

The Blooming Bell



October 2019

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Photos by Randy Brown at the Dallas Arboretum.



October 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 LGEG, Raye-Allen Elementary, 4 pm	2 Work Day-8 am * Herb Study- -9:30 am, Social-9 am, Burger Wed.-11 am LGEG, Garcia Elementary, 4 pm	3	4	5
6	7	8 LGEG, Raye-Allen Elementary, 4 pm	9 Work Day-8 am* General Mtg-10 am, Social-9:30 am, Harris Community Center LGEG, Garcia Elementary, 4 pm	10	11	12
13	14 Columbus Day MHMR, Potting Succulents, 9 am	15 LGEG, Raye-Allen Elementary, 4 pm	16 Boss's Day Work Day-8 am* LGEG, Garcia Elementary, 4 pm	17 Gardening Series-Landscaping/Xeriscaping, 6:30 pm	18 Plant Sale Set-up-Learning Center & Expo, 8 am	19 Fall Plant Sale, 7 am
20	21	22 LGEG, Raye-Allen Elementary, 4 pm	23 Work Day-8 am* BOD Mtg-9 am LGEG, Garcia Elementary, 4 pm	24	25 Deadline for Blooming Bell submissions	26
27	28	29 LGEG, Raye-Allen Elementary, 4 pm	30 Work Day-8 am* Whistle Stop Playground Clean-up-7:30 am LGEG, Garcia Elementary, 4 pm	31 Halloween	In the event of rain, there will be No Workday.	

Upcoming events:

- ♦ Herb Study, Persimmons, Nov. 6, Belton, Ext. mtg. room, 9 am
- ♦ McLane Children's Hospital, Flower arrangements & gift bags, Nov. 16, Temple
- ♦ Gardening Series-Vermiculture, Nov. 21, Belton, MG Ed. Bldg., 6:30 pm

Mark your calendar:

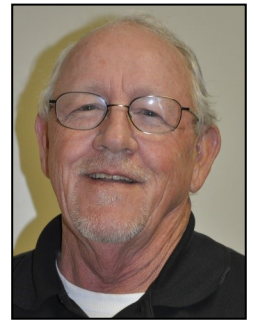
- ♦ Daylight Savings Time ends, Nov. 3
- ♦ Veterans' Day, Nov. 11
- ♦ Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28
- ♦ Annual Meeting/Christmas Party, Dec. 10, Expo Special Events Room



Remember to record volunteer service hours and education hours separately each month. You may include your travel time to meetings and work projects as service hours. You can input your hours on the MG office computer on Wednesdays.

The President's Corner

Glenn Melton



Upgrades to the Learning Center and Greenhouse are complete and both facilities are fully functional. Now all we need to do is establish procedures for their utilization. We owe Paul Carter a huge Thanks for all the hard work he put into this project and for seeing it through to the end.

Last month at our monthly General Membership Meeting we discussed the status of our Strategic Action plan which was approved this past January. Here is a recap of that discussion for those of you who may have missed the meeting:

Goal 1: Manage active BCMGA membership to accomplish the annual target goals as listed.

- 2018 @ 139,
- 2019 @ 150,
- 2020 @ 171,
- 2021 @ 192,
- 2022 @ 213,
- 2023 @ 234

We exceeded the 2019 goal and reached a membership total of 155 as of August. At the present rate of growth, we will easily attain our goal of 200+ in the year 2022.

Goal 2: Maintain the Master Gardener Learning Center to meet the organizations current and future needs taking special attention to current and future growth, and...

Goal 3: Develop the Greenhouse facility as an increasingly utilized asset to support the organization.

- These two goals are listed together since upgrades to both facilities were addressed simultaneously and recently completed. Now we must evaluate how best to utilize these facilities to meet the needs of the organization as well as the public.

Goal 4: Maintain and develop strong Member and Community Outreach Education.

- The monthly Community Outreach classes continue to be popular with members and the public alike. Effective September 19th, classes will be held in the newly renovated

Learning Center. We do not anticipate a need to turn anyone away as the capacity in this facility is at least 85-90 attendees.

- Members continue to enroll in Advanced Training, and many have taken advantage of the organizations Scholarship Program.
- The organization will host its first Central Texas Home Lawn, Landscape, and Garden Conference at the Expo Center next spring.

Goal 5: Develop and position New Class training to meet the needs of new students with support information approved by TAMU.

- The New Class has met several times to develop the curriculum and training needs of the New Master Gardener class of 2020.
- Enrollment is limited to 20. This number seems to be ideal and enables increased interaction as well as more "hands on" presentations.
- Classes will be presented by instructors from TAMU as well as our own Master Gardener members.

Goal 6: Develop and focus Youth Education support of Bell County school and youth programs such as Math/Science Days, Science Fairs and Horticultural related programs.

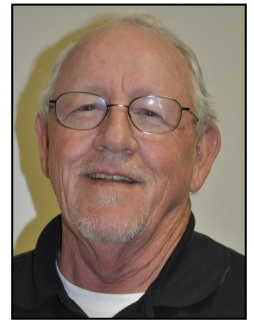
- Requests from schools, local non-profits, and other organizations continue to be strong.
- Recently the Clearwater Underground Water Conservation Group offered its mobile learning lab to any organization requesting information concerning water conservation and how the public can help with this very important environmental issue.

Goal 7: Landscape/ Grounds committee will continue to augment educational activities of the BCMGA by maintaining and enhancing the grounds of the BCMGA Texas AgriLife center through the noted activities.

- Plans are under way to repair and upgrade the existing irrigation system and a Master Site plan is in the works.
- Improvements are being made to demonstration beds and some landscape plants have been identified. However, work in this

The President's Corner - con't.

Glenn Melton



- area is not progressing as well as expected and more emphasis should be placed on planting, labeling, and more native plants in the landscape. It is hoped the new Master Gardener interns will take up this work as one of their projects and help us get this goal accomplished next year.
- Nov 6 – all day – Annual Water Symposium (more details to follow). This event conflicts with Burger Wednesday
- Nov 20 – BOD meeting

Goal 8: The Plant Sale Committee will continue to develop and maintain the Spring and Fall plant sale to generate income for the BCMGA and act as a source of education to the public.

- The public continues to enjoy the Spring and Fall plant sales. These events have become so successful that the organization has found it necessary to relocate them to the Expo Center to accommodate the ever-increasing number of attendees. This new location will enhance safety, improve customer service, and lead to a more efficient and enjoyable experience. The 2020 Plant sale will be held in conjunction with the Central Texas Home Lawn, Landscape, and Garden Conference on March 7th.

Planning for the Fall Plant sale is well underway, and a lot of work has been completed at Wright's Nursery prepping and inventorying plants. Please see Christy Reece or me if you are interested in earning some service hours. There will be plenty of opportunities to help at this major event. The educational portion of our October General Membership meeting will be devoted entirely to the Fall Plant Sale: procedures, layout, work shifts, sales, etc. I encourage all of you to attend and become fully informed about this major event. We are expecting a record-breaking crowd.

That's all for now. I hope to see you all at the October General Membership meeting on Oct 9th and at the Board of Directors meeting on Oct 23rd

Special note: Lyle has been briefed as to the status of this plan and he appreciates the level of detail taken in our report. He is particularly proud of our Outreach Programs. However, as indicated above we continue to receive requests for presenters and support in various educational programs. When deciding to support these various requests we must carefully evaluate whether we have all the resources to meet the client's needs. We must not overburden the select few members who willingly and happily agree to participate without thinking of themselves. This will only lead to member burn-out, and it must not be allowed to happen. Please look in VMS and, if you have the time and energy, volunteer for some of these very rewarding and fun educational projects and programs.

Some upcoming events or important dates:

- Oct 17 at 9:00am - Tree planting at the Belton Police Department grounds: 711 E. 2nd Ave in Belton
- Oct 19 - all day – Fall Plant Sale, Bell County Expo



Did You Know?

Raised Bed Gardening, What is it?

Wayne Schirner

The answer seems intuitive to me, but a recent discussion led me to believe it might not be so intuitive to everyone. A gardener I was talking to was using a no-till modified "lasagna garden" method and had placed 4" of compost on top of the native soil, and then covered that with 8" or more of arborist wood chips. When I said this was a form of raised bed gardening, I was told "no, this was lasagna gardening, not raised bed gardening."

So, what is raised bed gardening? The best all-encompassing definition that I could find is that "a raised bed garden is a garden built on top of your native soil, sometimes incorporating native soil, sometimes not. These gardens can be contained, such as when you build a wood or stone structure to keep the bed intact, or they can be more free form, with soil and amendments merely piled several inches high on top of the native soil." Simply put, a raised bed is where the growing medium, whatever that is, is on top of the native soil. The growing medium, however that is assembled, does not define whether the bed is raised or not.

The advantages of using raised beds for the home gardener in Bell County are numerous, but probably the most important reason is our native soil is very alkaline and not great for vegetable gardening. It is extremely difficult to amend alkaline soil to get the pH into the desirable range of 6.5-7.0 for most vegetables, so building beds on top of the native soil is the easiest way to avoid using native soil. There is also a growing body of scientific evidence that tilling the soil disrupts micro and macro organisms that are critical for developing a good gardening medium. Tilling also leads to more soil compaction, which impedes the flow of water and air in the bed. Beds designed for adult gardeners should not be wider than 4', so that the center of the bed can be reached from the side without walking on the soil. If the raised bed is not contained with fixed sides, then most beds are 3' wide with 6" of sloping soil on each side.

By the way, the use of arborist wood chips, as the gardener I was talking to did, is an excellent way to build a fertile soil. It does take some time for the decomposition to occur, and the layer of compost below the wood chips helps shorten that time. Planting is done by pulling the wood chip mulch aside and planting directly into the underlying compost. If you don't place a layer of compost down first, then you will need to wait at least 6 months for enough decomposition to have occurred to create a growing medium for your plants.



What's Been Happening...

Killeen Municipal Community Court Garden

Randy Brown

Photos by Randy Brown



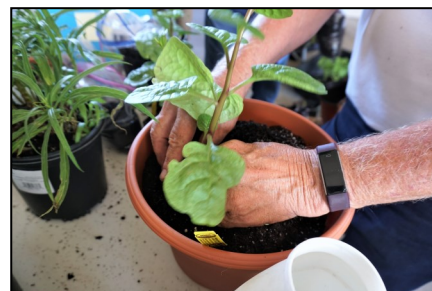
What's Been Happening...

VA Suicide Stand Down

Kathy Love

Photos by Terri Marceau

The Temple Daily Telegram described our efforts at the 7th annual Suicide Stand Down event as follows: "Bell County Master Gardeners were out in full force, behind tables that ran the length of the covered valet parking area at the Olin E. Teague Veterans' Administration Medical Center in Temple." Twenty-one Master Gardeners worked the event on Wednesday, September 25th from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Our members grew and donated over 500 plants ranging in size from 4" to 5 gallon and the Association purchased an additional 200+ vegetables, herbs and succulents. Many of these were used in the 6 ongoing demos given by various members to 290+ veteran attendees. Overall 630+ veterans came to our tables to receive free plants of their choice along with pots and soil. One hundred and forty 10" pots, over 90 one gallon pots along with 400+ bags of 1 quart and 1 gallon bags of soil were given with each plant or group of plants adopted by each vet. Members too numerous to list donated plants and pots, purchased some of our herbs and vegetables, donated their time to up-pot plants, clean and prep the plants before the event and transport them to the VA. Of the donated transplants, easily 2/3 were grown by our members. Awesome thanks to Claudette Hawkins, easily the grand champion of propagators for her 250 colorful and various coleus plants! A special thanks to the Seed Savers group who collected and packaged seeds as giveaways.



What's Been Happening...

September General Membership Meeting

Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Randy Brown

The monthly membership meeting was held at a new location, the Harris Community Center in Belton. The meeting space was very nice and will accommodate us nicely. Brad Hamel, Central Texas Regional Urban Forester, Texas A&M forestry Service, provided the educational program on "Trees and Construction". The meeting was on 9/11, a very significant day in our country, and as part of our program, we honored our First Responders in Belton. Belton Police Chief Gene Ellis joined us to accept our donation of a Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) which we will plant at a location to be decided by the chief later this fall when conditions are more favorable. A representative from the Belton Fire Department was also present.



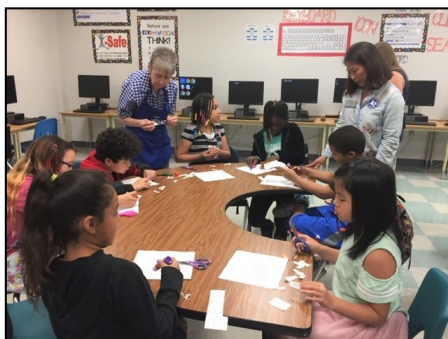
What's Been Happening...

Learn, Grow, Eat, Go - Elementary After School Programs

Gail Koontz

Photos by Gail Koontz

Here are pictures of our first class at Raye Allen Elementary. Master Gardeners there were Marjorie Gillmeister, Laura Bridges and me. We had 14 students. Included in the group photo are Andrea Haubner, Jackie McLaughlin and Tonya Elliott.



Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen

Our first two classes at Hector Garcia Elementary were filled with 11 & 14 excited students wanting to learn about gardening. The lessons will include learning about gardening, nutrition, and physical exercise as well as hands on gardening. This class enjoyed tasting and grading green/red/yellow bell peppers, carrots and strawberries. Tonya Elliott, Extension Service, helped with the activities.



What's Been Happening...

Temple College Community Garden & Greenhouse Project (Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society)

Marjorie Gillmeister

Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

On Friday, September 27th, Marjorie Gillmeister, Carla Harmon, Mike Butts, and Wayne Schirner planted 145 fall cool season crops & perennial herb transplants with 26 people in attendance from the school president, students, administrators & the community to help feed homeless students on campus by providing fresh food for the college food pantry.

Marjorie Gillmeister educated the community on The No-Dig Gardening Method, Carla Harmon spoke about proper ways of transplanting & the importance of soil temperature, Ph & moisture. We look forward to many more educational lessons and hands on activities to build this community project.



What's Been Happening...

Youth Outreach - Immanuel Lutheran Church

Marjorie Gillmeister

Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

On September 16th, Janice Smith and Marjorie Gillmeister educated the Trail Life Boy Scouts, 28 boys ages 5-10 years old learned the importance of plants, what plants make up a hamburger, played a card game with what plants are roots, stems, or flowers. The boys also learned the benefits of recycling an eggshell, the lifecycle of an eggshell plant and planted their own eggshell pod plants to take home and nurture.

Youngest Master Gardener in training, Wolfgang Gillmeister volunteered his time to assist in planting with the boys group.



What's Been Happening...

Herb Study Class

Jane Van Praag

On November 6, Jeanne Richard will start us off with Persimmons.

If you'd like to know more about a particular herb or herbs, please let me know soon at jivan-praag@sbcglobal.net. Perhaps you're not ready to lead on the topic (s) but chances are some of the rest of us will have the time/inclination.

Tidbits of Info...

Fertilizers — a cautionary tale

Dr. Jim Downer

Gardeners are assaulted with marketing campaigns nowhere better than in the fertilizer aisle of a garden center. There are so many choices and the labels suggest that fertilizing garden plants is a complicated process that requires specialized products.

More information can be found at the following link -

<http://gardenprofessors.com/fertilizers-a-cautionary-tale/>

Info provided by Wayne Schirner



Fall Crops for Kids

Square Foot Gardening Foundation

There's no better way to spark creativity, get kids outside, and help them enjoy eating their vegetables than gardening. Mel used to say, "It's also a wonderful way for children to learn everyday lessons from nature as well as become more self-sufficient.

More information can be found at the following link -

<https://squarefootgardening.org/2019/09/fall-crops-for-kids/>

Info provided by Wayne Schirner



What's Happening In Your Yard?

Gail Pierce

Photo by Gail Pierce

My sacrificial zucchini plant is loaded with aphids, but the okra beds don't have any aphids. 1st time in 12 years my okra plants haven't had any aphids, usually they are infested with aphids.

Last night I investigated why zucchini has aphids and not the okra.....Ants! Their hill was on the other-side of the 2 okra bebs. The ants traveled up and around the bed across the hose connecting the beds and into the zucchini bed.

Needless to say, there are no more ants. Well, for the moment.



Crystal Fisher

Photo by Crystal Fisher

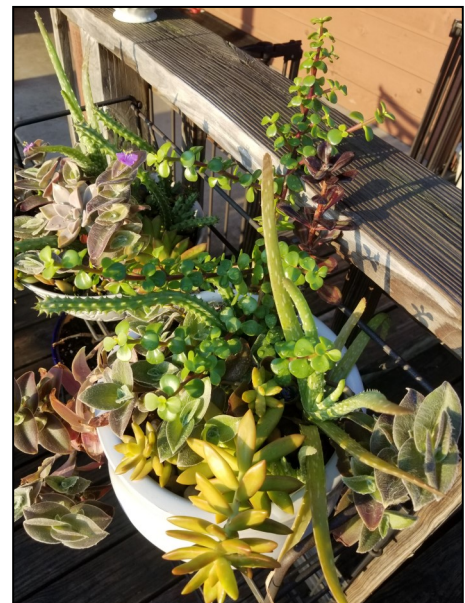
This is the first bloom from the large rain lily bulb purchase made a few months ago. This rain lily bloomed while still being potted.



Sylvia Maedgen

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen

My succulents are really thriving in the summer heat.



In Memoriam - Mel Myers, Class of 2007



Melvin Lee Myers passed away peacefully on Tuesday, September 24, 2019 in Round Rock, Texas at the age of 83. He was the husband of Sharon, his loving wife of 40 years. They were married in Houston on March 10, 1979.

Melvin lived out his Christian faith throughout his life. He was very active in each church he belonged to in Houston, San Antonio and Temple. Mel served Meals On Wheels for many years. He was a proud Longhorn fan, loved square dancing with Hey Lollies in Houston, polka dancing at family reunions and Wursthfest, tubing down the Comal river in New Braunfels, golfing at Wildflower CC, and being a Bell County Master Gardener.

The memorial service is to be held on Friday, October 11, 2019 at 11:00am at First United Methodist Church in Temple. A luncheon will be provided for family and friends following the service. Please let the family know if you plan to attend.

Memorial donations, in lieu of flowers, may be made to Meals On Wheels, 15 N 2nd St, Temple, TX 76501, (254)778-4221.

The family may be contacted through the daughter, Kathleen Simons, at (512)415-6498.



Announcements...

Wildseed Farm - Monarch Celebration - Fredericksburg

Jan George

This Saturday, October 12, 2019, the Wildseed Farm in Fredericksburg is having a Monarch Celebration where the public is invited to participate in tagging the Monarch butterflies. The first session starts at 9:30 and the 2nd starts at 2:30. There will be live music and you can shop for wildflower seeds (remember they need to be planted by the end of Oct), pumpkins, gourds, and fall decor. You might even enjoy sampling their selection of wines. It should be a fun day in the beautiful Texas Hill Country and hopefully it'll be a little cooler. Several of you went last year and reported having a great time. I didn't get to go last year but look forward to going this year. Hope to see you there!!!



Fall Plant Sale - Saturday, October 19th

It's coming! Don't forget to sign-up in VMS to help with the Fall Plant Sale. We will be at the Bell County Expo Assembly Hall this time. The sale hours are 8 am to 3 pm. There is lots to do with preparing for the sale and setting up for the sale as well as working the day of the sale.

If you have any questions, contact Christy Reese.



Gardening in Central Texas - Landscaping/Xeriscaping

Carol Morisset

On October 17th (Thursday evening) "Landscaping/Xeriscaping" will be presented from 6:30 to 8 pm in Belton at the Bell County Master Gardeners Learning Center located at 1605 N. Main Street at the Bell County Extension offices. We have 4 Bell County Master Gardeners (Kathleen Lovelace, Elaine McSpedon, Rachael Glass, and Kerin Grimes) who graduated in our 2018 class that have attended Levels 1,2, and 3 of additional landscaping classes at Texas A&M in College Station and are ready to share their advanced learning with us. This is a very special program that I hope you can attend and start preparing your yard to enhance it's appeal and be water efficient and Texas plant friendly. To register, email us at bellspeakers76513@gmail.com or if a BCMG you may sign-up in VMS. It is important if you register and cannot attend to let us know so materials can be obtained only for those attending and to ensure everyone can come and we don't have to turn down attendees due to room occupancy...Snacks and drawings for prizes will be part of program plans. A \$5 donation is accepted to cover costs.

Announcements...

October General Meeting

Kathy Love

When: October 9th

Where: Harris Community Center
401 Alexander St, Belton
You can park either south or east of the building and also enter from either direction but we hope you will only use the eastern entry to the building...this will help us maintain a comfortable temperature inside.

Time: Social starts at 9:30 am*
Program starts at 10 am
Business meeting follows program

Program Presenter & Topic: Christy Reese and her teams will discuss Details and logistics for the Fall Plant Sale.



Board of Director's Meeting

The October Board of Director's Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 23rd at 9 a.m. in the class/meeting room of the AgriLife Building. Please submit your agenda items to Janice Smith, Recording Secretary by Wednesday, October 16th.

Grounds Workdays

Karen Colwick

Here is the workday schedule for October.

October 2, 2019 8:00 a.m. Workday
October 9, 2019 8:00 a.m. Workday
October 16, 2019 8:00 a.m. Workday
October 23, 2019 8:00 a.m. Workday
October 30, 2019 8:00 a.m. Workday

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

Refreshments

Jane Van Praag

We are in need of volunteers for our January meeting. You can sign-up in VMS, or at the monthly meetings on the sign-up sheets.

First person to sign-up for a month is the lead and selects the theme, unless you assign someone else to lead the group. Volunteers are allowed to earn service hours for food preparation for 1-3 hours.



Upcoming Events

Upcoming Advanced Training

- Oct. 17-19 Greenhouse Management Advanced Training
Fort Worth - Cost \$225
Deadline to register - Oct. 7
- Ongoing Earth-Kind On-Line Master Gardener Training modules
Go to - <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/training/>

Upcoming Extension Events

- Nov. 16 Bell Co. Water Symposium
- Nov. 13 Workshop—Oscar Store
- Dec. 17 Pecan Show
- Jan. 14-15 Blackland Income Growth Conf.
- Jan. 21 Crops Conf.
- Jan. 23 Professional Grounds Conf.
- Jan. 31-Feb. 8 Bell County Youth Fair

Upcoming Event

Southern Garden Symposium

When: October 18th-19th
Where: St. Francisville, LA
Cost: \$80-\$280
Online Registration: <https://bontempstix.com/events/2019-southern-garden-symposium>

Upcoming Conference

Texas Fruit Conference

When: October 28-30, 2019
Where: New Braunfels
Cost: \$85 by 9/15; \$100 after 9/15
Online registration: <http://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/>

Upcoming Texas A&M Events

Turfgrass Field Day

When: Wednesday, October 9th
Where: Scotts-MiracleGro Lawn and Garden Research Facility in College Station, TX
Cost: \$55 (early registration) - Lunch is included.
Registration information: Coming soon. We will post more information on our website in the coming weeks and send another email out when registration is open.
Description: The Texas A&M Turfgrass Field Day offers an opportunity for members of industry and the general public to see and hear about current research activities in the Texas A&M turfgrass program and select related programs in entomology, pathology, and soil science. Attendees will have the opportunity to **earn CEUs** for professional development, visit the trade show floor to see some new products from industry, and enjoy a delicious lunch alongside fellow turf professionals and enthusiasts!



College Station, TX

Officers

President	Glenn Melton	2019-20
First Vice President	Kathy Love	2018-19
Second Vice President	Bill Walker	2019-20
Recording Secretary	Janice Smith	2019-20
Treasurer	Gail Koontz	2018-19

Board of Directors

Communications	Sylvia Maedgen	2019
Facilities	Paul Carter & Karen Colwick	2019
KMCCG	Edie Campbell	2019-20
Membership	Sherry Oermann	2019
New Class	Gary Slanga	2019-20
Outreach	Christy Reese & Carol Morisset	2019-20
Projects	Barbara Ishikawa & Stacye Parry	2019-20
Youth	Marjorie Gillmeister	2018-19

AgriLife Agent Lyle Zoeller

Contributing Writers and Photographers:

Randy Brown	Sylvia Maedgen
Karen Colwick	Teri Marceau
Dr. Jim Downer	Glenn Melton
Crystal Fisher	Carol Morisset
Jan George	Gail Pierce
Marjorie Gillmeister	Wayne Schirner
Gail Koontz	Jane Van Praag
Kathy Love	

Editor: Sylvia Maedgen

Please submit articles of less than 500 words for the Blooming Bell as Word documents. Photos should be sent separately in a folder through a link using OneDrive or Dropbox, Google Photos or in a zipped file. **Photos must be in the JPG format.** Also, do not text your photos. Email your documents and pictures to Sylvia Maedgen at:

txbikerchic7@gmail.com

Please do not send PDF documents.

BCMGA Webmaster

Rachel Glass - glass.rachel@gmail.com

Please send your updates for the BCMG web site to Rachel.

CHECK OUT BCMGA FACEBOOK PAGE! GO TO

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

Texas Master Gardener web site:

<https://txmg.org>

Bell County Master Gardener web site:

<https://txmg.org/bell/>

Texas Master Gardener Voluntary Management System

<https://texas.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm?logout=1>



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