

2007 Tennessee Master Gardener Conference

*** CONFERENCE COUNTDOWN— ONE MONTH REMAINS ***

The conference is shaping up to be a wonderful event. Not only have people registered from Tennessee, but also from Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia. Conference organizers are busy making final arrangements for this major conference. Helpers are still needed in the following areas. Between now and the opening of the conference, we need workers to get all of the tour sites in good shape. These include:

Appalachian Fairgrounds - Workdays are usually on Wednesday and Saturdays. Call Doug Hilton for details at 239-9433.

Butterfly Garden on Kingsport Greenbelt – contact Lois Bronson at 239-4285 or honeybee37@charter.net

Healing Garden at Johnson City Medical Center – contact Dennis Marshall at 288-3675 or marshalls3@earthlink.net

During the conference weekend workers are needed to assist in the following areas:

Vendors – contact Jennie Clemmer @ 288-7615 or clemmer@chartertn.net

Silent Auction – contact Sandee Cook at 234-2882 or sandee@cookgreenhouses.com

Registration – contact Mary Ward at one and lcat@yahoo.com

If you have any questions regarding other areas related to the conference, please contact the following people:

Conference Chair – Doug Hilton – 239-9433

Treasurer – Lois Bronson – honeybee37@charter.net

Hospitality – Valerya Hyrne – 743-9093 or catsmeow24@earthlink.net

Tours – Ken Hyche – 288-5834 or kwhyche@charter.net

Fundraising – Lisa Bradley – 257-3009 or lgb Bradley1@comcast.net

Publicity – Teresa Tittle – 323-5937 or teresa5937@hotmail.com

All hours worked during the conference may be counted toward MG volunteer hours.





CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS NOTED



In addition to keynote speakers Erica Glassener and Roger Swain, there are many other excellent speakers to inform and entertain us during the conference. These include.....

Eric Johnson

Head of Horticulture Research from Park Seed- He has to predict the future of horticulture and look for the best of the best plant varieties to release on the garden market. His presentation is titled "Gardening for the Future."

Michael Balogh

If you're not into conifers yet... you will be! This Dwarf Conifer expert has over 20 years experience growing and designing landscapes with the little jewels. He is presenting two sessions: "Selecting and Growing Dwarf Conifers" and "Dwarf Conifers: Color Texture, and Forms." Michael now owns a nursery and landscaping company, his designs are listed in the Smithsonian Institute's 'Archive of American Gardens.'

Warren Hill

If you haven't heard of this horticulture legend you should heard and see his work for yourselves! This Bonsai Expert has over 40 years of experience including 5 years of service as the Curator for the United States Bonsai and Penjing Museum at the U.S. National Arboretum! Some of The Bonsai in his collection are over 400 years old. Several of his masterpieces will be on display at the conference.

Be sure to consider these opportunities during the conference.....

Historic Tour - People have been waiting 5 million years for this tour - to the Gray Fossil Discovery! This is the largest and most diverse fossil discovery east of the Mississippi. For more information visit <http://www.etsu.edu/grayfossilite>

Golf packages - The Meadowview Conference Center does have golf packages available. <http://marriott.com/hotels/travel/tricc-meadowview-conference-resort-ad-convention-center/>

Dinner reservations

Make sure you register your special guests in advance for the featured speaker dinners. Meals for Friday lunch and Saturday breakfast will be available on site.

SLIDES NEEDED

We want to show off your projects and gardens! Please send slides of MG projects or of your own personal gardens or favorite sites to Brad Jones. He is the park naturalist at Winged Deer Park and is putting together a presentation to be used during the June conference. You can e-mail slides to him at cbjwdp2@johnsoncitytn.org or snail-mail them to Johnson City Parks and Recreation, C/O Brad Jones, PO Box 1535, Johnson City, TN 37601. Be sure to include information identifying the slides (especially the county). Brad would like to receive these as soon as possible.



"Growing a New Tomorrow"

TENNESSEE MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE

www.tnmgc2007.net

Freeze Recovery for Urban Landscapes



What happens to plants during a late freeze?

Young green leaves and flowers can get zapped during late spring cold snap. So what exactly happens? In some plants the cell inside the leaves and stems froze and the cell membrane ruptured killing that part of the plant tissue, not necessarily the whole plant. At night plants take in water vapors, carbon dioxide and oxygen through small opening on the leaves called stomates. Others might have wilted. In these plants water escaped from the leaves and plant cells too quickly due to a rapid drop temperature. Cells in the plant actually deflated causing the tissue to wilt (in horticulture we call this *epinasty*).

Due to the freeze, flowers and tender buds may be lost on plants that flower on old growth like some hydrangeas and some climbing roses. Plants that bloom on new growth, such as crape myrtle and butterfly bush may still bloom- only later, after they have recovered.

What happens now? Will my plants survive?

There are many answers. It will depend on how your plant reacted to the cold night temperatures, its location in your garden, the type of plant, or its genetic fortitude. Plants that appear to be only wilted and perk back up when the sun comes out (like some hosta, daylily, or rhododendron) should be fine. Later in the season they may exhibit puckered or stunted leaves or may have a "sunburn" look. Few may have brown or black spots on the leaves where plant cell membranes did rupture, killing that tissue.

Other plants like some Japanese maples, crape myrtle and bigleaf hydrangea are much more sensitive to the cold night temperatures. If you notice leaves that look water-soaked (imagine lettuce frozen in the back of the refrigerator) this tissue is dead and won't re-hydrate. This Does Not Mean the Plant is Dead! Adopt a wait-and-see attitude, some plants may re-leaf and bounce back just fine. Most likely all these plants will have brown and black tissue which can be removed later in the season (more about that below).

So what to do now?

Two words... **Wait and Water.** Wait to dig or remove any plant material. In a few months you will know if it will survive the summer.

For those plants that have lost all of the new leaves to the freeze it will be difficult to regenerate new leaves if there is not enough starch stored up in the root system for "another spring"- they will need extra water for this recovery. Water will allow wilted leaves to re-hydrate. For trees, water deeply twice weekly. Monitor your plant and if you see leaves start to droop, check the soil moisture around the roots and add more if it seems dry. Keep stressed plants mulched this summer to retain moisture around the roots.

Do Not Prune- Pruning can stimulate excessive growth, these plants are stressed, give them time to recover. Give some plants, especially trees a year before severe pruning. Dead foliage can be carefully cut away, but this is not necessary for recovery. The trick is to not to cut too much off the plant.

Do Not Fertilize- Fertilizing now with nitrogen may cause the plant to leaf too quickly instead of giving it time to recover. Trees and shrubs should not be fertilized until next winter. If you had already fertilized, make sure plants receive ample water to use the excess fertilizer.

Freeze Recovery for Urban Landscapes



What is the future of my garden?

The damaged tissue at the tips of stems was the growing point for future growth. Tip dieback may cause you plant to look different. In most trees and shrubs you can selectively prune to redirect growth to rebuild the form of your plant (next year). The leaves manufacture a plant's food to be stored for the next growing season. If plants aren't able to store enough food this year they may not make it next year. But don't lose hope!

Remember: Your garden is also a small ecosystem. The living rudiments that allow your garden or landscape to be viable are both good and bad: plants/weeds, soil, insects, bacteria, fungus, worms, plants, birds and other critters. Each part of this system depends on the other. This freeze may have reduced these populations or will reduce the food sources for them in the coming months. Pay attention. You may see some changes in your garden's seasonal routine, greening may be slower, the color may not be as brilliant as last year and you may not see as much activity from the critters this year. Don't fret the future of your garden! Look forward each day to see how Mother Nature uses unexpected changes to open new opportunities in the garden.



Water-soaked leaves on hosta



Wilting on Annabelle hydrangea



Leaf burn on oakleaf hydrangea



"Sun burned look" on daylily

Plan to Attend Saturdays in the Gardens

A series of garden tours featuring some of the Kingsport area's most beautiful private gardens is being sponsored by Keep Kingsport Beautiful. Guests may visit open gardens at their own pace on three scheduled Saturdays during the gardening season

The first garden will be opened May 12 and is the Hunter Garden on 691 Shady View Road. In addition to the garden, the following seminars will be offered: "Why Raised Beds?" at 10:30, "Faux Finishes on Concrete Pots" at 11:30 and "Christy Picks Low Maintenance/ High Impact Annuals & Perennials" at 12:30.

The second gardens will be open on June 2. They are The Morrow-Mader Garden located at 115 Coventry Wynde and the Steinmetz Garden at 835 Sir Echo Drive.

The third gardens will be open on July 7. These include the Paulsen-Boaz Garden at 1342 Watauga Street and The Carter Garden at 341 Bridwell Heights Road.

Fees for the garden tours are \$10 for each Saturday or \$25.00 for the tour package. The package fee includes all three Saturdays with six featured gardens. Children 12 and under are free. The gardens will be open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tickets are available at the following locations: Kingsport Times-News Kiosk, Fort Henry Mall, upper level, and Kingsport Area Chamber of Commerce at 151 East Main Street. Tickets are also available at featured gardens on tour day.

- Tours include light refreshments.
- Tours will be held rain or shine.
- Please wear comfortable shoes.
- No pets, please.

Please note: MGs are needed to serve as tour guides during these garden openings. If you are interested please call 229-2723 to volunteer.

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Chris' Corner

CHRIS RAMSEY
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(423) 279-2723

I was just looking back at past contributions to this

column. Interestingly, the weather was very similar in the spring of 2005. In the May/June column, I referred to "up and down" temperatures and the "snow" on April 24. As we did then, we will make it through this unusual season. I will admit that the cold we experienced this April was of historical significance given the number of nights in the low 20s.

You may have many questions and probably already have. The best advice is to Wait, Water, and Don't Prune! The exception to the "Don't Prune" would be to remove dead portions of plants after this initial period of stress recovery is over, probably just a few weeks when the weather

warms. Removal of dead plant material will minimize the chance of infections from disease pathogens. Removal of too much live material will cause the plant additional stress.

As the gardening year continues, please record your MG hours, both CEUs and ACE hours. One thought is to record these on a calendar in the kitchen. This will be a good record to refer back to periodically when you fill out the report service form or enter the hours online.

If you wish to complete the paper report copy instead of online entry, please go ahead and send in those hours monthly or whatever is convenient. Just don't wait until September 30! The forms may be sent to Gwyn Duncan or myself. I will be glad to send you a form or they are available at sullivan.tennessee.edu. Also, please keep a paper copy of your hours for your record!

HISTORIAN STARTS WORK

Hello fellow NETMGA members,

My name is Jeanne Driese, member of the 2006 Master Gardeners class. In the last newsletter there was a note about needing a historian for the



NETMGA. Apparently there has never been an official collection of news all put in one place, such as a book or online, etc. The task sounded like something I would enjoy. The idea was suggested that it

would be great to have something at least started by the time of the June convention. Lots of help in the way of gathering any, and hopefully all, articles, newsletters, pictures, of "things" that tell the history of how NETMGA started and its evolution will be needed. I am ready to tackle the job, will you help?

Here is my email jeanne13@earthlink.net. Also my Cell phone number 423-737-1446.

TURF GRASS SEMINAR SCHEDULED

Master Gardeners are invited to attend Turf & Landscape Workshop at the East TN Agriculture Experiment Station in Knoxville, TN. on May 15 and 16, 2007. Pesticide recertification points will be given in various categories. Please visit <http://utturf.net> for registration information and directions. This event is highly recommended for MG CEUs.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULED

The International Master Gardener Conference which will be held May 2-5, 2007 in Little Rock, Arkansas. Over 940 Master Gardeners from 43 states and 4 provinces have already registered, and we want to include you in that group. Registration materials can be found at the website <http://mg2007.uaex.edu>

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

Check the list below to find places to help

Need MGs To Help With Planning Committee

The Fall 2007 Master Gardener Class will be here very soon. A committee will assist with the agenda and promotion for the program. If you are interested in assisting on this committee, call Chris at 423-279-2723. This committee will meet in mid to late May to identify program basics. A meeting date and time will be determined after the committee members are identified.

Jonesborough Garden Gala Seeks Helpers

Volunteers are needed for the Jonesborough Garden Gala on Saturday, May 26. Volunteers are needed to greet guests or answer questions about plants in gardens, to assist with registration, introduce seminar speakers and a myriad of other helpful work. Master Gardeners who wish to be garden guides should contact Anna Choquette at 753-4860 or archoquette@hotmail.com. All other volunteers should contact Joy Moore at jonmoore@tricon.net or 348-6572. Volunteers receive a free ticket for the tour in exchange for volunteering for a shift.

Keep Kingsport Beautiful Offers Opportunities

- Volunteers are needed to serve on the Beautification Committee which meets the first Monday of every month at noon. This committee encourages beautification through tree fund plantings, beautification projects at Kingsport Housing Authority communities, Adopt-a-spots, Saturdays in the Garden Tours and Greenbelt & Chamber beautification plantings.
- Volunteers are sought to serve on the Beautification Award Committee May through October. Volunteers would be responsible for one area of the city to pick a monthly Beautification Award winner and write a brief description of their yard to promote to the community. This job is fun when done with a friend.
- Volunteers are needed to serve on the Tree Board. *The Kingsport Tree Advisory Board* is a group of concerned citizens and professionals who share a common **vision** about trees:
 - To encourage the establishment, care, and preservation of trees*
 - To give recommendations for planting sites and varieties of trees*
 - To provide assistance for the ongoing tree city USA annual recertification and arbor day ceremony*
 - To assist in the identification of situations whereby the urban forest could be improved*
 - To increase public awareness of the value of the urban forest by promoting events and educational opportunities*

If you are interested in any of the KKB opportunities please contact Mary Lee at Keep Kingsport Beautiful, Kingsport Chamber of Commerce, 392-8814 or 392-8829 (fax). Email: clean@kingsportchamber.org

A Letter from the President....

A View from the Mountain....

What a Spring we have had! Wildly fluctuating temperatures, high winds, rains, and SNOW! We had 6 inches at our house on April 15th! In Unicoi County, it is predicted that most of the Coffee Ridge apple crop has been lost to the Easter freeze. In our garden we have things in that I am sure many of you have had in 2-4 weeks before we have – onions, shallots, cabbages, peas, and potatoes. Oh the joys of spring gardening!

With the continued Spring season, there has been an abundance of gardening seminars and activities! So much to choose from, so little time! I hope that you have been able to expand your gardening experiences by attending one or some of these programs! Have you noticed how many of our Master Gardeners and Tennessee Extension Agents put on these programs? I don't know about you, but that is one of the reasons why I wanted to be a part of the Master Gardener program – to share in the knowledge and passion for gardening with other Master Gardeners, Extension Agents, and yes, our gardening public – which incidentally are our potential future MGs!

Over the coming months and at our Tennessee Master Gardener Conference, there is such an opportunity to participate in so many gardening activities, programs, and field trips! There is also the opportunity to thank the folks who are responsible for these programs – a lot of work and compassion go into these quality programs that our folks, MGs and Extension Agents, prepare and present for us! And you know a word of thanks is always appreciated! To our MGs and Extension Agents that work diligently to present these quality programs, I'd like to thank you for sharing your knowledge, experience, and passion for gardening!

There are many others in our organization that are gifted in writing, speaking, and willingness to share their knowledge and passion for gardening. Have YOU thought of doing and sharing that for our MGs or the gardening public? Would you like to write for our MG Thymes or other printed medium? If so, I encourage you to give it a try! Not sure if you can speak or write about your gardening knowledge and passion? Why not ask another MG to pair up with you to do this? There is a power in numbers – and this may help you to realize a goal to write or speak about gardening to others!

Speaking of gardening programs and opportunities, have you registered for our TN MG Conference yet? Time is running out on such an opportunity to see, hear, and participate in a fantastic Conference in Kingsport!! When you register, you are only paying for your meals – and you participate in the other Conference programs and tours at no additional cost! Considering the high cost of fuel, this is a great opportunity to carpool with another area MG to only go to Kingsport for a State MG Conference! If you haven't registered, sign up today for this wonderful opportunity!

A final note – I have heard so many folks say that Spring is their favorite time of the year, which I must agree! With this in mind, please be careful in the garden and other places as Summer returns to our area. Stay well-hydrated, use sunscreen and a hat and sunglasses to protect not only your face but your eyes too. Work and enjoy your garden during the cool of the day – which those times do diminish as Summer wears on! And try not to work alone when possible!

I wish you the best of Springs and a safe and abundant Summer season!

Valerya

Wow, what a cold snap!

GUEST COLUMN By Glenn Keup

We all worry about the effect the cold has on our plants, but what about the effect it has on our landscape lighting? If you were out working around inexpensive plastic lights, you probably found that they had become very brittle in the cold. They may crack easily when you are trying to re-arrange them or replace a bulb. Metal lights do not have that problem. (I have seen so many plastic ones at garage sales in Spring and when I check, most of the lenses are cracked and the light housing clips are broken off.) When considering investing in a quality lighting system, shy away from the plastic ones.

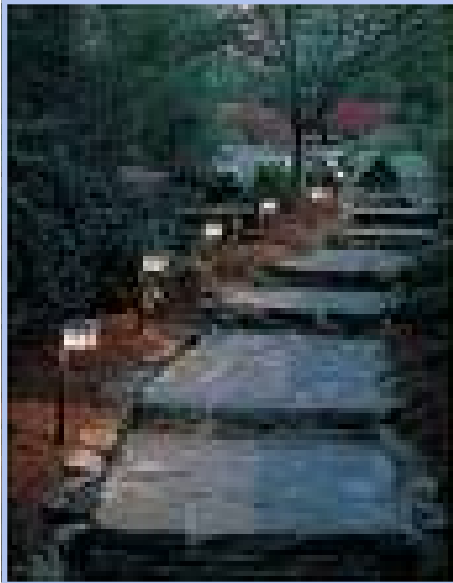


PHOTO courtesy of
www.gardeningtipsnideas.com

However after deciding on the style of lights you find attractive, keep in mind the heart of the low voltage system - - the transformer. The transformer reduces household current from 120 volts down to 12 volts. Most transformers also feature a timer that can be set from sunset to midnight, or whatever times you desire. You can also add a photocell that will turn the lights on at dusk and off at dawn. The connections are fairly simple and the directions that come with the lights and transformers do not need an electrician to decipher. You can even add lights and move them around while the system is turned on without getting a shock.

So, let's get the right transformer. There are two main core designs used in landscape lighting transformers, the **laminated (EI) type and toroidal**. The laminated (EI) transformer is a series of metal plates welded together and is the most *inefficient* and the burnout rate is *high*. Of course it is also the most inexpensive. The core of the toroidal transformer is basically two lengths of wire wound on a core in a configuration that creates a magnetic field, thus reducing the house voltage of 110v to 12v. It is also more expensive. Big deal, one is a bunch of metal and the other is a length of wire. What does that mean when you're buying the whole system? Let me show you where this information can save some money and help pay for the system.

Advantages of Toroidal vs. Laminated (EI) Cores

- **Higher efficiency (approx. 95% vs 85%)**

A Toroidal 1,000 watt system, running 12 hours per day, at \$0.12/kwh. The cost savings would be around **\$50.00 per year**. Now that should get your attention.

- **Toroidal Runs Cooler** and when a transformer runs cooler, **its life is longer.**

- **Light burn out:** For example a toroidal transformer will deliver about 11.4V at the 12V tap. Cut the load in half and the voltage at the tap will increase only about 0.3V, well within the low voltage bulbs range of operating voltage. On the other hand, the Laminated (EI) transformer will deliver about 10.8V at the 12V tap. Cut the load in half and the voltage at the tap will increase to about 11.7V. **This rise of nearly one volt is enough to burn out or reduce the life of your lamps.** Some people buy a boxed system and only use ½ of the lights and are constantly replacing bulbs.

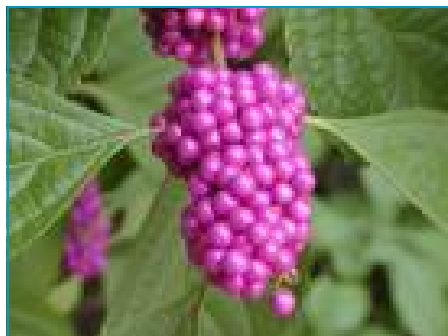
My suggestion is that rather than buy a boxed system and hope for the best, buy the units separately so you know what you're getting and **build** a system that you can enjoy virtually trouble free for



INVASIVE PLANTS WORKSHOP HELD

GUEST COLUMN *By Nina Hedrick*

Last month, several local Master Gardeners attended a one-day symposium on invasive plants in the landscapes and the use of native plants as alternatives. **TNEPPC** (Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council) hosted the event at UT-Knoxville. **TNEPPC** is an organization of landowners, scientists, educators, some Master Gardeners and others who are interested in maintaining Tennessee's biological diversity.



American Beautyberry
Wildflower.utexas.edu

Kris Johnson from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park shared photos of invasive plants that had escaped years ago from nearby residences (including Biltmore Estates). They now wreak havoc in the park, costing millions of dollars a year to manage and decreasing the park's biodiversity.

Margie Hunter, author of **Gardening With the Native Plants of Tennessee: the Spirit of Place** presented a helpful and practical talk showing many of the common invasives present in homeowners' gardens, and identifying native plant alternatives. Actually seeing the

photos of the invasives, followed by those of the native alternatives, sometimes made participants wonder why gardeners ever planted the invasives in the first place! Here are just a **few** common garden invasives followed by some of her recommended native substitutes:

INVASIVE

Ligustrum japonicum, Japanese Privet
Lonicera fragrantissima, January Jasmine
Lonicera x bella, Bell's Bush Honeysuckle
Hedera helix, English Ivy
Wisteria sinensis, Chinese Wisteria
Miscanthus sinensis, Zebra Grass

NATIVE SUBSTITUTE

Kalmia latifolia, Mountain laurel
Chionanthus virginica, Fringe Tree
Callicarpa apillari, American Beautyberry
Asarum canadense, Wild Ginger
Wisteria frutescens, American Wisteria
Muhlenbergia apillaries, Pink Muhly Grass

For the complete listing of all of the invasive plants and their native substitutes, as well as information on joining TNEPPC, go to their website: ***tneppc.org***. Also, don't miss Terri Hogan, a Master Gardener from Murfreesburg, TN, an Ecologist, and the current President of TNEPPC, who will speak on Friday, June 8 at the Master Gardener Conference. She will also work at a TNEPPC Information Booth in the Garden Market. She will provide handouts of their new brochure "A Garden and Landscape Guide to Tennessee's Native Plant Alternatives to Exotic Invasives". Terri will talk about the Invasives Mapping Project to begin this year in Tennessee and how we can help collect and record this important data!



Native American Wisteria
www.gardenvines.com



GARDENING GUIDELINES

May's Tasks

Weed your beds thoroughly before they get out of hand.
Rake beds that have ample mulch, to prevent matting. Use a hand rake in small spaces.

Keep watering transplants and new plants frequently.

Prune shrubs that flower in early spring right after they bloom.

Fertilize roses, if you didn't feed them earlier in the season.

Set out dahlias after the last frost date.

Plant gladiolus corms beginning early this month.

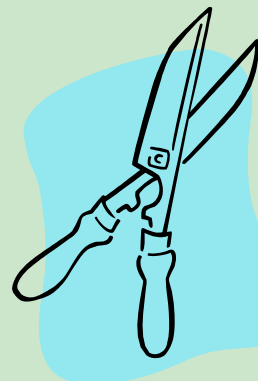
Finish dividing summer- and fall-blooming perennials.

Stake peonies, delphiniums, and tall phlox early.

Reseed bare spots in the lawn.

Set herb transplants into the garden.

Begin transplanting tomatoes, pumpkins, melons, peppers, eggplants, and summer and winter squash seedlings into the garden. Gray, windless days after the last frost date are the best days to do this.



June's Tasks

Continue watering newly planted plants and transplants, early in the morning when possible.

Continue weeding!

Deadhead, deadhead, deadhead! Rhododendrons, azaleas, mountain laurels, lilacs, and especially repeat-blooming roses benefit from this.

Fertilize repeat-blooming roses.

Pinch back chrysanthemums when 4-6 inches high.

Direct-seed kale, collards, turnips, and other greens for fall

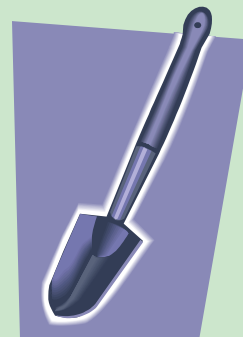
harvest.

Continue transplanting vegetable transplants into the garden.

Transplant or direct-sow cucumbers into the garden when soil is 70 degrees F.

Watch basil, and other herbs that will try to bloom, and dead-head to keep the fresh leaves coming for salads, herb butters, pesto, or just torn into pieces and added with olive oil to freshly cooked pasta!

Take care when working in the garden during the hot and humid times of the day, especially from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00p.m. An indoor activity is better during this time of the day than exposing yourself to dangerous UV rays from the sun, not to mention the danger of heat stroke and heat exhaustion.



Compiled from Country Living Gardener Garden Almanac, A Month-by-Month Guide by Penelope O'Sullivan and the editors of Country Living Gardeners.

NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS CHANGES TO MAKE

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For conference information
visit the website

<http://tnmgc2007.net>



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<http://netmga.net>

<http://mastergardeners.tennessee.edu>

DATES TO WATCH

May 2-5	International MG Conference Little Rock, Arkansas	June 2	Saturday in the Garden Kingsport, TN
May 12	Saturday in the Garden Kingsport, TN	June 8-10	Master Gardener State Conference Meadowview Convention Center Kingsport, TN
May 15-16	Turf and Landscape Grass Seminar Knoxville, TN		
May 26	Jonesborough Garden Gala	July 7	Saturday in the Garden Kingsport, TN

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