What’s in this December newsletter...

- News and Notes!
- Night Before Christmas...
- Bok Tower Gardens
- Smithsonian Gardens
- Christmas/Holiday Gift Ideas
- Zoo Garden News
- Don’t forget to Submit Hours!
News from Education Coordinator
Thank You — Carolyn Lemaster

Iowa State University Master Gardener News

See the full list of upcoming events, webinars and plant sales here:
https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/events

Iowa Master Gardeners Facebook page
Have you “Liked” this page? Frequent posts are included about timely gardening topics.

Horticulture & Home Pest News, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation: Upcoming Webinars

Trees Forever presents
Our Woodland Legacy Symposium: What Trees Teach Us
December 9 @ 8:30 am – 2:30 pm
Attend in-person in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, or attend Virtually
Info and Registration Here

Home Garden Tour? If you would be interested in giving Master Gardeners a tour of your home gardens, please let us know!
Here we are at the end of another year!! Christmas is around the bend and holiday festivities with family and friends are aplenty!!

**Enter your Master Gardener Hours!!**

It is time to be sure that you have all of your education and volunteer hours entered in the Iowa State University Master Gardener Website. If you need help entering hours of questions about the website etc., please contact Lauren Nerad at the Muscatine County Extension Office. The hours need to be entered into the system by Wednesday, December 15, 2021. Ten education and 20 volunteer hours are the annual requirement.

**Annual Recognition Luncheon**

Sunday, January 16, 2021, Annual Recognition Luncheon location to be determined. The meeting/luncheon will begin at 1 and conclude by 3. Bring a dish to pass and a white elephant gift for the exchange. Meat will be provided by the group!!

**4 New Board Members to be Elected**

With talents to share and interests to grow….now’s the time to step up and join the Muscatine County Master Gardeners Board. Bring your ideas and your gardening talents along only to enrich and strengthen our great leadership team!! Let Ed Moreno and Ron Jensen know of your interest to step up!! The Board generally meets once a month to address the business of the organization.

**Art of Gardening … Saturday, March 12, 2022**

We will soon be sharing our plans for the annual event and look forward to reconvening after a 2 year pandemic hiatus. But you can tell your gardening friends that “Art of Gardening” will be back stronger than ever with great learning sessions and excited vendors sharing their new garden wares.

Enjoy the festive days of December.
The joy of friends and family.
The delicious Christmas treats to eat,

Hoping you and yours take the time to smell the pine and unwind around the tree!
Remembering the reason for the season.
The love, peace and joy that we all deserve!!

Merry Christmas
Happy New Year 2022
Mary Wildemuth
Sunday, January 16, 2021, Annual Recognition Luncheon........location to be determined. The meeting/luncheon will begin at 1PM and conclude by 3PM. Bring a dish to pass and a white elephant gift for the exchange. Meat will be provided by the group!!
A Gardener’s Version of the Night Before Christmas

Provided By: Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener Chair
By Richard Jauron

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the yard
the branches were bare and the ground frozen hard;
The roses were dormant and mulched all around
to protect them from damage if frost heaves the ground.

The perennials were nestled all snug in their beds
while visions of 5-10-5 danced in their heads.
The new-planted shrubs, had been soaked by the hose
to settle their roots for the long winter's doze;

And out on the lawn, the new fallen snow
protected the roots of the grasses below.
When what to my wondering eyes should appear
but a truck full of gifts of gardening gear.
Winter Gardening Tips and Chores... Continued
By Janet Loughrey and Garden Design Newsletter

Saint Nick was the driver - the jolly old elf and he winked as he said, "I'm a gardener myself. I've brought wilt-pruf, rootone, and gibberellin, too. Please try them and see what they do.

To start new plants, a propagating kit. Sparkling new shears, for the old apple tree. To seed your new lawn, I've a patented sower; in case it should grow, here's a new power mower.

For seed-planting days, I've a trowel and a dibble, and a roll of wire mesh if the rabbits should nibble. For the feminine gardener, some gadgets she loves; plant stakes, a sprinkler, and waterproof gloves;

A chemical agent for the compost pit, and for pH detecting, a soil testing kit. With these colorful flagstones, lay a new garden path, for the kids to enjoy, and bird feeder and bath.

And last but not least, some well-rotted manure. A green Christmas year round, these gifts will ensure." Then jolly Saint Nick, having emptied his load, started his truck and took to the road. And I heard him exclaim through the motor's loud hum "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a green thumb!"
Bok Tower Gardens
Provided By: Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener Chair

AND WHILE THE WINTER WINDS BLOW IN IOWA.... YOU CAN VISIT BOK TOWER GARDENS IN PERSON OR VIA THEIR BEAUTIFUL WEBSITE!!

Home - Bok Tower Gardens https://boktowergardens.org

Bok Tower Gardens is a “must see Florida attraction” centrally located between Tampa and Orlando among rolling hills of citrus! Our nearly 50 acres of Olmsted gardens, 2.5 acre children’s garden Hammock Hollow, 20-room Pinewood Estate Mediterranean-style mansion and the 205-foot art deco and neo-Gothic Singing Tower carillon is a place that has fascinated millions of Florida visitors.

Bok Tower Gardens boasts one of the greatest works of famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. The meandering, historic landscape garden was designed to be a contemplative and informal woodland setting offering a series of romantic recesses and tranquil resting spots, picturesque vistas and breathtaking views of the Singing Tower. Acres of ferns, palms, oaks and pines fashion a lush backdrop for flowering foliage and the spectacular seasonal color of azaleas, camellias and magnolias (a highlight of our spring peak bloom season) showcasing an ever-changing work of art.

One of the wonderful attributes of the Gardens and natural habitats is its wildlife population. It includes 126 different species of birds as well as the threatened gopher tortoise and endangered eastern indigo snake. The grounds of Bok Tower Gardens is a designated site on the Great Florida Birding Trail.

The Gardens consist of paved primary pathways and many mulched secondary paths, some of which have an incline. There are two main pathways that lead into the core Gardens, and many routes to choose in making your way to the Singing Tower. It is about an 8-minute walk to the Singing Tower from the Visitor Center.

Bok Tower Gardens is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and is supported by tax-exempt gifts, generous contributions and admission revenue. All revenue and Membership support continues Edward W. Bok’s dream of helping to preserve and sustain this gift of beauty for future generations.
Bok Tower Gardens... Continued

Provided By: Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener Chair

The Grounds of Bok Tower Gardens
Smithsonian Gardens

Provided By: Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener Chair

Enjoy the beauty of the Smithsonian Gardens.... This site is packed with information, virtual tours and traveling exhibits you won’t be disappointed. Take a few minutes respite from your holiday preparations to enjoy the beauty found at this website.  https://gardens.si.edu/about-us/
CHRISTMAS TIME
Fill in the crossword and find the hidden words.

[Crossword grid with Christmas icons and illustrations]
Christmas/Holiday Gift Ideas!

Gardening in Iowa and Surrounding Areas (Bur Oak Book) Paperback – March 1, 1997

by Veronica Lorson Fowler  (Author)

Available on:
- Amazon $21.00

On the East Coast, so the story goes, newcomers are asked where they come from; on the West Coast they are asked what they do for a living; in Iowa people ask them, “How’s your garden doing?” Maybe this is not a true story, but it does epitomize the importance of gardening for Iowans, blessed as they are with the rich glacial soil so hospitable to corn and soybeans. Rural and urban Iowans alike start planning next summer’s garden in midwinter, when their plots are still snow-covered and deep-frozen; by state fair time their trees, shrubs, vegetables—including the ubiquitous zucchini—and flowers are thriving. Veronica Fowler's month-by-month guide to gardening in Iowa is a concise, valuable resource for all novice and experienced gardeners.

Beginning in January, Fowler presents a monthly checklist to allow gardeners to prioritize seasonal tasks. Her winter chapters focus on garden design, cold-weather gardening, and starting plants from seeds; in spring she moves into soil preparation, shopping for plants, wildflower and rose cultivation, and lawn care basics; summer brings landscaping, flowers for cutting, and organic gardening; and fall involves cold frames, winter-harvest vegetables, forcing bulbs and perennials, trees and shrubs, and ground covers and vines best suited for Iowa’s climate as well as information on mail-order suppliers, gardens to visit, where to go for help, and garden club memberships. Tips from some of the more than two thousand members of the Federated Garden Clubs of Iowa round out this plentiful harvest of useful advice.

On a day in February when the wind chill is, well, chilling and the forecast calls for more of the same, the arrival of the first garden catalog of the season brings warmth to any gardener. Veronica Fowler’s accessible, information-packed book will become part of every gardener’s life both indoors and out.
Christmas/Holiday Gift Ideas!

Gardening with Native Plants in the
Upper Midwest: Bringing the Tallgrass
Prairie Home (Bur Oak
by Judy Nauseef (Author)

Available on:
- Amazon $24.95
- Kindle $14.72

Want to have a garden that is both beautiful and biodiverse, satisfying and sustainable? In this book, long-time landscape designer Judy Nauseef shows gardeners in the upper Midwest how to restore habitat and diversity to their piece of the planet by making native plants part of well-designed, thoughtfully planned gardens. In contrast to most books about gardening with native plants, Nauseef provides specific regional information. Working against the backdrop of habitat and species losses in the tallgrass prairie states, she brings years of experience to creating landscapes that recall the now-vanished grasslands of the Midwest.
Friendly Reminder: 2021 Hours!

Just a reminder that in 2021 the Master Gardener hour requirements have returned to normal – completion of 20 volunteer hours and 10 continuing education hours. The hours need to be entered into the system by **Wednesday, December 15, 2021** in order to receive recognition at the Annual Recognition Luncheon in January.

The Iowa Master Gardeners page has video tutorials on how to use the reporting website if you need a refresher: [mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/videos/](https://mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/videos/)

If you have any questions feel free to reach out to Lauren at lnerad@iastate.edu or 563-263-5701.

Thank you all for all that you do!
[https://mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/](https://mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/)

I have received a request in the Muscatine Extension Office to see if there is a Master Gardener who is interested in helping an individual with a backyard landscape plan for an existing flower bed. They are asking for advice for shrubs and flowers that would work in the area. They live in Muscatine. If you are interested in this opportunity please reach out to Lauren at lnerad@iastate.edu or 563-263-5701 by Thursday, December 9th so I can let them know if anyone is interested.
Zoo Garden News

By: Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener

What a summer we all experienced this year. Between the drought and extreme hot weather it was a real challenge to keep things looking good at the Zoo Garden. I would like to say thanks to all the garden helpers Kathy Chalupa, Marci Stephens, Jane Hodge, Sara Carroll, Becky Schertman, Mary Danner, Nancy Jensen and Rose Spicknall.

We were also involved in other projects such as moving the elephant closer to it's garden and relocating several bridge piers. We worked with Randy Soenke, who created two small deer. We then located them near the mother doe and created a memorial to Master Gardener Emma Mae Pruitt. This effort has taken more time and the memorial plaque is on order and will be installed at a later date.

One more item we have been working on is replacing the old audio kiosks with a new design. The new kiosks will be designed as a steel flower and built by Randy Soenke. It will contain a current QR code giving the visitor information as heard before on the old kiosk. All these projects must be approved by city staff with more meetings and time spent.

Just when I thought we were finally finished with activities at the Zoo Garden, I received a call from Nick Gow, city parks superintendent. He asked us to light up the Zoo Garden area for the first Christmas Lighting Festival at the park. So, one cold Monday, Kathy Chalupa and myself, Mike Kellor and volunteers from the Community Bank decorated the cabin and nearby trees, bears, etc with lights. Check us out this Friday, December 3 and don't forget to bring a food donation that goes to the Food Pantry.

Thanks,
Maryrose
Zoo Garden Pictures

By: Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener
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2021-2022 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board

Board Members
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Terri Hansen, Secretary/Treasurer
Brandy Olson
Kathy Haltmeyer
Ron Jensen
Carolyn Lemaster
Ed Moreno
Lauren Nerad—Co-editor
Erin Parks—Co-editor

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