



# Master Gardeners Hear it ... Through the Grapevine

UT Extension The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

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## MASTER GARDENERS OF HAMILTON COUNTY

### President's Letter

A practical gardener always knows when it is time to step back and take a breather from a difficult or a never ending project. Lawns, it seems, top the list of tough projects. My yard is a prime example. The Zoysia grass in my front yard is beautiful and the Thermal Bluegrass in the back yard is coming along. However, the side yard is a completely different picture. It is pathetic! We have tilled and aerated and seeded and the only grass we are growing with abundance is crabgrass and nutgrass (imposters!). So, short of getting down on our hands and knees and begging, we are not getting the complete lawn we'd hoped for. I have finally drawn the line (a line in the dirt where the grass won't grow) and moving on. Yes, I am leaving Mike to battle the grass demons alone. Mike will never

give up. I, on the other hand, have a new project! A water feature...A Pond! The fact that it will take up a large part of the side yard does give me a great sense satisfaction. If the grass won't cooperate, I'll just dig up the whole area. Seems a bit ambitious, but I am up for the task.

Seriously though, a water feature adds depth and interest to the garden. The sound of water calls, leading you down one path or another. It is also cool and refreshing on hot summer days. This is not anything new to Master Gardeners. We just forget sometimes that a simple fountain or even just a large pot saucer filled with water can make

an interesting statement. I have always dreamed of having a pond to enjoy, but it is a challenge...where to build it; what is the best design; who to install it; how to get Mike to agree to it. Now that I am learning patience (see June's letter), I know I have to take this project one step at a time. At least I won't be fighting with the grass!

I hope to see everyone at the Membership meeting on August 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at Crabtree Farms. You don't want to miss it. We will be touring the Farm and taking a peek at the Master Gardener garden plots. If you need directions or a ride there, please contact Tom Stebbins or me.

Stephanie Payne

### **August Master Gardener Meeting, August 16th, 6:00pm**

The August 16<sup>th</sup> Master Gardener Membership meeting will be held at **Crabtree Farms from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.** Meet at the Pavilion behind the main building

(the meeting is starting a ***½ hour earlier*** to take advantage of available daylight). A speaker from Crabtree will give us an overview of the farm. We will then be

viewing the Master Gardener Plots as well as other areas on the farm. If you need directions or a ride there, please contact Stephanie Payne or Tom Stebbins.

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Vicki Reeve's two year old Harrison garden

## Upcoming Events

•**August 7th, Natural Photography at Crabtree Farms 5:30-7**, Learn about proper lighting and equipment necessary to have your own garden portfolio. Dr. Marshall will share a portion of his knowledge of photography. Register by phone 493.9155 x16; Member:\$17 Non Member: \$20.

•**August 14th, Harvesting and Creating Herbal Salves at Crabtree Farms 5-7:30**. Register by phone 493.9155 x16; Member:\$17 Non Member: \$20.

•**August 16th, Master Gardener Membership Meeting**, 6:00 at the Crabtree Farms.

•**August 18th, Stepping Stones with Gretchen. 9-12. Contact at [GRominger@comcast.net](mailto:GRominger@comcast.net)** or call 875-9204

•**August 25th, Intro to Basket Making at Crabtree Farms 10:30-12**, Bill Haley, will discuss local natural materials, such as kudzu and weeping willow and share some of his techniques. Register by phone 493.9155 x16; Member:\$17 Non Member: \$20.

•**August the 18<sup>th</sup> and September the 8<sup>th</sup>, Bamboo Structure Assembly Project for the Hamilton County Fair with Bud Hines, 9:00-4:00**. To sign up for this activity or if you have questions, please call Bud Hines at 332-2175 or Charlene Griffin at 886-4586.

## AUGUST 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Board Meeting	3	4 Tomatoes at Crabtree Farms
5	6	7 5:30-7 Photography	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Herbs at Crabtree Farms	15	16 6:00 Membership Meeting	17	18 Stepping Stones and Bamboo
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 10:30-12 Basket Making
26	27	28	29	30	31	

### Wanted:

I am looking for a partner for a project for a Master Gardener's Project. The AIM Center is planning a community green space for one of their apartment complexes. The AIM Center is a non-profit that works with adults with mental illness for recovery and community reintegration. The AIM Center provides housing, education, employment and recovery classes. A grant is being written for outdoor furniture and plants to make an area at the complex for outdoor classes and meetings. I need a partner that could help design an appealing but easy to maintain landscape to create a soothing and inviting space. I estimate it will be about 5-10 volunteer hours and the complex is located in East Ridge. I admit I am a "Granny Gardener" and pick out "landscaping" by what I find to be irresistible at the nursery! So I really need someone that can help hold me in check! If you are interested, please e-mail me at [Leobishop@comcast.net](mailto:Leobishop@comcast.net).

Many Thanks-Gina Turley

## Upcoming Events

•**September 6th, Master Gardener Board Meeting**, 6:00 at the AG Center.

•**September the 8<sup>th</sup>, Bamboo Structure Assembly Project for the Hamilton County Fair with Bud Hines, 9:00-4:00.**

To sign up for this activity or if you have questions, please call Bud Hines at 332-2175 or Charlene Griffin at 886-4586.

•**September 8th, 5th Annual Fall Plant Sale and Festival, 9-1 at Crabtree Farms.**

Customers can choose from a wide variety of fall vegetable starts including lettuce mix, spinach, snap peas, and perennial herbs and flowers. Fall is the best time to plant perennials in your garden or floral beds. The winter months allow them to nestle in and prepare to burst forth in 2008.

Over 30 new varieties have been added this year, including chocolate and grapefruit mint! This sale is not to be missed. . For a list of Plants to be sold check out <http://www.crabtreefarms.org/events/springplant.html>

•**September 17th, Crabtree Farms and Community Gardens Open House, 6-8pm.**

Enjoy the showcase of Chattanooga's Largest Community Gardens here at Crabtree Farms. Learn about Community Gardening & Crabtree Farms Urban Farm.

## SEPTEMBER 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6 Board Meeting	7	8 Plant-Sale and Bamboo
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 Plant Sale
16	17 Open House at Crabtree	18	19	20 6:30 Membership Meet-	21	22 Cooking at Crabtree
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						



•**September 15th & 16th, 2007 Fall Open House**

**and Native Plant Sale at Reflection Riding.**

Fall is the best time to plant, so be certain to come out and find something special for your garden from our hundreds of native trees, shrubs and wildflowers.

Along with the native plant sale, there will be guided wildflower walks and hikes, informational talks, and exhibitors from other nonprofit organizations.

Hours: Saturday, 9am to 5pm, and Sunday, 1 to 5pm. Free Admission.

•**September 20th, Master Gardener Membership Meeting**, 6:30 at the AG Center.

•**September 22nd, Preparing Stocks and Rues, 10:30-12 at Crabtree Farms.**

Chef Kenny Burnap of Table 2 will demonstrate how to prepare stocks and rues from scratch. Learn how to prepare your favorite recipes by preparing the essential ingredients yourself! In this delicious training, Chef Burnap will share secrets of creating your very own tasty recipes. Register by phone 493.9155 x16; Member:\$15 Non Member: \$20.

## Tom's Tidbits for August 2007

### Questions Master Gardeners May Get in the Summertime

Here are a few of the common questions that I am getting from people around the Chattanooga area. Maybe you will get similar questions from your neighbors and friends.

**Why are my crape myrtles dying?** Crape myrtles took quite a hit this spring from the Easter Freeze. They were at the most vulnerable time for damage. They had broken dormancy from winter and were in a fast growth period. That means that the trunk was full of water and when it froze it often expanded the tissue. Think of a milk jug that freezes. The container is split open from the expansion of ice. I saw many trunks that were split open from the freeze event. If no splits were seen there might still be internal damage. To make matters worse, insects can move in on this stressed tissue. Now I am getting reports of boring beetles attacking the trunks of crape myrtles. These appear to be the Ambrosia beetles. Ambrosia beetles bore holes the size of pencil lead. The wood dust removed is called frass. In this

case the frass is pushed straight out. It looks like toothpicks sticking out of the bark. Left unchecked, the tree will die in less than a year. Spray a bark borer spray on all trees in the area. Spray the trunk at least six feet high.

This same spray works good on other trees which get a variety of borers. Protect dogwood, maple, lilac, viburnum and almost any newly planted tree.

**Why are hemlocks looking gray?** At first this was a puzzle until I saw a sample taken from the Rock City area. The microscope revealed numerous small mites sucking water out of the needles. There were probably a hundred mites per needle. These mites are about ten times smaller than the regular spider mites.

These mites are often seen but for some reason their numbers ballooned this summer. I think the dry summer stressed the trees.

The summer rains should help the problem. Beneficial insects should start to gobble up these small mites without the help of

chemical sprays. Sprays are difficult to apply to the taller trees, anyway. Be on the lookout for the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. It is very easy to see when present. It looks like someone lined up small white cotton balls on the needles. We saw it only on a few trees this year. I expect it to explode next year into a major epidemic. Then, regular sprays of horticultural soap will be needed for control.

#### **Can Fire Ants Eat our Swimming pool liner?**

Maybe but the probable culprits are termites. Bring in samples into the Master Gardener lab for identification before control measures are implemented.

#### **My tomatoes have white hard areas on the inside of the ripe fruit. What is that?**

Fruit affected by this disorder usually show no outward symptoms. High temperatures during the ripening period in seem to trigger the symptoms. Adequate potassium fertilization has shown to reduce but may not eliminate it.

*Continued on page 5*



## Tom's Tidbits

### *Continued:*

Some varieties are more resistant to the problem.

### **What is making all the holes in my yard?**

Chipmunks, voles, snakes are the usually culprits making those holes. In the coming weeks expect to see holes from the Cicada killer wasp. This wasp is huge, one of the biggest seen in our area. They sting a cicada chirping in the tree, which is even larger, they throw it over their back and then glide to the ground. They scoop out the dirt and stuff the cicada into the hole. It looks a lot messier than the other holes. Control methods?

These are beneficial insects. Cover the holes back up and reseed areas in the fall.

Well there you have it. I hope you can use this information in the coming weeks.

For Masterful Gardens

Tom

## Hamilton County Gardening News:

•**Donna Adams needs all pictures, news articles,** newsletters or anything that concerns the HCMG. She will be placing them in the History Books. She will accept them at the monthly meetings or you can mail them to her. (find her address in the Master Gardener Directory.)

•**Stepping Stone Workshop Saturday, August 18th from 9:00 to 12:00.** We will be making stepping stones for the County Fair exhibit. The cost is \$ 3.00 and they will be yours to keep after the fair. We will be painting Japanese symbols on them at another workshop is September after the cement has set up. All you need bring to the workshop is a 14" plastic plant saucer. If you would like to attend contact Gretchen Rominger at [GRominger@comcast.net](mailto:GRominger@comcast.net) or call 875-9204. The workshop will be at Gretchen's home in Hixson.

•**Bamboo Structure Assembly Project: August the 18<sup>th</sup> and September the 8<sup>th</sup>,** we will be assembling the structures and fence panels that will be used in our Japanese garden exhibit at the **Hamilton County Fair** on September 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>. These workshops will be held at Bud Hines Community Property Lake Lot Location at 1373 Osage Drive, Soddy Daisy, TN 37379. Each Saturday there will be morning and afternoon sessions from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Hot Dogs and burgers will be grilled for lunch at Noon. You re welcome to bring a spouse or friend. Please bring a side dish, drinks or dessert. We will be on the Lake so please bring cordless drills with Philip's screwdriver bits, fishing gear, swimsuits and towels to enjoy the lake after your shift. This is a great way to get Master Gardener Hours, prepare us for the Fair and enjoy an activity with our Master Gardener Organization. To sign up for this activity or if you have questions, please call Bud Hines at 332-2175 or Charlene Griffin at 886-4586.

•**Gene Howard at the Master Gardener Garden plot at Crabtree Farms.**



**MASTER GARDENERS OF  
HAMILTON COUNTY**

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[http://  
mastergardeners.tennessee.edu/](http://mastergardeners.tennessee.edu/)

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**2007-2008**

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