



# Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,  
News and Education

Vol. 5 No. 6  
Nov.-Dec. 2004

## Coordinators' Comments

Fall is here and garden clean-up is nearly over (mine won't begin till the snow flies...maybe). Congratulations to all the interns who have finished their 60 hours and are now becoming active. Please take time this holiday season to gather and recognize all of the Master Gardeners who have volunteered in your program. As you evaluate this year's successes and plan for garden projects next year, be sure to thank your volunteers for their efforts.

Don't forget to tally up those volunteer and continuing education hours and report them to your coordinator. January is the time for coordinators to report those hours to the state office.

Many thanks to the East Central Master Gardeners for an excellent conference in Decatur this fall. Master Gardeners from Champaign, Coles, Ford-Iroquois, Macon, McLean, Piatt and Vermilion put in many hours to make the conference enjoyable as well as educational. Personal favorites were the "20 Minutes in the Life of a Tree" demo, "Diagnosing Plant Problems" by the 3 amigos from Ohio State, Janet Macunovich's design classes, and Pat Lanza's "Lasagna Gardening". Mark your calendars now to attend the 2005 conference in Collinsville, IL. on Sept 22-24.

Fall is also a good time to consider taking Pesticide Applicator Training to become licensed. The Illinois Pesticide Act states that if you apply pesticides in the course of your employment or on property you do not own, you must be licensed. This also applies to volunteer work and this means all pesticides, even the ones you use at your home without a license. To obtain a license, you will need to take the General Standards exam to become an "operator". However, at least one person from your county will need to go one step further and become an "applicator". There are various categories including pest control in Turf, Ornamentals, Fruit, and vegetables; each is a separate exam.

Since your entire range of pesticide use must be covered by the categories on the applicator's license, this could mean several exams. Another option would be to take the Demonstration and Research category exam which would cover all plants in your demonstration garden. Also, put some consideration into choosing your applicator(s). If the applicator is out of town or not available, the operator may not legally apply pesticides. You must be in daily contact with each other at the time the pesticide application is going to be made. There is no fee for Master Gardeners to take the course or the test, except for class materials. To learn more about study options, license categories and requirements, go to <http://www.pesticidesafety.uiuc.edu/> and click on "training schedule." For further information contact the Illinois Dept. of Agriculture or the University of Illinois Pesticide Applicator Training Office at 1-800-644-2123.

If you haven't checked the Master Gardener website lately ([www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg](http://www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg)), then you may find some interesting updates. At long last, an index to the Master Gardener manual is available to download, print and add to your manual. This can be found on the MG Resources page. This section also includes the state policies, Junior Master Gardener information and forms, information on online training and the results of the 2004 Silent Auction.

Other updates to the website include the 2005 training schedules, information about 2004 Teamwork, Sustained Excellence and Outstanding Master Gardener award winners, pictures from the 2004 conference, continuing education opportunities and more. Please remember to send information to the state office about your local gardening days and workshops. Information will be published in *Imagine* or on the website.

Lastly, I wish you a restful and happy holiday season. Thanks for "Helping Others Learn to Grow"!

✍ Monica David, State Master Gardener Coordinator

## Thank You

The Coles County Extension Master Gardeners want to thank everyone for making their committee work easy at the 2004 Illinois Master Gardener Conference. The generosity of all the counties and individuals in the east central region, who contributed door prizes, was absolutely amazing. We were able to present over 80 fantastic 'gifts' to attendees during the Friday and Saturday luncheons.

And the first annual silent auction was an astounding success. The announcement in the summer *Imagine* newsletter was all it took to get people thinking. Master Gardeners (and their family members) are so talented.

We had original paintings, topiaries, trough planters, and garden art. In addition people donated books, tools, jewelry, trips and much more. The silent auction offered a wonderful variety of items at a broad range of prices. There was indeed something of interest to everyone.

And, we did not have to beg or plead to gather the items. Master Gardeners from all over Illinois participated by donating, bidding and purchasing. Thank you for assisting in the 'kick off' of what we hope will be the first of many silent auctions at future state conferences.

The \$3000+ generated from the silent auction will be used for Master Gardener state awards, printing of the *Imagine* newsletter and the Master Gardener Coordinators annual workshop.

The list of donors, items and buyers was too lengthy to add to this newsletter but it is available on the Master Gardener website at [www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/](http://www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/) Check the MG resources page for a complete listing.



## Important Dates

**December 2:** Iowa-Illinois Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference, Quad City Botanical Center, Rock Island, IL. Check the website: [www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson)

**January 19-21:** Mid-Am Trade Show, Lakeside Center at McCormick Place, Chicago, IL. Check the website at [www.midam.org/](http://www.midam.org/)

**January 22:** "A Winter Day in the Garden", Zwermann Theatre, Lincoln Trail College, Robinson, IL. 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Speakers include: Felder Rushing "Elements of A Fun Garden"; Greg Speichert "Stellar Solutions for Soggy Sites"; Nancy Clifton "Using Herbs We Grow" and "Hypertufa Trough and Spheres"; and Heather Sherwood— topic to be announced. Registration fee is \$30 and includes continental breakfast and lunch. Late registration fee \$40 after Jan. 10. Sponsored by the Crawford County Master Gardeners. 618-546-1549.

**February 24-25:** Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School, Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, IL. Call the Madison office for information- 618-650-7050.

**March 5:** Spring 2005 St. Louis Garden Symposium, St. Louis Community College at Meramec Featured speakers will be C. Colston Burrell "A Whole New Perspective for the Home Front Landscape"; Ping Lim "Shrub Roses"; Steve Vander Woude "Compatible Shrubs and Trees for the New American Landscape"; Dennis Schrader "Hot Plants for the Midwest" and Katy Moss Warner "Horticulture and Gardening: Past, Present and Future". Visit the website [www.hortco-op.org](http://www.hortco-op.org) for information.

**March 12- 20:** Chicago Flower Show, Navy Pier, Chicago, IL. [www.chicagoflower.com](http://www.chicagoflower.com)

**July 24-27:** International Master Gardener Conference, Saskatoon, Canada Check the website at: <http://mastergardener2005.usask.ca>

**September 22-24:** Illinois Master Gardener conference, Collinsville, IL.

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

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

## Organic Gardening Day

Organic Gardening Day 2004 has been scheduled for Saturday, November 20, from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, 1001 Killarney St., Urbana, IL.

Organic gardening experts from around the country will present five educational sessions:

**Dr. Rhonda Janke**, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist at Kansas State University, with major focus on sustainable cropping systems, who is also a former research director at Rodale Institute, will set the stage with a presentation entitled, *The Practical Side of Organic Gardening*.



**Dr. Leslie Cooperband**, who was recently promoted to Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, has done extensive research in composting and organic soil building. Leslie has now moved into a position with University of Illinois Extension, and will speak about *Building An Organic Garden from the Soil Up*.

**Rosemary Divock**, herbal author, speaker, gardener, and cooking enthusiast, from Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, will tempt our taste buds by demonstrating several recipes utilizing *Harvest Bounty in the Organic Kitchen*. Rosemary is a regular exhibitor in the retail area at Herb Day, whom many of you will recognize.

**Dr. Melvin Epp**, currently is the director of botanical research and activity at The Center for Human Functioning International, in Wichita, Kansas. Mel maintains a large organic garden at The Center, which supplies much of the organic produce used in the cafeteria there. He will explain the benefits of organic produce in our diet in a presentation entitled *Organics and a Healthy Lifestyle*.

**Dr. Rick Weinzierl**, Entomology Professor and Extension Specialist in the Crop Sciences Department at the University of Illinois, and author of circulars on biological control and beneficial insects, will wrap up the day's program by explaining *Organic Insect Management*.

There will be a retail area associated with this event, where a broad spectrum of organic garden-related products will be offered for sale.

Registrations will be allotted on a first come, first served basis, based on postmarks. Cost of registration, including lunch, is only \$49 per person. This includes seating in the lectures, coffee and tea during morning registration, an organic theme lunch buffet (including vegetarian options), and access to the retail area.

Reservations must be received no later than November 12, 2004, to guarantee lunch. Registration after this date will also cost \$49, but will not include lunch. Those interested in attending should mail checks, payable to the **University of Illinois**, to: **Organic Gardening Day 2004**, Attn: Carol Preston, S-406 Turner Hall, 1102 S. Goodwin Ave., Urbana, Illinois, 61801. Sorry, credit card orders cannot be accepted, and cancellations will not be refunded. For more information, call (217) 333-7738 or e-mail [preston1@uiuc.edu](mailto:preston1@uiuc.edu) and mention **Organic Gardening Day 2004**.

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### 2005 Training Locations\*

Location	Starting Date
Benton	1-20-2005
Bloomington	1-26-2005
Charleston	1-19-2005
Chicago Botanic Garden	1-26-2005
Danville	1-31-2005
Decatur/Springfield	1-25-2005
Edwardsville cluster	1-18-2005
Elgin	1-10-2005
Galesburg	1-19-2005
Garfield Park	1-24-2005
Joliet	1-25-2005
Morrison	1-28-2005
Quincy	1-18-2005
Rockford	1-11-2005
Wheaton	1-12-2005
Woodstock	1-14-2005
On-line Training**	1-17-2005

\*Please contact your local unit to attend these classes. Times and locations are listed on the website at: [www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/trainingschd.html](http://www.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/trainingschd.html)

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

## Chairperson's Chat 'Everybuddy needs a Buddy'

Remember that first day of grade school. It was exciting and scary all at once. New faces and new ways of doing things. We had to stand in line and raise our hand. No matter how confident we are now I believe that little school kid is still inside us. The Master Gardener training program can seem overwhelming to many people. For many trainees this may be the first time in a very long time that they have faced attending class and completing quizzes.

We have a large program here in Champaign County. Each year we have over 90 active MGs and 40 interns. It can be overwhelming for anybody to get involved. With so many projects and activities it's like a merry-go-round that never stops. In addition our online trainees don't really get to know anyone in their own class. We all know it's easier to climb aboard the merry-go-round if you have somebody to hold out a helping hand. The Garden Buddy mentoring system was developed to provide that helping hand.

In the Garden Buddy program experienced MGs (I promised not to call them old MGs) agree to be a buddy to 1 or 2 trainees/interns (also known as sprouts) for one year. One MG agrees to coordinate the Garden Buddy mentor list. They try to match buddies with sprouts according to geographic area and/or garden interest. (We have a separate program for mentoring interns for the MG hotline in the office in which experienced MGs serve as office mentors for the first 8 hours (usually two- 4 hour shifts) an intern is in the office.)

Our goal is to have garden buddies assigned early before trainees start class. Garden buddies get together for one meeting prior to meeting their sprouts to brainstorm ways to get their sprouts involved. A few suggestions include:

- \* Find out trainee interests and try to get them involved with a committee. Working together for a common cause is a great bonding experience.
- \* Invite sprouts to coffee, lunch or dinner before an MG activity.
- \* Invite them to the Wednesday morning coffee group (the Morning Glories).
- \* Offer to meet them at the next MG monthly meeting or community garden workday.

- \* Keep sprout informed on what is going on in the MG program. Get them familiar with the membership manual/directory and the MG website.
- \* Project a positive attitude about the program. Every program has room for improvement but it is generally a turn off to start with nothing but complaints.
- \* Send them a quick note or email to see how training is going.
- \* Make at least 2 contacts every month. Garden buddies with online trainee sprouts are asked to make additional contacts.

Buddies are asked to join their sprouts at the welcome breakfast on the first day of training, pizza party luncheon half way through training and graduation potluck.

The Garden Buddy system in Champaign county has produced life long friendships and goes a long way in making new MGs feel welcome. As new trainees come into your program in 2005, remember that little school kid. Be an ambassador. Go out of your way to smile and help them feel welcome. Remember everybuddy needs a buddy.

*Sandy Mason*— Champaign County Horticulture Educator & Chairperson MG State Advisory Committee

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## Three Illinois Sites to Pilot New JMG<sub>sm</sub> Curriculum



The Texas headquarters for the Junior Master Gardener<sub>sm</sub> program will be rolling out a new curriculum in spring 2005. The "Literature in the Garden" curriculum is targeted for children in grades 3-5 and will explore the relationships between reading, literature and gardening. Three sites in Illinois (from 23 sites chosen nationally) have been selected as pilot sites to evaluate the new curriculum with their JMG<sub>sm</sub> groups. Illinois pilots will take place in Hillsboro, Sparland and Wenona. More information about the new curriculum will be forthcoming. Check the JMG<sub>sm</sub> website ( [www.jmgkids.com](http://www.jmgkids.com)) for information about the Junior Master Gardener program .

## Spotlight on ....

### Fulton County Master Gardeners

Twenty-five very active Master Gardeners help University of Illinois Extension – Fulton County spread the horticultural message throughout the county. Their work includes community beautification projects, garden walks, speaker's bureau, youth programs, horticultural therapy, public education, one-on-one consultations, and much more!

Community beautification projects are numerous for this ambitious group. In 2004, they designed and helped install new landscaping for the Fulton County Highway Department. They maintained previously installed plantings at Spoon River College, in a town square butterfly garden, & at the county nursing home.

Currently, Master Gardeners are working with the Fulton County Health Department to develop a "Think Pink" garden in front of the Canton Health Department office. Master Gardeners are also working with the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Canton to develop another "Think Pink" garden on the church grounds. These gardens will display the pink Breast Cancer Ribbon as a reminder of breast health.

The Mississippian Indian Garden at Dickson Mounds Museum in Lewistown is a long-standing project that requires not only horticultural skills, but also historical research. Master Gardeners work closely with Dickson Mounds staff to draw plans for the garden based on the Mississippian Indian lives. They then plant, weed, harvest, and otherwise maintain the garden each year.

Several years ago, Master Gardeners began Garden Walks in Canton and Farmington. Those continue today and Master Gardeners provide horticultural education each year during the walks.

Youth Programs are the emphasis for several volunteers. They have helped implement teaching gardens at various schools, participate in special school events, and help with summer youth programs. Three volunteers lead a Junior Master Gardener 4-H Club in which four children recently received their certification.

Public horticultural education is provided in many ways. They answer many questions from Fulton County residents in their daily activities or through special educational booths at festivals and fairs.

Mostly this group knows how to have fun doing what they love! They try to meet monthly for social interaction and to discuss projects.

 Rhonda Ferree– Fulton County Unit Leader

## Congratulations to the Advanced MG Tree ID Graduates

The 2004 Advanced Master Gardener Tree ID sessions are almost done and have received rave reviews. Even tromping through landscapes in pouring rain or studying hard for that "challenging" final exam didn't dampen the spirits of these diligent tree enthusiasts. Please join me in congratulating the following Master Gardeners who received their pins and certificates this summer and fall:

### Northeast Region

Irene Bradley, Suzan Capillo, Brenda Dahlfors  
Beverly DePhillips, MaryAnn Dillavou, Don Gee  
Pat Gee, Caroline Jacobsen, Arthur King, Marva King  
Linda Schoenmakers, Patty Schreiber, Bill Sheahan  
Celia Turner, Paula Twilling, Kathy Uszler,  
Pam Weinberger and Marilyn Witney

### West Central Region

Cathy Carpenter, Gay Eflin, Terry Flaherty  
Eleanor Kabala, Alan Manchester, Terry Meade  
Barbara Nieders, Gerald White, Roberta Wienhoff  
and Cheri Wujak

### Southern Region

Treasa Brookman, Winnie Chappell, Jim Gilpatrick,  
Cheryl Green, Ernie Henson, Ann Henson  
Ben Huntley, Ray Kirkman, William Klopstein  
Joe Knoll, Kathy Lapp, Sarah Lee, James Lock  
Roseanne Melson, George Peterson, William Powers  
Brent Schindewolt, Dennis Sievers, Judy Smejkal  
Ronald Smith and Donald Taylor

### East Central Region

This group finishes October 29– check back in the next issue!



The Southern Illinois Advanced Tree ID class after finishing their final and graduation at McKendree College in Lebanon, Illinois.

## 2004-2005 State Master Gardener Advisory Committee

SOUTHERN REGION	WEST CENTRAL REGION	EAST CENTRAL REGION	NORTHWEST REGION	NORTHEAST REGION
Ernie Henson (MG) 618-822-6584 erni@midwest.net	Elaine Smillie 309-467-3789 esmillie@uiuc.edu	Darla Binkley 815-842-1776 dbinkley@uiuc.edu	Karen Durtschi 815-544-3710 durtschi@uiuc.edu	Diana Husband (MG) 708-349-0771 wort-woman@earthlink.net
Mark Hoard 618-242-9310 hoard@uiuc.edu	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
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Many thanks to the following Advisory Committee members who completed their terms in 2004:

**Barb Larson, Sharon Yiesla, Martha Smith, David Bobell and Nancy King.**

### Illinois Steward Calendars

The Illinois Steward magazine has a 2005 calendar with exquisite nature scenes from around the state. Individual calendars sell for \$12; order 5-99 calendars and the cost per calendar is \$10; purchase 100+ calendars and the cost is \$8 per calendar. Shipping to your unit office or for individual orders (up to 99 calendars) will be included. There will be an extra shipping charge for orders over 100 calendars. 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](mailto:karynk@uiuc.edu).

### University of Illinois Hort Club

The Hort Club brings students with a common interest in horticulture together to share and expand upon their knowledge, help gain practical experience, and increase awareness within the fields of Horticulture. The Hort Club has numerous activities throughout the year, including: hands-on workshops (such as propagation, Bonsai, and terrariums); caramel apple sale; grape picking and grape stomp; Christmas poinsettia and wreath sale; and outreach events through Horticulture Therapy (such as flower arranging with the elderly and painting pumpkins with kids). The club also sponsors various speakers from within the industry and the ever popular Moms Weekend Flower Show is the highlight of the year. The 2005 student-run show will highlight gardens across America.

The U of I will also host the national Pi Alpha Xi Intercollegiate Flower Judging and Design Competition on April 7 and 8th, 2005.

## Effect of Mulch Type on Yields of Tomatoes and Peppers at a Plant-a-Row for the Hungry Garden in Peoria, IL

This project was undertaken in order to compare the efficacy of a biodegradable mulch developed at USDA/ARS/NCAUR with newspaper/straw and bare soil for stopping weed growth and promoting vegetable yields. The USDA mulch was made from brown kraft paper, either 30 lb. or 40 lb., coated with epoxidized soybean oil/citric acid resin and a small amount of carbon black colorant. This mulch can be rolled out like polyethylene mulch film but will transmit water and gradually biodegrade in soil. Therefore, the coated paper mulch need not be removed at the end of the season like polyethylene.

There were four different mulch treatments (30 lb coated paper, 40 lb coated paper, newspaper/straw, bare soil), each of which were replicated 3 times in randomized order. Tomato and pepper plants were planted in adjacent rows with spacing of 1.5-2 ft. between plants and 3-4 ft. between rows. Planting took place in early June. Mulch samples were cut into 6 ft. x 2 ft. lengths then cut from the side with scissors to allow the mulch to be placed around the plants. Edges of the mulches were then weighed down with soil (peppers) or held in place by cages (tomatoes). The bare soil plots were hand weeded over the summer. Vegetables were harvested weekly beginning July 21 until September 15. Total number as well as weight of vegetables was measured. Soil temperature at a depth of 4 in. as well as mulch appearance were estimated periodically.

As shown in the Table below, there was no significant difference in yields between the different mulch types. The coated paper and newspaper/straw mulches were effective in preventing weed growth around the plants while laborious hand weeding was required for the bare soil plots. There was some degradation (a few cracks, holes) beginning for the coated paper mulches after 3 months but not enough to allow much weed penetration. Soil temperatures under the newspaper/straw mulches were about 5 °C cooler during the day than under the coated paper mulches or bare soil. This is probably due to the lighter color and insulative properties of the straw and newspaper. The oil coated paper mulches had a dark brown color similar to soil.

In conclusion, paper/polymerized vegetable oil mulches were effective in preventing weed growth and gave yields of vegetables similar to the newspaper/straw mulch or hand-weeded plots. For many people hand-weeding is a tedious and difficult task so use of a weed-blocking mulch would be desirable. Application of the paper/oil mulch might be a little easier than newspaper since it is in a roll form. The warmer soil temperature under the paper/oil mulch may also be an advantage in cooler climates or early in the season when temperatures are lower.

<b>Mulch</b>	<b>Total Tomato Yield</b>		<b>Total Pepper Yield</b>	
	Number	Weight (lb.)	Number	Weight (lb.)
30 lb. Kraft paper/oil	177	82	144	25
40 lb. Kraft paper/oil	198	83	106	18
Newspaper/straw	167	119	101	18
Bare soil	171	79	123	21

Participants in the project included Randal Shogren, Elizabeth Krietemeyer and Debra Palmquist of USDA/ARS, University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners Lynn Webb, Helen Nixon and Patrise Swanson and Monica David of University of Illinois Extension. Thanks also to Redeemer Lutheran Church in Peoria for the generous donation of land and water, to Greenview Nursery for donation of vegetable plants and to Pam Perrilles for her enthusiasm which helped the project get started

## Scott's Give Back to Grow Program

The Scott's Company is offering awards for individuals who take pride in giving back to their communities through gardening. Nomination categories are : Classroom Gardener of the Year; Good Neighbor Gardener of the Year; Urban Greenup Gardener of the Year; and Community Beautification Gardener of the Year. Each winner will receive a \$5,000 cash prize and two finalists in each category will receive a \$2,500 cash prize. **Deadline to submit entries is December 3, 2004.** Winners will be announced in February, 2005. For more information call 1-800-551-5971 and ask for a "Give Back to Grow" representative or check the website: <http://www.scotts.com>



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Department of Natural Resources and  
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ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO.  
75  
Champaign, IL

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