Bell County Master Gardener Association
Tip of the Week
By Mary Lew Quesinberry
“Winter, a Good Time to Evaluate Your Garden”

Winter is a good time to evaluate the garden. If your preference is a formal garden you can see where lines need to be straightened and plantings balanced. If you prefer a natural garden, your landscaping will present curves, changes in elevation and features concealed until the garden is explored.

After the first freeze our gardens no longer have their lush foliage. Deciduous trees have lost their leaves and it is easier to see elevations, structures, hardscapes and plant placement. You may want to change a worn pathway into a paver or stone walkway, or add a bench. You can also create a seating area with a low wall of stone or brick.

New planting beds, trees selected for seasonal interest, lighting to highlight special features may be on your wish list. Is your garden too green? Consider the addition of color by planting the colorful shrub lorepetulum (burgundy). Gray Bush Germander, Cenizo, Wooly Butterfly Bush and Eleagnus will add gray highlights. Japanese Maple with its blazing red fall leaves or Forest Pansy with its spring show of burgundy leaves and pink flowers will add spots of color and your garden will be all boring green no more.

You may need to screen off an unsightly area or add privacy. This can be accomplished with berms and tall bushy plants like the Arizona Cypress. If shade is an issue a gazebo or an arbor will provide a cool place to escape summer’s heat. The next drought is just a missed rainfall away and this may be the time to invest in rain barrels and a rainwater harvesting system.

Winter is a good time to plan changes, additions, and projects for the coming gardening season. It is too cool to work outside so spend some time evaluating and plan a few changes to make your outdoor living more enjoyable. Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact ask.bcmga@gmail.com

In the photo: First freeze produces a frosted Bush Daisy. Winter is a good time to evaluate the landscape and make plans for the next growing season.