

The Blooming Bell

September 2015



**Bell County
Master Gardener
Association**



Hummingbird
nest in Frances
Idoux's back-
yard. Check out
story on page 7.

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Work Day 7 am* Burger Wednesday 11 am	3	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8	9 Work Day 7 am* General meeting - Plant Sale Discus- sion 10:30 am Social time 10 am	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 Work Day 7 am*	17 Plants coming in for sale	18 Plants coming in for sale	19 PLANT SALE 7 AM - 1 PM
20	21 First Detec- tor class	22 First Detec- tor class	23 Work Day 7 am* BOD Meeting 9 am Fall Begins 	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Work Day 7 am*			

* in the event of rain, there will be No Workdays. Remember to record volunteer/education hours.
Banner photo of Thyralis by Terrie Hahn

The President's Corner

After setting a new record for most number of days without rain, we finally got some. Over the last few days I believe everyone got a little.

At the Aug 5th special board meeting we selected Johnson Insulation to insulate out building. That was completed on Aug 12th. We will see just how much better the sound is with this material dampening the echoes off the wall.

Susan Terry with the help of Mary Ann have done an outstanding job of putting together our Master Gardener Specialist "First Detector" training. We have a full house of 25 participants. It is going to be a great event.

Don't forget the plant sale coming up on the 19th of September. We will have an informational class at the next general membership meeting on Sep 9th for all who will be helping with the sale. The class will familiarize everyone on what will be available and where we may need your help.

Please make a point to attend. This time we are planning a garage sale along with the plants.

I want to thank everyone for all your dedicated hard work in planning and coordinating these events. It takes a good deal of time and effort to keep things on track and everyone is doing a super job.

Many thanks to all, merci, danke, grazie, dziekuje, dekuji, spasibo, arigato.

Gary

Photo from the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens during their Autumn Festival last year. See page 9 for more information.



In Memory of Faye Zook, Class of 2015

- Gail Koontz

For those of you who may not be aware, Faye Zook left cancer behind Saturday, August 8, and moved to Heaven. Burial was at Rest Haven Cemetery.

Faye wrote in her bio that was published in the January 2015 Blooming Bell that she lived in or near Belton her entire life. She lived on a small family farm near Nolanville before moving to Belton at age 10. Her gardening experience started early on the farm.

"I've always loved getting my hands in the dirt and watching plants grow. I want to learn the most successful methods of growing plants in this area as well as how to deal with pests and diseases. I also want to learn various propagation methods. A big plus is the chance to connect with like-minded people who love to garden," she shared.



She retired on November 30, 2013, and gleefully turned in all of her security badges, saying goodbye to 22 years of government employment as an auditor for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

I knew of Faye Zook because she visited several times at my church First Baptist Temple. But I never met her face to face until our Orientation Meeting in November of last year. We visited as much as one can visit on Wednesday afternoons after class started. In April I began to miss her and later learned from a mutual FBT friend that she had been diagnosed with cancer. The prognosis was not good.

She was unable to attend Graduation on May 6. She was listed as a graduate but noted that she had not completed her Master Gardener Certification Requirements. Let me add: here on earth. For I believe in the presence of THE MASTER GARDENER, and under His guidance, Faye Zook is certified today in a way that you and I can only look forward to and hope for. I wonder what her badge looks like!

Join me in prayer. Father, God, thank you for the gift of today. Thank you for the gift of special Master Gardener friends as we learn and grow and fellowship together. Thank you for life. Thank you for the promise of eternal life. I pray Your comfort showers Faye's family today and in the days to come. Wrap Your loving arms around each of them. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



Gear Up for the Fall Plant Sale!



- Jan George

Our **Fall Gardening Extravaganza** is just around the corner! Please go through all of your gardening material and donate what you don't use to the garage sale. It can be tools, pots, yard art, plants or anything gardening. We will be accepting items after the Sept. membership meeting on Sept. 9th. We will also have sign up sheets so if you haven't signed up to work, please do so. We need all of the help we can get. Our plants should be delivered on Sept. 17 & 18 but don't know exact times yet. We will send out an e-mail when we find out. We will need help accepting plants and with set up. The plant sale will be on Sept. 19th from 7:00a-1:00p. We will be arriving between 6:00 & 6:30 and will wear our light blue conference shirts and aprons. If you don't have an apron, you can check one out for the day. This is such a fun day, meeting new people, teaching, and learning. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Take a look at some of the activity from last year's Plant Sale!



Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

Yellowjackets

- Wizzie Brown, Travis County
AgriLife Extension Entomologist

Yellowjacket is a term that refers to several types of wasps in the family Vespidae. They are social wasps and are often thought as beneficial. Problems may arise when nests are in populated areas and the chance of being stung by the insect increases.

Yellowjackets are about ½" long with alternating bands of yellow and black on the abdomen. They are often mistaken for honey bees or paper wasps. Honey bees are a bit smaller and have hairy bodies, while paper wasps are reddish-brown with some having yellow markings.

Yellowjackets often build their nest in old rodent burrows, but some will make aerial nests in trees or on eaves of structures. Subterranean nests can often be found in flower beds, pastures, gardens as well as other locations. Aerial nests are often made in trees, under eaves, in storage sheds, garages or wall voids. These wasps construct their nest from a paper-like material using chewed wood fibers mixed with their saliva. Yellowjacket nests are enclosed with a single entry hole and may contain up to 20,000 adult workers in a mature nest, which can be up to 6 feet in size.

Cut-away of ground-dwelling yellowjacket nest showing internal layout.



Yellowjacket nests are abandoned each year and soon after abandonment begin to deteriorate. Occasionally, during mild winters, nests in sheltered spots may not be abandoned. In October and November, queens and males emerge from the nest to mate. After mating, males die while the newly mated queens seek sheltered areas to overwinter. The following spring, these queens emerge to build a small paper nest and begin to lay eggs. Maximum colony size is usually reached by August or September.

If wasps are in an area that can be left undisturbed, then they can be beneficial and help manage pests in the landscape. If there is a chance of a stinging incidence, then wasps should be managed. It is best to hire a pest management professional who has safety equipment needed to treat these wasps.

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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EXTENSION

If you feed them, they will come

- Frances Idoux

Triple digit temperatures reduced the number of blooming plants in my yard to only the strongest survivors - lantanas in full sun and petunias in shade (as long as they are watered). What the gardens have lacked in flowers, they have made up in tiny visitors -- hungry hummingbirds. I have three feeders which have attracted numerous customers. Their needs are specific -- simple feeders kept clean and filled with nectar, homemade with the easy formula of one cup sugar dissolved in four cups water heated to boiling.

This summer's hummingbird population has taught me a few lessons. Their arrival for breakfast is not always peaceful. Male hummingbirds are territorial and tend to claim one feeder or all the feeders nearby as their own. The smallest of all birds, their wings can beat nearly 80 times a second. No wonder they are so hungry! In addition to the hum of those wings, hummingbirds also "chatter." And they are ferocious dive bombers, driving any intruder away.

This year one of the hummingbird flock produced a delightful surprise - a small cuplike nest with two small occupants. Like many of nature's gifts, this one would have been easy to overlook. Fortunately, it was spotted by the young man who tends my garden when I'm away. As a very observant Eagle Scout, he noticed the nest and the babies. Luckily, I came home in time to take the picture!



Announcements

September General Meeting

- Randy Brown

Fifty-one MG's came to the August meeting to watch the Greg Grant DVD from the Conference. Jan George and the Plant Sale Team will be conducting the September General meeting at 10:30 a.m. Social time at 10 a.m.

Upcoming Business

- Bernie Hurta

2015 Awards

Nomination forms for our local awards will be available at the August Monthly Meeting. The awards that are given out at the Christmas Party are:

Three Golden Trowel Awards (for service to our community) six Green Thumb Awards (service to our organization), and the New Master Gardener of the Year Award (from the 2015 New Class). Nominees must be certified Master Gardeners and have the 50 service hours and 12 education hours recorded to be considered. The deadline is October 31st. Forms are also available on our website. Completed forms are to be given to Bernie Hurta by mail, email (bhurta@gmail.com), or leave them with Scarlot in the Extension office. Let's honor those that have worked so hard for our organization and our community.

5, 10, & 15 Year Badges and Pins

The following Master Gardener classes are up for 5, 10, and 15 year badges and pins: 2011, 2006, and 2001.

In order to receive your new badge and pin, you must have your 50 service hours and 12 education hours recorded.

Please have the hours recorded by October 31st. The badges and pins will be presented at the December 3rd Christmas party. If you have any questions, please contact Bernie Hurta.

Grounds Workdays

- Walter Ponder

Here is the Workday schedule for September:

7:00 a.m.	September 2, 2015	Workday
10:00 a.m.	September 2, 2015	Burger Wednesday
7:00 a.m.	September 9, 2015	Workday
7:00 a.m.	September 16, 2015	Workday
7:00 a.m.	September 23, 2015	Workday
7:00 a.m.	September 30, 2015	Workday

HELP WANTED:

Traditional Mentors For the New Class

- Peg Fleet

It's here again! The 2016 class of Master Gardener interns will begin with orientation on January 6th, 2016. Once again, the New Class Committee is asking Master Gardeners to volunteer as traditional mentors for the interns. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and interact with the interns and to gain service hours. Mentor duties include setting up the classroom, monitoring and recording homework, setting out refreshments, providing assistance as needed during classes, and making sure that the room is returned to order afterward. Mentors should plan on being present from 12:00 noon on class days until about 5:15. Signup sheets will be available at the September membership meeting. Master Gardeners who sign up will receive confirmation by e-mail. As usual, the response last year was outstanding, and I hope that we will have the same experience this year. We will not be asking for refreshment mentors, so only one set of signup sheets will be available. Please consider sharing your time and skills to help make this class the rewarding experience that it is meant to be.

Thank you.



For Gardeners. By Gardeners.

The **Travis County Master Gardeners Association** has set **Saturday, October 17, 2015** for their popular Inside Austin Gardens Tour (IAGT). The tour provides a rare look inside six private gardens and one public experimental garden that demonstrate realistic, sustainable gardening practices for Central Texas.

The tour's theme remains: "For Gardeners. By Gardeners", focusing on the practical beauty, variety and stamina of native and well-adapted plants in the garden. In turn, each garden has a theme that demonstrates a particular set of characteristics Central Texas gardeners are likely to encounter in their own gardens. Those themes are:

Flashy Natives – bright and colorful
Sunbathing Natives – brutal, full sun
Shady Natives – shade and under trees
Death-Defying Natives – especially hardy, minimal water
Cottage Natives – Texas tough classics
Oh Deer! – deer-resistant, not deer-proof
Native Testing Ground – new varieties and proven winners

Go to: www.insideaustingardens.org

Autumn at the Arboretum

September 19 - November 25

With the welcome change of seasons comes one of the **Dallas Arboretum's** most anticipated events: Autumn at the Arboretum. The highlight of the festival is the nationally acclaimed Pumpkin Village, which is created with more than 75,000 pumpkins, gourds and squash by the talented horticulture team. This year, to continue with the ongoing Texas theme, the display will be recreated into an Old Texas Town in the Pecan Grove.

<http://www.dallasarboretum.org/visit/seasonal-festivals-events/autumn-at-the-arboretum>

21st Annual Sorghum Festival

Homestead Heritage Traditional Craft Village: Monday, Sept. 7, 2015, we'll be having our 21st annual Labor Day Sorghum Festival at Brazos de Dios, in Waco, Texas.

Hours: 10AM – 5PM, Admission is free.

Watch the entire process of making sweet sorghum syrup—from pressing the raw cane using a horse-powered mill to cooking the juice into a rich, golden brown syrup. Enjoy some samples of sorghum syrup on freshly-baked cornbread made from stone-ground cornmeal!

<http://www.sustainlife.org/events/21st-annual-sorghum-festival/#more-14551>

What's Happening in Your Yard

Bountiful Season

- Melinda Woods Arriola

I lost 8 pounds in one evening! Turned them into plum jam!



Little Happenings in the Yard

- Terrie Hahn

Two Lesser Goldfinches enjoying our wild sunflowers-can you find the second one?



Plumbagos are one of the few things blooming right now. Below: lots of babies out there; and I thought that this was one of a couple of dozen newly emerged adult (teneral) dragonflies



flying around my head, but I just read that many dragonflies migrate, so maybe this one is in a group that is migrating?! If they're new adults, then they're softer bodied and weaker, and have a 90%



What's Happening in Your Yard

- Randy Brown

Some of the photos of flowers from our recent trip to Hawaii.



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