

The Leaflet

September 2017



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RCMGA Member Profile Index Added to Web Site

Have you ever wondered about your fellow Robertson County Master Gardeners and wished you could see what they wrote in their Leaflet profile? Wonder no more: an index to the Leaflet for each pro-

file(36 total) that has been published has been added to the www.rcmga.org web site. The profile index links to the newsletter containing the information, generally on page 4.

Master Gardener Class 2017



The Master Gardener class 2017 is in full swing! Thank you to everyone who advertised, promoted and encouraged folks to join our program. As a result, there are 12 people enrolled from Robertson County, that's very exciting!

This year classes are being held at the Pleasant View Fire Department for optimal convenience for members from Robertson and Cheatham counties, and it's a packed house! Classes are held every Tuesday evening from 6-9 and current MG members are welcome to stop by and introduce themselves to the interns. We will have an official meet-greet-and-eat at the end of the course,

and we'll have more details regarding that at the October meeting.

I asked one of the interns, Yolandi Kriek, on her thoughts about the class so far, and here is her response:

"I like it. I think it is fun so far, there is a lot of information and I've learned a lot out of just 2 classes. It's cool that there is a diversity of people interested in learning more about the different aspects of gardening, it's nice that the class is interactive and that everyone is asking questions and sharing information. I've already made a friend too! I'm looking forward to what is still to come."

Correction

We incorrectly listed the September program topic as "Farming in Robertson County" by speaker Kim Hendley.

Instead Terry West, Southern Nurseries, will speak on Landscaping. We look forward to Kim's program at our October Meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Sept. 28, 2017
7 pm

Speaker:

Terry West

Southern Nurseries

Program:

Landscaping

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

Grape Day

By Jeanne Protsman

We all received an invite from Rutherford County Master Gardeners for Grape Day Harvest on August 26, 2017. I decided to attend as I knew nothing about grapes. I also decided to go early to avoid the heat of the day, and the invite stated it started at 6:00 a.m.

So, alarm goes off at 4:30 am—I get dressed and yes even brushed my teeth. Packed up the items they requested we bring with us. I left about 5:00 a.m. and headed out on the road. While traveling down the high way, I was in awe of the majestic sun rise. I was able to view a sun rise with hues of pink, blue, and



white. It faded away as I arrived at the Grape Day about 6:00a.m.

I was greeted by Lisa Brent, a Rutherford County Master Gardener, who took me under her wing and showed me the ropes of harvesting

grapes. I soon realized that the birds were providing me with a symphony while picking grapes. But, Oh No!, soon I realized the birds weren't serenading me, instead they were scolding me for taking their food.

I was there to harvest four tons of grapes but fell short, as I was completely exhausted by 11:00 a.m. I did come home with grape juice and an experience that was wonderful from the sunrise, to the singing birds. The grape juice I enjoyed drinking and even made grape jelly. *A Big Thank You To Rutherford County Master Gardeners.*

Revised Handbook and New TEMG Volunteer Reporting Database Coming Soon

By Dr. Natalie Bumgarner, TN Extension Master Gardener Coordinator

When will the new handbook be ready? Authors, editors and reviewers for the revised handbook are still working furiously to finish the project. We think that we are going to be able to print in time for the new handbooks to be here for January intern trainings. As we get closer, I will keep agents informed and we'll all work together as we move to the new materials.

When might we start using the new TEMG volunteer reporting database? We are targeting moving to the new system for the new year, but there are still many decisions to be made by

agents, the IT team and administration in UT Extension. So, we want you to know it is coming, but be assured that there will be more communication coming as testing continues and we become more certain about the system and its completion and readiness for action. There is already one county testing the new system right now and we may add additional testing counties through the fall.

How will volunteers switch to the new database? What about records in the current system? Volunteers will need to register for the new database, and then using an email matching

system, their service records will be able to be pulled from the current database. The ability to pull your current records from the old system to the new system is a pretty amazing feature that our IT developers have been working very hard to provide. It will also require investments by coordinating Extension agents in terms of record readiness, so be assured that the whole Extension team is working to do our best to make this process painless, but we are also asking for your patience in advance as we test and prepare to move to a new system over the next few months.

'Tis The Season to Think about Our Legacy Gift

It has been a couple of years since our Association presented a "Legacy gift" to the community. The guidelines and form are available at www.rcmga.org (Members' Lounge—email Julee Orr if you do not have a userid and password for this restricted part of our web site.) The planters at the Ext. Office and enhancements to the Ridgeway Arboretum are two of our legacy gifts.

We are including the guidelines for the legacy gifts in this article. We have several members who have joined since the guidelines were created in 2012 and

have a growing emphasis on training the community in gardening. As you think of a garden related gift to the community, review the guidelines below, think of a garden related gift to the community, and consider updates that may be needed. Current guidelines are as follows:

In accordance with the Master Gardener mission and with wishes expressed by our membership, our Robertson County Master Gardeners Association will nominate and select garden-related gifts to the community. Nomination and award of legacy gifts

will be made only when our Association's financial status permits and only when a majority of members present at the monthly meeting approval the gift.

Proposals for legacy gifts may be made at any time but customarily will be considered at the end of the year when annual projects have been completed and/or after major fundraisers.

- The Legacy proposal must include: the name of the Legacy gift; the location, materials list including names of plants to be used, estimated costs

- (materials, site prep and installation if applicable, maintenance, etc.).
- The gift must be planned to endure for more than three years and must make an improvement to the beauty of Robertson County.
 - The proposal should describe how the Legacy gift would add to the county's beauty, including before photos and an after sketch or landscape plan where applicable.
 - The Legacy gift may or may not be associated with an existing Master Gardener project.
 - Any certified Master Gardener or Master Gardener intern may submit a proposal to the group for consideration.

- The RCMGA officers will notify members when the Legacy gift is being considered and invite all members to submit nominations within a specified time (generally 30-60 days).
- A committee consisting of the officers, the project coordinator, and the county agent will review the nominations, interface with the nominators to obtain any missing information, and insure that the nomination meets the Legacy gift purposes. The RCMGA president may appoint substitutes for any recused officers.
- The nomination will be presented at the next association meeting for selection by vote of association members (certified Robertson County Master Gardeners and interns) present.

The Magic Milk Jug

For sheer versatility in the garden, nothing comes close to the humble plastic milk jug. Save both half-gallon and gallon sizes to create these garden helpers.

Seed flats. Starting your own seeds is the easiest way to cut your gardening costs to the bone. And it's the only way to get many of the newest varieties. To save space and bother, start seeds in shallow trays filled with potting soil, then transplant the strongest seedlings to pots later on. To make free seed flats, cut off the bottom three inches of a gallon milk jug and punch a few holes in the bottom with a nail. Fill with potting mix, and use a pencil to create two or three shallow furrows for sowing. Then plant your seeds according to the packet directions.



for your prized perennial bed, but the gentle caress of the terry cloth is perfect for heavy vegetables, like this tomato plant.

All the News

Newspapers are the key ingredient for "no-till" garden beds. To create a new planting area without the work of digging, just mow the area as short as possible, spread with 6 or more layers of newspaper, and top with enough compost, soil, or mulch to hold the papers in place.

Over a few months, the newspaper will smother weeds and grasses, then decay into the bare soil. You now have a pristine planting bed ready to receive trees, shrubs, or flowers.

Towels, Blankets, and Tablecloths

Never throw away a worn or damaged vinyl tablecloth. There are just too many ways to put these old soldiers to work in the field.

Corral dirt. When digging a hole, spread an old tablecloth out nearby to keep your dirt from getting, well, dirty. You won't lose precious top soil, and you'll keep your surroundings clean.

A moving experience. Use a vinyl tablecloth, plastic side down, to transport heavy items like bags of mulch, plant divisions, or balled-and-burlapped trees and shrubs. Even if you have a wheelbarrow, this ground-level transportation system may be easier on your back for many chores.



Frost protection. A lightweight blanket, towel, or tablecloth (or blanket) can save your tender annuals from certain death when a frost is forecast. Covering works especially well on clear nights, when the open sky literally sucks heat out of unprotected leaves.

Ties that bind. Worn-out towels, cut into strips, make safe and secure ties for supporting plants. They may not look good enough



Dollar-Store Treasure

You can pay a lot for a high-quality pruner, but for most everyday trimming chores, get a \$1 pair of kitchen shears at the dollar store. That way, if you lose them or leave them out in the rain, you won't be kicking yourself.



From Junk to Jewels

Let's wrap up with a collection of quick-hits.

Old dish pans. Fill with some potting soil and supplies, and you have a portable potting bench that you can take anywhere.

Carpet scraps. Use old or leftover carpet to line paths in your vegetable garden. You'll keep weeds at bay, and give yourself clean footing even when the garden is wet. Small



pieces of lightweight carpet are also useful for covering cold frames on chilly nights.

Jelly jars. Be on the lookout for attractive little containers for small bunches of cut flowers.

Coffee and tuna cans. Use these straight-sided containers to collect and measure rain and sprinkler water. That way, you can be sure that every part of your garden is getting the an inch of water a week.

Broken mini-blinds. Slats from light-colored vinyl mini-blinds make easy-to-see, durable plant labels. Cut them into 8-inch strips with a point at one end. (*Note: Older mini-blinds may contain lead; if you are concerned, substitute inexpensive wooden craft sticks.*)

Soft drink cans. Rinse well and place in the bottom of large planters to take up some of the space. They provide extra drainage capacity and you'll need less potting soil.

Chopsticks. Whether new or used (and washed), use these little fellows when you start seeds in pots. Add one or two sticks to each pot, then cover with a cheap plastic bag to control moisture. The chopsticks will prevent the bag from collapsing onto the soil. Just be sure to keep your "greenhouse" away from high heat or direct sun.

Egg cartons. These are long-time favorites for starting seeds, one or two per soil-filled cell. To reduce the risk of bacterial contamination, use well-washed Styrofoam egg cartons with a single drainage hole punched in the bottom of each cell.

Broken or cracked flower pots. Sink the broken side halfway into the garden to create attractive artful accents.

Planting Food Plots

by René Kriek

Deer season is upon us, and if you're a hunter, that's exciting news!

But whether you hunt or just like the presence of wildlife, planting a food plot might be the way to go.

This was the first year my husband and I decided to plant a food plot on our farm, mostly to learn and experiment and if it happened to attract deer or turkey, that would be bonus.

During the summer we plowed about 2 acres, fertilized it and sowed a special blend of seed—a deer buffet! A healthy, protein filled mix of annuals: sunflowers, sun hemp, soy beans and peas.

Never having done this before, we weren't sure what to expect, and when the seeds started sprouting, we were thrilled! It was fun trying to identify the different seedlings as they sprouted, and as the weeks passed, the plants got bigger and bigger and BIGGER! Sunflowers were some of the early bloomers and they were just beautiful! Yellow wherever you looked! This particular food plot had far exceeded our expectations. It turned into a proper jungle and we saw signs of deer and turkey.

We decided to plant a winter food plot as well with a seed mix of winter greens such as kale, brassicas and turnips. The seeds have already sprouted, all 3 acres of them. I'm eager to see a big field of greens in the coming weeks, more food for wildlife, less mowing for us!



Nashville Rose Society Annual Rose Show

Admission and Parking are FREE!



October 7: 1-4:30 p.m. October 8: 11:00-4:30 p.m.

Belmont University
Gabhart Student Center, Rooms A & B
2002 Belmont Blvd, Nashville, Tennessee

Hundreds of beautiful roses on display
Free workshops each day on "The Basics of Growing Roses"
For more information and directions to the Rose Show, visit:
www.nashvillerosesociety.com

Upcoming Events

Sep 5- Nov 14	M.G. Classes	Pleasant View
Sep 9	Foodscaping	Mansker Station Park
Oct 10	Bugs; Kids' Classes	Springfield Library
Oct 21	GroWild Fall Sale	Fairview, TN
Nov 14	Trees; Kids' Classes	Springfield Library

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