



Garden Talk

MGOFDC OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

STATE FAIR PAGE 4





Chicken Scratch

A Note From Our President, Alisa Huntsman

Can anybody tell me where the time has gone? It is truly hard for me to believe that it is fall already! Honestly, it wasn't the best summer for gardening; the heat and the humidity were awful. Despite the fact that we were well over a foot ahead in rainfall, we experienced mini droughts all through the summer. It was pretty common to go 10 days to 2 weeks with absolutely no rain, high temperatures of 90 or more and lots of humidity. It was an open invitation to any disease or blight that affects tomatoes and peppers and trust me, they all came to the party in my garden. For the first time in years, I pulled my

tomato and pepper plants in mid September rather than waiting for the first frost.

While I am not a big fan of the shorter days and the colder weather, I do enjoy gardening in the fall. The lower temperatures make growing greens and cole crops possible and I am waiting patiently for my plants to mature. We always hoop the beds as the temperatures drop and try to extend the season as long as we can. Most of the time, it works but when the deep freezes arrive, only the hardiest of plants survive. But it means having fresh picked vegetables nearly all winter when it does work!

Earlier this year, we gathered a small group of volunteers to save milkweed plants in a waystation built by Kindergarten teacher Becky Collins who teaches at the lower school of Lipscomb Academy. The plants have been in the greenhouse and they have recovered completely and will soon be ready for planting. It is our plan to build a new waystation out near the Demonstration Garden and then someday, return healthy plants to Becky so that she can build a new garden on the campus. Stay tuned, details to come!

Happy Gardening!

Master Gardeners of Davidson County

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Upcoming Events

October Member Meeting

Thursday, October 10th, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM.

"I was born in Barren County, Ky. My family on both sides had rural, farming backgrounds (my DAR ancestor was given a land grant and most of his descendants stayed in the area).

Growing and tending comes natural. I have lived in my house for 44 years and have seriously worked my garden, 'Coillte Beag' (Irish for Little Woods) for 23 years. It is primarily a shade/woodland garden.

I graduated from the Vanderbilt School of Nursing in 1965 and cared for Laboring Women and Families for 41 years before retiring.

The Perennial Plant Society of Middle Tennessee Master Gardeners of Davidson County Middle Tennessee Hosta Society (Master Judge for the American Hosta Society) have provided opportunities for creating longtime friendships. Sharing knowledge and sharing plants with others as passionate about gardening as yourself puts me in a 'Happy Place'."



Georgeann's program for the October 10th meeting will be about drying garden flowers in silica. Slide program of photos of this project will be running while tips and shared visuals presented. Other ways of drying will be mentioned. She would welcome any members to bring their dried plant material to share in the "Show and Tell".

October City Cemetery Living History Tours

Saturday, October 12th, 2 - 4 PM and 6 - 8 PM. Master Gardeners will lead our visitors from one storyteller to the next. Tours this year will from 2-4 in the afternoon and the night tour—brought back by popular demand—running from 6-8 pm. If you are interested in being a tour guide, contact Bob Mather.



On the Cover

Photo of the TN State Fair.

2019 TN State Fair

By Robert Mather, Education Chairperson (2000)

It's hard to believe, 2019 is almost over. We have now completed the last of our yearly Master Gardener projects, the Tennessee State Fair. This was one of the first projects of the newly formed Master Gardeners of Davidson County in 1987! Being from the class of 2000, I remember my first State Fair as a Master Gardener. I met so many great fellow Master Gardeners. In 2004, I co-chaired the State Fair,. Our theme that year was, "Gardening is out of this World". The co-chairs from the previous year were a tremendous help, which is so important in any of our projects. Listen to those who came before!

The audience for the State Fair is nothing like the Lawn and Garden or Urban Garden Festival as most know very little about gardening. Which is not to say they are not interested, they just need a little education on gardening and how we grow our food.

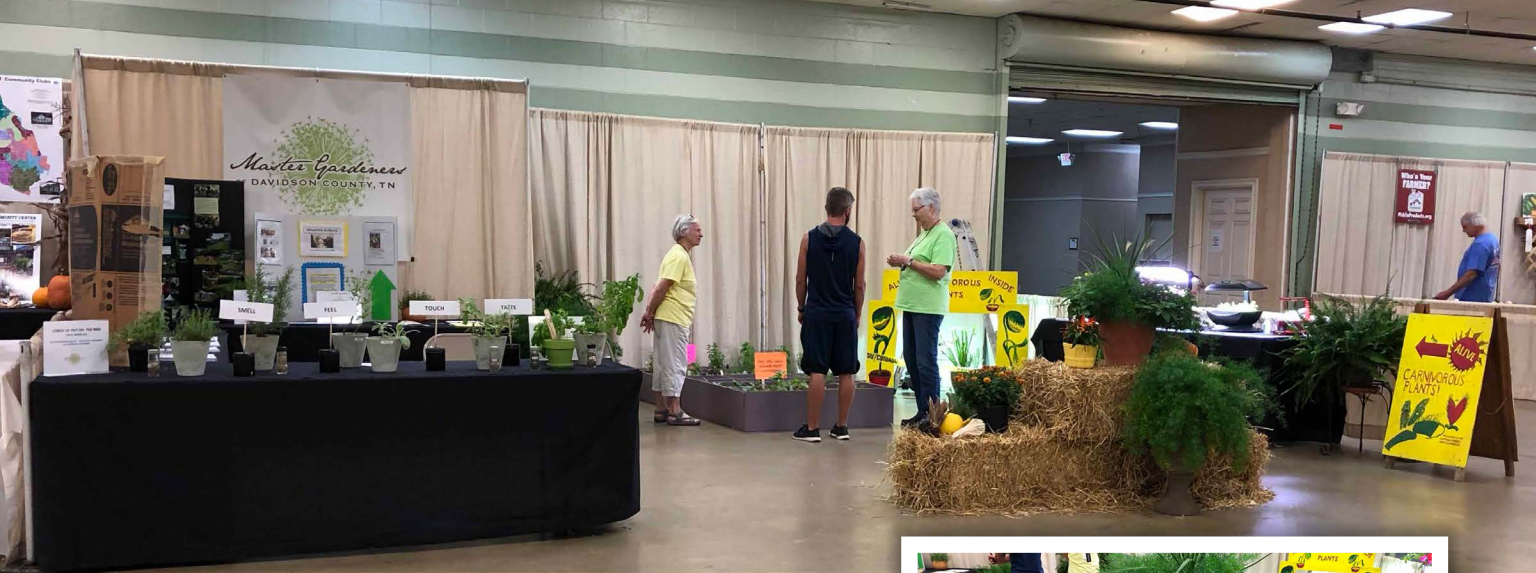
We chose " Square Foot Gardening" and Fall vegetable gardening as our topic. On Tuesday, school children were invited to the fair during the day. They knew something about gardening, including hydroponic gardening, and were eager to learn as much as they could. It was a fun day. Thank you Catherine Atwell, Barbara Allen and Mary Dickerson.

I hope you took the opportunity to work at our booth at least one shift. This is a great way for members to get to know other fellow Master Gardeners, learn from each other and earn hours! Thanks to all who took advantage of these opportunities. And also thanks to Robert Bryan and those who helped take down our booth and store our props.

Now, with fall almost here, it's time to begin thinking about "Lawn and Garden" in early 2020. Put on your thinking caps, get on the planning team and help continue the Master Gardner presence at Lawn and Garden!

Robert Mather, Education Chairperson(2000)
Master Gardeners of Davidson County





My Favorite Gardening Tool

By Karen Brown

This month's "My Favorite Garden Tool" comes from our Education Chair, Bob Mather (2000).

Meet the Wolf Garden Soil Crumbler. A powerful dual action garden tool, easy push-pull action. The pendulum blade keeps tool at a constant depth. The multi-star snap-lock handle connection makes easy to change attachments for additional garden tasks. It makes it easy to keep your weeds at bay, after you get your soil ready in the spring. Cut them off....till them under. I use it at the City Cemetery all the time!



If you have a favorite gardening tool that you'd like to share with our members, please send a picture, the name of the tool and why it's your favorite (send to karenbrown21@me.com) and I'll format it for our next newsletter.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

November Nominations

Time to get ready for 2020

Executive Board position descriptions are found below. Think you know someone who would be good in that position? Email it to President@mgofdc.org

President: The president shall preside over association membership meetings, advise officers of executive board meeting dates and locations and shall preside over those meetings and shall appoint the chairman and members of all standing committees.

First Vice President: The first vice president shall perform the duties of the president in his or her absence and plan programs for the association monthly membership meetings.

Second Vice President: The second vice president shall perform the duties of the president and first vice president if their absences occur at the same time, is responsible for the supervision of projects and coordinate orientation of the new class interns to all the projects and events.

Recording Secretary: The recording secretary shall be responsible for recording and keeping the minutes of the association membership meeting and making those minutes available to the membership and shall be responsible for keeping minutes of the executive board meetings.

Corresponding Secretary: The corresponding secretary shall be responsible for handling the correspondence of the association and will help write, edit and send out a newsletter on a periodical basis as may be determined by the officers of the association. He or she shall handle media matters.

Treasurer: The treasurer shall be responsible for the collection, receiving, holding, managing, investing and expending of monies of the association and pay all legitimate obligations of the association in a timely manner.

Education Chairperson: The education chairperson shall be responsible for supporting coordination of continuing education activities and community education outreach.

Events Chairperson: The events chairperson shall be responsible for supporting events and the organization of all annual and special events.

Membership Chairperson: The membership chairperson shall serve as chairperson of the membership committee and shall be responsible for assisting in the coordination of member services.

Besides the Board of Directors, we also have several appointed positions as follows:

Hospitality Team; Merchandise Sales ; Mentoring Team Leader

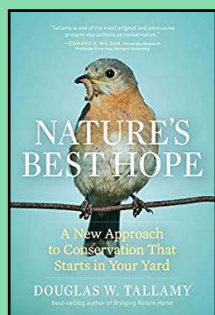
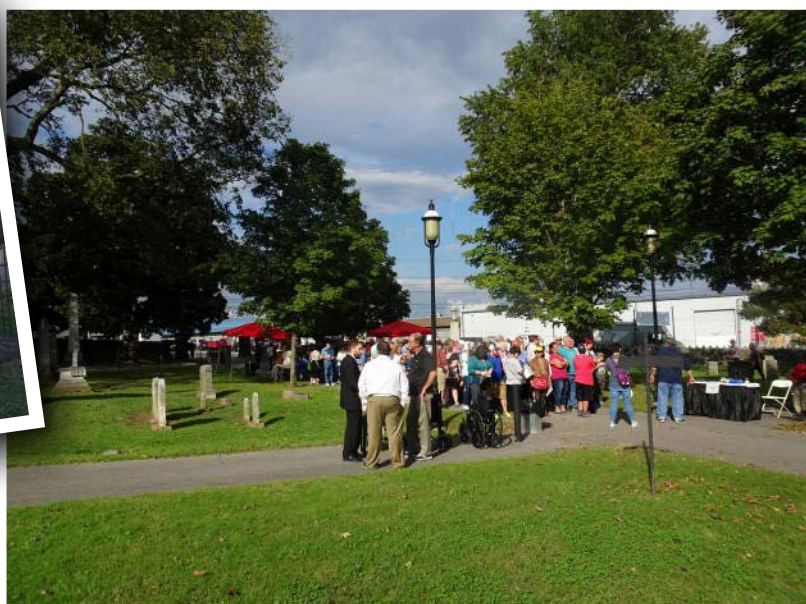
City Cemetery

By Robert Mather (2000), Education Chairperson and Secretary,
Nashville City Cemetery Association

In 1998, Master Gardeners, at the request of then Nashville Historical Commission employee Tim Walker, started to take care of the four gardens in front of the Keeble building at the historical Nashville City Cemetery. We have been there ever since.

Our first Living History Tour at the cemetery was 1999 and Master Gardeners served as tour guides. We are now on our 20th Living History Tour on Saturday October 12th. Several Master Gardeners will lead our visitors from one storyteller to the next. Tours this year will from 2–4 in the afternoon and the night tour—brought back by popular demand—running from 6–8 pm. If you are interested in being a tour guide, just let me know right away!

With the hot days and very little rain this year, we have not been able to work like we wanted in the flower beds. We are now planning to revamp our beds next year, planting more native plants, but still keeping with flowers that would have been in Nashville gardens between 1850 and 1875.



New Book by Doug Tallamy Coming in February 2020

"Doug Tallamy is a quiet revolutionary and a hero of our time, taking back the future one yard at a time. In *Nature's Best Hope*, he shows how each of us can help turn our cities, towns and world into engines of biodiversity and human health."

— Richard Louv, author of *The Nature Principle* and *Last Child in the Woods*

Harding Garden at Belle Meade

As the summer winds down, the Weedin' Women of Belle Meade are slowly ending another growing season. We've pulled up mildew cukes and squash, cut down deer-eaten cornstalks, and harvested mini-pumpkins in a rainbow of fall colors. In their places, we've planted cool-weather crops like kale, collards, mustard greens, and radishes.

In the flower garden, a slight cooling in temperatures allowed us to move some daylilies, verbena, and yarrow to edges where they won't be shaded out by taller plants. Speaking of taller plants, we've dug out and moved the towering 'Limelight' Artemisia and reduced the size of native azaleas, rudebeckia, and perennial sage. Even great plants can sometimes be too much of a good thing!

Since we sadly won't have our home-schooled kids at the garden this year, we plan to stop gardening in mid-Oct. But there will still be lots to see until the first frost. See you til then.



Project Gardens

As part of the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Program, we design demonstration gardens to educate citizens on sustainable lawn, garden and landscape practices. Our project gardens are our place to show off our skills and the techniques we've learned from the extension office and CEU - and is a great way to earn volunteer hours. Our Master Gardener division operates **five** educational garden sites through collaborative partnerships around Nashville: Demonstration Garden at Ellington Agricultural Center, Harding Garden at Belle Meade, Hermitage Kitchen Garden, Grassmere Gardens at the zoo and the City Cemetery.

Historic Grassmere Gardens

by Kay Gragg

In cooperation with the Nashville Zoo at Grassmere, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County maintain the gardens behind the historic Croft House using gardening practices and cultivars that would have been grown there one hundred years ago. Because of the garden's historic nature, only heirloom vegetables are grown in the vegetable terrace.

So just what is an heirloom vegetable? Most experts agree that heirloom varieties meet the following criteria:

1. **Age.** In general, vegetables introduced before 1951, when plant scientists created the first hybrids, are considered heirlooms. Many are hundreds of years older, including Native American crops that predate Columbus, European varieties brought over by pioneer farmers, and others which trace their ancestry to Africa and Asia.
2. **Open-pollinated.** Seeds have been saved from mature plants and handed down from one generation of gardeners to another, ensuring that new plants grown from seed will look just like the parents. This is not necessarily true of hybrids.
3. **Quality.** Because the new plants are genetically identical to the parents, the flavor and quality are consistent.

Just one example of the diversity of heirlooms is the ever-popular pole bean. Here are some varieties which have been grown at Grassmere.

- **Kentucky Wonder.** First introduced in 1864, originally under the name "Old Homestead," it was renamed in 1877. By 1907, the USDA described it as the most widely-grown pole bean in the United States.
- **Cherokee Trail of Tears.** The beans were brought from Tennessee by the Cherokee people as they were marched to Oklahoma by the U.S. government in 1839 over the infamous Trail of Tears.
- **Scarlet Runner.** Also grown by the Native Americans, the vines of this bean grow over ten feet tall and sport clusters of vibrant scarlet flowers.
- **Blue Hyacinth.** A very ornamental variety, originally from Asia, with lilac-colored blossoms and purple stems. Thomas Jefferson planted these beans at Monticello.

A good source of seeds for heirloom varieties is Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds, the company which supplies those planted at Grassmere.



Lessons from the Garden

By Jill DeBona , Society of Ceres

As I write this article on the last day of July, with summer heat and humidity blanketing my vegetable and rose gardens, I wonder how I can keep fungal disease at bay. Blackspot seems to laugh as I pick mottled leaves from my beloved roses. It knows that it will win the battle despite my efforts to prevent its advance. Our humidity and rainfall give it the advantage. Blackspot robs the roses of their foliage, leaving them naked and vulnerable. As a besotted rose gardener, I worry about their ability to bloom with so few leaves. “How can my rose bushes reach their full potential with Blackspot ravaging them?” To my surprise, the defoliated roses are still blooming. The canes are thorny and bare. Atop these rather grotesque canes, sit the roses, enchantingly beautiful and intensely perfumed. They are like naked goddesses, flaunting their blooms, unaware of their exposed legs and the disease that threatens them from below. I wonder, “how can they bloom so resplendently with so few leaves?”

Like the roses, my tomato plants are afflicted with fungal disease. Early Blight and Septoria Leaf Spot invade their leaves. Yet, they seem unconcerned. Frayed, yellowed leaves and weakened vines continue to climb, blossom and set fruit. Again, I wonder, “how can this be?” “How can they remain productive in the face of so much disease?”

I suppose that the answers lie within the secret of Mother Nature. Mother Nature is the teacher and the garden is one of the vehicles by which she imparts her wisdom. In my garden, she seems to choose roses and tomatoes to teach about resiliency, the ability to persevere in the face of challenges. The roses teach that beauty can transcend affliction. Beauty can surprise us and appear where we least expect it. Through the tomatoes, she teaches that vitality and new growth are possible even in the face of infirmity. A fighting spirit may be required, but productivity can remain. Finally, I think that Mother Nature urges us to be still and to listen for she has much to teach us...

As Gertrude Jekyll once said, “A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust.”

A single bloom above defoliated canes.



Southwest Orzo and Black Bean Salad

Ingredients

Salad:

1 cup dried Orzo pasta
1 can 15 oz black beans rinsed and drained
1 1/2 cups corn fresh cut, frozen or drained canned
2 firm ripe tomatoes chopped
1/3 cup chopped cilantro
1/2 cup thin sliced green onion
1 teaspoon grated lime peel
1/4 cup lime juice
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
Salt and pepper about 1/2 teaspoon each

Avocado topping:

1 ripe avocado
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/4 cup non fat low fat or regular sour cream
Salt and pepper
tortilla chips
chopped lettuce

Instructions:

Boil 2 quarts water. Add pasta, cook until barely tender 9-11 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water. In large mixing bowl, mix pasta, beans, corn, tomato, cilantro, onions, lime and lime juice. Toss to combine. Add seasonings, including salt and pepper to taste.

In small bowl, mash avocado with 1 tablespoon lemon juice and sour cream. Salt and pepper.

If serving as an appetizer, pour into serving bowl or platter, top with avocado mixture. Serve with tortilla chips. As a salad, shred romaine lettuce onto platter, top with salad and avocado.

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