



St. Louis Master Gardener Garden Talk

Volume 5

May 2, 2018

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Upcoming events:

- **May 12—MG Volunteer at Bellefontaine Cemetery**
- **May 21—MG Continuing Education Class with Scott Woodbury**
- **June 2—Tour of MBG Horticulturist, Nathan Urban's Garden**

Charlotte Schneider Female Forester & Plant Doctor

After 10 years of working as a secretary, I finally decided to follow my passion and headed off to the University of Missouri- Columbia for forestry school and became one of the first women to graduate as a forester in the late '70s. I learned to experience trees in all their glory and for 10 years I worked forest fires in Missouri during the spring and fall, and out of state during the summers. I met with loggers and sawmill owners and saw how fire damage to a tree's foundation progresses through disease and insect attack. But I also recognized the trees' strengths and ability to compartmentalize wounds and delay/stop the progression of diseases and of their ability to minimize

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Yes—that is a snake!

Soil & Dirt by MG Dick Cone

Ideas have consequences and words have meaning. So if we want to talk about subjects of science we need to start with our thoughts and the words we use. For soils people dirt is inert. We all played in the mud or dirt as kids, didn't we? Mud puddles could be turned into clay structures and mud balls thrown at combatants having great fun to the consternation of the mothers who saw the dirt all over bodies, clothes, hands and feet.

Dirt is what's left after the life is gone out of it. Nutrients are depleted. If they aren't there, they also won't be in the food grown from it. Oh, there will be leaves from what are today called pioneer weeds. They will be the pioneer plants whose roots will go deep. They will find some calcium that had leached downward to lower levels. Maybe potassium too. Over a vast amount of time, by growing and rotting and other plants appearing from seeds, they would finally restore the soil. By farming depleted soil the farmer might blame himself for the poor crops or call

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Master
Gardener**



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Bamboozled by Ann Robison

The natives laughed because before I could take the classes, I had to locate the University of Missouri where the Master Gardener classes were to be held and this was before GPS.

I told you earlier that I'd let you peek through my fence. That's not so easy to do now because of the thick stand of bamboo. I think my bamboo is wonderful; many others don't share my enthusiasm. As I write on this grey January day with a dusting of snow on the ground, the 40 foot tall bamboo is as green as it was in July and is gracefully swaying and bowing down to the wind and making kind of a gentle, comforting whispering sound. The stand is about 30 feet long and



4 feet deep. You can hear the birds who live there chattering.

About the bamboo, let me back up. When we decided to install a pond I was working as a project manager building luxury homes and had access to lots of construction professionals. Among them was Stan McKay, an architect, who was eager to do a landscaping project. (We joked that Stan should have been architect to the king because of his regal concepts and assumption that all clients had coffers of gold.) I showed Stan the drawing a landscaper made: basically a water lily floating in a whiskey barrel. Stan sneered. He went to the drawing board.

A month later earth moving equipment moved in. Giant boulders were selected at the Stone Center on Arsenal. We were underway! Stan and I sat in the sun on the patio and watched the boulders hovering mid-air in the front-end loader. Stan had an idea of where each one should go. He had the excavated dirt mounded for a hill to become a waterfall. We sat there sweltering for days.

Time passed and suddenly it was winter. We had to cover the gaping hole with tarps and could only watch as the snow and ice took over. I must remind you at this point that my husband is not a king and my husband was not amused by the construction site visible from our kitchen from November to March.

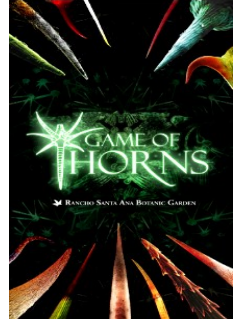
But as it will, Spring came and with the warm weather more ideas sprouted in Stan's head. This is when bamboo called to him. Our company had built a house in Ladue that was the holding site for plant material used on the World's Fair Grounds in 1904. Bamboo had thrived in this yard for over 100 years. With permission Stan and I with the greatest of difficulty, dug 3 clumps of bamboo.

Did you know?

Peter & Stephen Sachs Museum now open at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

The museum is one of the Garden's most iconic buildings, and its history dates back to Garden founder Henry Shaw and his vision for the Missouri Botanical Garden. For the first week of the Museum's regular operations, limited, timed entry to the Museum will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Advance reservations available now at the Garden's ticket counter. Museum

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden Game of Thorns exhibit is an outdoor exhibition at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden that focuses on the art and armaments of botanical warfare. Over millions of years, endless duels between California native plants and their predators have given rise to the incredible thorns we see today. The exhibition features these living fortresses and showcases their weaponry through large-scale macro and microscope photography, gigantic sculptures, immersive exhibits and more. The exhibit is currently open until August 15, 2018.



The Healing Power of a Garden—Medieval View. When it came to healthy living, medieval people were careful on what they ate. It was commonly believed that foods could offer good (and not-so-good) consequences to the body, but it was hard to remember what ailments a certain food could cure. This text has recently been edited and translated and a copy can be found in the Garden's library.

Flying insects tell tales of long-distance migrations



MASS MIGRATIONS This hawk moth (*Hyles gallii*) is one of millions of insects that migrate through a Swiss Alpine pass each year. Trillions of insects fly vast distances with the seasons to eat and breed. They may teach us something about how insects and other animals move around the planet.



Durian—Glenn Kopp's favorite milkshake. Hundreds evacuated a college library, fearing a gas leak. The culprit was the notoriously smelly fruit, found rotting in a cupboard. This is from a Washington Post [article](#) that was reposted on the Garden's Yammer.

Moving by Susan Pang

Dear STL Master Gardeners,

The columbine flowers are coming soon. The realtors sign on our front yard displays our house of 22 years will be coming on the market soon too.

Moving houses is generally a dreadful time. There's little time for fun and the work seems endless. Peace and calm have been in short supply.

Sadly we've hardly had a chance to enjoy the garden as we distance ourselves from it. Though a tiny piece of our souls will always remain there even if it's in the form of a plant or an animal that feeds off the plant. Rhizomes will creep and crawl under the soil. Seeds will disperse. We assisted to create an ecosystem and reversed, in our time there, the ravishes associated with near invasive monocultures of Japanese honeysuckle, English ivy and winter-creeper.

So as we move forward, we'll start all over again by first contending with STL County Bldg. inspectors to assist them to understand that a prairie-style house needs a prairie-style landscape. For new construction, we are *supposed* to plant sod or turf-grass seed. We have no intention of doing that.

Already I've explained to STL County that in Richmond Hgts and Lake Forest subdivision, we removed most of the turf grass years ago. No complaints. No letters. No code compliance issues. I truly appreciate our neighbors for their tolerance and respect for biodiversity.

I'll fill you all in on what it's like to build a prairie in west county suburbia. It'll be fun and I fully expect to have an irritated throat from constant explanations of what I'm doing. But education is the key to understanding the food web and how plants are part of it. Many people, once they understand, that pretty butterflies often come from plants that have the word 'weed' in their name, notice the monotony of lawn. Thankfully things are changing for the better. I have to believe that.

Cheers to spring and to fresh beginnings.

Susan Pang



it bad luck for a bad season of weather or often just blame it on bad seed. But what makes a living soil and how would we take such a poor land described above and renew it where the life was gone and hopes and dreams with it? We have a good guide to that right here in the state of Missouri when Eugene Marcel Poirot and Dr. William A. Albrecht got together and demonstrated that very situation in Southwest Missouri. It's recorded in a book titled "Our Margin of Life" by Eugene Poirot and printed by ACRES U.S.A. in 1945. I'm hoping that book will be reprinted some day so everyone in Missouri can take heart and realize the great genius of these two men.

Dr. Albrecht stands yet unrecognized except by a few as the Father of Soil Fertility Analysis and that's a tragedy for the state and the nation. He stands with Mendeleev, the Russian chemist who believed in a natural order to the world and is the one with a scientific mind so large that only a few attain that greatness. He put together the table of elements. What is that? It should be on the wall of every beginning class in science where the history of science is also taught. Without that history, we simply are pin ball thinkers with thoughts bouncing from one thought to another. When the first table of elements was produced there were eight positions Mendeleev left open because he calculated that by atomic mass and molar structure there would have to be additional elements in those locations. Now, they have been found and his genius confirmed.

In his own field of soils Dr. William A. Albrecht was an equal genius. He discovered the Cation Exchange Capacity equation and followed it where his ideas lead and now that work stands solidly confirmed, along with the elements of Mendeleev, so that we can measure the fertility of a soil and develop it to grow nutrient dense foods which would produce health in the soil, plants, animals and human lives to the benefit of the world's population. And it can be done, has been done, and is being done without using any toxins whatsoever. Just imagine what that could do to build a world community to replace the strife and wars we have seen throughout history and they continue to this very day. These were men of vision and the consequence of those visions meet at the junction of soil fertility.

Dr. Albrecht shared his ideas freely. He freely published his work for all to see and use to further the ideas of healthy soils contributing to optimum crops coming from fertile lands. He responded to every request to speak to farm groups, future farmers, ladies farm and homemakers groups, magazines, newspapers and presented his ideas to Congress in testimony. He produced a black and white video, a rare film of a presentation to small group in a 1950s setting that looks like one I recognize from my grandmother's house and it's furnishing; the gas stove with oven above on the right and burners on the left. And with that picture in mind I can taste her chicken and noodle Sunday suppers that I don't seem able to duplicate. That film was titled "The Other Side of the Fence" and showed cattle reaching over the fence to get nutrients that were absent in their own pastures. It also showed cattle knew what they wanted and later proved that by putting boxes out for certain nutrients and letting the cattle decide what they needed. The film is available from ACRES U.S.A.

Thousands flocked on "Farm Days" to see the results Poirot was having and all this in Southwest Missouri where in 1910 Missouri shipped 10% of the corn for the world's supply. So much for global planning needed for food supply to the world. Missouri had access by rail and the Mighty Mississippi to the markets of the world way back then. Just like Connecticut had access to the far east and coastal areas of the American Colonies in the 1700s from Connecticut where my ancestors settled in the town of East Haddam. ("Old Chimney Stacks" - A History of East Haddam). They built two frigates and three coastals; frigates to sail to the far east for Asian treasures and coastals to send their manufactured goods to states up and down the East Coast. A wealthy resident provided an enormous sum to set up an education and training facility for the youth for jobs the community needed for growing businesses.

Artist & Master Gardener Trainee



Sheri Goldsmith is a hardy perennial. She prefers sun to partial shade, but fades in high humidity when temperatures exceed 86 degrees F. When not hacking honeysuckle or pulling weeds, Sheri loves to plant MO natives to feed the beneficial animals. She is a mixed media encaustic wax painter and a ceramic artist. When not working in her studio, Sheri loves to work on her fixer upper.



Sheri Goldsmith is a trainee in the 2018 afternoon class and she designed the cover for the Youth Master Gardener binder. You can learn more about Sheri on www.sherigoldsmith.com.

Recent Survey Results

- 450 Master Gardeners emailed
- 362 completed the survey
- 60% of the respondents currently purchase a MBG membership
- 10% purchased a Garden membership until told it was a Garden volunteer benefit
- 82% responded that they would attend an annual Master Gardener meeting
- 70% preferred a meeting in January or February



**Youth Master Gardener Program
Queeny Park**

Master Gardener Winter Book Club by Nancy Miner

The Master Gardener Book Club met four times this year. We read books which in one way or another related to tea. For the January and February meetings the guest speakers talk amplified one of the themes for that month's book. In January, Eric Glass spoke about an ancient variety of tea from China. He also passed around samples of the tea brewed in three different ways. In February, we had a student of Japanese Tea Ceremonies. She gave us a demonstration and passed sweets samples. Both meetings were well attended. For the March meeting we read an historical account of how the East India Trading Company stole tea plants and secrets from China to begin growing and exporting tea from India. A fascinating story, which led to a good discussion. Our last meeting was to be a tour of the Japanese Tea House Island. Unfortunately our tour guide was a no-show, so we walked and talked about what we knew and generally just enjoyed an afternoon - albeit a chilly one.

insect attack. What a marvel! My career working the forest trees was cut short by the progression of multiple sclerosis, so I can certainly empathize with the trees. After a time as a naturalist learning intimately about snakes and salamanders, I returned to forestry in St. Louis for 10 years diagnosing and teaching about trees. Urban tree problems bear remarkable similarities to fire damage. Often homeowners will inadvertently introduce problems to their trees or will not recognize them soon enough. The planting methods or planting stock may be the beginning. Though limited by body energy, I may be able to help you understand your trees. As a Certified Arbor-



Free wheeling!



certified arborist

tor at the Missouri Botanical Garden, with God's everlasting help, I have succeeded. Friends assist me to plant and prune. We have over 50 different species of woody plants—trees, shrubs and vines—about 30 different perennials, and several annuals on this less than 1/3 acre home site in Shrewsbury. I have written 2 books and one is a [diary](#) of current observations here as well as comparisons to 3 previous years back to the beginning. Reflections on perceived assets and liabilities, and knowledge gained from the web are included. This place is amazing!

There were times in the last years 6 years when I was unable to volunteer at the Plant Doctor Desk as I can no longer function on my own. My personal assistant and friend, Renee Quackenbush, brings me to the garden. Well at least she did. On March 1st my van was totaled and I am working

to find a suitable replacement. This has definitely proved to be a challenge. The future is up in the air.

Charlotte Schneider
Missouri Forester
Certified Arborist
Master Gardener
Distributor American Dream Nutrition
[PhytoZon® Thank You God](#)
Author [Female Forester Forever](#)
Author [Our Little Urban Arboretum—A Diary](#)
Blog: [urbanarboretumdiary.wordpress.com](#)
Blog: [msprimaryprogressive.wordpress.com](#)
[www.charlottefff.pure-light.com](#)



firefighters starting a fire line

Book Reviews

by MG Sharon Upchurch

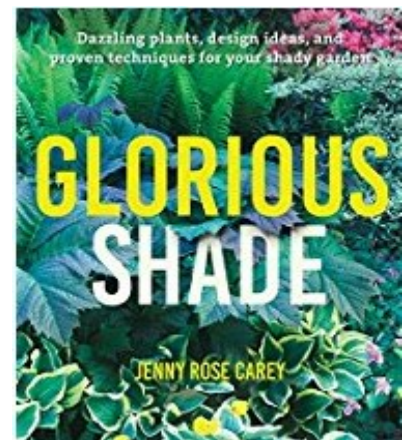


I have just finished reading the **Unexpected Houseplant by Tovah Martin** (2012), loaned to me by a friend. Reading is something I can do. Have you read it? I am an indifferent houseplant owner. Tovah claimed to own in excess of 300 houseplants. Wow. Usually, my houseplants are tender things I put outside in the summer and pull back inside for the winter. In reading this book I am inspired to try some houseplants that I have never tried before, like stephanotis. I also found that one of the houseplants that Tovah struggles with, bougainvilleas, I love. I have two. One I think I have owned for nigh on to 30 years. The other is younger but not smaller. I will send you a picture. The old one is about to bloom

but I will pick a day when it is fully out. Another surprise is that she spends only two pages briefly discussing African Violets. I take African Violets as almost a cliché houseplant. I have six or seven, legacies of my grandmother and friends. She talks a lot about Orchids and apparently owner a lot of. Orchids are a group of plants I struggle with. I loved Tovah's writing style and her down-to-earth advice which doesn't follow the regular "University Extension" type of advice.

I just finished **Glorious Shade by Jenny Rose Carey, 2017.**

The author is British but is a director at a botanical garden in the U.S. Her knowledge is encyclopedic. This would be a good book to keep around for reference. It is information dense and well-illustrated. She uses some pictures from her own garden and references her own home experiences, but tends to rely heavily on illustrations from botanical gardens in both England and the U.S. The botanical garden photos are lovely but beyond the scope of most home gardeners. The rock garden and water garden illustrations, for example, would require access to a backhoe and a crew of strong backs to pull off. Her personal children's garden from her home, on the other hand, is charming, imaginative, and practical without heavy equipment.



Sips & Soil Speakers Series created by MG Jodi Smedley



Master Gardener, Jodi Smedley, has created a new speakers series called Sips & Soil. The talks are held at the

Wildwood Grill, 17253 New College Avenue, Wildwood, MO 63040.

We had a great turn out for our first Sips and Soil Speaker event! Roy Gross from St Louis Composting spoke about how soils form, what makes a good soil, how to improve a poor soil, and how to care for soil spring and fall. Roy has been in the Horticulture Industry for over 40 years. The past 10 years he has found a new area of the green industry to call home with St Louis Composting as a Horticulture Product Sales Representative and New Product Development specialist.

Roy referenced Dr. Elaine Ingham, American microbiologist and soil biology researcher

and founder of Soil Foodweb Inc. She is a leader in soil microbiology and research of the soil food web and author of the USDA's Soil Biology Primer. He recommended her book, Adding Biology in Soil and Hydroponic Systems.

Here in St Louis we have our challenges with the type of soil we have to work with. The following are tips to improve your soil:

Add compost. Regular applications of compost will provide nutrients to your soil and dramatically improve your soil's water retention and help suppress disease

Cover soil with mulch. Controls moisture and weeds. His favorite mulch is finely ground leaf mulch.

Plant cover crops in the fall. Legumes (clovers, alfalfa, beans and peas) are especially valuable cover crops, because they fix nitrogen from the atmosphere into forms available to crop plants. Winter

wheat and annual rye grass are great cover crops as well. In addition this will add nutrients to the soil.

Test your soil. You will get faster results if you test your soil in the Fall.

We all walked away with valuable knowledge about how to create a healthy soil medium. In addition, no one will ever call soil dirt!

You can reach Roy at, rgross@stlcompost.com.

Matt Lebon of Custom Foodscaping gave the April 27th Sips & Souls talk. Information on the May talk will be posted in Holly's weekly email.



Food Preservation Class with Leslie Bertesch



As a Master Gardener you have all learned how to produce bumper crops of fruits and vegetables from your gardens, but do you know how

to safely preserve your harvest so that you can enjoy those wonderful items in the dead of winter? MU Extension provides hands-on home food preservation classes teaching people

how to safely and properly preserve their garden produce. Each home food preservation class provides participants with ACTUAL hands on experience making canned goods. Participants will make and can a range of products including jam, salsa, pickles, and vegetables depending on the course taken. You may sign up for just one course focused on certain topics or both of the courses offered this spring. All participants will walk away from the course with the skills they need to safely can different produce and prod-

ucts at home. Additionally, everyone gets to take home the goodies they make in class!

Leslie's next class is Saturday, May 5th, visit the [Extension website](#) for more information or contact Leslie.

Leslie H. Bertesch, MS, MPH, RD, LD
University of Missouri
Extension
[Nutrition & Health Website](#)
BertschL@missouri.edu



Master Gardeners Carol & Dan Gravens



Photograph by Kim Dillon

Pick up the latest copy of *St. Homes & Lifestyles* magazine to read about Master Gardeners, Carol and Dan Gravens. The article is written by Master Gardener, Lucyann Boston, and the photographs taken by Kim Dillon are spectacular.

"For Dan and Carol Gravens, gardening is about sharing. Married for 56 years, it is a passion they share with each other that has grown and evolved over time. They also abundantly share their gardening expertise with a variety of community organizations and willingly share the garden itself. Just ask. "

New Initiatives

These are a few of the things I am currently working on. I will keep you posted.

- Master Gardener Annual Meeting January or February of 2019
- 2019 Plant Sale — a committee is forming to explore the idea of holding a Master Gardener Plant Sale in spring of 2019.
- Partnering with 13 area Starbucks for volunteer projects.
- Get to know the Master Gardener Volunteer Site Workdays
- Series of Advanced Training classes in fall of 2018—Pruning, Tree ID, Diseases
- More knitting and maybe some art classes
- Tree Walks with Dan Billman Fall 2018
- Growing Cut Flowers class
- Garden Center tours and classes for MGs only
- Pollinator Landscape at the MU Extension Office in Kirkwood
- Monthly recent hort problems email

Holly
Ilex extensionii

Save the Date

Saturday, August 18th
SAVE THE DATE
 Kemper Center for Home Gardening
 at the Missouri Botanical Garden
 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Cultivating Young Cooks
A garden party celebrating kids & food!
 Discover the resources and information needed to foster the development of young cooks, young gardeners, and healthy eaters.





Touch a worm
 Taste a mushroom
 Milk a goat
 Drink kombucha
 Eat a bug
 Make cheese
 Sample chocolate
 & more!



Participating Organizations

ACF's Chef & Child Foundation
 Share the Soap
 Saint Louis University High School
 2017 Chef of the Year Mike Palazzola

Greenscape Garden & Gifts
 STL County Parks Children's Garden Club
 Rawkin Worm Farm
 Gateway Greening

Missouri Entomophagy
 Mushrooms Naturally
 University of Missouri Extension

Cooking demos by local chefs at
 10:00 am
 11:30 am
 & 1:00 pm
 in the
 Kemper Center

included with Garden admission

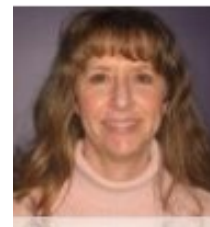




Caramel Apple Cookie Recipe by MG Durinda Mullins

Winner of the Post Dispatch 2012 Cookie Recipe Contest

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 1/2 cup bread flour | 3/4 cup brown sugar |
| 1 1/2 cup rolled oats | 1 large egg |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | 2 teaspoons vanilla extract |
| 1 teaspoon baking powder | 3/4 cup minced dried apple slices |
| 1/2 teaspoon baking soda | 3/4 cup caramel bits |
| 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon | 1-2 tablespoons milk |
| 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened | |
| 3/4 cup granulated sugar | |



1. Preheat oven to 350. Put flour, oats, salt, baking soda, baking powder and cinnamon in a bowl and mix well.
2. Cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla, beat until well combined. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add the flour mixture and beat until combined. Stir in the apple and caramel.
3. If the dough is dry or crumbly, add milk and mix until dough sticks together.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment. Roll dough into 1 inch balls and slightly flatten between your palms. Place balls on parchment 2 inches apart. Bake for 9 to 11 minutes or until the center of cookies appears done. Cool on baking sheet for 3 minutes; place on wire rack to cool completely. Yield: About 3 dozen

Per cookie: 115 calories; 3.5g fat; 2g saturated fat; 10mg cholesterol; 2g protein; 20g carbohydrate; 13g sugar; 0.5g fiber; 85mg sodium; 15mg calcium.

Adapted from a recipe from Cooking Light magazine

Holly's Note: Make sure you find the caramel bits. They are a must and I find them at Target.

Sugar Cookie Recipe shared by MG Durinda Mullins

- 1 stick butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 Tb brandy
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 cups flour

Cream butter and sugar. Add egg, vanilla, brandy and mix well. Add dry ingredients. Roll 1/4 to 1/8 inch thick. Bake at 350 for 8-10 minutes.

Brandy is definitely the secret ingredient.
This is a Martha Stewart recipe.





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LOG YOUR HOURS!



www.stlmg.com

MG Merchandise

Is your Master Gardener tee shirt a little ragged? Would you love a fleece or sweatshirt to wear in the ever changing St. Louis weather? Maybe you need a moisture wicking shirt so you are comfortable and looking good when it is 95 degrees. Whatever your reasons visit [MG Merchandise](http://www.stlmg.com) on www.stlmg.com and begin shopping for new MG apparel. Contact Margaret Lahrmann with any questions at mlahrmann@sbcglobal.net



MG Denny Green models the Men's Sweatshirt.



New moisture-wicking polo worn by MG Diane Grubb.



Master Gardener Juanita Walker enjoys wearing the Women's Fleece Jacket

I want one of these?

This Wisteria Vine in Sierra Madre is the Largest Blossoming Plant in the World—[video](#)



Photograph by Susan Henderson