GREETINGS FROM YOUR STATE BOTANICAL GARDEN

By Sue Hamilton, UT Gardens Director

An often overlooked aspect of the UT Gardens is the role that our sites play as living museums. Just as museums are recognized for their art and artifact collections, botanical gardens are recognized for their living plant collections. This is true of the Gardens, and it is an important part of the plant performance research information we collect. Our collections also play a role in plant conservation as we safeguard endangered or threatened plant species. In this issue, we’ve taken some time to highlight our role as a living museum. I hope you enjoy learning more about our collections and the people who make them possible.

As you leaf through the pages of the magazine, you’ll also find that all three Gardens have great educational programs, plant sales, and special events throughout the season. I hope you take advantage of these wonderful opportunities to engage with each site.

As you can imagine, it takes a lot of people and financial support to keep a public garden operating. I appreciate and thank you for your continued support as a friend, sponsor, volunteer, and advocate of the Gardens. With your help, the Gardens will continue to grow!

I hope you enjoy this issue of Cultivate, and I look forward to seeing you in the Gardens!

FROM THE DIRECTOR

TRAVEL

MY FAVORITE THINGS

IN THE GARDENS

BOOK REVIEW

CALENDAR

BEST & BEAUTIFUL

VOLUNTEER CORNER

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LAST LOOK
GIBBS GARDENS
By Joan Worley, Tennessee Extension Master Gardener, Blount County

Ordinarily, history doesn’t get started until something has been around for fifty or one hundred years. Not so Gibbs Gardens in Ball Ground, Georgia.

Its story began in 1973, when Jim Gibbs began looking for land for a public garden. It took Gibbs more than six years to find the right 300 acres set in the hills of North Central Georgia’s Cherokee County, in the area where he wanted it, and with enough water to support a public garden.

Gibbs Gardens opened in 2012. Designed in a park-like setting, with ponds and streams surrounded by great swaths and fields of perennial plants, the gardens offer ten months of viewing beauty. Formal beds of perennials including hostas, ferns, flowering shrubs, Japanese maples, and unusual woody shrubs and trees; and a large collection of hellebores; many types of flowering bulbs and perennials; a large collection of camellias and Japanese maples; and hundreds of types of conifers. While there you can feel free to take photos, enjoy the whimsical garden art, listen to a waterfall in the pond garden, or even have a picnic! Most of all, these gardens provide a place for visitors to see mature specimens of plants before purchasing them.

Once there, you can’t help but to be amazed at the extensive selection of plants, including natives and classic southern favorites. In addition to rare and unusual plants, most of which are Georgia grown. Piccadilly Farm sells a wide variety of high-quality plants such as hellebores; a broad selection of conifers for sun and shade; and perennials including hostas, ferns, grasses, succulents, and rohdeas.

Open-sided trams travel between gardens for those who prefer to ride, and most of the paths are accessible. Gibbs Gardens advises, “Check the website, gibbsgardens.com, for conditions,” as paths may become soft after heavy rains. In addition to benches in the gardens, the outdoor Arbor Café offers comfortable seating for lunches and for special events. Prepackaged, catered sandwiches, salads, desserts, and drinks are available. The website offers many photographs and complete information for visitors, including a comprehensive events list.

1987 Gibbs Drive
Ball Ground, Georgia 30107
770-893-1881

N ot far from Watkinsville, Georgia, tucked down a country road in Bishop is where you’ll find a jewel of a nursery in a simplistic setting: Piccadilly Farm Nursery and Gardens. It’s not a high-traffic nursery that attracts impulse buyers; it’s a destination nursery sought out by serious plant lovers.

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One reason that Piccadilly is such a special place to visit is the many acres of wonderful display gardens open year-round. Winding trails link together natural and informal gardens with names like Hellebore Trail, Winter Garden, and Pasture Conifer Garden. These gardens are filled with thousands of hellebores; many types of flowering bulbs and perennials; a large collection of camellias and Japanese maples; natives including ferns, wildflowers, shrubs and trees; and hundreds of types of conifers. While there you can feel free to take photos, enjoy the whimsical garden art, read a book on a bench in the shade, listen to a waterfall in the pond garden, or even have a picnic! Most of all, these gardens provide a place for visitors to see mature specimens of plants before purchasing them.

The gardens of Piccadilly Farm first took root when the late Sam and Carleen Jones moved to the property in 1982. Sam, a retired botany professor at the University of Georgia, and Carleen, a retired biology teacher, combined their passion for plants and years of gardening experience to create the gardens and a unique nursery with an extensive plant selection. Together, they wrote numerous articles on plants, won many honors and awards for their contributions to the industry, and helped organize the Perennial Plant Association and the Georgia Perennial Plant Association. Today, Piccadilly continues to flourish under the guidance of the couple’s daughter and son-in-law, Valerie and Bill Hinesley. Valerie brings over thirty years of experience as a registered landscape architect, and both take great pride in Piccadilly and the plants that leave their nursery. They’re always current in garden industry trends and search trusted plant sources to find new and hard to find plants to offer.

If all that’s not enough, Piccadilly Farm was the first nursery to hold a Hellebore Festival, and it’s still going strong today in its twenty-fourth year. If you make plans to go to the next one, you’ll have the opportunity to see thousands of hellebores in full bloom and visit with Valerie and Bill . . . and oh, take your truck!

1971 Whippoorwill Road
Bishop, Georgia 30621
706-765-4444
piccadillyfarm.com

PICCADILLY FARM NURSERY AND GARDENS
By Michelle Reimert, Knox County Extension Master Gardener

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In this edition of My Favorite Things, you will learn about two long-lived, tough-as-nails, gold-foliaged plants: Liriope muscari ‘Peedee Ingot’ and Ilex ‘Whoa Nellie’.

Both are easy to grow and, once established, are drought tolerant and will thrive in most any soil but wet. While many good nurseries will have ‘Peedee Ingot’, you may have to do some searching to find a ‘Whoa Nellie’.

**LIRIOPE MUSCARI ‘PEEDEE INGOT’–GOLDEN MONKEY GRASS (LEFT)**

I never thought I would write about a monkey grass, but ‘Peedee Ingot’ is no ordinary monkey grass. Its foliage is a brilliant gold with luminescent qualities. Its arching leaves are about 12 inches tall, and, with time, the clump will reach 2 feet across. In late summer, spikes of lavender-blue flowers appear above the clump.

For best color, plant ‘Peedee Ingot’ where it will receive a few hours of shade in the hottest part of the day as full, hot sun will bleach the foliage and eventually turn it brown in late summer. A word of caution: Too much shade causes its foliage to turn a dull chartreuse green, so site the plant carefully.

‘Peedee Ingot’ makes a great accent plant and looks good with most garden favorites. It especially shines when it is grown near dark-foliaged plants like ‘Crimson Fire’ Loropetalum and ‘Tropicana’ Canna.

Since ‘Peedee Ingot’ is a clump-forming monkey grass, you need not worry about it getting out of hand. It is easy to dig up older clumps and divide them to make more. In late winter, cut the foliage back to a few inches. Just like the standard monkey grass, ‘Peedee Ingot’ will grow most anywhere. Hardy to zone 6.

**ILEX ‘WHOA NELLIE’–HOLLY (ABOVE)**

The first time I saw ‘Whoa Nellie’, I was with Dr. Michael Dirr at the University of Georgia’s Horticulture Farm. It was a hot day in July 2011, and the bright glow of this holly’s beautiful foliage set me on fire. I had to have one! A few days later I bought one at a nursery in Atlanta, and that winter I planted it at the Gardens in Jackson.

Dirr found the gold-leaf selection as a branch sport on ‘Nellie R. Stevens’ on the UGA campus. North Carolina plantsman Tony Avent later provided this beauty with its catchy cultivar name. ‘Whoa Nellie’s’ bright gold foliage contrasts with its older, interior dark green leaves. Grow it in full sun for the best gold color; more than a few hours of shade diminishes its glow. Make sure a male pollinator such as ‘Edward J. Stevens’ or one of the Chinese hollies (like comuta) is growing nearby so that your selection will sport an abundance of bright red berries. ‘Whoa Nellie’ is an outstanding specimen and a shining light in a mixed screen planting. Its evergreen foliage also works well as cut greenery and brightens up any holiday arrangement.

With no supplemental water, the ‘Whoa Nellie’ in the Gardens in Jackson is now about 5 feet tall. Under average garden conditions, expect it to reach 10 to 12 feet tall by 6 to 8 feet wide in about ten years. Just like its mother ‘Nellie R. Stevens’, ‘Whoa Nellie’ is a tough, long-lived girl that is hardy to zone 6.
1. The Master Gardeners’ Spring Plant Sale returned to the West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center on Saturday, May 7 (Mother’s Day weekend). The event included lots of gift ideas for Mom including garden art and accessories in addition to a large selection of ornamental and vegetable plants.

2. Pennisetum ‘Vertigo’ was available at the Spring Plant Sale. This dramatic ornamental grass can add a “wow” factor to the landscape and is prominently featured at the UT Gardens, Jackson. Reaches 3-5 feet.

3. Summer Celebration is Thursday, July 14. The theme is “The Garden of Eatin’” and will feature several talks on edible ornamentals, including a Jason Reeves tour on how to use them in landscape design. Come see the creative and culinary displays. General admission $5. Kitchen Divas admission an additional $5.

4. We owe a lot to dedicated Master Gardeners, like Bill Bobbitt of Lexington, pictured here moving shrubs out of the cold frame. Bill and his wife Frances each racked up more than 100 volunteer hours this past year. We appreciate all the volunteers who help keep our grounds looking good.

5. The Summer Celebration Plant Sale is known for its great selections and exceptional service. Master Gardeners like David Tanner can answer plant questions and help you load your purchases. Proceeds from the sale benefit Master Gardener projects that beautify West Tennessee and support the UT Gardens.

6. Panicle hydrangeas are a popular item at UT Gardens, Jackson, plant sales. This fast-growing species is tough and adaptable to sunnier sites. Visitors to our grounds can tour our collection of more than forty panicle hydrangea cultivars located southwest of the main office building. The plantings are especially lovely July through September.

7. The welcomed addition of four 8-foot DuMor benches has enhanced both the beauty and function of the grounds. The benches are located in the gazebo area, near the annual and perennial berms, and in one of the shade gardens. Special thanks to local Master Gardeners for this very generous donation.

8. You don’t need a special event to make a visit to the UT Gardens, Jackson. The longer days of spring and summer provide a wonderful opportunity to tour the grounds, get a little exercise, or simply enjoy time outdoors with family and friends.
The Crossville Gardens is awakening as temperatures rise and the days lengthen! This is an inspiring time of year and we can’t help but become consumed in garden-tidying, organizing, and propagating! If our gardens were Broadway, we’d be shouting “Showtime!”

Staging: Ground has been prepped and the outdoor pavilion has been staked for construction. Whether attending classes, the Fall Gardeners’ Festival, or simply touring the Gardens on a summer day, this new 40- by 60-foot, post-and-beam, open-walled outdoor classroom will provide accessible shelter for all visitors.

Scenes: In addition to current sights, work has begun on a tranquility plot which will demonstrate a feng-shui system of garden order—a governing of spatial arrangement and orientation in relation to the flow of energy (qi). Plans are also underway for a new garden entrance as well as enhanced butterfly, hellebore, wildflower, and conifer displays.

Storylines: Based on applause from previous years, thirty-seven classes are well underway for 2016, as well as field trips and tours. Intermission: Our eighth annual Fall Gardeners’ Festival is scheduled for Tuesday, August 30, and will offer twelve educational sessions, vendors, educational exhibits, opportunities to talk with garden experts, behind-the-scenes tours, and so much more! The event program will be available online August 1 for your planning purposes.

And the Garden Tony Awards: The 2016 Tennessee Master Gardener Search for Excellence program has recognized the UT Gardens, Crossville! Accepting the awards for:
- Research—Fred Mullen for the Tomato Trials
- Youth—Beth Morgan for the KinderGarden
- Outstanding Contributing Partner—Walt Hitch, Director, Plateau AgResearch and Education Center

To learn more about upcoming performances at the UT Gardens, Crossville, visit our website at ag.tennessee.edu/plateaugardens!

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!
BOOK REVIEW

CURB APPEAL WRIT LARGE

By Joan Worley, Tennessee Extension Master Gardener, Blount County

What do you call the area between the front sidewalk and the street? In Texas we called it the parkway. In Wisconsin, it’s the curb lawn. In Maryland, the freewall. Elsewhere in the US, it’s the easement, the berm, the devil’s highway, or the planting strip. In England it’s the verge; in Australia, the nature strip. One local government calls it the right of way, but apparently there is no common name for it, even among town and city planners. It’s the strip of land few of us ever think about, our author excepted.

Evelyn J. Hadden, the author of Hellstrip Gardening: Create a Paradise Between the Sidewalk and the Curb (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 2014), ignores the hellstrip of the title in favor of curbside garden, used throughout the book. Hadden is also the author of Beautiful No-Mow Yards (Timber Press, 2012).

Of course many neighborhoods don’t have sidewalks, and in urban areas the sidewalks may abut the street, but with or without a sidewalk, a strip of garden along the road is striking. Hadden offers good ideas and advice for the neglected, quasi-public bits and pieces of land that we pass every day and yet never see.

Hellstrip Gardening is aimed primarily at the individual gardener and the focus is on his or her curbside garden. In large part it is a practical guide to expanding one’s gardening space and bringing beauty to the streetscape. Other than a brief mention, private-public projects such as daffodils planted along major thoroughfares are not covered.

The contents are divided into four parts: Inspirations, Situations, Creation, and Curbside-Worthy Plants. Inspirations describes twelve gardens, six in the West, four in the North, and two in the South (Charlotte, North Carolina and Orlando, Florida). Four of the ten are professionally designed, one a garden next to a member-owned grocery co-op. The rest are varied in nature, and not all of them include curbside planting. Six to eight pages are devoted to each of the gardens, all beautifully and amply illustrated. Most have before photos, and the homeowners’ adventures in designing and implementing their gardens add a sweaty serendipity.

Although monoculture foliage gardens and no-mow lawns are not covered, the latter covers pedestrian traffic, dogs, children, vandalism, litter, liability, and privacy.

Part 2, Situations, is mandatory reading for anyone gardening in the land beyond the front walk, because the curbside is city-owned. In some places, it is maintained by the city, but more often, it is mowed and maintained by the homeowner. Information and advice is directed at specific challenges and obstacles, whether from trees, water, poor soil, vehicular traffic, wildlife, laws and covenants, road maintenance (think snow and salt) and utilities, or “the public.” The latter covers pedestrian traffic, dogs, children, vandalism, litter, liability, and privacy.

Part 3, Creation, covers design and management issues unique to curbside gardens. There is a clear do’s-and-don’ts guide for plant selection, as well as an overview of planting decisions to be made. Part 4, Curbside-Worthy Plants, is a compilation of over one hundred plants suitably tough and showy enough for curbside use, sub-divided into Plants With Showy Flowers, Plants With Showy Foliage, Plants With Culinary and Medicinal Uses, and Plants With Four-Season Structure. All are arranged alphabetically by proper botanical names (common names noted), with illustrations, desirable growing conditions, and AHS zone information.

Curbsides and other orphaned public spaces across the country are being reclaimed, adopted, and beautified by community gardeners, environmentalists, neighborhood associations, water savers, edible gardeners, wilderness advocates, and others who have adopted a garden space, according to the author. The text touches on those “unused public spaces”—alleys, parking lots, medians, vacant lots, and the centers of traffic roundabouts—but regrettably, there are no examples or photos of adopted garden spots.

Hellstrip Gardening is an inspirational book. Its 296 pages of matte-finish (non-glare) paper include an index and suggestions for further reading. It is thoughtfully organized, well written in a friendly, informal style, and the coverage is spot on. The curbside is a different sort of place to garden, one easily overlooked, but Imagine a street with a series of gardens adjacent to the street. If this book sparks curbside creativity, city streets could be transformed into amazing miniature parks. What a gift to passersby!
**KNOXVILLE**

The UT Gardens, Knoxville, is located just off Neyland Drive. All programs require preregistration. Contact Derrick Stowell, garden educator, at dstowell@utk.edu or 865-974-7151, or visit https://gogarden.utk.edu to register and read a full course description. All start times listed are in Eastern Time.

**2016 GARDEN DISCOVERY CAMPS**

Ready for a summer of fun and learning? The UT Gardens, Knoxville, can help! To sign up for one of our camps, register online and fill out an application. Payments are accepted via online registration or by check until session is full. Download and print off the Garden Discovery Camp application at https://gogarden.utk.edu/campapplication2016.

**Aftercare:** Need a little more time to pick up your camper? Our new aftercare program will run from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day of the camps.

- **Cost per week:** $20 members/$25 nonmembers
- **Cost per single-day session:** $5 members/$10 nonmembers

**FAMILY EVENTS**

- **Bat Fest**
  October 22, Time TBD
  Cost: $7 per child
- **Howl-O-Ween**
  October 23, Time TBD

**SYMPOSIAS**

- **Natural Dyes**
  August 13, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
  Cost: $50 members/$60 nonmembers
- **Critter Scene Investigation**
  Friday, July 29, 9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.
- **Music in the Garden**
  Friday, July 8
  9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

**WORKSHOPS/MAKE & TAKES**

These hands-on events provide the perfect opportunity to learn and create with an expert on a garden-related item. Enjoy the fun of working with others in a creative atmosphere as you DIY and craft your own backyard or home item.

- **Kokedama**
  September 10, 1–3 p.m.
  Cost: $25 members/$35 nonmembers
- **Hypertufa**
  October 1, 1–3 p.m.
  Cost: $25 members/$35 nonmembers
- **Fresh Seasonal Wreaths**
  December 3, 1–3 p.m.
  Cost: $25 members/$35 nonmembers

**CROSSVILLE**

UT Gardens, Crossville, classes and events are held at the Plateau AgResearch and Education Center, 320 Experimentation Station Road, Crossville, Tennessee. All start times are listed in Central Time. For more information regarding classes and other opportunities in Crossville, visit https://tn.utk.edu/plateaugardeens.

**CLASSES**

- **Canning—Pressure**
  June 30, 10–noon
  Fee: $10
- **Fall Vegetable Gardening**
  September 29, 10 a.m.–noon
  Fee: None
- **Fermenting**
  September 24, 9 a.m.–10:30 a.m.
  Fee: None
- **Tree Identification**
  September TBD, 9–11:30 a.m.
  Fee: None
- **Fall Plant Sale and Garden Lecture Series**
  October 6.
  Indoor garden talks: 1:30 p.m.–3 p.m.
  Plant Sale: 3 p.m.–6:30 p.m.

**EVENTS**

- **Summer Celebration Lawn and Garden Show**
  July 14, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
  Cost: $5
- **Landscape Review**
  September 1, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
  Cost: $15
- **Fall Plant Sale and Garden Lecture Series**
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**Knoxville**

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

For more information regarding classes and events held at the UT Gardens, Knoxville, classes and other opportunities in Crossville, visit https://tn.utk.edu/plateaugardeens or call 731-424-1643. All start times are listed in Central Time.

**EVENTS**

- **8th Annual Fall Gardeners’ Festival**
  August 30, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
  Fee: None

Event agenda will be posted online by August 1 at ccmga.org or by call 731-424-1643. For more information, visit https://tn.utk.edu/plateaugardeens.

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**TOP ANNUALS OF 2015**

**Best in Show:** Petunia Tidal Wave Red Velour–PanAmerican  
**Best New Variety:** Sedum Lemon Coral–Proven Winners  
**Best Repeat Variety:** Vinca Cita Strawberry–Syngenta  
**Best New Series (tie):** Dianthus Jim Finley–NEW–PanAmerican  
**Best New Series (tie):** Dianthus Jim Finley–NEW–PanAmerican

**TOP TWENTY ANNUALS OF 2015** (alphabetical order)  
- *Agastache* 'Astello Indigo' Van Hemert & Co.  
- *Angelonia* Archangel Orchid Pink–Ball FloraPlant  
- *Angelonia* Baby Wing Starflower–PanAmerican  
- *Campanula* 'Marquis Blue' Van Hemert & Co.  
- *Calliachora Can-Can Neon Pink*–Ball FloraPlant  
- *Canna Cannova Lemon*–NEW–Ball Ingenuity  
- *Cleome* Sonora Blanca IMP–Proven Winners  
- *Celosia* ‘Flamingo’–Hem Zaden  
- *Celosia Flame Thrower series*–NEW–Ball FloraPlant  
- *Dianthus* Jim Finley–NEW–PanAmerican  
- *Euphorbia* Glamour–NEW–PanAmerican  
- *Gerbera* Hello! series–NEW–Proven Winners  
- *Impatiens Rockapulco Wisteria*–NEW–Proven Winners  
- *Lantana Luscious Pinkberry Blend*–Proven Winners  
- *Marigold* Hot Pax series–PanAmerican  
- *Ornamental* Chili Pepper NuMex Easter  
- *Petunia* Supertunia Picasso in Burgundy–Proven Winners  
- *Petunia* Supertunia Violet Star Charm–Proven Winners  
- *Petunia* Supertunia Bubblegum–Proven Winners  
- *Petunia* Superbena Vista Silverberry–Proven Winners  
- *Petunia* Cascading Indian Summer–Ball FloraPlant  
- *Verbena Zanzibaris* Major Street–Proven Winners  
- *Vinea Valiant Light*–PanAmerican  
- *Zinnia* Double Zahara Yellow–PanAmerican

**INCREDIBLE EDIBLES**  
- Okra 'Jambalaya'  
- Pepper 'Pretty N Sweet'  
- Buttercup syrphus ‘Butterscotch’

**REMARKABLE ROSES**  
- *Love and Peace*  
- *Rainbow Sunblaze*  
- *Twilight Zone*  
- *Spotbound*  
- *Sugar Moon*

**PROMISING AND PROVEN PERENNIALS**  
- *Lavandula x intermedia* ‘Phenomenal’  
- *Echinacea* ‘Cheyenne Spirit’  
- *Cyclamen* hedelfingen, Hardy Cyclamen  
- *Sedum Rock N Grow Pure Joy*  
- *Geranium* ‘Gerwat Rozanne’  
- *Dendranthema* ‘Jogina’ series, Hardy Mum from Blooms of Bressingham  
- *Hibiscus Syriacus* ‘Summer Storm’ from Proven Winners  
- *Ageratum Hekat Gold*, Dwarf Hummingbird Mint from Terra Nova  
- *Amsonia hubrichtii*, Arkansas Blue Star

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**INCREADIBLE EDIBLES**  
- *Olea* ‘Jambalaya’  
- *Pepper* ‘Pretty N Sweet’  
- *Buttercup Syrphus* ‘Butterscotch’

**TREMENDOUS TREES & SHRUBS**  
- *Ceris canadensis* ‘Whitewater’, Whitewater Eastern Redbud  
- *Little Lime Hydrangea paniculata*–Shine, Little Lime Hydrangea Jane  
- *Amsonia* Virginia Taylor, Taylor Juniper  
- *Ace* palatum ‘Masawa Yatsubusa’, Masawa Yatsubusa Japanese Maple  
- *Ace* palatum ‘Tsukasa Silhouette’, Tsukasa Silhouette Japanese Maple  
- *BloomStruck Hydrangea macrophylla* ‘P1HM-1’, BloomStruck Bigleaf Hydrangea  
- *First Editions Loropetalum chinense var. rubrum*–P1HM-1, Crimson Fire Chinese Fringeflower  

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UT GARDENS, KNOXVILLE, VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION & KICKOFF LUNCHEON

By Beth Willis, UT Gardens, Knoxville Membership and Volunteer Coordinator

T he 2016 Volunteer Appreciation and Kickoff Luncheon was held on Wednesday, February 24, at the UT Visitors Center.

Ninety-three people, new and veteran volunteers as well as Gardens staff and student interns, were in attendance as we recapitulated the accomplishments of 2015 and anticipated the opportunities of the 2016 volunteer season.

The luncheon also allowed the Gardens to recognize two outstanding volunteers. Linda Mason was recognized as the 2015 Volunteer of the Year for her tireless and cheerful work on the Howl-O-Ween committee, her help at other special events, and her service as the Knox County Master Gardener liaison to the UT Gardens. The Gardens was thrilled to honor longtime volunteer Elin Johnson as the recipient of the Distinguished Volunteer Service Award, designed to honor an individual who, through volunteer service, has contributed greatly to the UT Gardens over the course of many years.

If you’re interested, it’s not too late to get involved with the volunteer program this year. Volunteers play a vital role in the UT Gardens, and we invite you to join this fun and dedicated team. No particular gardening experience is required; in fact, volunteering is a great way to learn new skills. Opportunities range from our weekly sessions in the Gardens/greenhouse to special events and assistance with educational programming.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities at the UT Gardens contact Beth Willis, volunteer coordinator, at 865-974-2712 or ewillis2@utk.edu.

UT GARDENS, CROSSVILLE, VOLUNTEER REPORT

In 2015, 120 volunteers contributed 3,256 service hours, which has a value to the Gardens of $75,156 ($23.07/hour published by Independent Sector’s valuation of volunteer time to nonprofit organizations). From help with plant sales and special events, to assistance with educational programming, to pitching in each week in the greenhouses and gardens, our volunteers are an invaluable resource to the UT Gardens. We would not be able to accomplish everything we do without the generous contributions of their time, expertise, and energy.

In 2004, a group of volunteers saw a need, created a vision, and took on a challenge. By 2016, this same group had created eighteen themed demonstration beds, ongoing ornamental research trials, gardening-related classes, an annual garden festival, plant sales, a college internship, Master Gardener driven vegetable trials, educational videos, tours, a children’s garden, and so much more.

Unlike most public gardens with employed staff, the Crossville Gardens relies on volunteers. From oversight to maintenance, fundraising to walking tours and educational outreach (thirty-seven classes this year!), the Cumberland County Master Gardener Association (CCMGA) remains the core of this garden, documenting 3,899.75 volunteer service hours in 2015 alone. An umbrella committee of eleven—which includes nine CCMGA members, three of whom serve as Gardens co-chairs—is responsible for all garden-related business.

Master Gardeners take part in many activities to help the Gardens grow, including coordinating annual plant sales that benefit the general garden fund and the outdoor pavilion fund. An annual Spring Flower and Garden Show has allowed CCMGA to allocate $57,500 over the years toward garden maintenance, college internships, classes, printing costs, and the Fall Gardeners’ Festival. In addition to those activities, members have secured grants, private donations, and special fundraising efforts for the KinderGarden ($10,000), the outdoor pavilion ($75,000), and established an endowment designed to provide funding for the Gardens and its many programs in perpetuity.

To learn more about how you can become a part of the UT Gardens, Crossville, visit ccmga.org or ag.tennessee.edu/plateaugardens.

Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.

—Sherry Anderson, author
I was standing along a side trail in the woodland garden talking to horticulture director Dale Skaggs as an event was about to begin at Dixon Gallery and Gardens. Attendees were walking down the broad sidewalk toward the Pavilion to attend one of the Munch and Learn lectures. We laughed as yet another person stopped dead in their tracks and sniffed the air, head swiveling to find the source of the sweet scent. It was my turn to call out, “The large green shrubs near the building. It’s tea olive!”

Tea olive (*Osmanthus fragrans*) isn’t hardy throughout the state of Tennessee, but the Dixon Gardens are tucked in an older part of Memphis, and much of Memphis is a tiny pocket of plant hardiness zone 8, where gardeners can get away with old-fashioned camellias, fatsia, even St. Augustine lawns.

Founded in 1976, this year the Dixon celebrates forty years of fine art and fine gardening as a public garden. However, the garden’s origins as a private garden date much further back. Margaret and Hugo Dixon began the construction of house and gardens simultaneously in 1939, steered by one of the first female American landscape designers, Hope Crutchfield, who was Hugo Dixon’s sister. It’s remarkable that she did this mostly through letters (one of them twenty-seven pages long!) and sketches, along with aid from a few local Memphis designers.

The original conceptualizations of vistas and alleys still gracefully define the garden, and many of the original plantings exist, adding a maturity and elegance to the grounds. However, many new areas have been defined and planted under the guidance of horticulture director Dale Skaggs, a landscape architect and an avid plant nerd. One of his special interests is woodland plants, and it would be a great idea to attend the woodland tours offered, especially in early spring when the ephemerals are at their peak.

Later in spring, the prodigious bulb display emerges in waves of colorful tulips and a significant collection of wonderful daffodils. The Dixon maintains a close working relationship with the local chapter of the Daffodil Society and hosts their daffodil show and bulb sale each year.

Margaret Dixon’s interests seem to lay chiefly in the art collections, and she was very involved in developing the arts for the whole of Memphis. The collection of paintings at the Dixon includes a very impressive list of Impressionists works by Degas, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, Matisse, Cézanne, and Seurat.

The one area of the garden Margaret was known to find of interest was a cutting garden, so she could have fresh flowers for the house. That tradition has been revitalized with the Memphis Garden Club Cutting Garden, established in 1998, which strives to keep something in bloom twelve months of the year in the outdoors and in the greenhouse for use in arrangements inside the house and museum.

Though Dixon has a formal framework and a fine arts atmosphere, it is definitely a plantsman’s garden, and known for its well-attended plant sales, featuring a wide range of difficult-to-find natives to rare and unusual cultivars of woody plants and herbaceous perennials. More information, including address and directions can be found at dixon.org.
BRING ON THE VEGGIES!

EXPANDING TRIALING IN EDIBLE CROPS
By Natalie Bumgarner, UT Extension Residential and Consumer Horticulture Specialist

Last spring on a weekend trip, I found myself wandering through a Midwestern suburb on a leisurely stroll with friends. As we ambled along, a planter caught my eye. I realized that kale was the vertical focal point mixed with several flowering ornamentals, and my excited exclamation of “Look, kale!” completely interrupted the conversation. My friends continued with the topic at hand as it is not uncommon for me to provide random facts about vegetables at unexpected moments.

That mental planter image, though, was really worth a thousand words. One glimpse of kale brought to life all the statistics I had been reading about the increased interest in edible gardening among consumers nationwide. I will spare you the details, but suffice it to say that growing vegetables is actually kind of cool these days. Seed catalogs confirm this with all sorts of novel introductions designed to meet the needs of gardeners of all scales and locations.

Increasing choices bring more questions about cultivar recommendations. All of us in Extension are familiar with the queries for cultivar suggestions from homeowners and gardeners. For many years, the UT Gardens has participated in All-America Selections trialing of ornamental crops as well as a range of other trials to address these needs. These trials rely on the truly impressive expertise we have in Tennessee in both woody and herbaceous ornamentals. As I came on board in late 2014, one of the first areas of need that I wanted to address was developing trials focused on vegetable cultivars suited to home gardens, raised beds, and patio containers. Carrying out trials is both time and space consumptive, and the best recommendations are based on multiple years of experience. So, there was no time like the present to begin. The AAS edible trials provided a great entry point.

My first year in carrying out these trials in conjunction with the UT Gardens team was 2015. We converted a section of the UT Gardens, Knoxville, that was previously dedicated to biomass crops and began the sweaty and satisfying task of growing tomatoes, peppers, peas, pumpkins, and other crops. Each trial cultivar has two comparisons that are well known and used in gardens across the country. So, the twenty-four trial cultivars required almost seventy-five plots in total when comparisons were added.

As summer wore on, picking and weighing for data collection kept me rather busy. However, I enjoyed the opportunity to get a little dirt under my nails and spend time in the Gardens. Trialing vegetable crops in public gardens is an interesting proposition to which I am still becoming accustomed. The notion of straight rows inside curved bed edges and the methodology of replicated plantings in circular plots is novel to me. What became quickly apparent, though, was the interest of visitors. Evening weeding often turned into the opportunity to “talk tomatoes,” and provide us with the opportunity to share information informally in addition to our formal results.

In addition to the trials in the UT Gardens, Knoxville, home vegetable cultivar trialing in Tennessee also got a great helping hand from the Cumberland County Master Gardeners. At the UT Gardens, Crossville, the Cumberland County Extension team and resident Plateau tomato gurus and Cumberland County Master Gardeners planted and managed a demonstration and research plot where several tomato cultivars were grown under different management methods. This plot was linked with a Saturday morning workshop series that taught residents all the tricks of the home tomato trade.

This year, the AAS edible trial will again take place in Knoxville, and the Crossville committee has exciting plans in the works as well. Also, with the invaluable help of Extension agents and Master Gardeners, we plan to have some cultivar trial and demonstration plots in community gardens around the state. With this great team effort, we hope to take tomatoes (and peppers and beans and corn and kale) to the people. So, if you see us irrigating on weekends, or picking in the early mornings or evenings, stop by for a brief visit and check out the trials. Your new favorite tomato may be waiting for you there!
To members of the Knoxville Garden Club, Emily Bruner was a revered teacher. For close to two decades, she mentored them in weekly classes on all things horticultural. So valuable was her advice that the club decided to publish it as a book in 1993. Editor Nancy Siler said the title, *Ask Emily About Gardening in East Tennessee*, came easily.

An ‘Emily Bruner’ holly accents Fran Scheidt’s garden in Knoxville. The holly makes a great specimen or focal point plant in large lawn areas and is hardy to zones 6b/7a-9 (photo by Fran Scheidt).

Emily Bruner in her garden in 1969 (photo © West Side Story).

An azalea Emily Bruner grew, named ‘Pinky Bee’ both for Bruner’s strawberry blonde hair and the color of its blossoms, thrives in a UT greenhouse. Enjoying its blooms are Bruner’s great grandchildren Leila Bruner Myers and Daniel Bruner with their mother Amy Bruner (photo by Jean Hulsey).

“At her direction we dug. We divided. We saved seeds. We took cuttings. We studied and shared and learned. And always when there was a question, we said, ‘ASK EMLY.’”

To Knoxville area residents, Bruner was a source of plants that grew in abundance in a 2-acre garden located at her home in the city’s leafy Forest Heights neighborhood. Club members estimate that the perennials, shrubs, and trees that flowed from Bruner’s garden over the years enriched more than 500 landscapes.

To the horticultural world at large, however, Bruner was—and is—quite something else. In publications far and wide, you will find her credited as the discoverer of the famed ‘Bruner Hollies’. There are five available in trade; the star is *Ilex × ‘Emily Bruner’* (*I. comuta ‘Burfordii’ × *I. latifolia*). You can view several of them blooming in the spring at the Kathrine Dulin Folger Rose Garden next to the Smithsonian Castle in Washington, DC.

Scheidt, longtime editor of the Holly Society of America’s journal and member of the UT Arboretum Society’s holly task force, can’t say enough good things about ‘Emily Bruner’.

“It has a deep green color; the fruit is luscious red and abundant; its leaves are exceedingly lustrous, not dull like so many American hollies; it has the classic holly shape. It’s also disease resistant and has classic spines. It just has everything you could want a holly to be.”

So exceptional is the tree that the Holly Society bestowed the status “Holly Elite” upon both ‘Emily Bruner’ and another Bruner, the male pollinator, ‘James Swan’.

Bruner discovered the hollies in 1960 growing as six tiny seedlings from a dropped berry beneath a Chinese holly, *Ilex comuta* (‘Burfordii’), on the grounds of Swans Bakery in Knoxville. She was there that day supervising a grounds crew. Her exacting eye could tell their leaf form differed from the mother tree and also from nearby lusterleaf hollies, *Ilex latifolia*, the probable father. They were, she surmised, interspecific hybrids of the two. She later discovered that the National Arboretum had been striving to achieve that very cross.

Bruner took the seedlings and nurtured them, first in her greenhouse and then in her garden. There they caught the eye of a UT horticulture student named Don Shadow. When a hailstorm caused damage to the garden, Bruner took holly cuttings to UT to propagate. Shadow was at the greenhouse when she arrived and gladly volunteered to help. Nine years later, he asked Bruner for the commercial rights to market two of the hollies. ‘Emily Bruner’ and ‘James Swan’, which Shadow then introduced, became the very first “new and useful” plants that he brought to market. Today Shadow and his Winchester, Tennessee, nursery are acclaimed for the unique plant material he has found throughout the world and also hybridized that fits that description.

Other nurseries introduced *Ilex × ‘Arthur Bruner’*, ‘Bob Bruner’, and ‘Ginny Bruner’. Each can be seen at the UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge and all five are registered with the Holly Society of America.

While it’s now been eighteen years since Bruner died, the plants she grew and shared, discovered and introduced, continue to have lasting impacts in the landscape and will do so for years to come. UT Gardens hopes to offer ‘Pinky Bee’ and other rare and specialty plants ideally suited for Tennessee gardens and landscapes in future years.

**TENNESSEE GARDENING LEGENDS**

**Emily Bruner | Cultivator & Discoverer**

By Margot L. Emery, UTIA Marketing & Communications

An ‘Emily Bruner’ holly accents Fran Scheidt’s garden in Knoxville. The holly makes a great specimen of focal point plant in large lawn areas and is hardy to zones 6b/7a-9 (photo by Fran Scheidt).

An azalea Emily Bruner grew, named ‘Pinky Bee’ both for Bruner’s strawberry blonde hair and the color of its blossoms, thrives in a UT greenhouse. Enjoying its blooms are Bruner’s great grandchildren Leila Bruner Myers and Daniel Bruner with their mother Amy Bruner (photo by Jean Hulsey).
Chili peppers, in their array of colorful shapes and flavors, are something to celebrate in 2016. That’s because the International Herb Association named Capsicum herb of the year. The association selects its annual honoree based on being outstanding in at least two of three categories: medicinal, culinary, or decorative. Peppers hit a home run in all three.

If classifying peppers as herbs gives you pause, consider this. One of the most basic definitions of an herb is any flowering plant that is valued for its medicinal properties, flavor, or scent. On those terms, peppers qualify.

While Capsicum most commonly refers to bell peppers, the genus includes the many versatile chilies, sweet and hot, that grow so well in Tennessee and that we find in increasing diversity at markets. In the kitchen, what better way to celebrate the herb of the year than with cold, spicy soup for the sizzling months ahead. The Spanish vegetable soup, gazpacho, taps into peppers two ways, combining bell peppers and hot sauce with tomatoes at their summer finest.

Gazpacho is versatile. Play up its Latin heritage by serving with tapas or Parmesan crisps and a panzanella salad. Adapt this Italian salad by adding chunks of avocado for a buttery contrast to the soup, and opt for a light olive oil-citrus juice dressing rather than its traditional one made of vinegar because the soup contains that.

Other great accompaniments are melon slices wrapped in prosciutto, a sweet-flavored olive tapenade served with crusty sourdough rosemary loaf, and nuts seasoned with spices and herbs. If you’d like to serve wine, a white or rose with crisp acidity pairs well. Food & Wine recommends selections from Spain’s Rueda region or a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc.

The Memphis Herb Society partners with the UT Gardens on an Edibles herbal recipe for each issue of Cultivate. The Society celebrates herbal foods at its monthly meetings and in the cookbooks it publishes. The recipe that follows is from Today’s Herbal Kitchen. Learn more about the Society at memphisherbsociety.com.

**GARDEN GAZPACHO**

- 6 stalks celery, cut into 1-inch pieces, divided
- 2 bell peppers, cut into eighths, divided
- 1 large cucumber, cut into sixths, divided
- 2 quarts tomatoes, peeled and quartered, divided*
- 1 medium onion, cut into eighths
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½ cup white wine vinegar
- ½ cup white wine
- ½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon Worcester sauce
- ½ teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil leaves
- Chopped fresh chives for garnish

Reserve 5 pieces of celery, 2 pieces of bell pepper, 1 piece of cucumber, and 4 pieces of tomato.

Combine remaining celery, pepper, and cucumber with onion in a food processor. Process until finely chopped. Remove to a nonmetallic bowl. Process tomatoes until smooth. Add parsley and garlic, and continue to process until smooth. Add mixture to bowl.

Mix in vinegar and next 5 ingredients. Process reserved vegetables on the “pulse” setting 2 or 3 times or until coarsely chopped. Gently fold into bowl mixture. Refrigerate overnight.

Garnish and serve very cold.

**YIELD:** 6 to 8 servings.

*Tomato juice may replace some of the tomatoes.

Currently the Gardens share space with the Plateau AgResearch and Education Center, which houses several research projects in the Gardens and helps with equipment and other expenses.

“We are able to provide things such as tractors with mulch and stone that you might not have access to at another location,” said Walt Hitch, director of the Center. “A distinctive part of the Plateau garden is that you see this unified spirit where people get together and have a common goal, and they have the resources in volunteer hours or financial support behind that. That is what makes it a success.” Hitch sees the direct benefit to Cumberland County, which is home to a large retirement community: “Folks come here from living somewhere else. The education that is offered at the Gardens in terms of how to grow plants here on the Plateau is a huge benefit.”

For Christopherson, this is what drew her to the organization and eventually her time volunteering and supporting the Gardens. “The Master Gardeners are empowered so they can get that information out into the community,” said Christopherson.

Morgan hopes that donations to the Plateau Discovery Gardens endowment will help grow the work that the Master Gardeners began. “I think the importance of this endowment will be to allow us to be more creative thinking about the future. It will give us ways to think about expansion,” she said.

For more information about how to partner with the UT Gardens, Crossville, contact Tiffany Howard at Howard@utfi.org, and to give directly to the endowment visit AdvanceUTIA.com/PlateauDiscoveryGarden.

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**EDIBLES**

**GAZPACHO**

By Margot L. Emery, UTIA Marketing & Communications

Photo by Tory Salvador
Building Our Plant Collections

The UT Gardens is a statewide, living museum that features outstanding collections of plant genera for all to study and enjoy. Our locations in Crossville, Jackson, and Knoxville are continuously expanding their collections through staff purchases, donations from noted horticultural wholesale and retail sources, and plant enthusiasts who have the desire—and the necessary documentation of their selections—to make their collections public.

With great gratitude, we acknowledge the following plant collectors who had the vision to help us expand our living museum. We also acknowledge the initiative and creativity of the Gardens staff members who have worked so hard to build our own collections. If you haven’t visited recently, we would love for you to stop by each site and see what is new.

The Ruth Baumgardner Perennial Collection

Retired commercial nursery owners Ruth and Erbin Baumgardner gave more than 1,600 perennials to the UT Gardens, Knoxville, when they retired and closed their Mouse Creek Perennial Nursery in Riceville, Tennessee, in 2014. Their gift created “The Ruth Baumgardner Perennial Collection,” which forms the core of the perennial garden in Knoxville. Ruth served as president of the Perennial Plant Association from 2001 to 2003 and also served as the group’s southeastern director and chair of the Education Committee. A passionate educator, Ruth chose to make her collection public so that everyone can learn about perennial plants and their use. It is a major teaching component for several plant science classes at UT.

The Richard Gillespie Peony Collection

Thanks to Dr. Richard Gillespie, a retired anesthesiologist, the UT Gardens, Knoxville, now has more than one hundred peonies in collection! Richard caught the bug for collecting peonies after attending an American Peony Society meeting over twenty years ago. Since then, he has amassed upwards of one hundred peonies composed of different species and cultivars, although the newer intersectional hybrids are his favorite. His gift collection to the Gardens creates the “Richard Gillespie Peony Collection.”

Growing the Daylily Collection

Peter Shea, a retired attorney, has been a daylily collector for more than thirty years and currently grows about 200 named varieties as well as 150 seedlings that he has hybridized. Peter specializes in double daylilies. He has generously added eighty-five choice cultivars to the UT Gardens, Knoxville, Daylily Collection.

The Hydrangea Collection in Jackson

In 2013, Jason Reeves, horticulturist and curator of the UT Gardens, Jackson, began planting many of the different cultivars of the panicle hydrangea for easy comparison. With the addition of Zinfin Doll and Pillow Talk this past fall, the collection now contains thirty-nine different cultivars. You can see these gorgeous hydrangeas on the left just as you drive onto the grounds of the UT Gardens, Jackson.

Iris Collections Across the State

Each location of the UT Gardens boasts beautiful iris specimens. Some so beautiful, in fact, that the locations share a few of the same cultivars!
The UT Gardens, Knoxville, celebrated spring with its annual Gala on April 29. A Symphony of Peonies brought together a host of friends who enjoyed an evening of music, great food, and beautiful flowers in support of the statewide mission of the Gardens. Next year’s gala will be Friday, April 28, 2017.

We are thankful for our supporters and the many ways they help us provide education, research, and beauty through our sites across the Tennessee. For a full list of UT Gardens Friends & Supporters, visit tiny.utk.edu/gardenssupporters, or visit utgardens.tennessee.edu/membership.html to become a member or contribute online.