



# Master Gardener News

A monthly publication of the St. Louis Master Gardeners

November 2005

## Calendar of Events

November 7<sup>th</sup> – Interviews Begin for MG Level I Class

November 9<sup>th</sup> – ORMI Recycling Tour has Been Cancelled

November 23<sup>rd</sup> – Holiday Show Begins at Ridgway and Runs Through January 2<sup>nd</sup>

November 24<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving

November 22<sup>nd</sup> – Advisory Committee Meeting 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. EECC Bldg.



## What's Inside

Vote for the Master Gardener of the Year!

Clear Your Throat and Jump into the Speaker's Bureau.....

It's a Party & You're Invited!

Edible Mushrooms? Find out in Q&A

What's New with Mike Miller's MO Gardener's Guide?

## A Word from the Editor, by Stacy Rolfe

It's hard to believe that it's already November. Get out the good china, keep the place looking nice and all that good stuff. From the first day of November to the end of the year, it's all a blur to me. Lots of stuff going on – all good mind you, but, just lots of stuff. Why just with the Master Gardener organization, there are a lot of things to do before the end of the year. Take for example that the new class has to be selected. Interviews need to be scheduled, questions need answers, curriculums need reviewing, papers need copying, books need ordering and students need mentors. Then like the unveiling of a statue, we get to meet the grand new class of 2006 at the upcoming holiday party. And speaking of that party, I hope you're all planning on attending! This year's affair promises to be the best one yet. You probably don't realize the work that goes in to putting on

an afternoon like this but, we have a lot of coordinating going on, surprises being planned and awards to be given out. Oh yes, awards. That would be for the enviable honor given to the Master Gardener of the Year. The one person that when it comes down to it has really worked their 'tookus' off this year! Look inside to see who has been nominated and do your part by casting your vote. Yes, the end of the year is a busy time, but then again it always is. So, fasten your seatbelt, set your gardening gloves aside and take time to revel in the hard work that we as an organization have accomplished during 2005. Come to the party, nominate a fellow Master Gardener, sprinkle your pearls of wisdom to the new students and have a good time partying with your friends without sweat dripping off your brow and dirt on your knees.



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

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





Best of Missouri Market a Huge Success!

According to Dan Litsch, coordinator for the Master Gardener apple cider booth, this year's booth was a complete success! Dan oversaw the efforts of recruiting 40 volunteers to make and sell cider. Over 4,000 pounds of apples were pressed in our new electric press making the process very accommodating to those working it. Our booth was beautifully decorated and looked fantastic, Chinese Elms and Dawn Redwoods were sold and all told, we grossed \$2,500 for the weekend.

If you missed out on the opportunity to help out this year, Dan has ambitious plans for next year's booth and will need even more volunteers! So plan on spending a beautiful fall weekend having fun with your fellow MG's, earn some hours and sign up next time this comes around

Mark your Calendar for the MG Holiday Party!



Wednesday December 7, 2005  
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Ridgway Center  
Beaumont Room

Lot's of fun things will be happening at the Master Gardener Holiday Party! Tradition has it that attendees bring either an appetizer or dessert (plan on yours to serve 6-8 people). The 2005 Master Gardener of the Year will be announced (see ballot for nominating your candidate), Door Prizes, Length of Service Awards, Marshall Magner State Conference Registration Award Drawing and lots of *wonderful* raffle prizes. In fact, one prize that will be raffled off is a professional portrait of your home by local artist (and Master Gardener) Joan Williams...this is a \$450 value.

Joan's work will be done in watercolors and will be an 11x14 portrait, then matted into a 16x20. A tremendous donation by Joan and a wonderful prize for one lucky MG at the party!

So, plan on attending – guests are welcome too. Bring something to eat and as we have

done in the past, bring along a few canned goods for the Grace Hill Food Pantry.



Advisory Committee Minutes for October 4, 2005 and October 25, 2005 can be found at <http://outreach.missouri.edu/stlouismg/minutes/minutes.htm>





## Q&A with John Stephens

Q: I saw a plant near the exit of the Rose Garden at MBG that was labeled as Poisonous Bulb, but I'd like to know what kind of plant it is.



A: Poison bulb is a common name of *Crinum asiaticum*, a large, bulbous, perennial plant native to tropical Southeast Asia. It belongs to the family. Amaryllidaceae. The plant, which you saw, if it is to be saved, must be moved indoors for the winter. All parts of this plant are considered poisonous.

Q: Are there any mushrooms, which grow in yards that can be eaten?



A: Perhaps, but if you must ask about edibility, don't eat them. Most common yard mushrooms are inedible. They can often cause a variety of symptoms ranging from mild upset to severe gastrointestinal problems and/or hallucinations.

Q: Why does the MGB Herb Garden contain rose geranium?



A: Rose geranium, *Pelargonium graveolens*, is used as an aromatic in teas and therapies, and, thus qualifies broadly as an herb although not of the usual culinary type.

Q: My large pin oak tree, which was struck by lightning, last month, is now losing lots of brown leaves; what are the chances for its survival?



A: You should contact a consulting arborist and request an onsite inspection of your tree. Many mature trees manage to survive such an event given the proper care.

Q: What are some critical points to consider in buying a bonsai plant?



A: The most important consideration is whether you want an indoor plant or one that is best grown outside year-round; next, whether you plan to buy a ready-made bonsai or create one from proper stock; and finally, do you really want to invest the considerable time required to care for such a plant. Perhaps, before setting off on the bonsai exercise, you should

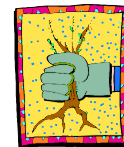
consult a good reference on the subject.

Q: Must I dig my yellow calla lily to save it inside over the winter?



A: Yes; hopefully you have already brought your yellow calla, *Zantedeschia elliottiana*, indoors for the winter. It should not be subjected to temperatures below 50°F. Pot it up and place it in a sunny southern window. Normally, this plant will enter a resting period at the end of bloom. Most gardeners have found it more convenient to grow calla lilies in a pot throughout the year.

Q: How can I control that weedy wild strawberry, which is running in my bed of English ivy?



A: Hand-digging is the only way to control false strawberry, *Duchesnea indica*, assuming, of course, that you wish to save the ivy. No selective chemicals are available for this particular task.





Book Review with Holly Parks

Missouri Gardener's Guide, Revised Edition, authored by our own Mike Miller, is an updated guide to plants for gardens in Missouri. It is an idiosyncratic reference manual on plants that Mr. Miller feels will thrive in Missouri. He covers the major plant categories of annuals, bulbs, ground covers and vines, lawns and ornamental grasses, perennials, roses, shrubs, trees and native wildflowers. It is a handy book to supplement information in other reference manuals as the featured plants will do well in the difficult St. Louis microclimate.

There is a general discussion of the plant category preceding the individual plant suggestions. These topics cover everything from how to maintain a compost pile, how to repair your lawn and eradicating moles from your yard.

Each plant page includes a close-up photograph of the plant selections. Separate sections include a thumbnail description of height, flower color and bloom period. This is followed by when

to plant, where to plant, how to plant, care and maintenance. Icons pinpoint sun requirements and additional benefits such as fragrant or attract butterflies. Companion plants and design tips are included. Then there is a topic "Did You Know?" with some tidbit about this particular plant.

The appendix includes a list of botanical and display gardens, definitions of common gardening terms and a "notebook" for you to track your garden plans.

Missouri Gardener's Guide, Revised Edition by Mike Miller is a 272 page soft cover book published by Cool Springs Press. It is available for \$24.99 at Wild Birds Unlimited, 1739 Clarkson Road in Chesterfield.



Bird Bath  
by  
Connie Alwood

Al Gentry was once lost in an Ecuadoran forest for three days. Upon finding his way back to camp and eating cold pancakes, he rushed back into the forest to retrieve an exquisite orchid that he had come across.

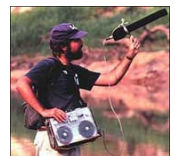
In another South American mountain forest, Ted Parker heard a bird that had been previously unknown to the

scientific world. He knew that the bird had never been identified before because as he said: "I would have known the song." Ted knew the songs or vocalizations of four thousand birds. That's more than forty percent of the birds in the world. Of the 90,000 bird recordings in Cornell University's Library, Ted Parker contributed 10,000 of them.

Al Gentry was senior curator at the Missouri Botanical Garden. He and his fellow field biologist, Ted Parker, were members of the Conservation International's Rapid Assessment Program (RAP). These two real-life Indiana Joneses lost their lives when their small plane crashed in the Ecuador wilderness on August 3, 1993. Both were experts in their fields of botany and ornithology. They were also ecopoliticians. Their mission was to go into environmentally sensitive regions of South America and inventory the flora and fauna. Armed with their data, they would then try to preserve important tracts from being developed. Dozens of plants have been named for Al Gentry, either plants that he discovered or ones named in his honor. A few years ago a new bird was found in the mountains of southern Ecuador, a tapaculo, *Scytalopus parkeri*. Finally Ted Parker has also been honored. It is only fitting that these two great neotropical biologists not be forgotten.



Al Gentry 1945-1993



Theodore A. Parker III  
1955-1993



# Master Gardener News



### Master Gardener of the Year Nominations

Listed below are the nominations submitted for Master Gardener of the Year. Included with your special hard copy edition of this newsletter, is a ballot for you to fill out and vote for which individual you believe has gone above and beyond the normal routine of volunteer work for the Master Gardener organization. If you prefer, you can also send an email to [Steven.Cline@mobot.org](mailto:Steven.Cline@mobot.org) with your candidate's vote. All ballots/emails must be received by November 18<sup>th</sup>. Winner will be announced at the Holiday Party on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### Van Spurgeon:

Van has been an active volunteer in outdoor horticulture for many years. He completed his Level I training in 2001 and since that time has put in countless hours with Flora Conservancy and outdoor horticulture on the Garden grounds. When Van was asked to meet with the

administrative staff of Shriner's Hospital to redesign their worn out landscape, Van and his partner Jim took on the project and ran with it. Nearly 2 years later, Van is still heavily involved in the project. During the course of this past year Van took a major role with the speakers bureau and has reignited enthusiasm for new presentations, skills and marketing efforts. Adding to this, Van joined the MG Advisory Board this past year.

Van is an outstanding example for all of us to follow. He tackles any and all assignments, does them with a smile on his face and when you compliment him, he always wants to share the glory with one or more others.

#### Doris Johnston:

Doris is a weekly volunteer at the Answer Service in addition to the Plant Doctor Desk. She is enthusiastic, personable and extremely knowledgeable. She only misses her days at the Garden when she is traveling or is *extremely* ill. Like the postman, you can always count on Doris! She has been faithfully serving the Garden for more than 20 years and during Marshall Magner's last years of service, Doris always made sure he was able to get to the Garden. Doris is the epitome of what a Master Gardener should be.

#### Gordon Gosh:

Gordon seems to be everywhere! You might find him working at the Soule Program (where he has been called a ("godsend"), or somewhere on the Garden grounds such as the Plant Doctor desk, Reception desk, grilling hot dogs and brats for hungry guests on Nursery Day, fixing the copying machine, uprighting overturned trains at the holiday show, or watering plants. You name it – Gordon's done it.

Gordon has served on the Master Gardener Advisory Board and showed his quiet patience and unflinching good nature at all times. Just like the Energizer Bunny, Gordon just keeps on going and going and going...







We Want to Put YOU in the Spotlight!

The Speaker's Bureau is an excellent opportunity to share your knowledge and personal interests with the local community. Presentations are requested of us on a regular basis and are comprised of almost any topic you can think of. Typical presentations given in the past have included the art of fung shui, designing a butterfly garden, pest and wildlife management, how to fill your yard with perennials, turf troubles and landscape design. Have a special interest you would like to share with a group? We'll help you put your presentation together! A little uneasy about speaking in front of a group? We'll teach you all the inside tricks of the trade to keep you calm, focused and relaxed. Not sure if this is for you? Come to a training class and see what it's all about!

We are looking for current and prospective speakers to attend an upcoming meeting:

**Saturday, January 14, 2006**  
**Kemper Center Classroom**  
**11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**  
**Lunch is Included**

You'll learn how to effectively present and share your knowledge in a group setting. We'll give you the tools to market your presentation. You will learn through hands on training how easy it is to put together your very own power point presentation. We have the technology to make this as easy as it can be!

Take a leap of faith in your skills and kick off 2006 as part of the Speaker's Bureau team. You'll be providing a much needed service to the community, fulfill volunteer hours and have a lot of fun while too.

Contact Bill Ziegenbein at 314.307.7024 or Van Sprugeon at 314.726.5435

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**St. Louis Master Gardeners**  
**Kemper Center for Home Gardening**  
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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 Stacy Rolfe ([srolfe@charter.net](mailto:srolfe@charter.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 contributors whose bylines appear in each issue.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI  
 **Extension**

 **MISSOURI  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN**



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