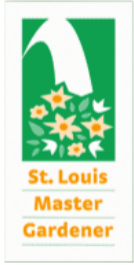




ST. LOUIS MASTER GARDENER 2009 ANNUAL REPORT





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OVERVIEW This annual report provides a summary of the activities and accomplishments of the St. Louis Master Gardener Program during 2009. A total of 275 active Master Gardeners:

- Provided 35,700 hours of volunteer service to organizations promoting horticulture throughout the metropolitan region, an increase of nearly 21% over 2008.
- Delivered >100 horticulture presentations to a wide variety of audiences.
- Donated a total of \$2,000 to three community organizations promoting horticulture, plus another \$1000 to the Plants-of-Merit program®.
- Helped train 29 new Master Gardeners.

BACKGROUND The Master Gardener program is a national organization of trained volunteers who work in partnership with their respective communities to promote horticulture and gardening. Founded in 1972 in Seattle, Washington, Master Gardener programs exist today in most states. The St. Louis Master Gardener program, established in 1983, is a partnership between the University of Missouri Extension and the Missouri Botanical Garden.

The Mission of the St. Louis Master Gardener Program is to provide horticultural information and assistance to the public for community service and gardening pleasure through the volunteer efforts of Master Gardeners.

Oversight and direction of the St. Louis Master Gardener program is provided by one Coordinator each from University of Missouri Extension and the Missouri Botanical Garden as well as an Advisory Committee comprised of nine Master Gardener members. The Advisory Committee meets on a monthly basis, and all Master Gardeners are eligible to serve, with members elected to serve a 3-year term. Advisory Committee functions include the development of an operating budget and the designation of approved volunteer activities and community outreach opportunities. The Committee also monitors an annual training and continuing education program. During 2009, the Advisory Committee also updated its By-Laws and Policies and Procedures.

VOLUNTEER EFFORTS During 2009, St. Louis Master Gardener volunteers made a significant impact by providing more than **35,700 hours** of service – or the equivalent of **17 Full-Time Employees (FTEs)** - to a total of more than forty St. Louis area organizations and St. Louis Master Gardener affiliated programs, services and activities. During all seasons, Master Gardeners could be found actively gardening or helping to instruct others in the entire metropolitan St. Louis area. Among the many organizations that they supported during 2009, plus the number of volunteer hours that they reported, are the following:

The Butterfly House Volunteer activities included both instructional programs and outreach presentations at off-site locations such as classrooms, as well as serving in docent positions structured to help guests learn about plants, butterflies and invertebrates. **[274 hours]**

Flora Conservancy at Forest Park St. Louis Master Gardeners volunteered with the Flora Conservancy of Forest Park by working in the Jewel Box, Pagoda Circle, at the golf course, or in the Savanna and Steinberg prairies. Volunteers also worked during the winter in the greenhouse of Forest Park, assisting with seed planting, propagation, and general plant maintenance. As the weather warmed up, the volunteer group headed outside to prepare beds and to plant the results of their winter's work. During the summer, the Master Gardener volunteers helped maintain the beds and kept them as weed-free as possible. **[2,099 hours]**

Forest Park Forever (FPF) Horticulture & Nature Reserve Volunteers worked side-by-side with Forest Park's horticulture and naturalist staff to maintain and sustain landscapes in Forest Park. FPF is responsible for overseeing seven zones (approximately 350 acres) in partnership with the City of St. Louis Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry. Zones include: the Visitor and Education Center grounds, Emerson Grand Basin & Post-Dispatch Lake, Art Hill & the Dual Path, World's Fair Pavilion & Government Hill, Steinberg Ice Rink & Murphy Lake, various Park entrances and the Forest Park Nature Reserve (which includes prairies, old-growth forest, savannas and wetlands). Typical duties included planting, weeding, pruning, clean-up, watering, the removal of invasive species and mulching. **[257 hours]**



Forest ReLeaf Master Gardener volunteers helped plant and propagate young trees and shrubs at Forest ReLeaf of Missouri's CommuniTree Gardens in Maryland Heights. Since 1993, Forest ReLeaf has distributed more than 94,000 trees and shrubs for planting by community groups and agencies throughout the region, while also engaging and educating many thousands of citizens about trees and their care. **[356 hours]**

Gateway Greening Gateway Greening each year selects several community gardening projects to be developed. These gardens improve the appearance of neighborhoods while also inspiring, educating and reflecting the pride of the participants – often becoming community focal points and catalysts for neighborhood improvement. Master Gardeners assisted in garden development by planting, weeding, watering, and pruning as well as by maintenance of the garden grounds, equipment, and buildings.

[1,789 hours]



Junior TreeKeeper Program Currently, this program is taught to third graders at three of the elementary schools in Kirkwood. The goal of the program is to teach appreciation of the urban forests and educate children in the identification and cultivation of trees. Master Gardeners provided horticultural education support to the third grade teachers. [33 hours]



Lafayette Park Established by city ordinance in 1851, Lafayette Park is the oldest developed urban park west of the Mississippi River, first serving as a parade ground during the Civil War. Extensively landscaped after the war by the renowned landscape architect, Maximillian Kern, the park truly came into its own during the Victorian "Gilded Age" of the late 1800s. During 2009, Master Gardeners assisted in the overall maintenance and preservation of these historic grounds. [495 hours]

Litzinger Road Ecology Center The Litzinger Road Ecology Center (LREC) is a 34-acre nature facility located in central St. Louis County. Affiliated with the Missouri Botanical Garden, LREC offers teacher / student groups hands-on opportunities to investigate and learn about nature in local settings - including woodlands, prairie, a creek, as well as in a small greenhouse. Master Gardeners worked with native ecosystem restoration in LREC's prairie, woodland, and riparian habitats in 2009. The restoration included invasive species removal and restoration using native plants and shrubs in order to expand diversity, as well as native seed harvesting. [497 hours]



Longview Farm Park Dedicated Park volunteers have been renovating, enlarging and enhancing the gardens in this 20-acre park surrounding the historic Longview home located in suburban Town & Country. Master Gardeners assisted these volunteers with numerous horticultural tasks, including the recent installation of fall bedding plants as pictured. [543 hours]

Missouri Botanical Garden Each year, the Missouri Botanical Garden (MOBOT) is by far the St. Louis area organization that benefits the most from total service hours contributed by the St. Louis Master Gardeners, and 2009 certainly saw this tradition continue. This world-class botanical garden and renowned St. Louis institution offered numerous opportunities for Master Gardeners to provide assistance, including:

Docent Services Master Gardeners helped, along with other MOBOT volunteers, to provide lectures and tours to Missouri Botanical Garden visitors. **[84 hours]**



Outdoor Gardens Working alongside other MOBOT volunteers and trained staff members, St. Louis Master Gardeners helped maintain one of the world's most-prized public gardens. Tasks included planting, weeding, mulching, raking, watering, trimming, pruning and many more activities as directed by MOBOT staff. **[5,596 hours]**

Greenhouses Master Gardeners worked in MOBOT's Greenhouses throughout 2009. **[290 hours]**

Kemper Center The Kemper Center for Home Gardening provides services for the public that includes assistance and interpretation of University of Missouri Extension Bulletins and Kemper Center Fact Sheets, the operation of computer-based applications, and the accessing of library resources, videos and soil tests. Volunteers also help to answer the public's basic gardening questions at the Center's reception desk. **[3,363 hours]**

Plant Doctor The "Plant Doctor" Desk located in the Kemper Center is a walk-in service that provides resource-based information to help identify an individual's plant or to diagnose a plant problem. The Plant Doctor desk is open Monday through Saturday and is supported by Master Gardener volunteers who also attend special plant, gardening, and diagnostic classes arranged for Plant Doctor and Horticulture Answer Service volunteers. **[3,508 hours]**



Horticultural Answer Service Started by George Pring after he retired as superintendent of the Missouri Botanical Garden's grounds in 1963, this service was originally staffed by Garden staff members. In 1970, the Regional Council of Men's Garden Clubs was asked to help staff it. When the Master Gardener program began in 1983, these "Answer Men" received the initial training to become Master Gardeners. Currently, the Answer Service responds to questions from 9 am to Noon, Monday thru Friday from March thru October. During the winter months, there are a few volunteers who come in each day, with volunteers required to complete an on-the-job internship. **[2,768 hours]**

Horticultural Research Projects Depending upon background and interests, Master Gardener volunteers may develop, research, write, or proof technical gardening information for GardeningHelp.org, the Garden's horticultural information website. Other volunteers may process and enter data or photograph garden plants for the MBG PlantFinder. **[583 hours]**

Orchid Range St. Louis Master Gardener volunteers help the MOBOT staff maintain the Garden's extensive orchid collection. They also assist in the substantial effort needed to prepare for the annual Orchid Show held in the Ridgeway Center each year. **[424 hours]**



Bloom Recording Master Gardener volunteers check, on a weekly basis, the flowers that are in bloom at the Garden. This information is then downloaded into MOBOT's website to inform and to enlighten the general public. **[195 hours]**

Kemper Adult Education The Garden's Adult Education Program offers the St. Louis Community a diverse number of classes pertaining to nature, gardening, art, crafts, cooking, and lifestyle. Each year, about 200 classes are made available for Garden members and the general public, with the Garden registering about 1,800 students annually. Classes are offered at the Litzinger Road Ecology Center, the EarthWays Center, the Butterfly House, Shaw Nature Reserve, or at the Garden itself. Master Gardeners participate as instructors in a number of the gardening classes and/or tours that are offered. **[163 hours]**

Operation Brightside Operation Brightside is the region's oldest not-for-profit cleaning and greening initiative. The organization enriches and beautifies St. Louis by restoring, maintaining and growing the community landscape. Saint Louis Master Gardeners participated during 2009 by planting window boxes for City Hall, and by assisting with other plantings downtown or at Lake Louie (located at I-64 at the 20th Street exit). They also helped as mentors for assorted neighborhood garden projects and by assisting with daffodil bulb plantings and by supervising other volunteers. **[161 hours]**



Plastic Pot Recycling Over 350 million pounds of plastic is disposed into landfills each year in the U.S. by the gardening public. The "Pots to Planks" Program was initiated in 1998 to divert a portion of this plastic back into a useful product. In the program's first year about 10,000 pounds of pots and trays were heaped in a pile on the parking lot of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Since that time, each year a larger collection is made and Master Gardener volunteers help with organizing, cleaning, and sorting the plastic pots brought to MOBOT. To date, over a half million pounds of horticultural plastic has been collected. This material is granulated on site at the Monsanto Center (adjacent to the Garden at 4500 Shaw Blvd.) and recycled into lumber, pallets and other goods. This program continues to grow as more and more gardeners are enthusiastically moved to recycle their horticultural plastic. **[586 hours]**

St. Louis County Parks Master Gardeners volunteered alongside other fellow volunteers and the Horticulture staff of the St. Louis County Parks Department to provide assistance with planting and maintenance was at Queeny Park, at the Faust Park Carousel Gardens & Conway House, and at the Museum of Transportation's Gardens. **[696 hours]**

Shaw Nature Reserve The Reserve (located 35 miles southwest of St. Louis in Gray Summit, Missouri) includes 2,500 acres of natural Ozark landscape and managed plant collections. Master Gardener volunteers assist the staff by providing environmental education, the restoration and protection of natural habitats, and ecological research, all as a means to preserve and enhance the public's enjoyment of the natural world. **[152 hours]**

Soule Senior Center for Older Adults The Samuel D. Soule Center for Older Adults was founded in the late Spring of 1984, as a result of the generous contributions of the family and friends of Dr. Soule in honor of his 80th birthday. The Center runs a host of senior-related activities, while a volunteer base of Master Gardeners and MBG Guides help provide outreach programming. These volunteers visit senior centers, nursing homes, and other locations and bring a bit of the Garden into the lives of others. Some recent Master Gardener programs included: Romance of Roses, Flowers Around the World, Missouri Wildflowers, Container Gardening, Healthy Houseplants, and Forcing Bulbs Indoors. **[145 hours]**



The Green Center Founded in 1998, The Green Center is a natural oasis in the heart of the St. Louis metropolitan region. The Center is headquartered in a residence built in 1932 and located in Kaufman Park, University City, Missouri. The heart of the Green Center is its outdoor spaces, including a learning and demonstration garden on the grounds, a half-acre prairie within a short walk of the headquarters, a half-acre Missouri wetland, the 26-acre Ruth Park Woods, and an Arboretum in University City's Heman Park. Master Gardener projects have included native plant propagation, working with schools on and off site, and

helping to maintain the 28-acre campus (including the prairie, an herb garden, a vegetable garden, a children's theme garden, a 33-sq.ft. Geodesic-domed greenhouse, wetlands, and the Ruth Park woods). **[303 hours]**

U. City in Bloom & Olivette in Bloom Master Gardeners worked with other volunteers and a staff of several part-time professional gardeners to help maintain municipal gardens in these two communities. **[68 hours]**

Urban Roots Urban Roots is a cooperative effort between St. Louis Master Gardeners, Gateway Greening, and Operation Brightside. This collaborative group works to plant spectacular horticultural displays along the most visible traffic medians in the downtown St. Louis area. **[345 hours]**

Other Activities In addition to working on the foregoing sites and projects, the Saint Louis Master Gardener program also provides services to several other important programs and activities, including:

Speakers Bureau In 2009, the Master Gardener Speakers Bureau provided 107 presentations to approximately 2,332 individuals throughout the community. Programs were presented to 52 different groups or forums, including: various area garden clubs, retirement homes, the annual Home/Garden Show, the Parkway Adult Education program, St. Louis Community College Adult Education, retirement centers, St. Louis Children's Hospital, Mothers of Twins, Rankin Jordan, Premier Bank, Maplewood Library, St. Timothy's Episcopal Women's Club, Teachers Honor Society, Washington University Women's Club, St. Louis County Widows Support Group. A total of \$5,250 was raised through the St. Louis Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau initiative in 2009, with a portion of these funds used in turn to help support the program's Community Outreach efforts. The list of presentations currently available from the Speakers Bureau is shown in Appendix 1.

Best of Missouri In connection with *The Best of Missouri Days* weekend festival held annually at the Missouri Botanical Garden in October, the St. Louis Master Gardener organization operates an apple cider press to help generate funds for its Community Service Awards program. During 2009, 37 Master Gardeners participated in this endeavor, earning in excess of \$2,000. These funds, along with funds obtained from the Speaker's Bureau; are used to help fund the Master Gardener's annual contributions to outside organizations that help promote horticulture in the community.



Community Service Awards In 2009, St. Louis Master Gardeners presented Community Service Awards to three organizations: Youth Planting Roots, Lafayette Park Conservancy, and Forest ReLeaf. These organizations were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the St. Louis gardening scene.

- A \$500 award was made to **Youth Planting Roots**, which is a new initiative led by Catholic Charities Community Services. The program was begun as an outgrowth of an 8th grade student's science experiment with hydroponics. The program serves over 200 St. Louis students from low-income neighborhoods with an aim to

create a horticulture curriculum that can be incorporated into existing reading, writing and mathematics curriculums.

- A \$500 award was made to **Lafayette Park Conservancy** to be applied toward the purchase of an irrigation system for the Rock Garden area. The Conservancy has spear-headed the restoration and enhancement of this historic Victorian era strolling-park that is enjoyed by thousands of visitors from the Greater St. Louis area and beyond.
- **Forest ReLeaf** is an organization dedicated to providing the education and resources to properly plant and care for our community trees. The organization supplies trees at no cost to public and not-for-profit entities such as parks, cities, school playgrounds, and other important green spaces. Volunteers, including four Master Gardeners (out of fourteen volunteers who regularly participated in 2009), worked with the forestry program manager to grow over 9,000 seedlings last year. The efficient handling of this volume of orders requires some additional mechanical assistance with the "heavy lifting." A \$1,000 award was made that will be applied toward the purchase of a second utility vehicle early in 2010.

Website & Newsletter The St. Louis Master Gardener organization operates a website at www.stlmg.org in order to provide information to its members as well as for the general public. Information on the website includes Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes as well as a monthly Newsletter.

MASTER GARDENER TRAINING Each year, the St. Louis Master Gardeners help to facilitate a rigorous horticultural educational program for trainees seeking to attain Master Gardener status. Trainees usually come from the entire greater St. Louis metropolitan area.

In conjunction with **Dr. Steven Cline** (Master Gardener Program Coordinator from the Missouri Botanical Garden), **Leigh Butler** (Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator), and **Nathan Brandt** (Master Gardener Coordinator and a Horticulture Specialist from University of Missouri Extension), a **Training Coordinating Team** consisting of eleven St. Louis Master Gardener members oversaw and facilitated the 2009 training program. **[1,210 hours]**

The subject matter for the 2009 training course was comprised of the following major topics:

- Botany Basics (*i.e.*, plant relationships, nomenclature, anatomy, growth & development)
- Propagation Techniques
- Soils, Composting & Mulching
- Plant Groups (*i.e.*, woody ornamentals, natives, turfgrass, annuals & perennials, etc.)
- Maintenance (pruning)
- Plant Health / Care (*i.e.*, insects, diseases, and integrated pest management (IPM))
- Landscape & Garden Design

Training classes were taught by staff from the University of Missouri, the Missouri Botanical Garden (MOBOT), and St. Louis Community College at Meramec (SLCC Meramec), as well as other horticultural professionals. The 2009 faculty members, affiliations, and topics, were:

<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Course Topic</u>
Glenn Kopp	MOBOT	Botany Basics
Steven Cline, Ph.D.	MOBOT	Plant Growth & Development
		Soil Properties & Amendments
		Diseases/IPM
Lisa Prasad	MOBOT	Plant Propagation
Chris Starbuck, PhD.	University of Missouri	Woody Ornamentals
Ben Chu	MOBOT	Pruning
Cindy Gilberg	Shaw Nature Reserve	Native Plants
Glen Kraemer	G. R. Robinson Seed Inc.	Lawn Care
June Hutson	MOBOT	Annuals & Perennials
Dan Billman	SLCC Meramec	Insects/IPM
Jason Delaney	MOBOT	Bulbs
Chip Tynan	MOBOT	Vegetables & Composting
Terry Milne	SLCC Meramec	Basic Landscape Design

Trainees received an Orientation Presentation in December, 2008, and the 2009 classes ran from January through May (17 weeks), meeting once per week from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. In addition to taking weekly quizzes on the lecture materials, trainees were required to learn approximately 230 plants, their genus names and the plants' unique characteristics, with a Genera Quiz also administered weekly. In order to successfully pass the course, trainees were required to achieve a minimum of 70% correct on their quizzes, several homework assignments, and a comprehensive final exam. The training was supplemented by several tours and field trips.



In addition to the class work, Master Gardener trainees agree to commit to 50 hours of volunteer work at many locations throughout the metropolitan area, some of which are described in detail above, in order to attain St. Louis Master Gardener certification. Most Master Gardeners will continue their volunteer activities after their trainee year in many capacities, as well as attending programs of continuing education organized by the St. Louis Master Gardener organization to add to the Master Gardener's horticultural knowledge base.



As stated in the overview, 31 individuals completed the 2009 training program and subsequently tallied a minimum of 50 volunteer hours before being certified as St. Louis Master Gardeners. In addition, two individuals monitored the training course online from their homes via an Internet connection, completed their volunteer commitment, and received Master Gardener Certification. This was the first known on-line certification in Missouri.

SUMMARY After reading this report, I believe you will agree that the St. Louis Master Gardener program exceeds the objectives of its Mission Statement, providing valuable horticultural-related services to many important organizations in the St. Louis area. Should you have any questions or comments about the Master Gardener Program or this report, please do not hesitate to contact me at arencs@sbcglobal.net or 636-296-3326

Respectfully submitted by: Chyrle Arens
Chairperson, St. Louis Master Gardener Advisory Committee
February, 2010

(Photo credits: Mr. Robert Weaver, Gateway Gardener editor, Urban Roots project (left, and upper right)).

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PRESENTATIONS AVAILABLE THROUGH SAINT LOUIS MASTER GARDENER SPEAKERS BUREAU

A Perfect Perennial-Daylily Magic for Your Garden
All About Orchids
Annuals and Perennials
Aromatherapy for the Garden
Backyard Composting
Bamboo!
Birds in the Garden
Bouquets for Everyday
Butterflies, Amazing Flying Flowers
Create Winter Interest in Your Garden
Designing a Perennial Garden
Edible Flowers
Enjoying Native Wildflowers
Everything Bamboo
Everything's coming Up Roses
Extend Garden Interest into Late Summer/Fall
Feng Shui
Flowering Shrubs
Forest Park from a Gardener's Perspective
Garden Invaders
Gardening with Chocolate
General Vegetable Gardening
Growing Soil for Beautiful Gardens
Is it Edible? Tips on Mushroom Hunting
Landscape Design 1 – Basic design
Landscape Design 2
Landscaping with Native Trees and Shrubs
Lawn and Garden Preparation for Spring
Lawn Care the Easy Way
Moon Gates and Drum Bridges: the Lure of Asian Gardens
Organic Gardening
Ornamental Grasses
Personalize Your Garden with Accents
Plants of Merit
Pruning Basics
Rain Gardening
Spring Wildflowers of Missouri
Sustainable Gardening
Orchids of MBG-Behind the Scene of the Orchid Show
Top 10 Orchids for the Home
Tours at MBG– Jenkins Daylily Garden, Iris Garden, Native Shade Garden, Native Prairie Garden at Kemper,
Orchid Show, Herb Garden at Henry Shaw house
Understanding the Serenity of Chinese and Japanese Gardens
Understanding the Shade Environment
Vegetable Gardening, advanced
Victorian Herb Gardens
Water Gardening
Winter Damage