



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

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Nov.-Dec. 2003

Coordinators' Comments

Many thanks once again to Nancy Kuhajda and the Will County Master Gardeners for an enjoyable state conference. The classes and workshops were top rate and our keynote Alan Armitage really entertained us with his poetry readings. We had some outstanding costumes again this year at our Friday fun night- most notably were the Japanese beetles and the Creeping Charlies (see page 7). If you weren't able to join us, mark your calendars for Sept 9-11, 2004 and join the fun at our state conference in Decatur.

As the year draws to a close, it's time to tally up your 2003 continuing education and volunteer hours as well as sign new volunteer agreements for the coming year. Please make your coordinators job easy and get those hours in as soon as possible. It is my goal to have all hours reported to the state office by Feb 1. Please do your part!

As many of you know, I accepted the position of permanent Illinois Master Gardener Coordinator and began my official duties on August 21, 2003. I report directly to Dr. Wes Jarrell, Head of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences in the College of ACES on campus in Urbana. Dr Jarrell requested that I work with the state advisory committee to draft goals for the next several years for the Master Gardener program. Obviously, any new programming is severely limited by declining funds and lack of personnel. Extension has lost several Horticulture educator positions in recent years and will lose another excellent educator when Ron Cornwell retires at the end of 2003. So, any goals we set, must of course take into account these shortfalls. Let me briefly share some of our ideas with you.

1. Volunteer management- We hope to increase communication between county coordinators and the state office as well as between county programs. We will work toward creating tools to make volunteer management easier and more effective. We also want to ensure that we are giving our clients the most reliable

and up-to-date information that is available.

2. Funding- The advisory committee will be looking at creative ways to increase funding for the program in the coming years. Denny Schrock, previous state coordinator, established the Illinois Master Gardener Foundation to initiate donorship to the program. We will be promoting this foundation in the years to come as a source of income and stability for the state program.

3. Education- We hope to improve the core course trainings by offering standardized quizzes as well as periodically evaluating our training course and making improvements. We will continue to offer training online. If staffing permits, we hope to offer new and different continuing education options and advanced training opportunities for our Master Gardeners. In conjunction with the Extension Horticulture team we will be looking at new delivery methods for learning such as the successful telenet series started last year.

4. Programming- We hope to expand participation in some of our state programs such as Junior Master Gardenersm, Plant-A-Row, Youth Gardening and Horticulture Therapy. Sharing of program strategies between counties will be a key to success.

5. Marketing- Public awareness of the contributions Master Gardeners make to their communities needs to be increased. This must occur on a local as well as a state level. Counties must do their part to get the word out in their communities and we will work towards seeking acknowledgement on the campus and state level.

6. New opportunities- I hope that we can utilize our volunteers to help with home research, disease studies and product evaluation opportunities. I will work to establish partnerships between neighboring states- programs that work across state lines and connect Illinois volunteers with their counterparts in neighboring states.

Do you have new ideas or suggestions to improve an existing program? Your comments and suggestions are always welcome. You may email me or contact your regional representative on the state advisory committee. Enjoy the upcoming holidays  Monica David

Participants needed for research survey!!!

Help identify the cause of oak tatters...

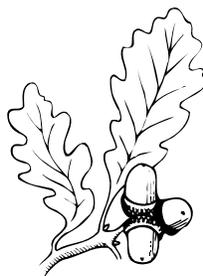
Save the white oaks.

Jayesh Samtani, Drs. John Masiunas, and Jim Appleby in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, are initiating a research project to identify the cause or causes of oak tatters, starting in-spring 2004. The term "oak tatters" refers to the malformations of newly developed leaves, most commonly observed in white oak species. We hypothesize, that these malformations of newly developed leaves on white oaks, are primarily due to drift of herbicides being used in corn and soybean fields. However, other environmental and human factors such as insects, soil or frost may be the cause of oak tatters.

We are asking for help from Master Gardeners in identifying the cause or causes behind oak tatters. A survey will be mailed out in early 2004 to anyone who is interested in assisting us in identifying the cause of oak tatters. The survey will ask you to look for oak tatters and follow its course on oak trees in your local community. Multiple visits (3 or 4) to the oak trees may be required to complete the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire will focus on site conditions, proximity of the affected oak trees to corn and soybean fields, the species of oaks being affected and the extent of damage.

Interested persons should contact Jayesh Samtani:
E-mail: jsamtani@uiuc.edu (Preferred mode of contact)
Phone: 217- 333-7303

Coming soon: For more information on oak tatters and to answer queries, we will be posting educational material at www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/oaktatters



Herb Day

Chuck Voigt, University of Illinois Research Specialist, announces that Herb Day 2004 will be held on January 17, 2004, at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, Exit 183 off I-74, in Urbana, Illinois. This is the same location where it has been staged for the past several years. Final plans for another day of herbal fun, food, and fellowship are being finalized.

As usual, the schedule will begin with registration and the retail area opening at 8:00 am, and educational sessions beginning at 9:00. There will be an herbal lunch buffet, featuring both meat and vegetarian items.



Vegans may request a special plate of food ahead of time. The retail area will be open from 8:00 am through 3:00 pm. Educational sessions will end between 4:00 and 4:30 pm.

Speakers already booked for this event include Stephen Lee, a delightful and entertaining chef from Louisville, Kentucky, who will demonstrate cooking with herbs. Also on the program are John Enterline and Ron Short, from eastern Pennsylvania, who will co-present two talks featuring ideas about herbal teas and arrangements, as well as decorating and seasonal displays using herbs. A detailed program will be announced in the coming weeks. Anyone not currently on the Herb Day mailing list should contact Carol Preston at the address below to receive a registration form and additional program information, as it becomes available.

Cost of registration, including lunch, is only \$44 per person. This includes seating in the lectures, coffee and tea during morning registration, an herbal theme lunch buffet (including vegetarian options), and access to the retail area. Reservations must be received no later than January 9, 2004, to guarantee lunch. Registration after this date will also cost \$44, but will not include lunch. Those interested in attending should mail checks, payable to the **University of Illinois**, to: **Herb Day 2004**, Attn: Carol Preston, S-406 Turner Hall, 1102 S. Goodwin Ave., Urbana, Illinois, 61801 to reserve registration and lunch. Call (217) 333-7738 and mention **Herb Day 2004**. Sorry, credit card orders cannot be accepted.

Visit the IL. Master Gardener website: <http://www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg>

Spotlight on

Vermilion County Master Gardeners

Vermilion County Master Gardeners were offered the rare opportunity last February to present a landscape design outside the University of Illinois tent at the Prairie Farmer Farm Progress Show that was to be held in Vermilion County (Henning, Illinois) on September 23, 24 and 25, 2003. They accepted the challenge readily as preliminary plans had to be presented to the University of Illinois for consideration by the first of March.



Three committees were established to develop ideas for town and country gardeners alike that could be implemented in their gardens at home. A theme entitled "Town and Country... Helping Others Grow" was chosen. The area to be landscaped was approximately 7 feet by 120 feet with an entrance into the tent at the midpoint. One side reflected town gardening with pergola, fencing, water gardens, patio area, flowers, shrubs and trees. The country area used a farm motif including a small tractor, windmill, fencing, flowers, straw bales, shrubs and an ear corn border to enhance their display.

Inside the tent, as part of the Extension display, a large façade of a barn was constructed and used to present Vermilion County gardening programs through videos and handouts of general gardening practices.

The project was successful because of 40+ Master Gardener volunteers and family members who gave many hours of plan time, creativity and labor. The University of Illinois, Vermilion County and rural western Indiana business communities gave them generous support to this project.

 Nancy Roderick

Vermilion County Master Gardener

Important Dates

January 14-16: Mid-Am Trade Show, Lakeside Center at McCormick Place, Chicago, IL. Check the website at www.midam.org/

January 24, 2004: "A Winter Day in the Garden", Zwermann Theatre, Lincoln Trail College, Robinson, IL. 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Doors open at 7:30. Speakers include: Felder Rushing "Tough Plants for Northern Gardens", Tom Turpin "All for the Bugs Stand Up and Holler", Gene Bush "Ten Months of Bloom in the Shade Garden", Diane Noland "topic to be determined", and Kate Copsey "Herb Gardening". Registration fee \$30, includes continental breakfast and lunch. Late registration fee \$40 after Jan. 12. Sponsored by the Crawford County Master Gardeners. 618-546-1549.

February 24-25: Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School, Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, IL. Contact Ron Cornwell for information- 618-692-9434.

March 13- 21: Chicago Flower Show, Navy Pier, Chicago, IL. www.chicagoflower.com

Deadline for submission of articles for the next issue is December 15, 2003.

2004 Training Locations*

Location	Starting Date
Bourbonnais	1-13-2004
Champaign	1-27-2004
Chicago Ag School	To be determined
Decatur/Springfield	1-21-2004
Edwardsville cluster	1-20-2004
Effingham	1-21-2004
Grayslake	1-16-2004
Macomb	1-8-2004
Matteson	1-7-2004
Mt. Prospect	1-20-2004
Mt. Vernon	1-22-2004
Oregon	1-23-2004
Ottawa	1-14-2004
Peoria/Pekin	To be determined
Rock Island	1-9-2004
Sycamore	1-12-2004
On-line Training**	1-19-2004

*Please contact your local unit to attend these classes.

Times and locations are listed on the website at: www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/

**The online class will be run from campus but participants should apply through their local units.

2003 Teamwork Project Winners

Demonstration Garden at the Conservation District (Boone County)

The Demo garden was begun nearly 9 years ago by a small group of volunteers. Over the years, participation as well as the scope of the garden has increased. Beginning with a simple herb garden, gardens were added until today there are a total of 6 unique gardens: Kitchen, Fragrance, Tea, Medicinal, Potpourri, Dye and Dried Flowers. The garden is the site for many local festivals and garden walks as well as educational programs.

Juvenile Detention Center Gardening Project (Champaign County)

In 2001, an asphalt and grass area was transformed into five raised beds with vegetables, annuals and perennials. The garden has turned into a year round program to teach the children about gardening and nature as well as important life skills to use beyond the fence.

“Ask A Master Gardener” Newspaper Column (Cook County/North Suburban Unit)

This team of volunteers writes a column each week for the “Home and Garden” section of the Daily Herald. The newspaper has a circulation of over 150,000 in the North, West and Northwest areas around the city of Chicago. The column serves to educate the public about good gardening practices as well as inform the public about the impact of Extension and the Master Gardener program.

4-H Summer Adventure Youth Camps (Cook County/South Suburban Unit)

For the last three summers, 4-H Summer Adventure Camps have introduced children from low income, urban households in Ford Heights and Robbins to the wonders of nature. At CEDA sites, children were taught by Master Gardeners and Hort educators about nature, plants, insects, the environment, food preparation, biotechnology and conflict resolution.

Junior Master Gardener Program (Crawford County)

This team piloted the JMG program at Lincoln and Palestine Schools as well as offering workshops to students in Summer Success, reaching at least 100 at-risk children. The volunteers have also worked with 5th grade kids on a worm-composting project. Their JMG kids have landscaped two islands on the Robinson town square as well as working with the Long Term Landscape program at the Crawford Memorial Hospital.

Shabbona Health Care Center Horticultural Therapy (DeKalb County)

Master Gardeners have led year-round hands on activities at the center for three years. During the growing season, activities revolve around plantings of annuals and vegetables in raised beds. In the winter, indoor projects include flower arranging, discussion of fruits and vegetables (followed by fruit salad), making of tussie mussies and other activities.

“Gardener Thymes” Newsletter Committee (DuPage County)

DuPage County has had a newsletter for its Master Gardeners for nearly 10 years. Over the past few years however, the newsletter has evolved from a short update by the coordinator to a multi-paged newsletter written for and by Master Gardeners. The newsletter is posted on the Web and has received praise for its content and quality both locally and abroad.

Historic Plant-A-Row for the Hungry Garden (Jo-Carroll Unit)

This lovely garden, located at the Galena Historic Museum serves to restore the garden plantings while providing produce for the needy at the Galena Food Pantry. The team worked to create a historically accurate infrastructure, design, plant and maintain this historic and functional garden.

2003 Teamwork Project Winners (cont.)

Speakers Bureau (Kane County)

The Kane County Speakers Bureau exploded this spring with new presentations, new presenters and rave reviews. Audiences ranged from youth to senior citizens, including garden clubs, church groups, civic groups and the general public. The group participated in training sessions to learn PowerPoint, developed a marketing brochure, created a database of target organizations and developed standardized request forms.

Lyon Historical Farm in Yorkville (Kendall County)

The Master Gardeners from Kendall County began planting the area around the Oswego House in 1997 and work is ongoing. The Farm is used for numerous educational events during the year such as Master Gardener workshops, county historical events, Civil War Re-enactments and a fall festival.

Beautification of Knox County Fairgrounds (Knox County)

This team project transformed the flowerless fairgrounds into a panorama of plantings. The project has evolved into total grounds beautification. The Union 4-H Club, Knox County Home & Community Education Association as well as juveniles from the teen court have benefited from and helped with this project.

Traugher Homestead Farm Heritage Gardens (Macon County)

In 2000, the Macon County Master Gardeners assumed responsibility for the gardens and began to plant heirloom vegetables and flowers similar to those planted in the 1860s. The garden is used as a historical teaching tool for children as well as classes by the conservation district.

Macoupin County Fairgrounds Project (Macoupin County)

The Master Gardeners have done several projects at the fairgrounds including installation and maintenance of flowerbeds and plantings along the highway. For several years, they have also assisted 4-H members with learning about plants and designing containers throughout the fairgrounds.

Mayors Manor Lawn and Garden Project (McLean County)

The Master Gardeners worked with the city and residents of the complex (once the grand home to 2 mayors) to renovate the grounds. They created a comprehensive program from establishing classes teaching the basics of plant care and horticulture to resurrecting a garden that was once a weed patch.

Plant-A-Row for the Hungry (Peoria County)

This project, which has been in existence for over 4 years, encompasses a large communal urban garden and a large rural home garden. The urban garden has been used for educating 3-5 year olds in gardening as well as a research plot for the USDA Ag Lab. Over 4,800 lbs of produce were donated in 2002.

“In the Garden” Radio Program (Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford Counties)

These gardeners have combined efforts to recruit volunteers and guest speakers, design the programs and answer questions on the spot. The recent ratings from WMBD (1470AM) can attest to their success- this program is the number one program in the area on Saturday mornings.

“Let’s Talk Gardening” Classes (Vermilion County)

The project team was responsible for organizing, coordinating, preparing and teaching monthly classes on gardening information to the public. These well-attended sessions provide Hort knowledge to the public as well as educating them on the services and programs offered by Extension.

2003-2004 State Master Gardener Advisory Committee

SOUTHERN REGION	WEST CENTRAL REGION	EAST CENTRAL REGION	NORTHWEST REGION	NORTHEAST REGION
David Bobell 618-687-1727 dbobell@uiuc.edu	Elaine Smillie 309-467-3789 esmillie@uiuc.edu	Mariellen Griffith (MG) 309-663-1620 griffith@fgi.net	Karen Durtschi 815-544-3710 durtschi@uiuc.edu	Diana Husband (MG) 708-349-0771 wort-woman@earthlink.net
Ernie Henson (MG) 618-822-6584 erni@midwest.net	Caroline Gherardini (MG) 217-787-2371 jcargh@earthlink.net	Virginia Schuler (MG) 217-388-7835	Amy Benecke-McLaren (MG) 309-358-1718 bridge@mtco.com	Diane Hatfield (MG) 708-758-7738 weedygardener@aol.com
Jan Villhard (MG) 618-345-5765	Tari Parr (MG) 217-483-4667 ILMasterGardener@aol.com	Nancy King 217-762-2191 nkking@uiuc.edu	Barb Larson 815-986-4357 larsonb@uiuc.edu	Barbara Bates 630-584-6166 bbates@uiuc.edu
Elizabeth Wahle 618-692-9434 wahle@uiuc.edu	Martha Smith 309-836-2363 smithma@uiuc.edu	Sandy Mason 217-333-7672 slmason@uiuc.edu	Barb Wych (MG) 815-544-6517 mail141310@pop.net	Sharon Yiesla 847-223-8627 yiesla@uiuc.edu
CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN	Jill Selinger 847-835-6849 jselinge@chicagobotanic.org	Julie Zanieski jzanieski@chicagobotanic.org	STATE STAFF Monica David 217-265-5256 modavid@uiuc.edu	Jim Schmidt 217-244-5153 schmidt1@uiuc.edu

Many thanks to the following Advisory Committee members who completed their terms in 2003:
Janet Burnett, Treasa Brookman, Dave Hinde and Joe Schwamberger.

Illinois School Wins JMG_{sm} Grant



The South Elementary School in Westmont, IL. is one of only 40 groups nationwide to win a “Growing Good Kids” grant from the national Junior Master Gardener_{sm} program. Through a partnership with the Minute Maid Corporation, this grant program was established to provide funding for groups across the country to purchase JMG_{sm} manuals and garden supplies. The South Elementary School group, led by teacher Nancy Bartosz-Thompson, will receive 1 teacher-leader guide, 20 youth handbooks and \$50 for garden supplies. Congratulations to Nancy and her gardening kids!

Plant Pathology Course offered to Master Gardeners

A plant pathology course, “Diseases of Ornamentals and Turfgrasses”, will be offered by the University of Illinois-Springfield in 2004 and is open for Master Gardeners. The course will be taught in Springfield by Dr. Don White, Professor of Crop Sciences. The course meets January 12 to April 12 on Mondays from 6:00 to 9:15 pm. Course credit is 3 hours for undergraduates (\$639); 0.75 graduate units (\$699) or non-credit (\$300) for Master Gardeners. Symptoms, diagnosis, causal agents, epidemiology and control of diseases will be studied in lectures, laboratories and discussions. This course is designed to meet the needs of graduate students pursuing a master’s degree, advanced Master Gardeners and professionals dealing with ornamentals and turf. If you are interested in enrolling or want further details, contact Don White at 217-333-1093 or donwhite@uiuc.edu

Chairwoman's Chat

Touring gardens on a clear beautiful day during the month of September is my idea of spending a perfect day. On September 18, Master Gardeners throughout the state of Illinois toured the Morton Arboretum and Cantigny gardens sponsored by the Illinois Master Gardener State Conference. The Morton Arboretum likes to advertise that they have "A garden of trees for all seasons." The Arboretum is open every day of the year and is visited annually by more than 350,000 people who discover 1,700 acres of trees, gardens, ponds and natural landscapes. There are 12 miles of trails and 11 miles of roads. The mission of the Arboretum is to collect and study trees, shrubs, and other plants from around the world, to display them across naturally beautiful landscapes for people to study and enjoy, and to learn how to grow them in ways that enhance our environment. The goal is to encourage the planting and conservation of trees and other plants for a greener, healthier, and more beautiful world.

Master Gardeners arrived at the Arboretum by bus. We were given a guided tour of the gardens by riding in a tram for 40 minutes followed by a 45 minute guided walking tour. The tram tour was a good way to get an overview of the Arboretum. Following the guided walking tour we had time to walk around the gardens. Walking through an old oak forest brought back memories of times long ago. Morton Arboretum has become a place that preserves trees and shrubs, a gift to our children and grandchildren.

Cantigny consisted of many gardens filled with colorful annuals and perennials. Also, there is a large rose garden and an Idea Garden. The Idea Garden was an inspiring place to be and one of the most popular gardens. A beautiful pergola in the Idea Garden was a lovely spot to sit in the shade and soak up the garden views. The Potlady, a central feature, is in the Children's garden. Garden pots were used to create a figure of a woman. The container section has a theme of "A Walk Through the Seasons." As I was strolling down the curving path I saw a garden with plantings of annuals, perennials, vines, shrubs, and trees representing all the seasons. In the vegetable garden there is a Lilliputian Mountain Scene placed among the many kinds of vegetables. In the west perimeter there is a grouping of Dwarf Alberta Spruce trees planted in a clustered mountain-like scene incorporating mini-boulders

in the display, surrounded by a hedge of lilac shrubs. The shady gourd tunnel offered a stroll down its path that led to the water garden. The small water garden had a bridge leading to paths throughout the garden. The Herb garden displayed favorite culinary herbs such as basil with 16 varieties. Master Gardeners were walking up and down the paths taking notes of the many ideas and name of plants.

For those of you who did not have the opportunity to tour these gardens, I highly recommend that you take the time to see them. It's well worth your time.

 Mariellen Griffith

State Advisory Committee Chairperson

The Creeping Charlie Song by Carol DeJong

To the tune of *On Top of Old Smokey*

By popular request, here is the song which brought fame (but no fortune) to the Cook South Suburban Master Gardener contingent at the 2003 state conference. Over 20 Master Gardeners dressed in green, pretending to be a weed and singing this song as they crept around the banquet hall- well can you imagine that?

I am Creeping Charlie
I ever will be
You'll pull and you'll pull
Down on bended knee

All over your garden
And into your lawn
I'll send out my tendrils
And choke before dawn.

If ever you see me
don't sit down and dine
'Cause I'll be all over
'Fore you finish your wine.

If you have a garden
You will know my name
'Cause I like to spread
And creeping's my game.

Illinois Steward Calendars

The Master Gardener program will **not** be producing a calendar for 2004 due to lackluster sales and the time involved in design, printing and marketing. But don't despair because The Illinois Steward magazine has a 2004 calendar with exquisite nature scenes from around the state. Individual calendars sell for \$12; order 5 -99 calendars and the cost per calendar is \$8; purchase 100+ calendars and the cost is \$6 per calendar. Shipping to your unit office or for individual orders will be extra. The calendars are lovely and would make great gifts for Master Gardeners or could be used as a fundraiser for your Master Gardener group. A picture preview of the calendars will be on the website soon at <http://ilsteward.nres.uiuc.edu/index.html> To order calendars, contact Karyn McDermaid at 217-244-3896 or karynk@uiuc.edu.



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Edited by

Monica David

Illinois Master Gardener Coordinator

University of Illinois Extension

1201 S. Dorner Drive

Urbana, IL. 61801

217-265-5256

modavid@uiuc.edu



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University of Illinois Master Gardener Office
Department of Natural Resources and
Environmental Sciences
1201 S. Dorner Drive
Urbana, IL. 61801

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