

The Blooming Bell

March 2014



**Bell County
Master Gardener
Association**



Photo by Frances
Idoux

Inside this edition:

March 2014 Calendar	2
President's Corner	3
Getting Ready for Spring	4
Take the Quiz!	5
Work Day/General Meeting	6
Youth Fair	7
KMCCG Annual Meeting/Awards	8
Q & A	9
Announcements	10
What Happening in Your Yard	11



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5 Work Day 9 am Soup Wednesday 11 am	6	7 Work Day 9 am	8 Spring Forward
9 Day Light Saving Time Begins	10	11	12 Work Day 9 am General Meeting 11 am-Spring Plant Sale	13	14 Work Day 9 am	15
16	17 	18	19 Work Day	20 Spring Begins	21 Work Day	22
23	24	25	26 Work Day Board Meeting 9 am	27	28 Work Day Weed Ap- preciation Day	29 Plant Sale 7 am - 1 pm
30	31					

Upcoming Dates: April 9, Plant/Seed Swap BOD meeting in April will be Wednesday, April 30
May General Meeting will be held in the New Building

Please turn-in your service and education hours for last month.

Photo by Annette Ensing

The President's Corner

I don't think I was surprised at all when the ground hog predicted 6 more weeks of winter. I am ready for spring and each chilly morning tries my patience. There are a few bulbs showing color, so I know it won't be too long. I am ready to begin those long spring days working in the garden.

Our annual Spring Plant Sale will be March 29th. The monthly meeting will be information and training for the plant sale. Please plan to attend the meeting if you are volunteering for the plant sale. Also this month, the chairman of the nominations committee Louann Hight will begin taking nominations for new officers. If you would like to be an officer or would like to nominate someone please notify Louann.

We just completed a successful Home and Garden Show. Thank you to all who volunteered in our booth at the show. A special thank you to Louann for once again serving as chairman of the Home and Garden Show.

The state association is now requiring a volunteer agreement be signed by each Master Gardener. This is not an unusual agreement. It is already being done in many counties, but will now be a statewide requirement. Agreement forms will be available at the next meeting and in the extension office. Because of the publication of our book and the upcoming state conference we are asking all Master Gardeners to also sign a release form for photographs. If you do not want your photo used at any time, you can check that box. Please sign both forms.

We have a change in the calendar that needs to be noted. Due to the new class field trip on April 23rd, the Board meeting will be the 5th Wednesday, April 30. The fifth Wednesday is also Whistle Stop Park Day; you are welcome to come late to the Board meeting if you plan to work in the park.

The State conference plans are well underway. If you are not part of a committee, please volunteer now. Your help will be needed if not immediately, certainly in the near future. Contact Gary Slanga.

Plan to attend the March monthly meeting and catch up with all of the news and activities of your association.....Laura

Our Sympathies

Master Gardener Dee Coffeen's husband, Tom, passed away recently. If you'd like to send a card to Dee, her address is:

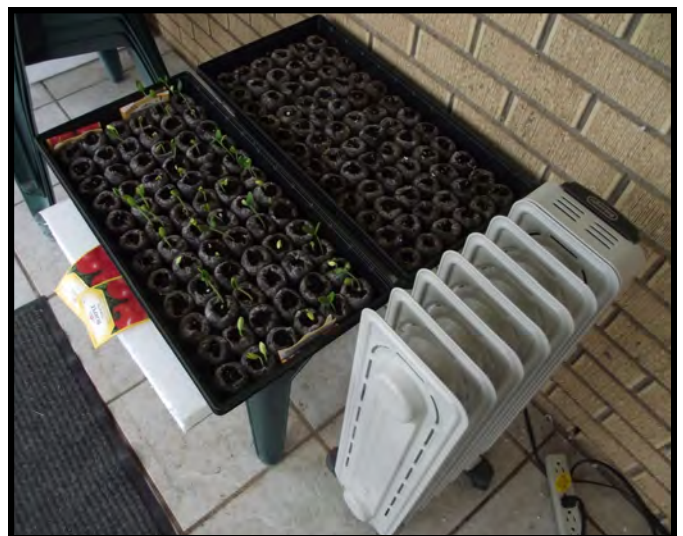
6 Sobrante Road, Belton 76513.

Getting Ready for Spring

- Charles Newsom

I bought two pieces of 4 x 8 x 1 1/2 inch rigid foam from the store in Belton. The cold frame is 16h x 96 inches on the sides and 16h x 24w on the ends. Uses one sheet with a piece left over for hardening plants when you may need to protect from freezing. Duct tape will secure the corners, with 8d nails used to help secure the corners. The top will be rigid foam that I used to make a hot house.

I bought a couple of seed planters from the big box in Belton to start the seeds I picked up from the last meeting. I needed a way to keep the seeds warm to germinate, so I got a piece of rigid foam from the building store in Belton. The sheet of foam cost about \$10. The front is 32h x 48w and the ends are 32h x 24 wide. This leaves three 16 x 32 inch pieces that can be used for a top. I had an oil electric heater that could be used as a heat source if needed that I placed in the box. The two seed trays were set on a small stool and some of the left over foam. The seeds were planted 13 Feb, and are fully sprouted on the 17 of Feb. I will use the enclosure to cover the hardening house that I constructed out of rigid foam.





Are you a **SERIOUS** Gardener?

Take the Quiz!



A. For your favorite plants in your garden you:

- (1) Label them neatly
- (2) Label them with custom designed labels
- (3) Etch the latin name in a piece of marble illuminated by a solar light so you can see it at night

B. When you decide to purchase plants you:

- (1) Go to a local nursery where you are known by name
- (2) Drive hours to a famous nursery with a rented trailer
- (3) Go to the famous nursery that calls you and sends a holiday card

C. If the weather suddenly turns colder in the middle of the night you:

- (1) Check the weather on your phone from bed and use the note feature to make plans for damage control tomorrow
- (2) Jump out of bed, put on a coat, and run outside with a few dirty towels out of the laundry to cover just your favorites
- (3) Jump out of bed, grab the sheet and blanket off the bed and go cover all the plants in your night clothes and bare feet

D. There are so many flowers in your front yard that:

- (1) Cars slow down and people linger to look
- (2) The neighbors take pictures of their kids in your lawn
- (3) A stranger you don't know takes her bridal portrait on your front porch

E. You purchased your last vehicle because:

- (1) It had good enough cargo space for three bags of fertilizer and a flat of plants
- (2) It had good shocks and fancy fabric that resisted soil spills
- (3) It maximized the available area for pots at 98% and was a spectacular color of brown that complimented burlap bare roots and plastic annual pots

F. You are always interested in cheap plants so you:

- (1) Keep an eye out for yard sales and ask the owners if the yard is really for sale
- (2) Knock on strangers' doors if their rose is pretty to ask for a cutting
- (3) Carry a mini clippers and a handful of zip lock bags in your purse to discretely snag seeds

Score

Add up all the numbers

6 - 10

Crazy Fun!

You are a tried and true gardener. Your devotion to the craft is second to none.

11 - 14

Wow!

You have reached the next level of greatness and you are well on your way to fame.

15 - 18

Unbelievable!

Do you have chlorophyll? You must be part plant! You are a famous gardening nut and are loved by all.

Work Day at the Extension Center

- Charles Newsom

1,400 pounds of wood products were taken to the recycling facility at the Temple landfill.



February General Meeting

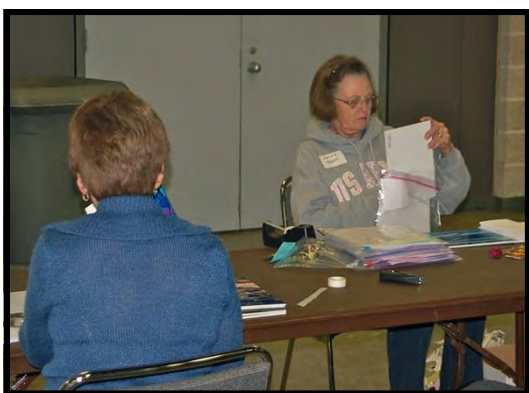
- Randy Brown

Mary Ann Everett did a great job speaking about Pruning Basics at the February meeting. These are photos of the Social Time where there was a feeding frenzy on food and seed packets and Carla was getting Plant Sale work done.



A Night at the Bell County Youth Fair

- Randy Brown



Community Gardens Workers!

- Randy Brown

This was an early February work day at the Killeen Municipal Court Community Gardens. Clockwise from right: Scout Troop 287 working on Community Service Badge dig holes for new donated olive trees; I get my turn at digging; Larry finishes tomato fence move, while Bob Gordon prepares soil for potato planting next week; Gail and Terri Harvesting carrots; Kathy working on hole outline for olive tree.



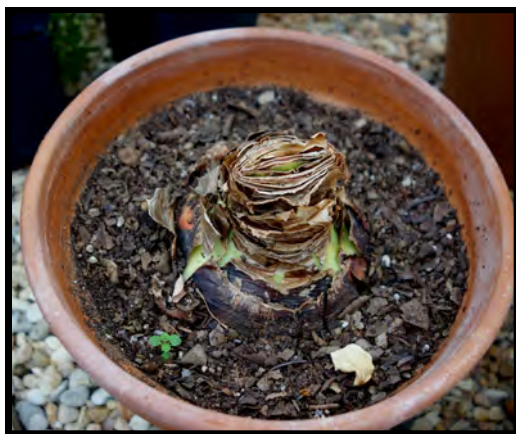
Q & A

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 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?



This month's Question is from:

- Terrie Hahn

What does the "hardy to" temperature on a plant tag really mean? I have a Red Tide Echeveria that says it's hardy to 25 degrees. Now, does that mean it won't totally die at 25 degrees, just lose its outer leaves? Does it mean if it's in the ground, it will be completely safe at 25 degrees? My echeveria is in a pot, but was covered when it got under 25 degrees, and still all of the outer leaves died. It *is* still alive (I finally brought it inside). So, does "hardy" mean it will live, but look horrible?! By the way, the same thing happened to my Ghost plant (*Graptopetalum paraguayense*), which is supposed to be good to zero degrees. It's alive, but doesn't look so good. It's been unprotected in pots for years and never had this happen before. It's been a very cold winter!

Could someone please translate the plant tag for me?

Right is the Echeveria and below is the Ghost Plant.



And the Answer is:

- Beverly Chenoweth

I had bad luck with an amaryllis bulb once. I planted it in the yard and it grew beautifully, returning each year for us to enjoy. Sunny or part sun location has worked well for me.

Thanks Beverly! It's in the ground now and is starting to get some green!



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 who are on Facebook or just want to look at the pages, go to:

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

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.

April Plant/Seed Swap

Bernie Hurta and Randy Brown

We will have a Plant Swap before the April Monthly Meeting (when the Plant Sale will be discussed). Please pot any extra plants that are coming up in your yard. Also, please bring any seeds you have harvested to share. **Please remember to label the plants with names and growing information.** Plant swaps are a lot of fun and you go home with a lot of new plants.

Upcoming Work Days

- Brenda Albro

The first Wednesday of the month will be "Soup Wednesday."

Until it gets warmer, work days will begin at 9:00 Wednesday and Friday unless we send out an email with a different time. Thanks for all the hard work so many people have put in on the grounds.

First Blooms

- Terrie Hahn



Above: our Winter Honey-suckle blooms every February; below: Plum trees in bloom; left: our first wildflowers of the season are Toadflax or Spurred Snapdragon (*Linaria maroccana*).



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. She will have a sign up sheet at the March General Meeting.

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.



Photo by Frances Idoux

What's Happening in Your Yard

Spring Has Sprung!

- Frances Idoux

These are my daffodils in February.



- Annette Ensing

Here are photos of my Star Magnolia and my Flowering Quince.



What's Happening in Your Yard

Pruning Expert

- Robin Pohl

Mama's little helper!



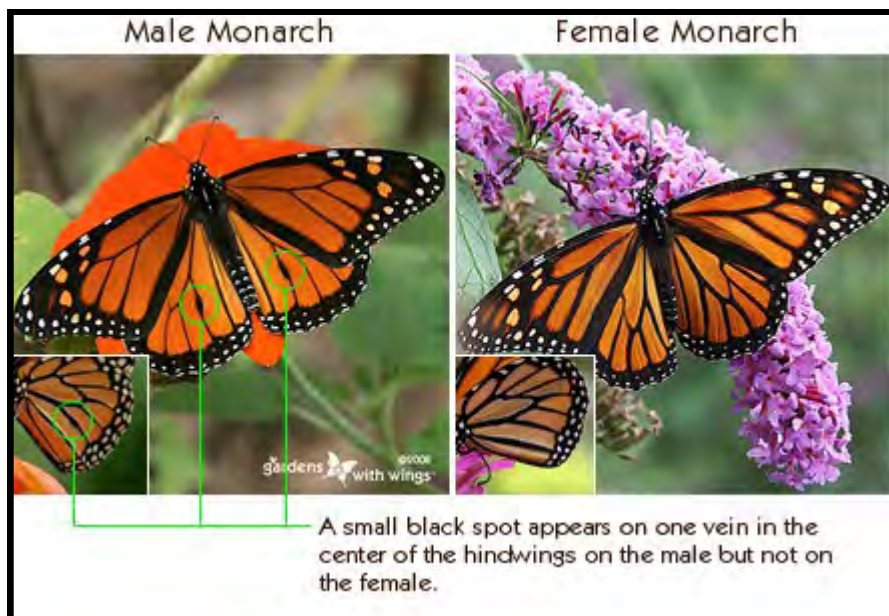
Time for Monarchs

- Crystal Fisher



I've got a Monarch chrysalis. I just saw it this morning (mid-February). Of all places - on a pot of Butterfly Weed. While it might live only 2 to 6 weeks after it pupates, I hope that the Butterfly Weed starts putting out leaves soon for it to eat. Apparently, February is time for them to start migrating up from Mexico. If I'm around when it starts pupating, it would be great to determine if it's a male or female. *Update: I was hoping to watch the Monarch come out, but I missed it. Unfortunately, the weather was freezing cold. I don't think it found any nectar.*

Photo on right is from gardenwithwings.com



What's Happening in Your Yard

Lots of Activity This Spring!

- Charles Newsom

Pictured here are Paperwhites, Broccoli, Carrots, Garlic, Onion sets with drip irrigation and an overview of our garden. We also have 650+ feet of potatoes in the ground and 120+ feet of peas planted. We use drip irrigation tape for watering.



Officers

President	Laura Murphy
First Vice President	Randy Brown
Second Vice President	Jerry Lewis
Recording Secretary	Myra Crenshaw
Corresponding Secretary	Peg Fleet
Treasurer	Gail Christian

Directors

Youth Programs	Mary Ann Everett
New Class	Fran Sheppard
Education/State Conference	Gary Slanga
Grounds & Maintenance	Sophia Gomez & Brenda Albro
Awards	Bernie Hurta
Webmaster	Louann Hight
KMCCG	Edie Campbell
AgriLife Agent	Lyle Zoeller

Contributing Writers and Photographers:

Laura Murphy
Louann Hight
Robin Pohl
Charles Newsom
Beverly Chenoweth
Randy Brown
Bernie Hurta
Frances Idoux
Annette Ensing
Brenda Albro
Terrie Hahn
Crystal Fisher

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.

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

