

# The Leaflet



January 2016

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## RCMGA Project Review Needed

This month we start planning our volunteer activities and events and prepare our 2016 budget. Our 2015 projects and project leads are listed below. Please review them and think about what projects we need to add or to deactivate. If you need to change your project commitment, if you have questions about a specific project, or if you have suggestions, please email one of the officers on the contact list on page 4. Project review will be on the agenda for our January 28th meeting.

PROJECT	2015 PROJECT LEAD
Adams Sign	Judy Bryant
Beautification Award	Paul Putman
CCS Community Garden	Jeanne Protsman & Shelley Pritchard
Courthouse Landscaping	Tim Best
Fair Booth	JoAnn Slate & Jeanne Protsman
Fairground Landscaping	Paul Putman
Garden Tour	
Habitat Landscape	
Ext. Office Landscaping	Paul Putman
Ext. Office Hardscape (2015 Legacy)	Sonny Pritchard
Jo Bryns Elem.	Patsy Morris & Judy Bryant
Plant Sale	Ursula Otto
Preserving RC Heritage	Dorothy Briggs
RCMGA Web Site	Julee Orr
Ridgetop Station Park	Lynn Stenglein
Robertson County MG Facebook Page	Ann Rausch
The Leaflet	Trina Fulton, Rene Kreik, Lynn Stenglein

### NEXT MEETING

**Jan. 28, 2016**  
7 pm

Program:

**The Vanishing Bees  
and How to Help  
Pollinators**  
by  
Doug Buck

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

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

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*The result of the recent snow storm which dropped 8 inches of snow in this part of Robertson County.*

## Gardening through the Eyes of Children

by René Kreik

I've always enjoyed listening to the colorful opinions of children. It sometimes surprises me how insightful they can be, and it reminds me of how their minds are like sponges, soaking up information even when you think they're not paying attention.

Gardening is more than my hobby; it's my passion and I hope to somehow pass it on to not just my own kids, but possibly inspire someone else's child to plant a seed and watch it grow!

I decided to ask some of the kids that I work with to share their thoughts on gardening. Ranging from ages 5 to 12, I got quite the variety of answers. Gardening is growing flowers, growing food such as fruits, vegetables and herbs. Gardening is planting trees, shrubs and landscaping.



When I asked who would one day like to have a beautiful flower garden, it was kind of funny to only see the girls raise their hands while the boys groaned and made faces. I know that will change with time...

I was encouraged when one boy said he would rather play outside and help his dad plant trees than to play video games all day long.

Another boy is convinced that the grocery stores all sell artificial produce (yes, artificial!) and that we should all grow our own organic food because it's healthier. I told him that the organic versus "artificial" debate is best left for another discussion on another day. On that note I asked the kids how many of their families actually grow their own food, albeit fruits or vegetables of any sort or size. Out of 20 children, 9 raised their hands.

The gardens varied from small square foot gardens to Topsy-Turvey tomato planters, mature fruit trees to single blueberry bushes.

I wanted to know if and why they thought that growing your own food is important, and again a good variety of answers: saving money at the grocery stores, making some extra cash by selling your produce, having fresh food



from garden to table, growing organic (non-artificial), chemical free food, good for nature by helping bees and other pollinators, and recycling plastic produce containers for your own fruits and veggies.

The last question I asked was the easiest for the younger kids to answer, being: "What is your favorite fruit or vegetable?" Their little faces lit up as they yelled out carrots, blueberries, bananas, tomatoes, potatoes, apples, watermelon and on and on, but the most popular were strawberries and broccoli! I have to say I agree with all of the above!

For fun I asked them to draw me pictures of their idea of gardening and they were all too eager to comply, creating some impressive and delightful artwork. This was an encouraging little experiment, picking the brains of what turned out to be some pretty sharp kids. I will continue to do my part by sharing and teaching and hopefully inspire some of them to develop a love for growing something green... or yellow or pink. After all, all you can do is plant the seed...

René, RCMGA Class of 2015, teaches karate for boys and girls at Top Gun Karate Academy in Greenbrier.



### WINTER SCHOOL CHANGES

Winter School, now called the TN MG State Conference, will be March 17th-19th at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. The first day of the conference is designated as the "Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Pre-Conference" including how to begin and implement JMG programs in the community, classroom and as a camp program.

March 18th conference highlights include sessions on using social media; selecting the right tree; rain gardens; and soil amendments and compost. On Saturday, March 19th sessions will include overviews of the three UT garden sites across the state and tours of the UT Gardens in Knoxville. Attendees will participate in Alliance meetings and hear Search for Excellence presentations.

The RCMG Association has provided scholarships (paid tuition and expenses) for members to represent our Association at prior "Winter School" conferences. We will discuss conference attendance at our January 28th Meeting.



## Provide a Winter Habitat for Butterflies

Feeling guilty about those dead flowers, stems, and leaves that did not get composted and/or tidied-up last fall? No worries! You are likely to be providing a winter home for butterflies, especially if your garden contained butterfly host plants last summer. Although some butterflies (most notably the Monarchs) migrate south for the winter, other species overwinter in Tennessee in a variety of ways—as eggs, as caterpillars, in the chrysalis, or as adults. Butterflies including the Pearl Crescent, Red Spotted Purple, Eastern Tailed-Blue, and Great Spangled Fritillary hibernate as caterpillars attached to the host plants, inside seed pods, or in the leaf litter near the host plants. Butterflies that hibernate as chrysalis include the Swallowtails (Black, Eastern Tiger, Pipevine, and Spicebush Swallowtails); they travel a short distance from the host plant and attach to

plant stems such as shrubs. The Red Admiral and Mourning Cloak Butterflies are among those that hibernate as adults in winter; they find a sheltered spot such as a crevice in a tree trunk where they can keep dry. Mature elms, Shagbark Hickory, and White Oak trees have bark with deep fissures that provide shelter for hibernating butterflies.

So, a few rules of thumb for gardeners who want to encourage butterflies (and balance garden pests with their predators): less garden/yard cleanup; discriminate pruning to avoid the chrysalis on shrubs and small trees; no removal of mature trees in winter and early spring. Think of gardening as a “fine balance between control and leaving things for nature to do.”

Additional information on winter habitats for butterflies may be found from the following: *Butterflies of Tennessee* by Rita Venable and the article “This Fall, Make Your Yard a Good Butterfly Habitat” by Joy Stewart, in the September/October 2015 edition of *The Tennessee Conservationist*.

## RCMGA Members Share Favorite Sources for Gardening Information and Products

Let's face it: it's January! It is mostly planning and ordering time here in Robertson County. Leaflet staff asked members to share their favorite seed, plant and/or garden product catalogs and or web sites. Thanks to JoAnn, Gwen, Dorothy, Catey and Lynn for the following input:

**JoAnn Slate:** My favorite resources include viewing nearby gardens and reading HGTV and *Better Homes and Gardens*. Source like these are likely to include garden plants as accessories, incorporating house and gardens. Considering my small space I need to rely on old favorites while occasionally trying some new greenery and/or flowers. Our Master Gardener sale is a favorite resource; otherwise, I buy seed at Walmart. My experiments with native plants have not always worked out; the Serviceberry trees were a success though mocking birds ate all the berries.



**Gwen Day:** I really like the *Antique Rose Emporium* <http://www.antiqueroseemporium.com>. You can search for roses by category like partial shade class, color, grow the list and click on a selection. You will see good information about the rose including the year it was introduced. Their website really helps in making a wise choice. They have a wedding website that you can click on which has very pretty pictures of the chapel and gardens surrounding the pavilion. I love getting landscape ideas from this (<http://www.weddings.com/photos.html>).



**Dorothy Briggs:** I am always looking for different vegetable varieties to plant. The *Totally Tomatoes* catalog specializes in seeds for tomatoes and peppers (hot and sweet varieties); they also offer other vegetable seeds. The *Natural Gardening Company* catalog also is a new one to me. They sell certified organic seeds and plants.

**Catey Henning:** I found my favorite catalog this year (at least my favorite for now!). The title is *The Whole Seed Catalog* from Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds—just happened to spot it at Sam's Club and their prices made my cost a bit over \$6.00. It isn't just a seed catalog!!! It tells the stories and history of many of our seeds and stories of the beginnings of many of these heirloom seeds. There are even four seeds fea-

tured which are from our state of Tennessee! This publication also includes many stories and much information about planting, seed saving and gardening in general. Many great recipes are shared as well. This is more like a good read rather than a seed catalog I call it my Fifty shades of Green book. It's worth a good look. The site is [www.rareseeds.com](http://www.rareseeds.com)

**Lynn Stenglein:** Although “tree huggers guilt-trip” kicks in when all the nifty plant catalogs arrive, I always look forward to the arrival of seed and garden product catalogs...especially the *Plant Delights Nursery Inc.* catalog from Juniper Level Botanic Garden in Raleigh, NC.. The plant offerings are well organized and presented. The plants arrive in the best condition and packaging of any that I have ordered anywhere. Ever! (I will leave it to you, Dear Reader, to evaluate the prices. However, the quality is there!). Of course I also appreciate their humor on each catalog cover. Check them out at [www.plantdelights.com](http://www.plantdelights.com).

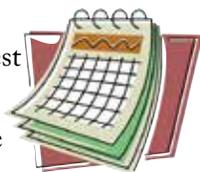
**The Whole Seed Catalog**  
FROM BAKER CREEK HEIRLOOM SEEDS  
2016



## Gardening Calendar

### January/February To Do's

- Provide food and water for the birds. Test left-over seed packets.
- Prune dormant trees and vines. Prune crepe myrtles for size and shape.
- Start cool season plants in greenhouse or warm southern window.
- Cut back ornamental grasses before new growth starts.
- Obtain soil test.
- Plant dormant balled-and-burlapped and bare-root trees.
- Spray dormant oil on broadleaf evergreens, roses, and fruit trees.
- In mid-Feb. start seeds that need about 8 weeks before spring frost to germinate and grow;
- It is too late to plant most spring flowering bulbs for 2016 blooms; Dutch Irises are the exception.
- Fertilizer spring flowering bulbs if you did not do so last fall when they are 1 inch high.



There are numerous informative sources for "To Do" gardening lists for the Middle Tennessee region; two of our favorites are the *Tennessee Gardener* magazine and web site ([tennesseegardener.com](http://tennesseegardener.com)) and the book *Gardening in Tennessee and Kentucky*, published by Cool Springs Press. We are including a few of the items from these and other sources in the 2016 Leaflet editions each month.

### Reminder: Due\$ Due!

Robertson County Master Gardeners' 2016 \$10 membership fee is now due. Please make checks payable to RCMGA and deliver to Shelley Pritchard, Treasurer. RCMGA still takes CA\$H also.

### CONTACT LIST

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## RCMGA Leaflet Staff Announce The 3rd Annual Newsletter Contest

Please share a favorite garden quote or saying with fellow RCMGA Association members! Entries may be original or quotes from other gardeners, humorous or profound (or both). Send entries to [roberstoncountymastergardeners@yahoo.com](mailto:roberstoncountymastergardeners@yahoo.com) and include "Leaflet Contest" in the subject line. Entries will be published in our monthly newsletter and fabulous prizes will be awarded to the winners at our December 2016 Christmas meeting. (You do not have to be present to win...but it helps.) Sample entries: "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." Audrey Hepburn "You know you are a gardener when you chose your new vehicle based on how many plants it could haul." Gardens Alive

### Herbal Workshops

Would you like to have a workshop with your friends? This year, instead of pre-scheduling specific workshops, you decide what you'd like to know about herbs—from choosing, growing, using, and preserving to anything you choose. Get together with 5 to 10 of your friends, pick a topic, then schedule date and time.

You may want to look back at the schedules of workshops on [www.diannsgreenhouse.com](http://www.diannsgreenhouse.com) for ideas, but don't feel limited to those topics. The cost will vary, for instance, you want to bring your own container for planting an herb garden, or you may want to have a demonstration rather than a hands-on experience.

Reprinted by permission from *Diann's Herb Newsletter*, Winter 2016.

### Summary of RCMG Volunteer Hours for 2015

	Hours	# MG members reporting
<b>ACT (total)</b>	792 hr.	18
<b>Administrative</b>	341 hr.	18
<b>Community</b>	420 hr.	17
<b>Ed (teaching)</b>	31 hr.	8
<b>CEU's</b>	145	12

*Gold Leaf Awards*—100 hours or more of service (ACT):  
Janice Derby and Lynn Stenglein

## Upcoming Events

Jan 28	RCMGA Meeting	Springfield
Feb 12-13	Intro. to Bee Keeping	Ellington Ag. Ctr.
Mar 3-6	Nashville Lawn & Garden Show	Nashville
Mar 17-19	Winter School	Knoxville
April	Wildflower Hike	Taylor Hollow
May 7	RCMGA Plant Sale	Springfield
June	Garden Tour (?)	Springfield
Jul 9	Summer Celebration	Jackson