



Horticulture Happenings

An Iowa State University Extension Newsletter for Mid-Iowa Gardeners

Oct. 2005 Vol. 2 No. 9

In This Issue:

Events Calendar.....p.2

Recipe Corner.....p.2

2006 Calendars.....p. 2

Food Safety.....p. 2

Meet a
Master Gardenerp.3

Flower of the Month.....p.3

Iowa Master Gardener
Field Day.....p.4

Floral Design
Workshops.....p.4

Herbaceous Perennial
Weekend.....p. 5

Garden Quote.....p.5

Sara Thill's
Garden.....p.6

Canning
Tomatoes.....p.7

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origin, religion, sex, age, or disability.*

Bring the harvest home – to your kitchen!



It's that time of year again – the orchards are open, with boxes and bags of crisp juicy apples for cooking!

This cooler weather changes one's thoughts to inside chores, such as baking...why not try our Apple Crumb Pie recipe and your home will soon fill with the delicious smells of cinnamon and apples. Yum!

Pumpkins, gourds and Indian corn for fall decorating are also now available. Take a photo of your door or yard decorations and submit it to this newsletter to share your ideas with others.

Be sure to reserve the date of Saturday, November 12, 2005 to attend the 8th annual Herbaceous Perennial Weekend at ISU. There are several speakers on various topics, and is a day well spent.

We will be holding a series of floral design workshops in our 4-county area. This is for beginning floral designers who wish to learn the art of flower arranging. You will create a fall flower arrangement in a miniature pumpkin that you can use as a centerpiece in your home or to decorate your desk at the office. Read the further details on this workshop as found on page 4.

We are in desperate need for you to submit horticultural articles, poetry or garden photos for this publication! Any type of submission will count towards fulfilling Master Gardener volunteer service hours. The volunteer service record forms for recording 2005 Mid-Iowa MG volunteer hours can be found on your local ISU Extension Office's web site.

Yvonne Nilles
Extension Horticulturalist
*Serving Hamilton, Humboldt,
Webster & Wright counties*

Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners to meet in Clarion

The Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners will meet Tuesday, Oct. 4, at the Wright Co. Extension Office, 210 1st Street in Clarion at 6:45 p.m.

Wright County Master Gardeners & Interns will host the meeting. The MG Advisory Council will meet prior to this meeting at 6:15 p.m.



MID-IOWA AREA HORTICULTURE EVENTS CALENDAR

- Oct 4....Mid-IA Master Gardeners
Wright Co. Ext. Off. - 6:45 pm
(Advisory Council at 6:15 pm)
- Oct 6....Fort Dodge Area Gardeners
Webster Co. Ext. Off. - 7pm
- Oct 14...Town & Country Garden Club
1 pm, at The Depot - W.C.
Natural ornament workshop
- Oct 15..IA Horticultural Society Awards
Luncheon, Iowa Arboretum.
- Oct 18....Fort Dodge Fed Garden Club
Izaak Walton, 1:00 pm.
Program-*Dividing Perennials*.
- Oct 23...Floral Design Class-Ft Dodge
- Oct 24...Floral Design Class-Clarion
- Oct 25...Floral Design Class-W.C.
- Oct 26....Town & Country Garden Club
Noon potluck, at WC Depot -
"Bonsai" will be the program.
- Oct 27...Floral Design Class-Humboldt
- Nov 11...Herbaceous Perennial
Weekend, Omaha.
- Nov 12...Herbaceous Perennial
Weekend, ISU Scheman
Auditorium, Ames (Repeat of
Nov. 11 program)

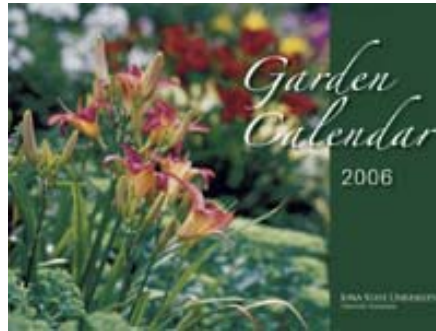
For further details on these events,
call 515-832-9597

Submit news articles & events to:
Horticulture Happenings
ISU Extension Hamilton County
311 Bank Street
Webster City, IA 50595-2303
Phone: 515-832-9597
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AP photo, Steve Pope

2006 Calendar now available!



The 2006 Garden Calendar from ISU Extension offers monthly how-to tips and plant stories in a full-color, 9"x12" format. The calendar includes lists of ISU Extension horticulture publications & county office phone numbers.

Calendars (PM 815) are available from your local ISU Extension county office for \$8.00, and from the ISU Extension Distribution Center's web site (\$8 plus postage) at:

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/store>

Food Preservation Safety

This time is the time of year gardeners complete their harvest by preserving garden produce for the coming winter months.

In the past, many people became ill by eating food contaminated with *Clostridium botulinum*. This bacteria can survive and grow inside a sealed jar of food and produces a highly poisonous toxin. Even a taste of food containing this toxin can be fatal!

Fortunately today, we have much researched based advice available on the proper methods for preserving foods to prevent such tragedies.

Always be sure to use safety tested recipes and procedures when preserving food. A helpful link to the National Center for Home Food Preservation web site and an online version of the USDA *Guide to Home Canning* can be found at:
http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publication/publications_usda.html

RECIPE CORNER



Apple Crumb Pie

- 1 (9inch) pie shell
- 6 c. sliced apples
- 1 T. lemon juice
- ¾ c. white sugar
- 2 T. flour
- ½ teas. cinnamon
- 1/8 teas. nutmeg
- ½ c. raisins (optional)
- ½ c. walnuts (optional)
- ½ c. flour
- ½ c. brown sugar
- 3 T. butter

Place apples in a large bowl. Sprinkle with lemon juice. Mix next 4 ingredients and sprinkle over apples. Toss to coat. Add raisins & walnuts. Place in pie shell.

Mix together ½ c. flour and brown sugar. Cut in butter until crumbly. Sprinkle over apple filling. Cover top loosely with aluminum foil. Bake at 375° for 25 min. Remove foil and bake 25-30 min. more, until top is golden brown.

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 Intern...



Wright County Master Gardener Intern **Melinda Petersen** lives in Goldfield, Iowa.

Melinda Petersen

Our featured Mid-Iowa Master Gardener for the month of October is Wright County Master Gardener Intern Melinda Petersen. Melinda completed her Master Gardener training in 2004 and is working to fulfill her 40 hours of volunteer service to become a certified Iowa Master Gardener. She helped with the plantings in Goldfield for the Sesquicentennial in 2005 and also submitted an article for this newsletter as part of her volunteer hours.

She has given many horticultural presentations for various groups and clubs in the Mid-Iowa area. Her special interest, that of container plants, is a topic she would love to present a program on for your group as well!

If you would like to hear Melinda speak, or any other of our Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners and Interns, please call your local ISU Extension Office for further information.

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

Flower of the Month...

Calendula



The birthday flower listed for October is either the Calendula or Marigold. As most gardeners are familiar with the Marigold, we'll discuss the Calendula or *Calendula officinalis*.

The term "pot marigold" is a common term sometimes used to describe this flower, as in the past, it was often put into cook's pots. The edible blooms were used to flavor soups and broths, in salads and to color cakes, puddings and butter as a cheap substitute for saffron.

Calendula can be direct seeded in the garden in full sun and dryer soils. They will bloom best in cooler weather as they do not tolerate heat well. Be sure to dead-head spent flowers to prolong blooming.

As most cultivars are frost tolerant, many gardeners will make a second mid-summer planting of *Calendula* for colorful fall blooms. Popular cultivars include 'Pacific Apricot' and 'Geisha Girl'. Why not plan to include the *Calendula* on your list of plants to plant next spring?

Iowa Master Gardener Field Day Held



Several of our Mid-Iowa Master Gardeners attended the Iowa Master Gardener Field Day held August 26 at the ISU Research Farm near Gilbert. This photo shows Dr. Gail Nonnecke, far left, discussing viticulture research at the farm. Wright County Master Gardener Intern Alyce Seaba, of Goldfield, is seated in the back row far right in this photo.

Mini-Pumpkin Floral Design Workshops set ...



Learn to create a floral design for your fall décor at this workshop at this first in a series of workshops.

Mid-Iowa ISU Extension Horticulture is sponsoring a series of floral design workshops to be held in the four-county area this fall. Participants will learn the basics of floral design and create a fall design in a miniature pumpkin container. Supplies for the design will be provided.

Cost is \$10.00 each, and pre-registration is required. Call your local ISU Extension Office to register or contact Yvonne Nilles, Extension Horticulturalist at the Hamilton County ISU Extension at (515) 832-9597 for further information on these workshops.

Fall design workshops will be held on the following dates:

Fort Dodge: October 23, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

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

Clarion: October 24, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Wright Co. ISU Extension Office, 210 1st Street S, (515) 532-3453

Webster City: October 25, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

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

Humboldt: October 27, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

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

Future workshops in this series will include a Christmas holiday design and a Valentine's Day arrangement.

Come discover your creative ability with Mid-Iowa Horticulture!

Herbaceous Perennial Weekend is Nov. 12!

By Dr. Cindy Haynes, Horticulturist
Iowa State University Extension

For the past eight years Iowa State University Horticulture Extension has put together a fall program called the Herbaceous Perennial Weekend. Like many gardening symposia, the audience is always enthusiastic and the speakers are always knowledgeable. But unlike any other gardening program this symposium is conducted twice in two different locations and each session is packed (from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.) with useful information, good food, Master Gardeners and a good time!

This year's crop of speakers includes a modern plant hunter/hybridizer, a prolific garden writer, a researcher, a designer/artist, and an educator. All are connoisseurs of ornamental plants. All are well-known and respected for their craft and knowledge. All have been fun to talk to and encourage participating in this year's program.

Dan Heims is the president of Terra Nova Nurseries in the Portland, Ore. area. While you might think that plants from the Pacific Northwest may not perform well in the Midwest – think again. In fact, you probably have a few of his coral bells (*Heuchera*) and other offerings planted in your garden already. Dan is an enthusiastic speaker and loves to show audiences the newest perennials on the market and those of the future too. His new book *Heuchera and Heucherellas* is sure to be a hit with gardeners. Dan will speak about these genera and his fascination with Asian plants.

Our garden writer is Elvin McDonald, senior gardening editor for *Better Homes and Gardens*. Since Elvin has been gardening and writing about gardening for more than fifty years, it is not surprising that he is often referred to as “the Dean of Garden Writers.” He is also one of the most knowledgeable and charming speakers I have ever met. He has authored, edited, photographed or published more than a hundred books on gardening. His forthcoming book *The Gardening Husband* refers to his long term gardening relationship with fellow author C.Z. Guest, and is the topic of his talk.

Don't let the name Nancy Rose fool you – she is not just an expert on roses but also on other ornamental woody shrubs. In addition, she has written the highly popular book *Shrubs for Cold Climates*. Nancy has worked for the University of Minnesota for several years where she has extensively studied hardy woody shrubs and willingly shares that experience with the gardening public across the country. Nancy will speak about small shrubs for the mixed border – a nice fit for a perennial weekend!

Charlene Harris passed up a pottery workshop to contribute to this year's Herbaceous Perennial Weekend. Her artistic background, experience as a Michigan Master Gardener, and delightful sense of humor make her an entertaining and insightful speaker. We will learn from Charlene the “fun-damentals” of garden design.

Last, but certainly not least, is Lois Girton from Iowa State University. Lois is on the board of directors of the Iowa Arboretum and chair of the plant collections management committee. She is an Iowa gardening expert and well-known for teaching and expertise with hosta and Siberian iris. Lois will pass along her ideas and passion for the use of Siberian iris in the landscape.

Join me in attending the 2005 Herbaceous Perennial Weekend. The symposium will be held on Nov. 11 at Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha and repeated on Nov. 12 at Scheman Auditorium on the ISU Campus, Ames, Iowa. Brochures with schedules and costs are available at your local county extension office or online at www.yardandgarden.iastate.extension.edu. Be sure to take your vitamins before the symposium, you wouldn't want to miss a thing.

****Editor's Note:** If you are interested in car pooling to this event, please call 515-832-9597.



Garden Quote:

"The most important thing about gardening is to enjoy yourself and have a good time. I've always felt that having a garden is like having a good and loyal friend. All the love and tender care you put into it will be returned."

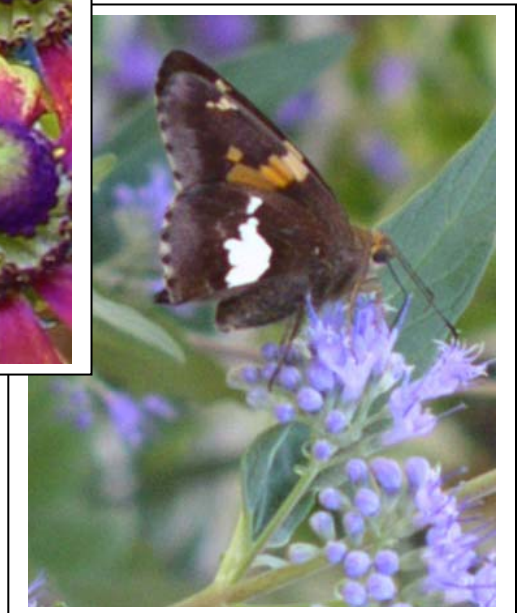
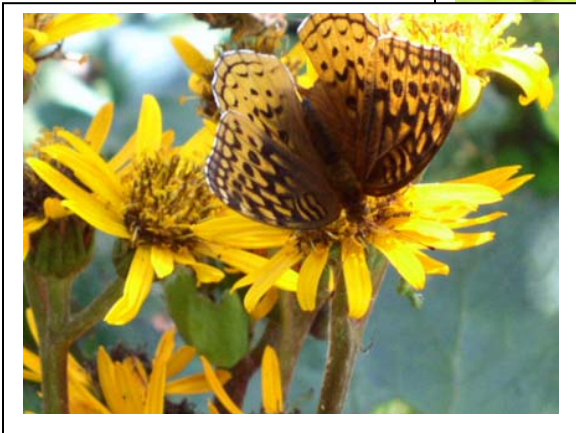
- C.Z. Guest, (1921-2003), New York Post gardening columnist and author

Webster County Master Gardener Sara Thill's garden...



These are a few snapshots of my garden the first week of September-It includes goldfinches on their way south, last of the hollyhocks, helenium, a gnome hanging from an old door covered with volunteer Grandpa Otts vines, butterflies and moths on flowers.

Master Gardener-
Sara Thill, Fort Dodge



EXTENSION CONNECTION – Canning Tomatoes

By: Paulelda Gilbert, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

Q. I have canned tomatoes for years, but this time the lids have popped off, though they were sealed after I put the hot tomatoes in jars.

A. The “open-kettle” method of canning is unsafe because undesirable organisms could grow and lower acidity enough to allow production of botulism or other food bacteria. In the “open-kettle” method you risk not keeping the entire contents of the pan cooking at a boiling temperature; you risk contamination as you fill jars and handle the jars, lids and utensils. Therefore, once jars of tomatoes are filled and lids are tightened, they need to be placed in a boiling water bath or pressure canner for a specified amount of time, to kill all harmful bacteria. When this step is not taken, bacteria might be present which grows in the jars once they return to room temperature and the lids will not stay sealed. The food then needs to be discarded. All home canned foods (fruit, vegetables, jam and jellies) need to be processed after jars are filled to ensure food safety.

Q. Why do we need to add lemon juice to our home canned tomatoes?

A. Our current varieties of tomatoes are not as high in acid as they used to be. To ensure safe acidity in whole crushed, or juiced tomatoes, you must add bottled lemon juice or food grade citric acid to each jar before processing. For quarts, use 2 tablespoons lemon juice or ½ teaspoon citric acid per quart. For pints use 1 tablespoon bottled lemon juice or ¼ teaspoon citric acid. Food grade citric acid is available at some food stores or drug stores. Do not substitute ascorbic acid for citric acid.

Q. Why is the acid content of the tomato important?

A. Improperly canned tomatoes have caused some cases of botulism poisoning in recent years. Botulism comes from dangerous toxins that are produced when *Clostridium botulinum* spores grow in low acid foods. These factors affect the acidity and therefore the safety of tomatoes for home canning. Tomato cultivars (variety) vary in acidity. Growing conditions, climate and location also affect acidity. Overripe and infected tomatoes may be low enough in acid to support *Clostridium botulinum*. Use only firm, ripe tomatoes that have no spoiled parts or mold. Tomatoes harvested from dead vines are low in acid. They can be eaten fresh or frozen, but do not can tomatoes from dead vines. Do not add any ingredients beyond those given in the directions. Adding other vegetables can lower the acidity and change the processing time.

Ask the ISU Experts

- by Richard Jauron, ISU Horticulture

Is it possible to pick green tomatoes before the first frost and ripen them indoors?

Yes, green tomatoes can be ripened indoors. Just before the first frost, remove all mature, greenish white fruit from the vines. They should be solid, firm and free of defects. Remove the stems, then clean and dry the fruit. Individually wrap each tomato in a piece of newspaper. Store wrapped tomatoes in a cool (60 to 65F), dark location, such as a basement or cellar. The wrapped fruit can be placed in a single layer in a box or on a table. Inspect the tomatoes frequently and discard any damaged or decaying fruit. When the tomatoes begin to color, remove the newspaper and place them at room temperature. An alternate method is to leave the green fruit on the vine and pull up the entire plant. Hang the tomato plant upside down in a cool, dark location. Pick the fruit as they ripen.