

# GardenTalk

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

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# Mather's Musings

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

If you have been out in your greens early in the mornings you can just begin to feel that Fall is well on its way. Butterflies, bees and other pollinating insects are busy gathering and distributing pollen before it turns cold and Jack Frost arrives.

This is also a time that activities in the gardens start wrapping up for the Fall. You are probably well into the planning of your own Fall garden, pulling up spent plants and preparing the soil for those Fall seeds of beets, kale and other greens. This year, I am going to try French White radishes—they grow better in the Fall than in the Spring. We'll see how they do this year.

We recently had the opportunity to enjoy the company of Tuwanda Coleman from the NewsChannel 5 program Talk of the Town as we showed her the butterfly and pollinator gardens at our Demonstration Garden. She was amazed at the activity of the butterflies, bees and even hummingbirds. She was telling us how much she enjoys spending time in her new yard...and I think she might even enroll in our Master Gardener course next year as she wants to start expanding her gardens.

The Tennessee State Fair is upon us and I hope you have called Barbara Allen and scheduled a time to work at our booth. If you'd like to earn a few hours while enjoying the fair, call Barbara at (615) 309-6130.

We will be happy for you to join us for setup on Wednesday and Thursday, September 9th and 10th. This is also the time you can bring your plants and entries for our Master Gardener contest. Be sure to read Barbara Drake's comments in this newsletter for more about the fair. If you have questions, please contact Barbara at (615) 859-4753 or [bsd Drake@comcast.net](mailto:bsd Drake@comcast.net) or myself if we can help!

Please don't forget: Our monthly meeting for this month will be held at 6:30pm on Thursday, September 10th at our booth in the Agriculture Building at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds.

I am pleased to announce that our co-chairs for the 2015 Music & Molasses Festival will be Lynn Ashford (2011) and Jill Meese (2015) who will be in charge of our booth for this fun and family-friendly October event! If you have never been, make plans to help in our booth on Saturday and Sunday and don't forget set up on the Friday before (check the calendar and our website for updates).

If you were at our August meeting, you noticed that we had several from the class of 2015 receive their certificates and badges. This was outstanding!

But wait, there's more....

We have had several more complete their volunteer hours who will be receiving their badges and certificates soon. If you are still adding hours, besides State Fair and Music & Molasses, our projects are well under way. Check this issue's calendar as well as our website calendar for updates for these opportunities.

One final note: Elections for officers is just around the corner. Please consider holding an office with our organization this coming year. It's a great time to get to know Master Gardeners of Davidson County you might not know well as well as to get more out of Master Gardening. This is your organization and YOU only get out what you put in of yourself. We are volunteers and ambassadors for our community!

Take a walk today in your gardens and enjoy them. 🌻



We had another great time at the Master Gardeners of Davidson County information booth this month at Meet Me at the Market hosted by the Nashville Farmers' Market downtown! Catherine Atwell (2004) and Bob Mather (2000) were joined by David Cook (2000) to answer questions about gardening and events and projects of MGDC. As usual, we had some very good questions from our gardening community.

Join us this month, September 9th from 10am to 2pm at the Farmers' Market and come "meet us at the Nashville Farmers' Market." 🌻

# Inside this issue: **Tennessee State Fair**

by *Barbara Ann Drake, Co-Chairperson, Class of 2012*

The Tennessee State Fair will run September 11th through 20th. We will start sitting up our Master Gardeners' booth on Wednesday, September 9th beginning at 2pm, and complete setup starting at 10am on Thursday, September 10th. Come join us for setup! To volunteer and work the booth, please contact Barbara Allen at (615) 309-6130.

This year, we are filling the booth with our own potted flowers. Bring anything you have that blooms, flowering or colorful in a pot. Try to label them as best you can. If you can't come earlier, bring your pot to the Master Gardener meeting at the Fairgrounds on Thursday night, September 10th. We are showing our visitors just how beautiful a pot of flowers can be!

The Master Gardeners will also be having a little contest. Bring anything growing in a natural container. Examples, like an old tree stump, rock, draft wood, seashell or a gourd. Be creative but please let it be natural. See you at the fair!!! 🌱

## **Historic Nashville City Cemetery**

by *Bob Mather, Co-Chairperson, Class of 2000*

As the weather cools, it is time once again to work in the gardens at the Historic Nashville City Cemetery. We will post dates on the newsletter calendar and our website. Fall also means the Living History Tour at the cemetery will soon be held.

Every year, Master Gardeners are invited to participate as tour guides, one of many wonderful opportunities to learn more about Nashville's rich history through a reenactment of past citizens (as well as earn volunteer hours). Put the date of Saturday, October 3rd on your calendar to either be a guide or attend the Living History Tour. The Living History Tour is free and open to the public and you can earn one hour of continuing education for every hour attended. 🌱

## **Editorial: Approaching Nominations and Elections**

by *Jason Goodrich, Corresponding Secretary, Class of 2013*

I have had the sincere privilege to serve as a member of our executive committee since 2013 and will be rolling-off the board at the close of the year along with the majority, if not all, of my fellow board members.

Because of the commitment and hard work of **all** of our Master Gardeners, this organization continues to strengthen its relationship with and positively impact our community through increased education outreach and significantly increased contributions of voluntary service. We have accomplished so much and have many reasons to be proud of our association.

Which makes our elections on November 12, 2015 very important indeed. It's not everyday that so many board members roll-off at once. But ours is an organization rich in diversity, experience, and talent, and the time has come for an infusion of renewed energy and vision to lead us during our 30th anniversary year.

### **Nominations are now open for the following nine positions on the executive committee:**

President, 1st vice president, 2nd vice president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer, education chairperson, events chairperson, and membership chairperson.

Nominations may be made by oneself, or by another member, and only certified Master Gardeners are eligible for consideration. **Nominations must be made to the Nominating Committee by email to [nominations@mgofdc.org](mailto:nominations@mgofdc.org) on or before October 1st.** All nominations will be presented at our October 8th monthly meeting and elections will occur at the November monthly meeting.

Great efforts and care have been taken to simplify and reduce the amount of work that has been required in times past, and I am confident that it will make a tremendous difference for next year's officers.

We have so much to look forward to next year — and we need your leadership! 🌱

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Cover: A calm home amongst our Demonstration Garden at Ellington Agriculture Center. Photo: Alisa Huntsman/MGDC.

Correction: On page 6 of our August issue, credit should be given to Joy Kosarsky for the beautiful photo captioned "Belle Meade's bounty".



Above: Bill Haley (2015) and his handiwork, the beautiful new grape arbor at the Demo Garden. Photo: Tyann Chappell/MGDC.

# September 2015

For a complete calendar of events,  
visit our website at [www.mgofdc.org](http://www.mgofdc.org).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Please note that the start time for workdays at Belle Meade have changed.</i>		1	2 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 8:30-10:30am at Belle Meade	3	4	5 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
6	7 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	8	9 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 8:30-10:30am at Belle Meade Meet Me at the Market, 10am-2pm State Fair Setup, 2pm-6pm	10 State Fair Setup, 10am September Monthly Meeting, 6:30pm at the <u>Tennessee State Fair</u>	11	12 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
13	14 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	15	16 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 8:30-10:30am at Belle Meade	17	18	19 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
20	21 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	22	23 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 8:30-10:30am at Belle Meade	24	25	26 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
27	28 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	29	30 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 8:30-10:30am at Belle Meade	<b>Upcoming Events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ October 3, 2015—Davidson Farmers Co-Op Customer Appreciation Day, 10am-2pm</li> <li>❖ October 3, 2015—Living History Tours at the Historic Nashville City Cemetery</li> </ul>		





## *An Intern's Year* *by Jennifer Cox, class of 2015*

*Cathie Long in the gardens at Grassmere. Photo: Jennifer Cox/MGDC*

My husband and I were walking our dogs recently around our Nashville neighborhood when we came to a particularly dense area of foliage along the road. Peeking out was a beautifully round, frilly purple flower. Before I knew it, I blurted out, "Oh, look! A passionflower vine! It'll have a crazy round fruit on it called a Maypop!" I have to say I was pretty impressed with myself! And how did I know that? Cathie Long and all the Master Gardeners at the Grassmere Historic Gardens, that's how.

Segue back four summers to a sunny day at the zoo. I was roaming around the gardens behind the Croft House, and a woman was pulling weeds. She was, she said, a Master Gardener. She told me about the Master Gardeners of Davidson County, all about the Historic Gardens at the Zoo, and stated that I ought to become a Master Gardener so that I could work in the gardens, too. While I had no idea who that person was, she clearly planted a seed in my mind because one Thursday evening last winter found me at the Genesco Park Complex beginning my Master Gardener training. I received the biggest gardening book possible and a nifty intern badge with my name and **Master Gardener** on it. As if that wasn't enough, there was a nice potluck dinner for all of us interns, thanks to other MGs. The camaraderie began.

Learning, too, began in earnest; there is too much to mention but for two highlights. First, David Cook taught us to be proud of our Tennessee Lawns. Until that class, I figured I didn't fertilize my yard or use herbicides because I just didn't. Imagine: by just letting a lawn *be* in Tennessee, it would garner a special name! Thanks to David, when those tiny wild flowers popped up in the spring across the backyard, when the wave of clover bloomed over on the left

side of the yard, and when the violets turned the front under the Tulip Poplar purple, I was able to say with pride, "That's my Tennessee Lawn." And thank you, MGs, for teaching about bokashi composting. I now have two buckets full of foodstuffs fermenting away. Between composting and monthly recycling, our home generates almost no landfill waste.

Back to interning. Soon it was March; time to get gardening. I was already a docent at the Nashville Zoo, so it was natural that the Grassmere Historic Gardens would be my learning zone.

Meeting Cathie Long at one of our Thursday classes cinched it; she became the perfect mentor. She was so friendly and welcoming, and they were starting work that next Saturday, so wouldn't I like to join them?

The Gardens were desolate that first visit: lots of open space with some turnip greens, kale, and a few carrots that had made it through the winter. I planted potatoes and spread milkweed seeds. At first, I felt as if I had headed into my sister's kitchen to cook. My sister is a *really* good cook; when I walk into her kitchen, I question whether I can do anything correctly. The same was true at the Gardens: There were real MGs around! Was I pulling weeds or were these good plants? How far apart do I plant the potatoes? Did I strew (throw) those seeds around correctly? Someone should have said, "Jennifer, those are milkweed seeds. They float. They are supposed to land wherever!" or "Those are potatoes, you can't mess them up!" But no one did; they let me have fun doing my

best. The best, though, was watching Cathie shovel and hoe with a finesse that defies description.

One Saturday, we planted beans and swiss chard. I helped Andrea as she taught us how to trim a climbing rose bush. Another



*Cathie Long in the gardens at Grassmere. Photo: Jennifer Cox/MGDC*



Saturday, I watched Bill put in posts for tomatoes and more beans. He put up fencing to keep out rabbits and a turtle. Still another Saturday several folks taught me that “I can can” and use a pressure cooker (my mom would still object). Rich showed us how to keep our tools clean and sharpened, and Mary walked me through the kitchen herb garden.

A few weeks later, the climbing rose was glorious to walk under. The herbs in my garden have benefitted from some extra love, but I don’t have a pressure cooker—yet. And despite Bill’s efforts, we picked a squash the rabbit or turtle had nibbled.



**Bare ground at Grassmere.**  
Photo: Jennifer Cox/MGDC

I disappeared from the Gardens for over a month, and when I returned in late July, I couldn’t believe my eyes. What had been an open space with potential was, as Cathie described it, a jungle! The transformation was stunning.

Harvest time is upon us: all types of beans, tomatoes, squash, even 33+ pounds of potatoes, the very ones I planted. Milkweed plants are like small trees now; the pods will be opening soon. Over by the riot of zinnias are butterflies, dragonflies, bumblebees, and more. There are beautiful rows of okra and patches of melons. Even the turnips that Katie sowed are coming up! It is pure joy to be in the Gardens.

As I was weeding last week, a gentleman approached me and said, “You look as if you know what you are doing, may I ask you a question?” I replied that I knew how to weed, but that the person who really knew her plants was Ms. Cathie, so we walked over to her. He was a horticulturalist from a nearby university and wanted to know the name of a bush that grows hidden way over in the corner of the garden near the sheds. Cathie didn’t skip a beat; she offered the scientific name and the common name and then had a great discussion with the expert. What intern could ask for more? 🌱



**Grassmere’s sea of okra.**  
Photo: Jennifer Cox/MGDC

## Harding Garden at Belle Meade

*by Mariwyn Evans, Class of 2011*

The end of summer always brings a certain sadness, but this year, the Weedin’ Women are also facing a personal bummer. Co-chair and founding Weedin’ Woman Catherine Atwell has told us that she won’t be able to come regularly to Belle Meade beginning this Fall. Catherine does so many projects on behalf of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County, including co-chairing the City Cemetery and serving as Second Vice President, and even a star has only so many hours in the day. We understand, but we will REALLY miss her. Catherine’s humor, her deep knowledge of vegetable gardening, and her ability to reach the top of the beanpoles will leave a hard-to-fill gap at Belle Meade. Thanks for all you do, Catherine, at Belle Meade and for all Master Gardeners.



**Joy Kosarsky transplants irises to a spot with better drainage.** Photo: Mariwyn Evans/MGDC

And even as things change and summer fades, we carry on. Tired yellow squash and cucumbers give way to new plantings of beets, lettuce, and spinach. Lucky for us, a late planting of wax beans is just beginning to yield so we still have produce to share. The popcorn harvest was unfortunately lost to some rascally raccoons. You can’t beat Mother Nature, even with a fence.



**Barbara Allen uses her trusty hoe to beat back the ever-prolific weeds.** Photo: Mariwyn Evans/MGDC

With the somewhat cooler temperatures, we’ve decided to push back our start time to 8:30, so join us then. 🌱



# Demonstration Garden at Ellington Agricultural Center

by Tyann Chappell, Co-Chairpersons, Class of 2013

If you take a walk through the demonstration garden you will see that it has been a busy year. The arbor has been painted and kiwis now call it home. The raised beds have a new coat of paint and have been planted with a succession of vegetables. The open vegetable area has been enclosed and enhanced with repurposed shovels, rakes, hoes, and trailing petunias in galvanized watering cans. The fairy garden Shirley and I created last year for the Music and Molasses Festival and has a new home under one of the roof top gardens. The fairies love it and have told all of their friends. The renovated perennial garden is now a cottage garden with plants blooming from early February thru November.

**Bob Bryan's fence going up.**  
Photo: Tyann Chappell/MGDC



Michael Fenswick (2009) planted an awesome banana tree last fall that is now over ten feet tall. The herb garden is a must see for its thoughtful plantings. The grapevines have flourished on the rebuilt grape arbor and the multi-colored bottle tree is now a focal point in the midst of hanging clusters of grapes. Well, the birds found the grapes irresistible, so now only the grape skeletons are left! The memorial bench and board have been painstakingly refurbished and refinished, along with the cedar topped work table. There are too many other changes to list here, so come out and see the gardens for yourself.

As you can imagine, Shirley and I were quite overwhelmed this year. But not overwhelmed in the traditional way of thinking. We were overwhelmed by the contributions that were made by interns who chose to work at the Demo. As usual, Shirley extended her warmth, kindness, and gardening knowledge and supported Carol Marrero's mentoring program. Some of the 2015 interns that she mentored at the demo this year were Jeanine Atkinson, Katy Brantley, Tom Coulter, Bob Bryan, Bill Haley, Lisa Sykes, and Erica Shannon.

As a group, they have helped to elevate the gardens to new heights. As individuals, they have made their own unique and lasting imprint in every nook and corner. Let me share some pictures of their creativity and contributions. In this article we will showcase the talent and hard work of Bob, Jeanine, and Bill. We'll showcase the other interns in the next article. Enjoy!!! 🌻



**Jeanine Atkinson's (2015) fairy garden.** Photo: Tyann Chappell/MGDC



**Bob Bryan (2015) in the vegetable garden.** Photo: Tyann Chappell/MGDC



# Kitchen Gardens at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage

by Mary Langford, Co-Chairperson, Class of 2009

Here at The Hermitage, the growing season is winding down. We have had a number of successes and challenges this year. The challenges have come in the form of uninvited animal—raccoons and turkeys especially. The raccoons completely destroyed our corn crop just before it was ready to harvest and we suspect the turkeys of pecking through the watermelon rind and eating everything inside.

Among our successes: This year, The Hermitage provided us with Deer Stopper, an organic concentrate, that really works to prevent the deer from eating our plants. When Deer Stopper was used weekly, our damage from deer was minimal. Another success was the scarcity of squash bugs. Following a suggestion in Louise Riotte's *Carrots Love Tomatoes*, we planted some cigarette ash with the squash seeds. We don't understand how or why it worked, but having battled squash bugs every prior season, and having so few this year, we gladly pass along the tip!

We are planting our fall carrots, beets, lettuces and broccoli and our cover crops. For the cover, we are trying Jeff Poppin's method of combining buckwheat, brassicas and red clover. Two of our Master Gardeners went to the Seed Savers Exchange Conference and Campout in Decorah, Iowa in July. One highlight of that trip was meeting Craig LeHoullier, author of *Epic Tomatoes*. Craig has recently bred a line of dwarf tomatoes, with short thick vines and full sized tomatoes and which are suitable for growing in pots on the patio. Listening to Craig talk about cross-pollinating tomatoes and growing them out for eight generations to get stable seeds was fascinating. Craig will speak at the Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello on September 10-12, 2015.



Last but not least, we congratulate Clif Gunter, class of 2015, for completing the requirements and receiving his Master Gardener badge. We're glad to have you with us, Clif! 🌱

# Recipe of the Month Duck Camp Shrimp & Cheesy Grits

from the kitchen of Jason Goodrich

## Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1½ lb jumbo fresh shrimp, peeled and deveined
- Salt to taste
- 1 c andouille sausage, sliced
- 1 lb fresh pork sausage (casings removed)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 4 c shrimp stock
- 2 c diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp lemon juice

**Instructions:** In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Season shrimp with salt and cook until browned (but not cooked through). Remove shrimp and set aside.

In the same pan, add andouille and cook over medium until browned; set aside. Repeat with pork sausage. Add onion, garlic, and thyme to pan and cook until they become aromatic; add all reserved sausage.

Add shrimp stock and bring to a boil over high heat; reduce and simmer 5-10 minutes or until sauce thickens. Add shrimp and cook 5 minutes more before adding tomato and lemon juice.

## **Cheesy Grits**

### Ingredients

- 4 c water
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1 c stone-ground grits
- 1 c grated cheese (your choice!)
- ½ c cream cheese
- Pinch crushed red pepper to taste

**Instructions:** In a large saucepan, bring water, salt, and butter to a boil over high heat; slowly whisk in grits. Lower heat and cook, stirring often, about 20 minutes or until grits are soft and creamy. Remove from heat and fold in cheeses, red pepper, and more salt if desired. Serve right from the pan or transfer to a skillet and bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

**Shrimp Stock:** Combine 1 lb shrimp heads and shells and cook over medium-high heat until toasted; add 1 c each chopped celery and carrots, 2 cloves crushed garlic, and 2 bay leaves.

Add water to cover by two inches and bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 2 hours. Strain and discard solids. Cover and refrigerate, or freeze up to 6 months. 🌱





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*Tom Coulter (2015) looks on as Shirley Lee (2001) is interviewed by Tawanda Coleman during a visit by NewsChannel 5's Talk of the Town program to the Demonstration Garden. Photo: Bob Mather/MGDC*