



January Events

01/02/08 12:00 New class begins with tour of greenhouse, gardens and landscape area.
(optional) Bring a sack lunch.

1/09/08 8:25 Herb Group "RELAX: Pamper yourself with Herbs and Flowers"

01/09/08 11:00 BCMGA meeting

01/09/08 12:00, Greenhouse 101 (optional)
Bring a sack lunch.

01/16/08 12:00, Greenhouse 102 (optional)
Bring a sack lunch.

Matt Hess to be January Speaker

Matt Hess, an educator and director of World Hunger Relief, Inc. will speak on Verniculture and Small Space Gardening. He will talk about teaching poverty areas populations how to raise their own food. The Extension office classroom remodeling is now complete and we will meet there at 11:00.

President's Corner

12/20/07

What a great Christmas Party! The turnout was excellent, there was plenty of good food, and the auction tables were full of interesting items for us to bid on. The Association awarded our volunteers and we took in \$2400.00 at the silent auction. All in all it was a great and rewarding evening for everyone. I hope you were able to be there and participate.

Greenhouse Disaster Plan:

This morning, the Board of Directors met a week earlier than usual to avoid the post-Christmas doldrums. Annette Ensing, our Greenhouse Production Coordinator, presented the new disaster plan for the greenhouse area. I would like to compliment her and her committee for an outstanding document. It should serve us well in case of any emergency situation.

It categorizes the type of event that would most likely be encountered, the response and action that would be appropriate in each instance, and reviews acceptable preventative and recovery assistance measures. It also contains other information, such as propane and water usage logs, contractor lists, and the function of the Disaster Initial Recovery Team (DIRT), amongst other things. Copies will be available in the greenhouse and in the MG Office at the Extension Center.

Greenhouse Financial Needs:

Annette then began a discussion of the Greenhouse Long Range Plan. The last nine months, the greenhouse management has had increasing problems with recurrent white fly and mealy bug infestations. The periodic use of insecticides has been ineffective in long-term control. A combination of inadequate screening on doors to keep insects out, and a perpetual problem with weed growth under propagation tables is felt to be a significant factor in these re-infestations. Some could be minimized or

possibly prevented if we had an isolation table, where new or infested plants could be sequestered and kept from spreading their blight to other plants in the greenhouse.

In addition, the plastic over the greenhouse has continued to develop leaks to the point that the insulating airspace between the inner and outer plastic shells is no longer present over much of the greenhouse surface. This loss of insulation is translated into higher propane use to warm the greenhouse in the winter and increased fan use in the summer to cool it. Some of the overheating in the summer could be corrected by purchasing another shade cloth to lay over the existing one. As if that wasn't enough, the plastic over the east and west ends of the greenhouse is deteriorating and needs replacing. In reviewing appropriate remedies, the Greenhouse Committee notes remedies that include purchasing plastic sheeting and patching materials for the greenhouse leaks that we can find, purchasing more blowers to keep the inner and outer layers separated, purchasing and installing new doors with appropriate sized screening to exclude pests even though it will probably reduce airflow through the greenhouse, installing floor covering to allow adequate sanitization of the floor surface needed to prevent weed growth, building an isolation table, purchasing a new replacement fan, purchasing an additional shade cloth and purchasing row cover for the hardening house so that the plants could remain out there through the winter, and not have to be brought into the greenhouse.

These are the urgent problems and what has to be done to correct them. There are other long-term problems that I have not addressed. Unfortunately, all of this comes at a time when the Association is financially strapped. Even

though we made money on the silent auction, it will be used up by fixed monthly costs before our next fundraiser occurs in March.

In an effort to obtain the funds needed to maintain the greenhouse, the Board of Directors has established a Benevolent Greenhouse Maintenance Fund. Since we are a non-profit, charitable association, donations to this fund are deductible from your income tax. If each master gardener would donate \$30 to \$50 to this fund, it would go a long way toward solving our immediate problems. Whatever you feel you could donate, please help us at this time. Send your donation or pledge to our treasurer, Dr. Judy Herrmann at 941 Rattlesnake Road, Harker Heights, 76548. If you wish to deduct your donation, ask her to email you a receipt. Even though we started the fund this morning with generous donations from the Board Members, your donations are still needed if we are to maintain our main teaching area.

Use of Board and Class Rooms at the Extension Office:

Dirk discussed the new quarters for Master Gardeners at the Extension Center. There are two larger rooms that could be used by the Master Gardeners, but the rules for using each are very different.

The Board Room cannot be used unless authorized by Dirk himself. If you think you want to use it for a committee meeting, etc., it must go through Dirk.

Use of the Class Room requires prior booking with Pat. Because of the anticipated use by multiple extension associations, Pat will need to know the date and the time the use starts and ends. Arrangements will need to be made several days in advance of its use.

Super Gardening Book Available Jan 9:

Doug Welch has written a superb book covering almost every aspect of gardening. I think he should have titled it "Everything I Ever Wanted To Know About Gardening, But Was Afraid To Ask". The BOD is selling them as a fundraiser. They will be available for purchase at the next regular BCMGA meeting on January 9th for \$25 each (tax included). When you see this book, I am sure you will want to own one. The Association is selling them as a fundraiser.

EarthKind Rose Fanciers: There is now a way to obtain an Earthkind Specialty without leaving home. Don Wilkerson and Dan Lineberger have developed 11 study modules that can lead to a local specialty in EarthKind Roses. The modules are accompanied by an on-line test and an on-line evaluation to document outcomes of participants. With completion of a module, Dirk is notified. A participant may select from any of the modules and obtain up to 3 hours of education credits in a calendar year. Each module is worth 1 hour of credit. If you have taken a module previously, it should not be repeated in subsequent years. A review of the website and guidelines may be seen at <http://earthkind.tamu.edu/MGtraining.html>. Violet and I would like to wish each one of you a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Gy Okeson, President BCMGA

Outstanding Christmas Party Honors Members with Service Awards

One hundred and eight Bell County Master Gardeners celebrated Christmas and honored members with service awards at the Bell County Expo Center December 13. Bell County Extension Agent Dirk Aaron and Bell County Master Gardener President Dr. Gyman Okeson presented service awards to sixty-one master

gardeners. Dr. John Curtis, State Representative Dianne White Delisi, Ilene Miller and Lawrence Cox were honored with Life Membership for can bestow on a member. These master gardeners were in the first Master Gardener class of 1997 and consistently contribute to the master garden program



Lawrence Cox, receives Life Membership from BCMGA president, Gy Okeson. This honor is bestowed from the board of directors to individuals who consistently work for the success of the goals of the organization. Mr. Cox is the Greenhouse Coordinator and a member of the class of 2000. He was also honored for over 1000 volunteer hours.



Crystal Fisher Honored for 1,000+ Service Hours



Ilene Miller, one of the organizers of the Bell County Master Gardener program started in 1997 was honored with Life Membership.



Mary Ann Everett received the Golden Trowel Award. Fellow master gardeners choose her as recipient of this award for her outstanding accomplishments to the organization and to the community. Mary Lou Edmondson, Annette Ensing, Karla Tomaka, Ken Richey and Mary Lew Quesinberry received the Green Thumb Award. Recipients of this award are also chosen by fellow master gardeners.

Johnny Buck of Florence, Mary Ann Everett of Temple and Ursula Nanna of Harker Heights received certificates for more than 800 service hours. Awards were also given to fifty-six other master gardeners for 100-400 hours of service.

Ten-year pins were presented to Dyna Bailey, Walter Daude, Vera Greenfield, Linda Hunter, Patricia Roy-Jolly, Lisa Sebek and Donness Shine. Five-year awards were presented to Rita Bielik, Neil Cochran, Marlene Gillman, Sandra Jones, Deborah Martin, Gladys Newsom, Marty Portman, Mary Lew Quesinberry, Jeanne Richard, Sandy Street, Mickey Sweeden and John Womack.

Walter Daude of Killeen received the Sharie Lanza Ambassador Award presented in appreciation for continued leadership and service to the Texas Master Gardener Association at the state convention in Kerrville last April. The Bell County Master Gardeners honored Mr. Daude with a certificate recognizing his award from the state association.

Ilene Miller chaired the Silent Auction and Christmas Party committee. Over 150 donations were received from members and area businesses. The silent auction is an important fundraiser for the non-profit organization.

2008 MG Begins January 2

The next class of master gardeners begins January 2. These new interns will receive 75 hours of classroom training most of which is provided by Texas A&M professors. In addition they are required to perform 75 hours of volunteer service to become a certified master gardener. In exchange for their training, Master Gardeners work as volunteers to provide horticultural service and information to the community.

2008 Class Schedule

1/02 Overview of Master Gardening and Xeriscape: Dr. Doug Welch, TAMU

1/09 Propagation and Greenhouse Workshop: Specialists , BCMGA

1/16 Basic Botany: Lisa Whittlesey, TAMU

1 23 Soil Testing and Basic Soils: Dr. Tony Provin and Dr. John Pitt, TAMU

1/30 Antique Roses and Perennials: Dr. Bill Welch, TAMU

2/06 Garden Entomology: Dr. Mike Merchant

2/13 Composting: Gy Okeson, BCMGA
Vermiculture Composting: Nancy Hawkins, BCMGA

2/20 Landscaping and Planting Design : Kim Mettenbrink, City of Temple

2/27 Plant Diseases: Dr. Larry Barnes, TAMU

3/05 Vegetable Gardening "Understanding Organics": Neil Cochran, BCMGA

3/12 Oakwilt and Earthkind Roses: Specialists, BCMG A

3/19 Native Plants and Pruning Basics: Reid Lewis, Temple College Horticulturist

3/26 Turf Grass: Dr. James McAfee, TAMU

4/09 Field Trip TBA

4/16 Field Trip to Gardens at Texas A&M

4/23 Water Issues: John Smith, TAMU
Rainwater Collection System Demo: Gy and Violet Okeson, BCMGA

4/30 Ag Day

5/07 Growing and Using Herbs: Janice Canard and Betty Nejtek, BCMGA
Class Evaluation and Closing: Class Directors

5/14 Graduation 11:30-3:00

2008 Master Gardener Class Roster

Wayne Baker
Mary Jo Bates
Gail Branner
Edie Campbell
Gail Christian
Dee Coffeen
Charlie Croninger
Louis Deiterman
Tony DiLillo
Mellar Estes
Michael Johnson
Laura Jung
Roseanne Lawler
Patricia Maskunas
Sandy Mason
Gayla Reynolds
Reed Reynolds
Carol Runyan
Donna Shott
Brenda Smith
Gina Spratt
Sidney Vanloh
Kathy White
Nikki Wilson
Linda Young
Kim Youngblood

Garden Tour Committee

As the new year arrives, the Garden Tour Committee will be searching for members that would enjoy having their gardens on the tour this year. This year's garden tour will be the "Springtacular" Garden Tour. Please give thought to volunteering your garden. The new class will be in session and we usually get a lot of help from them and it is a great way to achieve service hours. If you have questions, want to help or volunteer your garden, please contact Sue Morgan (698-8668; txmorgan2@earthlink.net) or Rae Schmuck at (933-7765; rae616@earthlink.net).

Everyone on the Garden Tour Committee would like to say how much Deanna will be missed, not only as a Master Gardener but as a friend.

We so enjoyed the lunches we shared when working on a garden tour. She loved showing her garden on the garden tour every year.

Deanna brought so much to our committee and we will miss her smile, her laughter, her friendship.

Rae, Mary Lew & Sue

Herb Group meets January 9

The Herb Group will meet in the new facilities on Jan. 9 at 8:25 a.m. The program will be "Relax: Pamper Yourself with **Flowers**" (please bring a lotion or bath salt recipe or some other way to enjoy herbs and flowers.)

Now that the Extension Office remodeling is complete and furnishings are nearly back in place we will have access to inside meeting space and a computer to work on Colonial Garden Powerpoint Presentation. Please review research notes on this project from a few months ago so we can discuss in January.

We also want to move forward on our Herb Book. We previously talked about writing about the herbs in first person (something different). Also want to include many of the recipes we have sampled. Computer wiz Susan has volunteered to compile the information for us. Perhaps we could each submit 2 of our favorite recipes. Frances reminded us that we need to write for permission to use some of the published recipes. Please give the Herb Book some thought.

Finally, Marty Portmann has requested us to do about a 30-minute program for her gardening group "Crafting with Herbs" in March, 2008. I think she told me it will be for about 15 women average age 75. I think they could probably teach us a thing or two about gardening. I will get the full details to you and find out who is interested in participating.

Freebies

No offerings this month, but remember this feature as you thin out your garden (or let the takers do the work). We could also include "wanted".



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