Donation Gardening is Moving Dirt !!!

Last Year’s Residue

Tractor-mounted Tiller Produces a fine Seed Bed

Raised Beds Cleared & Tilled

Mounding Rows for Potatoes and Onions

Planting Potatoes at the peak of the mounds — then, as an experiment, planting onions on either side — Onions should be finished and harvested before potatoes are ready to be dug.
Upcoming General Meeting and Event Highlights

Coordinated by Jane Hodge
Master Gardener

Future Events include:

**May 8, 6:30 pm — MG Board Meeting** at ISU Extension Office

**May 12, 8:00 am - noon — Joint Plant Sale** at Discovery Park in Muscatine

**May 19, 9:30—11:30 am — Zoo Garden Coffee** at the Butterfly Garden

**June 9, all day** — Hornbacker Gardens Tour and Educational Presentations in Princeton, IL

**June 12, 6:30 pm — General Meeting/Garden Tour** at Pruitt’s at 606 Broadway, Nichols - Including Educational Presentation by Kathy Haltmeyer

**June 26, 6:00 pm — Big Sand Mound Nature Preserve Tour** at Monsanto Rec Bldg on Wiggins Rd

**July 10, 6:00 pm til dark** — Fern Walk at Wildcat Den State Park

**July 15, 2:00 pm** — Plum Grove garden tour in Iowa City

**July 17, Bucket Brigade** @ WL Fair Grounds

**July ???, Fruit and Vegetable Meeting** at Muscatine Island ISU Research Farm

**Sept 11, 6:30 pm — MG Board Meeting** at ISU Extension Office

**Oct 9, 6:30 pm — General Meeting** at ISU Extension Office - Tami Schmidt will present the prairie rejuvenation she has done at her Milan home.

(continued above right)

More Regional Events:

**May 5** — Nature Walk by The Nature Conservancy at Swamp White Oak Preserve

**May 10** — Greening your Landscape Workshop by The Nature Conservancy

(above two items: RSVP to Hannah at 319-726-3041 or hannah.howard@tnc.org.

**May 10-13** — Spring Garden Festival — Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

**June 10, 1:00-4:00pm** — Iowa Arboretum 50th Anniversary — Madrid

**June 13-16, 8am-4pm** — Upper Midwest Regional Master Garden Conference — Chaska, MN

See ISU Website for additional information and many more opportunities: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/events

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS OF:

- GENERAL MEETING
- GARDEN TOURS
- LOCAL & OUT OF TOWN TOURS
MG Education Committee Report

GREENHOUSE TOURS:
Thank you Mary from Taylor’s and Maria Mc Culley from Hilltop Greenhouses for your continued loyalty to Muscatine’s Master Gardeners. Your programs were of great interest and your generosity is evident in always giving us a discount. Thank you so very much!

HORNBAKERS GARDEN TOUR
A must-see garden and greenhouse! Hornbakers’ family owned and operated gardens feature large collections of hostas, daylilies, trees and shrubs, grasses, aquatics, annuals and other perennials. June 9 is their Open House and they are advertising many sales.

Schedule for Saturday, June 9:
9:00 leave ISU Extension to carpool to 22937 1140 North Avenue, Princeton, Illinois
10:30 arrive at Hornbakers
11:00 Workshop then shop
1:00 lunch
1:45 depart for home
3:30 arrive home

BIG SAND MOUND
Once every 3 years Monsanto and Mid-American Energy open their Big Sand Mound Nature Preserve to the public. The preserve has a unique ecosystem of plants and animals not typically found in Iowa. Within the 510 acres the BSM is home to undisturbed prairies, shallow ponds and woodlands and it has the highest concentration of threatened and endangered species in the state. Of the more that 400 different plants at the site 80% are native. Our MG group has permission from these companies to have a special tour given to us by Paul Mayes who serves on their scientific advisory committee. We are finalized for Tuesday, June 26 at 6:00pm. We will meet at the Monsanto Rec. Building on Wiggins Road in Muscatine.

WILD CAT DEN FERN WALK
Bob, the fern expert, Bryant is hosting a fern walk through Wild Cat Den. Save the evening of July 10 for a walk through paradise. More information to follow.

PLUM GROVE HERITAGE GARDENS
Date: Sunday, July 15
Leave: ISU Extension at 12:30 for our 2:00 tour

HOME GARDEN TOURS
Besides hosting our MG General Meeting at their home on June 12, Emma and Lynn Pruitt will also be giving tours of their fabulous gardens...I hear they have added a several more gardens already this spring.
News from Susan

By Susan Cradick
Master Gardener

Farmers’ Market

The schedule as of the last meeting is as follows:

June 9 – Hornbacker Gardens (you can schedule if you’re not going on the tour)
June 16 – Carolyn Lemaster
June 23 – Carol Gundrum
June 30 – Mary Danner
July 7 –
July 14 – Susan Cradick
July 21 – Muscatine Cty. Fair
July 28
August 4 – Carolyn Lemaster
August 11 –
August 18
August 25 – Susan Cradick
September 1 – Labor Day Weekend
September 8 – Sara Carroll
September 15 –
September 22 – Carolyn Lemaster
September 29 –

Lots of singles you can jump on with if you don’t want to work alone. Schedule flexible.

My e-mail is cradicks45@yahoo.com. Thanks for your time. Susan

PLANT SALE

Well, the weather we’ve been waiting for is here. I’ve been digging plants and have more yet to do. Let’s all find a few in our yards to share for the plant sale. If you can’t bring them out to the Discovery Center Saturday a.m. (7 a.m.) you can drop them off at my place before Saturday and I can take them out. Make sure there is a popsicle stick, plastic knife, etc. inserted in pot with name, color, shade/sun, etc. People are always looking for something different so those sell fast.

May 12, 8 am until noon. Discovery Center. Flyers are out. Pick some up and pass them out – put on your facebook. Let’s make a good showing. Those wanting to work that day be there at least by 7 a.m. My address is 2861 Hwy 61 N., phone (leave message – 299-9114. Thanks to you all, Susan

Master Gardener Scholarship

Winners for 2018

The following High School Seniors are receiving a $500 scholarship based on their academic achievements, volunteerism and involvement in 4-H and FFA:

• Emma Martin, West Liberty High School
• Trevor Meyers, West Liberty High School
• Lauren Aird, West Liberty High School
• Katelyn Boeding, Wilton High School

Congratulations to all !!!!
Plant Sale!

Saturday, May 12th, 2018

8 am to Noon

Muscatine Environmental Learning Center, Discovery Park Pavilion

- Established perennials from Muscatine County Master Gardeners
- Registered Iris and Daylilies from Cedar Valley Iris and Daylily Society
- Beautiful plants from the Muscatine Garden Club

For more information contact:
Heather Harroun – Muscatine County Master Gardeners - jhsharroun@outlook.com
Deborah Bentley – Muscatine Garden Club – (641) 420-3696
Keith Riewerts – Cedar Valley Iris & Daylily Society – (563) 285-8941

Cedar Valley Iris & Daylily Society
CVIDS
CVIDS.ORG

Master Gardener
Iowa State University
Extension and Outreach

Muscatine Garden Club
Hello Master Gardeners,

Spring is FINALLY here!!! We have a Facebook event for the Plant Sale: https://www.facebook.com/events/167018100628899/ Please invite your friends and share on your Facebook page if you have one.

We will be again this summer hosting the Growing Season Webcast series. Topics will be; Insect Update & Tree Care, Local Bees & Organic Vegetables, and Compost 101 & Growing Roses. The dates are not yet set, but keep an eye out for this great opportunity to get some education hours in!

Lots of exciting programs going on with Extension and Outreach – if you have kids in your life entering 1st through 6th grade next year we have some great summer camps planned. We also have a Your Money, Your Goals training coming up on May 23 – this training is designed for service providers, volunteers, clergy members or anyone interested in helping individuals and families take steps towards financial stability and self-sufficiency. We have funding to offer this training for free to anyone who serves Latino families.

Happy Spring everyone!
Krista
Meeting Local Food Insecurity Needs

From: Nichole Sorgenfrey <nichole@unitedwaymuscatine.org>
Sent: Friday, April 27, 2018 2:40 PM
Subject: Food Insecurity

Hello-

Please fill out survey so we can get a better feel of who is doing what in the community around food insecurity. Once we have the results to this survey we will create a committee to help figure out the gaps we have in the community and what are the next steps. This is a collaboration with ISU Extension and Outreach, Muscatine Community Food Pantry and United Way of Muscatine.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. The link for the survey is as follows:
https://iastate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_82MB7t6dbnCw5Ap

Please fill this out before Friday. May 11, 2018.

Thank You so much for being part of a community who cares and is willing to help make a difference.

Thank you for Volunteering!

Nichole Sorgenfrey
Program Manager | United Way of Muscatine
208 W 2nd St Suite 201 | Muscatine IA 52761
563-263-5963 | unitedwaymuscatine.org
voluntermuscatine.org<http://voluntermuscatine.org>
Well, spring has sprung. Even the Drake Relays is expecting great weather!! It is amazing what a few days of warm sunny weather produces in Iowa’s fertile soil. I’ve included a selfie with forsythia (Oleaceae) buds beginning to bloom in our yard and Canadian geese protecting their eggs around our pond. This is one of my first opportunities to walk, very gingerly, and enjoy the Spring transformation for 2018!! Only three (3) days after hernia surgery...Dr.s orders! Regardless, with my cute nurse, Carol, life is good.

Of course, Muscatine Master Gardeners (MMG), continue to stay active. Our Plant Sale is right around the corner, May 12th, from 8:00am to noon at the Muscatine Environmental Learning Center, Discovery Park Pavilion. Please plan to harvest some of your awesome garden plants to help with this fundraiser in conjunction with the Cedar Valley Iris and Daylily Society and Muscatine Garden Club. Thanks Susan and Heather!

Four (4) deserving students were selected by the MMG Scholarship Committee; Mary Wilder, Emma Mae Pruitt and me, to receive $500 scholarships to further their post high school education. We will present at their scholastic awards ceremonies in May.

The MMG has several items to discuss and share with you at our next General Meeting; including and not limited to:

- MMG Scholarship Criteria
- MMG Training Transition
- Coordination with Neighboring Master Gardener Counties

Lastly, please keep Candi Whitmer’s husband in your thoughts and prayers. They were involved in a serious motorcycle accident.

Respectfully,

Ed Moreno
Muscatine Master Gardener Association

General Meeting Minutes - Extension Office

April 10, 2018 6:30 PM

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Ed Moreno

Featured speaker, Dr. Donald Lewis, Professor and Extension Entomologist from Iowa State University presented a program on Insect Pest Management in Horticultural Crops, Households and Structures via Zoom (live interactive internet presentation). He covered such pests as Japanese Beetle, Tomato Hornworm, Tobacco Hornworm, Squash Bug, Squash Vine Borer, Spotted Wing Drosophila, Earwig, Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, and Asian Longhorned Beetle.

Treasurer’s Report: starting balance as of 7-1-17 $7791.23 ending balance as of 4-10-18 $6867.21

Minutes Reviewed from February Meeting: Minutes were reviewed and accepted with no corrections

Meeting Schedule for 2018:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Board Meetings</th>
<th>General Meetings</th>
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<td>May 8</td>
<td>June 12- Pruitt Garden Tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>July (no meeting)</td>
<td>August 14 (May not meet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>October 9- Tammy Schmidt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>December 11- Annual Meeting @ New Hope Church 6 PM</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Schedule for 2018 presented by Jane:

May 12 - Joint Plant sale @ Discovery Park in the pavilion. Set-up is @ 7:00 AM and runs from 8am-noon. Plants are to be marked with color/name/sun/shade and maybe a photo. Baked goods will be for sale.

June 9 - Hornbacker Gardens, Princeton IL. Meet at the Extension Office at 9 am.

July 10 - Wild Cat Den Fern walk with Bob Bryant @ 6:00. Meeting place TBD

(continued next page, GENERAL MEETING)
(Continued from previous page, GENERAL MEETING)

June 26 -- Tour of the Big Sand Mound Nature Preserve

July 15 -- Plum Grove, Iowa City @ 2 PM. Meet at the Extension office at 12:30 to carpool

July 17 — Bucket Brigade @ Fair Grounds

Other programs discussed

- Floral Training class with Karen Britcher was well attended by the public and MG members on April 9 @ ISU Extension Office
- Green House tours
  - April 17 - Hiltop @ 6:00 Shop at 5:30 for a discount
  - April 24 - Taylor’s @ 6:00 Shop at 5:30 for a discount
- Garden Tours
  - June 12 -- Emma Mae and Lynn Pruitt’s house

Open Floor

- Art of Gardening was very successful on March 17 at MCC with 165 attendees; not sure of income yet.
- Tabled ISU Master Gardener training for 2018. Kathy is training to do a revamped hands-on curriculum for 2019. If anyone is interested in taking the course in 2018, they will be referred to Scott County. The Master Conservationist course with seven sessions will be available starting this August as an alternate, but not a replacement.
- Committee reports were made for several of our work areas.
- Scholarships- We’ve received 5 applications
- Muscatine Kids’ Day of Caring- March 28th through United Way
- L&M Kids’ Day of Caring schedule for April 27 at Zoo Garden
- Donation Gardens are getting ready when the weather improves

Meeting adjourned at about 8:00pm; Hours for meeting: 1 for education and 0.75 for volunteer.

Submitted by Candi Whitmer, Secretary/Treasurer
Planting an Extra Row

By Jane Hodge, Master Gardener

You are probably getting ready to plant your vegetable garden. Any day now the ground will be warm enough to germinate those miraculous seeds. As you do please consider planting extra to feed those in need in our communities. The food pantries give the staples like noodles, spaghetti, or hot dogs but cannot afford to purchase fresh produce which the recipients are eager to receive.

As Cindy Hayes puts it in her article ‘Donate Excess Garden Vegetables to Food Pantries’, “If you think and plan ahead, you can plant extra vegetables for the purpose of donations. It may be as simple as a half row of potatoes or one extra zucchini that produces multiple trips to the food pantry without a lot of extra effort in the garden.”

Wondering what to plant? Here are the top 13 plants listed in the ISU publication HORT 3068: Tomato, Zucchini, Squash, Potato, Onion, Pepper, Cucumber, Melon, Broccoli, Cabbage, Sweet Potato, Carrots, and Beans.

(continued above right)

Muscatine Food Pantry is open to the public Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8-10:30am. Please go behind 315 Iowa (the old P.O.) and someone will receive your donation. A staff member is usually available by 7 am.

West Liberty Food Pantry is open Thursdays from 6-7pm and Saturdays from 9-11am. Their Food Pantry is located at 1st Church United, 1108 Calhoun, West Liberty. Contacts for information: Dave Baker 319.627.3066 or Ed Moreno 319.331.0713.

A BIG thank you for help in feeding those in need!

Special Need

Our own Candi Whitmer and husband Chris were injured in a motorcycle accident a few weeks ago. Ed sent this planter to the hospital to cheer their recovery. We wish both Candi and Chris a speedy recovery!
Fair Flowers with a Flair

Presented by Barb Reesink, Karen Britcher, Susan Johnson, and Tammy Daufeldt

Flower Decorating Workshop held April 9, 2018 at ISU Extension Office

Comments by Emma Mae Pruitt, Master Gardener:

“This was a very educational and helpful workshop.”

“It certainly helped encourage our members and others in the community to participate in the Fair Floral Events.”
Jamie Scott is a visual effects artist, photographer and film maker whose first time-lapse film –*Fall*, a striking time-lapse shot over two years in New York City’s Central Park that displays the season’s changing colors through wide, static shots - went viral after being featured as a Vimeo Staff Pick. Widely encouraged to create a follow-up, he conceived of *Spring*.

“I wanted *Spring* to be as different from *Fall* as possible. *Fall* was shot mainly in wides so *Spring* was shot mainly in close-ups. *Fall* was very cutty so I wanted *Spring* to be a single shot. As a result, *Spring* ended up being even more meditative and contemplative than *Fall.*” -- Jamie Scott

Shot in stunning 4K Ultra High Definition with a moving camera, *Spring* is a romantic, evocative time-lapse of the growth and blossoming of flowers found in the New York area. Amaryllis, tulips, daffodils, grape hyacinths, cherry blossoms, peonies, irises, calandivas, ere-murus, bearded irises and hyacinths all come vividly to life. As the flowers grow and bloom, they conjure memories of years past, the ephemerality of time, and the transformative rebirth of the season, and evoke the way in which nature still makes its presence intensely felt even in the man-made world of New York City. Scott’s film simultaneously captures the beauty of the season and the accelerated rush of the city itself.

Other challenges involved the vibrancy of his subjects. Flowers move as they bloom, perk up when they’re watered, and grow towards available light sources, making the filming a balancing process between

*(continued above right)*
The Day of Caring at the Zoo Garden on Friday, April 27, was a huge success. Students and teachers from L & M High School turned out to give us a much needed helping hand. The amount of leaves to be raked was incredible and the amount of mulch to be spread was daunting. These tasks are especially difficult at the Zoo Garden because of the sloping hillside. With the help of these students, the gardens were cleaned and dressed on a beautiful spring day.

Volunteers are a valuable part of the Zoo Garden team. With their help we are able to make a significant difference in our ability to educate, enhance and inspire others to appreciate plants and the beauty of the natural world. The rewards of volunteering at the Zoo Garden are abundant. A volunteer will have a sense of personal achievement and satisfaction in helping achieve the goals of the team.

What are you waiting for? Become a player on the Zoo Garden team.

Volunteer !!!
Updates from Kathy Chalupa, Master Gardener

Zoo Garden News

Our monthly coffees this season will be held on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 9:30 to 11:30 - May through September.

Beginning on May 19th What’s New at the Zoo with Master Gardeners and Friends Meet in the butterfly garden. We will tour the gardens and talk about new plant additions. Bring a lawn chair and enjoy refreshments while earning MG education hours. In case of rain - we will move into a shelter.

Tentative Future Zoo Garden Coffee Schedule

June 16th - Attracting and Feeding Butterflies - The Sample Gals

July 21st - Prairie Food Sources for Modern Day Chefs - Riverside Resort

August 18th - Protecting the Planet One Tree at a Time - Nature Conservancy and Muscatine Branching Out

September 15th - Gardening is for the Birds! - US Fish and Wildlife

Muscatine Branching Out News

After planting a few trees at McKinley School, our next focus will be finishing preparations on a large grant for the West Liberty Fairgrounds.

Another MPW tree program will take place in October. Applications will be available after Labor Day.

There are still funds left in our storm budget. If you know of anyone who lost trees due to that last tornado - please let us know.

Muscatine FFA Plant Sale

Located in the MHS Greenhouse

2018 Dates

April: 26-27, May: 3-4, 5, 10-11, 17-18
Thursdays and Fridays 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM
Saturday May 5th 8AM – 10AM

Plants

Ageratum
Alyssum
Begonias
Coleus
Celosia
Dahlia
Dianthus
Dusty Miller
Fuchsia
Geranium
Grasses
Shasta Daisy

Prices

4 packs $2.00 singles, $1.50/12 or more
Gallon Perennials $8.00 each
Geraniums 6” pots $5.50 singles, $4.50/10 or more
Hanging Baskets starting at $15.00 buy two get one free
12” - 19” Patio Planters starting at $20.00
4” Specialty Annuals $4.50 singles, $3.50/10 or more
4” Spike, Vinca, Asparagus Fern, Wave Petunia $2.50

& MANY MORE!
Coral Bells

By Bill Koellner, Lifetime Muscatine County Master Gardener

Coral bells are one of my favorite flowers. Humming birds, I noted are attracted to my yard much prefer feasting on coral bells than other plants. I think my love for them dates to my childhood and my mother’s flower beds. She always had coral bells. I know many Master Gardeners are familiar with coral bells. I want to share the merits of the coral bell.

Coral Bells, also known by their Latin genus of Heuchera, are one of the most popular of all the perennials. Considered to be a semi-evergreen perennial, they received their Latin genus name from Johann Heinrich von Heucher, a German botanist who lived during the 17th and 18th centuries. Although native only to North America, coral bells began to be exported during the 18th century. However it was not until the end of the 20th century that the popularity of the plants really took off.

More than 50 species of coral bells are known to exist. They grow from across Canada south to Mexico. There seem to be no geographical limitations for the plants. First Church United in West Liberty recently re-landscaped many areas, and Coral Bells were selected as a plant to withstand all weather conditions and look great.

Species can grow on rocky seashores as well as in the hot, dry atmosphere of the Southwest region in the U.S. Though the delicate flowers of the plant are visually appealing, it is the eye-catching reds, purples, golds, yellows and greens of the coral bell’s leaves that make the plant popular with gardeners.

The many types of coral bells present a wide variety of flower colors. Different varieties include amber waves, amethyst myst, black beauty, lime rickey, midnight rose, peach melba and ruby veil. Each variety has a distinct leaf patterning and flower color combination.

(Continued next page, CORAL BELLS)
Chatterbox features the prototypical pinkish flowers, whereas Frosty offers up breathtaking flowers that are almost a blood red. In recent years a number of coral bells that sport plum-colored or even deep purple flowers have become popular. Nearly every color of the rainbow is presented in at least one species of coral bells.

They range in height from six to 36 inches and typically blossom from late spring through early summer. Coral bells are the perfect plant for those who do not necessarily have a green thumb. All species of Heuchera require very little maintenance and are easy to care for. As long as coral bells are not overwatered or under-watered and receive proper sunlight, are kept in a rich and fertile soil, and are provided with good drainage, they will perform spectacularly.

If planted in a location that experiences very cold weather, a winter mulching is highly recommended. The ideal time to plant coral bells is in either the spring or the fall. The plants should be spaced anywhere from one to two feet apart.

**Vegetables and Their Relationships to Bees**

The following website links to an article from Michigan State University that lists vegetables according to their pollination requirement and their attractiveness to pollinators. It’s an interesting look at the wide diversity of plants and pollination requirements on the farm and in the garden.

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/vegetable_pesticide_series_should_i_use_it_during_bloom

There is also good information about protecting pollinators and how complicated that can be in an area producing a variety of crops.

This info provided by:
Donald R. Lewis, Extension Entomologist
Department of Entomology
104 Insectary Building
2311 Pammel Drive
Iowa State University, Ames IA 50011
http://www.ent.iastate.edu
May Gardening Guide for Zone 5
(Courtesy of Midwest Gardening)

- **Fertilize trees, shrubs, perennials**  Apply a balanced fertilizer to all your trees, shrubs and perennials if you have not done it yet. Use liquid or a slow release granular. Note: Certain perennials, and shrubs for that matter, do not require fertilizer. For all your plants, follow recommendations for the specific plant.

- **Feed annuals**  Annuals need regular fertilizing for good bloom production, about every 4 weeks.

- **Apply broadleaf weed control**  Apply broadleaf weed control in May. Although you can purchase fertilizer with broad leaf weed control, conditions should be ideal when you apply (read the package) for best results. Mixing up some weed-b-gone in a tank sprayer is more effective. It also allows you to spot spray individual weeds at target small areas. Clover and creeping charlie require several applications. With a pump sprayer you can target those every few to several days.

- **Plant warm season vegetables**  As soon as the soil warms up to about 60 degrees, tomatoes, peppers, etc. can be planted in the garden. Beans can be direct sown.

- **Transplant**  Move shrubs and trees after the soil thaws out and dries up if it hasn’t been done already, before new growth begins, and the weather is cool. Transplant shock will be minimized.

- **Plant container grown shrubs, roses and trees**  Container grown trees, evergreens and shrubs can be planted.

- **Plant perennial seeds**  Seed can be sown for just about anything now. The seeds that need warm soil should germinate easily now.

- **Stake plants**  Stake tall plants that need support and protection from wind before they get to tall to confine.

- **Mulch**  Apply 2-4 inches of mulch to perennial beds and trees if you haven’t done it yet. Thick mulch will inhibit weeds and help keep the soil moist.

(continued next page, GUIDE)
Transplant seedlings  Transplant any annual, perennial or vegetable seedlings into the garden beds if you haven’t done it yet. Complete the hardening off process first and protect from late frosts.

Mow  Get on a regular mowing schedule. You should not be removing more than 1/3 the length when you mow.

Deadhead  Remove spent blooms from early flowering shrubs and shrub roses. Deadheading will improve the appearance of the shrub and encourage faster re-bloom. Rhododendrons should be pruned as soon as flowering is complete. Deadhead the spring flowering bulbs if you haven’t yet, but don’t cut back the foliage until it is yellowed and withered.

Spray or dig weeds  Weed season is well underway in May, and it is best to control them before they get well established. Dig weeds when the soil is moist to help remove the entire root system. Many weeds will re-grow from the tiniest bits of root left behind, especially dandelions. If not opposed to chemicals, apply liquid selective weed control, such as Weed-B-gone, to lawn weeds.

Fertilize early bloomers  Early blooming shrubs may need feeding after the first flush of blooms. Rhododendrons and Azaleas will need an acid fertilizer now to keep the foliage from yellowing, or work cottonseed meal into the surrounding soil.

Shape hedges  After a flush of summer growth, shaped and pruned hedges should be trimmed, usually in May.

Pinch  Pinch back annuals to promote fuller growth. Petunias and zinnias in particular will benefit from pinching back when they have reached about 4-6 inches.

Water  Water all newly planted shrubs and trees deeply every 7-10 days while the roots are establishing. Established trees should get a deep soaking as summer heat sets in.
(continued from previous page, GUIDE)

Fill the birdbath  Fill shallow birdbaths frequently. Deep birdbaths can harbor mosquito larvae so empty stale water and refill.

Take down the coldframe  By the middle of May you can put away the coldframe.

Apply organic fertilizers  Now that the soil is warm enough to activate microbes, compost, manure, fish emulsions and blood and bone meal may be applied in the gardens.

Check containers and baskets  Container gardens, hanging baskets and window boxes dry out quickly and need frequent watering. They will also need to be fertilized regularly.

Heat up the compost  If the compost isn’t ready yet but is not heating up, add green plant material such as grass clippings or fruit and vegetable waste, or add a shovel full of manure.

Check for insects  Keep an eye on your plants for insects that may be causing damage. Do not indiscriminately spray insects, as many are beneficial. Even those that cause visual damage may not necessarily be harming the plant. Check with your local garden center or extension service to properly identify and treat for insects.

Check for disease  Keep an eye on your plants for signs of disease such as wilting, leaf drop, and discolored foliage. Check with your local garden center or extension service to properly identify plant disease and treatment. It is tempting to water and fertilize if a plant appears weak or diseased, but until the problem is identified it is best to withhold both water and fertilizer. Many diseases are caused by or accelerated by over watering and poor drainage. Keep watering to a bare minimum until the problem is identified.
2018 Master Gardener Committees — Chair persons
(There are still opportunities for volunteers)

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

Simple Tips for Gardening
Written and Compiled by Rachel Quillin

*The tree of silence bears the fruit of peace.*
— Arabian Proverb

*Don’t throw away the old bucket until you know if the new one holds water.*
— Swedish Proverb

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

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

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

Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture coop-
erating.

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

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

— Lynn Pruitt, Editor —