



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

Vol. 5 No. 2
March-April 2004

Coordinators' Comments

Hello to all – spring is on the way and the gardening season is right behind. My *Hamamelis vernalis* (Vernal witchhazel) is showing its strappy yellow petals so spring must be very close indeed. Please welcome our 575 new trainees who are taking their classes and will soon begin their volunteering efforts. In this group we have 53 folks who are taking the training course online. Please make a special effort to welcome all the trainees into your county groups. Help them to choose projects which utilize their talents and give them support as they begin to answer questions in the office or on the hotlines. The telephone hotlines can be very intimidating for new interns so please pair the new interns with some of your “veterans”. Now is the time for your mentoring programs to take action.

Thanks to all the Master Gardeners and local coordinators who have turned in their volunteer and continuing education hours for 2003. When these are tabulated, I will use these figures to emphasize the contribution you are making in your local counties. In the near future however, I will also need to compile data to more accurately reflect the impact we are making in our communities. Some examples might include: number of calls answered on the hotline; number of walk-in clients served in your office or number of attendees at your educational sessions or garden days. This is not new information- many of you are already collecting this data for your county boards or have been asked to report similar types of things to your regional offices. This information is important to the Master Gardener program because in the present climate of declining state funds, we must be able to justify the importance of our programs.

If you haven't already, take a few moments and check out the improvements to the Master Gardener website at www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/ From the

homepage you can access current and past issue of the Imagine newsletter, training site schedules and a new page called “MG Resources”. This page contains downloadable copies of the guidelines for advanced trainings, the state policies and volunteer agreements, information and registration materials for the Junior Master Gardener program, advisory committee applications and more. A fourth addition is a “Coordinators Only” page, which contains documents such as certificates, policies and volunteer management aids. This section is password protected and the passwords have only been released to county coordinators.

I have had several calls relating to the home visit policy for Master Gardeners, so I will try to clarify this issue. The advisory committee does not endorse home visits by Master Gardeners for a variety of reasons including the potential for personal safety issues and the inefficient use of time and resources. Visits may be allowed in special cases only, when the Master Gardener has received prior approval from the unit leader and Master Gardener Coordinator. The main focus of our efforts should be offering educational programs in public venues rather than offering assistance in a private setting. Some counties have arranged educational trips for the group to view potential disease or landscape problems at local residences and usually this is done with a coordinator or extension educator. This is certainly acceptable and a great learning tool for the volunteers involved.

We are working to service mark the Illinois Master Gardener logo. If you have any questions about the appropriate use of the logo, please contact myself or Rick Atterbury (ratterbe@uiuc.edu or 217-244-2828). Later this spring, I hope to have signs with the logo available for purchase. These would look great at your offices or at your garden projects. More information will be available at a later date.

 Monica David

Important Dates

March 13-14: “Weekend Gardener Expo”, Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, IL. Vendors plus a wide array of speakers. Contact Janet Burnett for more information- 618-692-7700.

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

March 13: Macomb Gardener’s Day, Western IL. University, Student Union, Macomb, IL. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Twelve gardening topics will be presented in four different sessions. Topics include Natives in Small Spaces, Strawberries, Succulents, Landscaping Your Front Yard, African Violets, Garden Treasures, Water Gardening and much more. Pre-registration by March 8th is required and the cost is \$25 (includes lunch). Sponsored by the McDonough County Master Gardeners. 309-837-3939.

March 19-21: Midwest Gardening Symposium, Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL. This 3 day symposium features 2 days of lectures with an optional trip to the Chicago Flower Show on Sunday, March 21. Featured speakers include: Steven Silk- “The Quest for Color”; Pam Duthie- “Shrubs and Trees in Bloom”; Bill Aldrich- “Illinois in Bloom”; Peggy Pelkonen- “Contrasting Designs”; John Ball- “A Tree– to Prune or Not to Prune”; Nina Koziol- “A Midwestern Garden” and Craig Bergmann- “Garden Inspiration.” Sponsored by the Morton Arboretum and *Fine Gardening* magazine. Cost is \$109 for one day, \$199 for Friday and Saturday lectures. 630-719-2468 or visit the website at www.mortonarb.org

March 20: “2004 Gardener’s Big Day”, Spoon River College, Canton, IL. The events will include a presentation by keynote speaker, Lauren Howell from the Luthy Botanical Garden. Twelve breakout sessions include lectures on Day lilies, Hypertufa, Bonsai, Magnolias, Tree Peonies, Hostas, Bluebirds, Cacti and more. Fee is \$18 before 3-12 and \$23 after that date. Sponsored by Spoon River College, Fulton County Master Gardeners and the Spoon River Garden Club. 309-647-4645 ext. 6031.

March 20: Ready, Set, Grow– Gardening 2004, Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, IL. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sessions include: Perennial Diseases, Container Gardening, Vegetables, Fertilizing Basics, Organic Gardening, Lawn Establishment, Herbs, Ornamental

Grasses and more. Jeff Epping of Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison, WI will talk on “Inspirations from English Gardens”. Cost is \$20. Sponsored by the Ogle, Lee and Whiteside Master Gardeners. 815-772-4075.

March 27: “A Day in the Garden”, Galena Convention Center, Galena, IL. The day begins at 8:30 a.m. with registration and a continental breakfast. The program features 20 workshop sessions including: Harvesting and Preserving the Season’s Bounty; Cooking with Herbs from Your Gourmet Garden; Vegetable Gardening in Containers; Pruning; Working with “Pint Sized” Gardeners; Wetland Gardening plus many more. The keynote address will be given by staff members of the Dubuque Arboretum and Botanical Gardens explaining the new Japanese Garden at their facility. Registration fee is \$20 and includes continental breakfast, lunch, afternoon snacks and all hand-out materials. Sponsored by the Jo-Carroll Master Gardeners. 815-858-2273.

March 29: Gardening In Schoolyards and Beyond, Macomb Jr/Sr. High School, Macomb, IL. 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. This workshop is for anyone interested in creating outdoor learning environments for children. The keynote speaker will be Jane Taylor, former curator of the Michigan 4-H Children’s garden. Cost is \$5. Sponsored by the Regional Office of Education. 309-837-4821.

April 17: “Potpourri of Gardening”, Schilling Center in the Richland Community College, Decatur, IL. 8 a.m. to Noon. Sponsored by the Macon County Master Gardeners. 217-877-6042.

April 17: “Ready, Set, Grow”- Gardenfest-2004 McHenry County College, 8900 US Rt. 14, Crystal Lake, IL. Registration begins at 7:45am and the last session ends at 3:50pm. There are 44 classes on a variety of topics, from beginner to advanced, including both lecture and practical sessions. New this year is a Gardening-101 track for the beginning gardener. Jim Fizzell is one of the featured speakers. Other instructors are Master Gardeners, U. of I. Extension Specialists and instructors from the McHenry County College Horticultural Program. The cost is \$35.00 and includes lunch. Some practical sessions require an additional \$10.00 lab fee for materials. Co-sponsored by the McHenry County Master Gardeners and McHenry County College. For information or a brochure, contact MCC at 815/455-8697 or the McHenry County Extension Office at 815/338-3737.

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Important Dates cont.

April 17, May 15, June 12, July 10, August 21, Sept 25, October 2: Tazewell County Master Gardener Clinics. Clinics are at various locations. Seven free monthly clinics held on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to Noon. No formal presentations but gardening questions will be answered at each clinic. Master gardeners with expertise in particular areas of interest will be available on each date. Call 309-347-6614 for more information.

April 17: “Preserving Historic Trees: A Workshop on the Specialized Techniques Needed to Care for Aged Trees in Cultural Landscapes”, presented by Charles Pepper, Deputy Director of the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, a program of the National Park Service at Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies, Mt. Carroll, IL., 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This workshop is designed for Master Gardeners, and others, working with historic sites. Registration fee \$50, includes morning coffee and lunch; 10% discount for Master Gardeners and members of State Museum Associations. For additional information and registration materials, see the Campbell Center website at www.campbellcenter.org or call 815-244-1173.

April 24: “Tri-County Gardening Day”, Brandywine Holiday Inn, Peoria, IL. Keynote speaker will be Don Schmidt, the Dean of Green, an instructor at Illinois State University. Vendors will be available for a little garden related shopping. Breakout sessions include: Temporary Greenhouse Building, Water Gardens, Woody Plants, Nomenclature, Hardscaping, Heirloom Herbs and Vegetables and Faux Finishes for Cracked Pots. The cost is \$30. Sponsored by the Master Gardeners of Woodford, Tazewell and Peoria Counties. 309-467-3789

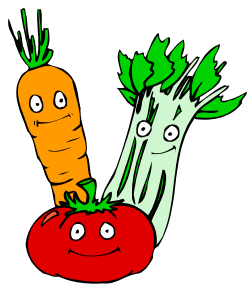
June 23-26: Tristate Master Gardener Conference, St. John’s University, Collegeville, MN. Sponsored by the Stearns County, MN Master Gardeners for Master Gardeners from Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois. Check the schedule on the website at www.mg.umn.edu. Registration materials will be posted soon.

September 9-11: Illinois Master Gardener Conference, Holiday Inn, Decatur, IL.

Deadline for submission of articles for the next issue is April 15, 2004.

“Grow Your Way to 5-a-day”

In celebration of Nutrition Month in Illinois, the Illinois Interagency Nutrition Council and the Illinois Department of Human Services is sponsoring the *Grow Your Way to 5-a-day* event in the Illinois State Capital on March 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



The public is invited to attend the festivities and learn more about the fruits and vegetables grown in Illinois. There will be numerous displays showcasing local, state and federal programs. The Nutrition Council will also be celebrating the impor-

tance of healthful eating, especially fruits and vegetables, and the benefits of physical activity for families in Illinois. University of Illinois Extension Nutrition Educators have asked the Illinois Master Gardeners to support their efforts in promoting this event. Master Gardeners are requested to serve as resource persons in their extension offices to help answer questions on growing vegetables and fruits. Information may be found on this website: www.aces.uiuc.edu/~INC. Lets support the partners (U of I Extension, your local WIC office, your local schools, & the local food pantry) in their efforts to encourage good nutrition through good gardening.

Master Gardener Apparel for Sale

Wear your Master Gardener apparel proudly! This newsletter includes a color sell sheet and order blank for the 2004 apparel. Many of our popular items from previous years are still available. New items for 2004 include a fleece pullover, nylon windshirt and a flower pot mug. All items are embroidered with the Illinois Master Gardener logo. Apparel is only offered for sale one time per year.

Please complete your order form and return it with your check (payable to the University of Illinois) to your local extension office. Orders will be tabulated and sent on to the state office. **Please check with your local Master Gardener Coordinator for his/her deadline for submitting orders to the unit office.**

The total price includes shipping to the local Extension office. **Please pick up your merchandise promptly after you are notified that the merchandise has arrived in your office. We will not be responsible for replacing damaged or missing apparel after July 15th, 2004.**

Spotlight on AJMPU Master Gardeners

Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski and Union counties make up the 5 southern most counties in Illinois bordering the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. Our rolling hillsides produce some of the best wine and table grapes and are home to apple and peach orchards. And with our zone 6 growing climate, we host the beautiful Southern Magnolia tree.

In the fall of 2002, our Master Gardeners hosted “Fresh Fruits in Your Backyard” at the Shawnee Community College. The program was designed for homeowners wanting gardening know-how on growing fruit trees and small fruits. Trudee Felcyn, Master Gardener, provided information on the growing, selection of varieties, and general gardening practices related to fruit crops. Elizabeth Wahle, Horticulturist from Edwardsville, presented the latest spray recommendations with valuable insights as to what commercial growers are doing. Bronwyn Aly, Research Specialist from Dixon Springs Ag Center, gave her analysis of the trials conducted at the center with blueberries and strawberries, followed by the latest techniques in deer proofing the orchard and gardens.

Audience response demanded more information that the six-hour course offered, so in late February 2003, we presented another 6-hour class held at the Dixon Springs Ag Center. The class was a “hand-on” training in the art of fruit tree pruning. Master Gardeners discussed pruning in the classroom, while Bronwyn Aly demonstrated on live trees in the orchard. Then students received a pruning saw, supplied by the local True Value Hardware store, to practice their newly learned skills. Gardening in the middle of winter can have its challenges as we encountered some heavy sleet and wind that day, but the students were brave enough to battle the weather to learn something new.

The “Fresh Fruits in your Backyard” program will continue to be presented annually because of the interest from the public. To grow healthy fruit trees and small fruits in your backyard is such a satisfying and enjoyable experience, not only for the homeowner, but also for the Master Gardeners who helped so much in planning, research and presenting.

Additional activities include the Massac County

Community Garden where gardening and nutrition are taught to developmentally disabled adults, hosting the Horticulture telnet programs, garden lectures for Homemakers, garden clubs, school classrooms and manning Master Gardener booths at local businesses and farmers markets.

Trudee Felcyn, AJMPU Master Gardener

Blue Poppies Make their Debut at the University of Illinois Plant Biology Conservatory



The himalayan blue poppy, *Meconopsis* ‘Lingholm’ will be on display at the University of Illinois Plant Biology Conservatory in March. While the exact date is still uncertain, mid to late March is when the poppies are expected to be in bloom. The Conservatory will be open to the public for the exhibit with a nominal fee of \$3.00 to help cover the cost of the exhibit. For additional information you can contact Debbie Black, Greenhouse Manager, Plant Biology Greenhouses at black3@uiuc.edu. Watch for further information.

New Updates on MG WEB

Check the website at www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg for new information. The Imagine newsletters, training schedules and MG resources (policies, advisory committee information and much more) have all been added to the website. There is also a password-protected page for “Coordinators Only” to help with volunteer management.

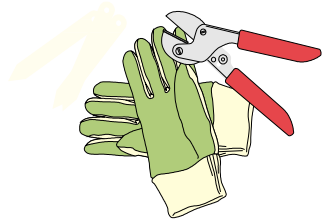
Chairperson's Chat

Spring has finally arrived after a snowy winter season. Many gardeners have already started their spring plantings indoors. Others are making plans where to plant their seeds or new plants outdoors. Spring is a time for new beginnings and new ideas.

At a recent State Master Gardener Advisory Committee some questions were raised about the differences between a Master Gardener organization and a garden club. Many Master Gardener programs, like all clubs, provide a social interaction that meets the interests and needs of the members. From looking at both organizations, I have found some similarities and some important difference.

Some of the similarities are:

- * We have similar interests in gardening.
- * We enjoy the out-of-doors.
- * We enjoy the company of other like-minded people.
- * We take training to improve our knowledge and skills in gardening.



However, there are some very important differences and they are:

- * A Master Gardener is a University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener volunteer.
- * The University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener Program provides horticultural information specific to local climates, soils and plants, and training to the gardening public, based on University of Illinois research, when available.
- * Master Gardeners provide non-biased horticultural information endorsed and sanctioned by the University of Illinois Extension.
- * Master Gardeners disseminate University of Illinois horticultural information to all who request it, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation.
- * Master Gardeners must complete a training course and serve a 60 hour internship before becoming a certified University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener volunteer.
- * Master Gardeners must take 10 hours of approved continuing education in horticulture and com-

year to stay eligible as a Master Gardener.

- * All Master Gardeners are required to sign a University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener Annual Volunteer Agreement. This agreement assures that all volunteers are committed to do the very best they can to make volunteer experience a productive and rewarding one.
- * Master Gardeners have a theme of "Helping Others Learn to Grow." Master Gardeners provide education and service to the public through group training or on a one-to-one basis.
- * Master Gardeners do not pay dues to belong to the Master Gardener organization.

In reviewing the list above I am proud to be a certified University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener. The program and organization are more than a social club. We provide an educational service to the public as volunteers.

 Mariellen Griffith

Master Gardener Advisory Committee Chairperson

Hort Club to Sponsor Mom's Day Flower Show

The Horticulture Club has been a powerhouse at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, offering its members an immense variety of opportunities. Members throughout the year are exposed to professionals' talks, plant sales, and horticultural therapy sessions. We instill the skills needed to grow, design, advertise, engineer and most of all lead. The club provides the opportunity for students to be creative and shine.

The Horticulture Club has maintained a tradition. A tradition of students creating and organizing a garden show. Club members use popular plant materials in fresh new ways through garden designs. Their goal is to educate the public and inspire new ideas. Members of the community, mom's and students are drawn to the University of Illinois's Stock Pavilion every spring for the last 48 years. Help us carry on the tradition by attending the debut of 'Garden of the Stars' on April 17th and 18th. Feature gardens include Wizard of Oz (will there be a witch?), Pirates of the Caribbean (a ship?) and Finding Nemo (a fish?). Come and see how we portray movie themes through flowers.

Saturday April 17 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

Sunday April 18 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

University of Illinois Stock Pavilion

Ornamental Germplasm Center Requests Plant Material

Dear fellow Master Gardeners;

I am an Ohio Master Gardener volunteer with the OSU Ornamental Plant Germplasm Center (OPGC). I am assisting with their efforts to collect germplasm of ornamental plants - specifically the heirlooms and related species.

The OPGC, established in 2001 at The Ohio State University in Columbus, OH, is the only USDA National Plant Germplasm System (NPGS) genebank specializing exclusively in herbaceous ornamental plants. The Center joins the NPGS network of some 25 other plant repositories around the United States to collect, conserve, evaluate and distribute our valuable crop germplasm. All the seed lines collected will be backed up at the state of the art long-term storage facilities of the USDA National Center for Genetic Resources Preservation in Fort Collins, CO. Currently, NPGS has 450,000 accessions (seed lines) in its genebanks and only about 3,000 of them are herbaceous ornamental species.

Without genebanks, genes that confer valuable traits such as natural resistance to insects or diseases can be lost when our heirloom plants are replaced by newer, trendier varieties or when natural habitats of the related wild species of our crops are destroyed by urban and rural development. The preservation of flower germplasm has become even more important as concentrated breeding narrows the gene pool of many popular flowers by focusing mainly on aesthetics.

The OPGC staff is responsible not only for maintaining the existing collection, but also for continuously building the collection, either through exchanges or plant-collecting expeditions, and for generating new and improved techniques for long-term conservation.

At this time, we are letting you know about our task in the hope that you will be able to assist us with our collection efforts. Please refer to our website <http://opgc.osu.edu> to learn more about this project.

We are interested in seed or, if that is not available, plant material from our targeted plants. Please click on "Priority Genera" on our website. In addition, if there are other significant heirloom, "native" or non-hybrid plants for which you have seed or plant material, we would appreciate you letting me know so we may consider adding it to our collection.

If you would be interested in assisting with this important national effort, please send me an e-mail at opgc@osu.edu or call me at 614-292-1941.

Thank you.

Joanne Dole

Ohio State University Master Gardener

Illinois Herb Association Summerfest

The Illinois Herb Association (IHA) has chosen Rockome Gardens as the location for its annual SummerFest to be held on June 19, 2004. Rockome Gardens is located five miles west of Arcola, IL, exit 203 off I-57 in the heart of the Amish country.



The IHA will present educational seminars, workshops, and demonstrations in air conditioned Blucker Hall on the garden grounds. Sessions will deal with topics such as growing and caring for herbs, utilizing herbs in the landscape, planting herbal theme gardens, crafting with herbs, and utilizing culinary herbs. Vendors will display and offer their products for sale in a 30' X 50" outdoor tent next to Blucker Hall.

The Illinois Herb Association, an affiliate member of the Illinois Specialty Growers Association is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to:

- * Promote and develop new and expanded markets for herbs and herbal products
- * Further the knowledge and safe use of herbs and herbal products
- * Bring together for cooperation and coordination all persons interested in the production and utilization of herbs
- * Collect and disseminate the best available information relating to the herb industry

For more information about Summerfest, contact Bill Rich at 217-728-7808 or bcrich@moultrie.com

Illinois Master Gardeners Invited to Tri-State Conference

The Master Gardeners from Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin meet every other year to share their Horticulture experiences. This year's conference, sponsored by the Stearns County, Minnesota Master Gardeners will be held at St. Johns University in Collegeville, MN on June 23-26, 2004. Illinois, North Dakota and South Dakota Master Gardeners have been invited to join the conference as well. Tours, classes and social events are all part of the fun. For a tentative schedule check the link on the Minnesota Master Gardener page at www.mg.umn.edu. Registration information will be available at a future date.

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