

The Leaflet



July 2014

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NEXT MEETING July 24

Program:
Flower Arranging
By Denise Arnold,
Potting Shed

MEETING INFORMATION

The Robertson County
Master Gardener
Association meets on
the fourth Thursday of
every month.

Meetings are at 6:30 pm
at the UT Extension
Office, 408 North Main
Street, Springfield, TN

Meet Me at the Fair Booth

By JoAnn Slate

“Are you going to Scarborough Fair?” asks a lyrical ballad of yore. Instead of parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme, Master Gardeners expect to produce flair and whimsy preparing for the 2014 Robertson County Fair. The upcoming annual fair, scheduled for August 25—30, offers opportunity to showcase members’ creativity. Booth entries this year will address the theme, “Spirit and Pride...Countywide”; additionally, booths display ways in which each organization has accomplished its stated goals. Robertson County Master Gardeners, therefore, will illustrate projects that respond to administration, community, and education (ACE) components.

First we work; then we play. That old adage applies not only to MG’s fair booth entry but also to individuals’ entries in diverse categories such as photography, needlework, garden produce, and flower arrangements. Since members’ artistry spans diverse areas, awards often go to gardener folk. A giveaway connected with our RCMGA booth display is packaged and labeled flower seed from members’ gardens; if you have not started saving seed, get outside and begin now. Fairgoers like free stuff.

The August meeting (August 21 since the fair occurs during our regular monthly date),



Doug Buck and Paul Putman at the 2011 Fairbooth.

held at the Fairgrounds, allows members convenience in which to assemble the booth and also to package collected seed. Various skills are needed, especially ability to climb a ladder and affix lettering and décor. At the July 24 meeting, sign-up sheets will be available for booth duty preferences; staffing is needed for Monday through Saturday, five to nine p.m. weekdays and perhaps longer on Saturday.

An immediate need involves clever approaches to the fair theme. Anyone who wishes to participate in planning and creating the booth should contact Jo Ann Slate (334-1341 or alnjosate@comcast.net) with ideas, energy, and originality. Actually, even willingness to meet and work would be sufficient. So far, no theme has presented a challenge that members could not meet and conquer; such a tradition deserves to be perpetuated.

Rain Garden Class

By Vickie Nixon

I took off work to take a class about Rain Gardens in Mt. Juliet which was taught by Ruth Anne Hanahan and Dr. Andrea Ludwig of Tennessee

Water Resources Research Center in Knoxville. We had about 30 students with about 10 of us being Master Gardeners and others from cities in the Middle Tennessee area. The class covered right

plant—right place, manage soils and mulches, recycling yard waste, using fertilizers appropriately, manage yard pests, reduce stormwater runoff and its pollutants, provide for wildlife, and protect water’s

Summer Celebration

By Ann Rausch

This was my first Summer Celebration and all I can say is Wow! I mean Wow! The bottles were decorating the entire place. I got there late (I know, big surprise there, huh?). I went straight to the Plant Sale around 10:15. I had meant to start classes at 10 but I figured I would just start them at 11. Well, I shopped, and I browsed, and I learned new things, and I ran into Jimmy Brigman in the tree section. Betty was actually inside in a class where I should have been. I spent more time in hydrangeas than I did anywhere else, but I did see (and buy) most of the rest of the selection. When I finally finished with that and had my plants safely tucked away with guards, I went back to my vehicle. That's where I ran into a very dear friend from Clarksville and her husband. I didn't even know they were into gardening and she didn't know that about me. Learning, acquiring plants, seeing gardening friends: a great way to celebrate summer!



By Janice Derby

My daughter, Trina, and I walked around the grounds until time for the first class - "Plant This—Not That". The premise was to be careful what plants you put into your landscape. Some plants are invasive. We learned that the Bradford pear which practically covers every neighborhood is a "bad" tree. When the Bradford pear breaks—which it will sooner or later—the shoots that come up are not Bradford pear but the Callery Pear root stock. The Callery pear will grow rapidly, put out fruit and reseed itself throughout the woodland. We went to several other classes but this was my favorite.

The entire grounds were decorated with "Bottle Trees" and "Bottle Art". Some of them were very clever like the Peacock and Billy Goat. I decided that Bottle Trees will probably never grow at my house but a lot of people loved them. The research gardens were beautiful. There were a great many different plants and flowers that UT is testing to see how they grow in the south. If a plant does not do well here in the research garden you will never see it at your local nursery or big box store.

If you have never been to Jackson, put it on your calendar for next year. You will love it!



Rain Garden Class continued

edge. We learned how to select a good spot for a rain garden, which included checking for runoff from the buildings if present, the contour of the landscape and any trees that might be on the land. At this point in the class we split up into 4 groups. I got lucky and was with a group of engineers. They even had their own tools for measuring. Calculations were made for the area of runoff to determine the size of the rain garden and how fast

it would drain. Rain gardens should drain within 24–48 hours. Plant selections were discussed for their tolerance to wet and dry and also for attracting wildlife. This class was held at the Mt. Juliet Community Center and they were in the process of putting in a rain garden at the back corner of the parking lot. The water drains into this corner. Due to heavy rain the previous day we could not do a lot (plans were for us to doing the planting.) Suggestions were made to dig one area deeper for better drainage. This

class was 7 hours long, we were provided with a nice bound notebook with information covered in the class. Since taking this class I have noticed that the new Dollar Tree Store in Springfield has a rain garden area in front. They planted shrubs and have used rocks for drainage from the parking, so you might want to take a look at that if in the area. I learned a great deal from this class and it has made me be more aware of the runoff when we have rain.

Ridgetop Garden Awarded Master Gardener Beautification Award

The Robertson County Master Gardeners Association presented the June 2014 beautification award to Leo and Joyce Smiley at 1023 Lennox Avenue in Ridgetop (Greenbrier). The Smiley's garden in late June features loosestrife, hollyhocks, containers of begonias, and gigantic "crown of thorns" cacti.

Bring your nomination(s) to our July RCMGA meeting! Thanks to Lynn Stenglein for the nomination and to Paul Putman for coordinating the award(s).



Ms. Dorothy Does Voodoo (Plants)



RCMGA member, Dorothy Brigg, enjoys acquiring unusual plants. Her Voodoo Lily that bloomed in her yard last year lives up to its promise. Voodoo lily plants are grown for the gigantic size of the flowers and for the unusual foliage. They are not as difficult to grow as their exotic appearance may suggest, however. Learning how to plant a voodoo lily bulb and the subsequent care of voodoo lilies can actually be quite easy.

Voodoo lily, also called Devil's tongue, is a member of the genus *Amorphophallus*. The voodoo lily *A. titanium* is the largest flower in the world. *A. konjac* has smaller

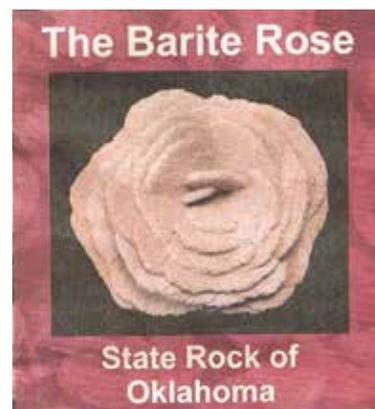
flowers, but it is still quite large compared to other garden flowers.

Each bulb produces one stalk, about 6 feet tall, topped by one gigantic leaf. After the leaf stalk withers, the voodoo lily bulb produces a flower stalk. The flower is actually a spathe and spadex arrangement similar to a calla lily. The spadex can be 10 to over 50 inches long. The blossom only lasts a day or two.

When in bloom, locate the voodoo lily a good distance from your house. Although Dorothy experience little or no problems, some of the flowers produce a strong, offensive odor similar to that of rotting meat. The smell attracts the flies that pollinate the flowers. Pictured above is Dorothy's voodoo plant that bloomed in her yard in 2012. She has generously donated a plant for our August RCMGA meeting door prize.

It's A Flower? It's A Carving? It's A Rock!

The barite rose rock, the state rock of Oklahoma, is formed when the barite crystals precipitated from groundwater in the



pore spaces between quartz sand grains with the Garber Sandstone. Most barite roses range from 1 to 10 cm in diameter, though these coalesce into clusters weighing hundreds of kg. Other than minor occurrences in Kansas, Morocco, and Australia, the barite roses are unique to Oklahoma. A myth attributed to the Cherokees holds that the barite roses formed from the tears of their women and the blood of the men who were removed to Oklahoma from Georgia, 1838-39 on the Trail of Tears. Thanks to Tim Best for sharing this information.

Profiles in Gardening:

Ursula Otto

Ursula certified as a Master Gardener in 2002 when she lived in Beaufort, South Carolina. When she moved to Robertson County, she joined the first class of Robertson County Master Gardeners in 2006. Ursula became a master gardener because she always enjoyed nature. She reported, "It was a trait I inherited from my mother who was raised in a rural area. I, however, was a city girl. It actually took several years until gardening became part of my life. Having a stressful job, in the evening I went into the garden. Sometimes I would just do weed pulling therapy, but it soon blossomed into full scale gardening."



Ursula has served as treasurer and president of the Robertson County Master Gardeners Association. Her projects include the Bird Sanctuary, Plant Sale, and Garden Tour. Ursula instigated and chaired our first RCMGA Garden Tour in 2009; her garden was featured in the 2012 tour. Ursula lists her favorite thing about Master Gardeners as meeting people with the same interests. Her hobbies and interests are endless. She "loves to read, crochet, knit, cook and bake." She names ornamental grasses and succulents as two of her favorite plants. Ursula characterizes herself as an ornamental gardener and does not grow vegetables.

Living in Beaufort, South Carolina, Montgomery County, and Davidson County, Ursula gardened in all locations. When asked to tell us two things about her that we did not know, she replied, "As a child I went to the Opera like other kids went to movies. My uncle was a baritone singer at the Frankfurt Opera; often he would come to the town where I grew up. The family would have front row seats. Also, I am a trained bookkeeper who worked with ledgers and journal. Those were truly the "dark ages".

Happy Birthday!

August

17 Ann Rausch

28 Irene Cain

Upcoming Garden Events

Aug 25-30	Robertson County Fair	Springfield
Aug 26	6th Annual Fall Gardener's Festival	UT Research Ctr., Crossville

More Opportunities!

Dorothy's Heritage project: Dorothy Briggs has reclaimed and maintains a local cemetery. If you are interested in learning more about this or participating on a work day, contact Dorothy at 643-7236 or talk to her at a RCMGA meeting or event.

Gardens at Grassmere: Cathie Long, project lead at the Grassmere gardens Davidson County M.G. project, says there is always lots to do in the gardens in preparation for their major fall event in September. If you are interested in working at Grassmere one morning (selected days when Cathie will have work lined up for us), please reply to this message or email Lynn at lcsgts@hughes.net, call her at 859-9659 or see her at a meeting/event. She will coordinate the work day/time with Cathie.

CONTACT LIST

President: Michelle Adcock
(615) 384-9845
shelladcock@yahoo.com

Vice President: JoAnn Slate
(615) 334-1341W
alnjoslate@comcast.net

Secretary: Ann Rausch
(615) 305-2598
alrausch@charter.net

Treasurer: Jeanne Protsman
(615) 859-2042
jeanne.protsman@comcast.net

Robertson Co. Ext. Agent: Paul Hart
(615) 384-7936,
pehart@utk.

Project Coordinator:
Lynn Stenglein, (615) 859-9659,
lcsgts@hughes.net

The Leaflet: Lynn Stenglein, Editor
(615) 859-9659,
lcsgts@hughes.net

The Leaflet: Trina Fulton, Production
(615) 382-6822
trinaf@charter.net



July Contest Entries:

"You're sooo much a RCMGA member if . . .

. . .you have poured water on someone's wilted house plant when visiting their home." *Michelle Adcock*

. . .it took you two months to decide which types of tomatoes to grow this year." *Michelle Adcock*

Still lots of time to submit your entry to our 2014 (You're sooo much a RCMGA member) contest. Quality and quantity count. Email your entries to a Leaflet staff member or bring it to any RCMGA meeting.