



HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY  
OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Summer 2025 Newsletter





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## VISIT

 [hsmtn.org](https://hsmtn.org)

 [HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE](https://www.facebook.com/hsmtn)

 [@hsmtenn](https://www.instagram.com/hsmtenn)



Fleurs de Villes *Cheekwood—August 1 - 10, 2025*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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Also, Check out The New York Times:  
"The 25 Essential Gardens to See in Your Lifetime"

# Message from HSMT President Deby Pitts



## **Spring cleaning has been in full bloom at the Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee!**

We've been busy refreshing our look and getting organized for the summer season ahead.

Our logo and social media presence have received a bright new update, and we've given our HSMT office, files and procedures a much-needed tidy-up. Camille Chaffin is doing a wonderful job as our new HSMT Administrator, and Abbie Griffith, HSMT Treasurer, is hard at work on automating our financial management systems. We are also streamlining and concentrating our fundraising efforts on just three special events (*Starry Starry Night* Patron Cocktail Supper [Tuesday, October 14], *Branching Out* Fashion Show and Tea Party [Saturday, October 18] and *Sparkling Settings* [Monday, December 1]). Another focus is upgrading the quality and variety of our educational offerings [look for more information on these developments in the Fall HSMT Newsletter]. We encourage everyone to attend these fun and exciting events that are designed to be shared with family and friends.

**With summer just around the corner, it's the perfect time to plan your garden parties and cookouts.** We're excited to share our refreshed logo in this newsletter, and you can also check it out on our website at [hsmtn.org](http://hsmtn.org), on our Facebook page (Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee) and on our Instagram feed (@hsmtenn). Follow us for a wealth of inspiration, from gardening and floral design ideas to tips for making your outdoor gatherings even more beautiful.

We'd love your help inspiring others! Share your favorite easy recipes that use fresh ingredients from your garden or local produce stand. Let us know about upcoming garden club news or events that would interest our members. And don't forget to pass along your tried-and-true garden tips and tricks—especially those that help us all prepare for the perfect summer garden party. Check out Gayle Jaggers' article, "Easy But Fun Gardening" in this newsletter. Feel free to share your ideas with either Camille Chaffin ([camille@hsmtn.org](mailto:camille@hsmtn.org)) or me ([debypitts@icloud.com](mailto:debypitts@icloud.com)).

Oh, the magic we can create together!

**Inspire, Connect, Grow and Thrive!**

*Deby*



## Easy Elderflower Cordial

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

Serving size: 5 servings | Prep time: 15 mins

### Ingredients

1 litre water (spring bottled water still or sparkling )  
5-10 medium elderflower blossom heads (freshly picked or dried \*)  
2 large lemons (one for the rind and juice and one to slice)  
100 g cane brown sugar (or 2-3 tablespoons of honey or agave)  
1 inch fresh ginger root (sliced/ optional )

### Nutrition

Amount per serving  
Serving size: 1 serving  
Calories: 90  
Total Fat: 1g  
Saturated Fat: 1g  
Sodium: 7mg  
Total Carbohydrate: 24g  
Dietary Fiber: 1g  
Sugars: 21g  
Protein: 1g

### Directions

1. Wash thoroughly the elderflower heads - see notes on how to wash these thoroughly
2. Pour the water into the drink dispenser or the large jug.
3. Add the sugar or the honey. Mix well until dissolved.
4. Add the thoroughly washed elderflower blossomed heads. Mix again.
5. Add the lemon juice, lemon rind and lemon slices. Stir again with a wooden or silicon spoon/ spatula.
6. Allow it to start fermenting on a counter by placing it in the sun. It will be ready in one to three days, all depending on how warm and sunny your kitchen is.
7. Once it's starting to get fizzy, strain it and store it in a glass bottle in the refrigerator.





## Easy but Fun Gardening

Many of us are getting where we are not physically able or emotionally motivated to get outside and spend hours digging up and weeding gardens. At the last Bellevue Garden Club meeting we had David Cook from the Tennessee Agriculture Extension Department as a speaker. His presentation on container gardening was one of the most interesting and informative ones we have had in fourteen years. So, I want to share with you ways you can continue your love of growing plants without heavy or physical work.

One type of gardening he exhibited was pyramid or tri-level gardening. This can be done with stacking different size pots or galvanized tubs or with commercial kits of wooden pyramid planters that require assembly. Herbs, vegetables, and flowers can grow in these planters. The stacked levels allow root systems to take advantage of deep and large soil volume. They are easy to reach for planting, tending, and harvesting the plants. David suggested that a commercial soil for potted plants is best for this type of gardening. The pyramid planters are for outdoor placement or good for a porch or patio. Add castor rollers to change position of the planter for adequate sun exposure if placed on a porch or patio. Google pinterest for stacked container ideas. A website, [mrstacky.com](http://mrstacky.com), has some great stacked planters. For the wooden tri-level pyramid planters, access the following: [hayneedle.com](http://hayneedle.com), [eatheasy.com](http://eatheasy.com), [houzz.com](http://houzz.com), [etsy.com](http://etsy.com), or [homedepot.com](http://homedepot.com).

David shared another type of indoor and year round gardening with Aero planters with grow lights. These planter kits come with the container and grow light hood plus seed pods and liquid plant nutrients. Veggies, herbs, and flowers can grow in these planters. They have a control panel that indicates when the plants need food or water. An automatic on/off 15-hour light controls the amount of light needed for the plants. David said he grew cherry tomatoes in his planter and enjoyed having access to them year round. Check [aerogarden.com](http://aerogarden.com) for details.

Hope these ideas will make your gardening easy and fun.

Gayle Jagers



# HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE

## *About Our Society*

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The Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee was originally founded in 1931 as the Horticultural Society of Davidson County, following the success of a 1930 Flower Show. The founding members, composed of various garden clubs, aimed to promote civic improvements, beautification, conservation, and horticultural education. Early initiatives included tree plantings, flower shows, and beautification projects such as landscaping schools and highways.

Today, the Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee remains active with numerous garden clubs, fundraising activities, and horticultural initiatives, inviting new members and supporting gardening enthusiasts throughout the region.

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### SOME OF OUR HISTORICAL ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 1930s-1940s: Planting trees at schools, transforming Nashville into the “Iris City,” and initiating garden tours.
- 1950s-1960s: Establishing the HANDS beautification project, moving headquarters to Cheekwood, and launching the popular “Trees of Christmas” event.
- 1970s-1990s: Funding Botanic Hall at Cheekwood, expanding membership, and supporting community landscaping projects.
- 2000s-Present: Evolving fundraising efforts, hosting community events, and growing into a regional organization with clubs across multiple Tennessee counties.



# *Rooted in Tradition, Ready to Grow.*



For decades, the visual identity of the Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee has stood as a symbol of our heritage and purpose. As we look toward the future, we've carefully refreshed our brand to better reflect who we are today — and who we aspire to become. Designed with a respectful nod to our 1930s origins, the new identity carries subtle Art Deco influences, bringing timeless elegance into a modern context. We've also reimagined our beloved Iris emblem — refining it for clarity and versatility while echoing the graceful lines of the era in which we began. Guided by the values of Inspire, Connect, Grow, and Thrive, the new identity captures the spirit of our community: welcoming, vibrant, and deeply rooted in a love of horticulture.

## *Designed to Bloom in a Modern World*

Our updated brand is built to thrive across today's media landscape, helping us reach and resonate with new audiences while staying true to our legacy. It reflects the energy and inclusivity that define our society, and we hope it invites more people to discover the joy, beauty, and purpose that grow here. We're excited to share this next chapter with you — and, as always, deeply grateful for the generations who helped plant the seeds.



Follow us on Instagram as we share exciting updates and events in the near future!



# **April 21, 2025**

## **Spring Membership Meeting**

### **Highlights**

**Panel Discussion on *How to Plant a Tree...For Free***

**Panelists:**

**Jennifer Smith, Metro Nashville Horticulturist**

**Kelly Tipler, Executive Director, Nashville Tree Foundation**

**Jason Sprouls, Root Nashville Program Manager**

**Michael Davie, Master Arborist, Barlett Tree Experts Conservancy**



**Introduction of new officer nominees**

**President-elect—Lacey Moore**

**Treasurer—Abbie Griffith**



**Introduction of *Branching Out* and the  
*Plant A Tree* Campaign Initiative**

**Plans for *Branching Out* kickoff party,  
Fashion Show and Tea at Dillard's  
and *Branching Out* Patrons' Cocktail Supper**



# Branching Out Campaign

The Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee's *Branching Out* campaign will complement *Root Nashville's PLANT A TREE* campaign—to plant a half million trees by 2050! This mission-driven program will make a difference in the ecological health of our community because trees help clean air, mitigate stormwater, provide wildlife habitat and add their own beauty and natural character for all to enjoy.

**THE TREES WE PLANT WILL BE OUR LEGACY TO FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

*Root Nashville* is a public-private campaign led by Metro Nashville and the Cumberland River Compact to plant 500,000 trees across Davidson County by 2050. Many organizations have *Plant A Tree* campaigns. Some, including the HSMT *Plant A Tree* initiative, are being done in collaboration with *Root Nashville*, which is the first-of-its kind public-private partnership in Nashville. The campaign is led by the Cumberland River Compact, which leads the day-to-day operations of the campaign, and Metro Water Services, the lead campaign partner from Metro Nashville.

# Instagram post @hsmtenn



## One Tree, One Tribute, One Beginning

The Harpeth Bend Garden Club planted the very first tree of our *Branching Out* campaign on April 9, 2025—in loving memory of a former member.

This meaningful moment marks the beginning of our shared journey to plant 500,000 trees across Nashville.

Every tree tells a story.

Let's grow this legacy together.



Planted & documented—one of many to come.



***Branching Out Kickoff Party***  
***May 1, 2025***  
**at the home of Deby and Keith Pitts**



***Branching Out Committee***

**L to R: Lacey Moore, Camille Chaffin, Ashley Henry,  
Stacey Rhodes, Deby Pitts, Nikki Peal, Lucie Cammack,  
Kayla Counts**



# ***Branching Out Kickoff Party***

**Photos by Stacey Rhodes**



**Revi Ferrer, Mimi Pohlman,  
Stacey Rhodes & Leigh Gillig**



**Laila Isa, Camille Chaffin, Doris Weakley,  
Jackie Bellar & Gerry Sams**



**Carla Nelson & Jennifer Smith**



**Nikki Peal & Morel Enoch Harvey**



# *Branching Out Kickoff Party*

Food by  
*Corner Market  
Catering Company*



Bar service provided  
by Bill Forrester





# BELMONT MANSION

## "Seeds of Heritage: The Moravian Roots of Old Salem's Gardens"

A Spring Garden Event to Benefit Belmont Mansion with  
Eric Jackson, Director of Horticulture, Old Salem Museum & Gardens

June 7, 2025, Belmont Mansion is presenting a Spring Garden Event. The afternoon begins with a talk on the **horticultural history of Old Salem Museum and Gardens**, followed by a **tour of the Belmont Gardens** and reception in the **Grand Salon of Belmont Mansion**.

Join Eric Jackson, Director of Horticulture at Old Salem Museum and Gardens, as he explores how **education, natural history, and land stewardship** shaped the gardens, landscapes, and forests of Old Salem.

Old Salem Museums & Gardens honors this heritage through **historic plant preservation**, seed saving, and horticulture education, bridging the past and present in meaningful and inspiring ways.

Belmont Mansion is the 1853 home of Adelia and Joseph Acklen, known throughout 19th century Tennessee for its stunning architecture and gardens. For details on how to join us visit, [www.belmontmansion.com/events](http://www.belmontmansion.com/events)



**The Miksch Garden**, Old Salem Museum and Gardens  
“Old Salem’s Horticulture program is focused on re-creating a landscape reflecting early Salem where utility, practicality and beauty unite.”

**When:** Saturday, June 7, 2024, 3:30 p.m.

**Where:** The Leu Center for the Visual Arts & Belmont Mansion

**Tickets:** \$60/person; \$110/couple





For more info and tickets  
scan the QR code or visit:  
[belmontmansion.com/events](http://belmontmansion.com/events)



*All proceeds to benefit Belmont Mansion.*

## Seeds of Heritage: The Moravian Roots of Old Salem's Gardens

Saturday, June 7th  
at 3:30 pm

A lecture, garden tour, and  
reception at Belmont Mansion

Join Eric Jackson, the Director  
of Horticulture at Old Salem  
Museum & Gardens, as he  
explores how education,  
natural history, and land  
stewardship shaped the  
gardens, landscapes, and  
forests of Old Salem.

**As a *Thank You* to the community and a celebration of 172<sup>nd</sup>  
anniversary of the Belmont Mansion Gardens, the *Belmont Mansion  
Association* is offering a group sales discount on tickets to the June 7<sup>th</sup>  
Spring Garden Event,  
*Seeds of Heritage: The Moravian Roots of Old Salem's Gardens.***

**Groups of five or more people may purchase tickets for \$55 each.  
Tickets may be purchased through the Belmont Mansion website at  
[www.belmontmansion.com/events](http://www.belmontmansion.com/events)**

# **FLEURS DE VILLES**

**August 1 – 10, 2025**

**This global flower show sensation has captivated audiences across five countries with over 130 immersive floral exhibitions celebrating extraordinary local floral artistry. Their debut 10-day exhibition at Cheekwood marks the first time their world-famous, one-of-a-kind floral masterpieces will be showcased at a historic estate in the United States. The vibrant celebration of art and flowers invites visitors to vote for their favorite design—and promises a truly enchanting experience for all ages.**

Cheekwood Estate & Gardens 1200 Forrest Park Drive Nashville, TN 37205



# Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee

Meeting and Coffee  
“Floral Design Focus”

October 13, 2025  
10:00 a.m.

Botanic Hall  
Cheekwood  
Estate & Gardens  
1200 Forrest Park Drive  
Nashville





*Branching Out* Patrons' Cocktail Supper  
“A Starry Starry Night”

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Join us at the  
Bradford Robertson Color Garden  
& Botanic Hall  
Cheekwood Estate & Gardens



**The Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee  
and Dillard's present a**

# **FASHION SHOW & TEA PARTY**

Fashion Show begins  
at 12 noon  
Open to public

Tea Party follows  
Fashion Show

Saturday, October 18, 2025  
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Supporting the  
"Plant a Tree" Campaign

Dillard's  
The Mall at Green Hills  
Nashville

*Branching Out*  
THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF  
MIDDLE TENNESSEE

VIP Front Row Seating and  
Tea Party tickets  
can be purchased in advance.



*Save The Date*



# Sparkling Settings

Holiday Luncheon

Monday, December 1, 2025

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM



BOTANIC HALL  
CHEEKWOOD ESTATE & GARDENS



1200 FORREST PARK DRIVE  
NASHVILLE





**If you wish to contact the Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee (HSMT), please visit our website [hsmtn.org](http://hsmtn.org) or email or call us.**



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(615) 353-6978**

