2009–2010
TMG
Advocacy
Board
Directory
The Tennessee Master Gardener Advocacy Board (TMGAB) is a state Extension program committee created to include representation by all facets of the Tennessee Master Gardener Program. It is composed of three county Extension agents (who are local Master Gardener Program coordinators representing each region), 12 certified Master Gardeners (four from each region) who have served as volunteers and have been active in their local MG programs, one state Extension specialist who has worked with the MG Program, and the state Master Gardener coordinator who serves as a facilitator of this committee.

The TMGAB is charged with the following tasks:
- Establish program policies.
- Define relationships between University of Tennessee Extension and Master Gardener volunteers.
- Work with the state MG program coordinator to identify and develop new program information and materials, and revise existing program information as needed.
- Set goals, as well as objectives and action plans for obtaining those goals, for the Tennessee Master Gardener Program.
- Evaluate and provide oversight to the growth and development of the Tennessee Master Gardener Program as we seek to accomplish the program’s mission and purpose as it relates to the University of Tennessee Extension, Master Gardener volunteers, communities and individual Tennesseans.
- Provide leadership for the TMG Alliance, a state-wide organization structured by region.

TMGAB recruits members who are interested in and committed to doing the work required of this committee and who can attend the necessary meetings. Positions require a two-year term of service, with members rotating off in alternate years.

If you are interested in serving, please review and complete the criteria on the TMGAB application (available on the Tennessee Master Gardener Web site). The board communicates monthly by conference call and meets twice a year; the state coordinator and the TMGAB will determine the necessity of additional meetings.

**TMGAB Position Description**
- Represents both county and region at board meetings (minimum of two per year) for a minimum of two-year term with an option to rate off after the first year.
- Maintains positive attitude in identifying deficiencies in the state program and recommending constructive changes if appropriate.
- Is dependable and takes initiative in projects.
- Maintains contact by keeping information lines open (checking e-mail and responding as soon as possible). E-mail is mandatory!
- Possesses good communication skills (verbal and/or writing).
- Volunteers to work on appropriate state committees; willing to chair committees as needed.
- Hosting, planning and participating in the annual Tennessee Master Gardener Winter School with other board members.

The TMGAB calendar year runs from January to the following January when applications are reviewed, unless there is an immediate vacancy. Meetings are usually conducted as monthly conference calls with at least two person-to-person meetings per year. Advocates are expected to conduct at least one regional Alliance meeting with other advocates and regional county leadership. Ad hoc meetings may be called to discuss state issues. Meetings will be spread across the state to be the most convenient for the group.

**Tennessee Master Gardener Alliance**
The Tennessee Master Gardener Alliance is a state organization of county, state and Extension leadership. The Alliance structure fosters understanding, facilitates communication, encourages networking, and identifies areas of improvement. The purpose of the Alliance is to create a recognized structure for every county to contribute to the state Master Gardener Program. The Alliance allows group leadership an opportunity to participate in decision making, goals setting and identifying initiatives for the program.

The Alliance has three parts: The active MG county groups; the TMGAB; and the University Extension who hosts the TMG certification program. The County Alliance membership is composed of active MG counties in the three geographic regions of Tennessee. All active county groups have equal representation in the Alliance. The regional county groups discuss relevant issues that affect Master Gardener volunteers, local groups and the state program. Alliance meetings are coordinated and sponsored by the TMGAB members at regional and state events. Regional meetings are held annually, prior to a state Winter School, so that regional input is shared during the state Alliance meeting at the preceding Winter School.
2009 TMG Alliance Meeting
3 Regions met to discuss issues and help resolve issues in their programs.
Eastern Region

Dave Craig
Knox County Master Gardener
6429 Westminster Road
Knoxville, TN 37919
craigdavid@bellsouth.net
865-558-5839

Dave is a former vo-ag teacher and ag-ed professor and has been a master gardener for six years. He volunteers for several gardening and religious organizations in the Knoxville area, as well as the UT Gardens. He created and manages the Habitat Urban Gardens (HUG) program which teaches and assists homeowners to establish their own perennial and vegetable gardens. HUG has landscaped over 100 homes in five years. Dave brings teaching and organizational skills to the local and state master gardener associations.

For more information on starting a HUG program in your area visit www.utextension.utk.edu/publications then click on “For Master Gardener”

Mike Payne
Hamilton County Master Gardener
1726 Collieview Lane
Hixson, TN 37343
Tnmastergardener@aol.com
423-842-3743

Mike is a 15-year member of the program who has served as both president and vice president of TMGAB. He has enjoyed teaching “Beginning Garden Classes” (pre-Master Gardener training courses), writing articles, and public speaking (even on TV!). Mike chaired the 2006 Southern Region Conference in Chattanooga. Mike is helping pilot the TN Yards and Neighborhoods program in Hamilton County. Mike’s wife, Stephanie, is also a Hamilton County Master Gardener.

Chris Ramsey
Sullivan County Extension Agent
3258 Highway 126, Suite 104
Blountville, TN 37617
chris.ramsey@utk.edu
423-279-2723

Chris has been training Master Gardeners in Sullivan, Washington, Greene, Carter and Johnson counties for several years. His Master Gardener group, the Northeast Tennessee Master Gardeners, regularly hosts educational programs. NETMG are currently constructing an urban tree demonstration at the fairgrounds funded by grant money.

Doug Hilton
Northeast Tennessee Master Gardeners (Sullivan County)
308 Castaway Drive
Kingsport, TN 37663
appfair@embarqmail.com
423-239-9433

Although Doug Hilton is a lifetime Master Gardener for NETMGA, he is TMGAB’s newest member. Doug, a past president and extremely active volunteer, recently served as program chair for the Tennessee Master Gardener State Conference. He is an organizer and motivator for the projects and activities he chairs (including a power line tree planting project seen below). He has been most active in planning educational projects and landscaping for the Appalachian Fairgrounds.
**Central Region**

Keith Miller  
Rutherford County Master Gardener  
1635 Jarratt Drive  
Rockvale, TN 37153  
ksramiller@yahoo.com  
615-631-9952

Keith has been in the Master Gardener Program for 10 years and during that time he has served as TMGAB president for 3 years. He also hopes to develop more advanced programs to maintain and retain current members. Keith is a former Toastmaster and is still active with his hand-radio club.

Keith has been exceptionally helpful as the TMGAB chairman. A few of his contributions include the TMG County Guidelines (especially the financial policies), editing the applications, and volunteer guidelines. TMGAB appreciates his prompt and efficient monthly meeting agendas and reminders.

Bob is the agent to Sumner County but has been serving the metro Nashville area for many years. His specialty is in adult agriculture education and he is extremely knowledgeable in consumer horticulture and Master Gardener needs. Bob helped Doris found the first Junior Gardener Day Camp in 2003. He hosts a third Thursday brown bag horticulture educational session and co-hosts a horticulture radio program among many other duties.

Bob Ary  
Sumner County Extension Agent  
155-A East Main Street  
Gallatin, TN 37066-3298  
bobary@tennessee.edu  
615-452-1423

Bob is the agent to Sumner County but has been serving the metro Nashville area for many years. His specialty is in adult agriculture education and he is extremely knowledgeable in consumer horticulture and Master Gardener needs. Bob helped Doris found the first Junior Gardener Day Camp in 2003. He hosts a third Thursday brown bag horticulture educational session and co-hosts a horticulture radio program among many other duties.

Jack Smith  
Rutherford County Master Gardener  
366 Calumet Trace  
Murfreesboro, TN 37127  
jesmg37127@yahoo.com  
615-217-0785

Jack is a retired educator and government servant and who hasn’t slowed down one bit! For the past three years, Jack has helped coordinate and teach a very successful gardener education series in Rutherford County called Basic Gardening. He continues to share the successes of the Basic Gardening classes with other county leadership so that they can find alternative ways to support agents, raise money and educate the public.

He is accustomed to working with volunteers and enjoys educating through community projects. As an advocate, Jack hopes to learn more and educate others through better leadership.

Vacant
Carol Watkins
Memphis Area Master Gardener

4245 Burgundy Rd
Memphis, TN 38111
cwatkins@mac.com
901-682-5838
901-277-5838

Carol is our newest member with Chris Cooper. Chris strongly endorsed Carol for this position saying, “(Carol) has been an asset to our association for the three years that she has been a member. She is organized, efficient, extremely competent and has an excellent rapport with other members of this association. Her communication skills, both written and verbal, are excellent. She is also able to effectively multitask to ensure that all projects are completed in a timely manner.”
We welcome Carol and look forward to some of her great ideas, including Education Abroad and restarting the concept of State MG Conferences.

Denisa Cate
Northwest TN Master Gardener

83 Lillie Brown Road
Bradford, TN 38316
dcate@hcmc-tn.org
731-742-2545

Denisa brings a unique group perspective to the board - she represents a cluster county group of Obion, Gibson and Weakly counties. This cluster group does not have official agent representation; however the Extension offices do assist in hosting classes and ordering materials.

She is an extremely organized and efficient person and has been instrumental in opening up lines of communication in the Western region. Denisa, an excellent meeting organizer, was invaluable in hosting the 2008-09 Winter Schools.

Chris Cooper
Shelby County Extension Agent

7777 Walnut Grove Road
Suite B, Box 21
Memphis, TN 38120-2140
(901) 752-1207
cmcooper@utk.edu

As the Extension Service’s Horticulture Agent and coordinator for the Master Gardener program, Chris is a new, but familiar face to most in the program, having just started his second year in the county. Chris’s primary job, in addition to his work with the Master Gardener program, is to plan, develop, coordinate and conduct educational programs for urban, commercial and home horticulture. He works with adults, primarily in Memphis, sometimes Millington, and throughout rural Shelby County.

Vacant
Sue Hamilton
Director UT Gardens
252 Ellington PSB
2134 Joe Johnson Drive
Knoxville, TN 37996
sueham@utk.edu
865-974-7324

Sue is the specialist advisor to the TMGAB. She is an instructor in the Plant Sciences Department, a researcher and has recently become the director of the UT Gardens under Dr. DiPietro UTIA Vice President. Her passion is sharing gardening with people and helping them to make a connection. She would like to help the Master Gardeners to become ambassadors of the UT Gardens for the University of Tennessee. Currently, there are two UT Gardens locations: UT Gardens Knoxville, TN and UT Gardens Jackson WTREC. If you have not participated in Blooms Days or Summer Celebration visit: http://utgardens.utk.edu

Beth Babbit
State Master Gardener Coordinator & Urban Horticulture Specialist
252 Ellington PSB
2134 Joe Johnson Drive
Knoxville, TN 37996
ebabbit@utk.edu
865-974-7970

Beth Babbit grew up in Nashville, where she discovered her love for gardening from her mother and learned to admire its science from her father. She received her Bachelor’s of Science in horticulture from Auburn University in June 1997. Beth was awarded an assistantship for graduate school at Auburn University to study the best management practices of various horticulture consumers and professionals. Following graduation she joined the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension as an area horticulture agent in the North Atlanta area. There she served Master Gardeners, professional green industry and consumer audiences. This role was followed by a position as an assistant manager of one of Pike’s Family Nurseries retail stores. Beth is currently the Urban Horticulture Area Extension Specialist for the University of Tennessee Extension in Knoxville. She also is the Tennessee Master Gardener Program Coordinator and is co-host of "The Garden Girls," radio show on WNOX 100.3 in Knoxville.
Tennessee Master Gardener Winter School is a state event designed to train Master Gardener volunteers and Extension staff to become more effective agents, leaders and educators. The event is hosted by the TMGAB to offer networking opportunities between participants, advocates and agents. There are two distinctive training focuses: educational training and leadership training. Following the event, an after actions report is developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. In 2009 the theme was “Water Wise” and we kicked off our first state alliance group.

2010 Winter School
Sustainable Gardening, Sustaining Volunteers
February 17-20, 2010
Rutherford County Agri Center