

# Beautification and Nature Committee Notes

## Seed Money Granted for Tree Planting Project!

Marilyn Swan

The Mentelle Neighborhood Association tree planting project is now a reality, thanks to a small grant award from the Urban County Government's Neighborhood Action Match Program. Our goal is to plant up to nine trees in the neighborhood this Spring.

According to the estimates we received from nurseries in December 2007, we should be able to purchase red maples or thornless honey locusts, 1 3/4" in diameter, for \$200; that will include professional planting of the tree and a one-year guarantee. We plan



to divide this cost three ways, with a third of the money coming from the grant, one third from the owner of the property where the tree will be planted, and one third from Councilman Dick Decamp's office. He has indicated support for the project, and we are now in the process of making an official request.

So what does that mean for you as a resident of our beautiful neighborhood? You could have a shade tree planted in front of your house (between the sidewalk and road or in your front yard) for a fraction of the cost by paying about \$65.00 and committing to care for the tree. If you live in rental property and can get the owner to agree to pay for a tree, that is an option, too.

We will be talking about the project in detail at the Neighborhood Association meeting in

March, so please come, or call Marilyn Rose Swan at 253-9467. The best time to plant trees is early Spring, while there is moisture in the soil, so we need to move quickly on this project.

## The City Buzz: 2010 Rain Gardens by 2010

Larry Porter

Have you heard? The excitement about rain gardens is unfolding so rapidly in Lexington that, by the time you've received this newsletter, there will have been at least three important community meetings addressing rain gardens and other important "green" practices in the month of February alone!

Why the sudden interest? Here's why: rain gardens can provide a beautiful and cost-effective solution to storm-water problems -- a major environmental crisis facing Lexington. Rain gardens beautify, especially when using native plants that attract birds and butterflies. In addition, they alleviate drainage problems, removing standing water breeding grounds for mosquitoes. They filter and help purify runoff, cleaning water that enters local streams and watersheds. It's no wonder that The Bluegrass Rain Garden Alliance, a consortium of local environmental groups, institutions, and builders, has just recently been created to promote the development of rain gardens and other "green" practices.

It's an ambitious undertaking: 2010 rain gardens by 2010, running up to the Alltech-FEI World Equestrian Games -- and, beyond. How strong will our commitment be as a neighborhood be? Join us in the process which includes site selection; soil analysis; then design; and, finally, installation and



maintenance. With your interest and support, we will seek grants from the city to help offset the cost of plants and soil amendments. Feel free to contact me at [greenstuff@mentelle.org](mailto:greenstuff@mentelle.org) with advice, offers of expertise, and general questions. Let's begin our conversation at the upcoming meeting, Tuesday, March 10th.

## Don't Forget the Flowers

Linda Angelo

Our Beautification and Nature Committee has been hard at work. In addition to the tree-planting grant and the rain garden initiative, we have several other planned or proposed events that we will be discussing at Mentelle Neighborhood Association Spring general meeting, including: a



neighborhood plant exchange; an informal neighborhood garden tour; a community flower arrangement project; and Lexington Beautiful, a city-wide project for planting around the base of street signs, with Cramer Avenue being a designated street.

Please let the Committee know if you are dividing or discarding plants, and if you are

interested in adopting. Already, dahlia bulbs have been offered! (If there are no neighborhood "takers," we have identified other community organizations that could use our extras.)

Meanwhile, if you have questions, or would like to talk to members of the committee about any of these projects, you can reach them at [greenstuff@mentelle.org](mailto:greenstuff@mentelle.org).