

“ 2016 A BLOOMING Success”
by Kim Halyak

December is a great month for taking stock of project accomplishments and planning for the new year. 2016 was an especially “FERTILE” year for the members of the Cooper-Young Garden Club. Our club was founded January 2015 for the purposes of beautifying Cooper-Young, educating our community about sustainable garden practices, building neighborly spirit and pride, and finally, just having “Fun” with other plant lovers. In looking over our accomplishments so far, I can truly say we fulfilled them all in “SPADES”.

Our neighborhood is known for its historic, beautiful, hip ambiance. We built on that and:

- replaced all the Ginkgo Tree mulch with more permanent river rocks for easier maintenance and improved appearance.
- softened our “hard, commercial gateways” with huge concrete planters and colorful plants. Additional planters will be purchased with the ioby grant balance.
- decked out the Gazebo with festive holiday greenery and decorations

We continued our mission of educating residents and visitors with informative speakers at our garden club meetings. Topics included:

- Linda Lanier, Memphis Hydrangea Society President, on growing Hydrangeas
- Susan Wallace, Plants for attracting the Monarch Butterfly
- Kim Halyak, “What we can learn from the “Buffalo Garden Walk”
- Katie McHaney, “Everything You Need to Know About Container Gardening”
- Deborah Foerhing, Urban Forestry, “Growing Native Plants”.

We submitted all necessary paperwork for level 3 Arboretum Certification and expect to have a “Tree Celebration” this spring. Additionally, we have partnered with CY artists to paint 90 educational, whimsical leaf stencils throughout our arboretum trail for easy tree identification.

All successful neighborhoods have that intangible feeling of pride and spirit that makes living here special. To help “SEED” these opportunities, the Cooper-Young Garden Club:

- held our 1st ever “Cooper-Young Garden Walk”, showcasing 23 gardens + green businesses to a sell-out crowd of 500 visitors. It was a resounding success and the press coverage was amazing. Wait “TILL” you see what we have in store this year!!
- Our garden club members unselfishly participated in every “Yard-A-Month” event held to help struggling neighbors reclaim their overgrown yards.
- has continued to “GROW” its membership from the initial 11 members to over 33 strong and “GROWING”
- Partnered with the CYCA office to create a community orchard in the future and beautify the land behind the railroad line. More info to come in the new year.

Finally, our garden club is about having fun and building friendships. We meet monthly to share garden advice, swap plants and enjoy each other’s gardens. In December, we take a break from all the Garden Club business and celebrate our successes with our annual, “Holiday Potluck and Dirty Santa” gift exchange at Katie McHaney’s house. You wouldn’t believe how sneaky some of our garden members can be!

If you love plants and/or just want to get involved with a fun-loving, civic-minded garden club, then check out the Cooper-Young Garden Club. We meet the 3rd Wed. of every month at the CYCA office. Potluck starts at 6pm and the program begins about 6:30pm.