

Welcome to 2018!!

2018 is ripe with promise! We have so much to look forward to, not the least of which is TWO Supermoons in January. The January 31 Supermoon (Blue Moon) will also coincide with a Lunar Eclipse (Blood Moon)!

Ready to get a jump on volunteer hours and CEUs for 2018? See the Calendar of Events located at the end of this issue!



2017 MG Class Spring Gardening Expo



The 2017 Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener class will host a spring gardening expo at the Ron Ramsey Agricultural Center. The class decided such a project has potential to bring wide exposure to UT Extension, NETMGA, and the Center's missions. The goal is to entertain and educate the Northeast Tennessee region. The hope is that success and a broad reach will lead to this becoming an annual event that funds the endowment and grows associations and programming.

There will be a variety of speakers presenting a range of topics; some suggested topics are raised-bed gardening, water management/rain gardens, container gardening, hydroponics, succulents, and even some out-of-the box topics like East Tennessee truffles.

A combination of lectures and hands-on workshops will be offered. There will also be static displays to promote programs and opportunities offered by associations and the Center.

The project is a huge undertaking that will require skills and dedication from many Master Gardeners. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Selena Harmon at selenaharmon1@gmail.com. If you know of a great speaker, instructor, or vendor, please contact Karen Rowell at karenrowell94@gmail.com.

NETMGA Board Meeting

Monday, **January 8** at 6:00 p.m. in the Sullivan County Extension Office, 140 Spurgeon Lane Blountville, TN.

NETMGA Annual Awards and Recognition Banquet

The NETMGA Annual Awards and Recognition Banquet will be held on Monday, **February 5, 2018**; in The Ron Ramsey Agricultural Building at 140 Spurgeon Lane in Blountville. Dinner will be at 6:30. Doors open at 6:00 for networking and fellowship. Please bring your family or a friend and one or two of your favorite covered dishes to share. Drinks will be provided. We will have door prizes! Come and enjoy a night with your fellow Master Gardeners. In case of inclement weather, we follow the schedule of Northeast State Community College.

How Your Time Counts

Good day, fellow Master Gardeners. I hope each of you had a wonderful Holiday season. During 2017 we experienced many opportunities to prosper in our program by volunteering at our local gardens, community service projects, the Extension Office, and taking classes to increase your knowledge about gardening. The 2017 year brought many new things for our organization; including a new Extension Office, an updated “TENNESSEE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM Volunteer Handbook”, and new opportunities to serve the public. This handbook has the changes to how we are classified as Master Gardeners.

You may find the complete set of guidelines at: <https://extension.tennessee.edu/MasterGardener/Documents/W099-%20Volunteer.%20November.pdf>

The Importance of Reporting Volunteer Service Hours

Tennessee Extension Master Gardener volunteers may consider reporting service and education hours trivial, but the importance of this task is critical to the success and continued support of the TEMG program. Quantifying time invested and the number of people reached through program activities are essential measures that demonstrate the worth of the TEMG program. The ability to document impact enables successful competition for funding that is critical to the program’s financial survival. TEMG volunteers should understand this local and statewide value in reporting their activities and time spent in service. TEMGs must report service hours regularly to meet the program policies for certification and to maintain liability coverage for volunteers through the university.

Levels of Participation for Extension Master Gardener Volunteers

Intern Extension Master Gardener Volunteer – Participating in the 40 hours of training from UT Extension and beginning 40 hours* of initial volunteer service and eight hours of continued education (if required by the county coordinator and association or group).

Certified Extension Master Gardener Volunteer – Has completed 40 hours of volunteer service and any required additional education hours within one year of completing 40 hours of intern training classes** The Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Volunteer certificate is valid for one year. Recertification for volunteers who wish to maintain certified status should include an annual minimum of 25 hours* volunteer service, eight education hours, completing the TEMG Volunteer Memorandum Of Agreement (MOA) and submitting to the county coordinator.

Certified 10, 15, 20 or 25-year Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Volunteer – A certified TEMG who has provided 10 years of active service to the program is eligible for recognition based on their years of service. Name badges will reflect years of service and recognition will be given for every additional five years of certified service. Service statuses of 10, 15, 20 and 25 years require an annual 15 hours combined of volunteer and/or continued education, and signing of the annual TEMG volunteer MOA. To be eligible for these advanced service statuses, records of service must be accurate for recommendation and approval by the appropriate Tennessee Extension agent/county coordinator. All records must be in line with the guidelines of the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Program. Out-of-state years may be eligible for years of service recognition if records are complete and meet the above criteria.

* Hours will not count unless they have been reported in the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener database.

** If 40 hours of intern training were completed, but the initial 40 hour service requirement for certification for the Extension Master Gardener Program was not completed, a person may request being able to attain initial certification. They will need to sign a Volunteer Memorandum of Agreement and complete 40 hours of volunteer service and eight hours of continuing education (if required by county) within one year. If it has been longer than five years since they completed the 40 hours of education, they will need to audit the local intern training class (the coordinator can decide if fees are required).

I hope this will better help you understand the importance of following these guidelines. If you have any questions feel free to give me a call 423-863-4599 (Cell) or 423-574-1919 (Office).

Great news! We will be moving to a new program for recording our hours around the end of January. Be sure and check your emails for further information. Looking for a great year in 2018.

- Jerry Ramey, NETMGA President

2018 Membership Reminder

Have you paid your 2018 Membership? If not, please complete the form below and send it with your payment to Sally Richard.

2018 NETMGA Membership Form

Membership dues are \$20.00 per year (\$30.00 for a couple) and are due by December 31, 2017.

If dues are not paid by February 1, 2018, there will be a late fee of \$5.00 (\$10 for a couple) assessed. You can also pay your dues at the Annual Recognition Dinner on Monday, February 5, 2018 at the reduced rate.

Please complete the membership form, make note of any changes to your contact information and include the form with your dues.

Make your check payable to **NETMGA** and mail to: Sally Richard 137 Bentwood Lane Gray, TN 37615

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

County _____ Phone _____

E-mail address _____ Class Year _____

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

Please remember to report your volunteer and CEU hours and verify you have met your certification requirements. http://mastergardener.tennessee.edu/tmg_resources/tmg_login.asp

Put These on Your Calendar

No Herb Saplings Meeting in January

January SAPS Program “Wild Kingdom – in an East Tennessee Garden”

Southern Appalachian Plant Society will present “Wild Kingdom – in an East Tennessee Garden” on Thursday, **January 18, 2018**, at 7 pm at the State of Franklin Food City Meeting Room, 920 N. State of Franklin Road, Johnson City. Avid gardener and photographer Susan Okrasinski will delight us with images and tales of her experiences with nature while spending time gardening. She has learned some fascinating things about the insect world and other flying and slithering creatures and will share how much there is to see in our own backyards if we take the time to look.

Susan is a member of the Tri Cities Daylily Society and an active member of the American Hemerocallis Society, for which she has served as our region’s publicity director.

Sponsored by Southern Appalachian Plant Society (SAPS), this program is free and the public is invited.

February Herb Saplings Meeting

Herb Saplings meeting, **February 1**, 7 pm at Exchange Place. “A Romance with Chocolate.” For February we celebrate the food often associated with Valentine's Day. Learn about the cacao tree, the different kinds of chocolate, the health benefits of chocolate, and more with Reeda Tate. Bring a snack to share if you have time. All SAPS members are welcome to attend Herb Saplings meetings.

February 2018 SAPS Program

Joe Hoffman of Hoffman Composting in Johnson City will present “Hoffman Composting – An Inside Look at a Creative Recycling Service” on **Thursday, February 15, 2018**, at 7 pm at BrightRidge Power Company (Johnson City Power Board), 2600 Boones Creek Road (2nd entrance), Johnson City.

Joe Hoffman will describe the services, process and benefits of Hoffman Composting. His business recycles food scraps from households and businesses, diverting 150,000 pounds to date from landfills to produce rich, weed-free compost for gardens and landscaping. Mr. Hoffman is donating one bobcat scoop of compost (pick-up only) for raffle to a lucky winner at the February SAPS meeting.

Sponsored by Southern Appalachian Plant Society (SAPS), this program is free and the public is invited.



Chris' Corner

CHRIS RAMSEY

SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT
(423) 646-9043 cwramsey@utk.edu

Happy New Year! How many days until spring? I know we've only begun to get into winter, but I can't help but think about those 70s of early spring.

Thank you for your many efforts as University of Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Volunteers. Our local Master Gardener group continues to expand its footprint in Northeast Tennessee. We've come a long way in the 16 years I've been involved with the program. Great projects, endowment, strong association, regional agriculture center, strong Master Gardener Volunteers are just some of the thoughts that occupy my mind when I think about the progress of the Northeast Tennessee

Master Gardener Association. Thank You and I fully believe the potential of NETMGA holds much promise for home horticulture impact in our region. I would encourage you to continue to think of ways we can improve the communication and networking of our volunteers, educational focus, and community horticulture impact. We can't assume "the way we did last year" is still the best way. Thank you for your innovative spirit.

In 2018, a new database for capturing volunteer hours will be introduced. We'll be sharing more information about the new improved record-keeping database soon.

NETMGA Projects List

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1
Boundless Playground at Warriors' Path State Park Kingsport
Gwyn Duncan 423-239-0460 geduncan@charter.net</p> <p>2
Carver Peace Gardens Johnson City
Nancy Shilling 423-833-1420 nancyshilling@gmail.com</p> <p>3
Church Hill Senior Citizens Center Garden
Marcia Vandermause mmvdvm@charter.net
Christine Barger 423-288-5115 o773h@hotmail.com</p> <p>4
Exchange Place Living History Farm Kingsport
Earl Hockin-Vegetable Garden ehockin@yahoo.com
Dave Gostomski-Lawns, Trees, etc. e3fan98@yahoo.com</p> <p>5
Harvest of Hope Community Garden Kingsport
Doug Hilton 423-239-9433 howlatthemoon1775@gmail.com</p> <p>6
Johnson City Medical Center, Woodridge Hospital Johnson City
Barbara Voigt 423-467-2013 voigt7b@comcast.net</p> <p>7
Northeast State Community College Gardens to Degrees
Contact Chris Ramsey for details</p> | <p>8
Rocky Mount Living History Site Piney Flats
Don Davis home 423-854-0152, cell 423-943- 2392
donfdavis@aol.com</p> <p>9
Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park Elizabethton
TBA</p> <p>10
Tipton Haynes Historic Site Johnson City
Vern Maddux vjornmaddux@embarqmail.com
Betts Leach BettsL@aol.com</p> <p>11
Vance Community Gardens Bristol
Gini Powell PowellG@btcs.org
Rebecca Craddock Craddockr@btcs.org</p> <p>12 & 13
Projects 12 and 13 are one weekend a year for each of the 4 activities:</p> <p>Johnson City Home Show and Women's Expo
Penny Rutledge pennyrutledge2@aol.com</p> <p>Kingsport MeadowView Home Show
Doug Hilton 423-239-9433 howlatthemoon1775@gmail.com</p> |
|--|--|

“Featured Project” will return in March/April Edition

Websites

Use these websites to find all the details for events at area Tennessee State Parks and Tennessee State Historic Sites:

Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site

<http://www.tipton-haynes.org/>

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park

<http://www.sycamoreshoalstn.org/>

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/sycamore-shoals>

Rocky Fork State Park

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/rocky-fork>

Warriors' Path State Park

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/warriors-path>

Roan Mountain State Park

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/roan-mountain>

Rocky Mount State Historic Site

<http://www.rockymountmuseum.com/>

Exchange Place – Living History Farm

<https://www.exchangeplace.info/>

Steele Creek Park

<http://tn-bristol.civicplus.com/166/Steele-Creek-Park>

The Carter Mansion

<https://sycamoreshoalstn.wordpress.com/category/carter-mansion/>



Feed the birds!

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5 Houseplants So Hardy They Would Even Grow On the Death Star

Don't let a lack of direct sunlight (or an atmosphere) keep you from living with nature.



JEFFREY HAMILTON/GETTY

Just because you don't have a big, sun-facing window doesn't mean you're out of luck when it comes to growing plants indoors. All you have to do is choose a little more carefully, says Karl Gercens, a horticulturist at Longwood Gardens.

Here are our suggestions for plants you can grow successfully in low-lit rooms, including those rooms that exist only on the death star.



DUGWY/GETTY

For the stormtrooper barracks

The ZZ plant (*Zamioculcas zamiifolia*), a member of the philodendron family, is ideal for places where the sun never shines. Gercens says that with proper care, it can even thrive in low-light rooms with only a little supplemental lighting. "The most important thing is to not overwater it. The thick stems are a water-storage mechanism to help it get through seasonally dry times.

For the officers' lounge

Also called mother-in-law's tongue, snake plant (*Sansevieria trifasciata*) is bold and architectural. Gercens recommends it because there are so many cultivars to choose from with interesting leaves in a variety of colors and heights, so you'll be sure to find one that suits your décor. But he cautions that overwatering is a certain death sentence for snake plant. "Be sure to let the plant dry slightly to the touch between waterings, never let it sit in a pan of water."



GABOR GEISLER/GETTY

For the control room

There are lots of palms you can grow indoors, but according to Gercens none of them can top the kentia (*Howea forsteriana*). Proudly display this plant where everyone has a chance to see it. Just make sure you find the real deal, not another palm that looks similar. Gercens explains that you can find lots of cheap palms, like the majesty palm, at big-box stores, but they'll surely lead to pest problems down the road. "The kentia is certainly more expensive than any other palm you can choose, but it's worth it. It resists pests and keeps its elegant look far longer," he says.

For the prisoners' quarters

African violet (*Saintpaulia ionantha*) is a small plant with soft leaves and petals that comes in a variety of colors. It's just the thing to add a spot of cheeriness to a dark and depressing room, since it doesn't need a lot of light to bloom. "If you can provide artificial light to these plants inside a warm home, you may get nonstop blossoms," Gercens says.



ROBERT_HORVAT/GETTY



For the garbage compactor rooms

"What a wonderfully leafy texture this provides to an indoor landscape," Gercens says. Chinese evergreen (*Aglaonema commutatum*) is a bushier plant with leaves of green to silver. It prefers warm, humid air, so Gercens advises placing the pot on a tray of moist pebbles. "The evaporating water from the pebbles will humidify the surrounding air," he explains.

By Rebecca Straus December 8, 2017, for *Organic Life*

JANUARY 2018 Calendar of Events

JAN 13 Orchid Workshop at UT Gardens

10:00am – 12:00pm. This workshop will introduce some of the most popular genera of orchids and explore the growth requirements of these beauties so that you can successfully grow them at home. Instructor: John Tullock. Cost: Garden member \$35/nonmember \$45. Fee includes one tropical orchid plant and one hardy terrestrial variety. (No blooms guaranteed at time of class.) Pre-registration is required: <https://tiny.utk.edu/OrchidClass>

JAN 13 Hypertufa Container Class at UT Gardens

10:00am – 12:00pm. In this workshop we will strive to go beyond the typical hypertufa bowl shaped planter and explore other creative options for molding a planter. Instructor: David Pease. Cost: Garden member \$40/nonmember \$50. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1288

JAN 14 Great Garden Trends at UT Gardens

2:00 – 3:30pm. Join UT Gardens Assistant Director, James Newburn as he shares the winning trial varieties for 2017 and looks forward at the hottest gardening trends for the coming year. Cost: Garden member \$0/nonmember \$5. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1312

JAN 18 SAPS Meeting

7:00pm. Guest Speaker: Susan Okrasinski. Food City Meeting Room, 920 N. State of Franklin Road, Johnson City. Contact: email sapsinfo@embarqmail.com.

JAN 20 Volunteer Day at Rocky Fork State Park

8:00am - 12:00pm. Join the Rocky Fork Staff for a variety of possible projects from trail improvements to exotic-invasive plant removal. Meet at Main Parking Lot. Contact: Park Manager Jesse Germeraad, Phone: 423-637-3709 or Email: Jesse.Germeraad@tn.gov

JAN 21 Small Fruit Production with Steve Stanley

10:00am. Mize Farm & Garden, 251 Old Gray Station Rd., Gray. Admission is free; space is limited so please register at 423-467-2300.

JAN 27 Hypertufa: Fabric Draping Workshop at UT Gardens

10:00am – 12:00pm. This workshop will focus on the art of using fabric to create dramatic, draped containers and sculptures. Instructor: David Pease. Cost: Garden member \$40/nonmember \$50. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1289

JAN 28 Edible Garden Workshop Series: All About Seeds Starting at UT Gardens

2:00 – 4:30pm. Join James Newburn in the greenhouse for this class on starting your own vegetable, flower and herb seeds. We will cover basics of seed starting, direct sowing, light requirements, media selection and share our favorite seed resources. UT Gardens horticulturist, Alice Kimbrell will explore the ABC's of seed saving and give tips for how to best start your own home seed library. Participants will receive a variety of seeds to take home. To register for individual sessions contact Derrick Stowell at (865) 974-7151 or dstowell@utk.edu. Cost for **entire series**: Garden member \$210/nonmember \$230. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1298

Master Gardeners: Report your hours each month!!

FEBRUARY 2018 Calendar of Events

- FEB 1 Herb Saplings Meeting 7:00pm; Exchange Place in Kingsport. Guest Speaker: Reeda Tate
- FEB 3 Honey Bees with John Hamrick
10:00 am. Mize Farm & Garden, 251 Old Gray Station Rd., Gray. Admission is free; space is limited so please register at 423-467-2300.
- FEB 4 Orchid Society of East Tennessee – 1 pm Gray Community Center.
- FEB 4 Edible Garden Workshop Series: Fruit Production for Home Gardens at UT Gardens
2:00 – 4:30pm. UT Extension fruit tree specialist Dr. David Lockwood will lead this session on pruning all types of fruit trees. We will have an extensive indoor presentation followed by an exploration in the garden to look at actual specimens. Participants will be given 'Triple Crown' thornless blackberry plants to take home. To register for individual sessions contact Derrick Stowell at (865) 974-7151 or dstowell@utk.edu. Cost for **entire series**: Garden member \$210/nonmember \$230. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1298
- FEB 5 NETMGA Annual Awards and Recognition Banquet
6:00pm – Doors open for networking and fellowship; 6:30pm Dinner. Please bring your family or a friend and one or two of your favorite covered dishes to share. Ron Ramsey Agricultural Building, 140 Spurgeon Ln, Blountville.
- FEB 6 Washington County Bee Keepers Association
7:00 pm; Gray Ruritan Bldg., Ruritan Dr. (behind fairgrounds), Gray, TN.
- FEB 10 Winter Naturalists' Rally 2018 at Roan Mountain State Park
9:00am. Contact: Friends of Roan Mountain: 423-772-3500, www.friendsofroanmtn.org or Roan Mountain State Park: 423- 772-0190
- FEB 11 Edible Garden Workshop Series: Healthy Soil for Healthy Plants at UT Gardens
2:00 – 4:30pm. Make your garden a success by building healthy vibrant soil. UT Gardens' Kitchen Garden manager Holly Jones will share her favorite techniques for soil building and nutrient management. To register for individual sessions contact Derrick Stowell at (865) 974-7151 or dstowell@utk.edu. Cost for **entire series**: Garden member \$210/nonmember \$230. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1298
- FEB 15 SAPS Meeting
7:00pm. Guest Speaker: Joe Hoffman of Hoffman Composting. At BrightRidge Power Company (Johnson City Power Board), 2600 Boones Creek Road (2nd entrance), Johnson City. Contact: email sapsinfo@embarqmail.com.
- FEB 17 Seed Starting with Melissa Hale
10:00 am. Mize Farm & Garden, 251 Old Gray Station Rd., Gray. Admission is free; space is limited so please register at 423-467-2300.
- FEB 18 Edible Garden Workshop Series: Style and Function in the Edible Garden at UT Gardens
2:00 – 4:30pm. Learn how to apply principles of design to vegetable production for a garden that is both beautiful and functional. From raised bed materials to garden color combinations, we will look at ways to combine vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers for a garden that is as ornamental as it is productive. To register for individual sessions contact Derrick Stowell at (865) 974-7151 or dstowell@utk.edu. Cost for **entire series**: Garden member \$210/nonmember \$230. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1298
- FEB 24 Adopt a Tree at Warriors' Path State Park
10:00am – 12:00pm. You can make a big difference for our future! Help us bring "re-leaf" to Northeast Tennessee by planting tomorrow's forests. For every tree seedling you plant, you will also get one to take home, to plant in your own neighborhood. Come early because supplies of trees are limited! Contact: 423-239-6786; Email: marty.silver@tn.gov
- FEB 25 Edible Garden Workshop Series: Growing with the Seasons—Warm and Cool Season Edibles at UT Gardens
2:00 – 4:30pm. John Tullock shares his experience and expertise in growing vegetables and culinary herbs in the beautiful Tennessee Valley region. Besides popular warm season crops like corn and tomatoes, cool season edibles such as lettuce, broccoli and some lesser known ones will be covered. To register for individual sessions contact Derrick Stowell at (865) 974-7151 or dstowell@utk.edu. Cost for **entire series**: Garden member \$210/nonmember \$230. Pre-registration is required: https://secure.touchnet.com/C21610_ustores/web/classic/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=1298



Northeast Tennessee
Master Gardener Association
c/o
UT Extension Sullivan County
3258 Highway 126, Suite 104
Blountville, TN 37617

<http://netmga.net>

<http://mastergardeners.tennessee.edu>



UT Extension

Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Endowment

Name _____ Spouse _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Daytime Phone _____

I/We would like to contribute to the University of Tennessee Foundation
(Please make checks payable to the University of Tennessee Foundation, Inc.)

My/Our gift is designated for: **Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Endowment (MASTE_06)**

Or other fund: _____

I/We pledge \$ _____ a year for _____ year(s) for a total of \$ _____.

Please remind me/us of our pledge
_____ annually
_____ semi-annually
_____ quarterly

Beginning: _____
Indicate month/year

_____ Enclosed is the first payment on my/our pledge.

_____ I/We would like to make a gift via Credit Card. Circle one: Visa MasterCard Discover.

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: ____/____/____

_____ Enclosed is a one-time gift of \$ _____.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

The Institute of Agriculture

Questions: Please contact Tom Looney at 865-974-8622 or tom.looney@tennessee.edu
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