



Master Gardener Thymes

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GARDENING OPPORTUNITIES SPRINGING UP EVERYWHERE!

As the days begin to grow longer and the promise of warmer weather becomes a reality, gardening workshops, festivals and seminars are happening throughout the region. Use this edition of the MG Thymes to plan your spring gardening schedule.

LEARN HOW TO BE A TREE KEEPER....

A Tree Keepers seminar will be held on Saturday, March 7 2009, from 9:15 am- 4:00 pm at the lodge at Steele Creek Park in Bristol, TN. Tree Keepers is an all day seminar sponsored by the Bristol , TN Tree City USA Board with help from the Washington County VA Master Gardeners and BTES. The purpose of the seminar is to educate area homeowners about tree care and tree concerns.

For this year Bruce Webster will talk about urban forestry in Tennessee. Leonard Hall, an Asplundh tree representative, will talk about appropriate trees to plant under power lines and about identifying hazardous trees. Hugh Conlon will discuss tree and pesticide use. After lunch, if weather permits, Sam Adams, from Knoxville's Cortese Tree Specialists, will lead an outdoor pruning demonstration. Jeremy Stout, Steele Creek naturalist, will point out examples of tree problems that homeowners should look for.

\$5.00 registration fee includes snacks and a light lunch. Preregistration is required. Fees may be paid at the Parks and Rec. Dept. at the Slater Center in Bristol or by mail. (Bristol TN Parks & Rec., 325 McDowell St, 37620)

For more information, contact the Bristol TN Parks & Recreation Department at 423-764-4023, Jeremy Stout 423-989-5616 or Nancy Estes 423-652-7460.

....OR

DISCOVER HOW TO CREATE A COMMUNITY GARDEN

Come to Sycamore Shoals State Historic Site on Saturday, March 7, 2009 from 1:00 to 3:00 to hear Master Gardener Ben Hunter discuss how to start a community garden.

Community gardens can be created in public areas in neighborhoods, on church or school grounds, vacant lots, and even roof tops! Therapeutic, good exercise, and a great way to add beauty and color to the landscape, gardening is a most enjoyable past-time. Master Gardener, Ben Hunter, will be discussing planning, problem solving, good plant choices, and encouraging support for community gardens. The presentation will be held in the theater of the park visitors' center.

For additional information contact Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, 1651 W. Elk Avenue, Elizabethton, TN 37643. Phone 423-543-5808

GREEN AND GROWING SEMINARS RETURN

Green and Growing, a series of lunchtime gardening seminars, will be presented from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on the first three Thursdays in March at the Kingsport Public Library Mead Auditorium. In these free sessions, both beginning and expert gardeners alike will learn how to work with nature to create beautiful, low-maintenance landscapes. This series is sponsored by Keep Kingsport Beautiful, Southern Appalachian Plant Society (SAPS), Kingsport Public Library, and Sullivan County Extension.

The seminar topics are:

March 5 - **Landscaping with Nature for a Greener World** - Discover the steps to making your garden more environmentally friendly. Led by Christy Shivell of Shy Valley Native Habitat Nursery and Herbarium.

March 12 - **Rain Gardens and Rain Barrels** - Learn how these rain catchers can help you improve your landscape by conserving water and reducing runoff. Master Gardener Joy Stewart is the presenter.

March 19 - **Invasive Exotic Plants and Native Alternatives** - Learn about the problems caused by plant invaders and the benefits of replacing them with native plants. Presented by Lisa Huff, Stewardship Ecologist, Tennessee Division of Natural Areas.

Bring a bag lunch and spend your noon break learning how to make your landscape greener. Each session will include free handouts with recommended plants for Northeast Tennessee and lists of books and web sites for further reference. For more information call Keep Kingsport Beautiful 423-392-8814 or e-mail jonmoore@tricon.net.

WORK (and play) AT WARRIOR'S PATH

Master Gardeners will have a work day Sat., March 14 at 10 am at the Boundless Playground at Warriors' Path State Park. Workers will begin plantings for the Braille Trail that extends around the perimeter of the playground. There are eight stations around the Braille Trail that represent scenes from ***The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*** from the ***Chronicles of Narnia***. On this day we'll be planting three of the eight stations.

If you're interested in working, please contact Gwyn Duncan (geduncan@charter.net, 423-239-0460) or Nina Hedrick (hedrick@chartertn.net) so we can plan the workday. If the weather is bad, the work day will be held the following Sat., March 21.

After working hard on the playground, plan to attend the park's 30th annual Spring Nature Festival, "Reading the Season" on April 17 - 19, 2009. The event starts at 7:00 pm Friday night and runs until mid afternoon Sunday. Various speakers, walks, and other activities are planned. For more information, contact Marty Silver at 423-239-8531 or email Marty.Silver@state.tn.us.

Choose "Exceptional Native Plants"

Andrea Sessions will present a program on "Exceptional Native Plants For Your Garden" at the Johnson City Power Board at 7:00 PM on March 19, 2009. Andrea is the co-owner of Sunlight Gardens in Andersonville, TN, (an exceptional native plant emporium).

In her talk, she will discuss why, how, and what native perennials to plant in your garden. She will also talk about how to show off a sense of place while creating a sustainable landscape. Gardeners are invited to come with questions and an open mind.

The Johnson City Power Board is located on Boone's Creek Rd (Hwy 354) The public is invited to this free gardening program.



Chris' Corner

CHRIS RAMSEY
SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT
(423) 279-2723
chris.ramsey@utk.edu

With a stagnant and declining economy, gardening is picking up steam. Requests for information and interest in Extension programming seem to be stronger than ever. This means opportunities for Master Gardeners. Pick a project and get involved this year while fuel prices are reasonable. The list of projects is available on our website at sullivan.tennessee.edu. Then, click on publications and then on Master Gardener to access the project list, continuing education opportunities, and hours report form.

We had six MGs attend the 2009 MG Winter School in Lebanon, TN. Those attending were Blenda Anderson, Johnny Suthers, Joy Stewart, Teresa Tittle, Charlotte Lytz, and Gail Shaver. I am

sure these MGs would be glad to share with you about their winter school experience if you think you might be interested in attending in the future.

Many of you have registered on the MG website, mastergardener.tennessee.edu. Please complete your profile. You must be sure to enter your graduation year and select me as your county agent. Note that the project list is available as a drop-down list when you enter hours. Let me know if there is a project that should be added. These hours can still be submitted via the hours report form. Regardless of your entry method, please keep some record for yourself. Your kitchen calendar makes a good record.

I need MGs to assist with the upcoming grafting classes on March 19 and the propagation class scheduled for April 7.

There is an urban forestry grant opportunity available. The deadline for this grant is March 20. I can provide you with an application. If you have any questions, email or call me.

URBAN FORESTRY GRANTS AVAILABLE:

The F.Y. 2009 Urban Forestry Grant Information and Application packet is now available. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry will accept Urban Forestry project proposals from local governments, private non-profit organizations, and educational institutions. To request a grant information package or get more information about the urban forestry grants, please call: • Bruce Webster at 615-837-5436, bruce.webster@state.tn.us • Tom Simpson at 865-908-4434, tom.simpson@state.tn.us • Brian Rucker at 615-837-5439, brian.rucker@state.tn.us • Shawn Posey at 901-754-5185 shawn.posey@state.tn.us



What's The Buzz on Bees?

The Washington County Beekeeper Association will present an introductory workshop on Beekeeping on March 12 and 13, 2009. The class starts at 7:00 PM and runs until to 9:30 PM at the Boones Creek Christian Church. Another "hands-on session" will be held at K & K Bee Farm in Jonesborough, TN. on Saturday April 11, 2009, weather permitting. All three sessions are free and open to any beekeepers or individuals who are interested in learning more about honeybees. Some of the topics to be covered are: Why Keep Honeybees, Life Cycle of the Honeybee, Bee Hive Location and Bee Pastures, Beekeeping Equipment and Products of the Bee Hive. For more information contact John Snavely at (423) 323-7368 or email wastel1@aol.com or K & K Bee Farms at (423) 753-4420.

To reach Boones Creek Christian Church Take I-26 exit 17 between Gray and Johnson City TN to Boones Creek Road. Go towards Jonesborough, the Church is on the left at the first traffic light

“March” to the NC Arboretum

Several interesting programs are coming up at the NC Arboretum in Asheville during the month of March:

March 5
Talk on “Worm Composting” at 3 PM in the Education Center



March 7
Holly Shimizu speaks on “Going Green” at 10 AM and on “Gardening for Fragrance” at 1:30 PM

March 10
Talk on “Vegetable Gardening in the Mountains”. 10:00 AM in the Education Center.

March 11
Collections Walk “Early Bloomers” 1:00 Baker Exhibit Center Lobby.

March 28 – 29
WNC Orchid Show, Sale and Sneak Peak at Spring. Orchids and orchid

supplies for sale. 9 – 5 Saturday and 10- 5 Sunday

May 2- 3
Rhododendron Show

May 9
Spring Dahlia Tuber Sale



ONE MORE SEMINAR ADDED AT MIZE



Martin Litz (shown at left) has added an additional gardening seminar to those being offered at the Mize stores. On April 4, Valerya Hyrne will discuss “Planting By the Moon.” The talk starts at 10:00 and runs until noon and will be at the Johnson City Mize store, 929 W. Watauga Ave. Call ahead to reserve a spot. Additional seminars are listed in the “Dates to Watch” section of this newsletter.



Pictured are MG’s at the Feb 21 Mize sessions



TAKE CARE OF YOUR TOOLS



Ben Hunter will present the program for the April 6 general meeting of NET-MGA. He will be discussing the proper use and care of hand tools. Learn which tools work best for which jobs, and find out how to sharpen and maintain the tools you already own. Food and fellowship start at 6 PM. Members are asked to bring finger food to share. The program will begin at 6:30 PM at the Gray Community Center.

Exchange Place Plans Spring Garden Fair



The 25th Annual Spring Garden Fair will be held Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday, April 26, from 12 - 5 p.m. at Exchange Place Living History Farm, 4812 Orebank Road in Kingsport.

The oldest garden fair in the region, the event will feature thousands of plants for sale with the emphasis on herbs, natives and heirloom plants (including a wide variety of heirloom tomatoes) along with garden related arts and crafts.

The Fair is also an educational and family event that fills the grounds and buildings of the historic site. Gardening and farming experts will lead "Talks and Walks" and area Master Garden-

ers will be on hand to answer questions and provide handouts throughout the weekend.

Heritage breeds of animals and the spring activities on a mid-1800's farmstead will be featured as volunteers plow the fields with the Suffolk draft horses, shear the sheep, spin and weave the wool, cook over the hearth, and shape iron over the forge.

Children's activities abound with Girl Scouts helping children create garden crafts and area 4-H groups showing more animals. Other volunteers will pass on the skills and chores of gardening and farming to the younger generation. Ol' timey music and traditional foods add to the atmosphere.

The Baaa...ck Porch Sale will be filled with "books, garden items, pottery, and great doodads, gizmos, and thingamadoodles". If you have items to donate call Kay Ann: 288-2468 or Exchange Place: 288-6071 (no clothes please). Proceeds from the Baaa...ck Porch Sale help feed the animals.

The Fair strives to be as environmentally friendly as possible with recycling, composting, and re-using. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own plant carriers and to bring used nursery pots for recycling / reusing.

Admission is \$1 for adults and \$.50 for children. For more information, call 423-288-6071.

To volunteer to staff a shift at the Master Gardeners' booth, please call Joy Moore at 348-6572 or e-mail at jonmoore@tricon.net. Volunteers are also needed to help with set-up, hospitality and take-down/clean up. To volunteer, call Jo Anne Medlin at 288-2879 or e-mail jmedlin@chartertn.net. or Christine Barker 247-7589 or cchrisb@chartertn.net

If you would like to volunteer at Exchange Place on a more regular basis, consider joining one of the MG groups that work there. Garden Work Days are scheduled each **Monday** beginning on March 2 and continuing through the season. Come anytime between 10 am to 4 pm and work as long as you like. Tools will be provided. Bring a bag lunch. Drinks and cookies will be provided. For more information call Ron Russum at 349-4499. **Saturday** work days begin February 21, 9 am-12 noon. For more information call Sue Cadwallader at Exchange Place 288-6071.

EVEN MORE EVENTS TO ATTEND

The following is a list of other events of interest to area gardeners:

The **Annual Plant Auction** of rare and unusual woody plants has been scheduled at Sycamore Shoals Park in Elizabethton on Saturday **April 18**. The auction starts at 9:00 a.m. sharp! Be there early to get the best buys.



Dick Bir, horticulturist and author, will speak on **Climate Change - Is the Garden Sky Falling?** on Thursday, **April 23**, at 7 pm at the Storytelling Center, 116 W. Main Street in Jonesborough. Learn from this scientist and gardener how to garden successfully in an era of change - what will grow now and continue to grow in your garden for years to come. Learn which beautiful plants that are adapted to change already exist

and about efforts to create better ones, as well as how simple adaptations tilt the scales in favor of your own garden.

Sevier County Gardeners have planned a **Flower and Garden Show and Sale, April 25**, 2009 at Sevier County Fairgrounds. For further info, call Janet Banks at 865-774-8410 or jbanks84@bellsouth.net

Nina Hendick will present the program for the **June 1** general meeting of NETMGA. Her topic will be **shade gardening**. The meeting will be held at the Gray Community Center in Gray, TN

2009 NORTHEAST TENNESSEE MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Johnny Suthers
4416 Fieldstone Drive
Kingsport, TN 37664
423-229-3263
jchemie@aol.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Karen Drought
629 Ridgefield Road
Elizabethton, TN 37643
423-542-6860
mommpurr@aol.com

SECRETARY

Gail Shaver
1404 Big Hollow Road
Blountville, TN 37617
423-323-1817
westwindangustwo@charter.net

TREASURER

Pat Mazurkiewicz
232 Cherry Street
Blountville, TN 37617
423-323-1644
robmazur@chartertn.net

CERTIFICATION OFFICER

Angie Droke
908 Spring Valley Drive
Kingsport, TN 37660
423-578-8281
adroke@chartertn.net

PAST PRESIDENT

Valerya Hyrne
492 Tilson Mountain Road
Flag Pond, TN 37657
(423) 743-9093
catsmeow24@embarqmail.com

2008 NETMGA COMMITTEE CHAIRS

MEMBERSHIP

Sally Richard
(423) 477-1903
sdr37615@comcast.net

PROJECT

Dennis Marshall
(423) 288-3675
marshalls3@embarqmail.com

WEBSITE

Belinda Bridwell
belindagb@comcast.net

HOSPITALITY

Kathy & Larry Wagner
423 Wine Circle
Blountville, TN 37617

PUBLICITY

Teresa Tittle
(423) 963695
teresa5937@hotmail.com

PROGRAM

Sandee Cook
3660 West Pines Road
Greeneville, TN 37745

NEWSLETTER

Jean Green (Editor)
(423) 652-1756
gardenergreen@gmail.com

Teresa Tittle (Assistant Editor)
(423) 967-3695
teresa5937@hotmail.com

Junella McClellan (Layout Design)
(423) 764-0736
j_mcclellan@hotmail.com

6TH ANNUAL GARDEN FEST COMING IN MAY

Plan now to attend the 6th annual Garden fest at the **Appalachian Fair Grounds** in Gray, Tennessee. The Festival runs Friday and Saturday, May 1 and 2 from 9:00 to 4:00. Some highlights of the Fest include:

- Plant and shrub sale by local garden and nursery centers
- Kid's workshop
- Gardener's workshop
- Farmer's Market (Sat only 7:00 am till produce is gone)
- Silent auction
- Musical entertainment
- Blacksmith
- Petting Zoo
- Gardening Seminars (Every Hour)



Attendees are asked to bring used plastic pots and mini-blinds to be recycled. For more info call Appalachian Fairgrounds at 423 477 3211 or visit their website. The event is sponsored by NETMGA and the Appalachian Fair.

Spare Species Listed

This is our second issue using our new Spare Species List. This is your chance to give and get free plants and seeds, so keep this opportunity in mind as the spring gardening season begins! It may prove to be especially useful in these times of tight budgets. Items listed below are located in Bristol, Tennessee. If you have questions, species to give or species you need, be sure to contact our coordinator, Joy Stewart, at joylarry@btes.tv or (423) 573-2376.



Arrowhead,
Sagittaria latifolia

(pots to be divided
in early March)



Catnip seed,
Nepeta cataria,

collected in in the wild in Wisconsin this past fall. Total available is 1 1/2 ounces. Seeds can be mailed at your request.



Red-Veined Enkianthus,
Enkianthus campaulatus,

originally purchased in a 3 gallon pot from Meadowbrook Nursery and planted in spring 2008. This shrub will be dug up while it is still dormant.

COMMUNITY GARDEN CONTINUES TO PROSPER

The community vegetable garden that was established last summer at Carver Park in downtown Johnson City will rise again this year. If you'd like to get a few (or a LOT) of volunteer hours this spring, and at the same time be doing work that will enable others to provide food for themselves, please contact Sam Jones, project coordinator.

There will be a wide variety of ongoing jobs to do: preparing beds for planting, mulching paths, weeding, building compost piles as well as offering your guidance in planting and caring for a vegetable garden or even teaching a special garden-related workshop this summer on a topic that you love!

This year's garden will have 10 plots to rent to neighborhood residents, as well as a pollinator's garden that will be planted and tended by kids that attend the Carver after school/summer programs. In addition, the city has now committed to beautifying and enlarging the garden through use of raised beds and landscaping. They are asking for master gardeners to help in that process. Don't miss out on this opportunity to use your skills where they'll really count.

For more info call Sam Jones at 349-6119 or email her at: simpleintn@yahoo.com



How to Log in MG Hours

As a Master Gardener, you are responsible for turning in a volunteer hour report.

You may choose to enter your own volunteer hours or have the designated record keeper enter them for you. To do this, everyone must register to be verified as a legitimate Master Gardener by an Extension agent. If you do not have access to a computer, please have the designated record keeper register you and enter contact, profile and hour information.

Step 1. Go to the Tennessee Master Gardener Website. <http://mastergardener.tennessee.edu>

Step 2. Click on the "Master Gardener Resources" link on the left column.

Step 3. Read the page. If you have not registered, click the word "register" at the right.

Step 4. Enter your first and last name, then your entire email address. Use the dropdown menu to search for your agent's name. Click the "Submit" button.

Step 5. Wait for an email confirmation from your Extension agent. You should have a new username and password. If you do not have a response within a week, please contact your county Extension office and ask to be verified.

Step 6. Log on the Master Gardener Resource Website (at the bottom of the page) by entering your user name and password. [If you have forgotten your password contact your agent to look it up on your profile. At this time usernames cannot be reset but this can also be verified by your agent.]

Step 7. Enter your contact information and submit. Be sure to indicate if you would like to be included in the county directory.

Step 8. Enter your profile and submit.

Step 9. Enter your volunteer hours. You can enter hours for each separate project.

- A) Indicate if you are a project leader (see guidelines for description).
- B) Name the project or describe the activity.
- C) Indicate which type of volunteer hours the project or activity should fall under (see description of Administrative, Community and Education in Guidelines)
- D) Insert the number of miles travel to project (if any). Mile records are for your documentation only (a reference if you deduct miles on your taxes), they do not count for MG or Extension benefit.
- E) Report any gift or grant dollars earned for this project (only if you are the project leader).
- F) Click Submit

Step 10: Enter CE credits.

- A) Name the educational event.
- B) Enter the date(s) you attended this event.
- C) Click submit

List the approved number of hours for the event.



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>

DATES TO WATCH

- March 5 Landscaping With Nature – Green and Growing Seminar, Kingsport
- March 7
 - Creating Community Gardens Sycamore Shoals
 - Tree Keepers Meeting – Steele Creek Park, Bristol
 - Seminar at Mize Garden Center in Johnson City (Roses and Container Gardening)
- March 12 Rain Gardens and Rain Barrels – Green and Growing Seminar – Kingsport
- March 14 Work Day at Warrior’s Path
- March 19
 - Invasive Exotic Plants and Alternatives- Green and Growing Seminar –Kingsport
 - Exceptional Native Plants - Johnson City Power Board
- March 21 Seminar at Mize Garden Center in Gray (Planting by the Moon and Perennials)
- Mar 22 – 26 International MG Conference - Las Vegas, Nevada
- April 4 Planting by the Moon, Mize Garden Center - Johnson City
- April 6 NETMGA Meeting – Proper Care of Tools by Ben Hunter – Gray, TN
- April 17 – 19
 - Mid-Atlantic Garden Faire - Abingdon
 - Reading the Season Spring Nature Festival - Warrior’s Path Park, Kingsport
- April 18 Rare and Unusual Plant Auction – Sycamore Shoals – Elizabethton, TN
- April 23 Climate Change – talk by Dick Bir - Jonesborough, TN
- April 25 Sevier County Flower and Garden Show and Sale – Sevierville, TN
- May 1-2 Garden Fest – Appalachian Fair Grounds, Gray, TN
- May 23 – 24 16th Annual Garden Jubilee Festival, Hendersonville, NC
- June 1 NETMGA Meeting – Shade Gardening by Nina Hedrick – Gray, TN
- June 16 – 21 Master Gardener College, Blacksburg, VA