**A round button with a landscape and sun

Description automatically generated\_\_\_\_The Thymes\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

How is your summer going? Are the plans you made last winter coming to fruition? Have you tried any experiments that went well, or did not? Did the drought or the subsequent heavy rains interrupt your gardening? I have found that Mother Nature sometimes has plans that do not align with mine, although sometimes I think she is just messing with me. I started with great intentions this year, but a number of things in life got in the way and I still have some highly anticipated seeds still in the packing instead of the soil. I have had success with many annuals, but I have also lost some 2-3 year old shrubs that I was unable to keep sufficiently watered. Please consider sharing some of your highlights in future newsletters or in our meetings.

In September, a nominating committee will be putting together a slate of candidates for President, President-Elect, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Each of the members of the Board is elected to a one-year term in office, although our by-laws allow two-year terms, which many of the current officers have fulfilled. The Master Gardener organization and the way that we operate requires Board members to make decisions to bring to the membership for approval. It is important to bring new people and ideas to our organization for us to continue to be successful. You may contact any of the officers (see list at the bottom) for a discussion of what their job entails, without making a commitment. Please consider getting more involved by taking on one of these roles or leading one of our committees. I think you will find it fulfilling. (PS, the newsletter editor position is also still available.)

For the Meeting in August, we will be on our evening schedule. The August 6th Member Meeting will begin @ 5:30 in the Country Store. Our speaker will be our PDG Intern and Master Gardener, Mikayla Vanlandingham. The theme for our August potluck dinner will be “summer salads” to go along with the summer heat.

UT Garden Membership – Erin Fletcher

If you have a UT GARDEN MEMBERSHIP that will expire around the time of the Fall Gardeners Festival, please wait to renew it at FFG. Even if your membership doesn’t need to be renewed until early next year you can renew at FFG and your membership will be extended.   There will be a membership drive and a friendly competition between all three UT GARDENS (Crossville, Knoxville and Jackson).  I would love for Crossville to win this little competition and sign up (or renew) the most memberships.

A group of insects on a white background

Description automatically generated

Bugs by Sue Partch

I have been bothered by bugs and such, very little in the past 5+ years of working in the gardens at PDG.  Occasionally I have been annoyed briefly by a persistent fly buzzing around my head and if I work into dusk I sometimes get bitten by a few mosquitos.  I think I have come home with a tick maybe twice.

Working in the daylilies I have encountered a few creepy crawlies.  There are 1 or 2 fire anthills every year on the plot edge.  A couple years I have spotted a few Japanese beetles.  I regularly dig up white grubs that I toss in the weed bucket and of course there are earthworms though not as many as I would expect.  I’ve destroyed some small spider webs most years and watched momma spiders run off with their egg sacs when I’ve pulled up their hiding places. Apparently, daylilies are not good pollinator plants because I’ve seen very few butterflies or bees around them.  And though the daylilies are near the ponds, I rarely see any damsel or dragonflies.

I asked garden director Shalena for her observations.  She sprays the anthills I tell her about but the Japanese beetles she says are best handled by hand removal into soapy water early in the morning.  They show up on the roses, hibiscus and milkweed, too.  She’s found sawflies on some conifers and has had to deal with spider mites.  In the vegetable area they’ve had some tomato worms. I am sure that there are others but not that came to her when I asked.  On the plus side she identified butterflies she has seen: monarchs, swallowtails, fritillaries, sulphurs and buckeyes.

Among the bugs that I am sure are there, but I haven’t seen, are lady bugs, grasshoppers, different kinds of wasps and hornets, centipedes and millipedes and the black flies that plague me in the spring at home.  During summer I do see lightening bugs - fireflies if you prefer - which appear to tell me to go home if I try to finish up just this one more bit in the dark. Just remember, bugs are not all bad.

**2024 Officers**

**President:  Mike Barron  barr**[**onconsults@yahoo.com**](mailto:onconsults@yahoo.com) **931-788-5523**

**​ President Elect:  Margo Carrol** [**margosky2012@gmail.com**](mailto:margosky2012@gmail.com) **931-202-4438**

**Vice President:  Katie DePoortere** [**ktruns3@hotmail.com**](mailto:ktruns3@hotmail.com) **209-986-6442**

**​Secretary:  Rita Reali** [**rita@realifamily.com**](mailto:rita@realifamily.com) **860-796-9106**

**Treasurer:  Alan Baker**[**jackal33980@gmail.com**](mailto:jackal33980@gmail.com) **​931-239-0877**