

# GardenTalk

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County and UT Extension

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# Mather's Musings

## News, wit and wisdom from Master Gardener Bob Mather, Class of 2000.

May was a very busy month, not only in our gardens, but as Master Gardeners as well! It was another fun time at "Meet Me at the Market" on the second Wednesday of the month. We presented our program on spring vegetables to a very interested crowd of visitors to the Nashville Farmers' Market. To our surprise, the market was filming a promotional film about the market and we were part of that promotion.

Thursday, May 14th, was especially busy as I met at the Demonstration Garden to help lay out the sites for our vendors at the Urban Gardening Festival and then moved on to the Kitchen Gardens at Belle Meade Mansion to prepare for our monthly meeting at the gardens. The following Friday afternoon, with the help of several Master Gardener volunteers and interns from the 2015 class, we set up several tents and helped vendors find their positions for the weekend's big event—the Urban Gardening Festival.

Despite a few showers, this year's event was quite a success. We counted around 1,000 visitors who all responded that they were very pleased with this year's event. Many had been to previous festivals and marveled at how well the Demonstration Garden displayed many types of gardening ideas that they could adapt to their growing conditions. We had several Master Gardeners and interns to answer their many questions. We've already received calls from vendors requesting participation in next year's event. Great job Master Gardeners and interns!

A big thanks to Muff Cline and the Weedin' Women for hosting our May meeting. We have been talking about being at the Kitchen Gardens for a whole year. It was nice to meet outdoors, enjoying the company of our fellow members, and be able to see how the gardens are looking at this time of the year. We also got to introduce the new interns of 2015 and recognize those who have already completed their volunteer requirements to become Master Gardeners. Our mentoring program is a great success. Remember, there are still many opportunities to earn your volunteer hours at Grassmere, The Hermitage, and Belle Meade Kitchen Gardens.

June is shaping up to be another busy month. Master Gardeners are one of the sponsors of Growing Roots: A Celebration of Food & Farming at Farm in the City on June 6th. There's also Meet Me at the Market on June 10th and our regular monthly meeting on June 11th at Ed Jones Auditorium starting at 6:30pm. There is also a Central Regional meeting in Lebanon on Saturday June 23rd for members of the board.

I have been able to spend several hours in my own gardens for a change this year. It's nice to get up early and spend time in the garden. I hope you are enjoying your own gardens this year. Take time to walk around your yard and enjoy nature! 🌱

## June Meeting

*by Karen Shaw, Class of 2014*

Who better than our own Master Gardeners of Davidson County to share their expertise with us at our June meeting. Georgeann McCoy (1998) and her husband, John O'Connor (2000), have been working their garden "Coillte Beag" (Gaelic for Little Woods), for 17 years. It's a shade garden so, at first, Hosta was their main choice in plants. Gradually, they have added companion plants and lots of native wildflowers, trees, and shrubs to their garden. Hydrangeas are such a wonderful plant that does well in both sun and shade.

Georgeann and John have over 30 different cultivars. Georgeann says, "At first it was a little confusing to get a handle on the different groups, when to prune, and what

kind of fertilizer to use. I think I have it figured out and want to share that with you. There are so many new varieties being introduced every year and all of us should be growing a few. I picked June to give my presentation hoping that I will have some examples from the garden to show you.

If you are growing hydrangeas, bring a bloom or two to share in the 'show and tell' section of my talk." Georgeann and John are longtime members of both the Middle Tennessee Hosta Society, Perennial Plant Society, and Master Gardeners of Davidson County, so they bring us a wealth of knowledge you won't want to miss. 🌱

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Cover: *Master Gardeners hard at work in the Historic Gardens at Grassmere.* Photo: Cathie Long/ MGDC.

## Harding Garden at Belle Meade

by Joy Kosarsky, Class of 2010

The May meeting of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County was held at the Harding Kitchen Garden on the Belle Meade mansion grounds. The Kitchen Garden is just behind the original cabin where the Hardings lived when they first arrived in the Nashville area.



The Belle Meade grounds staff was kind enough to setup several tables and chairs for us to use. Even the weather cooperated. It was a wonderful balmy spring evening—the perfect temperature for an outdoor meeting. There was no rain or wind, no hot sun. Even the humidity held off for the evening. There was a good turnout for the “field trip” meeting giving many gardeners a chance to view our little garden.



Catherine Atwell, Bob Mather, and David Cook at Meet Me at the Market, a monthly event MGDC participates in at the Nashville Farmers' Market.

Muff Cline, our project chair, introduced John Lamb, the curator of the Belle Meade mansion grounds as our speaker for the evening. He talked about the history of the Belle Meade property and the ongoing efforts to return the grounds to its previous beauty, including the upcoming expansion of the garden areas in and around the mansion.

Our team is excited about this opportunity. It will serve to increase the visibility of the Master Gardeners on the Belle Meade property as well as expand the public's learning experiences.

In the last month, we have been busy preparing the soil and planting our summer vegetables. Now we are weeding, watering, and waiting for the garden to transition from seeds to yummy veggies and herbs. Unfortunately, at meeting time, only a few seedlings had graced us with their presence. You will just have to trust us — there really is corn, beans, squash, etc. growing in the ground. 🌱

# June 2015

For a complete calendar of events,  
visit our website at [www.mgofdc.org](http://www.mgofdc.org).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	2	3 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 9am-12pm at Belle Meade	4	5	6 Growing Roots: A Celebration of Food & Farming, 10am-2pm Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
7	8 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	9	10 Meet Me at the Market, 10am-2pm Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 9am-12pm at Belle Meade	11 June Monthly Meeting 6:30pm	12	13 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
14	15 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	16	17 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 9am-12pm at Belle Meade	18	19	20 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
21	22 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	23 Central Region Alliance Meeting, 10am	24 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere 9am-12pm at Belle Meade	25	26	27 Workdays: 8am-12pm at Grassmere and The Hermitage
28	29 Workday: Grassmere, 8am-12pm	30				



# May Meeting Minutes

by Laura Boatwright, Recording Secretary, Class of 2014

The May monthly meeting of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County was held at 6:30pm on Thursday, May 14, 2015 at the Kitchen Garden at Belle Meade.

An announcement was made about Summer Celebration 2015 in Jackson, Tennessee. The bus will leave Ellington Agricultural Center at 6am on July 9th, returning around 8:30pm. Attendees should plan to bring a lunch or purchase hamburgers or hot dogs at the event.

Muff Cline recognized the Belle Meade Weedin' Women. Following the meal, John Lamb, curator at Belle Meade, shared about the history of Belle Meade and how it supports itself.

Cecil Ward mentioned that the Nashville Rose Society will have a show May 23-24 at Ellington. Admission and parking are free. He recommended arriving around 12-12:30pm either day and reminded us that roses will be for sale.

Attending certified Master Gardeners and Interns from the Class of 2015 were recognized. Carroll Marrero thanks all of the mentors for a job well done. She mentioned that 50 interns signed up to help at the Urban Gardening Festival.

Next month's (June) meeting will be held at the Ed Jones Auditorium, with Georgeann McCoy as our speaker. The Hosta Society will be at the UT gardens on June 7th. Cornelia Holland has an extensive hosta garden and donated hostas to the garden. The Perennial Plan Society of Middle Tennessee will have a garden tour of Georgeann's garden on May 30th.

Grassmere and The Hermitage will each conduct Earn & Learn workshops on Saturday, June 16th.

The Junior Master Gardeners Camp will be held June 22-26, 2015, and will include four gardening subjects each day for a total of 20. Camp attendees will have a hands on project after each subject. Please bring vases to our meeting next month for Perimeters. To be used in arrangements for hospices. Syliva Wall is now in charge of garden tours. There are currently three garden tours scheduled.

NPT wants people to help answer phones. They needed 12 people, and can use more. This event will be held on May 31st with orientation starting at 6pm and lasting an hour. Phones will be answered from 7-10pm and dinner will be provided.

The International Master Gardeners Conference is coming up and will be held in Iowa.

The Urban Gardening Festival will be held from 9am-4pm on Saturday, May 16th. Setup begins Friday from 3pm-7pm, and again on Saturday morning beginning at 6am. Vendors are to

be ready at 8:30am. Carroll will be hand off the job of contacting vendors to Justin Druckenmiller. We are working towards a master plan for how publicity, signage, etc are handled and how to take care of it in the future. Parking is to be directly across from the museum parking lot. You can park close to load or unload during setup. We expect six food trucks this year. In 2014, we had 52 booths with 1,600 visitors; this year, we have 70 booths and expect 2,000-2,500 visitors. Booths consist of 10'x10' tents with an extra 10' on either side to keep a park-like atmosphere.

UT Extension has hired someone to run the Davidson County Extension office. They started on May 11th and will attend the Urban Gardening Festival along with Natalie Bumgarner, head of the Tennessee Master Gardener program. The new Tennessee Master Gardener program website is up and running.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04pm. 🌱

## A Favorite Plant: Indian Pink

by Bob Mather, President, Class of 2000



One of my favorite plants I grow in my garden is Indian Pink (*Spigelia marilandica* L.). This native wildflower is found in rich, moist woods and along wooded stream banks in the greater southeastern United States but is well adapted for your gardens in shaded areas. It is a

clump-forming herbaceous perennial reaching a height of 12 to 18 inches. The leaves are emerald green, ovate to lance shaped, opposite each other along the stem and do not possess leaf stalks. This is one of the most attractive wildflowers and caught my attention several years ago in a garden near Paris, Tennessee. I looked for this plant for two years before finding it at Reta Randolph's nursery in Jackson, Tennessee.

The plant features brilliant red tubular flowers that are constricted near the top of the flowers where it then flares out to reveal a bright yellow interior, flowering in late spring during May and early June. Indian Pink grows well in shade, has a



fairly long blooming period and is pollinated by hummingbirds. It is easily grown in average, medium wet well-drained soil in full to partial shade. You can propagate the Indian Pink through division, or by gathering ripe seed heads from faded blossoms in early summer. Deadheading the faded flowers of Indian Pinks may prolong the blooming time. 🌱

# Historic Grassmere Gardens

by Cathie Long, Chairperson, Class of 1999

Congratulations on a great looking Urban Gardening Festival. I hope you got the crowds that you had anticipated.

The Month of May brought out school groups through the garden with their worksheets of questions to find answers by visiting the farm. It provided a great opportunity to talk about our mission and methods. The antique roses are in full bloom and the fragrance of them and the lilac really got the visitors attention.



We've had quite a productive month at Grassmere. Four kinds of bush beans, two kinds of okra, butternut squash, and corn were planted from seeds. Eggplant, peppers and tomatoes were planted. Zinnias and marigolds were transplanted from the veggie terrace to the borders and perennial bed.

As always, much weeding takes place. The area around the valuable milkweed was carefully cleared of the early spring weeds. The milkweed is the host plant for the monarch butterfly and a special part of our maintaining a butterfly garden.

Grape vines are made pliable after being soaked in a tub of water to use to tie up the Yellow Rose of Texas, *Kerria*. It takes a team, Debb, Jeanmarie and Andrea to corral the wandering sprouts of this bush.



In the garden, the work is accomplished high and low. Our own expert fence builder, Phd Bill, finished off another area of chicken wire fencing to protect the beans from the rabbits.



When I arrive in the mornings, I get to chase out the rascals who now know to use the gates as they exit.

Time out is always taken to sit and get to know each other, perhaps have cake and cookies with our water break. We discuss our goals and next steps in the garden. Garden work and visiting makes a very pleasant morning. We have had the pleasure of getting to know some interns of 2015. We don't have an exclusive club, all are urged to participate in this project. This means YOU. 🌱

## Mentoring Program

by Caroll Marrero, Membership Chairperson, Class of 2009

Interns, your involvement, support and commitment was mighty profound for our 2015 Urban Gardening Festival! Many of you "lived" in the Demonstration Garden working side-by-side with Shirley Lee, Tyann Chappell and Mary Boyd in preparation for the festival. Nearly fifty — yes 50 — of you volunteered your time on Friday and Saturday! I speak for all of us Mentors when I shout out a very big "thank you". Several of you were even able to complete your hours for certification!

David Cook will approve your UGF volunteer hours as "Continuing Education" hours. Once you have fulfilled the required 8 CEUs, any additional hours may be counted as volunteer time, either "Community" or "Administrative".

You may earn Education hours for attending MGDC garden tours. Tours will be listed in the monthly newsletters and e-blasts. NPT's Volunteer Gardener program, airing on Thursday evenings and repeated on Sunday mornings, also provide additional opportunities to earn continuing education hours. (Episodes may also be found at the Volunteer Gardener [YouTube channel](#).)

A reminder: When you attain and report your 8 hours of "Education" (CEUs), you may count, and enter, all additional education hours as Volunteer" time. 🌱



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## Recipe of the Month

### Carrot Salad with Minuted Yogurt

*from the kitchen of Bob Mather*

#### Ingredients:

1 c carrots, grated  
1/3 c walnuts, finely chopped  
2 Tbsp raisins  
1 Tbsp fresh mint leaves, finely diced  
1 Tbsp lemon juice  
1/2 c plain Greek yogurt  
Salt and pepper to taste

#### Instructions:

In a small bowl, whisk together mint, lemon juice and Greek yogurt until smooth. In a bowl, toss together the carrots, walnuts, and raisins. Stir in the yogurt mint dressing until thoroughly combined. Season with salt & pepper. Cover and refrigerate for an hour. Best served chilled.