

The 2016 Annual Report will be out in February. Watch your email for a copy.

# St. Louis Master Gardener Garden Talk

**Volume 1**

January 31, 2017

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## Sad News

2007 Master Gardener, **Connie Goss**, died on December 16, 2016.

2004 Master Gardener, **Sharon Pedersen**, died on January 15, 2017.

Please keep their families in your prayers.

## Upcoming events:

- February 7th MG meeting & class 6:00 p.m. at the Kirkwood Extension office 132 E. Monroe Avenue
- MG Garden Tour Friday June 16, and Friday, June 23rd as a rain date if needed
- Saturday, August 19th is the 3rd Annual Cultivating Young Cooks at Kemper Center

## 2016 Master Gardener Trenton Ellis

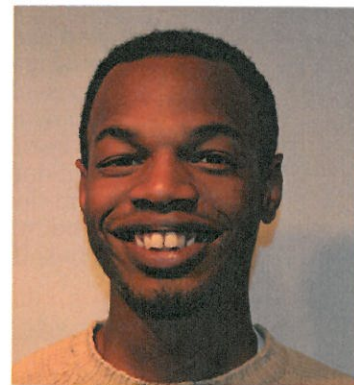
My adventures with gardening started long before I took part in the Master Gardener program. My time out in the garden started with my grandmother when I was very young. My grandmother was an avid gardener. My childhood Saturday afternoons consisted of riding with my father to pick her up from her job as a hairdresser and going to every single floral shop and boutique on the way to her home.

Granted as a five-year-old kid, for me, the last thing I wanted to do was waste precious hours of my time away from my new video games to look at plants (I only got to play video games on the weekend). Likely attuned

to my frustrations, my grandmother gave me something that would completely change my point of view. My love of gardening started when my grandmother gave me a seed packet to grow something on my own: zinnias. All I had to do was sprinkle the seeds and water. Simple enough for a five-year-old.

I remember leaving to go outside of my house every day looking at the little dirt plot at the base of the patio steps. For a while, all I would see was dirt (yes, back then I referred to soil as dirt). I started to forget about those little seeds I left to germinate in the spring sun. Yet one day, a

little speck of green caught my eye. When I looked a little closer, I was astounded. I saw it was more than just one little sprout but a whole garden bed full of them. I immediately grabbed my watering can and gave those little sprouts a nice drink of water. see page 4



**Trenton Ellis**

## 3rd Annual Cultivating Young Cooks Event

The 3rd Annual *Cultivating Young Cooks* Event is scheduled for Saturday, August 19th at the Kemper Center for Home Gardening. Master Gardener & chef, Margaret Grant, has scheduled chefs, beekeepers, mushroom growers, cheese makers, and many more artisans, experts and organiza-

tions to share information on a wide range of topics from healthy home cooking to beekeeping to vermiculture, goat milking, vegetable gardening, composting and more. Put this event on your calendar and bring your children, grandchildren, neighbor's children or just yourself.

Where else can you sample great food, play in dirt, milk a goat, and touch a worm. If you would like to help with event marketing, organization, and/or the actual event please send me an email.





# 30 Minute Chicken Gumbo

Ann Robison, adapted from Martha Stewart

- 3 Tablespoons oil
- 1/3 Cup flour
- 1 Red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 Medium onion, chopped
- 4 Cloves garlic
- 1 Teaspoon oregano, dried
- Salt & pepper
- 1 Package whole okra, frozen
- 8 Ounces Polska kielbasa, sliced 1/2 inch (I like Eckrich brand.)
- 1 Chicken Rotisserie style, about 2 1/2 pounds
- 4 Cups chicken broth, you can use water if you like

1. Heat oil over medium heat in a large heavy bottomed pot. Add flour and heat whisking constantly until it turns golden brown, about 5 minutes. Stir in the red pepper, onion, garlic and oregano. Season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally until vegetables are crisp tender, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, shred the chicken.
2. Add the liquid; stir in the okra (no need to defrost) and sausage. Bring to a boil. Stir in the shredded chicken and warm through, about 5 minutes.

I've served this dish several times this winter; it's even better the second day. And, it is ready in about half an hour. Whoever invented the Rotisserie Chicken deserves a medal.

## Kemper News

Chip Tynan and his Hort Answer Service are moving to Kemper. Woohoo! Chip is going to keep the mice company in my old office and I have been moved upstairs. I know it doesn't seem fair. Chip in the closet and me with all the windows. Guess I will just have to suffer through.

## New Species?

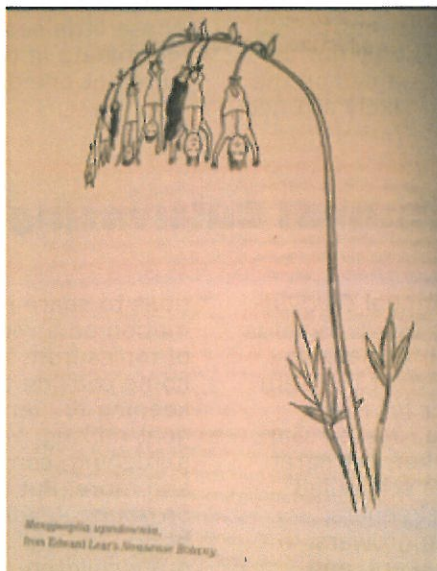


**Cornus?**

submitted by 2017 trainee  
Beth Bachman

Need helping figuring out how many plants you need for a particular area? Visit <http://www.greengatefarms.com/Plant-Calculators>

Sent to me by MG Mary Deschene.  
Nonsense Botany by Edward Lear.



## Flora Conservancy

Anabeth Weil has retired from Flora Conservancy after many years at the helm. When I began volunteering at Flora, my youngest were 7 & 9 and they loved to hear Anabeth talk about her pet tortoise Mitchell. Thanks Anabeth!

Master Gardener Jack Brier is the new Volunteer Coordinator of Flora Conservancy. Jack is a long-time volunteer with Flora. Long-time makes him sound old and I think he is younger than I am and we are not old we are FABULOUS!



*Bouteloua*  
just saying it makes  
you smile and how  
many genus names can  
you say that



## 2016 Gateway Greening Best Biodiversity in a Garden

The 2016 Gateway Greening Best Biodiversity in a Garden Winner was the Wild West Community Garden. Master Gardener, Jodi Smedley, is the visionary and founder of this garden. She gives credit to several organizations for their help such as Lucky's Market, Corporate Y Partners, St. Louis Master Gardeners, AmeriCorps, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Eaton Busmann, Kohl's Ellisville and of course Gateway Greening and the Wildwood Family YMCA! While I know these organizations were crucial there would be no Wild West Community Garden without Jodi. She is always working and always planning. I visited the Wildwood Family YMCA garden



in the early stages and it was impressive. I visited again this summer and it was amazing. The children's garden that was just an idea when I first visited is now a reality and made me wish I was a child again.

Jodi is always trying something new and she is not afraid to try just about anything once.

## Chicken Mansion



2016 Master Gardener Shawn Lipe does nothing halfway and that includes a house for his chickens. He used recycled products and built a mansion that someone downsizing might be interested in. When Shawn isn't gardening or building he is working in his shop [The Refind Room](#) in Brentwood.



## Master Gardener Alan Beasley

Californian, Alan Beasley, took the STL Master Gardener training in 2015, to learn about growing plants in St. Louis. California was easy and he wasn't so sure about St. Louis. Before and after class Alan would talk with me about garlic. His nickname is Dr. Garlic and he is a huge garlic lover. He has perfected a technique for fermenting garlic that allows you to eat the garlic without garlic breath. It works. I know this because I tried it. Alan brought me several different samples and the smoked flavor was my favorite. I will admit that at first glance a couple of the specimens looked a lot like slugs but they actually tasted pretty good.

Dr. Garlic who lives in East St. Louis volunteered and interned with Gateway Greening before starting State Street Educational Garden where he can often be found talking with visitors about the benefits of growing your own food. Alan is currently trying to raise funds to enlarge and improve the State Street Educational Garden.

## 2017 Master Gardener Training Session

The 2017 MG training began Thursday, January 5th, with Orientation. Every year I am amazed at the number of people willing to spend money and 18 Thursdays just so they can work for free. Chefs, teachers, nurses, artists, poets, moms, dads, and recent college graduates. We have people from all over the city and county participating this year and once again

more and more guys are applying. What took you guys so long?

Small changes to the training are made each year. This year the trainees are being required to learn the genus and species name for the first 3 tree sections. It might sound difficult but *americana*, *species*, *alba* and *illinoensis* are just a few and they are way easier than


the genus name.

The training always begins with Glenn Kopp's Excellent Adventures in Botany and this year he only made 2 trainees cry. Woohoo!

As always, we continue to look for ways to incorporate hands-on experiences for the trainees.







**St. Louis  
Master  
Gardener**

**University of Missouri Extension**  
132 E. Monroe Avenue  
Kirkwood, MO 63122  
314-400-2115

**St. Louis Master Gardeners**  
**Missouri Botanical Garden**  
P. O. Box 299  
St. Louis, MO 63166

**LOG YOUR HOURS!**

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**MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN**

[www.stlmg.com](http://www.stlmg.com)

## Interesting Reading or Listening

### BOOKS

***The Care and Handling of Roses with Thorns* by Margaret Dilloway.** **Winner of the ALA Reading List Award.** *Roses are Galilee Garner's passion. An amateur breeder, she painstakingly cross-pollinates her plants to coax out new, better traits, striving to create a perfect strain of her favorite flower, the Hulthemia.*

***What a Plant Knows: A Field Guide to the Senses* by Daniel Chamovitz.** "A rare inside look at what life is really like for the grass we walk on, the flowers we sniff, and the trees we climb." So now I can't mow my lawn without thinking about all the blades of grass that I am beheading —yikes!

***The Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature and the Shaping of the American Nation* by Andrea Wulf.** For the Founding Fathers, gardening, agriculture, and botany were elemental passions: a conjoined interest as deeply ingrained in their characters as the battle for liberty and a belief in the greatness of their new nation. This is a favorite of mine a MG Book Club selection.

**No time for reading?** I just downloaded on audible *The Ultimate Guide To Vegetable Gardening for Beginners* by Lindsey Pylarinos and narrated by Millian Quinterosby. I sampled several audio books and ughh it was like nails on a blackboard. Why don't the publishers use someone with a sexy voice to read these books.

### BLOGS

**BLDGBLOG** - Be sure and read **from Bullets, seeds**

The Department of Defense is looking to develop "biodegradable training ammunition loaded with specialized seeds to grow environmentally beneficial plants that eliminate ammunition debris and contaminants." Sent to me by Master Gardener Mary Deschene.

**Bug Tracks**—Recommended by the Insect/bug Queen herself Master Gardener Ronda Anson.

## Trenton Ellis continued from page 1

Sadly, that gardening interest started to fade. I became more involved with other aspects of my life that fascinated me more like technology, music, and art. Pretty soon I forgot about the zinnias, and roses, and myrtles while learning more about computers, songs, and graphic design. When I went to college my freshman year, I pursued these interests, but I felt something was missing. I missed the sun on my face and smell of spring flowers in bloom. I missed the fresh air and the earth beneath my fingertips. I missed being out in nature. By sophomore year of college, I knew I had to get back to my roots, so to speak, and I switched my major to Environmental Earth Science. My love of nature and gardening was revived. I had a renewed fascination for the

environment and all of its wonders, particularly the importance of green spaces. I even had the opportunity to intern with Gateway Greening, where I was fortunate enough to learn about urban gardening. In college, I had the opportunity to work alongside the Missouri Botanical Garden and Metropolitan Sewer District during their Project Clear initiative to create a sustainable raingarden to mitigate storm-water runoff. I found myself back in my old shoes astounded by the power of and beauty of plants. I learned about plants that do well in poor soil, plants that flourish in saturated soils, and even plants that hold on to toxic chemicals.

My first job after graduation from college, I worked with Great Rivers Greenway. I had

the opportunity to put my Bachelor's Degree to work. I got the chance to be out in nature, ride up and down countless trails, and explore the greenways of the region, and but once again felt something was missing. I missed the feeling of dirt between my fingers. I missed the chance to watch something extraordinary grow from a single seed. I missed learning about how amazing plants are and can be. And I missed being able to share that experience with someone else. My search for a gardening experience led me to the Master

**Trenton is currently a college counselor at McCluer North High School in Florissant.**