Muscatine County Master Gardeners
Officers for 2018
Chair: Ed Moreno
Vice Chair: Heather Harroun
Sec/Treas: Candi Whitmer

MG’s New Year’s Resolutions:
To attend Art of Gardening March 17 at MCC
To get involved in one or more MG committees
To get all my education and volunteer hours
To attend our events and training opportunities

Newsletter Contents for a quick perusal
- Upcoming Gardening Events: see page 2
- Art of Gardening at MCC: see pages 3-5
- Additional Upcoming Events: see page 6
- Director’s Input: see pages 7-8
- Message from The Chair: see page 9
- Board Meeting Minutes: see pages 10-11
- Tree and Prairie Plant Ordering: see page 12
- Sensory Gardening Article: see pages 13-14
- February Gardening Guide: see page 15
- Master Gardeners Committees: see page 16
- Simple Tips for Gardening: see page 17
Upcoming General Meetings and Special Events

Coordinated by Jane Hodge
Master Gardener

Future Events include:

February 13, 6:30 pm — General Meeting — Muscatine County Extension Office — Program: Glorious Ferns: Bob Bryant, former director of the Wapsi Environmental Center in Dixon, Illinois knows plants in our region but his specialty is ferns. He will give us his researched presentation of ferns in our area including those found in Wild Cat Den State Park. In July he will take us on a walking tour to see where these ferns are located.

March 13, 6:30 pm — MG Board Meeting — Muscatine County Extension Office

March 17, 8am—3:30pm — Art of Gardening at Muscatine Community College. The planning committee has booked several quality speakers with topics that are pertinent to our local gardening environment. See pages 3-4.

April 10, 6:30 pm — General Meeting

May 12, 9am — noon — Joint Plant Sale at Discovery Park in Muscatine

July 10, Fern Walk at Wildcat Den State Park

July 17, Bucket Brigade @ WL Fair Grounds

(Pending), Fruit and Vegetable Meeting @ Muscatine Island ISU Research Farm

Winter Webinars

Muscatine County Extension Office
6-8 pm

- February 26 - From Seed to Table
- March 5 - Garden Helpers
- March 19 - Food Security Partners

University of Illinois Extension
Lessons in Gardening 2018

February 17th, 2018 from 8:15a.m. to 3:45pm.
Gerber Center 3435 9 1/2 Ave.
on Augustana College Campus
https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=17746

New Online Course

Vegetable Production and Management Course in Spring 2018. This course is being offered both for college credits and for non-credits (for professionals and individuals interested in vegetable production).

http://www.distance.iastate.edu/registration.php

See ISU Website for many more opportunities: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/events
Also, see page 5 for Voice of the Valleys upcoming events and for Iowa City winter gardening seminars.
By now you’ve received your Art of Gardening Event brochure to be held on March 17. If you haven’t, stop by the Extension Office and pick one up. In fact, if many of you would pick up several and distribute around town and in neighboring towns at businesses you frequent we would have more publicity! Your doctor’s office, dentist, hairdresser, convenience stores, credit union, etc. are a few you come in contact with.

At the general meeting on February 13 we will be asking you to volunteer to be a host at a session you have signed up for. Hosts distribute evaluation forms, and pick them up, see if the speaker has any last-minute requests and introduce the class session so everyone knows they are in the right class and introduce the speaker, by name and title and any bio they give you or let them give their own bio. You get volunteer time for this as well as educational credits for attending any classes.

We hope you like the sessions provided and are having a hard time as I am trying to decide which to take!

Let’s hope for a nice day!

Susan
ART OF GARDENING March 17, 2018
SESSION 1 — 9:00 -10:00 a.m.

A. **ORNAMENTAL GRASSES** Chuck Porto, Iowa City Landscaping—Learn the basics of gardening with ornamental grasses. Chuck will discuss the best species and varieties for different landscaping and gardening situations.

B. **NEW PLANTS FOR 2018** Maria McCalley, Owner—Hilltop Greenhouses—Always on the cutting edge with the newest and most interesting plants at her greenhouse, Maria will share what she believes will be the “must have” plants for your 2018 garden.

C. **OUTDOOR BED PRODUCTION** Ty Allchin, Allchin Acres—Would you like to grow mushrooms among your garden vegetables? This presentation will cover a few methods to do this using two very easy to identify mushrooms; the Oyster Mushroom and the Wine cap Stropharia.

D. **BUTTERFLY & POLLINATORS IN LANDSCAPE** Peggy Burrows, Meyers Landscape—Butterfly and Pollinator Gardens need to expand in the landscape to include trees or shrubs for larvae to hatch and grow as well as mud puddles and water. Come for new additions or ideas for your landscape.

E. **HOT/COOL COLORFUL FLOWER BEDS** Jerry Stevenson, Earl May Nursery—There are now so many perennials on the market that it is possible to design a specific/narrow color palette for your flower beds.

F. **STARTING GARDEN TRANSPLANTS AT HOME** Zora Ronan, Linn County Master Gardener—This class will give you all the information you need to successfully start garden transplants (seed starting) at home with a minimal amount of equipment.

ART OF GARDENING March 17, 2018
SESSION 2 — 10:15-11:15 a.m.

A. **“KNOW-MAINTENANCE” LANDSCAPING** Chuck Porto, Iowa City Landscaping—It’s a big challenge trying to create a garden and landscape that is easy to install and maintain. There is no such thing as “No Maintenance”, but you can maximize your accomplishments if you “know maintenance”.

B. **CURB APPEAL** Deb Walser, Linn County Master Gardener—Learn how to evaluate your property, plan the garden, and select plants. Deb will walk you through the planning process for a new house or a new garden.

C. **JOURNALING IN YOUR GARDEN** Dominic Snyder, Iowa State—This seminar goes over how to set up your garden and keep documentation of what occurs in your garden throughout the growing season.

D. **HOSTAHOLICS** Jay McWherter, Linn County Master Gardener—History, size, colors, sun/shade requirements, soils, division & seed reproduction, moisture & fertilizer, compost & mulch, pests & diseases, virus x. Many home garden photos with before and after garden shots.

E. **CANNING AND PRESERVING** Laura McGinnis, Muscatine County Master Gardener—If you have a lot of produce, you can freeze-dry to save the good foods we are fortunate to have...We will be reviewing and going over facts/fiction of food preservation.

F. **TREES, SHRUBS AND PERENNIALS...SELECTING THE RIGHT PLANT** Todd Wiebenga, Aunt Rhodie’s—With so many varieties of plants out on the market, it’s hard to know which ones to buy and use in your garden. Learn some tips for selecting the right plant for the right spot in your landscape.

(continued next page — AOG)
ART OF GARDENING March 17, 2018
SESSION 3 — 1:15 - 2:15 p.m.

A. SAWDUST BLOCK PRODUCTION OF MUSHROOMS Ty Alchin, Allchin Acres—This presentation will cover how to successfully fruit purchased sawdust blocks from the comfort of your kitchen. Materials will be listed to create your very own table-top fruiting chamber.

B. DIVERSITY IN FLOWERS, TREES AND SHRUBS Jerry Stevenson, Earl May Nursery—The best protection against insects & disease is to plant a wide range of different plants. Take a tip from nature and don’t put all your plants (eggs) in one basket.

C. BUZZ ABOUT BEES Shane Mairet, Mairets Garden Center—This session is designed to be an overview of all things bees! From how to start beekeeping to pollination and from honey making to bee stings are all topics at this interactive session.

D. HARDY ROSES Deb Walser, Linn County Master Gardener—Are you in love with roses but not the work required? Learn how to plant, where to plant and the many types of hardy, more disease resistant and compatible roses to grow in today’s gardens.

E. GROWING MELONS IN FRUITLAND, IOWA Dominic Snyder, Iowa State—This seminar goes over how to grow watermelon and cantaloupe in Fruitland, IA. Our soils are very unique, which provides a great opportunity to grow melons. We will also give some tips so everyone can be successful growing melons.

F. GOING WILD: WILDFLOWER ID AND GARDENING Hannah Howard, The Nature Conservancy—Did you know that Muscatine County is home to the most bio diverse landscape in our state? Join Hannah to learn more about the native wildflowers that are a part of that diversity and how you can Go Wild at home.

ART OF GARDENING March 17, 2018
SESSION 4 — 2:30-3:30 p.m.

A. COLOR FOR ALL SEASONS Peggy Burrows, Meyers Landscape—Seasonal blooms, shades of green, fall foliage, texture and colors of branches and bark; All create a landscape of color or interest. Stop for ideas whether large or small.

B. BIRDS, BEES AND TREES Hannah Howard, The Nature Conservancy—Thinking of adding a few new trees and shrubs to your landscaping this year? Hannah will discuss native trees and shrubs that will attract birds, bees, squirrels and other wildlife to your yard!

C. A CRUISE AROUND JAPAN Zora Ronan, Linn County Master Gardener—Travel is the next best thing to gardening. Take a photo journey to Japan. Travel with me on a cruise ship from Osaka to Sapporo visiting some famous and iconic Japanese gardens along the way.

D. BEGINNING VEGETABLE GARDENING Diane Wiesenfeld, Linn County Master Gardener—Diane will present information for the beginning gardener to grow produce. Included will be a discussion about site selection, soil amendment, containers and raised beds, planting schedules and care.

E. THE SHADE GARDEN Jay McWherter, Linn County Master Gardener—Are there difficult areas in your garden due to insufficient sunlight? Explore the wide variety of annuals, perennials and tropicals which can be grown successfully in the shade while adding both beauty and interest.

F. MONARCH’S Chris Sample and Candi Witmer, Muscatine County Master Gardeners—Information and discussion about gardening for Monarch butterflies, whose numbers are in decline. Presentations will include planting flowers that attract butterflies, how to raise the Monarch in your garden.
Voice of the Valleys Upcoming Events

**Owl Prowl** Johnson County, Iowa, Friday, February 9th, 7:00 to 9:00 pm, F.W. Kent Park’s Conservation Education Center. Join certified raptor educator Joan Schnabel for an indoor owl program, followed by a night hike with hot chocolate. Registration is required by February 5th, email salgreen@co.johnson.ia.us.

**Winter Hike and Picnic** Johnson County, Iowa, Saturday, February 10th, 11:00 am, F.W. Kent Park’s Youth Group Camp. Picnicking in winter? With proper attire, this is a tradition you and your family are sure to love! Program will start with a hike and commence with a picnic in the lodge. Picnickers should bring their own meals, JCCB will provide the hot chocolate and s’mores dessert. Registration is required by Monday, February 5th, email salgreen@co.johnson.ia.us.

**Great Backyard Bird Count** Louisa County, Iowa, Saturday, February 17th, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, Langwood Education Center. Join 160,000 people worldwide who participate in this citizen science event. We’ll learn about citizen science and this annual bird count before heading out to the woods to count birds. No birding experience needed, great program for any age. Call the Louisa County Conservation office or email lmccomb@lccb.org to RSVP.

**Winter Tree ID** Johnson County, Iowa, Saturday, February 24th, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, F.W. Kent Park’s Conservation Education Center. Leafless trees might seem impossible to ID, but there are still many ways to set them apart. Participants will learn advanced tree ID skills indoors before a hands-on winter hike. Class is designed for adults, email kmorrow@co.johnson.ia.us by February 16th to register.

**Prairie Preview** Iowa City, Iowa, Thursday, March 1st, 6:30 to 8:45 pm, Clarion Highlander. Bur Oak Land Trust’s 35th Annual Prairie Preview will feature Mark Hirsch, author of That Tree. Mark will give a talk about his iPhone photo journal experience documenting a year in the life of a lonely Bur Oak tree. Program is free and all are welcome. Doors open at 6:30 pm to register and view exhibits, meet and greet, and book signing. The presentation begins at 7:30 pm. Mark will also give a 45 minute photography workshop at 4:30 pm (cost $25). For additional information visit www.bouroaklandtrust.org.

Iowa City Landscaping and Garden Center Winter Seminars

**Saturday February 3rd at 10:00am**  
**Gardening with Deer**  
Tammy Yoder, Owner of Green Earth Designs: Did the deer eat your favorite flowers for dinner? Discover the trees, shrubs, and perennials that the deer won’t bother. Tammy will help you incorporate these deer resistant plants into your existing landscape.

**Saturday/Sunday February 3rd & 4th at 2:00pm**  
**— Air Plants as Art Workshop**  
Design your own framed air plant art for your home. Arrange air plants and pieces of bark in the pre-assembled frame to make a unique piece of plant art. Instruction on how to care for air plants will be included. Additional air plants and decor will be available for purchase as well.  
**Fee: $40.00** (Includes instruction, frame, air plants, moss, bark, and embellishments).

**Saturday February 10th at 10:00am**  
**Pruning Tips and Techniques**  
Ed Rinderspacher, Owner of Rindy Inc.: Start thinking about what pruning you’ll need to do in your garden this spring. Ed will guide you through pruning techniques and timing.
Hello Master Gardeners,

Even though the air is cold and the ground is frozen, there is still a lot going on!! First off I would like to thank Karen Steinke, Rachel Horner Brackett and Jane Hodge for manning the Muscatine County Master Gardener booth at the Bald Eagles Days on January 27th. The live raptor show was great!! Also want to give a shout out to our Art of Gardening planning committee; the registration brochures are now available and my, what a selection of classes they have arranged! I hope to see you all at Art of Gardening on March 17 at Muscatine Community College – register today!

Another opportunity besides for Art of Gardening to get in some education hours are the Winter Webcast Series, thank you to Shelly Maharry for hosting all three! All three webcasts are scheduled 6-8 pm at the Extension office. They are free and open to the public, so invite a friend!

- **Monday, February 26: From Seed to Table** – Learn tips for starting your vegetable seeds and growing transplants. Also, get to know local food system resources in Iowa.
- **Monday, March 5: Garden Helpers** – Explore best practices for managing volunteers from Reiman Gardens staff. Then, learn about how Master Gardeners are volunteering as citizen scientists contribution to research.
- **Monday, March 19: Food Security Partners** – Hear how Master Gardeners are building projects that increase community food security. Also, find out how to expand project partnerships with 4-H youth and volunteers.

Muscatine County Master Gardeners applied for another Growing Together grant – the funds that have helped our donation gardening projects. We will find out by February 12 if we were awarded the funds.

*(Continued next page, DIRECTOR)*
We were excited to add two new projects to the donation gardening roster this year; Zion Lutheran Church and the Old Barn at Discovery Park.

Lynn and Emma Mae Pruitt and I had the opportunity to meet with Nancy Dew and Kara Zigament, Hy-Vee dieticians. Nancy and Kara take care of the Hy-Vee One Step garden by Hy-Vee Mainstreet and coordinate with the Flickenger Learning Center to get kids involved in planting and harvesting the garden. Laura McGinnis was the lead Master Gardener on this project, but with Laura’s Master Gardener retirement we are looking to fill her shoes! Lynn has offered to take the lead on coordination but we are looking for a few Master Gardener to help out on the project.

The Mainstreet Garden has been in existence since 2008 and has created a strong partnership between Hy-Vee, Flickenger Center, Pearl City Outreach and Master Gardeners. Involvement could include helping with the garden planning this spring, landscape planning for the non-garden areas, weeding over the summer, or helping Nancy, Kara and the Flickenger kids with planting in the spring or harvesting in the fall (no summer programming with the kids). If you are interested in working with the youth, the hours would be about 4 days over a two week period in May, 3:30-5:00pm. The garden site will also apply to be a part of the United Way Spring Day of Caring, so a few volunteers to help direct the United Way volunteers would be helpful – more on that soon! If you are interested in getting involved please let Lynn know.

If you are not sure what projects to get involved in please contact me! We have so much going on and so many projects, that sometimes it can be overwhelming to figure out where to jump in. Also, I encourage you to attend our general meetings; they are great ways to learn about projects, build relationships with other Master Gardeners and learn new things! Jane Hodge has a great speaker lined up for February 13 – hope to see you there!

Krista
I am honored to have the privilege of serving as the Chair of the Muscatine County Master Gardener Association.

As many of you may know, I have a passion for our mission, which, is outlined in the ‘Master Gardener Volunteer Manual’:

“To provide current, research-based, consumer horticulture information and education through Iowa State University Extension and Outreach programs and projects.”

I would like to share with you a little about why I am excited.

I was born and raised in Davenport Iowa. I attended ISU and the U of I and have a B.S. in General Science and M.S. in Civil and Environmental Engineering. My science background includes a minor in Botany. After 36 years in the career, I retired as the Superintendent of the Water Division in Iowa City two years ago.

Through my career and currently, I’ve had the opportunity to participate in numerous, professional and non-profit boards and committees. And now that I have retired, I have more opportunity to continue the growth and development that I have enjoyed being a part of the Muscatine County Master Gardeners (MMG).

I am very proud to be a Master Gardener and am very impressed by everyone I have met through the MMG program. Past Chairs, Lynn Pruitt and Bill Koellner, and the MMG Board, and members have been very welcoming and great mentors. And with the support of Muscatine ISU Extension and Outreach, through the enthusiastic and skilled leadership of Krista, we will continue to be a fun and vibrant organization.

Webster’s Dictionary defines ‘Master’ several ways... ‘a person who is skilled and able in their field of work’...”“being an authority or expert”. The journey to be a master requires lots of support and mentoring and much the patience and willingness to grow and develop by working with other Masters.

(continued above right)

I am committed to share my experiences and ideas, but more importantly to listen, learn and grow with everyone.

As we look forward to a great year I want thank you all in advance for your commitment and masterful expertise. I look forward to working together on the exciting activities and opportunities ahead for Muscatine Master Gardeners.

—Ed—
Muscatine Master Gardener Association
Board Meeting Minutes - Extension Office

January 9, 2018 6:30 PM

**Board Members present:** Mary Danner, Heather Harroun, Jane Hodges, Ron Jensen, Maryrose Peterschmidt & Candi Whitmer

**Board Members absent:** Kathy Haltmeyer, Ed Moreno,

**Intern Members present:** Rachel Horner Brackett and Shelly Maharry

**Past Chair present:** Lynn Pruitt,

**Extension Liaison present:** Krista Regennitter

**Introductions of Board Members and Interns**

**Election of Officers:**

Chair - Ed Moreno

Co-Chair - Heather Harroun

Secretary/Treasurer - Candi Whitmer

**Treasurer’s Report:** Beginning balance as of 7/1/17 $7,791.23 with total expenses of $853.02 through 12/11/17 with an ending balance of $6,938.21. Rachel moved to pay Bob Bryant $75 each for the Fern Presentation and the Fern Walk, Heather seconded, motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes Reviewed from November 14, 2017:** Minutes were reviewed and accepted with no corrections

**Meeting Schedule for 2018:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Board Meetings</strong></th>
<th><strong>General Meetings</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 9</td>
<td>February 13</td>
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<td>March 13</td>
<td>April 10</td>
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<td>May 8</td>
<td>June 12</td>
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<td>July 10 (no meeting)</td>
<td>August 14 (date may vary)</td>
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<td>September 11</td>
<td>October 9</td>
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<td>November 13</td>
<td>December 11- Annual Meeting @ New Hope Church 6 PM</td>
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*(continued next page, BOARD MEETING)*
Schedule for 2018:

- February 14, Bob Bryant-Glorious Ferns 6:30 PM @ Extension Office
- March 17, Art of Gardening @ 8:00 AM at MCC
- May 12, Joint Plant sale @ Discovery Park in the pavilion. Set-up is @ 8:00 AM and runs from 9-noon
- July 10, Fern Walk at Wildcat Den State Park
- July 17, Bucket Brigade @ Fair Grounds

Other programs discussed:

- Water Features- Ed Moreno
- Plumb Grove in Iowa City- Maryrose
- Container Planters- Shelly
- Fall time decorations- Shelly
- Companion Planting, 4-Season Gardening
- Tours to Brucemore Gardens; Hornbaker Gardens

Open Floor:

- Jane talked about doing 3 gardens tours- Candi, Rachel, & Susan are on the committee to help plan those.
- Krista- 3 Winter Webinars
  - February 26- From Seed to Table
  - March 5- Garden Helpers
  - March 19- Food Security Partners
- January 27- Bald Eagle Watch @ Red Brick Building 9AM-2PM. Is anyone available to help? Will have crafts for the kids
- February 3- Muscatine Branching Out annual meeting 9-noon @ the Discovery Center

Finalize planning for the Plant Sale during April meeting

Thinking about planting a small garden at the new library

Hy-Vee Mainstreet garden

- Need volunteers-Shelly brought up making a schedule to have multiple people share the responsibility

Lynn and Krista are working together to figure something out

Flickenger Learning Center kids to plant garden

Grants- $4500 in grants

Research Farm help- Dominic will send out emails when on times when help is needed to harvest at the farm

Meeting adjourned at 8:09pm

Submitted by Candi Whitmer, Secretary/Treasurer
MUSCATINE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2018 TREE AND PRAIRIE PLANT ORDER FORMS

(See Krista’s January 30 email for more details)

- **NATIVE PRAIRIE PLANT SALE** — 6 PACK PLUGS OR POTS — Final date to order is March 30, 2018. All orders must be pre-paid. Please send payment with order, make checks payable to: Muscatine SWCD. Plants will arrive in late May. The tentative pick up day is Thursday May 31, 2018. A postcard will be emailed/mailed with the exact pick up date and location.

- **BARE ROOT STOCK** — SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 5 AND 25 — The scheduled pick up day is Friday, April 27, 2018. A postcard will be mailed/ emailed with the exact pick up date and location. Pick up is ONE DAY ONLY.

- **LONGEST LASTING REPELENT** — PROVEN EFFECTIVE FOR UP TO 6 MONTHS — Repels deer, rabbit and elk — Rain Resistant — Sold as powder, granular or liquid

**Contact:** MUSCATINE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, 3500 OAKVIEW DRIVE, MUSCATINE, IA 52761 (563) 263-7944 x 3 or email holly.howard@ia.nacdnet.net
Sensory plants are plants that have special smell, taste, touch and sight qualities. Sensory stimulation refers to the impact that the environment has on our minds and bodies and how we receive and process that information in our brains by way of our sensory organs, which include: our eyes, mouth, nose, skin, and ears.

Planting a Sensory Garden is a wonderful way to experience nature and plants through the diversity of forms, textures, tastes, fragrances, and sounds that they may offer. A Sensory Garden not only stimulates the human senses, but also attracts desirable wildlife, such as butterflies and hummingbirds. For most people, plants by their very nature inspire a sensory response. This comes as a result of the plant’s colors, scents, tastes, or other notable features.

The idea of intentionally creating gardens especially designed to impact the senses—known as Sensory Gardens—has a history of being created for the blind or visually impaired, as well as for others with special physical or emotional needs. But this has changed today with Sensory Gardens becoming more and more popular—especially when gardening with children.

(Continued next page, SENSORY)
Sensory Garden design is now focused on creating a greater appreciation for the natural world -- with all persons and with all abilities. This enhanced appreciation is brought about by thoughtful selection of plants for outdoor gardens that produce positive sensory and cultural experiences for people, which may enhance their well-being and overall quality of life.

A Sensory Garden plot is divided accordingly into the five sensory sections—Sight, Taste, Touch, Smell, and Sound, featuring plants as well as natural and human-made elements that can inspire a particular sensory response.

With many plants having characteristics that awaken basic sensory functions, Horticultural Therapy programs use Sensory Plants and Gardens to help people with sensory impairments and/or to enhance their creativity and self-expression in order to enjoy life more fully. Horticultural Therapy Program activities vary seasonally and have proven to help people of all ages and abilities with concentration, mental functioning, and memory; with social interactions, improved sense of calm, relaxation, and sense of control. Perceptions of self-worth and well-being often result, as do enhanced physical functioning and overall health. Goal setting and achievement have also been documented for program participants.

Horticultural Therapy programs take place in both indoor and outdoor settings. Hands-on program activities may include: propagating houseplants, culinary arts, nature crafts, landscape design and the growing of flowers, vegetables, and herbs. More passive and reflective activities may also be included, such as: nature journaling, listening to and observing nature, participating in group discussions and practice exercises that use nature and wellness imagery to reduce stress, anger, anxiety, and depression--while improving relationships and communications with others.
February Gardening Guide  
(Courtesy of Midwest Gardening)

Pruning February Foliage. February is the ideal time to prune fruit and ornamental trees, since the lack of foliage makes the structure much more visible. Make sure your pruners, loppers and saws are sharp to obtain nice clean cuts.

Inspect Your Garden Tools. Before spring planting, sharpen hoes and spades with a file. Check pruners and loppers for chipped or nicked blades. Use a whetstone to sharpen these. Inspect wooden handles for rough spots and splinters. Lightly sand the damaged areas and apply a light coat of linseed oil.

The Chill of Winter. Inspect flowerbeds for frost heaving. Place the plants back into the ground. Add mulch when the ground refreezes.

Inspect Your Cold Frame For Damage. Replace any broken glass or framing. Cold season crops such as cauliflower, cabbage, and broccoli can be started in the cold frame this month. Be sure to crack it open on warm, sunny days.

What's Up Doc? Watch young trees and shrubs for rabbit (or rodent) damage. Make sure tree wraps and guards are high enough to protect against animals standing on top of snow.

Happy Houseplants. Nurture acid-loving houseplants such as gardenias or citrus; water once a month with a solution of 1-teaspoon vinegar in a quart of water. As the days get longer resume fertilizing your houseplants. Begin using a 1/2 strength mixture and increase bi-weekly until you reach full strength.

Dry Evergreens? To prevent your broad-leaved evergreens and boxwoods from drying out, take advantage of a mild day (above 40 degrees F) to reapply an anti-desiccant spray.

Heard It Through the Grapevine. Prune your grape vines. Grapes bear fruit on one-year-old canes. Old canes will not bear again and need to be pruned out.

Trim Branches Back. Cut some forsythia or pussy willow branches to bring indoors for forcing. Soak them in a tepid bath for one to two hours and place in a vase for colorful blooms.

Think Before You Stroll. You may get the urge on a nice sunny day to walk around on your lawn, or in your garden to check things out, but you may actually cause harm by compacting the soil. Wait until the ground dries out to do a thorough inspection.

Order Up. Get your seed orders in while supplies are plentiful. If you have room, order enough seeds to plant an extra row or two; a local soup kitchen or charity will be thankful for the fruits of your labor.

(continued above right)
2018 Master Gardener Committees — Chair persons
(There are still opportunities for volunteers)

Arboretum — Charles Rickey 563-260-5807
Art of Gardening — Susan Cradick 563-299-9114
Bucket Brigade -- Barb Woods 563-506-4506 and Linda Wells 563-263-0292
Community Donation Gardens — Krista Regennitter 563-263-5701
Education — Jane Hodge 563-272-1638
Fair Floral Hall — Bill Koellner 319-627-4545
Farmer’s Market — Susan Cradick 563-299-9114
Helping Master Gardeners Enter Hours — Krista Regennitter 563-263-5701
Historian — Emma Mae Pruitt 319-723-4362
Hy-Vee — Mainstreet Garden — Lynn Pruitt 563-260-0234
Manning Desk at Extension Office — Krista Regennitter 563-263-5701
Member’s Garden Tours — Jane Hodge 563-272-1638
Mulford Community Gardens — Heather Harroun 563-554-0028
Muscatine Branching Out — Kathy Chalupa 563-299-0887
Muscatine County Fair Office Garden — Bill Koellner 319-627-4545
Newsletter — Lynn Pruitt 563-260-0234
Muscatine Bridge Entry Sign Area — Chair position open
Plant Sale — Heather Harroun 563-554-0028
Publicity — Ed Moreno 319-331-0713
Zoo Garden — Maryrose Peterschmidt 563-263-0846

Simple Tips for Gardening
Written and Compiled by Rachel Quillin

JUDGE A TREE FROM ITS FRUIT, NOT FROM ITS LEAVES.
— Euripides

WISHING TO BE FRIENDS IS QUICK WORK, BUT FRIENDSHIP IS A SLOW-RIPENING FRUIT.
— Aristotle

Now is the ideal time to volunteer to serve with one of the committees listed to the left. Just give a call to the listed chair person.

Please note there is one committee without a chair person. Give Laura McGinnis a call if you want to know what’s involved — 309-791-0054
**Muscatine County Extension Office**
1514 Isett Avenue
Muscatine, IA  52761-4629
563-263-5701 or 800-992-0894
Krista Regennitter
Muscatine County Extension Director
Master Gardener Liaison
. . and justice for all

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

Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

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**Current Emails and Addresses**

As a reminder – keep both the Extension Office and Lynn Pruitt current on any changes of e-mail addresses, phone numbers, or mailing addresses. These need to be current to keep you — our members — informed.

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**Simple Tips for Gardening**

Written and Compiled by Rachel Quillin

The many great gardens of the world, of literature and poetry, of painting and music, of religion and architecture, all make the point as clear as possible: The soul cannot thrive in the absence of a garden. If you don’t want paradise, you are not human; and if you are not human, you don’t have a soul.

—Thomas Moore

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**2018 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board**

Board Members
Ed Moreno (18)*
Kathy Haltmeyer (18)*
Mary Danner (19)
Jane Hodge (19)
Heather Haroun (18)*
Maryrose Peterschmidt (18)*
Ron Jensen (19)*
Candi Whitmer (19)*

Intern Members
Rachel Horner Brackett
Shelly Maharry

Lynn Pruitt (Past Chair Advisor)

( ) Year term expires as of Dec. 31
* Going off Board Dec 31, 2018/2019 but eligible for re-election

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**Editorial Comments:**

Please remember, this is YOUR newsletter. Your articles, photographs and other tidbits are welcome. Send them by the end of each month to pruitt.lynn@gmail.com or call 563.260.0234

— Lynn Pruitt, Editor —