Foliage and Flowers – It’s All About Color!

The UT Arboretum Society’s 46th annual Spring Plant Sale will be on Friday and Saturday, April 19 and 20, at the UT Arboretum. The Members Only sale is from 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, April 19, and memberships can be bought at the door. On Saturday the sale is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is open to all. We will sell our new caps and gardening aprons with the UTAS logo. Dano's Hot Dogs of Lenior City will offer hot dogs, chips, and soda, so enjoy a bite to eat before you go home and start digging. This year for the first time we’ll accept credit cards for purchases of $50 or more.

The Society will feature plants with colorful foliage or flowers at this Spring Plant Sale. Colorful specimens include, but are not limited to, ‘Ever Red’ Loropetalum, ‘Purple Pixie’ Loropetalum, ‘Autumn Sunset’ and ‘Autumn Sangria’ Encore® Azaleas, ‘Kleims Hardy’ Gardenia, ‘Little Lime’ and ‘Vanilla Strawberry’ Hydrangeas, and ‘Blue Zinger’ Blue Sedge. We’ll also have some unique and striking azaleas from Oak Ridge’s stellar azalea hybridizer Huey Sides. We’ll offer some less-common plants grown by UTAS members and supporters, including ‘Dynamite’ and ‘Pink Velour’ Crape Myrtles and ‘Shoal Creek’ Vitex (Chastetree).

Plant vendors offering flowering trees, shrubs, perennials, wildflowers, and edibles include Beaver Creek Nursery and Riverdale Nursery, Knoxville; East Fork Nursery, Sevierville; and Sunlight Gardens, Andersonville.

Retired U.T. horticulture professor Dr. Will Witte will resume his role as the Answer Man to help you with your selections. This year he will also sell books from his personal horticulture library.

The University of Tennessee Arboretum Society is a 48-year-old, nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering the objectives and programs of the University of Tennessee’s 250-acre Arboretum in Oak Ridge. Proceeds from this sale and other fund-raising events go toward the operating expenses and the endowment and auditorium funds for the UT Arboretum. To learn more about the Arboretum Society, and our Endowment and Auditorium Funds, visit our website, www.utarboretumsociety.org.
President’s Letter

Spring is upon us, and the Arboretum is blooming. Trees in the magnolia grove are showing snowy white crowns, and the pinks will not be far behind. Daffodils greet you at the entrance, Lenten roses and bloodroot bloom near the office, and hepatica and some trillium are beginning to show on several trails. The Arboretum is truly a place for all seasons. I hope that you will take some time to visit during this beautiful and impressive time of the year.

The UTAS Spring Plant Sale, our major fundraiser, is April 19 and 20. I enjoy the colors of the plants that we offer, seeing old friends and making new ones. The Spring Plant Sale is as much an opportunity to have fun and to enjoy the Arboretum as it is to buy something of beauty for your yard and to support UTAS. I’ll see you at the sale.

I recently visited the Arboretum in Greensboro, North Carolina. It is a relatively small, beautiful, and pleasant place with neatly manicured collections, wide paved walks, quiet places, and large wind chimes whose treble and bass tones added to the enjoyment of the arboretum experience. If you have the opportunity to visit Greensboro I urge you to visit this arboretum, which is an example of a well-endowed city-supported facility. Greensboro’s Arboretum is a display garden. As I enjoyed this attractive facility, I felt kinship to that arboretum as a member of UTAS and as a supporter of our wild, beautiful, forested Arboretum. Neither Greensboro’s Arboretum nor the UT Arboretum could continue to serve their respective communities without the support of dedicated community members such as you. To each of you I send my sincere thanks for your ongoing support of the UT Arboretum.

UTAS is sponsoring other activities that may interest you. The Holly Task Force has a work day on April 6. Huey Sides, dedicated UTAS member and volunteer, will present a program on azaleas in the Arboretum Shop on April 16 beginning at 7:30 p.m. Huey’s beautiful yard mirrors his passion for these beautiful plants, and we are fortunate that he will share his wisdom with us. Kris Light, local science teacher, naturalist and nature photographer, offers a fun and informative MOTHers Night Out on May 11 at the Arboretum office. Bring your camera and learn about the variety and beauty of these animals. This is an especially fun program for school-age youth. We hope that you, your friends and family will join us for these and our other programs.

Remember, memberships to UTAS support the activities and programs of the Arboretum, and they make great presents. You also can give tax-deductible gifts to the UT Arboretum Auditorium and Endowment Funds.

~Charles Samuels, UTAS President
samuels253@comcast.net, 865-482-3502

Director’s Desk

Spring is sooner recognized by plants than by men. ~ Chinese Proverb

This quote reminds me that I have a unique vantage point in recognizing the coming of spring since I now spend most of my daily life at the UT Arboretum. Although the first day of spring does not always correlate well with the unpredictable weather patterns of East Tennessee, the signs of spring are all around. Robins, Bluebirds, and other song birds have been active around the Arboretum for several weeks. Fresh bud growth is appearing on trees, shrubs, and ground cover. The Arboretum parking lot is also beginning to fill to capacity on the weekends with visitors, walkers, and families. Finally, I am reminded of spring because I am getting the itch to travel to the Smokies in pursuit of casting flies for the wily trout that are also becoming active with the advent of spring.

Spring is also the perfect time to observe and enjoy the Arboretum’s ornamental flowering tree collection that contains the yet-to-bloom dogwood trial garden and research plots. Many selections of native flowering dogwoods (Cornus florida) along with the kousa dogwood (C. kousa), native to China and Japan, are located near the program shelter area. The magnolia cultivar test orchard, located near the office, is currently in bloom. We will soon witness the vibrant spring blooms in our redbud (Cercis canadensis) research area, located near the program shelter.

I recently had the opportunity to again stand in as the Master of Ceremonies for the Oak Ridge Arbor Day Observance and Tree City Celebration this year at Willow Brook School. As I networked with city officials I had the chance to publicly promote UTAS/FRREC and visit with some of the Willow Brook’s fourth graders. We planted a Weeping willow at the school to replace one they had lost in a strong February storm. I used this event as an opportunity to pitch the idea of bringing the ceremony back to the Arboretum next year to help us celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Arboretum.

As I reflect about springtime and all it brings to the Arboretum, I can’t help but to think about all the good things it has brought to my life and my family’s lives. For instance, having my daughters Brianna and Olivia again with me during February’s UTAS Father-Daughter Hike has now become a family tradition. I am also reminded of the special time I have spent on the Arboretum’s trails, and at other UTAS events, with my wife, Lisa. I am truly grateful for the great memories I have made here at the Arboretum with my family and staff, the friendships I have built with UTAS members, and the community networking opportunity provided through our events. Finally, speaking of events - I am discussing the plans for the UTAS Spring Plant Sale with the staff and we stand ready to help make this year’s event another huge success.

See our website for more information: http://forestry.tennessee.edu

~Kevin Hoyt, Director
Upcoming Events

Please check our website, www.utarboretumsociety.org, for updated and additional information on our events.

Holly Work Day
Saturday, April 6 9 a.m. – noon Elmore Holly Collection

The Holly Task Force will host a maintenance day at the Elmore Holly Collection on Saturday, April 6, from 9 a.m. to noon. We have fun and learn while we work. Bring pruning shears, goose neck hoe, and gloves. Most important, bring yourself! Volunteers help defray the cost of maintaining the Arboretum and insure that the Elmore Holly Collection remains one of the foremost holly collections in the US. We expect the collection to be featured again this year on the Dogwood Arts calendar so it is important we prepare the collection and make a good impression for our guests. All volunteers are welcome! Contact Dennis Superczynski, 675-8502, jandport@tds.net.

Huey Sides Shares Azalea Expertise
Tuesday, April 16 7 p.m. Arboretum workshop - follow signs

Longtime Oak Ridge resident Huey Sides, a true azalea aficionado, will share some of the many valuable lessons he has learned about the planting, care, and propagation of azaleas.

Huey is a mostly self-taught azalea hybridizer. His passion for experimenting, combined with his dedication to caring for his plants for more than 40 years at his New York Avenue home, has resulted in many successes and some failures growing in his yard. Huey and his wife, Barbara, open their yard to the public every spring. The Arboretum has a collection of over 20 Sides-bred azaleas, generously donated by Huey, growing on the hillside area south of the Visitors’ Center. Huey also sends selected varieties of his azaleas and other plants from his garden to the Society’s annual plant sales.

Come out and learn more about this favorite East Tennessee plant from a man who knows a lot about them.

Spring Plant Sale
Friday and Saturday, April 19 and 20 Arboretum

Color, in flower and foliage, is the name of the game for this year’s plant sale. We’ll have a wide variety of plants, and we have Dr. Will Witte and a cadre of knowledgeable UTAS volunteers who will help you choose good plants for your landscape. Dano’s Hot Dogs of Lenoir City will be there, too, to help with a different sort of need. And all the proceeds benefit the Arboretum. Norm Dobbs is in charge of our primary fund-raising event.

MOTHers Night Out with Kris Light
Saturday, May 11 7:30 p.m. Arboretum

Would you like to know more about moths and observe them up close? After a short talk, we’ll get to see who shows up on the black-lighted sheets. Join Kris Light and other moth enthusiasts to learn more about them and their habitats. Bring your cameras, and your kids or grandkids, to this family friendly event.

Middle Tennessee/Northern Alabama Garden Tour - Not Too Late to Sign Up!
May 16 - 18 Tennessee and Alabama

Although the deadline for this tour is already passed, some spots are still available. Stops on the tour include Cheekwood Botanical Gardens in Nashville, Don Shadow’s nursery in Winchester, an evening in Huntsville with a visit to Huntsville Botanical Gardens, Birmingham Botanical Gardens and an overnight in Birmingham, and a final stop at Mouse Creek Nursery in Cleveland, Tennessee. Tour cost for UTAS members is $330, which reflects a $50 discount. All the details and reservation form are available on our website, www.utarboretumsociety.org. Or contact Dennis & Jan Superczynski, UTAS Garden Tour Co-coordinators, 675-8502, jandport@tds.net.

Events Roundup

Father-Daughter Hike
Jeff Holt, Consulting Forester and UTAS Volunteer, led a group of about 25 fathers and daughters who turned out despite a cold, dreary day to spend some family time outdoors at the Arboretum.

The hikers spent more than two hours walking along the Marsh Area, Cemetery Ridge, Crossroads, Lost Chestnut, and Valley Road Trails.

Lecture Series: Climate Change, Fracking

From the UTA website: The UT Arboretum Society sponsored two highly successful lecture series events in February. Dr. Scott Schlumbaum, James R. Cox Professor of Forest Genetics, UT Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, gave a presentation entitled, "What's all the Concern About Climate Change - Forests in the Future Will be Very Different With or Without Climate Change” on February 7. The subject matter was well received by the 42 people who attended.

Dr. Robert Hatcher, Professor and Distinguished Scientist of Structural Geology & Tectonics, gave a presentation entitled "Geology and Petroleum Resources in Tennessee and the Use of Fracking as a Drilling Tool" on February 28. The topic was timely given that the proposed UT AgResearch Gas and Well Research Project has been in the local and regional news. Eighty-six people attended the event.

Committee Reports

Native Plant Group

The Native Plant Group is starting our 8th year as the task force that helps with upkeep of the beds around the Visitor Center at the Arboretum. We meet on the third Wednesday morning of the month and new additions to the group are welcome. Call Lee Ann Dobbs at 482-6656 for more information.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has made good progress on several of its initiatives. We now have caps and aprons for sale. Our outreach efforts to members and other supporters now includes an active Facebook page, e-blast emails with announcements and reminders of upcoming events, and our newly redesigned website. We are working on creating more opportunities for people to come out to the Arboretum, so look for some announcements in the coming months.

If you’d like to help us by serving on the committee, or have ideas about membership, please contact Emily Jernigan, emily@jernigans.net or 482-4836.
Holly Task Force

Join the Holly Task Force and spend a few hours getting the collection ready for spring. We will fertilize, prune, mulch, and perform general cleanup. We always have a good time, and this is a good opportunity to learn more about holly. All volunteers are welcome! Contact Dennis Superczynski, 675-8502, jandport@tds.net.

UTAS-Logo Caps and Aprons

UTAS now has caps and gardening aprons for sale. A project of the Membership Committee, they are useful, good-looking, and a way to show your support for UTAS and raise our public profile. We will sell them at the Plant Sale and some of our other events, and they’re available from any board member. The Oak Ridge Convention and Visitors Bureau sells them, too. Check them out at the Plant Sale!

UTAS Website and Facebook Page

Our website is back! The company that previously hosted our site, and that of several hundred other East Tennessee organizations, closed up shop with very little warning in late January and we were left without a web presence. We apologize if you were unable to view our site while it was down. We’ve taken advantage of this opportunity to revamp and expand our site. Charlie Jernigan has taken over the duties of webmaster from Angie Dobbs who served in this capacity for many years. Thanks, Angie!

We now have a new look with more links and articles, better coordination with the UT Arboretum’s website, easier access to back issues of Branches, and many other updates. You can sign up to receive email reminders and event updates. Visit our site and check it out.

If you’re on Facebook, please ‘like’ the UT Arboretum Society page. We update events and post reminders there, too.

Stumped?

Do you have any recommendations for gardening apps?

Although there are a number of apps available, the following got good reviews from the New York Times, Wired, and the Wall Street Journal:

**Home Outside** iPad, iPhone ($1.99)

This app allows you to design rectangular vegetable gardens of up to 2,500 square feet: enter the desired number of rows and columns to create a grid, then choose the crop you’ll plant from a list of about 65 plants typically found in kitchen gardens.

**Garden Tracker** iPad, iPhone ($3.99 & $0.99)

This app allows you to design rectangular vegetable gardens of up to 2,500 square feet: enter the desired number of rows and columns to create a grid, then choose the crop you’ll plant from a list of about 65 plants typically found in kitchen gardens.

**Leafsnap** iPhone, Android coming soon (free)

Leafsnap is the first in a series of electronic field guides being developed by researchers from Columbia University, the University of Maryland, and the Smithsonian Institution. This free app uses visual recognition software to help identify tree species from photographs of their leaves. Look for more about this app from UTAS soon.

**Garden Pro** iPhone, iPad ($1.99 - $3.99)

It offers photos and descriptions of some 2,000 plant species, along with growing zones, botanical names, water and light needs. It also lists common plant pests and diseases and possible treatments. It has a journal section that lets you add photos of your own plants and type in a description, as well as a To Do section to enter garden chores and dates, such as when to fertilize. They pop up as iPhone reminders.

Email questions about trees, woody plants, or wildlife to our Green Thumb experts at utarboretumsociety@gmail.com

Change Hydrangea Bloom Color

~Ken Farrell, former UTAS board member and current active volunteer

According to M. A. Dirr in his book, Hydrangeas for American Gardens, the color of the flowers on your mophead and lacecap hydrangeas, except for normally white varieties, depends to a large extent on the amount of aluminum they absorb via their roots. More specifically, you can change the color from pink/red to blue/purple or to various shades in between by controlling the amount of free aluminum you make available to the roots. High aluminum will favor blue. Low aluminum will allow the red to dominate.

Soil conditions conducive to blue color are an acidity pH of 5.0–5.5, low phosphorus, high potassium, moderate nitrogen but not from ammonium nitrogen. An acidic soil tends to dissolve more aluminum from the minerals in the soil. To further encourage bluing, treat the soil inside the drip line in early spring and early fall with powdered aluminum sulfate, which is both an acidifier and an additional source of suitable aluminum. Spread the powder by hand and wash it into the soil or dissolve it in your watering can and sprinkle it on. Aluminum sulfate can be bought from most plant nurseries in 3–5 pound bags. Do not attempt to acidify the soil using powdered sulfur; it ties up aluminum.

Favorable soil conditions for pink/red coloration are a lower acidity pH of 6.0-6.5, high nitrogen, low potassium and aluminum. A sprinkling of horticultural lime watered in with a hose will reduce the acidity.

These color changes may take a year or more to occur and may require repeat treatments to counter leaching during an excessively wet season.

All hydrangeas do better under a mulch and with about one inch of water per week during the growing season.
‘Purple Pixie’
Loropetalum
Loropetalum chinensis

‘Purple Pixie’
Purple Pixie is a new cultivar with intense, deep burgundy foliage, vibrant, showy pink fringe flowers, a very low, weeping form. It makes it an excellent ground cover or container plant, or may be used as an accent or foundation plant. A fast grower, it reaches 1-2’ tall and 4-5’ wide. It likes full sun or light shade and acid, well-drained soil. Deer and drought resistant.

‘Ever Red’ is another new cultivar with dark burgundy foliage and brilliant red blooms. It grows 3-6’ tall and wide, and has similar needs to ‘Purple Pixie.’

Vanilla Strawberry
Hydrangea
Hydrangea paniculata

‘Renhy’
This 2010 top plant (American Nursery and Landscape Association) is related to the PeeGee Hydrangea. Huge 10” stunning blooms start in early summer on red stems. They begin as white and turn pink and then deep strawberry all at the same time. Prolific blooms are long-lasting on the plant or as cut flowers, and go through fall. It does best in full sun/part shade, reaching 6-7’ tall and 4-5’ wide. Good for back-of-the-border, foundation, or in a grouping.

‘Autumn Sangria’ Encore®
Azalea

At 3 ½ inches, Autumn Sangria’s eye-popping, dark pink single blooms are the largest in the Encore® collection. They begin in spring and last through fall. These plants are butterfly magnets. Autumn Sangria grows quickly to 4-5’ tall and wide and prefers sun or a little afternoon shade. The plants have very dense dark green, attractive foliage and are wonderful as a hedge, foundation plant, or specimen. It likes acid, well-drained soil. Resistant to disease, heat, and mildew.

‘Dynamite’
Crape Myrtle
Lagerstroemia indica

‘Whit II’
The first true red Crape Myrtle, and one of the hardiest, this is a small (10-20”) upright tree. It’s very disease and pest resistant, drought tolerant, and long-lived, making it an eco-friendly choice. Its profuse cherry-red blooms are cone-shaped and can be 20” long. Leaves are bright red in spring, bright green in summer, and bright orange in fall - a perfect fit for the theme of this sale! Plant in full sun as a specimen, in a grouping, or foundation planting. It flowers best with no pruning.

‘Shoal Creek’
Vitex (Chastetree)
Vitex agnus-castus

‘Shoal Creek’ is a fast-growing multi-stemmed, vase-shaped deciduous large shrub/small tree. It has striking blue-violet very fragrant large (8-12”) prolific blooms that last from June to late September. Even its grey-green foliage is fragrant. They attract bees and butterflies. Very versatile, it can be used as specimen, hedge, patio tree, and more. It’s drought tolerant after established, deer resistant, and heat tolerant. Grows to 12’ - 15’ tall and almost as wide. It blooms on new wood so it can be pruned quite severely every year if desired.
Email & Membership Notes

We need your email address so that you don’t miss out on important notices from UTAS. We never share your address. If we don’t already have your email, please send an email to emily@jernigans.net and we will add you to our database.

If your email address changes, please notify emily@jernigans.net.

If your mailing address changes, please notify emily@jernigans.net. The Post Office charges us for every piece of returned mail.

Renew now! Check your Branches label for your membership expiration date! You’ll get a reminder, or download a form at www.utarboretumsociety.org.

View Branches Online

Look for an email reminder from UTAS with a link to Branches on our website. There, you can see it in color and link to websites, etc. You can also see what else is going on at the Arboretum and UTAS. Just go to www.utarboretumsociety.org and check it out any time.

New & Renewing Members-Thanks!

Debbie Allen  
Ralph & Belinda Aurin  
Jean Bangham  
Faye Beck  
Kathy Bracic  
Lynn Carlson  
Janet & Bob Cushman  
James H. Day  
Terry & Betty Anne Domm  
Margaret Dory  
Betty Dreyer  
Art Dworkin  
Susan S. Elmore *  
Carmen & Josie Gianforde  
Elwood & Roslyn Gift  
Mr. & Mrs. Melvyn Halbert  
Lynda & Chuck Haynes *  
Jeff & Lecie Holt  
Clara Joan Johnson  
Mary H. Kollie  
Christine Lee  
Edmond & Marese Nephew  
June E. Peischel  
Madelon Perreault  
David & Mary Ann Piper  
Richard & Mona Raridon  
Davis & Susan Reed *  
Robert Reynolds  
Murray & Mimi Rosenthal *  
Carole Schulman  
William & Muriel Sirett *  
Alan Solomon M.D.  
Joble & Ken Taulbee  
Paul & Barbara Taylor *  
Rita Trusley  
Fred & Aase Vaslow  
Marie Walsh  

* Denotes Society Friend

UTAS Membership Application

Name_________________________Phone______________
Address__________________________________________
City_______________________ State_____ Zip__________
E-Mail____________________________________________
New____ Renewal____
Society Friend $100_____ Patron $500_____  
Family $45_____ Individual $30_____ Student $15____

Yes, I want to make an additional Contribution:
UTAS General Fund $________
Elmore Holly Collection Fund $________
All memberships and contributions are tax deductible.

Yes, I’d like to help with Society committees, special events, or other needs. ______

Mail this form with your check to:
UTAS  
P.O. Box 5382  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831-5382
The UT Arboretum Endowment Campaign

A $3 million endowment campaign has been initiated to secure future funding for the UT Arboretum. The Rogers Group has fulfilled its pledge of a $500,000 Founding Gift to the Endowment. The UT Arboretum Society has contributed over $55,000 to this effort, continuing its longstanding support of the Arboretum. We have received pledges for more than $556,000 for the Auditorium.

Now we need to engage everyone to fully achieve our goal. You can assist this effort in many ways. Become an ambassador for the Arboretum and spread the word about the Endowment:

- Include the Arboretum Endowment in your estate planning
- Help the campaign partners identify potential donors
- Talk about how much the Arboretum has meant to you, your children and the community
- Honor loved ones with memorials to the Endowment

The endowment will fund critical features of a grand vision for the future of the University of Tennessee Arboretum that will include:

- Expanded collections of plants
- Creation of an Arboretum coordinator position
- Improved facilities for public access and enjoyment
- Enhancement of the grounds, displays, and trails
- Perpetuation and care of existing plant collections
- Creation of vibrant education and outreach programs

If you have questions, need information, or wish to share your idea for funding the UT Arboretum Endowment, please contact:

UT Institute of Agriculture Office of Development: Robin R. Haefs, 865-974-5779. Email UTIAadvancement@tennessee.edu

UT Arboretum - Kevin Hoyt - 865-483-3571

UT Arboretum Society - Charlie Samuels 865-482-9096

To contribute to the Endowment or Auditorium Fund, make your check payable to the “University of Tennessee Foundation” and indicate in the memo line that you want your contribution credited to either the UT Arboretum Endowment Fund or the Arboretum Auditorium Gift Fund. Mail it to the UT Institute of Agriculture, Office of Institutional Advancement, 114 Morgan Hall, Knoxville, TN 37996.

For more information on Planned Giving visit this University of Tennessee website at http://www.utfi.org/give-now/planned-giving.
See You at the Plant Sale
Friday, April 19, 5-7 p.m. for Members Only
Join or renew at the door
Saturday, April 20, 9-3 for All
Razzleberry Ice Cream Lab will be there with sandwiches and ice cream

Check the mailing label for your membership expiration date.

Azaleas all lined up for the 2012 Spring Plant Sale.
Photo by Charles Samuels

Upcoming Events

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