

Garden Talk

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County
Volume XXX, Issue No. 4 — April 2016

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

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OF DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

1986-2016

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Garden Talk is the monthly publication of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County, Tennessee.

Submissions

Readers are encouraged to submit articles and photographs for future issues to newsletter@mgofdc.org that will be featured as space allows.

The **deadline for submissions is the 19th of every month**, including items for the forthcoming calendar.

Dues

Payment of annual dues of \$20 may be made to the above address, at a monthly meeting, or [securely online with a debit/credit card](#).

NOTICE: Trade and brand names are used only for information. Tennessee Extension does not guarantee nor warrant the standard of any product mentioned; neither does it imply approval of any product to the exclusion of others which also may be suitable.

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. Tennessee Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Cover Photo: A honeybee collecting pollen from an Okame cherry tree. Photo Brad J. Meese (husband of Master Gardener Jill Meese).

Mather's Musings

by Robert Mather, President, Class of 2000

Spring is here at last! It has been a busy first quarter of the year. I hope you enjoyed our spring silent auction held during the March meeting. We had some great items up for grabs, including several auction items generously donated to us like tickets to the Belcourt Theater, a free night's stay at Pickwick Landing State Park Inn, and a train ride and wine tasting at DelMonaco Winery. The silent auction brought in \$388.

In case you hadn't heard, **our display at this year's Lawn & Garden show won the Alice Ann Chapman Environmental Award**. A BIG thank you to all who participated in this year's display, from early planning, setup and takedown, to manning our booth and front door duties.

It is always hard finding the right blooming plants so early in the year for displays, but we always manage. I received many great comments on our speakers at the Show again this year, and several thought our Vertical Garden was painted until they got close to see we had live plants in the felt pockets. From the first people through the doors Thursday morning until the last visitor on Sunday evening, Master Gardeners and Interns talked to the visitors and helped them with their many gardening questions. Fellow Master Gardener and UT Extension agent David Cook provided information on bees that was also a big hit this year.

We have received many donations of seeds from several seed companies and have distributed them to our various project so they can get plants growing and ready to plant come later April and May; the surplus will be used for our Seed Bank project.

I already have several trays sprouting. In addition to our projects, we are growing plants for our **seventh annual Urban Gardening Festival**. Be sure and mark your calendars for **Friday, May 20th** where we setup and the day of our event on **Saturday, May 21st from 9am-4pm**. This is our time to bring the community together to learn about gardening and horticulture. Each and every one of you will be needed to help with this festival.

I'm also looking forward to our field trip to **Huntsville Botanical Garden on April 16th**. We have a full bus but if you were unable to travel with us for this trip, don't worry: we have more planned! Just remember that you must book and pay early to secure a seat.

A reminder to all interns: there are several **Earn & Learn workshop** activities at our projects over the next few months so watch the newsletter and our website calendar for dates and details as they are added.

If you have questions, please ask your mentor! Project chairs: make sure you get your activities included in the newsletter calendar as well as the website calendar.

If you are like me, you have been busy getting your gardens ready for spring. Be sure and take time to enjoy your gardens! 🌱

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Submissions to our newsletter by members are always welcome! While there is plenty to share about our projects and programs, we always enjoy sharing stories about Master Gardeners, their experiences, and their gardens.

If you would like to submit an item to the newsletter, please email info@mgofdc.org.

Huntsville Field Trip

by Jason Goodrich, Class of 2013

For those traveling to Huntsville Botanical Garden on our field trip Saturday, April 16th, please check your email for your itinerary.

Loading will begin at 6:30am and we will promptly depart at 7:00am from the Tennessee Agricultural Museum parking lot at Ellington Agricultural Center.

Questions? Please contact Jason Goodrich at info@mgofdc.org or (615) 403-5766. 🐼

Junior Master Gardeners Camp

by Maddy Berezov, Class of 2014

Our annual Junior Master Gardener Summer Camp for youth ages 9-14 will be here before you know it!

Applications are now available at our the Junior Master Gardener Camp webpage at our website, www.mgofdc.org.

We need the following items for this year's camp if anyone has some to spare:

- For our Fairy Garden, items needed include: small clay pots (even broken ones), small colored glass stones or shells, figurines, critters, gnomes and the like.
- For terrariums, we need: old floppy disc plastic containers with the cover.
- We could always use small (artist size not house paint size) paint brushes.

Also, a Film from UT Extension on working with youth will be shown at 10am on Wednesday, April 13th in the UT Extension Davidson County office conference room (at David Cook's office), 1417 Murfreesboro Pk, Nashville, TN 37217

This film is **required for any Master Gardener volunteering at this year's Junior Master Gardener Camp** or working with youth.

If you have any questions, please email either Pam Swoner or Maddy Berezov at jrmg@mgofdc.org. 🐼

April meeting

by Paul Martin, First Vice President, Class of 1998

Join us for food, fellowship, and fun at our monthly meeting on **Thursday, April 14th at 6:30pm** in the Ed Jones Auditorium on the campus of Ellington Agricultural Center!

This month's program will be presented by **Keith Merry**, best known for his unique handcrafted furniture and accessories which incorporate salvaged antique architectural materials. His one-of-a-kind tables, consoles, beds, fire screens, lamps, planters and other furnishings incorporate 19th and early 20th century ironwork, stonework and other structural artifacts as their central design elements.

A graduate of O'More College of Design, Keith worked for his family's ornamental iron design and fabrication business established in 1959, Herndon & Merry, where he continued to learn more about the history of ornamental ironwork and developed a deep appreciation for the painstaking and highly detailed work of the master craftsmen from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1987, he opened Keith Merry/Garden Park Antiques where he began to acquire decorative architectural elements, such as antique gates, doors, iron fencing, window panels, tin finials, and other artifacts to sell and restore. Since then, he has been inspired to design and fabricate repurposed furniture rescued from wrecking balls and salvage yards.

His handcrafted tables, consoles, lamps and other one-of-a-kind pieces are produced entirely in-house, based on Merry's original designs and incorporating antique ironwork and other salvaged architectural elements from his showroom. His work has been featured in a wide variety of media, including *Architectural Digest*, *Elle Décor*, *House & Garden*, *Southern Accents*, *Veranda*, *House Beautiful*, *Renovation Style*, *Colonial Home*, *Southern Living* and HGTV.

We continue to have great turnouts at our meetings and I hope to see you all again this month! If it's your first time or even if it's been a few years since you were last able to visit with us, I encourage you to come out and enjoy an evening with the Master Gardeners of Davidson County! Our meetings are open to the public and we encourage you to bring visitors as well as a dish for our potluck meal. See you there! 🐼

Registration Open for Field Trip to Louisville

by Jason Goodrich, Corresponding Secretary, Class of 2013

On **Saturday, June 4th**, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County will be conducting its second field trip of 2016 to the **Yew Dell Botanical Gardens outside of Louisville, Kentucky**.

The cost of the trip will be \$40 including transportation and admission fees. **Registration is now open.** Please bear in mind that registration is on a first come, first seated basis and that your registration is not considered complete until payment has been received. You may now register directly at our website by clicking here: <https://mgofdc.wildapricot.org/field-trips>. If you prefer, you may pay at a monthly meeting or mail your check to our address as shown on page 2.

An itinerary for the trip is forthcoming and we are looking forward to hosting another trip! If you have questions, please email me at info@mgofdc.org. 🐼

April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Upcoming Events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workdays at Belle Meade have resumed and will be each Wednesday at 9am. • Demo Garden workdays will be every Tuesday and Saturday, from 9am-12pm. • Workdays at Grassmere have also resumed every Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday at 8am-12pm. For a complete calendar of upcoming events, visit our website at www.mgofdc.org .					1	2
3	4	5	6 Board Meeting, Teleconference, 6pm	7 2016 Course: Class 11 MNPD South Precinct, 6pm	8	9
10	11	12	13 2016 Course: Class 12 MNPD South Precinct, 6pm	14 Monthly Meeting Ed Jones Auditorium, Ellington Ag Center, 6:30pm	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 2016 Course: Class 13 MNPD South Precinct, 6pm	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 2016 Course: Final Class MNPD South Precinct, 6pm	29	30

Joy Kosarsky (2010) and Joan Clayton-Davis (2014) thinning the iris and daylilies.
Photo Bob Mather/MGDC



Historic Nashville City Cemetery

by Bob Mather, Class of 2000

It's hard to believe that the first three months of the year have passed and now we are in April. We held two Boxwood trimming demonstrations last month, the second being the same day as the city-wide Weed Wrangle event.

This was the second annual Weed Wrangle Nashville held during National Invasive Species Awareness week, engaging local communities to join together to learn about and manage invasive plants. Ten city parks including Historic Nashville City Cemetery and The Nashville Zoo participated in this year's event. Our Master Gardeners at the Boxwood demonstration also got to hear about national and international efforts to stem the tide of biological pollution in our local communities.

The irises and daylilies are among the first to bloom each spring, so we spent our last workday thinning them out and replanting some. We last thinned them two years ago and they have since spread.

I have been starting seeds from the many donated seed packets from Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Co. In addition to Calendula that we introduced to our gardens last year, we are growing Zinnia (Will Rogers), Marigold (Harlequin) and Hollyhock (Majorette double brown red). This was a great opportunity to add to our collection of heirloom plants.

If you have not already done so, add May 14th to your calendars for the annual Master Gardeners tour of the Nashville City Cemetery. You can learn more about the cemetery by visiting its website: www.thenashvillecitycemetery.org.

And if you know of any runners, the annual Memorial Day Run through the cemetery is on Monday, May 28th. I have included a link you and forward to those you think might be interested: www.nashvillestriders.com.

Many thanks to all who have helped at the Cemetery and continue to watch our website calendar for additional workdays. Please contact me with any questions at (615) 525-5293 or at president@mgofdc.org.

Joy Kosarsky digging up iris with the help of
Annie Dale (2016) and Karen Brown (2016).
Photo Bob Mather/MGDC



Urban Gardening Festival Plant Sale

by Judy Burger, Class of 2004

Every year during our Urban Gardening Festival, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County host our annual plant sale and preparations continue for this year's event.

Ours is a unique plant sale because all plants are grown by our Master Gardeners, and I encourage you to consider donating some of your plants for the sale. **Please consider donating perennials, annuals, herbs, and vegetable plants.**

Because all plants must be inspected and certified by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture as part of their ongoing effort to prevent the proliferation of fire ants, please use clean containers and clean potting soil.

Please label plants with the common name (and any other information you wish to provide) and drop you plants off during our May monthly meeting (May 12) or during setup of the Urban Gardening Festival on Friday, May 20 before 12 noon.

If you have any questions or if you're interested in volunteering to help with the sale, please contact me at (615) 424-8425 or judyburger@rocketmail.com.

Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage

by Laura Kraft, Class of 2010

We marched right in to the new season this month!

We enjoyed hosting our annual Seed Starting Earn & Learn workshop including soil health and preparation, growing conditions, demonstrations for soil blocking techniques, and how to build a grow light stand. It was a great collaboration of knowledge and ideas.



Spring cleaning at The Hermitage on March 26th: Donna Haggitt (2009), Mary Langford (2009), Sue Prosch (2016), Carol Freund-Taylor (2016), Phil Arnold (2011), and Cliff Gunter (2015). Photo Laura Kraft/MGDC

A very special thank you to all who attended!



Sue Prosch sees we're on target with our worm to square-foot of soil ratio! Photo Laura Kraft/MGDC

This year is all about the soil getting healthy again. We're literally changing our path by adding walkways inside our quadrants to help deter 'compacting the soil' and to cut down on watering and weeding. Cool season veggies are doing well and we're ready for spring planting in a couple of weeks.



Phil Arnold, Donna Haggitt, and Cliff Gunter dividing/planting the cabbage. Photo Laura Kraft/MGDC

Join in the fun or just come visit on Saturdays beginning at 8am! Share your knowledge of heirloom gardening or learn more about it. We look forward to growing with you! Contact us at hermitage@mgofdc.org for details! 🌱



Laura Kraft (2010) looks on as Mary Langford demonstrates soil blocking techniques. Photo Pam Swoner/MGDC

Junior Master Gardener Camp Annual White Elephant Sale

by Doris Weakley, Class of 1999

The Junior Master Gardeners Camp committee is now collecting gardening and gardening-related items to sell at this year's Urban Gardening Festival. All donated gardening items can be brought to our monthly Master Gardener meetings or on the day of festival. Clean out your unwanted and gently used items and donate to the Junior Camp. The proceeds from our White Elephant Sale will be used to further enhance our Junior Master Gardener Camp and help to keep the cost of camp at \$50.00 per camper. Thanks! 🌱

Grassmere Classes in the Garden

by Jeanmarie Karazin, Class of 2014

Each year the Master Gardener volunteers at Grassmere offer an education series called Grassmere Classes in the Garden. This year, our schedule looks a bit different because we're trying something new! Half of our series will be held during spring and the other during fall. Here is our schedule for the spring portion of our series:

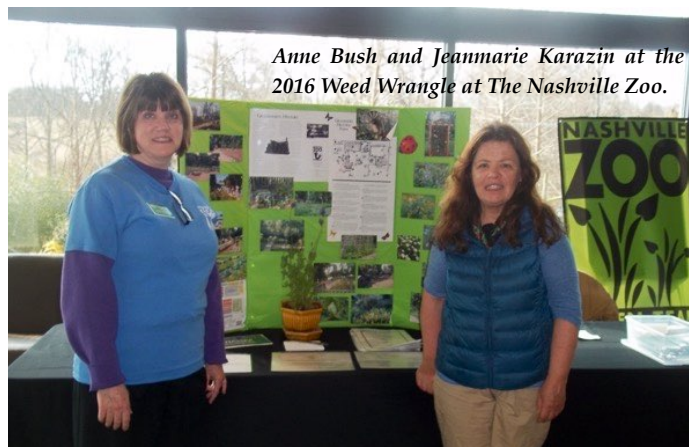
- April 9th, *Introduction to Gardening: Soil Prep, Composting, and Raised Beds*
- April 16th, *Tools are your Friends and Pruning Fruit & Ornamental Trees for Success*
- April 23rd, *History of Medicinal Herbs and Culinary Herbs to Spice Up Your Life*
- April 30th, *Kids in the Garden: Come and share a read-aloud and help plant a special children's garden that you can watch grow all summer long!**

* In the event of inclement weather for the Kids in the Garden class, it will be postponed to May 7th.

All classes will be held in the Grassmere Historic Gardens at The Nashville Zoo, beginning at 11am and ending at noon. 🌱

Nashville Zoo Weed Wrangle

by Anne Bush, Class of 2015



Jeanmarie Karazin and I attended the Weed Wrangle at the Nashville Zoo on Saturday, March 5, 2016. The Master Gardener volunteers at Grassmere Historic Gardens had a display with information about the gardens and the Master Gardeners of Davidson County in the Croft Center.

Representatives from the Zoo Board, Weed Wrangle and Cumberland Compact reported on their various organizations in the amphitheater. After the reports, we worked along with about 100 volunteers to remove invasive Chinese Privet from the creek plain where a new exhibit will be built for bison and elk. 🌱

Speakers Bureau Update

by Joan Clayton-Davis, Class of 2004

Spring is here and the Speakers Bureau is set to share its knowledge, expertise, and resource information in the Antioch and Edgehill areas at Nashville Public Libraries as we prepare for warm season vegetable gardening.

- April 9th at 2:00pm. Nashville Southeast Public Library will focus on **A Beginners Guide to Growing and Enjoying Herbs.**
- April 16 at 10:00am. Edgehill Public Library will focus on **Spring/Cool Season Vegetable Gardening** and **Warm Season Vegetable Gardening.**



Joan Clayton-Davis (2014) leading a spring gardening workshop at the Davidson Farmers Co-Op. Photo Jenny Newell/Davidson Farmers Co-Op

Speakers Bureau and Interns from the 2016 Master Gardener Class (**Carolyn Freund-Taylor, Maria Johnson, Alyssa Leonard, and Denise Dunbar**) helped launch our workshop at the Davidson Farmers Co-Op Annual Spring Gardening as well as at the Southeast Public Library with fun and interactive events reaching more than 60 local residents, gardeners, and prospective gardeners at the two events!

Thank you for your interest and continued support. Be certain to check our [website calendar](#) for updates as presentations and workshops are added during the year. 🌱

Herb Society Plant Sale 2016

by Rhonda Galligan, Herb Society of Nashville

The Herb Society of Nashville will hold its **Annual Herb Sale** on **Saturday, April 16, 2016**, from 9am to 2pm at the Fairgrounds Nashville sports arena building.

The sale is open to the public and admission is free (except for a \$5 fairgrounds parking fee), and will feature the sale of rare varieties of annual and perennial herbs as well as all culinary herbs.

Credit and debit cards will be accepted. A local Boy Scout troop will also be on hand to help you check out.

For more details, contact me at rhonda.galligan@gmail.com or at (931) 224-8947. To learn more about the Nashville Herb Society, visit www.herbsocietynashville.org. 🌱

How Canola Oil is Made (from plants grown locally)

by Judy Wright, Class of 2015

This article is an excerpt from Judy's Chickens, a blog by Master Gardener Judy Wright. You can read the entire article and other great posts of interest at www.judyschickens.org.

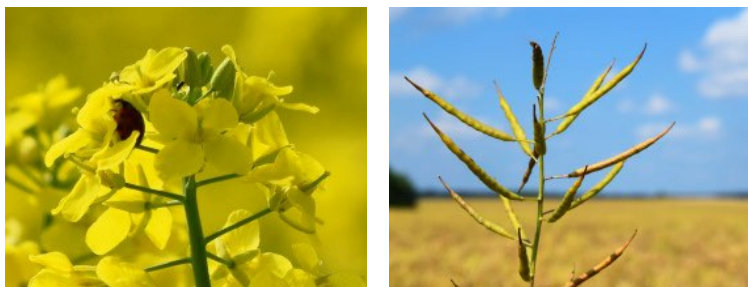
Last April, I wrote a story about the gorgeous yellow fields of canola that were growing along I-24 in Cadiz, Kentucky. You can read all about it and see the photos [here](#).

This is Part 2 of that story. The part where after seeing a dramatic increase in the number of yellow fields from the year before, I called the plant manager at the AgStrong Canola and Sunflower Seed Processing Plant in Trenton, Kentucky and asked, *What gives?* Why are we suddenly seeing yellow everywhere? When he started to explain, I realized I had a lot to learn and asked if I could drive over to meet him and get a tour of the plant. An hour later Mark Dallas was giving my husband and me a tour. Not exactly the way I thought my day would turn out, but I do love a good backroads detour.

As background information, can-o-l-a oil, or "Canada-oil-low-acid," is made from crushed canola seeds. These seeds are about the size of poppy seeds. Even having seen how canola oil is extracted from the seeds, I still shake my head in disbelief that anything that small could produce so much of something as useful as cooking oil.

Like winter wheat, canola is planted in the fall, sprouts then go dormant in the winter and perk up again in early spring. It flowers in mid-April, and the seed pods are harvested in mid-June. Farmers like to grow winter wheat and canola because then they can double-crop their fields, meaning there is time left in the warm months to raise another crop, such as soybeans, in that same field. By comparison, in most northern climates, there's only time to grow one crop like wheat or canola.

The photo on the left was taken from a stem of canola flowers on April 17th. The photo on the right was taken on June 12th, just a few days before the pods were harvested by the combines I wrote about in this article.



You may have seen similar seed pods develop in your own gardens if you ever let broccoli or bok choy plants flower and "go to seed." If you look closely at the flowers below, you can see the early development of seed pods. They look like little

spikes. Canola is in the same Brassica family as bok choy and broccoli.

The next photos are of fully mature canola seed pods that I dissected at home to release the seeds within. You can see how small these seeds are. It's amazing to think cooking oil is extracted from them.



AgStrong contracts with local, family-owned, farms to plant nonGMO canola seeds in their fields. NonGMO means the seed's genetic material has not been manipulated in a laboratory through genetic engineering to make it more disease or insect resistant. A few other tidbits I learned about growing canola: canola has a 5-6 inch tap root which acts as a natural tiller in the soil, and canola brings in \$8.10/bushel compared to wheat's \$5.25/bushel.

The first stop on the tour was the long silver cylindrical oven used to warm the seeds to no more than 120°. Warming the seeds made them easier to press. The low oven temperature kept the process in the category of cold-pressed. The blue conveyor belt brought the warmed seeds to a machine that cracked the hard outer shells.

Next stop was the seed crusher. This was where the magic happened. This machine crushed the seeds and expelled the golden canola oil into the blue well. The oil will still need to go to an offsite refinery before it can be bottled.

But the story doesn't end there. As a volunteer chef and Board member of [The Nashville Food Project](http://TheNashvilleFoodProject.org) my antennae is always up for opportunities for food donation and food recovery. Canola and olive oil are two expensive staples we use in abundance at TNFP. I asked if AgStrong would consider partnering with us and donating their locally grown and manufactured Solio oil to TNFP, which they have graciously done.

And that's how this one little detour ended up providing cooking oil for TNFP whose mission is "Bringing people together to grow, cook, and share nourishing food with the goals of cultivating community and alleviating hunger in our city."

The story, however, didn't end there, either. I happened to "pull" a few young canola plants from the side of the road last April to plant in my vegetable garden, so I could watch and learn how these plants matured to the seed stage. Once the plants produced seed pods and dried out, I was pleasantly surprised to walk out to my garden one day and see my chickens poking their heads through the chicken wire and eating the canola seeds. 🐔



Master Gardeners of Davidson County

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*Join us at our April meeting on Thursday, April 14th
at 6:30pm in the Ed Jones Auditorium at Ellington
Agricultural Center!*

Hellebores

by Bob Mather, Class of 2000

Long before the arrival of spring, there is one plant in our landscape that shows its color and signals that spring is not far behind. Hellebores are evergreen or semi-evergreen perennials that bloom in the winter and very early in the spring, usually before the daffodils dare, and before we have started our new garden season. Hellebores, members of the buttercup family, are long-lived plants that add color to the garden for several months. They are also appreciated for their attractive foliage, with each leaf consisting of long leafstalks, ending in large, leathery leaflets group together like fingers on an out-reached hand.

Helleborus niger, often called the Christmas rose, is the earliest of the hellebores to bloom with white or very pale green cupped flowers, sometimes with a pink blush. Introduced from Europe, this elegant plant is 12 inches tall, 18 inches wide, and blooms from December into spring. Their lustrous dark green leaves are divided into seven to nine lobes with a few large "teeth". Their flowers appear singly or in groups of three on a stout stem.

Another species, *H. orientalis*, also known as Lenten Rose and introduced from Greece and Turkey, is the most popular hellebore. As the flowers mature, the delicate stamens drop

off but the petal-like sepals hang on, enveloping clusters of seed pods. Lenten Rose is tolerant of warm-winter climates.

All hellebores thrive in loamy soil enriched with plenty of compost. They grow vigorously around the skirts of shrubs and they adapt gracefully to the challenging conditions of dry shade under mature trees.

Hellebores are very long-lived plants, and once they have settled into their shady spot, you can count on them for years to come. 🌱

