



# Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,  
News and Education

Vol. 9 No. 6

November-December 2008

## Coordinators Comments

I often receive questions from volunteers who wonder if they “are covered” by liability insurance while performing their volunteer activities. The answer is a conditional YES-Master Gardeners are covered by the University of Illinois Extension general liability insurance while participating in scheduled, pre-approved volunteer activities. The keywords being scheduled and pre-approved. There is also limited medical insurance coverage for participants who sustain accidental bodily injury while participating in an approved program. The limits of liability are \$2,000 per person, \$10,000 per accident and are subject to a \$100 deductible. The limit of liability is in addition to other collectible insurance. This insurance is on an excess basis, meaning that coverage only applies after your personal insurance has been exhausted.

Please keep in mind that in order to be eligible for this liability insurance, you must follow certain guidelines set down by the Illinois Master Gardener program.

1. Your volunteer projects must be pre-approved by your local MG Coordinator.
2. You must sign a volunteer agreement each year to remain active.
3. If an accident does occur– you must inform your MG Coordinator and fill out an accident report form.

**Volunteers Who Work With Youth-** Please remember that if you plan to work with youth in the course of your volunteer activities next year– you must go thru the screening process. This includes having a volunteer application on file; filling out paperwork for a DCFS CANTS check and an Illinois State Police Conviction Name Check. Extension staff will also check your name against the IL Sex Offenders Website. This screening process is good for 5 years and these records will be kept confidential in a file in your local county office. Now is a good time to do this paperwork so that you are all set to work with youth next gardening season.

 Monica David, Illinois MG Coordinator

## Conference 2008 a Huge Success

Thanks to the Master Gardeners of DuPage County with the help of Cook, Cook South Suburban, CBG, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will County Master Gardeners for an outstanding conference. The speakers and tours received rave reviews from the 425 attendees. Melinda Myers keynote address provided valuable insight on how to grow environmentally friendly landscapes. The photo contest was popular with entries from 47 counties (see the announcement of winners later in this newsletter). **The silent auction brought in \$4,870** to be used for the update and redesign of the MG manual. Thanks to all of you who donated items for the auction-your generosity is much appreciated. **Mark your calendars to attend the 2009 conference in Effingham on Sept 10-12.**

## New Members Join State MG Advisory Committee

The MG state advisory committee welcomes three new Master Gardeners– Robert Bisser, Theresa Greene and Linda Smith as well as educators Peter Chege, Ron Wolford and WC Associate Regional Director Rhonda Ferree. The advisory committee serves as advisory council for the state coordinator. Please contact your regional representative with ideas and suggestions.

### NE Region:

Staff– Susan Grupp and Ron Wolford  
MGs– Steve Canavis, Mary Anne Spinner

### NW Region:

Staff– Karen Durtschi, Peter Chege  
MGs– Mary Theising, Barbara Wych

### WC Region:

Staff– Carrie Edgar, Paula Robinson  
MGs– Robert Bisser, Roger Harfst

### EC Region:

Staff– Sharon Kuhns, Jennifer Nelson  
MGs– Harry Clayton, Linda Smith

### Southern Region:

Staff– LaDean Scheurer, Elizabeth Wahle  
MGs– Theresa Greene, Ernie Henson

**Chicago Botanic Garden:** Julia Zanieski

**Administration Rep:** Rhonda Ferree

**MG Coordinator:** Monica David

## 2009 International MG Conference “New Frontiers in Horticulture and Gardening”



The Master Gardeners of Southern Nevada invite you to join them in Las Vegas from March 22-26 for the 2009 International Master Gardener Conference. The conference will focus on issues that gardeners everywhere face—water conservation, proper plant selection, soil enrichment, pest control— while also presenting new concepts in environmental stewardship and “green” technologies.

Special events include the Sunset and Stars opening reception; Viva Las Vegas banquet and show featuring “Encore Follies”; Master Gardener poster session; trade show; IMGCC market place and silent auction and “Fit for Gardening” activities— pool party, exercise demos and walking tours.

Keynote speakers will be Jeff Lowenfels, founder of “Plant A Row for the Hungry” who will present a talk on “Teaming with Microbes— No More Clowning Around About Organics” and Marvin Miller, Ball Horticulture who will speak about America in Bloom. Over 24 different breakout sessions will be offered.

Tour destinations include Hoover Dam, Grand Canyon, Ethyl M. Cactus Garden, Red Rock Canyon, Desert Rose Garden, casino gardens and the Master Gardener Orchard, which is an outdoor living laboratory for testing fruit and vegetable varieties and more.

The host hotel, the Alexis Park, is the premiere all-suite non-gaming resort in Las Vegas. Visit the website [www.alexispark.com](http://www.alexispark.com) for more information.

Registration fees are \$260 early bird (**closes November 15th**); \$310 regular registration. Hotel rates are \$129 for a double, queen or king. For more information visit: [www.unce.unr.edu/imgc](http://www.unce.unr.edu/imgc)

## 2008 Photo Contest Winners

Thanks to all the volunteers who submitted photos to the second annual photo contest. We received 141 photos from 47 counties. Regards to Tom Ward, Ken McPheeters and Reid Barkley for judging the awards. The winner of each category received a \$25 cash prize and the top three entries were displayed at annual conference in Lombard in September. And the winners are....

### Illinois Public Gardens

1st Place— Marilyn Davis, Rock Island County  
2nd Place— Shannon Godby, Ogle County  
3rd Place— Jean Miller, Madison County

### Master Gardeners at Work

1st Place— Jane Hanson, DuPage County  
2nd Place— Loraine Miranda, DuPage County  
3rd Place— Ruth Ann Seney, Kane County

### Wildlife

1st Place— Richard Adorjan, Sangamon-Menard Unit  
2nd Place— Suzanne Eck— McHenry County  
3rd Place— Mike Gratti, Winnebago County

### Plants

1st Place— Nick Janakas, DuPage County  
2nd Place— Lynn Lewis, Logan County  
3rd Place— Kris Maher, McHenry County

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## Last Chance for 2009 Costa Rica Trip

A couple of spots remain for the Master Gardener Botanical trip to Costa Rica, January 17-27, 2009. This trip is a once in a lifetime opportunity to view and learn about tropical plants, bird species and biodiversity. Trip highlights include a visit to Ileana Tehran’s private orchid garden; La Paz Waterfall Gardens; La Selva Biological Station and rainforest trails; a chocolate tour; Collin Street Bakery Pineapple Farm; Arenal Volcano and Hanging Bridges; Hidalgo Ecotermals Hot Springs; Manuel Antonio National Park, Elise Kientzler Botanical Garden and much more. Several stops on this trip will include fairly strenuous walking.

The full itinerary may be found on the Illinois Master Gardener website at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/events>. Trip price based on double occupancy is \$3,550 including roundtrip airfare. **Hurry and reserve your spot now as the tour will close by late November.** Contact Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours, L.L.C. at 573-445-3097 or [info@hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com](mailto:info@hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com)

## Chairperson's Chat

For most of us the gardening season is nearly over for this year. But that doesn't mean that all our gardening activities come to a halt.

For the typical gardener there is always the anticipation of seed and plant catalogs that arrive after the first of the year. Then we have the excitement of the planning process as we look to update or rejuvenate some of our existing plant beds. We envision how these changes will enhance the current landscape and how they will contribute to our expected goals.

For the Master Gardener program the end of the gardening season includes much of the same thing. We look forward to using this time to begin planning for the next season. That means looking at educational opportunities to increase the knowledge and effectiveness of the Master Gardeners and recapping the current year to review the benefits of projects, and deciding on and planning new projects for next year.

As we go forward in our planning process within the Master Gardener program, we need to remember the goals and objectives of this program. Helping others learn to grow is more than just a tag line. It is our mission for our communities. Develop projects and find ways that you can share your knowledge and educate your community. And above all – have fun in doing it.  
✍ Karen Durtschi, Advisory Committee Chairperson

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## Important Dates

**January 14-16:** MidAm Trade Show and Workshops, McCormick Place West, Chicago, IL. [www.midam.org](http://www.midam.org)

**January 17:** Herb Day, Urbana Holiday Inn. 217-333-7738

**January 24:** "A Winter Day in the Garden", Zwermann Theatre, Lincoln Trail College, Robinson, IL. 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Five sessions include "Garden for Change = Transform the World" – Eva Shaw; "Tooling Around the Garden" – Roger Swain; "Fun with Gourds" – Helen Thomas; "Growing and Care of Fruits" – Roger Swain; "Diversity Beyond Belief - The Wonderful World of Cucurbits" – Mac Condill; "Birdscaping" – Sharon Sorenson. Sponsored by the Crawford County MGs and LTC. 618-546-1549. Flyer can be found at: [web.extension.uiuc.edu/crawford/](http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/crawford/) under the horticulture & environment tab.

**February 24 & 25:** Gateway Greening Conference, Gateway Center, Collinsville, IL. 618-650-7050.

## Garden trip to Holland, Belgium, Austria and Germany

May 3-14, 2009

Join University of Illinois Master Gardener Coordinator Monica David for a tour of the tulips and the springtime gardens of Holland, Belgium, Austria and Germany. The group will also visit some of the historical highlights of these four lovely countries. Registration is open to anyone with an interest in gardens, with preference given to Illinois Master Gardeners.

The tour begins in Holland with the medieval garden Be-gijnhof; the stupendous bulb and tulip gardens at Keukenhof; the international flower market at Aalsmeer and the palace gardens at Het Loo. On the way to Belgium and the romantic city of Bruges, the group will stop at the Hortus Botanicus Garden of Leiden University which is the oldest botanical garden in the Netherlands. Annevoie Gardens and the gardens of the Castle of Feyr are next on the itinerary. Then



the group will cross the border into Germany and enjoy a Rhine River cruise to see the ruins of castles and the vineyards which surround them. After a visit to the famous Heidelberg Castle and gardens, the group will continue through the Black Forest to the Baden Baden Rose Garden. The next highlight on the trip will be Lake Constance, a beautiful lake shared between Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The lake is home to the Garden Isle of Mainau which is a beautiful example of an Italian garden with a flower and water staircase, impressive floral pictures and more than 20,000 roses. The trip concludes with stops in Innsbruck and Salzburg, Austria and a visit to Mirabel Gardens.

The tour cost per passenger (twin share) is \$4,325. Single supplement is \$850. The fee covers airfare, all hotels, luxury coach transportation, entrance to all gardens and features, 10 breakfasts, 5 dinners and 1 lunch. The full trip brochure is available on the MG website at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/events>. **Initial deposit due no later than November 25.** To book the tour or for more information, contact Robyn Gulstrom at 269-629-9248 or [rgulstrom@comcast.net](mailto:rgulstrom@comcast.net)

## 2009 MG Training Sites

Location	Starting Date
Bloomington	January 14
Champaign	January 27
Charleston	January 14
Chicago Botanic Garden	January 14
Decatur/Springfield	January 22
Edwardsville cluster	January 6
Galesburg	January 13
Garfield Park Conservatory-Chicago	January 13
Joliet	January 16
Morrison	January 16
Mt. Vernon	January 15
Naperville	January 7
Oakwood	January 26
Ottawa	January 14
Quincy	January 14
Rockford	January 15
St. Charles	January 6
Woodstock	January 9
Online Training	January 12

Please contact your local coordinator to attend these classes as continuing education. Complete schedules are found at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/mg/>

## Illinois Stewart Magazine

Extension's award-winning nature magazine, *The Illinois Steward*, is offering an unbeatable subscription offer to new and seasoned subscribers! **While supplies last, receive a free boxed set of 8 notecards showcasing the beauty of Illinois—a \$14 value—with each Illinois Steward subscription.** Renew your subscription of *The Illinois Steward* today and give the stunning notecards to a friend...or purchase a gift subscription for a family member and use the notecards to send along warm holiday greetings. Don't miss your chance to take advantage of this limited time offer!

Grounded in the Land Ethic of Aldo Leopold, *The Illinois Steward* features articles about stewardship, conservation, preservation, and restoration of natural areas in Illinois. If you have any questions about *The Illinois Steward* please contact Bob Reber (217-244-2851) or Liz Haynes (309-792-2500) or visit *The Illinois Steward* website: <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/illinoissteward/>.

## Illinois Specialty Crops Conference

### Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield

The conference will be held on January 8 and 9th, 2009 and begins with Culinary Educators Michael and Brigitta McGreal, followed by sessions on fruits, vegetables, herbs and agritourism/marketing. Fruit sessions include "Simple Rules for Pruning Apple and Peach Trees", "Controlling Growth in the Tops of Apple Trees" and "Disease Management in Peaches and Apples". Topics on vegetables run the gamut of disease management to production to marketing and include "Organic Insecticides for Vegetable Insect Control" and "Options, Effectiveness and Management of Bt Sweetcorn". Herb sessions include such topics as designing with herbs, making herbs work for you and the future of the herb industry. The agritourism/marketing track will feature sessions on how to capitalize on consumer trends, how to increase on-farm sales and how to work with the media. Several pre-conference tours and seminars will focus on production issues such as insurance, legal issues and biocontrol. To receive registration materials contact Diane Handley at 309-557-2107 or [handley@ilfb.org](mailto:handley@ilfb.org). A detailed conference agenda is available at [www.specialtygrowers.org](http://www.specialtygrowers.org). The Crowne Plaza is reserving a block of rooms for \$81/night. Call the hotel directly at 217-529-7777.

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## How Far Does Your Food Travel?

Many of us don't give buying produce a second thought at the grocery store. In fact, we've come to take it for granted that most produce will be available year-round, despite the weather outside. Did you ever think about how far your food has traveled before it sits in the produce section at your local grocery store? Researchers have coined the term "food miles" to define the distance a food travels from where it is grown to where it is purchased and ultimately consumed. The food miles assigned to common foods are a lot greater than you may think. Researchers at Iowa State University compared how far foods traveled to reach local markets. A typical carrot traveled an average of 1,838 miles before it reached the market! Compare that to a locally grown carrot that only had to travel 27 miles to market.

A great opportunity to learn more about using locally grown produce entitled "**Buy Local – Eat Healthy**" will be offered on Saturday, January 10, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza, Springfield, IL. Registration price (\$45) includes lunch. This program follows the annual Illinois Specialty Crops and Agritourism Conference. For more information check [www.specialtygrowers.org](http://www.specialtygrowers.org).

✍ Jennifer Nelson, Horticulture Educator

## American Horticulture Society

I recently had the opportunity to visit River Farm—the headquarters of the American Horticulture Society. River Farm, in Alexandria features a brick home built in 1757 by William Clifton and later owned by George Washington. In the perennial border stands the original gates of the White House, first installed in 1819 during the reconstruction after the War of 1812, and later moved to River Farm. The gardens are a mix of naturalistic and formal gardens and include a children's garden, the George Harding Memorial Azalea Garden and a Growing Connection demo garden featuring Earthboxes®. Events held at the headquarters include lectures, special exhibits, holiday events and hands-on learning events for children.

The American Horticulture Society (AHS), established in 1922, is one of the oldest national gardening organizations in the country. AHS partners with and promotes several outstanding projects you may be aware of including Plant-A-Row; The National Children's and Youth Gardening Symposium; the National No Child Left Inside Coalition; The Growing Connection and Earthboxes®, Green Garage® and the Junior Master Gardener® National Growing Good Kids Book Awards.

Yearly membership to AHS is \$35. This fee includes the *American Gardener* magazine; discounts on books sold by AHS and their reciprocal admissions program. The reciprocal admissions program offers free or reduced admission to many public gardens (including CBG, Morton Arboretum, Klehm Arboretum and more) as well as national flower and garden shows. Another benefit of membership is the free online webinars by nationally recognized gardening experts. Tracy DiSabato-Aust presented “Designing with Color and Texture for Visionary Effects” in July of this year. On October 16th, I joined Colston Burrell's one hour class on Woodland Gardens. These were both excellent presentations and can be done on your computer from home as long as you have high-speed or broadband internet connections. Lastly, AHS sponsors a members only Seed Exchange. Clean, dry seeds are sent in by members in the fall and then a list of available seed is published in early January. Members who donate seed get first pick of the available seeds. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Seed exchange this year, participants will share “Seed Stories” related to seeds received or donated through the Seed Exchange.

✍️ Monica David, IL Master Gardener Coordinator

## Visit Chicago's Greenest Home

You're invited to explore a real, three-story modular and sustainable “green” home in the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry's own backyard to learn about the ways, big and small, that you can make eco-friendly living a part of your life. The home, conceived by Michelle Kaufmann Designs and built by All American Homes, forms the exhibit *Smart Home: Green + Wired*, Powered by ComEd and Warmed by Peoples Gas. Celebrating exciting new directions in sustainable living and spectacular, environmentally-friendly technology, *Smart Home* offers guests guided tours of the 2,500 square-foot home and grounds, located in a park on the east side of the Museum.



The *Smart Home*'s native and sustainable landscape, features beautiful gardens around the house that are alive with plants native to the area. In the garden, there is a sustainable vegetable garden, rain gardens and other vegetation. Visitors learn how the gardens can be used for food, indoor climate control and water recycling and conservation. The roof is covered by a green-roof garden as well as photovoltaic film, which harvests daylight and provides much of the home's electrical energy. Rooftop gardens not only act as a source of cooling in the summer and insulation in the winter, but also absorb precipitation, which reduces storm water runoff, which can be reused for landscape irrigation. In the exhibit, you'll discover the process of building a garden, along with its many environmental benefits.

University of Illinois faculty and Extension staff were part of the team that designed the gardens. Master Gardeners from all over the Chicago area have been tending and managing the garden and also serve as historians and docents for visitors and student groups. On July 19th, DuPage County volunteers hosted a “Bug Bash”. Stations included Sort a Bug, Wormania, the Insect Petting Zoo, the Monarch Butterfly and Butterfly Crafts, Insect Face Painting and Ask a Master Gardener. On October 25, Will County Master Gardeners hosted an event featuring two passive and two active stations. The first group featured both season extenders (cloches, row covers, a small greenhouse, model of cold frames) and “Gifts from Nature”, with a presentation on using natural materials to create gift wrapping. The two active stations included a lasagna garden demo and a hands-on session on beneficials, with a focus on spiders.

## Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant Applications due November 30

The *Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant* program can assist you in your youth garden projects. Funds of up to \$600 per educator are available through this competitive grant program. Butterfly gardens, prairie plots, wetlands and other wildlife habitat areas can be implemented. Teachers and youth group leaders are eligible to apply. Students should be involved in all aspects of the program, from design to maintenance, and the project must increase the wildlife habitat value of the site. Applications are due by November 30. For complete instructions and a copy of the application form, visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/education/CLASSRM/grants.htm>. The *Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant* program is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) Division of Education with funding administered by the Illinois Conservation Foundation.

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Natural Resources and  
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