



Master Gardener News

A monthly publication of the St. Louis Master Gardeners

April 2005

Calendar of Events

April 7th – 9th American Daffodil Society's 51st Convention

April 15th – Speakers Bureau Luncheon

April 16th – Butterfly House Career Day

April 17th – Tulip Festival

April 20th – MG Level 2 Class on Bulbs

April 22nd – 30th Illinois Appreciation Week

May 11th – Plants Author Janet Marinelli Book Signing at Garden Gate Shop

A Word from the Editor, by Stacy Rolfe

The curse has been lifted - or at least I should say, the 'curse' that for years I thought I had. Ha, got your attention now haven't I? "What kind of possible curse could it be?" you say and "thank goodness I've never had a curse!" Alright already, what kind of 3 headed curse is it and don't give it to me you say? The 'curse' of big hands! I mean really BIG HANDS! The kind of hands that grew on my Russian stock Aunts - aunts who had hearts bigger than their bodies and hands large enough to knead dough all day without getting tired.

Growing up is tough enough right? Well, how 'bout throwing this physical attribute into the mix? I knew I would never have the delicate, slender fingers that I so envied of my friends.

Mine were large, hard working looking hands and I never fully appreciated them until recently while at Temple, my cousin (who married into the family) leaned over to me and said, "Stacy, I've never noticed, but you have those wonderful Rothberg women hands". And with that the "curse" was lifted.

I no longer saw my hands as being larger than they should be, but, came to appreciate them for the asset that they are. After all, they do allow me to reach well beyond an entire octave on the piano, carry 4 gallons of milk at the same time, haul large bags of mulch with ease, lift tremendous amounts of dirt on my shovel and yes, I can even knead dough pretty well too.



What's Inside

John Stephens' Q&A

Whistle while you work...

The Garden Tour Scene

Guess who's Yard of the Month?

Volunteer Ops Galore!

Life as a MG in training

All Sorts of things Coming Up...



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN



Missouri Master Gardener
University Outreach & Extension

To provide research-based horticultural information to the public for community service and gardening pleasure.



911 Call For Help!

St. Louis Children's Hospital is in immediate need for one volunteer to step in and offer *one afternoon* of fun for the kids at the hospital. Currently, Children's Hospital offers monthly programs for their pediatric patients.



These programs range from the Zoo, magicians, arts and crafts and the Missouri Botanical Garden. The Garden's slot for programming is April 28th from 1:30 – 2:30 and the volunteer originally scheduled is unable to attend. We need your help to fill in this terrific opportunity to help the kids have an hour away from their hospital routine. The program venue is open for the volunteers' creativity.



Want to show the kids how to make a terrarium? How about planting annuals in small pots? Think about making pictures with seeds. You get the idea. The point is to have a fun-filled hour for these kids.

Interested candidates should contact Mr. Gary Wangler, Horticulturist/Supervisor with St. Louis Children's Hospital at 314.454.4770.

Gateway Greening² Gardening Partnerships for Community Development Great Perennial Divide..

Saturday, April 2nd 9:00 a.m.
Hosta Pot Party! Come on out and dig, divide and label a whole lotta hosta.....free food to boot!

Location: 1244 South Geyer STL 63122 Home of Gwenne Hayes-Stewart

Monday, April 4th 8:30 a.m.
More digging & potting at Gwenne's house

Wednesday, April 6th 6:30 a.m.
The BIG DIG at Wild thang Farms
Location: Meet at Hwy. 270 & Dorsett

Thursday & Friday, April 7th & 8th pot the BIG DIG at various collections sites

Next GPD meeting: Tuesday April 12th 12:00 Gateway Greening Office

For more information or to sign up to volunteer, please call Gwenne Hayes-Stewart at 314.577.9484

Earthways Home Pond Clean-Up



Missouri Botanical Garden Horticulturist Greg Cadice will be guiding volunteers through an Earthways Home Pond Clean-up this month. Please call Jean Ponzi, at 314.511.0246 to sign up for this water gardening exercise to help the Earthways Home and earn volunteer hours as well!

2005 MBG Garden Tour



The Missouri Botanical Garden Tour takes place only once every three years. June 2005 is the next time that nine spectacular private gardens will be showcased for the general public to view.



Master Gardeners have been invited to participate with the tour and help answer questions to the expected 1,200 visitors to these gardens.

The public tour will be June 12th and shifts are from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. or 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. All volunteers will be treated to a private tour on June 9th. Please contact Sally Cohn, MG at 314.727.6327 for further information or to schedule your volunteer times.



Obrigado!



No matter how you say it, a huge thank you goes out to all of the volunteers who helped make the Garden Symposium on March 5th at the St. Louis Community College- Meramec such a huge success this year!

Volunteers were: Betty Burdick, Sally Cohn, Sue Chaires, Cindy Corley-Drapsey, Charlotte Godat, Bob Irwin, Linda Kalicak, Claire Linzee, Pat Lynn, Allison O'Brien, Ann Ragland, Jan Thomas, Robert Weaver and Leon Zickrick

The event was deemed a great success and much of that is due to the support of our MG

volunteers who helped at registration, payment tables and the MG booth.

Many thanks once again,
Jan Hermann

Upcoming Events



City of Chesterfield Garden Tour June 25, 2005

The city of Chesterfield will host their 2005 Garden Tour on June 25, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. rain or shine. What's unique about this tour is that along with the showing of six stunning private gardens there will be four local floral designers, Mary Tuttle's, Floribunda, FOB St. Louis and The Mulberry Tree presenting beautiful tablescapes at four of the residence homes. In addition, Barbara Perry Lawton, nationally recognized writer and author of books such as *Improving Your Garden Soil*, *Seasonal Guide to the Natural Year in Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas*, and *Magic of Irises* will be on hand for book signings at one of the residential gardens. In addition, Ms. Lawton happens to be an active Master Gardener!

Tickets for this self-guided tour will be available at Chesterfield City Hall beginning April 1st. Cost is \$15 per ticket with proceeds going toward the Chesterfield Beautification Committee's efforts to replace damaged or dead city trees. For further information log onto their website at www.chesterfield.mo.us.



Book Signing at the Garden Gate Shop May 11th

Plants author Janet Marinelli will be on hand at the Garden Gate Shop to sign her new book. This is the American version done in association with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

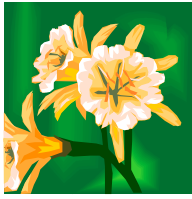
Look for Holly Parks review of Plants in the May issue of the *MGNews*.

Tip of the Month...

Prune lilacs immediately after they bloom. If they need drastic rejuvenation, cut back one third of the oldest, thickest stems to two inches.



Master Gardener News



“Gateway to Spring” The American Daffodil Society’s 51st Annual Convention

Date: April 7th – 9th
Location: Sheraton Westport
Lakeside Chalet

Go to
<http://adsconv2005.stldaffodilclub.org/>
for full details



Speakers Bureau Luncheon set for April 15th

The St. Louis Master Gardener Speakers Bureau deserves recognition for the outstanding community service that is performed by its current members. This program represents horticultural education and the spirit of all Master Gardeners.

In celebration of the fine work of all our speaker-representatives,

we would like to invite active Speakers Bureau members AND prospective members who are interested in becoming part of this group to a special luncheon. It promises to be an enjoyable time with friends; along with a chance to compare notes, experiences, training opportunities and discuss ways we might improve and promote this program.

Please join us in the Beaumont Room on Friday, April 15 at 12:00 noon

Looking forward to seeing everyone.
Steven Cline
Bill Ziegenbein

RSVP to
phillip.egart@mobot.org or 314-577-9441 by Friday, April 8



Butterfly House Career Day April 16, 2005

Career Day focuses on opportunities in the field of horticulture and entomology and will be held from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Participants will man a booth demonstrating their area of expertise and offer suggestions to students on the potentials of working in entomology or horticulture. We hope to draw over 200 local high school and college students. We will be providing

tables, chairs and lunch for all participants.

For further information, please call Laura Chisolm at 636.530.0076

Tulip Festival April 17, 2005



The 2nd Annual Tulip Festival will be held on the grounds of the Jewel Box in Forest Park on Sunday, April 17 from 10 AM - 2PM. Festivities include Red Hat Society Parade and Hat Contest, Photo Contest, Children's Planting Table, Nerinx Hall High School Jazz Band and Herb and Hydrangea Sale. Hope to see you there!

Illinois Appreciation Week April 23rd – April 30th

What: “Illinois Appreciation Week”
When: April 23rd – April 30th 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. daily
Where: Missouri Botanical Garden
Cost: Two-for-one admission for all Illinois guests (show proof of state residency)



Master Gardener News



**Missouri State
Master Gardener
Conference
September 16th – 18th
Kansas City, MO**

Now is the time to schedule this conference in Kansas City.

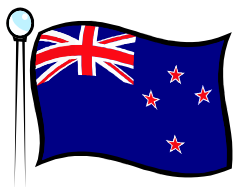
You know that Felder Rushing is the featured speaker. And you are also aware that there will be a tour of Powell Gardens. In fact at Powell Gardens you will see plants with our Plants of Merits signs as Powell Garden is a partner with the Missouri Botanical Garden for the Plants of Merit Program.

BBQ, You like BBQ ? Saturday night, September 17, will be a traditional Kansas City BBQ, a guaranteed gastronomic treat for your pallet.

Some additional tours in addition to Felder Rushing's "Garden Ornamentation " will be "Art and the Garden" and "Small Container Water Gardens".

So call your Master Gardener buddies and plan on attending this special conference.

Questions? Contact Dan Gravens at 314.779.5559



**Kiwi Magic
Master Gardener Trip to
New Zealand
December 1st – 16th 2005**

A Minnesota travel agent is teaming up with a New Zealand travel agent to offer a wonderful travel opportunity for Master Gardeners in early December 2005. Enjoy traveling with Master Gardeners from within your state, as well as Master Gardeners from within the North Central States. This horticulture tour is being planned to visit the best of New Zealand's unique gardens and natural wonders. Experience colorful gardens, lush temperate forests, high mountain passes and snow-capped peaks, iridescent blue glacier fed lakes, tranquil rolling farmlands and quaint little towns.

This trip during springtime in New Zealand will feature flowers, nature, national parks, botanic gardens and privately owned gardens on both the North and South islands of New Zealand. Botanic Garden sites included in the itinerary will be Auckland, Otari-Wiltons, Wellington, Dunedin and Christchurch Botanic Gardens. Other sites will include the natural wonders of Waipoua

Kauri Forst, Waitomo Caves, Kapiti Coastline, Milford Sounds, Lindis Pass and Otago Peninsula, and Mt. Cook National Park. Other locations we are hoping to visit and still working on confirming include Eden Garden, Ayrilies, Tikorangi: The Jury Garden, Pukeiti or Hollard Gardens, Te Papa, Larnach Castle and Gardens, and Te Anau Wildlife Centre.

The trip is planned for December 1-16, but subject to slight change of dates or length as the final itinerary is being confirmed. For more information contact Mary Kroening at 573-882-9633 or kroeningm@missouri.edu.

**New Horticulture Magazine
set to Launch this Fall...**

MG Robert Weaver, local contributing writer to *Fine Gardening* magazine, will soon be busy at the helm of the new *The St. Louis Gardener* magazine on track to be published beginning September 2005. Featured writers for the new mag will include a host of Garden experts such as Steve Cline, and Mary Ann Fink, in addition to local arborist guru Bill Spradley.

We'll be following Roberts ' efforts as he enters into the publication business and draw you in with his view of what St. Louis gardeners *really need to know*...Good Luck on your new venture Robert!



Master Gardener News



Q&A with John

Stephens

Q: Will it help to clip those rough, woody galls from the twigs of my pin oak?



A: These are horned oak galls; they are caused by a harmless (to people), small wasp. Benefits of their removal depend on the ages of the galls. Those with intact horns still contain insects, (juvenile gall wasps), and thus, their destruction would help to keep new populations down. Removal of these hard-to-reach galls is probably a job for professional tree trimmers with the proper equipment. Control of the adult wasps with insecticide sprays is not considered practical.

Q: Can I trim my overgrown viburnums now?



A: Spring-flowering viburnums should be trimmed after flowering. Pruning them now will reduce flower productivity.

Q: How can I propagate my Christmas cactus?



A: Christmas cactus, *Schlumbergera bridgesii*, is normally propagated via cuttings of two or three segments long, rooted in damp vermiculite. Large plants can also be divided using a clean, sharp knife to separate the parts. Dust cuts with powdered sulfur and allow to dry overnight before potting in a mixture of two parts of good quality potting soil, one part perlite, and one part peat moss. Use pots that are not too large; Christmas cactus seems to do best when somewhat rootbound. Cuttings and divisions should be given normal care.

Q: Are hollyhocks perennials in our area?

A: Hollyhocks, *Alcea rosea* (*Althaea rosea*), are generally considered to be herbaceous perennials. They are, however, usually grown as biennials and discarded after flowering to avoid rust infection, an unsightly fungal disease. A few early flowering varieties can be started indoors and treated as annuals.

Q: Are there any irises that bloom in very early spring?



A: *Iris reticulata* blooms in late-winter or early spring depending upon its site and the weather. These early bloomers may not exhibit the year-to-year reliability so characteristic of flowering of the more popular bearded species.

Q: I have a small redbud tree that I started in a pot; should I plant it now?



A: Plant your redbud now. Choose a site in full sun to part shade. Good drainage is essential. Redbuds are pretty tolerant of soil types except for permanently wet ones. Be sure to provide supplemental water during dry periods.

An anonymous wag once said "Your nursery is the one place where money does seem to grow on trees"





Book Review with Holly Parks

The Well-Tended Perennial Garden, a manual on planting and pruning techniques for perennials, provides unique information on this unusual topic. This is a wonderful book which starts with the premise that you can create a garden that is beautiful for weeks and months by good planning and judicious care. The photographs picture the plants not only showcase gardens but also more ordinary home gardens.

The book has short chapters on site planning, soil preparation and plant selection. Although these brief sections cover the usual material, they are good reminders on successful techniques. There is general material on pests, diseases, and renovating an established garden. Winter garden preparation and spring pruning are covered as well as a general garden calendar.

The unusual sections of the book are devoted to how and when to prune and shape perennials to produce more flowers, encourage new growth, discourage pests, stagger bloom times, promote repeat blooms and maintain vigorous health. There are sections devoted to deadheading, cutting back,

pinching, budding, thinning and deadleafing complete with diagrams. But the treasure in this book is the plant encyclopedia that describes plant maintenance in detail for each perennial. There is so much information here that simply reading the book is not helpful. What I have done with the encyclopedia is to mark the maintenance for each perennial on a garden calendar - so that I can remember tasks such as cutting a foot off Echinacea in early July to delay flowering or to cut saliva down to fresh basal foliage when it becomes leggy.

The Well-Tended Perennial Garden by Tracy DiSabato-Aust is a 269 page hardcover published by Timber Press, Inc. It is available for \$29.95 at Walden Books in West County Shopping Center.



Bird Bath by Connie Alwood

*I know two tunes. One is
"Yankee Doodle Dandy." The
other isn't*

Ulysses S. Grant

Readers my age will remember the TV quiz show *Name That Tune*, where contestants tried to name a familiar song given just a few notes. Most of us could do

very well on that show. Yet how many of us can recognize the songs of birds in our gardens?

As I write spring is still a few weeks away, yet the Northern Cardinal and American Robin are already singing. If they raise two broods, both will sing until July. And both have songs that are easy to learn. Here's how you do it. When you go out to get the morning paper, listen to the bird that is singing. Chances are that it is the Northern Cardinal. He usually starts to sing from a tree limb before dawn and he sings continuously in the morning. The song is usually three or so slurred whistles accompanied by a rapid fire *woit, woit, woit*, as sharp and clear as a tiny trumpet. All you have to do is find him. Listen while he sings. Notice the variation of *purty, purty, purty* and in a day or two you will be as familiar with the cardinal's song as Grant was with his one tune.

The American Robin also sings in the early morning, but what sets him apart is that he is the last bird to sing in the evening. So just step outside an hour before dusk. Sometimes this thrush will sing all the way up to dark. He has a singsong voice that resembles *cheerily, cheer-up, cheerily*. Often he gives a *whinny* when he flies from a tree limb. Of course, once you have mastered these two songs, you won't want to stop there. Most book stores, including the Garden Gift Shop have tapes and CD's to help you learn the bird songs.



A Good guide for gardeners is Lang Elliott's *Know Your Bird Sounds*. It covers thirty five birds most commonly found in gardens. Listening to birdsongs while you weed the garden adds a whole new dimension to the concept of "whistling while you work."



Look Who's Yard of the Month...Karen Koehneman!



Please keep sending your photos of your yard. Email pictures to srolfe@charter.net

expertise. The Garden awaits us. Go forth, propagate, and volunteer!

Master Gardener Class...a Class Act

By
Linda Strunk, MG Trainee

Well, the Master Gardener Class of 2005 is a little more than halfway through our course now. We're learning many things about many life-long skills - - useful in our own lives as homeowners, as plant hobbyists, as dabblers in the art of growing annuals, perennials, lawns, propagation, and even our own healthy compost pile.

In my assigned volunteer work at The Green Center in University City, we maintain existing flower beds, create additional wild flower beds and prairie areas, and are reclaiming a small wetland area. Under the watchful tutelage of Ms. Penney Bush-Boyce, restoration and gardening volunteer leader, we are learning to propagate seeds. Soon they will be ready to be moved outdoors. It will be cause for the birds to sing!

We members of the Master Gardener Class of 2005 are as fortunate as those flowers in that we will have opportunity to go out in the field - - the field of volunteer work at The Garden or some other entity.

We are limited only by our interests, our imagination, and our inquisitiveness. We must seek opportunities to gain further knowledge and



Master Gardener News



**Get Those Creative Juices Flowing...
Announcing the
Master Gardener Logo Contest!**

If you have a creative flair and would like to try your hand at designing a new MG logo- we need you! The St Louis Master Gardeners logo will go on items such as clothing, satchels, drink holders etc.

All ideas are welcome. Please send your entry to Linda Kalicak at 160 Hunters Pointe Dr. St. Charles, MO 63304 or email your artwork to lkalicak@aol.com

Deadline for submissions is April 30th. Winner will be notified in an upcoming issue of *MGNews*



This Just in...

The Grand South Grand Task Force is looking for volunteers to help with plantings on Grand Avenue. Much has already been done to upgrade the look of this historic area. Landscaping plans are currently underway. Plant installations will begin the weekend of April 16th and will continue each weekend through May.

Please contact Anne G. Moore at 314.664.4776 or email her at gamblemoore1987@yahoo.com. On going maintenance care of this area will be needed as well.



Don't forget to record your volunteer hours...

If you are not using the on-line method of recording your hours, the paper format can be found at <http://outreach.missouri.edu/stlouismg/who/record.html>

**St. Louis Master Gardeners
Kemper Center for Home Gardening**
P.O. Box 299 • St. Louis, MO 63166
www.mobot.org

We would love to have Master Gardeners submit articles for Master Gardener News. Remember that articles are due no later than the 10th of the month. Please send copies to Steve Cline and Stacy Rolfe (drolfe01@earthlink.net). Letters may be edited for length or content.

Master Gardener News is published monthly for St. Louis Master Gardeners. Stacy Rolfe serves as Editor, assisted by Carol Huston (proofreader), and contributors whose bylines appear in each issue.



Steve Cline
Manager, Kemper Center
Missouri Botanical Garden

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