

The Blooming Bell

February 2014



**Bell County
Master Gardener
Association**



Photo by Charles
Newsom

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February 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Ground Hog Day	3 Youth Fair at the Expo Center	4	5 ALL MG'S WORKDAY 9 am Hamburger Wednesday 11 am	6	7 Work Day 9 am	8
9	10	11	12 Work Day 9 am General Meeting 11 am - Pruning with Mary Ann	13	14 Work Day 9 am 	15
16	17 Presidents' Day	18	19	20	21	22 Home and Garden Show
23 Home and Garden Show	24	25	26 Board Meeting 9 am	27	28	

Upcoming Dates: March 29th, Spring Plant Sale April 9, Plant/Seed Swap
Please turn-in your service and education hours for last month.

Photo by Frances Idoux

The President's Corner

Last month, at the last minute, Bob Gordon stepped up to present a program on vegetable gardening. As always, Bob gave a lot of information on vegetable gardening and answered many questions. Thank you Bob for preparing us all for spring gardening. Now is the time to begin to plant seeds for transplants, test soil and put a few things in the ground. Follow the planting guide for our area, but keep in mind that we are having a rather unusual winter and the average last freeze date could be later this year. Early transplants may need to be protected longer this spring. During the April monthly meeting we will have a plant swap. If you have an abundance of seedlings, the swap is a good time to share.

Another part of gardening this month is tree care. If you have not sprayed fruit trees, plan to spray soon. Pruning is also a winter task. Mary Ann Everett will present a program on tree pruning at our February meeting. There are correct ways to prune trees to keep them healthy and improve their appearance. Plan to attend the meeting, and refresh your tree pruning skills.

The revised bylaws of our association will be voted on during the February meeting. If you have questions regarding the changes, please contact Jerry Lewis prior to the February meeting.

The Bell county Youth Fair and the Home and Garden Show are this month. Signup sheets will be available at the meeting for service hours. Our March monthly meeting will be preparations and instructions for the spring plant sale to be held on March 29th.

February 5th is Burger Wednesday. This Wednesday is also going to be a general clean up day for our grounds. "Many hands make light work." Plan to attend and assist in getting our grounds cleaned up and ready for spring. We have many items in and around the building that need to be discarded. Other than a very loyal landscape group, many of us do not work on Wednesday mornings. However, this is a different occasion and your help is needed. We will make quick work of our

clean up job and then have lunch. Bring a dish to share and your work gloves.

If you have volunteered to bring refreshments, we have an abundance of cups and napkins in the office for your use. We do need refreshment volunteers; please see Randy Brown to sign up.

We have had quite a swing in temperatures this winter. I hope you have enjoyed the beautiful warm days and used the frigid days to plan for the warmer days ahead.Laura

Taking my granddaughter for a walk through the yard.



Master Gardener First Responder Specialist Course

Boxwood Blight

- Mary Ann Everett

This is the last in a series.

Boxwood blight was first discovered in the UK in the mid 1990's, of unknown origin, it has now spread throughout Europe and was first found in the U.S. in 2011 in Connecticut and North Carolina. Thus far there have been confirmed reports in Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Virginia. It has also been found in New Zealand and Canada. It has not reached into the interior of the U.S., mainly being found on either the east or west coast.

Some states have put regulations in place to try to limit disease spread. There is federal research money used to aid in preventing introduction to new areas and managing the disease once it is established.

The pathogen is *Cylindrocladium pseudonaviculatum*, a fungus which can be spread by various means. The spores can be dispersed by wind, animal, rain splash, equipment, or other means.

ground and cankers on stems that remain attached to the plant.

The boxwood blight infects leaves and branches, causing defoliation, leaf spot (circular with dark brown margin), blight, dieback, cankers/lesions on stems, and death of the plant. The interesting thing about this disease is the roots remain healthy. In general, you will see leaf spots first.

The host is all *Buxus* spp.; only plants in the Buxaceae family are affected.

The hyphae grow within and on leaf tissue and can survive up to 5 years on fallen, dead leaf material. Conditions required for infection are warm (64-77 degrees F), wet conditions. High humidity levels and free water are needed in order for infection to occur. No infections occur below 45 degrees F.

Top photo: A Nursery's worst nightmare; middle: black stem lesions; left: leaf lesions showing Boxwood Blight.



Continued on next page...

Boxwood Blight...continued

Disease is spread by spores in water or rain splash (wind-driven rain, overhead irrigation, water flowing on soil surface, water droplets in the air), contaminated pruning tools, it can travel on animals, shoes, and equipment, and be transported by infected nursery stock or infected plant debris (responsible for long distance dispersal -spores are unlikely to travel long distances by wind). Some fungicides can suppress but not kill the pathogen, so plants appear healthy for some time. When conditions are not conducive to the disease, plants can harbor the fungus, but appear asymptomatic.

How to manage: Buy plants from reputable sources, inspect on arrival. Keep new stock away from other plants for at least a week, and inspect for symptom development. Sanitize pruning tools by soaking 10 sec in 10% bleach or 70-100% ethanol. Clean shoes and other equipment after leaving potentially infested areas. The current recommendation is that any *Cylindrocladium* infected materials be destroyed by burning plant material. Do not compost. Do not reuse pots which contained infected plants. Sanitize clothing,



This is someone's garden in New York.

equipment, and vehicles used to dispose of infected plants.

Best management practices include planting in an area with a little shade (morning sun and afternoon shade is best), plant in well-drained soils, apply fertilizer just outside the drip line, avoid overhead watering, and apply field sanitation practices.

[Pictures from Bing Images of Boxwood Blight](#)

BCMG Book Available

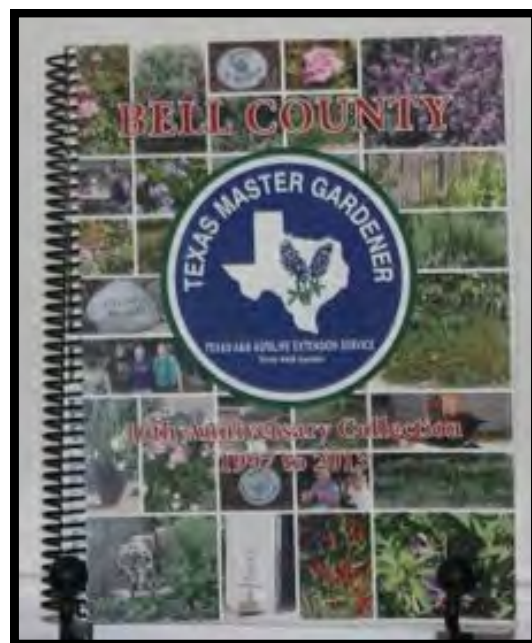
- Frances Idoux

The Bell County Master Gardener 16th Anniversary Book is available now. The cost is \$25.00. Gail Christian is handling the purchase of the books.

I am very pleased with the book -- 330 pages with lots of color, includes 16-year history and a collection of newspaper articles with an index.

I need to thank the members who worked on the book and the writers of the newspaper articles -- and Lyle and Laura for their help and encouragement. The printing company also contributed part of the cost of the color printing, and Terri Keese (one of the owners) did a great job on the design.

[Photo by Frances idoux](#)



Paving the Way

-Gail Christian

Left: Don Wyatt, Ray Machovsky and new student, Walter Ponder started the preliminary work for laying the bricks. Below: the next day, a hard working group of MG's get pavers laid. Later in the week, Charles laid the rest of the pavers and started finishing off the area. But there's a lot more work to be done. And some of these will be removed to be printed on and put back again as people order them. Others working were Charles and Gladys Newsom, Brenda Albro, Gail Garner, Sophia Gomez, Ursula Nanna, Jan George, Gail Christian and Cindy Allen.

Photos by Gail Christian and Charles Newsom



Planting Onions at the Killeen Municipal Garden

Jerry Lewis - On January 14, BCMG's were out planting onions at the Killeen Municipal Garden. Varieties planted were Early White, Yellow Granex, 1015Y Texas Supersweet, and Red Southern Belle. Below is a photo of some of last year's crop, same varieties.

Two photos on right by Randy Brown. Other photos on page by Jerry Lewis.

Randy Brown - Thirteen Master Gardeners planted four rows of onions (over 700 plants) January 14th.



Introducing the Class of 2014

Cindy Bollinger has done some vegetable gardening in her backyard. While she landscaped and maintained two yards, she learned a lot about natives, but would like to learn more. She'd like to learn about lawn care, maintaining existing plants and trees, xeriscaping and environmentally sound watering practices. She'd also like to continue work toward a bird/butterfly friendly yard. And she looks forward to the social aspects of being a Master Gardener.



Jo Carlsen will be starting with a fresh slate with no major gardening experience. She is retired and wants to learn new things that involve being outdoors and in the garden.



Linda Chichester - I am a recently

retired nurse looking forward to free time and learning new



things. I love gardening, but need to learn so much more about gardening in Central Texas. I've traveled some and seen some beautiful gardens, in Hawaii and France especially. My favorite flower is the Gardenia! I have volunteered in the schools, love working with children. Hope to spend lots of time gardening and reading. And doting on my 4 grandchildren!



Mary Jo doVale - I am a semi retired advanced practice nurse. I grew up on a farm in Minnesota. I have always enjoyed nature and all it produces. I am interested in learning more about the environment in central Texas. At this time I do not have any particular interest areas but I am sure as class progresses there will be. This class will be dedicated to my father who was the ultimate gardener.



Janet Eberhardt has experience with vegetables, flowers and composting. She particularly loves cacti. She plans to retire in two years and would like to significantly increase her personal gardening skills and become more self sufficient.

Introducing the Class of 2014

Jean Flores has lots of vegetable gardening experience, but not much with flowers. She would like to learn a lot about all facets of gardening, meet other gardeners and give back to the community.



Justin Hammonds - I have always had an interest growing things, even as a small child. My family moved around quite a lot when I was a child, and so my gardening pursuits usually were limited to small flower gardens with the purpose of sprucing up the new home. I planted Crepe Myrtles fairly often to provide a quick burst of color and shade for several of my childhood yards. I read every gardening book I could get my hands on, and conducted extensive research online on the subject. In college, I took several ecology and botany classes in order to push the boundaries of my knowledge in this area. Now, having completed college and bought a home, I am currently engaged in creating a Microfarm, with the goal of producing as much of my own food as possible. I will be growing fruits, vegetables, chickens, and rabbits. In 10 years, it is my goal to become debt free and buy a farm in order to set up a truly self-sufficient lifestyle, utilizing renewable energy technologies and green methodologies. The grand goal is to buy enough land to accommodate a small community of like-minded individuals. It is an exciting prospect. The more you know, the more you can grow!



Stan Henn has typical yard work experience. He would like to learn more about taking care of his lawn, shrubs and trees. He'd also like to find out about vines that grow on a trellis and more about vermiculture. Stan would like to learn the history of invasive plants.



Patty Kuehl has worked on her home garden, much of it successful, some unsuccessful. She says "Texas is difficult to garden in." She would like to improve her skills in gardening.



Jacob Manns - I'm originally from Virginia. I've been in Texas for 13 years now and landscaping for the past 5 years. Every season I plant thousands of flowers for my customers and employer. I have expectations of learning different planting techniques and learning more about vegetation overall. My volunteer work includes coaching youth football for a non profit organization and helping kids reach their full potential by leading by example.. My most important belief in life is "a seed cannot grow unless it is first planted."

Introducing the Class of 2014

Carl Mauritz has dabbled on and off for many years in gardening, mostly when he has had opportunity, time and money all at the same time. He really likes to grow vegetables and herbs. Carl is fond of flowers and really has little use for grass, especially if it's in his own yard. He'd like to better understand what he's supposed to be doing in the yard and why. Much of his gardening has been hit or miss even though he's had some spectacular crops.



Tina Mazur had a home garden thirty plus years ago on a farm in Nebraska. Her attempts in Tucson, Arizona never worked, but she's excited about growing food in Texas. She'd like to learn to understand the soil composition and growing season for fruits, vegetables and herbs here in Central Texas. She'd like to learn how to grow hay and crops on her acreage in Temple.



David and Katy Mitchell - I always had a HUGE garden when I was a kid (a long time ago). I remember thinking if I

could just grow up and move to the city, I would NEVER have a garden because they were too much work! But what happened? David and I got married and bought our first house which had a producing garden right there! Most years since then, we have tried to have a garden. And now that we don't try to have such a big garden, we really love it. David is usually the planter, weed controller person. I am the picker, cooker, freeze/preserver. David is interested in how to learn what plants/shrubs/trees he can plant in our plot in town that will do well. I want to find ways



to make our garden produce better with less effort. We both want to be able to control the pests, ESPECIALLY the grasshoppers that devastated our gardens, both fall and spring, last year. And this is something that we can do together and have fun doing it.



Daniel Perry has very little gardening experience. He has been gardening for three years at his house and with others. He would like to learn to improve his gardening skills in his area of the state. He'd like to establish a gardening business as well.



Introducing the Class of 2014

Walter Ponder - I am a recently retired, Patient Safety Manager. I

have a lifelong love of plants, and enjoy sharing cuttings and plant care tips. I am interested in becoming more proficient in

propagating plants, and improving soil conditions. My volunteer interests include working with both children and adults to expand their knowledge of growing and cultivating plants and in community beautification projects.



Todd Strait has had a small vegetable garden for a few years. His experience so far is that "some things grow and some things do not." He'd like to become a better, more efficient gardener. Also, he'd like to help teach water wise landscaping and other related topics.



Vivian Rush has planted various flowers and vegetables in her yard over time, mostly on the east coast. She'd like to learn how to garden in Texas.

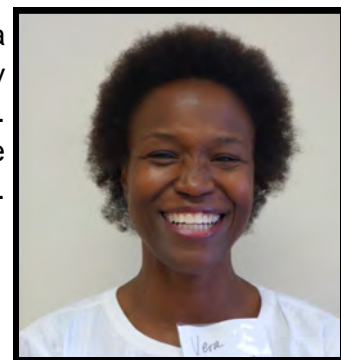


Sandy Sedberry- My husband and I moved to Temple in

August of 2013 and bought a lovely home with acreage. The previous owner had started a "secret garden" of sorts and I want to enhance the area with native plants and flowers. Having spent the last 30 years in Seattle, Washington, I am not familiar with what grows well here. I look forward to acquiring that information!



Vera Townsend has had a vegetable garden almost every year and flower beds since 1996. She'd like to gain more knowledge of Texas gardening.



Annual KMCCG Planning Meeting and Potluck

- Randy Brown

Bob Gordon hosted this year. The guys cooked up 70 Crappie filets, hush puppies and fries. The ladies did sides and desserts. All 23 rows of garden are planned out. Below: Larry Moehnke is getting his Green Thumb award.



Photos by Randy Brown

Awards Given at January Meeting

At the January General Meeting, several awards were given to MG's absent from the Christmas Party. Below, from left: Larry Moehnke receives his Green Thumb Award and his 200-299 Service Hours Award; Gail Christian receives her 200-299 Service Hours Award; Judy Hermann receives her Green Thumb Award; Gail Christian and Sophia Gomez receive the Friends of the Master Gardeners awards for their husbands, Tom Christian and Guillermo Gomez. Sophia also received her Service Hours award.



Q & A

Editor's note: Let's learn from one another. Submit your questions and answers to me at moompie45@hotmail.com or call me at 512-863-9837.

Last month's Question from:

- Terrie and Werner Hahn

We've heard a lot of conflicting information as to whether you should cut back those brown frozen perennials in your yard after the first freeze or the beginning of spring. We've read that you should cut back Plum-bagos, Esperanzas and others after the first freeze. But other sources say to leave them all winter to protect the plant. We leave ours until early spring to cut back for the health of the plant, and we like how the skeletons of some of these plants look. Just wondered what other MG's are doing in their yards and if the plants are truly affected by cutting or not cutting back.



And the Answer is:

- Ursula Nanna

In my gardens I cut back in the early Spring, February

14th and forward from there. The branches and grasses provide wildlife shelter and the grasses and plants still have volumes of seeds for the wildlife to eat. Also, too early pruning, for me, seems to force the plants to leaf-out too early and they get a good burn with a late freeze.

Not to add to the confusion, as this very question came up at the grounds committee Agri-life today, we are pruning now because the weather is conducive to all of us, young and older, to work. It also gives the New Class an opportunity to meet us and we visit as we work and to earn service hours....also, there is A LOT of work to be done. We have other new areas with which to plan as we move along.

This spring, the roses at the Agri-life Bldg will be pruned only by about a foot as there are not 5 years of sticks, bramble and under-growth with which to contend, and the other plants will be pruned as needed every work day.

So, take your pick, but I prefer spring pruning here at home.

This month's Question is from:

- Terrie Hahn

I bought an Amaryllis Bulb back in November. I planted it in a pot and put it in the greenhouse thinking it would be extra warm in there and would leaf out faster. It's still sitting in there with absolutely no change! I'm planning on planting it in the garden in the spring with some others that I have had in the ground for years and hope it does something. My question is: What did I do wrong? Why hasn't it grown at all?



Announcements

Facebook Page for BCMG's

- Terrie Hahn



One of the new interns, Justin Hammonds, has set up a Facebook page for BCMG's and a group page for the intern class. So any of you that are on Facebook or just want to look at the pages, go to:

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

<https://www.facebook.com/Groups/453302588111883/>

This will be a good advertising tool. We'll be able to put signs up when we have booths at different events and ask people to "like" us and maybe word will spread to the younger generation that there is a local source for gardening information.

Herb Forum Coming in March

- Kim Pringle

The 19th Annual Herbal Forum at Round Top is March 21 and 22, 2014. The theme is "Herbal Celebrations with Artemisia, Herb of the Year 2014." Anyone interested in more details or interested in making a reservation may contact Kim Pringle at kimberpringle@earthlink.net or (254)791-1564. Registration will commence in early January, 2014.

We have 24 beds reserved if you would like to spend Friday night and we usually have a pot luck dinner on Friday evening. The cost of the Forum last year was \$85 including lunch and the accommodations are about \$80 including breakfast. There are optional workshops for an additional fee. Of course, there is a big plant sale.

April Plant/Seed Swap

Bernie Hurta and Randy Brown

We will have a plant/seed swap before the April 9th Monthly Meeting.

We just wanted to let you know early so you can be thinking about what you want to contribute to the swap.

Upcoming Work Days

- Brenda Albro

February 5th will be an "**All Master Gardeners**" clean-up day. Sophia will be working in the shed; Don Wyatt will be directing the clean up inside the fence and others will be working on the outside of the fence. We will have burgers for Burger Wednesday on the 5th. Please notify Sophia Gomez as to what you want to bring. We can work hard and eat hardy! Hope to see you all there.

Other planned work days for February are Friday the 7th, Wednesday the 12th and Friday the 14th weather permitting of course. Until it gets warmer, work days will begin at 9:00 unless we send out an email with a different time. The plan is to work hard the first part of February and then spend the last part of February in our own yards.

Thanks for all the hard work so many people have put in on the grounds.

A Little Help, Please

- Terrie Hahn

I've been asked to do a presentation for a Garden Club in Georgetown on "Herbs in the Landscape." I'll be using the Herb Group's Cooking with Herbs power point and changing it up to stress landscaping with them. I'll be using the photos of the culinary herbs and adding a few others like Artemisia, Roses, and Jerusalem Sage. Does anyone have any more suggestions of other herbs that aren't culinary? Does anyone have any photos of any type of herb in your landscape? I'd appreciate any help I can get. Send them to me at moompie45@hotmail.com. Thank you.

What's Happening in Your Yard

Blooming Bulbs

- Myra Crenshaw

My husband gave me a Christmas gift that keeps on giving. In these cold dreary winter days, I have beautiful bulbs blooming in succession. The basket came packed and ready to bloom with 20 bulbs. First came the



mini star of Bethlehem, white and frilly. Then the 6 "Merry Christmas" tulips bloomed a bright red and some had more than one bloom on a stem. Then the "aiolos" hyacinth slowly emerged. Finally the "Alfresco" Amaryllis produced around 11 beautiful blooms pictured here.

Brrrrr!

- Gail Christian

This was taken January 4th.



What's Happening in Your Yard

Mr. Dithers

- Jerry Lewis

Mr. Dithers is still around and apparently doing well. As you can see, he has found a bird feeder.



SNOW!

- Frances Idoux

Snow on January 25th. This is one of my lavender plants in the snow -- one of the plants that is surviving in my garden!



What's Happening in Your Yard

Cold Weather Plant

- Diane Calderwood

Got lucky this year with the cool weather. I usually put in a couple plants of Brussels Sprouts each Fall just to fill in a square in my square foot garden. They normally don't do too well. Not something that is easy or recommended to grow here.



Strange Sights

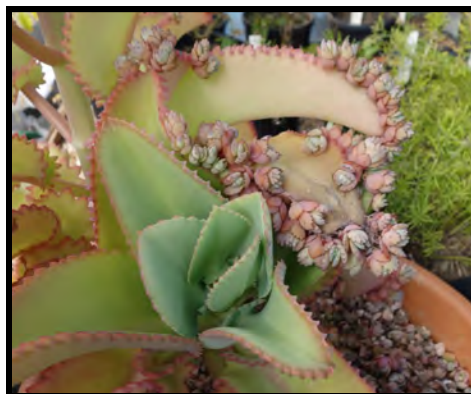
- Terrie Hahn

We put our Gingerbread house out in January when it was warm. Those black things are bees enjoying the sugar. The deer got to it after a day or two.

Right: Donkey's Ear (*Kalanchoe gastonis-bonnieri*) blooming in the greenhouse. The blooms will last a couple of months and then the mother plant will die, but it has babies where each of the leaves meet the

stem. Below the

Mother of Thousands (*Kalanchoe laetiviridis*) will be blooming in about a month. Its leaves are covered with plantlets.



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Please do not send PDF documents.

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