We are saddened to announce the passing of Terry Mikel, retired Horticulture Agent at Maricopa County Cooperative Extension. Terry’s contributions to the field of horticulture and Extension are immeasurable.

While this has been a year of uncertainty and change, the AWF team continues to bring a bit of normalcy and excitement to those who participate. While the traditional Arizona Water Festival (AWF) Program was dramatically changed to an online event this year, it was still a great success.

The Zoom platform was utilized. While 2019 and 2020 both featured the same number of conference attendees, the 2020 program saw an increase in attendance to the new format and to make gardening information more accessible for the new reduced ticket price. Another new feature for DIG has been Zoom breakout-rooms to allow participants to ask questions or network with each other.

The UA Maricopa County Cooperative Extension team worked hard to make the class as engaging and informative as possible. The Zoom platform allowed us to bring in several high profile speakers to discuss topics ranging from pest management to creating a new vegetable garden. We also had a special guest appearance by Richard Steel, the Master of Ceremonies, in our Discovery 4-H Garden Class.

The family resource team includes Extension Agent, Patty Merk and staff: Ginamarie Masons, author Sharon Penchina, UArizona Cooperative Extension-Maricopa County Extension. Also working with this group was the South Phoenix Early Childhood Family Resource Center's community outreach in South Phoenix. Together, they worked to bring the program to new audiences and increase engagement.

Our team is excited about the future and the opportunities that Zoom will bring us. While we may not be able to bring people together in person, the digital platform allows us to reach a wider audience and continue to provide quality Extension programs to our community.

As we look forward to the future, we are proud of the progress we have made and the work we have done. Thank you to all of our participants and community members for your support and dedication to the Extension mission.