



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

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Coordinators' Comments

I hope that you were able to join us for the 2004 Illinois Master Gardener conference in Decatur this month. Master Gardeners from all over the East Central region turned 'bug crazy' to present "*Bitten by the Garden Love Bug*". From the wide array of tours to the excellent speakers, new silent auction and the enjoyable entertainment, this conference will achieve the same high level accomplished in previous years. Thanks to the steering committee for all their hard work!

One of the highlights of the conference is the awards banquet. This year we will recognize eight Sustained Excellence winners, 36 Outstanding Master Gardeners and 13 Teamwork projects. These winners have shown leadership and dedication to their organizations and the public. Once again this year, selection of the winners was difficult due to the high quality of applicants. Please join me in congratulating the winners. A listing of award winners is below and on page two of the newsletter.

 Monica David

Sustained Excellence Winners

Jo Ann Block	Fulton County
Arthur Feid	DuPage County
Helen Henry	Cook North Suburban Unit
Phyllis A. Hunt	Macon County
Caroline Jacobsen	DuPage County
George Keller	Cook North Suburban Unit
Linda Smith	McLean County
Fern Stinson	Macon County

Teamwork Project Winners

Plant A Row for the Hungry	Cook North Suburban Unit
Junior Master Gardeners_{sm} at Stretch Time	Coles County
Carlinville Primary	Macoupin County
Juvenile Detention Center Vegetable Garden	Sangamon-Menard Unit
Northwest Community Center Children's Garden	Winnebago County
Crisis Nursery Garden	Champaign County
Nursery School—Lessons in Gardening	Rock Island County
Prairie Farmer Farm Progress Show-2003	Vermilion County
Butterfly Education Garden	DuPage County
Standish Park Arboretum Tree Identification	Knox County
St. Mary's Day Care Center	Macon County
Prairie Plant Project	Washington County
Farmer's Market-Ask the Master Gardener	Cook South Suburban Unit

2004 State Outstanding Master Gardeners

Barb Bodine	Macon County	Jane Morris	Sangamon-Menard Unit
Terri Carlson	Lee County	Ann Pictor	Sangamon-Menard Unit
Elaine Cripe	Macon County	Mike Prescott	DeKalb County
Paul Dillefeld	Fulton County	Carolyn Purcell	Champaign County
Donna Easterday	Coles County	Beverly Reffett	Fulton County
Ruth Eck	Winnebago County	Barbara Rogers	Sangamon-Menard Unit
Paula Enstrom	Coles County	Gail Savidge	Sangamon-Menard Unit
Karen Grant	Sangamon-Menard Unit	Bonnie Simon	McHenry County
Anne Gray	Macon County	Jim Simon	Champaign County
Leah Groenwald	McHenry County	Ron Smith	Madison-St. Clair Unit
Nancy Hebb	Fulton County	Gil Solarz	Cook North Suburban Unit
Lloyd Johnson	Macon County	Diana Stoll	Kane County
Patricia Kosmach	DuPage County	Aporn Surintramont	Champaign County
Helen Leake	McLean County	Charlotte Talkington	McLean County
Barbara Lindholm	DeKalb County	Jennifer Tobin	Cook South Suburban Unit
Ray Lobmeyer	DeKalb County	Janice Weber	DeKalb County
Elizabeth Magnuson	Lee County	Joni Wolffe	Woodford County
Bill Mark	DuPage County	Barbara Wych	Boone County

Spotlight on Edgar County Master Gardeners

They may be few in number, but the Master Gardeners of Edgar County are an active group when it comes to educating the public in all things horticultural. With active members barely numbering in the teens, they are kept busy 12 months a year with beautification projects, public education, and promoting the Master Gardener Program.

Their focus for beautification projects is on design and guidance, although occasionally they decide to execute the plan themselves. In the five years since their inception, the Master Gardeners of Edgar County have designed multiple sites along IL Highway 1 through the city of Paris, including public parks, welcome sign gardens, and two gardens on the 4-H grounds. Some of their other projects involved designing and planting a low height and low maintenance shade garden at the public library to discourage break-ins, two large raised-bed gardens at the entrances to the largest cemetery in Paris, a garden for the Alzheimer wing of a nursing home in Chrisman, and municipal containers in the town of Brocton.

Educating the public is accomplished in a variety of ways. The Master Gardeners have a monthly column in both the county-wide daily newspaper and a local town

weekly. In the early spring they host a luncheon with two speakers who are experts in their field. The luncheon has been surprisingly successful from the start and has the added benefit of identifying prospective gardeners for future Master Gardener classes. They occasionally conduct evening seminars on specific subjects like container gardening, bulbs, and roses, etc. Members help with after-school programs and provide speakers and demonstrations for clubs and organizations. Of course, like all good county Master Gardeners, they have office hours to answer questions about horticultural problems sent in by the public.

Their focus is not entirely on Edgar County. One of their members, Harry Clayton, serves on the State Master Gardener Advisory Committee.

Lest you think this group is all work and no play, they have a great time as a group visiting gardens, nurseries, and shows throughout Illinois and Indiana. They also get together to make “garden junk” for their own yards like stepping stones, hypertufa planters, and leaf castings among other things. This winter will find them at an all-day retreat at a Bed and Breakfast a few months after their Christmas Party with spouses.

 Jan Phipps, Master Gardener

Chairperson's Chat

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a serious gardener

In Extension we talk to a diverse group of people. From the dedicated "whatever it takes" to the "just want it to be green". Horticulture affects everyone whether it is the tree lined city streets or the backyard garden. Some people are passive gardeners whether they like it or not they have a lawn, shrubs or trees and just want the landscape to look nice. Others want the newest and the best and are willing to spend time and money to make it happen. Some are drawn to gardening willingly. Gardening continues to be a favorite outdoor leisure activity. For some it is an obsession.

As we talk to clientele and other Master Gardeners, it would help us to know where they lie on the garden insanity continuum. Through numerous observations and suggestions from other gardeners, I came up with a garden insanity quiz. See where you are by answering the following questions with yes or no.

1. You can remember the date to plant the potatoes better than you can remember your own birthday.
2. You suffer from zone envy. No matter what winter hardiness zone you live in, you long for the plants in the next warmest zone.
3. When someone says escargot, you think of your hostas instead of reaching for the butter and garlic.
4. You're running out of places to garden, but under your fingernails looks promising.
5. You don't hesitate to book an extra moving van just to move your plants.
6. You would rather share your toothbrush than your hand pruners.
7. You schedule your vacation time to coincide with the tulip blooming season.
8. You carry more photos of your garden in your wallet than photos of the kids.
9. In the middle of winter you start cultivating the mold in the refrigerator just to see something grow.
10. On vacation your car is on automatic pilot for every garden center and botanic garden along the way.
11. You know far too much about manure and you insist on sharing that information with your friends during dinner parties.
12. You never have dinner before sunset during the summer.
13. Your neighbors don't recognize your face because that's usually not the end they see.
14. You hesitate when your spouse says there's not enough room in the house for her/him and the house plants.
15. Your house guests are afraid to stay in the guest bedroom because the philodendron looks hungry.
16. In your will it states your final resting place will be a companion planting with your spouse in the garden.
17. It really wouldn't bother you if your final resting place was the compost pile.
18. You insist on saving all 225 tomato seedlings even though you only need 6.
19. Your hands have furrows deep enough to plant bean seeds.
20. Your idea of a salad bar is grazing through your garden.
21. You know exactly how to run the leaf shredder but you haven't quite figured out how to work the DVD player.
22. Your idea of winter fun is sticking your hand in the compost pile to feel how hot it is.
23. In the fall you have been seen running around the yard in your pajamas throwing sheets over the impatiens.
24. You're on dogwood number 4 because you are convinced you know exactly why the first three died.
25. You can never have too much compost.
26. When preparing the laundry you often find seeds in your pockets. Now if you could just remember what they are.
27. Your list of four letter words include weed, clay,
28. You delight in the harvest of the first carrot. The \$25 and 20 hours of work to produce it seems irrelevant.

If you answered yes to 16 or more statements, than you are indeed pleasantly suffering from garden insanity. Don't fight it and enjoy. The Master Gardener program is definitely for you.

If you answered yes to 8-15 statements than you are on the verge of garden insanity. Either lock yourself in your room or give in to the green force.

If you answered yes to less than eight statements than you probably have a life beyond gardening.

If you didn't answer yes to any of these statements than you may be just as happy with AstroTurf.

Learn to recognize the signs of a serious gardener. It will make your job easier in the long run.

 Sandy Mason

Buy Fresh Buy Local

Farm Direct is a program by sponsored by the University of Illinois to connect consumers directly to Illinois farmers. In Farm direct you'll find farmers in your area who are growing everything from juicy heirloom tomatoes, succulent peaches, truly farm-fresh poultry and eggs to mushrooms, maple syrup and black raspberries. Farm Direct features growers who sell directly to consumers and is a handy county by county guide to farmers as well as farmer's markets. The website also features information on organic food, agritourism, sustainable agriculture, The Land Connection, Slow Food, cooking with farm fresh food and more. Check the website for information: www.illinoisfarmdirect.org

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