

Texas Master Gardeners of Blanco County

Next Meeting: August 9, 2011
First United Methodist Church, Johnson City
Coordinator: Betty Mucha
Program: County Fair Preparation

Susan Evans presented a demonstration of making hypertufa planters. Tufa means volcanic rock. The hyper means we make the planters from Portland cement mixed with other components to simulate volcanic rock.



Watching Susan work the cement mixture (with Joanne as her helper) showed us the work involved, but she made it look easy. Her formula is one container of Portland cement (Susan used a 10 cup container.) to 1 ½ containers of both perlite (or vermiculite) and peat moss. Screen the peat moss to get big stuff out. Use an old wheelbarrow or large container to mix. Mix in enough water to make the mix stick together without being drippy wet. Rub a bowl

or other mold with Vaseline or spray with Pam or line the bowl by putting it in a light plastic bag—because the cement will stick to it otherwise.

Pat the cement mixture into the bowl—about 1 ½ inches thick at the bottom and 1" at the top of the sides. Smooth it and pack tightly, scraping it down with a smooth tool. It takes a while to do it right to have a nice planter. Get the top even and smooth. You can poke a hole in the bottom with a stick for a drain hole.

Put the mold into a garbage bag and use a twisty to tie it. Leave for a couple of days. Then take it out when it is hard enough and leave it in the sun for a couple of weeks, hosing it down every day so that the lime in the cement is leached out and doesn't kill your plants.

There are various ways you can decorate or embellish your planter. If you want to make one and did not see the demo, email Susan and she will answer your questions. The two planters she brought to show us were lovely.

CAUTION:When working with the dry cement/perlite/vermiculite/ peat moss mixture—Wear a mask. (Jim says vermiculite has asbestos in it but you shouldn't breathe any of that dust even if you're not using vermiculite.)When patting out and packing your mixture, wear heavy rubber gloves because of the lime in the cement.



Susan with a planter she made.



POLO AND TEE SHIRT ORDERS DUE NOW

Polo shirts are to be use for meetings/ as presentation speakers, etc. and the T-shirts are for use when getting dirty is necessary. We want our name out there announcing who we are!

The deadline for ordering the shirts (either or both) is July 18th. The order will be place on July.19th.

The cost is \$20 for the Polo shirt, \$10 for the T-shirt. Money **MUST** be received with your order.



The Ladies Polo is made by Devon & Jones a Y collar style and runs a bit small. The men's Polo has a 3 button placket also made by Devon & Jones. The T-Shirt is made by Port Authority a short sleeve sized as unisex and roomy, a large is a large, size runs true.

I washed a polo and it did well. I wore it to the meeting. It was a medium and I was comfortable but it was not roomy.

If you want to order a shirt at any time please contact me by phone @ 868-2680 or 830-997-4744 work or my e-mail powens@vei-tx.com.



Side oats gramma by Susan Evans

We thank you, Pat, Susan E. and Betty for taking care of this so well.

NEED HELP for the Blanco County Fair

By Pat

The next meeting will see us finalize plans for the county fair, where we are responsible for three areas. The Blanco County Fair is Friday & Saturday Aug. 19 & 20 and the theme is **Texas Frontier**.

Betty, Sarah, Henrietta, Mary J. and I, Pat O. have already volunteered to provide the Plant Competition Booth and decorate the Master Gardener Exhibit Table. If you would like to help, please call 830-868-2680 or 830-997-4744 or e-mail Pat.

We already have an old plow for use and we are looking for other items.

Examples: Old Lantern Old milk can
Sunbonnet Old apron
Tin plates/ old style utensils (1 or 2 sets)
Red checkered table cloth & napkins (1 or 2 sets)
Prairie grass or Wildflowers (in pots)

Drop off at The Extension office or Betty Mucha's house on Aug 17 or 18. Items will be safe because we will have one or two members in the booth at all times. **Be SURE to put your name on ALL your items!**

Sign up sheet for the Exhibit Hall volunteer hours will be at the meeting, Aug. 9:
Plant Competition booth, MG Exhibit booth, Outside booth (Susan Hamm).

We need one to two people at 2 hour intervals, from about 9:00 am to 7:00 or 8:00 pm..

Those willing to help with the Plant Competition Booth and the Master Gardener Exhibit Table set up will be at the Exhibit Hall at a time To Be Determined.

The Plant Competition Booth is receiving entries on **Thursday Aug 19th**, beginning at **10am**. **Beginning last year it is required that we monitor our Master Gardener table throughout the Exhibit Hall opening hours for security reasons**

Friday August 19th Times: 9 am to noon, and 3 pm to 8pm. **Saturday:** 11:30am to 8pm.
Sunday: Take down begins at NOON. Please come to help and to pick items you loaned.

July Meeting

Twenty-five members and three guests met at the First Baptist Church in Blanco on the afternoon of July 12. Guests were Bev Meadows and Henrietta's granddaughters. Alex and Reagan enjoyed Kathy's Equist's baby Boer goats.



We adjourned from the demonstration to refreshments brought by Carol Rankin and Cindy Stomberg. The business meeting opened with Pat giving information about the shirts and the fair. For more information about the fair—especially entering some of the competitions—to to the Blanco County website under AgriLife.



Ann thanked everyone for sending hours to her. Jim thanked those who helped with the children's project at the Peach Festival.

Diana reported on the survey for those who could not attend the last meeting. There was some discussion, including the suggestion from Peggy Welch that we meet at 5:00 or 5:30 sometimes instead of 7:00. Mary reported that several had made that suggestion in the survey.

Five year pins were awarded Ann Cook, Susan Evans, Joanne Fischer, Betty Mucha, and Shirley Winslow (in absentia).

Carol Rankin brought up her concerns about new environmental legislation with tighter restrictions on land owners. Those who share her concerns may email her for a site to express opinions.

The meeting adjourned as members helped themselves to garden produce brought by Ron Bourland.

Program Plans for the Rest of the Year

August 9, 7 pm—Blanco County Rodeo preparation—Refreshments/Coordinator: Betty Mucha

Sept. 13, 2 pm—Tricia Timmons with propagating session, location tba

Oct. 11, 7 pm—tba

Nov. 8, 2 pm— Patricia Michael on Permaculture Designing--Blanco First Baptist Church-- Patricia@PatriciaMichaelDesign.com

<http://www.patriciamichaeldesign.com>

Dec. 13, 7 pm—Holiday Party—Peggy Welch's

