

2010 Madison County Master Gardener

madisoncountymg.org



The Bridge to Knowledge

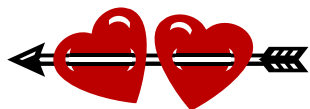
Volume 80, Issue 2

Feb 2010

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Notes from Bill...

I look forward to seeing you at our annual graduation and awards banquet on February 4, 2010. The banquet will be held in Room A at WTREC beginning at 6:30 PM. Bring a dish to share. Barbecue and drinks will be provided. We will need vegetables, salads, breads and desserts. You may bring a guest.

We welcome 16 new Master Gardeners into the association. They are Judy Baskin, Bill Bobbitt, Alice Bryson, Sherry Caldwell, Caroline Davis, Wayne Gerler, Cathy Gilliam, Dennis Hall, Pamela Karr, Cindy Kryscio, Cindy Mosher, Helen Mullins, David Tanner, Susan Thompson, Susan Rigsby and Maggie Bible.

We will recognize 19 MG Interns who completed educational training during the Fall 2009 session.

Four of our members will be granted MG VIP status as they have completed 3 years of active membership. Included are Peggy Allen, Kathy House, Nancy Murray and Jean Webster.

Four members will be awarded 5 year pins including Patsy Powell, Marilyn Taylor, Liz Whitsitt and Carol Preuss.

Twelve members will be granted Lifetime Membership as they have completed 10 years of active membership. They are Kathy Andrews, Sue Ann Barnes, Bill Castleberry, Bob Ellis, Ida Feldman, Geraldine Fussell, Bob Graves, Pam Morphis, Darlene Tanner, Debra Torstrick, Barbara Tucker and Lisa Wilson. What a group! The Class of 2000 has had more impact on Madison County MG than any yearly graduating class to date in my opinion. I will have more to say in that regard the night of the banquet.

A highlight of the evening will be the presentation of Outstanding Master Gardener Volunteer of the Year. This honoree will remain unknown until the presentation is made. Congratulations to these Master Gardener Volunteers.

William B. Wyatt, Extension Agent Madison County, (731) 668-8543.

From the President

Dear Master Gardeners,

We have started the new year off with a wonderful "heart-warming" program from Rita on some innovative ideas in creating and maintaining a greenhouse for our personal use. She also shared some refreshing greenery from hers! It was great to smell!! We have begun planning projects and adventures for the upcoming year. Asheville is tentatively planned for May 20th through the 23rd. By our next meeting plans should be firmed up and we can begin signing up. If you wish to sign up at the meeting please be ready to pay to hold your spot. Master Gardener will be able to help defray some or all the bus costs and the membership will prepay for motel and garden admission. Hopefully we can get some significantly reduced rates with our numbers. I look forward to the upcoming year as we grow and learn together.

Respectfully, Linda Laney

"The Death of a Dream"

They say that when you plant a tree, you are planting it for your children/grandchildren. It really does take decades for a tree to fully display its beauty. Sadly, we had to cut down another 50-year old maple due to decay and damage. I'm sure the former homeowners had planted these trees with all the expectations and dreams of future generations enjoying their beauty for many years to come. The beauty that trees bring to the landscape is unparalleled. Mature trees enhance any neighborhood by bring a sense of permanence and nature's glory. The only bright spot in the loss of the tree scenario is that the tree was a silver maple, which is my least favorite variety. The fall leaves do not offer the spectacular color display of other maples.

Realizing that some of our other trees may also be experiencing their final days, I've begun to plant new trees as replacements in my attempt to "keep the dream alive". I have purchased and have planted several trees that have performed well. These trees include a little gem magnolia, a weeping crab apple with very large berries, a light-gray cedar, a bald cypress, and two Japanese maples.

Additionally, several trees have appeared in my 'no mow' shade area. I have allowed them a place of proper respect. These Tennessee Volunteers include the following: a sassafras, two willow oaks, two magnolias, a red bud, a mimosa, and several dogwood and cedar trees. As a notorious tightwad, I love free stuff! I also love the beauty and ease of care of these native plants.

I have an antique plaque that states--"Only God can make a tree". My hope is that I can properly tend to the trees and the beautiful plants that God has provided.

By Melissa Moore

Lorene Marie Bonds Robinson

&

Richard Gary Crone

Will marry in a private ceremony

Sunday, February 14, 2010

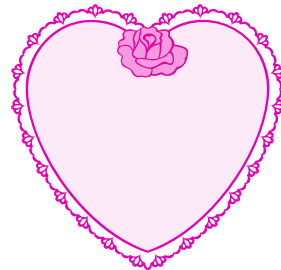
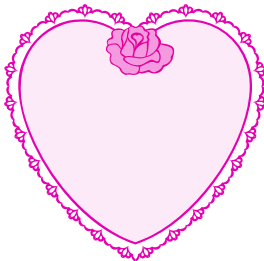
You are invited to attend
A reception to honor the newly weds on

February 20, 2010

From 1:00 PM until 3:00 PM

Family Worship Center of Jackson
1340 North Parkway
Jackson, TN 38305

Please RSVP at 731-668-9364 or
e-mail lorenerobinson@charter.net



The couple is registered at Wal-Mart & Bed Bath & Beyond however,
If you had enough shopping during the Christmas season, they would love
To have gift cards. Kroger, Lowe's, Sears, Wal-Mart, Bed Bath & Beyond, Home
Depot, restaurants or VISA/MasterCard would be greatly appreciated.
But the best gift of all will be your presence.

Master Gardener News from Around the State and Across the Country

Murfreesboro:

Sustainable Solutions

If you haven't heard...

Tennessee Master Gardener Winter School is in Murfreesboro February 17*, 18-20!

Registration Deadline February 9, 2010!

{There is additional information in January, 2010 newsletter.}

It is my pleasure to announce Dr. Tim Cross, Dean of UT Extension and Lieutenant Governor Ron Ramsey will be joining us to recognize MG volunteers for their community service achievements.

This is a two-track event-with a pre-conference workshop. These descriptions and their costs are in the January Newsletter.

Preconference:

<http://utiportal.tennessee.edu/ext/tyn/Pages/default.aspx> or download the workbook

<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/wfiles/W219.pdf>

Winter School:

http://mastergardener.tennessee.edu/tmg_resources/forms/2010%20WS%20Program.pdf

Registration can be downloaded from the web site and mailed in or you can click on the link from the website (or here:

<https://web.dii.utk.edu/agstore/c-49-master-gardener.aspx>) to register and pay with a credit card on a secure site hosted by UTIA.

Super savings on lodging: Baymont Inn and Suites www.baymont.com (615) 896-1172- mention "Master Gardener" and get a room (with refrigerator and microwave before they are all gone!) for around \$56 until January 27!

Other hotels in the area: Comfort Suites

Murfreesboro www.comfortsuites.com (615)

869-0950 Clarion Inn & Suites Murfreesboro

www.clarionhotel.com (615) 896-2420 We hope to see you all in Murfreesboro, the true center of the state!

Beth Babbit

Horticulture Specialist/Master Gardener
Coordinator UT Extension

Knoxville:

Conifers for Gardeners

A 1-Day Symposium on how to grow and use conifers in the mid-South

Saturday, February 27, 2010

8:30 – 5:00

Location: University of Tennessee Visitor Center and the UT Gardens, 2712 Neyland Drive, Knoxville, TN, 37996

For directions:

<http://admissions.utk.edu/undergraduate/visit/directions.shtml>

<<http://admissions.utk.edu/undergraduate/visit/directions.shtml>>

American Conifer Society Members \$40; UT Gardens Members \$40; Non-members \$45.

Register on line at <https://web.dii.utk.edu/agStore/pc-2709-2412-conifers-for-gardeners-symposium.aspx>

<<https://web.dii.utk.edu/agStore/pc-2709-2412-conifers-for-gardeners-symposium.aspx>> or call 865-974-8265.

Come and learn about some of the most beautiful and low maintenance plants you can have in your garden. The day includes educational seminars teaching you how to grow and design your garden with conifers combined with a guided walk through the UT Gardens conifer collection. This exciting symposium will conclude with an exclusive conifer plant sale of some of the most beautiful and choice selections for the mid-South.

- Symposium includes lunch, education, tour and sale. 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

- The UT Gardens are an official American Conifer Society Reference Garden

- An ACS Reference Garden Grant provides funding in support of this symposium

- For more information call 865-974-7972 or e-mail sueham@utk.edu <<mailto:sueham@utk.edu>> or

- <http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/>

- <<http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/>>

8:30 Welcome – Duane Ridenour

8:45 "Go Cone Crazy: A Craving for Conifers" - Flo Chaffin

9:45 Break

10:00 "Great Conifers Worth Knowing from the ACS West TN Reference Garden" - Jason Reeves

10:45 "Great Conifers Worth Knowing from the ACS East TN Reference Garden" – Andy Pulte

11:30 Buffet lunch

12:30 "Hiding From the Neighbors: Green Privacy Screening" – Hugh Conlon

1:15 "How To Use Conifers and Companion Plants in the Landscape" - Sue Hamilton

2:00 Break

2:15 Guided walk thru the UT Gardens Conifer Collection – Sue Hamilton, Andy Pulte, Jason Reeves and Duane Ridenour

3:00 Conifer Plant Sale

Optional on-your-own tours for Sunday to ACS members private gardens of Alan Solomon and Sue Hamilton
Susan L. Hamilton, Ed.D

UT Gardens Director

University of Tennessee

*MCMG Members' Corner
Information
Project Workdays
Questions & Answers*



Just Do It!
It is the end of the year!
Report those hours!

Vertical Gardening

The same Friday that Carol's article (p. 6) on mealworms appeared in The Jackson sun there was an article on Vertical Gardening. It covered both vegetable and flower growing and was well written. If this interests you try typing the topic into a search engine, or you can find Dean Fosdick's article at: www.modbee.com/life/story/1000808.html

Also remember Cindy's e-mail is:

ckryscio@charter.net

If you have a plant you would like her to research let her know.

We all have received e-mails, which circulate old, false information. It seems that falsehoods persist longer than the truth. Bill recently e-mailed us an example.

Question #36624

Will club soda control fire ants?

The use of club soda as an ant mound drench likely will disappoint the user, because the chances of its working are slim to none. This so-called home-remedy was recently scientifically tested and was not effective. For a thorough discussion of the idea of club soda as a home remedy and how it has been debunked, see the following Insects in the City blog post: [Club soda for your ants, Sir?](http://insectsinthecity.blogspot.com/2010/01/club-soda-for-your-ants-sir.html) (<http://insectsinthecity.blogspot.com/2010/01/club-soda-for-your-ants-sir.html>)

It is interesting how many different fire ant "cures" have been suggested. Many of these have not been scientifically tested. The club soda home remedy, like many others, is attractive because it is environmentally sound and uses a readily available product. It has a basis in fact, because carbon dioxide in high concentrations is known to be lethal to many organisms. However the quantity of carbon dioxide generated from a club soda drench would not be sufficient to replace the air in a colony that may extend 12 feet underground. The club soda drench might make the colony move since the fire ants do not like being disturbed. Also, the amount of club soda needed to kill any ants may be expensive! Find more information about home remedies at [FAQ 1107, "Do any of the home remedies for eliminating imported fire ants work?"](#) The [eXtension fire ant resource area](#) has information about safe and effective methods of fire ant control, including the [Fire Ant Control Made Easy Video](#) and the [Managing Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas Learning Lesson](#). You may want to try the [Customized Fire Ant Management Decision Tool](#) which will help you develop your own fire ant management plan.

Are you curious about how much carbon dioxide occurs in club soda or any other carbonated drink? Apparently not very much. See [Carbonation](#).

Created Thursday, April 3, 2008, 4:03 PM (almost 2 years ago) by [Kathy Flanders](#).

Last updated Thursday, January 7, 2010, 2:59 PM by [Kathy Flanders](#).

Karen M. Vail, Ph.D

Professor and Extension Urban Entomologist

Entomology and Plant Pathology

2431 Joe Johnson Drive

205 Ellington Plant Sciences Bldg.

University of Tennessee

In Cindy's Garden

Cindy Kryscio

While working on thoughts for an article this month I have been doing my usual reading from the garden sites to which I am connected. I have learned many tips and the captivating histories of some very old and valued plants. I had wanted to begin on one of the plants that had been submitted, but as of yet I do not feel I have enough favorites to make most popular picks. So will hold on and give others time to drop me your favorite. ckryscio@charter.net

Along the way, reading through stories, tips and neat ideas, I ran across a very interesting article about making use of those old pots, which we collect from the nurseries when we purchase plants. I save mine in hopes of repotting some of my smaller plants one day into a larger pot. Often I look at the garden centers for pretty pots to be able to add color and style to a patio or porch, but many of these have price tags a bit on the high side. The following article provides a good way not only to recycle our pots, but also to use the creative side that is in us all. It sounds like a fun project that could be done with friends or children. I hope you find it a neat and useful idea. With imagination they can be something unique and colorful.

Dress up black nursery pots

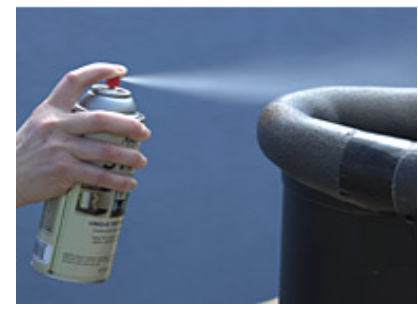
Do you have a stack of plastic nursery pots in your garage? Well, start now and by next spring you can make them into a stack of attractive pots. Here's an idea for making them look good enough for the garden without spending a lot of time or a small fortune. You'll make rolled-edge, stone-look containers from nursery pots that have been dressed up, for about \$10 each in materials and a trip to the hardware store.

STEP ONE — This technique works best on sturdy pots with rims. First wash the pot well and dry it completely so the paint will stick to the plastic. Also, sand the pot lightly with fine sandpaper to scuff up the surface. The pipe insulation comes with a lengthwise slit in it. Pull the insulation apart along this slit and slide it onto the rim of the pot to see how long a piece you need to fit around the top edge. With scissors, cut the insulation to the right length, then remove it.



STEP TWO — Apply a bead of construction adhesive, such as Liquid Nails®, to the top edge of the lip of the pot. Replace the insulation on the lip and place a piece of duct tape over the insulation where the two ends meet. The tape will hold it onto the pot and hide the gap, as well. You'll be painting over the tape, so smooth it down to make it blend into the rim.

STEP THREE — Place the pot on a couple bricks or a piece of scrap wood outdoors so you can paint all the way to the bottom edge. Spray the outside of the pot and the insulation with paint, as well as the top 2 in. of the inside. The number of coats you'll need depends on the color of your plastic pot. I liked the look of the black plastic showing through the paint, so I used a single coat. If you want to completely hide the underlying color, wait the time recommended on the can and apply a second coat.



After the paint is dry, spray or brush on a clear coat of sealer to protect the finish and give the pot a nice glazed look. A water-based urethane, like Varathane® Outdoor Spar Urethane, is good to use because it won't yellow when exposed to sunlight.

That's all there is to creating a pot like this. Check out our Web extra for more tips and creative effects you can get with paint — the possibilities are almost endless!

This article comes from the site called Garden Gate, thanks for all the work you do to make our gardening efforts more beautiful! <http://www.gardengatenotes.com>



Bon appetit! Some birds just don't comprehend gourmet cuisine.

I have become hard-core and made my first purchase of mealworms for feeding wild birds. However, the birds don't seem to be as excited about it as I am. You can purchase the larvae as live mealworms in a carton that looks something like what you may get if you purchase red wigglers (true worms) for fish bait. As described in last week's column, you can use these to start your own little mealworm colony, or simply feed them to the birds and go buy more. At R&J Feed Supply in Jackson, there are 500 of them in the carton. You have to wonder who counts them. The canister is about the size of a grapefruit, so it takes up little space in the refrigerator.



There was no odor, or at least none I could detect, and not being squeamish, it went in right beside my canister of cottage cheese. (No, I am not worried about getting the two confused, as I keep a clear head.) I also bought a package of freeze-dried mealworms. This was about the same cost, around \$9, but the package contains about 2,800 mealworms. These were in a nice Ziplock bag and looked clean and crisp. I thought about trying one but decided against it.

At home, I saw no sign of the birds I had determined to be most desperate for this high protein fare the phoebes and bluebirds, insect eaters that will not eat bird seed or suet. I did see my lone winter resident mockingbird and decided he or she was mealworm worthy. This mockingbird had been getting a few grapes from me each day, and I had begun to give it a little grape jelly mixed with peanut butter, which it seemed to like but not relish.

In fact, it began to mostly forego these foods in favor of a couple of apples that I had impaled with some small limbs deliberately pruned into points for that purpose. The bird ignored these apples until they were brown and thoroughly frozen. There is no accounting for taste, but then, I've never tried a frozen brown apple. The bird had worked on these apples so diligently that they were slightly hollowed out, so I first tried sprinkling a few of the freeze-dried mealworms into these excavations.

Hurrying back to the house, I watched from the window, and soon the mockingbird was back, avidly eating the apple flesh all around the mealworms, leaving them untouched. I had been informed that live mealworms were preferred, so I made another dash into the cold to sprinkle a few of these onto the apples.

Of course, in the few minutes it took for the mockingbird to return, the mealworms that had begun to wiggle in the warmth of 'my palm had stopped moving and were probably frozen solid atop the freeze-dried mealworms atop the frozen apple.

Next I made a "double boiler" arrangement to keep the mealworms warm by setting a few in a small shallow bowl that I set atop a deeper bowl filled with hot water. I put this on the top of the gate near the apples. There it sat, steaming in the cold air and ignored, until it, too, was frozen solid.

I'm not giving up. Mealworms must be great fare, as the people at Petco and PetSmart informed me. They are fed not only to birds but to reptiles, amphibians and even sugar gliders. Maybe I will have to try one to show the mockingbird how it's done.

Carol Reese is an ornamental horticulture specialist with The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service. For more information, call your county extension agent.

A Landscape That Attracts Birds Has Natural Pest Control

By C. Rae Hozer, Cumberland County Master Gardener

Gardeners should follow the old advice “Know your enemies’ enemies and make them your friends”. Lots of insect pests damage landscape plants by sucking plant juices, munching on leaves or other plant parts and/or by spreading diseases from plant to plant as they feed. And other nasty pests like ticks, chiggers and mosquitoes come looking for blood when people venture out-of-doors to walk in the woods, tend a garden, or to view and enjoy greenery and beautiful flowers growing outside. All these pests could be called a gardener’s “enemies”. On the other hand some insects, a few animals and many birds are natural enemies of the pests named earlier. These “enemies of your enemies” prey on one or more of an insect’s various life forms– eggs, larvae (such as grubs, maggots and caterpillars), and adult insects. For natural pest control, design a landscape that attracts insect eaters.

One sure way to make birds your friends and your allies in the fight against harmful insects- create a good wildlife environment. You may prefer as do I, to attract insect eating birds rather than relying exclusively on synthetic chemical pesticides. Of course, pest control isn’t the only reason to entice birds to your yard. Many folks like watching and learning about birds as much or more than they care about having a nice lawn and pretty flower beds.

Wild bird habitat must have available water and suitable food. Birds need fresh water year-round. Only water fowl like ducks and wading birds such as herons can take advantage of deep water in lakes, ponds and rivers. Other birds require shallow water for drinking and bathing. That makes a birdbath the best “bird-magnet” you can buy.

Landscape shrubs that are good food sources for birds include hollies, sumacs, roses, brambles like blackberries and raspberries, elderberries, blueberries, and viburnum. Mahonia (Oregon grape holly) are evergreen shrubs that bloom during February or March in the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee. Seedy fruits shaped like grapes form in clusters at branch tips during May. The fruit is green at first then turns purple as it ripens. As soon as Mahonia fruit gets ripe cardinals begin gobbling up the berries. Trees that provide food for birds include firs (seeds from cones are available in late fall), serviceberry (spring blossoms attract insects which some birds eat while other birds eat the berries that form later), maples (seeds and insects), hackberries are taller shade trees (berries), hawthorns have thorny branches which protect nesting birds from predators (hummingbirds get nectar from hawthorn flowers and eat insects around them, other birds eat the berries), and junipers make good nest sites (also a source of winter berries).

Birdfeeders help supplement the natural food supply and have been shown to improve the survival rates for over-wintering birds. Black oily sunflower seeds appeal to many species of birds living in Tennessee. These and other varieties of seed can be offered in feeders. A feeding platform or shelf at the base of a hopper filled with seeds are two types of birdfeeders that large perching birds like cardinals can use easily. Smaller perching seed eaters like gold finches and red polls will flock to hanging tube feeders. Insect eaters such as woodpeckers, bluebirds, nuthatches, and tit mice easily cling to the sides of hanging suet feeders while they eat.

Master Gardener Rae, mgardenerrae@frontiernet.net.
pictures from the internet



January 2010 Plant of the Month — American Arborvitae

Submitted by Dr. Susan Hamilton

The American Arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*) is an easy and adaptable evergreen that can thrive in almost any landscape situation. Hundreds of cultivars have been introduced which allow this native, northeastern U.S. plant to fill almost any landscape niche.

From miniature selections like 'Mossy' growing to just one foot tall and 'Hetz Midget' growing to two feet to 'Green Giant' growing up to 30 feet tall, these plants can fulfill many uses in the landscape. Cultivars also tolerate a range of soil conditions. American arborvitae can be found growing in the wild in swampy, damp conditions as well as in the dry cracks and crevices of rocky cliffs. It can equally tolerate a range of light conditions, thriving in light-shade to full-sun.

One of my favorite features of American Arborvitae is its fine foliage texture. The evergreen, scaly foliage grows in fan-like sprays making for a soft, fine texture. Some stellar selections are valued for their striking foliage colors too like the bright gold foliage of 'Yellow Ribbon', 'Lutea', and 'Sunkist'; the orange-bronze color of 'Rheingold' and 'Fire Chief'; and the showy variegated foliage of 'Sherwood Frost' and 'Wansdyke Silver'. I like to have a gold or variegated selection in my landscape to brighten up my winter garden.

Many different forms along with varied sizes and colors allow for a range of landscape uses of American arborvitae. For a privacy screen and nice backdrop plant, you can't beat 'Green Giant', 'Smaragd', 'Emerald Green', and 'Degroot's Spire'. Round and spherical forms like 'Bowling Ball', 'Rheingold', and 'Hetz Midget' make good foundation plants or good decorative container plants. Pyramidal forms such as 'Emerald Green', 'Sunkist', and 'Yellow Ribbon' can make nice specimen or accent plants.

For ideal performance, I recommend growing American arborvitae in a well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. Foliage density will loosen up in too much shade. In hot and dry weather, periodic, deep waterings are advisable, especially when these plants are grown as foundation plants. Maintain a good three- to four-inch layer of mulch around the plants. Fertilizer and pruning are not required, which is another added benefit!

Dr. Susan Hamilton is an Associate Professor of Plant Sciences and Director of the [UT Gardens](#) at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture in Knoxville. The UT Gardens are open public gardens that serve public horticulture teaching and research needs. Locations include Knoxville and Jackson.



Some Arborvitae selections are valued for their striking colors, for example the bright gold foliage of 'Sunkist.'

Wanted: Garden Ideas! Great! or Small.

Contributors to this month's newsletter include: Cindy Kryscio, Melissa Moore, Lorene Robinson, Manuel McKnight, Linda Laney, Bill Wyatt, Carol Reese, Rae Hozer, Sue Hamilton and Beth Babbit.

Keep contributing.
Keep reading.
Keep sharing.

Sue Ann Barnes, Editor
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Graduation and Awards Banquet of the Madison County Master Gardener February 4, 6:30 PM

This is a time for recognition of the new and of the not so new members of our group.
Please see Bill's note on Page 1.

Location:
West Tennessee Research and Education Center

Please bring a Dish.
Drinks and BBQ will be provided.

Some Well Deserved Praise

From: Babbit Beth <ebabbit@utk.edu>
Subject: WOW! What an annual report!
To: "Bill Wyatt"
<wwyatt1@tennessee.edu>
Date: Friday, January 15, 2010, 1:10 PM

I just opened up the most interesting package... It was the Madison County Annual Report! WOW! What a fantastic job!

The yearbook is beautiful! I can't wait to show this off at Winter School.
Please share my appreciation with your group!

Sincerely,
Beth