

# GardenTalk

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County and UT Extension

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Vacant

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# Mather's Musings

News, wit and wisdom from Master Gardener Bob Mather, Class of 2000.



**O**ld Man Winter snuck one in on us right before the start of December. It gave us a little time to sit inside where it is warm and ponder what was good in our gardens and what to do differently next year. But wait! We have a couple of more months to do that... Our 2015 catalogs are only just going to the printer! So, I began to reflect on the Master Gardeners of Davidson County in 2014.

I got a great team of board members, project chairs and events chairs for what became a really big and important year for us. We increased our footprint in Davidson County, making more of our community aware of who we are and what we do! We started out with a great new class of interns and even had Nashville Mayor Karl Dean become an honorary Master Gardener.

Over one-third of this year's class of interns have completed their volunteer service and continuing education hours to certified as Master Gardeners; and, I am proud to say, many went on to become active in some of our many projects and special events. Some are still working toward their goals and we continue to support them with our very successful **Mentor Program**. I hope each and ever one of you are considering being a mentor to our 2015 class! Be certain to contact Caroll Marrero at (615) 554-3344 or [bmarrero@comcast.net](mailto:bmarrero@comcast.net) to express your interest!

This past February, I attended my fifth Tennessee Master Gardeners Winter School and I am looking forward to 2015's school. That month also saw our Boxwood Trimming at **Nashville City Cemetery** immediately followed by the **Nashville Lawn & Garden Show** in March. I am happy to announce we have a new chair for the 2015 Lawn & Garden Show: **Cindy Martin** (2014).

In May, our signature event, the **Urban Gardening Festival**, was a tremendous success and we have already begun planning for 2015 and need each and every one of you to help! I am delighted to share that **Nancy Wilcenski** (2014) will be chair for next year's festival.

If you didn't get to take the 2014 **Nashville City Cemetery Living History Tour**, you can watch a video of it at [YouTube](#).

Both the **Tennessee State Fair** and **Music & Molasses** were also bigger and better than ever. The pairing of our new **Speakers Bureau** with the **Nashville Public Library** and our participation with the **Nashville Farmers' Market** have further increased our reach to parts of Davidson County where, until now, we have not been visible. All of these events, as well as our five major projects, add to the presence we have in our community and the impact we provide.

Now that the weather has turned cold and we are spending more time indoors, I must remind you to **enter your hours**. It is important to let others see how we impact our community, and both our volunteer and continuing education hours offer proof of what we've accomplished. If you need assistance, please let me or someone on the board know you are having difficulty.

As I look toward 2015, I feel confident that we will once again have another solid board to help plan and execute the mission of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County. It is because of **you** that we are making an impact in our community. You have more than gardening skills to give! Enjoy those catalogs as they arrive soon in the mail!

My very best wishes to you and your families for Happy Holidays and a very happy New Year. 🍷

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**Cover photo:** Pussy willow in bloom. Photo: Laura Kraft/ MGDC.

## Don't Forget!

Please remember to take a moment and record your hours for 2014 with UT Extension! You have until the end of the year before David Cook's annual report is filed. Please contact any member of the board if you are having problems logging them at the [UT Extension website](#).

Also, it's the time of year once again where we remind you about annual membership dues. Now through January 31st we will be collecting dues for the 2015 calendar year.

Dues are **\$20** for certified members and couples; lifetime members are welcome but not required to pay dues. You may pay by mail or at our December or January meetings. 🌱

## December Meeting

**O**ur December meeting held at 6:30pm on **Thursday, December 11th, 2014** in the Ed Jones Auditorium on the campus of Ellington Agricultural Center will be a celebration! Ham, rolls and beverages will be provided—please bring finger foods or desserts.

The meeting will feature some garden-themed games with prizes. Learn more about your fellow Master Gardeners while we have some fun! If you have a “white elephant” or other garden-related object to contribute as a prize, please bring it! 🌱

## Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage

*by Laura Kraft, Class of 2010*

**T**he Hermitage Kitchen Garden has been put ‘to bed’ for the winter. The Café and Herb gardens are still sprouting some of their finery for our guests. We just collected the last of the sesame seeds.

We sincerely appreciate all of the work our Master Gardener volunteers have done in nurturing the demonstration gardens and educating visitors this year. We have gathered heirloom seeds throughout the growing season and will add to our varieties next year with seeds received from The Monticello Kitchen Garden.



We will meet in January for our annual planning meeting/breakfast, with greenhouse planting starting in March. We are looking forward to a fruitful year in 2015. We wish Happy Holidays to all of our fellow Gardeners! 🌱

## Demonstration Garden

*by Tyann Chappell, Class of 2013*

**A**s 2014 comes to a close there are some new things that have been happening at the Demo Gardens. Neither Shirley Lee (2001) nor I have been fall/winter gardeners but we thought we would give it a try. We have been pleased to pick collards, turnip greens, and mustard greens by the bushels! We are keeping our fingers crossed for a good harvest of cabbage, cauliflower, turnips, beets, and of course more greens. We have spruced up the garden with some fresh paint, added the fairy garden and the enchanting trees from our Music and Molasses booth and Shirley's succulent dish is a showpiece. Please come by for a visit and while you are there add a decoration to the trees and pick yourself a mess of greens! 🌱

# December Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Regularly scheduled work days at ALL project sites is suspended for the month of December.</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Meet Me at the Market, 10am-2pm	11 <b>Monthly Meeting: November 6:30pm</b> Whites Creek Watershed Alliance Riparian zone tree planting, 11am-3pm	12	13 Whites Creek Watershed Alliance Riparian zone tree planting, 11am-3pm
14	15	16 	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 	26	27
28	29	30	31	Save the Date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Nashville Area Beekeepers Association (NABA) Advanced Beekeeping Workshop — Jan 17, 2015</li> <li>★ NABA Introduction to Beekeeping — Feb 13-14, 2015</li> <li>★ Tennessee Master Gardener Winter School — Feb 26-27, 2015</li> <li>★ Nashville Lawn &amp; Garden Show — March 5-8, 2015</li> <li>★ Urban Gardening Festival — May 16, 2015</li> </ul>		





## *A Tale of Two Sisters*

*by Tyann Chappell, Class of 2013*

**A**s Master Gardeners, we are familiar with the term "Three Sisters Garden".

The three sister plants: corn, pole beans, and squash protect and support each other. Each of the sisters contributes something to the planting. Together, the sisters provide a balanced diet from a single planting.

As older sisters often do, the corn offers the beans needed support. The beans, the giving sister, pull nitrogen from the air and bring it to the soil for the benefit of all three. As the beans grow through the tangle of squash vines and wind their way up the cornstalks, they hold the sisters close together. The large leaves of the rambling squash protect the three-some by becoming living mulch that shades the soil, keeping it cool and moist, and preventing weeds.

But this is the story of two sisters: Master Gardeners **Barbara Allen** (2000) and **Mary Dickerson** (2000). In early June, our annual Junior Master Gardener Camp

was conducted and a day was dedicated to the planting of the Junior Garden. In prior years, the garden had been located in an upper location in the Demonstration Garden that had been slowly overtaken by the oak tree growing ever wider and creating a more shaded rather than sunny location.

One day in early May, Master Gardener Shirley Lee (2001) had a "re-purposing" idea: Offer the butterfly bush garden location for the Junior Garden. (The butterfly bushes had been severely damaged during the harsh 2013 winter.) All agreed the new location was larger and better-suited for the needed six to eight hours of sun.

Preparing the bed for vegetables was a daunting task in itself. The butterfly bushes had to be removed along with their extensive root system. The soil then had to be amended and tilled for the upcoming new tenants. As you have read in a previous newsletter, the camp was quite a success and the new garden was cheerfully planted. But once the camp was over and all had returned to their normal activities, the two sisters remained to tend the new garden.

One might find them at any time—in the mornings, afternoons, or into the evenings past dusk—making certain the maturing plants were given the best care to thrive.

Barbara and Mary weeded, fertilized, planted additional vegetables, pruned, staked, deadheaded, mulched, picked vegetables, watered, and implemented several tactics to TRY and outsmart the deer! Lo and behold they were quite successful by installing a perimeter fence around the garden.

The sisters have been tireless (and tired) for months and have a beautiful garden to show for it. Others have helped and we appreciate them, too, but day in and day out, these sisters have been doing the majority of the gardening.

The garden might be put to bed but the sisters are still tending to its every need and making plans to put their fall crop to bed.

We want to extend a very special **THANK YOU** to both ladies for their dedication, always gardening with a smile and always willing to share their knowledge and time working in the other gardens too! 🌻

# Mentoring Program

*by Caroll Marrero, Class of 2009*

Just think, now we are a “bunch of friends” who also happen to be doing a LOT of educating, volunteering and increasing the profile of the Master Gardener Program in Davidson County! A tremendous round of applause accompanies a humble “thank you” to each and every one of you. We should all be pleased to say “So long, farewell to 2014” and look forward to great things to come in 2015!

## Continuing Education Opportunities

Though low temperatures curtail outdoor opportunities, seek out segments and episodes of Volunteer Gardener found at their [YouTube channel](#) or the [WNPT website](#) to earn continuing education hours. For every 30-minute episode watched you will earn ½ continuing education hour—and there's no limit!

Gardening and related webinars, or presentations that are delivered online, are another new method to earn your continuing education hours. But remember: When recording your hours, indicate the name of the episode watched.

## Volunteer Service Opportunities

There are several upcoming and ongoing opportunities to earn volunteer hours for community service that will be approved by UT Extension:

- **Cumberland River Compact** has a unique opportunity to earn volunteer hours over the next several weeks on a collaborative project removing invasive, non-native plants (honeysuckle, privet, etc.) from

nearly 10 acres above Cathy Jo Creek at The Nashville Zoo. Once cleared, the area will be converted into a native prairie grass infiltration zone with native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees, and will become a rotational grazing area for bison and elk as well as an education space. Volunteer shifts will generally be three hours each, Monday to Friday, at either 9am to 12 noon or 1pm to 4pm. To learn more and signup, contact Dr. Gwen Griffith at (615) 837-1151.

- The **Whites Creek Watershed Alliance**, under the guidance of the Tennessee Division of Forestry, will be planting trees to establish a riparian zone along beautiful Whites Creek on Thursday, December 11th and again Saturday, December 13th from 11am to 3pm. Warm snacks will be provided to volunteers each day. To signup, contact Master Gardener Michelle Carratu (1986) at (615) 876-8865 or [geminiseashell@juno.com](mailto:geminiseashell@juno.com) — and remember to ask for directions to the site.
- **Community Food Advocates** has a mission to end hunger by creating a healthy, just, and sustainable food system in Middle Tennessee. Several volunteer opportunities are available throughout the year with its many programs that serve veterans, homeless and other vulnerable populations; community gardens; Farm to School; and the Nashville Mobile Market. To learn more and signup, visit their website at [www.communityfoodadvocates.org](http://www.communityfoodadvocates.org).
- The **Tennessee Agricultural Museum** educates visitors about our state’s rural and agricultural heritage and the importance of farming and forestry. Weekly opportunities are available. To signup or learn more, contact its new director, Gregory Phillipy, at [gregory.phillipy@tn.gov](mailto:gregory.phillipy@tn.gov).



At left and center: Honorary Master Gardener **Bella** (2013) in amazing before and after photos of cabbage in the Demo Garden; at right: **Shirley Lee** and the keyhole garden in full glory. Photos: Tyann Chappell/MGDC





# Historic Gardens at Grassmere

by Cathie Long, Class of 1999



Photos: Cathie Long/MGDC

**N**ovember 17th marked the first anniversary of the passing of our dearly, beloved friend, Barbara Sullivan (1993). We have a plaque in the perennial garden in her honor. Also, the rose that was planted in her memory is doing well and we look forward to many blossoms in the years to come.

Thanks to all of you who shared in the purchasing of these things to honor Barbara. Her memory has been with us all year as we carry on in a manner beneficial to the purposes of both Grassmere Historic Farm as well as the Master Gardeners of Davidson County, especially when educating our many visitors.

Part of the end of season preparation has been the tidying up of the sheds. Susan Brown (2012) was a big help with this as she organized the storage cabinet, including the seed collection which she cataloged and then arranged in alphabetical order! You can't

get better than that. Hoses and hardware have been collected and stored and the tool shed organized.

Winter time has come early and the gardens are clean, look kept and with a variety of greens that show off a fall garden; that is, until the temperatures have an impact on them. It seems we are playing with the notion of being a Zone 6.5 as in the days of old. Maybe the Zone 7 days are behind us for a while.

In spite of this the Lord and Ladies, *Arum italicum*, Lenten roses, *hellebores*, and *Nandinia* are the attractions until the spring bulbs come forth. Should we have a warm, sunny day come out and take a stroll. You might encounter a sheep being walked on a lease to sample the fallen leaves.

Merry Christmas to All! 🍷



# November Minutes

*by Recording Secretary Doris Painter (2013)*

**M**inutes of November 13, 2014 monthly meeting of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County held at Ellington Agricultural Center with 56 members attending.

President Bob Mather called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a blessing before our potluck dinner.

He reported that **Faye Dorman** (2014) was recuperating at home after an accident. Faye will not be able to run for the office of First Vice President as a result.

Bob announced Master Gardener merchandise was for sale in the back of the room. He also encouraged members to bid on the Silent Auction items located around the room.

**Music & Molasses** — Bob said that the Music & Molasses Festival was “Outstanding” and stated a member of the Tennessee Agricultural Museum Board told him that our booth far exceeded what they thought we would have. Tyann Chappell said many photographs were taken of the event and she thanked all who participated, and presented home-made owls to her committee members. She particularly mentioned that **Shirley Lee** (2001) worked 100 hours and **Georgeann McCoy** (1998) worked 50 hours on the event, and also thanked Don and Jean Hover (2003) for coming from Spring Hill to help setup for the festival.

Tyann along with co-chair **Dan Colehour** (2014) presented Busy Bees to: Shirley Lee, **Cindy Martin** (2014), Georgeann McCoy, **Barbara Allen** (2000), **Mary Showers** (2014), and **Kim Paulus** (2014).

**Mentor Program** — Caroll Marrero spoke to the members about the success of the Mentor Program and encouraged anyone interested in becoming a Mentor to sign the sheet in the back of the room. Caroll said that 22 Interns of the 2014 class have been certified this year. Caroll said there will be a meeting Thursday, November 20th for the Mentor Program.

**Treasurers Report** — Ed Taylor gave the Treasurer's Report indicating a balance of \$10,138.79.

Bob announced the Silent Auction to be closed.

**Election of Officers** — The Nominating Committee recommend reelection of **Robert Mather** as President; **Catherine Atwell** as 2nd Vice President, and **Jason Goodrich** as Corresponding Secretary; and election of **Laura Boatwright** as Recording Secretary. Nominations from the floor were opened. Caroll Marrero nominated **Marilee Jacobs** for Treasurer. Paul Martin nominated **Karen Shaw** for 1st Vice Presi-

dent. Chuck Dehorn made a motion to accept the nominations for officers to the Executive Committee and the adoption of amendments to the Bylaws. The motion was agreed to.

Bob announced there will be a dinner meeting for the outgoing and incoming members of the Executive Committee at his home on December 16th [corrected]. The new board will begin their terms of service effective January 01, 2015.

**Lawn & Garden Show** — Bob announced the dates for the Nashville Lawn & Garden Show as February 5-8, 2015. The theme this coming year will be “The Garden of Eden”.

Bob mentioned that it would be a good idea to list when our recipes contained peanuts and we might also bring the recipe if it is a new dish.

Bob reminded members that we will have an awards ceremony in January so we need to record our hours by the end of November.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Laura Kraft and seconded by Doris Weakley. 🍷



*Mentors preparing for the 2015 class. Photos: Bob Mather/MGDC*



Master Gardeners of Davidson County

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## Sweet Potato & Black Bean Chili

From [\*Green Fork Academy\*](#)

### Ingredients:

- ▶ 1 Tbsp + 2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- ▶ 1 medium-large sweet potato, peeled & diced
- ▶ 1 large onion, diced
- ▶ 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ▶ 2 Tbsp chili powder
- ▶ 4 tsp ground cumin
- ▶ ½ tsp ground chipotle chile\*
- ▶ ¼ tsp salt
- ▶ 2 ½ c water
- ▶ 2 15-oz. cans black beans, rinsed
- ▶ 1 14-oz. can diced tomatoes
- ▶ 4 tsp lime juice
- ▶ ½ c chopped fresh cilantro

### Instructions:

Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add sweet potato and onion and cook stirring often until the onion begins to soften. Add garlic, chili powder, cumin, chipotle, and salt. Cook, stirring constantly, for 30 seconds. Add water and bring to a simmer. Cover, reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook until the sweet potato is tender, or about 10-12 minutes. Add beans, tomatoes, and lime juice; increase to high heat and return to a simmer, stirring often. Reduce heat and simmer until slightly reduced, or about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in cilantro.

\* *Chipotle peppers are dried, smoked jalapeño peppers.*