

## GET SET FOR *Green and Growing* SEMINARS

*Green and Growing*, a series of lunchtime gardening seminars, will be presented from 12 noon to 1 pm on Thursdays in March at the Kingsport Public Library Mead Auditorium. In these free sessions both beginners and expert gardeners alike will learn how to work with nature to create a beautiful, low-maintenance landscape. The series is sponsored by Keep Kingsport Beautiful, Southern Appalachian Plant Society and the Kingsport Public Library. This is an opportunity for Master Gardeners to earn CEUs. The schedule is as follows:

**March 6 - Right Plant, Right Place** - Selecting plants that are compatible with your growing conditions is the surest way to gardening success. Learn how to choose the best perennials and shrubs for every spot in your landscape. This session is taught by Christy Shivell of Shy Valley Native Habitat Nursery and Herbarium and will emphasize drought-tolerant and native plants.

**March 13 - Composting and Mulching** - A healthy garden begins with healthy soil and you can learn how to build healthy soil, use less chemical fertilizer, conserve water, and recycle yard waste in this talk led by Master Gardener Ben Hunter. You'll learn backyard composting and mulching basics that will help you grow a blossoming garden this season and for years to come.

**March 20 - Attracting Birds, Butterflies and Other Wonderful Creatures** - Learn how to plan a diversified landscape that provides food, water and shelter for the wildlife you wish to attract with Master Gardener and birding enthusiast Bill Grigsby. Find out what plants are some of the best berry, seed, or nectar producers for wildlife and how to use a multi season approach to meeting your critters' needs.

**March 27 - Working with Nature to Manage Garden Pests** - Discover how to minimize pest damage without pesticides. How? Plant pest resistant or well-adapted varieties like native plants, attract beneficial insects, and discourage pests. Master Gardener Joy Moore will share ideas on how to design, water, fertilize and manage your garden the natural way.

Bag lunches from "On the Trax Café" will be available at the seminars for \$5 or participants may bring a bag lunch. Each session will include free handouts with recommended plants for Northeast Tennessee and lists of books and websites for further reference. For more information call Keep Kingsport Beautiful 423-392-8814 or e-mail [jonmoore@tricon.net](mailto:jonmoore@tricon.net).

# NEED A HUG? THIS “HUG” NEEDS YOU!



The well known program **Habitat for Humanity** now has a cousin: Habitat Urban Gardens or **HUG**. Master Gardeners are a vital part of this organization. Master Gardener Dave Craig explained **Hug** at the January Master Gardeners General Meeting. Dave works with **HUG** in Knoxville where he is the only active Master Gardener in the program. The purpose of the meeting was to begin a **HUG** group in the Johnson City – Kingsport area. The mission of **HUG** is to educate and assist Habitat homeowners in the landscaping of their new homes. **HUG** volunteers use donated plants, materials and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect people, pets and the environment. The programs aims are:

- 1) To educate the homeowner – homeowners must apply for and attend six hours of landscaping instruction. They must assist in developing a landscape plan for their home;
- 2) To secure landscaping materials – obtain donations of plants and landscaping material from gardeners, nurseries and landscapers;
- 3) To install the landscape – HUG volunteers, under the direction of MGs, work with Habitat homeowner to properly install the landscape following the plan developed for their home;
- 4) To follow up—MGs evaluate and provide follow-up support to the homeowner to encourage the proper care and management of the landscapes.

The HUG program also includes instruction based on research using visual, hands-on demonstrations and question and answer sessions. By teaching the homeowner the best management landscaping practice, HUG volunteers will be teaching them to take care of their own landscape – something for them to be proud of, something they developed and had a hands-on experience creating. Anyone interested in working on this project or chairing it should contact Dennis Marshal, Project Chairperson. Dennis can be reached at 288-3675 or [marshalls3@embarqmail.com](mailto:marshalls3@embarqmail.com),

## PRUNING WORKSHOP PLANNED

A Pruning Workshop and discussion of pruning fruit trees and some ornamentals will be held Tuesday, March 11 at Exchange Place in Kingsport from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. This date is after the Daylight Savings Time change so there should be plenty of daylight. Bring pruners to practice what is taught Call Chris Ramsey at 646-9043 for more information.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO CONNIE !

Connie Walters was honored at the NETMGA Awards Dinner for five years of active involvement as a Master gardener.

Congratulations!



## Chris' Corner

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

Spring is not far away. Sooner than later we'll be digging in the garden and mowing the grass. I encourage you to get involved early in the season in a MG project of your choice. The list of projects is available on our website at [sullivan.tennessee.edu](http://sullivan.tennessee.edu). Then, click on publications and then on Master Gardener to access the volunteer hours, continuing education hours and report form.

There are some exciting opportunities coming up over the next 18 months. The Tennessee Master

Gardener program will be updating the website including the volunteer reporting procedures. I think this website will be a big improvement offering you more benefits as a Master Gardener. The state MG office will be requesting that all hours be entered online via the website. If a MG volunteer does not have internet access, you can still submit the blue report form. I encourage everyone to keep a written record of hours such as a calendar by the kitchen door.

There will be a MG Education Day on Saturday, September 27 at the UT Ag Campus. This is the former event that was held at Smokey Stadium in Sevierville. Another exciting opportunity will be the 2009 International MG Conference, scheduled to be held in Las Vegas. If you're interested, start saving now.

If you have any questions, email me at [chris.ramsey@utk.edu](mailto:chris.ramsey@utk.edu) or call 279-2723.

## LEARN THE LATEST ON WOODY ORNAMENTALS

Hugh Conlon, UT Extension Area Specialist-Ornamental Horticulture, will present *Garden Worthy Trees and Shrubs* on Thursday, March 20 at 7 pm at the Johnson City Power Board just off Exit 38 on I-26. In this program Hugh will visually present a large number of great woody landscape plants that grow particularly well in the Southern Appalachian region.

The emphasis will be on low maintenance and eco-friendly (no pesticides) plants - those that adapt well to our soils and weather and do not have disease and insect problems. Some of these plant cultivars are improvements over the species and older cultivars. Some have larger flowers, earlier or later flowering times, fit better into modern landscapes, have a better fall color, and other wonderful traits. Sponsored by the Southern Appalachian Plant Society, this program is free and the public is invited. For more information, call 348-6572 or e-mail [jonmoore@tricon.net](mailto:jonmoore@tricon.net). MGs earn 1.5 CEUs.



*Cornus alba* 'Prarie Fire' Dogwood

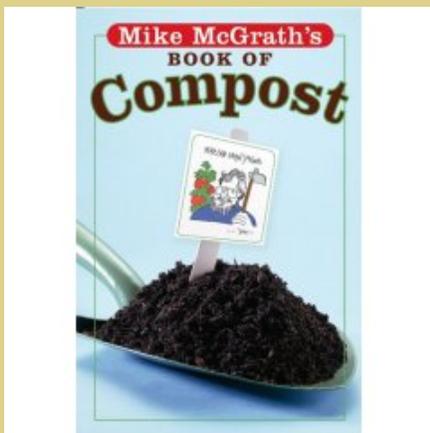
Photo courtesy of  
[www.loudounnursery.com](http://www.loudounnursery.com)



## SNEAK A PEEK AT SPRING

The annual Western North Carolina Orchid Society Juried Show and Sale will be held on Saturday March 29 and Sunday March 30 at the NC Arboretum in Asheville. Indoor and outdoor activities will include trail walks, demonstrations, exhibits and an orchid plant sale. Experts will be available to answer questions.

## Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Compost!



Mike McGrath, host of Public Radio's *You Bet Your Garden*, will speak on *Composting* on Thursday April 17 at 7 p.m. at the Kingsport Renaissance Center. As Editor-in-Chief of *Organic Gardening* magazine for seven years, Mike McGrath learned quite a bit about the nature and science of composting. He's never stopped study-

ing, because he wants to give the best, most up-to-date information to the listeners of his nationally-syndicated radio show, heard on WETS FM each Saturday. Mike recently gathered all this information into an illustrated guide, *Mike McGrath's Book of Compost*.

In his presentation, Mike will outline his findings and explain why compost improves soil structure; why it provides the *perfect* amount of food for every plant; how it fights plant diseases more safely and effectively than any chemical fungicide; and how you can make your own. This program is sponsored by the Southern Appalachian Plant Society (SAPS) and is free and open to the public. For more information call 348-6572 or e-mail [jonmoore@tricon.net](mailto:jonmoore@tricon.net).

## 2008 NORTHEAST TENNESSEE MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

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to be announced

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## EXCHANGE PLACE SPRING GARDEN FAIR CELEBRATES 24<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

Come and celebrate the arrival of spring at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Exchange Place Spring Garden Fair on April 26 and 27. The Fair will be open from 10 am to 5 pm. Saturday, April 26, and 12 noon to 5 pm. Sunday, April 27. As always, it will be held at Exchange Place Living History Farm, 4812 Orebank Road in Kingsport, Tennessee.

The Fair will feature thousands of plants for sale with an emphasis on herbs, perennials, native, and heirloom plants. There will also be garden accessories and related crafts, garden talks, children's activities, traditional music, and baked goods for sale. Demonstrations of springtime activities on an 1850s farm such as sheep shearing and plowing will occur. For more information, call 423-288-6071 or see <http://exchangeplace.info>.

## STEP BACK IN HISTORY - VOLUNTEER AT EXCHANGE PLACE

As a living history farm, Exchange Place's mission is to preserve the heritage of this region and to educate visitors about what life was like on an East Tennessee farmstead in the 1850s. Thousands of people visit the site each year at the three festivals, at Farm Fest and other special events, for school programs and tours. Plants and gardening are an important part of the experience. Just as seeing the furnishings, dress and old-time animal breeds contribute to an understanding of daily life in another time, so do the plants that were grown and used then.



For years Master Gardeners have worked with other Exchange Place volunteers to help make history come alive for visitors young and old, and there continue to be many opportunities for Master Gardeners to volunteer at Exchange Place and to help educate the public about plants and gardening. Volunteers are needed to help care for the heritage vegetable garden, the heritage herb garden, and to adopt many other areas; to help with planning, organizing and staffing the Spring Garden Fair, Farm Fest, and Fall Festival; to develop ideas for children's activities; to research heirloom varieties; and to help with the arboretum. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Sue Cadwallader at Exchange Place 288-6071 or [getmancadwalla@yahoo.com](mailto:getmancadwalla@yahoo.com)

## Put in your two cents worth!

Two local MGs are starting to work on interesting and educational projects which will benefit all area gardeners. They are asking all East Tennessee MGs to help by giving their opinions.

### 1 **Adaptable Native Plants** The first project is being worked on by MG Intern **Joy Stewart**. Joy writes:

*"Now that global warming seems to be here for the long haul, I often find myself thinking that I should select my garden plants accordingly. I have been planting species and varieties that are not necessarily adapted to the wild weather swings that seem to accompany global warming and then have to struggle to protect the plants from all extreme temperature and moisture changes. I have often wished I had a list of very adaptable plants to which I could refer when it is time to plant. I thought it might be fun to collect a list of native plants with which our local gardeners have had good experiences."*

To help with Joy's project please call or e-mail her with the names of native plants which you have found to be very adaptable and reliable over the last few years. Joy will compile the data and we will print her findings in the next MG Thymes. Joy's contact information is 573-2376 and [joylarry@btes.tv](mailto:joylarry@btes.tv).

### 2 **WOW! Plants** The second project is being developed by **Hugh Conlon**. Hugh also wants to compile a list of plants from regional MGs. His plants are called "WOW!" plants. Read on to learn Hugh's ideas:

*"For 2009 I would like to present a program which is tentatively titled "Exciting Plants" or "WOW Plants". The idea came from a statement that Tony Avent from Plant Delights Nursery in Raleigh, NC made that green industry people (nurserymen, greenhouse growers, garden center operators, and landscapers) are not trying hard enough to excite their customers – the gardening public. I thought that I would solicit the names of one to three plants per MG or SAPS member to photograph and build a program for 2009 or 2010 for both associations. These are plants that excite people (gardeners or not) to say WOW! when they first catch sight of the planting. Of course, digital photos are also welcome from all. I thought that this might be unique, different and, of course, educational. Some ideas might be 'Ogon' metasequoia (Goldrush dawn redwood) or angel trumpet (Brugmansia), 'Thailand Giant' strain elephant ears(9-12 feet tall), 'Stoplight' heucherella. "*

If you have any plants that elicit a "Wow!" from your gardening friends please send their name, and a picture, if possible to Hugh Conlon at 423-753-1680 or [hconlon1@utk.edu](mailto:hconlon1@utk.edu).

## KEEP THIS LIST!

### *2008 Master Gardener Projects*

Listed below are the projects available for master gardeners to work on and to earn required hours for certification. If you have any questions please call or email Dennis Marshall at 423-288-3675 or [marshalls3@embarqmail.com](mailto:marshalls3@embarqmail.com).

NAME OF PROJECT	CONTACT INFORMATION
1. <b>Johnson City Medical Center / Woodridge Mental Health Clinic</b>	Barbara Voight 423-467-2013    voigt7b@comcast.net
2. <b>Appalachian Fairground</b>	Doug Hilton 423-239-9433    appyfair@embarqmail.com
3. <b>Herb Garden@ Appy Fairground</b>	Lisa Jones 423-239-8811    wlle@charter.net
4. <b>Allendale Mansion</b>	Ken Hyche 423-288-5834    kwhyche@chartertn.net
5. <b>Butterfly Garden, Greenbelt</b>	Glenda Blanton 423-323-8646 glendablanton@netzero.net
6. <b>Heirloom Garden, Greenbelt</b>	Carlotta Boaz 423-378-9361    Cpaulsenboaz@charter.net
7. <b>Unicoi Heritage Museum</b>	Valerya Hyrme 423-743-9093    catsmeow24@netzero.com
8. <b>Sycamore Shoals</b>	Karen Drought / Wenny Elrod / Carolyn Martin 423-543-3752    jcmartin@chartertn.net
9. <b>Boundless Playground</b>	Gwyn Duncan 423-239-0460    geduncan@charter.net
10. <b>ETSU</b>	Brenda Warner
11. <b>Hammond House/Netherland Inn</b>	Dennis Marshall 423-288-3675    marshalls3@embarqmail.com
12. <b>Indian Path</b>	Dennis Marshall/ Doug Hilton (Call Doug or Dennis for info-this is still in the works.) Work will be done at the Pavilion soon.
13. <b>Sycamore Shoals / Plant Native Plants / Butterfly Garden</b>	Cathy Ciolac – 423-723-5141    cathy@artandcathy.com
14. <b>Developing a City-Wide Garden in JC</b>	Sam Jones..423-349-6119    simpleintn@yahoo.com
15. <b>Planting Native Plants at Fairground</b>	Hugh Conlon 423-753-1680    hconlon1@utk.edu
16. <b>Farm Expo/ Home Show/Women Expo</b>	Doug Hilton 423-239-9433    appyfair@embarqmail.com
17. <b>Tomato Fest-SAPS &amp; Master Gardeners</b>	Claudia Haselton 423-349-5604 <a href="mailto:haselton@chartertn.net">haselton@chartertn.net</a>
18. <b>Rocky Mount</b>	Don Davis 423-854-0152 <a href="mailto:donfdavis@aol.com">donfdavis@aol.com</a>

## JUST TEASELING

The following article was written by guest columnist Sylvia Lagergren.



**TEASEL.** Common name for the genus *Dipsacus*, a group of coarse, prickly biennial herbs of the Teasel Family (*Dipsacaceae*), thistle-like in appearance. A few species are grown as ornamentals in the wild garden or shrubbery border. Started from seed they are easily established and, indeed, are likely to escape and become weeds.

A few weeks ago I was given the official tour of Tipton Hanes so that I could volunteer my skills at pulling weeds. Not just any weeds, either, but “invasive exotics.” There is something “exotic” about botanical names in general, but “invasive” is a word with which I am well acquainted.

Well, these “exotics” were pretty common plants such as privet and honeysuckle, which were to be sent along to heaven. Perhaps I’ll pay tribute to them later. But I really must tell you that I was overcome with a strange nostalgia as we passed the herb garden, or “householders garden” during the tour. It was the sight of teasel plants planted there that evoked in me a powerful sense of déjà vu. Bear with me... I start with the end of the story first.

It was early spring and I felt quite spiritual. I don’t know why I feel spiritual in the early spring, but the sight of darling little shoots of green things appear in all their hopefulness and tell me how glad they are to have made it through the winter, how warm the sunshine is, how they will thrive and, in short, how happy they are to be alive.

So, as I was cultivating an area by my patio, I noticed that I still had little teasel seedlings spreading out their dock-like leaves and establishing their territory. Ah...the little teasels! It had been five years since I stole their forbears, growing along the meridian of Interstate 81 in the grand State of Virginia. It was a theft of great effort. You can imagine how difficult it is to get one’s husband to stop *anywhere* when you are traveling, much less along the interstate, much, much less to pick a flower. But I had been nagging him a long time because I had been longing to make a wonderful bouquet of the seed heads in flower arrangements that I had seen priced at \$35 and upwards. I just had to have these seeds and I think he just had finally given up.

So I planted my seed in the fall. Make that plural: seeds -- only a couple more, I’m sure. The next spring they grew their lovely rosettes, they were happy to be alive, happy to be thriving and all that year they were relatively flat, docile and well behaved. I was impressed with my green thumb. I felt so spiritual, so encouraged.

The spring after that fine stalks of teasel appeared. Fine at first, but as the growing season grew, Great, Big, Tall stalks appeared that grew higher than my head, higher than your head, and higher than a giant! And they were thick and Menacing! Although they could not yet chase me, I was afraid to go near them. It was a fearful situation.

Their leaves bore daggers both on top and underneath. Their stems were implements of torture that must have inspired the Inquisition. Each plant produced side arms that bore weapons of mass destruction. Their flower heads, deceitful things, were of soft lavender inviting you to approach, like the wicked witch with the poison apple.

*Continued on page 9*

*Continued from page 8*

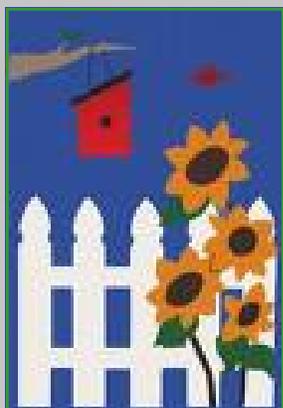
I guess I should admit that my father-in-law gave me that old encyclopedia, first published in 1931.

Now the most invidious problem of all: their seeds. Not hundreds, not thousands, not even millions. Billions! As I began taking these "flowers" down to arrange them ("arrange"?), they ruthlessly heaved their seeds out at me, at the patio, on nearby acres, and, aided by wind, to nearby states and continents.

I spent the next two years diligently, religiously destroying every little seedling that I spotted. Preventive medicine has nothing on me. Missionaries could take lessons from me on rooting out evil.

So, with some chagrin I inform you that when I saw those teasels at Tipton Hanes, it reminded me of how spiritual I once was. Ah, yes!

But I got over it.



## The 5th Annual

# GARDEN FEST

**May 9 12 noon - 6 PM**

**May 10 9AM - 5 PM**

**Appalachian Fairground**

**GARDEN FEST** daily fun includes:

- Plants and shrubs for sale by East Tennessee's finest local garden centers and nurseries
- Gardening Seminars (Hourly presentations on different subjects)
- Crafts
- Food - furnished by Shriners
- And Much, Much More
- Don't forget to buy Mom's Mother's Day Gift
- Garden related merchandise
- Silent Auction
- Come out for fun

**FREE ADMISSION**

**GO GREEN!** - Bring your used Garden & Nursery plant pots to be recycled  
For more **GARDEN FEST** information, Call the Appalachian Fairgrounds

SPONSORED BY NORTHEAST TENNESSEE MASTER  
GARDENERS ASSOCIATION & THE APPALACHIAN FAIR

## SEVIER COUNTY MGs PLAN SHOW

Master Gardeners in Sevier County are planning their 3rd annual Flower and Garden Show for April 26, 2008.. It will be at the Sevier County Fair Grounds from 9 am till 3 pm. Plan now to be a part of our larger and improved Garden Show indoors at the Sevier County Fairgrounds.

Contact Margaret Thompson at 865-932-7751 or [rebinger@bellsouth.net](mailto:rebinger@bellsouth.net) for information.

## GARDEN FEST COMING SOON

The annual Garden Fest will be held May 9 and 10 at the Appalachian Fairgrounds in Gray. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Valerya Hyrme at 423-743-9093 [catsmeow24@netzero.com](mailto:catsmeow24@netzero.com) for more information.

## Saturdays in the Gardens

**THEY'RE BACK ! SAVE THE DATE FOR SATURDAY IN THE GARDENS**

On Saturday, June 21, 2008, Keep Kingsport Beautiful invites garden lovers to Saturday in the Gardens 2008, a day of tours featuring six of Kingsport's most beautiful private gardens, most of which have never before been open to the public. The tour will include lunch for the first 100 ticket buyers at the centerpiece garden along with a seminar on New Perennials for 2008 and a Bonsai exhibit.

Tickets are \$25 (children 12 and under free) with all proceeds benefiting Keep Kingsport Beautiful's education and beautification projects. Tickets go on sale March 1. For more information, call Keep Kingsport Beautiful 392-8814 or e-mail [clean@kingsportchamber.org](mailto:clean@kingsportchamber.org). Watch for more details in the next MG Thymes.

## SEVIER COUNTY MGs PLAN SPECIAL DAY

**Eastern Region Master Gardener Day**, sponsored by Sevier County Master Gardeners, is scheduled for September 27th at the University of Tennessee Agriculture Campus. More information will be available closer to the date. For more information contact:

W. Alan Bruhin, Extension Director  
125 Court Avenue, Room 102  
Sevierville, Tn 37862  
(865)-453-3695

## 2008 DATES TO WATCH

- Feb 1 - April 20     ***Orchids and Iris in the Garden***, Silk Painting Exhibit  
NC Arboretum, Asheville, NC
- March 6             ***Right Plant, Right Place***, Christy Shivell, Kingsport Public Library
- March 13            ***Composting and Mulching*** , Ben Hunter, Kingsport Public Library
- March 20            ***Attracting Birds, Butterflies and Other Wonderful Creatures***, Bill Grigsby  
Kingsport Public Library
- March 20            ***Garden Worthy Trees and Shrubs***, Hugh Conlon, Johnson City Power Board
- March 27            ***Working with Nature to Manage Garden Pests***, Joy Moore  
Kingsport Public Library
- March 29 – 30      ***Orchid Society Show and Sale***, NC Arboretum, Asheville, NC
- April 17             ***Composting***, Mike McGrath, Kingsport Renaissance Center
- April 18 – 20        ***Spring Nature Festival*** , Warriors' Path State Park
- April 18 – 20        ***Mid-Atlantic Garden Faire***, Abingdon, VA
- April 26- 27         ***Exchange Place Spring Garden Fair***
- April 26             ***3rd annual Flower and Garden Show***, Sevierville, TN
- May 9, 10            ***Garden Fest***, Appalachian Fair Grounds
- June 21             ***Saturday in the Garden***, Kingsport
- Sept. 27             ***Eastern Region MG Day***, Sevierville



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>

## E-MAIL CHANGES TO MAKE

Please make the following changes in your MG contact list:

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Joy Stewart - [joylarry@btes.tv](mailto:joylarry@btes.tv))

Dennis Marshall - [marshalls3@embarqmail.com](mailto:marshalls3@embarqmail.com)

Sue Stanley - [serenity4life@live.com](mailto:serenity4life@live.com)

Marie Kasten - [tuliptime@gmail.com](mailto:tuliptime@gmail.com)



**Horse Manure  
Delivered to you by  
Dustin Chapman.  
Call 423-341-2418**

## SPACE AVAILABLE FOR GRAFTERS

There is still space for MGs to participate in the Grafting Workshops scheduled for Thursday, March 20. There will be a 9:30 a.m. session and a 6:30 p.m. session. The grafting workshops will be held at the Sullivan County Farm Bureau Office in Blountville. Interested MGs can call Chris Ramsey at 279-2723.