What’s in this May newsletter...

- News and Notes!
- Spring Time Note
- Support Local!
- Memorial for Emma Mae Pruitt
- Plant Sale
- History of Rhubarb and Recipes
- Muscatine Farmers Market
- Garden Pictures
- Spring Clean Up Review
- Arboretum Tour Pictures
Looks like we might be rounding the bend….coming out of the pandemic!! Vaccination shots are all the talk and action, as we’ve gotten our shot or figured out how or where to or what one we want, Moderna , J and J or…?

As Master Gardeners we are coming out also… seeing our friends and resuming our annual activities!! Plant Sale, Farmer’s Market, Shopping and visiting!!

**Master Gardener Board Meeting Notes/Highlights**

- The Master Gardener Board met on April 20, 2021 via zoom and welcomed 2 new board members; Terri Hanson and Brandy Olson. Terri was elected and volunteered to be our Secretary/Treasurer. Thank you both for stepping up and joining the Board!!

- The Board will meet in person for our next meeting on May 11th at 6:30 p.m. at the Extension Office.

- The Board decided to honor any active Master Gardeners who pass away by placing a brick with their name on it at the Muscatine Arboretum. The brick will indicate the year the individual (who has passed away) became a Master Gardener. First bricks to be placed will be in honor of Rick Crooks and Emma Mae Pruitt.

- The Board approved the participation in seeking donations to contribute to a metal zoo garden statue to honor Emma Mae Pruitt. The Board and the Zoo Garden Committee under the tutelage of Mary Rose Peterschmidt will be working on this memorial. (See article in this newsletter)
Volunteer and Education Opportunities!!

⇒ Jane Hodge and Susan Cradick have agreed to host our Annual Plant Sale the week of May 10th, 2021. Details to be provided in another article in this newsletter. We will need your plants and your help at the sale.

⇒ Lauren Nerad will be reaching out to Muscatine County Master Gardeners to help answer local residents planting questions. (Volunteer and Education Hours!!!)

⇒ Mary Wildermuth will host the monthly signup sheet for the Farmer’s Market. We will have one Saturday each month where a Master Gardener or two will be at the Saturday, Muscatine Farmer’s Market. Sign up sheet is in another article in this newsletter.

⇒ Master Gardener, Laura McGinnis invites all of us to the Hilltop Greenhouse, Illinois City on May 10, 2021 to shop with a 10% discount. Wear your pin and enjoy the flowers, friends and the fun! Master Gardener, Heather Harroun invites you to come on over to her yard after shopping and enjoy some quality time with your Master Gardener friends!!

Enjoy the beautiful weather and Spring majesty!!
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

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

Buckeye Yard & Garden online, 17-Year Periodical Cicadas! Ohio State University

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

International Master Gardener Conference 2021
September 12-17, 2021
This event will be virtual! Read more here.

Master Gardener Application Information

Application Open: March 1, 2021
Application Deadline: July 1, 2021
Participants are notified of acceptance to MG Training in early August; payment due at that time.
Fee: $195 MG trainee, $550 ProHort
Online Course: August 30-November 5, 2021
https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/become-master-gardener

Home Garden Tour? If you would be interested in giving Master Gardeners a tour of your home gardens, please let us know!
Hilltop Greenhouse in Illinois City, IL will be offering a 10% discount to Muscatine County Master Gardeners on May 10th. All you have to do is show your badge!

-From Laura McGinnis

Beautiful flowers and specialty arrangements at Hilltop Greenhouse, Illinois City
After meeting recently the Zoo Garden Committee has announced plans for a metal animal sculpture in memory of Emma Mae Pruitt. We all were deeply saddened by the passing of Emma Mae. She was a friend and touched the lives of everyone. Her love of flowers and her involvement and support for the Zoo Garden is a good example for the volunteers that help make the Zoo Garden beautiful. With approval from Lynn, we are establishing a memorial fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine to fund this project.

If you are interested in donating to this memorial fund a check may be sent to the Community Foundation at 104 West 2nd Street, Muscatine, IA 52761 and marked “Memorial Fund” Zoo Garden. The total cost of the sculpture, by local artist Randy Soenke, will be determined by the size and complexity of the sculpture as well as the current cost of steel. The Zoo Garden Committee will keep you updated on the memorial's progress.
Support Local!
By: Mary Wildermuth, Master Gardener Chair

Both Muscatine HyVee’s have a wonderful selection of garden statuary and art!!

Wal-Mart has a generous selection of trees for $25-$30. Including, flowering crabapple, Dogwood, peach, pear, apple, weeping willow, sweet cherry and many more!!
May Flower Suduko

The words or names that are used in the puzzle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Solution on page 25
Arboretum Tour, April 27th 2021
Photos Taken by: Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

Charles Rickey, Lifetime Master Gardener, provided his expertise to a lovely evening tour of the Muscatine Arboretum. He continues to tend this beautiful and peaceful garden and is responsible for planting most of the large variety of trees. The flowering crabs were a special treat as we hit them in full bloom.
Plant Sales
Jane Hodge and Susan Cradick Co-Chairs, and Lynn Pruitt

WHEN:
⇒ Week of May 10 – 15 from 10-12 or 4-6pm (Susan Cradick)
⇒ May 16th from 2-4PM (Lynn Pruitt)

WHERE:
⇒ Susan Cradick’s Home: 2861 Hwy 61, Muscatine Iowa (first left after Menards, across from New Era Road onto frontage road) tan house with flag pole next to A-Frame) 563-299-9114
⇒ Lynn’s address is 606 Broadway Street, Nichols, Iowa. Phone number is 260-0234

CONTACT JANE HODGE TO VOLUNTEER: 563-272-1638

One of our plant queens, Susan Cradick, would like to downsize her garden this year. So, our plant sale will have an unusual look to it, but I think we’ve all become more flexible throughout the last year.

So here is the plan... please drop off your plants to sell anytime Monday, May 10, then we have 5 days to bring our friends, neighbors and ourselves to shop at her house. From Tuesday, May 11 through Saturday, May 15 from 10-12 or 4-6 pm you may come with a container and dig from her fabulous collection of flowers for a $5 a pot charge.

Lynn Pruitt invites you to his yard from 2-4 pm Sunday, May 16th to dig selected plants. Bring your container digging tools and find a special remembrance of Emma Mae. All proceeds, $5 per pot, will go towards the Emma Mae Pruitt, Muscatine County, Master Gardener Scholarship

This is a great way to diversify your garden while supporting the MG scholarship fund. As an incentive for every 5 labeled plants (color, height, light preference) you bring you can log in one hour volunteer time.

We are also looking for help throughout the week to collect cash and help dig. Please text 563-272-1638 (Jane Hodge) with your preferred hours. Looking forward to seeing everyone once again!!!
Watch for Jumping Worms
By Donald Lewis, ISU Department of Entomology

Late June to early July is the time of year when populations of invasive and destructive jumping worms (*Amynthas* spp.) will have built to detectable levels and may be noticed under mulch and leaf litter or in potted plants. Jumping worms have been confirmed in seven Iowa counties. See the accompanying map.

We assume jumping worms are much more widespread than reports so far indicate and we appreciate all reports of additional areas of infestation. If you believe you might have jumping worms in a previously unreported county, please send videos and images of possible infestations to insects@iastate.edu.

See our online article for more details about jumping worms, including the potential for harmful ecological effects, especially on woodland slopes.

Jumping worms are also known as crazy worms or snake worms, names that describe their wild movement. They violently writhe and squirm when disturbed and move more like a snake than an earthworm. They are 3 to 5 inches long (some up to 7 inches in length) and dark brown to gray in color rather than reddish-brown. They are darker and smoother than our usual earthworms such as nightcrawlers and garden worms.

There is no cure or eradication for earthworms (European or Asian). Therefore, the goal is to prevent their spread and monitor for their presence. To prevent their spread do not move compost, mulch and top soil from potentially infested points of origin. Do not move plants from the infested counties and carefully inspect nursery plants prior to planting.
Rhubarb is a culinary eccentric, the counterpart of the tomato. Much like the tomato is a fruit that we treat as a vegetable, the rhubarb is actually a vegetable that we treat as a fruit. However, this has only been the case since the last two centuries or so and even then not wholeheartedly. That could be due to the effect rhubarb on the teeth: rhubarb leaves a rough layer on the teeth after eating which feels odd to the tongue. Moreover, the acidity of rhubarb is not to everybody’s taste. Still, give it a try!

Rhubarb as medicine

The scientific name for rhubarb, Rheum rhabarbarum, goes all the way back to Antiquity. Rha was the name for the Volga River where the plant grew according to the Greeks, and that was also where ‘the barbarians’ lived.

In the Middle East rhubarb stalks have been used in the kitchen since the Middle Ages and appreciated for their acid taste. But in Europe rhubarb remained unknown, except for the dried root that was used as medicine. It was not until the sixteenth century that fresh rhubarb arrived in Europe, and for centuries it would remain more of a curiosity than a culinary ingredient.

Originally, rhubarb was indigenous in Siberia. The Chinese used the dried and powdered root as medicine. The active ingredient is anthraquinone; the French wikipedia has the most relevant information on this ingredient. The Chinese kept the production method of the medicine pulvus rhei secret. During Antiquity the powder was already traded to Europe as a very expensive cure against obstipation and other complaints. During the sixteenth century powdered rhubarb root cost ten times as much as the same amount of cinnamon, which was also an expensive spice at the time.

The following recipe is an example of how pulvus rhei was used during the sixteenth century: steep 30 gram raisins in dry Malvasia (wine), drain them well and sprinkle them with 3 to 4 gram dried rhubarb root. Chew these raisins, and the constipation is gone. The source of this recipe
Rhubarb, the Reverse tomato... Continued

is Giacomo Castelvetro, an Italian who lived in England (see bibliography).

Rhubarb as poison

Like spinach, rhubarb has a high content of oxalic acid, which can be bad for your teeth. It forms small crystals that attach themselves to the enamel. Do not brush your teeth immediately after eating rhubarb (or spinach), because that would cause more damage. However, there is a simple remedy against the adverse effect of oxalic acid: simply add eggs or milk, cream or butter to the dish. These ingredients neutralize the acid. That is why we often eat eggs with spinach, or eat creamed spinach. In the following recipe, the pie’s stuffing is tempered with eggs, and the rhubarb fool is prepared with cream. So you can safely eat these dishes. However, do not eat rhubarb leaves, because these contain more oxalic acid than the stalks.

Rhubarb in the kitchen

The English were the first in Europe who adopted rhubarb in the kitchen. Maria Rundell (1745-1828) published a recipe for rhubarb pie in A New System of Domestic Cookery (1807). Fifteen years later William Kitchiner (1775-1827) published a short chapter dedicated solely to rhubarb recipes in The Cook’s Oracle (edition 1822).

Kitchiner was an optician, amateur musician and – what’s in a name – talented cook. It seems he not only prepared food himself, but also did the washing up afterwards!

Kitchiner’s chapter on rhubarb is titled ‘How to dress spring fruit’, but not all recipes are sweet. There are recipes for savory rhubarb soup with onions, carrots and ham, and rhubarb sauce for mackerel (instead of the more traditional gooseberry sauce). A rather sour syrup with rhubarb, lemon peel contains a little sugar. Sweet dishes include rhubarb pudding, rhubarb pie and the typically English dish rhubarb fool (pureed fruit with cream).
In the Dutch version of the Keukenboek (1867) by Henriëtte Davidis rhubarb is listed under vegetables. According to her the young leaves of the rhubarb can be prepared as spinach (don’t do this!), the stalks can be prepared as gooseberries and the flower buds can be prepared as cauliflower with a simple sauce. Removing the buds is also important if you want to harvest the stalks, because the flowers will use much of the energy of the plant with shorter stalks as a result.

The original recipe

The recipe is from William Kitchiner, The Cook’s Oracle edition 1822, pp.453/454. The recipe is already in English, so no translation is necessary.

Spring Fruit – or Mock Gooseberry Fool

- Prepare a Marmalade as directed for the Pudding
- add a pint of good thick Cream
- serve up in glasses, or in a deep dish
- if wanted in a shape, dissolve two ounces of isinglass in a little water, strain it through a tammis,
- when nearly cold put it to the cream, pour it into a jelly mould
- when set, turn out into a dish, and serve up plain.

For the Marmalade

- Peel and well wash sticks of rhubarb
- blanch it in water three or four minutes
- drain it on a sieve
- put it in a stew pan with the peel of a Lemon, a bit of Cinnamon, two Cloves, and as much moist sugar as will sweeten it
- set it over a fire, and reduce it to a marmalade
- pass it through a hair sieve

Modern adaptation of the recipe

Although they are not mentioned in the original recipe, I have used pistachios as garnish. I like the color combination, and the bite the nuts add to the otherwise soft dish.

Dessert for 4 to 6 persons; preparation in advance 15 minutes + cooling; preparation 10 minutes.
Rhubarb, the Reverse tomato... Continued

500 gr rhubarb marmalade (see recipe)
2.5 dl (1 cup) double cream (at least 35% fat)
1 tsp sugar
2 Tbsp pistachio nuts, chopped

*Preparation*

Whip the cream with a dash of salt. Do not add the sugar until the cream is stiff. Then add the cream to the rhubarb puree in a large bowl. Mix rhubarb and cream lightly, it is best if there are still some lighter and darker streaks visible. Scoop the fool in small bowls or glasses and sprinkle some chopped pistachios over it.

*To serve*

Serve as soon as possible, preferably the same day. Put the fools back in the refrigerator if they will not be served right away. Serve with whipped cream if desired.

*Alternative – Pudding*

Dissolve the gelatin in one deciliter heated rhubarb marmalade and combine this with the cold purée and whipped cream. Rinse a pudding mold with cold water and pour the rhubarb mousse in the mold. Let it set for at least three hours in the refrigerator. Dip the mold in hot water for a few seconds and demold the pudding on a plate. Garnish with some extra whipped cream and pistachio nuts.

---

**Rhubarb marmalade**

Kitchener writes: “reduce it to a marmalade”. The amounts given below will yield about 5 deciliters rhubarb ‘marmalade’.

500 gr rhubarb stalks, rinsed, peeled and chopped
100 gr dark moist sugar
grated peel of ½ lemon
1 cinnamon stick
2 cloves

*Preparation*

Add everything to a cooking pan and let it simmer until the rhubarb is done, which should take about ten minutes. There is no need to add water. Remove the spices, and puree the rhubarb in a blender or push it through a strainer.

Pint = 538 milliliter
Ounce = 28 gram
Muscatine Saturday Farmer’s Market Sign Up

We will be at the market one Saturday a month this summer. You have your choice of Saturday’s during the months of June, July, August and September. You are asked to bring a recipe and or provide a tasting based on the theme you select. (Your own or the suggested one for the month.) Grab a Master Gardener Friend and join in the fun showcasing Muscatine County Master Gardeners!!

Additionally, you will be encouraging folks at the Market to become a Master Gardener or at least be aware of the opportunity to do such!!

Dates:

- **June**: 5, 12, 19 and 26th.
  - Theme: My father’s favorite pie is? Or My father’s favorite veggie in June is?
- **July**: 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th or 31st (One Saturday for the month ..your choice.)
  - Theme: My favorite 4th of July Dessert is? Or I like the Muscatine County Fair because of ?
- **August**: 7,14,21, 28th (One Saturday for the month... your choice.)
  - Hot days of summer... my favorite salad is? Or Sweet Corn many different ways!
- **September**: 4,11,18,25th (One Saturday for the month... your choice).
  - Theme is Apples, pumpkins and gourds!! Or What do you do with a Spaghetti Squash?

Please contact: Mary Wildermuth at mlwilder@machlink.com with your selected time... you earn volunteer hours.... For the 7-11:30 time invested at the market!!

I want to volunteer on _________________ Saturday in June.
I want to volunteer for _________________ Saturday in July.
I want to volunteer for _________________ Saturday in August.
I want to volunteer for _________________ Saturday in September.
Pruitt Garden In April 2021
By: Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener

The fruits of Emma Mae’s labor and expertise continue.
History of Rhubarb

Article from highaltituderhubarb.com

Many consider rhubarb a fruit due to the dominance of rhubarb dessert recipes. Although botanists and horticulturists do not agree on the taxonomy of this species it is considered a dessert vegetable. More surprisingly, rhubarb’s role was medicinal rather than culinary throughout the majority of its period of use. Indeed, widespread culinary uses began only two centuries ago whereas medicinal uses go back 5000 years or more.

The word rhubarb is of Latin origin. The ancient Romans imported rhubarb roots from unknown, barbarian lands. The lands were beyond the Vogue river, sometimes known as the Rha River. Rha was first adopted to mean rhubarb. Imported from barbarians across the Rha the plant became Rha barbarum and eventually rhabarbarum, Latin for rhubarb plant. The modern English word rhubarb derives from rhabarbarum.

Rhubarb’s medicinal uses began at least 5000 years ago, to when Chinese used dried roots as a laxative. The first documented uses in western civilization are 2100 years ago when rhubarb roots were an ingredient in numerous Greek and Roman medicines. Dried rhubarb roots are also astringent. The astringent effects closely follow the cathartic impact, which made rhubarb roots a popular laxative in days of old. Though uncommon, dried rhubarb root is still sold as a laxative. Therefore, it is noteworthy that the medical efficacy of rhubarb roots varies significantly by variety. The original Chinese variety remaining the most efficacious while some varieties have no laxative value whatsoever. Unfortunately, rhubarb hybridizes easily and there are no standards for the names of varieties or cultivars. This makes it very difficult to know the pedigree of any particular plant. Just calling it “Chinese” does not mean it is the same as the early strains.

There is no record of common culinary rhubarb prior to the 1800s. Widespread consumption of rhubarb stalks began in Britain in the early 19th century with its popular adoption as an ingredient in desserts and wine making. The accidental discovery of forced rhubarb (growing rhubarb in winter) accelerated the growing popularity of rhubarb to the point of a mania in 1800’s Britain. Since then rhubarb’s popularity grew to a peak just before World War II. It was always more popular in Britain and the U.S. than...
elsewhere but rhubarb also achieved noteworthy popularity in Australia and New Zealand. Culinary uses also spread to northern Europe. At its most popular commercial quantities of rhubarb were grown outdoors as well as in greenhouses and dark cellars. Culinary use dropped dramatically during WWII, possibly as a direct result of the deprivations of war, most notably the rationing of sugar.

Since WWII rhubarb production has rebounded but to only a fraction of pre-war levels. Today’s U.S. rhubarb production is almost exclusively outdoors with relatively little commercial forcing. There are about 1300 acres devoted to rhubarb production, 60% in Washington State with Oregon and California next, and 1/2 acre in Black Forest, Colorado (That’s us!). Rhubarb production also resumed in England after the war but, as in the U.S., not at “mania” levels. Forcing, however, is still popular in England with Yorkshire the English leader in rhubarb production.

Formal research had concentrated in two laboratories: Stockbridge House Experimental Horticultural Station at Cawood, Selby, North Yorkshire, England, and; Clarksville Horticultural Experiment Station in Michigan. The focus was on commercial rhubarb production, including the development of plants suitable for mechanized harvest and the discovery of optimal techniques for forcing. It has proven very difficult to acquire records of those activities. New research endeavors are likely underway elsewhere but are not easily discovered.

Rhubarb’s usefulness as a cathartic was widely valued in Europe for millennia. Unlike some laxatives rhubarb roots are not only effective but their effects are short-lived and painless. Important, too, is the fact that cathartics played a more prominent role in medicine in ancient times than they do today. Purging one’s system was a common component of many treatments. These factors helped motivate a variety of rhubarb-related activities in post-Renaissance Europe, including exploration to discover the Asian source and subse-
History of Rhubarb... Continued

Article from highaltituderhubarb.com

quent transplanting and experimentation. Although China was eventually discovered to be the source of the original and highest quality plants other varieties were discovered elsewhere in Asia. Many were imported and grown in Europe and Britain.

Current naming of rhubarb varieties is discretionary. By the 13th century a handful of varieties had been imported to Britain and Europe. Experimentation and exploitation continued to focus on medical applications until the 19th century when culinary growing and experimentation resulted in at least 60 additional hybrid varieties. Any estimate of the number of varieties of rhubarb available today would be a wild guess. Indeed, the plant is so plastic and its seed production so prolific that knowing the true lineage of modern varieties is problematic. For practical purposes it suffices to identify rhubarb species by their demonstrated characteristics rather than relying on an apocryphal pedigree. This may seem imprecise but it is still very useful. Reliable propagation is normally by splitting roots or, in recent times, by cloning. Cloning rhubarb, however, is challenging, sometimes producing non-robust which fail in the second year. At least one Australian rhubarb farmer found success cloning but he replants annually. Propagation by seeds often yields unpredictable results, producing plants without the most desirable characteristics of their parents. Dedicated researchers, however, have produced highly desirable commercial varieties through long years of tedious and precise experimentation with hybridization. While seed propagation is a viable mechanism for hybrid experimentation it is not proven for large-scale proliferation of extant, desirable characteristics in rhubarb. This is hardly unique to rhubarb. Indeed, when dealing with hybrid seeds it is often important to get the F1 seeds (first generation) as hybrids often don’t propagate true through the seeds of subsequent generations. This is why gardeners witness second-generation plants, sprouting from seeds grown by last year’s first generation hybrids, to exhibit significantly different characteristics than the parents.

The Renaissance and the Industrial Age brought attempts to discover the constituent elements of rhubarb responsible for the cathartic and astringent effects. Also, there were attempts to develop tests and procedures to ensure quality. These were rather unsuccessful until modern times. The nature of rhubarb’s medicinal values were eventually understood, just in time for hybrid mayhem to cloud the actual
origin and non-visible characteristics of many if not all rhubarb plants! Anthraquinone, particularly emodin and rhein, now explain the laxative effects of rhubarb. The chemicals are known to exist in both the roots and the stalks, though the actual concentration varies from species to species and even by the phase of growth.

As mentioned, rhubarb did not enjoy widespread consumption as food until the 19th century. Indeed, the modern market for culinary rhubarb was created virtually from scratch in 18241 by Joseph Myatt, a South London nurseryman with some rhubarb plants, a recipe for tarts, and enough gumption to convince others that the otherwise bitter plant could taste good when combined with something sweet. (Guess what crop Mr. Myatt was best known for producing … strawberries.) The timing was perfect. Sugar was becoming available and affordable and the rhubarb stalks were otherwise going to waste. There was nothing to lose! Adding to rhubarb’s popularity was the fact that it is generally ready for harvest well before most other vegetables. With forcing it can be made available even earlier. It was a welcome, fresh food after a long winter of preserves and meat. With such an explosion in popularity there were many other preservation techniques developed for rhubarb. These included drying, canning and, most recently, freezing.

Rhubarb species can be grouped into two broad categories, all classified as members of the genus Rheum. In one category, sometimes collectively called Victoria, the stalk exteriors vary in color from pure green to light red while the interior is green. The varieties in this category tend to be larger, more robust and relatively disease resistant. The second category consists of pure red rhubarb. These stalks are deep red inside and out. They tend to be smaller, less robust and more prone to diseases. In general the yield per plant per year of red rhubarb is at most half that of Victoria plants. The Victoria group is by far the more common type of rhubarb in the U.S. Over 100 species of rhubarb are now known, mostly hybrids of the few species imported from Asia after the Renaissance. Rhubarb also grows wild in Alaska and may be native to that region. Varieties vary in appearance, taste, medicinal merit,
yields, and date of harvest. There is no known variance in food value among varieties although the pure red is aesthetically preferred for some uses.

Rhubarb leaves are toxic and have no safe culinary use for humanity. Unfortunately, they were served as greens in England before this fact became known. The toxicity is due to high concentrations of oxalic acid, an organic poison and corrosive found in many plants but present in relatively large amounts in rhubarb leaves. Other toxins may also exist. However, based on oxalic acid alone 5 kilograms of the leaves provide a lethal dose to a human. (Although this varies by variety and the phase of growth.) Still, all are advised not to consume the leaves in any quantity whatsoever.

We rhubarb cultivators work to improve and understand our varieties. At High Altitude Rhubarb we are searching for a hybrid of red and green that will offer the color of the red and the robustness and size of the green. We are also working, and believe we have succeeded, in producing a reliable Victoria seed. Our attentions have now turned to the red varieties. We have one very unique red variety which we have named Colorado Red. It is larger than Crimson Red and smaller than Canada Red. The most unique feature is that it does not produce flower stalks or seeds! It is an obvious candidate for cloning. In the meantime, enjoy your rhubarb. It’s good for you! (high in calcium, vitamin C and fiber)
Zoo News: Reflecting on Spring Clean Up 2021

By: Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener

You would think that cleaning up a garden would not be a big deal, but when you have nine beds that have been collecting leaves and other debris over the winter, it becomes a big deal.

This spring we had students and adults from the Calvary Church Youth Ministry volunteer to help us. Due to all the many activities the students are involved in, we had fewer students turn out. Despite that, we all pitched in and raked “tons” of leaves out of the beds, trimmed ornamental grasses and cut back perennials. After all this, we dressed the beds with mulch provided by Parks and Rec. Department. We are grateful for all who turned out to help.

If you can give us a few hours to help us maintain the theme gardens this season, it would be greatly appreciated. Several volunteers with health issues have left us a little short of help. Contact me by phone or email if you are interested so that I can direct you to the garden with need for work. As a reminder, this work counts toward earning your volunteer hours of service. Please keep us in mind, if for only a few hours each week.

Maryrose Peterschmidt
Chair, Zoo Garden Committee
peterschmidtmaryrose@gmail.com

563-263-0846
Zoo News: Reflecting on Spring Clean Up 2021
By: Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener
Hy-Vee Main Street Donation Garden
Cleanup and Ready To Plant!
Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

Nancy Dew, retired Hy-Vee Nutritionist, continues to manage this garden with assistance from Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener. Folks from the adjacent Jesus Mission are very interested and also provide help in tending the garden and enjoy the harvest.

The flower bed is a continuation of Emma Mae Pruitt’s expertise and her love for natural beauty.
Solution to Crossword on Page 8
Muscatine County Extension Office
1601 Plaza Place
Muscatine, IA  52761
563-263-5701 or 800-992-0894
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.

2021-2022 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board

Board Members
Mary Wildermuth, Chair
Rachel Horner Brackett, Vice Chair
Terri Hansen, Secretary/Treasurer
Bandy Olsen
Kathy Haltmeyer
Ron Jensen
Carolyn Lemaster
Ed Moreno
Angela Weber (Intern)
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.