



# Garden Talk

**Volume ?**

March 1, 2020

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Ferguson	2
Events	3
Seminar	4
Metal & Vomit	5
Food for Thought	6
Online	7

## Upcoming events:

- **March 7 - Northside Workshop Volunteer Day**
- **March 14 - Workshop**
- **March 21 - Weinman Shelter Volunteer Day**
- **April 21 - Cut Flower Workshop**

## MU Extension Horticulture Answer Service

Thanks to Ronda Anson, the MU Extension office now has a Horticulture Answer Service every weekday, noon to 3:00 p.m., beginning March 2nd. There will also be monthly update classes that will be open to all master gardeners beginning in April. Training for this new service was conducted by Ronda and Glenn Kopp and more training sessions will be conducted as the need arises. Thank you Ronda for starting a wonderful service.

*Bit of history*— years ago Master Gardeners would volunteer for a shift at the MOBOT Hort Answer Service in the morning, and then drive to Clayton to volunteer another shift at the MU Extension office Hort Answer Service.

**Please stop by, or call 314-400-7657 to speak to a Master Gardener. You can also email [stlgardenhotline@gmail.com](mailto:stlgardenhotline@gmail.com) at any time with your plant questions.**



Ronda as Chip Tynan

## Volunteer Hours

The St. Louis Master Gardeners logged 42,236 hours in 2019. Incredible as that may be, I know it's not all of the hours that St. Louis Master Gardeners volunteered in 2019. So in 2020, please make every effort to log ALL of your volunteer and ce hours. Thank you!

### 2019 Highs

Ron Stevens reached 8000 total hours since becoming a Master Gardener in 2001. Myra Rosenthal logged 913 hours in 2019.



## Thank You Speakers Bureau

The St. Louis Master Gardeners Speakers Bureau gave over 103 talks in 2019. They are an amazing group who have created talks on wide range of topics. MG Carol Gravens gave 31 of those talks in 2019 with her most popular talk being *Plants that Changed the Course of History*.



On the 2nd Tuesday of each month, a Speakers Bureau talk will be given at the MU Extension office in Kirkwood. The topic for March is [Best Gardening Practices for A Sustainable Garden](#) given by Betsy Alexander. There is no registration and a minimal donation is requested at the door. See you on Tuesday, March 10th at 6:30 p.m.



**St. Louis  
Master  
Gardener**



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**Facebook**

# Seed Starting & Hydroponics House & Garden



MG Mary Ellen Roussin and volunteer is checking out the hydroponics unit created from old pvc fencing.

Master Gardener Ron Brown, his wife Ann, and MG Jim Morrison are building an amazing gardening facility in Ferguson. The project includes a wheel chair accessible seed starting & hydroponics house in addition to a therapeutic community garden. There will be both indoor and outdoor gardening opportunities. Ron has partnered with UCP Heartland, a daycare center working with developmentally disabled children and adults living with cerebral palsy, autism, downs, TBI (traumatic brain injuries), and others, to provide a unique and rewarding experience sharing his passion for gardening

"Be prepared to get your hands dirty, laugh, play, cry a little, and go home feeling that you made a difference in someone's life. AND want to come back for more" said Ron.



There will be some arts and crafts such as making gourd birdhouses that will be sold along with plants and cut flowers at the Ferguson Farmers Market on Saturdays to benefit the project.

Plans include a greenhouse, brick paved walkways and patio, raised beds constructed of landscape blocks with wire arbors, flower beds built of abandoned tires, a circular flower garden with a yoga area at its center, traditional bermed vegetable rows, and wall mounted strawberry beds. Plus a few other crazy ideas that Ron will probably think up. Many if not the majority of the items used to build this project are recycled.

## Silent Skies

**Silent Skies St Louis** is a citywide celebration of the arts and conservation. Beginning April 1 through June 2020, the city will be using art to explore conservation issues. Issues include not only damage to the planet but also what man has done to restore it.

Events will begin with the exhibition of the Silent Skies Mural. The mural is a 678 piece collection of 8"x8" squares of all the endangered birds of the world. The mural was created by 150 signature members of the international Artists for Conservation in 2018. Due to its size, parts of the mural will be hosted in three different venues. The St Louis Zoo is the primary host with half of the total mural. The Missouri Botanical Garden will host part of the mural from locations where it is restoring habitat. The St Louis Arch will host parts of the mural related to the birds migrating the Mississippi Flyway. With so much to do, consider staying overnight.



Tour gardens with the Master Gardeners, enjoy the opening of Park-Like with the Pulitzer, join the Art Museum for an interpretative talk of SLAM Underground, create origami animals at Earth Day Festival and, for the stroller set, Contemporary Art Museum. See student work at the Galleries of Heartland Art Club and participate in creative art programs for children with Art Unleashed, the Magic House and Magic House MADE. There are 3 art and photography workshops scheduled for adults as well. St Charles County and Master Naturalists will be celebrating Birds in the Park and find out what you can do to support birds with the Lights Out St Louis project. International Dark Skies Association-Missouri will host a talk and interpretative sky watching party at the Arch. National Dance Week-St. Louis and Storytelling Festival will have performers addressing nature. The StL Symphony is performing Rite of Spring. So many more partners and additional events added all the time. For more information and to volunteer contact Master Gardener, Sandy Brooks [sandy@stlouisartschamberofcommerce.org](mailto:sandy@stlouisartschamberofcommerce.org). Check out the app [stlartschamberofcommerce](http://stlartschamberofcommerce.org) for iphone and android.



# Growing Cut Flowers Workshop

Calling all flower lovers...(yada yada yada?)..please join Vicki Lander, owner and operator of Flower Hill Farm, as we discuss the what, where, when, and how's of growing a cut flower garden. Everything you need to know to bring fresh cut flowers into your home, in every season of the year.

We will cover planning, planting, growing, harvesting, conditioning, designing, enjoying & sharing cut flowers from your very own garden.

Plenty of time for all of your gardening questions...just in time for the upcoming growing season.

**Tuesday, April 21—8:00 a.m. to noon**  
This class is being run through the Wildwood Community College in partnership with MU Extension.  
The registration link will be available soon.



## March 21st 9:00 a.m.

Please join me for a **volunteer day** at the Kathy J. Weinman Women's Shelter in North County. The gardens at the shelter were created by the MG class of 2012, and MGs Linda Monday and Tina Short have been the team leaders maintaining the site since the initial installation.

The Kathy J. Weinman Shelter is a 39 bed domestic violence program for abused women and their children.

### Mission

- Offer safe shelter and support services to promote the healing of women and their children suffering the trauma of intimate partner violence.
- Work together with individuals, families and our community to break the cycle of violence
- Provide safety, encouragement, support, and education through an array of comprehensive services.

Your help is needed for a spring garden cleanup. Linda and Tina are also looking to turn the project over to another Master Gardener or group of Master Gardeners.

I will bring lunch and you should bring your own gloves and your well-marked garden tools. Register to volunteer: <https://forms.gle/nCdgcD6D7UcNMc1z8>



Before



After

## March 7th 9:00 a.m.

Please join me for a **volunteer day** at the Northside Workshop getting the beds ready for planting. The Northside Workshop is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing cultural and community issues in North Saint Louis. NSW hosts multi-generational workshops focused on beekeeping, gardening, cooking and the arts to encourage a healthy urban ecosystem for all. *NSW* is a collaboration between the Old North Saint Louis Restoration Group, the Kranzberg Arts Foundation, and Artist/Cultural Activist Juan William Chávez, restored a historic brick building in danger of being destroyed and transformed it into an art space.



I need your help and I will *feed* you! Bring a family member or friend to help! It will be fun. Register to volunteer <https://forms.gle/GeR5kBYdG8Y6WqPA>





# Sustainable Garden & Kitchen Seminar



**A TOPIC AND EXPERT FOR EVERY INTEREST!**

**Be the change  
you want to see  
in the world!**

**March 14th**  
8:30 am to 3:30 pm

**Parkway  
Northeast Middle  
181 Couer De Ville  
Dr., Creve Coeur,  
MO 63141**

**\$50.00**

**Includes local lunch**

**Please register by  
3/11/20**

<b>Opening session</b> 9:00-9:55	Keynote: Reducing the Carbon Footprint of Your Home and Garden: Crystal Stevens, Author, farmer, and artist of Flourish			
Choose (1) one class for each session				
<b>Session 1</b> 10:00 -11:00	Seed Starting/ propagation	Designing a Native Garden	Preserving the Harvest From A to Z	Soils 101/Sustainable Soil Management
<b>Session 2</b> 11:10 – 12:10	Composting 101	Foodscaping & Permaculture for Beginners	Fermenting Foods 101	Organic Pest Management in the Home Garden
12:10-1:10    Lunch   from Local Farms provided by SEED SPROUT SPOON				
<b>Session 3</b> 1:15-2:15	Vermi- composting	Kombucha 101	Natural and Organic Lawn Care	Birdscaping for Beginners
<b>Session 4</b> 2:15-3:30	Compost Tea Production and Uses	Plant Based Recipes and Cooking	Home Canning	Native Trees for the Home Landscape

**REGISTER @**<https://extension2.missouri.edu/events/sustainable-kitchen-and-garden-seminar>



OR Scan me to Register



an equal opportunity/ADA institution

**314-400-2115**



# Down on the Farm That Harvests Metal From Plants

By Ian Morse

Some of Earth's plants have fallen in love with metal. With roots that act practically like magnets, these organisms — about 700 are known — flourish in metal-rich soils that make hundreds of thousands of other plant species flee or die.

Slicing open one of these trees or running the leaves of its bush cousin through a peanut press produces a sap that oozes a neon blue-green. This "juice" is actually one-quarter nickel, far more concentrated than the ore feeding the world's nickel smelters.

The plants not only collect the soil's minerals into their bodies but seem to hoard them to "ridiculous" levels, said Alan Baker, a visiting botany professor at the University of Melbourne who has researched the relationship between plants and their soils since the 1970s. This vegetation could be the world's most efficient, solar-powered mineral smelters. What if, as a partial substitute to traditional, energy-intensive and environmentally costly mining and smelting, the world harvested nickel plants?

Dr. Baker and an international team of colleagues has set its sights on convincing the world the idea is more than just a fun thought experiment. On a plot of land rented from a rural village on the Malaysian side of the island of Borneo, the group has proved it at small scale. Every six to 12 months, a farmer shaves off one foot of growth from these nickel-hyper-accumulating plants and either burns or squeezes the metal out. After a short purification, farmers could hold in their hands roughly 500 pounds of nickel citrate, potentially worth thousands of dollars on international markets. This is an excerpt was taken from an article in the [New York Times](#).



Nickel-rich sap being taken from a tree in Malaysia. Credit...Antony van der Ent

# Bumblebee Vomit

Just when I thought it was all about the poop, I read this article that scientist are no longer ignoring bumblebee vomit. Regurgitation sounds much nicer and apparently can be an important consideration when it comes to the process of pollination.

If you did not already know it, bumblebees don't just visit *any* flower for pollen. There are several factors that they consider when choosing a flower: distance, the shape of the petals, and how sugar-rich the nectar is. Now in [a study published in February](#) in the Journal of the Royal Society Interface, it appears that bumblebees might also consider how fast they can barf it back up. If the flower has a higher percentage of sugar it is generally more viscous. That means it will take more time and energy for the bumblebee to lap it up. This means the bumblebee is using more energy and thus cuts into the benefits of the extra sugar.

Researchers have been studying what sugar levels are "most appealing to bees" in the hopes that this knowledge can help them entice the bees to certain crops. This sounds like the same kind of studies that food manufactures conduct to entice people to consume their products.

The rest of the article in the [New York Times](#) is fascinating. How did I ever think that bees and bumblebees were like robots just doing what they were programmed to do with no variation. These creatures can do math.



A possibly slightly nauseated buff-tailed bumblebee. Credit...Frank Bienewald/imageBROKER, via Alamy

# More Upcoming Events

- **Saturday, March 7—Volunteer Day at the Northside Workshop. To volunteer visit** <https://forms.gle/GeR5kBRYdG8Y6WqPA>
- **Saturday, March 14 —Spring Sustainable and Gardening Seminar. See flyer included in this newsletter.**
- **Saturday, March 21—Volunteer Day at the Weinman Shelter. To volunteer visit** <https://forms.gle/nCdgcD6D7UcNMclz8>
- **Saturday, April 11 - 1st Session of the Youth Master Gardener Program at Queeny Park. This program conducted by MGs in partnership with St. Louis County Parks.**
- **Tuesday, April 21 - Cut Flower Workshop at the Wildwood Community College. Registration link will be emailed when available.**

## Food for Thought

By Linda Chalker-Scott

Linda's chapter on "Weeding out the Myths" could be especially impactful if the right people watched it – with an open mind. Which is required if you already have strong feelings one way or the other about permaculture, glyphosate or native plants.

### *Misperceptions of Native Species:*

- Species extinction due to non-natives
- Only native species can fill ecological roles
- Native species are superior to introduced species
  1. adapted to local environment
  2. reduced maintenance need
  3. non-native species will not integrate well
  4. give a sense of place

On the great native/nonnative plant debate, Linda challenges the claims of native-plant superiority and argues against mandates requiring their use in landscapes (as opposed to in ecological restoration projects). She has a great list of things that benefit wildlife even more than focusing on plant origin, in her view – like creating vertical structures, and reducing the amount of highly managed lawns.

Linda is an Associate Professor & Extension Specialist with Washington State University and *this was taken from Linda's [blog](#)*.

## Projects & Survey

**Project proposals** that were submitted will be reviewed by a committee that will choose 3 to 6 of the proposals that best fit the criteria that was noted in the project request. St. Louis Master Gardeners will then vote on the selected projects to determine which ones will be acted on. This voting should be available by March 16th. I would like to thank all of you who submitted projects.

**Cleanup Project:** Justin and I am also working on a project to help seniors and others who need help with their landscape. This is not a continued maintenance project but will be conducted on one weekend with the purpose to help clean up as many lawns as possible. I am hoping to have landscapes selected in areas all over the city and county. Justin Keay has already spoken with a landscape company that will lend its crew and lawnmowers for a day to help with the project. I am in need of organizers and will have a signup link ready by next week.

**Survey:** a huge thank you to everyone who completed the survey. I would love to hear from more of you so please use this link [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc1OHL\\_VVUBt8v-sPTRkyonsrnQQEZJ3cVVFkqQsK56Oq0VNw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc1OHL_VVUBt8v-sPTRkyonsrnQQEZJ3cVVFkqQsK56Oq0VNw/viewform?usp=sf_link) or paste in your browser. DO IT! If you really just want to garden and not share any of your other talents from your previous life that's okay. Please consider completing this survey by the end of next week.



**University of Missouri Extension**  
132 E. Monroe Avenue  
Kirkwood, MO 63122  
314-400-2115

**St. Louis Master Gardeners**  
**Missouri Botanical Garden**  
4344 Shaw Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63110

**LOG YOUR HOURS!**

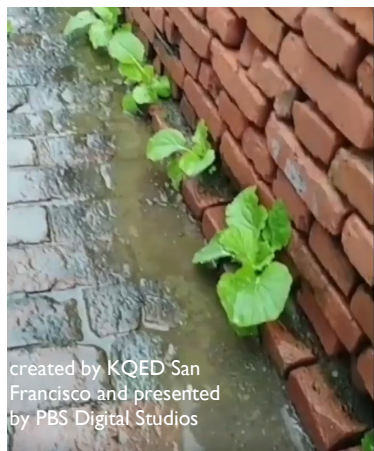


[www.stlmg.org](http://www.stlmg.org)



**Integrated Pest  
Management**  
University of Missouri

Visit [Missouri Environment & Garden](#) newsletter MEG.



created by KQED San  
Francisco and presented  
by PBS Digital Studios

**Gardening in small spaces taken to a new level—submitted by MG Mary Harris— to watch the video visit**

<https://www.facebook.com/thenewworldordersufi/posts/210041760144090/>

## MG Merchandise

Would you love a fleece or sweatshirt to wear in the ever changing St. Louis weather? Maybe a *Master Gardener lanyard* for only \$4.00. Whatever you need, visit [MG Merchandise](#) on [www.stlmg.com](http://www.stlmg.com) and begin shopping for new MG apparel. Contact Margaret Lahrman with any questions at [mlahrman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlahrman@sbcglobal.net)



## Online Learning

- [ASHS American Society for Horticulture Science's](#) Certified Horticulturist Examination Study Guide available for \$55
- BBC online learning, support & advice <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/subjects/gardening.shtml>
- [Colorado State University](#) online learning. While the program is based on content similar to a traditional master gardener program, online courses give you more flexibility to learn only what you want to learn, on your own schedule. Each course is \$40 to \$60.
- [NC State University Department of Horticultural Science](#) is partnering with [Longwood Gardens](#) to provide a fully-online introduction to plant identification. These courses will introduce you to the language of botany, plants with global popularity, a few special plants from breeding programs at top horticulture institutions, and cultivation information for key plant species. These courses are more expensive at about \$195 each.
- [National Garden Club](#)—several courses to choose from and most of the online courses are only \$10.
- [Oregon State University Online Short Courses](#) - Excerpted from OSU's Master Gardener Online course, the Master Gardener Short Course Series allows students to study specific fundamentals of gardening. The various subject areas of the OSU Master Gardener curriculum encourage participants to learn the art and science of growing and caring for their own plants. \$45

### BLOGS:

- <https://www.gardenrant.com/>
- <http://www.indefenseofplants.com/>
- <http://khkeeler.blogspot.com/>



# Soil Testing Blitz



Extension  
University of Missouri

GROW A GREAT LAWN & GARDEN  
AND PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT  
TEST YOUR SOIL WITH MU EXTENSION

## Dates:

**Monday, March 2 -  
Saturday, March 7**

**Times:** Dependent on Location

## Sponsoring Locations:

- \* Brightside (St. Louis)
- \* Crabapple Cove Nursery (Mehlville)
- \* Hummert International  
(Maryland Heights)
- \* Garden Heights (Richmond Heights)
- \* Gateway Greening (St. Louis)
- \* Greenscape Gardens (Manchester)
- \* St. Louis Composting (Florissant and  
Valley Park)

**Cost: \$25.00**

Details will be provided on how to make  
payment when dropping off soil.

MU Extension in St. Louis County is partnering with local garden center businesses to provide multiple locations throughout Saint Louis for residents and landscape professionals to drop off a soil sample for testing services by MU Extension.

Understanding the condition and health of landscape soils is essential for:

- Supporting Healthy Plant Growth
- Growing Bountiful Landscapes
- Protecting the Environment

Drop off your 2-3 cups of soil sample at one of the sponsoring locations, register your sample online, make payment, and in approximately two weeks, you will receive an analyzed report with recommendations on how to improve your soil health.

Once you receive your results, our horticulture specialist, Justin Keay, will be happy to talk through the results with you at an FREE "Understanding your Soil Test for Lawn and Garden Success" workshop on April 7th or 20th.

For more information and how to take an accurate sample,

[tinyurl.com/2020SoilHealthBlitz](https://tinyurl.com/2020SoilHealthBlitz)