

TheBloomingBell

*February 2007, Newsletter
Bell County Master Gardeners Association*

Monthly Meeting

***Wednesday, February 14th,
2007 – 11:00 a.m.***

***Mystery
Guest Speaker***

Opening
by
Ilene Miller

Bell County
Extension
Office

BCMGA Events Schedule

- Belton Greenhouse Workdays,
Wed. & Thurs., 7 am, Belton
- Burger Wednesday, 1st Wednesday
- February 24 & 25 – Home & Garden Show
- March 17th – Spring Veggie Sale
- April 21st – Spring Garden Tour
- April 28th – Spring Plant Sale
- August 25th – Fall Veggie Sale
- October 20th – Fall Garden Tour
- October 27th – Fall Plant Sale

President's Corner

Fall has fell and Spring has yet to "sprung", but it won't be long now. Next summer I know I will be longing for the cold, but for my money, this January takes the cake for being too cold and dreary. The ice set back our education schedule for the interns and the gloomy weather has almost completely arrested the growth of plants in our greenhouse. I personally feel that we need a few days of nice sunny weather.

Just as I promised, our brief winter nap is about over. Our spring starts off with the Rainwater Harvest Specialists conducting a program for the Salado Garden Club on the thirteenth of February.

As you are probably aware, there are underground aquifers that Texans have relied on for personal and irrigation water use for the past century. There was so much water underground that it was never supposed to be depleted, no matter how much water we used. Guess what? They are slowly being depleted. One outward sign of this is that the once plentiful freshwater springs across Texas are drying up. The estimate is that we have lost 40% of the springs our ancestors relied on. On February 15th at 8 p.m. there will be a special PBS program devoted to

documenting this problem. It should be worth your attention, especially since there was recently an operating permit amendment for the Texas Veterans Land Board, requesting an additional 18.4 acre feet of water annually (bringing the total requested to 55.2 acre feet of water per year. One acre-foot is equivalent to 325,851.4 gallons) to irrigate the grass at the 174 acre veterans cemetery on highway 195. Fortunately, the Clearwater District Board of Directors turned them down because they felt that pumping the additional water that they requested would unduly stress the Trinity Aquifer.

The annual Home and Garden Show will consume the weekend of February 24-25. BCMGA will have two booths there - one will be an "ask the master gardener booth" and the other will be our Rainwater Harvesting Exhibit. Our organization will present seminars on Rainwater Harvesting, Earthkind Roses, and Hardscaping both days. Karla Tomaka will be developing a list of workers for the weekend. We will need your help if we are going to have a good presentation for the attendees.

Lawrence has started the vegetables that we will be selling at the spring vegetable sale on the seventeenth of March. About one month later, we will have our spring plant sale and seminar. Please watch and respond to notices for cuttings from the greenhouse crew. Occasionally I am still stopped by a gardener who compliments our Association on the high quality of the plants sold at the fall sales. There is little doubt in my mind that we have raised the bar significantly in terms of plant quality grown in our greenhouse. We are no longer in the minor leagues of master gardening. Lawrence and Crystal deserve not only our accolades; they deserve our participation in this worthwhile labor of love.

In addition to getting ready for these sales, consider helping Joyce Pack and Joan Hinshaw clean out the vegetable demonstration gardens and readying them for a new crop of summer vegetables. Lest just thinking about all that has

to be done has you feeling overworked, we also need to start concentrating on our own yards, getting them ready for the spring yard tour that will take place April 21st.

President's Corner Contd.

Just as "all work and no play makes jack a dull boy", there is also fun coming just around the corner in the form of the upcoming state and international conventions. The Inn of the Hills in Kerrville will be the site of the TMGA annual convention to be held April 12-14. I encourage all of you to consider taking the time to make the trip because the rewards are really worth it. There will be a plethora of talks, seminars, banquets, tours, workshops, and exhibits awaiting you. This year, we have submitted nominations from BCMGA in the following categories: the Blooming Bell for best newsletter, Mary Ann Everett for best individual Master Gardener, our DVD Power Point Presentation on Composting, and our Rainwater Harvesting Exhibit for best poster. Wish us luck. Online registration and conference information is available at www.hillcountrymastergardeners.org.

If you can't make the state (TMGA) convention, consider attending the International MGA Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, the first week in May. There will be special programs presented by experts not only from across the United States, but also Canada. In addition there are some nice side trips through the Ozarks. Convention information can be obtained by either emailing jcarson@uaed.edu, or visiting the web site www.uaed.edu.

I'll be looking forward to seeing you at the next BCMGA meeting on February 14th, when Ilene Miller will be doing the presentation, so it should be something very special. I'll also look forward to seeing you at the greenhouse for workdays.

Gy Okeson
President BCMGA

Rose Symposium

The McLennan County Master gardeners are having a symposium in April, 2007.

For further information go to;

www.mclennanmastergardeners.org then click on 'Rose Symposium'. The form to pre-register is on the site.

A Rose by Any Other Name...



Some rose cuttings were left in the greenhouse on Jan. 11th and not identified. We have already made cuttings from this rose, **but do not know the name of the rose**. If you are the person who left the cuttings in the greenhouse, please contact Lawrence or Crystal.

Class '07 February Schedule

2-7-07

Garden Entomology
Dr. Jeff Tomberlin – T.A.M.U.

2-14-07

Understanding Chemical Laws & Labels
Dr. Don Renchie – T.A.M.U.

2-21-07

Botany II (Plant Structure, Function, Hormones and Nomenclature)
Deb Martin – B.C.M.G.

2-28-07

Plant Diseases
Dr. Larry Barnes – T.A.M.U.



Poisonous Plants

For those of you interested in a list of plants not recommended for human consumption go to, <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/comlist.html>

*Submitted by
Charles Newsom*

A BOOK REVIEW

Bell County Master Gardener Celebration!

10th Anniversary Collection 1997-2007.

Compiled by; Ilene Miler, Candy Mullen and Frances Idoux.

This book is a must have for any BCMGA member. This thoughtful book will give you such pride in being a member of our organization. BCMGA, only ten years old has accomplished much, twice being awarded first place for outstanding chapters for its size. Its' members have won many awards and honors.. The history of the organization documented by Ilene Miller explains that Bell County became the 46th Texas County to implement a Master Gardener program. She and James Davis, both Bell County Extension agents, conducted the classes for the first volunteers. The book includes the roster and accomplishments of each class, published monthly gardening tips, recipes, mission and goals of Texas Master Gardeners.

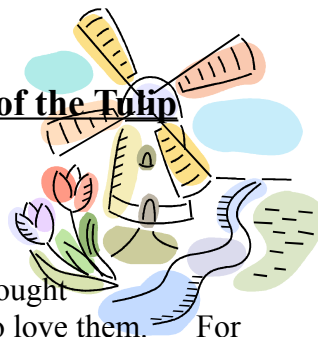
Thank you Ilene Miller, Candy Mullen and Frances Idoux for your vision and hard work documenting the accomplishments of the pioneers of the B.C.M.G.A.



There are 16 copies of the anniversary book that no one has claimed. They will be for sale at the next monthly meeting for \$13 dollars each. When they're gone there gone!

A Very Short History of the Tulip

Tulips--who can resist a bouquet of these beautiful bright flowers appearing during the dreary winter months? Most of us have bought them. We are not the first to love them. For centuries people have loved tulips, resulting in a fascinating history of this flower.



While tulips tend to be associated with Holland, their history goes much further back, to Central Asia. Tulips came to Europe from the Turkish or Ottoman Empire, which included parts of Russia, the Crimea, and steppes north of the Caucasus, places having cold winters and dry summers. Cultivated there as early as 1000 A.D. tulips are mentioned by the poet, Rumi in the thirteenth century. Sultans prized them, and the tulip is still the national flower of Turkey.

European plant exploration began in the 1500's. Plants as well as botanical drawings became immensely popular, some more so than others. The tulip was one of them. Acquiring a tulip, however, was not an easy task.

Botanist Carolus Clusius was renowned for his work with medicinal herbs in Prague and Vienna. At some point during his time there he was given several tulip bulbs by an Ambassador to the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Ogier Ghislen de Busbecg. Later, Clusius moved to Leiden in the Netherlands to become the curator of the University Botanical Gardens there. He took his large tulip collection with him.

There Clusius experimented and developed new color combinations of the flower, although some historians say he did not like to share. On three occasions “tulip rustlers” stole into his gardens and filched many of his tulip bulbs, which soon made their way into the Dutch markets, ultimately contributing to the infamous “Tulipomania” in Holland. Initially, only the well-to-do owned bulbs, but then investors, speculators, and merchants got into the trade, seeing a quick and easy way to riches in Holland’s developing floral trade. The equivalent of thousands of dollars could be spent on a single bulb, or more often, upon a promissory note.

History of the Tulip, Continued

Growers would sell promissory notes guaranteeing delivery of certain bulbs. The notes would resell several times before the bulb was actually ready to be delivered. The unlucky investor was most likely the one who simply ended up with the very expensive bulb. This selling of notes became known as the “wind trade” because it involved little more than air as the notes changed from hand to hand.

Why this craze began and continued as wildly as it did is still a puzzle. At last the Dutch government stepped in to enforce economic controls in order to get the situation back in check after the inevitable tulip market crash, in 1637.

Today tulips remain of great economic importance to the Dutch, who produce billions of tulip bulbs a year. Of these, at least half are

exported, mostly to the US, followed by Japan and Germany.

Of course, many people buy the bulbs for their gardens as well, even in Texas where tulips entail a fair amount of work for what can be considered to be an “annual”. Growing these bulbs involves refrigerating them for several weeks before planting them 6-8 inches deep after the weather gets cold, a time many of us prefer to be inside with hot cocoa, reading spring plant catalogs. However, it is much easier to buy a pot in bloom at Wal-Mart and then spend the time reading a good book, like *Tulipomania* by Mike Dash.

References:

<http://www.americanmeadows.com/Wildflower-Articles/DaffodilTulipHistory.cfm>

<http://www.tesselaar.net.au/flowerandgarden/thetulip.asp>

<http://www.bell.lib.umn.edu/Products/tulips.html>

http://tulip-fever.com/tulip_fever/tulip_timeline.html

http://tulip-fever.com/tulip_fever/tulip_history.html

http://www.floridata.com/ref/t/tulip_spp.cfm

Dash, Mike. *Tulipomania*. Crown Publishing, 2000

Submitted by Jane Capen

Miss the January BCMGA Meeting?

Bell County Master Gardeners started off the New Year with 53 members in attendance at the January monthly meeting. President Gy Okeson updated members on the new fence for the greenhouse, a rainwater harvesting project utilizing the new storage building, our role in the upcoming Home and Garden Show, plans for a JMG program, and our web-master's changes to our web site.



Cathy Slaughter of Gabriel Valley Farms gave a presentation on the history, uses and planting requirements of Lavender. She provided a list of the most widely grown varieties and had Lavender plants for sale after the meeting.

Can't Find Someone in the 2007 Handbook?

The below listed B.C.M.G.A. Members did not make it into the handbook, or have changes. Please pencil them in!

Peggy Carter

507 Ellis Avenue, Belton, TX 76513
254-939-8277

Tony Owen

10811 Buchanan Court, Temple TX 76502
254-780-1002

Dyna Bailey

22689 Owl Creek Road, Gatesville TX 76528
Owlcreekceramics@aol.com
Home: 254-986-8443, Work: 254-215-6307

Maureen Montgomery

P.O. Box 1745, Belton, TX 76513

2007 Interns - First Day of Class

Bell County Master Gardener interns began the first of their 75 hours toward Master Gardener certification January 3, 2007. With 100% of the interns in attendance Dr. Douglas Welsh lectured on landscape water management and Xeriscape. He explained the importance of

water conservation from simple acts like brushing your teeth to the irrigation of golf courses and home landscaping. He recommended the techniques of hydro-zoning your plant placement into zones of natural rainfall, occasional watering and regular watering. He explained that Xeriscaping does not mean desert plants and a lawn of gravel. A Xeriscape landscape uses texture, hydro-zoning, plants selected for Central Texas, limited turf, drip irrigation and mulch. Dr. Welsh, Professor and Extension Horticulturist with the Texas A&M University System, is specialized in consumer horticulture. He is a co-author of the book Xeriscape Gardening: "Water Conservation for the American Landscape". He also serves as coordinator for the Texas Master Gardener program which has a membership of 6,000. He explained the Texas Master Gardener program to the new interns and the economic value the volunteers have to the Texas Cooperative Extension Service. He informed the interns of the Master Gardener specialist programs: Junior Master Gardener, Firewise Landscaping, Entomology, Plant Propagation, Earth Kind, Fire Ant Management, Oak Wilt and Rainfall Harvesting.



Beverly Wickersham, '07 Master Gardener Intern

2007 Intern Propagation Class



BCMGA Propagation Specialist Deb Martin instructs the 2007 interns in their propagation class held January 10th. The class learned different propagation techniques including air-layering.



Interns gather around Propagation Specialist Mary Ann Everett, who assisted Instructor Deb Martin in the Propagation class



Intern Ken Richey works on his propagation project.



Sara Lee Perryman, 2007 Master Gardener intern brought delicious Jalapeno Cheese Squares to the Propagation class.

The requested recipe is listed below.



1 pound Colby Jack cheese (grated)

4 eggs, beaten
3-4 Jalapeno peppers, chopped

Mix ingredients together and bake in an 8x8 pan at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes.

Rainwater Harvesting Specialist Class **Menard, TX June 6 - 8, 2007**



Registration fee: \$200.00 (Includes supper, breakfast, lunch, snacks, drinks, rain barrel, wildlife waterer, a personalized denim shirt, Power Point CD and resource materials distributed during the course).

Transportation and lodging on your own.

Course is limited to first 25 applicants to send check and application.

Make check payable to Menard Demonstration Fund along with the registration form to:

Menard County Extension Office, P.O. Box 485, Menard, Texas 76859, no later than May 20, 2007 (or when class fills).

We must order supplies in advance so no refunds after May 20th.

For more information contact: Billy Kniffen b-kniffen@tamu.edu or phone 325-396-4787.

Note: June 6th supper is optional. But will be a fish fry on the river and a chance to meet others in the class.

More information is located on the TMGA Web Site "Calendar of Events" Specialist Training.

<http://www.texasmastergardeners.org/events/events.html>

Doug Richards
Webmaster TMGA
<http://www.texasmastergardeners.org>
dougrichards@gmail.com

December 2006 **B.C.M.G.A. Board Meeting Minutes**

Minutes from November, 2006 meeting were approved as printed.

Treasurer Jan Anderson reported that as of November 30, 2006 we had a balance of \$14,369.95 in the bank.

Mary Ann Everett gave the Christmas/ Anniversary report stating that the Silent Auction made about \$2,700.00 and that everyone she'd talked to was pleased with the meal and events of the evening.

Jan Anderson gave the New Class Report stating that all but one of the 26 class members attended orientation, and many are already working in the greenhouse towards their volunteer hours. Members are looking forward to the start of class on January 3rd, 2007.

The Fence Project around the rest of the

greenhouse area should start soon. Rutha Leffel is working to get the project forms completed soon.

Dirk Aaron was asked about the need for sign-in sheets for various volunteer work, as well as our monthly meetings and told Gy Okeson that this is required by law.

Gy Okeson stated that the following projects will be submitted for State Awards: Christmas/ Anniversary Book, Herb Ladies Project, the Blooming Bell Newsletter, and the Rainwater Collection Display.

Crystal Fisher, Mary Ann Everett, Lawrence Cox, and D.J. Campbell's entry to the Home & Garden Show preview party on February 23rd will be paid by the Association. Violet and Gy Okeson will also attend, but pay their own way.

We are having problems with the current video equipment that was purchased last year, and Gy will get with the people at Scott & White to determine what to do about the situation.

Next Board Meeting will be held January 24th, 2007.

Marty Portmann, Recording Secretary

You don't need an excuse to go outside. The beauty of nature is its own reward.

Thomas Kinkade



Multnomah Falls

Home & Garden Show Info.

We will set up the "Ask a Master Gardener" Booth and Educational Seminars at booth E37 in building C.

Karla Tomaka is coordinating the list of Certified Master Gardeners who will man the booth at the entrance to the seminar class room at E37.

Doors Open:

February 24 Saturday 10:00am to 5:00pm
February 25 Sunday 12:00 noon to 5:00pm

1. The educational seminars to be held are as follows:

EarthKind Landscaping and Roses

Saturday: 11:00 am to 12:00 noon

Homeowner Rainwater Harvesting

12:30 pm to 1:30pm

EarthKind Landscaping and Roses

2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Homeowner Rainwater Collection

3:00pm to 4:00pm

Homeowner Rainwater Collection

Sunday 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

EarthKind Landscaping and Roses

2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Hardscaping around Your Home

3:00 pm to 4:00 pm

To be taught by Certified Master Gardeners in Bell County who are Certified Specialist in EarthKind and Rainwater Harvesting. Johnny Buck will teach the Sunday session of Hardscaping.

(Please notice these topics are to be repeated in 3 separate sessions in the two days. This will allow people to focus on times they can attend their desired topic and still view all booths on the grounds.)

Ask a Master Gardener



2. The second part of our booth will also be educational where people can stop and "Ask a Master Gardener" for technical advice on landscape management, lawn care, disease problems in the yard, landscape ornamentals and home to diagnose "Oak Wilt". We will have publications for free from Texas Cooperative Extension and also some of our publications that are for sale. We will also promote at the seminars and education booth our Spring and Fall Plant and Vegetable Sales.



We will not be selling any plants to the general public because this puts us in direct competition with your other booth exhibitors from around the area.



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TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF TEXAS A & M
UNIVERSITY
1605 N. MAIN ST, BELTON, TEXAS 76513
254-933-5305**

Newsletter Staff

Reporting & Production:

Jean Kitchens
(254) 771-2942
Jeankitchens1@aol.com

Laverne Adams
(254) 791-3808
L16Adams@sbcglobal.com

Jane Capen
(254) 939-3835
Janec1@clearwire.net

Editor

Jeanne Richard
(254) 931-7228
Jeannerichard@hughes.net