



Photos by Daisy Klassy

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**Bell County  
Master Gardener  
Association**

The 2017 graduation class of Bell County Master Gardeners and their class directors. Graduation Day was May 17th followed by cookies and ice cream. Several family members of the graduates also attended the ceremony. The class had a total of 22 graduates, with 2 members being transferees.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> <b>Gardening in Bell Co.- Irrigation Efficiency Seminar 6:30 pm</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7 Work Day 8 am*</b> <b>Burger Wednesday 10:30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14 Work Day 8 am*</b> <b>Social 8:30 am</b> <b>General Meeting 9 am</b>	<b>15</b> <b>Gardening In Bell Co.- Controlling Fire Ants/ Beneficial Insects Seminar 6:30 pm</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> <b>Father's Day</b> 	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21 Work Day 8 am*</b> <b>am</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28 Work Day 8 am*</b> <b>BOD Meeting 9 am</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	

**Upcoming events:**

- ♦ Fall Gardening, Killeen, July 14
- ♦ Preserving your gifts from the garden, July 22
- ♦ Jr. Master Gardener Trng., Corinth, Aug. 1-4
- ♦ Preserving the vegetables in your garden, Aug. 5
- ♦ Fall Plant Sale, September 30
- ♦ Fall Plant Swap, October 11

\* In the event of rain, there will be No Workday.

**Remember to record volunteer/education hours.**

Photo by Daisy Klassy



# The President's Corner

- Wayne Schirner

Congratulations to the BCMGA New Class of 2017, who all graduated on the 17th of May. The New Class Committee did an outstanding job of putting the ceremony together, and guiding them through the coursework. Someone figured out that even though this is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the BCMGA, this was the 21<sup>st</sup> Graduation. Twenty interns completed this class, and 12 of them documented the 50 hours of volunteer service hours required to become a Certified master Gardener. Of the remaining 8, 2 have over 40 hours documented, and 4 more have over 30 hours documented, so we hope to see at least 6 more Certified Master Gardeners soon. There were two transfers from other Master Gardener Associations who are also now officially members of the BCMGA. Please continue to welcome them as you see them at meetings and volunteer service events.

Have you read our mission statement recently? I must admit that I had to look to find it on our web page, so to keep you from having to search for it, here it is:

**MISSION:** The Bell County Master Gardeners Association assists the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in providing high quality, relevant, research-based horticultural education and service to the residents of Bell County and the state of Texas through outreach, teaching, and demonstration projects.

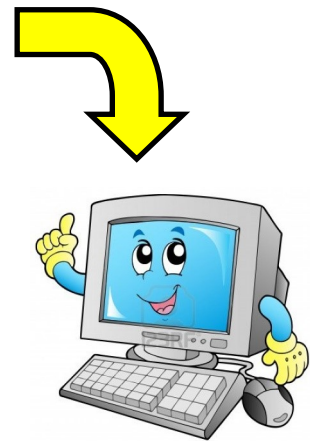
We also have an approved list of values:

**VALUES:** The Bell County Master Gardener Association

- Promotes gardens and gardening
- Provides opportunities for education
- Provides opportunities for networking, the exchange of information, and experience
- Promotes respect for the environment
- Promotes research based understanding of plants and environmental effects to them and by them
- Promotes continual improvement of personal information & knowledge

You might be wondering why I am bringing this up? I want to highlight that we are a volunteer service organization. I was surprised to discover that there are 36 members who, halfway through the year, have not documented any volunteer service hours. The BOD wants to strongly encourage you to document the volunteer service hours that you have done in the VMS

system. I know it's not a perfect system, but, if we use it correctly, it gives us very valuable information. The hours we document are reported by our County Extension Agent to a variety of other organizations and help get us support for the programs we want to provide. Looking at the list of those who haven't reported any hours, I know there are many on that list that have done volunteer service hours, they just aren't documented. If you are having trouble using the VMS system, ask for help. If you are looking for new ways to provide service, read the article later in this issue on two new service projects just approved by the BOD.



Finally, congratulations to the membership of the BCMGA for being recognized as the Outstanding Organization in the large association category in the TMGA. See the article in this issue on the other awards presented at the TMGA State Meeting recognizing the great work done by all of you.



# 1 More Thing...

## New Service Hour Opportunities

- Wayne Schirner

At the May 24<sup>th</sup> Board of Director's meeting, two new service hour opportunities were approved and will be coming on-line in the near future.

A Helping Hands Community Garden Service Project was approved by the Board and will be added into the VMS system. This new opportunity was brought to the Board by Rebecca Burrow, a 2017 graduate who currently volunteers with this community initiative. The Helping Hands webpage provides the following Vision statement: *Helping Hands Ministry's vision is to eliminate all physical and spiritual poverty in East Bell County.*

The proposal brought by Rebecca is to assist with the gardening development of approximately 3.5 acres of land, located along South Pea Ridge Road, which has been donated to Helping Hands by the First Baptist Church in Temple. Helping Hands seeks help with horticultural education and some planning recommendations from BCMGA to install orchards, a greenhouse and intensive vegetable gardening so they are better enabled to provide fresh fruit and vegetables for their food pantry. Educational opportunities will be available to assist Bell County citizens with gardening knowledge and food self-sufficiency.

Rebecca will be heading up this project so look for announcements from her regarding the need for assistance as the project gets underway this summer. It will appear in the VMS system as, "Helping Hands Community Garden" once it is formally endorsed by Lyle Zoeller, our Texas A&M AgriLife sponsor.



Another approved project will be an opportunity to assist with staffing the BCMGA office every Wednesday between the hours of 9 a.m. – noon and 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m. This staffing, to which Lyle Zoeller has already given his verbal support, will be an opportunity to sign up for shifts to assist with citizen calls, emails, home/site visits and walk-in's on horticultural topics.

Kathy Love, who will head this project, will be on hand Wednesdays during the designated hours to provide instruction and research training. Don't be afraid to sign up for this project because you don't think you've learned enough so far. The actual purpose of this office staffing is to help each of us apply the knowledge we have gained in our training and improve that knowledge as we assist our fellow citizens with their horticultural concerns and questions.

Look for information in the coming weeks on where and how to sign-up to serve on this new project which will not be added as a new single category in the VMS system but will remain in the categories of e-mails, telephone calls, home/site visits and a new category which will be "office visits".

This is a wonderful opportunity for those of you who enjoy meeting new folks and researching and sharing information on interesting horticultural questions such as identifying insects, plant damage and possible diseases, tree problems, etc.

Finally, this staffing service will also provide those of you who have difficulty with time entry in the VMS system, either because you do not have access to a computer or are not comfortable with the system, an opportunity for hands on assistance. If you will bring documentation of your hours by the office during the designated times, your time will be entered by Kathy or other members who are staffing the office, so please take advantage of this assistance.



# Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

## Fireflies

- Wizzie Brown, Travis County AgriLife Extension Entomologist

Is it a firefly or a lightning bug? Well, that usually depends upon where you grew up as different areas of the U.S. will call these beetles one or the other or, sometimes, use them terms interchangeably. Fireflies and lightning bugs refer to beetles in the same insect family, Lampyridae.

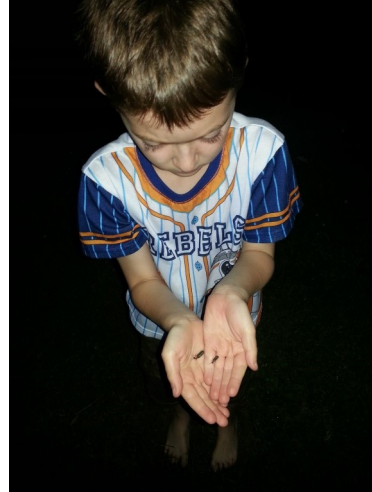
Larvae are nocturnal and feed on small animals, including snails. Larvae prefer moist environments, with some being subterranean or semi-aquatic. Some larvae are able to emit short glows which are used to warn predators that they are distasteful.

Adult beetles are around ½ an inch long, slender, and fairly soft-bodied. They have a shield-like structure, the pronotum, which covers their head from above. The last few abdominal segments may be modified to emit light, but not all Lampyridae are bioluminescent.



Fireflies are bioluminescent which means they have a chemical reaction that occurs within their body causing them to light up. When fireflies combine oxygen with calcium, adenosine triphosphate (ATP) and the chemical luciferin in the presence of luciferase, a bioluminescent enzyme, light is produced. Light from a firefly does not give off heat which is important to ensure survival of the beetle. Fireflies control light flashing by controlling the oxygen that reacts with other chemicals needed to produce light.

Adults use flash patterns to identify those of the same species as well as determine location of the opposite sex. Female fireflies choose their mates based upon flash pattern characters; males with higher flash rates and increased flash intensity are preferred.



Adults feed on nectar, pollen, other fireflies, or many do not feed. One group of females in the genera *Photuris* lure in males in the genus *Photinus* by mimicking the flash pattern of female *Photinus*. When the male comes in to mate, imagine his surprise when he gets eaten!

No one seems to know exactly why firefly numbers seem to be decreasing. It is thought that disappearing habitat along with light pollution are playing a part in the decline. How can you help fireflies? Turn off lights at night to help reduce light pollution (you'll get the added benefit of less insects being drawn to areas where they can possibly get into your house). Create water features in your landscape to provide areas of moisture required for larvae. Target pesticide usage and make wise pesticide choices to reduce the possibility of effecting non-target organisms.

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](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com)

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# Bokashi Composting

- Pamela Dragoo

I first learned about Bokashi Composting five years ago from a young friend. He had read about it and then shared the information with me. I was immediately intrigued as I could get broken down compost in as little as 4 weeks so, the next day I raced out and purchased a 50 lb. bag of bran from a local feed store and that's where it ended. I didn't do anything for two years.

One Saturday as my husband was cleaning out our garage, he came across the Rubbermaid container full of the bran which had been completely taken over by weevils. We decided to mix it into my conventional compost pile and to our great surprise, that pile got hot. That is when I decided to get busy making Bokashi compost. I purchased another bag of bran and proceeded to inoculate it. Once inoculated, the bran must be placed into a black plastic garbage bag with as much of the air squeezed out possible. I then left it alone in a Rubbermaid bin for two weeks for the inoculation process to be completed.

I then started on the bucket that I would use to collect my food scraps in for the fermentation process. I ended up making two buckets one with a nozzle and the other with a hole drilled into the bottom so the liquid could leak out into the bottom bucket. I put gamma lids on both (food grade) buckets. After two weeks I was able to use the inoculated bran. You are supposed to dry the bran but it seemed like every time I planned on laying it out in the sun, we got rain.

I took out approximately 10 cups of the bran and placed it in a Tupperware container in order to start the Bokashi process. I cleaned everything out of my refrigerator that was no longer fit to consume, then proceeded to layer it and the inoculated bran into the bucket and pushing it down with a potato masher to get as much of the air out that I could. I then went to my mother's house and cleaned all of her bad food from her refrigerator and continuing the process of a layer of food followed by a layer of bran until the bucket was completely full. I put another sprinkling of bran over the top layer of food waste and screwed the gamma lid on.

After the two week waiting period, I took the bucket out and dug a trench down the middle of my garden bed. I then emptied the contents of the bucket into the trench and covered with soil. After another two weeks I had to see for myself if it was still intact or what it looked like. I was really surprised to find the

contents of the trench were gone and all that was there was really dark, rich soil.

For all of you that would like more information regarding this process, I will be doing a more in-depth presentation at our monthly meeting. Hope to see you all there!





# Thank You Mentors!

## - Peg Fleet

Details do make a difference. Those who served as either traditional mentors or refreshment mentors for the Bell County Master Gardener Class of 2017 provided that difference that turned a memorable educational experience into something even more remarkable.

Master Gardeners who served as traditional mentors for this year's class were Debbie Brumleve, Joan Bumgarner, Jo Carlsen, Beverly Chenoweth, Vernon Chenoweth, Jan George, Bette Gilmore, Rose Harris, Sandi Lenehan, Sylvia Maedgen, Betty Nejtek, Stacye Parry, Elaine Passman, Mary Lew Quesinberry, Connie Rivera, Carol Runyan, Wayne Schirner, and Jane Van Praag. You provided that behind-the-scenes help that got every class off to a good start and made sure that everything was in its place when it was supposed to be. Please know that you are appreciated.

Master Gardeners who provided fuel for the interns in the form of delectable refreshments were Mechelle Davies, Mary Ann Everett, Peg Fleet, Sophia Gomez, Bernie Hurta, Jerry Lewis, Kathy Love, Stacye Parry, Walter Ponder, Mary Lew Quesinberry, Amazon Muldrow Roberts, Carol Runyan, and Fran Sheppard. Thank you for extending such wonderful hospitality to the interns.

I give a special thank you to the Class of 2017. **Every intern, as well as our two transfers**, signed up to bring refreshments for a specific class. So, thank you very much Sandra Blankenship, Lorraine Brown, Yvonne Brown, Rebecca Burrow, Mike Butts, Breanna Care, Linda Farmer, David Hubbell, Armand Hufault, Kellie Hussmann, Barbara Ishikawa, Emily Kuczek, Connie Kuehl, Glenn Melton, Kathleen Ramey, Christy Reese, Dee Seely, Janice Smith, Bill Walker, Dolly Wilson, Sharon Hardin, and Allan Ramos. You helped make the class a special experience.

The class graduation has come and gone, but I am still grateful to all these people who stepped up to volunteer or to fill in when needed. You are awesome, and you make the work fun.



# Graduation 2017

Photos by Daisy Klassy





# Graduation 2017

Photos by Daisy Klassy





# Graduation 2017

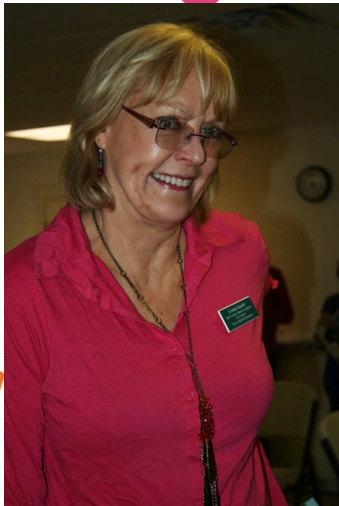
Photos by Daisy Klassy and Sylvia Maedgen





# Graduation Party

Photos by Daisy Klassy





# What's Happening Across the State...

## Austin Pond Society - Tour

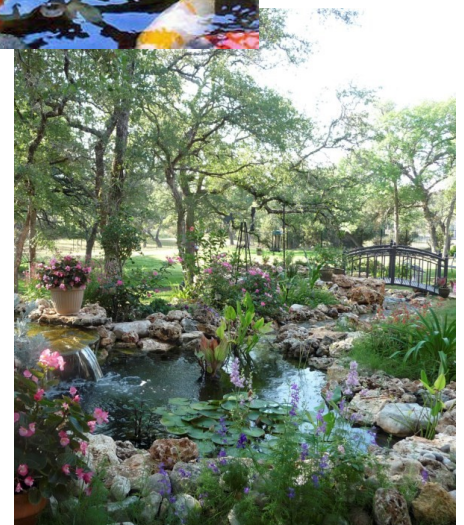
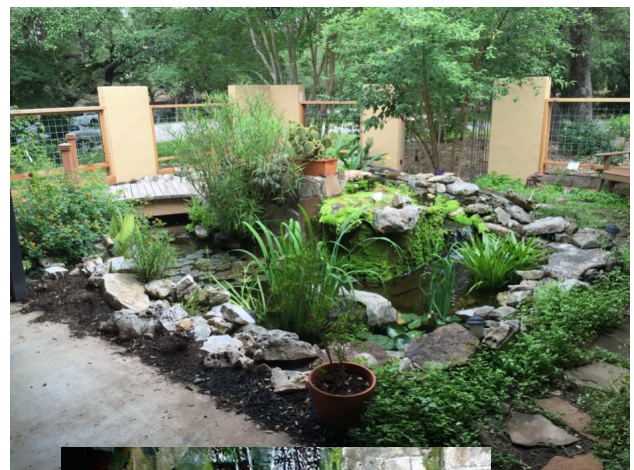
The 2017 Austin Pond & Garden tour is coming this weekend, June 3-4. The owners are spiffing up their gardens to welcome you and share their "Backyard Bliss". Make a weekend dedicated to pond touring. The north ponds are on Saturday June 3 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, the night pond from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm in Cedar Park and the south ponds on Sunday from 9:00 pm to 5:00 pm. A wonderful tour is planned including 20 amazing ponds. Many have never been on the tour before.

The official tour maps are now available. The maps show a logical flow but you can start at any pond and go in any order. Be sure to show your wristbands. For those who have purchased a discount wristband on line, you can pick up your wristband at any pond; just bring your Pay Pal receipt.

Wear sunscreen, drink plenty of water and take your time to explore these gardens. Be inspired to create your own Backyard Bliss.

To wet your water garden appetite, here are some pictures from this year's crop of ponds but don't stop there, the ponds are much more exciting in person. #apstour2017 #apstour #apstour17

Go to their web site to purchase your wristbands to attend the tour - <http://www.austinpondsociety.org/>





# What's Been Happening...

## May General Meeting

- Sylvia Maedgen

At May's General Meeting, our feast during the social time included many items made with the herb of the year—cilantro/coriander. The hostesses previously attended the Herbal Forum in Round Top, TX back in March and used recipes they received at the forum. The hostesses included: Kim Pringle, Pam Dragoo, Jane Van Praag, Vivian Rush, Gina Knievel, Janet Stein, Connie Kuehl, Sylvia Maedgen, Claudette Hawkins, Connie Rivera, Terrie Hahn, Carol Runyan, Elaine Passman and Mary Ann Everett. A few of the ladies that participated as hostesses are pictured below.



Photo by Randy Brown

## Appreciation Luncheon

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photo by Sylvia Maedgen

On May 31st, a group of Master Gardeners honored Scarlot Barreras and Janice Runyon with lunch at Miller's BBQ in Belton. The two ladies were treated to lunch and several gifts from the members. We wanted them to know how much we appreciate all that they do for Master Gardeners. Thank you Scarlot and Janice!



### Recipe

Terrie Hahn has graciously provided the recipe for the **Five-Herb Green Rice Salad** that she brought to the general meeting.

Serves 8-10

3 cups long-grain rice  
6 cups chicken stock or veggie stock  
½ tsp Salt  
1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice  
2-3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard  
1/3 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
1 cup Picholine or other small green pitted olives, halved  
½ cup red onion, diced  
½ cup parsley, chopped  
1/3 cup mint, chopped  
1/3 cup basil, chopped  
1 Tbsp. oregano or marjoram, chopped  
1 Tbsp. sage, finely chopped  
Freshly ground pepper

Cook rice as you usually would, adding a chicken bouillon cube to water or use chicken stock with a pinch of salt. You may also use the Success Brand Rice with a bouillon cube in the water. Set aside to cool.

In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, ½ tsp salt, mustard and then the olive oil to emulsify. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl combine cooled rice, olives, onion and all the herbs. Toss to combine. Add dressing and toss again. Season with salt and ground pepper to taste. Can be served at room temperature or can be chilled for at least two hours and served cold.



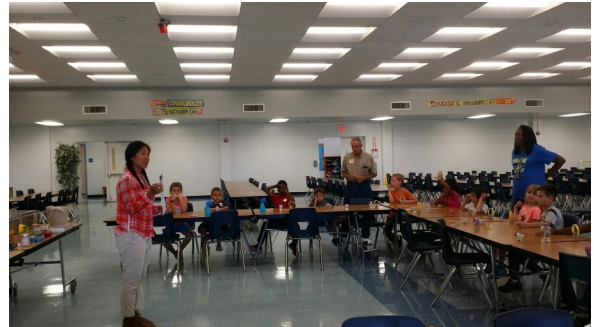
# What's Been Happening...

## “Youth Program - Career Days”

- Gail Koontz

On Friday, May 12, Sandra Blankenship, Lorraine Brown, Marjorie Gillmeister, Kellie Hussmann and I journeyed to Duncan Elementary School with Gary Slanga as our driver to get us through Fort Hood security. Marjorie led us in helping some 13 classes of PK3 through Second grade do some eggshell gardening. A total of 231 children in this all day Career Day event. We were blessed when one of the Kinder classes sang their Happy Mother's Day song for us.

Photos by Gail Koontz & Gary Slanga





# What's Been Happening...

## “Youth Program - Career Days” - continued

- Gail Koontz

The following Friday, May 19th, Lorraine Brown, Joan Bumgarner, Shellie Downing, Marjorie Gillmeister, Emily Kuczek and Connie Kuehl joined me at Lakewood Elementary in Belton for a half day Career Day event. We helped Kinder through Second grade age children do some newspaper gardening. We were voted #1 by one of the classes because our presentation was hands-on and the children got to visit with each other as well as their Master Gardener helper at each small group table. You will see in these pictures that many of the children are dressed in their Career Day outfits. So cute.



Photos by Gail Koontz





# What's Been Happening...

## SPJST Car Show & Czech Heritage Celebration

- Gail Koontz

Many thanks to Breanna Care, Kathleen Ramey, Allan Ramos, and Christy Reese who joined me on Saturday, May 6, at Seaton Star Hall to work the Master Gardener Booth in the Kids Zone. We helped some 30 children (and a few adults) make and decorate newspaper hats. Because we were not so busy, we had several opportunities to visit and get to know each other better. Plus we did some shopping and some eating. Was truly an enjoyable and relaxing day with new friends.

Photos by Gail Koontz and Amber Bartek





# What's Been Happening...

## Local Field Trip

- Bernie Hurta

The BCMGA class local field trip traveled to the homes of Don Latham, Diane Calderwood and Mary Lew Quesinberry on April 26th to view their gardens. Members carpooled to the homes.

Photos by Daisy Klassy





# What's Been Happening...

## Local Field Trip - con't.

Photos by Daisy Klassy





# This and That

## Killeen Municipal Court Community Gardens

- Randy Brown

Gaps in the rows are where onions were harvested.  
29 lbs. worth...onions are big! Half of potatoes and  
onions were each taken to Homeless Shelter and  
Families in Crisis. 103 lbs. of potatoes were dug out!



Photos by Randy Brown





# What's Happening in Your Yard

- Terrie Hahn

Photo by Terrie Hahn

This is a photo of a shade bed we have filled with Heart Leaf Skullcap, Oak Leaf Hydrangea and Cast Iron Plant. All great shade plants that take very little care and not a lot of water. The area of Skullcap used to be filled with Borage, but somehow over the years, the Borage disappeared and the Skullcap took over. Don't know where it came from. Anyone who may have gotten a plant from me at the Plant Swap marked Borage, actually has Heart Leaf Skullcap.

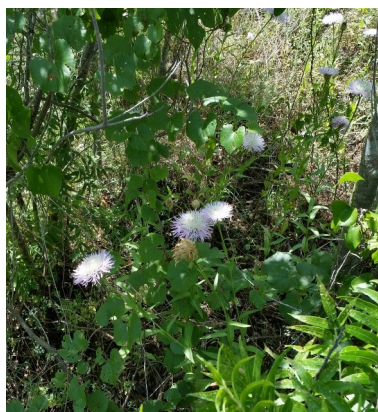


## Can you identify it?

- Elaine Passman

Photo by Elaine Passman

Trying to identify this plant. Any guess?



## Feathered Visitors

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen

Just outside my kitchen windows I have noticed the return of hummingbirds. Also, noticed some courting doves. The female dove has taken refuge in my garden amongst my tomato plants. She doesn't even fly off when I am watering my garden.





# Announcements

## Gardening in Bell County

- Carol Morisset and Jan Upchurch

We are proud to present the following educational opportunities for our neighbors and fellow gardeners:

June 1	Irrigation Efficiency
June 15	Controlling Fire Ants/Beneficial Insects
July 20	Lawns and Turf Grass
August 17	Fall Gardening
September 21	Cooking with Herbs
October 19	Fruit and Citrus Trees
November 16	Composting

Location: Bell County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Offices  
1605 N. Main  
Belton, TX

Time: 6:30-8:00 pm

Cost: Our seminars are free of charge but the BCMGA will accept donations of up to \$5.00 per class  
Seminars are limited to 25 participants so register early.

For Information Contact one of the following: j-upchurch@sbcglobal.net [OR](mailto:carol.j.morisset@gmail.com) carol.j.morisset@gmail.com

## Grounds Workdays

- Johnny Jones and Tom Rennels

Here is the Workday schedule for June:

June 7, 2017 8:00 a.m. Workday  
10:30 a.m. Burger Wednesday

June 14, 2017 8:00 a.m. Workday

June 21, 2017 8:00 a.m. Workday

June 28, 2017 8:00 a.m. Workday

In the event of rain, there will be No Workday.

## June General Meeting

- Mary Ann Everett

The June general meeting will be on June 14th. The presentation will be provided by Pam Dragoo and the topic will be on Bokashi Composting. Social Time is 8:30 a.m., meeting at 9 a.m.

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

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



## Officers

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Second Vice President	Louann Hight
Recording Secretary	Stacye Parry
Corresponding Secretary	Pat Allen
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New Class	Fran Sheppard
Grounds	Johnny Jones Tom Rennels
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KMCCG	Edie Campbell
Outreach	Carol Morisset Jan Upchurch
Awards	Kathy Love
Webmaster	Pat Johnson
Membership	Gail Christian
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Elaine Passman  
Tom Rennels  
Gary Slanga  
Jan Upchurch

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Sylvia Maedgen

*Please submit articles of less than 500 words for the Blooming Bell as Word Documents with **photos** separate as **JPG** files to Sylvia Maedgen at:*

**txbikerchic7@gmail.com**

***Please do not send PDF documents.***

*Photo by Daisy Klassy*



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