

GardenTalk

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

Volume XXIX, Issue No. 4 — April 2015



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Mather's Musings

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

Spring is finally here! There is lots of work to be done in our yards and gardens before April 15th, the average last frost day for Middle Tennessee. It won't be long until you can plant what you bought at Lawn & Garden 2015 along with what you have your eye on from garden catalogs.

Many upcoming events are approaching for Master Gardeners, including our Urban Gardening Festival where we also host our annual Plant Sale. While cleaning up your garden to prepare for the season, consider donating those extra plants you've thinned to the plant sale.

Preparations for the Urban Gardening Festival are underway, and we will have meetings leading up to the event — so watch our calendar and e-blasts for updates!

You are a very big reason for our success, so please try to attend and reserve the dates May 15th (for setup) and May 16th (for the event day). Thanks to those who attended last year and helped—we had a very successful event for the community. We have almost filled our vendor spaces for this year, which says a lot about last year's event. Your suggestions and comments are very impor-

tant to us, so please attend our meetings and become an important part of this year's success!

Our Speakers Bureau is running very smoothly, and I recently got to view some of the comments we are getting from those attending our workshops at various libraries across Nashville. People are delighted to learn about gardening. If we are to fulfill our mission teaching the community, we need more speakers. We furnish the topics and you speak with an experienced member of the program. The mighty team of Bob and Monica will be busy in April, too! I had a delightful time speaking to Terry Torre's Riverside Garden Club on the topic "Plants and Herbs used by Physicians during the Civil War" where several good questions were asked.

Join Catherine Atwell, David Cook, and myself at the Nashville Farmers Market on Wednesday April 8th from 10am-2pm. It's a great way to meet people interested in gardening and don't know where to begin to start gardening. It's a fun time to be a Master Gardener. Time to start walking around your own gardens and see what is happening! 🌱

March Monthly Meeting

by Karen Shaw, First Vice President, Class of 2014

We've all been waiting for Spring so we can get our hands in the soil and plant all those seedlings we've been nurturing indoors.

However, the vegetables and flowers we tend depend on more than our own efforts.

It is estimated that native bees pollinate 1/3 of all the food we eat and drink and 70% of all flowering plants. They contribute over 3 billion dollars annually to our farm economy.

Experts believe there are over 4000 bee species in the U.S. alone. And worldwide there are over 400,000. But the one thing they all have in common is their numbers are decreasing.

Studies being done indicate that we may well be our own worst enemy. Loss of habitat and over use of chemicals in our environment are affecting our whole ecosystem and this system is what we depend upon for our very existence.

Polly Rooker, a biologist with Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, is an expert on threatened and endangered species. She has worked within the agency for 38 years (first as a game warden for 20 years and as a biologist for the last 18 years).

Polly will be sharing her extensive knowledge on native bees (the unknown soldiers) and how we can help reverse the devastating trend of bee loss.

She will also be showing us ways we can attract bees to our own gardens using pictures and actual habitats she will have on display.

Not only does Polly have incredible knowledge in this area, when not working she is watching birds, wood turning, and gardening. She is a fellow Master Gardener, having been a member of the Cheatham County Master Gardeners for the past 10 years.

To hear Polly's presentation, please join us on April 9th at our monthly meeting to be held at the Ed Jones Auditorium at the Ellington Agricultural Center at 6:30pm. 🌱

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Directory Photos Also Scheduled at April Meeting

by Jason Goodrich, Corresponding Secretary, Class of 2013

Mickey Salomom will be returning during our April meeting to continue taking photographs of Master Gardeners for our 2015 member directory. Please plan to have your photo taken! **This will be the last opportunity to have your photograph taken for the 2015 member directory.** 🌱

Plant Sale Preparations

by Judy Burger, Plant Sale Coordinator, Class of 2004

Please remember to sow your seeds and divide your plants to contribute to our 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. 🌱

Merchandise

by Ethel-Lonniell Williams, Co-Chairperson, Class of 2011

The Merchandise Committee is not accepting new orders at this time as we begin to review new vendors for our merchandise. Current vendor Nashville Sporting Goods was recently purchased and its policies have necessitated a change of vendor. If you have a vendor recommendation, please email me at elmwilliams@yahoo.com. 🌱

Mentoring Program

by Caroll Marrero, Membership Chairperson, Class of 2009

Many "thanks" must go out to Interns and Mentors for assisting with the Lawn & Garden Show! The "tone" for the entire show began at the door with fantastic "Greeters"!!

The guests were smiling and laughing, Metro Parks personnel were smiling and laughing. In fact, the entire "Security Contingency" at the door were also smiling. (For a second I couldn't figure out what was going on—then I realized it was the enthusiastic MGDC "Greeters"!! I've never seen so much excitement. What a beautiful way to enter this show. Also, a "big thank you" for your relentless energy in helping to set up and break down our booth.

How to Enter Your Hours:

1. Register online at:
https://mastergardener.tennessee.edu/tmg_resources/tms_login.asp.
2. Click "Master Gardener Resources" in the left column, then click, "Login/Logout".
3. Next, click "Click Here to Register" in the right column.
4. Complete the information and, at the bottom of the page, click "Submit".
5. David Cook will receive an email indicating a new Master Gardener has requested registration. He will confirm your registration and email you a unique username and password. (Be sure to write it down.)
6. You will now be able to record your hours.
7. If you should have questions, please contact your Mentor. 🌱

April 2015

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

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---------|--|--|--------|--|
| Save the Date: ★ 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 | | | 1 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm Workday: Belle Meade, 9am-12pm | 2 Class 12 of 2015 Master Gardener Course | 3 | 4 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-11am Workday: Demo Garden, 9am-12pm |
| 5 | 6 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm | 7 | 8 Meet Me at the Market, 10am-2pm Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm Workday: Belle Meade, 9am-12pm | 9 Monthly Meeting 6:30pm | 10 | 11 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-11am Workday: Demo Garden, 9am-12pm |
| 12 | 13 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm | 14 | 15 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm Workday: Belle Meade, 9am-12pm | 16 | 17 | 18 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-11am Workday: Demo Garden, 9am-12pm |
| 19 | 20 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm | 21 | 22 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm Workday: Belle Meade, 9am-12pm | 23 | 24 | 25 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-11am Workday: Demo Garden, 9am-12pm |
| 26 | 27 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm | 28 | 29 Workday: Grassmere, 9am-12pm Workday: Belle Meade, 9am-12pm | 30 | | |

Historic Grassmere Gardens

by Andrea Pruijssers, Class of 2013

Spring is almost here and the weather has improved by leaps and bounds. It is exciting to watch the garden change this time of year. We have been out at Grassmere for a few weeks in a row now, digging and weeding and pruning while chatting and laughing and taking breaks to eat cookies. I love going out there on my day off.

With the help of others, I have been taking care of the roses for a little over a year now. Grassmere has 17 heirloom roses. First described before 1867, these roses have been admired for a long time. Our collection of roses includes *Albas*,



R. Rugosa 'Rubra' (1796) with praying mantis.
Photo by Andrea Pruijssers, MGDC.

Bourbons, Chinas, Damasks, Gallicas, Hybrid Perpetuals, Noisettes, Rugosas, and Teas.

Each rose has an intriguing name and a unique story. Our Alba rose 'Maiden's Blush' was originally known as 'Thigh of

the Nymph,' but that was considered too risqué for Victorian gardens. Did you know the species *Rugosa* takes its name from the word "rugosus", meaning wrinkled in Latin? It makes sense when you look closely at the leaves like the Praying Mantis is doing in the picture. The most unusual is the 'Green Rose'. At first, the blooms are hard to detect, but once you know what you are looking for, you'll find the bush completely smothered.

Heirloom roses are known for their wonderful fragrance and incredible show of color. They are a lot hardier than you might think. The *Gallicas*, for example, will gladly grow in poor, gravelly soil and reward the gardener's lack of attention with the most beautiful, intensely colored blooms. Most heirloom roses flower once in spring, but some continue to flower all summer long and into the fall. Aren't you curious to see the exact rose the ancient Greeks and Romans cultivated? Or smell the roses that once graced the gardens of Victorian England? Stop by Grassmere sometime in mid to late May for the best chance to see them bloom. We hope to see you there! 🌹



R. Multiflora 'Seven Sisters' (1817).
Photo by Andrea Pruijssers, MGDC.

Harding Garden at Belle Meade

by Mariwyn Evans, Class of 2011

The Weedin' Women are back! We've resumed our regular 9am Wednesday workdays starting April 1 — weather permitting. And thanks to a little early cleanup work in March, the happy crew at our first session will be greeted with tiny lettuces and pea shoots. Can carrot tops and beet greens be far behind?



Doris Weakley (r.) and Muff Cline (l.) discuss where to plant the early daffodils Doris brought to brighten the garden until the veggies appear. Photo by Mariwyn Evans, MGDC.

On a rather gloomy day in March, our enthusiastic crew raked, weeded, and hoed. "Many hands made the work go quickly," to paraphrase an old saying. The chance to see old friends and get our hands dirty more than compensated for the gray and chill.

Next on our agenda is still more planting, along with renovations to last year's trellises for green beans and limas. We've also started seeds indoors, including several varieties of heirloom tomatoes courtesy of Barbara Ann Drake and Catherine Atwell. The

eggplants weren't so successful (not one seedling for yours truly!) so it looks like a trip to the coop is also in our future.

Whatever it takes, we'll have the garden spruced up and ready to receive company when the Master Gardeners meet here on May 14. We look forward to seeing you then, or sooner if you'd like to come by any Wednesday. 🌹

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. 🌹

Historic Nashville City Cemetery

by Bob Mather, Co-Chairperson, Class of 2000

Finally the weather allowed us to have our Boxwood earn as you learn. We had a good mix of new class members as well as from past classes. It rained on us a couple of times, but we managed to get several of the boxwood shaped. We will try to get at least one more demo this month. 🌱



Boxwood trimming at the Nashville City Cemetery. Photo by Bob Mather, MGDC.

The Hermitage

by Laura Kraft, Co-Chair, Class of 2010

We are springing into action with this warm weather. We've done some spring cleaning in the gardens tended the seeds from the Earn & Learn Workshop, and are eager to kick things into high gear!

Our volunteering starts in full swing on April 4th. Our main workdays are Saturdays starting at 8am, but you may volunteer anytime, any day during The Hermitage's Visitors hours.

Are you new to MGDC? Here's some info about our project:

The Hermitage Kitchen Garden is one of the original DCMG Demo Gardens. It is located at 4580 Rachel's Lane, Nashville, TN 37076.

Our growing season kicks in to full gear in April. We have an exciting lineup, including Moon and Stars watermelons, Blue Hubbard squash, and Tennessee Valencia peanuts. Our goal: plant only heirloom varieties, and those that would have been planted at the time of Andrew Jackson's residency. Our challenge: There's not much historical data for The Hermitage Gardens or Tennessee during this period. But our volunteers, along with the Hermitage Grounds staff, have done a great job in reading historical literature from other plantations and states, researching plant varieties, and in saving seeds over the years to keep our heirlooms growing!

We are currently tending three gardens: The Cafe Garden at the Visitor Center, lovingly nicknamed Terry's Garden (Terry Torre, MGDC, who has been tending this garden for over ten years), another herb garden North of the main House, and the heirloom vegetable garden. If we have enough volun-

teers, we will assist the professional staff with Rachel's Garden, the formal garden which contains flowers, trees and the cemetery.

Join in the fun or just come visit—share your knowledge of heirloom gardening or learn more about it. Contact Laura Kraft or Mary Langford for details. We look forward to seeing you at the Hermitage! 🌱

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! 🌱

Herb Society of Nashville Plant Sale

by Shelly Rosenberg, Herb Society of Nashville

The Herb Society of Nashville will be hosting its annual herb sale at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds on Saturday, April 18th from 9am to 2pm. Admission is free and parking is \$5 for each car entering the fairgrounds.

Among the varieties of herbs offered will be:

Artemisia, Agastache, Arugula, Basil, Baptisia, Bee Balm, Bloody Dock, Borage, Burnett, Cardoon, Caraway, Catmint, Catnip, Chamomile, Chervil, Chicory, Chives, Cilantro, Coleus, Comfrey, Cumin, Dill, Echinacea, Epazote, Equisetum (Horsetail), Euphorbia, Fennel, Feverfew, Garlic, Horehound, Hyssop, Laurentia, Lavendar, Lemongrass, Lemon Verbena, Lovage, Nasturtium, Ming, Oregano, Parsley, Patchouli, Pennyroyal, Peppers (Ornamental), Perilla, Plectranthus, Rosemary, Rue, Sage, Savory, Santolina incana, Santolina virens, scented Geraniums, Sorrel, Stachys byzantine, Stevia, Strobilanthes, Sweet Woodruff, Swiss Chard, Tarragon, Teucrium fruticans, Thyme, and Yarrow.

Available heirloom vegetables will include: 11 varieties of tomato, 9 varieties of peppers, 2 varieties of kale, and 3 varieties of eggplant.

Other available plants will include: assorted citrus plants, figs, Bay Laurel, Honeysuckle, Gooseberry, Gojiberry, Elderberry, Blueberry, Hardy Kiwi, Strawberry, Artichoke "Imperial Star", and Oso Easy Roses.

Like all plant sales, visitors are encouraged to arrive at the plant sale early as plants will sell quickly! 🌱

Urban Gardening Festival

by Nancy Wilcenski, Class of 2014

The Urban Gardening Festival is a unique and free annual community event free to visitors and vendors alike. Held on the campus of Ellington Agricultural Center across 8,800 sq. ft. of our Demonstration Garden, we invite the public to learn about gardening and home horticulture while engaging with local artisans, exhibitors, food trucks, growers, markets, organizations, and producers from throughout the Greater Nashville and Middle Tennessee areas.

Over the past few months several people have been working behind the scenes preparing for this huge event. Jason Goodrich has done a fabulous job securing sponsors, getting the information out to various media sources, lining up security, portable toilets, picnic tables and other facility requirements. Caroll Marrero and Justin Drunkenmiller have been working on vendor contacts to line up the many great vendors that come out with their products. Bob Mather and Catherine Atwell have been lining up volunteers for the various booths as well as making executive decisions as needed. Shirley Lee and Tyann Chappell are preparing the demonstration gardens so they will be beautiful as well as interesting.

Calling for volunteers — Master Gardeners and interns! What can you do? Besides telling your friends and neighbors about this great event, there are at least five areas where you can earn volunteer hours and have a great time too.

- **Demo Gardens** — Tyann and Shirley will be hosting work days at the garden. If you can, come out to help. There is a lot of preparation required to get the gardens in shape especially after this cold, brutal winter.
- **Program Tent** — We will have a new tent this year to provide Master Gardeners and exhibitors the opportunity to speak on their passionate gardening topics. Speakers may earn teaching hours while others attending these sessions earn education hours.
- **Plant Sale** — If you have extra plants as you are preparing your gardens this year, dig them up, pot them, and talk to Judy Burger about how you can donate them to the sale and when she needs them. Friday, May 15th there will be a state inspection of the plants that is a new requirement this year.
- **Craft Sale** — Lynn Ashford will be collecting donated crafts, i.e. garden ornaments, yard art, painted pots, etc., at the April monthly meeting for our Craft Sale.
- **Pre-Event Friday, May 15th** — We are going to need volunteers the afternoon of May 15th helping the vendors get set up.
- **Event Saturday, May 16th** — We will need volunteers for many areas including early morning vendor set ups, parking, greeting, different garden assignments, counting attendees, working at the children's booth, master gardener plant booth, and craft booth, and after event take down and cleanup.

Contact Nancy Wilcenski if you have any questions via email nancy.wilcenski@gmail.com or at (615) 881-4707. 🍷

The Urban Gardening Festival

Saturday
May 16th, 9am-4pm

DEMONSTRATION GARDENS AT
ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER

A free event for the community

hosted by
Master Gardeners of Davidson County
www.mgofdc.org



- Explore over **8,800 square feet** of garden space
- Learn from area experts during **how-to workshops**
- Discover **neighborhood** gardens and markets
- Shop **local growers, suppliers, & the Nashville Mobile Market**
- Buy from **local artists and vendors**
- Find how to get involved and give back to **your community**
- Find flowers and vegetables at the **Master Gardener Plant Sale**



Bring the whole family (and your pets, too) and visit 60+ exhibitors & the Tennessee Agricultural Museum!

2015 Lawn & Garden Show

by Cindy Martin, Chairperson, Class of 2014

Thank you, Master Gardeners of Davidson County! More than 130 members and interns participated—contributing 2,300 volunteer hours. The kindness and generosity of so many Master Gardeners made all the difference!!! Our organization showed up, showed well and delivered a learning opportunity to many.

The Lawn & Garden Show 2015 is history. The Master Gardeners' booth, "Magical Backyard Paradise", received excellent comments from visitors and Master Gardeners alike. You may have heard: **Our booth received a ribbon for "Good & Accurate Labeling"**.

Hundreds of plants were purchased from Iris City & Riverdale Nursery at a cost of \$1,264. After the show, every plant was sold, resulting in a ZERO cost to our organization & happy gardeners with perennials, vegetables and herbs for their spring garden. The cost for booth material was low as many materials were borrowed, repurposed & prefabricated by members.



Many heroes...but above all, I would like to highlight these individuals who contributed exceptionally:

- Co-Chairs: Tyann Chappell, Shirley Lee & Caroll Marrero
- Sub-Committee chair for Labeling: Maddy Berezov
- Staffing: Barbara Allen & Mary Dickerson
- Speakers: Caroll Marrero, Coordinator & Speaker and David Cook, Cathie Long, Becky Fox Matthews, Georgeann McCoy, Monika McCurdy, Lou Anne Williams

Our "Magical Backyard Paradise" was labelled by Maddy Berezov. The booth included a waterfall--materials borrowed from Ann Carpenter; perennials displayed in front of a cedar split rail fence contributed by Don and Jean Hover; rain garden design was enhanced by the design ideas, river rock & landscape glass from Philip Byard; and a three level aromatic square foot garden of edible vegetables & herbs enhanced by design contributions of Dave West. Bamboo was contributed by Tom Hobbit. Georgeann McCoy and Lynn Ashford contributed their special "bling" to the booth.

The magic was complete with a bigger than life 11-foot architectural rendition of Mother Nature designed and built by Tyann Chappell and Shirley Lee. Barbara Allen and Mary Dickerson ensured the booth & front door were staffed...



This year's award-winning booth at the Lawn & Garden Show. Photo by Cindy Martin, MGDC.

even if the real Mother Nature gifted us with snow and ice. The bad weather began on Wednesday evening...Pam Swoner, Tom Coulter, and Ken Rushlow stayed to brave the 'ugly wet ice & rain' & cleaned up our space by moving the leftover bamboo—they helped again 'big time' on Sunday night! Maggie Speight, a long-time member, hosted at our booth Friday thru Sunday. Bob Bryan helped to the very end of Sunday night getting all the stuff back in the truck! Becky Fox Matthews and Pattie Waller stood strong while the plants sold fast on Sunday.



Sincere Thanks to THESE & ALL! To view more great photos taken at this year's Lawn & Garden Show, visit our page at the MGDC website: www.mgofdc.org! 🍷



Master Gardeners of Davidson County

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Spinach Dip

from the kitchen of Bob Mather

Ingredients:

- ▶ 1 (10 oz.) pkg frozen chopped spinach, drained
- ▶ 1 (8 oz.) container plain low-fat yogurt
- ▶ ½ tsp dry Italian seasoning, crushed
- ▶ ¼ tsp garlic powder
- ▶ 1 stalk fresh celery or other vegetable, for dipping

Instructions:

In a medium bowl, combine spinach, yogurt, Italian seasoning, and garlic powder. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.