The Gayla Mize Garden is on a fast track! Since the last update, we have entered a record spell of heat and drought – but we are thriving! Steady progress with a great crew. Here’s what’s been happening since the last Gayla Mize Garden Update.

This is Ben Christopher, a fine young man majoring in HealthScience with a farm background. Gets an A+ in cheerful attitude.
Here’s our crew for the summer 2011. Left to right, Charles Maraggio, Ben Christopher, and Brock Vinson. All three understand that they’re on hallowed ground. One hundred years of neglect turning into a hundred years of nurture. Here we’re repairing another mainline break at a tee. Not sure who to blame. We’re heading into what may be the record hot, dry summer.

Barb Stump and Ray in one of our meetings – we rock! I think Barb is holding brownies.

The planting on the north side – drip irrigation in place. In spite of worst drought in many, many years, plants are thriving.
Our Drip system is based on ½ gallon per hour NetaFim emitters. Our strategy is to run the system two hours per day for a total of one gallon of water per plant per day at the trunk. A+ in water conservation.

We are using an inexpensive Orbit controller. Runs off four double A batteries. Pressure regulator after controller keeps pressure at 30 psi in the drip line.

Wood Debris removal
Getting a little more sunlight

Ryan creates the entrance to the Gayla Mize Garden.

Work on the entrance to the Gayla Mize Garden in early June 2011.
The entrance takes shape and the first trails are laid out. We are planning to shape and smooth the trails and apply a layer of crushed red iron ore gravel. Boardwalks planned over two stretches of “wetland”.

Rock placed on edge of entrance. Via Ray Mize. These will be repositioned, backfilled and planted. Trail entrance base will be crushed red iron ore.

More rock arrives.
Ray and Ryan arrive with more rock. These rectangular rocks are from the farm of John Young – century old hand sawn rock - used to support an old pier and beam farm house. Barbara is going to get the written history on the source of this rock.

And here comes more rock!

Barb Stump and I flagging the trail network on N side.
June 8, 2011 – L to R, Jeff Abt, Barb Stump, Ryan Cupit, and Ray Mize. Planning and planting for a better Nacogdoches!

Cleaning up the dump . . . continues with assistance from SFA’s Physical Plant and a portion of the original TP and W grant funding the operation.

Cleaning up the debris field is no chore for sissies.

A hundred years of neglect is now a hundred years of nurture!
On the East side of the Gayla Mize Garden we have a 60’ circle that will be planted to a columnar Liquidambar styraciflua ‘slender silhouette’ – a rare candle-like sweetgum, an introduction of Don Shadow in Tennessee. Will exceed 40’ tall and five or six feet wide quickly.

Digging the holes with the SFA Gardens Bobcat and SFA Physical Plant’s auger. Nineteen trees planned for the circle. Holes given a good dose of mushroom compost in June, mixed and allowed to mellow until planting on July 11, 2011.

Planting day! July 11, 2011 - The trees used are Liquidambar styraciflua ‘Slender Silhouette’. A candle-like columnar sweet gum. Should grow to 40’ tall and only 5 to 6 feet wide. Duke and Brock after planting
Drip line installed. Mulching.

GOALS FOR THE NEXT FOUR MONTHS

1. Lay a trail base down using east Texas red iron ore rock. Math for the trail network is as follows:
   
   2500’ of trails to be created in the Gayla Mize Garden. If 6’ wide and three inches deep crushed East Texas creek red iron ore rock
   
   2500 X 6 = 15,000 square feet
   
   15,000 / 4 = 3750 cubic feet (if 3” deep)
   
   2500/27 = about 140 cubic yards
   
   At $25 per cubic yard delivered . . . we’re looking at around $4000 – and I’m not sure how long it would take to spread and roll. We are currently exploring the opportunity to use SFA’s asphalt spreader.

2. Continue to clean up bottomland – keep woody weeds sprayed with Glyphosate applications. Spot stump spraying with Remedy.

3. Barb prices and procurs six benches for the garden.

4. Boardwalks and small bridges (four) built to connect the trail network.

5. Working ATCOFA GIS specialists, develop a base map of the Gayla Mize Garden with trail networks, grid, irrigation lines, etc.
6. Entrance plantings. Continue to spread mulch and kill weeds in the entrance area with plans for an extensive planting there later this fall.

7. Continue to monitor the drip irrigation system.

8. Continue to build plant numbers in our nursery and making arrangements for fall delivery of plant materials. Emphasis on deciduous azaleas and hybrid deciduous azaleas. Acquire rare, unusual, connoisseur plants from specialty nurseries and plant collectors.

9. In December 2011, finish planting the entire eight acres.

10. Design and order two GAYLA MIZE GARDEN signs, one for University Drive and one for near the entrance on Starr. One of the options is a sign like below . . . which is a very rough prototype, would be designed a little more aesthetically and have the GAYLA MIZE GARDEN text instead of Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden. Instead of architectural blocks, we would go with east texas rock mortared around the concrete pad that the slab is set into. This is JUST a thought. About $4000 each. Letters are precision sandblasted, indented, and painted.