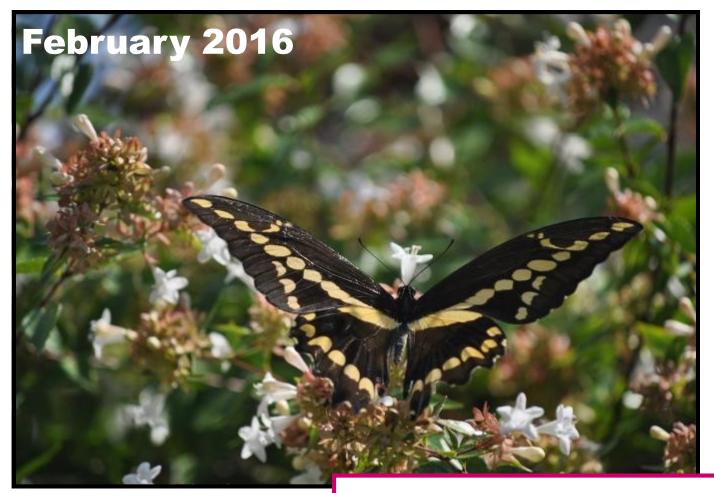
The Blooming Bell



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Bell County Master Gardener Association



Photo by MG Intern, Sylvia Maedgen .

February 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Ground Hog Day	3 Work Day 8 am* Hamburger Wednesday 10:30 am	4	5	6 State BOD
7	8 Chinese New Year	9 Mardi Gras	10 Work Day 8 am* General Meeting 10:30 - Gail Christian and the Volunteer Manage- ment System Social Time at 10 am In Education Building	11	12	13
14	15 Presi- dents Day	16	17 Work Day 8 am* Grounds Committee Meeting	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Work Day 8 am*	25	26	27
		BOD Meeting 9 am		Home and Gar- den Show, Feb. 26,27,28		
28	29					

* in the event of rain or 40 degree temperature or below, there will be No Workday.

Remember to record volunteer/education hours.

The President's Corner

I want to say thanks to all the folks who helped with the three conferences in January. We had a good turnout of volunteers and attendees. We still have several busy months ahead of us. So many things are planned for the spring.

The big event for February is the Home and Garden Show on the 26,27,and 28th.

I know several of you have already signed up to help. It's a great event and you are sure to enjoy it.

At the last board meeting, we approved the 2016 budget. Also approved the purchase of a storage building for the Killeen Municipal Court Garden. The board voted to accept the bid for finishing out the interior of the Ed. Bldg. I am hoping we can work out details so the construction can start soon.

The next general membership meeting will be on February 10th. Due to the great turn out we are exceeding the occupancy numbers for the classroom so our meetings will be held in the education building.

The State board of directors meeting is on Saturday, February 6th at College Station. Anyone wishing to ride down may contact me. We meet at the AgriLife building and leave from there.

See you at the meeting.

- Gary



First class of 2016

Bob Gordon and Jerry Lewis talk about veggies.



Photos by Randy Brown.

Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

Leaf Cutting Ants

- Wizzie Brown, Travis County AgriLife Extension Entomologist

Leaf cutting ants are reddish-brown with three pairs of spines on the thorax and one pair of spines on the back of the head. Workers come in various sizes. and some can be up to $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch long. Mounds can become large and are sometimes clustered together with other mounds giving this ant a nickname of "town ant". Leaf cutter ant mounds (right) have a central opening and often a crater shape at the top.

Cut ants typically forage when temperatures are cooler. and often become active in cooler periods of the year. During the summer, they



adhesives around the base of the plant. Adhesives should be refreshed often when dirt or debris accumulates. Temporary protection can also be provided with contact insecticidal spray or dusts. If mounds are located in an area, the bait product labeled for leaf cutter ants, Amdro Ant Block, can be broadcast with a hand-held spreader around the mound area. If no mounds are seen, then residual sprays and dusts can be used along foraging trails and around openings.

may forage at night or in the morning. They can sometimes cause complete defoliation of plants or small trees overnight. Leaf cutting ants remove leaves and buds from plants in the landscape. The ants do not eat the plant pieces, but instead, take it back to the colony and feed the vegetation to a fungus garden. They tend a species of particular fungus and weed out any other fungus from the garden. The fungus is the food source of the ants and mated females carry a piece of the fungus with them when they leave to start a new colony.

Colonies exist for years and can exceed over two million ants. It is not unusual for a single colony to cover an acre of land. Colonies are usually found in well drained, sandy or loamy soils.

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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Plants can be temporarily protected by using spray

This and That

January General Meeting

- Randy Brown

Gail Koontz presented a program on the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug at the January General meeting.



Those not in attendance at the December

meeting/party received their awards. Daniel Perry received his Green Thumb Award; Kim Pringle received her 15 year pin; Susan Terry accepted her husband, Gene's, award for Friends of the Master Gardeners; Terri Gulig, Melinda Arriola, and Betty Nejtek received their 100-199 Hours Service Award Certificate.









Photos by Randy Brown.





This and That

KMCCG News

- Randy Brown

First planting of 2016 involved putting in onions. And lots of them!



Committees Hard at Work

Kathy Love heads the Plant Sale Committee. Thirty MG's attended including several interns.





State Award Committee meeting.

Photos by Randy Brown.



Herb Group's Winter Tea

- Terrie Hahn

Nineteen MG's and former MG's recently attended the Herb Group's Annual Winter Tea at Suzanne Boyer's beautiful home overlooking Lake Belton. We ate yummy herb filled brunch items and discussed what we learned from our research on Chili Peppers, the 2016 Herb of the Year. Jane Van Praag wrote up an informational sheet



on Shiracha. We tried an unknown perennial pepper (possibly a cherry pepper) that Kim brought in and Mary Lou Edmondson told us about her bell peppers that have been in pots for 4 years. She brings them into the garage during freezes and prunes them regularly. The conversation somehow led to Frances telling us how she uses 1/3 cup of Epsom salts each spring at the drip line of your rose bushes and a spoonful when planting peppers and tomatoes.

Back to Chili peppers, the capsaicin in the peppers is thought to have a medicinal quality helping to reduce pain from arthritis, aching joints, nerve pain, etc. It triggers endorphins in the body which makes everything feel better. In 1912, Wilbur Scoville developed the Scoville Scale, a way of measuring the concentration of capsaicin in different peppers. The scale goes from Bell peppers at zero Scoville Heat Units to Carolina Reaper pepper at 1,600,000 to 2,200,000 SHU's. Too much of the very hot peppers can be fatal. Two good websites about the development of the Scoville scale is: http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/how-hot -is-that-pepper-how-scientists-measure-spiciness-884380/?no-ist and http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/ rating-chili-peppers-on-a-scale-of-1-to-oh-dear-god-im-on-fire/

Daisy Klassy's mother, Marta, (pictured above) shows us her mortar and pestle. She and her mother used to use this to make salsas and sauces. Now, they use the food processor, but her father still believes the mortar and pestle gives a better tasting sauce. The seeds are normally left in when using this.



Attending the Tea were (front) Barbara Salys, Vivian Rush, former MG, Nancy Blansett, Daisy Klassy, Marta Klassy; (back) Mary Lou Edmondson, Pam Dragoo, Barbara Beebe, Joyce Richardson, Suzanne Boyer, Carol Runyan, Kim Pringle, Brenda Smith, Jane Van Praag, Terri Gulig, Frances Idoux and not pictured, Terrie Hahn and former MG, Rowena Fengel.

Photos by Terrie Hahn.

Welcome 2016 Interns!

Bell County Master Gardeners Association welcomes 29 new interns this year! Here are their photos and bio's. Let's all make them feel welcome!

James "Larry" Cowan

I've lived in Temple the last 33 years. I was born in Fort Worth and grew up in Austin. I retired from Federal Service in January 2013 after 42 years, mostly in Information Technology Services.



I live in Temple. I was born in Forth Worth, grew up in Glen Rose, Texas and lived most of my adult life in Dallas. I graduated from Texas A & M. I taught in the Hearne I.S.D. and Garland I.S.D. My husband, Larry and I share my



three adult children, his two, five precious grandchildren plus one due in May and two <u>bad</u> dogs!

Nestor Centeno

My wife Vicki and I have lived in Temple for the last 30 years. We are originally from New York City, where we were born, raised and married. I retired from Scott & White Health Plan where I had worked as a Senior Sys-



tems Analyst/Programmer. Even though I lived in apartments while in New York, I always kept a lot of plants and successfully kept them alive. The best nursery I found in New York City was on top of a 10 story industrial building...such is life in N.Y. I was introduced to many varieties of plants there. In travelling around the country, we have enjoyed visiting many botanical gardens, arboretums and nature sanctuaries.

Knowing more of plant and tree varieties and their requirements will be of great use to me in being able to identify plants, plan sustainable environments, utilize irrigation systems and provide erosion control. I look forward to understanding soil composition and remediation and getting involved with the Organization.

Shellie Downing

I'm a Bell County native, now residing in Troy with my husband and two children. I have a BA in Journalism/Public Relations. I have been a realtor in Bell County for over 21 years.





lda Fair

I was born in the Carolinas and made my way via the military to Killeen. I moved here from Maryland in 1986. I was in the military for 7 years and transitioned into civilian life becoming a government civil servant for

30 years. I have retired and am interested in gardening and crafts. I hope to gain the knowledge to have some Texas plants in my yard and garden.

Shermaine Daniel

(no photo or bio available)

Photos by Terrie Hahn and Carol Runyan.

2016 Interns

Johnnie J. Fair Jr.



I was born in Georgia and made my way via the military to Killeen. I have been a resident of this town since 1986, coming from Maryland. I was in the military for 20 years and transitioned into civilian life becoming

a professional truck driver for 18 years.

I have retired and am interested in cooking and gardening. I hope to improve my yard and garden skills through these classes.

Marcia "Andrea" Frame

I live in Killeen. I'm originally from St. Mary's Pennsylvania and am retired Army. Mother is great at gardening, but I have a brown thumb. I love the idea of adding beauty and food to my landscape. I am hoping to learn how to start and maintain my own garden and also work with others to make garden



food more accessible for others. I also hope to learn how to battle fire ants.



Marjorie Gillmeister

I am currently living in Temple, but started organic vegetable gardening in Troy, TX at my father-in -law's ranch with my 3 year old son in February of 2014. I had a vendor's booth at the Water Street Farmer's Market on Saturdays. We moved to Temple in November, 2014 to care for my father-in-law who is now 90 years old. We lived in NYC for 20

years, but desired a better quality of life for our son- Someplace where he could learn self sufficiency, love of nature, how to grow his own food and for communities and to gain respect for his surroundings.

In NYC, my career for 10 years was Fashion/Wardrobe/ Stylist/Prop Set Design for commercials, advertisement and magazine publications. Moving to Texas has been a positive life changing experience and Texas has become our home. I would like to continue nurturing, growing and harvesting organic vegetables and fruits for my family and community. I'd like to give people the option of "organic" food. I hope to gain sufficient knowledge and understanding of the environment around me and how to better nurture and care for the ecosystems in which we work. Looking forward to becoming a part of a like minded community of friends and to learn, share and support one another through the MG program.

Jodie Folsom



I live in Temple and have been here since 1979. My husband is Jack Folsom. I graduated from UMHB in 1994. I worked at Texas Instruments at Solectron/ Flextronics in Austin and retired in March, 2015. I am a

licensed realtor with Reed Realty. I have a son, Anthony, daughter, Jessica, five grandchildren and one great grandson. I am excited to learn more about gardening!

2016 Interns

James Halvorson

We own a small family farm in Temple. I was born and raised in Waukesha, Wisconsin. I served in the army for a little over 4 years and was stationed at Fort Hood where I met my wife, Amy.



After the military, I worked as a contractor for another 10 years. I became interested in gardening to provide better food for my family. I would really like to learn about fruit and nut production and soil sciences. I thank everyone in advance.

Rose Harris

My husband and I moved to Temple in 2000 from El Paso, Texas. In 2001, we bought our



home in Belton and have been here since. We were both born and raised in Corpus Christi and gardening has always been a joy. Many friends say I have a green thumb, but they don't see all the failures I have had. I have had vegetable and flower gardens and like so many

others, I struggle with which are good bugs and which are bad as well as what is the best way to fertilize or control weeds while at the same time encouraging butterflies, birds and wildlife. I am very excited to take this class and hone my gardening skills. As a member of the Belton family, I am also interested in working in my community in any way I can.

Claudette Hawkins

I was born in San Antonio and grew up in Houston. I am a former teacher and my husband and I have had the privilege of living several places in our country. I have always loved being outdoors. My mother enjoyed gardening and I think I inherited her love of nature. When I am outdoors, I feel re-



laxed and love looking around at God's creation. I even love the smell of the outdoors. Being able to grow things that are beautiful is so rewarding. I look forward to learning more about gardening (scientifically rather than experimentally!) in Master Gardening.

Judy Hoelscher

I live in the Western Hills area of Temple. I was born in



eastern Bell County, the eldest daughter of a farming family.

I've worked as a special ed. teacher and for the past 27 years as a hospital/hospice chaplain with Baylor Scott and White Health. I have lived in many places including Europe for four years.

Soil, plants and growing have

been part of my life since childhood. We always had a large vegetable garden and Mom planted colorful flowers for our yard. For the past two years, I've nurtured a keyhole garden, but would like more success. I hope to gain knowledge about all aspects of gardening so as to enjoy the hobby and beauty it brings.

Johnny Jones

I live in Temple and am from Gatesville, Texas. I was a railroad engineer for 37 years on the BNSF Railroad. I became interested in gardening looking around at the garden section of HEB. I'd like to learn how to fill in the blank spots in my garden.



2016 Interns



Gina Knievez

(no bio available)

Christina Medrano

I was born and raised in Berlin, Germany, but I have been living in Kempner Texas for almost 22 years now.

I am an administrative assistant and am working with my husband in his company.

A few years ago, I started my first little garden with tomatoes, bell peppers, squash and onions, and I found it very



rewarding to incorporate home grown vegetables into our meals. I am hoping that through this class, I will learn more about home vegetable gardening, soils and composting, and landscaping including ornamentals and drought tolerant plants.



Sylvia Maedgen

I was born in Temple and have lived here all my life, but we moved out to the country 22 years ago. I graduated from Temple High and attended Temple Junior

College. I retired last year from USDA after 36 years and 8 months. My last federal position I held was the Administrative Program Director for USDA, Rural Development. A former neighbor/ friend/coach got me interested in vegetable gardening about 30 years ago and I have been growing vegetables and canning my produce ever since. It is something my husband Tommy and I both enjoy. I want to learn more about flower gardening and soils to help improve our land so I can grow more fruit and ornamental trees and do more landscaping on our property. Also, to give my husband something to do with his tractor.

Carol Morisset

I currently live in Troy, Texas and I am a native Bell County resident. I have also lived in Bartlett and Salado during my childhood. I have spent some time in Central America and lived in Panama for two years.

I am currently retired after 45 years as a registered nurse and a safety compliance officer.

My interest in gardening is lifelong, having a garden and canning all the produce. I hope to gain the knowledge in class to raise a more successful garden, increase knowledge of plant types and be successful in our Central Texas landscape.

Tom Rennels

I live in Bell County and worked for BNSF Railroad for 38 years.

I'd like to learn from the class better gardening techniques and learn about fruit trees and growing plants in the shade. I'd also like to learn about raised bed gardening and how to do a greenhouse. And watering plants and learning about vegetables in pots – soil



mix, etc. are on my list of things to get out of the class.

Donna Warthan

2016 Interns



Connie Rivera

I live in Kempner Texas. I was born and raised in the mid west and have always been interested in gardening even as a child. My Dad taught me most about gardening. I guess I have inherited the green thumb from him. I hope to gain a lot from the class being that I have only been in Texas three years. In my short time here I have discovered gardening is totally different then the mid west...how do

"y'all" keep your plants alive???



Doug Slocumbe

I live near Moffet. I'm originally from Austin. I've been self employed. I've been gardening for 30 years. I love it! I'd like to learn more about hydroponics and aquaponics.



Jan Upchurch

I consider Las Cruces, New Mexico to be my home town. I started my career working with children there, spending more than 7 years teaching children with physical challenges. I've worked as a psychometrist/prescriptive teacher, research assistant on Play Therapy with Dr. Bill Rae. I've been Director of the Child Life Program and spent over 30 years at Scott and White ending my career as Director of Patient and Family Services McLane Children's Hospital in 2013.

My mother was an avid gardener. Wherever we went she had a vegetable garden and beautiful flower garden. We had gardens in the frigid Wyoming and Nebraska plains and in the deserts of the Southwest. I discovered my love of gardens when I moved to Temple. In 2007, my mother came to live with me and became my gardening partner and mentor until her death last spring. Watching the therapy that gardening provided my mother and to me during her final years was truly a gift to me. I am excited to learn ways to be a better steward of our resources; learn better ways for soil preparation; learn about garden design and from other gardeners' experiences.



I live in Bell County on 15 acres between Belton and Salado. I was

born in Houston 60 plus years ago and have lived in Texas all my life. I'm the middle child in a family of five-no one in my immediate family was ever interested in gardening; however, I was born to love it. At the age of 3. I was taken to the doctor because I could not resist eating dirt. Loved the taste of it and most especially the smell. Don't eat it anymore, but to this day, the smell of dirt is deeply satisfying. By the age of 4, not knowing what would happen, but confident that something would, I shoved a lemon seed into a flowerbed as deep as a four year old finger could - it grew into a lemon tree. I've been a gardener ever since.

After working in the legal field for 33 years, I retired from the Attorney General's office in 2002. Gardening has since become my full time hobby. I'm hoping to finish this class with a better understanding of the botany of plants, soil requirements, landscape design, pruning techniques and propagation.

2016

Ann Wagner

I was born and raised in Toledo, Ohio. I went to University of Florida in Gainesville. I have a BS in Food Resource Economics. I



have a Masters of Education in Agriculture from Texas A & M. I have worked as Plant Protection Quarantine Officer for USDA Citrus Canker program in Florida and Citrus Greening program in McAllen, Texas. I served in the Army 5 years to pay college loans. While serving in Iraq, I was Agriculture Specialist working with Iraq farmers. My agriculture interests are subtropical fruits, propagating fruit trees, tropicals, soil science and working with flowers. I want to learn more about growing vegetables and organic gardening.



Jan Watkins I live in Temple, and my original home was Dallas. I began my retirement this month after 40+ years in management posi-

tions involving warehousing, distribution and manufacturing.

My interest in gardening began as a child where my parents had a huge garden. We were encouraged to help with the vegetable garden and sold many of the things we grew. Now that I'm retired and have time to invest in outside interests, I hope to have a vegetable garden and some flower gardens. Hope to learn to be a responsible gardener.

Gena (pronounced Jenna) Winston

I live in Temple and am retired military. I'm a 27 year Veteran. My mother had a two acre garden in Michigan. I'd like to learn everything I can from the MG class.



Joann Zieschang



I live in Bell County between Bartlett and Holland on a farm that was part of the 1000 plus acres that my great grandparents purchased in 1875. Growing up in a farm community, I thought everyone had a large vegetable garden and a large flower garden that covered the front yard. After marriage, I moved to Taylor and started growing flowers. I learned when you lived in town, you had a lawn in

your front yard and flowers went in the back yard. I've worked with my husband in the nursery and landscaping section of our store. We also operated a commercial greenhouse. In 1975, we moved to the Lake Travis area for 30 years where I belonged to several garden clubs. I am presently a member of the Bartlett Volunteer Fire Dept.

By taking the MG course, I hope to refresh and update my knowledge of gardening in the Blacklands. I am interested in new varieties of plants that are used in xeriscaping and in learning about soil additives, and new insecticides and fungicides.

Wayne Zieschang

I live in Bell County between Bartlett and Holland. I was raised in Taylor, Texas, but spent many weekends and summers with my grandparents at the farm where I currently reside. I attended A & M University where I received a BS in Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences. I received a commission in the Navy and served 10+ years on active duty and



nearly 10 years in the reserves during which time I earned a BA in Computer Sciences from UT. I worked at Dell for 9 years. I was a member of the Jonestown VFD as a fire fighter/EMT for 20 years and am currently a member of the Bartlett VFD.

I have worked in the family gardens for as long as I can remember. I also worked in my parents Feed & Seed store which included the selling of seeds, plants and trees, a landscaping business and a commercial greenhouse. My primary focus is vegetable gardening and fruit trees. Flowers are nice, but I'd rather eat what I grow. I expect to learn more about soil science, composting, natural pest control, grafting, high density gardening and plant propagation.

Announcements

BCMG Dues are Due!

- Gail Christian

Dues for 2016 were due by the end of January. Please send them in if you haven't already. If you were not in the last two Master Gardener classes, you probably need a background check. We only need one every three years. We discovered that the form the previous 4-H agent used and turned in for us was not correct. They've agreed to use those so that we don't have to redo them all, BUT, I have to put your driver license on the front. If you have paid your dues, I am asking you to send me your driver license number so that I may write It on your form. Please send it to me at: gtchrist1@gmail.com.

Grounds Workdays

- Walter Ponder

Here is the Workday schedule for February:

- 8:00 a.m. February 3, 2016 Grounds Planning
- 10:30 a.m. February 3, 2016 Burger Wednesday
- 8:00 a.m. February 10, 2016 Workday
- 8:00 a.m. February 17, 2016 Workday/Committee Meeting
- 8:00 a.m. February 24, 2016 Workday

There will be no work days if it is raining or the temperature is 40 degrees or below.

CHECK OUT BCMGA FACEBOOK PAGE! GO TO

https://www.facebook.com/BCMGA

February Meeting

- Mary Ann Everett

The Speaker for the February General Meeting will be Gail Christian. She will be explaining the new Volunteer Management System.

Mother Earth News Fair

Check out the MOTHER EARTH NEWS FAIR ON THE WEB - http://www.motherearthnewsfair.com/ texas/schedule/.

Mother Earth News Fair is coming to the Expo Center in Belton, February 19 and 20. This is the first time the fair has been in Texas. They only hold 7 fairs each year.

At the MOTHER EARTH NEWS FAIR, you'll discover a dazzling array of workshops and lectures designed to get you further down the path to independence and self-reliance. Whether you want to learn how to grow and raise your own food, build your own root cellar, or create a green dream home, come out and learn everything you need to know — and then some! More than 150 workshops from the leading authorities on organic gardening, food preservation, homesteading and livestock, green building, and natural health.

Great deals from more than 200 regional and national exhibitors that feature sustainable products and services. Off-Stage Demos – With topics ranging from hands-on seed saving to building mud houses to heritage breed livestock, there is a lot to see! Inspirational keynotes, great food, and kids programming.

Landscape Design School Series XXIV, Course IV

February 22-23, 2016

LOCATION: George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, College Station, Texas

The George Bush Presidential Library at Texas A & M University will be the site of Landscape Design School IV, Feb 22-23, 2016. The Schools are sponsored by Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. & the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A & M University. http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/sglandex2.html

What's Happening in Your Yard

Blooming AGAIN!

- Jann George

The new year has started out with beautiful blooms! This was taken on Jan. 3rd.





Surprise!

- Jann Dworsky

Weeding my carrots yesterday I accidentally pulled up a few and then discovered I had some big enough to EAT!! First crop of the new year, and I have lots more left!

What's Happening in Your Yard

- Sylvia Maedgen

I love butterflies and things around my home. We have a family of geckos, lizards, and frogs. All but the Zebra butterfly were taken in my yard. The Zebra butterly at the bottom right of the page was taken at the Corpus Christi Botanical Garden.











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A publication of the Bell County Master Gardener Association sponsored by Texas AgriLife Extension of Texas A & M University

> 1605 N. Main St. Belton, Texas 76513 (254) 933-5305



Contributing Writers and Photographers:

Gary Slanga Wizzie Brown Randy Brown Sylvia Maedgen Gail Christian Walter Ponder Jann George Jann Dworsky Mary Ann Everett Carol Runyan Terrie Hahn

Editor:

Terrie Hahn

Proofreader:

Werner Hahn

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

> moompie45@hotmail.com Please do not send PDF documents.



