

March 2020
Muscatine County



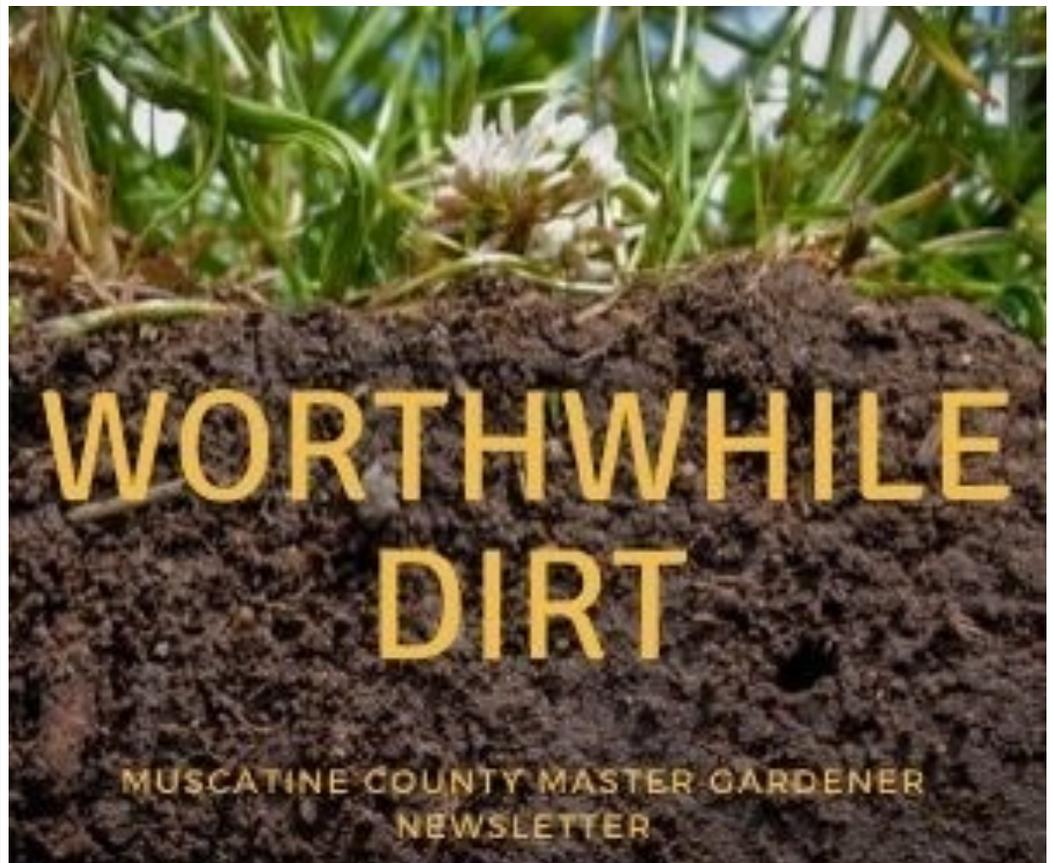
WORTHWHILE DIRT



Applications for the Search for Excellence award will be due on March 15, 2020.

Search for Excellence (SFE) is the recognition program of the Iowa Master Gardener program. SFE has seven categories:

- Youth/School Gardens
- Demonstration/Research Garden (applied scientific methodology)
- Workshop or Presentation
- Special Needs Audience (i.e. seniors, low-income families, people with disabilities, minority groups, incarcerated individuals, etc...)
- Mass Communications (i.e. newsletters, television, radio, social media, website, publications)



Master Gardener Winter Webcast Series



Iowa Weather

February 4, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

With a changing climate, Iowa will be warmer and wetter. State Climatologist Dr. Justin Glisan from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship will share what people can do to adapt to changing growing conditions.



Bring Kids in the Garden

February 18, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

State Master Gardener Coordinator Susan DeBlieck wants adults to help get youth outdoors. She'll share ideas for Master Gardener volunteer project sites and landscape design tips.



Iowa's Botanists

March 3, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Love native plants? Deborah Lewis is the curator of the Ada Hayden Herbarium. She'll present on early Iowa botanists, introduce the herbarium, and share her favorite native plants.



All webcasts will be held at the Muscatine County Extension and Outreach Office and are free and open to the public. Questions? Call 563-263-5701

www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener

Muscatine County

1601 Plaza Place, Muscatine, IA 52761

www.extension.iastate.edu/Muscatine

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Top Ten Pollinators in Agriculture in the United States*

1. Wild honey bees
2. Managed honey bees
3. Bumble bees
4. Other bee species over 4000 bee species including mason bees and carpenter bees
5. Eight different species of butterflies
6. Four different kinds of moths
7. Wasps including paper wasps and yellow jackets
8. Other insects including flies and beetles
9. A few species of birds including hummingbirds
10. Two species of bats

*From agamerica.com

Growing Together Mini-Grants Awarded to 29 Iowa Projects

Guess what! Muscatine County was one that was awarded a Growing Together Mini Grant again this year. See link below to read more details.

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/news/growing-together-mini-grants-awarded-29-iowa-projects?>

Looking for more events to attend? Please go check this website out for more Master

Gardener Events <https://>

[www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/
events](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/events)

News from Education Coordinator

By Carolyn Lemaster, Master Gardener

Master Gardener Winter Webcast – Tuesday, March 3 at 6:30-7:30 pm, Muscatine County Extension

“Explore the Ada Hayden Herbarium” Deborah Lewis, curator of the Ada Hayden Herbarium.

Learn about early Iowa botanists and explore the herbarium. Read more here [Explore the Ada Hayden Herbarium](#)

General Meeting – Tuesday, March 10, 6:30 pm at Muscatine County Extension

Guest speakers will be Dana Yerington, Outreach Educator for Muscatine County Extension, and Dominic Snyder, Muscatine Island Research Farm.

Art of Gardening – Saturday, March 21 at Muscatine Community College

Register online at eicc.edu/artofgardening

Grafting Worship – Tuesday, April 7, 6:30-9:30 pm at the Muscatine Arboretum with Patrick O’Malley, Commercial Horticulture Specialist. Cost is \$35. Registration deadline is March 24.

Divide Hostas at the Muscatine Arboretum – Saturday, April 25, 9:00-11:00 am

Your help is needed in the hosta garden near the labyrinth. Volunteers are welcome to take a plant home. Remaining plants will be sold at the Spring Plant Sale. Bring your tools. Rain or shine!

Annual Plant Sale – Saturday, May 9. 8:00 am-12:00 noon at the pavilion near the Environmental Learning Center, Discovery Park.

Home Garden Tours! If you are interested in hosting a home garden tour this summer, please contact Carolyn Lemaster, Ed Moreno, or Mary Danner.

Other Events and Opportunities

Look here for an extensive list of other Master Gardener opportunities/events near and far throughout the state! <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/events>

Wild Edibles: Tasty Treat or Don’t Eat – Saturday, May 2, 10:00-11:30 am at the Environmental Learning Center, Discovery Park with Sarah Subbert from Cedar County Conservation.

Hosted by the Muscatine County Conservation Board

Learn about some of the wild edibles that might grow in your backyard. Free, but pre-registration is requested by calling 563-264-5922. Ages 10 and up plus an adult.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Extension and Outreach

Horticulture and Home Pest News

A new issue of the Iowa State University Extension & Outreach **Horticulture and Home Pest News** is now available.

To view the new issue, please visit the following
URL: <https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/issue/february-10-2020>

You can find other items of interest on our website: <https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/>

In this issue:

[Learn to Prune Trees Successfully with Video Instructions](#)

By Jeff Iles, Department of Horticulture, Zach Clemens, IPM Communications Specialist

[For the Love of Chocolate](#)

By Cynthia Haynes, Department of Horticulture

[Valentine's Day Roses – Grown Globally](#)

By Kevin Duerfeldt, Department of Horticulture

[New Gardening TV Show for Iowans](#)

By Aaron Steil, Reiman Gardens

[2020 Workshops for Morel and Oyster Mushrooms Certification Scheduled](#)

By Lina Rodriguez Salamanca, Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic

[Emerald Ash Borer Discovered in 2 More Iowa Counties: Audubon and Guthrie Counties](#)

By Donald Lewis, Department of Entomology

Save the Date!

ART OF GARDENING

March 21, 2020

Presented by:



Muscatine Community College's Continuing Education Department is again offering its popular Art of Gardening daylong seminar, to educate and inspire others to seek enjoyment and fulfillment through a variety of home gardening-related topics and activities. This year's seminar will be held: **Saturday, March 21, 2020** MCC Strahan Hall 152 Colorado Street Muscatine, IA **Cost: \$45** (includes lunch)

Register online at <https://www.eicc.edu/future-students/events/art-of-gardening.aspx>

Registration is from 7:30 - 8:15 a.m. with coffee provided. The Welcome and Announcements are from 8:30 - 8:45 a.m. followed by the breakout sessions. Breakout sessions are scheduled for the day as well as vendor exhibits, and the Business Professional of America Bake Sale (MCC Student Organization). For more information contact [Cynthia Kress](#) in Muscatine Community College's Continuing Education Department, 563-288-6161 or toll free 1-888-351-4669.

2020 NATIVE PRAIRIE PLANT SALE

MUSCATINE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

3500 Oakview Dr. Ste A, Muscatine IA 52761 (563) 263-7944 ext. 3

6 PACK – 6 PLUGS, 2" X 2"			
Common Name	Price	QTY	Cost
Aromatic Aster	\$12		
Bee Balm	\$12		
Butterfly Weed	\$12		
Columbine	\$12		
Culver's Root	\$12		
Grey Headed Coneflower	\$12		
Mistflower	\$12		
New England Aster	\$12		
Pale Purple Coneflower	\$12		
Prairie Alumroot	\$12		
Prairie Coreopsis	\$12		
Purple Milkweed	\$12		
Rattlesnake Master	\$12		
Sky Blue Aster	\$12		
Smooth Beardtongue	\$12		
Southern Blue Flag Iris	\$12		
Spiderwort	\$12		
Swamp Milkweed	\$12		
Sweet Black-Eyed Susan	\$12		
Wild Petunia	\$12		
Willow Leaf Bluestar	\$12		
Subtotal			

6 PACK – 6 PLUGS, 2'X2"			
Common Name	Price	QTY	Cost
Big Bluestem	\$12		
Bicknell's Sedge	\$12		
Fox Sedge	\$12		
Little Bluestem	\$12		
Northern Sea Oats	\$12		
Side Oats Grama	\$12		
Switchgrass	\$12		
Subtotal			

Remember to order: "Plantskydd" The Deer/rabbit repellent that helps protect your plants!	Subtotals
	+7% Tax
	Total

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Cell number: _____

Home number: _____

Mail orders to: Muscatine SWCD, 3500 Oakview Dr. Ste A, Muscatine IA 52761.
 Final date to order is **March 25, 2020**. All orders must be **pre-paid**.
 Please send payment with order, **make checks payable to: Muscatine SWCD**.

Plants will arrive in early June. The tentative pick up day is Thursday June 4, 2020.
 A postcard will be emailed/mailed with the exact pick up date and location.

"Muscatine County Soil & Water Conservation District is an equal opportunity provider employer"

2020 TREE ORDER FORM

MUSCATINE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
3500 Oakview Dr. Ste A, Muscatine, IA 52761 (563) 263-7944 x 3



BARE ROOT STOCK – SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 5 AND 25

The scheduled pick up day is Friday, May 1, 2020 at Muscatine SWCD, 3500 Oakview Dr.

A postcard will be mailed/emailed with the exact pick up date. Pick up is ONE DAY ONLY.

Tree Species	Size of Bare Root Tree	Cost per 5 trees	The # of Bundles of 5	Cost per 25 trees	The # of Bundles of 25 trees	Cost
DECIDUOUS SHRUBS						
LILAC	1-2 foot	30.00		50.00		
NINEBARK	2-3 foot	30.00		50.00		
SILKY DOGWOOD	2-3 foot	30.00		50.00		
NANNYBERRY	1-2 foot	35.00		65.00		
RED OSIER DOGWOOD	2-3 foot	35.00		70.00		
DECIDUOUS TREES						
BLACK WALNUT	2-3 foot	35.00		70.00		
AMERICAN HAZELNUT	2-3 foot	35.00		70.00		
RED MAPLE	2-3 foot	35.00		70.00		
SUGAR MAPLE	2-3 foot	35.00		75.00		
RED OAK	2-3 foot	35.00		75.00		
SWAMP WHITE OAK	2-3 foot	35.00		75.00		
CONIFERS:						
WHITE CEDAR (ARBORVITAE)	12-18 inch	35.00		70.00		
BLUE SPRUCE	18-24 inch	35.00		70.00		
WHITE SPRUCE	18-24 inch	35.00		70.00		
NORWAY SPRUCE	18-24 inch	35.00		70.00		
WHITE PINE	18-24 inch	35.00		75.00		

**REMEMBER TO ORDER "PLANTSKYDD"
DEER/RABBIT REPELLANT TO PROTECT
YOUR TREE SEEDLINGS!!!!
See order form or call for Details**

SUBTOTAL _____
+ 7% sales tax _____
TOTAL DUE _____

**FINAL DATE TO ORDER IS MARCH 25, 2020. ALL ORDERS MUST BE PRE-PAID.
MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: MUSCATINE COUNTY SWCD AND SEND PAYMENT WITH ORDER.**

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE # _____ CELL PHONE # _____
EMAIL _____

If you have any questions, please contact Pam at (563) 263-7944 ext. 3 or pam.parker@ia.nacdnet.net

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

**MONEY RAISED FROM TREE SALES HELPS THE DISTRICT
SUPPORT LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS, EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY PROJECTS.
Muscatine SWCD is an equal opportunity provider and employer.**



Director's Input

By Krista Regennitter

Muscatine County Extension Director, Iowa State University Extension

Telephone 563-263-5701



Hello Master Gardeners!

I think spring is in the air (or at least I am hoping!). We have many great events happening this spring, both within the Master Gardener organization and within Extension and Outreach. I look forward to connecting with you!

First off I want to celebrate the fact that Muscatine County Master Gardeners were selected for the fifth year in a row for the Growing Together mini grants!! Big shout out to our Master Gardeners that work on this donation gardening project. We are excited to partner again this year with the Muscatine Food Pantry to help our neighbors in need gain access to fresh produce.

As many of you know Shirley Grimm, Muscatine County Extension Office Manager, will be retiring in April. We are accepting applications through March 6 for an Office Assistant. If you know anyone who might be interested please direct them to: <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/muscatine/news/office-assistant-open-position>

Here are a few events and activities coming up in the next few months:

- Tuesday, March 3, 6:30-7:30 pm @ Extension Office – last Master Gardener **Winter Webcast** for the season – **Iowa's Botanists**. Deborah Lewis, curator of the Ada Hayden Herbarium, will present on Iowa botanists and share information on her favorite native plants. Free and open to the public – bring a friend!
- Join us at **5:45 pm** on March 10 – BEFORE the regular Master Gardener meeting – for a presentation on **Safely Shopping On-Line!** 4-H youth will be presenting information as part of the Muscatine County 4-H Tech Changemakers program. Hope to see you there!
- Wednesday, March 11, 11:30 am – **Lunch for a Cause at Sunnybrook Assisted Living** – benefiting Muscatine County 4-H! Dine in or carry out. Menu: BBQ Pulled Pork, Cole Slaw, French Fries and St. Patrick Day's Dessert (YUM!!). RSVP required to marketing@sunnybrookmuscatine.com. 100% of the proceeds will go to Muscatine County 4-H!
- Thursday, March 12, 6:30-8 pm @ Extension Office – **Map of My Kingdom viewing**. Join us and Women Land and Legacy for this dramatic production about land transitions. Free and open to the public, but please RSVP to Lydia at Lydia.Whitman@usda.gov.
- March 13 – March 19 – **4-H Spring Break Day Camps @ the Extension Office**. If you have a kiddo or grandkid in Kindergarten through 6th grade check out more info at the link!
- Saturday, March 21 – I hope to see you all at **Art of Gardening!!!**
- Tuesday, April 7, 6:30-9 pm – **Apple Tree Grafting Workshop @ Muscatine Arboretum**. See info in newsletter.

Lastly, we have an opening on the Muscatine County Extension Council. If anyone is interested in learning more about this opportunity please contact me (563-263-5701 or KristaR@iastate.edu).

Thanks so much!

Krista

News from the Chair

By Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener

My world this year, 2020, has revolved around looking back 100 years... an entire century!! I have celebrated the Muscatine Rotary Club's 100th Anniversary at a lovely Gala at the beautiful Merrill Hotel. I have been involved in celebrating the 19th Amendment which enabled women in our country to vote. Specifically, I have learned more about and told others about the life of Pearl McGill, a young woman of 15 who because of her literacy spoke out for the rights of many in Muscatine and across our country!! Continuing that theme... I decided to find out what gardening was like at the time... What follows is what I found out...

1920s landscaping was all about the greenery. There was a real desire to celebrate and welcome nature in all its glory, which led homeowners to install bird feeders, birdhouses and birdbaths, as well as fish ponds and rock gardens—anything that would draw more nature to the home. Bird watching was a popular hobby at the time, making plants and trees with berries (such as holly, hawthorn, nandina, rugosa roses, crabapples) popular choices for landscapers of the day. In the 1920s home, the front yard was considered a public space and therefore received the most landscaping attention. Most houses featured a wide front porch, often furnished with rockers and swings so that folks could comfortably enjoy the natural outdoor scenery. Front yards typically didn't have fences, and walkways and driveways were often lined with perennials (such as Canterbury bells, irises, foxgloves, phlox, pyrethrum, coreopsis, hollyhocks, roses, columbine, delphinium, poppies, and carnations) and annuals (including California poppies, cosmos, petunias, snapdragons, verbena, bachelor's buttons, Centaurea [sweet sultan], strawflowers, marigolds, Drummond phlox, and asters). Shrubs used by landscapers in this era included boxwood, holly, yews, abelia. The backyard was often referred to as the “service area” and mostly reserved for clotheslines and storing garbage cans. However, some owners designated a small area in the backyard as a private place. In that case, part of the backyard would be screened off, fenced-in, or surrounded by a border of trees or shrubs to shield residents from the sun (and their neighbors' watchful eyes). In the 1920s, popular recreational activities often found their way into landscape architecture and Campfires, bowling greens, putting greens, and croquet grounds were among the more common landscape features. <https://golmn.com/2011/03/03/a-look-back-in-time-landscaping-trends-from-the-1920s-50s/>

So as you enjoy your yard, garden or even your front porch I hope you will think about what Pearl McGill or a Muscatine Rotarian might have planted or enjoyed seeing in his or her garden or yard 100 Years ago!! Here's to a great year 2020!!

Your new Master Gardener Board Chair

Mary Wildermuth

National Garden Bureau Year of the Lantana:

Lantana has a rich history of being utilized in the garden for long-lasting, colorful blooms, superior heat tolerance and the ability to attract bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Featuring clusters of bright colors, solid as well as multi-color, Lantana can be used in containers, landscaping and hanging baskets.

In the 18th century, lantana was a popular greenhouse plant in Europe and breeding efforts were extensive, resulting in hundreds of available selections.

There are 150 species of lantana in the verbena family (Verbenaceae) and the most commonly used ornamental selection is *Lantana camara*. Hardy to zone 8, this plant can be a perennial (tender perennial in zone 7) or even a medium shrub in frost-free locations. It is most commonly used as an annual in colder areas.

Visit <https://ngb.org/year-of-the-lantana/> for more details and full article!

Master Gardener Scholarship Available

The Muscatine County Master Gardener scholarship application is now available. Only Muscatine County students who will graduate from a high school in 2020 and will attend an Iowa college, university or community college are eligible to apply. This is a \$500 scholarship. The deadline is March 30th, 2020. An application can be found at <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/muscatine> or call the Muscatine County Extension office at 563-263-5701



MUSCATINE MASTER GARDENERS HANDS-ON APPLE TREE GRAFTING WORKSHOP

APRIL 7, 2020 6:30-9:00PM

Join us for a hands-on apple tree grafting workshop with ISU Extension and Outreach Field Specialist Patrick O'Malley. Held at the Muscatine Arboretum, Muscatine, IA

FEE: \$35 includes two semi-dwarf rootstock (EMLA 7) & scion wood (participants may bring their own scion). Grafting tape, grafting sealant, and knives are provided.

Class is limited to 20 participants! Register NOW to ensure your spot!! Payment due at registration.

Register in person at the Muscatine County Extension Office 1601 Plaza Place Muscatine, IA,

or mail your check to: Muscatine County Extension 1601 Plaza Place Muscatine, IA 52761 please note 'grafting workshop' with your payment. Sorry, no credit cards.

Final registration deadline is March 24.

ISU Extension and Outreach programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, or disability. Registration fees are used to offset costs of the program.

February 11th Meeting Minutes

Muscatine Master Gardeners Association

By Heather Harroun, Master Gardener

Board Members present in bold: **Mary Danner, Kathy Haltmeyer, Heather Harroun, Carolyn Lemaster**, Ron Jensen, **Ed Moreno**, Maryrose Petershmidt, **Rachel Horner Brackett, Mary Wildermuth**.

Intern Member: Angela Weber, present.

Extension Liaison: Krista Regennitter, present.

Meeting called to order 6:30pm

- Election of new officers

- Ed Moreno motioned to approve the slate of: Mary Wildermuth, Pres.; Rachel Horner Brackett, Vice Pres.; Heather Harroun, Sec. ○ Mary Danner seconded. Motion passed.

- Approve minutes of last meeting: read by Mary D., Kathy H. moved to accept, Rachel seconded, approved.

- Treasurer's report – not available at this time. Receipts for food, and New Hope Church for annual meeting outstanding. Mary D. submitted expenses for plants for annual meeting of \$136.96. Kathy H. moved to accept plant expenses. Ed M. seconded. Approved

- Schedule and confirm 2020 meetings. Kathy H. Moved to approve, Ed M. seconded. Approved.

General Meetings

Board Meetings March 10th 5:45 Digital Ambassadors 6:30 Mtg.

April 14th 6:30 May 12th 6:30

June 9th 6:30 Sept. 8th 6:30

Aug. 11th 6:30 Nov. 10th 6:30

Oct. 13th 6:30 Jan. 10, 2021 Time TBA

Dec. 8th 6:30

- General Meeting Programs. March – recycling with Karen Hartman? Sept. Daylily hybridizing 101 Heather Harroun. Others to be determined.

- Annual Meeting Evaluation. Feedback was positive regarding the food, program and prizes.

- MG Scholastic Scholarship – Ed M. Ed Moreno, Emma Mae Pruitt and Mary Wildermuth on the committee. One application received from West Liberty. Application deadline is March 30th.

- MG Intern -updates. The new program is much better. 1 drop. All new interns have completed training. Gretchen N. needs to complete training from 2018.

- Winter webcasts: 1st had 9 attendees. Discussed showing at Women, Land, Legacy. Approved.

Zoo garden News

By Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener

You would think this time of the year everything would be in low gear and not much happening but one can only wish. More does take place behind the scene than most people realize. To start with the Day of Caring on April 1st is not going to happen at the Zoo Garden. I have been working with United Way and said this date was too early for us. We are trying to find a group of students to come at a later date but so far we haven't been able to finalize it. Will let everyone know when all arrangements have been made. Last summer, Nancy Jensen and myself were at the Island Research Farm collecting flower seeds to use for the Zoo Garden. We will be using the greenhouse at the research farm to plant these seeds thanks to Dominic Snyder. We are planting zinnias, cosmos, sunflowers and many other varieties of annuals. Wish us luck on this new venture. One more piece of good news I wanted to share is we have received a rather large check from Andy Vaitkus from the Riverside Casino volunteer program. Andy made this happen because of his volunteer work and wanted the zoo garden to receive it. Andy wife Nancy Jensen has been a lead helper at the Buffalo Garden for several years. We truly thank both of them. Another check came in from the Hometown Hundreds program at CBI Bank and Trust. What good news to start the year off. We are so grateful for all the support because we do rely on donations and grants.

February 11th Meeting Minutes Continued.....

By Heather Harroun, Master Gardener

• Committee Reports. Art of Gardening – Get the word out! Education Committee – Carolyn Lemaster - Chair, Ed Moreno, Mary Danner members.

Plant Sale – Update flyer time May 9th 8:00-12:00. Note: NO WOODY PLANTS. Arboretum – Kathy H. Hosta bed at the Arboretum needs divided. Dividing party Sat April 25th 9- 11am rain or shine. Workers get to take one home. The rest will be sold at the Spring plant sale.

Grafting Workshop – Heather H. Motion by Rachel to hold at Arboretum (Kathy H contact person), Mary seconded. Approved. April 7, 6:30-9:00 pm is the date and time. Fee \$35. Registration deadline March 24th.

Other Misc. Grant Application for Jr. MG Program. Rachel moved to approve, Kathy seconded. Approved.

Shirley is retiring!

Move to adjourn by Ed M., seconded by Kathy H. Meeting adjourned 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Harroun, Sec.



Landscaping to remove Nitrogen

By Gretchen Nollman, Master Gardener,
and William Koellner, Lifetime Master Gardener



Nitrogen's (N) primary role is to aid the plant in making proteins used as the building blocks for leaves and stems. In nature, nitrogen is not often readily available and it moves rapidly throughout the soil and is lost to convection and other mechanisms.

An overabundance of nitrogen will cause a plant to grow quickly, however, this rapid growth will not only affect its health, but will cause the plant to produce very few if any flowers that lead to fruit production.

Excess nitrogen can actually stunt the growth of plants and even kill young plants. When N is available in excessive amounts, the plants will take in so much of it that all other nutrients are ignored causing a massive imbalance and stunting the growth of established plants and possibly killing young plants.

Symptoms of a nitrogen deficiency include:

- Short plants
- Small leaves
- Yellowing

Deficiency symptoms are noticeable on older growth first. When a plant is lacking nitrogen it will start to break down the nitrogen in older parts to provide it for new growth.

Too much nitrogen in soil can harm plants, but while adding nitrogen is relatively easy, removing excess nitrogen in soil is a little trickier. Reducing nitrogen in garden soil can be done if you have patience and a little knowledge. Let's look at how to amend too much nitrogen in the soil.

In order to remove excess nitrogen in soil, you need to bind (attach) the nitrogen that is in the soil to something else. Fortunately, as a gardener, you probably grow many things that bind nitrogen — plants. Any plant will use some nitrogen in the soil, but plants like squash, cabbage, broccoli and corn use up large amounts of nitrogen while growing. By growing these plants where there is too much nitrogen in soil, the plants will use up the excess nitrogen. Be aware though, that while they will grow there, plants may look sickly and will not produce many fruits or flowers. Keep in mind that you are not growing these plants for food purposes, but rather as **sponges** that will help lower soil nitrogen content.

Many people use mulch in their garden and have problems with the mulch depleting the nitrogen in the soil as it breaks down. You can lay mulch over the soil with too much nitrogen to help draw out some of the excess nitrogen in the soil. In particular, cheap, dyed mulch works well for this. Cheap, dyed mulch is generally made from scrap softwoods and these will use higher amounts of nitrogen in the soil as they break down. For this same reason, sawdust can also be used as a mulch to help reduce nitrogen in the soil. When you have too much nitrogen in soil, your plants may look lush and green, but their ability to fruit and flower will be greatly reduced. While you can take steps towards reducing nitrogen in garden soil, it's best to avoid adding too much nitrogen to the soil in the first place. Test your soil before you add any nitrogen to the soil to avoid having excess nitrogen in your soil.

5 Health Benefits of Our Green Spaces (Debbi Mayster—On Behalf of OPEI and the TurfMutt Foundation—)

As you get outside this spring, have you ever considered how our green spaces contribute to our health? Studies show that green space and landscaping contribute to health, happiness, and intellect.

It's natural to long for spring when it's cold outside. But did you know, there's a good reason why you may pine for green? Living landscapes are an important part of the outdoor lifestyle that Americans enjoy, but the benefits go beyond the barbeque and backyard baseball. Green spaces are necessary for your health.

"The advantages of grass and landscaping surpass the usual physical benefits that result from outdoor activity," said Kris Kiser, president and CEO, [Outdoor Power Equipment Institute \(OPEI\)](#). "Numerous studies have found that people who spend more time outside or are exposed to living landscapes are happier, healthier and smarter. As you get ready to get outside this spring with your lawn mower and other outdoor power equipment, it's great to know being outside is good for you."

Researchers have studied the impact of nature on human well-being for years, but recent studies have found a more direct correlation between human health, particularly related to stress, and the importance of people's access to nature and managed landscapes.

Getting dirty is actually good for you. Soil is the new Prozac, according to Dr. Christopher Lowry, a neuroscientist at the University of Bristol in England. Mycobacterium vaccae in soil mirrors the effect on neurons that Prozac provides. The bacterium stimulates serotonin production, which explains why people who spend time gardening, doing yard work, and have direct contact with soil feel more relaxed and happier.

Children who are raised on farms in a "dirtier" environment than an urban setting not only have a stronger immune system but are also better able to manage social stress, according to the National Academy of Sciences.

Living near living landscapes can improve your mental health. Researchers in England found that people moving to greener areas experienced an immediate improvement in mental health that was sustained for at least three years after they moved. The study also showed that people relocating to a more developed area suffered a drop in mental health.

Greening of vacant urban areas in Philadelphia reduced feelings of depression by 41.5% and reduced poor mental health by 62.8% for those living near the vacant lots, according to a study by a research team.

Green spaces can make you healthier too. People who live within a half mile of green space (such parks, public gardens, and greenways) were found to have a lower incidence of fifteen diseases by Dutch researchers — including depression, anxiety, heart disease, diabetes, asthma and migraines.

A 2015 study found that people living on streets with more trees had a boost in heart and metabolic health. Studies show that tasks conducted under the calming influence of nature are performed better and with greater accuracy, yielding a higher quality result. Spending time in gardens, for instance, can improve memory performance and attention span by 20%.

Living landscapes make you smarter. Children gain attention and working memory benefits when they are exposed to greenery, says a study led by Payam Dadvand of the Centre for Research in Environmental Epidemiology in Barcelona. In addition, exposure to natural settings may be widely effective in reducing attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder symptoms in children.

This applies to adults as well. Research has also shown that being around plants helps you concentrate better at home and at work. Charlie Hall, Ellison Chair in International Floriculture believes that spending time in gardens can improve attention span and memory performance by as much as 20 percent.

A National Institute of Health study found that adults demonstrate significant cognitive gains after going on a nature walk. In addition, a Stanford University study found that walking in nature, rather than a concrete-oriented, urban environment, resulted in decreased anxiety, rumination, and negative affect, and produced cognitive benefits, such as increased working memory performance.

Living landscapes help you heal faster. Multiple studies have discovered that plants in hospital recovery rooms or views of aesthetically-pleasing gardens help patients heal up to one day faster than those who are in more sterile or austere environments.

Physicians are now prescribing time outdoors for some patients, according to recent reports. Park Rx America is a non-profit with a mission to encourage physicians to prescribe doses of nature.

All of these benefits reinforce the importance of maintaining our yards, parks and other community green spaces. Trees, shrubs, grass, and flowering plants are integral to human health. Not only do they provide a place for kids and pets to play, they directly contribute to our mental and physical well-being.

Henderson Luelling -- An Early Plant Pioneer

Compiled by Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

Another of the early plant pioneers was Henderson Lewelling (sometimes spelled Luelling) who moved to Iowa from Indiana in 1835. The Lewelling family's first came to the United States from Wales and their first encounter of the new world was in Randolph County, North Carolina. Henderson's father was named Meshack, who along with his two brothers Shadrach and Abednego, were raised in a very pious Christian family.

Henderson settled in Iowa at the town of Salem in Henry County about 12 miles SW of Mount Pleasant where he started an orchard as he and his family had previously done in Indiana. Lewelling was a member of the Quakers Friends Church as were most of the early settlers in Salem. He made several trips back to Indiana and further east to bring nursery stock for his orchard in Salem. His brother John eventually sold their Indiana land and joined Henderson in Iowa in 1841 where they jointly operated the nursery and also started a dry goods store. The Lewelling's were responsible for the establishment and propagation of some of the highest quality apple trees in the world. Their produce including apples, pears, peaches, plums, cherries, and fruit shrubs was distributed by wagon throughout the populated portions of Iowa.

When the Lewelling's left North Carolina several years earlier, the family had owned slaves but they set them free when they moved to Indiana. As a general rule, Quakers did not own slaves but that may not have been the case in North Carolina in the early 1800's.

Lewelling along with his family and several friends in Iowa joined the abolitionists and used Henderson's large two-story limestone home as part of the Underground Railroad to help runaway slaves make their way north to freedom. The leadership of the Quaker congregation also opposed slavery but disagreed with the unlawful practice of assisting runaway slaves. As a result, Lewelling and 50 other members of the Friends church were dis-fellowshipped in 1846 at which time they started a new branch of Quakers called the Anti-Slavery Friends.



Photo Captions:

TOP: Henderson Lewelling, [Quaker](#) Horticulturalist

BOTTOM: The Henderson Lewelling House in Salem, Iowa

Henderson Luelling -- An Early Plant Pioneer...continued....

Compiled by Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

Encouraging reports about the agricultural growing conditions in Oregon had come to Lewelling through the writings from the Lewis and Clark Expedition so in the spring of 1847 he loaded many of his plants and headed west. A special wagon had been equipped with two wooden boxes containing a charcoal/soil mixture to transport some 700 young fruit and nut tree seedlings to the Willamette Valley in Oregon.

Henderson and his family and a few friends traveled in a small group until they crossed the Missouri River, at which time they joined a west-bound wagon train. The extremely heavy loaded "plant wagon" made the travel even more difficult than usual. Oxen turned up lame and some died. Weather was hot and the land was occupied by Native Americans who opposed travelers. Others in the wagon train objected because of slow progress due to Lewelling's heavy load and wanted him to discard the trees. He would not so he and his companions joined another wagon train but that relationship also soon fell apart.

At the Platte River the Lewelling family was left to travel the rest of the way on their own. Even though Lewelling watered his trees daily about half of them died during the trip but the remainder were to form the basis for his successful nursery business in Oregon. When the Lewelling's finally reached the Willamette Valley in mid-November 1847 they settled at Milwaukie. The surviving trees had grown about 3 feet during the trip and were soon thriving in the Oregon territory. Lewelling prospered through the sale of his quality seedlings to settlers throughout the region. *{for a detailed description of Henderson Lewelling's travel, see <http://iagenweb.org/history/journal/oct1929.htm>}*

Henderson's brother Seth Lewelling joined up with the original group in 1848. In 1851 the well-travelled trees started bearing fruit and nuts which Lewelling sold locally and in San Francisco. Seth set up his separate nursery business and is credited with developing a very high quality dark colored cherry which he named the "Bing" cherry after a Chinese workman.

In 1854, Henderson Lewelling decided to move to California and settled near what is now Oakland. He bought 400 acres and started his Fruit Vale Orchard which was again very successful. This area now is known as the Oakland neighborhood of Fruitvale. But Henderson never stayed put in one place for very long. In 1858 he sold his orchard in California, bought a ship, and sailed to Honduras in hopes of starting a utopian community. However, that never materialized and Lewelling lost his sizeable investment and returned to California in 1860. After that he never fully recovered and eventually died in 1878.

Perhaps you will remember the early television series, *Death Valley Days* hosted by Ronald Reagan. One episode in 1965 entitled "The Traveling Trees" depicted the arduous travel of Henderson Lewelling across the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains and eventually to Oregon.

Henderson Lewelling and many of his family members left their mark on society from Indiana to Iowa to Oregon and eventually to California. They are best known for bringing quality fruit and nut trees to the north-west and western U.S. It is said the value of their fruit to California greatly outweighed the value of all the gold mined in that state during the Gold Rush.

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. . . and justice for all

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2020 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board (to be voted on Feb 11th)

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* As a reminder – keep both the Extension *
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* our members – informed. *



Editorial Comments:

It enjoyed putting this together and look forward to more! If I missed anything or you don't see something that should be in here, please let me know by emailing me at

nollmanag@gmail.com or calling me 319-541-1462. Thanks! Gretchen Nollman