

The Leaflet



May 2015

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Plant Sale 2015: A Huge Success!

Congratulations, RCMGA Members on our most successful plant sale ever! Thanks to everyone who brought plants from their gardens and yards, who created beautiful living-arrangement that were perfect for Mother's Day shoppers, and who worked at the plant sale. Special thanks to Jeanne, Ursula, and Vickie, who brought breakfast for the workers, and to Paul Hart, who had the tables set up when most of us arrived at (nearly) first light.

This was our 8th annual plant sale; we continue to learn. The Leaflet is a good place to record notes for next year. We offer the following observations/suggestions:

Change the sale time to 8am until noon. Our customers have learned to come early for best selection and we have finished well before 2pm every year.

Designate an "unload area" for a couple of vehicle adjacent to the sale area from 6:30 am to 8am to expedite large deliveries of plants.

Acquire containers for potting/dividing plants the prior season, i.e. start saving now for 2016. This is the time that landscape companies are emptying containers and recycling them.

Finally, fall is the best time to divide many perennials. Pot them up and overwinter them. It is only a little over 44 weeks until our next RCMGA plant sale!



NEXT MEETING
May 25, 2015

7pm at Travis
Price Park

Program:

Springfield Parks
Revue or
Bee Keeping

**MEETING
INFORMATION**

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

Attention Creative



Thinkers!



The theme for the 2015 Robertson County Fair is "Turning Frowns Upside Down." Send your ideas and suggestions for our RCMGA Fair Booth to Jeanne Protsman (jeanne.protsman@comcast.net) or to JoAnn Slate (alnjoslate@comcast.net). Bring your ideas to the meeting.

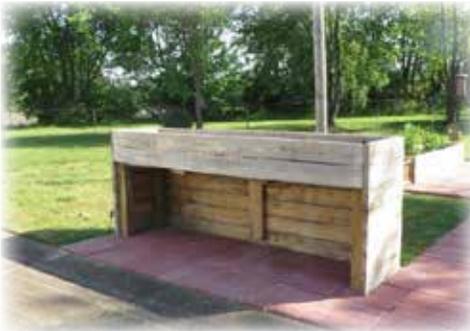
Invaded By Invasives?

Our April RCMGA meeting speaker Lee Patrick, VP of Invasive Plant Covntrol, Inc. (IPC) offered to answer questions from RCMGA members by email at lee@ipc-inc.org. The IPC web site is www.invasiveplantcontrol.com. Lee gave us several copies of USDA publication SRS-119, A FieldGuide for the Identification of Invasive Plants in Southern Forests". Email Lynn (lcsgrts@hughes.net) if you are interested in a copy.

Christian Care Center Gardens Project



This is the crew that helped make so many smiling faces. It truly was a great experience for all of us—we had so much fun. One of the residents was 105 years old—guess gardening never gets old. We want to thank Darla Goad, CCC Activities Director, for inviting us to share with the residents our gardening experience. It was truly a great day!



There were two boxes that allowed residents to either stand by or use walking canes etc.



There were 2 flower boxes like these that people in wheel chairs were able to do some gardening.



Photos of the flowers that were so generously donated by South Central Growers. Thanks to them the project looked great.



Here are additional gardeners—they loved the flowers!



Here is Betty assisting a resident planting. She was really into this project.



Here is Shelley getting some of the residents to help plant some of the vegetables. It was a beautiful day!



Shelley's group planted some vegetables that they will be able to eat later. Here are the pepper and tomato plants. Looks yummy! Thanks Shelley!



Final photo of the completed flower beds—what a change! Now the residents can enjoy this colorful area. Thanks to all who helped.

Tree Added to Ridgetop Arboretum

A Japanese Red Maple (*Acer palmatum* v. *dissectum*) was planted at the Ridgetop Arboretum in mid-April. In accordance with the arboretum plan, which was an element of the 2013 RCMGA legacy project, the tree was donated by the children and grandchildren of Dorothy Briggs in honor of their mother and father; the tree was researched and acquired by RCMGA members; and the planting was supervised by the Master Gardeners. Boy Scout Troop 151, the Ridgetop Highland Chapel chapter, volunteered their time and manpower to plant the tree. The Japanese Red Maple, cultivar 'Red Dragon', is located adjacent to the historic log smoke house at the Park, behind the house/museum. Be sure to go by and give it a hug when you are there.



Scouts left side clockwise from top: Michael Cantrell, Stephen Fulton, Nathan Suter, Parker Johnson, Austin Poteet, Jakob Rethi. Center: Master Gardeners Dorothy Briggs and Lynn Stenglein. Scouts on right: Ryan Love, Alex Love, Weston Johnson, Timothy Fulton, William Green

Plant of the Month: Supermarket Orchid

By Carol Burdett, Cumberland County Master Gardener and volunteer with the UT Gardens, Crossville

Did someone bless you with a beautiful orchid? Mass marketing has hit the orchid world!

Among the most popular orchids for gifting are cattleyas (pronounced "KAT-lee-uh"). Another favorite gift orchid is the genus phalaenopsis (pronounced "fail-en-NOP-sis"). This orchid is nicknamed the moth orchid because of the shape of its blooms. Both come in a variety of sizes and colors, are readily available in grocery stores and garden centers, and can look just as good in your home as the store.

In spite of the fact that my friends think I can grow anything with little regard for plant rules, I will confess that I managed to kill the first two orchids I was given years ago by simply not consulting the experts. Orchids are epiphytes or air plants that have developed specialized water-storage organs. They like to attach to moist tree bark in a tropical atmosphere. Thus, they have their own set of recommended growing practices. The American Orchid Society (aos.org) gives great advice on keeping your new friend healthy and blooming.

Both cattleyas and phalaenopsis appreciate a lot of air movement and a long day of filtered, bright light. They don't appreciate direct sunlight but do thrive in temperatures between 60 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Living in an east-facing window usually makes them happiest.

Both orchids should be kept in free-draining growing media. The AOS recommends even moisture, although allowing the media to dry slightly can be beneficial. I recommend you water your orchid once a week, at most. Be sure the water can drain and does not stand in the pot. The pot it came in probably has no drainage, so your job is to not overwater. You can also create drainage holes.

Orchids should be watered in the morning. Because the water should run through the pot, place the plants in the sink. Tepid water is recommended. Also, do not use salt-softened or distilled

water. Let the water run through the plant for a minute or so. Be sure to let the plant drain completely. If any water gets trapped in the leaves, use a paper towel to blot. This will help avoid crown rot. If you've read that you should just lay some ice cubes around the roots, I have found that generally works, also.

As for fertilizer, there are a number of mixtures and brands, but the AOS recommends that any fertilizer you use should not contain urea. Their website discusses recommended methods. If you want to try a home fertilizer brew, you might try your morning brew. I dump the dregs of my coffee pot into my orchids once a week, all year around. For an average pot with a 5-inch top measurement, about 1/4 cup of these leavings works best. Doing this will negate the job of occasional fertilizing, as the dregs give your new friend all the encouragement it needs to do its best. I use "high test" (caffeine) coffee leavings, but a friend is using decaf on hers. It will be interesting to see which formula produces the best results.

When orchids have completed their flowering cycle, it's time to cut the flower stem to encourage a new bloom on a healthy plant. Again, the AOS has a number of tips about getting your orchid to re-bloom. For phalaenopsis, they recommend cutting the flower stem 1/2-inch above the first or second node. Be sure your pruners have been disinfected. The plant will most often grow another flower stem and re-bloom.

Repotting may be necessary every one to three years if the plant becomes root-bound or the media needs replenished. Don't be tempted to substitute the loose medium that came with your orchid with your favorite soil mix. Orchids like orchid mixes that drain well, otherwise they may decline to the point of no return.

Now sit back and enjoy!

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Profiles in Gardening:

Shelley Pritchard



Shelley is one of our newest master gardeners; she completed her certification in 2015. She always wanted to be a Master Gardener but did not have time when her children were young. She started the program when her oldest "left the nest" to go to the University of Tennessee. Shelley's gardening "roots" and interests go back to when she was a young child and to her memories of a great-aunt, who had numerous plants inside and out. Shelley always wanted to be able to "grow things". Her grandparents were farmers and grew almost everything they ate. Shelley says, "My grandmother worked all summer canning, freezing, and drying apples on an old screen door."

Shelley is interested in all types of gardening including flowers, vegetables, and herbs. Her favorite plants include Calla Lilies and Angel Trumpets. Along with being part of a group that enjoys discussing and learning about gardening, Shelley likes the opportunities afforded by the Master Gardener program of helping others to love gardening. She works on the Christian Care Center garden project which assists residents in their garden. (See pictures on page 2 of this Leaflet.)

Shelley is a native of Robertson County and has lived "on the same street her whole life, on the old home place". But Shelley's interests include travel; she and Sonny love beaches, warm weather, and sun. She coached cheerleading and softball for six years. She and Sonny met in high school and have been married for 31 years.

Upcoming Garden Events

Jul 9	Summer Celebration	Jackson, TN
Jul 9	Plant a Fairy Garden	Diann's G.H.
Aug 1 7:30-8:30	"Ask a RC MG"	Farmer's Market
Aug 22	Make Herbal Oils and Vinegars	Diann's G.H.
Aug 25	Fall Gardeners Festival	Plat. Res. & Ed. Ctr.
Sept	Master Gardener Classes	Extension Office
Oct 12	Making Herbal Breads	Diann's G.H.

New RCMGA Members



March 2015: Newly certified RCMGA Members Lynn Cantrell, Betty Brigman, Jim Brigman.

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Photo Contest



Robertson County Sunset
submitted by Dorothy Briggs

May Picnic at Travis Price Park

We will meet at the lakeside shelter at Travis Price Park in Springfield (4155 Wilks Road) for our May RCMGA meeting. To reach the park turn off Hwy. 41 onto Wilks Road just north of the Robertson County Fairgrounds. Bring a dessert, salad, chips, or a relish tray; the Association will supply barbeque, drinks, and utensils. Volunteers are needed to set up the tables so that we can eat promptly at our 7pm meeting time. Contact one of the RCMGA officers if you can come early and help.