



Master Gardeners and Interns volunteer their time at the Home & Garden Show, Belton Expo and at Wright's Nursery in Briggs, TX.

Above Photo by Marjorie Gillmeister
Right Photo by Sylvia Maedgen



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**Bell County
Master Gardener
Association**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 Work Day - 8 am* Burger Wed. 10:30 am BCMG Intern Class Plant Sale Comm. Mtg. 9:30 am	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Work Day - 8 am* Social - 9:30 am General Meeting - 10 am No BCMG Intern Class - Spring Break	15 Gardening in Bell County - Plant Selec- tion	16 Herbal Forum- Round Top, TX	17 Herbal Forum 
18	19	20	21 Work Day 8 am* BCMG Intern Class Plant Sale preparation	22 Plant Sale preparation	23 Plant Sale prepara- tion	24 Spring Plant Sale - 8 am-1 pm
25 Blooming Bell dead- line	26	27	28 Work Day 8 am* BOD Meeting - 9 am BCMG Intern Class	29	30	31

Upcoming events:

- ◆ Herbal Forum, Round Top, Mar. 16-17
- ◆ Spring Plant Sale, Belton, Mar. 24
- ◆ 2018 TMGA Conference, College Station, Apr. 4-6,
- ◆ Plant Swap, Belton Learning Center, Apr. 11
- ◆ Gardening - Hummingbirds/Butterflies/Bees, Belton Extension Office, Apr. 19,
- ◆ Rain Barrel Class, Belton Learning Center, Apr. 21,
- ◆ Chisholm Trail Elementary, Belton Learning Center, Apr. 24

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

Remember to record volunteer/education hours.

Photo by Terrie Hahn

The President's Corner

- Wayne Schirner

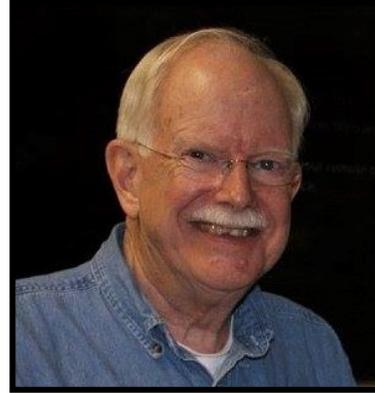
February has been a busy month with lots of opportunities for volunteer service hours. Over 5,000 youth participated in the annual Bell County Youth Fair, and many of us were there to support them. Too many to name individually, but this is clearly an area where we support Bell County youth. Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help with this project. The other main project in February came at the end of the month, when the Temple Area Builders Association held their annual Home and Garden Show at the Bell County Expo Center. This two-day event was a great opportunity for us to interact with the public on a variety of horticultural projects. There were six presentations given on a variety of topics, and all were well received by the audience. The Kids Zone was also a big hit for children and their parents. Look for articles in this edition of the Blooming Bell for additional information. These two events are annual events and great volunteer opportunities. If you weren't able to sign up this year, put it on your schedule for next year.

The big event for March is the spring plant sale to be held on Saturday March 24th. Hard to believe it is only 3 weeks away. There is a lot to be done, but Sylvia is doing a great job getting things organized. I know she needs more volunteers, and she will have something in this BB asking for your help. Don't sit on the sidelines. This is one of two major opportunities we have to earn money to support our many activities.

I know there will be something in this BB about annual membership dues but let me emphasize that the deadline for paying annual dues for certified Master Gardeners was January 31st. We are now a month past that deadline, and there are members who still haven't paid. If you have decided to not remain a member, we are sorry to see you go. If you do want to remain a member, please pay your dues.

The BCMGA has a new logo, approved by the BOD at the February 28th meeting. This distinctive logo will be used on our advertising information and flyers, etc. Hopefully you will be proud of our new logo.

Finally, a group of about 30 members met at the Temple VA on February 28th to better visualize the scope of the new project that was approved at the January BOD meeting. This project has the potential to allow us to interact with area veterans in a wide range of



horticultural topics. We will be assisting them in landscape design and teaching them about plant selection and care. This project is so big, that it will be tackled in small pieces that hopefully will provide quickly visible results, even in the short term. Kathy Love has taken on the job of overall project coordinator, but she has wisely selected three other very capable members to assist her. If this is a project that you might be interested in, contact Kathy for more information.

As always, I am proud of everything you do to help make the BCMGA a great group to belong to. Just remember, whatever you do, do it well.

That's it for this month.

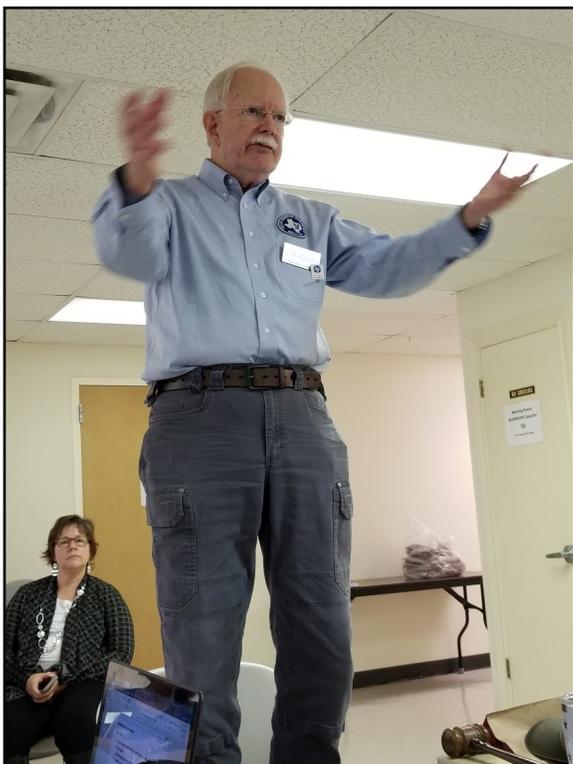


1 More Thing...

Central Texas Freeze/ Frost date

- Wayne Schirner

The average last freeze/frost date for Belton is March 11th. So, what does that mean. Each winter, on average, our risk of frost is from November 21st through March 11th. Almost certainly, we **will** receive frost from December 13 through February 18th. We are almost guaranteed that we **will not** get frost from March 31st through October 31st (unless it snows in April, as I am frequently reminded.) Our frost-free growing season is around 255 days. With each passing day, we get more eager to get planting. Go ahead, give into some of these urges, but be prepared to provide protection to frost sensitive plants when a cold front is suddenly upon us.



BCMGA Web site

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photo by Sylvia Maedgen

BCMGA President, Wayne Schirner got on his chair at the February Board of Directors meeting and appealed to everyone to go to the BCMGA web site - <https://txmg.org/bell/> - and view the various screens under each of the tabs and make note of the pages that need updating. If you are responsible for a page or information on this web site, please make appropriate updates to the documents and submit to Pat Johnson, BCMGA webmaster. This web site is for members' use as well as the public's resource for information about BCMGA. Some information is only available to members, but we need to have updated information available to everyone.

Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

Acrobat Ants

- Wizzie Brown, Travis County AgriLife
Extension Entomologist

Acrobat ants usually nest outdoors under stones or in dead wood such as firewood, tree stumps, dead tree branches, or hollow tree cavities. Because they are found in similar habitats, acrobat ants are sometimes confused with carpenter ants. Indoors they can nest in foam insulating board or water damaged wood. Acrobat ants get their name from the act of raising their abdomen over their thorax when in defensive posture which makes the ants look similar to circus acrobats.

Acrobat ants have a reddish-brown head and thorax with a dark blue-black abdomen. The abdomen is a distinctive heart-shape. Acrobat ants primarily feed on honeydew produced by aphids and can often be seen tending honeydew producers on plants. They will sometimes use overhanging tree branches or power lines to enter homes in search of food.



Outdoors, acrobat ants are usually not a problem directly. They can be seen as a problem in that they will protect honeydew producers from predators and parasites. You can use this to your advantage by using the acrobat ants as a monitoring tool to watch if you have honeydew producers on your plants.

To avoid a home invasion by acrobats follow these tips:

- Remove tree stumps & dead limbs from trees
- Trim back branches overhanging or touching the roof
- Fill tree cavities with sand

- Do not store firewood in or near the home
- Keep weather stripping around doors & windows in good repair
- Seal around pipe penetrations with caulk or expanding foam
- Fix any water leaks
- Replace water damaged wood on the structure
- Spray around the foundation of the home- select a product labeled for ants

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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TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Do You Know About...?

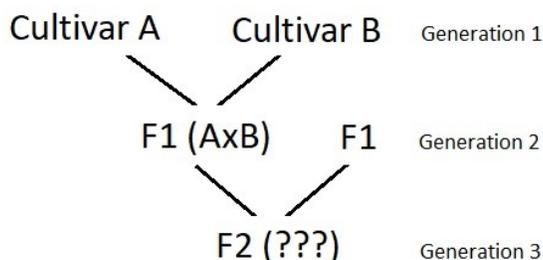
Understanding Natural and Artificial Hybrid Seeds

- Rebecca Burrow

This article is simply to inform about the difference between classes of hybrid seeds in the vegetable industry. As Master Gardeners, we know the difference between open-pollinated plants and hybrid plants, but the distinctions within hybrids can be hard to understand.

Let's start by defining "hybrid." To get a hybrid, you cross Cultivar A with Cultivar B to get an F1 generation (Cultivar AxB if you want to be specific). Simple Mendelian genetics. Cultivar AxB is not labeled as Cultivar C, because an F1 will not breed "true to type". F1 characteristics are known, but F2 is not.

How to Make a Hybrid F1



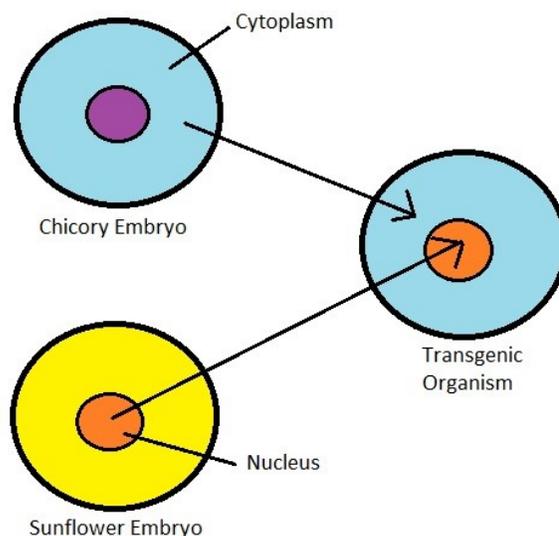
Hybridizing is a basic, natural, and foundational process in plant or animal breeding. Good hybrids often produce a "hybrid vigor," being more productive than either A or B would have been alone. While hybridizing can and should be used in open-pollinated plant breeding programs, such as landracing, in commercial seed production a hybrid is a genetic dead end.

Dead end hybrids have their uses. A hybrid can be patented. In a business sense, this is wonderful. If a gardener or farmer needs a particular hybrid, they have to buy from that company each season. If another company wants to sell the seeds, they have to pay a royalty fee. All in all, the seed company wins.

An artificial hybrid popping up in the past two or three decades is the cell fusion hybrid with cytoplasmic male sterility (CF-CMS). This is a genetic engineering method widely used in commercial seed companies for onions, potatoes, carrots, and particularly brassicas.

Cell fusion (CF) is when DNA from one cell is combined with DNA from another cell of a different species (think radish and broccoli or chicory with sunflower). The result is a "transgenic" organism, a "cybrid" if you will.

Protoplastic Cell Fusion of Plants



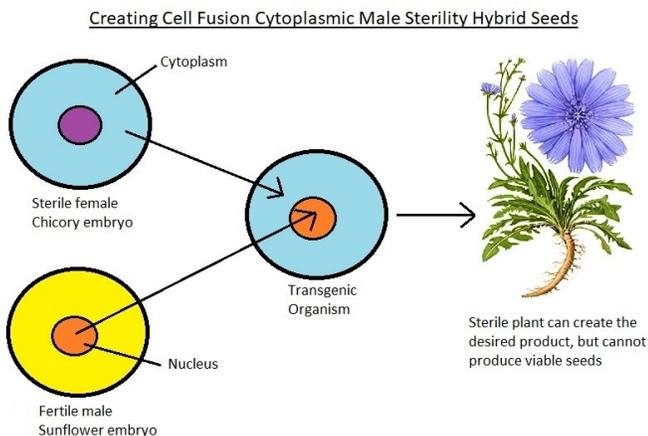
Cytoplasmic male sterility (CMS) is actually naturally occurring. It is a maternally inherited trait in the cytoplasm DNA (specifically, the mitochondria). A plant is sterile when CMS cytoplasm interacts with a fertility gene in the nucleus. Male reproductive factors are inhibited (pollen), while the female side still works (fruit). It happens in onions quite easily. Seed labs artificially induce CMS using cell fusion techniques.

Do You Know About...?

Understanding Natural and Artificial Hybrid Seeds - con't.

- Rebecca Burrow

CF-CMS is created when the nucleus of a fertile male embryo is added to the cytoplasm of a sterile female embryo, producing a sterile F1 hybrid plant. This F1 plant produces a product with known characteristics, but no viable seeds or pollen.



Now, why do seed companies do this? They do not do it because it sounds cool. They want sterile plants. For a seed company, sterile plants are safe, easy, cheap, and guarantee repeated business. They cannot be stolen and therefore do not need to be patented, which is costly and irritating. They have a dead end hybrid that the company does not need to worry about and just by its existence creates demand. Additionally, a seed lab can make CF-CMS seeds by the millions.

The International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) states that cell fusion is a genetic engineering technique, labeling such plants as GM (genetically modified). The USA does not use the IFOAM standard. Politically, cell fusion is not considered GM in the USA, even though it is scientifically.

While a hybrid seed must by law be labeled as a hybrid, the seed company does not have to detail how they made it. Not all hybrids are CF-CMS. Therefore, it is impossible to know whether a hybrid was bred through natural hybridization (and still possibly fertile) or artificial CF-CMS (sterile). If saving seed is a deciding factor in choosing vegetable varieties, then the easiest thing to do is avoid all hybrids and choose only open-pollinated ones.

Now you know the difference between natural hybridization and artificial hybrid sterility and can make informed choices when roaming through your large stack of vegetable seed catalogs.



What's Been Happening...

Meridith Dunbar Early Childhood Academy - Seed Activity

- Marjorie Gillmeister Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

Meridith Dunbar Early Childhood Academy Update on the research project with our four year old youngest gardeners. The seedlings have emerged after waiting so patiently in Eggshell pods versus newspaper pots using grow lights and measured watering schedule each day. We have chosen to do a comparison of Tomato Tigerella seedlings as we will weigh the harvest of the fruit. The children are so excited to grow their own tomatoes.

I will keep you updated on the progress. Mrs. Ca-david's bilingual class have been tending to their Egg-shell pods with lots of love and the result is evident with happy smiles. Mrs. Sanchez's class is responsible for the newspaper pots. As you can see the egg-shells have a head start and are looking quite promising and the newspaper pots are emerging at their own pace.

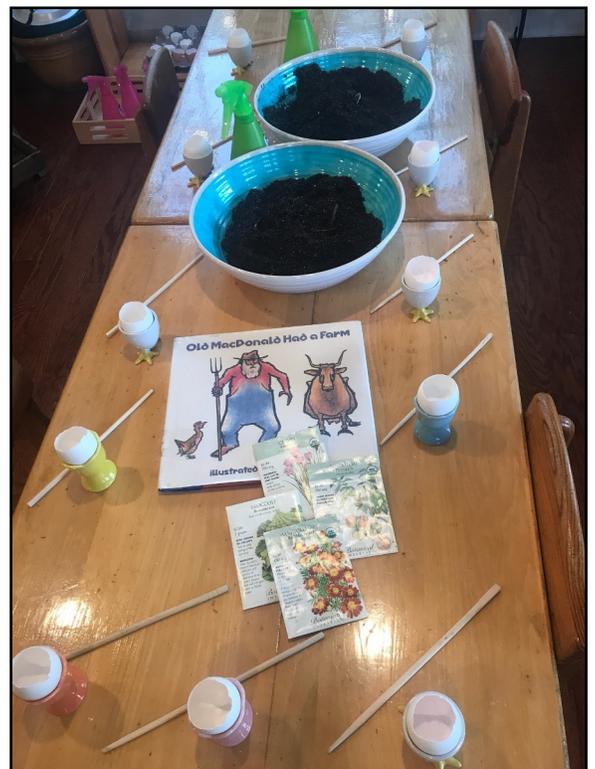


What's Been Happening...

Montessori School

- Marjorie Gillmeister Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

Master Gardener Class of 2017, Dee Seely and I worked with three classes sowing seeds in Eggshell pods with 50 children in attendance that day. Each class has their own little house where the classroom has windows all around and where their little seedlings are growing. Special thank you to Dee Seely for joining me on this wonderful project and reading to the grateful children.



What's Been Happening...

Oveta Culp Elementary - Fort Hood

- Marjorie Gillmeister Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

Master Gardeners Marjorie Gillmeister, Gail Koontz, Sandra Blankenship, Dennis Biggs, and New Class Interns, Nancy Novakoski, and Kerin Grimes worked with 11 children (2nd and 3rd graders) and their teachers Mrs. Gonzalez and Mrs. Miranda for the after school garden club program. Activity was starting seeds in Eggshell pods indoors for their outdoor community garden. Master Gardeners will meet once a month throughout the school year to help educate, hands on gardening lessons, and engage the children with various topics on horticultural education. We were impressed to see that the community garden is being maintained, a compost bin with scraps and eggshells too. Next month's activity will be soil amending the raised beds, direct sowing seeds, and transplanting Eggshell pod seedlings.



What's Been Happening...

Baylor Scott & White Children's Hospital

- Marjorie Gillmeister Photo by Marjorie Gillmeister

Thank you to all of our wonderful Master Gardeners, Kathy Love, Claudette Hawkins, Sandi Lenehan, Carol Morisset, Breanna Care and our future Junior Master Gardener in training, Wolfgang Gillmeister, and New Class Intern Michael Pointer, who joined us for this day of sowing seeds in Eggshell pods with the children. Special thank you to Breanna Care, MG Class of 2017, who coordinated the class. We had 3 children in attendance that were able to plant and one young boy who sowed a tray of 12 eggshell plants to grow in his hospital room during his stay. We hope to brighten many of their lives.



The Home & Garden Show - Belton Expo

- Marjorie Gillmeister Photos by Sylvia Maedgen

I am overjoyed with the amazing turnout we had at The Kidzone. Much gratitude for all of you! We had an amazing team of Master Gardeners, Gail Koontz, Jo Carlsen, Peg Fleet, Janice Smith, Claudette Hawkins, Barb Salys, Joan Bumgarner, Elaine Passman, Sylvia Maedgen, and Jeannie Richardson. New Class Interns, Laura Ladd, Kelby Kosel, Nancy, Novakoski, Kathleen Lester, Kerin Grimes, Kathy Lovelace, Dorothy Thomas, Juan Anaya, and Janet Stein. Special thank you to Carla Harmon for taking the time to help breakdown our setup. If you only knew how many lives you have an impact on is truly priceless. The turnout of attendance speaks loudly as we educated and planted seeds of life with 439 children, their parents, and adults.



What's Been Happening...

The Home & Garden Show - Belton Expo - con't.

- Marjorie Gillmeister

Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister and Sylvia Maedgen



What's Been Happening...

Bell County Youth Fair

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photo by Sylvia Maedgen

Many Master Gardeners and Interns helped with the Bell County Youth Fair during the week of February 5-8, 2018. Many served as judges, recipe readers, room monitors, office help, etc.

From Jackie McLaughlin and Betty Nejteck—

First of all we want to thank all of you for your work with the Bell County Youth Fair. I know many of you took time from your job, family and daily routines to help with the FCS Division at the fair. There is no way our office staff could possibly do all the work involved. Many, many thanks to you!

All of you are a special group of youth and extension program supporters! Again - Thank You All for Everything You Do!



Plant Sale Workdays at Wright's Nursery

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen

Master Gardeners and Interns got their hands dirty transplanting plugs into containers at Wright's Nursery in Briggs, TX on February 1st and 15th. Hundreds of plugs were transplanted. Some of the plants will be for our Spring Plant Sale on March 24th.



What's Been Happening...

General Meeting—February

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Randy Brown

The presentation was given by Gary Slanga and the topic was on flowers. Refreshments with a Valentine's theme were provided by Joan Bumgarner, Jo Carl- sen, Karen Colwick, and Carla Harmon.



Master Gardener Inter- view on KXXV-25

- Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen

We have a celebrity in the house! Marjorie Gillmeister, Youth Programs Director was interviewed by Ann Harder, News Anchor for KXXV-25 Central Texas Living Show on February 7th. Marjorie and Dannette Gardener from the Meridith Dunbar Early Childhood Academy talked about the research that the 4 year old students are conducting with eggshell seed planting vs. newspaper seed planting.

You can go to the BCMGA web site on Facebook to view the entire interview.





Member Spotlight



- Larry Causey

Juan Anaya, 2018 MG Intern

Juan Anaya, 59, of McGregor, who has been gardening for about 30 years, has had good luck with tomatoes. Cherokee purple is his favorite, because of its fruit size, productivity and flavor. Last year he had enough tomatoes for his family, the neighbors and just about everybody else. Each Cherokee purple probably weighed more than a pound, he said.

"I had to stake every limb," he said. "If I didn't, they were going to break the plant. I really had it supported." Anaya attributes his success with tomatoes to lots of compost, nutrition and a trick for developing a sturdier root system.

Late this February he had about five healthy young tomato plants near the window sill of his back bedroom, with a grow light on them. His procedure is that when one of the plants is about nine inches tall, he lays it down on a piece of newspaper. The end of the plant will turn up toward the window sill. He then re-plants the young vine in a small box, still indoors, in compost he has developed over the years. The vine will have about three inches above-ground and about nine inches below. "That plant will begin to grow pretty rapidly, and I'll start feeding it," he said. "It will be probably 18 inches tall when I plant it in the garden."

Instead of having a root ball about three inches long, his will be about nine inches long and three or four inches wide. He only plants it about seven inches deep, so it will be easier to feed.

He is careful to apply a granular mix that has calcium in it. That's to fight blossom end rot, he said. "When I first started tomatoes, they got up, and when they started to get ripe, the end would rot out," he said.

As the Texas summer wears on, the heat gets to the Cherokee purple tomatoes, he said. Toward the end of July 2017, his vines were putting out so few they were not worth watering, he said.

Enter the Juliet tomato, about an inch and a half long and pear-shaped. "It will produce tomato after tomato," he said. "I picked my last tomatoes Dec. 15 this past year. That Juliet will keep on producing through the heat. Every gardener that I know will plant at least one Juliet plant."

Anaya also grows potatoes, onions, carrots and various pepper plants. Half of his yard, he said, is filled with plants that attract hummingbirds and butterflies. He has learned more about plant nutrition and composting in the 2018 Master Gardeners class, he said. His success with tomatoes came through experimenting, he said. "Now I can see that there are factual studies behind it," he said. "It kind of reinforces what I thought."

One thing I never paid any attention to was the pH level," he said. "I've been lucky when it's worked. Some of the other kinds of plants I planted that didn't do so well, maybe now I know why." One of the biggest things about the course is the information resources provided, he said, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website and handbook. "There's no reason for anyone to fail at gardening," he said. "They don't have to go through the failures I had over the years."

This and That...

Bell County Master Gardener Association

Spring Plant Sale

Saturday, March 24, 2018

8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Bell County AgriLife Building
Master Gardener Learning Center
1605 N. Main, Belton, TX 76513



Featuring Earth-Kind,
Texas Superstar and
Native Plants - including:
Annuals, Ferns/Grasses,
Groundcovers, Organic Herbs &
Vegetables, Perennials, Trees,
Shrubs, Roses, Succulents, & Vines



Kid's Camp
Concessions by 4-H Youth

Free Demonstration Classes:
Composting
Rainwater Harvesting
Square Foot Gardening
Succulent Propagation



Agriculture and Natural Resources - Family and Consumer Sciences - 4-H and Youth Development - Community Development Extension programs service people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level; race; color; sex; religion; disability; or national origin. The Texas A&M University System; U.S. Department of Agriculture; and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating A member of the Texas A&M University System and its statewide Agriculture Program.

Don't forget to sign-up to help with the Plant Sale. Refer to page 18 for a listing of activities that you can volunteer for the Plant Sale and the week before the event. Thank You!

This and That...

Annuals	HERBS-con't	VEGETABLES-con't	PERENNIALS	ROSES	TREES & SHRUBS
AGUSTACHE, VARIOUS	GINGER, (edible)	PEPPER, BELL JUPITER	FALL ASTER	BALLERINA	BLUE SHRUB SAGE
ANGELONIA, SERENA WATERFALL MIX	HYSSOP	PEPPER, BELL MIX	FIRECRACKER FERN	BLUSH NOISSETTE	CESTRUM, ORANGE PEEL
BLUE CURLS	LAVENDER: ELLEGANCE	PEPPER, JALAPENO	Honeysuckle-Mexican	CAREFREE BEAUTY	ESPERANZA, YELLOW BELLS
BLUE DAZE	LAVENDER: FERNLEAF	PEPPER, POBLANO	JERUSALEM SAGE	CHESTNUT ROSE	MAKI/JAPANESE YEW
DURANTA, BRAZILIAN SKY FLOWER	LAVENDER: HYSSOP	SQUASH, ACORN	LAMBS EAR, HELEN VON STEIN	CRAMOISI SUPERIER	MEXICAN BUCKEYE
DUSTY MILLER	LAVENDER: MUNSTEAD	SQUASH, BUTTERNUT	LANTANA	DAME DE COEUR	POSSUMHAW
FIREBUSH	LAVENDER: PROVENCE	SQUASH, WHITE SCALLOP	LANTANA-NEW GOLD	DRIFT CORAL	TEXAS MOUNTAIN LAUREL
GLOBE AMARANTH	LAVENDER: Spanish Otto Quesí	SQUASH, YELLOW STRAIGHTNECK	MARIGOLD-MEXICAN MINT	DRIFT RED	TEXAS PERSIMMON
LAURA BUSH PETUNIA	LEMON BALM	SQUASH, ZUCCHINI	MEXICAN BIRD OF PARADISE	DUCHER	CRIMSON BOTTLEBUSH
MOSS ROSE	LEMON GRASS	SWISS CHARD, BRIGHT LIGHTS	MILKWEED-NATIVE	GREEN ROSE	TEXAS KIDNEYWOOD
PETUNIA, TIDAL WAVE	LEMON VERBENA	TOMATO, BETTER BOY	MISTFLOWER, FRAGRANT/White	HOT COCOA	TEXAS SAGE, GENIZO
PLAINS COREOPSIS/TICK-SEED	LION'S TAIL	TOMATO, BLACK KRIM	MISTFLOWER, GREGG'S BLUE	JOSEPH'S COAT	RED YUCCA
PLUMBAGO, BLUE	MARJORAM, SWEET	TOMATO, CELEBRITY	MOUNTAIN PEA	JULIA CHILD*	ZEXMENIA, ORANGE
PRIDE-OF-BARBADOS	MINT: CHOCOLATE	TOMATO, CHEROKEE PURPLE	PENSTAMON, HILL COUNTRY	LA MARNE	THYRALLIS
PURSLANE	MINT: HILARY'S LEMON	TOMATO, DWARF CHERRY BHN 968	PENSTEMON-BACCHARIS-LEAF	LADY BANKS	VIOLET SILVERLEAF
TEXAS BLUEBONNETS	MINT: PEPPERMINT	TOMATO, EARLY GIRL	PHLOX, JOHN FANICK	LAFTER	LYNN'S LEGACY GENIZO
VARIEGATED SHELL GINGER	MINT: SPEARMINT	TOMATO, GARDENER'S DELIGHT	PHLOX, Louisiana Blue	LINDEE	MEXICAN WHITE OAK
VINCA CORA SERIES	MINT: VARIEGATED PINEAPPLE	TOMATO, HOMESTEAD	PINCUSHION FLOWER, BLUE	LOUIS PHILIPPE	TEXAS RED BUD
FERNS/GROUNDCOVERS	MYRTLE: DWARF MYRTLE	TOMATO, JUBILEE	PLUMBAGO-WHITE	MARIE DALY	EVE'S NECKLACE
ASPARAGUS FERN	OREGANO: GREEK	TOMATO, JULIET	PRIMROSE-MISSOURI	MARTHA GONZALES	GOLDENBALL LEAD TREE
FOXTAIL FERN	OREGANO: MEXICAN	TOMATO, LEMON BOY	RIVERFERN	MILE. FRANZISKA KRUGER	LACEY OAK
HOLLY FERN	OREGANO: SICILIAN	TOMATO, PATIO	ROOT BEER PLANT	MONSIEUR TILLIER	VINES
MAIDENHAIR FERN	OREGANO: SYRIAN	TOMATO, PORTER	RUDBECKIA CHERRY BRANDY	NACOGDOCHES	CONFEDERATE JASMINE
MING FERN	PARSLEY: CURLY	TOMATO, RED CHERRY	RUDBECKIA GOLDSTRUM	REPUBLIC OF TEXAS	CORAL HONEYSUCKLE
GRASS: CHINESE SILVER	PARSLEY: ITALIAN (FLAT LEAF)	TOMATO, ROMA	RUELLIA KATIE DWARF WHITE	RISE N SHINE	CORAL HONEYSUCKLE
GRASS: PERENNIAL FOUNTAIN	PENNYROYAL	TOMATO, SUN GOLD	RUELLIA, 'Ragin' Cajun'	ROSARIUM UETERSEN	CORALVINE
GROUNDCOVER: ICE PLANT	ROSEMARY, PROSTRATE	TOMATO, SWEET 100	SAGE, BIG RED	SEVEN SISTERS	CROSS VINE
GROUNDCOVER: LIRIOPE	ROSEMARY, HARDY HILL	TOMATO, TYCOON	SAGE, Mealy Blue, Augusta Duelberg	STAR OF THE REPUBLIC	PASSIONFLOWER
GROUNDCOVER: SILVER PONY FOOT	ROSEMARY, TUSCAN BLUE	TOMATO, VALLEY GIRLS	SAGE, MEALY CUP, EVOLUTION	THE FAIRY	PRIMROSE JASMINE
HERBS	SAGE: BERGGARTEN	TOMATO, YELLOW PEAR	SAGE, MEXICAN BUSH	VALENTINE	
BASIL: AMETHYST	SAGE: GOLDEN	PERENNIALS	SAGE, RUSSIAN	VEILCHENBLAU	The availability of the
BASIL: BELL PEPPER	SAGE: PINEAPPLE	CATMINT WALKER'S LOW	SAGE-CEDAR	SUCCULENTS	listed plants is subject
BASIL: BLUE SPICE	SAGE: PURPLE	COLUMBINE NEW GOLD	SALVIA GREGGII CORAL	DYCKIA: GRAPE JELLY	to receipt from
BASIL: CINNAMON	SAGE: TRICOLOR	CONEFLOWER, PALE	SALVIA GREGGII FURMAN'S RED	DYCKIA: SAN JUAN	contracted nurseries.
BASIL: CLOVE	SALAD BURNET	CONEFLOWER, PURPLE	SALVIA GREGGII PINK	ECHEVERIA: ASSORTED	
BASIL: HOLY	SCENTED GERANIUM: Assorted	CONEFLOWER, YELLOW	SALVIA -HENRY DUELBERG	GHOST PLANT	
BASIL: MRS. BURN'S LEMON	STEVIA	CORALBERRY	SALVIA, FOREST FIRE	GOPHER PLANT	
BASIL: PURPLE RUFFLES	THYME: ENGLISH/FRENCH	COREOPSIS LANCELEAF	SALVIA, LIPSTICK	MANFREDIA: ASSORTED	
BASIL: THAI	THYME: LEMON MIST	COREOPSIS, NANA	SALVIA, PURPLE FAIRY TALE	MOLINA: ASSORTED	
BAY LAUREL	THYME: LEMON VARIEGATED	CYPRESS-STANDING	SALVIA, RASPBERRY	HEN & CHICKS	
BEEBALM: PETER'S PURPLE	THYME: ORANGE	DAISY, BLACKFOOT	SANTOLINA, LAVENDER COTTON		
BORAGE: BLUE	YARROW-Fernleave Cloth of Gold	DAISY, CHOCOLATE	SKULLCAP, TEXAS PINK		
CATNIP	YARROW-Pastels	DAISY, COPPER CANYON	SOCIETY GARLIC		
CHILI PEQUIN	VEGETABLES	DAISY, ENLEMANS	TEXAS BETONY	Please visit http://txmg.org/bell/ for additional	
CHIVES GARLIC	CARDOON	DAISY, FOUR NERVE	TURKS CAP	information on gardening resources. Send us	
CILANTRO	CUCUMBER: HOMEMADE PICKLES	DAISY, MAXIMILIAN	VERBENA	your email to be added to our customer email	
DILL: BOUQUET	CUCUMBER: MARKETMORE	DAMIANA	VERBENA, HOMESTEAD	list and receive Spring & Fall Plant Sale	
DILL: FERNLEAF	EGG PLANT: BLACK BEAUTY	DIANTHUS, FIRST LOVE	VIOLET, PHILIPPINE	emails and announcements.	
FENNEL: FLORENCE	EGG PLANT: ICHIBAN	ESPERANZA, GOLD STAR	VITEX, BEACH		

Don't forget to submit your pre-sale plant order in by March 14, 2018, You can email it to me at txbikerchic7@gmail.com or bring me a printed copy to Burger Wednesday on March 7th or the General Meeting on March 14th. The order form will go out by email this week.

This and That...

Spring Plant Sale - Volunteers Needed!

DON'T FORGET TO SIGN-UP TO HELP WITH THE PLANT SALE ON MARCH 24TH AND THE WEEK BEFORE TO HELP WITH THE PREPARATIONS AND DELIVERIES OF THE PLANTS AND SET-UP. BELOW IS A LISTING OF ACTIVITIES WHERE WE NEED HELP. PLEASE CONSIDER BEING A COORDINATOR, IF NOT, WE APPRECIATE YOU VOLUNTEERING FOR AN ACTIVITY. THANK YOU!

Date	Activities	Coordinator & Volunteers
3/7/18	Plant committee workers meeting-9:30 am - Learning Center Bldg.	Sylvia Maedgen
3/7/18	Notebook plant descriptions-review & updates-after meeting	
3/7/18	Plant sign descriptions-make new ones-after meeting	
ongoing	Advertisements	Carol Morriset/Jan Upchurch
3/21/18	load-up plant order at Wright's Nursery - 10 am to 3 pm	
3/22/18	Unload plant orders & set-up on tables-from Wright's Nursery & Gabriel Valley Farms at Learning Center Bldg.-9 am to 12 noon set-up canopies, set-up tables, chairs, banners, signs, etc.	
3/23/18	Pre-Order Sales/Boxing & payment receipt - 8 am - 12 noon	Barbara Ishikawa
3/23/18	Bring wagons, canopies and carts to learning center - 8 am - 12 noon water plants, put out plant signs, clean up plants	
3/24/18	Entrance greeters-counters/contacts - need 4	
3/24/18	Talliers of plant sales - need 6	
3/24/18	Cashiers - need 6	
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Annuals/Vines	
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Ferns/Grasses/Groundcovers	
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Herbs	Carla Harmon
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Vegetables	Wayne Schirner
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Perennials	
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Roses	Rebecca Burrow
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Succulents	Jan George
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Shrubs	
3/24/18	Plant Sale Contact-Trees	Art Carr
3/24/18	Ask a Master Gardener booth - 2 to 3 workers (MG Literature and Plant Raffle)	
3/24/18	Kids Camp	Elaine Passman
3/24/18	Loading Zone helpers	
3/24/18	Photographer - 1 or 2	

What's Happening in Your Yard

- Terrie Hahn

Photos by Terrie Hahn

The Anemone *Anemone berlandieri* (is pictured on the Calendar, page 2) - the first wildflowers to bloom for us every year. And Winter Honeysuckle *Lonicera fragrantissima* which is buzzing with bees! Also in our yard, Purple Hyacinth, Snowflakes (*Leucojum aestivum*) and a couple of bulbs that look like they're in the daffodil family, but am not certain.



- Juan Anaya

Photo by Juan Anaya

This is a picture of the roots of my Cherokee purple tomatoes last year.

(Juan is in this month's featured 'Member Spotlight'. You can read more about his gardening skills in this article on page XX.)



Announcements

2018 TMGA Conference - Celebrating 40 Years

Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Present, Embracing the Future



- Sylvia Maedgen

Only one more month before we head to College Station for the 2018 TMGA State Conference on April 4-6, 2018 in College Station. The conference will be held at the Hilton Inn. The Hilton Inn is **SOLD OUT!!!** (Note: If your preference is to stay at The Hilton, we suggest you call directly as the hotel may have had a cancellation. You may also be placed on a waiting list by emailing Nicky at 2018tmgaconference@gmail.com). Other hotels to contact include:

- The Embassy Suites, 979-260-6000, \$129 per night
- Aloft Hotel, 979-704-6400, \$109 per night
- Courtyard by Marriott, 979-695-8111, \$110 per night
- Holiday Inn and Suites, 979-485-8300, \$131 per night
- Home2Suites by Hilton, 979-703-8288, \$124 per night
- Hyatt Place, 888-591-1234 (Group G-TMGA), \$119 per night
- TRYP by Wyndham, 979-314-7663, \$119 per night
- Baymont Inn & Suites, 979-680-3000, \$109 per night
- Best Western Premier, 979-731-5300, \$99 per night
- Quality Inn, 979-695-9400, \$89-King/\$99-Queen per night
- TownePlace Suites, 979-260-8500, \$109 per night-Studio, \$149 per night-2 BR Suite

There will be seminars and tours (additional costs) throughout the 3 days. 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

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. Please try to send some digital photos of yourself so the BCMGA will be well represented in the video. They want to feature as many Master Gardeners for an exclusive video to be featured at the conference. Examples include a photo showing what you do outside of working in the dirt.

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 \$80 and you can register and pay online at - <http://festivalhill.org/calendar/details.php?id=2726>. Most of the optional workshops on Friday are already sold out. Eighteen members and friends will be attending. You can also drive down for the day on Saturday. The plant sale is open to anyone.



On Friday you can spend time at the plant sale and tour the grounds at Festival Hill. There is shopping in downtown Round Top and Royer's Cafe offers lunch and their famous pies as well as other restaurants.

If you have any questions, please email me at kimberpringle@earthlink.net or call or text 254-421-2593.

Announcements

Baylor Scott & White - McLane Children's Hospital Healing Garden

- Kathy Love

My co-chair for the Children's Hospital Healing Garden Project, Breanna Care, has organized and scheduled 4 horticultural teaching opportunities this year. The Next class is May 12th, 1:30-3:30 p.m. - Bees and other pollinators taught by Breanna Care. This provides an opportunity for the children, parents, and staff at the hospital to participate. The class will be held in the hospital's multi-media room. Just check in at the front desk as usual and ask for directions to the multi-media room.



If you can help Breanna with this important addition to our Children's Hospital project (we have been missing an educational component and now, thanks to Breanna's hard work, we have added that element) please email Marjorie Gillmeister at mjgillmeister@me.com or Breanna at breannacare@gmail.com.

I will evaluate the condition of the garden when I am there Saturday and see what additional plantings we may need for the containers. If we need to do some updating prior to the re-potting of all containers with spring color (probably mid-March). I will let everyone know.

Thanks to everyone for all of your support in 2017 for this wonderful project and I look forward to working with all of you in 2018 to keep this garden beautiful, peaceful and comforting.

Upcoming Youth Program Activities

- Marjorie Gillmeister

We've had a fruitful February month sowing seeds of life with many children and adults throughout the county. If you are interested in volunteering with our youth please contact: Marjorie Gillmeister, BCMG Youth Director, email - mjgillmeister@me.com, or phone (347) 820-3221.



- March 2nd Sugar Loaf Elementary, Killeen
- March 21st First United Methodist Church, Temple
- March 22nd Montessori School of Temple
- March tbd MDECA- Meridith Dunbar Early Childhood Academy
- April 9th, 10th, 11th, 13th MDECA- Meridith Dunbar Early Childhood Academy
- April 20th Career Day at Cavazos Elementary, Nolanville
- April 27th Career Day at Douse Elementary on Fort Hood



Who Has BCMGA Photos and Videos?

- Sylvia Maedgen



Hear ye!
Hear ye!

We would like to collect an inventory of digital pictures of all people and events of the Bell County Master Gardener Association from current to past events. We plan to store the pictures on an external hard drive and maintain an archive on our history. This collection will be helpful for use in submitting awards and for special events. If you have pictures that you would like to share, please save them to a CD or thumb drive and turn them in to me please. I can return the CD or thumb drive once I have copied them onto the hard drive. Thank you!

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:

- | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| • March 15 | Plant Selection | • August 16 | Propagation of Plants |
| • April 19 | Hummingbirds, Butterflies, & Bees | • September 20 | Greenhouse Basics |
| • May 17 | Water Efficiency | • October 18 | Texas Native Gardening in the Winter |
| • June 21 | Insects in Your Garden | • November 15 | Raised Bed Gardening |
| • 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 OR carol.j.morisset@gmail.com

Rain Barrel Workshop - Mark your calendar!

Saturday, April 21st, 9 am—12 pm, Bell County Extension Building, 1605 N. Main St., Belton, \$60
Payment due in advance. Contact Karen Colwick for info @ 254-913-4459 or kcolwick@hotmail.com.

Refreshment Roster for General Meetings

- Jane Van Praag

On March 14th Larry Causey has signed up for an Easter theme and could use a few more helpers.

Our Herbal Group, fresh from the Herbal Forum at Round Top a few weeks before, will take care of April 11th.

Sylvia Maedgen selected Spring for the May 9th theme and could benefit from a few more volunteers.

For June 13th, Marjorie Gillmeister will bring goodies reminiscent of her family trip to Lubeck, Germany, and is gladly open to other helpers.

I'm doing September 12th, to coincide with Hispanic Heritage Month beginning on the 15th, Diez y Seis--anniversary of Mexican independence--and reflecting on my time in Mexico.

July 11th and August 8th are vacant; so too, October 10th and November 14th are up for grabs. Some of the rest of you want to fill in these blanks, I can sense those creative juices flowing through your brains(!), so contact me soonest at jvanpraag@sbcglobal.net !!!

Reminder - BCMGA Membership Dues

Annual membership dues of \$25 were due on January 31, 2018. If you have not paid them, please submit your payment to Kathleen Ramey. We would prefer to keep you as an active member.



Announcements

Dallas Arboretum Tour

- Jan George



BCMG will be going on an adventure to tour the Dallas Arboretum's "A World of Flowers" on Thursday, March 29, 2018. We will have a guided tour of the 66 acre botanical gardens which consists of over 500,000 Tulips in bloom, Azaleas, and varieties of other spring blooming plants. We will be departing the AgriLife center at 7:30 am and returning around 4:30-5:00 pm. Plan on arriving around 7:00 am as the bus will pull out promptly at 7:30 am. Our tour will be from 10:30-12 or 12:30. There will be plenty of time to eat lunch and wander the gardens after the tour. We will be departing the gardens around 2:30 pm and arriving back at the center about 4:30-5:00 pm. The cost of \$40.00 will include bus fare, admission fee, tour guide, and gratuity. The payment must be turned in by March 14, 2018. It can be given to Scarlot in the main office, Kathy Love in our MG office on Wednesdays, at the next membership meeting on March 14th, or mailed to me @ PO Box 882, Florence, TX. 76527.

You can either take your lunch or purchase a lunch box for \$15.00 which includes a sandwich, tea or water, chips, cookie, & gratuity. Your choice of sandwiches are:

- Cedar Elm-Maple glazed ham, herb roasted turkey, smoked bacon, baby greens, sliced Roma tomato on soft country wheat bread
- Red Oak-turkey, Swiss cheese, tomato, greens, on wheat bread
- Magnolia-chicken salad with sun dried cherries, toasted Texas pecans, sliced cucumbers, wild baby greens, sliced tomato on a buttery croissant
- Buckeye-tossed salad with natural roasted chicken, mixed green, shredded carrots, sliced tomatoes & cucumbers with ranch dressing or balsamic vinaigrette
- Mesquite-Veggie wrap with Hass avocado, lettuce, sliced tomato, Vidalia onions, julienned carrots and Swiss cheese wrapped in a spinach tortilla with a cilantro hummus spread

When paying, indicate if you will be bringing your lunch or which sandwich you will purchase. This has to be turned in to the Arboretum on March 15th along with admission fees and tour guide fees. There will be snacks and water on the bus. This will be a trip to explore our Texas spring time and nature's beautiful colors! I'm looking forward to seeing you all there. If you have any questions, please contact me @ jan-george530@gmail.com or text me @ 254-371-5276.

Congratulations! It's a boy!

Kellie Hussmann, MG Class of 2017 gave birth to a baby boy on December 23, 2017. Everett Charles Hussmann and proud mom and dad are pictured here. What a cutie! We can't wait to meet the new bundle of joy. Hopefully a future Junior Master



Gardener. We plan to honor Kellie and Everett with a baby shower at the March general meeting on Wednesday, March 14th. We will present her with refreshments and gifts during the social hour before the meeting.



Announcements

March General Meeting

- **Kathy Love**

The March general meeting will be held on the 14th. The education presentation will be on "VMS Instructions and Advice" by Gail Christian and Kathy Love. Social time is 9:30 a.m., meeting at 10 a.m. in the learning center building.

Board of Director's Meeting

The March Board of Director's Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 28th 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, March 23rd.

Grounds Workdays

- **Johnny Jones and Tom Rennels**

Here is the workday schedule for January:

Mar. 7, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday
10:30 a.m. Burger Wednesday
Mar. 14, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday
Mar. 21, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday
Mar. 28, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday

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

Upcoming Conferences

Apr. 4-6 TX MG State Conference
College Station
Cost \$315 late registration 2/16-3/30
Workshops/Tours/Parking - extra \$\$

CHECK OUT BCMGA FACEBOOK PAGE! GO TO

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

Advanced Learning

Upcoming Specialist Training

- Mar. 23-24 Propagation Specialist Training
Ft. Worth - Cost \$225
Deadline to register - Feb. 26
- Mar. 26-28 Irrigation Efficiency Specialist Training
Dallas - Cost \$250
Deadline to register - Mar. 19
- Apr. 30-May 2 Rainwater Harvesting Specialist Training
Dallas - Cost \$250
Deadline to register - Apr. 24
- May 23-25 Greenhouse Management Specialist Training
Kerrville - Cost \$185
Deadline to register - May 1
- Sep. 18-20 Texas Superstars Specialist Training
Tyler—Cost \$ TBD



Officers

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Second Vice President	Louann Hight
Recording Secretary	Stacye Parry
Corresponding Secretary	Mary Lew Quesinberry
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KMCCG	Edie Campbell
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New Class	Fran Sheppard
Newsletter	Sylvia Maedgen
Outreach	Carol Morisset Jan Upchurch
Youth Programs	Marjorie Gillmeister

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Awards	Kathy Love
Plant Sale	Sylvia Maedgen
Webmaster	Pat Johnson
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Betty Nejteck
Kim Pringle
Tom Rennels
Wayne Schirner
Jan Upchurch
Jane Van Praag

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 Sylvia Maedgen



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