From The President

It’s the most wonderful time of the year! At least that is my opinion. Springtime in West Tennessee is magical. Daffodils, azaleas, phlox, dianthus and peonies burst forth in a riot of color. The beauty of seemingly endless shades of green as trees awaken from their winter slumber is a certainty. Ferns and hostas unfurling from the earth is an amazing sight. The air grows warmer and the days are longer. Best of all we can begin the annual transformation of our own gardens.

Please plan to help in every way possible with the Plant Sale on May 6. If you have not signed up yet, I’m sure Judy Rice can find a place for you. If not Jason will need help, so watch your email as time draws nearer. Jason will be speaking about the plants that he will have in the sale at the meeting on May 4 which is at First United Methodist Church.

The diehards just returned from Memphis Botanical Gardens annual plant sale. We shopped, heard a lecture on herbs and had a quick tour; all in the rain. Thankfully we were able to have lunch inside. The highlight for me was the world class Children’s Garden. Our next bus tour will be with Jason to Huntsville on May 25-27. Jason will email details and sign up will be at the May meeting. There are several private gardens on this trip that are not open to the public so I encourage you to participate. His trips are always fun and educational.

Happy Planting,
Elizabeth Edwards,
MCMG President
Robertson County Master Gardeners

PLANT SALE: Sat. MAY 13TH
8am – 2pm
Springfield Extension Office 408 Main Street
Call 615-384-7936 if there are questions.

May Gardening Tips from the UT Gardens [https://ag.tennessee.edu/utg]

- Plant butterfly weed (Asclepias), parsley, dill, rue and pipevine to encourage butterflies in your garden. The foliage of these plants provides food for the caterpillars. Aristolochia fimbriata is a lovely ground-cover-type of pipevine that is covered each year by the pipevine swallowtail caterpillar at the UT Gardens, Jackson. It may be a little hard to find for sale, but worth seeking out.

- Caladiums and vinca need warm soil. Caladium tubers will rot in cool soil, and vinca will be disease-prone, or exhibit stunted growth. Night temperatures should regularly be above 60 degrees F before planting.

- Remove the flowering stalks on yucca as they begin to form if you dislike the look of the bloom. Cut them off down in the foliage at the source, and you won’t even know they were there.

- Cut back any woody perennials that need it, such as rosemary, rue, lavender, Santolina and Artemisia. If done before the danger of frost has passed, new growth may appear, and a freeze can kill that new growth and sometimes the entire plant.

- Prune spring-flowering shrubs (azaleas, flowering quince, Forsythia and Loropetalum) soon after they finish flowering, but only if they need it. To keep them from looking like a meatball, follow the taller branches down into the shrub and cut just above a joint.

*Of course, the list of May Garden Chores could be much much longer, but maybe these will set you on the right course of action!

Saturday May 6 2017.
Tipton County Master Gardeners will participate in the annual May Festival at the Tipton County Veterans Museum and Nature Center, Bert Johnston Ave, Covington. 9am-4pm.

More than 50 vendors and educational information will be available. FREE 901-476-0231

Two of our members Camille and Carl Mussenden of Milan, TN have lost Camille’s mother Mrs. Maurine Shoaf this past week. Ceremonies were held this past weekend. I am sure they would appreciate cards and thoughts.

Camille & Carl Mussenden
3062 Park Ave. Milan. TN 38358
The Plant Sale will be here before we know it.

Here are a few last minute tips on preparing your plant donations:
- Drop Off times Wednesday May 3rd and Thursday May 4th
- Please have plants groomed presentable and ready for sale when you drop off. (no weeds/leaves in pots ect.)
- Make sure they are watered deeply before you drop them off.
- Printing your labels: We have a library of plant labels on the MCMG homepage madisoncountymg.org. On the right hand side of the page you will see a green button titled “Plant List & Labels.” Celeste has labels available for everyone’s use at the Extension Office. If your plant is not listed, please research the information and create a new label from the green button titled “Blank Label Template.”
- If you are unable to print labels/research, please contact Marky Kay Havranek at mkretired08@gmail.com so that our team can print them out for you. We will need to know the plant name and how many of each plant.
- We will also have a label printing/reference station set up at check in for last minute additions, but would prefer that the bulk of plants be pre-labeled.
- If you have any questions/issues with labels, please contact Mary Kay. You can also reach Celeste at 731-668-8543 or cscott52@utk.edu we will do our best to help!
- We have a collection of pictures that are displayed for common plants that may not be in bloom during the sale, for customers who are not familiar with the plants. If you have a unique plant or something different from the norm, bring a picture. We can also print one out for you, if you let us know ahead of time!

Notes for Workers:- We are still in need of workers Transporters- 4 folks 6:30-9:30 and 3 folks from 9:30-Noon o Parking- 1-2 people 6:30-10:30

All workers please wear your name badge while working Please consider participating in next year’s Plant Sale Planning Committee. Several of the leaders are stepping down, and we need fresh talent to fill those spots. If you are interested, we can pair you up with someone to shadow during the preparation days so that you get an idea of how things happen!

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**Talk of the Town**

Celeste Luckey Scott May 2017

Project Updates

**Project Accomplishments**
The installation of the **Historic Demonstration Garden at Parker Crossroads Battlefield** was a great success. On April 1st, work began on this project and will continue through the summer. The garden is in need of a few items. If you have any of these in your garden and would like to donate them, it would be much appreciated: Lambs ear, iron weed, soapwort, iris. These gardens are meant to demonstrate how plants were not only used for beauty and food, but practical everyday purposes. The work day at **Liberty Park Garden** was well attended and we appreciate all of the members who were present to freshen up the landscaping of this valued park/arboretum/garden. A Special thanks to Brad Moore who volunteered to construct the brick edging around the soon to come Xeriscape Garden! On the same day as Liberty Park, we also had the **Downtown Planter Project**. I spoke with Jodi Jacobs of Keep Jackson Beautiful and she was very pleased with the number of folks who turned out to help. Many of the volunteers were first time helpers with this project and we hope that you enjoyed yourself.
I walked downtown after the project day, and the planters do look very pretty. **Extension Bed Clean-up day** was much needed and looks wonderful after our volunteers spent several hours cleaning, weeding, and mulching. Thank you so much and keep your ears open for other opportunities at the Extension Office throughout the spring/summer. The **Earth Day Festival in Downtown Jackson** was still held despite rainy weather. Thanks to the volunteers who manned the both throughout the day and to Christine Warrington for planning and preparing for the day’s events. A hands on plant-a-seed area was held for the children and an Information Station was set-up for adults visiting the booth. They handed out FREE UT gardening publications, Extension Class flyers, Master Gardener brochures, and recruited for the fall training class. In short, it was a great opportunity for community interaction and awareness!

**Leaders Needed-Potential Project**

**Hands-up Pre-School**- Ongoing beautification project. We could grow this program to include fun hands on activities for the kids using Ag in the Classroom or Jr. Master Gardener material!

**Farmers Market Info. Booth**- Potential new project. We could set up an information/question/answer booth periodically through the growing season at the West TN Farmers Market. It may be used to help promote the Seed Library as well as other educational horticulture events in our community.

*If you are interested in leading any of these projects or have ideas for NEW projects please contact Glenn Fesmire at glennfes@aol.com

**Opportunities for Service**

**Xeriscape Bed at Liberty Park**
Jack Baudo is the lead for this project. Plans are underway for the construction of a no irrigation planting around the flagpole at Liberty Park. The brick edging has been constructed and we are on our way to preparation and installation. We hope to turn this into a 2 day workshop that is open to the public educating all on this landscaping technique.

**Committee to Amend By-Laws**
Elizabeth Edwards is heading this committee. If you are interested in helping to bring our guidelines up to date, please contact her at 731-664-08910 or elizbiz@live.com

**Revitalizing the Seed Library-Ongoing**
Melissa Moore is leading this project for this year. After a year of inactivity, the Library has taken down the seed library. We hope to get in refilled and set back up for Spring 2017! Long term goals are to incorporate gardening classes and maybe even some kids activities. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Melissa at 731-668-8222 or hmoore731@gmail.com

*If you are not able to work on ‘Official Projects’ but have something in mind that you would like to do to earn hours, just give me a shout and we can make sure that it is appropriate. Any horticulture related work for Non-profit organizations qualifies (ex: Community Centers, Churches, Public Buildings, Parks).

**Memphis Botanic Garden Trip**
Saturday April 22nd
Even though the weather didn’t cooperate with us, we still had a great time! There was a light drizzle all day with periods of harder rain, but we didn’t let it get our spirits down. Many fun plant finds were bought and returned with us to west TN. Herb seminars ran throughout the morning in the plant sale area and many MCMG’s took advantage of this time to duck out of the rain. The lunch was yummy and allowed us to dry out a bit before the abbreviated afternoon grounds tour of the Botanic Garden. We quickly visited the Japanese Garden, Herb Garden, Kids Garden and several others along the way. This was just enough of an introduction to entice our members who have never visited to schedule their own return trip. The rain just wouldn’t let up and we returned early, but fun was still had!
School curriculum: The horticulture program at South Side seems to be another example of the wonderful work being done by our schools not only in teaching but in motivating students. Yet many if not the majority of our students graduate from school not ready to attend college. How can we show students the necessity of school in nonvocational areas and motivate them to learn? We have got to solve that problem.

Last meeting: The attendance for Larry Tucker’s meeting on hostas was very high and he came away wondering why the vitality of our group is so much higher than that of the hosta society. Yes, we have good people but that may not be the whole story. Perhaps the service element we emphasize contributes to the vitality of our group. We are certainly focused on good works and accomplishing them too.

Plant Sale: Once again the plant sale is upon us. Some of us will soon have several hundred fewer plants to care for and will be able to turn our attention to our own plantings. That day can’t come too soon. Carol and I are tired of caring for these plants and not looking forward to properly labeling them. We seem to work harder every year but get less done. Surely age is not a part of it! Nevertheless, I see fewer plants to giveaway each year in our future and more time spent on our home gardens.

Do now: Cool season vegetable harvests should be well underway now. Some cool season vegetables such as English peas will cease growth and die shortly due to high temperatures and spinach and leaf lettuce is already bolting and turning bitter in the long days of late spring. Plant any remaining warm season vegetables and turn your attention to irrigation and pest control. The time for both is upon us. The very best care one can give plants begins with frequent observation to detect problems before they become severe. Walk through your gardens and look at your plantings frequently. I found asparagus beetles in my garden last week! Our asparagus is being removed as I will not spray anything weekly for several months. This is especially true when the product is available year around in stores. Do you remember when we ate what was in season except for bananas, apples and oranges which stored for several months or arrived from far places by boat?

Draped Hypertufa: We cancelled the draped hypertufa workshop due to spring rains. Draped hypertufa must dry 2-3 days without rain. We will try again this summer after the plant sale is over. Remembering the formula or much of anything these days is a second problem calling for ever increasing organization on our part.

Irrigation: Once again my attention turns to automated irrigation. The big problem has been getting electricity to my storage building to run a control box. The building is 150 feet from the house which presents voltage drop problems. I finally have admitted to needing help and have a very expensive electrician working to solve this problem. Seventy-four or not I will not quit on the yard and/or life in general and will continue to add to the automated irrigation system.
I am serving my second 2 year term as a board member. My association with the Madison County Master Gardener group goes back to day one as I am the founding Extension Agent of the program locally. Upon my retirement I was offered full membership and gladly accepted the promotion from Agent Advisor to member at large. My retirement came after 31 years with University of Tennessee Extension. My wife is Sue Wyatt who is a member of our most recent class of MG graduates. Sue and I have been married for 38 years and have two daughters and three grandchildren. Both of our daughters are UT Extension Agents serving as Family and Consumer Science Agents in Crockett and Hardeman counties.

I have a BS in Agricultural Science from UT Martin and a MS in Agriculture from UT Knoxville with an emphasis on crop pest management. While working I served as President of the City of Jackson Tree Board and later as President of the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council. I was also honored to serve as President of the Tennessee Association of Agricultural Agents and Specialists and a three year term as a member of The UT Martin Alumni Council.

Sue and I enjoy gardening together, occasional travel and being grandparents. I also enjoy other outdoor activities including hunting, fishing and working on our small farm in Carroll County.
Spring Vegetable Egg Casserole  
12 servings

This Spring Vegetable Egg Casserole is the perfect way to highlight all of your favorite seasonal veggies. And when paired with zesty feta cheese, and baked up into an easy casserole, it’s the perfect make-ahead dish to serve a crowd.

Prep Time: 10 mins  Cook Time: 45 mins  Total Time: 55 mins

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small white onion, peeled and diced
- 1 large carrot (or 1 cup of baby carrots), peeled and diced
- 1 pound asparagus, cut on the diagonal into bite-sized pieces
- 4 ounces sugar snap peas, halved
- 3-4 cups chopped broccoli florets (about 1 medium head of broccoli)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 ounces baby bella mushrooms, sliced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 4 ounces crumbled feta cheese
- 12 large eggs, whisked
- 1/2 cup milk
- salt and pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 x 13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large saute pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and saute for 4-5 minutes, or until it is soft and translucent.
3. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil, carrot, asparagus, snap peas, broccoli and garlic, and stir to combine. Continue cooking for about 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the veggies have softened and cooked through. Add the mushrooms and cherry tomatoes, and stir for another 3-4 minutes.
4. Transfer about half of the veggie mixture to the prepared baking dish, and spread the veggies out in an even layer. Sprinkle evenly with half of the feta cheese. Repeat by adding the remaining veggies on top in an even layer, followed by the rest of the cheese.
5. In a separate mixing bowl, whisk the eggs and milk and a generous pinch of salt and pepper together until combined. Then evenly pour the egg mixture over the veggies.
6. Bake for 30-40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of the casserole comes out clean. Serve immediately.

*If you would like to make this casserole in advance, just cover and refrigerate the casserole for up to 1 day before baking. Then remove the cover, let the casserole rest out at room temperature while the oven is heating up, then bake as directed.
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.


Please send your contributions to:
Liz Whitsitt      lizv@tds.net
Pam Stanfield    pamstanfield@gmail.com

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!

May Meeting

Thursday, May 4
6:30pm
First United Methodist Church
200 S. Church St. Jackson TN
Jason will be speaking about the plant sale

Bring a dish to share.

Board of Directors

President- Elizabeth Edwards
1st Vice President/Programs- Christine Warrington
2nd Vice President/Projects- Glenn Fesmire
Secretary- Mary Kay Havranek
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Master Gardener financial standing information is available upon request.

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