



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

Vol. 10 No. 3
May-June 2009

Coordinators' Comments

Numbers do not always tell the whole story! In the case of the Illinois Master Gardener program-your impact on Illinois citizens is by far the most important aspect of this program. However these numbers do give an impressive picture of the hours you dedicate to the program. Congratulations to all volunteers and local Coordinators!

Illinois Master Gardener Statistics for 2008:

3400 Master Gardeners in Illinois as of 4-20-09

163,140 Total Volunteer Hours

39,424 Continuing Education Hours

Value to the Citizens of Illinois: \$3.183 Million

(This figure is based on the value of \$19.51 per volunteer hour from the Independent Sector).

If you think these numbers are impressive, then look visualize them on a national scale! In 2008, the Consumer Horticulture National Committee conducted a survey of Master Gardener State Coordinators. The following reported numbers are being used by the committee to seek greater recognition for our volunteers as well as support from the USDA and legislators. Here are the national figures with 42 states and the District of Columbia reporting- and this is a very conservative estimate!

Total Current MG volunteers: 94,865

Total Annual Volunteer Hours: 5,197,573

Value of Volunteer Hours: \$101.4 Million

New Master Gardeners Trained: 16,471 (40 states)

Personal Contacts: 4,840,285 (30 states responding)

Produce Donated to Local Food Banks: 685,554 lbs

Percentage of States with Core Training Dedicated to:

IPM	92.7%
Water Issues	65.7%
Using Native Plants	61%
Wildlife Management	58.5%

If you want to view pictures of some of the top national projects go to the eXtension MG page and view the PowerPoint show on the six national winners of Search for Excellence Awards.

www.extension.org/pages/IMG_Search_for_Excellence

✍️ Monica David, IL MG Coordinator

IPM Survey for Master Gardeners

The North Central Consumer Hort Working Group received funding about a year ago to help set up programming in IPM for both Master Gardeners and consumers. The first effort of this group was to prepare a survey of Master Gardeners in the Midwest to determine their knowledge of Integrated Pest Management as well as the use of IPM in the home landscapes. The results of this survey will help the group focus on ways to improve basic Master Gardener training in IPM as well as to prepare continuing education opportunities for volunteers in the North Central region. Please help us by completing this online survey before May 30th. You may access the survey through the MG website- "News and Updates" or by going directly through the following url: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=6TuNzxuiWYTY0pNh_2blSYOQ_3d_3d

Master Gardener Apparel Now on Sale

Apparel sales are now open. Master Gardener apparel is a great way to show your pride and promote your local Extension. Check the enclosed sell sheet to pick out your items. All ordering will be done via the internet (through the Master Gardener website at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg>). Credit cards and checks can be accepted. All apparel will be shipped to your local extension office for pickup mid-July.

New items for 2009 include a fleece jacket, long-sleeve T-shirt, polyester mesh knit polos and gingham shirts. Most items include an embroidered logo except for the T-shirts, long sleeve T-shirts, ladies tank tops and hats which feature a screen printed logo. Please choose carefully as all sales are final and there are no extra items ordered for exchanges. Please note that the ladies polo runs small- so order a size larger than normal. Unisex sizes are basically men's sizes.

The last day to order apparel is June 5th.

No late orders will be accepted!

Important Dates

May 19, 26 June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Rock Island County Home Grown Challenge Purposeful Gardening Series. Classes offered every Tuesday from 6 to 7 p.m., throughout the summer. Sample topics include: May 19– The Raised Bed Option; May 26– Herb Gardening; June 2–Compost Made Easy; June 9– Going Green in the Lawn and Garden; June 23–Harvest Preservation Ideas and June 30th–Garden Photography and Journaling. Class locations vary between the Rock Island Extension office and Riverside Park Gardens, Moline. For more information– www.extension.uiuc.edu/rockisland or 309-756-9978.

May 23-24: 21st Annual Garden Ramble. Wesley Whiteside’s Five Acre Garden will be open from noon until 5 pm. See rare species of trees, shrubs and flowers in this unique garden. Plant Guides will allow you to take a self-conducted tour of the grounds. Some Coles County Extension Master Gardeners will be speaking during the afternoon and vendor booths will be available. The garden is located on the south side of Route 16, just east of Charleston. Sponsored by the Coles County Historical Society, the suggested donation is \$6.

June 13: Monroe County Garden Tour. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This self-guided tour will highlight various home landscapes throughout Monroe County. The tour will take place rain or shine and tickets can be purchased in advance or the day of the tour at the Monroe County Annex Building, 901 Illinois Ave., Waterloo, IL. 618-939-3434. Sponsored by the Monroe County Master Gardeners.

June 14: Annual Garden Walk. Stroll seven Decatur-area gardens in the Master Gardeners’ annual garden walk. The walk includes traditional gardens in Decatur’s historic West end, vegetable gardens, sunny cottage-style gardens, and an amazing variety of shrubs and flowering plants. Garden walk guests will find private backyard havens, creative examples for small spaces, plants for shady areas, an enchanting water feature, and much more. Garden walk hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine. Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 the day of the walk. Tickets provide the address and driving directions to each garden, along with photos and garden descriptions. To order tickets, call the Macon County office, 217-877-6042.

June 19: Sustainable Agriculture Tour– Growing Strawberries Naturally. For the seventh consecutive year, University of Illinois Extension is offering tours that highlight sustainable agriculture operations around the state. The June 19th tour will be to Jed’s Farm in Thompsonville, IL (Franklin County). A fee of \$20 will include lunch. Registration must be at least one week in advance of the event. Call Donna Cray at 217-241-4644 or visit <https://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration>. The September 22 tour will be to the River Front Berry Farm in Martinton (Iroquois County).

June 27: Rooms with a View Garden Walk. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The theme this year emphasizes outdoor living at its finest. Guests will be treated to a variety of outdoor spaces that invite intimate conversation to those that embrace wide-open vistas, and almost everything in between. Vendors of unique gardening supplies and plants will be also located at the Master Gardeners' Idea Garden on South Lincoln Avenue, and there will be several featured demonstrations during the day. Tickets are \$10.00 in advance and \$12.00 on the day of the event. Tickets are available at the Extension Office at 801 N. Country Fair Dr. in Champaign and local garden centers. For more information, please call Karyn Traum at 217- 333-7672.

July 11: McHenry County Master Gardeners Garden Walk. The self-guided, day-long tour begins at 9 a.m. at the Master Gardeners' Demonstration Garden at McHenry County College in Crystal Lake. The walk features six private gardens in the Crystal Lake/ Woodstock/McHenry areas and includes a wide variety of garden styles from an English Garden that buffers a busy street; a Perennial Garden with a bit of everything; a Touch of Prairie Garden with wildflowers and native plants; an Eclectic Mature Garden with a meadow and woodlands; and an Enabling Garden which is used for horticultural therapy. All gardens will have a “Top 10” list of plants to see. Each garden stop will feature an Education Display and the Demonstration Garden will host a plant sale. Tickets are \$10 in advance; \$15.00 after June 26. Purchase tickets through the college www.mchenry.edu, 815-455-8764, or at the gardens on the day of the event.

July 11: Annual Gardenwalk and Plant Sale. Dekalb, IL. Eight unique gardens have been chosen for this year’s event. The BIG plant sale will include a garden boutique, a Master Gardener help desk and informational handouts. Sponsored by the Dekalb County Master Gardeners. For more information, call the office at 815-758-8194 or check the website at web.extension.uiuc.edu/dekalb/gardenwalk.

Kane County Master Gardeners Earn First Place in the 2009 International Search for Excellence Awards



On March 23, 2009, Kane County Master Gardeners were presented a first place award at the 2009 International Master Gardeners Conference held in Las Vegas, Nevada. The **Kane**

County Female Inmate Garden Project under the direction of Barbara Bates, Unit Educator, Horticulture, won first place in the 2009 International Search for Excellence Award in the Special Needs Category.

This project serves incarcerated adult females of diverse backgrounds. It also serves the general community and patrons of the Northern Illinois Food Bank. The goals of the Master Gardeners are to mentor the inmates to build life skills and work ethics, to educate the inmates about food production, to increase their awareness of healthy eating, and to produce locally grown vegetables for the general public and food bank patrons. Partners in this endeavor include: Kane County Sheriff's Department, University of Illinois Extension Kane County Master Gardeners, and several area nurseries.

The most significant outcome of this project was the positive effect of education on the inmates. Eating fresh vegetables was another benefit enjoyed by the inmates. A vegetable stand, staffed by Master Gardeners, provided opportunity to educate the general public about gardening as they purchased vegetables grown in the inmate garden. Also, hundreds of pounds of good quality produce was donated to the Northern Illinois Food Bank for distribution among their clients.



Congratulations to all the Kane County Master Gardeners who participated in this award winning project.

Garden Trip to Charleston, S.C.

Illinois and Arkansas Master Gardeners will meet this fall for a combined six day trip to view the gardens of Charleston, South Carolina. Led by Illinois Master Gardener Coordinator Monica David and Arkansas Coordinator Janet Carson, this trip will feature outstanding private and public gardens as well as a chance to network with South Carolina Master Gardeners. Highlights of the trip include tours of Magnolia Plantation, Middleton Plantation Gardens and Brookgreen Gardens. Magnolia Plantation is the oldest public garden in America with sections of the garden dating back more than 325 years. Middleton Plantation, a National Historic Landmark, has 65 acres of landscaped terraces, shadowy allees, ornamental ponds and garden rooms which combine for a spectacular 18th century garden. Brookgreen Gardens situated just south of Myrtle Beach, is a diverse mix of forested swamp, salt marsh, sandy ridges and fresh tidal swamps. This garden includes spectacular display gardens such as the Archer and Anna Hyatt Huntington Sculpture Garden, the Live Oak Allee garden and the Dorothy P. Peace Garden for Children.

The trip will also include tickets to the Charleston Preservation Society's Fall Tour of Homes and Gardens. Participants will have time to explore eight to ten private homes and gardens in Charleston. This is a self-paced, self guided tour which covers six to eight city blocks in the national historic area of downtown Charleston.

Lastly, the tour will include time with South Carolina Master Gardeners- visiting their private gardens and volunteer projects. This is a great opportunity to meet gardeners from both Arkansas and South Carolina and share garden stories and project successes.

The trip runs October 1 to 6, 2009. Tour cost is \$795 and includes hotel, all breakfasts, 2 dinners, coach transportation and entrance to all the gardens and events. Airfare is not included, but if 10 or more people travel from the same airport it may be possible to secure a group flight. View the full itinerary and booking form at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/> – under “News and Updates”. For information or to book your trip– call Robyn Gulstrom at 269-629-9248. **The initial deposit is due as soon as possible in order to hold tickets for the Preservation garden tours. Please send your deposit no later than May 15th.**



2009 Master Gardener Conference

The Thelma Keller Convention Center
Effingham, IL
September 10,11,12

Keynote Speaker to Highlight “Our Backyard Bounty”

Holly H. Shimizu has been the Executive Director of the United States Botanic Garden since 2000. Under her direction the Botanic Garden, located adjacent to the U.S. Capitol on the National Mall, is experiencing a renaissance with the renovation of the Conservatory, the completion of the National Garden, and continued creation of innovative exhibitions and inspiring gardens. Holly has worked in gardens in many parts of the world and is often recognized from ten years as a host of the popular *Victory Garden* television show. She has degrees in horticulture from Temple University, Ambler Campus, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Maryland. Throughout her career, Holly has received numerous awards, most recently the prestigious 2008 *Professional Award for an Outstanding Public Garden Director* from the American Horticultural Society. She has written for numerous publications and can often be heard on National Public Radio. She is currently on the Board of Botanic Gardens Conservation International – U.S. and is dedicated to heightening an awareness and love of plants through her work. Her husband Osamu is a Garden Designer that she met while working in Europe. They live in Glen Echo, Maryland with their dog Petey and where they enjoy their meditative garden near the Potomac River.



Holly’s Keynote Address “Backyard Bounty” will highlight ways to create gardens with rich biodiversity in order to attract pollinators and create variety through our choice of plants and planting styles. In addition the talk will focus on methods for achieving sustainability through our sensitivities to place, soil, exposure, water, plants, materials and human beings.

A Variety of Class Sessions Will be Offered

The EC Master Gardeners are offering an impressive lineup of speakers and topics. Here are just a few of the selections. An off-site demo at the Firefly Grill titled “**Taste the Difference of Farm to Table**” with Chief Sous Chef Cara Milewski will include a walk-through of their garden and a cooking presentation (including tastings!). Cheryl Bennerup from Sunny Border Nursery in Kensington CT will present “**Bodacious Temperennials**” and “**Underused Groundcovers**”. John Gaydos from Proven Winners will talk about **New Releases** and how plants are bred and selected for the consumer market. George deVault, Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah, IA will talk on “**Seed Saving**”. Trudi Temple, founder of Market Day and gardener extraordinaire will present “**Order and Creativity in the Garden**”. Terra Brockman from the Land Connection will explain “**Growing for Yourself and Others**”.

Other breakout sessions include– Ornamental Grasses; Home Biodiversity; Designing for Midwest Roller-Coaster Weather; Weed Control; Water Gardening; Small Scale Gardening; Food Preservation and Safety; Water Wise Gardening; Nuisance Wildlife Management, Medicinal Plants, Monarchs and Migration; Soil Testing; Small and Medium Shrubs for the Landscape; Tree Selection; Gardening with Children and much more.

Garden Tours a Highlight of Conference 2009

All Day Tours

Ballard Nature Center- This tour incorporates hands-on activities such as tree and plant ID; exploration of the different ecosystems at the park and butterfly and bird watching. The Nature Center covers 210 acres of Illinois prairie and deciduous hardwood forest and includes miles of trails through wetland, woodland, savannah and prairie ecosystems. This will be a perfect way to experience nature first-hand.

Gardens of Coles County-The tour begins at Lake Land College where you will see the use of color, texture, shape and form in the gardens. The viewer will see how the architecture and plantings are used to nurture minds of those on campus. Next travel to Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site, the last home and farm of Abraham Lincoln's father and stepmother. Gardening 1840's style and lunch will be the highlights of this stop. The final garden is a little known wonder of east central Illinois—Wes Whiteside's five acre collection of trees and shrubs has been developed over the past 50 years. Magnolias are a specialty and there are carnivorous plants including Venus fly-traps by the hundreds.

Vandalia Tour-This tour will begin with a visit to the Vandalia Community Gardens. This Master Gardener project features a children's garden, flower garden and vegetable garden where more than 2,600 lbs. of produce were donated to feed needy families. The group will make a stop at the oldest existing IL Capitol Building, built in 1836, where Lincoln started his political career. Attendees will also travel to St. Peter to view the Mennonite Settlement and gardens and to feast on a typical home-cooked meal.

Morning Tour

The Cross and Local Greenhouses— The 198 foot Cross in Effingham serves as a beacon of hope to travelers and is also home to a landscaping and educational project by Effingham County Master Gardeners. This tour also stops at Alwerdt Gardens which has an impressive All-America Selection Display Garden with over 1,000 varieties of herbs, perennials and ornamentals. Last but not least, the tour will include a visit to Cumberland Trail Growers- a wholesale greenhouse operation with 4.5 acres under plastic and 7 acres outside; that ships annuals, perennials and vegetables all over the Midwest.

Afternoon Tour

Wineries-If you want to spend the afternoon learning about grape growing and wine making this trip is for you. The group will visit both Vahling and Cameo Vineyards in the area with a chance to sample the local wines.

We Need Your Help for Our Silent Auction!

Once again the State Master Gardener Conference will feature a silent auction. Put on your thinking caps to consider what you or your county could donate for the sixth year of this fundraising effort. This project benefits the State Master Gardener office for expenses such as the *Imagine* newsletter and the current manual revision. Coles County Extension Master Gardeners, who coordinated the 1st ever silent auction, will be coordinating the effort this year, so make contact with slkuhns@illinois.edu if you have questions. Complete details will be in the July/August Imagine newsletter.

Make Your Hotel Reservations Now!

<i>Hilton Garden Inn</i> (adjacent to the conference center)- \$79.20/night plus tax Made-to-order breakfast for \$7.95	217-540-777
<i>Country Inn and Suites</i> (3-5 minute walk from the conference center)- \$65/night plus tax Complimentary continental breakfast	217-540-5555
<i>Holiday Inn Express</i> (3-5 minute walk from conference center)- \$65/night plus tax Complimentary continental breakfast	217-540-1111

Call to reserve your hotel rooms before Aug 26. Please mention the "Master Gardener Conference" - to receive the discounted rate.

For Effingham Area Information go to: www.visiteffinghamil.com

The conference registration materials will be posted on the website at web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg
Registration will be done online and opens on June 15th. More details in the July-Aug Imagine.

Master Gardener Trip to France in Spring 2010

If you dream of spending spring in France—visiting gardens on the French Riviera, sitting in a sidewalk café in Provence and viewing extraordinary gardens in the Loire Valley—then this garden trip is for you! Registration is open to anyone with an interest in gardens, with preference given to Illinois Master Gardeners. The trip runs April 30th to May 11, 2010.

The trip begins in Menton, on the French Riviera and at the Princess Grace Rose Garden in Monaco where over 4,000 roses bloom year round. Then on to the Serre de la Madone garden which was created by Lawrence Johnston and sits on a hillside with ancient olive trees and exotic plants. The next stop is Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild overlooking the Mediterranean and with a luxurious Italian villa and gardens. Stops at the Laboratory Factory of Fragonard where perfumes and soaps are made as well as the medieval village of Eze. Perched on a rocky peak above the city is the Jardin Exotique with its world renowned collection of succulents and cactus. We will have time to enjoy the lovely city of Aix de Provence with a cooking demo for our lunch. Afterward it is on to Arles for leisure time at the daily market and then to Avignon to explore the City of Popes.

The group leaves southern France by way of the bullet train to Paris. The first garden we visit in the Loire Valley is Chateau Chenonceaux created by Henri II mistress Diane de Poitiers and his wife Catherine de Medici. The castle is built on the River Cher, where the unique beauty of its architecture reflects on the water. The garden is a masterpiece of shrubs, trees and fountains with over 40,000 flowers planted annually. Subsequently we will visit Chateau Villandry— an imaginative recreation of a 16th century Renaissance Garden. No trip to France is complete without a visit to Monet's masterpiece— Giverny. Near the house is a flower and vegetable garden awash in brilliant colors. The second garden has the beautiful pond and Japanese bridge seen in Monet's paintings. The last garden on the tour is Chateau Chantilly. The French garden with its magnificent fountains and ponds was designed by Andre Le Notre who designed the gardens at Versailles. The trip concludes with free time to explore Paris.

The final cost of this trip will be determined soon. Check the website for the final itinerary and costs.
<http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg>
Contact Robyn at rgulstrom@comcast.net or 269-629-9248 for trip details and to reserve a spot for the trip.

House Passes Bipartisan Legislation to Expand and Strengthen National Service

On March 24, The U.S. House of Representatives passed the most significant overhaul and expansion of national service programs in 16 years, acting on President Obama's call to increase service opportunities for Americans of all ages to help address the economic crisis and usher in a new era of service and responsibility for our nation.

The House passed H.R. 1388, the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education (GIVE) Act bill by a strong bipartisan vote of 321 to 105. The vote came after a floor discussion that featured a series of Members of Congress from both parties who saluted America's long tradition of service and cited numerous examples of volunteers and national service participants helping Americans in need through mentoring at-risk youth, building homes, teaching in underserved schools, caring for veterans and seniors, and helping survivors of Hurricane Katrina and other disasters. The GIVE Act would update and strengthen national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency created in 1993. The Corporation engages more than four million Americans in result-driven service each year, including 75,000 AmeriCorps members, 492,000 Senior Corps volunteers, 1.1 million Learn and Serve America students, and 2.2 million additional community volunteers mobilized and managed through the agency's programs. "The American spirit is one of giving back – to our neighbors, our communities, and our nation. All across this country, citizens are devoting their time, skills, and resources to make our country a better place. And through the GIVE Act, we can nurture that spirit of selflessness, leveraging both individuals and organizations to achieve national goals," said Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, the House Education Committee's Ranking Republican member.

On the other side of the Capitol, the Senate also took action on national service, as the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee approved S. 277, the Serve America Act, on a voice vote. Like the GIVE Act, the Serve America Act, introduced by Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT), would also provide a significant expansion of national service opportunities for Americans of all ages, strengthen accountability and performance, support social innovation, strengthen our volunteer infrastructure, and usher in a new generation of service programs.

For more information, visit www.NationalService.gov

Macon and Sangamon-Menard Units Awarded Second Place in 2009 Search for Excellence Awards

The Macon County Master Gardeners have been awarded second place in the National Search for Excellence Awards— Demonstration Garden Category. Their Heritage Garden is a collaborative effort between the Master Gardeners and the Macon County Conservation District. The M CCD's desire was to educate the community and showcase a typical 1860 vegetable garden as part of the farm's restoration. Master Gardeners have been key in providing the expertise and educational components needed to make the garden a reality. The Conservation District regularly features the Homestead Prairie Farm in their programming and the garden enhances their portrayal of life in that period of time. Master Gardeners contribute to these programs by describing and utilizing organic practices as well as distributing research-based information and typical 1860 recipes for the lesser known vegetables, herbs and spices grown in the garden. The garden's produce is taken to Dove, a local shelter for victims of domestic violence. Under the direction of a chef, the food is prepared by students in the shelter's culinary school who are recovering from alcohol and drug addiction.

The Sangamon-Menard Master Gardeners also received a second place award- in the Community Service Category for their Plant-A-Row project. Over the past eight years, the Sangamon–Menard MGs have collected more than 275,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to improve nutrition for those served by food pantries and soup kitchens in 21 counties in Central Illinois. Beyond the sheer volume of produce contributed, the program has a successful educational component that compliments “eat local” efforts. Master Gardeners, food distributors, and consumers have learned good growing, handling and food preparation methods. Sangamon-Menard PAR has expanded upon the basic mission of the national PAR effort by partnering with commercial growers and an established distribution system. Master Gardeners maintain dedicated gardens and seek fresh produce from unexpected sources to prevent both waste and hunger. Volunteers use a PAR informational display for promotional events and give presentations to civic groups. Most importantly, Master Gardeners have taken time to learn about food recipients and their needs. Master Gardeners have worked with the Central Illinois Foodbank to change attitudes by meeting with food pantry workers, timing harvests to food distribution hours to ensure freshness, and providing recipes. Congratulations to these Master Gardeners for their award winning projects!

Perennials in Design Seminar



Presented by the Perennial Plant Association this design seminar features “A Potpourri of Plants, Designs, and Arrangements”. The program will be Monday, July 20, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Marriott Union Station Hotel in downtown St. Louis. The program features presentations by six nationally

recognized speakers with decades of experience in growing and designing with perennials. Timely topics include “Designing with Color and Texture”, “Bulbs in Gardens”, “Four Seasons of Container Gardens”, “Tough Perennials for Tough Sites”, “Perennial Floral Design” and “Perennial Plant Communities”. Early bird registration is just \$69 and includes all presentations and beverage breaks. For details, visit www.hortco-op.org or contact the Perennial Plant Association at (614) 771-8431 or ppa@perennialplant.org

Midwest Regional Hosta Society Hosts Convention

The Illinois Prairie Hosta Society is proud to host ‘**Grand Prairie Hostas**’ the 2009 Midwest Regional Hosta Convention in Champaign, Illinois, June 11-13, 2009. The convention location is the I Hotel and Conference Center on the University of Illinois campus. The convention includes all the expected activities such as national and local vendors, accredited hosta leaf show, live and silent auctions, garden tours, raffles, banquet, and optional garden tours on Sunday. New events include a Thursday evening alfresco cocktail party, educational seminars on Friday, and optional golf outings on Friday and Saturday.

Speakers at the conference and their topics include: Mike Shadrack- “Hostas in the English Garden”; Mike Tiffany- “Viruses in Ornamentals and HVX Demo”; Glenn Herrold-“My 25 Favorite Plants”; James Bier-“Japanese Garden Design”; Mary Ann Metz-“The Shady Side of Peonies” and Sandy Mason- “Gardening Smarter Not Harder”.

The three-day registration cost is \$135 before May 11 and \$160 after May 11th. The fee includes four meals as well as the Thursday evening cocktail party, vendors, garden tours and educational sessions. For information and a registration form go to <http://www.mrhs2009.com>

Michelle Obama and Jr. Master Gardeners Install White House Garden

On March 20th, First Lady Michelle Obama and a group of 5th grade students from Bancroft Elementary School broke ground for the new White House Kitchen Garden. These children went thru the Junior Master Gardener® program 2 years ago with Washington D.C. Master Gardeners. On April 9th, the same children returned to help plant the garden with the help of Mrs. Obama, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and White House Chef Sam Kass. The children will return later this summer for harvesting and cooking with the food grown. In the meantime White House staff and a colony of mite resistant honeybees will tend the garden. To see a video of the groundbreaking visit: <http://www.dogonews.com/2009/03/21/malia-and-sasha-get-their-own-vegetable-garden-and-beehive>

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