



# *Garden Talk*

MGOFDC OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER





# Chicken Scratch

## A Note From Our President, Alisa Huntsman

It looks as if summer has finally arrived and while it may be hot out there, I will take the heat over cold, dreary days! The garden is humming along and I am looking forward to all of the vegetables that will arrive this season.

Now that the festival has taken place, all of us can begin to focus on so many things that were put on hold. For me, that means changing my garden over from a spring garden to a summer garden. As the broccoli and peas finish producing, I am planting tomatoes, peppers and sweet potatoes in their place. Even though it is June, it is not too late to plant

summer vegetables. We are lucky to have a long growing season here and planting in June means picking tomatoes and peppers up until the first hard frost.

Last year, I spent many hours canning, pickling and freezing the many vegetables that grew in my garden and this year, I will continue this. It made the winter a little tastier and it also meant I didn't have to go to the grocery store as often as usual. If you haven't tried canning or making pickles, I highly recommend giving it a try. The jars can do double duty; they fill the pantry and they also make great gifts.

If you have chosen open-pollinated, heirloom varieties of vegetables for your garden, don't forget to let a few go to seed. One of the most economical ways to garden is to save seeds from the vegetables you grew. This year, the peas and green beans in my garden were grown from seeds I saved last year and I am currently letting some arugula and spinach go to seed so that I can save them for next year.

Here's to a successful summer in your garden!

## Master Gardeners of Davidson County

PO Box 41055, Nashville, TN 37204

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# Upcoming Events

## June 13th Member Meeting - David Cook, "Trees: Your First Impression May Be All Wrong," Interactive

Trees are more complicated and more diverse than you could ever imagine.

Again, this will be an interactive program with membership participation, as we will explore lots of interesting questions and answers about trees and learn that certain tree facts are stranger than science fiction.

## June 15 & 16 - Member Garden Tour - See page 4

## June 27th - Central Regional Conference @ Gallatin

Central region- hosted by Sumner County at Vol State Comm. College

Two morning tours will feature historical sites managed by our hosts along with options for visiting a local community garden and fruit and tree nursery. Afternoon sessions will focus on ornamentals, vegetables, herbs and marketing your local TEMG group. For additional information and registration forms, visit the Tennessee Master Gardener web site. This is a great opportunity for educational hours and to see what other Middle Tennessee Master Gardener organizational are doing in their communities.

## July 11 Member Meeting - Jackson Trip

Summer Celebration, one of the largest gardening shows in the Mid-South, is just around the corner. Hosted by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, Summer Celebration runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the West Tennessee Ag Research and Education Center in Jackson, TN.

The event features more than 40 plant and craft vendors, 16 talk/tours led by gardening experts, an extensive Master Gardener Plant Sale and a plant and pest diagnostic clinic.

The location is UT Gardens, UT Jackson, 605 Airways Blvd, Jackson, TN 38301.

The date is Thursday, July 11 and will take the place of our July meeting.



## Hey Interns and Mentors!

Interns, if you haven't chosen a mentor let me know and we can team you up!

Barb Hoffman, barbhoffman@aol.com

# Member Garden Tour: Visit 'Nature's Song' June 15 & 16

The garden tour season is in full swing! As always, Master Gardeners are invited and encouraged to host a garden tour for fellow members.

Master Gardener Pam Rice will host a tour of her garden, Nature's Song, Saturday, June 15, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., and Sunday, June 16, noon – 3 p.m. The address is 4208 Cecil Ct. S. in Nashville, 37207. Developing "Nature's Song" has been a labor of love over the last decade, Pam says. "This garden is filled with trees, shrubs, and perennials (many of which are native) in both sun and shade. The front yard contains a bed in which each "hosta of the year" has been planted. With a creek and pathways winding through the back yard, there are places to relax by the stream and in the woodland retreat. Boulders and stacked stone walls as well as wooden arbors lend a rustic feel to the space."

Anyone can host a Garden Tour or Open House. In addition to showing off your hard work and creativity to an appreciative audience, you earn volunteer hours!

When you host a garden tour, you earn 15 volunteer hours. Any Master Gardener who assists a host in preparation for the tour can record one volunteer hour for every hour you assist (including travel time to and from the garden). Master Gardeners who visit the tour garden can count the visit for one CEU hour.

Even if your garden is a "work in progress," Master Gardener colleagues enjoy and learn from it. To host a tour, plan a day and time and email the information to Gloria Ballard, [gardentours@mgofdc.org](mailto:gardentours@mgofdc.org).



## On the Cover

Photo of the Urban Gardening Festival by Joy McKenzie



# MG OF DC URBAN GARDENING FESTIVAL

We had an amazing festival this year! There were more activities, participants, presenters, and visitors than ever before. The food truck area was packed, the snack area was a hit, steady crowds meandered through the well laid out festival, and presentations at the Program, Listen and Learn, and Chef's tents were well received.

There are many volunteers to be thanked but two people, Claudia Neeley and Barbara Erk, were the backbone of this year's festival and did an outstanding job for months to bring 100 many interesting and unique participants and presenters to the festival.

Thank you to our many volunteer teams from planning through setup and takedown. A few other festival successes include 100+ signs, traffic control, gorgeous gardens, quality plants and variety for sale, 2100 plants raised from seed and nurtured in the Greenhouse to sell, décor of the MG areas, visitor increase, "handyman" persons, soil education, and strong presence for diagnostics.

Separate tents for Ask A MG and Speaker's Bureau programs highlighted these services provided by MG of DC and kept the Ask A MG volunteers busy the next week responding to all the inquiries. Our afternoon musician, Colin O'Brien, praised the Diagnostic Tent folks for some great tips for his tomatoes and peppers.

Thank you all volunteers! This festival could not have happened without you!

We still have t-shirts for sale so please check with Barbara Hoffman to get yours!

Nancy Wilcenski  
Urban Gardening Festival Committee



# My Favorite Gardening Tool

By Karen Brown

It all started when Ginny Russell (2006) brought her favorite hand weeding tools over to the Demo Garden. That got me thinking, I bet others have favorites, I know I do.

So, let's share our Favorite Gardening Tools. I'll start:

My favorite tool is The Radius Garden brand Transplanter. Bob Mather (2000) brought one to the City Cemetery in the Spring and he let me use it to thin out the daylilies and irises. I loved it and immediately went home and ordered it from Amazon.

What's so special about it? The blade is narrower and longer than a regular shovel blade, with a cutting edge more like

a nursery spade. This tool is great for transplanting and separating perennials, and working around existing plantings in established gardens. And you can easily and cleanly chop through the roots of your perennials.

And here's where you can buy it online (using the Smile Amazon feature that donates a percentage of your purchases to MGofDC when you list it as your charity):

[https://smile.amazon.com/gp/product/B016W5UC-MC?pf\\_rd\\_p=019ad97c-f176-43be-96b9-991a6dc65763&pf\\_rd\\_r=ABS99KAD3CZK8WJK-31M5&th=1](https://smile.amazon.com/gp/product/B016W5UC-MC?pf_rd_p=019ad97c-f176-43be-96b9-991a6dc65763&pf_rd_r=ABS99KAD3CZK8WJK-31M5&th=1)

So, what's your favorite garden Tool?

Send me an email ([karen-brown21@me.com](mailto:karen-brown21@me.com)) with a picture of the tool, it's name if you know it and why it's your favorite and we'll write it up for the next issue of Garden Talk.



**WE NEED YOU**

## Make a Difference Join the Board

Our board is tired and weary, and we need fresh recruits! We still have 6 months left before the next year. If you think you might be interested in one of the following Executive Board positions, please reach out to [Membership@mgofdc.org](mailto:Membership@mgofdc.org). You can "shadow" the position for a month to get hands-on experience and training.

**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.

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# Junior Gardener Camp

*MGofDC Junior Camp June 10th - 14th, 9am - 3pm at the Demo Garden*

By Pam Swoner

Jr Camp is almost here. The theme this year is SOIL: Where Life Begins. We have filled every seat and have a waiting list. You are invited to come for a day or a few hours but please let me know in advance as we have limited space and plan to set up demonstration areas in the classroom.

Monday: Cumberland River Compact will bring their "Creek Critter" program and we will hike to the stream. The afternoon David Cook will talk about "What is Soil?."

Tuesday: Dr Wharton will introduce observation drawing, we will plant beds, make fairy gardens and we will be out scouting for birds.

Wednesday: Lisa Spencer from channel 4 has a great program about weather, Cumberland River Compact returns and we will look closer at life in the soil with microscopes.

Thursday: Buzz will introduce bees and we hike to the apiary, Melissa is presenting a taste test game, Julie will present Water Wise.

Friday: We'll do some hiking and visit the TWRA building, a special lunch and Tyne Meade will introduce Floral Design.

There is much more planned!

If you have questions please feel free to contact me.

**Pam Swoner**

Jr Camp Coordinator - MG of DC

615-397-5114

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## BOARD DESCRIPTIONS CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

**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.

## **Hermitage Garden**

By Mary Langford

We are off to a good start. Many thanks to The Hermitage for the new wood chips around the perimeter and on the pathways! It looks great.

We tend three gardens: the flower and herb garden at the Visitor Center, the herb garden by the Maintenance Building and the Kitchen Garden. The Visitor Center garden makes a good first impression as people enter the grounds. The herb garden is lovely and lush.

In the Kitchen Garden, we grow only varieties of herbs and vegetables that were available a century ago.

Our garlic and shallots overwintered and are thriving. The horseradish is impressive. The cabbage is healthy and growing. Pimento, Tabasco and bell peppers are coming along. We have three varieties of heirloom tomatoes planted with basil. Also eggplant, cucumbers, zucchini, patty pan and yellow squashes and cantaloupe. We will be planting watermelon and okra soon.

Unfortunately, the cardoon is gone, apparently eaten by one of our furry pests. Who knew such a prickly plant would be so tasty!?



Pictured: Mortgage Lifter tomatoes and basil.

## **Harding Garden at Belle Meade**

It's summertime (almost), and the gardening is easy at Belle Meade—thanks to the many new hands (Sandra, Suzanne, and Rita) that have joined the Weedin' Women band. Plants are in, seeds are up, and once we have the trellises in place, we can just take sit back and enjoy the crop. (Right!)

We're particularly optimistic about our tomatoes this year, thanks to a comprehensive lesson on planting and cultivation from MG Bob Bryant. His combination of fertilizers, manure, and newspaper will surely do the trick. We also have a bumper crop of strawberries, which fed the birds if not the gardeners.

Up at the flower garden, we've been amazed how well the bachelor's buttons, gaillardia, and larkspur have come back this year. We've added in a few new yellow/orange plants, including geum and zizia, to supplement standbys like rudbeckia and echinacea. There are still a few gaps to fill, so if you have some goldenrod or other yellow/orange perennials you'd like to share, please let us know.



Bob Bryant shows Judy Murray (left) and Rita Bates how to get the most from a Cherokee Purple tomato.

# Historic Grassmere Gardens

By Melanie Davis

Like every garden in Middle Tennessee in spring, the kitchen garden on the Grassmere Estate at the Nashville Zoo is in transition. In winter, the team put things in place like newspaper and cardboard topped with pine straw to minimize spring weeds and allowed the entire garden to rest. Now, we're preparing beds, harvesting early crops, and getting tender plants in the ground.

The vegetable garden is producing peas, spinach, lettuce, and kale. Onions and carrots are thriving, and the cover crop of crimson clover is in full bloom next to the pole beans, which are in the ground and ready to grow up their guides. Tomatoes are also planted with their trellis in place.

While some beds are prepped, ready, and planted, others are still in transition. The team is placing structures where they need to be in order to grow certain veggies, and some beds are still being turned and amended. By the time summer hits, all of the beds should be planted and thriving. Weeding, watering, and pest control will be the primary goal of the gardeners at that stage.

A few plants in the herb garden were lost over the winter, but the thyme, bee balm, comfrey, and several other plants are thriving and giving the eyes plenty to wander over. As summer approaches, this area will be filled with blossoms and Pollinators.

The beauty of the rose garden is at a close for the season. Now is a good time to check out the rosehips on the bushes.

The full-sun flower bed is stunning, with nigella (a.k.a. Love-in-a-mist) stealing the show with its frothy, elegant blossoms. The bees were enjoying it, too! Other summer annuals and perennials will take center stage as these blossoms fade with the season.

This can be a very task-oriented time of year in the garden, but it's worth taking a step back and appreciating the work in progress and the promise of a productive summer season.



## 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.

# Rosemary Cookies

**½ c. butter**  
**½ c. shortening**  
**1 ½ c. sugar**  
**2 eggs**  
**2 ¾ c. flour**

**2 tsp. cream of tartar**  
**1 tsp. soda**  
**¼ tsp. salt**  
**2 tsp. fresh rosemary**

**Blend together butter, shortening, sugar and eggs until creamy. Sift flour into the mixture, then add the cream of tartar, soda, and salt and blend together. Next, add 2 scant teaspoons of fresh chopped rosemary.**

**Form the dough into small balls and place on an ungreased baking sheet. Press balls flat with the bottom of a drinking glass that has been dipped into sugar. This gives them a crunchy texture.**

**Bake in a preheated 400-degree oven for about 8 minutes. Loosen the cookies as soon as you take them from the oven. Store in air-tight container**

**(taken from the Master Gardeners of Davidson County 30th Anniversary Cookbook.**

**Mary Duncan, MG 2004**

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