

June Calendar

11th 8:25 Herb Study Group

11:00 Monthly meeting

Growing Lavendar in Bell County

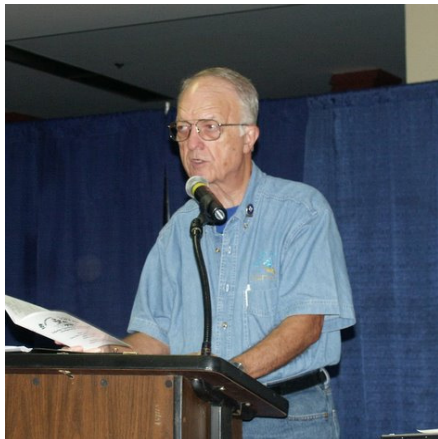
June's monthly meeting will present Leroy Harris of Birdsong Lavendar Farm. He will bring lavender samples and talk about the best lavender plants for Bell County

Herb Study Group

"Plants to compliment a Silver Herb Garden" will be the study subject for the June meeting of the Herb Study Group. Herbs to study are Horehound and Rue (Also, please bring your pruning shears as the herb demonstration gardens need a little attention.)

Bell County MG Spring Luncheon

Master Gardeners enjoyed the May luncheon as new officers were installed and 2008 graduates received their badges and certificates.



President Gyman Okeson Presides Over His Last Bell County Master Gardener Meeting

Gy was president from 2006-2008 and took over the reins during a time of turmoil for the association. One of the directors said Gy was

handed a bucket of snakes and told to deal with it and he did, admirably. Many thanks to Gy who put his heart and soul in his position as president and to the lovely Violet Okeson who was there for Gy and the association as well. The BOD presented a small plaque to Gy in appreciation for his dedication to the association. The plaques said-"President Gyman Okeson, thank you for your leadership, sense of humor and putting the fun back in gardening". Thank you Gy and Violet



David Fitch of Temple takes over as Bell County Master Gardener President.

David, a member of the Class of 2007, was installed in a ceremony conducted by Ilene Miller and Dirk Aaron

Officers Installed May 14th

The following officers were installed at the May Luncheon: First Vice President Frances Idoux, Second Vice President Raymond Marr, Recording Secretary Beverly Wickersham, Corresponding Secretary Anette Ensing, Treasurer Judy Herrmann, Directors Don Wyatt, Johnny Buck, Mel Myers, Rae Schmuck, Ursula Nanna, Jeanette Karr.



Put Your Garden in the News

Candy Mullen asked Master Gardeners to participate in the *Tip of the Week* articles published in the Temple Daily Telegram on Fridays and the Killeen Daily Herald on Saturdays. This program that reaches thousands of central Texans. Send a 300 word article, with a photo if possible, to Candy by e-mail. She will edit it and needs hot weather gardening articles appropriate for the summer months. Send to candylane@taptrain.com.

Congratulations Class of 2008.

Twenty-three master gardeners graduated May 14 at the Bell County Expo Center. Welcome to all of the hardworking former interns and many, many thanks to the Class directors, Mary Ann Everett, Jan Anderson and New Class Chairman, Janice Canard.



Charles Spencer and Gy Okeson

President Gy Okeson presents Life Membership to Mary Lou Edmondson and Charles Spencer. Life members have provided years of devotion, hard work and loyalty to our master gardener association. As a life member they no longer have to account for hours or yearly dues. Dr. John Curtis, Dianne White DeLissi, Ilene Miller and Lawrence Cox were honored with Life Membership at the December 2007 Christmas party.

Junior Master Gardener teachers received certificates and badges at the May graduation ceremony. Pictured are the teachers, JMG directors and classroom mentors.



Tip of the Week Editor: Candy Mullen



Mary Lou Edmondson and Gy Okeson

Delightful (or Not) Dandelions

OK, I am a little embarrassed to admit this, but, well, I like dandelions. I love those little yellow buttons of color in the grass, nodding cheerfully, greeting me wherever I go. The light fuzzy heads that appear after the yellow flowers bring back memories of childhood and blowing the seeds to watch them scatter (probably to the lawns of people who were far more bothered by them than my parents were).

I may as well like them. Our lawn is thick with them. If only they could be recognized as the wonderful wildflower they are instead of classified as one of the most ubiquitous weeds in the country I could proclaim my front and back yards to be wildflower meadows.

There are over one hundred species of dandelion, and the plant has one of the longest flowering seasons of any plant. It has been used to tell time (if it takes three times to blow off all the seed heads, then it is three o'clock, or the number of seeds heads left after three blows is the time.), predict the number of children a woman would have (number of seeds left after blowing on the head), or for wishing.

The name dandelion comes from the French *dents de lion* -- lion's tooth, which refers to the deeply toothed leaves. Similar words in different languages can be found for the plant-- such as the Italian *dente di leone*, or Spanish *diente de león*. Another, rather colorful name for the plant is *pissenlit* (politely translated as "wet the bed") and most likely was derived from the diuretic properties of the plant.

Like many plants dandelions have been used medicinally for everything from warts to liver ailments. As well, there are numerous culinary uses for this herb. The young leaves are used in salads (old leaves are bitter), roots can be dried, roasted and used as a substitute for coffee, the flowers used in making wine, and the buds can be sautéed and are said to taste like mushrooms. The dandelion is rich in vitamins and minerals, in particular, Vitamin A.

Tips on dandelion cultivation (or dandelion eradication if you really hate them) can be found on <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>
References:

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>
http://www.floridata.com/ref/T/tara_off.cfm

The Secrets of Wildflowers by Jack Sanders
Submitted by Jane Capen

Ed Humphreys, Creator of Eagle's View, Offers Fire Ant Advice

Eddie's brother, Robert Rhoades, has discovered an environmentally friendly cure for fire ants that has been announced by Walter Reeves on his Georgia Gardener radio program. Testimonials that it REALLY WORKS are coming in. Directions follow:

Pour two cups of CLUB SODA (carbonated water) directly in the center of a fire ant mound. The carbon dioxide in the water is heavier than air and displaces the oxygen which suffocates the queen and the other ants. The whole colony will be dead within about two days. Here's the good side: club soda leaves no poisonous residue, does not contaminate the ground water, and does not indiscriminately kill other insects. Each mound must be treated individually and a one liter bottle of club soda will kill 2 to 3 mounds.

Submitted by Rowena Fengel

Gail Branner's Flowers Move Cross Country

My Maine to Mississippi to Tennessee to Texas Iris have decided that's it's ok to bloom here. The purple flowers came from my Great Grandparent's yard in Maine to my Grandmother's farm on the NH/MA border. Gram added yellow which then were split and given to my Mother for her house in Massachusetts. Mom added purple which I relocated both colors, with her permission, to my yard in Tupelo, Mississippi. When we got the word that we were moving to Texas, I didn't have any place to put them so I split what I could and took them to my daughter's in

Tennessee and planted them at the absolute worst time of the year - July.

My daughter, who swears she only has brown thumbs, was thrilled when they bloomed last spring at her place. Then over Labor Day, I drove to her place and split everything again and carried them to Temple. Of course some of each color were left behind and others have been added.



The orange is my color, but these flowers are a little piece of my family that has moved with me on my trek across the country. If anyone would like some purple, let me know. It sure looks like I'll be thinning that color this fall.



Oh and no those aren't weeds - yet...They are simply plants I'm waiting to see what they grow into before I pull them. I never planted poppies in that bed and look what appeared after 3 people told me to pull that "weed"...

Guess who got the last laugh!

Submitted by Gail Branner

Joan Hinshaw to Edit "The Blooming Bell"

Joan Hinshaw will take over the editor position beginning with the July issue. She helped with this issue and is looking forward to her new job. As for myself, Retta, I am going to do a no-brainer – Wednesday watering. Thanks to all of you for your help, patience and appreciation for the past year's work as editor of the BB. Joan's email is:

irene_joan@hotmail.com

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