



## NEWS . EVENTS . GARDENING TIPS. EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES



### Get involved in the Spring Plant Sale

By Barbara Ishikawa

Saturday, March 23, the Bell County Master Gardeners will hold our annual Spring Plant Sale. You may remember that last year we had over 1,200 contacts and sold out by 10am. In 2023, more than 50 volunteers made set-up fast and efficient and more than 74 volunteers helped customers select and purchase their plants. The Spring Plant Sale is our largest fund raiser and a great way to meet your fellow master gardeners and members of the community we serve. It's going to be a lot of fun and we can use your participation!

#### How can you get involved?

- Volunteer for day of the sale activities: greeters, plant specialists, talliers, cashiers, clean up crew and many others.
- Volunteer for set-up day (Friday, March 22): plant organizing, pricing, plant prepping, signage
- Before the sale (starting now): create and share advertising, research, create and post plant profiles, spread the word, organize supplies.

(continued on page 5)



Upcoming Events .....	2/3	Herb Study Group.....	13
President's Perspective.....	4	February Recipe.....	14
Prep for the Spring Plant Sale.....	5	Peggy Martin Rose.....	15
Meet the 2024 New Class.....	6-9	Pruning Rosebushes.....	16
Community Outreach Events..	10-11	KMCCG Report.....	17
Wizzie Brown-Exoskeleton.....	12		



Have Gardening Questions? Submit your questions and photos at: [bell.mg@agnet.tamu.edu](mailto:bell.mg@agnet.tamu.edu)

# THE BLOOMING BELL FEBRUARY 2024

## UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2024

**WEDNESDAY SERVICE DAYS:** First & Third Wednesdays, 8:00-11:00 am, is a Master Gardner workday at the Extension Office. (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays, prior to meetings).

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 BCMGA. Come for an hour or two or four. The Grounds Focus group will continue guiding the grounds until there is a director and associate director installed.

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**General Membership Business Education Meeting:** Meets Wed., **February 14th**. Fellowship time 9:00- 9:30 a.m..

We will be hosting the business portion of the meeting on Google Meets for those who cannot make it for personal reasons (this will not include the educational portion of the meeting). Look for the online meeting link in the weekly events email from Monique Armas. We will meet in person at the Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander St., Belton.

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**Board of Directors Meeting:** Beginning in 2024 our board of directors' meetings will be held bimonthly as a hybrid meeting. Look for the link in the weekly events email from Monique Armas. All of our meetings will be held in the extension office and will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m..

**Meeting Dates:** **March 27<sup>th</sup> | May 29th**



Texas AgriLife Extension Service  
Horticulture Program in Bell County

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### Executive Board

President	Teri Marceau
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Anna Sartin
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Barbara Ishikawa
Recording Secre-	Sophia Gomez
Treasurer	Jackie McLaughlin

### Directors

Communications	April Marek
Facilities	Open/Grounds
Membership	Sherry Oermann
KMCCG	Monique Armas
New Class	Dave Slaughter
Projects	Jan George
Youth	Susan Fogleman & Joyce Lauer
Outreach/Speakers Bureau	Debra Thompson

# THE BLOOMING BELL FEBRUARY 2024

## UPCOMING EVENTS FEBRUARY 2024

**Bulb Interest Study Group:** Please join us for our February meeting at 1:00 on February 21. Please check the VMS for details.

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**Herb Study Group:** Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10:00-11:30 AM. The February class will make herb-infused oils.

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

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**Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden:** Meets every Saturday at 9:00 a.m. Please contact Monique Armas at justasimpleplantlover@yahoo.com

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**HELP DESK:** Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to Noon & 1:00 to 4:00 pm. The help desk needs a lead volunteer for Tuesday mornings. 9:30 AM. If interested in earning education & volunteer hours, please contact Kathy Love lkathy021@gmail.com.





## President's Perspective

Teri Marceau

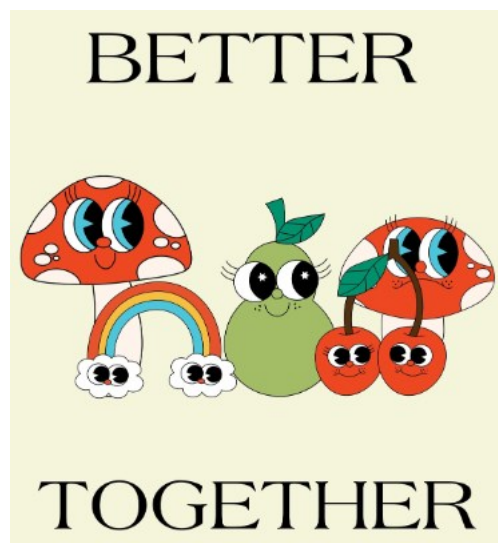
"There is no 'I' in team!" Who said it first? You may find it interesting that the phrase first came on the language scene in 1960 referring to baseball pitchers, yet the saying is most attributed to Michael Jordan. Both instances relate to sports.

Now you are asking "what does this have to do with gardening?" That is a fair question, if you would indulge me for a minute. I first heard this term from a favored boss of mine. He used the idiom to invoke unity within the different positions in the restaurant that I work in. It stuck with me throughout my working career and beyond.

The phrase is two-fold, in the literal sense since there is no letter "I" present in the word team and figuratively referring to the team as a whole. Creating comradery, fellowship, and collaboration within the group. This is my biggest dream of a legacy for the BCMGA. I would wish for the community within our association and throughout the county to know BCMGA for its kind and generous members. Creating such an environment that draws people in.

All this is to introduce you to the **HIGH-5** moment we will start having at our GM meetings. For example, if you missed the Outreach Seminar on Vegetable Container Gardening you missed a really great class. It was the first seminar of the year and we started with almost 50 people in attendance. Kathy Love did a fantastic job of teaching. We will have a **HIGH-5** box where you have the opportunity to acknowledge an individual, a project/group, a partner, or just about anyone you can think of to encourage, praise, and/or thank. When you do give a **HIGH-5** drop a little monetary donation into the box. This is a fun way to contribute to our association and to help fund some of our financial needs. I know it won't be much money, but it surely will be fun.

Something I desire to incorporate into the unity of our association is conflict resolution. Don't run away yet. I know the word conflict and the idea of confronting someone can make your heart race, but conflict resolution is very good for our character and growth. First step: when offended or your feelings are hurt please stop, put yourself in the other person's shoes, then let them know how you are feeling. Talk to each other before going to anyone else. This will help alleviate gossip and exclusion. In other words, resolving conflict builds the team rather than tearing it apart. Of course, if it is serious please talk to one of your board members who can help you work out the conflict. What can it hurt to try it. We will talk about this more as we grow and improve.



### Just in case you want to hear about business

We successfully submitted our recharter to the state solidifying our status with TXMG.

We also held our first board of directors meeting in the new classroom. We apologize for those who tried to join via Google Meets, we are still working out the kinks, don't give up on us just yet. Please join us for our next BOD meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup>. We will try out our new table in the Education Center.

April Marek was approved by the board to finish out the Communications Directors term. Check out the communications committee to participate in all the fun things they have going on.

The Herb Study Interest Group submitted for a state award, let's cheer them on for having a fantastic 2023 and a looking forward to an exciting 2024. Their schedule is in the Education Center for anyone interested in joining them.

# THE BLOOMING BELL FEBRUARY 2024

(Continued from Page 1)

## Sign up

If you'd like to support this important event you there are many ways to sign up:

- Add your name to the Plant Sale Committee in VMS which will ensure you receive all Plant Sale-related information including any planning meetings and pre-sale activities.
- Add your name to the Set-up day and/or Plant Sale events in order to let us know you'll be helping on those days.
- Although the VMS event sign-ups are for the full day, you may choose to volunteer for a shorter duration. A more detailed schedule will be developed once we have the group of volunteers and assignments.
- Send an email to [barbara.ishikawa@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.ishikawa@gmail.com) and let her know you'd like to assist.

This year's sale will be at the Cadence Bank Center (formerly known as the Expo). Doors will open to the public at 8am.

A wonderful selection of perennials, vegetables, herbs and roses have been ordered and our wholesale partners and busy growing plants. We will have a couple of choices for small ornamental trees, but we have not ordered shade or fruit trees.

For more information on plant varieties check our website (<https://txmg.org/bell/plant-sales/>)

Get involved and sign up today!





# 2024 New Class



**Director Dave Slaughter and  
Asst. Director Santi Duncan**



Angela Brunaugh

Angela enjoys visiting and hanging out with her kids , gardening , traveling, and taking care of their goats and bees with her husband.

Danna is married and has two girls. She loves growing and planting a variety of plants and flowers. Plants are her happy place!



Danna Sellers



Viola Ming-Copsy

Natalie is a wife and mom of three. She works in healthcare and has been tending to her garden for five years.



Natalie McAnarney



Stenna Halldorson



Lisa Wiesman

Lisa is taking this course to grow her knowledge so she can have a beautiful and bountiful garden.

Jessica is a plant hobbyist, an artist, a lifelong learner, a mother of two young children, and wife to her husband of 8 years.



Jessica Dunmire



Lenny West



# THE BLOOMING BELL FEBRUARY 2024



Will Snow

Will was born and raised in Paterson, New Jersey. When he lived in Puerto Rico from about the age of 10 through 12, he was already curiously experimenting with gardening and harvesting vegetables. He is a Retired U.S. Army veteran with over 20 years of service. He enjoys playing the trumpet and taking care of his three chickens. He is interested in experimenting with his raised vegetable bed to plant seedlings, watch them sprout, and grow until harvesting for consumption. His interest in the Bell County Master Gardeners training was to learn to have more understanding on how to be versatile, consistent, and closer with nature to show others and his grandchildren how much fun and satisfaction one can have from harvesting vegetables, fruits, and growing flowers, fruit trees, and much more.



Chris Gordon

An appreciation for gardening was instilled in Kim by her mom at an early age. But at 13, it was the giant box from Richters Herbs landing on her porch that really got her hooked! She's a member of Seed Savers Exchange and the Herb Society of America—with a keen interest in preserving heirloom varieties, community gardens, and organic gardening. She loves herbs, native plants, tropicals, carnivorous plants, and roses. Outside of the plant world, she enjoys art, ceramics, traveling, and researching local history.



Kim Tompkins



Berlin Rodriguez

Berlin works as the development coordinator at Eldred's Nursery Foundation. She enrolled in the Master Gardener program to best help her clients and the community. As a strong believer in continued education, she hopes to impart the knowledge she takes from here to help everyone she can.



Stephanie Preciado



# THE BLOOMING BELL FEBRUARY 2024



Denise Wolf

Denise is a retired home educator, spouse to an active-duty soldier, and grandmother. She enjoys hiking, gardening, and learning the art of stained glass.

Greg is married with three fur babies. He is a Texas Tech Alum and enjoys outdoor activities such as gardening and landscaping.



Greg Sherrod



Kim Dowell

Kim is a wife, Mom of 3 and Gigi to 2 perfect grandbabies. She loves being outdoors and has recently discovered that she loves growing things.



Jalenn Ellis



# THE BLOOMING BELL      FEBRUARY 2024

## Community Outreach Upcoming Events

### **Feb 10**

The Bell County Master Gardener Association and the Harker Heights Activities Center Outdoor & Science Expo presents a Hands-on "Rainwater Harvesting Barrel Workshop" on Saturday, February 10 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Harker Heights Recreation Center, 307 Miller's Crossing Rd., Harker Heights. Certified Master Gardener's Karen Colwick and Teri Marceau will be providing educational information on Rainwater Harvesting followed by a class on how to build your own rain barrel to take home after workshop.

Rain Barrels (food grade) included with cost of class: 15 available (one barrel per family, 2 family members, age 10 and up, only due to room occupancy).

Fee: \$75

Register at [bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com](mailto:bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com)

Registration closes Wednesday, February 7 or when sold out.

### **Feb 10**

The Bell County Master Gardener Association and the Harker Heights Activities Center Outdoor & Science Expo presents a Demonstration on "Succulents" Saturday, February 10 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Harker Heights Recreation Center, 307 Miller's Crossing Rd., Harker Heights. Certified Master Gardener's Jan George and Carol Morisette will be providing educational information on Propagating and growing succulents to save water.

Class Limit: 20

Fee: Free

No registration required

### **Feb 10**

The Bell County Master Gardener Association and the Temple Public Library Garden Club presents a Special Event Seminar on Saturday, February 10, from 2:00 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Temple Public Library, McLane Room. 100 W. Adams Ave., Temple. Certified Master Gardener Barbara Ishikawa will present "Drought Tolerant Native Plants" providing an assortment of native plants that are drought tolerant for your landscape, enabling you to conserve water. The second presentation will be conducted by Certified Master Gardener Wayne Schirner who will present "Spring Gardening in Central Texas" and provide a vegetable planting schedule using research-based information.

Class limit: 50

Register at [bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com](mailto:bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com)

Walk-ins are Welcome

### **Feb 15**

The Bell County Master Gardener Association is hosting a free monthly seminar "Roses in the Landscape" on Thursday, February 15, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Texas Agrilife Extension Office, BCMGA Learning Center, 1605 N. Main St., Belton. Certified Master Gardener's Carol Morisette and Jan Upchurch will discuss types of roses, when to prune and to perform maintenance. They will also discuss how to propagate roses as well as how to identify Rosette disease and how to properly remove from your landscape.

Class Limit: 50

Please register at [bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com](mailto:bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com)

Donations are appreciated to support continuing education opportunities in Bell County.



# THE BLOOMING BELL      FEBRUARY 2024

## Community Outreach Upcoming Events

### **Feb 16**

The Bell County Master Gardener Association and Elevate Troy Business Coalition Presents a Free Lunch and Learn Presentation "Fruit Trees" on Friday, February 16, from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. at the Troy Community Center, 201 E. Main St., Troy. Certified Master Gardener Sylvia Maedgen will discuss various fruit tree varieties that grow well in Central Texas. Sylvia will also discuss chill hours, planting times, container versus bare root trees as well as tree care maintenance.

Class Limit: 50

Register for Lunch at [hello@elevatetroy.org](mailto:hello@elevatetroy.org) or call Gaby Warlick at 254-400-7345

Walk-ins welcome without lunch based on space available.

### **Feb 24**

The Bell County Master Gardener Association will be at the 2024 Home & Garden Show on Saturday, February 24, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Cadence Bank Center, 301 West Loop 121, Belton. Certified Master Gardeners will be conducting demonstrations on various gardening topics to include 10 a.m. Turf and Weed Control, 11:15 a.m. Water Conservation and Rainwater Harvesting, 12:30 p.m. Propagating Succulents, 1:15 p.m. Getting Ready for Spring, 2 p.m. Seed Saving and 2:45 p.m. Soil Testing. Certified Master Gardeners will be available to answer questions as well as the Kids Zone and Seed Table. There will also be succulents and herbs for sale. Plan to stop by our booth.

### **MAR 2**

The Bell County Master Gardener Association presents a hands-on workshop "Hush and Eat Your Flowers-Cool Season" on Saturday, March 2 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Texas AgriLife Extension Office, 1605 N. Main St., Belton. Please join Certified Master Gardener's Kathy Lovelace and Kim Pringle for an introduction to cool season edible flowers. There will be tips and reminders on how to easily incorporate fresh and dried edible flowers and herbs from your own garden into your favorite drinks, salads, entrees, and desserts. Please plan to join us for an enjoyable morning of learning and creativity.

Class Limit: 20

Class Fee: \$20

Register at [bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com](mailto:bcmgaspeakers@gmail.com)

Registration closes on Wednesday, February 28





## The Exoskeleton...the part of an insect that goes crunch

*By Wizzie Brown*

Insects and other arthropods have an exoskeleton, which means their “bones” are on the outside of their body. The exoskeleton serves as a protective covering, helps prevent desiccation, allows muscles to attach to it from the inside for movement, and provides sensory information.

The exoskeleton is made up of four layers: epicuticle, procuticle, epidermis and basement membrane. The most outer layer, the epicuticle, serves as a barrier to the outside environment and helps the insect avoid desiccation. If you have ever used diatomaceous earth for insect management, you are hoping to abrade the epicuticle of the insect with the diatomaceous earth and cause enough water loss for the insect to die.

The next layer, the procuticle, is for strength. The procuticle is made of chitin, which is secreted by the underlying third layer, the epidermis. The cuticle is soft when it is first secreted, but undergoes a process called sclerotization, which allows for hardening and darkening of the exoskeleton. The procuticle is divided into two components, the exocuticle and endocuticle. The endocuticle is tough, but flexible while the exocuticle is where thickening occurs to provide a more rigid, armored structure. With soft-bodied insects, such as termites, aphids, or caterpillars, the exocuticle layer is greatly reduced.

The epidermis is a layer of living cells that secrete chitin that is used to create the layer above, the procuticle. Any sensory hairs, called setae, that an insect has on its body originate in the epidermis and sensory information travels through the hair on the outside of the insect’s body to nerves found in the epidermis.

The innermost layer is the basement membrane which is a support for the epidermis and a separation from the insect body cavity.

All these layers together make up the insect exoskeleton. The exoskeleton is comprised of hardened plates called sclerites. The composition of plate structure allows the insect to have segmented joints and bodies which allows for movement. Each segment has various thickness of sclerites related to the movement and/ or protection required in that given area of the body. Furthermore, the exoskeleton has various areas that are folded inward, called apodemes, allowing for more surface area of the exoskeleton in that particular region and creating a strengthened area where muscles can attach on the inside of the body.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

This work is supported in part by the Crop Protection and Pest Management, Extension Implementation Program [award no. 2021- 70006-35347/project accession no. 1027036] from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

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# THE BLOOMING BELL      FEBRUARY 2024

## HERB STUDY GROUP

Notes Compiled from the January 24, 2024 meeting of the Belton Master Gardener's Association  
by Andrea Brumbach

*Disclaimer: The perspective expressed in this article does not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of Texas A&M AgriLife or the Bell County Master Gardener Association.*

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) is a versatile plant used in many ways throughout history. This perennial herb is native to Europe and Asia but has spread to other parts of the world, including North America. Yarrow is known for its feather-like leaves, clusters of tiny flowers, and medicinal and cultural uses. Yarrow belongs to the Asteraceae family - Daisy, Aster, and Sunflower. The plant grows to a height of 1 to 3 feet, with tall stems that bear flowers in white, yellow, pink, and many shades of red. Yarrow blooms from late spring to early fall, attracting pollinators such as bees and butterflies.

### Medicinal Use

In ancient Greek mythology, Yarrow is named after Achilles, who used the herb to treat the wounds of his soldiers during the Trojan War. Yarrow was often used in military settings to staunch bleeding, including during our American Civil War.

The plant contains many bioactive compounds, including volatile oils, flavonoids, and alkaloids, contributing to its therapeutic properties. Traditional herbal medicine has utilized yarrow for:

1. **Wound Care:** Yarrow has astringent properties and has been employed to help stop bleeding. Its ability to constrict blood vessels can aid in the coagulation process.
2. **Anti-Inflammatory Effects:** The plant has anti-inflammatory properties that may help alleviate discomfort associated with conditions like arthritis.
3. **Digestive Aid:** Yarrow has been used to support digestion by stimulating appetite and relieving symptoms of indigestion.
4. **Fever Reduction:** Bathing in yarrow was said to lower fevers.
5. **Antibacterial and Antiviral:** Yarrow tea can be used topically and vaginally to treat infections.

Yarrow can be consumed as a tea or eaten on salads, but only in small amounts. Yarrow contains Thujone, although in relatively small quantities. Thujone is a naturally occurring compound found in various plants, including some species of *Artemisia* (such as wormwood) and in trace amounts in yarrow. It's worth noting that the concentration of Thujone in yarrow is generally considered to be low and not a cause for concern in terms of toxicity. If you take pharmaceutical medications, consult your doctor before drinking Yarrow tea or eating it in salad.

### In the Garden

Yarrow is a hardy plant that is relatively easy to grow. It thrives in well-drained soil and full sunlight. The plant is drought-tolerant and can be propagated through seeds or division of existing plants. The plant attracts butterflies and bees and is considered very attractive in landscapes.

Yarrow is considered a dynamic accumulator because it pulls copper, lead, and minerals out of the soil. In this way, it can be used to clean contaminated soil. In the same way, Yarrow grown in uncontaminated soil can be used as mulch fertilizer because it absorbs minerals. Some birds are thought to line their nests with Yarrow to ward off disease and pests.

Yarrow will also loosen compacted soil and is thought to boost the essential oil content of plants nearby. Although not scientifically proven, many gardeners plant it near their culinary herb gardens to boost the taste of the herbs. It also makes a great ground cover and can be mowed.

Yarrow is a low-maintenance plant which tolerates different soil types and pH ranges.

### Cautions

While yarrow has a long history of use, it is important to exercise caution. Some individuals may experience skin irritation when handling the plant, and it has been known to raise blood pressure if too much is consumed. If you have allergies to ragweed and daisies avoid Yarrow. It is toxic to cats, dogs, and horses, although it has no effect on deer or rabbits. The plant is fed to cattle in Australia; however, it can change the taste of milk from dairy cows.

### Cultural Uses

Yarrow is also associated with folk traditions. Some believe it works as a shield against negativity. The Chinese believe it brings good luck, and the stalks are traditionally used to consult the I Ching- tossed on the ground- and the patterns formed correspond to specific advice and answers to the person's questions. The plant is included in love spells, dream work/divination, and ceremonial rituals.

Yarrow has a long history of brewing beer, especially with the Vikings. It was used as a bittering agent like hops are used today, which balances the taste with a spicy flavor. Because of the plant's antimicrobial properties, it was also used as a preservative. The plant is not generally used as a culinary spice.

## HEARTBEET CHOCOLATE CAKE

THIS CAKE IS SO INCREDIBLE! I WAS WARY AT FIRST WHEN I READ THAT IT USES BEETS, BUT OMG...TO MY SURPRISE, IT WAS CHOCOLATEY, MOIST, EARTHY, NOT SO SWEET AND JUST PERFECT! THIS IS A RECIPE THAT WILL SURELY HAVE PEOPLE WONDERING HOW YOU MADE IT!

--SANTI DUNCAN

Here is the full recipe by Anna Stockwell  
<https://www.bonappetit.com/recipe/heartbeet-chocolate-cake>



Photo By Alex Lau, Food Styling By Susie Theodorou

### INGREDIENTS

#### CAKE

4 medium beets, scrubbed  
 (you can also use pre-cooked beets)  
 2 tbsp. virgin coconut oil, plus more for pan  
 ½ cup Dutch-process cocoa powder, plus more for pan  
 1½ cups almond flour  
 ½ tsp. baking soda  
 ½ tsp. ground cinnamon

2 oz. bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped  
 1 tsp. apple cider vinegar or distilled white vinegar  
 1 tsp. vanilla extract  
 4 large eggs  
 1¼ cups (packed) light brown sugar  
 1 tsp. kosher salt

#### GLAZE

4 oz. bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped  
 1 Tbsp virgin coconut oil  
 ¼ tsp. vanilla extract  
 Pinch of kosher salt  
 Gold luster dust (for serving; optional)

#### Cake Preparation

1. Cook beets in a medium pot of boiling unsalted water until tender, 30-40 minutes, depending on size. Drain and rinse under cold water until cool enough to handle. Cut off stem end, then peel and cut beets into large pieces. Transfer to a blender and add 2 Tbsp. water. Blend, adding water 1 Tbsp. at a time as needed, until a smooth purée forms--it should be the consistency of applesauce. Measure out 1 cup purée (reserve remaining purée for another use, such as blending into a smoothie).
2. Preheat oven to 350°. Line bottom of an 8" round cake pan with parchment. Grease with oil, then dust with cocoa powder, tapping out excess. (I found that using a 9" round pan or two 6" round pans makes it less messy)
3. Whisk almond flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and remaining ½ cup cocoa powder in a medium bowl; set aside.
4. Heat chocolate and remaining 2 Tbsp. oil in a medium heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of barely simmering water, stirring often, until melted. Remove bowl from heat. Stir in vinegar, vanilla, and reserved 1 cup beet purée until smooth.
5. Beat eggs, brown sugar, and salt in the large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment on medium-high speed (or use an electric mixer and large bowl) until more than tripled in volume and mixture holds a ribbon for several seconds when beater is lifted above batter, 5-7 minutes. Thoroughly beating the eggs is key to creating an aerated, light crumb and is a critical step when using gluten-free ingredients.
6. Pour chocolate-beet mixture into egg mixture and beat on medium-low speed until combined. Turn mixer off and gently tip in reserved dry ingredients. Beat on lowest speed, scraping down bowl as needed, until combined.
7. Transfer batter to prepared pan. Bake cake until a tester inserted into the center comes out clean and the top springs back when gently pressed, 45-50 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edges of pan, then invert cake onto a wire rack and let cool.

#### Glaze Preparation

8. Heat chocolate, oil, vanilla, and salt in a medium heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of barely simmering water, stirring often, until chocolate is melted. Let cool, stirring occasionally, until mixture is thickened and cool enough to touch, 10-15 minutes.
9. Place rack with cake on a rimmed baking sheet. Pour glaze over center of cake to cover top, tilting baking sheet slightly to encourage a few drips to run over sides of cake. Sprinkle with luster dust (if using). Let sit at room temperature until glaze is set, 2-3 hours.
10. Do Ahead: Cake (without luster dust) can be glazed 2 days ahead. Cover and store at room temperature.



# THE BLOOMING BELL FEBRUARY 2024

## Peggy Martin Roses by Monique Armas



Figure 1 by Epic Gardening



Figure 1 by Epic Gardening



Figure 3 by The Rose Table

Peggy Martin roses, scientifically known as *Rosa* 'Peggy Martin', have gained prominence in the realm of horticulture for their resilience and ornamental appeal. Originating in New Orleans, Louisiana, these roses have garnered attention not only for their aesthetic qualities but also for their fascinating history. One distinctive aspect of Peggy Martin roses lies in their ability to withstand adverse environmental conditions particularly during Hurricane Katrina. These roses were notably discovered flourishing in the garden of Peggy Martin, a survivor of the devastating hurricane. This resilience has contributed to their popularity among gardeners seeking robust and enduring plant varieties.

In addition, the ornamental appeal of Peggy Martin roses is further underscored by their botanical characteristics. These roses exhibit an impressive display of vibrant pink blooms, creating a visually striking presence in gardens. The petals possess a delicate texture, contributing to their allure and making them a sought-after choice for landscaping enthusiasts. They have a moderate fragrance level. They are considered low maintenance as they require minimal maintenance such as being pruned in the late winter after low temperatures have subsided. These roses are a climbing perennial and zoned for areas 4 thru 9. Also, they thrive in well-drained soil in full sun. They bloom from spring to mid-fall, and they are a bee magnet. They can be fertilized in the spring and then again in the fall to encourage vigorous growth. Finally, they can grow in upwards of 6 to 15 feet tall and 12 to 15 feet wide.

In conclusion, Peggy Martin roses' unique attributes such as resilience, ornamental charm, and historical narrative make them a subject of interest for researchers exploring ways to enhance the hardiness of ornamental plants; particularly in the face of changing climate patterns.

### Resources

Texas Master Gardener - Henderson County

<https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/plant-library/peggy-martin-rose/>

Dr. William C. Welch, Professor & Landscape Horticulturist, Texas A&M University

<https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/southerngarden/PeggyMartinrose.html>

The National Gardening Association Plants Database

<https://garden.org/plants/view/229354/Rose-Rosa-Peggy-Martin/>

Get It Growing: Super Plant Peggy Martin rose represents Louisiana by LSU AgCenter

<https://youtu.be/Qaql7tHoVDc?si=hns45L0lvGTlr3U>

## ***Solving the Mystery of Pruning Roses***

*by Douglas F. Welsh, Extension Horticulturist, Texas A&M University*

February is the month when most modern roses need to be pruned. Even if your roses have already begun growth, the time has come to prune. Annual heavy pruning is essential to insure the prolific bloom and long-life of a rose bush. Explaining the concept of rose pruning without a live bush to demonstrate on is difficult, so let your mind loose to help visualize the following steps in rose pruning:

Pruning of roses is actually done year round. Every time you cut off old blooms and remove twiggy growth, you are actually promoting new growth. There are two times a year when you prune more seriously, spring and fall.

You will need the following items: a good pair of hand pruners (preferably the scissor type, not anvil type), a sharp keyhole saw and large loppers, a heavy pair of leather gloves, a pruning compound and a dull knife. The first step in spring pruning of Hybrid Teas, Grandifloras, Floribundas and Climbing roses is to remove any canes that are dead or just old and non-productive. These canes are usually gray in color and scaly.

This pruning will encourage future "basal" breaks which are the life blood of any rose bush. Basal breaks refer to new shoots, soon to be producing canes, which arise from the graft union. These should not be confused with "suckers" which arise from the rootstock below the graft union. Remove all suckers.

The next step involves taking a good look at the bud union. If you have any old, dry, scaly wood on the union, remove it. Use the dull knife to scrape the bud union to remove the scaly wood. By doing this it will again make it possible for new basal breaks to come about.

Beginning to fine tune the pruning, remove all twiggy growth on the remaining canes (note: the fine tune pruning on climbing roses should be done after they bloom in the spring). Try to clean out the middle of the bush as much as possible. This allows for good air circulation to prevent insects and disease.

Now you are ready to prune on the good healthy canes. If your roses have already flushed growth, it is important to prune each cane back to a dormant bud. A bud that has already begun growth and is then pruned will simply continue to grow vigorously and bloom very little. A dormant, non-growing bud will initiate growth after pruning and will produce an abundance of blooms.

One comment used to describe pruning is to "prune to an outside bud." This means when picking the point on a given cane to cut back to, make sure there is a good bud on the cane facing toward the outside of the plant. This will insure the growth of the new bud is to the outside, therefore keeping the center of the rose bush clear and open for air circulation.

Another guideline in pruning back an individual cane is to cut the cane at the point when the diameter of the cane is the size of a pencil or slightly larger. This is normally at a height of 18 to 24 inches. If there is the need to prune back to a dormant bud, the size of the cane may be larger and the cane length may be shorter.

If old and large canes have been removed to the bud union, it is a good practice to seal these large cuts. This helps prevent insects and diseases from infecting the cuts. Smaller canes usually don't need to be sealed. Use some sort of sealing compound such as orange shellac or even Elmer's glue.

When pruning is completed, remove any old foliage left on the canes and rake up and remove any leaves or twigs. This will help reduce the disease and insect pressure on the young, tender shoots and buds.

The final product of your pruning should be a rose bush about 18 to 24 inches tall with 4 to 8 canes. Add some fertilizer, water and tender-loving-care, and that pitiful looking rose bush will soon give you a shower of flowers.

[https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate\\_archives/2004/jan04/HU4,solving.html#:~:text=Texas%20A%26M%20University%2C%20College%20Station%2C%20TX&text=February%20is%20the%20month%20when,life%20of%20a%20rose%20bush](https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/2004/jan04/HU4,solving.html#:~:text=Texas%20A%26M%20University%2C%20College%20Station%2C%20TX&text=February%20is%20the%20month%20when,life%20of%20a%20rose%20bush)





# THE BLOOMING BELL      FEBRUARY 2024

## 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/>

01-06-2024

Today at the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden, we harvested 27 pounds of cabbage, turnips, carrots, brussels sprouts, and broccoli. More onion sets were planted, as well as Swiss chard and komatsuna seeds. As always, lots of weeding and other maintenance was completed.

01-13-2024

Today at the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden, we harvested 55.93 pounds of cabbage, broccoli, turnips, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, radishes, and carrots. All the produce grown at this garden is donated to local shelters. In preparation for the cold weather, we gave the garden a good soaking to help protect the roots during the freezing temperatures.

01-20-2024

Today at the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden, the temperature was a balmy 33 degrees. We found that the turnips, broccoli, and some of the onions succumbed to the recent freezes. Surprisingly, the carrots and beets are showing signs of frost damage; however, the henbit came through like a champ. Garlic, lavender, oregano, rue, irises, and many native perennials still show signs of life

