

The Leaflet

December 2015



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RCMGA Christmas Party 2015

Row 1: Betty Brigman, Jo Ann Slate, Deborah Dawson, Shelley Pritchard, Lynn Stenglein, Sonny Pritchard
 Row 2: Jim Brigman, Vickie Nixon, Dorothy Briggs, Ann Rausch, Rene Kriek, Doug Buck, Paul Putman, Lynn Cantrell

Dear RCMGA Members,
 At the end of calendar year 2015 and the onset of 2016, we are proud of our Robertson County Master Gardener Association's accomplishments and look forward to a new year of Robertson County Master Gardener activities. A few of the highlights of 2015 include:

- Partnering with Cheatham County for 2015 Master Gardener classes.
 Welcome Deborah Faye, Melinda, Rene, Tamara!
- Our 7th Annual successful plant sale.
- Community outreach at Lowes and Farmers Market.
- Working with the garden and residents at Christian Care Center
- Planning for Habitat for Humanity build landscaping in Springfield

- "Turning frowns upside down" at Ro. Co. Fair
- Continued volunteer activities at Adams welcome signs, Courthouse, Extension Office, Ridgetop Park and Arboretum, and other locations.
- Learning opportunities including Organic Gardening (January), Zero-scaping (February), Native Plants (July), Tropical Plants (October)

As we plan our programs, fieldtrips, activities and projects for 2016, we need your ideas and suggestions. Contact any of the 2016 officers with your ideas.

Thank you for your support and confidence in our team(s). Best wishes for a very

Happy New Year!
2015 & 2016 Officers
(Doug, Lynn, Wanda, Janice, Jeanne, & Shelley)

NEXT MEETING
Jan 28, 2016
7 pm

MEETING INFORMATION:

The Robertson County Master Gardener Assoc. meets the fourth Thurs. of every month.

Meetings are at 7pm at the UT Extension Office, 408 Main Street, Springfield, TN

Ann's Happy Place: Otherwise Known as the Rausch Greenhouse

by Ann Rausch

When I decided to try for a Master Gardener certification, my husband, Michael told me he would get me a greenhouse if I became certified. Of course, Michael thought that certification would mean that I would then have all the answers. I was never under that misperception. I finished the MG

class in 2011 and had my volunteer service hours complete by the middle of the following year, I believe. The model I finally settled on was the 8x16 Monticello by Riverstone Industries. We ordered the greenhouse through Lowe's at the price I found on the manufacturer's website. It was delivered directly to my home. I was so excited but it took

us a few months before we were able to put it together. My husband dug a pit, built a frame, filled it with gravel, and installed a 5/4 deck board floor for the greenhouse. My husband likes to say he wouldn't wish a greenhouse build on his worst enemy. He really hated it but I didn't think it went that badly. Between the two of us, it did take us about



The foundation



The roof was the hardest



The completed greenhouse

a week to build instead of the weekend that the manufacturer had planned out. We had it ready for Winter 2013/2014.

The greenhouse is constructed of 8mm twin wall polycarbonate walls and an extruded aluminum frame with an integrated base allowing for direct anchoring. Construction consists of twist and lock nut and bolt fastening. The walls are 4'10" high and the peak is 7'6". And one of my favorite parts is that it was made in the USA. The standard package includes a built-in rain water/gutter system, automatic roof ventilation system, and dual locking sliding doors which open 4 feet wide.

I upgraded to a package that includes a workbench system, interior shading system, programmable watering system, and a greenhouse potting sink.

As you can see, the bench runs the length of one side. We have a 7.5kW car-wash certified heater installed from the rear ceiling which we keep at 50 degrees after the night time temperatures drop below that. A propane heater (15,000BTU) supplements the electric heater when the temperatures drop below 5 degrees. In the event of a power failure, we have a 20,000BTU kerosene heater ready to support the propane heater. We do run an extension cord

to the heater—there is no electricity run directly to the greenhouse yet due to underground difficulties which have also prevented running water to it. On a separate extension cord, I have a strip fluorescent light and a standing fan (which runs year-round). We are planning to replace the standing fan with a solar fan next year. The three automatic roof ventilator panels help keep it from getting too hot. The doors are open 24/7 from probably May through at least October. I was using a small 'baby gate' to keep the dogs out and allow all possible air circulation but Michael scored an expanded aluminum panel from his



Michael taking a break with our two helpers



Gate



Interior screens & heater



Exterior Screen

work (it used to be an outside air bird-guard for a commercial a/c unit) this fall so I can keep it across the doorway in the summer. In addition, the interior shading system stays up year round. They are fine for three of the four seasons. We add a much darker, one-piece screen to cover the entire outside in the summer. With a sunny morning in the middle of the summer, it can heat up to about 101 degrees inside but it really doesn't feel that hot when I'm in there.

At this time, it is full of all my container plants and any extra plants I picked up this past year but didn't get in the ground. Some of the plants I have include: two potted citrus plants, a Meyer lemon and a clementine; two oversized Asparagus Ferns; three Angel Trumpets (my first one from Mrs. JoAnn Slate, one from Lynn Stenglein, and one from Ms. Dorothy Briggs—all from our wonderful plant sale); five Bird of Paradises varying from one to six feet tall; a Peace Lily (with two more in the house); a large Angel-wing Begonia; two large pots of Spider Plant baby starters (with two more plants in the house); last year's Poinsettia's we bought at the SCG Open House which have not "bloomed" this year; two large Christmas Cactuses I'm hoping will bloom soon; two Fiddle leaf Figs; three Oxalis containers; a braided Gardenia standard; several types of cacti; various sedums; and lots of pots of potato plant I didn't use this past summer.

I haven't (successfully) started any seedlings yet but I haven't put much ef-



My Front Porch Potting Bench



Potting Bench



My helpers, Isaac & Fagan



Rear Porch

fort into that end of growing. I've had a bout of aphids a time or two on just one or two plants but controlled it quickly and completely with homemade insecticidal soap.

The sliding doors on the front open to four feet wide. The inside of the greenhouse is 7'6" high. Michael included a four-foot deep front porch and a two-foot deep back porch. During the summer, a lot of the tropical plants sit on the back porch getting all day sun. While they're inside now, I currently have all my extra pots stored there.

I had no real plan when I purchased it and that was one of my big mistakes. I didn't plan out what I was going to do with it, how I was going to run it or get water inside, or where and how much storage would be needed. My advice to

everyone thinking about a greenhouse would be to plan a lot more than I did. I don't know if there is any location where I could have run electricity and water any easier than I can now which is nearly impossible. I will advise that no matter how much room you think you need—add to it. It's just like closet space, you can never have enough. Think about how you are going to store all the things you have now and all the additional things you will buy because you have a greenhouse. This includes inside and outside. I've picked up two of those plastic shelving units at garage and estate sales. You are going to need some sort of storage inside that is at least water resistant.

But, in the end, I am thrilled to have a hobby greenhouse.



From Outside the Door



Angel Wing Begonia



Bird of Paradise



Asparagus Fern

2016 Leaflet Contest Open for Suggestions

Next month we will announce our 3rd annual Leaflet contest. Our 2014 contest was to complete the sentence: "You're sooooo much a RCMGA Member if..." And our 2015 contest was photography. Send in your suggestions for the contest to Lynn or Trina. Get ready to enter early and often. We recognize all participants and winners, and we award fabulous prizes at our December Christmas party.

Certification/Recertification: from The Tennessee Master Gardener Handbook

Master Gardener interns must complete and document a minimum of 40 hours of approved volunteer service activities within one year of the date of their training. Each year after initial certification, certified Master Gardeners must complete a minimum of 25 hours of volunteer service activities and eight hours of personal continued education.

Master Gardeners who have been inactive for a period of time are encouraged to participate in Master Gardener Program activities and volunteer their expertise whenever possible. Activation will occur when recorded hours are returned to the UT Extension Office. Former Master Gardeners will be required to turn in recertification hours and continuing education hours to reinstate their Master Gardener title.

Thanks!

Thanks to our 2015 RCMGA officers (Doug, Lynn, Wanda, Janice) for their work and to our 2016 officers (Jeanne, Doug, Lynn, Shelley) for agreeing to serve. Special thanks to Doug and Lynn for providing continuity for the RCMGA offices.

TIME!

Don't forget to enter all your 2015 volunteer time and continuing education hours before December 31st at mastergardener.tennessee.edu. You can also give your hours to Judy Bryant for entry.

Think Spring! Get Strawberries!

Rene may still have some strawberry plants to share. Email her at boerekind82@yahoo.com to arrange to get them.



Leaflet Photo contest winners:

Dorothy Briggs (photos above left) and Lynn Cantrell (photo above right).



Top: Janice and Lynn purchase Poinsettias for the Meals on Wheels recipients. Bottom: Patricia Brooks, Meals on Wheels Director and Lynn Cantrell.

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Upcoming Events

Jan 28	RCMGA Meeting	Springfield
Mar 3-6	Nashville Lawn & Garden Show	Nashville
Mar 17-19	Winter School	Knoxville
April	Wildflower Hike	Taylor Hollow
May	RCMGA Plant Sale	Springfield
June	Garden Tour (?)	Springfield
Jul 9	Summer Celebration	Jackson