



Seedlings~
Master Gardeners of Blanco County

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

December Meeting
The Landing Community Center
Highway 281 north of Blanco

6:00 pm, Monday* Dec. 17* (*Date change!)



(Check the sign-up sheet on p. 2 for what you chose to bring.)

Its Happy Holiday Time!!!

The Master Gardeners Association of Blanco County will be hosting their annual Holiday Party/Meeting on Monday, December 17. We look forward to celebrating the festivities of the holidays, recognition of a successful year for the Association and look forward to a new year of accomplishments.

Date: Monday, December 17, 2013

Time: 6:00 pm (folks contributing food please arrive at 5:30)

Location: The Landing Community Center, Blanco, TX 78606

- The Landing entrance is located 2 miles north of Blanco on east side of Hwy 281
- Look for stone curved wall with large iron gates...no entry code required. Gates will be open
- Follow the MG mtg signs on Hwy 281 and main road through The Landing to Community Center
- Follow parking signs

Festivities will commence at 6pm as we begin socializing with beverages and appetizers. The Master Gardener Association of Blanco will be providing the meat entrée. Please see food/potluck sign-up sheet below and let me know if you would like to contribute one of your culinary delights for the evening.

• cindy.stomberg@gmail.com • 830 822-1773



The Master Gardeners Association of Blanco County will have a brief meeting at some point in the evening. Please remember to wear your name-tag so spouses and guests will know who you are.

We will also have the annual gift exchange. \$10.00 gift limit and do not forget to pick-up your raffle ticket once you have arrived to the event.

In addition to eating and drinking among friends, we will have poker and domino's available for those interested.

Please RSVP to cindy.stomberg@gmail.com or (830) 822-1773.

Food	Volunteer Name & Food	Volunteer Name & Food	Volunteer Name & Food
Appetizers	Kathy Edquist	Carol DiQuilio	
	Barbara Counts		
Salads	Mary Nabers		
Breads	Cindy Stomberg		
Vegetable Sides & Casseroles	Susan Evans	Carol Rankin	
	Donna Sultemeier		
Desserts	Mary Joyce	Beverly Meadows	
	Shirley Winslow		
Drinks	Diana Blackburn		
	Susan Hamm		

Scholarship Reminder

If you have been to training sometime during the year, don't forget to request your scholarship money before Jan. 1. Notify Joan for the \$50.00 reimbursement. Betty says we have money in the scholarship fund, and it is to be used for training. If you have had training—Apply.

Minutes of the November Meeting *Karen Casey*

The November meeting was held on November 13, 2012 at the Wild Boar Farms outside of Fredericksburg. The farm is owned and run by Daniel Bacon, a plant physiologist, who farms 16 acres of vegetables and a 14 acre peach orchard. Mr. Bacon bought this farm/peach orchard 11 years ago and calls his work an organic experiment. The farm was for many years cotton fields, and he explained that growing cotton is devastating to the soil, especially if cotton is grown year after year, as it was on this land. He estimates that it will take 20 more years to fully restore the soil. In addition to this challenge, he has lost his entire peach crop to freezes 5 out of the last 11 years.

Mr. Bacon showed us his favorite products for his gardens:

Maestro Gro's Natural Garlic Pepper Tea--for flying insect control
Neptune's Harvest--fertilizer
Dipel Dust--for worm control
25% vinegar--for weed control (this will not kill the roots--just the tops)
Dr. Bonner's Castille Soap (liquid)--for use as an insecticidal soap

He also recommends the following:

Pike green beans
Navarro flat green beans
Concessa green beans
Heat Wave tomatoes
Clemson spineless okra
Flavor Rich peaches (they need only 600 hours of cold weather--below 45 degrees)

Mr. Bacon, after years of trial and error, orders his seeds from the Harris Seed Company in New York.

Mr. Bacon recommends two cover crops: Austrian winter peas, because it is very good at fixing nitrogen, and elbon rye, because it secretes an enzyme that encourages the growth of mycorrhizal fungus. This fungus is beneficial to plant roots when it is present in the soil. The fungus sends very thin

filaments to plant roots nearby and receives a meal from the plant. In return, the plant's root area is enlarged by these filaments, and the plant can absorb more nutrients, and survive drought better. If you don't plant cover crops, you can buy the fungus and add it to your soil.

Boar Farm currently raises 26 varieties of vegetables, and they are sold at the store on site, and through a sustainable agriculture co-op in Kerrville. The co-op members can pick up their in-season vegetables at various places in the Hill Country. Contact Mr. Bacon at 830-990-8187 if you are interested in participating. He also has a bakery and bee hives, and sells breads and honey when the store is open. His bees are kept on site for pollination of the crops. The store is closed at this time because of road construction but will re-open on April 15.

After the presentation and a walk around the fields, we enjoyed cookies and apples provided by Mary Nabers and Joan Marasek. Betty Mucha conducted our business meeting, and we **discussed ways to make future education days more appealing to the public**. Some of the ideas were: better newspaper coverage, providing CEU credits for the classes, better titles for the classes, offering 1/2 day (instead of full day) schedules, incorporating our presentations into the events at the fair and rodeo in August or with our plant sale, and using the email lists of various organizations in our communities to advertise our classes.

Our December meeting will be our Christmas party, to be held at The Landing Community Center. The meat dish will be provided by the Master Gardeners, and everyone is invited to bring a side dish, drink, or dessert. Contact Cindy Stromberg to sign up for drinks, desserts, and sides. We will meet at 6PM for the party on Monday, December 17. If you are bringing a dish, please arrive at 5:30 PM. We will have a gift exchange for any who want to participate (under \$10 please) and a poker table will be set up for cards or dominoes. BYOB if you choose.

Our January meeting will be held at the Johnson City Extension office in the Hoppe Room on 1/8/2012, where we will meet the new interns.



Please contact Jim Meadows if you want to order onion sets.

Diana Blackburn will be attending the director's meeting in College Station on 12/1/2012, and would enjoy company on the long ride--let her know if you can attend.

Susan Hamm brought in part of her book, How to Grow More Than Rocks in Blanco County, for us to look at. It looks great, and is soon to be published.



D'Anne Welch reports that she is still working on the scrapbook for us, and needs articles, pictures and information for the 1995-2009 (especially needed is info from 2009). She is compiling the information, so please send her anything you have right away. Betty has seen the scrapbook and says that D'Anne is doing a terrific job for us all. Kathy Edquist will be the illustrator for the scrapbook.



Ken Burns *Dust Bowl*

This special two part series is well worth watching on KLRU. It chronicles the development of the Dust Bowl, faulting farming practices as much as the drought. Interviews with children of the 1930's in Oklahoma, Kansas, and the Texas Panhandle are excellent, elderly men and women remembering the terrible dust storms and travail of when

they were young watching their parents suffer. The film footage makes you wince. It is a moving film. The ending is a warning that we are making some of the same mistakes today, pumping the Ogallala dry to grow wheat where native grasses are supposed to grow.

July, 2011, at our ranch in Uvalde, the cows came running out of a boiling cloud of dust when we drove out in the truck with feed. They emerged like ghosts. It was eerie. It was so dry the ground had hardly a blade of grass or weed. It wasn't the dust bowl, but it was bad enough. Master Gardeners can join Agri-Life Extension Service in promoting education and awareness to prevent a new dust bowl



Carol DiQuilio Reports

I added another 55 gallons of rainwater collection. Took all day yesterday, just in time for a good rain shower! Added a leaf protector gutter guard today. I'm up to 4 tanks now. 400 gallons Yeah!

I learned more about gutters than I wanna know, other than it is very hard to do yourself!!!! Ha. Carol





Cindy gets the scoop from Boar Farm owner Daniel Bacon.

At the end of the program, we walked in the well kept field of winter greens under a vast gray sky.



In spite of the raw weather, members huddled together to enjoy the program and examine the products Daniel recommends.



Daniel in the field with the only non-working plant or animal on the farm: the cat, a very social being who followed us out into the garden. (Carol Diquilio photo)

As we approach the end of a good year, here is a shot of one of our accomplishments—a super display at the Fair. (Karen Casey photo)



*See You at the Landing for the Party on Monday, Dec. 17.
Bring food or drink and a gift if you want.*

Mary Nabers
mmbnab@gmail.com
Editor