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Mather's Musings

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

The seed catalogs have been arriving and I have enjoyed browsing through them most every evening. I particularly enjoy reading the *Rare Seeds* catalog from Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds. I have learned so much about heirloom seeds and those that sell them, such as Comstock, Ferre, & Co. which is the oldest, continuously operating seed house selling seeds since 1811! Starting at Amaranth and ending with Zinnias, there are so many seeds I want to order for next year. Since you get more seeds than a small garden can hold, perhaps we can have a "Seed Swap" this spring! It is so much fun planting seeds from vegetables and flowers you have never grown and then watching them mature through harvest. I have folded the corners of many pages of this and other seed catalogs so far!



Last month I reflected, with great pride, on the many activities of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County for 2014, including the continuation of our established projects as well as the new ventures we have undertaken in 2014. We are not taking on any new projects but are expanding on the mission of the Tennessee Master Gardener program: "Promoting environmental stewardship through a network of volunteers who provide information and education to Tennessee communities in home gardening and related areas." With our Speaker's Bureau, Mentoring Program, Earn As You Learn workshops, and Meet Me at the Market events, we have been able to reach out to areas of our community that we have not been able to visit before now. Great job Master Gardeners!

As we begin this New Year, we are already planning for an even better Mentoring Program to help our new class of 2015. We will need about 30 members to mentor one or two interns from the new class. This program is a two way street, benefiting new interns as well as mentors. Our new classes start on Thursday January 15th at 6:00 pm, and will continue for 14 weeks. **David Cook** is still putting together his schedule of topics, some of which will be new this year. Remember that you can be a mentor and can audit classes along the way. Don't forget to bring finger food for the class breaks.

We have another great team of board members for next year as we welcome Laura Boatwright, Marilee Jacobs, and Karen Shaw. I would like to thank Becky Fox Matthews, Doris Painter, and Ed Taylor for their service and a wonderful job over the past year.

We still have three more board positions that we will fill during the coming months. Please consider one of these positions.

It will be a busy 2015 for Davidson County Master Gardeners, but well worth all of the time and energy you contribute.

January Meeting

We will meet at 6:30pm on Thursday, January 8th, 2015 in the Ed Jones Auditorium on the campus of Ellington Agricultural Center for our annual Awards and Recognition Ceremony!

As has become our custom, Master Gardeners will be recognized for their significant and valued contributions throughout the past year across our several volunteer service and continuing education categories.

Bring your covered dish and be prepared to have a good time and celebrate our accomplishments over the past year! ••

Inside this issue:

| Mather's Musings3 |
|--------------------------------------|
| January 8th Meeting3 |
| 2015 Lawn & Garden Show4 |
| Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage4 |
| January Calendar5 |
| Speakers Bureau6 |
| Harding Garden at Belle Meade6 |
| Mentoring Program7 |
| Demo Garden Doin's7-8 |
| Demo Garden Reflections8-9 |
| Gardens at Grassmere10 |
| December Minutes11 |
| Recipe of the Month12 |

Cover photo: Carrots and beets from the Demonstration Garden. Photo: Alisa Huntsman/MGDC.

Reminders

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 January meeting.

Merchandise

A handful of our sale items remain and will be available for purchase at 50% off during our January meeting. We also have a few aprons left as well

— get them before they're gone! We're also taking pre-orders for black and navy totes available at \$25 only in January. (Note: Totes *do not* come with embroidered logo).



by Cindy Martin, Class of 2014

The 2015 Nashville Lawn & Garden Show will run from 10am on **March 5th** through **March 8th** at 5pm. The show theme for 2015:"The Garden of Eden".

The echoes of Christmas may still linger in your eyes, ears, and nose. A garden is a lot like Christmas — it fills our senses. Displayed throughout our 1,000 square foot booth, our guests will see...smell...and hear the magic that a garden of edible, ornamental and medicinal plants offers! The supportive theme for our booth is "A Magical Backyard Paradise", and it will provide our visiting public a garden display of proven plants for the Tennessee garden.

I must admit, my backyard garden is a joy and a labor of love. The restorative power of nature's beauty feeds my soul. The sweat equity and "lessons learned" feed my character. Our 2015 Lawn & Garden booth will also be a labor of love — won't you please join me? 100 volunteer Master Gardeners giving 10 hours will keep a few from a great labor.

By January 15, lists of scheduled activities and materials needed will be posted at our website: www.mgofdc.org. Please help! It takes about 1,000 hours to prepare, setup, staff, and teardown during our participation with the Lawn & Garden Show. Call, write, and signup!

Contact me at (615) 948-0544 or cfmnbw@gmail.com. *

Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage

by Laura Kraft, Class of 2010

We are excited to plan for 2015. Join us on Saturday, January 24th, at 10am for our annual planning meeting. Contact Laura Kraft at lkraft1212@gmail.com for location and details! We'll add to our heritage plants — both vegetables and herbs — with seeds obtained from Monticello, home of Thomas Jefferson. Also, The Hermitage is offering FREE admission on January 8th in recognition of the bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans. A host of free activities sure to entertain visitors of all ages will include:

- Wreath laying ceremony honoring Andrew Jackson and his army at 11:00am
- 101st Airborne Division Dixieland Band
- Listen to eye witness accounts, military records and other documents that tell the story of Jackson's great victory at New Orleans. Sign the muster roll and join Jackson's regiment! Families will receive a haversack of supplies and get to experience what a soldier's life was like during the War of 1812.
- Learn about naval warfare at the Battle of New Orleans and build your own souvenir boat to compete in the Raingutter Regatta, made possible by the Middle Tennessee Council Boy Scouts of America!



January 2015 Calendar

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|----------------------|---------|-------------------------------|--|--------|---|
| ★ Tennessee Mo★ Nashville Law | uction to Beekeeping | | | I | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | Gar | 8 January Monthly Meeting 6:30pm | 9 | 10 |
| II | 12 | 13 | LENTENS CHNESS ASTER GARDEN | Class I of 2015 Master Gardener Course | 16 | Vorkshop: NABA Advanced Beekeeping |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21/8011 | Class 2 of 2015 Master Gardener Course | 23 | 24 Grassmere Planning Meeting 9am Hermitage Planning Meeting 10am |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 Class 3 of 2015 Master Gardener Course | 30 | 31 |

Speakers Bureau

by Natalie Manor, Class of 2009

The Master Gardeners of Davidson County Speakers Bureau is alive and well...and really pretty good! At the beginning of 2014, David Cook asked if our members could take on some of the volume of the speaking requests that he receives. Bob Mather and Jason Goodrich took the idea and ran with it. I transferred to our association here in Davidson County and Bob asked if I might take over the project. That was seven months ago, and here are the results so far:

- 13 trained Speakers Bureau presenters
- 12 topics available for presentation
- Developing a 2015 marketing and theme program
- Developing original MGDC presentations written and developed by the Speakers Bureau

The Nashville Public Library was our main "customer" and each of the branch library managers helped to make the experience excellent for the new speakers as well as their audience. We all learned a great deal about our topics.

Bob Mather authored our first MGDC Speakers Bureau topic on Herbs. While he gives credit to myself and Becky for the development of the 23-page PowerPoint presentation, we just researched a bit and edited the final document. We are so proud of the content and have delivered this presentation on Herbs five times to diverse groups and

garden clubs.



Bob Mather discussing herbs with workshop attendees. Photo: Natalie Manor/MGDC

2015 is going to be an exciting year of growth for MGDC and we hope to have a list of 20 trained speakers to carry out topical and thematic presentations every month. Watch our website (www.m-gofdc.org) for announcements and our 2015 presentations schedule.

Remember: You are very welcome to join our Speakers Bureau! We meet monthly on the telephone for speaker training and quarterly for a decision-making meeting and din-

ner. If you are interested in participating with the Speakers Bureau, email me at coachnatalie@nataliemanor.com!

Happy New Year! Thank you for all the support. Big hugs to all of our speakers...you made lots of people out there more confident and informed about the world of planting and growing.

Harding Garden at Belle Meade

by Mariwyn Evans, Class of 2011

The Harding Garden at Belle Meade Plantation is a heritage garden, which strives to duplicate the types of vegetables and flowers that John Harding and his family might have grown in the early 1800s. The fenced garden is locat-



The Weedin' Women of Belle Meade.

ed next to the Harding Cabin, where the Harding family lived from 1807 until the plantation house was completed in 1820.

A group of Master Gardeners — we call ourselves the Weedin' Women — works weekly at the garden on Wednesdays, from March through

November. Our work varies year to year, and week to week, depending on the weather; still, we always have a great time.

Among our regular projects are:

- Fall scarecrows to welcome the season and visitors to the garden
- Demo days for local kids, where we show them how to plant veggies and share snacks made from local produce
- Selecting and nurturing heirloom seeds to plant at Belle Meade
- Planting, weeding, picking, and fence repair—to keep out those rascally rabbits
- Eating scrumptious treats prepared by our leader Muff Cline

We'd love to have you volunteer or just visit the garden and get to know us better. See you in the Spring! *

Mentoring Program

by Caroll Marrero, Class of 2009

It just does not seem like it has been an entire year since I first "laid eyes" on these beautiful people on the first night of our 2014 class! It has been a busy and very productive year for everyone, mentors and interns alike.



At our first meeting, we recognized Mayor Karl Dean as an Honorary Master Gardener because his administration exemplifies the mission, vision and values of the Tennessee Master Gardener Program through a wide variety of programs and initiatives emphasizing health, sustainability and volunteerism. We also introduced two new programs during the 2014 class: our Mentoring Program and our Earn As You Learn workshops.

Through the first, Mentors are assigned to each of the interns in the new class fulfilling a role that familiarizes each intern with the Master Gardener program and helping them to feel comfortable as they attend the course and begin their volunteer service. The second assists interns with hands-on opportunities to earn volunteer service and continuing while taking the Master Gardener course.

I extend a tremendous and heartfelt "thank you" to our team of Mentors. What a delight and joy to be able to serve with this group! A round of applause and "congratulations", too, are in order for each intern achieving their certification in 2014:

Madelyn "Maddy" Berezov, Laura Boatwright, Joan Clayton-Davis, Biars Davis, Dan Colehour, Rene' Colehour, Brenda Colladay, Faye Dorman, Kathryn Firsching, Anjou Gerhardt, Michael Humeny, Jeanmarie Karazin, Anne Lovell, Cindy Martin, Monika McCurdy, Paul Mulloy, Margaret Paulus, Melanie Perry, Mickey Salomon, Karen Shaw, Mary Showers, Constance Swett, Chuck Vehorn, Nancy West, Nancy Wilcenski, and Jay Youngs.

Several more Interns are also approaching the completion of their volunteer hours to reach their certification as well! To simply say we are both pleased and proud just isn't enough. While celebrating, let us all remember the sweet friendships forged in this endeavor. Yes! — what a wonderful 2014!

More ideas for earning Continuing Education hours

- Thirty (30) minutes for each "Volunteer Gardener" episode;
- 2. Watching episodes of "A Walk With Marilee" (yes, our very own Master Gardener Marilee Jacobs on Comcast Channel 19!) on topics pertaining to the Master Gardeners of Davidson County, airing Wednesdays at 5am; Thursdays at 6am and 2pm; Fridays at 4pm; Saturdays at 5pm; and Sundays at 7:30pm.

<u>Don't forget</u>: When recording these as continuing education hours, indicate the topic of each episode and the date and amount of time watched.

Lastly, we are still looking for some of you wonderful certified Master Gardeners to become mentors for the Class of 2015! It's immensely rewarding and you will find that you will have developed new and meaningful friendships before the end of spring! If you are interested, please contact me by phone at (615) 554-3344 or email at bmarrero@comcast.net.

Demo Garden Doin's

by Tyann Chappell, Class of 2013

When growing up (in the 1950's), my father was the family gardener. He came from a long line of Illinois farmers and we always had a small vegetable patch and our yard was a maze of flowers, vines, shrubs, and trees. Back in those days, for the most part, you swapped plants and cuttings with your neighbors or always carried a shovel in your trunk (if you know what I mean...). Now this is before the time of all the shopping malls, five lane roads, massive interstates, the big box garden centers, and not to mention the internet. Everywhere you drove, you were "in the country" and if you lived in the suburbs like Franklin, Dickson, Hendersonville, or Goodlettsville you were true country folk! I can remember hearing people always telling my father that he had a green thumb. I'd look at his thumb, and it not being green thought it was something that only grownups could see.

My mother is Japanese and her father spent his leisure time tending to his massive garden in Hokkaido. His garden included several koi ponds, bonsai creations, and rock and granite sculptures. So I guess gardening DNA is in my blood. How times have changed! But then again, thankfully, some things stay the same.

(continued on p. 8)

We may not always know our next door neighbors anymore but true gardeners still enjoy sharing the abundant rewards from their garden. Gardeners are eternal optimists and planners and our dreams of springtime keep us going during those dull overcast days of winter. **Shirley Lee** and I made plans in September to plant bulbs throughout the demo to herald in spring and summer. We thought it would also enhance the 2015 Urban Gardening Festival with cheerful faces

of giant crocus, Ice Follies daffodils, hyacinths, single and double tulips, and three varieties of alliums. Now all we had to do was wait for spring. Well, maybe not entirely.

In early October, Becky Fox Matthews (2005) sent us a note graciously offering to share some of her wonderful varieties of daffodils which in-



cluded Rio Rouge, Accent, and Vulcan. Whhhaaat? Of course we want to add them to the Demo! She was even willing to come and help plant them. Did I mention that gardeners have a passionate gene too?

If you had come by the Demonstration Garden on November 1st you would have met three of those eternal optimistic gardeners, Becky, Shirley, and me. On that day it turned out to be one of those cold blustery winter days. The temperature was in the low-40s with winds at 15-20mph; the wind-chill temp was mid-30's. But there we were, layered in warm attire with shovels in hand ready to plant. We had the perfect location for our new residents, the renovated rose beds around the gazebo. We planted them around the inside perimeter and will be planting something new in the center, specimen TBD. We will be looking forward to their spring blooms and smile provoking nods of approval from all who visit the garden. THANKS Becky for sharing!! Oh, our thumbs ARE GREEN!

Demo Garden Reflections

by Alisa Huntsman, Class of 2008

When Darry and I first began working in the Demonstration Garden back in 2008, we did so just to meet the certification requirements. The fact that the garden was so close to our

home only made it easier. We had no idea what to do or what the plan was, we just knew that there were more weeds than anyone could possibly eliminate! One thing was clear; the Demonstration Garden was a diamond in the rough and in desperate need of volunteers.

As the seasons changed and winter arrived, small ideas evolved and slowly, plans began to take shape. We had an increase in sorely needed volunteers and with David Cook's guidance we began to transform an unruly and neglected space into a beautiful garden.

One of our first changes was to take out the color wheel garden and create the herb garden in its space. The rain garden was designed and built and then put to work. Many colorful cinderblocks have been put to work over the years and one never knows what they will be! We have participated in a tomato plant trial and experimented with many techniques such as vertical gardening, square foot and a keyhole garden.

As the time progressed and the garden flourished, so did the bond between the gardeners. For the first time since I became the project chair for the Demonstration Garden, I had a team of volunteers who would show up, rain or shine, and get things done. More importantly, the garden began to look as beautiful as we all knew it could. It became a place where one could sit quietly and admire the view, watch the wildlife and marvel at how such a place could be found hiding in plain view!

Leaving Tennessee and the Demonstration Garden was one of the hardest things I have ever done, I simply wasn't ready to go; I was not finished with my work there. But luckily, for the garden, neither were the folks I had been sharing the responsibility of tending the garden with. It takes a team to make a Demonstration Garden grow and I was lucky to be part of that team for six years. And now, it is in their hands and from what I can see, it is growing just as beautifully!

(continued on p. 9)



As my attention turns to building a garden in my new home and towards becoming a member of the Virginia Master Gardeners, I am looking forward to the day I can go back and visit the Demonstration Garden. To see what has popped up in the beds and what shape the cinderblocks have taken. Curiously, there is but one lingering thought, who's bringing the cake?



Many, many thanks to all but especially to Shirley Lee, Tyann Chappell, Caroll Marrero, Lynn Ashford, Alice Warner, Carolyn Jones, Michael Fenswick, Barbara Allen and Mary Dickerson for all of your support over the last few years.

A big congratulations as well as a huge thank you to the interns (and now certified Master Gardeners) **Brenda Colladay**, **Michael Humeny** and **Melanie Perry** who adopted the garden this year. It truly takes a team to tend a garden this size, so, garden on my friends!

To keep up with me and my new gardening adventures and to perhaps find a good recipe for cake, visit my blog page: www.willgardenforcake.com and if you would like to email me, info@alisahuntsman.com is where to send things. In the meantime, I will most likely be overthinking things with a piece of cake in my hand... *



Above: Bumblebee in flight in the herb garden. Photo: Alisa Huntsman/MGDC



Above: Raised bed sunflower. Photo: Alisa Huntsman/MGDC



Page 9

Grassmere

by Cathie Long, Class of 2009

As we reflect on the work in the Historic Gardens of Grassmere for 2014, we have a year to be truly proud of based on the results and camaraderie from the Master Gardeners of Davidson County.



This year we had 33 Master Gardeners and Interns volunteer, contributing a total of 1,393 hours, talking with over 1,600 visitors and raising 435 lbs. of produce. The food produced was shared with zoo animals, the chef at the Zoo café and volunteers. Plus, we gave corn and okra stalks to the elephants.

In addition to direct one-on-one contact with the public, we were also featured in *Good Organic Gardening*, an Australian magazine after two visits by its editor, Diane Norris. Master Gardener Marilee Jacobs interviewed me and Rich Shiavi in March to produce episodes 13 and 19 of her program, "A Walk with Marilee", broadcast on Comcast Channel 19.

After a visit to Monticello by Master Gardeners Bob Mather and **Debb Wilcox** (2013), we have two plants from that renowned historic garden. The fig tree surprised the heck out of us by producing figs in the late fall. The vine snail flower, or *Vigna caracalla*, had beautiful flowers and started to produce seed pods but they were maligned by the squirrels.

Our vision for 2015, is to continue our historically accurate gardening with even greater participation from our Master Gardeners and a new class of interns. We will start our mentoring and "Earn As You Learn" workshops early and involve more people in the planning and work of the gardens.

This year we will give early attention to the perennial garden which will involve lifting and thinning of the daffodils after

their magnificent showing in early spring and lifting of some of the daylilies to make room for more flowers for summer and fall bloomers.

A planning meeting will be held in January and a seed starting meeting will be held in February. Look to "E-Blasts" from Jason for future details. This year we should have pawpaw and red raspberries to add to our market basket. The blueberries got a fall feeding of coffee grounds, thanks to Maureen May (2012) which will help to perk their health and production. The "Queen of Bourbons" rose should also come into its own with repeat blooming periods.



From Monticello to Grassmere: The new fig tree. Photo: Cathie Long/MGDC

Make your plans to be a part of the very exciting Nashville Zoo that is growing and receiving increased worldwide recognition. As always, it remains a relaxing step back into the past and a special atmosphere to have fun with and inspire your fellow garden lovers.





Perennials in bloom. Photo: Tyann Chappell/MGDC

December Minutes

by Recording Secretary Doris Painter (2013)

Minutes of December 11, 2014 monthly meeting of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County held at Ellington Agricultural Center with 54 members attending.

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

Bob reported that **Faye Dorman** is now recuperating at home after her accident. He also announced Master Gardener merchandise is for sale in the back of the conference room, including tote bags that may be ordered as well as t-shirts and polo shirts.

Bob presented Certificates and Badges to the following who certified during the 2014 calendar year: Madelyn "Maddy" Berezov, Dan Colehour, Rene' Colehour, Brenda Colladay, Biars Davis, Kathryn Firsching, Michael Humeny, Anne Lovell, Cindy Martin, Margaret Paulus, Melanie Perry, Karen Shaw, Mary Showers, Milton "Mickey" Salomon, Chuck Vehorn, Susan Wilson, and Jeanmarie Karazin. Bob encouraged members to get online and record their service hours before the end of the year.

Caroll Marrero reported on the condition of **Nancy Wilcenski**, who was recently diagnosed with Transverse Myelitis. She is presently paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair. Please keep Nancy in your prayers.

Treasurers Report — Treasurer Ed Taylor reported a balance of **\$10,967.89** as of December 11, 2014. He stated anyone needing to be reimbursed for expenses should mail their receipts to our post office box no later than December 13th. Ed announced that we made \$335 with our November meeting silent auction.

Lawn & Garden Show — Cindy Martin will chair our committee for 2015. This year's theme for the show is "The Garden of Eden" and the dates are March 5th-8th, 2015. Cindy asked members for help if they have any plants that might be used in the booth and to share their talents with crafty ideas.

Michelle Carratu announced that there will be a tree planting at the Whites Creek watershed on Crouch Drive on February 21, 2015. The Tennessee Environmental Council plans to plant a total of 50,000 trees across every county in the state.

Bob announced that the **Tennessee Master Gardener Winter School** will be held at the Lane Agricultural Park in

Murfreesboro on February 27th and 28th, 2015. The cost for the two day session is \$80. This fee is paid by the Master Gardeners group for all officers who wish to attend.

Class of 2015 — Caroll Marrero announced that the new Master Gardener class will begin Thursday, January 15, 2015. There are currently 26 Mentors for the upcoming class and the cut off for the class size will be 70 interns.

Bob announced that Mickey Salomon from the class of 2014 will be taking photographs of our members for the membership directory next year.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. *

Beekeeping Courses

The Nashville Area Beekeepers Association (NABA) is sponsoring an Advanced Beekeeping Winter Workshop presented on Saturday, January 17th from 8:30am until 3pm. The workshop is open to everyone an interest and is designed for those that want to increase their knowledge of raising honeybees.

This year's course will feature NABA member **Kent Williams**, president of the Lake Barkley Beekeepers in Wingo, Kentucky who maintains around 400 colonies, and **Clarence Collison**, Emeritus Professor of Entomology and former chair of the Entomology and Plant Pathology Department at Mississippi State University.

NABA will also host its **Introduction to Beekeeping Beginners Course** over the weekend of February 13th-14th (6-9pm Friday; 9am-3pm Saturday).

Designed to provide information on how to become and succeed as a beekeeper, this course is open to everyone with an interest. The course will begin on Friday, February 13th at 6pm-9pm and will continue on Saturday, February 14th from 9am until 3pm. Registration is limited to 125 people.

The fee for *each* course is \$25 and may be made payable to "NABA". A barbecue lunch from Corky's will be provided at each course as well.

Applications may be downloaded from the NABA website, www.nashbee.org. For more information, please contact Joel White at (615) 308-3776.



Master Gardeners of Davidson County

P.O. Box 41055 Nashville, TN 37204-1055 www.mgofdc.org

Swiss Chard Frittata

From Hotel, Inc.(www.hotelincbg.com)

Ingredients:

- ▶ 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ▶ 1/2 c bell pepper, sliced
- ▶ ½ c mushroom, sliced

- ▶ ½ c onion, chopped
- ▶ 1 bunch Swiss chard, chopped
- ▶ 8 large eggs
- ▶ 1/2 c shredded cheddar cheese
- ▶ ¼ tsp salt

Instructions:

Preheat broiler with a rack set 4-inches from heat. Heat oil in a large, ovenproof frying pan over high heat. Add bell pepper, mushrooms, and onion and cook until vegetables are soft. Stir in Swiss chard, reduce heat to medium, and cook, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, whisk eggs in a large bowl until combined. Stir in cheese and salt. Pour mixture into pan with vegetables; cook on stovetop until the bottom sets, or about 3 minutes. Transfer pan to oven and broil until frittata is firm and browned, 3 minutes.

Cut into 8 wedges and serve.