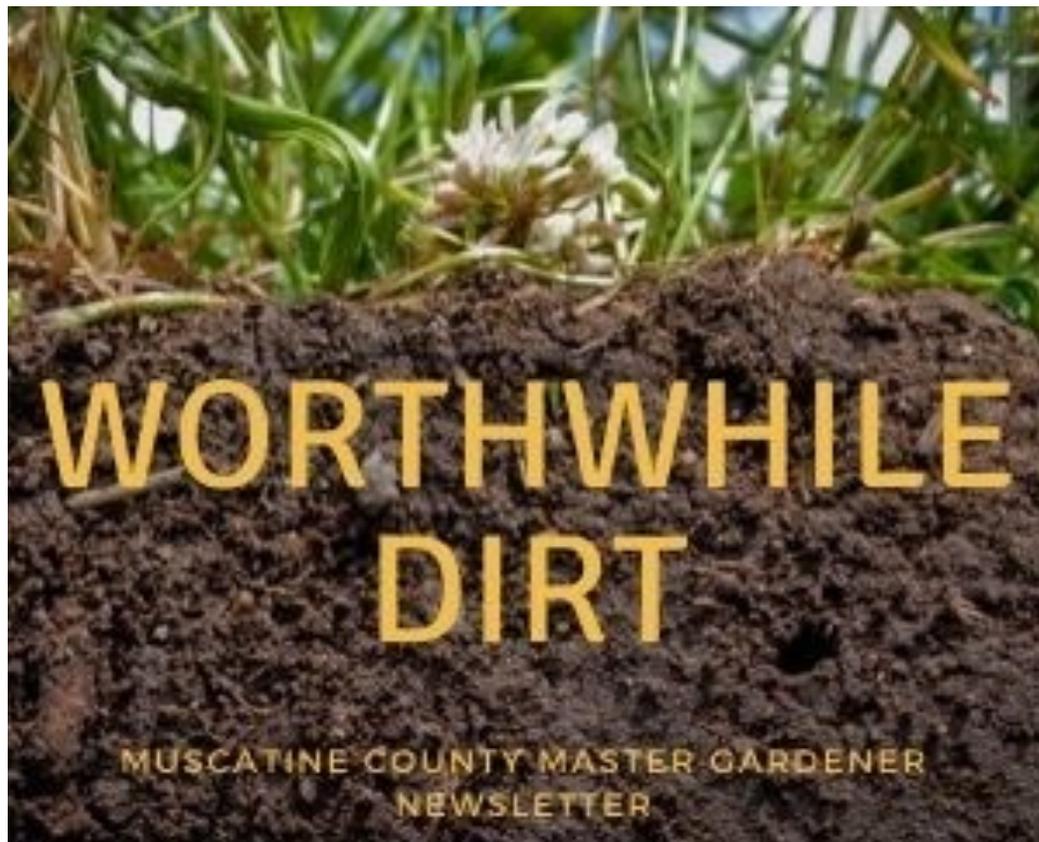


May 2020

Muscatine County



WORTHWHILE DIRT

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Best Practices for Donation Gardening



One in eight Iowans is food insecure meaning they do not have access to enough food to make up a healthy diet. This is a big problem given how important nutrition is to overall health. The good news is, gardeners have the ability to make a difference! Many gardeners produce more vegetables than they need during the summer. Why not consider 'donation gardening'?

Donation gardening is easy! Gardeners can donate excess produce from their own garden, plant extra rows specifically for donation, or work with other gardeners to plant a whole garden specifically for donation to a food pantry.

Principles for Successful Donation Gardening

1. Plan and plant with the recipients in mind. Visit with pantry staff and clients and plant items they request.
2. Work with pantries to set a schedule for harvest and drop-off.
3. Team up to share responsibilities in the donation garden.

Food Safety in Donation Gardens

1. Wash your hands for twenty seconds with soap and water before and after handling produce.
2. Use clean tools, utensils, gloves and containers to harvest fresh produce.
3. Discard or compost bruised or damaged produce.
4. Keep pets and wild animals away from your plot.
5. Use clean municipal (drinking) water to rinse and irrigate your produce.
6. Remove visible dirt or rinse produce.
7. Transport food in a covered vehicle.

Fruits and Vegetables Preferred by Pantries

green beans
tomatoes
potatoes
peppers
lettuce
broccoli
beets
squash
sweet corn
onions
cauliflower
cabbage

Muscatine County Pantries and Open Hours

Muscatine Com. Food Pantry
312 Iowa Avenue, Muscatine
Tue & Thur., 10 AM-12PM

West Liberty Food Pantry
1100 N. Calhoun St, West Liberty
Sat. 9-10 AM, Thur. 6-7 PM

Durant/Wilton Food Pantry
408 Cedar Street, Wilton
1st & 3rd Tue. 9-11 AM & 6-7 PM

Mulford Church
2400 Hershey Ave, Muscatine
M-W 9 AM - 11 AM

Salvation Army
1000 Oregon Street, Muscatine
M - F, 9 - 11:45 AM and 1-4 PM



This program is funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known in Iowa as Food Assistance, provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more visit www.eyesforfood.iowa.gov.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran. Direct inquiries to Rosa Wilburn, 515-294-1482, wilburn@iastate.edu. HS 73 April 2017

News from Education Coordinator

By Carolyn Lemaster, Master Gardener

As we know, there is an amazing amount of online learning opportunities. Want to learn more about tomatoes, tree planting sites, hemp research, landscape trees, bees, worm composting, planting for pollinators, herb gardening, etc., etc.? Here are a just few websites you might want to check out!

ISU Insect & Plant Diagnostic Clinic

Join our Safe Mushroom foraging webinar! registration closes May 1st! [ISU Extension and Outreach - Agriculture and Natural Resources Iowa State University Integrated Pest Management Program Iowa State Horticulture News](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/.../online-workshops-planne...)
<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/.../online-workshops-planne...>

ISU Horticulture and Home Pest News

<https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/>

Penn State Extension Webinars

<https://extension.psu.edu/shopby/webinars>

Purdue Agriculture

<https://ag.purdue.edu/extension/WIA/Pages/webinars.aspx>

Illinois Extension gardening webinars

<https://extension.illinois.edu/global/four-seasons-gardening-webinar-series>

Main Street Garden

By Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

This spring has been challenging. Not so much from the weather, although it has we have experienced some very cool (actually cold) nights, and some measurable snow falls in April. Our primary challenge to spring planting has been the Coronavirus! While many of us gardeners have used this confined time to work safely at home, we have been reluctant to get out to community and donation gardens.

Finally, near the end of April, Nancy and Randy Dew, and Lynn Pruitt ventured out (with safety precautions) to clean up and prepare the Hy-Vee Main Street gardens for planting. Beds were clear off from last year's vegetation and last winter's debris, and then tilled. The flower garden was also weeded and mulched.

Please drive by 5th Street and Mulberry Avenue in Muscatine and take a look. Nancy is checking with Flickinger Learning Center to determine if any children will be available to help with vegetable planting, otherwise we will hopefully soon be back to drop some seeds in the ground for the adjacent Jesus Mission to watch and water and enjoy the harvest.



Master Gardener Scholarship Recipients



CONGRATULATIONS!

Erick Estrada- West Liberty High School
Taylor Garvin- Wilton High School
Juan 'Carl' Nino- West Liberty High School
Alexis Partida- West Liberty High School

Digital Educational Sessions

Now extended through May 22!

May Topics

- Creating Curb Appeal (Landscaping) - 5/1, 10 a.m.
- Landscaping Around Established Trees - 5/1, 3 p.m.
- Vines and Groundcover Plants - 5/8, 10 a.m.
- Lawn Care 101 - 5/8, 3 p.m.
- Growing Great Tomatoes - 5/15, 10 a.m.
- Garter in the Garden, Snakes of Iowa - 5/15, 3 p.m.
- Backyard Fruit - 5/22, 10 a.m.
- Mammals of Iowa - 5/22, 3 p.m.



Visit www.sioxlandgardenshow.org for full details

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach
Woodbury County

N EXTENSION
Dakota County

News from the Chair

By Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener
Master Gardener Musings from Mary



Well here we are 6 weeks into quarantining, social distancing and self isolating! If you are like me you are finding things to do at home, maybe cleaning out a closet or flowerbed, reading that book you now have time for or just enjoying an afternoon nap!!

Cancelled, Postponed or Zoomed

In our Master Gardener World we like everyone else have cancelled, postponed or zoomed our meetings and or planned activities. The Master Gardener Board met on April 7 2020 via Zoom with Krista and Lauren in attendance. At the meeting we cancelled the May 12th general meeting and formally cancelled all April and May planned events. We discussed the possibility of a future plant sale in the Fall but came to no decision on rescheduling it. The next scheduled General Meeting is September 8, 2020.

Scholarships

We talked about and approved the presenting of 4 scholarships this year. The Scholarship Committee has met and will be sending letters in May to the 4 outstanding recipients. (Names to be shared in the next newsletter).

Victory Gardening/ Planting an Extra Row

We talked about the importance of making garden food more available this year due to the pandemic. Planting an extra row in your own garden is encouraged so that that food can be shared with someone in need via a food pantry or the family next door.



MAY DAY

By Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener

So here we are at May!! Have some fun and share a May Day surprise with a friend!

Although not as popular in America as it is in European countries, May Day is a day of celebrating spring, fertility and femininity. It is celebrated on May 1st and the history of this holiday goes back to Roman times as a festival of flowers. This was a five-day festival in honor of the Goddess Flora with offerings of flowers, dancing, ringing bells, May Queens and dancing around the Maypole. The Maypole was erected the night before when the men would strip down a birch tree and plant it on the ground. Long ribbons were tied to the pole and each dancer would hold onto a ribbon while dancing around the Maypole.

The tradition of celebrating May Day by dancing and singing around a maypole, tied with colorful ribbons, is still practiced today. Another European tradition that survived is hanging May [baskets](#) on doorknobs. People make small baskets filled with treats or flowers to give secretly to friends and neighbors. **It is customary to leave the basket on the doorstep of a neighbor or friend, ring the doorbell and run away.** If the friend catches you before you get away, you must give them a kiss.

May Day baskets are fun and easy to make. Most baskets are made from a piece of paper rolled into a cone shape. You can also use small Easter baskets and embellish them with ribbons and bows. May Day is a great holiday to get your children involved with arts & crafts. [June 25, 2015 By Majid at Paper Mart](#)



March 10th Meeting Minutes

Muscatine Master Gardeners Association

By Heather Harroun, Master Gardener



Log hours from meeting: 1 CEU and 1 Volunteer

5:45 Pre-meeting presentation by Change Makers 4-H Tech Program
Online Shopping Safety presented by Anna Marine and Colby Brown

6:30 General Meeting

Presentation by Dana Yerington, Muscatine Extension Outreach Educator
Dana is starting an afterschool program and summer day camp called, 'Learn, Grow, Eat and Go'.

She thanked MG's for the \$450 grant that will be used to build a mini greenhouse and provide materials for planting and growing vegetables.

Dana shared some of the curriculum she used with the kids she teaches and informed us that the books are available for MG's to use as well.

Presentation by Dominic Snyder, Manager of the Muscatine Research Farm.

Some of the highlights from Dominic:

The farm consists of 100 acres of mostly corn and beans.

The farm is slowing down on research and focusing more on education.

Features a 1/2-1 acre home demo garden where volunteer hours are available.

He has lots of seeds available.

He is presenting 2 sessions at Art of Gardening

Dominic encouraged us to "like" the Muscatine Island Research Farm on Facebook.

Business meeting

New Board officers introduced: Mary Wildermuth, Pres.; Rachel Horner-Brackett, Vice Pres.; Heather Harroun, Sec.

Treasurer's report – Heather / Krista Balance as of 2-17 \$5474.15. Motion to approve, Ron Jensen; seconded by Kathy Haltmeyer.

Motion to approve January Annual Meeting and February Board Meeting minutes by Susan Cradick; seconded by Emma Mae Pruitt.

Art of Gardening Report – Susan Cradick.

Kathy Haltmeyer, Emma Mae Pruitt, Gretchen Nollman, Mary Daner, and Laura McGinnis are all presenting.

145 have signed up so far. Cutoff date is 3-16-20.

Doors are open at 7:30AM, Saturday to help set-up.

March 10th Meeting Minutes

Muscatine Master Gardeners Association

By Heather Harroun, Master Gardener



Grafting workshop – Heather Harroun

Date is set for April 7th 6:30-9:00PM at the Muscatine Arboretum.

Fee is \$35 and includes 2 rootstock and all supplies needed.

Payment due at registration.

Limited to 20 participants. Register by mail or in person at the extension office.

Deadline to register March 24th.

Arboretum – Kathy Haltmeyer

Hostas need dividing. Workday set for 4/25/20 9-11AM. If you come help divide, you can take one home.

Plant Sale – Heather Harroun

May 9th, 8-noon. Help needed to set up.

Do bring: annuals, perennials, books, tools (in good condition). DO NOT bring: woody plants i.e. raspberries, lilac etc....

Krista shared Shirley Grimm's last day will be 4/15/20. She has been with the extension office for 20 years! Krista suggested a card shower. Collect cards at Art of Gardening and drop off at or mail to the office.

Krista also shared they are hiring for two positions: 4-H Program Coordinator and for Shirley's position.

Heather shared an education opportunity from The Tree Fund: 'Why Tree Limbs Fail'

Carolyn Lemaster needs volunteers for home garden tours.

Susan had a voodoo plant blooming.

Mary D. has a worm composting bin available.

Motion to adjourn by Kathy Haltmeyer, seconded by Ed Moreno.

April 7th Meeting Minutes via Zoom Muscatine Master Gardeners Association

By Heather Harroun, Master Gardener



All board members present

Meeting called to order 4:30

Introduction to Lauren Nerad who is Shirley's replacement. She has a background in a cow/calf operation and horticulture and is an Iowa State University graduate with a double major in Advertising and Agricultural Communications. Krista will e-mail Lauren's contact information.

lnerad@iastate.edu

Due to quarantine with no internet available, there were no minutes to present by Heather.

Treasurer's report: Current balance is \$4952.90. Motion to approve report by Ron Jensen 2nd by Kathy Haltmeyer, passed.

Old Business

Plant Sale: discussion tables to a later meeting with a question of do we want to have a fundraiser this year?

Scholarships: Ed Moreno motioned that we provide 4 scholarships this year, 2nd by Ron Jensen, passed.

Presentation training: Carolyn Lemaster shared a future opportunity to meet at MCC for presentation training by Zac Campbell.

Zoo Garden: Maryrose Peterschmidt asked for volunteers

Bucket Brigade: hold off on decision.

New Business

The research farm has cancelled the home demo garden for this year.

Plants that are already purchased will be made available to MG's for donation gardens.

Ed will contact Lynn Pruitt about writing an article on victory gardens.

Nest board meeting will be June 9th.

Motion to adjourn at 5:10 by Kathy Haltmeyer, 2nd by Rachel Horner-Brackett

Zoo garden News

By Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener



Things are moving rather slowly at the Zoo Garden due to the pandemic, however we are still planning to get back into the gardens to begin work. As you are aware the United Way Day of Caring was cancelled and this means we need to take care of getting the gardens ready on our own.

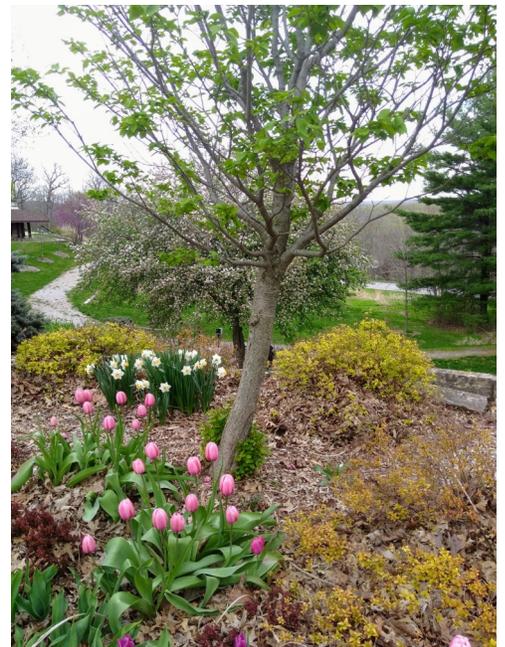
We plan on working in small groups to keep the number of people in each garden to a minimum. Everyone will be following the social guidelines and wearing masks and gloves. Since we are outdoors this will provide us with a safe way to proceed.

Mary Danner has already started some cleaning in the Monkey Garden and Jane Hodge was working in the Reptile Garden this week. However we still have all the other gardens to tackle. The problem is we have lost some of our helpers due to illness or accidents. We are asking that you help us by working in the gardens a few hours. What needs to be done is raking leaves that have blown into the shrubs, cutting back the ornamental grasses, and some perennials. The mulching would be the last job. So if you can give a few hours of your time call me at 563-263-0846 or email me at peterschmidtmaryrose@gmail.com. This is a great way to earn some volunteer hours.



"Where flowers bloom so does hope" -- Lady Bird Johnson

Maryrose





Gray mold in the flower garden

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



Below is more of an overall checklist with facts, how to identify, why it survives and how to protect against it. Enjoy!

- Quick facts
 - Gray mold is a fungal disease that blights flowers, leaves and stems of many different flowering plants.
 - Wounded and old plant tissue and flowers are easily infected by gray mold.
 - Gray mold is common in wet or very humid conditions.
 - The best way to prevent gray mold is to space out plants so they have room to dry out after rain or watering.
 - Remove infected flowers, leaves and stems. Infected plant parts should be buried or composted.
 - Many flowering plants can recover from gray mold when warm, dry conditions return.
 - How to identify gray mold
 - Gray mold causes a dark brown to black blight of flowers, buds, leaves and stems.
 - Infected flowers and flower buds turn completely brown or black.
 - On plants with large petals, brown spots may form on petals.
 - Leaf spots often form near a wound or where an infected petal has fallen onto the leaf.
 - Leaf spots are large round brown blotches with target like rings of darker brown.
 - In wet weather, leaf spots can grow to turn the entire leaf brown.
 - Flower and leaf infections can progress into stems. Infected stems are brown and may have target like darker brown rings.
- How Gray Mold Survives and Spreads
 - Gray mold is caused by the fungus *Botrytis cinerea*.
 - The gray mold fungus is able to infect a large number of plants including many common flowering plants, fruits, and vegetables.
 - It can also live on dead leaves and other plant debris.
 - As a result the gray mold fungus can be found in most gardens in Minnesota.
 - Infection often starts on wounded or old plant tissue. Flowers are also easily infected by the gray mold fungus.
 - Powdery spores are produced on all infected plant parts. These spores spread by wind or splashing water to new plants.
 - The gray mold fungus thrives in wet weather or high humidity.

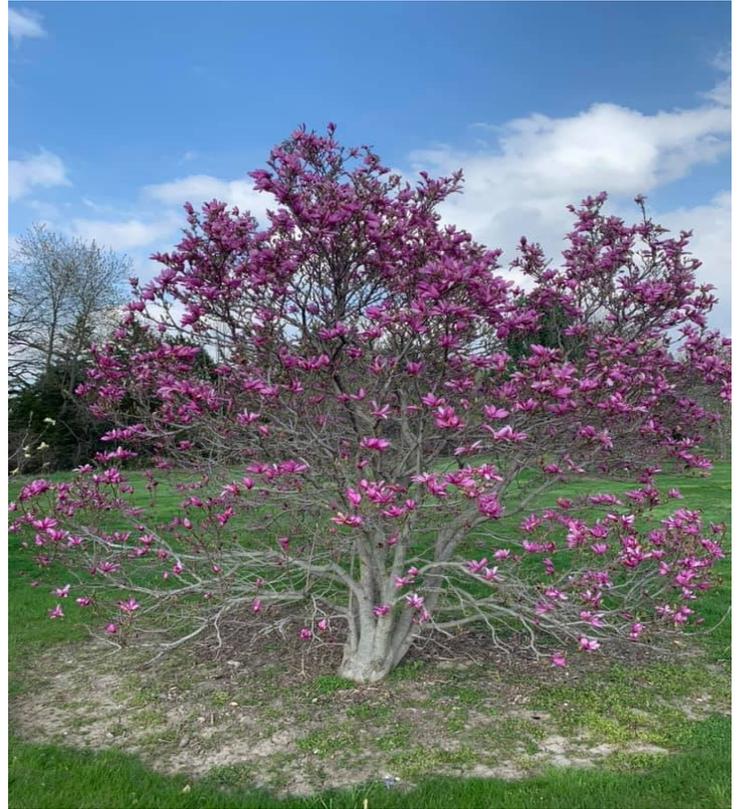
Gray mold in the flower garden

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

- Provide good air circulation
 - Gray mold can show up anytime wet weather occurs during the growing season.
 - Space your plants properly to encourage good air circulation between plants.
 - Split or thin overgrown perennials.
 - Keep your plants dry.
 - Avoid overhead watering.
 - Use drip irrigation or a soaker hose.
 - Don't water late in the day. Give your plants time to dry off after watering them.
 - Take care not to wound plants
 - Infections usually begin on weak, dying or wounded plant tissue.
 - Handle plants carefully when transplanting and pruning.
 - Gray mold usually attacks wounded plants, so avoid harming your plants.
 - Prune plants later in the day when plants they are dry.
- Keep your garden clean
 - Remove infected plants or plant parts in a paper bag. Bury or compost all infected plant parts.
 - Compost stems, leaves, and flowers that are removed for dead-heading and other garden maintenance.
 - Many moths, butterflies, bumble bees and other wildlife rely on leaf litter and plant debris for winter protection.
 - Allow fallen leaves and other plant debris from healthy plants to remain in the garden over winter.
 - Remove and compost leaves, stems, flowers and plants that have been infected with gray mold or other fungal diseases.
- Fungicides
 - Fungicides are not necessary to control gray mold in the flower garden.
 - Cultural control practices will reduce gray mold to an acceptable level.
 - Many flowering plants will recover from gray mold once dry conditions return.

SOME FUN WHILE 'SOCIAL DISTANCING'

Go out and check out some great pictures on Muscatine Branching Out's FB page with pictures from the Arboretum-many spring trees blooming. It's a great place to walk & enjoy the view and Still do our 'social distancing'.



While practicing social distancing, wear masks and gloves, the Muscatine County Fair Grounds Office Garden received its annual spring cleanup at the end of April. Thanks to Jan and Bill Koellner, and Emma Mae and Lynn Pruitt for getting it in shape for many Fair-goers and workers to enjoy throughout the year.

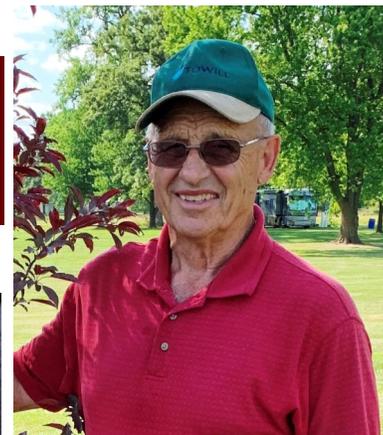
Victory Gardening Revisited

Compiled by Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

While I was quite young during World War II, I do remember the rationing of cars, rubber tires and gasoline. These items are easily imaged to be critical to the war effort in Europe and the Pacific. But as important, or maybe even more so, was the rationing of food. We lived on a farm so having a vegetable garden was not a novel activity. My mother canned all types of vegetables and we kids were expected to help. We had a cave which was built primarily underground so the temperatures would be moderated enough to preserve fresh vegetables such as potatoes throughout the winter. Our cave also was used to store racks and racks of glass jars containing the canned produce.

Victory Gardens came into vogue in the cities during World War I, as the normal food supply chains were diverted to feed the military on the battle fronts. Charles Lathrop Pack is credited with organizing the National War Garden Commission in 1917 as the United States joined the Allied Forces in World War I. Not only did this effort provide needed food stuffs for the troops, it also assisted starving Europeans who had been in the thick of battle for a longer period. The Victory Garden concept also gave the ordinary American an opportunity to join in the freedom fight even though they never left home. Citizens started looking around for any vacant piece of land, or land that could be converted from parks and backyards, to start their own Victory Garden. Many of the larger plots were developed into vegetable gardens by extended families or groups of families as a community effort.

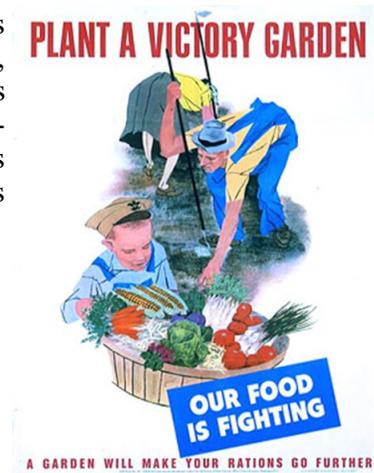
A similar emphasis on home and community gardening was renewed during World War II. The push for home preservation of fruits and vegetables was evidenced by the surge of pressure cooker sales from 66,000 in 1942 to 315,000 in 1943. It is estimated that Americans harvested nearly 10 million tons of fruits and vegetables from some 20 million Victory Gardens during WW II. This was a great asset to the nation's food supply as it amounted to half the total supply available from all sources. {As a frame of reference, one of our Muscatine donation gardens produced 2,200 pounds (1.1 tons) of vegetables for the



area food bank in 2019.}

Several themes were developed during war time to build morale back home and to encourage the gardening support for the war effort. “Sow the Seeds of Victory” was a WW I theme, as was “Soldiers of the Soil”. The theme, “Food will Win the War” was stated by President Woodrow Wilson. George Washington Carver is credited with writing a “Victory Garden” tract to provide gardening tips.

During WW II, Eleanor Roosevelt used a portion of the White House lawn for a Victory Garden, even though she didn't tend it herself. The U.S. government came up with the themes “Our Food is Fighting” and “Grow Your Own, Can Your Own.” The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Claude Wickard, is credited with writing, “A Victory Garden is like a share in an airplane factory. It helps win the War and it pays dividends, too.”



Muscatine County Extension Office

1601 Plaza Place

Muscatine, IA 52761

563-263-5701 or 800-992-0894

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THEME FOR THE BUCKET BIRGADE 2020 IS:

HOT SUMMER NIGHTS

COLORS TO BE USED FOR FLOWERS ARE:

PURPLE, YELLOW AND WHITE

DATE: TUESDAY JULY 14TH EVENING TIME

MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW IN NEXT NEWSLETTER

2020 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board

Board Members

Mary Wildermuth, Chair (2021)*

Rachel Horner Brackett, Vice Chair
(2020)*

Heather Harroun, Sec/Treas(2020)

Kathy Haltmeyer(2020)

Ron Jensen (2021)

Carolyn Lemaster(2021)*

Ed Moreno (2020)

Maryrose Peterschmidt(2020)

Mary Danner (Past Chair)

Angela Weber (Intern)

() *Year term expires as of Dec. 31*

* *Going off Board Dec 31, 2020 or
2021 but eligible for re-election*



* **Current Emails and Addresses** *
* As a reminder – keep both the Extension *
* Office current on any changes of e-mail ad- *
* dresses, phone numbers, or mailing address- *
* es. These need to be current to keep you – *
* our members – informed. *



Editorial Comments:

I 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