

Official Publication



# Master Gardener Thymes

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

JAN / FEB 2010

## MIZE GARDEN CENTER HOSTS LECTURES

Master Gardener Martin Litz at Mize Garden Center has created a nice group of talks this winter so that MGs can get a head start on their education hours. Check out the schedule below and pick your favorites. All talks are from 10:00 to 12:00. They are free but participants must pre-register to insure adequate seating. Call 434-1800 to register for the sessions in Johnson City or 467-2300 to register in Gray. Martin is available at 434-1800 if you have questions.

### Mize Johnson City

- Jan. 16 Composting w/Ben Hunter
- Feb. 27 Fruit Trees w/John Hamrick and Seed Germination w/Martin Litz
- March 13 Herbs w/Joy Moore and Rain Gardens w/Joy Stewart

### Mize Gray

- Jan. 30 Composting w/Ben Hunter
- Feb. 6 Herbs w/Joy Moore and Rain Gardens w/Joy Stewart
- Mar. 20 Fruit Trees w/John Hamrick and Seed Germination w/Martin Litz
- April 3 Supporting Your Vegetable Garden w Martin Litz

## LEARN ABOUT FERNS ON JANUARY 21



*Cinnamon Fern*  
(*Osmundastrum*  
*cinnamomeum*),  
Courtesy of wikipedia.org

Dr. Patricia Cox, Botanical Specialist for the Tennessee Valley Authority, will present a free public lecture, "Ferns of the Smokeys", on Thursday, January 21, at 7:00 p.m. at the Johnson City Power Board Auditorium on Boones Creek Rd (Hwy 354.) in Jonesborough. Dr. Cox has 30+ years of experience as a field biologist with 13 years spent in academics at the University of Tennessee. Her area of expertise is plant taxonomy/systematics and plant anatomy. Currently she is working on the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory Project in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, using the trails as transects to map the fern species in the park. Over the past six summers, with the help of volunteers, over 200 miles of 60 trails have been mapped for ferns. This talk is based on the findings of that study.

This program is sponsored by Southern Appalachian Plant Society. For more information, call 348-6572 or e-mail [ijnjmoore@embarqmail.com](mailto:ijnjmoore@embarqmail.com).



## WINTER SCHOOL OFFERS EXCELLENT CLASSES

All Master Gardeners and Interns are invited to attend the 2010 Winter School "Sustainable Solutions" in Murfreesboro, TN on Feb. 17, 18, and 19, 2010. Winter School is sponsored by the Tennessee Master Garden Advocacy Board (TMGAB) to provide educational opportunities for MGs in leadership positions, for interns, and for extension personnel.

This year's Winter School has been kicked up a few notches. It promises excellent national speakers, targeted presentations, a pre-conference workshop, and networking opportunities to enhance the MG experience. Rutherford County Master Gardeners are graciously assisting in this event by adding their personal touch of hospitality.

Two tracks are offered. First is the Educator Track. It costs \$45 and is open to Extension agents and MG educators. This training will provide educators with teaching methods, skills and resources about best gardening practices. The second track is the Leadership Track. It also costs \$45 and is open to Extension agents, all current MG leadership and those considering leadership positions in the county groups. This track will provide guidance and demonstration in best practices for leading, communicating and managing volunteers in county leadership.

Tracks are separate rather than concurrent to allow leaders to participate in education and educators to participate in leadership activities. MG and agents have a choice to participate in only one track if desired. However, participants may attend the entire Winter School (both tracks) for \$75.

The Pre-registration deadline is February 9. Pre-registration is required for each track to ensure enough supplies and refreshments for all participants. MGs have the option to register using a credit card with the link below.

[http://mastergardener.tennessee.edu/tmg\\_resources/advocate/advocates.asp](http://mastergardener.tennessee.edu/tmg_resources/advocate/advocates.asp)

### Mini-Workshop on Yards and Neighborhoods

An Optional Pre-Winter School Tennessee Yards and Neighborhoods (TYN) Workshop will be held February 17 with a free dinner for all participants. The TYN Program is a full delivery program for Extension offices and local water resources folks to partner on educating the public on better landscape management practices. Master Gardeners have the opportunity to provide input on the program to advise coordinators on how to best utilize MG volunteers. MGs may attend this workshop without attending the full Winter School, but must register for the opportunity. This workshop is sponsored by the Tennessee Water Resources Research Center. See the 2010 WS Registration Form for details.

## ERICA GLASENER Returns to Area

Another terrific education opportunity occurs April 10, 2010 when HGTV's Erica Glasener talks at a regional gardening seminar at the Renaissance Center in Kingsport. Erica is the host of the popular show "A Gardener's Diary." The event will run from 9:00 to 2:00. Tickets cost \$25.00 and include a delicious lunch. NETMGA and Keep Kingsport Beautiful are co-hosts. Call KKB at 423-392-8814 to reserve your tickets.



Erica Glasener



### Chris' Corner

**CHRIS RAMSEY**  
SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT  
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chris.ramsey@utk.edu

The Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener program continues to grow thanks to NETMGA. I would encourage you to support this local organization. With increasingly tighter budget and need to operate on less funds, I rely heavily on NETMGA to communicate opportunities and other news to Master Gardeners in Northeast Tennessee.

We have a great leadership team in place and I am excited about 2010 and the opportunities for Master Gardeners in Northeast Tennessee. NET-

MGA meetings are a great way of meeting other MGs and keeping informed about the Master Gardener program. I hope you will attend the bi-monthly NETMGA meetings this year. Please note that NETMGA activities will follow the inclement weather schedule of ETSU in Johnson City.

We have more projects than ever before. There are projects in most of our communities which will make it easier for you to stay involved. Please submit your volunteer hours throughout the year instead of waiting until late in the year.

Don't forget about the 2010 Master Gardener Winter School. This is a great opportunity to meet MGs from across the state, learn, and have fun too! Please let me know if you need information or a registration form.

## ARBORIST TO SPEAK AT FEBRUARY NETMGA MEETING



The first general meeting of NETMGA for 2010 will be held on Monday February 1 at the Gray Community Center. Ray Gilliam, Professional Arborist, will speak on *Preventing Tree Problems in Your Own Yard*. Mr. Gilliam is the owner of Gilliam's Tree Service in Kingsport. Food and fellowship will start at 6:00. The meeting will start at 6:30. Please bring a finger food to share.

Dates for the remaining NETMGA meetings for 2010 are April 5, June 7, August 2, and October 4. Meetings start at 5:30 with fellowship and will be held at the Gray Community Center. All NETMGA members are encouraged to attend.

The 2010 Recognition Banquet will be held on Monday November 29 at 5:30 PM. The event will be held at the Farm Home building (2009 site) depending on availability.

**In the event of snow or other inclement weather, NETMGA has the following policy. If ETSU classes are canceled then NETMGA meetings are also canceled and will be rescheduled.**

### NETMGA BOARD MEETINGS SET

NETMGA Board of Directors meetings will be held in the Executive meeting room at the Appy Fair Grounds at 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM on the following 6 dates below:

Monday, January 11  
Monday, March 8  
Monday, May 10  
Monday, July 12  
Monday, September 13  
Monday, November 8

.....MGs Receive Letter of Thanks.....Richard E Shadden, Secretary and Manager of the Appalachian Fair Grounds, sent a letter to Doug Hilton thanking all Master Gardeners for their hard work at all the Appy Fair sites. He said fairgoers and visitors are very complimentary about the beauty of the sites and their educational nature. He also thanked MGs for working with over 1300 school children last year at the fair grounds. The teachers are especially appreciative of how well the educational projects at the fair grounds fit with their state-mandated curriculum. Mr. Shadden asked MGs to let him know if he could be of assistance to them in any way.

## MEMBERS HONORED AT RECOGNITION DINNER

Many Master Gardeners were honored for their hard work at the annual recognition dinner held November 30, 2009 at the Appalachian Fair Grounds. Receiving **fifteen year pins** were Doug Hilton and Joy Moore. Honored with **lifetime awards** were Barbara Moore and Mary Ward.

**Five year awards** were given to Lynn Carson, Karen Clark, Gwyn Duncan, Bill Grigsby, Jr., Nancy Haas, Penny Hahne, Valerya Hyrne, Jan Jones, Lisa Jones, Sharron Lane, Martin Litz, Laura Martin, Junella McClellan, Lou Ann Moore, Mayme Pecktol, Gini Powell, Lisa Stair, Barbara Voight, and Kathy Wagner.

**VIP awards** for three years of service were presented to Blenda Anderson, Nancy Colquitt, Linda Day, Angie Droke, Karen Drought, Elaine Kolp, Carolyn Martin, Patricia Mazurkiewicz, Catherine Rose, Gail Shaver, Susan Stanley, Johnny Suthers, Teresa Tittle, Larry Wagner, Gerald Watkins, Helen Wilson, Eva Johnson, Pamela Pope, and Karen Campbell.

Congratulations to all these hard working MGs.

## Clearinghouse Established For Better Communication

In an effort to have better communication within Northeast Tennessee Master Gardeners Association, the Board has created a central email that members should send inquiries through. The new email is [netmga2009@yahoo.com](mailto:netmga2009@yahoo.com). This will give everyone one email address that the Board can access and address questions from and also send Association news from. Please be looking for further email communications from NETMGA in the future. We will now send all Association mailings from this mailbox to all members and any correspondence from them will be handled by the Board as a whole. This will include project updates, news from Chris and answers to your questions.



## APPLY NOW FOR FISKARS' GRANT

Community groups across the United States and Canada are about to receive a big boost to their efforts, thanks to **Fiskars Project Orange Thumb**. Fiskars, the world's number one scissors brand and a leader in the garden tool industry, has announced the beginning of its 2010 Project Orange Thumb Grant Program. Applications are currently available for grants worth up to \$2,000 in garden tools and green goods.

Beginning November 13<sup>th</sup>, applications for grants will be available on the Project Orange Thumb website and are open to any community group for use on a gardening project. Past recipients have included school and church groups, master gardener groups and community organizations.

For more information on Project Orange Thumb, visit [www.projectorangethumb.com](http://www.projectorangethumb.com).

## MG ATTENDS SEVERAL CONFERENCES

*Editor's Note: MG Brenda Warner has been busily attending regional and national conferences this year. She is excited to share some of her experiences with the NETMGA community.*

One of the events Brenda attended was the Conference Linking Urban and Rural Communities. This conference centered around the theme " Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food. " This is an initiative that encourages people to eat better and healthier. Some of the suggested methods to achieve that goal are agricultural tourism, inner-city horticulture, and direct marketing of crops and livestock products through CSA's and Farmer's Markets in urban areas.

According to Brenda, " The best speaker was from Colorado. He spoke on how he started a neighborhood movement of planting front and backyards and church properties in vegetable gardens instead of grass. The entire neighborhood eventually joined the movement and started helping. Not only did they get fresh food, the children participated, and it became a social gathering for the neighbors who normally would not have even spoken. The neighborhood community became just that." This conference was sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, Virginia State University School of agriculture and USDA.

### NC Conference

Brenda also attended the 24<sup>th</sup> annual sustainable agriculture conference at Black Mountain, NC Dec 4-6. She attended several break out sessions including one that held a tour at the Black Mountain Community Garden. Brenda says, "This garden is a non-profit where members of the community can rent spaces for a year- round garden. The special techniques for a winter garden were discussed and shown thru a field trip. Field trips to an acre community in Asheville were taken along with a tour of a 7 1/2 acre vegetable farm within 5 minutes of downtown Asheville. This was a conference well worth attending."

### Gathering in the Smokeys

Brenda stayed closer to home for the the All Taxa Biological Inventory in Gatlinburg, Tn.. For the past 10 years researchers have been surveying the Great Smokey Mountains National Park and have found over 9,000 new species. These include fungi, bacteria, mammals, plants, water bears, and everything that is living.

This year's conference featured Dr. Daniel Simberloff, who spoke on invasives. The most inspiring talk was given by Dr. Paul Bartels from Warren-Wilson who worked with Dr. Diane Nelson, ETSU, on water bears. (Brenda didn't know what they were until he showed pictures. MGs will have to ask her to describe them.)

There were National Park Service representatives from Yellowstone, Boston Harbor and Texas who are also conducting All Taxa Biodiversity research. The majority of this is accomplished with Citizen Scientists - volunteers from the general public with varying skill levels who are matched to the job! Brenda says: "**This is folks just like you and me having a positive impact on a very important environmental program!** The website is [www.dlia.org/atbi/](http://www.dlia.org/atbi/) and is well worth your effort to explore."



## Plant A Tree on your Car

The Tennessee Urban Forestry Council is spearheading a campaign to have a specialty license plate with a tree on it with the slogan - Trees Make a Difference. They need 1,000 prepaid tags in order for this to be issued. For more information contact [www.TennesseeTrees.org](http://www.TennesseeTrees.org) or [www.tufc.com](http://www.tufc.com).

## Liz Bushong's White House Diary



Editor's Note: MG Liz Bushong was selected to help decorate the White House for Christmas. Below she writes about some of her experiences.

At the White House I began in the floral department. A master gardener's dream... fresh cut flowers everywhere and a behind the scenes look at the floral shop. I met the new floral designer, Laura Dowling. She was working on a flower arrangement for Michele Obama's tea party that she was hosting that particular day. It was a rounded arrangement with fresh cut pink and salmon colored roses, with lemon leaves dispersed throughout the

roses. The vase was in a Jacquelyn Kennedy's gold vase. Pretty fascinating to watch.

My job was to unbox and prepare the fresh flowers as they came in. Flowers like long stem pink, red, and yellow roses, orange bronze calla lilies, huge purple and blue head hydrangeas, pink pepper berries, baby's breath, naked eucalyptus and other stems I didn't recognize.

My claim to fame or to see some of my handiwork, was the gold bows on the front gates and through-out the house. I was one of 4 that created all the bows in the White House. In fact they called us 'bowologists'.

Another item that the Master Gardeners might be interested in is the 400 pound gingerbread house that was covered with White chocolate. I took a photo of the opening in the side of the mansion so you can see a miniature state dining room, then outside the dining room was Michele's garden, made of marzipan vegetables. Very cute. (See photo next page.)





There were about 40 decorators in our group of volunteers. We ate lunch and dinner each day while decorating in the state dining room. Had good food, soups, sandwiches, homemade lasagna, salad, apple tarts and ice cream sundaes for desserts.

We were not allowed to take photos until the last evening at the Holiday reception. I was very honored and humbled to be selected as part of this dynamic decorating team.



Christmas at the White House  
December 3, 2009  
To view the entire photo gallery,  
click on:  
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/photogallery/lifestyle/christmas-at-the-white-house/20091203-k751.html>

## Spare Species List

As of March 21, 2010 (the first day of spring), the following pond garden items are available:

- Some nice sized goldfish, including comets and shubunkins
- A 20 gallon tub of pink hardy Denver waterlilies
- Arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*)
- Graceful Cattails (dwarf) (*Typha laxmannii*)
- Blue Pickerel Rush (*Pontederia cordata*)



Contact Joy Stewart at 423-573-2376 or [joylarry@btes.tv](mailto:joylarry@btes.tv)

## 2010 DATES TO WATCH

Through

- Jan. 3** **NC Arboretum in Asheville: Winter Solstice and Holiday Plants:** A sample of traditional holiday plants with interpretation on how the plants came to be associated with the winter solstice and holiday season at the Baker Exhibit Greenhouse, 9 am to 5 pm, Monday-Saturday; Noon to 5 pm Sunday.
- Jan. 11** NETMGA Board meeting, Appalachian Fair Grounds
- Jan. 16,** Composting w/Ben Hunter Mize Garden Center, Johnson City
- Jan. 16** 10:00 – 12:00 Winter Gardening Seminar Warrior’s Path State Park in Kingsport. Cherie Cordell of Great Smokey Mts. National park will teach environmentally friendly gardening techniques. Free but pre-registration is required. Call Marty Silver at 423-239-6786, 423- 239-8531 or e-mail him at Marty.Silver@state.tn.us
- Jan. 21** “Ferns of the Smokeys” Johnson City Power Board Auditorium, Jonesborough
- Jan. 22 - 24** Farm Fest at Meadowview Convention Center.
- Jan 24 – 27** The Ohio State University Nursery Short Course in Columbus, Ohio. Speakers include Tony Avent, Plants Delights Nursery, Inc from North Carolina and Dr. Ed Gilman from the University of Florida on Urban Forestry. [www.basicgreen.osu.edu](http://www.basicgreen.osu.edu) is the website for more information.
- Jan 28 – 30,** Tennessee Horticultural Expo in Nashville. For more info check [www.tnthe.com](http://www.tnthe.com)
- Jan. 30** Composting w/Ben Hunter Mize Garden Center, Gray, TN
- Feb. 1,** NETMGA Meeting at Gray Community Center
- Feb. 6,** Herbs w/Joy Moore and Rain Gardens w/Joy Stewart at Mize Garden Center in Gray, TN
- Feb 17-19,** Winter School, Murfreesboro
- Feb. 27** Fruit Trees w/John Hamrick and Seed Germination w/Martin Litz at Mize Garden Center in Johnson City, TN
- March 13,** Herbs w/Joy Moore and Rain Gardens w/Joy Stewart at Mize Garden Center in Johnson City, TN
- Mar. 20,** Fruit Trees w/John Hamrick and Seed Germination w/Martin Litz at Mize Garden Center in Gray, TN
- April 3** Supporting Your Vegetable Garden w Martin Litz at Mize Garden Center in Gray, TN

## Water Wise Landscapers Select Two Sites

This article was submitted by Joy Stewart

A group of eight master gardeners began working on a Water Wise Landscaping Demonstration Project this past September. The group's goal is to create a demo site in the Tri-cities area that showcases attractive landscaping and gardening techniques that people can use around their homes to help manage stormwater runoff.

After visiting a number of possible sites in the Tri-cities area, including city parks, fairgrounds, and a fire station, the group has a final proposal that includes two sites. The first project will be a demonstration site at the Appalachian Fairgrounds. This will include two small rain gardens, rain barrels and a small ecoroof. This will be a great learning experience for the group.

The group will then begin work on a larger project at the second site, Steele Creek Park in Bristol, Tennessee. The park has a strong focus on environmental education, and it is also the third largest city-owned park in the country. The group tentatively plans on a large rain garden, rain barrels, an ecoroof, and using native wildflowers and grasses to control soil runoff on a slope.

The workgroup will begin drafting a detailed proposal at its next meeting in mid-January. New members are welcome at any stage of planning or production. Contact Joy Stewart at 423 573-2376 or [joy\\_larry@btcs.tv](mailto:joy_larry@btcs.tv) if you are interested or want more information.

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## IT'S TIME TO PAY NETMGA DUES

Dues are \$15.00 per year (\$25.00 for a couple). MG Interns have already paid dues as part of their MG class fees. Pay your dues before January 31, 2010 to insure your continued receipt of the MG Thymes every other month as well as updates and volunteer opportunities.

## 2010 NETMGA Membership Form

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**. \$15 individual, \$25 couple.

Mail to Sally Richard, 137 Bentwood Lane, Gray, TN 37615

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