




## July

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4  Independence Day	5	6	7 NO BURGER WED  8:45 Herb Study Group	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 WORKDAY 8 – 11:00 (see article) 10:30 Monthly MG Meeting	15	16	17
18	19	20	21  9:00 Greenhouse Committee Meeting	22	23	24
25	26	27	28  9:00 Board of Directors Meeting	29	30	31

## **FREEDOM RINGS**

Submitted by Mel Myers, President

We are so fortunate to live in America. The time is fast approaching that we celebrate Independence Day....and what a day it is. The freedom we enjoy today is very special and we should stop and be thankful for those who made it possible. While I have heard about this all my life, it finally became real to me in 1988 when Sharon and I visited Mount Vernon. We were eating in the restaurant when we were joined by a Captain Armature dressed in revolutionary war attire. During the course of the evening he invited us to come to a celebration at George Mason's plantation a few miles down the road. George Mason was responsible for writing the bill of rights in Virginia which later was copied into our constitution. What a day it was with speech after speech about freedom and the rights that must be protected. We often forget that those who signed the Declaration of Independence were signing their death warrant. If any would be captured they would be put to death for treason. Well, that is enough about history.

July and August are months we constantly warn ourselves about the dangers of heat exhaustion, etc... It is the time of the year we yearn to get a reprieve by visiting Colorado or another cool spot. It gets so bad that someone named the period starting with July 3 as the "dog days of summer".

Your board of directors met this morning and heard reports on the progress we are making in finalizing the plans for the garden tour and plant sale. Several new and innovative suggestions were discussed and that appears to have caught the attention of several of us. I hope each of you will visit the board meetings and join in for the discussion. We meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 9:00 A.M. While voting is reserved for the board members, anyone can discuss the issues and offer suggestions.

From the community garden comes a lesson we should be aware of. I have already mentioned the problem with heat exhaustion but it is important enough to emphasize. Be careful and do your hardest work early in the morning. July is a good month to enjoy the fruits of our labor and slow down. It is also a good time to plan a fall garden when the weather is cooler. Happy gardening!!!

## **Blooming Bell's New Editor**

Submitted by Joan Hinshaw

I'm pleased to announce that MG Terrie Hahn has

volunteered to be our newest **Blooming Bell** Editor. Thanks Terrie. I know you will do a bang-up job! Please send all your future submissions for the Blooming Bell to Terrie at [moompie45@hotmail.com](mailto:moompie45@hotmail.com)

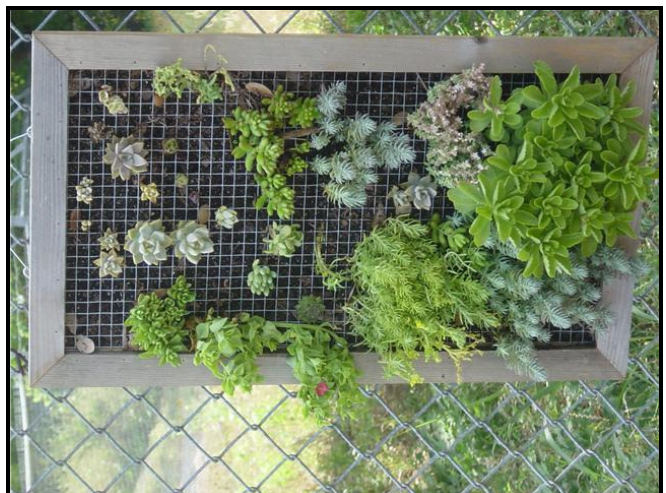


## **Succulent Bed**

Submitted by Terrie Hahn

Kim Pringle, Terrie Hahn and Brenda Smith have gotten a succulent bed going in one of the demo beds. They also decided to try making a living picture out of succulents. The frame (built by Werner Hahn) is now hanging behind the demo bed on the chain link fence. Once planted, the frame needs to sit horizontally for about 4 weeks. After hanging, it will be trimmed and rotated every couple of months as the plants grow and turn to reach the sun.

In the middle of the demo bed is Kim's tire bed. She got ideas for this from the Herb Forum in Round Top this past March. Her husband cut the tire and turned it inside out to make a cool looking "pot." Kim planted lines of different types of succulents and it's been growing like crazy! Succulents are great hot weather drought tolerant plants!





## **WORKDAY July 14**

Submitted by Pat Maskunas

**Burger Wednesday has been canceled** for the 7th of July due to vacations and the closeness to the 4th of July holiday.

Grounds maintenance workday will be July 14, 8:00 to 11:00AM. We will start early and stop when heat frustration sets in! We will work again if the scheduled projects are not completed. On the schedule are clearing out the growth under the large oak and relaying weed cloth and mulch, weeding throughout the demonstration beds and relaying some areas of newspaper. Please save your papers and fold them into stacks of 12 sheets. If the paper is all ready, the job will go much easier. You will need to bring your own pruners, loppers, and a weedeater if you can. Water will be provided or bring your own. We will also be planting the remaining plants in the demonstration beds. Looking forward to seeing all of you who need service hours.

## **JMG Teacher Training**

Submitted by Mary Ann Everett

Any Master Gardener who is interested in helping with the 4-day Junior Master Gardener Teacher Training from July 27-30 at the Extension Office please come to a meeting on Wednesday, June 9 at 9:00 AM. This meeting is for those who will be giving a talk, those who want to help with the training, and those who wish to help with this program within the schools as a resource. We are always in need of help with the science days during the school year.

If you have any questions, please email Mary Ann at [pma4514@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pma4514@sbcglobal.net).

## **Looking for Speakers**

Submitted by Mary Ann Everett

If you have any suggestions for a program/speaker for the monthly meetings, please let Mary Ann know at [pma4514@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pma4514@sbcglobal.net). Thank you.

## **Black Thumb? Turn it to Green!!**

Submitted by Jann Dworsky

Martha, my wonderful friend for 30 years, loves my house plants and was trying unsuccessfully to grow some herself. Houseplants were a blessing and she wanted to participate. She tried several types of ivy, and some airplane plants, but kept killing her plants

by the shrinkum method. They would slowly shrink smaller and smaller until no leaves were left. She was afraid she, indeed, had a black thumb with plants.

She invited me over to see if I could tell what was wrong and possibly turn her thumb green. The first thing I noticed was that the windows in the room were covered with blinds and curtains, and stayed that way until they were home for the evening. A dim light came in, but not enough even for an ivy. Plants must have light for photosynthesis. We opened one blind and parted the lace curtain right beside her plants so indirect light came in about 8 hours a day from her covered porch.



The second thing we talked about was how much water to give the plants. She showed me that for an 8-inch pot she would only put one or two cups of water and none came out the bottom. None of the more common ivy types, like Pathos ivy or airplane plant can be easily hurt by over watering. Together we watered, pouring slowly, until the water came out the bottom. We watered all her plants in this way and then waited 15 minutes and checked the trays. Most had no water in them as the plants had absorbed all the excess. Together we slowly poured more water on each plant, several times, until some ran out the bottom and stood at least an inch deep in every tray.

The third thing we did was to select grow sticks, a mild fertilizer, and push grow sticks just below the soil to feed the plants slowly over 3-4 months. These can be found at any garden center or on-line. Martha continued to water once a week and have water standing in the bottom for at least one day. In about 6 months she had me over to show me her luscious thick green plants and her attractive green thumb. Martha was delighted with the blessing her plants made in her home, and it was just the welcoming look she was after.

## Killeen Municipal Court Community Gardens

Submitted by Gail Hughling

Bell County Master Gardeners and area teenagers work together and successfully produce crops of vegetables, bouquets of flowers and baskets of herbs in the Municipal Court Community Gardens. Each Saturday morning throughout the year, Master Gardeners assemble in the gardens to teach local youth how to appreciate the land, skillfully plant, tend and harvest vegetables, identify plants, and to water correctly.

The teens earn community service hours by working responsibly in the gardens. This year's farm area has already produced over 570 pounds of vegetables. Kale and spinach were abundant crops that were harvested from spring until early summer. The final harvest of cabbage weighed 56 pounds. More recently, 24 pounds of tomatoes were picked. Potatoes, tomatoes and onions are popular crops with the youth once they learn to identify the plants. Raised herb beds delight all the gardeners with appealing aromas. Uses for rosemary, dill, parsley, chives and fennel are often shared between the adults and teens.

Life skills, outdoor experiences and a vocabulary of gardening terms are benefits the Bell County Master Gardeners are providing today's teens.





## Herb Garden Punch\*

Submitted by Diane Calderwood

(Served at the May 12th Herb Class)

2 Cans (11.5 oz.) Welch's Orange, Pineapple, Apple frozen juice Concentrate  
3 Cans Water  
Bunch of Lemon Balm  
Bunch of Mint  
Lemon Slices  
Lime Quarters  
Club Soda

Gently wring the bunches of lemon balm and mint to release the flavor. Place them in a large container and cover with the juice and water. Add lemon slices. Chill overnight, occasionally stirring and pressing down on herbs with the back of a wooden spoon.

Prior to serving remove the herbs and replace with fresh ones. Can add more lemon slices, lime slices and orange slices to the pitcher to make a nice presentation.

FOR EACH SERVING: Fill a small glass with 1/2 punch mix and 1/2 club soda. Add a squeeze of lime juice. Garnish with a fresh mint or lemon balm sprig, if desired. Can also spike with tequila or rum to taste.

\*this recipe is adapted from an Herb Garden Punch recipe in "The Herb Garden Cookbook" by Lucinda Hutson

## Miracles of Nature

By Darla Horner Menking

Last Saturday, I watched the sun rise... literally.

On a daily basis, nature provides those rare glimpses of perfection and miracles, just for us to enjoy. I'm sad to say though, that so many of them are easily missed by so many of us. Why is that? Maybe we are too busy to notice. Or maybe we're not paying attention. Surely it's not because we lack the awareness that miracles are out there actually happening as we speak. Or maybe it's because we just don't care.

To me, it's those miracles of nature that can have the greatest impact on our lives on a regular basis. Yes, there are large-scale events that happen and can change a person, a village, or a country in an instant. By contrast, those events tend to be few and far

between and, due to technology, no one misses them because they are usually documented worldwide in a matter of minutes and played over and over again.



But it's the small miracles right in front of us, surrounding us, happening moment by moment and that seem so insignificant to the world around us, that, at least for me, elicit the greatest thrills, awe and appreciation in my soul.

As I watched the sun come up last Saturday morning, I wondered how many people besides me happened to be up that early, out on the road and driving east, and couldn't help but "gawk" at the perfectly round, glowing, medium-sized star we call our sun. The haze in the lower atmosphere allowed me to look right at it for at least five minutes, reminding me that this ball of gases is a perfectly functioning source of life for our perfectly placed planet, orbiting perfectly, at a perfectly determined distance, and with a perfectly designed atmosphere. In that moment in my car, it was... perfect.

After a prayer of thanksgiving for that Saturday morning miracle I'd just witnessed, I could no longer look, since the sun had risen to a higher position and its glow was back to being beautiful but blinding. I felt renewed, and hoped everyone who witnessed it with me felt the same way. I saw the greatest show ever and it didn't cost me a dime. And I felt richer for seeing it.

This is but one account of the miracles of nature that are happening and could touch us deeply, if only we take the time to watch and notice. And let's not ever be too busy to be thankful for the perfection of our world, for which we have been entrusted. Join me, won't you?



**Soda Bottle Sprinkler. Photo submitted by Don Gold.**

## **BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**

Are sponsored by the  
**TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION of  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

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