

MADISON COUNTY
2016
Master
Gardener

The Bridge to Knowledge
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From The President

Dear Master Gardeners,

I hope all of you who are able to volunteer to work at Summer Celebration on July 14th had a chance to sign up for a two hour shift at the June meeting. If not, and you want to earn some hours, please contact the Summer Celebration Project leader, Joan Hughes. Her email is : joanfarrow@tds.net.

In addition to working at the sale, this is a great opportunity to get some of those education hours you need. Each one of the educational speakers you listen to that day will count as one hour of education.

I also want to share with you, something I learned at the last MG board meeting. You can claim education credit for each gardening show you watch on TV. So if you watch Chris Cooper on "The Family Plot: Gardening in the Mid-South," that is ½ hour toward your education credit. Chris Cooper and P. Allen Smith, are just two of the shows on now for which you can earn education credits. Just remember, get those education hours posted along with your volunteer hours as soon as you do them.

Another way to earn hours is to attend the West Tennessee Regional meeting from 8 to 8:45 am on the morning of Summer Celebration. We would love to see a good turnout of Madison County Master Gardeners there.

The Nashville trip was wonderful. We saw gardens that were truly fabulous and the hosts were so generous with their time. Many even had refreshments for us. Many thanks to Jason for his time and effort in organizing and carrying out this trip. His knowledge of the gardens (and nurseries) of Tennessee and his friendships throughout the state made this trip very special.

Remember, there is no MG meeting in July. But we have a special treat in store for you for the August meeting. Celeste has information below.

See you at Summer Celebration!

Mary Nenarella President
Madison County Master Gardeners

Ramblings

David W. Sams July 2016

Nashville Trip: Carol enjoyed this trip. We have always enjoyed the master gardener trips and I regret that I was unable to participate this time. Carol purchased only 5 plants! I'm sure I could have added many more. Can two live as cheaply as one? Certainly not if both are plant nerds.

Summer Celebration: Summer Celebration is right around the corner, the second Thursday in July as always. I have never missed a Summer Celebration and won't miss this one. The speakers, plant sale, vendors and information make it well worth tolerating the heat for a day if one can. I'm sure that many of us will be helping that day and that most will enjoy it even in the heat. Tell Carol Happy Birthday as this Summer Celebration will be held on her birthday. We won't discuss which birthday...

Around the Yard: Hydrangeas (oakleaf, macrophylla and arborescens) as well as daylilies are all putting on their show of beauty now. New arborescens (Invincible Spirit II and 'Haas Halo') are both opening flowers. What a wonderful era in which to be growing a garden!. Our yard is hot and dry and we are watering steadily. Plants which are not fully established can die very quickly during periods of heat and drought. We use mulch and watch them as closely as we can. We could not have the garden which we have without both of us being dedicated to working at it.

Keyhole Gardens: Some of you likely read the recent article on "Keyhole gardens" in the Jackson Sun. I found the idea highly interesting, did a Google search for keyhole gardens and visited the one in the article. The result is 3 books which will arrive tomorrow according to Amazon. I will almost certainly build a keyhole garden before fall and you will eventually hear more about it in this column.

Caged Berries: Our blackberries and blueberries now each live and grow inside of their own personal cage. The cage over the purple (Royalty) raspberries is built but not yet covered. Can the strawberry and red raspberry cages be far behind? Royalty can be propagated by tip layering. I believe that the plants would sell. We will have to see about that...

Thoughts on Blackberries. Thornless blackberries are easier to pick. But they also have larger seeds and seem not to be as sweet. When a blackberry turns black it remains quite tart for several days. Then the berry swells a bit, goes from shiny black to dull black and becomes sweeter. I have acquired a thorny blackberry plant ('Black Magic') which not only produced very sweet berries with small seeds last year but produced these berries from May right through until frost! It sends up root suckers which come true to type! Hmmm!

Thai Giant Elephant Ear: Last fall I mulched three Thai Giant's heavily with leaves and covered the pile of leaves with large plastic containers after the plants had frozen back. This spring they were apparently rotted and dead and I thought no more about this apparently failed experiment. I now observe that 2 of these 3 plants have come up having survived the winter! How can I make that work even better? They will also overwinter in pots in the garage.

Aphrodite's Purple Nightie: Finally, at the risk of my reputation, I ask, have you seen Aphrodite's Purple Nightie? No, she hasn't lost it; it's the name of a passion plant (go figure) sold by Jason last year. It is supposedly only hardy to zone 8 but mine returned and is flowering. It flowered all summer last year and I was happy to see it return. Enough rambling, see you next month. David

Mary mentioned in the President's Note that there is a surprise in store for the August meeting. In an effort to keep things exciting, we are planning on taking the ENTIRE group on a short bus tour of select projects and local gardens here in Jackson! Our hope is to introduce members to projects that need our continued support and to familiarize everyone with the project locations and coordinators. Each bus will have a leader who will be talking about the projects during the ride. We plan to drive through the downtown area viewing the JMC Library, ComeUnity Café Garden, and the Downtown Planters. We will then go to Liberty Garden Park where we will unload, and you will have some time to walk around the park and look at existing projects and possible improvements. From there we will head to Helen and Kayo Mullins garden. There will be time to admire their collection as the daytime temperatures begin to drop and light refreshments will be available as well. To round things off, we will head over to Lucinda Hunley's home where you can walk the garden in the twilight hour and enjoy desert. Obviously this short bus tour will require more time than we generally allot for regular meetings, but I feel it will be well worth the time. On August 4th we will be departing the WTREC at 6:00 pm. So come early and load directly onto the buses rather than going inside. This should speed things up a bit. We will be returning between 8:30 and 9:00 pm. and there will be plenty of seating. We do ask however, that this "meeting" be for MCMG MEMBERS ONLY. We encourage you to bring friends and guests who may be interested in joining the group to monthly meetings, but this particular gathering is restricted to members, in order to ensure comfortable travel. This is something NEW for our group and we hope that everyone is excited about getting out and seeing some sites around our home county!! If you have any questions, please contact me at the office 731-668-8543.

I would also like to give everyone a heads up about the upcoming Madison County Master Gardener Plant Swap, which has been requested by many. We are planning on holding that in conjunction with the November meeting. So go ahead and be thinking about what plants you might enjoy sharing with others. More details will be provided in the August Newsletter.



One morning while sitting at my computer I had just finished responding to my last e-mail, I decided to see if there were any local CSA's. It was one of those quick, involuntarily acts of curiosity. I just wanted to see if any were out there, especially locally. To my pleasant surprise I saw two; one in Toone and the other in Selmer and an even greater delight when I noticed the one in Selmer was year around.

In all my spontaneous, inquisitive, browsing adventures I had never seen a year around CSA posted in any state I ventured into, which of course I was determined to visit and see what caused this local caretaker of vegetables to grow year round.

I took the man's name and phone number down and set out to make contact. One phone call, no response, so I waited a day then called again, no answer. Plan B send an e-mail. Again no response. By the end of the week I changed my strategy and called in the early morning - at a polite time and wa-la. Plan B was successful! We exchanged names and concluded an appropriate time for an interview and tour.

When I first drove into Rosewood Village Farms I knew I was entering some sort of community. The road was made for one vehicle as it wound down a small hill and up another as I passed modular home after another. I passed a small orchard with guineas roaming the ground looking for their mid-day meal at the bottom of the hill, then the road wound down to an emerging large field, mostly covered with some sort of frost cloth on top and weed cloth on the ground, with one large hoop house in the back of the field and a smaller greenhouse to my right. What mesmerized me more than what the man was growing, is the efficiency, technology, and what looked like a plan to produce as much as he could out of the acre and half he plotted.

As I scanned the field I saw two men and two small children. I parked my car in the nearest empty looking spot and got out and hollered, "Ray?" with a question in my voice. He looked up, hesitated, and then he must have remembered the interview. He looked around for a small child, picked him up and slowly started walking towards my direction.

We walked up to his home and sat on his porch and the story unfolded.

Ray Tyler 34 years old married and has 3 children. And yes, Rosewood Village is a community of "like" people as Ray put it. They all want to live peacefully in the country and share their Christian faith. Amen.

He currently cultivates 1.5 acres full time and has one part-time helper and is adamant about using organic, non-gmo seeds and grows all the plants certified naturally.

He started growing vegetables in 2010; learning what grew well, what did not, how to do it better, basically for him to sell the produce at the Farmer's Market. In the beginning he grew 80-90 different varieties of plants but has now honed it down to only the best of the best.

He initially took his produce to the Jackson Farmer's Market on the weekends and found he could make a profit and also encounter some steady customers, who encouraged him to do more, a CSA. Through the encouragement and persistency of a customer, Ray entered into the world of a full-time CSA manager in 2012.

When I approached Ray and questioned him on why he decided to do a year long CSA, again it was customer demand and I personally believe it was the challenge to try it out.

He no longer does a year-around CSA due to a critical situation in his family. However when he did a Fall/Winter CSA he grew the traditional vegetables and kept them in the ground until he needed an order to be filled, then he would dig them up, clean it off and put them in a box.

We began the tour as we walked into the greenhouse. The fan was blowing and you could still feel the moisture from the morning dew. He described all the seedlings that were growing and how he grows all his vegetables naturally. He emphasized naturally.

Then we stepped back out onto the field as I began to ask him questions about what type of ground cover he was using, why the mounds of earth and why he was still using frost cover when the last frost had already come and gone. Ray began to share that he has been doing this for 5 years and has perfected gardening each year. He uses a heavy gauge ground cover almost like nautical, bulkhead cloth to keep the weeds at bay. The mounds are his raised beds; no side supports. He then began to explain that he uses the frost cover on his lettuces to reduce the sun and heat, keep the insects away and prolong the gardening season.

You may find Ray at the Jackson Farmer's Market on the weekends selling his certified natural vegetables, probably a child nearby, and the anticipation of a delightful conversation.

Contributed by Kathleen Trent
(CSA -Community Supported Agriculture)

Fellow Master Gardeners,

Summer Celebration will be July 14th 2016, and we have plenty of opportunities for you to get some hours in. If you did not sign up at Thursday night's meeting and would like to volunteer, please email me at joanfarrow@tds.net and we will get you signed up. Please indicate the time and position you prefer to work and we will do our best to work you in. Thank you for all your help!

Work times begin at 8:00 am and continue until 6:00 pm. The work times are broken up into 2 hr. segments ex: 8-10, 10-12, 12-2 ect...

Positions needed:

Customer Service - helping customers with plant selection/questions

Adders - folks who will count up plants and their cost before customers proceed to check-out

Cashiers - those who will be accepting payment and manning the cash boxes

Holding Area- labeling plants and organizing them in the holding area, retrieving plants for pick up from holding, and loading

Joan Hughes

Create a Garden Anywhere with Straw Bales

By [Melinda Myers](#)

Add productive garden space and raise your planting bed with straw bale gardening. This technique allows gardeners to create raised bed gardens on a patio, lawn or any area with poor compacted soil. Straw bale gardening has been around for centuries, but thanks to Joel Karsten's book "Straw Bale Gardens" it has gained new popularity. All that is needed are a few straw bales, fertilizer, a bit of compost and time to condition, plant and water the garden.

Type of Straw Bale

Be sure to purchase straw bales made from alfalfa, wheat, oats, rye or other cereal grain that have less weed seeds than hay. Start a few weeks before the designated planting date.

Permanent Location

Place the bales in their permanent location with the cut sides up and twine parallel to the ground. Once you start the condition process, the bales will be very heavy and hard to move. When the bales are in place you are ready to start the conditioning process. This is done to start the inside of the straw bales composting, so they'll support plant growth.

Day One to Six

On day one, spread fertilizer over the top of the bale. Use a ½ cup of a complete garden fertilizer or three cups of an organic based fertilizer like [Milorganite](#). Then completely moisten the bale. The organic fertilizers feed the microorganisms that help decompose the straw into a nutrient rich planting medium. Thoroughly soak the bale every day. On days three and five you will add more fertilizer at the same rate used on day one.

Day Seven to Nine

Days seven through nine use half the rate used on day one. This would be ¼ cup of a complete garden fertilizer or 1 ½ cups of an organic fertilizer. Thoroughly water the bale each time.

Day Ten



On day ten you will add one cup of 10-10-10 or three cups of an organic fertilizer rich in phosphorous and potassium. This completes the conditioning process.

Get Ready to Plant

Bales treated with a complete fertilizer should be ready to plant. You may need to wait a few more days when using an organic fertilizer. The inside of the bale should be the temperature of warm bath water or cooler for planting. If it is hotter than this, wait for the bale to cool a bit before you plant.

Use a trowel to pry open a hole in the bale. Place the plant in the hole and cover the roots with potting mix or compost.

Planting with Seeds

Create a planting bed for seeds by covering the bale with a one- to two-inch thick layer of planting mix. Follow the planting directions on the back of the seed packet.

Watering

Regular watering is critical for success with this method. Soaker hoses or drip irrigation make this an easier task. You can also use gallon milk jugs with holes in the bottom or inverted two-liter soda bottles placed near the base of each plant to provide water where it is needed.

Nutrient Boost

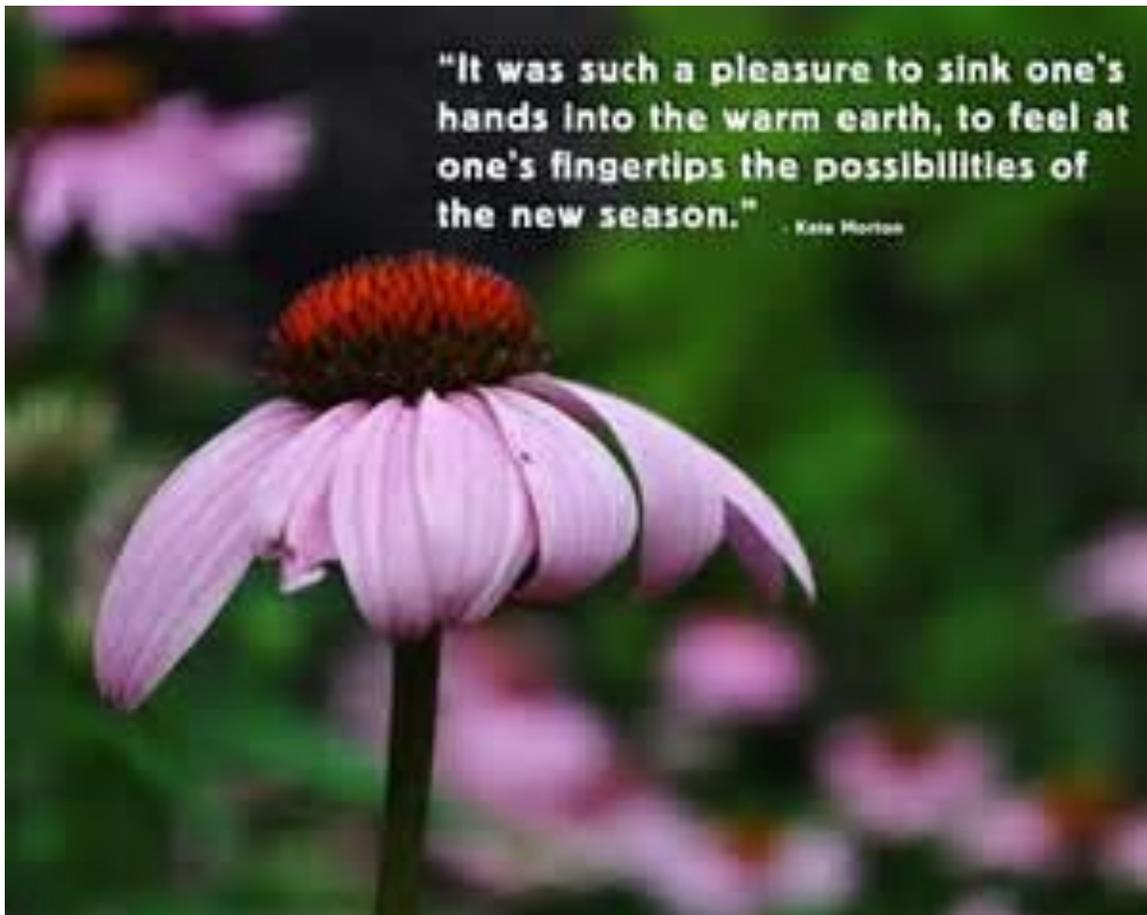
Give your straw bale garden a nutrient boost with [Milorganite](#) about once a month or as needed throughout the growing season. Follow these steps and you'll be well on your way to growing a productive straw bale garden to enjoy throughout the season.



Contributed by Lorene Robinson

Summer Celebration, July 14

- Master Gardeners' Plant Sale begins at 9 a.m.
- Garden Lectures begin at 10 a.m.
- Admission is \$5 for adults, free for children 17 and under.
- Admission to UT Kitchen Divas Cooking Demo additional \$5.



SUMMER CELEBRATION PLANT SALE

Thursday July 14th

Just wanted to give everyone a update on a few things.
First of all plant sale will start at 9:00 a.m.
If you are working the morning shift, please arrive by 8:00 a.m.

Also we still have several positions open for adders, plant sellers
(customer service) and workers for the holding area.
Times needed are 12:00 - 2:00 and from 2:00 - 4:00p.m.

If you are interested in working any of these positions
please email me at joanfarrow@tds.net .

We will be sending out a email of the work schedule in a few days,
please look it over and note your scheduled time to work.

Any Questions? Please email me at the address above.

Thank You and we look forward to seeing you there!

2016 Summer Celebration Plant Sale Team
Joan Hughes, Tommy and Paulette Crews,
Brenda Coffey and Farrow Hughes



Baked Parmesan Zucchini

Ingredients

- 4 zucchini, quartered lengthways
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves

Instructions

1. **Step 1** Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Coat a cooling rack with nonstick spray and place on a baking sheet; set aside.
2. **Step 2** In a small bowl, combine Parmesan, thyme, oregano, basil, garlic powder, salt and pepper, to taste.
3. **Step 3** Place zucchini onto prepared baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with Parmesan mixture. Place into oven and bake until tender, about 15 minutes. Then broil for 2-3 minutes, or until crisp and golden brown.
4. **Step 4** Serve immediately, garnished with parsley, if desired.

Wanted!! Articles for the Newsletter

You can earn volunteer hours by writing about some garden you visited, some technique you tried which worked (or did not), or share your enthusiasm for some special plant, or condensing a gardening article you read.

Keep contributing. Keep reading. Keep sharing.

Please send your contributions to:

Liz Whitsitt lizv@tds.net

Pam Stanfield pamstanfield@gmail.com



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UT Gardens Jackson
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Lots of great info being shared there, and you
don't have to wait for a monthly newsletter!

The Bridge to Knowledge

The University of Tennessee Extension

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