

BLOOMING BELL

BCMGA NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2009

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 WORKDAY 9:00AM Weed Control Around the Greenhouse & Burger Wed	4 WORKDAY	5	6
7	8	9	10 WORKDAY 8:25 Herb Study Group* 10:30 Monthly MG Meeting	11 WORKDAY 12:30 Killeen Lions Club Senior Gardening Group	12 Mel Myers–Topic: “Constructing an Earthbox”	13
14  FLAG DAY	15 Troy Kimmel, Chief Meteorologist for Clear Channel Radio in Amelia	16	17 WORKDAY 9:00AM Greenhouse Com. Meeting 9:00AM Board of Directors Mtg	18 WORKDAY	19	20
21  FATHER'S DAY	22	23	24 WORKDAY	25 WORKDAY	26	27
28	29	30				

*Herb Study Group topic is “The Uses of Cooking with Mint” hosted by Joyce Richardson.

President's Corner

Submitted by Mel Myers

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Isn't it nice to have a New Year in BCMGA right here in June!! With the new year comes hot weather, flowers and weeds. It also brings a new perspective to our organization with fresh ideas from our newest members. We look forward to sharing ideas and experiences in the gardening world.

I would like to thank all who participated in the graduation and meeting at the Expo Center on May 20. That would include the class co-coordinators and directors. At the top of the list are Dirk and his crew at the Agri-Life office.

I would also like to thank David Fitch for leading our organization this past year. His leadership and ideas for improving Bell County Master Gardeners Association will be in place for years to come.

So we are starting a new year. News Year resolutions are not required. I would like to encourage everyone to find your place with BCMGA and work to make our organization the best in the state. The response to the committee sign up sheets was impressive. If that represents what is ahead of us, we will have a terrific year.

Once again, thank you. Happy gardening!!.....mel

Speaker for June Monthly Meeting

Submitted by Frances Idoux

The speaker for our monthly meeting June 10th will be Troy Kimmel. He is chief meteorologist for Clear Channel Radio in Austin, senior lecturer for Studies in Weather and Climate, and manager of the Weather and Climate Resource Center of the Department of Geography and the Environment of the University of Texas. Mr. Kimmel will give a presentation on weather conditions and discuss the rain gauge project.

Monthly Speakers

Submitted by Mary Ann Everett

At our monthly meetings, we have educational speakers who come and talk on a variety of horticultural topics. If there is a topic or speaker that would be of interest to you, please pass that along to me and I will contact them. Thank you for your help.

Summer JMG Teacher Training Canceled

Submitted by Mary Ann Everett

We will not be holding a 4-day JMG teacher training in July this year. With the restructuring in the school districts and money not being available, we thought it best to put it off until next summer. However with that said, we have come up with a one-day enhancement program for these teachers. The teachers we have spoken with are excited about this, especially since it will be free. That date is July 29 from 8:30AM to 3:00PM at the Agri-Life Extension Office.

Mentor training will take place on Tuesday, July 28, from 9:00AM to 11:30AM and will include some of our JMG teachers discussing what worked and didn't work, what are their expectations, etc. More information will be forthcoming.



Newly graduated Master Gardeners hold their MG Certificates presented May 20th at their Graduation Luncheon.



Our newly installed BCMGA officers.



Outgoing BCMGA President David Fitch displays the cake presented to him by his fellow Master Gardeners at the May 20th Graduation and Installation Luncheon.

2010 Master Gardener Conference

Submitted by Kim Pringle

The MG Conference is scheduled April 8-10 in Dallas. The host hotel is the Omni Mandalay Hotel in Los Colinas. We understand that rooms are going fast. You can book reservations online by going to the conference website www.2010tmgconference.org.

Herb Study Minutes of May 13, 2009

Submitted by Kim Pringle

Brenda Smith shared information and handouts on fairy gardens. She also brought 3 container gardens she had made. You can get a copy of the handout at <http://brendasmith.webs.com/createafairygarden.htm>. Thanks Brenda.

We briefly discussed hop. It is a vine (some varieties grow 25 feet) with rough leaves. The female flowers (strobiles) are used in beer production. Hop prefers a rich soil and lots of water and grows very well in the Pacific Northwest. It will grow in Central Texas with a little extra care. An article in the Temple Daily Telegram reported that recently there has been a shortage of hop (previously there was an oversupply which forced many farmers to abandon the crop) which resulted in a price spike and now small farmers are planting hops.

We enjoyed the plant exchange including trees, large sweet onions from Beverly Wickersham's garden, peppers, yellow sage, mint and papallo (taste similar to cilantro but grows in warm weather - from Dr. Novak at TAMU) and many others. Brenda brought her book "Herb Gardening for Beginners" by Derek Fell.

Jill Decker at the Extension Office called about a volunteer opportunity for "Women in the Outdoors" for the local chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation on Saturday, June 27, 2009 from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm at Hilliard Ranch near Davilla, Texas. From the flyer, it is four sessions (about an hour and 15 minutes each) on herb gardening (Texas Master Gardeners give us tips and tricks for growing and using herbs). Please contact me or Jill (jsdecker@ag.tamu.edu) if you are interested. It is my understanding that some Master Gardeners had volunteered for this program but are now unable to attend.

Next Meeting: June 10, 2009 at 8:25AM. Joyce Richardson is facilitating program on mints. More information later.

The Uses of Cooking with Mint

Submitted by Joyce Richardson

The June 10th Herb Study meeting will explore "The Uses of Cooking with Mint" and each participant is challenged to bring a sample of their favorite mint recipe to share with the group.

Final Report on the Class of '09

Submitted by Robin Pohl

We've finally done it. It feels so good to know that I made it all the way through. But before we accepted our certificates, we closed out our last two classes with a bang. We got the scoop on all the creepy crawlies, both good and bad. I've already gotten better on not killing good insects and more evil in killing bad ones. Then we had an herb party. Where else can you combine talking about plants and eating them at the same time? It was a wonderful way to end our classes.

On behalf of the class, I would like to thank all of our mentors and class directors. I look forward to using all those things that have been filed into the "plant" section of my brain. The classes and propagation work have been a wonderful kick start into what I hope will be a lifetime of education and service.

Texas Law on Picking Bluebonnets

Submitted by Crystal Fisher

For years, I thought it was illegal to pick bluebonnets. A lot of my friends thought the same. Not so. Just be careful where you pick them so as not to cross onto private property. And, by all means, be safe from traffic and aware of the possibility of snakes.

http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/director_staff/public_information/pr032602.htm

Keep that Rainwater!!!

Submitted by Jann Dworsky

The Master Gardener intern class was pleased recently to hear Billy Kniffen, Water Resource Specialist from A&M, give an enthusiastic and sincere talk on Rainwater Harvesting in Texas. Mr. Kniffen spoke without notes during the afternoon of teaching and is living a rainwater-harvesting lifestyle. The class was amazed to hear that he and his wife use only rainwater collection as their water resource for household use, as well as for the flower and vegetable garden.

He has 5 water collection tanks that hold a total of 16,500 gallons of water. That is enough water for their needs for one year if only 9 inches of rain falls. Menard is not a tropical location and averages 22 gallons a year. Roof space for water collection includes the roof of his house as well as his barn. When one inch of rain falls, he collects 6 gallons of water per square foot of roof space. The water for the drinking and household use has a system of filters for purification.

According to my notes, their household water usage is only 17 gallons a day per person. An additional 70 gallons a day are used for their gardens, making a total of 87 gallons a day for their household. The average for Killeen and Temple is about 125 gallons per day per person or 250 gallons for a two-person household.

He encouraged all of us to conserve water inside the house and keep every drop of rainwater that falls on our place. For the water to run slow, pure and clear he advised putting in water gardens in low places to catch and diffuse the water allowing all of it to soak into your yard, flower beds and trees. Rocks, logs or berms, of dirt placed attractively can push water to where it can soak into the ground and not run off into the gutters.

To learn more about rainwater harvesting usage in your home, landscape, for wildlife, livestock, and pets check out the following sites:

Texas AgriLife Extension Service Rainwater Harvesting at <http://rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu/>
American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association at <http://www.arcasa.org/>
Texas Manual on Rainwater Harvesting at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us>



Barley and Black Bean Salad

Submitted by Terrie Hahn

4 C	water
1 C	uncooked pearl barley
1 1/2 C	frozen whole kernel corn, thawed
1 1/2 C	diced tomato
1 C	frozen peas, thawed
1 C	avocado, chopped (optional)
1 - 2 T	chopped fresh cilantro (can sub parsley)
1	large can black beans, drained and rinsed
2 T	chopped onion

Sauce: Mix together:

4 - 5 T	fresh lemon juice
1 T	vegetable oil
1/2-1 t	salt
1/4 t	pepper
2	garlic clove, chopped

Bring 4 C water to boil. Add barley; cover, reduce heat and simmer 45 minutes. Remove from heat; cover and let stand 5 minutes. Drain and transfer to large bowl. Add all ingredients including sauce. Can serve warm or at room temperature.

Barley can usually be found in bulk at stores that carry bulk items. This makes a very large amount, so often, I don't add the avocado. You can have it on the side if you'd like.



This baby deer was discovered in the Quesinberry's back yard.

Greenhouse Committee Meeting Summary

Submitted by Karla Tomaka

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Are sponsored by the

TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION of TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Belton, Texas 76513
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The Greenhouse Committee met on 5/13/09. The focus of the discussion was determining what planning is needed during the summer months to take advantage of outdoor work opportunities during the cooler fall weather. Projects that we would like to kick off this fall include: a small scale compost demonstration geared towards homeowners, a rainwater harvesting demonstration and landscape maintenance on the west end of the greenhouse. We discussed the possibility of conducting an Earthkind demonstration project at the Killeen Municipal Gardens. During the summer months, Don Wyatt will be spearheading a heritage tomato project. He will be testing various soil and heritage tomato seed combinations to see which produces the greatest yield. The seedlings will be transplanted into the demonstration gardens this fall. If you are interested in working with this group, contact Don at dwyatt2005@sbcglobal.net

Plans are progressing for the fall sale, which will be held on Saturday, 9/26. It will be a combined sale with vegetables (Cole crops), herbs, perennials, trees and roses. We will be working with Deb Martin to get preorder sheets up on our website to allow members to get the plants they want without competing with the public. We would like to plan our fall sale seminar topics in advance so they can be advertised. There is interest in presenting a wildflower seminar. The problem is that it has not previously been developed. This would be a wonderful project for someone who has an interest in wildflowers. If you would like to develop this presentation, please contact Karla Tomaka at kstomaka@aol.com

Our dearly beloved Burger Wednesday chef extraordinaire, Nolan Young, has hung up his tongs. Nolan has been preparing delicious hamburger, chicken and sometimes even roasted turkey feasts for us for over two years. We are all deeply grateful to him for all the hard work he has put in to make our Burger Wednesdays such a fun event. During the summer months, we plan to continue the tradition of working on a project the first Wed. of the month and enjoying lunch together. We may have to temporarily change the name to potluck Wed.. This Wed., 6/3, Gary Slanga & Sidney Vanloh will give a presentation on controlling pests through controlling weeds in the landscape and we will work on cleaning up the area between the greenhouse and the hardening house. Please bring something to share and we will have our first potluck Wednesday.

Contributors: Jann Dworsky, Mary Ann Everett, Crystal Fisher, Terrie Hahn, Joan Hinshaw, Frances Idoux, Mel Myers, Robin Pohl, Kim Pringle, Mary Lew Quisenberry, Joyce Richardson, Karla Tomaka.

Editor: Joan Hinshaw

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

