

BRADLEY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS



February 2017 Newsletter

Our Mission

The Bradley County Master Gardeners promote environmental stewardship through a network of volunteers who provide research-based information and education to Tennessee communities in home gardening and related areas. As part of our mission, the program supports continued education and development for committed volunteers.

2017 Officers

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Next meeting: March 2, 2017



Bradley County Master Gardeners learn what's hot in the plant market for 2017

At the BCMG meeting on Feb. 2, Jason Rymer, director of the garden department for Elder's Ace Hardware, gave a spirited presentation on current season gardening and 2017 "Proven Winners" on the market soon. Among his seasonal tips: now is the time to apply root stimulator, top dress many plants with fertilizer, prune certain perennials and prep garden beds. Proven Winners he's most impressed with this year include Baptisia Decadence "Lemon Meringue," Dianthus Fruit Punch "Maraschino," Hucherella Fun & Games "Leapfrog," and the Hosta called "Whee!" If that doesn't get your garden gloves washed and waiting, what will?! Native plant lovers were pleased to hear that the 2017 Perennial Plant of the year is Asclepias, which includes natives like Butterfly Weed and Orange Ditch Weed.



Message from Johnnie

Happy February!

I know you are enjoying this beautiful weather in the last few days. I really hope those early tender plants don't get their little buds frosted. We all know how the February weather is and we are likely to have some colder days coming. So, go play in the yard while the weather is more pleasant.

The 2017 Master Gardener Class is up and running with 21 members and 14 volunteer mentors there to assist.

The next meeting is on March 2 and I hope to see you there. Don't forget, our regular monthly Master Gardeners' meeting will be held in the downstairs conference room for the next few months.

Johnnie Arnett, President BCMG
Master Gardener



Volunteer and CEU Opportunities

Volunteer opportunities

- ◆ **Junior Master Gardener Project Assistants Needed**
Wednesdays, starting March 22 for 13 weeks, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
The Jr. Master Gardener Project is a cooperative project with the Bradley County Juvenile Court and BCMG Volunteers. Assistants will work directly with students to reinforce instruction as well as mentor students in basic gardening activities and are expected to be a positive influence on students and maintain confidentiality.

All volunteers working with minors on a regular basis must complete an application process which includes background check and child protection training. For more info, contact Leslie Humberd at lshumberdpersonal@gmail.com.
- ◆ **April 6 - 9 Crabtree Farms, Spring Plant Sale & Festival**
Opportunities exist for a variety of skill levels. Contact Avery Patten at apatten@crabtreefarms.org.
- ◆ **April 8, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Cleveland State Community College All About the Green Day**
Come help educate the community about the environment, promote the Master Gardener organization and answer gardening questions.
Contact: Kay Cox, kaycox@netzero.net
- ◆ **April 21 - 22, Reflections Riding, Spring Native Plant Sale**
Volunteers needed for setup and sales. Email volunteer@reflectionsriding.org

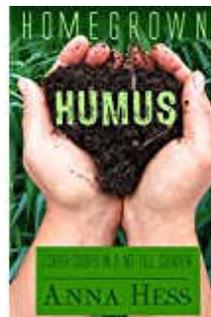
Continuing Education Opportunities

- ◆ **February 25 A Day of Gardening**
TFGC District III Garden Clubs, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, East Ridge, TN. 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. \$20. 423-618-4244. Registration form attached.
- ◆ **March 9, 6:00 - 7:30 The Garden Space**
Soil/Light/Methods, a Tennessee River Seed Library workshop. E.G. Fisher Library Community Room, Athens. Free.
- ◆ **March 18 Wild Ones Annual Native Plant Symposium**
University of Tennessee Chattanooga, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Fees dependent upon Wild Ones membership. www.tennesseevalley.wildones.org
- ◆ **April 7 - 9 Trails & Trilliums**
Guided hikes, workshops, art show, very fun. www.trailsandtrilliums.org
- ◆ **April 8 - 9 Master Your Garden Expo**
Hamilton County Master Gardeners
Camp Jordan, East Ridge

Jason's Tips & To-do's for right now

At the February BCMG meeting, Jason Rymer of Elder's Ace Hardware gave us all kinds of reasons to be outside right now preparing for the growing season. Here are several activities he suggests:

- ⇒ Put fertilizer and Root Stimulator on new and year old plants .
- ⇒ Put a 20-20-20 water soluble fertilizer on Pansies.
- ⇒ In late February, clean up leaves. Shred and use as mulch, if possible.
- ⇒ Cut back perennial grasses and most perennials.
- ⇒ Apply weed preventers when forsythias start to bloom. Crabgrass preventer and Preen should be applied every three months or more, depending on the amount of rain we get. He suggested Scott's Starter Fertilizer as one that won't kill new grass if you have over seeded your lawn.
- ⇒ Clean out birdhouses and put up new ones.
- ⇒ Do a soil test
- ⇒ Prep garden beds – organic matter, layout, straw bales.
- ⇒ Plant cool season beds with sugar snap peas, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, onions, , etc. Cover if temps drop to the upper 20's.
- ⇒ Prune blueberries. Remove lower growth, soft short shoots, damaged limbs, and unproductive canes. Fertilize as growth begins.
- ⇒ Remove dead foliage from all plants.
- ⇒ For pest control, use dormant oil spray. Apply before foliage. He recommended Melorganite fertilizer which repels deer. This is one fertilizer you can use on your lawn in August without fear of burning it up.



Interested in cover crops but don't want to till? Here's a recommended reading:

Homegrown Humus - Cover Crops in a No-till Garden, by Anna Hess

"Cover crops are a simple, cheap way to boost your soil's organic matter, to fight weeds, to prevent erosion, to attract pollinators, and to keep the ecosystem in balance. Unfortunately, most information on growing cover crops is written for people who plow

their soil every year and are willing to spray herbicides. You can get all of the same benefits in a no-till garden, though, if you're clever. " Hess packs a lot of information into this short, quick read. Though her experiments take place in a colder climate (Zone 6) than ours, looks like you can get a lot of the same benefits here in our zone. If you're clever.



A DAY OF GARDENING

Presented by
T.F.G.C. District III Garden Clubs

February 25, 2017, SATURDAY

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
822 Belvoir Avenue, East Ridge, TN, 37412**

9:30 A.M.-2:00 P.M.

Cost: \$20 before February 18, \$25 at the door

SCHEDULE

Registration:	9:30-10:00
Class I:	10:00-10:50
Class II:	11:00-11:50
Lunch	12:00-1:00
Class III:	1:10-2:00



Join us for classes on various aspects of gardening. Even though the weather is chilly, our home-made soups will warm you up. Registrants will be limited to the first 125 people. For questions: crymertfgc@gmail.com / 423.618.4244

*****Pre-Registration Form*****

Please make checks payable to T.F.G.C. District III. Put Day of Gardening on the 'For' line.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail Address (for confirmation of receipt) _____

Mail to: Marilyn Smith, 279 Pine Hollow Road, Dayton, TN 37321