



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

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Coordinators' Comments

At this writing, Denny Schrock has been at his new position as a garden writer in Des Moines for five weeks. We wish him well in all his endeavors!



Master Gardener and future chairwoman of the state advisory committee, Mariellen Griffith is shown giving a plaque to Denny from the McLean County Master Gardener group.

I have met many of you at workshops and meetings through-out the state, but now that I have assumed the responsibility of Interim Coordinator of Illinois Master Gardeners, I wish to re-introduce myself. I jumped ship on a 20 year career as a Medical Microbiologist about 7 years ago and turned to my life-long desire to be a Horticulturist. I received an M.S. degree from UIUC for the study of plant nutrition and plant disease. After a summer as a diagnostician at the Disease Clinic, I became the Master Gardener program assistant. My interests include children's gardening and plant pathology.

As I read through the award applications for this year's state Master Gardener awards, I was impressed by the dedication, leadership and just 'plain old hard work' which is given every year by Master Gardeners from all over the state. Master Gardeners certainly serve as role models for other volunteer organizations in both their educational service and selfless pursuit of goals.

I was recently asked to give a summary of the Illinois Master Gardener program to the state Extension Advisory Committee. Although my half-an hour allotment was certainly insufficient to talk about all the activities going on around the state, I believe the administration gained a flavor of the types of projects and dedication of our group. I was pleased to report that in 2001, Illinois Master Gardeners recorded

98,441 hours of volunteer service and 26,681 hours of continuing education (45 units reporting). This volunteer service relates to \$1.452 million dollars in value.

It was made clear to me that the University of Illinois Extension administration has made a firm commitment to our program, even in these times of budget cutbacks. As interim state coordinator, I intend to build on the foundations we have established over the last 3 years and to continue to improve the program in the future. The guidelines and procedures that have been implemented over the last two years or so will continue to be in place. With the help and advice of the state advisory committee, I hope to expand our educational opportunities for Master Gardeners and work to improve communication and idea sharing between individual Master Gardener programs.

In order to promote sharing, I have begun plans for a Master Gardener Coordinators group. This group will function to bring your project ideas and program management tools to other groups in the state. The group will meet informally at the State Master Gardener conference in September and then via list-serve and telenet in future months. Another way to highlight your program would be to prepare a poster exhibit for the state conference. Instructions for these exhibits may be found in the conference information in this issue. Last, but certainly not least, the state advisory committee members serve as liaisons for your ideas. Find out who the representatives are from your region and speak to them about your ideas and concerns. This committee is a sounding board for the polices and opportunities so vital to our program, so don't be shy about contacting them. Several Master Gardener committee members will be completing their terms this summer and new members are needed for every extension region except WC. **Deadline for applications is July 15th.**

I look forward to seeing all you "Masters of the Garden" in Rockford!

 Monica David

Chairman's Chat

"I have *moss* in my lawn!" the caller on the hotline said, a year ago.

I waited several seconds, then said "Congratulations!"

The pause that followed suggested that *that* was not exactly what he wanted to hear, so I went on to say that I'd recently spent about an hour down on my belly photographing various mosses in the 2-plus acre moss garden at the Bloedel Reserve on Bainbridge Island in Puget Sound, mosses that I'd found enchanting.

"But I don't want moss, I want grass", he said. So I gave him the standard litany about shade, compacted soil, drainage, nutrients – what we MGs have been trained to say when such a question arises. But in doing so, I felt a bit uneasy – to what extent should I be suggesting tactics that totally counter Mother Nature?

I was reminded of this exchange a few days ago as I was drifting along the shores of Rainy Lake in northwestern Ontario, trying to fulfill the hunter-gatherer role of providing meat for Ellen's table, but (secretly) just enjoying the scene of rocks, mosses, pines, and lichens – lichens in the plural indeed, as there were gray, green, orange, and red ones in view on rocks and trees as we floated along, magnificent in their colors, magnificent in their many forms and patterns.

The landscape that nature laid before me on that shore was diverse and largely uncontrolled, except by the natural forces of fire, weather, and waves. Wild columbines sprang out of rock crevices only a quarter-inch wide, a rose had found footing in a patch of ground not much wider than my hand, one birch clump stood out amongst a stand of pines. Nature had not read about proper planting techniques in the MG manual or taken a course in landscape design, but the overall scene was stunning.

I'm not a "hands-off" gardener, by any measure, and I'm not suggesting that others should be. If my own aesthetic injury level (remember that, from your IPM training?) is reached, I'll take action, and in most situations I'll attempt preventive measures long before any injury is likely to occur, through plant variety and site selections, fertilization, and watering. The 6-foot fence goes up around the azalea border every November, because I know that the deer that wander through our yard love azaleas every bit as much as I do, and without the fence there would be no blossom buds left come next

fence there would be no blossom buds left come next spring.

But if some wild violets think that my lawn is a proper place to be amongst the grass, or a hybrid tea rose reverts to its wild rootstock, or a self-seeded clematis is now rambling over one of the azaleas, who am I to argue with them? After all, monoculture and monotony have a lot in common.

Gardening teaches patience and tolerance, I think, or at least it should. If you must have the first garden-ripe tomato in town (or even in your neighborhood) each year, if your rose entry must always be Queen of the show, if your lawn can only have 100% bluegrass with no aberrant intrusions, you're likely not going to be a happy gardener most of the time. And if you're not happy about it, why do it?

Having said that, it's time to close this, my last Chair's Chat column – Mariellen Griffith assumes the Chair the first of September. It's a lovely June day as I write, and there are roses outside that need smelling (for the third time today!)

Happy Master Gardening. I hope to meet many of you in Rockford at the state conference in September, when you can share your success stories of the year.

 Dave

Important Dates

July 18-20: "Ripe From Downtown"- A National Symposium on Creating Garden-based Entrepreneur Programs for Youth, Cleveland, Ohio. Sponsored by the Cleveland Botanical Garden. 216-721-1600.

September 20-21: American Horticultural Therapy Association Conference, Norfolk Botanical Gardens, Norfolk, Virginia. Check the website at www.ahta.org

June 18-22, 2003: International Master Gardeners Conference, Greater Cincinnati area and Northern Kentucky. Preliminary schedule and information available on the website at <http://mastergardener.osu.edu/imgc2003/>

Deadline for submission of articles for the September-October issue is August 15th.

Horticulture Therapy

Horticultural Therapy is a new field of interest to most Master Gardeners. Some people think that it is a program of activities for assisted living residents; others think it is a program that calls for special adapted tools. Horticultural therapy includes all the above but has a wider scope of programs.

As defined by the American Horticultural Therapy Association, Horticultural Therapy represents the therapeutic work performed by trained Horticultural Therapists. It is the use of professionally directed plant, gardening and nature activities applied therapeutically for the purpose of restoring the physical and mental health of its participants. Research results have supported the theory that interaction with plants and nature is important to human health and well-being. Caring for plants provides the opportunity to further cognitive, physical and emotional objectives. Adapted tools and techniques maximize the ability to function independently in the garden. Professional Horticultural Therapists are trained to evaluate the abilities and needs of each individual. By matching the person's interests, skills and needs with appropriate plant-related activities, the therapist can help the individual reach desired goals such as increased muscle strength or improved socialization skills.

Master Gardeners can apply their horticultural skills by providing programs to nursing homes, assisted living centers and retirement communities, corrections centers, Developmental Centers for Children and Adults, and Medical institutions. Horticultural activities may occur outdoors or indoors. They might include growing plants, floral design or garden maintenance from weeding to watering and pruning. Programs can use plants and the cycles of nature to teach life skills. Or, through analogies between plants and people, important social and psychological concepts such as nurturing, responsibility, the importance of strong "roots" and the value of rejuvenation can be explained.

When planning a program for a particular group consider following four steps. The first step is to conduct a **needs assessment**. Discuss the needs of the client with the professional staff of the center or institution. Some of the questions that you should include are physical functioning, mental alertness, interests, and moods of the residents or clients.

By looking at the holistic aspects of your clients, also include the environment and background of the residents. The second step is to **define goals**. What kind of educational program do you want to plan that will meet the needs of the residents for a one time program or a series of program activities. Do you want to increase their skills in horticulture? Or provide activities that will raise the self-esteem. Step three is to **specify objectives**. Plan and conduct plant activities such as identification of parts of plants (leaves, flowers, stems, roots and seeds). The fourth and final step is to **conduct an evaluation** of your program. Assess the effectiveness of objectives and planning process.

(Mariellen Griffith, McLean County Master Gardener)

Spotlight on.... Moultrie-Douglas Master Gardeners

Moultrie-Douglas Master Gardeners are once again doing a huge Plant-A-Row garden with about 100 Arthur Elementary School fifth and sixth graders. Plants were started in science class and transplanted into the garden. About once a week (including during the summer), students help in the garden with maintenance and harvesting. Produce is distributed to five food pantries in the county. Seeds were donated by a local seed company as well as from Johnny's Selected Seeds. Johnny's also donated out-of-date gardening catalogues to use as a teaching tool in the Full Cycle Gardening class. Extra seeds were planted for a plant sale as a fundraiser to help with gardening expenses.



The Master Gardeners of Moultrie-Douglas were pleased to have the opportunity to acquire a program called "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life" from the National Honey Board. This program for 4-6 graders came complete with a teaching guide, worksheets with answer keys and a videotape.

These busy Master Gardeners are reorganizing the garden at the Extension Office to feature a Culinary Herb garden, a prairie plant section and a kid's herb garden. The garden is a useful educational tool to demonstrate to kids how to preserve food, make crafts and use herbs in cooking. Preparations are also underway to expand the Prairie gardening plot at Sullivan Elementary School.

Horticulture Diseases, Pests, & More

A new CD-ROM on plant disorders

For many years, the color photo sheets produced by ITCS Instructional Materials have been popular. CDR600 *Horticulture Diseases, Pests, and More* is a CD-ROM containing 41 color photo sheets dedicated to horticultural topics. Each sheet has the front filled with multiple, labelled images of problems and the back of each sheet describes problems. CDR600 sells for \$45.

All the sheets are rendered as Adobe Acrobat files and the entire content of the CD is searchable and navigation is fully integrated. For more information about this CD-ROM check the ITCS website at www.aces.uiuc.edu/ITCS/IM/cdr600.htm. Contact ITCS at 1-800-345-6087 with questions or to order the CD-ROM.



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