

# roots

The monthly newsletter of the Sevier County Area Master Gardeners Association

JULY 2023



SEVIER COUNTY  
**U**EXTENSION  
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

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*On the cover: Picture of Passion Flower is from the MG Demo Garden. Becky's medicinal herb garden has begun to bloom! Photo credit: Diane McCullen*

## july meeting info

**P** is for planning a fun-filled evening  
**I** is for inviting all Master Gardeners  
**C** is for some hometown cuisine  
**N** is for a night of socializing  
**I** is for being indebted to those who helped  
**C** is for connecting with everyone in the group



**What does that spell? PICNIC!**  
**What are we having? A PICNIC!**

**Monday, July 17, 2023, 6:00pm**

Pasty Farmer wants to give a big thank you to all who helped with the Tomato Seed Project. For our next meeting, Patsy is hosting a picnic at her place. Don is going to grill up some tasty hot dogs and hamburgers. This will be a great opportunity for

the whole group to get together and visit. So let's all come out and have an evening of fun, fellowship, and thankfulness. The address is **3530 Sam Ellis Way in Sevierville**. Please bring a side dish or dessert and a lawn chair with you when you come. The Picnic will be **July 17th at 6:00 pm** (In lieu of our regular meeting). If you have any questions please contact **Patsy Farmer at 865-850-9644**.



# opportunities



## volunteer

**Demo Garden Workday**, Tuesday, July 18. Begins 9 am.

**My People Senior Activity Center Workdays**, Wednesday, July 19 and Saturday, August 5, 9 am.

**Sevier County Fair**, August 29 - September 4. Volunteer opportunities also available for fair setup and intake. Detailed information coming soon.



SEVIER COUNTY  
**UT EXTENSION**  
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## meetings & events

**July Board Meeting**, Monday, July 10th, 1:00 pm.

**Monthly Meeting**, Monday, July 17th, 6:00 pm, 3530 Sam Ellis Way, Sevierville. See page 2 for details.

**Monthly Meeting**, Monday, August 21st, 6:00 pm (no scheduled board meeting).

**Monthly Meeting**, Monday, September 18th, 6:00 pm (board meeting TBA).



## educational

**Friday Office Hours in Horticulture**, July 7, August 4, September 8. [Register here to receive reminders](#). See the entire 2022 playlist [HERE!](#)

**Melody's Monday Musings** (Greene County), [More info HERE.](#)

More TEMG events in [THIS CALENDAR!](#)

### SAVE THE DATE!

**Eastern Regional Tennessee Master Gardener Conference**, September 8-9, 2023, Hamilton County. Registration will begin in July.



### *The names below have paid their 2023 dues.*

According to the bylaws, the deadline for paying dues is April 30

\$25 per MG; \$15 for additional MG spouse

THANK YOU!

Jennifer Bacon  
Henry Barse  
Linda Barse  
Tammie Browning  
Andy Bush  
Pat Butler  
Natileene Cassel  
Lois Cooper  
Joan Falsone  
Patsy Farmer  
Rebecca Felty  
Bonnie Gathergood  
Sarah Gibson  
Steve Greenwell

Kathy Hammer  
Andrew Hennigh  
Melanie Hill  
Glenna Julian  
Guane Julian  
Kathleen Lear  
Paul Lear  
Karen Less  
Ashley Lowe  
Leo Lubke  
Audrey Maclellan  
Colette Mancke  
Diane McCullen  
John Oakberg

Linda Oakberg  
Pam (Jeannie) Ogle  
Sandra Palmer  
Carl Parsons  
Teresa Rae  
Monica Scaccianocce  
Dixie Seaton  
Jerry Shonk  
Donna Stinnett  
Renee Thrapp  
Steve Wilson  
Lois Worthington  
Bonnie Young

# letter from the president

## Americana, Master Gardener Style

July 4th is upon us! Happy Independence Day!

Our public festivals of patriotism actually start in May with Memorial Day, then continue into June with Flag Day and come to the “explosive” climax with our July 4th fireworks. This string of holidays reminds us of our history as a country, and allow us to show our patriotism with a show of flags along roadways and porches.

Americana – the collection of things and characteristics that could be said to be representative of being part of the American culture as a whole. Think of icons such as the U.S. flag, blue jeans, baseball and apple pie.

What can be more Americana than our tradition of county fairs? Is there any one of us that doesn't have fond memories of hot summer days, wandering through the exhibits and commercial booths as we nudged our parents out to the midway?! Lemon shakeups, corn-on-the-cob, elephant ears, BBQ sandwiches...

Back then we didn't think about the work and planning involved in



holding such a wonderful summer event. Now, as adults, we can absolutely understand the blood, sweat, and tears as the fair crews get ready each year. We absolutely want and need to support our county fair as much as we can, as this is a part of our historic tradition; nostalgic Americana for those us lucky to have some rural influences in our youth. I'd say its not only a tradition, I'd say it's an American duty to support our county fairs!

As master gardeners, we need to remember this is one of the few venues in this county for the local citizens to participate in a group horticultural event. It is a great opportunity for us to not only show off our green thumb, but to support other budding gardeners, meet and greet other enthusiastic horticulturalists, and educate the general population in important developments in the natural world - good bugs vs. bad bugs for an example - and how they can make a positive impact. It's our number two-best contact opportunity, right behind our annual plant sale.

Why would I be talking about fairs now? Because our Sevier County Fair is coming sooner than you think! It opens Aug 29th, and entries have

to be in the week before. We absolutely need to support the floral department and fill it with entries by master gardeners. We need to work the tables at entry, and win ribbons. And we need to show off that fabulous Teaching Patch Demo Garden that we have worked so hard to develop and maintain for the past 10 years. It is our crowning glory, our first impression, our best teaching tool. Watch for dates in the garden and fairgrounds to volunteer, and mark your calendar.

The online 2023 Fair book is still being tweaked but there are 3 full pages of different horticulture and design entries to take advantage of. If you have never entered, talk with one of us “seasoned” MGs as to process. Know that you need to own your plants 90 days ahead, so you can show plants you already are tending now. But don't forget design entries, and cut flowers. And don't miss the produce, canning, baking and other areas you can enter. I've even won a blue ribbon in Domestic Arts!

Summer – mowing, swimming, picnics, car trips, ice cream, watermelon – and county fairs!

See you at the picnic out at Patsy's on July 17th !

*Dixie Seaton*  
SCAMGA President

# img conference report

from *Glenna Julian*

Our trip to the International Master Gardener Conference in Overland Park, KS was a wonderful experience. My highlight was meeting Chip Taylor, head of Monarch tagging and Monarch way stations at Kansas University. Nat Cassel and I took the day trip to the university which was a wonderful adventure. It also included wetlands and prairie stops. Five of our group attended the conference: Nat Cassel, Donna Stinnett, Leo and Linda Lubke, and me.



## a 4-H scholarship thank-you

For the scholarship for 4H Camp  
provided by the SCAMGA

Thank you so much for your generous donation to the 4H program. Your donation allowed my son to experience the 4H Camp and learn new, lifelong skills, as well as make lifelong memories.  
Thank you!  
Candy Curtis  
Travis Curtis



## creating and growing in hypertufa containers

presented by *Leo & Linda Lubke*  
September 18, 2023, SCAMGA meeting

This fast-paced one-hour presentation will begin with the history of hypertufa (man-made rock) garden containers. A short history will show the beginning of trough planters, and then will move to the steps in creating them. The media (mixes), form

types, drainage and cautions will be illustrated in a visual presentation and with real objects. Typical soilless mixes, plants and mulches will also be discussed.

*The hypertufa pictured is "fresh off the press" as Linda took it at the International Master Gardener Conference that we just returned from in Kansas City! One of their county MGs made this and it was for sale in their store!*





SEVIER COUNTY AREA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

# meeting minutes

JUNE 19, 2023

**ATTENDANCE:** 18

**PROGRAM**

Melody Rose, Extension Agent for Greene County, presented “*Horticultural Therapy*.”

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**Call to Order:** President Dixie Seaton called the meeting to order at 7:48 PM.

**SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Minutes for the May 15th Meeting: The minutes were accepted without change.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

The Treasurer’s Report for May was accepted without change, but Treasurer John Oakberg reminded members that there is an ongoing delay of three weeks in the information that feeds into the report from UT Accounting. Also, one week of information was missing from the June report due to Debbie Hurst’s recent vacation. In closing, John urged members submitting expense receipts for reimbursement to do so promptly in order to avoid long delays in receiving their money due to the lag time in the accounting cycle.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**County Fair (our newest committee):** Karen Hall reported

that the committee made a walk-through of the fairgrounds to identify improvement projects. Projects identified so far are: creating a background for the SCAMGA booth, creating a banner for the gazebo, stenciling pictures of flowers on the floor of the Exhibit Hall, obtaining colored pots for the exhibition area, planting flowers at the entrance to the parking lot. She also mentioned the possibility of decorating the SCAMGA Demo Garden for the fair. However, the budget for these activities is only \$100. Committee member Patsy Farmer noted that the parking lot entrance sign will also need to be rebuilt by the County before planting can be done there. Linda Oakberg warned that the plants used for the parking lot will need to be very low maintenance as the County will probably not tend them on a regular basis since they did not in the past. Linda also pointed out that the entrance gate to the fairgrounds itself will need some attention, but Diane McCullen stated that the fairgrounds maintenance should take care of the entrance gate.

**Demo Garden:** Diane McCullen announced workdays for Wednesday, June 20, and July 18, both starting at 10 AM. She stated that she also plans to order fresh

mulch before the County Fair, so spreading that will require extra workdays.

**Senior Center:** Lois Worthington reported for Glenna Julian. Lois announced a workday for Wednesday, June 21, and added that the butterfly garden at the Senior Center needs attention.

**Other Committees:** There were no new committee reports for the Plant Sale, Tomato Seed Project, Greenhouse, JMGs, Wilderness Wildlife Week, or County Agent.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**SCAMGA Membership Meeting Time:** Dixie reminded everyone that the next meeting will begin at the new meeting time of 6:00 PM and that the meeting will be held at Patsy Farmer’s home in Richardson’s Cove. Patsy will send by email directions and other details for this picnic-style meeting.

**Christmas Party:** The SCAMGA Board decided, with the membership’s authorization, to hold the 2023 Christmas party at the Sevierville Country Club again with the same meeting room and menu as last year. Diane McCullen reported that this year’s cost per member will be between \$28-33, depending on anticipated attendance. The party is scheduled for December 4 at 6:00 PM.

**4-H:** Dixie reported for Matt Anderson that SCAMGA received five

“thank you” cards from 4-H parents to express their thanks for the \$600 in scholarships SCAMGA donated for 4-H summer camp.

#### NEW BUSINESS

None

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Newsletter:** Teresa Rae reminded everyone to submit articles for the July newsletter by July 1st.

**Next Meeting:** The next SCAMGA meeting is a picnic on Monday, July 17, at 3530 Sam Ellis Way in Sevierville.

Dixie announced that she had brought some **herb seedlings** that were not previously large enough for use during the Plant Sale but any members who wanted them could take them now.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Carl Parsons*

Secretary



## oakes daylily festival

Below are a few Pictures of Daylilies from the Oakes Daylilies Festival. If you love Daylilies you should plan on attending this event next summer. It was a treat for the eyes and nose to behold. Photo credit: Diane McCullen.



## demo garden news



The rains came and the plants grew!!! The gardens are thriving with all the rain we have had. We have had flowers on our passions flower vines. They are absolutely stunning. Come out and see them for yourself! We have planned work days on July 10th at 9:00 am and July 18th at 9:00 am. I have also planned workdays in August on the 10th at 9:00 am (changed from the 7th) and the 22nd at 9:00 am.

I also need MGs to help with the Ask a Master Gardener Booth and Garden tours during the fair. The Ask a Master Gardener Booth will be outside in our gardens. We will have a cover over the gazebo to keep the sun off of us. Please consider working one or more of these days during the fair. Sign up will begin in early August. Let me know if you have any questions.

See you in the gardens,

*Diane McCullen*

# treasury report

There is no financial report in this newsletter. The June financial reports for MG & JMG will be included in the August Newsletter, and from then on, the report will be from two months before. That will allow for more accurate financial reports, accommodating for the monthly reconciliation in the UT financial accounting system, which is finalized well after the newsletter deadline.



# the butterfly whisperer



It's butterfly season! Lois Worthington enjoyed documenting newly hatched Giant Swallowtails and a Monarch in the My People Senior Center garden.



*The Giant Swallowtail deposits eggs on the Common Rue.*







# a glimpse into the demo garden

photos by *Diane McCullen*



Perennial Garden.  
**Needs to be adopted!**



Rain Garden.  
**Needs to be adopted!**

Memory Garden. Maintained by Interns of 2022



Mullein. Part of medicinal herb garden. Maintained by Becky Felty



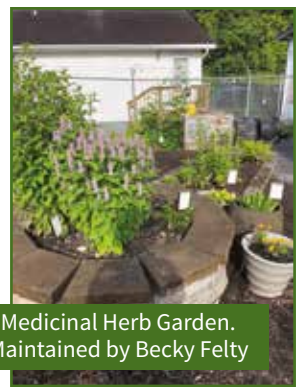
Ground Covers and Edible Flowers. Maintained by Diane McCullen



Hugelkultur Garden. Maintained by Diane McCullen



Lasagna Garden. Maintained by Carl Parson



Medicinal Herb Garden. Maintained by Becky Felty



Pollinator Garden. Maintained by Karen Less and Renee Tharp



Native Plant Garden. Maintained by JMG



Straw Bale Garden. Maintained by Interns of 2023

# loving currants, currently

from *Karen Less*

As master gardeners, we know that there's nothing better than fresh picked vegetables and fruits. Is there anything more sweet and tasty than a blueberry or strawberry that you just picked off a plant you have been growing and nurturing? Are you interested in adding fruit varieties that are not available in your local grocery store? One fruit typically not found



in American supermarkets, but are common in European markets, is the currant (*Ribes* spp). They are easy to grow and thrived in parts of North America (USDA Zones 3 through 8) until the early 20th Century. Currants come in red, black, and white varieties, are sweet, tart, juicy, and full of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber. By the way, dried Zante Currants are not a black currant, but are instead Corinth grapes. Black currants are extremely high in Vitamin C, potassium, some of the B vitamins, and Vitamins E and K. They are used more as medicine than food, but are also the primary ingredient in Crème de Cassis, a liqueur used in making the popular French cocktail, Kir Royale.

Red currants (*Ribes rubrum*) are especially easy to grow, and are self-fertile shrubs. So, if you only have room for one, you can still realize a

good yield, and can fruit for up to 20 years. They enjoy well-drained, slightly acidic soil and can grow in full sun to partial shade. Currants can also grow in containers at least 10 gallons in size. Fully grown, they are about three to five feet tall by three to six feet wide. Fruit ripens in late May to early June in our area. They have a shallow root system, so regular watering

is needed until harvest and then only occasional watering will suffice unless there is an extended period of drought. They are winter hardy, but blooms may be affected by late frosts. Red currants can be susceptible to powdery mildew, currant aphids, leaf spot and fungal cane blight, but resistant varieties are available. While native to Europe, they adapted well to our region in colonial times and remained a popular plant into the early 20th Century.

In the early 1900s, White Pine Blister Rust was accidentally imported into the US from Asia. *Ribes* plants, including currants and gooseberries, were found to be excellent alternate host plants for this fungus, which can infect and kill white pines, a prized crop for the building industry. As a result, several states, including neighboring North Carolina, banned the sale and importation of currants, a ban which



remains in place today. Problems typically only occur when currants or gooseberries are planted within 900 feet of white or five-needled pines.

Currants can be legally purchased and grown in Tennessee, and are a wonderful spring fruit that is easy to grow. Red currants make amazing pies and jams, but are also tasty right off the shrub or in your morning cereal.





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Newsletter content is due on the 1st of each month, and should be emailed to [peatree@peatreedesigns.com](mailto:peatree@peatreedesigns.com)  
Articles submitted by members are welcome and should be 300-500 words. Photographs should be at least 3Mb in size. Please make sure emails that contain attachments are less than 10Mb (combined). if attachments exceed 10Mb, send in separate emails or use Dropbox.

A photograph of three monarch butterflies with orange and black wings perched on a vertical stem of small purple flowers. The background is a soft-focus green field of similar flowers. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

PERHAPS THE BUTTERFLY IS PROOF  
THAT YOU CAN GO THROUGH A GREAT  
DEAL OF DARKNESS AND STILL BECOME  
SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL.

-Unknown