


BLOOMING BELL

BCMGA NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2009

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		Perennials Arrive 4/1 Help Needed	1 WORKDAY Burger Day 9AM Greenhouse Com. Mtg. 1PM 2009 Class	2 WORKDAY	3 Roses Arrive 4/2 Help Needed	4 Spring Perennial & Rose Sale 8AM-1PM
5	6	Randy Doyle, Supervisor of the Environmental Support Team at Fort Hood*	8 WORKDAY 8:25AM Herb Study Group 10:30AM Monthly MG Meeting 1PM 2009 Class	9 Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie presented by Beverly Wickersham. WORKDAY	10	11
12  EASTER SUNDAY	13	14	15 WORKDAY 9AM Board of Directors 1PM 2009 Class	16 WORKDAY	17	18 Spring Garden Tour 9AM-4PM
19	20	21	22 WORKDAY Class Field Trip to Austin	23 WORKDAY	24	25
26	27	28	29 WORKDAY 1PM 2009 Class	30 WORKDAY		

*Our speaker is Randy Doyle, Supervisor of the Environmental Support Team at Fort Hood. He will speak about environmental issues in Bell County. His job is to help surrounding communities implement projects to improve the quality of life in this area.

President's Corner

Submitted by David Fitch

Spring has sprung and I am very pleased to report that we just had a very successful Spring Vegetable sale. The Greenhouse Committee members are to be congratulated for all their efforts with this event. This was the first attempt at buying plants rather than producing them in the greenhouse. Accordingly, there were many unknowns. Decisions had to be made as to what plants to purchase and how many of each. There were logistical issues about getting the plants here at the correct date and time. There were staffing concerns for getting the plants positioned for sale and then taking care of all the customers. Well, I am pleased to tell you that very few plants were left over and the sale was judged by the Board this morning to be a great success. Thank you to all who helped.

There were a couple of takeaways from this and, in fact, from previous sales. It seems that one of the compelling reasons people come to our sale for their plants is because of the interaction with BCMGA members. Our customers seek out and appreciate the information they get from our members regarding the description, planting and general care of the plants. Something we, as humble folks, tend to underestimate.

We've taken some additional steps to shore up the Association organizational structure. At the Board meeting this morning, we approved the following additions to the organizational chart. These additions are necessary to assure that certain critical functions are given the proper level of attention to assure compliance with the Strategic Action Plan. Positions added are:

Under the Area of the Treasurer; Bookkeeping & Reporting – The title says it all. This person(s) will have responsibility to record credits and debits to the books of the Association in accordance with guidelines given by the Treasurer as provided by the Board of Directors. This person(s) will also compile, generate and distribute financial reports as requested by the Treasurer. A working knowledge of the bookkeeping software used by the association will be required.

Retail Sales & Marketing – This person(s) will have the responsibility of collecting monies from customers at BCMGA sales, providing for an accurate accounting of those monies, developing and promoting new and innovative products for sale

at BCMGA functions that are in line with the mission of the association and in the spirit of the function where the sale is being conducted.

Finance Coordinator - This person(s) will assume the responsibility of preparing and managing an annual budget for the BCMGA. Additionally, this person(s) will develop and pursue external sources of funds in the form of grants and donations.

Under the area of Education, Internal Education - This person(s) will assume the responsibility of developing, coordinating and conducting educational classes and programs for the members of BCMGA. Classes are to include current topics of interest to the membership and will qualify for educational hours for members. Programs are to include such things as Bell County Specialty classes wherein members can be certified to become members of the Speakers Bureau and otherwise present their Specialty subject to other internal and/or external audiences. Plan, coordinate and implement a statewide Turf Grass Specialist course for Texas Master Gardeners. This position is not a part of the New Class function.

External Education - This person(s) will assume responsibility for developing, coordinating and conducting educational classes and programs for members of the general public. These classes can be held at evening or weekend hours as well as in conjunction with other BCMGA functions. Such classes shall be in line with the overall mission of the BCMGA.

Our April Plant Sale is just around the corner. This sale is for decorative plants. Please remember that we need all the talent we can get at the sale to help with customer questions. It is a fun morning and a great way to pick up some volunteer hours, if not some beautiful plants. Enjoy the Spring weather and hope to see you at the Sale.



Everyone has enough weeding to do in their own garden
Flemish proverb

2009 BCMGA Spring Garden Tour

Submitted by Betty Nejtek

Our Spring Garden Tour is scheduled April 18th from 9:00AM to 4:00PM. We are excited and pleased to have a variety of gardens on display in our Spring Garden Tour this year. Some of the gardens in the tour are from previous years and there are also several new gardens in the tour. Some of the highlights are two certified Texas Wildscapes, earthkind roses, vegetable and herb gardens, butterfly gardens, composting and, of course, the Killeen Municipal Gardens which represents one of the organization's Service Projects. We are still in need of volunteers to assist prior to the tour and especially on the day of the tour. These gardens are an excellent representation of the Bell County Master Gardeners and we urge anyone that has not volunteered to help on the tour to do so. This is an opportunity to earn service hours for anyone that needs a few more while enjoying the beauty of nature in these gardens.

Please take a look at the write-ups included in this issue and volunteer your time to assist on the tour this year. You can contact Betty Nejtek at 913-4065 or 986-1431 or Ellen Majestic at 780-1868 or 760-5383 to volunteer. You can also email us at enejtek@hotmail.com or emajestic@clearwire.net.

Margaret Leigh's Garden 6530 Cedar Creek Road, Temple North of Belton approximately 10 miles

Challenging landscape area is filled with 5 garden plots encouraging butterflies and birds. Mixture of perennials, roses, shrubs and native plants placed to create a beauty-spot on Bell County farmland location. Take pathway to adjoining creek or off the path to view wildflowers along creek banks.

Directions - Take Hwy 317 to Cedar Creek Road. (north of intersection with Hwy 36 approximately 1.4 miles). Travel 1.4 miles from Hwy 317 to home. White 2-story house sitting back from the road on left about .4 mile. Lane meanders through wheat and corn fields.

The Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden Project Located behind the Killeen Civic and Conference Center

The Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden Project provides an opportunity to offer positive life changing community service opportunities for the young people of Killeen. The Texas AgriLife Extension Bell County and the Bell County Master Gardeners Association are secondary collaborators

with the Killeen Municipal Court and their staff in developing and managing a Community Service Garden. The first objective of the garden project is to provide vegetables for the Killeen Food Care Center. The "farm" is currently under development, and early vegetable crops are being planted. A completed garden project involved the construction, filling, planting and care-taking of seven raised beds by the young people assigned by the court to assist in the garden project.

Future plans for the garden area include a variety of gardening techniques and plants. Several square-foot gardens as well as vertical gardens will demonstrate alternative gardening techniques for small (or large) yards. Numerous individual "theme" beds will be placed throughout the remaining area. These beds will showcase succulents, butterfly-attracting plants, EarthKind and heirloom roses, sunflowers, herbs, and vines. A water collection unit will be installed on the property as well as a composting bin.

To visit the garden take the W.S. Young exit off Hwy 190 in Killeen. Drive south to the Killeen Civic and Conference Center on your right. Drive between the Conference Center and the Shilo Inn to the back of the Center. The garden is directly behind the Conference Center

Quesinberry's Garden 11005 Lake Whitney Drive, Temple

This garden is a certified Texas Wildscape and a National Wildlife Backyard Habitat. Native and adapted plant material and landscaping is in harmony with the many birds, butterflies and the local deer population. This one acre garden continues to evolve and has many interesting plants including the rare Traveler Redbud tree, Anacacho Orchid tree and many drought tolerant native grasses.

Directions - Go west on Adams (Hwy 2305), cross Hwy 317, take second left (Lakewood Drive), across from Lakewood Elementary. Go all the way to the end of Lakewood Drive. Lakewood Drive turns left and becomes Lake Whitney Drive. Fifth house on the right.

Diane Calderwood's Garden 2908 Sleepy Hollow Lane, Temple

In the Fall of 2005 this acre property began its transformation from a standard landscape to a certified Texas Wildscape. All existing plants were removed and replaced with native and well-adapted Texas plants. In the front of the property, new perimeter flower beds were created to define the property lines and reduce turf. This included a rose garden along one side of the yard. Existing flower beds around the house

were expanded and new perennial flower beds were created around the backyard shed and vegetable garden area. The vegetable garden area features the "square foot gardening" method. This landscape is maintained using organic practices. Expect to see many new and unusual plants in this truly Texas landscape!

Directions - From Temple: Go south on 31st street. Turn right on Sleepy Hollow Lane (just before Timber Ridge housing addition). Go to the end of the cul-de-sac to find 2908 Sleepy Hollow.

From Belton: Take 6th Ave./Hwy 93 east. Turn left (north) on 31st street. Go one mile. Turn Left on Sleepy Hollow (just after Timber Ridge housing addition). Go to the end of the cul-de-sac.

Lou Hight's Garden ***4909 South Pea Ridge Road. Temple***

We have the following vegetables planted: Onions, potatoes, dill, cucumbers, squash, corn, tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, lettuce, spinach, parsley, green beans, okra and radishes. We also have a large black berry patch, large iris bed, roses, altheas (rose of Sharon), crape myrtles, a fig tree and pecan trees. Right now we also have a variety of birds which include blue jays, blue birds (nesting), cardinals, mocking birds and all different kinds just flying around. We have a purple martin house up but I have not seen any nesting just yet. I am hoping they come soon. We have a variety of butterflies visit from time to time. We also have compost piles going.

Directions - The garden is located at 4909 South Pea Ridge Road, which is two blocks off of FM 817 (also called Charter Oaks Drive) between Temple and Belton.

Robin Pohl's Garden ***414 Penelope, Belton***

This garden consists of a vegetable garden with a drip irrigation system, an herb garden and a variety of other beds containing native plants. There are also 17 rose bushes on the property for the rose lovers. Located in the Downtown Historic area of Belton, this garden demonstrates how to create your own private space in town.

Directions - Go north on Penelope Street from Main Street in downtown Belton. Second house on left past United Methodist Church. There is no parking

in front of the house because the city has blocked it off. Most cars will need to go to the Methodist church parking lot or to the Agape church. There are three "entries" to the yard. One is through a white gate on the right side of the house, one up a gravel driveway, and the other is through the garden on the side. If people park in the Methodist parking lot, they will ultimately try to go right through my garden gate because it's very visible.

Karla Tomaka's Garden ***114 Wyatt Earp Loop, Nolanville***

My garden is built around several distinct areas. The front yard is more formal, with a seating area nestled under live oak trees. The private portion of the garden includes a hacienda style brick patio with a small pond and fountain, an herb garden, a wildflower garden and a small vegetable garden. Native and adapted plants are used throughout. Eleven different EarthKind and antique roses featured throughout the landscape.

Directions - Exit Hwy 190 at Nolanville exit, enter the town of Nolanville. Follow signs (road will curve to the left) to FM 439. Turn right on FM 439, continue approximately 1/2 mile and make a right on Wyatt Earp Loop. If you cross the railroad tracks you have gone too far.

God made rainy days, so gardeners could get the housework done.





April 22nd New Class Field Trip

Submitted by Diane Calderwood, New Class Com.

Following is some general information for those who have signed up to join the new class on their upcoming field trip. The field trip is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22nd. The bus will be in the extension office parking lot, ready for boarding, at 7:30 a.m. We will leave promptly at 8:00 a.m. Please remember to bring a sack lunch. If you have a problem the morning of the trip, please contact Diane Calderwood. Her cell phone number is 254-718-5647.

You will have the opportunity to purchase plants at both places we will be visiting. The Natural Gardener

has a wide variety of plant material as well as gardening gifts and supplies. They will accept cash, check or credit card. Gabriel Valley has mostly vegetables and herbs and some perennials and native plants. They will accept cash or check.

I still have a waiting list for the field trip, so if your schedule has changed and you cannot go on the trip, please let me know so that I can sell your seat to someone else. You can contact me at dcalder@hot.rr.com; 254-771-1218 or 254-718-5647.

See you April 22nd!

Just Ask

Do you have a question about gardening? **Just Ask** is a new column suggested by Terrie Hahn to share knowledge among ourselves. Here is Terrie's question.

"I found five baby roses growing near (within 1 to 2 feet) of other roses. They seem to have their own root system. Do you think these have grown from rose hips dropped through the years? What will we end up with? A rose like the mother plant or just a scraggly wild rose? Someone did a short class in the greenhouse a while back on rose hips, but I can't remember who it was to ask."

Please email your response to this question to the Blooming Bell editor Joan Hinshaw at irene_joan@hotmail.com and we will print the responses in the next edition.

Slate of Candidates for 2009 Board of Directors

Submitted by Mary Lew Quisenberry

We had 24 nominees for the 7 open positions. Some were nominated for more than one position. All 24 nominees were polled. 10 wanted to be considered for the position they were nominated for. Here are the results:

President - Mel Myers

1st VP - Mary Ann Everett

2nd VP - Rutha Leffle

Treasurer - Jan Anderson

Director (JMG) - Pat Maskunas, Cathy White

Director (Garden Tour/Professional Grounds) - Luann Hight, Nolan Young

Director (New Class) - Suzanne Boyer, Janelle Burson

Certified members of the Bell County Master Gardener Association will have an opportunity to vote on the slate of nominees April 8th prior to the monthly meeting. Certified members have paid the current fiscal year membership dues and have completed the required number of volunteer hours and education hours for re-certification during the current fiscal year.

Help Wanted

Submitted by Karla Tomaka

Our spring perennial and rose sale is coming up fast: Saturday, April 4th from 8:00 – 1:00 at the greenhouse. Times are still being coordinated for plant deliveries. Roses will be delivered early in the week prior to the sale – hopefully, Wednesday the 1st. Our perennials are programmed for delivery Thursday, April 2nd. I am trying to schedule a morning delivery. We will need help unloading the plants on both days. We will get the word out on times as soon as possible. We are in need of wagons for customers to use to shuttle plants out to their cars. If you can loan us a wagon, please bring it in April 1st for Burger Wednesday.

We will also need help from our rose and perennial "experts" on the sale day. Customers like to ask questions about the various plants and we like to have lots of folks on hand to answer them. The

perennials and roses that we will have for sale are listed with pictures and detailed information on our web site. We will also have booklets on hand in the greenhouse with this information to assist volunteers as they help customers.

The signup sheet for the sale will be available Burger Wednesday, April 1st. It will be available for new class members this week. If you'd like to help and can't make it in to sign up, please contact me at kstomaka@aol.com. Our vegetable sale was a big success. Hopefully, this sale will be even better.

Herb Study Group

Submitted by Kim Pringle

1. The Hamilton County Extension Agent, Derrick Chabot, called me (referred by Ilene Miller) about Herb training for Hamilton County Master Gardener interns on Thursday, April 16 from 1-5 pm. Derrick said he could fill in with other topics if the presenters wanted to do only a couple of hours on herbs. Apparently, there was a late cancellation. I think Betty and Janice did this training sometime and the members really liked it - perhaps Betty and Janice might want to do this again. He said there were 14 interns so the presentation would be for no more than 20 - they would like some tasting. You would be reimbursed for cooking supplies as well as mileage. You can reach Derrick at 254-386-3919 (office) or 254-485-3016 (cell) or by email at dachabot@ag.tamu.edu. If you are interested in taking on this task, please let me know. I am not able to attend but could help gather handouts.

2. The Herb Study was invited to participate in Teacher JMG Training on July 31. More information later.

Following are the recipes for Mexicorn Dip and Greek Orzo Shrimp Salad made by Pat Camp for picnic at Herbal Forum. Hope to see you at the meeting on April 8 if not before.

GREEK ORZO AND GRILLED SHRIMP SALAD WITH MUSTARD-DILL VINAIGRETTE

¾ lb orzo, cooked al dente
1 large cucumber, seeded, quartered lengthwise and sliced(I substituted salad burnet because I had no cucumber)
3 green onions, thinly sliced
1 pint grape tomatoes, halved
¼ cup chopped fresh dill, plus extra for garnish
¼ cup white wine vinegar
3 tbsp. Dijon mustard
½ cup olive oil, plus additional for brushing shrimp
Salt and freshly ground pepper
¾ lb feta cheese, crumbled
16 medium shrimp, peeled and de-veined

Combine orzo, cucumber, green onions, and tomatoes in a large bowl. Place dill, vinegar, and mustard in blender and blend until smooth. With the motor running, slowly add the olive oil and blend until emulsified. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour the vinaigrette over the orzo mixture and stir well to combine. Gently fold in the feta cheese.

Heat grill to high. Brush shrimp with oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill for approximately 2 minutes per side or until just cooked through. Divide orzo salad among 4 plates and top with 4 shrimp. Garnish with additional dill.

Note: I did not have fresh dill so used some dried from Whole Foods Bulk....Did not have time to grill the shrimp so just boiled some frozen, deveined shrimp.

MEXICORN DIP

1 can mexicorn
¾ cup grated cheddar
½ cup mayo (I use light)
4 oz green chilies
½ cup chopped green onion
2 Tbsp. picante
2 jalapenos, chopped and seeded (I used the canned pickled ones that are milder)
½ cup sour cream
½ tsp. cumin
½ tsp. salt

Mix all and refrigerate overnight.....Too easy to be so good!!!!

I like to add chopped cilantro!!

Spring Messenger

Submitted by Jane Capen

When we first bought the land where our house is I spent hours walking, wildflower book in hand, trying to identify all of the flowers that grew there. One of the first spring flowers was bright yellow, with a ruffled corolla. My book identified it as Fringed Puccoon. Fringed Puccoon, what an interesting name. Where did it come from? What does it mean?

A bit of digging brought me the following information. The Fringed Puccoon, also known as the Narrowleaf gromwell, Narrowleaf stoneseed, and Narrow-leaved puccoon, is properly called *Lithospermum incisum*, and is native to the US. It is a member of the borage family. A perennial, it is 6-12 inches tall, has hairy stems and leaves, and grows in much of the country. The genus name, *Lithospermum*, means stone seed, a name given for the small nut-like seeds the plant produces. 'Incisum', which means "cut into", refers to its jagged edges.

The meaning of this plant's common name is a bit more obvious. The bright, lemon yellow flower has ruffly, serrated edges, thus accounting for the 'fringed' part of its name. The Puccoon part of the name is an Indian word for plants that produce dye. In this case, it is the roots from which the dye comes, and is not bright yellow like the flower, but purple. Dyes were not the only use for this plant. Native Americans also used it medicinally for colds, coughs, paralysis and delirium.

Apparently I am not the only one who likes this flower with the funny name. The Kansas Associated Garden Clubs and Kansas Native Plant Society chose it as the 2008 Wildflower of the year. So when you are out walking this spring, keep an eye out for this bright little harbinger of the season.

In Defense of the Dandelion - Samuel Pickering, Jr. Submitted by Diane Calderwood

Spring has arrived and so have the dandelions. Here by the porch, there by the drive, everywhere. For years I struggled to get rid of them. One summer I wore out a pair of leather gloves digging them up. Another summer our dog Fred almost died from drinking the weed killer I mixed in the garage.

I'm older now and have learned better. I just sit on the porch and leave the dandelions alone. In fact, we have grown fond of one another.

I have decided that the real American Beauty isn't

the rose but the dandelion. The common dandelion is not a Native American. Like most of our ancestors, it didn't travel first class and there is no record of its arrival on our shores. All we know is that it seems to have come from Europe, and like those "huddled masses" who sought a better life in a newer world, the dandelion put down roots and thrived.

Grateful for the opportunity to settle, it was content to make wayside and wasteland bloom. Unlike the cultivated rose, the dandelion is, in its stem of stems, a Populist. It generally prefers hard homesteading on barren ground to pampered living in potting soil. The dandelion smiles just as brightly amid backyard tenement clutter as it does beneath the boxwood border of an English garden. In contrast to the formal rose, which make a sticking point of ceremony and can be prickly with those who do not show proper deference, the dandelion is friendly. It even enjoys the company of children as they weave it into garlands.

The dandelion lives a clean and simple life. It opens and blooms at sunrise and, closing up tightly, goes to bed at sunset. It keeps healthy and respectable hours because it is a family flower. One hundred to 200 florets compose its yellow blossom. As the florets mature and are finally pollinated, the dandelion's stem lengthens. Sacrificing its position in the world, the dandelion now lives for its children, closing one last time until the florets have grown into seeds and are ready to leave home. Then the gray globe expands so the seeds can catch a breeze and start out well in life.

No other flower embodies the American spirit as well as the dandelion. When the going gets tough, pansies and petunias wilt. Neither the strong winds nor heavy rains can break the dandelion. When the petals of the dogwood blossoms are scattered and the peony is beaten to the ground, the dandelion still holds its head up bravely.

Unlike the southern magnolia or sagebrush, the dandelion is not tied to a particular region of the country. It is truly a National flower. Moreover, it is a flower for all months and all communities; from January to December, the dandelion blossoms somewhere. It may be found in Arizona under the shadow of the saguaro cactus, in Florida's orange groves or on a ledge in Colorado's mountains.

Such a flower is a bright sign of hope, and when winter comes and days and nights seem black, remember that somewhere in America, the dandelion is blooming!



Class of '09 Report

Submitted by Robin Pohl

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Are sponsored by the

TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION of TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

1605 N. Main St.
Belton, Texas 76513
(254) 933-5305

Howdy again from the class of 09!

Spring is officially here. Trees are budding, grass is growing, and our minds are filling up with new information. First we learned about roses and the tricks they do. Some roses climb and others turn into

bushes and the really smart ones are ever blooming. We didn't talk much about the Yellow Rose of Texas or the San Antonio Rose but I still hummed the tunes to myself for the afternoon. We also learned about native bulbs. I never did a background check on the bulbs that came with my house, but they appear to be of the friendly local variety. We had a wonderful class on pesticides and insecticides. I thought this was one of the most sobering lectures that we have had

because it involves health and life safety. If you went to Lowe's a couple weeks ago and every label on the shelf was pulled out, I'm sorry. It was me reading them all looking for key information. We also had a lecture on Wildscaping. Birds are as picky about eating as my daughter with vegetables. I also didn't know that hummingbirds had color preferences more sensitive than my college art teacher. I know why my backyard is not a luxury condo for butterflies but at least

it's a popular "all you can eat" buffet.

We are still working away in the greenhouse. We practiced cutting up bulbs to propagate them. One of my bulbs is sending up a green shoot of encouragement and it feels good to be loved. We are preparing our beds and getting plants out. Look out HEB produce department. We are taking over!

With service projects, we are anxious as ever to be included. While most of us helped out at the plant sale, I was a slacker and just bought plants. Word of the week is "yard tour". I'm not just saying that because I have a yard on the tour either. We are working in all the yards to groom them like beauty pageant queens. We are signed up and are ready to go the day of the tour.

We'd like to thank everyone for your continued support and words of wisdom.

Contributors: Diane Calderwood, Jane Capen, David Fitch, Terrie Hahn, Frances Idoux, Betty Nejtek, New Class Committee, Robin Pohl, Kim Pringle, Mary Lew Quisenberry, Karla Tomaka, Beverly Wickersham,

Editor: Joan Hinshaw

Please submit articles for the ***Blooming Bell*** to Joan at irene_joan@hotmail.com.

