

The Blooming Bell



NEWS . EVENTS . GARDENING TIPS. EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES



Upcoming Events	2
President's Corner.....	3
Meet Your Board of Directors.....	4-9
KMCCG Report.....	10
Superstar Of The Month	11
2023 Christmas Party.....	12



Have Gardening Questions? Sumit your questions and photos at: bell.mg@agnet.tamu.edu

THE BLOOMING BELL DECEMBER 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS DECEMBER 2023

Speakers Bureau: Monthly Outreach Seminar & Workshops

2024 Monthly Seminars:

Jan. 18th with Kathy Love teaching Container Vegetable Gardening.

Feb. 15th - Roses in the Landscape with Carol Morisset

March 21st - Turf and Weed Control with Glenn Melton

Workshops:

Jan. 13th - Seed Starting with Wayne Schirner, 9:00 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$20.00 and open to the public first.

For more information please email: BCMGA Speakers@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY SERVICE DAYS: First & Third Wednesdays, 8:00-11:00 am, are Master Gardner workdays at the Extension Office. We have demonstration beds all around the facility. Bring a friend who may be interested in becoming a MG or just a friend of the BCMGS. The Grounds Focus group will continue guiding the grounds until there is a director and associate director installed.

General Membership Business Education Meeting: Meets on **January 10th**. Fellowship time is 9:00-9:30 a.m. The 2023 Awards Ceremony will be held in lieu of our educational portion of the meeting. Followed by our business meeting.

We will be hosting the business portion of the meeting on Google Meet for those who cannot make it in person. (this will not include the educational portion of the meeting). Google Meet link: <https://meet.google.com/vkd-rofq-orf>

We will meet in person at the Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander St., Belton.

Board of Directors Meeting: Beginning in 2024 our board of directors meetings will be held bimonthly as hybrid meeting. The meeting link will be sent in the weekly events email. All our meetings will be held in the classroom located right of the extension office and will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m..

Meeting Dates: Jan. 24th, March 27th, May 29th

Herb Study Group: Meets on the **3rd Wednesday** of the month, **10:00-11:30 AM**. See the Calendar of Events for location as it may fluctuate between the learning center and the extension classroom.

Please contact Tracy Brown for further information: bcmgtabrown@gmail.com.

Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden: Meets every Saturday, 9:00a.m.

Please contact Dave Slaughter slaughtd915@gmail.com. See VMS for additional harvest days to earn extra service hours.



Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Horticulture Program in Bell County

1605 N Main St Ste 102 Belton, TX 76513

Email: bell-tx@tamu.edu

Phone: 254.933.5305

Fax: 254.933.5312



Executive Board

President	Kathy Love
1 st Vice President	Anna Sartin
2 nd Vice President	Louann Hight
Recording Secretary	Sophia Gomez
Treasurer	Jackie McLaughlin

Directors

Communications	Teri Marceau
Facilities	April Marek
Membership	Sherry Oermann
KMCCG	Dave Slaughter
New Class	Pat Johnson
Projects	Wayne Schirner
Youth	Susan Fogleman & Joyce Lauer
Outreach/Speakers Bureau	Debra Thompson

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Kathy Love

We are coming to the end of another year, fellow Master Gardeners and we will be transitioning to new leadership for 2024. It has been my privilege to serve as the President of the Association for the past two years, but I am ready to relinquish the position to Teri Marceau, who will officially take over in January. I hope everyone will be as supportive of her as you have been of me.

I want to thank fellow Board members who are going off at the end of the same two-year term: Lou Ann Hight as 2nd Vice President, Wayne Schirner as Projects Director, Pat Johnson as New Class Director, and her Associate Director Betty Nejtek, Dave Slaughter as KMCCG Director, April Marek who filled out the 2023 term as Facilities Director, and Misti Daniel who resigned for family reasons as Recording Secretary.

I then want to thank members who stepped up to fill these positions on the Board: Barbara Ishikawa as 2nd Vice President, Jan George as Projects Director, Dave Slaughter as New Class Director, Monique Armas as KMCCG Director, and Sophia Gomez as Recording Secretary. Please support these new officers and directors as we move into 2024.

Of course, by moving into the position of President, Teri Marceau will be relinquishing her position as Communications Director in January. We plan to take nominations from the floor at the January membership meeting for a member to serve out her un-expired term in Communications. If you are interested in that position on the Board, let me or any other Board member know of your interest.

Our agent, Floyd Ingram, informed me that our AgriLife District has a new District Administrator, Mr. Jay Kingston. Mr. Kingston will be at our offices this coming Monday, December 4th, and will get copies of our monthly reports for the year showing our activities for 2023. Current District Administrator Dr. Donald Kilm, Ph.D., has been promoted to State County Director.

At our final 2023 Board meeting on November 29th, we were informed by Projects Director Wayne Schirner of creating a new project in VMS, the Bulb Interest Group. If you are interested in joining this group, to be led by Debbie Thompson, you can find it and sign up by clicking on General Information, Projects, and go into the project, and click on the "Volunteer for This Project" green button. Wayne described this project: "This project is designed to enable members to sign up for a group to share information about growing bulbs in Central Texas. This also allows an email group to be formed to enhance communication between members with this interest. Any education hours of group members are reported under the project name "Education." Volunteer service hours for developing and presenting a talk are reported under the project name "Speakers Bureau."

Please keep in mind that the project description for this new project applies equally to the Herb Study Group, e.g., Volunteer service hours for developing and presenting a talk are reported under the project name "Speakers Bureau."

So, in signing off today on my final Blooming Bell President's Corner, I want to again thank everyone for two good years in this position and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year! And, of course, Happy Gardening.



THE BLOOMING BELL DECEMBER 2023

Teri Marceau, President

Teri Marceau was New Master Gardener of the year in 2019. She has served at the help desk, demonstration gardens on the extension grounds, with the speakers bureau, outreach workshops, and youth. She has sat on the board of directors as the communication director (2020-2023). Teri sits as a photography judge for the 4H Youth Fair each year. She was our association's state alternate representative and currently serves as one of two representatives.

Teri is passionate about soil and microbial health, which is why she loves red wiggler worms so much. She is also an advocate for anything water wise and became advanced trained in rainwater harvesting in 2021; volunteering and teaching at the rain barrel workshops.

She lives in Killeen with her husband, John, in their 5th wheel RV where she likes to grow as many native and perennial flowers and bushes. She likes to dabble in growing vegetables in her containers, although it is very challenging with the central Texas climate. Teri also loves macro and landscaping photography.

Teri has worked in several fields throughout her life. She is full of energy and embraces change with excitement and enthusiasm. One of her volunteer superpowers is to motivate and encourage those around her. As president she hopes to cheer BCMGA into the future while remembering our past. She is excited to serve all BCMGs with humility and rejuvenated energy.



Jan George, Projects Director

Jan George is a graduate from the class of 2012. She is fondly known as “The Mayor of Ding Dong” as she and her husband Cliff have lived in that area for decades. They just celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Jan has been the recipient of both the Green Thumb and Golden Trowel awards. She is one of our succulent experts and enjoys teaching about them. Jan has served on both the plant sale and Christmas party committees as long as she has been a master gardener. You can find her on Wednesdays in the native and wildflower demonstration garden behind the extension office. You can find her at the Home & Garden show and the Water Symposium. She has served at the Youth Fair and provided wonderful garden tours for our association. One of her greatest accomplishments is that she has served as a New Class Mentor from the moment she became a certified master gardener. We are excited to have Jan serve on the board as the Director of Projects for the 2024-2025 term.



Dave Slaughter, New Class Director

Dave Slaughter was born and raised in Michigan, where he was introduced to gardening at an early age. His maternal grandfather taught him about blackberries, raspberries, and vegetable gardening, and his paternal grandmother introduced him to flowers and propagation using willow water. As a child, he had his own vegetable garden, and as a teen, he raised corn for his pig farming adventure. Moreover, he was fortunate to have grandparents who shared organic growing methods and time-tested home remedies for better vegetable and flower gardening success.

As a teen, Dave also worked on a commercial agricultural farm in the summers and after school, where he learned about apple, cherry, peach, plum, and pear trees, blueberries, sweet corn, irrigation, and the use of herbicides, fertilizers, and insecticides. After Dave graduated from High School, he joined the Army and, over the years, had the opportunity to garden in Pennsylvania, Colorado, Washington, and Virginia during his service in the military.

Dave has been gardening in Texas for the last twenty-plus years and, upon retirement, attended the Texas A&M AgriLife Master Gardner course in 2020. He also received advanced training in entomology and plant propagation in 2022 and vegetable gardening in 2023. As a Master Gardener, Dave has educated the community on monarch butterfly migrations, plant propagation, and milkweed seed growing techniques and conducted bug hunts with youth from the Harker Heights community.

He is the current Director of the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden, where they grow vegetables for local shelters, maintain perennial flower demonstration gardens for community education, sustain a monarch waystation, and mentor youth on gardening principles, completing their community service hours assigned by the Municipal Court. Dave has a large vegetable garden and several fruit trees at his home in Maxdale and uses his homemade greenhouse for seed starting and propagation of native plants.



Jackie McLaughlin, Treasurer

Jackie McLaughlin is currently serving the BCMGA as treasurer. Her term will end in December 2024. Jackie is a native to Bell county and a graduate of UMHB. She loves basketball and played as a young lady. She served the county as the Family and Health agent from 2014-2022.

She is from the graduating class of 2022 and brings a wealth of financial experience. Her favorite parts of the MG association is volunteering with the youth programs and the camaraderie with everyone. She started teaching the LGEG program at Bartlett elementary school this year which was very successful. You may have seen her as the clothing superintendent for the Youth Fair 2023. She also volunteered and our fall and spring plants sales ('22-'23).



Sophia Gomez, Recording Secretary

Sophia Gomez is a lifelong resident of Bell County and from Class 2011. Being involved with Master Gardeners was something she looked forward to upon her retirement. She retired after 32 years of banking where she gained experience in all aspects of banking from tellering to banking center manager.

As a new Master Gardener, she received the New Master Gardener of the Year Award and had over 200 service hours each of the first three years. She has a passion for gardening and learning new ways to garden. She has completed three of the four landscaping classes held in Bryan-College Station.

She looks forward to being Recording Secretary for the upcoming two years. She is also striving to be of more service in various Master Garden endeavors. Outside of Master Gardeners, she is very involved at Christ the King Catholic Church in various ministries. Helping those in need through food pantry and taking calls for services needed is a passion. She is also involved with Education Connection with BISD.

**Barbara Ishikawa, Second Vice President**

Barbara has been a Bell County Master Gardener since 2017. She has volunteered time at Plant sales, Bulb sale, Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden, BCMGA Web site updates, Awards Committee, Policy & Procedures Committee and Speakers Bureau. Barbara was the BCMGA Treasurer from 2019 to 2022. She was recognized with a Green Thumb award in 2018 and 2019 and was awarded third place as a state Outstanding Individual of the year in 2022.

Barbara brings communication, organization, and technology skills gained over her 31 year career in Commercial Insurance to the role of Second Vice President. Her gardening interests include: vegetable gardening, herbs, native plants and the local ecosystem. She enjoys camping with her partner, Greg, and doing all kinds of textile crafts.



Anna Sartin, First Vice President

Anna Sartin became a Master Gardener in 2022 and is beginning the second year of her term as First Vice President. She and her husband, Chris, have lived in Temple for the past eight years with their two kids (Luke and Laurel – who you’ve probably seen following around at meetings or in the garden!).

Anna enjoys getting to work alongside amazing Master Gardeners who are passionate about sharing their gardening knowledge with others! As a newer gardener, she often doesn’t feel like she has much to offer, but she been so encouraged by the group and is learning that she doesn’t have to know much to be able to share what she DOES know with someone else to encourage them in their gardening journey. Anna also greatly enjoys hiking, cooking, and baking .

**Debra Thompson, Outreach Director**

Debra Thompson became a Master Gardener in the spring of 2022. She currently serves as the Director of Community Outreach and Education. She enjoys planning and scheduling seminars and fee-based workshops for the citizens of Bell County. Debbie also serves as a Co-Superintendent of Photography for the Bell County Youth Fair.

Debra is the former Assistant Director of Supply Chain Management at Brooke Army Medical Center; the Army’s premier Level 1 Trauma Center located at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. She worked as a Department of Defense Civilian for 35 years and retired in 2016. She was recognized as one of the Army Medical Commands senior logisticians implementing numerous cost-saving initiatives.

Debra was born at Fort Hood, Texas and as an Army brat, traveled to military bases until her father retired. She grew up in Killeen, Texas, graduating from Killeen High School. She went on to complete her associate degree from Kilgore College where she was a part of the world-famous high kick dance team the Kilgore Rangerettes, and Central Texas College, bachelor’s degree from American Technological University and a master’s degree from the University of Central Texas.

Debra has one daughter, Kimberly Wical from her first marriage. In 1991 she married Randall Thompson of Troy. She has two stepchildren, Shelly McCullough and Dewayne Thompson and has ten grandchildren.

Debra now resides in Troy, TX and has taken up canning, baking, and gardening since she retired.



THE BLOOMING BELL DECEMBER 2023

Susan Fogleman, Youth Co-Director

Susan became a Master Gardener in 2020 and received the Golden Trowel award in 2021. She volunteers for a variety of Master Gardener activities and regularly volunteers at Eldred's Nursery Foundation. 2024 will be her third year to serve as the Pie Superintendent for the Bell County Youth Fair.

Susan is a Registered Dietitian and continues to consult 1-2 days per week. Susan lives in North Temple with her husband Dow, 4 chickens, 3 cats, and 1 dog. She has 2 children, Shannon, who is an accountant in Temple and Nolan, who works in digital marketing and is a musician in Austin.

Bell County Master Gardeners Association has given Susan the opportunity to meet many wonderful individuals who share her passion for gardening. Susan is honored to serve as Youth Co-director and looks forward to another active year of coordinating youth projects and "planting the seed" of gardening in our future generation



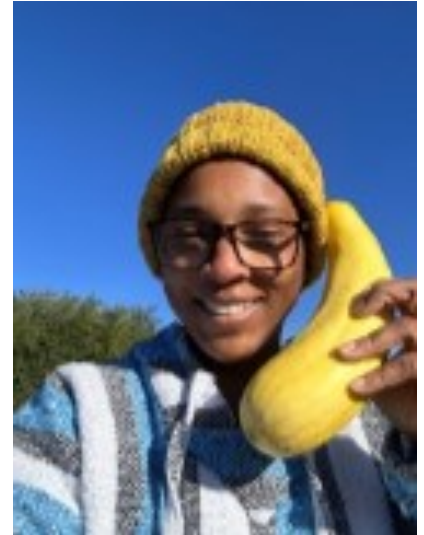
Joyce Lauer, Youth Co-Director

Joyce Lauer became interested in growing vegetables and flowers as a child growing up on a farm. The interest has continued as an adult. After teaching children for many years in public school, she was allowed to take the master gardening class in 2022 and continue to learn new things from many masterful gardeners and classes. As she works with our youth, she sees our future gardeners who will grow food and take care of our earth. She encourages everyone to join in educating our future children.



Monique Armas, Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden Director

Monique Armas, is a BCMGA Graduate of 2023. She is an avid gardener of edible plants and flowers. She is also a plant collector and really good at growing tropical house plants. Besides growing outdoor and indoor plants, she enjoys reading, learning new things, and crafting. As the new Director of the KMCCG, she plans to continue the amazing work that has been established at the garden as well as integrate some new concepts. Her hope for the future is that we can continue to foster a relationship with the community through gardening.

**Sherry Oermann, Membership Director**

Sherry Oermann grew up in Colorado and her dad taught her a lot about gardening. His idea of gardening was to scatter his vegetable seeds hither, thither and yon in his patch of dirt. As you can guess, the garden was a mixture of more weeds than vegetables and he would give up in disgust. Sherry took note of his gardening methods and decided to do better. Her first vegetable garden was planted on the day before she gave birth to her first daughter 48 years ago.

Sherry moved to Texas in 2007 and has been a Master Gardener since 2019. There has been a lot to relearn and experience, in this vastly different growing environment, but she's enjoying every minute of it.



THE BLOOMING BELL DECEMBER 2023

KILLEEN MUNICIPAL COURT COMMUNITY GARDEN REPORT

By April Marek and Randy Brown



★ For more details, check out the blog: <https://txmg.org/bell/kmccg-blog/>

11-04-2023

Today at the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden we harvested 41.6 pounds of produce for donation to local shelters.

Despite this week's frost, the peppers are still producing; however, the squash plants were not as fortunate, and were removed from production.

11-11-2023

Today at the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden we harvested about 29 pounds of radishes, okra, and peppers.

The cabbages are already forming heads, and plants that were skeletonized by cabbage loopers are recovering after a BT treatment.

11-18-2023

Today at the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden we harvested about 22 pounds of okra, radishes, and peppers.

All of the vegetables harvested at this garden are donated to local shelters.





TEXAS SUPERSTAR OF THE MONTH

Red Yucca (*Hesperaloe parviflora*)

By Sylvia Maedgen

This herbaceous, evergreen perennial succulent is a cross between our common spine-pointed yuccas and an aloe. Although it is closely related to yuccas, it is a member of the century plant family not the yucca family. This plant, also known colloquially as pink yucca, red-flowered yucca, coral yucca, hummingbird yucca, redflower false yucca, soft-tip yucca, or samadoque is a favorite of southwestern U. S. gardeners and is a native of the Chihuahuan desert in western Texas. The leaves are thicker than those of yuccas, but more sword shaped than those of aloe. The dark green leaves arise from a slowly suckering clump forming a cluster of rosettes. The rosettes are usually 4 in. to 5 in. long pale pink spikes or narrow sparsely-branched panicles of coral, salmon-pink, or rarely red or yellow, 1 in. to 2 in. long tubular flowers with trumpet-shaped flared tips. They may bloom multiple times through the growing season. Younger plants produce spikes, where older plants produce larger branched panicles. The foliage is evergreen and the plant can be long-lived. These showy plants are attractive year-round and serve as excellent pollinator support plants. Deadheading of spent flowers will improve plant appearance and avoid resource diversion to fruit development. The plant is a slender, fountain-like blue-green foliage, and is fairly slow-growing.



Exposure: Prefers full sun, dry and exposed locations, but can survive in partial shade. Will tolerate reflected heat and wind exposure. Salinity tolerance is moderate.

Hardiness: Zones 6 – 13

Size: Height — 12 to 18 inches; Width – 2 to 3 feet, occasionally wider over time

Planting time: Early spring to summer from containers

Bloom time: Multiple times through the growing season, but blooms will be reduced if plant is in partial shade

Plant type: Evergreen herbaceous shrubby perennial succulent

Soil type: Adapts to most soils, but needs good drainage (sand, loam, caliche, clay, limestone).

Suggested uses: Rock gardens and xeric landscapes, accents under light shade trees and cover on dry, rocky slopes

Special notes: Maintenance is low and it is the perfect Earth-Kind plant. Will tolerate low fertility sites, but grows more vigorously when adequate nutrients are available. Once this plant is established, it is drought and heat tolerant. Red yucca blends well in a wide range of landscapes. They make a nice accent or small-scale groundcover beneath trees with light filtered shade. They grow well on dry slopes, rocky outcroppings, and patio containers. They attract hummingbirds and butterflies. They are suitable for pedestrian traffic that may contact it as it does not have sharp points on the leaves. The deer love to eat the flowers. Propagation is by seed or division.

Resources

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>

www.texassuperstar.com

[Native Texas Plants, by Sally Wasowski and Andy Wasowski](#)

