



Horticulture Happenings

An Iowa State University Extension Newsletter for Mid-Iowa Gardeners

March 2006 Vol. 3, No. 1

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Title picture above shows Mary Stribe & Richard Carlson at the recent 4-H Horticulture Garden Trough workshop held in Webster City. Mary is active in both Webster City FFA & 4-H Horticulture in Hamilton Co.

**IOWA STATE
UNIVERSITY**
University Extension

Helping you become your best.

Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability.

It's back -- Spring is here!!



Welcome Spring!!
I am so happy to finally say goodbye to the winter weather (I hope).

Last week, the 50th Annual ISU Shade Tree Short Course was held in Ames. There were over 530 people registered for this event.

It was noted that this seminar was started in 1956, mainly in response to the out break of Dutch elm disease. How ironic, that fifty years later, our discussion is once again on a threat that can totally wipe out a tree species that of ash trees throughout North America by the Emerald Ash Borer.

While the Dutch elm disease mainly attacked only stressed elm trees, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), attacks both stressed & healthy ash trees, of all sizes, from 1/2" saplings to mature trees.

Unfortunately, there is no preventative and no cure, and healthy ash trees attacked by the EAB will die within 2 years.

Dan Herms, of Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, gave an update on the spread and containment efforts, on this EAB outbreak, which was first discovered in MI in June of 2002.

It is suspected that due to the EAB, a native of Asia, over 15 million ash trees in MI, IN & OH have died. It is just a matter of time before it reaches Iowa.

The EAB attacks all native North American *Fraxinus* (ash) species, with the main ID being "V" shaped entrance holes, rather than round holes typical of other types of borers. If you find an ash you suspect may have been attacked by EAB, contact your local Extension Office ASAP!

Yvonne Nilles, ISUE Horticulturalist

Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners to meet in Fort Dodge

The Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners will meet Tuesday, April 4, at the Webster Co. Extension Office, 108 S. 8th St., Fort Dodge at 6:45 p.m. The program will be on "Lilies", given by Peggy Moody, of Fort Dodge.

The MG Advisory Council will meet prior to this meeting at 6:15 p.m. Webster Co. MG's will be the hosts.



MID-IOWA AREA HORTICULTURE EVENTS CALENDAR

Mar 24-26...Lawn & Garden Show,
ICCC, Ft Dodge, Free Admit!

Mar 28....."Shade Gardening"
ICCC, Ft. Dodge – 6 pm

Apr 1....Humboldt Co. 4-H Trough
Making Workshop, 1 – 3 pm
Humboldt Co. Ext. Office, \$10

Apr 1....FGCI Judges Workshop, FD

Apr 3....Winegrape Seminar -\$65/\$20
Ham. Co. Ext, 6:30 - 9:30 pm

Apr 4....Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners
Webster Co. Extens. - 6:45 pm
(Advisory Council at 6:15 pm)

Apr 5....Farmers Market Nutrition Prog.
Training, ICC, FD, 4-6 pm

Apr 6....Fort Dodge Area Gardeners
Webster Co. Ext. Off. - 7pm

Apr 10...Winegrape Seminar, # 2
Ham. Co. Ext, 6:30 - 9:30 pm

Apr 12...Town & Country Garden Club
"New Cultivars for 2006", by
Sherry Lambi, 1pm WC Depot

Apr 16....Hoppy Easter!

Apr 18....Fort Dodge Fed Garden Club
Izaak Walton, 1 pm. "Table
Design & Knapkin Folding" –
by Jeanette Lawrence

Apr 22...Earth Day

Apr 26...FGCI Dist.6 Meeting, Mallard

Apr 28...Arbor Day

For further details on these events,
call 515-832-9597

Please submit your events to:

Horticulture Happenings
311 Bank Street
Webster City, IA 50595-2303
Phone: 515-832-9597
Fax: 515-832-9599
E-mail: ynilles@iastate.edu

Tree Thoughts

"Trees are your best antiques",
Alexander Smith, Scottish poet,
1830-1867

"We need to focus more on what
makes trees healthy and less on
trying to bring back the dead",
Alex Shigo, *A New Tree Biology*

Interested in learning more about
trees?

2006 Tree Steward Program

The 2006 Tree Steward Program will
begin on May 23rd and will be held on
six Tuesday evenings, concluding on
June 27th. Each session will begin at
6:00 p.m. and conclude at 10:00 p.m.

The cost of the program will be
\$30/individual, or \$45/couple sharing
materials.

Site locations include: Rockwell City,
Moorland, Belmond, Webster City,
Humboldt & Fort Dodge.

The sessions scheduled will include:

- Tree Identification & Matching
Tree & Site, Design
- Species Selection & Tree Growth
- Tree Planting and Care
- Diagnosing Tree Problems &
Preventing Tree Damage
- Community Tree Inventories
- Developing Community Tree
Programs

Each evening instructors from ISU,
IA DNR & Trees Forever will conduct
up to three hours of training on
selected sites (weather permitting)
and one hour in a classroom.

Students of the Tree Steward
Program are expected to share their
knowledge and experience in their
communities following the class.

Class size is limited; for additional
information contact your local
Extension Office.

RECIPE CORNER



It soon will be time for rhubarb treats!

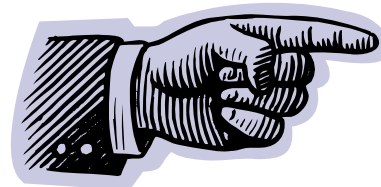
Rhubarb Stir Cake

- ¼ c butter, softened
- 1½ c brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 T vanilla
- 2½ c flour
- 1 teas baking soda
- ½ teas salt
- 1 c sour cream
- 4 c chopped rhubarb
- ½ c white sugar
- ½ teas nutmeg

In a large bowl, cream butter &
brown sugar. Beat in egg & vanilla.
Stir together flour, baking soda &
salt; gradually add to butter mixture.

Fold in sour cream and rhubarb.
Spoon into greased 9x13 glass pan.
Stir together white sugar & nutmeg,
sprinkle on top. Bake 350° for 40
min. or until tester comes out clean.

We Need You!



Articles of interest,

Photos,

Tips & Ideas...



Please submit YOUR article
for the next issue of
Horticulture Happenings



**ALL submissions will be
considered!**

Meet a Master Gardener...



Webster County Master Gardener Marian Jensen lives in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Marian Jensen

Our featured Mid-Iowa Master Gardener for the month of March is Webster County Master Gardener Marian Jensen of Fort Dodge, IA.

Marian completed her Master Gardener training many years ago and has worked each year since performing many hours of volunteer service in Webster County. Among her volunteer activities as a certified Iowa Master Gardener, Marion assists with planting the Salvation Army flowerbed; she helps maintain the St. Olaf Church courtyard; and she also assists a widow with her flowerbeds.

A few years ago, due to Marion's encouragement, a garden area was established at the Rabiner Boys Ranch. Marion makes frequent visits and always checks out the garden area there. In fact, one of the boys even told her that the garden was his favorite place to work!

If you would like more information, on our Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners and training opportunities, please call your local ISU Extension Office for further information.

Thank you Marian, for all your many hours of volunteer service!

2006 Perennial Flower of the Year...

'Feuerhexe' (Firewitch) *Dianthus gratianopolitanus*



Hardiness: Grows well in USDA Zones 3-9 **Light:** Full sun **Soil:** Grows best in well-drained soils **Uses:** The cheddar pink is excellent as a border edger, as a rock garden plant, planted in wall crevices, or as a groundcover on a sunny slope. It is at home in the herb garden, a formal border or a cottage garden.

The genus *Dianthus* is a member of the Caryophyllaceae family with species found native to the Mediterranean, Balkan Peninsula, and Asia Minor regions. The genus contains annual, biennial, and perennial species and includes plants with the common names of carnations, sweet Williams, and pinks.

The name *Dianthus* originates from the Greek *dios* and *anthos*, the divine flower, which refers to the flower of a god, an indication of the esteem in which the flower has always been held. The common name associated with *Dianthus gratianopolitanus* is cheddar pink.

The enticing clove-like scent of this low-growing ornamental makes it the perfect choice for use in a border near the walkway. The blooms offer lingering fragrance. Placement near the walkway allows extra scent as passersby brush fragrant blossoms. Pert, bright blooms make Firewitch a perfect choice for the rock garden or for planting in wall crevices. The perennial quality creates a good ground cover on a sunny slope. – by *Perennial Plant Association*

MOREL MUSHROOMS

Prepared by Iowa State University FAMILIES EXTENSION ANSWER LINE 800-262-3804

These are the wild mushrooms that people pick in April and May. The season usually lasts 3-4 weeks; the mushrooms' growth depends upon spring rains and warm temperatures.

The safe morels are those that have the hollow stem. The first pickings of mushrooms are usually the gray ones and the later ones become more yellow. The tops all look like a sponge, very "holey".

They can be kept as picked (not washed) in the refrigerator 1-2 days. Three days at the very most for safety's sake. Do not soak in water. They are best if you use a mushroom brush; brush them before cooking. If you feel you must put water on them, do a quick rinse.

Bugs: Early spring morels don't have bugs. Depending upon where they are grown, generally a quick rinse is enough. After late May, some mushrooms may need to be soaked because of insects. And because of the tiny holes that make up the mushroom, they may even survive a long soak. However, cooking will destroy them.

REF: Dr. Lois Tiffany, ISU Botany Professor & Don Lewis, ISU Extension Entomologist. 1991.



Morel mushroom: *Morchella esculenta*

COOKING MORELS

Most people cut in half or slice, rinse, dip them in beaten egg, and dip in flour or cracker crumbs. Fry in small amount of margarine or butter. They usually are crisp and brown in 3-4 minutes. Serve immediately.

FREEZING MORELS

Prepare as for a meal (noted above). Put them on a tray and freeze individually and then package in freezer bags or boxes. To prepare them for eating, place on a baking sheet and heat in the oven.

One can also blanch (anywhere from 3 to 5 minutes, depending on the size of the piece), chill, drain and freeze. However, this precludes the preferred method of breading and frying that the large majority of people like. They would be best used in stews and casseroles instead.

WILD MUSHROOMS CAN NOT BE CANNED SAFELY.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Mushrooms are low in calories, high in fiber, high in riboflavin, high in potassium, low in sodium.

General Food Elements:

Food Energy: 14 calories

Carbohydrates: 2 grams

Fat: 1/2 gram

Protein: 1 gram

Crude Fiber: 200 mg

2/3 cup of whole mushrooms equals 2 ounces or 50-55 grams.

1 pound equals 8-9 servings

REF: Information based on Nutritional Research from the Produce Marketing Association, 1982

Garden Quote:

"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." - Margaret Atwood



Corsage Workshops Offered...

Discover the basics of corsage making and design, plus gain the skills to create your own corsages & a boutonnieres!

Learn to make your own corsages for just in time for Mothers Day, Prom, Weddings, birthdays or baby showers. Participants will create at least three different designs during this workshop and receive supplies to make additional designs at home.

Cost is \$15.00, pre-registration is required. Bring floral pruners or scissors and a small wire cutter, if available. Registration deadline is May 3, 2006!

Call your ISU Extension Office today for reservations:

CLARION: May 9, 6 -8 pm

Wright Co. ISU Extension
210 1st Street SW (515) 532-3453

FORT DODGE: May 11, 6 – 8 pm

Webster Co. ISU Extension
108 S. 8th Street (515) 576-2119

HUMBOLDT: May 10, 6 – 8 pm

Humboldt Co. ISU Extension
727 Sumner (515) 332-2201

WEBSTER CITY: May 12, 6 – 8 pm

Hamilton Co. ISU Extension
311 Bank Street (515) 832-9597

Interested in growing grapes? ISU Extension has learning opportunities for you!



Free Publication:

Growing Grapes in the Home Garden:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1707.pdf>

Visit the ISU Viticulture website at:

<http://viticulture.hort.iastate.edu/>

Or, if you are interested in growing grapes commercially attend:

WINEGRAPE & VINEYARDS 101 SERIES

Featuring: Michael White, ISU Extension Viticulture Specialist

Location: Hamilton Co. ISU Extension, 311 Bank Street, Webster City. 4 Mondays: April 3, 10, 17 & 24, 6:30-9:30 pm

Cost: \$65/all or \$20 a session. To register, or for additional information, please call 515-832-9597

ATT: Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners – Show your 2006 MG certification card & receive a 25% discount off admission!

**2005 Mid-Iowa Master Gardener
Volunteer Hours**

Hamilton County – 504.5 hours

Humboldt County – 454.25 hours

Webster County – 1185 hours

Wright County – 577.25 hours

2005 Total Hours – 2,721 hours!

**Mid-Iowa Master Gardener
2006 Special Awards**

Carol Main, Hamilton County
Mornin' Glory Coffee Shoppe Webster City, IA

Howard Jensen, Webster County
Visitor Center, Custer State Park, SD

Mary Hawley, Wright County
United Methodist Biblical Garden, Belmond, IA

**Mid-Iowa
Master Gardener Graduates – 2006**

Hamilton County

Sherry Lambi
Dave Mechaelsen
Josh Mechaelsen

Webster County

Sela Bryhne
Darlene Wolff

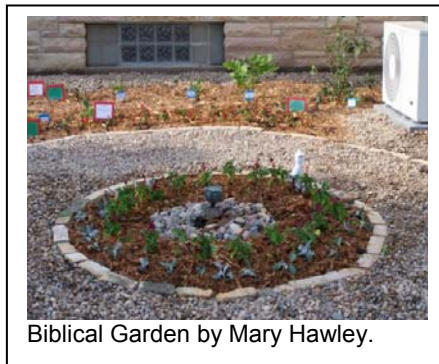
Humboldt County

Lorrie Bacon
Juliana Bormann
Doyle Darnall
Jodi Kohlhaas
Susan Owen
Cheryl Rhead
Michele Trauger

Wright County

Maxine Larson
Melinda Petersen
Shelley Rethman
Alyce Seaba

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
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Biblical Garden by Mary Hawley.



Knot garden designed by Carol Main.



Interested in joining the Iowa Master Gardener Program? Training will begin in the Mid-Iowa area this fall. Call your local ISU Extension Office for further details!

Not on the *Horticulture Happenings* mailing list?
Contact Yvonne Nilles at ynilles@iastate.edu or
call 515-832-9597 to have your name
added to our mailing list.