

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 that will be featured as space allows.

The **deadline for submissions is the 15th of every month**, 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: Insect Hotel in Demo Garden. By Alisa Huntsman, President, Class of 2008

Chicken Scratch

by Alisa Huntsman , President (Class of 2008)

Greetings Master Gardeners,

As winter trudges on, most of us are making plans for our gardens. Whether it is a Master Gardener project or a bed in the backyard, success depends on careful planning. The same is true for just about anything, including the Master Gardener organization itself. Our success this year depends on the efforts of our volunteers; from the Lawn and Garden Show to the State Fair to the Speakers Bureau, many hours will be spent planning. While careful planning is crucial, without volunteers, we will not succeed. Over the years, I have noticed that when it comes to these events, the same small core of volunteers gets the majority of the work done.

When I decided to pursue the role of president, my first thoughts were of the goals I would set for the year. Many of those goals centered on the Demonstration Garden and the Earn and Learn classes. For those of you that have known me for a while, you are aware of my feelings about the Demo Garden. If I seem a bit biased on the importance of the project, I am; it is the only garden that we control outright. We own it, we truly own it and we are fortunate to have the space.

Over the years, countless classes have been taught there, day campers have had lessons there, interns and pathologists have performed research there and Volunteer Gardener has taped any number of episodes there. It truly is a learning center that we should all embrace and be proud of. As I plan my classes for the incoming Master Gardener interns, I am excited to share this amazing place and all it has to offer.

However, as I make those plans, I am reminded that we have a common mission. As participants in the Master Gardener program, we are all obligated to teach. With this in mind, I am hoping that I can convince more of you to come out and participate in the various programs and events we organize. Please do not assume that you have little to offer because there is always work to be done! Teaching is just part of the equation. A class on building beds may only require one person to do the talking, but it could require three to do the building. A lecture tent at the Urban Gardening Festival requires hands to put up the tent and they are every bit as important as the person(s) who lines up the speakers.

My ultimate goal is to make this year a year of activism by getting as many members as possible involved in our projects and events. While the true definition of the word activism implies vigorous work to affect change, my goal is not that far from the mark. It will take all of us working together to bring this change about.

This means getting to know the new interns as well as the long-term members and building relationships. Teaching and mentoring are an important step in the process as is attending meetings. While you are making your garden plans for the year, please leave some time open to join us around town. We have many opportunities to volunteer available.

The next time an e-blast lands in your inbox, read through it and look for notices on planning meetings. Even if you do not think you have anything to offer, attend the meeting! We always welcome fresh faces and new ideas. It is all hands on deck right now, Lawn and Garden is a few weeks away, following close on it's heels are the Earn and Learn classes and we will have little time to recover before we are consumed by the Urban Gardening Festival and State Fair.

We held our first meeting in our new location and at least 90 members were present. As fantastic as that was, there were quite a few of you that did not join us and we hope to see you next time, there is plenty of room! As for myself, I am looking forward to getting to know more of you and to working with you.

This is just the beginning, I hope to bring more of my ideas to the table and hope to get more involved in the community through gardening. According to David, we as a group volunteered more than 17,000 hours in 2017. Can you imagine what that number would be if more of us put in a few extra hours? To all of our members, I invite you to get involved and help us smash that record! 🌱

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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.

Recruiting Speakers for Gardening Education in 2018

All Certified Master Gardeners and Interns interested in joining the Speakers Bureau, contact Joan Clayton-Davis, Speaker Bureau coordinator at 615.419.1236. 📞

2018 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/>.

February

Master Gardener featured for African American History Month at Nashville Main Branch Library

Nashville Pubic Library Main (downtown) Branch will kick-off its 2018 Seed Exchange and celebrate African American History Month by featuring Davidson County Master Gardener Joan Clayton (Class of 2014) with a blog post about her history with farming and gardening.

Additionally, Nashville Public Libraries Seed Exchange Program and Master Gardeners of Davidson County begin its yearlong partnership by helping gardeners get ready for spring gardening with three learning opportunities during February.

Feb. 3 at 10:30 a.m. at Green Hill Branch Library – Seed Starting

Feb. 17 at noon at North Branch Library – Spring Vegetable Gardening

Feb. 24 at 10 a.m. at Bellevue Branch Library – Organic Practicies in Vegetable Gardening

March

March 10 at 1 p.m. at Old Hickory Branch – Beginners Guide to Growing and Enjoying Herbs

The schedule of educational workshops and presentations at libraries throughout the county are available at www.mgofdc.org.



Don't Miss the Chance to Go "Guerrilla" at Lawn and Garden

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That ability of Nature to flourish under harsh conditions is the idea behind "Guerilla Gardening," the theme of the 2018 Nashville Lawn and Garden Show. At the show, which takes place March 1-4 at The Fairgrounds Nashville, our Master Gardener booth will be a real-life demonstration of this challenge. The booth, entitled "From Brownfield to Green Glory," will show how to turn an abandoned plot of ground into a flourishing garden. Demos will show how to test and amend soils. Attendees will also a free "plant bomb" of wildflower seeds to plant in a vacant or underused space.

Want to be a part of this exciting and educational event? We'd love to have you! Volunteers are needed to acquire materials for the booth, do set up beginning, Tuesday, Feb. 27, and help with teardown on Sunday, March 4.

To find out more and help make this garden a reality, please come to one of our planning meetings:

Jan. 15 at 10:30 a.m. at the home of Mariwyn Evans, 115 Lafayette Court, Nashville Jan. 29 at 1:30 p.m. at David Cook's office, 1417 Murfreesboro Pike, 2nd fl. Feb. 12 at 1:30 p.m. at David's office Feb 19 at 1:30 p.m. at David's office.

Set up at the Fairgrounds will begin tentatively on Tuesday, Feb 27 at 10 a.m.

If you'd like to contribute to the project, but are unable to come to any meetings, please contact either Barbara Drake (bsd Drake@comcast.net) or Mariwyn Evans (mariwynevens@att.net). We look forward to your help in making this the best MG booth EVER! 🌱

2018 Master Gardener Class

The 13-week Master Gardener course for 2018 is now full. Classes will start on February 8, and continue through May 3. The 2018 class schedule is being finalized and will be posted on our web site as soon as available. This year's classes are being held at the Andrew Price Memorial United Methodist Church, 2846 Lebanon Road, Donelson, Tennessee. 37214.

The classes will be held in the large, downstairs meeting room from 6pm to 8:30pm on Thursday nights. The course fee is \$150 per person or \$250 per couple, which includes class materials, name badge, and a copy of the NEW handbook, which is replacing the 860-page Tennessee Master Gardener Handbook.

March 8 Monthly Meeting

Andrea Bishop will be our speaker on March 8. Andrea is a botanist with the Department of Environment and Conservation. She has been with the State for 32 years. Her official title is "Recovery Biologist" and is responsible for the recovery of the endangered and threatened plant species in Tennessee. We will also be holding our annual White Elephant sale.

See the inset on page 5 for information about the February meeting. 🌱

Garden Talk

Calendar of Events

Feb. 2-4

The 2018 Antiques and Garden Show of Nashville celebrates its 28th year February 2-4, 2018. This year's theme is "A Sense of Place...". In addition to informative lectures, the show features over 150 extraordinary lectures, art and horticulture dealers and magnificent gardens. Find more details at www.antiquesandgardenshow.com.

Feb. 8

Master Gardeners monthly meeting from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Feb. 20

Perennial Plant Society of Middle Tennessee monthly meeting from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Cheekwood

March 3

Weed Wrangle at City Cemetery is a one-day, citywide volunteer effort to help rescue our public parks and green spaces from invasive species through hands-on removal of especially harmful trees, vines and flowering plants. The event is 9 a.m. to noon at Nashville City Cemetery.

April 5-7

Tennessee Extension Master Gardener State Conference. The conference will be at Montgomery Bell State Park which offers a unique combination of nature and history with ready access to many TN cities.

April 7

Perennial Plant Society of Middle Tennessee annual plant sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Nashville Fairgrounds. Free admission and parking is \$5.

April 14

Herb Society of Nashville annual plant sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Tennessee Fairgrounds. Featuring herbs, common and rare varieties and heirloom vegetables. Sales favorites: shopping assistants and plant daycare and handmade pottery and herb markers by Roy Overcast.

Monthly Meetings

Davidson County Master Gardeners Association members and guests are to join us for our Monthly status.

Join us on **Thursday, Feb. 8** for the Master Gardeners of Davidson County Monthly potluck meeting. Our speaker will be Lucas Holman. Lucas is presently an Ag teacher in Rutherford County. Beginning February 5th, Lucas will be the Horticulture Extension Agent for Wilson County. He owns a nursery called Holman Farms and sells unique perennials for Tennessee. His talk will be on what you can do now to get your Arden and flower beds ready for spring planting, and favorite garden vegetables.

Also, Sara Connolly's mother, Mary Beth Goulet-Connolly, a Master Gardener from Holden, Maine will talk to us briefly about Master Gardeners in Maine. Holden is located between Bangor and Bar Harbor, Main.

Please note! Our new location is:
Crievewood United Methodist Church at 451 Hogan Road.



Pineapple sage in bee garden (Demo Garden)
Photo: Alisa Huntsman, President, Class of 2008

Urban Gardening Festival

by Justin Druckenmiller and Nancy Wilcenski

Mark Your Calendars for the Urban Gardening Festival on Saturday May 19 from 9 to 4 at Ellington Agricultural Center on the grounds of the Demonstration Gardens. This is the Master Gardener's showcase garden and this event is the only fundraiser done by Master Gardeners.

The event is free to the public and to vendors. We do ask for event sponsors to offset some of the cost. Some goals of the event are to educate the community, inspire gardening in both newbies and long timers, introduce new concepts, create awareness, and encourage those with minimal gardening space.

Not only do you get to tour an amazing beautiful garden, but you have the opportunity to learn, share your vast knowledge, speak with unique vendors, buy interesting items, and enjoy a great day!

Here's what we will need:

- Program Tent Speakers: Note that we ask vendors to do some of these spots as well as our county extension experts.
- How To Demonstrators: These are hands on demonstrations at the Master Gardener booth by Master Gardeners- they went over great!
- Crafts: Spend those cold days making crafts garden related that can be donated and sold at the Master Gardener Craft sale.
- Plants: As you begin to thin your beds, think of plants you can pot (unlabeled pots-no vendor names) to donate to the Master Gardener Plant sale or plant seeds to share some healthy young plants.
- Demo Garden: Volunteers needed during the months ahead - watch their schedule - to help get the gardens ready for the festival.
- Volunteers: Day of the festival and for setups on Friday May 18 and early morning Saturday May 19. We want young and old. Some of you longtimers have a wealth of knowledge that we find invaluable.
- Sponsors: If you have contacts and know a business that would sponsor us please contact us soon.
- Vendors: We have an ongoing list of vendors but do not hesitate to let us know of a garden related business that we should contact.
- Communicate: Spread the word about this great event. We compete with so many activities but ours is well worth a spot on anyone's calendar.

Nancy is planning a meeting in the next two weeks. Contact her at 615-881-4707 or nancy.wilcenski@gmail.com if you want to know more. 🌱

Harding Garden at Belle Meade

The weather outside is frightful, but the enthusiasm for the garden never dies. That's why Belle Meade's Weedin' Women are getting ready for their annual garden planning meeting.

As in years past, we'll discuss what veggies will perform for us, and how we can defeat the heat and bugs for a great harvest.

New seeds we'll try this year include a peachy-pink runner bean, Long Island cheese squash, and clay cowpeas.

We also hope to build another frame to help reduce mildew on squash this year. (Last year's frame for the cukes, courtesy of Pat McFadden, did wonders.)

In its second year, the cutting garden will also get a thorough review of successes and failures. The blues and were beautiful; the yellow and orange side struggled.

A particular favorite was a pink and white veronicastrum (culver's root). We'll discuss some reliable, and a few exotic varieties to add and where to place the new shrub additions.

We expect to start working in the garden shortly before Easter, so if you've got time on Wednesdays at 9 a.m., we'd love to have you to visit.



The Harding Garden regulars share a little holiday cheer.

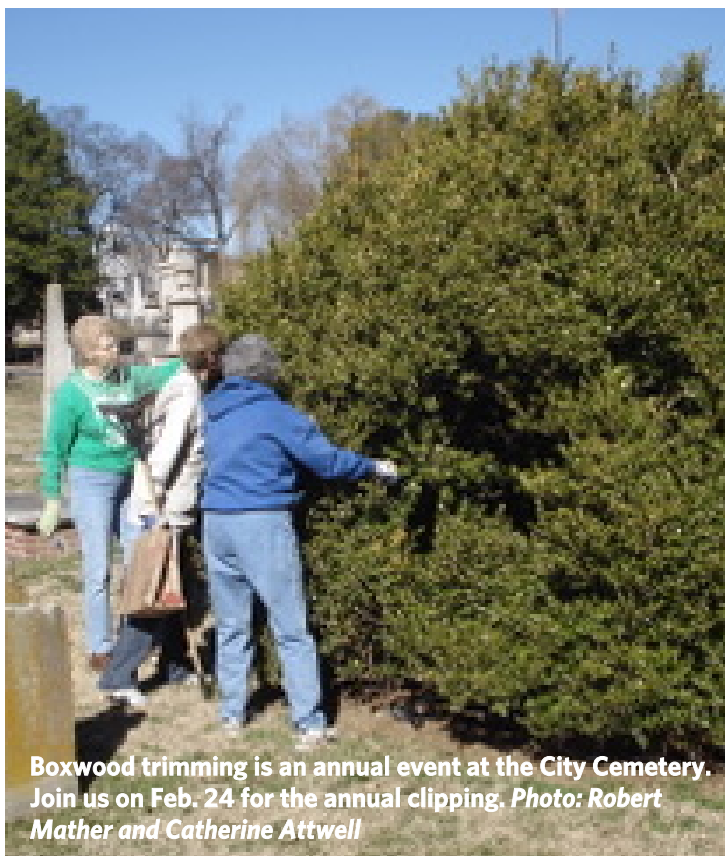
City Cemetery

by Robert Mather (2000) and Catherine Attwell (2004)

February can be very cold and wet in Tennessee, so it's the perfect time to plan our projects for the coming growing seasons. It's also a great time to survey your own gardens from a different perspective, and I don't mean from your kitchen window. Get your coat and take a short walk around your yard.

The first thing I notice is, it's time to prepare and schedule the next boxwood trimming demonstration at the City Cemetery. We have been hosting this once a year opportunity for the past 10 years. Mark your calendar for Saturday February 24 9 a.m. to 12 noon for Boxwood pruning at the City Cemetery. Bring gloves, hand cutters and shears for some hands on learning. This is an Earn and Learn opportunity!

Most boxwood in this area are American or English boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) which have become a landscape staple. We do our trimming in late winter, before the plant starts its growth. We also use hand clippers and shears to shape our bushes. (Never use electric trimmers, you will be sorry you did). These slow growing plants can become massive, before you realize. To cut your plants back to shape, cut no more than 5" from the plant this year, and do another 5" the next, until your overgrown boxwood takes the size and shape you desire. We will also learn about the boxwood blight, which is becoming an increasing problem in southern landscapes. 🌿



Boxwood trimming is an annual event at the City Cemetery. Join us on Feb. 24 for the annual clipping. Photo: Robert Mather and Catherine Attwell

Historic Grassmere Garden

by Chuck Vehorn, Project Co-Chair, Class of 2014



Grassmere during winter. Crimson clover is used as cover crop. Photo: Andrea Pruijssers

Did you know a home listed in the National Register of Historic Homes is located at the Nashville Zoo? And did you know that directly behind the home, called the Croft House, is an historic garden managed by the Master Gardeners of Davidson County (MGofDC)?

Based on a Zoo web page, the house was built in 1810 and renovated in the period 1876-1881, which included additions of porches, a kitchen, a smokehouse, and a three-tiered garden. The family called their farm, Grassmere (lake of grass).

In 1997, a reclamation of the garden began with a partnership of the Metro Historic Commission, the Metro Parks Department, and MGofDC.

The 0.7 acre garden contains three main terraces (annuals/perennials, vegetables, and fruit trees/berries) along with medicinal herb, heirloom rose, and kitchen herb gardens.

The garden is considered a "demonstration garden" because (1) it is cared for in the same manner as it was cared for in the late 1800's – using only compost and companion plants and not using commercial fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides; and (2) the plants in the garden are typical of those grown in that period (heirloom vegetables, antique roses, period perennials, annuals, and native plants).

The Zoo Garden is enjoyed by numerous visitors to the zoo, so we Master Gardeners strive to interpret that period of time and enjoy making the garden as beautiful as it might have been when the Croft family lived there.

We welcome any gardeners who have completed recent Master Gardener classes and those taking the current class (2018) to join us in recreating history. 🌿

Dates for Junior Camp for 2018

by Pam Swoner (2009) and Maddy Berezov (2014)

A big thank you to everyone who has offered to volunteer with Junior Camp for 2018. If you are thinking about coming, please let me know so I can add you to our email list.

You are welcome to participate one day, part of a day or all week. It is a great way to meet your hour requirements for certification too.

For those not familiar with Junior Camp, it is one week of sharing our gardening experiences and knowledge with our campers aged 9 to 12. Camp dates for 2018 are: June 11-15. We meet from 9 a.m. till 3 p.m. each day. You can find more information on the Davidson County Master Gardener website under programs.

This year we are looking for six Team Leaders. You can be a Team Leader for one day or all week. We are excited about taking the campers on hikes and learning more about the trees, apiary, and health of the stream on the Ellington property. Team Leaders will play a key role in these activities.

Thank you in advance for your support of our Master Gardeners Jr Day Camp. 🌱

Demonstation Garden

by Pam Swoner (2009) and Maddy Berezov (2014)

Last month Jr. Summer Camp had a work day at the DEMO Garden. With lumber donated by Lowes, Pam Swoner and Maddy Berezov, Jr. camp co-chairs, along with David Cook were joined by Corinne and Tessa and their moms to assemble 3 dedicated raised beds next to the pollinator garden. The girls put down layers of cardboard, drilled and hammered, then shoveled wood chips around the perimeter.

The girls, who aged out this year, are excited to come back to camp as intern assistants.

To finish the project, Maddy Berezov with the help of her nephew David Howard filled the beds with wood chips, compost, leaves and manure. Now we wait for nature to give us great planting beds for camp.

David Howard, a freshman at Nashville State, is completing his core curriculum studies and plans to transfer to MTSU in 2019 to complete his studies in accounting. This project enabled David to complete his 8 hours of community service in time to meet the tuition benefit deadline.

Thanks to everyone who worked on the beds. We can't wait to plant with our campers this summer. 🌱



The team with our finished product.



David Howard shoveling manure



Tessa and Corinne

Membership Awards

UT Extension Master Gardener Program for Davidson County Volunteers was established in 1986! Since that time, many hours have been spent volunteering and providing educational information to individuals and to groups within Davidson County, as well as to our neighboring counties. So, it can be said that our "footprint" has been strong and mighty for many years and through our involvement we have also forged many enduring bonds and friendships.

In 2017, Tennessee Extension Master Gardeners (TEMA) who had provided ten (10) years, and more, of active service to the program were eligible for special recognition. This recognition is broken into 5-year increments; 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30-Years.

We would like to recognize the following MGofDC members who achieved this special recognition in 2017: (All volunteer and education hours have been confirmed.)

<u>Lifetime – "Retired":</u>	Carolyn Turner	Chuck Hutsell	Diana Bradford	Becky Fox Matthews
Jessie Lee Holloway	Cecil Ward	Shirley Lee	Judy Burger	Pam Rice
Adrian Jacobs	Lou Anne Williams	Jane Linker	Judy Burnette	Arden Schlesinger
Maggie Speight		Mike Lannom	Muff Cline	Cheryl Svoboda
Waneta Strickert	<u>15-Year Lifetime Badge:</u>	Paul Martin	Dan Covington	Ed Taylor
	Barbara Allen	Bob Mather	Margaret Devine	Terry Torre
<u>30-Year Lifetime Badge:</u>	Susan Collier	Georgeann McCoy	Mary E. Duncan	Sylvia Wahl
Michelle Carratu	David Cook	Sue McGinnis	Lois Francis	Pattie Waller
	Mary Dickerson	Jim Miles	Joe Harwell	RuthE Wingate
<u>25-Year Lifetime Badge:</u>	Alf Futrell	Johnny O'Connor	Fred James	Sharon Work
Barbara Adams	Joanne Futrell	Doris Weakley	Lyn James	Cherri Zaske
	Roxie Harwell		Carolyn Jones	
<u>20-Year Lifetime Badge:</u>	Don Hover	<u>10-Year Lifetime Badge:</u>	Sheila Kelley	
Turner Simons	Jean Hover	Catherine Atwell	Bill MacLennan	

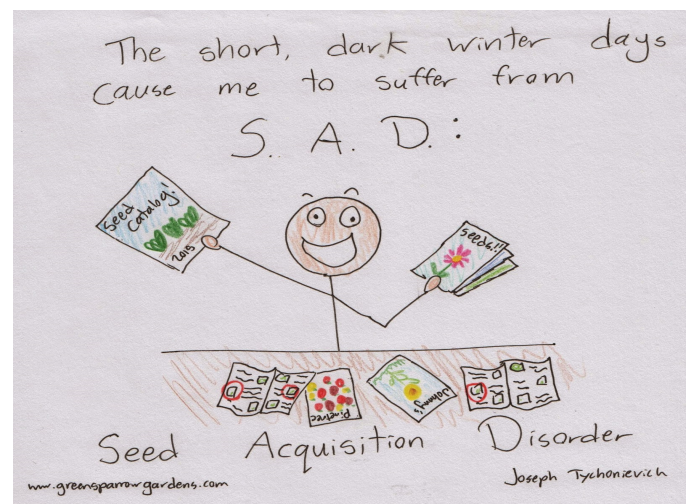
In addition to recognizing our "Lifetime" members for reaching their significant achievements, we must also congratulate many of our Interns for completing their minimum requirements of 40 volunteer hours and 8 education hours to certify in 2017! (All volunteer and education hours have been confirmed.)

Marita Wolf (1992)	Neil Anderson (2015)	Lydia Wickwire (2016)	Joan Gallagher (2017)
Katrina Coomer (2000)	Jacobia Dowell (2015)	Carmen Willey (2016)	Lilly Hall (2017)
Mickey Salomon (2004)	Sonya Ewing (2015)	Sy Arden (2017)	Leah Hawkins (2017)
Rose Cooper (2009)	Bill Haley (2015)	Mary Baxter (2017)	Terri Kureshi (2017)
Sara Marquardt (2009)	Jenna Henderson (2015)	Maggie Bracewell (2017)	Bren Letsen (2017)
Jennifer Gentry (2010)	Sandy Seidel (2015)	Susan Bryant (2017)	Kalli Lipke (2017)
Andrew Skipper (2010)	Patricia VornDick (2015)	Dolly Carlisle (2017)	Dawn McBee (2017)
Carol Rella (2011)	Marsha Burton (2016)	Billy Carmichael (2017)	Jo Neumaier (2017)
Buzz Evans (2012)	William Gant (2016)	Sarah Connolly (2017)	Trish Scudder (2017)
Kristine Kaye (2013)	Patty Ghertner (2016)	Christina Crawford (2017)	Lynda Spurlock (2017)
Philip Byard (2014)	Jill Mai (2016)	Elaine Davis (2017)	Judy Stewart (2017)
Charles Crim (2014)	Patricia Majett (2016)	Traci Feffer (2017)	Marsha Wharton (2017)
Nancy Piper (2014)	Marinda Skeesick (2016)	Gene Gallagher (2017)	

Last, but definitely not least, we extend a warm welcome to Master Gardeners who have moved to Davidson County and have become part of our MGofDC family:

Dee Anne Proctor (2014) from Williamson County
 Jayme Story (2014) from Shelby County
 Jennifer Telford (2014) from San Diego, CA
 Diane Berk (2008) from Williamson County
 Mindy David (2016) from Wilson County
 Sandra Daum (2008) from Wilson County

Congratulations everyone and the best to you in 2018! 🌱





Master Gardeners of Davidson County

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Protecting Plants from Freeze Injury

by David Cook, UT Extension Agent

Soft woods, actively blooming plants, and potted plants are the most susceptible to frost damage. The greatest threat of frost usually occurs overnight when the temperature drops enough to freeze the moisture on plant leaves and buds. The signs of frost damage are usually visible within two to three days and include browned and mushy leaves and buds. To protect plants from frost, you will need to cover them to keep the moisture from freezing.

Plastic can be used to protect plants from frost, but it's not the best or most effective material, and some expert gardeners warn against it. Plastic or vinyl materials do not breathe, causing moisture to get trapped inside. If the temperature drops low enough, the increase in moisture presents a greater threat to the plants. Instead of plastic, try using natural fabrics like cotton or linen, an opened burlap bag, or newspaper, as a covering to protect plants from frost. Covers must reach all the way to the root zone to be the most effective.

As the temperature decreases, the moisture in the air condenses into dew, which then freezes when the temperature reaches 32 degrees F. on the plant surfaces. At 32 degrees, damage to most plants may be minimal and only affect a small amount of leaves. However, if the temperature drops far enough for the plant cells to freeze, non-hardy plants will die.

You can ensure the survival of below-ground parts or the crown of a plant by placing 4-6 inches of mulch, such as pine straw, over the soil around the base to provide additional protection. Should any of these plants suffer cold injury to their tops this winter, cut them back as needed.

Mulches only protect what they cover. Mulch may help keep the lower stems, crown and roots alive, but they won't protect the uncovered upper parts of the plant. To protect the upper part of tropical plants growing in the ground, you must cover them. Wetting plant foliage immediately prior to a freeze does not provide any protection, but it is important that plants are not drought stressed going into a freeze. If the weather has been dry, thoroughly water plants in the ground and in containers early in the day when a freeze is predicted for that night.

Any type of covering should only be left in place during the cold spell. As soon as the weather moderates or it begins to rain, remove the covering completely.