

GardenTalk

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

Volume XXIX, Issue No. 3 — March 2015



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Mather's Musings

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

I've always heard that March comes in like a lion and out like a lamb! I think the lion got loose a little too soon this year. I know we were all getting stir crazy. It just gave us more time to think about spring and our gardens.

At least we have the Nashville Lawn & Garden show to help us pretend spring is just around the corner. **If you have not already signed up for a time to work at this year's show, please call Barbara Allen at (615) 309-6130** and she can help you find a slot. Remember: When you work at the Show, bring your badge to show — and enter the Fairgrounds from Bransford Avenue and park around the livestock sheds for free admission. Those badges are important.

I got to sit down and talk to our new Tennessee Master Gardner State Coordinator, **Dr. Natalie Bumgarner**, the Friday before our big winter storm. She is very cool! David Cook, Caroll Marrero and I got to tell her about the many activities the Master Gardeners of Davidson County are offering our community.

We described our many ongoing projects involving volunteer and education hours, our seasonal projects and our newer community outreach activities with our Speak-

er's Bureau and Meet Me at the Market events. Caroll explained our Mentor Program and Earn & Learn workshops to help our interns get their volunteer hours and become involved with the Master Gardener program. Natalie was very interested in all of our community programs.

She is going to try to schedule a trip back to Nashville for our Urban Gardening Festival. With 1,600 in attendance last year, our goal this year is 2,500. I look forward to working with each and every one of you at this year's event. There is a place for everyone!

Several of our Earn & Learn workshops were cancelled the weekend of our ice/snow storm. Be sure and check the online calendar at our website often for up-to-date listings.

Don't forget: Most events are cancelled if it is raining at the time the event is scheduled, so please continue to our website calendar and Facebook page for the most current information.

Now that the snow and ice are gone and the ground is not so wet, take a walk in your garden. Spring is almost here. 🌱

March Monthly Meeting

by Karen Shaw, First Vice President, Class of 2014

The March monthly meeting will be held on **Thursday, March 12th** beginning promptly at **6:30pm** in the Ed Jones Auditorium on the campus of Ellington Agricultural Center.

Our guest speaker will be **Mark Kerske**, an organic grower since 1976 who opened **Gardens of Babylon** on a small lot in East Nashville's Five Points neighborhood in March 2003. His wife, Mary, and his two sons Marcus and Matt help with the business and Meagan, his daughter, is also a registered dietitian in Nashville.

Gardens of Babylon moved downtown to the Nashville Farmers Market in 2005 and is the only organic garden center in Middle Tennessee. Their company's landscape and personal farmer divisions use only natural soil amendments and fertilizers



during installation and maintenance.

Mark is passionate about educating his clients about eliminating use of poisonous chemicals in the garden, reading labels on food products, and supporting local organic farmers. He sits on the boards of the

Nashville Clean Water Project and UT Agricultural Extension Committee.

Mark will share his extensive knowledge about transforming dirt into healthy soil, and will also share a pictorial presentation about his recent garden tours in England, Ireland, and Scotland. 🌱

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Cover photo: A focal point of our Lawn & Garden booth this year, this elegant lady created by our Master Gardeners will soon be on display at the Demonstration Garden. Photo: Jason Goodrich/MGDC.



Directory Photos Scheduled at March Meeting

by Jason Goodrich, Corresponding Secretary, Class of 2013

If you're like me and not able to always make meetings, you know it's difficult to associate names with faces — especially among so large a membership with many new faces every year.

In answer to this and in response to your feedback from last year's member survey, we're going to add photos to our membership directory! We're fortunate to have Mickey Salomon (2012), photographer extraordinaire, who has kindly donated his time and skills to help.

Mickey will be setup to take our photos during our March meeting, so please plan to have your photo taken that evening! 📷

Plant Sale Preparations

by Judy Burger, Plant Sale Coordinator, Class of 2004

It is time to start sowing your seeds and dividing your plants as we prepare for the annual Master Gardeners of Davidson County Plant Sale. The sale will be held during the Urban Gardening Festival on Saturday, May 16th from 9am-4pm.

Annuals, perennials, vegetables, herbs — we'll once again be offering a wide variety of affordable plants for purchase by visitors to the festival (and members, too). We welcome as many plants as you'd like to contribute to the plant sale! If you have questions, please contact me at (615) 244-4533 or judyburger@rocketmail.com. 🌱

Grassmere Historic Farm

by Cathie Long, Chairperson, Class of 1999

We invite everyone to our 2015 Grassmere Classes in the Garden at the Nashville Zoo! The classes will be conducted on Saturdays from 11am to 12 noon, and are free with admission to the zoo. Here is our class schedule:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| March 7 | In the Beginning: Seed starting, groundbreaking, raised beds, and invasive plants; presented by Andrea Pruijssers and Ann Lovell |
| March 14 | Gardeners Know All the Dirt: Composting, plus soil enrichment with green manure; presented by Bill MacLennan, Susan Brown, & Kathryn Firsching |
| March 21 | Tooling Around: Tools are your Friends — Take Care & Pruning for Success; presented by Rich Shiavi & Cathie Long |
| March 28 | Nature's Best From the Seedy Part of Town: Organic gardening, seed saving, and butterfly havens; presented by Cathie Long |
| April 11 | The Spice of Life: History of Medicinal Herbs & Culinary Herbs to Spice Up Your Life; presented by Mary Duncan & Rich Shiavi |
| April 18 | Coming Up Roses and Perennials: Rose care and planning your perennials; presented by Andrea Pruijssers, Kathryn Firsching, & Cathie Long |
| April 25 | You Are What You Eat: Good nutrition plus flying dragons and other weird stuff; presented by Catherine Atwell & Maureen May |
| May 2 | Yes You Can Can: Home preserving by canning and pickling; presented by Faye Dorman & Debb Wilcox 🍷 |

March 2015

For a complete calendar of events,
visit our website at www.mgofdc.org.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	3	4 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	5 Class 8 of 2015 Master Gardener Course	6	7 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-11am
8	9 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	10	11 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	12 February Monthly Meeting 6:30pm Class 9 of 2015 Master Gardener Course	13 NABA: Introduc- tion to Beekeep- ing Beginners course, 6-9pm	14 Earn & Learn: City Cemetery Boxwood Trim- ming, 9am-1pm Workday: Grass- mere, 8am-11am
15	16 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	17 TSU Extension Third Tuesday Field Day (615) 963-4929	18 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	19 Class 10 of 2015 Master Gardener Course	20	21 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-11am Workday: Demo Garden, 9am-12pm
22	23 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	24	25 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	26 Class 11 of 2015 Master Gardener Course	27	28 Earn & Learn: The Hermitage, Seed Starting, 9am-12pm Workday: Grassmere, 8am-11am Workday: Demo Garden, 9am-12pm
29	30 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm	31	<p><i>Save the Date:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Nashville Lawn & Garden Show — March 5-8, 2015 ★ Perennial Plant Society of Middle Tennessee Plant Sale — April 11, 2015 ★ “Master Your Garden” Garden Expo hosted by the Master Gardeners of Hamilton County — April 11-12, 2015 (East Ridge, TN) ★ Urban Gardening Festival — May 16, 2015 			

2014 Accomplishments

by David Cook, Extension Agent, Class of 2000

Total Contribution of Volunteer (ACT) hours	11,846
Total Administrative hours	3,680
Total Community Service hours	7,440
Total Teaching hours	726
Total Continuing Education hours	1,640

2014 Awards

The following members were awarded and recognized for their significant contributions last year:

President's Choice Award

Caroll Marrero

Chairpersons' Choice Awards

Demonstration Garden

Barbara Allen & Mary Dickerson

Grassmere Historic Farm

Faye Dorman

Harding Garden at Belle Meade

Margaret Devine

Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage

Sharon Pressley

Junior Master Gardener Camp

Pam Swoner

ACT and CEU Awards

Administrative Hours

1st Place, **Marlee Jacobs** (383 hours)

2nd Place, **Shirley Lee** (312 hours)

3rd Place, **Jason Goodrich** (285.75 hours)

Community Service Hours

1st Place, **Cathie Long** (429.75 hours)

2nd Place, **Tyann Chappell** (373.3 hours)

3rd Place, **Sharon Pressley** (324 hours)

Teaching Hours

1st Place, **Doris Weakley** (98 hours)

2nd Place, **Pattie Waller** (86 hours)

3rd Place, **Catherine Atwell** (59 hours)

Continuing Education Hours

1st Place, **Becky Fox Matthews** (69.5 hours)

2nd Place, **Michelle Carratu** (63.5 hours)

3rd Place, **Catherine Atwell** (54 hours)



Mentoring Program

by Caroll Marrero, Membership Chairperson, Class of 2009

72 excited interns and their mentors have finally settled into a routine! Our classroom actually feels a bit small with nearly one hundred in attendance each week. Interns and certified members gather to learn from lectures provided by tremendously talented instructors, including Debbie Joines, David Cook, Becky Fox Matthews, and more talent to follow.

Hands-on Earn & Learn workshop opportunities abound to assist with earning both volunteer hours (40 hours needed for certification) and continuing educational opportunities (8 hours needed).

Our project sites can be used as outdoor labs to practice what is being taught in class. To name a few: "Tree Trimming" by David Cook, "Boxwood Trimming" by Bob Mather and Catherine Atwell, daffodil garden tours by Becky Fox Matthews, and don't forget to get involved in our booth at the Nashville Lawn & Garden Show featuring 14 hours of educational opportunities plus opportunities to volunteer.

Please remember to refer to the calendar at our website, www.mgofdc.org, and our newsletter for a complete and up-to-date list of activities. New additions to the calendar will also feature in the periodic e-blasts you receive as well.

A special message for interns from previous classes:

Please know your hours are cumulative until you reach your required hours for certification. Contact me with any questions you may have about completing your certification by calling me at (615) 554-3344 or emailing bmarrero@comcast.net. 🌸

2015 Dues

by Marilee Jacobs, Treasurer, Class of 2013

Master Gardeners, if you haven't already renewed, please submit your dues soon. Your dues help us to offer our newsletter and support our many projects and programs. Dues are **\$20** for certified members and couples; interns are exempt and lifetime members are welcome but not required to pay dues. You may pay at our March meeting or by mail to: MGDC, P.O. Box 41055, Nashville, TN 37204. 🌸



It's in the Bag

by Laura Kraft, Co-Chair, Class of 2010

Our recent cold weather snap gave me a "Snow Day" at home. It afforded me the opportunity to do a little Spring cleaning of my gardening bag, organizing the tools I want at my fingertips when I'm onsite at a project. I had a couple of "how did that get in there?" moments as well as a few "I need to remember to stock this" while repacking.

Let me share with you the tools I wouldn't leave home without and a few new pieces I'd like to add to my bag this year:

- **Trowel**, helps dig and turn soil in a smaller area without damaging the delicate roots of nearby plants.
- **Dandelion Weeder**, for those tight places.
- **Trowel**, helps dig and turn soil in a smaller area without damaging the delicate roots of nearby plants
- **Hori Hori multi-tool**, this has become my all-time "go-to" tool. It is perfect for weeding, digging, planting, and cutting through root balls (Hori is Japanese for "dig"). This knife has a ruler on the blade that comes in handy when I need to plant something at a specific depth or space plants apart. The serrated edge is designed to cut through root systems to divide plants and to act as a weeding tip. Mine also has a twine cutter which is handy for opening bags and containers.
- **Pruners**, they're ideal to cut tree branches or thick-stemmed plants, shape shrubs and rose bushes.
- **Small garden scissors**, where would we be without small snipping scissors? A pocketknife comes in handy but I'm forever misplacing mine. Scissors are handy for harvesting lettuce, cutting twine, deadheading, trimming, and collecting seed pods. They are quick and proficient in getting the job done.
- **A small spray bottle of rubbing alcohol**, I disinfect my tools before putting them away. A light spray on my scissors can reduce the spread of plant viruses and fungi. The alcohol evaporates quickly and doesn't promote rust.
- **Twine**, I keep twine in my bag for tying tomatoes or climbing plants, tagging plants for seed-saving, and bundling herbs. I keep it on a spool and in a see-through bag so it doesn't get tangled with my tools.
- **Inexpensive camera**, I never know what I'll come across when I'm gardening and having a camera is nice for capturing plants or gardens that inspire me. It also comes in handy when documenting from season to season (I wish I would have remembered to use this to capture where I planted my bulbs this past Fall).
- **Mobile phone**, I have a few garden apps loaded to my smart phone for planting and for bug identification. It always comes in handy to phone a fellow Master Gardener for tips.
- **Magnifying glass**, useful for reading seed packets and looking at small bugs.
- **Chopsticks**, ideal for making holes to sow seeds, marking where a plant should go, or propping up drooping plants. They have all kinds of uses. I've also heard of a fellow gardener who uses an old fondue fork for the same purpose.
- **Venetian blind remnants**, sounds odd, don't they? Mary Langford's recycling idea works great for plant ID sticks (our Hermitage plant labels are 5+ years old still going strong).
- **Sharpie markers**, to mark plant labels where I plant seeds. Note to self: Do this immediately upon planting a batch of seeds!
- **Small plastic container**, for seed-saving to catch any seeds or seed pods that may have fallen while breaking-off seed heads.
- **Small (coin) envelopes and a pencil**, to collect seeds from plants to sow for the next gardening season. Just remember if you're collecting seeds, make sure to follow the proper steps for drying and preparing the seeds for storage once you get home.
- **A few packets of seeds**, these always seem to be hanging around in my bag, whether new or from last season. Lettuce is a seed I keep handy. President Thomas Jefferson advised gardeners to plant a thimble spool of lettuce seed every Monday morning from February 1st to September 1st. (That reminds me to add thimble to my bag!)
- **Cayenne pepper**, we sprinkle an organic mix that includes Cayenne pepper on plants to deter deer.
- **A Bottle of Water**, we gardeners need water as much as plants do!
- **Handkerchief**, our summers get hot!

- **Hat**, *I keep an old baseball cap or wide-brimmed hat handy, covering my skin to protect it from the sun's powerful UV rays.*
- **Insect Repellent**, *a habit from my South Louisiana days of "don't leave home without it".*
- **Small First-Aid Kit**, *the nurse in me always keeps antiseptic wipes and Band-Aids handy.*
- **Baby Wipes**, *great for a quick cleanup before jumping back in the car to drive home.*

One thing I will do this year is decorate my garden tool handles with colored duct tape or paint so they're easier to find in the garden. The natural wood handles blend in with the yard and I have to go on a scavenger hunt to find them. It is also a good idea to label your tools with your name for easy identification if volunteering with a group.

Gardeners think outside of the traditional gardening bag when stocking up for the season. They say you can really tell a true gardener by their tool set. What's in your bag? 🌱

February Minutes

by Laura Boatwright, Recording Secretary, Class of 2014

The February monthly meeting of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County was held Thursday, February 12, 2015 in the Ed Jones Auditorium at Ellington Agricultural Center.

President Bob Mather called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance before our meal.

First Vice President Karen Shaw introduced the guest speaker for the evening, Jason Adkins, manager of the Trevecca Urban Farm at Trevecca Nazarene University.

Cindy Martin, chairperson for this year's Lawn & Garden Show, informed members that the theme for 2015 is "The Garden of Eden, a Magical Backyard Paradise." She requested members and interns come March 3rd and 4th to assist in setting-up our booth, which will include a living wall of bamboo, a water feature, and a square foot garden. The remainder of February will be spent building and gathering supplies.

Teardown will be at 5pm on Sunday at the same time as a cash and carry sale of plants used to create our booth. Free parking at the livestock area can be accessed at the Bransford Avenue entrance. Members and interns must show their name badge to park and enter the show for free.

The annual ACT Awards for 2014 were presented and recipients will be listed in the next newsletter. Project chairs and

co-chairs as well as officers and retiring board members were also recognized.

Cathie Long requested volunteers to assist with the Weed Wrangling at the Nashville Zoo on Saturday, February 28th from 9am-12pm. This activity will remove invasive species from a wooded area to help make a grassy prairie for buffalo. Please contact Amy Walter, volunteer coordinator at the Nashville Zoo, if you are interested in helping.

The 2015 class is comprised of 72 interns.

There being no other business, following a motion to adjourn the meeting was closed. 🌱

Upcoming Earn & Learn Workshops

by Jason Goodrich, Corresponding Secretary, Class of 2013

Earn & Learn Workshops are easy ways in which to practice what is being taught in the Master Gardener course while also earning both volunteer and continuing education hours!

Here are some upcoming Earn & Learn Workshop dates:

- *Boxwood Trimming Demonstration* at Historic Nashville City Cemetery, Saturday, March 14th from 9am-1pm.
- *Early Spring Seed and Set Planting* at Grassmere Historic Farm at the Nashville Zoo, Saturday, March 14th from 9am to 12pm.
- *Garden Bed Preparation & Early Spring Seed Planting* at the Demonstration Garden, Saturday, March 21st from 9am to 12pm.
- *Seed Starting, Soil Preparation, Soil Blocking Techniques, and Transplanting Seedlings* at The Hermitage, Saturday, March 28th from 9am-12pm.
- *Digging and Thinning Daffodils* at Grassmere Historic Farm at the Nashville Zoo, Saturday, March 28th from 9am to 12pm.

For the most current listing of activities, frequently check the calendar at our website, www.mgofdc.org! 🌱

Perennial Plant Society Plant Sale

by Mariwyn Evans, PPSMT Member, Class of 2011

The Perennial Plant Society of Middle Tennessee invites you to its annual Plant Sale on Saturday, April 11th from 9am-12pm at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds. Park for \$5 and have free admission to shop over 450 varieties of plants. Cash, personal checks, and credit/debit cards accepted. And come early, the plants sell out quickly! 🌱

The Hermitage

by Laura Kraft, Co-Chair, Class of 2010

Our gardening outdoors took a backseat to Mother Nature as we postponed our February workshop. Join us for our spring **Earn & Learn Workshop on Saturday, March 28th**, from 9am-12pm. We will lead you through several spring planting activities:

- ✓ Starting seeds; soil blocking techniques; warm season seeds planting
- ✓ Preparing Kitchen Garden Beds
- ✓ Transplanting seedlings in containers for our annual Urban Gardening Festival plant sale.

We'd like to congratulate our 2014 Chairperson's Award Recipient, **Sharon Pressley**, Class of 2013!

You'll see Sharon bright and early at the Hermitage feeding Willie (our resident donkey), visiting with the resident Percheron horses, or tending the kitchen gardens. Her love of animals, gardening, and knowledge sharing is infectious!

Sharon has been volunteering with us since her internship and she has truly expanded her knowledge and Master Gardener experience. Each Saturday, at about noon, she leaves the Hermitage Kitchen Gardens to travel over to the Buchanan Log House—Donelson's oldest historic site—to spend a couple of hours tending its English gardens.

Thank you, Sharon, for your commitment to MGDC, our community, and these historic sites. 🌱



"From December to March, there are for many of us three gardens - the garden outdoors, the garden of pots and bowls in the house, and the garden of the mind's eye."

— Katherine S. White

Speakers Bureau

by Natalie Manor, Chairperson, Class of 2009

The Nashville Public Library Seed Exchange and Master Gardeners of Davidson County are partnering for a second year to offer free educational workshop delivered by our Speakers Bureau program.

If you're interested in participating or helping with the Speakers Bureau, you are very welcome! Please contact me at (603) 493-1435 or coachnatalie@nataliemanor.com if you are interested in signing-up!

Dates for our spring schedule of Speakers Bureau workshops include:

- ➡ Saturday, March 7th, 10am—*Spring Vegetable Gardening* at the Nashville Public Library Goodlettsville Branch.
- ➡ Saturday, March 21st, 2pm—*Spring Vegetable Gardening* at the Nashville Public Library Inglewood Branch.
- ➡ Saturday, April 4th, 2pm—*Beginners Guide to Growing Herbs* at Nashville Public Library Southeast Branch.
- ➡ Monday, April 13th, 6pm—*Spring Vegetable Gardening or Beginners Guide to Growing Herbs* at the Nashville Public Library Edmondson Pike Branch.
- ➡ Saturday, May 2nd, 10am—*Vegetable Container Gardening* at the Downtown Nashville Public Library.
- ➡ Saturday, May 23rd, 2pm—*Vegetable Container Gardening* at the Nashville Public Library Inglewood Branch. 🌱

Nashville Rose Society Prunings

by Marty Reich, Nashville Rose Society Rosarian

The Nashville Rose Society is hosting two "pruning parties" in March where you can learn about how to properly prune and care for your rose bushes. Both are eligible for continuing education hours. For more information and directions, please contact Marty Reich at (615) 833-0791 or marty615@bellsouth.net.

The first is scheduled from 10am-12pm Saturday, March 14th at the home of Master Gardener Mona Mishu, 6224 Bridlewood Ln, Brentwood, TN 37027.

The second is scheduled from 10am-12pm Saturday, March 28th at the home of Lynda Correll, 2615 Davidwood Ct, Nashville, TN 37214. 🌱

Junior Master Gardener Camp

by Doris Weakley, Chairperson, Class of 1999

Enrollment is now open to 25 children, ages 9 to 14 years, for our next Junior Master Gardener Camp taking place June 22-26, 2015.

The camp registration form is available at our website, www.mgofdc.org. A \$50 fee (made payable to "UT Extension") must accompany any registration to be considered complete, and can be mailed to:

UT Extension, Attn: Junior Master Gardeners, P.O. Box 196300, Nashville, TN 37219-6300. 🌱



Master Gardeners of Davidson County

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Taco Casserole

Ingredients:

- ▶ 2 lbs. ground beef
- ▶ 1 medium onion, chopped
- ▶ 1 (10oz.) can chili with beans
- ▶ 1 (10oz.) can tomato soup
- ▶ 1 (6oz.) package corn chips
- ▶ 1 c cheddar cheese
- ▶ Dash of salt to taste

Instructions:

Brown ground beef with onion and pour off fat.

Add chili, tomato soup, and salt. Heat mixture until warm. Layer mixture with corn chips in a casserole dish.

Top with cheddar cheese. Bake in a 350°F oven until cheese melts and casserole is heated through.