

## CONGRATULATIONS TO HARD WORKING MGS

Thirty-six Master Gardeners were honored for exceptional work at the annual recognition dinner on November 13 at Gray. The VIP award is given to Master Gardeners after they have reported volunteer and continuing education hours for 3 consecutive years. Earning VIP status were: **Lisa Bradley, Penny Hahne, Junella McClellan, Lynn Carson, Valerya Hyrne, Gene Moody, Sandee Cook, Lisa Jones, Mamie Pecktol, Gwyn Duncan, Sharron Lane, Gini Powell, Bill Grigsby Jr., Martin Litz, Sally Richard, Nancy Haas, Laura Martin, Lisa Stair, Barbara Voigt, and Kathleen Wagner.**

The 5 Year award goes to those Master Gardeners who have reported volunteer hours and continuing education hours for 5 consecutive years (2 years beyond the VIP award). Five Year awards were given to **Melissa Arrowood, Laurie Feit, Dennis Marshall, Sebrina Wilson-Bader, Benny Francisco, Michael May, Lois Bronson, Michelle Hatley, Gene Morgan, Susan Cadwallader, Ben Hunter, Betty Jane Castle, Kenneth Hyche, Patricia Chapman, and Patricia Jessee.**

The honor of Lifetime Membership was presented to **Marie Kasten.** A lifetime MG has contributed volunteer hours and attended continuing education hours for 10 consecutive years. Congratulations to all.

## ENROLL NOW FOR WINTER SCHOOL

The members of the Master Gardener Advocacy Board personally invite each Tennessee Master Gardener to attend the Tennessee Master Gardener Winter School which will be held in Lebanon, Tennessee on February 28th, 29th and March 1st. This is to be a state-wide annual event that will be packed full of classes and activities to help volunteers become better leaders and educators. Attendees will select one of two tracks, each of which is two days long.

### Leadership Track \$60 (Thursday and Friday)

This program track has been specifically designed to provide county association officers and leadership solutions to difficult issues. Are the IRS rules for non-profit groups trying Master Gardener group treasurers? Are volunteers puzzled when organizing Master Gardener projects? Is communicating with Master Gardeners a challenge? Answers to these questions and other opportunities and challenges for Master Gardener leaders will be answered through interactive games and skits in the leadership track at the 2008 Winter School.

### Educator Track \$60 (Friday and Saturday)

This track is for individuals who desire to teach Master Gardener topics. This is an active training covering the psychology and processes of learning and putting this knowledge into action. MGs will hear, see and participate in the following topics: How to give a talk and How to give a demonstration, including basic teaching and learning principles. The Educator Track will be held on Friday, February 29 through March 1, 2008. On Saturday, March 1, 2008, MGs will practice effective teaching techniques including: extended talks, demonstrations and activities on one specific topic. The content aspect for this day will be a specific topic in either: Basic Botany, Landscape Design or Propagation.

Winter School continued from page 1

**Registration**

Registration should be submitted prior to February 25. Late registrations will not be guaranteed meals or materials. All interested Master Gardeners should contact their County Extension office to be registered on the SUPER system. Meals and materials will be provided for each track. Checks payable to The University of Tennessee will be received in the county office at the time of registration.

For information on Lebanon Hotels, visit: <http://www.hotels-rates.com/Lebanon/TN/usa/#visited=true>

## CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW NETMGA OFFICERS

Congratulations to the following MGs who have agreed to serve as the leaders for NETMGA for the 2008 year:

- Valerya Hyrne, President
- Pamela Pope, Vice President;
- Lisa Bradley, Secretary
- Connie Dean, Treasurer
- Gywn Duncan, Certification Chair
- Sandee Cook, Program Chair
- Dennis Marshall, Projects Chair
- Sally Richard, Membership Chair
- Kathy and Larry Wagner, Hospitality

We appreciate their willingness to serve!

## TIME TO PAY DUES!!

It's time to pay Master Gardener Yearly Dues. These dues entitle you to continue to receive the MG Thymes. Interns from the fall 2007 class have already paid dues for the 2008 year. Thanks for paying promptly so we don't have to end your subscription.

### 2008 NETMGA Membership Form

Membership dues are \$15.00 per year and are due by January 31, 2008. Please make your check out to NETMGA and mail to: Sally Richard 137 Bentwood Lane Gray, TN 37615

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Please check if you **cannot** receive the newsletter via e-mail \_\_\_\_\_



**Chris' Corner**

**CHRIS RAMSEY**  
**SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT**  
 (423) 279-2723

This past year was the most exciting year yet for the Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Program. This year, 130 volunteers submitted 11,633 volunteer hours and 2,429 continuing education hours. This is a value and an impact of \$204,159.00 to the Northeast Tennessee area. Just keep reporting your efforts and remember that you don't have to wait until the September 30, 2008 deadline to submit hours. Our certification officer for 2008 is Gwyn Duncan. Paper report forms can be submitted directly to Gwyn. Call me if you need a report form.

The certificates and pins were mailed the middle of December for those Master Gardeners who

were unable to attend the annual recognition dinner. Let me know if you did not receive yours.

Our most significant activity this year was the 2007 State Master Gardener Conference which has brought NETMGA recognition from as far away as Oklahoma with many southern states attending. The conference, attended by UT Extension administrators, brought much needed awareness to strengthen our program at the state level. Thank you for your support!

The next statewide Master Gardener event will be the Tennessee Master Gardener Winter School which will be held in Lebanon, TN on February 28, 29 and March 1, 2008. This event will include a two-day leadership track and a two-day educational track. You will only be able to attend one of these sessions. Master Gardeners will need to register through the Sullivan County Extension Office. We will coordinate travel if there is enough interest. Call 279-2723 for more details.

**SIGN UP NOW FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Two annual MG events are coming up and volunteers are needed. The first event is the **Farm Expo** scheduled for Jan 18, 19, 20 at Meadowview Convention Center. Workers are needed to sell tickets and direct traffic and to staff the information booth inside the main hall. Call Doug Hilton to volunteer at 423-239-9433. The schedule of needed workers for the Farm Expo is as follows:

**Ticket sales and direction**

Jan 18	6:00 to 9:00 pm	1-2 people needed
Jan 19	3:00 - 6:00 pm	3 people needed
Jan. 20	3:00 - 6:00 pm	2 people needed

**Information booth**

Jan 18	11:45 - 3:00	2 people needed
	3:00 - 6:00	3 people needed
	6:00 - 9:00	3 people needed
Jan 19	9:45 - 12:30	3 people needed
	12:30 - 3:00	3 people needed
	3:00 - 6:00	3 people needed
Jan. 20	12:45 - 3:00	2 people needed
	3:00 - 5:00	3 people needed

**Home Builders' Association Greater Kingsport's Home and Garden Show** is the second event. It is also held at the Meadowview Convention Center during Feb. 29 and March 1 and 2, 2008. During the show Master Gardeners will staff an information booth inside the main hall answering gardening questions and giving information about the Master Gardener Program. Helpers are needed at the following times:

Feb. 29	12:30 - 4:00	1 person needed
March 1	4:00 - 7:30	3 people needed
March 2	11:30 - 2:30	2 people needed
	2:30 - 5:00	1 person needed

**New e-mail address for  
 Doug Hilton:  
 appfair@embarqmail.com**

## Learn From Gardening Workshops at Flat Rock, NC

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Organic Growers School will take place on March 8<sup>th</sup> at the Blue Ridge Community College in Flat Rock, NC. This is a day of workshops for beginning gardeners to commercial growers and is open to the public. The program for the day includes practical, regional appropriate organic growing and permaculture workshops, homesteading, and rural living classes, a seed exchange, a trade show and a children's program for little ones aged 7 - 12.

Last year this conference drew over 1500 participants from 15 states. This year participants may choose four one-and-a-half hour workshops from over 60 themed- tracks. The tracks are: Gardening, Nurturing Healthy Soils, Livestock, Alternative Energy Options, Commercial Farmers, Pest Management, Homesteading, Fruit Production, Herbs, Sustainable Forestry, Urban Growing, Sustainable Landscaping and Cooking.

There are also several hands-on, half-day workshops for an additional \$5.00 fee. These include: Shitake Mushroom Production, Dry Stack Stone, Herbal Medicine Making, Earthen Building, Collecting and Growing native Grasses, Goat Cheese Making, Draft Horses, Build your own walk-in cooler, Fruit Tree Grafting and Organic Home Brewing.

The cost for the conference is \$40.00 for those who register before Feb. 28. After this Early Bird period, the registration fee is \$60.00. Those interested in the half-day workshops must register by Feb. 28. To register online go to [www.organicgrowersschool.org](http://www.organicgrowersschool.org) after Jan. 15 or request a mailed registration form from [info@organicgrowersschool.com](mailto:info@organicgrowersschool.com). Or, you may call at 828-450-7996.

**Editor's Note:**

The information above was taken from an article in the Bristol Herald Courier, December 13, 2007.

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## Stop the invaders! MGs Get Tough at Tipton Haynes



Did you know that many of the native plants found in the Tipton Haynes Historic Site in Johnson City were identified two hundred years ago by French botanist and explorer Andre Michaux? Are you surprised to learn that since that time Tipton Hynes, like so many other public parks, has been infested with exotic invasives which are crowding out the native plants? Would you believe that when the invasives are removed, the native plants rejuvenate forming areas of beautiful wildflowers?

This is what Tipton Haynes volunteer Bob Keiter discovered last year when he began clearing some of the Andre Michaux Trail of its privet, bush honeysuckle, winter creeper, and trees of heaven. Bob and his wife, Beth, who is the volunteer gardener at Tipton Haynes, were so delighted with their work that they recently gave a presentation about it to state commissioners visiting the site.

Tipton Haynes is a circumscribed area of about 20 acres about a quarter of which is forest. It is bounded by two roads, residential land, and commercial property. Currently volunteers are involved in the ambitious project of removing all of the exotic invasives in order to create a wildflower sanctuary. The trails at Tipton Haynes are used for educational purposes, for guided wildflower hikes and for programs with children. This project has been approved for Master Gardener hours and is a good way for Master Gardeners to learn about the problem of invasive exotics and how to identify some of the culprits.

This year's attack against the invasives at Tipton Haynes will begin in mid January. Naturally weather will dictate when work can be done. Volunteers have usually worked on Friday mornings, but are welcome any time. Interested MGs should e-mail or phone Bob. He will schedule work days based on availability of people. Bob plans to meet with each volunteer on site to familiarize him or her with the area and the plants needing uprooting. It will be important to share knowledge, especially so that wanted plants are not accidentally removed. After training, people may work on their own or with a partner and go anytime they like.

The weed wrench tool has been Bob's most valuable ally on this project. At least 3 weed wrenches will be available for use by volunteers. MGs who may have their own weed wrenches are asked to bring them when they come or to loan them to other workers. (This tool may be purchased on the internet) When the weed wrench has not been enough, a mattock has been used to loosen the soil with minimal disturbance. Bob has used Round Up only for invasives that are wedged in rocks and cannot be uprooted, because of the possibility of accidentally inhibiting the growth of wild flowers.

This is a great way to get some winter exercise while helping the environment. For more information or to volunteer contact Bob Keiter at 423-928-7951 or [keiter2b@embarqmail.com](mailto:keiter2b@embarqmail.com).

## LEARN ABOUT “NO SPRAY ROSES”



Old Blush  
Image courtesy of Kaye

Dr. Mark T. Windham, Professor of Plant Pathology, University of Tennessee College of Agriculture will speak on “No Spray Roses” at the SAPS meeting Thursday, January 17 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The talk will be held at the Jonesborough Farm Bureau office meeting room. The presentation is free and open to the public.

Dr. Windham will be speaking about his two passions: Roses (his hobby) and Plant Pathology (his occupation). Dr. Windham is a Research Plant Pathologist at the University of Tennessee. He is part of the internationally known Dogwood Research Team at UT which has introduced five disease resistant dogwood cultivars in nursery commerce over the past 10 years. Mark's research also involves evaluating the Encore Azaleas and several series of Shrub Roses. He is past president of the Knoxville Rose Society chapter. He is a superb plant man and his presentations are always very informative as well as entertaining.

**Directions from I-26** --Take Exit 17 (Hwy 354 -Jonesborough) and travel 3 1/2 miles to Farm Bureau Building on right. Park in back of building and meeting room is also in rear of FB Building.

**Directions from Jonesborough:** from Hwy 11-E go north on Hwy 354 to Farm Bureau Building on left of highway.

## HOW MUCH DID IT RAIN?



If you know the answer, CoCoRaHS needs your help. The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow Network is looking for volunteers to observe and report precipitation. Many agencies, including the National Weather Service, look at the observations by local reporters. To participate, you will need a 4 inch diameter rain gauge and either telephone or internet to report daily results.

The website [www.cocorahs.org](http://www.cocorahs.org) provides an online training slide-show for those who wish to participate. For those without internet, contact Craig Carpenter of the National Weather Service in Morristown at (423) 586-3771. All are welcome to check the daily reports online to see how much rain fell across town or across the country.

## WINTER GARDENING SEMINAR

The Annual Winter Gardening Seminar at Warrior's Path State Park in Kingsport, will be held Jan 12, 2008 from 10 AM till Noon. The guest speaker is Dick Birr who will present a program on gardening using native trees and shrubs. Admission is free but pre-registration is required. For more information contact Marty Silver, Park Naturalist, at 423-239-6786 or e-mail [Marty.Silver@state.tn.us](mailto:Marty.Silver@state.tn.us).



## SPONTANEOUS ERUPTION

The following is a guest article written by 2007 MG intern Sylvia Lagergren

There is an explosive element that occurs in the plant world. Take the Jerusalem artichoke, for example. My interest in this plant was whetted a few years back when my friend Jeanne was helping me distinguish its flowers from those of a certain sunflower. She told me about its edible root (and I am always interested in edibles.) Later on I read that that plant is not an artichoke nor is it from Jerusalem, but the name is a corruption from the Italian, "*girasole*." It does belong to the sunflower family, *Helianthus tuberosus*. So, there is the technical information for you since edifying as well as edible interests are the general purpose of this article.



Jerusalem Artichokes seedforsecurity.com

The bargain was too good to resist in one of those early catalogs of spring, so I sent away for five tubers of the Jerusalem artichoke and dutifully planted them as instructed. (Inwardly, I choke even now as I think how stupid I was). Anyway, the instructions were to plant them in any soil, any place, any light, any moisture and they would thrive for sure.

This was my first encounter with Spontaneous Eruption -plants which seem to appear explosively out of nowhere. Yes. Here I've gone out, bought and planted Jerusalem artichokes. Soon I notice an eruption of similar plants nearby. Lo and behold – they are springing up in gay profusion all over creation. Surely not Jerusalem artichokes! I examine the leaf structure, stem, root and all that stuff. Yes. They are. And are they growing any place, any soil, any moisture, any way? You bet.

The same phenomenon occurred one spring when I found a thriving patch of trailing arbutus, that sweet smelling tiny little tubular flower with leather leaves that grows in untrodden places. Naturally I was compelled to have it in my own collection. So, from this patch I transplanted a tiny piece, noting carefully how it was facing the sun, what sort of plants grew near it, what sort of soil, and all that stuff. Tenderly I carried it, walking about two miles, I'm sure, and found a nest for it near my house. So sweet. So delicate. I visited it regularly and said prayers over it.

*Slowly* and surely it began to spread – like a half inch per season. But within months after all this effort I happened across an *entire acre* of trailing arbutus, *exploding* in bloom from under the dried leaves just across the creek and *on my own property!*

Another case. I happen to love persimmons and at my family reunion down in North Carolina a few years back, I saved the pits from several fruits that grew on a tree in the churchyard there. I brought them home and planted them, and they came up! Did they ever come up! I should not have prayed over them. I had so many little trees that I began transplanting them all over – any place, any sun, any moisture, any meeny miny, mo. Not a one perished. Such a green thumb. Did I mention that I lived on the side of a mountain in Hampton? I discovered that I was fairly surrounded by a forest of persimmon trees. Spontaneous Eruption!

Lastly, the lady slipper. My neighbor Theresa and I stole a couple of lady slippers from Pansy's property. It's OK because we told her about it afterwards. Well, in defense of us, we knew she was going to plant grass there anyway and we were acting to save the environment. Once again, I tried to copy its homeland and planted mine beside a dead log with laurel bushes and oaks nearby. I gave it my best wishes on a daily basis. And it lived but it hasn't bloomed yet. *However*, only ten feet away from it an entire colony of lady slippers burst into their first bloom the very next year. I counted 12 blooms! Can you believe it?

There's only one way to explain it. And this article too. It just spontaneously erupted.



Northeast Tennessee  
Master Gardener Association  
c/o  
UT Extension Sullivan County  
3258 Highway 126, Suite 104  
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<http://netmga.net>

<http://mastergardeners.tennessee.edu>

## 2008 DATES TO WATCH

<b>Jan 5</b>	<b>Chipping of the Greens 10:00 - 2:00 Sycamore Shoals, Elizabethton, TN</b>
<b>Jan 12</b>	<b>Winter Gardening Seminar Warrior's Path St. Park, Kingsport</b>
<b>Jan 17</b>	<b>SAPS Program – No Spray Roses Jonesborough Farm Bureau, Jonesborough</b>
<b>Jan 18, 19, 20</b>	<b>Farm Expo – Meadowview Convention Center Kingsport, TN</b>
<b>Feb 29 - Mar 1</b>	<b>Home and Garden Show- Meadowview Convention Center, Kingsport, TN</b>
<b>Feb 28, - Mar 1</b>	<b>TN Master Gardener Winter School – Lebanon, TN</b>
<b>March 8</b>	<b>Organic Growers School – Flat Rock, NC</b>