

The Blooming Bell

August 2016



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**Bell County
Master Gardener
Association**



Photo by Gail Christian
of nesting Mississippi
Kites in her yard. More
on page 5.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Work Day 7:30 am* Burger Wednesday 10:30 am	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Work Day 7:30 am* General Meeting 9 am Topic is Fall Plant Sale Social time starts at 8:30 am	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Work Day 7:30 am*	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Work Day 7:30 am* BOD Meeting 9 am	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Upcoming events: Plant Sale is Sept. 10, Plant Swap is Sept. 14. Salado Garden Tour is October 8th.

Photo by Melinda Woods Arriola of her Zinnias.

* in the event of rain, there will be NO Workday.

2

Remember to record volunteer/education hours.

The President's Corner

Well another month, July, is gone. August will give us several educational opportunities. We have the tomato workshop on the 5th with the promise of a new variety of tomato to test out in our fall garden. Dr. Kevin Crosby of A&M has developed a hybrid cultivar named "TAM Hot-Ty". Hopefully it will live up to its name and produce in the hot fall garden. Next was the tour of olive orchards around San Antonio on the 8th and 9th. Deadline for that was August 1st. I hope some of you had the chance to sign up and go. The next State Board of Directors meeting is the 13th. There is usually a speaker there for one hour of education. Then we have the East Texas Fruit and Vegetable Conference at the Overton Texas Research and Extension Center on the 19th. There will be seminars on Aquaponics, Beekeeping, Backyard Grapes and Figs. Plenty of opportunities to get your education hours.

I want to thank every one who has been working so hard on getting the floor into our new greenhouse, Carla Harmon, Wayne Schirner and Walter Ponder with many others. Also a big thanks to the crew that helped with the Ag Agents Conference in Waco. And all you other Master Gardeners who are continuing to work for our organization to make it great.

Thanks to All...Gary

Greenhouse Update:

We have put in the new greenhouse floor. The foundation is roadbase, leveled and hardened. Then we topped with decomposed granite. Our next project will be to shore up the outside base with landscape stone to keep erosion to a minimum.

Our greenhouse will be used to house plants for the Fall plant sale on Saturday, September 10th!!!

Of course....we will continue to make upgrades (hopefully when it is a bit cooler) as we begin using our "Project Greenhouse."

Look for more info soon.

- Carla Harmon

Thank You

A big thank you to the summertime watering crew who have taken care of the Children's Garden this summer: Carol Runyan, Joyce Richardson, Kim Pringle, and Walter Ponder!

- Frances Idoux

Botanical Garden Update

The final master plan for the Bend O' the River Botanical Garden will be unveiled to the public on Aug. 23.

For information on how the July meeting on the Botanical Garden went, go to:

http://www.tdtnews.com/news/article_9ed7e2ac-48a6-11e6-96a4-afe4f168b876.html



The Veggie Guy

- Wayne Schirner

August Update for Veggies

This is a slow time of year for planting in central Texas. Sweet corn can be planted until the middle of August, and a second crop of cucumbers can be planted. You can plant a fall crop of peppers up until mid-August, but I have had good luck with just keeping my spring plants alive through the heat and they produce even more as the weather starts to cool down in September and October.

Now is the time to set out the fall crop of tomatoes, through mid-August. If you didn't get your own transplants started from seed, hopefully there will be some transplants showing up in stores before the middle of August. Some gardeners try to baby their spring tomato plants through the heat to get a second crop, but by now, most of those plants are covered with spider mites and the leaves have fallen due to early blight. Whether you are trying to baby plants through the heat, or starting with new transplants, they will need consistent watering and will probably also benefit from afternoon shade. If you are setting out new tomato transplants, pay attention to the maturity date so that you can get a crop before the first frost, which is usually the last week in November. Speaking of tomatoes, there is a Tomato Workshop being held on 5 August near College Station that was announced this past week. It's free, which is the best price. I am going, so I hope to be able to report back to those who are interested. (See page 18 for more info.)

Since August is so slow for planting, and in preparation for our second primary planting season in September and August, I decided that now was a good time to "harvest" the compost piles I had started last January. I like to sift my compost before I use it, to make sure there is minimal material that still needs to decompose, which would compete with nitrogen in the soil that crops need. I have previously used a method



that was simple, but worked. I had built a frame out of 2x4 lumber and attached a 2' x3' piece of 1/2" hardware cloth to the bottom of the frame. I could put the frame over a wheelbarrow and sift a shovelful of compost at a time. Like I said, it did the job, but it was also a lot of work to do all my compost,

especially in the heat of July and August.

I decided to build a compost sifter that would allow me to sift more compost, with less work. I found plans for a small sifter on You-Tube that was made out of 5-gallon buckets, 24" wide hardware cloth, and PVC pipe for the frame. That wasn't exactly what I wanted, so I modified those plans and used the rims from 26"



bike tires and hardware cloth that was 36" wide. I had to adjust the frame size to accommodate the larger sifter, but I finished it last week and was able to put it to use. I sifted two piles of compost in less than 30 minutes, with minimal effort. Any un-decomposed material fell out of the end of the sifter and I used it to start a new compost pile. Now I have plenty of finished compost to add to my garden before I plant in September.

A couple of other tasks that should be done in August, but not related to vegetable gardening:

For more rose blooms in the fall, prune rose bushes back about 25%. This isn't as severe as the pruning we do in the spring, but it will encourage new blooms for fall color. If you dead-head the seed clusters on crepe myrtles, you will also encourage more fall blooming. You don't need to prune heavily, just remove the seed clusters.



I'm looking forward to September, when we can start vegetable planting in earnest again. That's it for this month.

Nesting Kites

- Gail Christian

Tom and I have been intrigued this summer watching these Mississippi Kites. A couple of months ago, we had a flock of about 6 birds circling the neighborhood and landing in a tree behind our house. Mary Ann identified them for us as Mississippi Kites. They eat mostly large insects with a preference for grasshoppers, cicadas, dragonflies, and other insects that they will, at times, catch in flight and consume in midair. Kites have been known to fly about cattle and horsemen in order to catch insects that are stirred up from the grass. They sometimes will feed on lizards, small snakes, frogs and occasionally a small bird. We did notice that the birds in our feeders would disappear when their shadow crosses over the yard. Tom found this nest in our front yard the beginning of July. It is in a very tall Live Oak right next to our sidewalk and front door. The last few days the baby bird seems to be sitting up more and watching for his parents. After rearing their chicks they fly all the way to Central South America for the winter. They are very graceful fliers. This kite glides, circles and swoops in pursuit of large flying insects. Despite the name, it is most common on the southern Great Plains. We will have to remember to watch for them next spring.



Photos by Gail Christian.



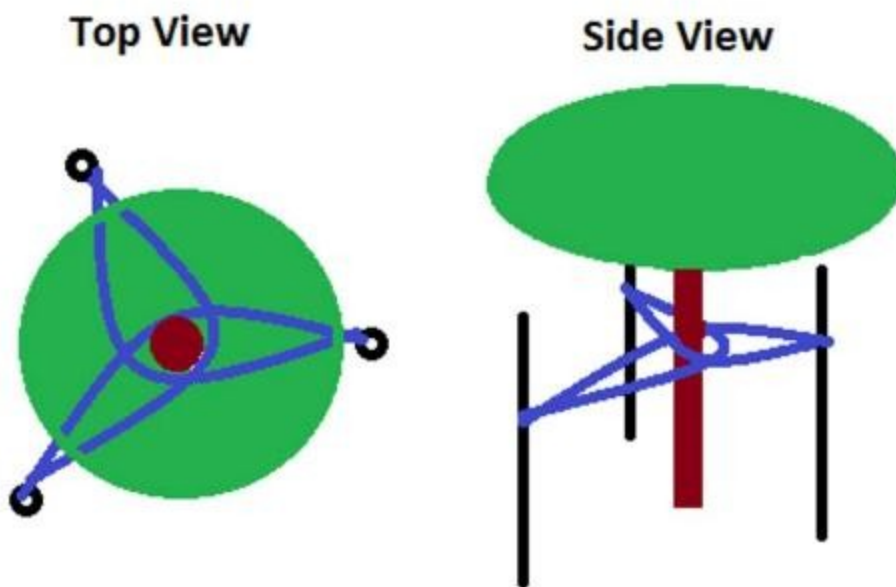
Staking Trees

- Editor's note: With fall coming soon, it will be time to think about planting trees. This is from TreeFolks.

"TreeFolks is a 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to empower Central Texans to build stronger communities through planting and caring for trees. Since 1989, TreeFolks volunteers and staff have planted 1.6 million trees in Central Texas at schools, parks, in medians, right of ways, community gardens, greenbelts and on private lands to restore the Lost Pines in Bastrop County."

In general, we don't recommend staking young trees. Trees need to be able to bend and sway in the wind to build a strong trunk. Immobilizing a young tree will make it grow taller but the trunk will be weaker and more prone to snapping off in high winds. Also, hard or rigid tie materials can damage tree bark. BUT, as usual, there are exceptions and some young trees can use a little support. If the top half of your tree is bending and swaying in the wind, but the base is steady, and the whole tree stands upright during calm weather, no staking is needed. However, if your tree is heaving up at the base, or can't hold itself up even in calm weather, it needs some support. (see photo above!)

Here's how to stake well:



Put three vertical posts into the ground to form a triangle around the tree. For a 5 gallon tree space posts about 2 ft away from the trunk. For a larger tree, space the posts out as wide as the tree's canopy. At a height of about 1/3 up the trunk from the ground, loop a strip of a soft material like cotton cloth around each stake and the trunk. Don't wind the cloth around the tree – that would constrict the tree as it grows. Secure the looped cloth ties so that the tree trunk is upright, but not so tightly that it can't move.

Good staking allows the tree to move, doesn't constrict the trunk, and provides gentle support during heavy winds. After a couple of years, the tree should be strong enough to remove the supports entirely.

**CHECK OUT BCMGA FACEBOOK
PAGE! GO TO**

<https://www.facebook.com/BCMGA>

Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

Fleas

- Wizzie Brown, Travis County AgriLife Extension Entomologist

Fleas are ectoparasites and females require a blood meal to produce eggs. After feeding on a host, females can produce about 30-50 eggs per day that fall off the host animal and into carpeting or other areas of the home or outside in areas where the animal frequents. Larvae feed on organic matter as well as partially digested blood excreted by the adult fleas. After fleas pupate, they hatch out of the cocoon in about 2 weeks, but pupae can remain dormant for up to 5 months waiting for a host.

A proper flea management program has multiple parts. Fleas should be managed on the pets as well as in the environment.

Grooming the animal with a flea comb and/ or regular bathing can help reduce flea numbers. A veterinarian should be consulted about flea control products for pets; there are numerous products on the market that work well when used according to label instructions. When you find fleas on a pet, you need to treat the pet and any areas where the pets frequent, inside and outside the home.



Photo by Roger Meola



Flea debris- hair and fecal material.

Fleas found around or in homes that do not have pets may be coming from wildlife. Attic and crawl spaces should be

inspected for wildlife activity. Wildlife should be removed with traps and after removal, the area treated with an insecticide labeled for fleas and sealed so that wildlife cannot move in again.

New homeowners may also have problems with fleas shortly after moving in if the previous owners had pets with fleas. Fleas can remain dormant for several months and become active again when they sense vibrations from hosts.

Inside, vacuum thoroughly and regularly, getting under furniture and along baseboards to reduce flea eggs, larvae and pupae. Place the used vacuum bag in a sealed plastic bag and throw away in an outdoor garbage can at least once a week so fleas do not hatch out and re-infest the home. Target pesticides to areas where the pets frequent.

Wash pet bedding in hot water. Bathe pets regularly and use a flea comb to remove fleas. Avoid walking pets in known flea infested areas.

Outside, pesticide treatments should target areas where pets frequent. Full sun areas do not need to be treated as fleas will not remain in these areas.

When treating for fleas, you need to treat at least two times. The second treatment should occur 10-14 days after the initial treatment.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

This and That

State AgriLife Agents Conference

- Gary Slanga

The Bell Co. master gardeners were diamond sponsors donating \$2500 to the State AgriLife Agents Conference. With that donation we had a booth in the Waco Convention Center where the Ag. Agents had their meetings from noon to 5 PM on Sunday the 17th and from 8 AM to 4 PM on Monday the 18th. Between meetings the agents visited the vendor booths including our booth. Mary Ann Everett presented the same tree ID program that she did for our master gardeners. We asked agents to name as many as possible. The three who named the most trees were given a book on the trees of Texas. Surprisingly very few agents attempted to name them saying they did not recognize very many of the samples. Several who stopped by were from West Texas where many of these trees do not grow. Helping with the booth were Louann Hight, Jan George and Gail Christian.



Q & A

- Terrie Hahn

We were in Burlington, Vermont lately. There were new trees planted along a walking/bicycle path along the lakefront. These containers were placed at the base of the young trees. Are any of you MG's in the know about these things?



This and That

On the Homefront Family Day

- Gail Koontz

Ann Wagner, Rose Harris and I celebrated Independence Day early at the Temple Railroad and Heritage Museum on Saturday, July 2. The World War II themed event was held in conjunction with the museum's summer exhibit Victory Rails: American Rail-



roads in World War II.

As Master Gardeners, we talked to the families, and especially the chil-

dren, about the Victory Gardens that were planted by families in the United States during the 1940s to help make sure there was enough food for our soldiers fighting around the world. Because canned vegetables were rationed, these gardens also helped people stretch their ration coupons. At their peak there were

more than 20,000,000 Victory Gardens planted across the United States. That was one garden for every seven people! By 1944, Victory Gardens were responsible for producing 40% of all vegetables grown in the U.S. More than one million tons of vegetables were grown in these gardens during the war.

People with no yards planted small Victory Gardens in window boxes and watered them through their windows. Some city dwellers who lived in tall apartment buildings planted rooftop gardens and people in the whole building pitched in and helped. Many schools planted Victory Gardens on their school grounds and used their produce in their school lunches. We talked about how today many of us do container and raised bed gardening.

Victory Gardens were responsible for bringing Swiss chard and kohlrabi onto the American dinner table because they were easy to grow. Our activity with the children was newspaper gardening which gave us an opportunity to talk about recycling which was important during the war. Each one took home a newspaper container in which they had planted vegetable seeds to plant in their home garden.

Excess food grown in Victory Gardens was canned and used during the winter months to help supplement the amount of food available. Growing Victory Gardens gave Americans on the Homefront a feeling that they were doing something helpful to win the war.

Gardening at Mary Ruth Briggs Library

- Gail Koontz

Master Gardeners have seized another opportunity to train up some future Master Gardeners. The 2016 Summer Reading Program in Morgan's Point Resort wanted to feature the topic of gardening this summer. Twenty enthusiastic and energetic



children joined us the first Saturday, July 23, to learn about Snakes in the Garden and to do some newspaper gardening. Many thanks to Dawn Orange, Barbara Dalby and Jo Carlsen for your help. Dawn doubled as photographer. Here are some of her pictures.



This and That

KMCCG

- Randy Brown

We had 740 pounds of produce harvested and delivered during July. Okra plants are coming along and several varieties of squash and peppers are still producing. Demo beds and trees are looking good. Below is a Desert Willow, Squash and the new bio-soil and mulch bins. Thanks Larry.



Personalized Yard Art

- Crystal Fisher

In my humble opinion, I don't think it's advertising if you don't toot your own horn. And Terry has no idea how loudly I've been tooting his.

However, this is an idea worth sharing amongst other BCMGs.

Terry Smith of Terrell Granite Works is a BCMG, too. He was in the 1998 class with Ilene Miller, and he engraved the bricks in the Education Building area. He's very good at the art of sandblasting monuments. I

asked him to do the above saying for me to go in my butterfly garden that is being developed now. Narrowing down the copy is always the most difficult thing to do as there are so many good quotes out there.

However, this is an idea that we can incorporate in our own yards whatever the topic is. Be it our own yards or someone you gift it, to. There are a couple of good rock locations around our greater area.

It might be worth your time to go check them out and get your own stone that specifically fits your yard. Yet, there is something to take into consideration. The surface needs to be smooth since the process of sandblasting applies a heavy duty vinyl to the stone. Any gaps between the vinyl and stone will leave you very disappointed. So, choose carefully. If you have any questions, you might call Terry and clarify them or drop by and see what other things he has sandblasted. It could broaden your perspective of yard art!



Lavender
Information card
submitted
by Vivian
Rush.



Successfully Growing Lavender in Texas

Sun: A Mediterranean plant that prefers all day sun and good air circulation.

Soil: It needs well draining, alkaline soil (ph 6.5-7.5 or even higher). Improve drainage by planting on raised mounds. **Mulch:** Use white pea gravel/decomposed granite

to deflect water that may splash up on the base of the plant. **Water:** It wants to be dry and needs little water once established. During the first year, if there is no rainfall, water regularly (once every week) when the soil is dry down to the root zone. A drip irrigation system is best to control the amount of water applied. Place emitters 4"-6" away from the stem. Overhead sprinkler systems cause the plant to "splay" open which promotes fungal disease. Once established, water during times of drought, especially prior to blooming, to help promote flowering and improve oil yield. **Fertilizer:** A light feeding of a well balanced organic fertilizer the first year. Once established, side dress in early spring or spray with compost tea for organic treatment. **Pruning:** For best flower production cut back the plant by 1/3 in December. Some varieties will flower again in the fall, so after the big bloom in summer cut back the spent blooms. **Spacing:** It is best to give plants plenty of good air circulation between plants to avoid fungal issues. www.TexasLavenderAssociation.org and find us on Facebook.

Fall Plant Sale

- Kathy Love

If any of you know of a community calendar we could send an announcement to, please let me know so I can have our PR committee chair, Johnny Jones make contact and get them our info. Many such calendars, particularly if in print, have deadlines of 30 or more days so even though the sale is not until September, we need to be getting our announcements out now. Thanks for your help with this. My number is: 972/672-0999

Come to the

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FALL PLANT SALE FEATURING TREES SHRUBS & THE SHADE PLANTS THAT LOVE THEM

Ask a Master Gardener Booth; Free Handouts on Fall Planting, Rainwater Harvesting, How to Plant A Tree, Adapting Alkaline Soil for Acid Loving Plants & More

ENJOY VENDORS, CONCESSIONS BY 4-H YOUTH &
A GARDENER'S "STUFF" GARAGE SALE

**SATURDAY September 10, 2016,
8:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.
Bell County Agrilife Bldg.
1605 N. Main St., Belton**

SEE OVER FOR A
LIST OF PLANTS FOR
SALE

Agriculture and Natural Resources · Family and Consumer Sciences · 4-H and Youth Development · Community Development
Extension programs service people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating
A member of The Texas A&M University System and its statewide Agriculture Program



UPCOMING PLANT SWAP

- Jane Van Praag

Please keep in mind that, with our Fall Plant Sale coming up next September 10th, our Fall Plant Swap won't be much further beyond! We'll hold it just before the General Meeting starts on the following Wednesday, the 14th, making it easy for all to attend both events.

Be assured the same great committee members--Carol Morisset, Gena Winston, Jan Upchurch, Rose Harris, and Sylvia Maedgen--and I will be there starting at 8 a.m. to help place the items you'll be bringing, according to whether they are annuals, biennials, grasses, herbs, perennials, roses, seeds, shade-lovers, succulents, Texas Stars, trees/vines/shrubs, and vegetables.

May the fun begin for you even earlier, as you contemplate what you want to share with the rest of us, then set about propagating or transplanting...perhaps in those nursery pots we've all been saving for just such purposes. Using whatever medium is easiest for you, on each one identify the specimen, include your name, and, if its root system is already developed, mark with an R (for ready) and that's all there is to it! (We'll have a supply of Sharpies and masking tape on hand for just in case, along with some spare boxes and sacks for transporting your goodies home.)



Editor's Note: Plant Swaps are one of my favorite times to get together with MG's. This crepe myrtle and summer phlox are two of my favorite plants (blooming right now) that I got at past Plant Swaps. Don't miss out on camaraderie, great plants and great gardening tips. - Terrie



Garden Tour

- Susan Terry

Keep Salado Beautiful invites you to attend the 5th Annual Salado Yard and Garden Tour on October 8 from 10 am to 4 pm with a Salado Sculpture Garden Reception from 4:30 – 6:30 pm. The event will showcase the broad range of manicured and native landscapes and gardens that are the hallmark of the Village.

The tour is self-paced and will feature eleven inspirational private and public properties with unique landscaping features, beautiful gardens, original sculpture and whimsical art, and more. Attendees will be able to discuss features and maintenance care with the homeowners of each property.

With your help, Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists will serve as docents to provide additional information. Ann Eubanks and Susan Terry are the contacts if you would like to assist with this fun project.

An added attraction to the tour includes book signings from two leaders in the architectural landscaping industry; Cheryl Beesley author of, *Landscaping with Edible Plants in Texas Design and Cultivation* and author, Judy Barrett who has penned multiple books including; *Recipes From And For The Garden* and *Yes, You Can Grow Roses*. Both will be at the Keep Salado Beautiful booth at the Christmas in October event on October 8th.

Tour tickets are \$15 per person. They are now available for sale online at www.keepsaladobeautiful.com. They may also be purchased in



advance at the Salado Chamber of Commerce located at 813 N. Main Street. All proceeds from the tour go toward the Salado Sculpture Garden Improvement Project.





Bell County Master Gardener Cookbook Fundraiser



The Bell County Master Gardener Association has decided to publish a cookbook filled to the brim with the best recipes from the best cooks in our organization and we need your favorite recipes, especially those that you have shared with our classes, parties, and meetings!

The best news of all? All of the profits from the sale of the cookbooks, will go into our treasury for our current fundraising projects. These 6.75" x 9.25" hardbound 3-ring binder cookbooks will most definitely become a cherished keepsake on your kitchen shelf! They also make great gifts and should be here in time for Christmas.

We would like to have three or four of your favorite recipes as soon as possible and no later than September 28th. It would help us tremendously if you would type your recipes online at the web site - www.cookbookpublishers.com/utypeit2/. We will select one or more of your recipes to be included in our cookbook; with your name printed by your recipe! These should be your recipes and not those that are trademarked or copied from a copyrighted author. The cookbook categories are: Appetizers/Beverages, Soups/Salads, Vegetables, Main Dishes, Breads/Rolls, Desserts, and Miscellaneous.

We will need your email address so we can email you your username and password if you would like to submit your recipes online yourself; it is very easy. Or, if you do not have internet access, you can carefully print or type your recipe on the opposite side of this flyer; submit only one recipe per form, you can make copies of the form. However, you will need to turn in your hardcopy recipes to the Bell County AgriLife Extension Office no later than September 9th so we may consider them and type in your recipes for inclusion in our cookbook.

We are anticipating a great demand for these cookbooks, so we want to be certain we are ordering enough cookbooks. The cost of the cookbooks will be \$18. It would help us immensely if you would indicate below how many cookbooks you want us to reserve in your name . . . remember, if you don't reserve your copies now, we may not have a cookbook for you! Or you can purchase your cookbook in advance at a discount for \$16. The cookbooks should arrive by December 1st in time for Christmas gift giving. If you have any questions, please contact Sylvia Maedgen, Cookbook Coordinator at – txgrammy4@outlook.com or at (254) 624-6171.

Thank you so much for participating in our fundraising efforts.

Please reserve _____ copy(ies)

Name _____

Phone No. _____



Submitted by: _____ **One Recipe Per Page**
(First and last name - Please type or print submitter's first and last name as it is to appear in cookbook.)

In case we need to contact you for additional information, please provide the following:

Phone number: (_____) _____ Email address: _____

RECIPE CATEGORY (select one)

***OPTIONAL ICONS** (select one)

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appetizers, Beverages | <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetic | <input type="checkbox"/> Quick and Easy | <input type="checkbox"/> Freezes Well | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soups, Salads | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> Gluten-Free | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart Healthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Heirloom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Main Dishes | <input type="checkbox"/> Breads, Rolls | <input type="checkbox"/> International | <input type="checkbox"/> Kids Recipes | <input type="checkbox"/> Low Fat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desserts | <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow Cooker | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot & Spicy | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian |

Please Type or Print Plainly

RECIPE TITLE _____

INGREDIENTS

(Please use these abbreviations: c., tsp., Tbsp., pkg., qt., pt., oz., lb.)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Method

Please return hardcopy recipes to the Bell County AgriLife Extension Office - Attn: Sylvia Maedgen - no later than September 9, 2016

You may submit your recipe online at - www.cookbookpublishers.com/utypeit2/ - but you will need to send an email to Sylvia Maedgen at - txgrammy4@outlook.com - to request your username and password.

If you are submitting your recipes online, do not complete the following information sections:
Sub-title, Contributor Information, and Title to the Ingredients.

Announcements

If you have any questions, please contact Bernie Hurta at bhurta@gmail.com.

Grounds Workdays

- Walter Ponder

Here is the Workday schedule for August:

7:30 a.m. August 3, 2016 Workday
10:30 a.m. August 3, 2016 Burger Wednesday
7:30 a.m. August 10, 2016 Workday
7:30 a.m. August 17, 2016 Workday
7:30 a.m. August 24, 2016 Workday

Save the Date!

- Gail Koontz

Get it on your calendar!

Bell County Master Gardeners Christmas Party

Friday, December 2, 2016

6:00 pm

Bell County Expo Center Special Events Room

Details coming!

August Meeting

- Mary Ann Everett

The August 10th General Meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. with the Social at 8:30 a.m. The meeting will be the Fall Plant Sale with Kathy Love.

New Class Committee Meeting

- Bernie Hurta

There will be a New Class Committee Meeting on August 10th after the Monthly Meeting and the Christmas Party Committee Meeting.

If anyone from the 2016 New Class would like to join the New Class Committee, please make plans to attend this meeting.



**YOU'RE INVITED TO A
SUMMER HERB GROUP GATHERING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2016
10:00 A.M. AT CAROL RUNYAN'S HOME**

Come with a Cold Appetizer, Salad, or Soup Using Herbs Along with the Recipe and Share Your Favorite Tip About Growing, Cooking or Using Herbs. Or ask a Question.

RSVP CAROL AT 254-939-0186

FYI

Education: Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP)

Register now for the Fall 2016 Williamson County Chapter NLCP classes! The Native Plant Society of Texas created the Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP) to encourage a migration of Texans back to nature that will reap priceless benefits for our families, environment, and economy.

NLCP is a series of day-long classes that teaches best practices for native plant landscaping – including wildlife habitat gardening. Each class consists of an indoor training session and a 2-hour outdoor plant walk.

For information on the statewide program and to register for classes, go to: <http://npsot.org/wp/wilco/2016/07/21/education-native-landscape-certification-program-nlcp/>

Level 1, Introduction to Native Landscapes – Saturday, September 17, 2016

Level 2, Design and Development with Native Plants – Saturday, October 1, 2016

Level 3, Installing and Maintaining Native Landscapes – Saturday, October 22, 2016 (NEW class)

Note: must take Level 1 class to register for Level 2 or Level 3 classes. All classes are 8 am to 4 pm; Georgetown Public Library, 402 W 8th St, Georgetown, TX 78626

Tomato Workshop

COLLEGE STATION -- A workshop on tomato improvement will be held 9 a.m.-noon on Aug. 5, according to Dr. Kevin Crosby, Texas A&M AgriLife Research horticulturist in College Station. The free workshop will be held at the Texas A&M Horticultural Teaching, Research and Extension Center, 3199 County Road 269, south of U.S. Hwy. 60 and west of U.S. Hwy 50, near College Station.

It is hosted by the Texas A&M University department of horticultural sciences tomato improvement program. Crosby said anyone interested in growing tomatoes, either privately or commercially, should attend. Topics include tomato breeding and cultivar selection, pest and disease management, fertility to improve quality, health benefits of tomatoes, protected culture (tunnels and greenhouse) and organic practices.

“There will be a hands-on grafting lesson, tomato samples and free tomato plants for the fall garden, including the new ‘TAM Hot-Ty’ hybrid cultivar,” Crosby said. For more information or to register? Contact Crosby at: k-crosby@tamu.edu.

Landscape Design Course I

The George Bush Presidential Library at Texas A & M University will be the site of Landscape Design School I, September 26-27, 2016. The Schools are sponsored by Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. & the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A & M University. Master Gardeners who complete a course and pass the test may apply to their MG Chapter to receive 12 hours of credit toward their requirements for continuing education.

This is the first in the current series which is offered in four separate schools, approximately six months apart, each with 10 hours of instruction, in the Bryan-College Station area. These courses offer an opportunity to learn from professional landscape architects and horticulturists about how successful landscapes are designed.

For more info: http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southernregion/LDSep16/lds1_announcements_sep16.pdf

Questions: EMAIL Michele Wehrheim: texaslandscapedesignschool@gmail.com

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference Coming Up

The 2016 SRMGC will be held in Arlington and Fort Worth, November 1-4, 2016! Check out the information at: <https://2016southernregionmg.com/>

What's Happening in Your Yard

Rattling Away!

- Wayne Schirner

This Diamond Back rattlesnake was in the landscaped portion of my back yard. Fortunately my wife saw it before any of our 3 Yorkies did. It was approximately 4 feet long and had 4 rattles.



Summer Blooms

- Randy Brown

Crepe Myrtle, Bird of Paradise and Esperanza all blooming nicely.



What's Happening in Your Yard

What's Cookin'

- Sylvia Maedgen

As my garden is coming to an end, I am saddened in not getting any more fresh vegetables, but relieved that I do not have to work as much in the hot sun and in a hot kitchen canning a bunch of stuff. Thanks to my master gardener friends, Claudette Hawkins and Charles Newsom, and another friend from my church, for giving me figs this past month. They were absolutely delicious. I was able to can



10 pints of fig jam, 6 pints of apricot/fig jam, and 10 pints of strawberry/fig jam. One of my favorite colors is purple and I was able to find some purple color mason jars, lids and seals that I could not resist buying. The picture shows all my beautiful jams and the marinara sauce I made this month. At least my family and I will be able to enjoy the fruits of my labor for months to come.

Critters in My Yard

- Melinda Woods Arriola

Bumble Bees, Praying Mantis and Garden Spiders abound!



What's Happening in Your Yard

- Terrie Hahn

This is a photo of a young cardinal. For the past month, when I've come out in the morning, he flies to the branch above me and follows me around from branch to branch until I put the sunflower seeds out for them. Speaking of sunflowers...I do really love them. I leave the wild ones (Common Sunflower, *Helianthus annuus*) to grow in most of my beds-I

just can't bring myself to pull them all out. This year, we planted some fancier Sunflowers that actually need to be watered, but they're quite pretty. They all attract bees, particularly the American Bumble Bee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*), whose number are declining, and now as they are going to seed, the birds are in heaven!



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*Please submit articles for the Blooming Bell as Word Documents with **photos separate as JPG files** to Terrie Hahn at:*

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Please do not send PDF documents.

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