Master Gardeners Hear it … Through the Grapevine

UT Extension The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

Volume 15, Issue 2 February 2008

MASTER GARDENERS OF HAMILTON COUNTY

President's Letter

Have I mentioned that there is a big mud hole in my back yard? No, wait…That's my new pond…almost. Getting it from the drawing board to the back yard has been a challenge. I must have looked at every pond picture available on the internet. I even asked other Master Gardeners about their ponds. Honestly, I was tired of looking at ponds, but at least I had a design. So, the time was well spent, right? Wrong. I had forgotten about one small problem…Mike. He had ideas of his own and actually thought we should build the pond his way. So, we had to work out a compromise. Now we are getting a pond with a stream. Next, we had to figure out a way to explain what we wanted to David (Ponds and Plants). Try getting someone to see your vision when it is only in your head and a little fuzzy at that. At first, you would have thought we were speaking different languages. But, eventually we got on the same page and the pond should be finished soon. Better than I first envisioned it.

Building a pond has reminded me that gardening is all about flexibility. It is great to have a vision of what you want your garden look like, but you have to have the ability to "go with the flow". Mike and I are still moving plants from one place to another and rearranging beds. I admit I have a hard time adjusting to changes in the plan, but it usually turns out for the best. A garden isn't planted just once. A garden is always evolving. What is planted now may not be appealing in the future. Well, except this pond, I better love it forever or Mike might plant me!

hope everyone is planning on attending the Membership meeting Thursday, February 21st. We have a full meeting planned and Jane Mauldin from the Chattanooga Area Food Bank will be our guest speaker.

Stephanie Payne

February Master Gardener Membership Meeting

The February membership meeting will be held at the Ag Center on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Our speaker will be Jane Mauldin from the Chattanooga Area Food Bank. She will speak on a project to develop a Demonstration and Teaching Garden behind the new food bank building. Master Gardeners will be asked to help out with events and fundraising for a new greenhouse.

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Upcoming Events

- **29 Feb, 7:00 pm, Holcomb's Perennial seminar at Hixson store (Craig Walker)**
- **Membership Meeting, February 21st.**
- **Master Gardener Winter School:** Lebanon, TN February 28-March 1

See Page 5 for more details

- **Board Meeting, March 6th at 6:00.**
- **8 March, 7:00 pm, Holcombs Perennial seminar at Ft. O. store (Craig Walker)**
- **Beginning & Newcomer Gardening Classes:**

The beginning and Newcomer Gardening Classes will be held on Four Tuesday nights in March.
March 4th Soil, Fertilization, & Turfgrasses
March 11th Trees & Shrubs and Attracting Wildlife
March 18thWater Gardening and Herbs
March 25th Perennials & Annuals and Wildflowers

- **Membership Meeting, March 20**
- **Bonsai Workshop** Sign up now for this two-session, two-hour, workshop taught by our own MG Jim Gumnick. The workshop is limited to 10 people, and will be taught at the AG Center on: Saturday, **March 22** and Saturday **March 29** from 10:00 to 12:00. A $ 20 fee will cover the nursery stock, soil and container that will be used. If you have an established Bonsai that just needs pruning, you can bring it at no charge. Deadline for the sign-up is March 8th, 2008. For sign-up and information email gromminger@comcast.net or call Gretchen Rominger at 875-9204.

Sertoma Lawn & Garden Show

The Sertoma Lawn & Garden Show is just around the corner. The dates are Saturday, March 15th from 9:00am to 5:00pm and Sunday, March 16 from 10:00am to 4:00pm at Camp Jordan in East Ridge. Master Gardeners will be teaching classes again this year and as last year, will be covering (2) Q&A tables. There will be sign up sheets at the February 21st members' meeting with days and times that volunteers will be needed to help man the Q&A tables. Keep in mind that the volunteer hours are to be turned in to Gretchen Rominger by March 31st and the Sertoma show is the last big event for MG's to earn volunteer hours. This is a good time to pick up those much needed hours. And if you already have all of your hours, come help us out anyway. This is a great way to get to know other MG's as well. Admission is free for those who volunteer to work and for those who teach a class, but you must wear your MG badge, and a MG shirt if you have one. If you can't make the February meeting and want to volunteer your time, please email me at thehenhouse2@comcast.net or call me at home at 894-1103 and cell phone at 488-9011. Last year we had two large baskets with beautiful plants in them that were used for decoration on each of our Q&A tables. Many people wanted to buy them, so this year we are planning to make a number of baskets to sale. If you have a fairly sturdy basket that you would like to get rid of, please drop it off at the AG Center and add a note explaining that it is to be used for the Sertoma Lawn & Garden Show. You can also bring them to the February meeting. If you have any questions, please contact me.
Sue Henley

Upcoming Events

Encore Azalea Developer Coming To Chattanooga

Robert Lee will be at **The Barn Nursery** Saturday Morning, 29 March. Mr. Lee developed a new group of azaleas known as Encore Azaleas. He created the Encore Azalea by crossing a traditional spring-blooming azalea with a rare Taiwanese summer blooming azalea. These Azaleas now bloom in the spring with an encore in late summer and fall. Another interesting attribute of the Encore Azalea is its ability to thrive in full sunlight.

Mr. Lee started developing the Encore Azalea in the early 1980's. He made an agreement with Plant Development Services (PDSI) and Flowerwood Nurseries to assist with this endeavor. After a 15 year hybridization and selection process Encore Azaleas became commercially available in 1997.

The Barn Nursery is proud to recognize Mr. Lee for his achievement. He will give a short talk and have a question and answer session. Flowerwood Nursery is bringing in a trailer load of Encore Azaleas for this occasion with almost all 23 varieties available for observation and purchase. The best way to get to The Barn Nursery is exit 181 off I-24 (4th Ave.) take the first right turn after exiting I-24. Plenty of free parking will be available. Hours are from 9 am to 6 pm.

Written by Jack Townsend Master Gardener Intern 2008

MARCH 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 Turf Class	5	6 6:00 Board Meeting	7	8
9	10	11 Wildlife Class	12	13	14	15 Sertoma
16 Sertoma	17	18 Water and Herbs	19	20 Membership Meeting	21	22
23	24	25 Flowers Class	26	27	28	29 Azaleas at the Barn
30	31					

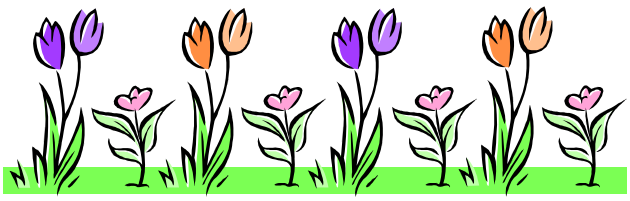
Dues are *Due*

Your 2008 ($16) membership dues need to be turned in before April 1st to have your name included in the 2008 Membership Directory.

Your ACE HOURS should also be turned in by March 31st, especially if you are receiving a 3-5- or 10 year award.

Please mail to: UT Extension-Hamilton County
Master Gardener Resource Room
6183 Adamson Circle
Chattanooga, TN 37416

If you need an ACE Hour form you can go to our MG website www.mghc.org click on Members link, then scroll down to Service Hours reporting form and print one.



Tom's Tidbits for February 2008
New Master Gardener Classes in Full Swing

The Master Gardener classes are rolling along nicely. There are a total of fifty-nine students in the two classes combined. The mentors have really enriched the classes. They help me in so many large and small ways. The door prizes have gotten very fun for everyone. I know the students appreciate the extra attention. Many students are already very active on projects. I think there is even a friendly competition going on to see who gets their 40 hours the fastest. It is fun to watch and it is so beneficial to the program and to the community.

Class is going "green"

Every class usually generates a big bag of plastic or styrofoam for the dumster. The mentors decided to change this practice. After all, this is an educational gardening class which talks about environmental issues. We needed to walk the talk.

So far they have replaced the silverware with stainless forks and spoon. Then Jimmy Culver brought in real china dinner plates. Ron Bohrer supplied real cloth napkins and other supplies. Finally, the whole crew found china mugs for everyone in class.

Next plan is to replace the plastic water bottles. Everyone is cooperating with the transition. It takes a little more clean-up at the end. Now everyone eats in style.

Master Gardeners welcome

Master Gardeners are invited to attend any session they want. Many good sessions are coming up. Ruth Baumgardner speaks on perennials February 25th at 6:00pm and then at 9:00am on Tuesday morning, March 4th. It's always a treat to listen to Ruth. Another great class is the outdoor pruning class with John Nessle on April 14th at 6pm or on April 15th with Carl Absher at 9am. Look for the full schedule on the website at www.MGHC.org.

The Sertoma Lawn and Garden Show is scheduled for March 15th & 16th. Many good educational sessions are lined up. Call or email Sue Henley if you want to help.

Master Gardener Hotline needs help

It's time to start thinking about spring activities. The Master Gardener Hotline is up and running. In fact, this year the hotline went right through the winter. I'm surprised how many questions we get, even in the winter. I think we will do the same thing this year. I hope many Master Gardeners and Interns will want to come and answer gardening questions we get at the office. Even two hours a week would be a big help. It's a great opportunity to put your knowledge to work. Most of the questions are easy. Some are more involved and would need a little research in books or on the internet. I don't always have the time to go that in depth. It's a big help when Master Gardeners answer one or more of these types of questions. Look for more information on this soon. The regular hours for the hotline are on Monday mornings from 10am to noon. However, once you are trained, you can come in at anytime. Some questions can be taken home to work on.

Many thanks to students, mentors, speakers and my workmates for doing their part in making this the smoothest class so far. I can't believe 5 classes are already completed.

For Masterful Gardens

Tom

2008 Master Gardener Winter School- Lebanon, TN

Leadership Track:

Thursday, February 28:

9:00 – 10:30a.m. Welcome. Annual reports

and what they can do for you!

10:45a.m. -12p.m. Managing New Master Gardeners

1. Selecting Newbies
2. Helping newbies figure it out
3. Keeping everyone interested

1 – 2 p.m. Programs that Work

1. Basic Gardening
2. Habitat Outreach
3. Jr. Gardeners

2:15- 5:00p.m. Community Outreach

1. Community Gardens

2. Historical Sites

3. Botanical Gardens

Friday, February 29

8:30-10:00 a.m Mock Meeting with Robert and His Rules

10:45—12:00 p.m. Breakout session for officers

1.President/Vice President: Duties and By-laws

2. Secretary/Treasure: Recording

1-2:30 p.m. Fundraising doesn't mean you have to abuse the shrubbery

3-5:00 p.m. Communication: Did you get the message?

Educator Track:

Friday, February 29: Teaching Master Gardeners How to Teach

9 – 10a.m. Presentations: Start to Finish –

It is all in the presentation! Learn techniques and tips for preparing, developing, presenting, evaluating programs for any audience.

10- 11 a.m. Practice What You Preach!-

Put your knowledge to work. Small groups practice the principles of delivering their message.

11a.m. -12p.m. – Morphing Learning Behavior

Don't look now you just might see someone learn something new! Dave discusses how to achieve ultimate goal of teaching: change and gain in knowledge!

Lunch

1 – 2 p.m. – Creating the Teachable Moment

Get your wheelbarrow ready! Start loading your tools for beginning the teaching process.

2 - 3 p.m. – Walking the Talk- Dave Craig &

Witness a lesson plan's evolution! Follow an Extension specialist as she follows the step by step process of pulling a program together.

3 – 5p.m. Now Its Your Turn – Dave Craig, On your mark get set go! You have one hour to plan and organize a group talk, and 10 minutes to deliver! Don't worry we are all in this boat together.

5:15- 6:30 p.m. extension Presentation

Saturday, March 1: Train the Trainer Sessions

9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Choose one of the following concurrent sessions. 1. Introduction to Horticulture- Beth Babbit, Natane Davis 2. Plant Propagation- Lori Osburn, Lucas Holman 3. Landscape Design Karla Kean

1-3 p.m. TT Breakout Activities

February 28-March 1

Registration options $60 each (choose one)

Leadership Track: February 28-29

Education Track: February 29- March 1

Registration Instructions

Register at your county Extension Office prior to February 25. Late registrations will not be guaranteed meals or materials. Meals and materials will be provided for each track. Checks or cash ($60) payable to The University of Tennessee will be received in the county office at the time of registration.

Are You Smarter Then a Fifth Grader?

By Jerry Smolinski - MG Intern 2008

On a recent airing of the popular TV show “Are you smarter than a fifth grader?” a young college student was asked the following question; “How many colors of carrots are there?” Her reply, after much deliberation was, “one color, orange, that’s the only color carrot I’ve ever had”. Probably, most people would have given the same WRONG answer. Actually, there are at least six colors of carrots!

The bright orange fleshy root vegetable we know today as the carrot is a far cry from its wild ancestor, a small tough, pale fleshed acrid root plant. Probably no one would be eating carrots that were once small, very thin, red, purple, and even black taproots with a distasteful bitterness if no one had taken an interest in improving their flavor. Luckily, some motivated Dutch people took carrots under their horticultural wings and taught them how to be sweet, it's a long story.

The Wild Carrot - Daucus Carota - is one of the many plants which belong to the natural order Umbelliferae. It is a common plant in pastures and by roadsides and especially likes light soils where it can soon turn into a weed.

To unravel the history of the Carrot you have to go back a very long way. Fossil pollen from the Eocene period (55 to 34 million years ago) has been identified as belonging to the Apiaceae (the carrot family). The carrot dates back about 5,000 years ago when the root was found to be growing in the area now known as Afghanistan. Drawings found in temples from Egypt in 2000 BC show a purple plant, which some Egyptologists believe to be a purple carrot. Egyptian papyruses containing information about treatment with carrot and its seeds were found in pharaoh crypts. Throughout the centuries Arab merchants travelled the trade routes of Arabia, Asia and Africa bringing home to their villages the seeds of the purple carrot. During these years the vegetable appeared in a variety of hues ranging from purple to white, pale yellow, red, green/yellow and black (but never orange! - that came about in the 15th century).

In Roman times carrots were purple or white. By the 10th century purple carrots were grown in Afghanistan, Pakistan and northern Iran. Moorish invaders are thought to have brought the purple and yellow variety from North Africa to Southern Europe around the 12th century. By the 13th century carrots are known to have grown in the fields of Germany and France.

Purple, white and yellow carrots were imported to southern Europe in the 14th century. Black, red and green/yellow carrots were also grown. Flemish refugees eventually introduced the vegetable to the shores of England in the 15th century.

Carrots were originally purple or red, with a thin root. The species did not turn orange until the 1500's when Dutch agricultural scientists and growers used a mutant yellow carrot seed from North Africa to develop a carrot in the color of the House of Orange, the Dutch Royal Family.

In an attempt to "nationalize" the country's favorite vegetable they began experiments on improving the pale yellow versions by cross breeding them with red varieties. These varieties contain beta carotene to produce orange-colored roots. This was developed to become the dominant species across the world - wonderful, sweet orange.

The Carrot originated some 5000 years ago in Middle Asia around Afghanistan, and slowly spread into the Mediterranean area. The first carrots were white, purple, red, yellow/green and black - not orange. Its roots were thin and turnip shaped. Temple drawings from Egypt in 2000 B.C. show a plant which some Egyptologists believe to represent a large carrot. Egyptian papyruses contain information about treatment with carrot and its seeds were found in pharaoh crypts. Carrot seeds have been found in prehistoric Swiss lake dwellings in Ronbenhausen giving clear evidence of human consumption. There is however no evidence of cultivation at this stage, more likely they were used for medicinal purposes. Similar findings appear also in ancient Glastonbury. Neolithic people savored the roots of the wild carrot for its sweet, succulent flavor.

Carrots were recognized as one of the plants in the garden of the Egyptian king Merodach-Baladan in the eighth century B.C. It was placed amongst the aromatic herbs along with fennel, suggesting that the root was discounted, using only the pleasantly scented flowers and leaves in cooking.

The exact lineage of carrots is difficult to trace as it was often confused by early horticulturalists with the parsnip, its close relative.

Carrots were well known to both the Greeks and Romans. During the first century, the Greeks cultivated a variety of root crops that included leeks, onions, radishes, turnips, and a poorly developed variety of carrots. The unpleasant tasting carrots were rarely eaten but were applied medicinally. Though the Greeks excelled in cultivating many food plants, they never succeeded in developing the carrot into a flavorful vegetable. Even Galen, the 2nd century physician at the court of Marcus Aurelius, stated that the wild carrot is less fit to be eaten than the cultivated variety. They cultivated carrots in their kitchen gardens. These varieties are thought to have been 'forked' with white roots, not unlike the roots of today's wild carrot.

The Romans often ate carrots raw, dressed in oil, salt and vinegar or they cooked them with a sauce made from cumin, salt, old wine and oil.

The Romans invading Britain in the second century AD brought leeks, onions, garden carrots, garlic, fennel, mint, thyme, parsley and coriander to name but a few. The Greeks called the carrot "Philtron.

The Carrot is mentioned by Greek and Latin writers under various names however it was not always distinguished from the Parsnip and Skirret, which are closely allied to it. The name Pastinace was used for both at the time of Pliny the Elder and is based on the verb pastinare - to dig up. Galen in the 2nd century attempted to distinguish the two by giving the wild carrot the name Daucus Pastinaca.

Hippocrates said "The powers of foods severally ought to be diminished or increased in the following way...Take away their power from strong foods by boiling and cooling many times; remove moisture from moist things by grilling and roasting them; soak and moisten dry things, soak and boil salt things, bitter and sharp things mix with sweet, and astringent things mix with oily."

For example, foods like cabbage, carrots and turnips were boiled several times, fish or lamb would have been grilled, and an herb like sorrel would have been dressed with oil.

The carrot was certainly cultivated in the Mediterranean area before the Christian era, but it was not important as a food until much later. There is a long gap of about 900 years between the writings of the Greeks and Romans of the first to third centuries and the next clear records about the carrot.

The carrot is a member of the parsley family which includes about 2,500 species such as dill, caraway, cumin, chervil, coriander, fennel, anise, parsley, parsnip, and celery. It also includes poisonous species such a poison hemlock, water hemlock and fools parsley. Then ornamentals like sea holly, masterwort and blue lace flower. The cultivated carrot belongs to the genus Daucus L. which contains many wild forms. The USDA classification is;

Kingdom Plantae -- Plants

Subkingdom Tracheobionta -- Vascular plants

Superdivision Spermatophyta -- Seed plants

Division Magnoliophyta -- Flowering plants

Class Magnoliopsida -- Dicotyledons

Subclass Rosidae

Order Apiales

Family Apiaceae -- Carrot family

Genus Daucus L. -- wild carrot

LET IT SNOW SOMEWHERE ELSE……..

By Tina Fiorito- MG Intern 2008

That was the mantra of the tourists visiting Cancun Mexico. Recently I visited Cancun, Mexico located in the state of Quintana Roo on the Yucatan Peninsula. I was impressed by the natural beauty of the land as well as the vegetation of the area. The surface of the peninsula is composed of carbonate and soluble rocks which are mainly limestone. There is also dolomite and evaporates at various depths. The peninsula is flat and low and the limestone is honeycombed with caves and sinkholes. These sinkholes are called cenotes, in the northern lowlands. These are natural holes in limestone bedrock with water at the bottom of it. These result from caves collapsing, forming holes in the ground with water in the bottoms of the holes. Some are shallow and small but others are large and deep. The Mayan people who live in this area still use the cenotes as their main water source as there are no rivers and very few lakes on the Peninsula.

The Yucatan peninsula lies within "the tropics". However, tropical vegetation can consist of wet rainforest of the jungle and dry, scrubby or dry grassy habitats. As a master gardener intern and plant lover, I was in my glory with all the magnificent plants surrounding me. One of these was the "Elephant Ears" which is a member of the Arum family. A distinguishing feature of this species is that it's very large leaves arise from thick, pale rhizomes. Most of the leaves get to be three feet long.

Boat lily, Tradescantia spathacea—also known as Moses-in-a-boat, Oyster plant, or Boat plant is a native Mexican plant most likely seen in gardens. small white flower emerge from between the purple bracts. The plant's foot long leaves are purplish below, much in contrast to the green upper surfaces. Don't think these would grow here in Hamilton County.

Bougainvillia

Bougainvillea, genus Bougainvillea, has been one of my favorite tropical plants since the days I lived in Florida. They are woody semi-vines with thorns and their flowers come in colors ranging from bright red through shades of pink to cream and white. One interesting thing about their blossoms is what most people regard as the bougainvillea flower is actually a cluster of three flowers. Bougainvilleas do best in drier conditions.

Coral Bell

Another native Mexican plant is Coral vine, Corallita, or Antigonon leptopus. This plant is a member of the Buckwheat family and in the dry season it climbs over fences and wall providing bursts of color. This plant may be found wild in the countryside but is also grown in the Southern US and California.

Crinum Heliconia Hoja Santa

Crinum asiaticum is a huge member of the Amaryllis family. It grows in massive, chest-high clumps and if watered properly, can flower through a long season. It is often found at old haciendas. Hoja Santa is an interesting plant. If you crush the large leaves of this plant, you will never forget it. It has a very spicy odor. In many parts of tropical Mexico where this small tree grows wild, people wrap their tamales in Hoja Santa leaves before cooking them.

The golden trumpet vine, yellow bell, angel's trumpet, yellow allamanda, or Allamanda cathartica are one and the same plant. It is a scrambling, perennial shrub or vine that grows up to 15 feet long. It is native to northern South America. All parts of the plant are poisonous. Traditionally, the flowers have been used as a laxative. To flourish, this plant needs lots of sun and moist, loose soil and just can't stand salt.

Allamanda

Well, with all these wonderful thoughts of flowering plants can spring be far behind?

Helping Tennessee Grow Better Communities

MASTER GARDENERS OF HAMILTON COUNTY

PO BOX 25194
Chattanooga, TN 37422

Phone: 423-855-6113
Fax: 423-855-6115
Email: Garden@MGHC.org

UT Extension

http://mastergardeners.tennessee.edu/

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2007-2008

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