

# The Blooming Bell

January 2018



Photos by  
Terrie Hahn,  
Bill Walker  
and Sylvia  
Maedgen.

**Upper Left:**  
Terrie Hahn  
visited The  
Giant's  
House Gar-  
dens in  
Akaroa, New  
Zealand.



**Upper Right (2):** Master Gar-  
deners enjoy the chili on Burger  
Wednesday.



**Lower Left:** Bill Walker's wife  
is holding a Daikon radish from  
their wildlife food plot.


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**Bell County  
Master Gardener  
Association**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b>	<b>3 Work Day - 8 am*</b> <b>Burger Wed.</b> <b>10:30 am</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10 Work Day - 8 am*</b> <b>Social - 9:30 am</b> <b>General Meeting - 10 am</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 	<b>16</b>	<b>17 Work Day 8 am*</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24 Work Day 8 am*</b> <b>BOD Meeting - 9 am</b>	<b>25 Gardening in Bell County – Tree Care</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31 Work Day 8 am*</b> <b>Whistle Stop Play-ground Clean-up 7:30 am**</b>			

#### Upcoming events:

- ◆ New MG Intern Orientation Class, Jan. 3
- ◆ First day new MG Intern Class, Jan. 10
- ◆ Seed Exchange, Harker Heights P&R Dept., Jan. 13
- ◆ Bell County Youth Fair, Belton Expo, Feb. 5-9
- ◆ Home & Garden Show, Belton Expo, Feb. 23-25
- ◆ Spring Plant Sale, Belton, Mar. 24
- ◆ 2018 TMGA Conference, Apr. 4-6, College Station
- ◆ Plant Swap, Belton, Apr. 11

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

\*\* In the event of rain or freezing temperatures, there will be no Clean-up day.

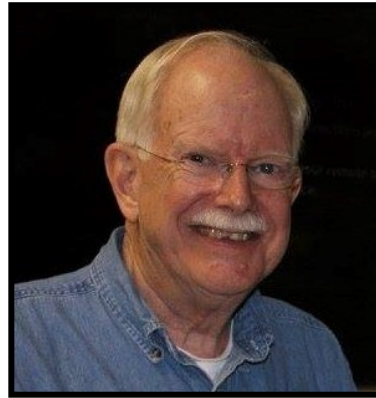
Remember to record volunteer/education hours.

Photo by Terrie Hahn



# The President's Corner

- Wayne Schirner



Happy New Year everyone. I am confident that you will look back on 2017 and agree with me that it was a very successful year for the BCMGA. At the time I am writing this, we have documented over 14,600 volunteer service hours in the VMS system, and I suspect there are still more hours to record. I don't believe that our members have done any more service hours than in past years, but you have documented them better in the VMS system, which is the most efficient way for us to track them. Thank you for putting up with my many requests to enter hours. At least 46 members documented over 100 hours of volunteer service. I mention this only because there were concerns when we reduced the volunteer service hours requirement from 50 down to 12 that we would end up with fewer hours being performed. I was confident that the members would continue volunteering just as they had in the past.

Speaking of volunteer service hours, we have many opportunities in January and February that still need volunteers. The annual crops conference, irrigation conference, and grounds conference, all of which occur in January, only have 1-2 volunteers so far. I put the dates for those in last month's newsletter, so let me know if you want to volunteer for any of these. I will also bring a sign-up sheet to the monthly meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup>. In February, there are two major volunteer opportunities. The first week is the annual Bell County Youth Fair, and the last weekend is the Home & Garden Show. I suspect that there will be sign-up sheets for these too at the January meeting.

There are also education hours that are available in January. The BIG (Blacklands Income Growth) conference is in Waco on 11 January, and you can get education credit for any of the lectures you attend. There is no charge, but registration is required. The Mother Earth News Fair will again be at the Expo center on 17-18 February. You can claim hour for hour any lectures you attend. Advanced tickets are available at a discount online. Don't forget that you can also get education and volunteer service hours from each of our monthly meetings.

We are again planning to offer vegetable plants for sale at the Home & Garden show. Carla Harmon is coordinating that effort, so talk to her if you want to participate in growing new plants. That's another opportunity to get volunteer service hours. Plants need to be ready by the end of February, so most will need to be started 6-8 weeks before then.

Speaking of starting from seeds, you know winter is here when the seed catalogs start arriving in the mail. I received 4 different ones just today. It's always hard to decide if I want to try something completely different, or just stick with what I know works in my garden. Maybe this will be a year that I experiment some more.

Remember a new class starts with orientation on 3 January. When you see new faces, welcome them to the BCMGA.

Finally, is there something that reminds you the cold weather is here (other than just feeling cold?) For me, it's my garage door opener. Whenever the temp gets below 40F, it starts to act up. It will raise about 18", then stop. I have to put it down to the floor and try again. Sometimes it goes up a little farther, sometimes not. I might have to push the button 4-5 times before it finally gives up and opens all the way. Then it might not go all the way down. I think it is just reminding me to start slowly on cold days and get warmed up a little before you try to do too much.

That's it for this month. Enjoy each day as it comes.



# 1 More Thing...

## Texas Gardener Magazine

TEXAS GARDENER'S  
**SEEDS**  
FROM OUR GARDEN TO YOURS™

- Wayne Schirner

I wanted to share something that you may already be aware of, but this week's issue reminded me how useful it is. The Texas Gardener magazine has a free weekly email newsletter that you can sign up to receive. It's called "Texas Gardener's Seeds, From Our Garden to Yours." It starts out with a useful article that is seasonally appropriate, and then gives a calendar of gardening related events that are coming up in the next couple of months.

This month's main article is on "10 ways to make your landscape Earth-Kind." The article nicely summarizes the things we have already learned, in a way that reminds us about the simple things we can do that improve our environment in a friendly way.

I also like to review the calendar of events to see what other organizations, including other county Master Gardener Associations, are doing in their mission to educate their citizens.

Go to [www.TexasGardener.com](http://www.TexasGardener.com) and sign up for it. I suspect that you will find it as useful as I have.

Articles on gardening, insects,  
soil, water, and other topics are  
provided in each newsletter.

Sign up to receive  
Texas Gardener's  
Seeds, the weekly  
email newsletter.  
Subscribe to the Tex-  
as Gardener's Maga-  
zine. The magazine  
for Texas gardeners,  
by Texas gardeners.



Upcoming garden events

Available gardening books, planning guides,  
and calendars are listed for online purchase.



# Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

## Molting

- Wizzie Brown, Travis County AgriLife  
Extension Entomologist

Arthropods, including insects, have an exoskeleton (their bones are on the outside of their body). The exoskeleton gives structure and support. Unfortunately since the exoskeleton is rigid, it cannot grow larger and arthropods have to lay down a completely new exoskeleton when they need to grow. The process of shedding the old exoskeleton to grow larger is known as molting.

Hormones control the production of a new exoskeleton under the old one. The new exoskeleton is soft and mushy so the arthropod can wriggle out of the old exoskeleton. When hormones signal that the new exoskeleton has completed development, the arthropod will break open the old exoskeleton along the ecdysial cleavage line and slowly work its way out of the old exoskeleton. The arthropod swells its body size so when the new exoskeleton hardens it is larger.

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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When an arthropod first emerges from its old exoskeleton, it is vulnerable to predation and adverse environmental conditions. For this reason, molting usually occurs in hidden and/ or protected locations.

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

# Do You Know About...?

## Soil Organic Matter

- Bill Walker

The organic component of soil is known as soil organic matter (SOM). This important element of soil touts a long list of important functions in the soil structure. It serves as a reservoir of nutrients for crops, provides soil aggregation, increases nutrient exchange, retains moisture, reduces compaction, reduces surface crusting and increases soil water infiltration.

Many think SOM refers to humus in the soil. Actually, humus is one of three components of SOM. The components are:

- Plant residues and living microbial biomass
- Active soil organic matter or detritus
- Stable organic matter referred to as humus

The first two elements contribute to soil fertility as the breakdown of organic material release plant nutrition such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and other trace elements.

The third factor, humus, has less influence on soil fertility as it is the final product of organic decomposition. However, it plays an important role in soil structure, soil tilth and carbon exchange capacity CEC. Humus level in the soil is the factor which darkens the soils color.

Productive agricultural soils maintain SOM at levels of 3% - 6%. The best agricultural soils in the US are those developed under grass prairie vegetation. East Bell County is an interesting reference to this point. This part of the county is located at the western edge of the Texas Backland Prairie. This is a strip of USDA -NCRS classified soil running about 75 miles wide from the Red River down east of I-35 to just below San Antonio. You may want to research this subject as it has an interesting history. Yes!!!, we do have good soil in Bell County. It's just all east of I-35 and classified as some of the best farmland in the US. Thus, the history of German and Czech populations surged in the late 1800's as word spread of rich black soil in which to grow wheat and other grains.

SOM has to be managed carefully as under normal conditions in temperate regions of the country 1.5% of SOM mineralizes yearly. In Texas, this point can

be accelerated by higher soil temperatures and cultivation practices. Increased no-till and cover crop practices help manage the annual losses to SOM levels.

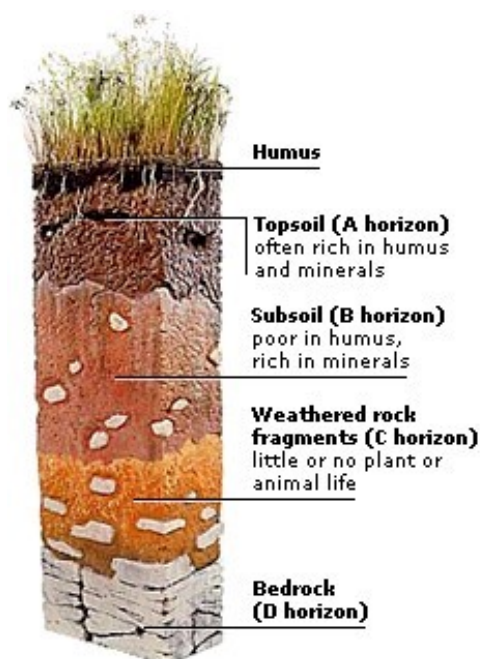
In the garden or crop field it is important to understand your desired SOM and management to the term 'steady state', where the rate of organic matter addition from composted materials, crop residues, roots, cover crops and other organic sources equals the rate of decomposition.

Some factoids of interest....

Nutrient Supply - decomposition of a 1% level of SOM in the top 6 inches of the soil releases 10-20 lbs. of N, 1- 2 lbs. of P and .5 lbs. of Sulfur per acre.

Water Holding Capacity - SOM reacts much like a sponge. It has the ability to hold up to 90% of its weight in water. Another plus, it can release nearly all this water for use by plants.

All said, SOM is all important to soil health and requires careful understanding and management.



# What's Been Happening...

## Meridith Dunbar Early Childhood Academy - Seed Activity

- Marjorie Gillmeister

Photo by Marjorie Gillmeister

Happy New Year Master Gardeners!

We are getting ready for an exciting year of wonderful hands on activities with the children at Meridith Dunbar Pre-K Academy.

This month, January 22, 23, 24, 25, & 26 (Mon-Fri; 8:00am-2:00pm) we will sow seeds indoors for their spring garden using Eggshell pods and cylinder newspaper pots. This is a great opportunity for existing Master Gardener Members and New Class Members to join us in the world of four year olds and volunteer for an abundance of service hours available to you.

Temple ISD requires all their volunteers on all campuses to submit a Temple ISD Volunteer Application, DPS Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Verification Form, and a copy of their driver's license. No exceptions! So even though we go through this screening to become Master Gardeners, we must do it again to volunteer at MDECA. I have some applications in my possession, or you can go to [www.tisd.org](http://www.tisd.org) to print one.

- Click on **Community**.
- Scroll down and click on **Volunteer**.
- Look to lower right and click on **Volunteer Application**.

If you want to come and be a part of this world of four year olds and are interested in volunteering for future activities at MDECA, or just need more information, please email me at [mjgillmeister@me.com](mailto:mjgillmeister@me.com) or call me at (347)820-3221. We look forward to many of you being a part of this amazing journey with the youth in our community. I will also be present at The New Class Orientation on January 3rd and will have volunteer applications readily available and can collect them with a copy of your driver's license. There will be a sign up sheet for this month's activities at MDECA as well. I look forward to working with many of you this year!



Learning Knows No Bounds



# What's Been Happening...

## Pecan Show

- Ann Wagner

It is that time of year again! The 2017 Bell/Williamson County Pecan Show took place at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office in Belton, Texas on December 6th and 7th. There are three levels of pecan shows county, regional, and state. The upcoming State Pecan Show will be in San Marcos on July 15, 2017. It is open to the public to attend. The judges for this year's district pecan show were Dr. Monte Nesbitt, a Program Specialist of Pecan/Fruit/Citrus from Texas A&M University and Bill Ree, an entomologist specialist from Texas A&M University.

About 10 Bell county Master Gardeners volunteered their time shelling the pecans after Lyle Zoeller, a Grading Demonstrator Coordinator and Bell county AgriLife Extension Agent, first put the pecans through an electric pecan cracker. The electric cracker made the job of shelling the pecans much easier although it still was a tedious job on the thumbs trying not to break the pecan, as it was being removed from the shell for judging. Overall it was quite a neat experience.

Pecan grading has been going on for a long time. In 1950, Fred R. Brison originated the current pecan show program with a state show. Bluefford G. Hancock, J.M. Cooper and John E. Hutchinson expanded the program to include county preliminary shows in 1952. The pioneering counties were Travis, Hood, San Saba, and Guadalupe. Robert Kensing developed the regional pecan show concept in the late 1960's and they became the "show window" for Texas premium pecans that we have today. The current pecan show program, from 1971 to present, under the direction of Texas AgriLife Extension, formerly, the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, and the Texas Pecan Growers Association, has played a very important role for the Texas pecan industry by teaching growers how to grade their pecans for better prices, identifying outstanding varieties for each region of the state, recognizing and awarding the most successful pecan management programs in the county, region and state, and advertising and promoting Texas premium quality pecans. The shows also provide an important historical record and educational tool for pecan scientists.

The most important function of pecan grading or pecan shows is to provide growers a system for determining the value of their pecans before they are taken to market. In order to maintain the standard quality of premium pecans in the show the rules for the county show are as follows: The exhibitor must be the grower; an entry must contain a minimum of 40 pecans with 42 being preferred. Samples with insufficient number of pecans can be disqualified at any level. Entries containing more than one variety can be disqualified. The pecans must come from the same tree. Nuts which are polished, cut, sanded, or altered will be disqualified. The samples must have the variety name of the pecan, grower name, and the county it was grown in on a white piece of paper. No growers can be advanced to a regional pecan show without being graded at the county show. The pecans are judged for percentage Edible Kernel and size. The judges also look at oil content, blemishes on the shell that could signify insect damage or fungus as well as any spotting on the pecan meat itself. The damaged kernels are placed in a small plastic bag corresponding to the variety number before weighing percent edible kernel. The plates are numbered along with the bowls so that once the pecans are shelled by the volunteers, they can be placed in the bowl and if needed the plastic bag with any diseased or damaged pecan pieces. There were 9 pecans per plate to be shelled of any one variety. The volunteers had to remove the outer shell and only put the pecan meat in the corresponding entry number bowl free of all shell material so that the judges could get an accurate number of percent kernels. The pecans were arranged on tables according to variety. Enclosed with this article are photos of the pecan show.

# What's Been Happening...

## Pecan Show - con't.

Photos by Ann Wagner

- Ann Wagner

The pecan show is divided into 3 divisions of variety class's pecans. The three variety classes are Commercial Division, Classic and New, and Natives. The 2017 county and regional pecan show in Belton, Texas yielded the following winners. For the Commercial Division, Forkert pecan variety took the Grand Champion prize. It had 42 nuts per pound and 60.77 percent kernel. The Hopi pecan variety took the Grand Reserve with 53.68 nuts per pound and 60.28 percent kernel.

In the Classic and New variety Comanche took Grand Champion with 39.87 nuts per pound and 54.69 percent kernel. Tejas variety took the Grand Reserve prize with 54.89 nuts per pound and 53 percent kernel. Finally, for the Native variety, McCastland Farms in Comanche county took Grand Champion with 60.08 nuts per pound and 55.74 percent kernel. The Grand Reserve prize in the Native division went to David Patton in Williamson County with 57.97 nuts per pound and a 58.50 percent kernel. The pecan shows are open to the public as a means to educate and extend information to the public about pecan production and the importance of this industry in the state of Texas.



Lightest pecan variety.



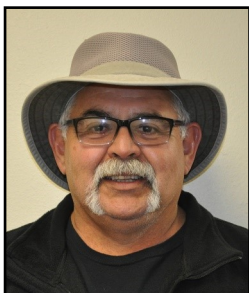
# What's Been Happening...

## Intern Orientation Class

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen

- Sylvia Maedgen

The new class of Master Gardener interns met on January 3, for orientation. Twenty-three students are enrolled for the 2018 Class. Information on each of the students is provided below.



**Juan Anaya**

Resides in and is originally from McGregor. Career - was an AT&T Lineman. Became interested in gardening through his family. Favorite outdoor activities include fishing, bird watching, and wood working. Other interests include photography.



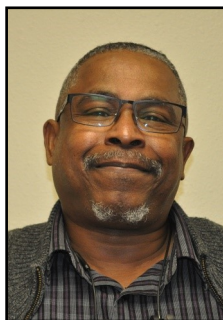
**Brenda Britton**

Resides in and is originally from Lampasas. Career - was with Texas State Rehabilitation Services, now retired. Has always had an interest in gardening, but has not had the time until now. Favorite outdoor activities include vegetable gardening.



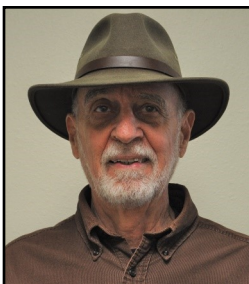
**Mary Carter**

Resides in Harker Heights. Originally from Norfolk, VA. Career - was a soldier and a Paralegal. Became interested in gardening from her mother-in-law. Favorite outdoor activities include gardening.



**Paul Carter**

Resides in Harker Heights. Originally from St. Louis, MO. Career - was in the Army and Auto Body Repair. Became interested in gardening from his mother and wife. Favorite outdoor activities include fishing. Other interests include spending time with his kids.



**Larry Causey**

Resides in Temple. Originally from Spur. Career was in journalism for 25 years and worked for the Temple Telegram for 17 of those years. Became interested in gardening by accident. Favorite outdoor activities include canoeing and hunting. Other interests include always carrying a camera.



**Tsui Cheung**

Resides in Killeen. Originally from Hong Kong. Career - currently an accounting student at Texas A&M and will graduate in May. Has a Bachelor's degree as a Nutrition Specialist. Became interested in gardening at last year's Home & Garden Show and attended a couple of the monthly MG workshops.



**Joshua Chupik**

Resides in Rogers. Originally from Temple. Currently a college student and interested in forestry. Became interested in gardening from his grandmother. Favorite outdoor activities include biking, landscaping, and vegetable gardening. Other interests include Japanese gardens.



**Travis Collins**

Resides in and is originally from Temple. Career is an LVN/Surgical Tech. Became interested in gardening through an after school program. Favorite activities include basketball and drums.



# What's Been Happening...

## Intern Orientation Class

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen



**Rachel Glass**

Resides in Ding Dong. Originally from Dallas. Career – was in Fashion Buying, Teaching, and Web Design. Has always been interested in gardening. Favorite outdoor activities include camping and CrossFit.



**Kerin Grimes**

Resides in Killeen. Originally from California. Career included being a certified esthetician and a General Mills Sales Rep for the military commissary. Became interested in gardening a very long time ago.



**Kathy Harte**

Resides in Gatesville. Originally from Texas. Career - was an Administrative Assistant with a major oil company in Alaska. Became interested in gardening from her grandmother at the age of 5 years old. Favorite outdoor activities include gardening and her greenhouse. Other interests include playing the piano and organ, quilting, and a member of the Keep Gatesville Beautiful organization. She is also an artist and has a commercial pilot's license.



**Laura Ladd**

Resides in Copperas Cove. Originally from Princeton, KY. Career – worked for State Rehabilitation Agency as an Assistant Office Manager, now retired. Became interested in gardening at the age of 8 years old. Favorite outdoor activities include grounds and garden maintenance.



**Kathleen Lester**

Resides in Belton. Originally from Rockdale. Career - was a Psychologist in the Army. Became interested in gardening a very long time ago. Favorite outdoor activities include cycling.



**Kathy Lovelace**

Resides in and is originally from Belton. Career – was an Elementary Librarian and teacher. Became interested in gardening from her mom and grandparents. Favorite outdoor activities include hunting, fishing and farming. Other interests include photography.



**Elaine McSpedon**

Resides in Temple. Originally from New York. Career - was an educator. Became interested in gardening from her parents. Favorite outdoor activities include hiking, biking, and gardening. Other interests include communications and technology.



**Ann Miller**

Resides in Belton. Originally from Kansas City, MO. She was a full-time mom. Became interested in gardening after purchasing a new home with a new yard. Favorite outdoor activities include walking and hiking. Other interests include cooking and reading.

# What's Been Happening...

## Intern Orientation Class

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen



**Nancy Novakoski**

Resides near Ding Dong. Originally from Illinois. Career – Registered Nurse. Became interested in gardening through her family's garden. Favorite outdoor activities include gardening. Other interests include quilting.



**Pat Parker**

Resides in Killeen. Originally from Germany. Career - was a merchandiser and sales rep. Became interested in gardening from her grandmother and a friend. Other interests include a love for fresh fruits and vegetables.



**Michael Pointer**

Resides in Killeen. Originally from Germany. Career - Inventory & Auditing Services. Became interested in gardening from his grandfather. Favorite outdoor activities include hiking, building, camping, swimming, fishing, and gardening. Other interests include graphic design, instrumental music, and the keyboard.



**Laura Pope**

Resides in Temple. Originally from Houston. Career – was a kindergarten teacher. She does not know how she became interested in gardening, but just likes it. Favorite outdoor activities include walking. Other interests include visiting gardens.



**Sandi Remson**

Resides in Gatesville. Originally from Lansing, MI. Career - was a microbiologist. Became interested in gardening a long time ago. Favorite outdoor activities include swimming.



**Dorothy Thomas**

Resides in Moffat. Originally from Florida. Career – substitute teacher, library worker and a homemaker. Became interested in gardening after meeting several Master Gardeners. Favorite outdoor activities include hiking and her herb garden. Other interests include baking.



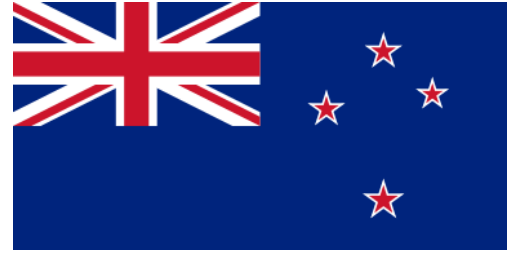
**Larry Wolfe**

Resides in Salado. Originally from Paris, TX. Career - was in Business Management. Became interested in gardening at a young age and also had a former business-florist/greenhouse. Favorite outdoor activities include gardening. Other interests include dabbling in hydroponics.

 WELCOME   
Class of 2018



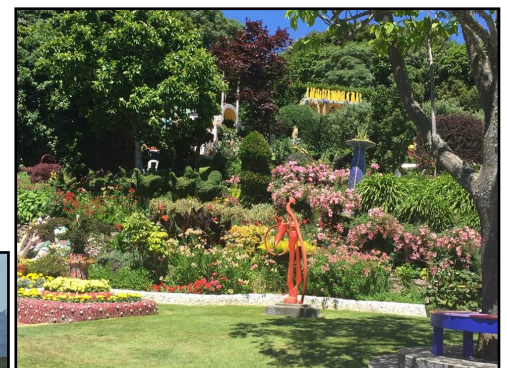
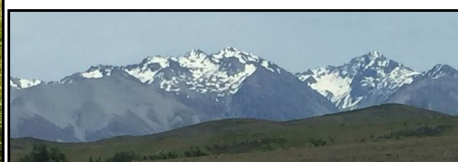
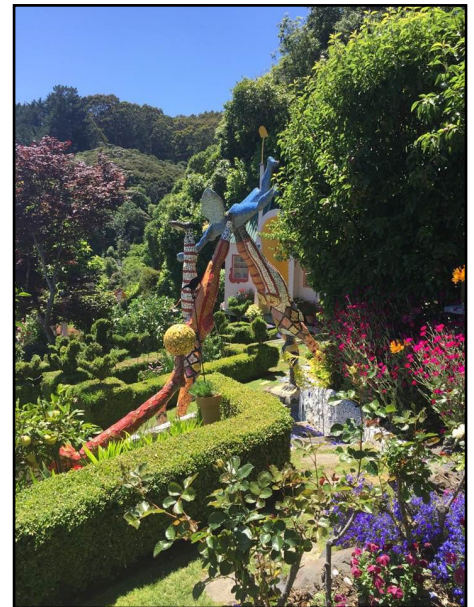
# I've Always Wanted To Go There... New Zealand



- Terrie Hahn

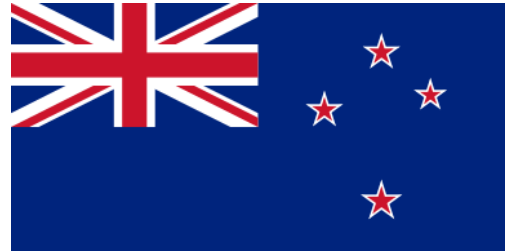
Photos by Terrie Hahn

Traveled to New Zealand last month. The country was gorgeous. Visited the Giant's House in Akaroa. Very cool mosaics and gardens. One lady trained in art and horticulture and spent 15 years creating this. Very inspiring.





# I've Always Wanted To Go There... New Zealand



- Terrie Hahn

Photos by Terrie Hahn

Flew from Nelson to Christchurch. Went to the Botanical gardens - beautiful flowers in bloom. Drove to Akaroa, a seaside village with a French background. Akaroa, NZ is a wonderful French influenced small town. World War I exhibits and memorials all through the country to commemorate the 100 year anniversary of the end of the war. Tasman Glacier ride. Soooo much fun AND I didn't feel sea sick in this speed boat. Very interesting. National park visitors center. Great area! Great company! Great fun! Good day, but tuckered out!



# This and That...

## 2018 Bell County Master Gardener Intern Class Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Class Hours</u>
1/3/18		Orientation	BCMGA	3
1/10/18	6	Vegetable Gardening	Bob Gordon, Jerry Lewis	3
	1, 2			
	Class time 12:00 pm	Overview of MG Program		
1/17/18	- 3 pm	Basic Botany	Jayla Fry	3
		Rainwater Catchment		
		Basic Soils, Understanding Soil	Karen Colwick	1
1/24/18	3	Test Results	John Sackett	2.5
		Composting	Louann Hight	1
1/31/18	2	Irrigation	Wayne Schirner	1.5
2/7/18	7	Landscape Design	Diana Kirby, Diana's Designs	3.5
			Wizzie Brown, Extension	
2/14/18	7	Garden Entomology	Program Specialist, IPM	4
			Kelly Simon	
2/21/18	8	Wildscape Gardening	Texas Parks & Wildlife	3
2/28/18	5	Fruit & Nut Trees	Gary Slanga	3
3/7/18	1	Plant Propagation Lab, Part 1	BCMGA members	4
3/14/18		No Class, Spring Break		
			Dr. Kevin Ong	
3/21/18	4	Plant Diseases	Director TPDDL	4
3/28/18	3, 4	Plant Propagation Lab, Part 2	BCMGA members	4
4/4/18		No Class, TMG Conference		
			Lyle Zoeller, Extension	
		Pesticide/Herbicide Reduction	Agent, Bell County	2
4/11/18	1	Turf Grass	BCMGA Turf Specialists	2
4/18/18		Field Trip to local MG gardens		2.5
4/25/18		Field Trip to ?	TBA	5
			Betty Nejtek, Terrie Hahn	
5/2/18	6	Growing and Using Herbs	and BCMGA members	4
			<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>56.5</b>
5/9/18		Monthly Meeting		
5/16/18		Graduation		

## Plants Info

### - Crystal Fisher

You might want to watch the documentary "What Plants Talk About" on YouTube. It runs for about 53 minutes. Go to - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrrSAC-vjG4>

A friend sent this info to me on the planting and harvest dates for Temple. Go to - <https://www.almanac.com/gardening/planting-dates/TX/Temple>



# Announcements

## 2018 TMGA Conference - Celebrating 40 Years

Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Present, Embracing the Future



- Sylvia Maedgen

The 2018 TMGA Conference is scheduled for April 4-6, 2018 in College Station. The conference will be held at the Hilton Inn with a room rate of \$139 per night and online reservations can be made at 979-693-7500 or - <http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/C/CLLCHHF-TMGA18-20180403/index.jhtml>  
The group code is: TMGA18.

There will be seminars and tours (additional costs) throughout the 3 days. Early registration is through January 10 at a rate of \$255. Regular registration is from January 11 - February 15 at a rate of \$285. Late registration is from February 16 - March 30 at a rate of \$315. You can register online at - [https://texasmastergardeners.formstack.com/forms/2018\\_tmga\\_conference\\_registration](https://texasmastergardeners.formstack.com/forms/2018_tmga_conference_registration)

FULL REGISTRATION includes access to all six Keynote sessions plus options for six additional Educational Sessions, three lunches, (Wednesday through Friday, April 4-6, 2018), as well as both receptions and dinners on Wednesday and Thursday, April 4 and 5, 2018! Leadership Training, Parking Passes, Workshops, Tours, Guests and Merchandise incur additional fees. The complete schedule can be found at - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oLCMrS90CCKGLxRUARMUP9IHxpaDZgld/view>

Don't forget to send photos of yourself for the video they are creating for the conference. Email your photos with identification to - [2018tmgaconference@gmail.com](mailto:2018tmgaconference@gmail.com)

## 2018 Herbal Forum at Round Top, TX

- Kim Pringle

The 23rd Annual Herbal Forum at Festival Hill in Round Top is scheduled for March 16-17, 2018. The theme is "The Spicy World of Gingers." The cost of the Herbal Forum on Saturday is about \$80 with optional workshops on Friday. Many of us book accommodations at Festival Hill for Friday evening, with the cost about \$90 including continental breakfast. We average about 18 people in our group. I usually collect funds for accommodations and individuals must call or register on-line directly with Festival Hill for the Herbal Forum and the optional workshops. You can also drive down for the day on Saturday. The plant sale is open to anyone.



Many of us bring a sack lunch for Friday noon so we can spend more time at the plant sale and touring the grounds at Festival Hill. There is shopping in downtown Round Top and Royer's Cafe offers lunch and their famous pies if you would prefer. We arrange carpools to the Herbal Forum. We hold our traditional gourmet picnic on Friday evening. Each person brings an herbal dish to share - for those who have not attended, this is really a sampling. We do not have kitchen facilities, a refrigerator or stove, so if you need refrigeration, you will have to bring a cooler. And you are welcome to bring wine or your favorite beverage.

If you are interested in attending the Herbal Forum or have questions, please email me at [kimberpringle@earthlink.net](mailto:kimberpringle@earthlink.net) or call or text 254-421-2593.

Herbal Forum Update: 7 reservations and 11 spaces open. Festival Hill requests payment about mid January for reservations.



# Announcements

## 2018 BCMGA Membership Dues

- Gail Christian



Your 2018 membership dues are due by January 31, 2018. Dues are still \$25.00. You can mail you check to 1605 N. Main, Room 102, or give it to Scarlot in the office. She will hold it for us and send us a notice to come by the office. You can always give dues to Kathleen Ramey or Gail Christian on Wednesday mornings. Thanks,

## Gardening in Bell County

- Carol Morisset and Jan Upchurch

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

- |              |                                   |                |                                      |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| • January 18 | Tree Care                         | • August 16    | Propagation of Plants                |
| • March 15   | Plant Selection                   | • September 20 | Greenhouse Basics                    |
| • April 19   | Hummingbirds, Butterflies, & Bees | • October 18   | Texas Native Gardening in the Winter |
| • May 17     | Water Efficiency                  | • November 15  | Raised Bed Gardening                 |
| • June 21    | Insects in Your Garden            |                |                                      |
| • July 19    | Fall Gardening                    |                |                                      |

Location: Bell County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office - Conference Room  
1605 N. Main, Belton, TX

Time: 6:30-8:00 pm

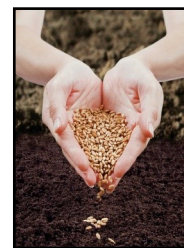
Cost: Our seminars are free of charge but the BCMGA will accept donations of up to \$5.00 per class  
Seminars are limited to 25 participants so register early.

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

## Harker Heights Plant & Seed Swap

- Melinda Arriola

On Saturday, January 13 from 11am to 1pm, the BCMGA will participate in the Harker Heights seed and plant swap located at the Community Center, 400 Indian Trail, Harker Heights. Plan is to have 3 booths; one for ask a master gardener, a second for rainwater barrel/water manned by Karen Colwick and Amazon, and a third for a kids table. Coordinator of this event is BCMG Melinda Arriola who will attend our next BCMGA monthly meeting on January 10 and will accept all seed donations and small plants. She will also coordinate the children's section. We need 3 to 4 volunteers to man the ASK a Master Gardener table and assist with the children's booth. If you are interested in selling some of your home goods or representing your company, you can reserve a free table for your use. Vendors are welcome. Contact Melinda at [marriola@hotmail.com](mailto:marriola@hotmail.com).



# Announcements

## January General Meeting

### - Kathy Love

The January general meeting will be held on the 10th. The education presentation will be on "Leaves" by Gary Slanga. Social Time is 9:30 a.m., meeting at 10 a.m. in the learning center building.

## Board of Director's Meeting

The January Board of Director's Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 24th at 9 a.m. in the class/meeting room of the AgriLife Building. Please submit your agenda items to Stacye Parry, Recording Secretary by Friday, January 19th.

## Grounds Workdays

### - Johnny Jones and Tom Rennels

Here is the workday schedule for January:

Jan. 3, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday

10:30 a.m. Burger Wednesday

Jan. 10, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday

Jan. 17, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday

Jan. 24, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday

Jan. 31, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday

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

## Whistle Stop Playground Clean-up

### - Kathy Patterson

There will be a clean-up at the Whistle Stop Playground on January 31, 2018, which is the 5th Wednesday. Please plan to join in the clean-up at 7:30 am. If it is raining or too cold, this clean-up day will be cancelled.

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

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

# Advanced Learning

## Upcoming Specialist Training

Feb. 8-6 Master Gardener Plant Health and Diagnostics Educator Specialist Training  
Gonzales  
Deadline to register - Jan. 16  
Cost \$185

Feb. 14-16 Master Gardener Vegetable Specialist Training  
Dallas  
Deadline to register - Jan. 31  
Cost \$235

Feb. 19-20 Master Gardener Earth-Kind Specialist Training  
Bastrop  
Deadline to register - Feb. 9  
Cost \$225

Feb. 26-27 Master Gardener Landscape Design School Series XXV, Course IV  
College Station  
Deadline to register - Jan. 1–Feb. 1  
Cost \$145  
Register - after Feb. 1  
Cost \$165  
Book cost - \$40

May 23-25 Greenhouse Management Specialist Training  
Kerrville  
Cost - ?  
Registration - ?

## Upcoming Conferences

Apr. 4-6 TX MG State Conference  
College Station  
Cost \$255 early registration by 1/10  
Cost \$285 reg. registration 1/11-2/15  
Cost \$315 late registration 2/16-3/30  
Workshops/Tours/Parking - extra \$\$

## Officers

<b>President</b>	<b>Wayne Schirner</b>
<b>First Vice President</b>	<b>Kathy Love</b>
<b>Second Vice President</b>	<b>Louann Hight</b>
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<b>Stacye Parry</b>
<b>Corresponding Secretary</b>	<b>Mary Lew Quesinberry</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Gail Koontz</b>

## Directors

<b>Grounds</b>	<b>Johnny Jones Tom Rennels</b>
<b>KMCCG</b>	<b>Edie Campbell</b>
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Kathleen Ramey</b>
<b>New Class</b>	<b>Fran Sheppard</b>
<b>Newsletter</b>	<b>Sylvia Maedgen</b>
<b>Outreach</b>	<b>Carol Morisset Jan Upchurch</b>
<b>Youth Programs</b>	<b>Marjorie Gillmeister</b>

## Committee Chairpersons

<b>Awards</b>	<b>Kathy Love</b>
<b>Plant Sale</b>	<b>Sylvia Maedgen</b>
<b>Webmaster</b>	<b>Pat Johnson</b>
<b>AgriLife Agent</b>	<b>Lyle Zoeller</b>

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Carol Morisset  
Kathy Patterson  
Kim Pringle  
Tom Rennels  
Wayne Schirner  
Jan Upchurch  
Ann Wagner  
Bill Walker

**Editor:** 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 Terrie Hahn



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