



From The President

Dear Fellow Master Gardeners,
Thank you for electing me to serve a second term as your president. I appreciate the vote of confidence and I am looking forward to working with all of you in the coming year. Master Gardeners from across the state volunteered over 2500 hours this year and our MCMG hours contributed a large portion of those hours. Let's keep up the great work!

Our next upcoming activity is the "Chipping of the Green" on January 9, 2016! Be ready to bundle up!

Also please keep in mind the TN Extension Master Gardener Conference that is being held in Knoxville this year on March 17, 18 and 19. An extra day (Thursday, March 17th) has been added to accommodate a full day of classes for those interested in learning how to start and work with Junior Master Gardener programs. We supply two scholarships for members to go and we hope this year to give them to two MCMGs interested in starting Junior Master Gardener programs.

We have had a fabulous year and have seen great growth in our program. Thank you all for the wonderful work you do.

We'll see you all on January 7th for our next meeting and our speaker will be Jason Reeves.

Mary Nenarella
President
Madison County Master Gardeners

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MIG CORNER

My Christmas Wish for you
That your heart be light as snowflakes
that your troubles melt away like snow
and a drift of blessings surround you.

Talk of the Town

Celeste Luckey Scott December 2015



Things are beginning to slow down here at your county Extension Office. As the temperatures drop and the Holidays approach, you can imagine there is not much interest from the general public in horticulture issues! However, planning for the upcoming year and reporting on this year's outcomes are enough to keep this warm body busy!

This is a final reminder to please enter ALL of your volunteer and education hours for 2015. These numbers are so very important when attempting to show just how much impact TN Extension Master Gardeners have on their local communities. These numbers help solidify the relevance and importance of our program which then translates into monetary support throughout the state. In addition to these excellent *persuasive* points, reporting is also beneficial on the local level allowing us to accurately represent how much time is donated by MCMGs to the Madison County Extension Office and the West TN Research & Education Center. In order to correctly report these hours, please read through the dropdown box of Official Projects before entering your own description. For example, ALL work done at the Research Center should be reported as "WTREC work for Jason." The same principal applies to other projects as well. If you taught a class at a garden club, enter your hours under "Presentation of a horticulture program to a group." If you helped in any way at Summer Celebration, enter your hours under "Summer Celebration Plant Sale." ect.....

Even if you have achieved Lifetime status and no longer have to report hours, I ask that you enter them anyway. Most of our Lifetime members are still very active, and your numbers are extremely important to us!

I have asked that everyone report their hours by Dec. 1st. If you have not done so, please enter them ASAP! Once the system shuts down, you will not be able to go back in and post dates from the past as you can now. If your hour requirements are not satisfied, it will delete you from the roll along with all of your past service records. So please, please get those hours in! If you know that you will not be able to meet your requirements for 2015 due to personal/family/medical reasons, please contact me and we can set you up for 1 year of "Inactive Status." This allows you to remain a MCMG but waives the service hours for 1 year. If you already know that you will not be able to satisfy your hours for 2016 for like reasons, let me know and we can go ahead and get you on Inactive Status for the upcoming year. Keep in mind that a member cannot be granted Inactive Status for 2 consecutive years. This is also a great time to go onto your profile and make any necessary updates. The information listed on your Master Gardener profile is the contact information that will be used in the 2016 Directory. I know this is a lot of information! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at the office 731-668-8543. I can assist you with entries and last minute volunteer service opportunities.

Winterizing: We are in better shape around the yard this year than ever before. JEA soil is in the appropriate bin waiting for planting season. 100 bags of mulch, 4 bales of straw and 4 bales of pine straw are waiting for the right time to be spread. One fenced bed contains numerous bags of leaves collected and shredded by the lawnmower. Still, there are many loads of leaves to collect, hoses to collect and roll, an irrigation system and outdoor faucets to protect, strawberries to transplant and overgrown shrubs to remove in preparation for spring planting. And we are about to be gone for the rest of the month. It is November 15 and we have not had a frost at our house yet! The warm lake behind the house has done its job.

2016 Plant Sale: Carol and I have 24 hypertufa, nearly 20 draped hypertufa, and about 200 plants potted or rooted thanks to the Bobbitt's, Havranek's and Tommy Crews. This should give us a good start on spring. Lenton roses will be ready to dig when they begin growth in January or February depending on the winter. I may take a few last cuttings before we leave on our next trip at the end of this week.

Elections: We will have just about the same officers next year as this year. That's ok, this was a good year and so should the next year be.

Monthly meetings: Jason's January meeting on his travels should be very interesting. He has been in some of the best gardens in the world in the last year. The February banquet is always a highlight of the year as is Rita and her March meeting.

November meeting: Thank you Bob Hayes for your explanation of all that goes on at the Station. I cannot imagine how you keep up with it all.

Do Now: Most of the leaves are finally down. Now is the time to collect them with a lawnmower which will

chop them up into a mulch less likely to blow away. When should I use all that mulch which I have collected? Cannas, crinum, dahlias, tall gingers, mums, pineapple lilies, pineapple and Mexican salvias and any questionably hardy plants should be mulched immediately if they are not already mulched. Also do final winterization on home irrigation systems and faucets immediately to prevent their freezing. Mulch 'straw berries' after it freezes hard and they are fully dormant. I like to use pine straw. Mulch flower beds anytime to control winter weeds and prevent the soil from freezing. It is probably best to wait and mulch vegetable gardens after the soil is worked in the spring as a light colored mulch will reflect sunlight delaying the warming of the soil and early planting.

Microclimates: Every yard has places which are sheltered from the worst of the wind and cold and in which plants which are not expected to survive winter may survive. Mulch may make survival of plants in these microclimates still more likely. Consider, for example, sheltered sites near buildings and south or east slopes under trees or near buildings. My mulched pineapple lilies survived in the ground last winter and multiplied amazingly. Behind our deck we have a 3 year-old *clematis armandii* which is frequently not listed as hardy for us. We also have a plant of pineapple sage, *salvia elegans*, which is more than 5 years old just south of the dining room even though it is listed as hardy only in zones 8-10. We also stretch our zone by overwintering potted hardy palms, gingers, cycads etc. in the garage. Carol would like to see her car in the garage during the winter while I am quite certain that the car is hardier than the plants!

And so it goes...



Gardening and Arthritis



Do these two things really go together? Not easily. I never dreamed that anyone as "young" as I am (61) could be plagued with this curse of old age. Many of my mother's relatives have been quite crippled and handicapped by this disease. Thanks gene pool! For those of you who are not blessed with this condition, or do not share a "healthy dose" of it, THANK YOUR LUCKY STARS AND GARTERS!

In the words of Churchill, "Never, never, never give up". I refuse to succumb to the urge to lie about, but I must admit it is certainly tempting. I am learning to curb my enthusiasm for the Herculean tasks, such as moving 1000 bricks and building a patio. I do have a few tips that have proven helpful to me.

1. A good quality "grabber" tool is great for picking up sticks and trash without bending over. A good one at Lowes is \$20-25. Another tool is a short handle hoe. It is great for sitting and digging up clumps and hard to budge items. I've found that a knife is easier to use as a seedling remover than pulling.
2. Schedule shorter work segments instead of all day tasks
3. Use landscape cloth if you have very stubborn weeds. Cover them.
4. No more thug perennials
5. More shrubs.
6. Exercise, weight lifting and yoga
7. Finally, a long soak in a hot tub with a cup of Epsom salt does a world of good!



Melissa Moore

This poem reminds me that time marches on and we must learn to follow step.



As I Grow Old

God keep my heart attuned to laughter
When youth is done.
When all the days are gray days, coming after
The warmth, the sun.
God keep me then from grieving, from bitterness
When life seems cold.
God keep me always loving and believing
As I grow old.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH POISON IVY – Kathy House

In my lifetime of 60+ years I may have had just a few small, very brief breakouts of poison ivy. During my many years as a Girl Scout and Girl Scout leader I felt very well trained in spotting, avoiding and taking measures to avoid a breakout after time in the out of doors. I have managed to keep young Brownie scouts free from poison ivy during several years as a leader in the woods in Pinson, TN.

I am just now (November 6) free of a terrible breakout on my legs after working in my yard the first week in September. No, before weeding, I do not recall seeing any of the triple leaved, red stemmed vegetation after thinking I had been vigilant about checking my beds. Yes, after weeding upon coming inside I carefully scrubbed myself and washed my gardening clothes.

What I want to share with Master Gardeners is a fairly new product called Zanfel that without having I would not have been able to endure the first few days of my break out. My itching was just about unbearable and this product is made to ease the itching. It does not make the rash go away. Zanfel is a wash for Urushiol-induced contact dermatitis.



Urushiol is the toxin that triggers the body's allergic response, causing the itching and rash associated with plants like poison ivy that break us out. If you follow the ritual like procedure outlined in the instructions IT REALLY WORKS. The only drawback is the cost of this fairly small tube is fairly high (\$40. +). After I realized I had spent over \$200. dollars on this stuff, I decided that the itching had gotten to the place that cortisone would keep me comfortable. Zanfel is found in the drug store near the Cortisone.

The main lesson I have learned from my poison ivy experience is even if it is a hot day – COVER UP! I am wearing long pants and long sleeved shirt every time I am weeding from now on.



and

suddenly

there was with

an angel

a multitude of

the heavenly host

praising God

and saying

Glory to God

in the highest, and on earth

peace, goodwill toward

men

Luke 2

13-14

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

January Meeting

January 7th 6:30pm

Jason Reeves Speaking

West Tennessee AgResearch & Education Center Auditorium

Please bring a dish to share.



**Check Out
UT Gardens Jackson
On Facebook!**

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

The Bridge to Knowledge

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