



Kentucky Extension  
Master Gardener  
Fayette County

# NEWSLETTER

FAYETTE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER'S ASSOCIATION



## The Prez Sez...

### The Results Are In: Let's Get Together!

At the FCMGA Annual Meeting we conducted a survey asking (among other things) if you all want to get together more often and the answer was YES! So we created a new social committee who are working to make that happen. **But we could really use some more of you on the committee! Do you like organizing get-togethers? Have an idea or a preference for a fun event? We'd love to have you join that committee or just send in your suggestions/preferences. You can email me at [suziemac01@aol.com](mailto:suziemac01@aol.com) or call/text me at 859-230-0162.**

#### Here are some ideas that have been floated out:

1. A "Swap" of some sort: Plant swap, seed swap, harvest swap.
2. A meetup for coffee/tea (maybe before or after toolbox classes?)
3. A Book Club
4. And my personal favorite: A tour of various master gardener gardens. I'd love to see your gardens!



What do you think? Can't wait to hear your ideas! Thank you!

*Happy Gardening!  
Susan McDaniel*

### Newsletter Committee:

MARY MILLER, CO-CHAIR  
SUSAN MILLER, CO-CHAIR  
JUDI DANIELS  
PAMELA DORREL  
SUSAN MCDANIEL

### In This Issue:

- Board Meeting and Dues - p. 2
- Bluegrass Fair Photos - p. 3 and 4
- Preventing Injury p. 5
- Continuing Education - p. 6
- Garden Therapy p. 7-8

"I have found, through years of practice, that people garden in order to make something grow; to interact with nature; to share, to find sanctuary, to heal, to honor the earth, to leave a mark." – Julie Moir Messervy



**FCMGA BOARD MEETING**

At the quarterly board meeting on April 19, the Treasurer’s Report was reviewed and ideas for the social committee and the upcoming Directory were discussed at length. The MG program has needs we could help with including: the development of a speaker’s bureau for a culture of more public facing education in the community, monthly volunteer meetings to encourage more unification of our members, and leadership training for members who are willing to lead projects in the community. Emphasis should move toward sharing information with others and documenting those contacts because it's integral to being an Extension Master Gardener.

**KNOW OF ANY GORGEOUS GARDENS?**

The Lexington Council Garden Clubs is looking for special gardens for their Open Gates of Bluegrass Living Garden Tour 2025. We know gardeners might feel a little reluctant to volunteer their own gardens, but maybe you are aware of some great, undiscovered gardens you could tell us about. We know they are out there!



Proceeds from this bi-annual tour go to scholarships, non-profits and wonderful beautification and educational projects in our community. Plus, think of all the joy you could help spread!

If you have a tip, contact Council member Jackie Wagoner – [jackie.wagoner@yahoo.com](mailto:jackie.wagoner@yahoo.com)

**Social Events and Upcoming Picnic**

Watch for news about upcoming social events. The Social Committee is planning meetings on selected Thursdays at 5 pm ahead of Toolbox classes. Hopefully, these casual meetings with refreshments can be scheduled monthly so members can stay in touch, discuss activities, and get to know each other a little better. It's not necessary to attend the Toolbox class but makes it more convenient for those who are attending.

**Picnic planning is underway for Sunday, Sept. 15, at Susan Umberger’s.** Save the date for this event and look for an email announcement later in the summer.



The Master Gardener Directory is coming soon! Look for an email from Suzann Smith to see photos and contact information for your fellow master gardeners.

# Lexington Lions Club Bluegrass Fair

The Flower and Vegetable Show was a big success thanks to chair Kay Fisher and her team of veteran volunteers who made everything run smoothly. The entries were stunning (oh, those hydrangeas!) and there were more professional looking (and gorgeous) arrangements in the design classes than we've ever had before. Bravo!



To the right is the winner of the rosette - awarded for best in design by Mary Turner. It was in the Happy Father's Day class.



Master Gardener  
Jake Karnes  
enjoying the show



First place winner  
Arrangement by Sandra  
Fritz



# More photos from the Bluegrass Fair!



## A REMINDER ABOUT PREVENTING INJURY IN THE GARDEN

BY PAM DORREL

Earlier this year, Master Gardeners had an opportunity to earn CEUs and learn how to prevent injuries while gardening by watching a webinar with guest speaker Gabriela Murza, a Professor of Health and Wellness at Utah State Extension Services. The webinar was about preventing common garden injuries, minimizing pain from repetitive movements, using proper posture, maximizing tool use, and incorporating stretches into gardening activities.



It's helpful to be reminded that we sometimes lose ourselves in the work of gardening and if we're not careful, we might have some muscle soreness. What's worse, carelessness can lead to repetitive strain injury in muscles, tendons, and nerves in the hands, wrists, shoulders, elbows, knees and lower back. Those injuries are far more painful and take much longer to heal. Gabriela began with three easy to remember ground rules to stay healthy while gardening: adapt the garden, adapt the tools, and adapt yourself.

### **Adapt the garden**

Plan a garden that promotes healthy movement. Ensure that beds are not too large and that rows are spaced properly so that you can reach all areas of your garden without overextending your back or arms. Raised beds and vertical gardens can help you maintain a healthy posture so you don't have to hunch over or reach in awkward ways.

### **Adapt the tools**

Use ergonomic tools that are designed for the right tasks. Your tools should be adapted to fit your specific needs and abilities as a gardener. They should be comfortable to use and most importantly, they should allow you to maintain healthy postures and movements while gardening so you don't have to hunch or overextend to get the job done.

### **Adapt yourself**

In the heat of summer, work during cooler times of the day. Prepare to work by dressing comfortably for the weather and wearing sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses if needed. Wear proper non-slip shoes. Drink plenty of water and stretch before starting. Keep your tools and other essential items like your cell phone in a bucket or cart nearby while you work.

When working close to the ground, kneel instead of crouching or squatting. Use a foam mat or knee pads. Kneel on one knee and keep the other knee raised with your foot on the ground for support. This helps keep your back straight and avoids hunching. Alternate legs every few minutes.

When working in a standing position, use tools that are comfortable for your height and strength to help you maintain proper posture. Wear gloves or use tools that have padded handles to prevent blisters. Move around in the garden so you can reach areas you want without twisting and overreaching. Vary your movements by alternating your leg and arm positions every few minutes.



Remember to take short breaks to stretch your muscles and hydrate. Be honest with yourself about what you're able to accomplish and don't overdo it. Try to avoid gardening for more than an hour and a half at a time. Finish up with a whole body stretch and drink more water. Don't forget that gardening is a workout!



Master Gardeners at Yew Dell Garden

In May Ellen Ferguson arranged a guided tour of Yew Dell Gardens in Oldham County. The history of the Gardens' ownership and transition to being acquired by a private foundation to avoid residential development was as interesting as touring all the different garden areas, including a fairy garden.

On June 17 we will be treated to a tour by Joe Dietz of his Bonsai garden and collections here in Lexington. On August 13 we have ten reservations to be guided through the botanical gardens at Buffalo Trace Distillery in Frankfort. There are two spots left for anyone interested. Thanks to Pam Dorrel for this event suggestion. To register for either of these, contact: Fran O'Connor, fsoofssi@gmail.com.

Future tours still in process include Bernheim Forest in Clermont in the fall, and Lexington Cemetery Annuals and Perennials later this summer. Pemberton's Nursery will also conduct a winter container design on November 8. As more events are confirmed we'll update our information on the Master Gardener website.

Please note that the University of Kentucky Arboretum offers a number of in person classes related to their Perennial Gardening Series and Naturalist Series that are approved for credit. To see a complete listing of these events and for information about registering, go to <https://arboretum.ca.uky.edu/calendar>. Most require registration directly with the Arboretum and some have fees, and you will need to contact Fran to get CE credit at fsoofssi@gmail.com.

This spring thanks to the significant efforts of Jamie Dockery and Suzann Smith at the Extension office we were able to post the 2024 events schedule on the website. As with so many first attempts, there have been some glitches and this is still a work in progress. Please be patient with us as we try to get updated information to you as soon as we have events finalized. The website address is : <https://fayette.ca.uky.edu/mg>

If you have any questions regarding the 2024 schedule please contact Graham Rowles at [growl2@uky.edu](mailto:growl2@uky.edu) or Fran O'Connor at [fsoofssi@gmail.com](mailto:fsoofssi@gmail.com).

Here's hoping for continued rain as we head into the normally drier times of summer.

## Extension Garden News

The Extension Garden Group has been working hard to keep our beds of flowers, vegetables and herbs looking great. But more help is needed to keep the beds weed free!

If you'd like to join the Extension Gardens group, please contact Martha at [martha.taulbee@gmail.com](mailto:martha.taulbee@gmail.com).

The Extension Gardens group is currently working together on Tuesdays and Fridays, when weather permits, and it's a wonderful way to build up your volunteer hours.



Volunteers harvesting peas.

## Continuing Education by Fran O'Connor

The Continuing Education Committee has been working to introduce new opportunities for the Master Gardeners to achieve their 10 hours of credit for this year. In April several of us toured the Berea College greenhouses guided by Emma Leigh Forbes, the College's horticulture manager. In case you didn't know, the greenhouses are open to the public from mid-March through the end of May for sales of their vegetable and flower plants. They carry an unusual variety of vegetables and their prices are very reasonable.

## GARDEN THERAPY FOR A HAPPIER WORLD

BY PAM DORREL



GreenHouse17 (<https://greenhouse17.org/media-images/>)

In March, I attended a lecture at the Lexington Senior Center entitled “Horticultural Therapy, The Impact on Mental Health” as part of UK’s OLLI program (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute), and here’s what I learned. “Horticultural therapy, or garden therapy is a way to improve both mental and physical health. Garden therapy can be beneficial for all people, with all different abilities and of all ages. Garden therapy is a goal driven therapy to increase individuals’ feelings of self-esteem and independence using plants and plant-based activity.” (Sui. et al 2020)

The lecture was given by Madelyn Cline, an RN and PhD candidate in mental health studies at UK. She began by mentioning that Florence Nightingale was a pioneer for garden benefits. Madelyn is an evangelist for garden therapy because she has experienced so many of its benefits in her life. She began gardening because as a busy young nursing professional, she was beginning to suffer from secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue. She needed to regain balance in her life, and garden therapy became the focus of her research.

### Garden therapy has given her:

1. Better quality of life in the form of a deeper relationship with her husband, who is also a gardener (more love and more passion!)
2. More financial independence, in the form of being able to grow some of her own food
3. Better health in the form of vitamin D because of more time spent in the sun
4. Better mental health in the form of emotional healing and solace (at this point she showed a picture of her rescue dog, who loves her garden)

Research has proven that horticultural activities and gardens in general are therapeutic for the mental and physical benefit of patients and others in need of healing. Gardens are being used in healthcare systems around the country. One such green space can be found at Eskenazi Health in Indianapolis, which has a rooftop garden called Sky Farm that’s open to staff, patients and the community to learn about and work in the vegetable and flower gardens. The hospital also has a canine therapy garden for their patients to visit with therapy dogs in a garden environment. Boston Children’s Hospital has a rooftop garden for patients and their families, as well as gardens inside the building.



Sky Farm at Eskenazi Health in Indianapolis  
(<https://www.eskenazihealth.edu/locations/main-campus/the-sky-farm>)



Garden inside Boston Children's Hospital Hale Family Building (<https://www.childrenshospital.org/about-us/expansion-renewal/hale-family-building#gardens>)



GreenHouse17 (<https://greenhouse17.org/media-images/>)

Lexington's best example of therapeutic gardening is GreenHouse17, a shelter for domestic violence survivors, located on a 40-acre property in rural Fayette County. Adults get the chance to earn an hourly stipend in exchange for participating on the farm. Working and being in the fresh air and sunshine aids the healing process after abuse. Participants are also able to eat healthy meals made with the produce harvested on the farm. Survivors also learn how to make natural candles, lip balms, bath salts, and soaps that can be purchased online and around Central Kentucky. They also grow flowers on the farm, which are available for pre-order through the website. GreenHouse17 publishes a newsletter three times a year that is full of survivor's success stories about how being close to and working in nature aided the healing process.

Madelyn quoted the late Anne Lubbers, Professor of Biology at Centre College, "No matter what you encounter in the years to come, do not forget to look above at the sky and marvel at the clouds and the stars. Shift your gaze downward and discover the tiny organisms making a living in ways you had never imagined. Look about and note the individuality of every tree—the architecture of its branches, texture of its bark, venation of its leaves. All these things may be oblivious of us, but we do not need to be oblivious of them. This is what we belong to, and what grounds our sense of self."

For anyone interested in learning more, two recommended books about horticultural therapy and therapeutic gardening are: *The Well-Gardened Mind: The Restorative Power of Nature* by Sue Stuart-Smith, and *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative* by Florence Williams.

Happy gardening!



GreenHouse17 (<https://greenhouse17.org/media-images/>)