The Prez Sez:

It has been my pleasure to serve as your President for the past two years. I would like to thank all of our master gardeners, committees, and committee chairs, whose tireless efforts resulted in another outstanding year.

The success of our mission of educating the community as well as ourselves through our continuing education program is evident in the 3,464 volunteer hours and 1,330 hours of continuing education our dedicated volunteers have recorded so far in 2018.

I would like to commend the Continuing Education committee for the educational opportunities they provided so that we may continue to improve our skills. We owe a special thank you to Clare Farnau, who led this committee so capably for many years.

Please join me in welcoming our twenty-five new Extension Master Gardeners. The class of 2018 has completed their coursework and will embark on their apprenticeships in 2019. They are a hard-working and talented group, and we look forward to working with them in the new year.

It is important to make sure you continue to post your hours and contacts through the end of December. This information supports Jamie’s efforts and is important in making sure our program remains outstanding.

Our EMG Annual Meeting will be held at the Extension Office on Sunday, January 13 at 4:00 p.m. Please plan to attend this fun gathering to reconnect, meet our new EMGs, and gear up for a busy 2019. This is your opportunity to sign up for committee work, so please think about what activities you are interested in or a new committee you may want to join.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season and a bright new 2019!

“Kind hearts are the gardens, kind thoughts are the roots, kind words are the flowers, kind deeds are the fruits. Take care of your garden and keep out the weeds, fill it with sunshine, kind words and kind deeds.”
— Longfellow

Debbie Johnson, President
Save the Date!

Extension Master Gardener

Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper

Sunday, January 13, 2019, 4:00 PM
At the Extension Office

Join us for a fun-filled gathering . . .

Welcome the Class of 2018!

Vote on the proposed 2019 Slate of Officers!

President - Nancy Davis
Vice President - Susan Umberger
Secretary - Mary Miller
Treasurer - Kay Fisher
Continuing Education Chair - Brenda Owen
Newsletter Chair - Susan Miller
Volunteer Projects - Mary Hicks
Nominating Committee - Natalie Gray, Tina Godby and Nancy Kolacz

Raffle, Good Food, Good Company & A Surprise
FCMGA Memorial Donation

Each year in the event of a master gardener’s death, the FCMGA gives a donation to the charity that receives the most votes at the January annual meeting.

Members may vote for one of the following three charities:

**Catholic Action Center** - A house of hospitality that welcomes all who are in need with shelter, meals and many other programs. For more information, visit the website at: [tp://www.catholicactioncenter.net/](http://www.catholicactioncenter.net/)

**Seedleaf** - Its mission is to nourish communities by growing and sharing food with neighborhood gardens throughout Fayette County. For more information, visit the website at [https://www.seedleaf.org/](https://www.seedleaf.org/)

**GleanKY** - Works every day throughout the Bluegrass collecting and distributing thousands of pounds of donated fresh fruit and vegetables to more than 100 local feeding programs. For more information, visit the website at: [http://gleanky.org/](http://gleanky.org/)

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**Don’t Go High-Fiving Your Boxwoods**

**By Donna Jackson**

Sometimes I remind myself of a basketball player at the end of a game, walking down the row, slapping hands with the opponents. I often walk along my garden borders and run my hands across anything that smells heavenly. Catmint, Russian sage, mints of all kinds, and especially, freshly clipped boxwood. Well, no more, my friends.

With the devastation of the emerald ash borer still fresh in my mind, here came warnings about boxwood blight. I’ll have to admit that I didn’t take it seriously enough until I attended U.K. Extension’s recent Boxwood Blight class, led by Nicole Ward Gauthier, Extension plant pathologist. Looking across the room at the attendees, I began to realize how far reaching this problem is going to be. Not only were there gardeners like myself, but there were also landscapers, installers, and lawn care professionals in the crowd. This is serious, folks!

Here are my major take-aways from the class. This fungal infection is spread by culprits called conidia fungal spores. These spores are heavy and sticky. Keep that in mind now. They can be spread short distances by a driving rain or splashing water.

However, we were told that they rarely move unaided by humans (okay, now WE are the culprits). We can spread those things with our tools, hands, and even clothing. (We were told to wash our hands and...
steering wheels after we inspected diseased specimens in class.) Got your attention now? Umm, I think I've heard something before about cultural practices that include air circulation, no overhead irrigation, and cleaning our tools.

I'm sure most of you have already read bulletins about this dreadful blight. An excellent source from U.K., Boxwood Blight (PPFS-OR-W-20, available online or at the Extension office) will lead you to even more sources on this topic. If you have read them, read them again. They include detailed information on management and cultural practices to help us protect our incredible boxwoods. I can't imagine my landscape without them. So hang on for the ride; it's going to get bumpy. No surgical gloves yet, but be very diligent about high-fiving your boxwoods while this threat is so serious.

Defoliation of the lower plant canopy is often the first obvious symptom of boxwood blight. (Photo: Nicole Ward Gauthier, UK)

Welcome New EMG Apprentices!

Congratulations to the 2018 class of twenty-five new EMG trainees who just finished their class work and passed the final. They are ready to embark on their apprenticeships in 2019.

Please give our new apprentices a round of applause and a big welcome in the coming year!

Demonstration Vegetable Garden at the Arboretum

The Monday and Thursday crews cleaned up the gardening shed and put the garden to bed for the winter.
Wisteria Can Fit Right in For The Holidays

By Susan Miller

At this time of year, when my twenty-five year old wisteria has shed all of its foliage, and doesn’t look its best, my husband thinks I might weaken and let him cut it down. But there are hush-hush plans for it.

I have to confess it sometimes gets unruly. A couple of times, it has weaved its way up to a second story, and grown right through a window crack, which was actually kind of charming. It has embraced the satellite dish, and cut off all television viewing. It reaches out and grabs tall people by the ears and nose when they step up on the porch because I only trim it at my height. And did I mention that it has never bloomed?

A wise old country neighbor assured me that if I banged it hard with a rubber mallet, it would be “shocked” into blooming the next season. So now I’m guilty of wisteria bashing, and you already know the results.

Every summer, as those green tendrils seem to grow a foot a day, my husband crosses his arms, frowns, and says, “When are you going to cut that thing down?” So now it is known as “that thing.” And at each mention, he gets the stink-eye.

To heck with blooms, its voluptuous foliage always looks captivating at its peak in summer. Its tunnel-like shape around the porch steps sets the stage for rustic rocking chairs and pretty ferns. And now, in early winter, it has dropped its leaves to reveal an artistic swirl of twigs and branches. It will look great this holiday season with … you guessed it, little twinkling lights!

Decorating trends seem very twig-friendly this year. The effect will be stunning. Visitors will have wisteria envy.

But I can just see my husband shaking his head in dismay.

I definitely feel a stink-eye coming.