

# *Garden Talk*



**The Official Quarterly Newsletter of  
the Master Gardeners of Davidson  
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*Garden Talk* is a quarterly publication of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County, Tennessee. The newsletter will be distributed Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1 and Nov. 1 each year.

### Submissions

Readers are encouraged to submit articles and photographs for future issues to [newsletter@mgofdc.org](mailto:newsletter@mgofdc.org) that will be featured as space allows.

The **deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month before each publication date**, including items for the forthcoming calendar.

### Dues

Payment of annual dues of \$20 may be made to the above address, at a monthly meeting, or securely online with a debit/credit card.

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Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. Tennessee Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

**Cover Photo:** Volunteer sunflower in the Harding Garden at Belle Meade. Photo by Jill Meese/MGDC.

# Double Header

by Mary Maddox and Wayne Maddox, Co-Presidents,  
Class of 2000 & Class of 2015

Summer Greetings Master Gardeners,

Well, it seems to us that in contrast to some previous years, most of us have been blessed to have cooler June temps and significant early July rainfall. Everything has been lush and beautiful—well, almost (are we the only ones?) Remember to send us pictures of any unfortunate garden casualties for critique at the August meeting.

Davidson County Master Gardeners have been very busy and still have much in the year to look forward to. Thanks to everyone who participated in our Urban Gardening Festival. Nancy Wilcenski and Justin Druckenmiller and their crew did a great job. We had a good turnout and the weather cooperated right up until closing time.

Likewise, thanks to all who made another Jr. Master Gardeners Camp a success. We had an enthusiastic group of young people and a fantastic supporting group of Master Gardeners, led by Doris Weakley.

A big thank you to Bob Mather for leading the bus trip to Jackson. I know Bob will have much to share at our next meeting. Speaking of meetings, we will meet in August at Crieveewood Baptist Church. As an update, we are hopeful that we will be able to return permanently to Ed Jones Auditorium in October, but, until then, keep watching for announcements on meeting locations.

We have a couple of upcoming needs. One is getting ready for the Tennessee State Fair. Virginia Casalone will be reaching out for your ideas and help, so we hope you will be responsive to that as you always have been.

Secondly, the nominating committee is seeking members for next year's board. We want to encourage you to either volunteer or seriously consider any request from the nominating committee. Don't think you are making a lifetime commitment; it's only for one year!

This is a chance for younger or newer members to get their feet wet. If you're not sure you can spare the time, find a friend who will team up and share the position with you. (Check out the job descriptions on the MGofDC website in the Library under Resources.)

We are thankful that Barbara Drake is heading the nominating committee. Make her job easier! Contact [bsdrake@comcast.net](mailto:bsdrake@comcast.net). 🌱



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Submissions to our newsletter by members are always welcome! While there is plenty to share about our projects and programs, we always enjoy sharing stories about Master Gardeners, their experiences, and their gardens.

If you would like to submit an item to the newsletter, please email [newsletter@mgofdc.org](mailto:newsletter@mgofdc.org).



## 2017 Gardening Presentations at the Library

Look below to find out what Master Gardeners presentations are scheduled at Nashville Public Library locations through October 2017. For more information, visit <https://library.nashville.org/>.

### August:

Aug. 6 at 10:30 a.m. at Green Hills – A Beginners Guide to Saving Seeds

Aug. 20 at TBD Main Library – Fall Vegetable Gardening

### September

Sept. 3 at 10:30 a.m. at Edmondson Pike – The Science of Composting

Sept. 17 at TBD at Main Library – A Beginners Guide to Saving Seeds

### October

Oct. 10 at 10 a.m. at Goodlettsville – Bulbs

Oct. 15 at 10:30 a.m. at Bellevue – Bulbs or A Beginners Guide to Saving Seeds



## 2017 Junior Gardeners Camp in the Books!

By Doris Weakly, Coordinator, Class of 1999

What a great week for JR Gardeners Camp this year. There were 23 campers and as usual it rained during camp. Rain during camp must be accounted for, so weather related activities – inside – of course must be planned in advanced.

Many MG Volunteers greeted the campers each day. There were several 2017 Interns and how great full JGC is to have new faces. Also, volunteers in the community come each year to give presentations for JGC.

This year, Margaret Cameron of Owl's Hill came with Kernel the Corn Snake and a Screech Owl. She is always welcomed to JGC. Marlene Key with Tyne Meade Garden Club came with buckets of flowers for the favorite of JGC Floral Design Class. MG Judy Wright came with a chicken and gave a short presentation. Sherry Arnold gave a demonstration on Making Tussie Mussies using Herbs as she walked campers through the Demo Herb Garden. That was a first for Sherry and JGC. Lillian Dibble along with MG Virginia Casalone talked on Herbs and campers made a Bouquet Garni.

This was the last year for Arden Schlesinger to bring us Trees and Birds he has been giving this presentation now for over 10 years. Lou Anne Williams has been giving Landscape Design topic for 15 years using a Doll House.

These are just a few Teachers listed here and JGC appreciate all MG Volunteer Teachers; Bob Ary, Carol Taylor, Jane Linker, Doris Painter, Patricia Majett, Whitney Pinkston, Maddy Berezov, Julie Berbiglia from Metro Water Dept, David Cook with Insects always a favorite, Barbara Allen and Mary Dickerson.

Photographer Susan Bryant and Joan Davis, a Thank you to Russell Kirchner of Holt Kamp Greenhouses for plants for Fairy Gardens, and a SPECIAL THANKS to Pattie Waller and Ethel-Lonneill Williams for preparing Snacks twice a day for JGC and all the Aids that came daily to help with Hands on Projects. JR Gardeners Camp could not be held without all MG Volunteers – the BEST!

This is my last year as JGC Coordinator. It has been a good run for 15 years and time has come to turn over the reins of JGC to Pam Swoner. Pam has been with JGC since 2009 and is indeed a most helpful JGC Chair to move up to JGC Coordinator. MG is looking forward to new adventures for JGC. 🌱

## Announcements!

**Congratulation and Thank You** to these dedicated **Lifetime Members**: Jim Miles (2001) earned his 15-Year Badge; Muff Cline (2007) earned her 10-Year Badge; and Arden Schlesinger (2007) earned his 10-Year Badge.

**Congratulations** are also extended to **Interns earning their certification badges**: Marsha Burton (2016); Buzz Evans (2012); Patty Ghertner (2016); Lilly Hall (2017); Jenna Henderson (2015); and Dawn McBee (2017).

**Reporting hours** continue to be a very important part of our volunteer efforts —it truly is part of our program's sustainability. Please remember to enter volunteer AND education hours.

**Interns**: When you have entered 40 volunteer and 8 education hours, please send me an e-mail at [membership@mgofdc.org](mailto:membership@mgofdc.org) or call me at (615) 554-3344. I will confirm your hours and send David Cook an e-mail, with a cc to you, requesting his verification and to order your badge. When your badge arrives I will notify you. (Your notification is the only way we have of knowing that you have completed these required hours.)

**Hosting a garden tour**: Earn 15 hours. (contact Gloria Ballard) If asked to assist earn one hour for every hour of volunteer time. 🌱





# Calendar of Events

**Aug. 21  
& 28**

**Tennessee State Fair 2017:** All Master Gardeners of Davidson County and Interns are invited to join in creating and presenting an educational State Fair display focused on extending our local growing season and providing visitors with answers to gardening questions.

**Sept. 8-17**

**Tennessee State Fair** proudly presents "Tennessee Proud," its theme for the 2017 edition of this landmark event, which was inaugurated more than 150 years ago. For more information, visit <http://tnstatefair.org/>.

**Sept. 22  
& 23**

**Music and Molasses** Arts and Crafts Festival is at the Ellington Agriculture Center. The event features crafts, music, food dance, pottery, soap, and broom-making demonstrations as well as artisans teaching about wood carving, weaving, spinning, quilting, and more.

**Oct. 21**

**GroWild Fall Sale** is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit [growwildinc.com](http://growwildinc.com).



**Regional Workshop:** On June 22, the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener program had their central regional meeting. The workshop saw more than 90 volunteers and Extension folks enjoy inspiring tours of Ellington Ag Center (Davidson Co.), Cedars of Lebanon state park butterfly garden and the arboretum in Fiddlers Grove (Wilson Co.) as well as Lane Agri-Park (Rutherford Co.).



## Monthly Meetings

Davidson County Master Gardeners Association members and guests are asked to bring and share your best **heirloom tomatoes** and **peppers** (large, small, ugly, pretty, whatever) to our **August 2017 monthly meeting**.



If you don't grow them, please be on the lookout (where you buy your heirloom tomatoes) ... the more, the better.

We'll celebrate and study the diversity of the tomatoes and peppers present, explain their benefits, swap advice, ask/give questions and answers, give some awards and prizes and most importantly, taste the bounty.

Happy summer!



## Kitchen Gardens at Hermitage

*by Mary Langford, Class of 2009*

This year's is the best garden at the Hermitage in quite some time. We put down mulch pathways and improved the soil in the beds and it has made such a difference! It's easier to weed, the plants are healthier and the rain doesn't wash through so badly.

We added rhubarb and horseradish this year. Zucchini, yellow squash, eggplant and green beans are coming in. The tomatoes are big and healthy, but not yet ripe. The cantaloupe and watermelon have small fruits. Of course, we can't see the product yet, but the foliage on the sweet potatoes and peanuts looks good.

Squashes have never looked better. Squash bugs have always been a problem for us. Last year, we put tobacco ash in the hills and had fewer bugs than usual. This year, we buried one inch of a cigar in each hill and have seen no squash bugs at all. (knock on wood)

Deer are also less of a problem (so far) this year. We are being especially vigilant with the repellent spray, but I suspect they heard us discussing a venison barbecue fundraiser and decided to stay away.

Welcome and thank you to new volunteers, Traci Feffer, Vickie Woods and Dolly Carlisle. We hope you'll be back again and again. Thanks also to regulars, Sue Prosch, Carol Freund-Taylor, Phil Arnold, Donna Haggitt and Laura Kraft. We couldn't do it without you!

Others, we'd love to have you join us on Saturday mornings between 8-11 a.m. at the Maintenance Building.

For more information, email me at [langfordlaw@hotmail.com](mailto:langfordlaw@hotmail.com). ☺



## Harding Garden at Belle Meade

*by Mariwyn Evans, Class of 2011*

The Weedin' Women have turned into the "Constructin' Women," at least temporarily.

The verdant growths of the Scarlet Runner and Kentucky Wonder beans have overwhelmed our bamboo trellises for several years.

Now we're getting serious!

Drills in hand, the crew has built two sturdy wood trellises to hold our bounty.



*Jill Meese can't believe all the roses that need pruning in the new cutting garden.  
Photo: Mariwyn Evans*

Once the new trellises were in place, Lynne Wells patiently wound the new shoots on their upward journey. Continuing on the construction theme, new WW Pat McFadden built an amazing frame to help keep the cucumbers off the ground-and hopefully mildew free. Finally we planted some additional peppers and squash to fill out our beds.

With all our building done, we've also had time to tend our brand new cutting garden. All the plants have gotten over their transplant shock and are putting out bright colors for Belle Meade's summer visitors. In the yellow/red section, 'Moonglow' yarrow and 'Cheyenne Skies' coneflowers are flourishing.

On the other side of color wheel, blue delphiniums are giving way to purple liatris and 'Midnight Spires' salvia. Now if only we could make the Bermuda grass disappear!

Next up will be labeling the new garden and discussing ways to add an educational component for visitors.

We're alternating weeks at the two gardens starting at 8:30 a.m. Please check with Mariwyn Evans at [Mariwynevans@att.net](mailto:Mariwynevans@att.net) to find out where we will be working. ☺



*Anne Underhill and Pat McFadden encourage bean vines up the newly built trellis. Photo: Mariwyn Evans*



# Historic Grassmere Garden

by Andrea Pruijssers, Co-Chairperson, Class of 2013



View of the garden from the northeast corner.  
Photo by Andrea Pruijssers

We are entering into the summer months which until a few weeks ago had not been quite as hot and dry as other years. The weeds are enjoying all the rain too. Fortunately, the zoo visitors don't seem to notice them much. Besides an occasional comment ("The weeds are winning" or "Sssshh, stay really still, I think that's a Weedus pullerus in its natural habitat"), most people only have eyes for all the wonderful plants we have growing behind the Croft House. For many visitors, it's the first time they have made it back there. For others, it's part of their regular route through the zoo or even their favorite area.

This is the time of year that our Zinnia and Milkweed plants are blooming all over the vegetable and flower terraces. The garden is slowly turning into a butterfly haven. Hopefully the butterflies will still be as abundant in September, when we host the Master Gardener Monthly Meeting (more information will follow on the website [www.mgofdc.org](http://www.mgofdc.org)). We hope to see all of you there! Our fall "Classes in the Gardens" series kicks off September 2. Classes will be held from 11 am - noon every Saturday in September except the 23rd.

These classes are fun, informative, and they count towards your CEUs

We also need your help. Just a couple of extra hands would make so much of a difference to us who keep this project alive. Please come check us out! We would be thrilled to have you, even if you can't commit to more than just every once in awhile. Email [grassmere@mgofdc.org](mailto:grassmere@mgofdc.org) for more info. 🌱



Fox Cherry Tomatoes. Photo by  
Andrea Pruijssers

# Nashville City Cemetery Tour

by Bob Mather, Co-Chairperson, Class of 2000

Thanks to our projects chair, Faye Dorman, we have been trying some different Heirloom plants for the this season. Faye secured free seeds from Rare Seeds Unlimited and each MGDC project chose seeds. It was fun to research which plants were in use by Nashville area gardeners from 1860 to about 1880.

The first greenhouse was established by Thomas C. Joy in 1879, Joy's Greenhouse. In 1886 they established a small retail store at the corner of Church and Summer Street (Fifth Avenue). Joy's flowers has been owned and run by members of the family ever since. Among the seeds we received were Hollyhock Jet Black or Nigra and Cotton Red Foliated.

The single hollyhock below is about as close as a flower can get to really black, a deep, deep purple. Hollyhocks were always found in gardens throughout the south, and as cities grew, often found in many stately gardens in Nashville. Early seed companies offered a few varieties, but seeds were often passed on to family and friends. This biennial self seeds!

Red Foliated Cotton is the color of Thanksgiving cranberry sauce. The hibiscus-like flowers are a cherry-red to cerise pink and eventually yield snowy white bolls on a 3-4 foot, bushy plant. Red cotton was grown through out the south in the mid 1800's. This makes a great background plant in your garden.

Our very popular Living History Tour at the Nashville City Cemetery will be Saturday October 14th from 3-6pm. This years theme will be "Early Settlement Days in Nashville 1779-1806" As in the past, Master Gardeners can volunteer as tour guides. Come visit the Cemetery!

Robert Mather (2000) and Catherine Atwell (2004)  
[www.thenashvillecitycemetery.org](http://www.thenashvillecitycemetery.org). 🌱







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## Early Blight Tomato Disease

by David Cook, Extension Agent

Early blight is caused by the fungus *Alternaria solani* and is the most common disease of tomatoes in Tennessee. The fungus causes a leaf blight and may also attack tomato stems and the fruit. Leaf spots begin on the lower leaves as small, brownish-black lesions. As the spots enlarge up to 1/2 inch in diameter, concentric rings may be observed. Leaves turn yellow and dry up when only a few spots are present. Plants can be defoliated, causing low-quality tomatoes that are prone to sunscald. The early blight fungus is spread by wind and splashing rain, and outbreaks are favored by warm, rainy weather. The fungus overwinters in crop debris and on seeds and can survive between crops on solanaceous crops and weeds.



Fungicides sprays applied every seven to 14 days, depending on the frequency of rainfall, help to slow the rate of early blight spread. Garden fungicide products containing chlorothalonil, mancozeb, or copper will help to prevent the spread of this disease.

### Preventative Disease Measures

- 🌱 Rotate crops. Early blight remains active for a year. Spores can be dormant in the soil for several years.
- 🌱 Plant disease-resistant hybrids to strengthen your plant's chances of being blight-free.
- 🌱 Give tomato plants extra space (more than 24 inches) to let air to move among leaves and keep them dry.
- 🌱 Water the soil – not the plants – to prevent splashing. Avoid overhead watering.
- 🌱 Mulch with black plastic or landscape fabric to prevent fungus from spreading up onto leaves.
- 🌱 Remove and destroy affected plants at the end of the season.