

November 2019  
Muscatine County



**WORTHWHILE  
DIRT**

## **CONGRATULATIONS!!!**

***Grand Opening — Muscatine County ISU Extension Office***

**October 10, 2019 — 1601 Plaza Place, Muscatine, IA 52761**



(See more photos on page 6)

### **November 12 General Meeting at 6:30pm at ISU Extension**

- Featuring Nick Gow, Horticulturalist with Muscatine Parks and Recreation Department
- Master Gardener Interns to be introduced and welcomed

**Stay tuned for our Annual Meeting date in early 2020**

### **Art of Gardening 2020 is scheduled for March 21**

- A great program is being planned
- Speakers are being contacted and confirmed
- The MCC venue is reserved and ready
- You need to be there so put it on your calendar!

# Upcoming Meeting & Event Highlights Muscatine County Master Gardeners

Coordinated by Jane Hodge, Master Gardener



I'm winding up the MG year...this is our last event...also my last entry being on the board. Not sure who will take over being Education Chair., maybe Rachel or Ed.

Anyway,

**General Meeting** — November 12 at 6:30pm at the new Muscatine County Iowa Extension office at 1601 Plaza Place. Nick Gow, superintendent of the parks at Muscatine Parks and Recreation, will have a presentation about the process of designing, planting, and maintaining the hanging planters in the downtown area. They have gone through several seasons of system and process iterations to arrive at a consistent display that is attractive, manageable and cost effective. If you've had questions about how these plants keep their beauty then come to this special occasion.

Jane

## Clarification:

Instead of holding a separate potluck on November 2nd for the new interns, we will have them work on their post assessment that day and review possible projects. The Interns will be invited to the **November 12 General Meeting** where we plan to recognize them. Kathy Haltmeyer will be working to match interns with a mentor, if you are interested in being a mentor please email Kathy at [haltmek@hotmail.com](mailto:haltmek@hotmail.com).

## Appreciation Lunch

United Way of Muscatine Volunteer Appreciation Lunch – Thursday, November 21, 11:30 -1 pm at the Riverview Center. Please RSVP to [Karena@unitedwaymuscatine.org](mailto:Karena@unitedwaymuscatine.org) by November 15 for a lunch count.

## 2020 Mini Grants Announced

We're excited to announce the 2020 Growing Together mini grants! Mini grants for up to \$4,000 to purchase materials for donation gardens will be available. Applications are due on January 10, 2020. See Krista if you want to get involved in donation gardening 2020.

***Be sure to check pages 3-8 for additional related events and details***

# 6th Annual Greenhouse Short Course — November 1

Reimen Gardens in Ames — 8am—4pm

Hello Greenhouse Growers!

This year our program will feature presentations delivering cutting-edge information for greenhouse growers. Specifically, our program will feature talks on: nutritional monitoring; managing and controlling root rots; sensitive sites impacted by pesticides, REI, and pre-harvest interval; consumer research; new greenhouse trends; fungicide rotations; pricing products; containerized floriculture and hydroponic food crop nutrition research updates. The cost for the Short Course (including lunch) is \$60. Additionally, we will be offering Pesticide Continuing Instruction Course (C-CIC) credit for greenhouse pesticide applicators for an additional fee of \$35.00.

Registration is limited to 110 people!

PLEASE CLICK ON THIS LINK TO REGISTER:

<http://www.aep.iastate.edu/greenhouse>

Featured 2019 Speakers:

Dr. W. Garrett Owen, Michigan State University

Dr. Janna Beckerman, Purdue University

Dr. Bridget Behe, Michigan State University

Dr. Mark Shour, Iowa State University

Dr. Chris Currey, Iowa State University

Location: Reiman Gardens, Garden Room



Directions and Parking: Reiman Gardens is located southeast of the ISU campus at 1407 University Blvd, Ames, IA 50011. For directions to the entrance from the intersection of University Blvd. and S. 16 St, click on the link below or paste the url into your browser address bar.

<http://www.reimangardens.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/directional-map.jpg>

An ISU campus map is also available online at <http://www.fpm.iastate.edu/maps/>

Parking is available in Lot S1 (next to the garden)

# Want a homegrown flower for the holidays?

During this family oriented workshop, you will plant an amaryllis bulb that will bloom right in time for the holiday season.



**When:** 9 am Saturday, November 2, 2019.

**Where:** The Dubuque County Extension Office, 14858 West Ridge Ln. Suite 2, Dubuque, IA 52003

**Cost:** \$20 per bulb and includes a bulb, pot and potting mix as well as bulb care information.

**Registration:** is required with a deadline of 4 pm October 31, 2019. Registration can be done by calling the Dubuque County Extension Office at (563) 583-6496.

**Please Note:** This is a family oriented learning activity. Parents of children are encouraged to bring their kids to make this a fun learning event. More information can be found [HERE](#) or by calling the Dubuque County Extension Office at (563) 583-6496.

Iowa State University  
Department of Agronomy

# PRAIRIE STRIPS

## Southeast Iowa Field Day

Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019 from 3:00 - 5:30 pm

**ISU Southeast Research Farm**  
**3115 Louisa-Washington Road**  
**Crawfordsville, Iowa 52621**

### SPEAKERS

#### **Kristina Tebockhorst**

ISU Ag Engineering  
Field Specialist

- On-farm Conservation Practices

#### **Tim Youngquist**

ISU STRIPS farmer liaison

- Prescribed Burning 101, Prairie Strip Establishment & Maintenance

#### **Tony Maxwell**

Washington County NRCS

- Conservation Planning & Enrollment in USDA Cost Share Programs

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Prairie STRIPS, and the Southeast Iowa Agricultural Research Association will host a field day on November 19, 2019, highlighting on-farm conservation practices, establishment and management of prairie, and enrollment in USDA programs. This event is free and open to the public. Free meal provided.

Directions to the Southeast Research and Demonstration Farm: take HWY 218 south from Crawfordsville 1 3/4 miles, travel east on G-62 2 miles, then 3/4 mile north. Watch for signs to the farm.

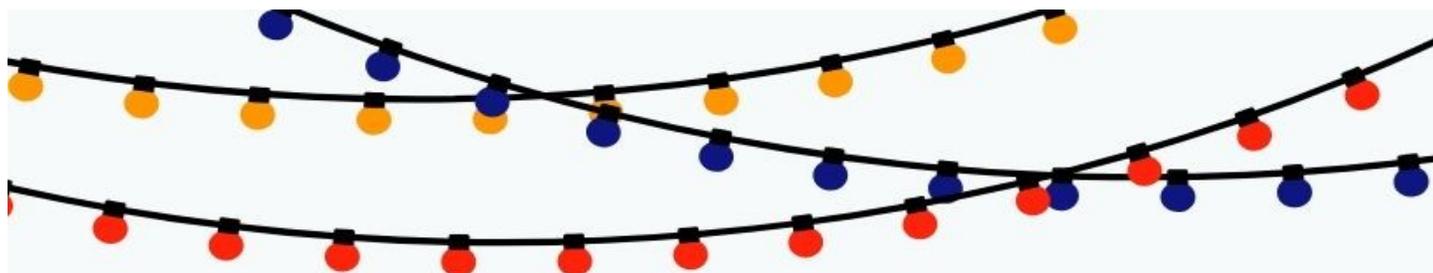
Registration begins at 2:30pm, speakers will start at 3:00pm. Weather permitting, a controlled burn will be conducted on the farm's prairie strips.

For more information, visit [www.prairiestrips.org](http://www.prairiestrips.org)



To RSVP, please contact Tim Youngquist at [timyoung@iastate.edu](mailto:timyoung@iastate.edu) or 712-269-0592 by Nov. 5th

*Our annual United Way Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon will be held on Thursday, November 21, 11:30 am at the Riverview Center. Please see the flyer below. Please invite all who volunteer for your agency and please invite your staff.*



JOIN US FOR A  
**volunteer appreciation  
LUNCH**

In appreciation of your  
time and dedication to  
our community, you  
are invited to the  
**Annual Volunteer  
Appreciation Lunch**

Thursday, November 21st, 11:30am-1pm

Presentation will begin at 12:15

Riverview Center 110 Harbor Lane

PLEASE RSVP TO [KARENA@UNITEDWAYMUSCATINE.ORG](mailto:karena@unitedwaymuscatine.org)

BY NOVEMBER 15TH

Lunch is provided by:



# Trees Forever Woodland Legacy Symposium

Thursday, December 12, 2019, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Cedar Rapids Country Club • 550 27th St Dr SE • Cedar Rapids, Iowa

This event brings together municipal and county leaders, business leaders, educators, engineers, developers, planners, architects, conservationists and activist citizens. Together we explore sustainable community development, considering the impact of trees and other green infrastructure on our local communities' livability, economy, wellness, and our children's ability to learn and thrive.

## **Keynote Speech: Bringing Open Spaces to our Urban Lives**

**George Hess, Ph.D., North Carolina State Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources**

Natural areas and green spaces in cities support healthy cultures, people, and environments. Our challenge is to reach "beyond the choir" and connect the dots in compelling and inclusive ways that bring everyone on board with the need to conserve nature in the city. Why? Because green spaces help protect clean water and natural habitats, provide opportunities for local farms and food, connect people with nature, and support public health and economic vitality. Dr. Hess will summarize research that supports these benefits, share initiatives that spread the message of conservation to the non-conservation communities, and review practices that make it work.

## **Morning Panel**

### **Bringing Nature Near**

Learn about local initiatives that are bringing nature to where we live and work, and why they are important to you and our community.

## **Afternoon Concurrent Panels (choose one)**

### **Building Nature In: Why, where and how to include nature in planning and development.**

This is an interactive workshop for planners, developers and engineers to discuss current development examples, and the opportunities and challenges of including open spaces.

### **Bringing Nature Home**

This interactive workshop will feature a variety of local perspectives to help you plan and plant for conservation on your property and in your neighborhood.

**Cost is \$50 for Trees Forever members, \$75 for non-members, and \$25 for students/AmeriCorps members.**

To register see Website: <http://www.treesforever.org/Symposium>

*Save the Date!*

# ART OF GARDENING

## March 21, 2020

*Presented by:*



 **DON'T FORGET** 

**TO ENTER HOURS!**

 [mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/](http://mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/)



# Director's Input

By Krista Regennitter

Muscatine County Extension Director, Iowa State University Extension  
and Outreach

Telephone 563-263-5701



Hello Master Gardeners!

My goodness – an October snow! It looks as though our crazy weather continues! Hopefully you all are finding warm places to hibernate.

Thank you to everyone who helped with our office move – a specific shout out to Lynn Pruitt, Jane Hodge and Dave Cooney who all volunteered with some heavy lifting and to Emma Mae Pruitt and Maryrose Peterschmidt who helped with the Open House Master Gardener booth. I appreciate everyone who stopped in, either during the Open House or for a private tour! We are very excited for our new space and I look forward to hosting the next general meeting on November 12.

At this point I am trying to get caught up after the move, but here are a few things happening:

- The Iowa Master Gardener Growing Together grants for 2020 are due in early January. The Growing Together grant focuses on growing or gleaning fresh fruit and vegetables to increase access for low income Iowans. In 2019 our local Master Gardeners helped to grow and transport over **2,700 pounds** of produce to the Muscatine Food Pantry! If anyone is interested in getting involved in this project, or would just like more information, please contact me! ([Kristar@iastate.edu](mailto:Kristar@iastate.edu) or 563-263-5701)
- The Art of Gardening planning committee is hard at work – please mark your calendars now for March 21, 2020.
- We continue to work with the Women, Land and Legacy chapter of Cedar, Muscatine, and Scott Counties. If anyone is interested in getting connected with this group of women in agriculture let me know and I can have you added to the mailing list. You can also check them out on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cmswll/>
- Kathy and Rachel are finishing up with the 2019 Master Gardener training! Our new interns will be invited to the November 12 meeting – I hope you all help us welcome them with open arms!

Also – it is that time of year to make sure your Master Gardener hours are in! Hours are entered at: <https://mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/> If you need a refresher on how to add hours there are a few Quick Tour videos on this site. I also suggest that if you are entering a many hours at once, clump them into projects and do one entry – in your comments you can elaborate on the dates and time you spent.

Last but not least – I invite you all to the United Way of Muscatine Volunteer Appreciation Lunch – Thursday, November 21, 11:30 -1 pm at the Riverview Center. Please RSVP to [Karena@unitedwaymuscatine.org](mailto:Karena@unitedwaymuscatine.org) by November 15 for a lunch count. You all do such wonderful volunteer work in Muscatine County and I hope you take advantage of this opportunity to pause and pat yourselves on the back!

See you all November 12,

Krista

# ISU Extension Office October 10 Grand Opening Photos



**See page 24 for more Grand Opening photos**

# Worm Bin Composting Event — October 10



*Obviously the participants at the Worm Bin Composting workshop were having a great time at the new Extension Office*

## **SIMPLE TIPS FOR GARDENERS**

Compiled by Rachel Quillin

*"Gardening is any way that humans and nature come together with the intent of creating beauty."*

*— Tina James*

## News from the Chair

By Mary Danner  
Master Gardener



Wow! Four inches of snow really put the halt on my gardening! Not once but two snows are burying my leaves that I had not yet had a chance to either mulch with the mower or rake up. I still have two trees to plant, but I know the ground is not frozen and I'll get along just fine, though a bit sloppy and cold. Bet my goldfish in the pond is not enjoying this weather.

There is still time to plant a few spring bulbs if we get a warm, dry day. The soil temperature is perfect for that; they will go right into cold stratification and no chance of sprouting early as in a warm fall. I planted 50 tulips at my daughter's home last weekend, can't wait to see them emerge.

Just before frost, we picked the last of our tomatoes, mostly Romas, and delivered three flats of them to the Muscatine Food Pantry. They were very much appreciated. Local food pantries will take extra produce during the growing season, especially if your bounty exceeds your time to process. So much better than just composting them.

Earlier this month I participated in the Worm Bin composting event our MG funds sponsored during the Extension Office's open house week. That was very interesting and I can report my Red Wigglers are still going strong. I give them a bit of water to keep moist and toss in vegetable scraps and an occasional crushed egg shell. I will report back in the spring and see if they survive my cool house over winter.

Please try to come to the Nov 12<sup>th</sup>, MG general meeting. The newly graduated interns will be there for the first time; let's have a great showing to introduce ourselves and encourage their growing and learning with this great group of gardeners!

Happy Gardening & Record those hours!

Mary

*As the year 2019 nears its end, be sure to thank our Board of Directors, Chair Mary Danner and Extension Director, Krista Regennitter for all they have done and continue to do leading Muscatine County Master Gardeners!*

# August Board Meeting Minutes Muscatine Master Gardeners Association

By Rachel Horner Brackett, Master Gardener

August 13, 2019

Muscatine County Extension Office, 5:30 p.m.



Board Members in attendance: Mary Danner, Kathy Haltmeyer, Heather Harroun, Jane Hodge, Ron Jensen, Ed Moreno, Maryrose Peterschmidt and Rachel Horner Brackett

Extension Liaison: Krista Regennitter

Not in attendance: Gretchen Nollman (intern member)

1. Welcome and Call Meeting to Order
  2. Review and Approve Minutes of Last Meeting (5-14-19)- **Haltmeyer motions to approve, (Hodge) seconds**
  3. Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills
    - **Current balance is \$6,301.60**
    - **Motion to pay C. Hynes mileage for zoo garden presentation (\$43.50) - Haltmeyer motions to approve, Jensen seconds**
    - **Mailing newsletter to non-active master gardeners – postage cost increase**
  4. Confirm and Update Meetings for 2019

<u>Board Meetings</u>	<u>General Meetings</u>
August 13 (5:30)	Sept 10
October 8	Nov 12
Dec. 10	Jan 2020 (Annual Mtg)
  5. General Meeting Programs for 2019
    - Sept 10- **6:00pm** Tour at Ed Moreno's plus watershed program by Matt McAndrews- please bring a lawn chair and a snack to share- 1330 100 St., West Liberty IA
    - Nov 12- **6:30pm** Melissa Baker, Horticulturalist for Muscatine Parks and Recreation Dept. - to be held at the NEW EXTENSION OFFICE at 1601 Plaza Place, Muscatine
    - Jan '20- **Date TBD** Annual Meeting at New Hope Church
  6. Garden Tours for 2019:
    - Sept 10- Ed Moreno-(including general meeting), *see above*
- Old Business:**
7. MG Master Events & Opportunities Calendar-update
  8. MG Trainee Scholarship- amount, details, application finalized
    - Discussion of application wording

***Continued next page, AUGUST MINUTES***

***Continued from previous page, AUGUST MINUTES***

- Motion to approve the current application for the 2019 year, with plans to update the application for the 2021 season- Moreno moves to approve, Hodge seconds, all in favor
- Motion for Chair/Extension Liaison to determine scholarship eligibility this year, the scholarship committee will do so in the future- Haltmeyer moves to approve, Moreno seconds, all in favor

**New Business:**

9. Master Gardener Training schedule-review

- Does anyone know of a good home compost site?

10. FY19 Budget Review

- Total expenses for FY19: \$4,722.73
- Total income for FY19: \$2,534.29

11. DRAFT FY20 budget: \$4,515.00 expenditures, \$2,600.00 projected income

- Motion to approve budget draft: Horner Brackett moves, Haltmeyer seconds, all in favor

12. Summer webcasts; last one is 8/13/19 following board mtg.

13. Committee reports

14. Other/Misc.

- Extension Office will be closed Sept 6-Sept 13 for moving

New office opens Sept. 16; 1601 Plaza Place, Muscatine IA

**Adjournment**

**Haltmeyer moves to adjourn, Peterschmidt seconds**

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## **SIMPLE TIPS FOR GARDENERS**

Compiled by Rachel Quillin

***"The impersonal hand of government can never replace the helping hand of a neighbor."***

***— Hubert H. Humphrey***

# October Board Meeting Minutes Muscatine Master Gardeners Association

By Rachel Horner Brackett, Master Gardener

October 8, 2019

Muscatine County Extension Office, 6:30 p.m.



Board Members: Mary Danner, Kathy Haltmeyer, Heather Harroun, Jane Hodge, Ron Jensen, Ed Moreno, Maryrose Peterschmidt and Rachel Horner Brackett

Intern Members: Gretchen Nollman

Extension Liaison: Krista Regennitter

1. Welcome and Call Meeting to Order
2. Review and Approve Minutes of Last Meeting (8-13-19)
  - a. Will approve at next general meeting
3. Treasurer's Report and Payment of bills-Krista
  - a. Current balance \$5,758.10

Motion to approve by Haltmeyer, Harroun seconds

4. Confirm Meetings for 2019

Board Meetings

October 8

Dec. 10

General Meetings

Nov 12

Jan 2020 (Annual Mtg-Set date?)

Discussed the second Sunday of January in the afternoon for our meeting. Tentatively scheduled for **1/12/20**

Vote for time and food options at Nov. meeting

5. General Meeting Programs for 2019:

Nov 12-Nick Gow, Horticulturalist for Muscatine Parks and Recreation Dept

- a. Nominations for the board are due for the Nov. meeting
- b. We need two new board members
- c. Nominating committee: Ed Moreno (Peterschmidt? Jensen?)
- d. Horner Brackett and Haltmeyer will talk to the interns regarding potential Intern Board member
- e. There are 11 new master gardeners being introduced at the Nov. 12 meeting- this will be an excellent time to promote your projects and committees to new interns looking for volunteer hours
- f. If you are interested in being a mentor for one of the new interns, please let the Board know

***Continued next page, OCTOBER MINUTES***

**Continued from previous page, OCTOBER MINUTES**

Dec 10<sup>th</sup>-Election of 2020 Board-appoint election committee  
Jan '20- Annual Meeting at New Hope Church

**Old Business:**

6. MG Master Events & Opportunities Calendar-any updates
7. MG Trainee Scholarship
  - a. one individual received a partial scholarship for the 2019 training

**New Business:**

8. Master Gardener Training schedule-update
  - a. Last class is Nov. 2 – Interns will have the opportunity to take the post-assessment at 11:30am on that date
  - b. On Nov. 2 Krista will present the intern with information about the different projects and committees looking for volunteers
  - c. The new interns will be introduced at the Nov. 12 meeting and receive their certificates at that time
  - d. We need mentors for the new interns- please contact Kathy/Rachel if you are interesting in working with one of them in the coming year
9. Summer Web-Casts-evaluation & attendance
  - a. Attendance wasn't great during the summer- Is there any interest for a re-broadcast of these during the winter months? Would anyone like to host a webcast screening at their home (or at the extension office)?
10. Committee Reports:
  - a. Maryrose Peterschmidt would like to announce the clean up date at the Zoo Garden will be **Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1pm to 4pm** with a youth group from Calvary Church assisting-please help if available.
11. 4-H Digital Ambassador optional training at a General Meeting?
  - a. Take a member vote at the Nov. meeting to determine interest
12. Other-miscellaneous
  - a. Discuss potential for fruit tree grafting workshop and costs at December meeting
  - b. Tour of new building

**Adjournment**

# Zoo Garden Activities

By Maryrose Peterschmidt, Master Gardener



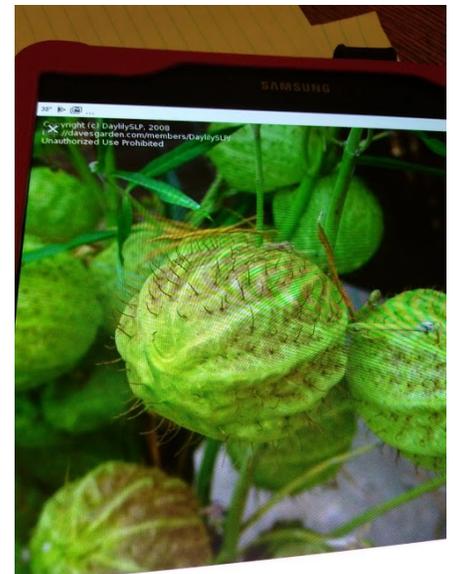
The Sunday morning scheduled for the work day at the Zoo Garden started out real foggy. I had once again worked with Nichole Sorgenfry from United Way to make all the arrangements and didn't want to cancel at the last minute. We were lucky because the sun broke out and the fog lifted and it started warming up. We could go ahead as planned. We had twenty students plus several adults and also master gardeners to get the job done. What a crew and everyone joined in and trimmed back some of the plants, pulled out annuals and even dug up elephant ears and Cannes bulbs to save for next year. The kids loaded up and help spread mulch in all the beds. With the help of the youth group and adults we were able to get a lot accomplished. We are so grateful for the help. Maryrose

***Calvary Church Youth Group was a valuable help Sunday***

The Mexican Flame Vine I planted in my yard, this was the first time and really liked it. It is a fast grower and does attract butterflies. The milkweed plant I saw at the reach farm on the island. Dominic Snyder let me take some cuttings and also we were able to gather seeds from some annual plants to use at Zoo Garden. The milkweed is so different from what you see in this area and makes for an interesting arrangements. Maryrose



***Mexican Flame Vine***



***Milkweed called "Oscar"***

***More Zoo Garden Photos next page***

## More Zoo Garden Cleanup Photos



***Boys hard at work***



***More students helping out***



***Mother and son from the youth group***



***Mary did a great job in the Monkey Garden***



***Twyla has been a long time helper in the Zoo Garden***



***Toby was one of the adults with the youth group who helped out in the Zoo Garden***

# Muscatine Branching Out

By Kathy Chalupa, Master Gardener



Muscatine Branching Out's Fall Tree Program was very successful. Many thanks to the Master Gardeners that helped on sale day.

We'd also like to remind all tree owners to water well and make sure you have adequate mulch before the ground freezes. Snow cover insulates but dry ground will continue to evaporate moisture.

Keep evergreens watered, to prevent browning. An anti-transpirant (Wilt-Pruf) helps and you can use it on your fresh wreaths, too.

Thanks,

Kathy

for Muscatine Branching Out

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## Additional Master Gardener Education Hours

*I have received a few questions about education hours, so I put together a list of a few sites people could access to get their 10 hours. Would you please include this in the newsletter?*

**Thanks!**

**Krista**

\* Horticulture Friday recordings from IPR:  
<https://www.iowapublicradio.org/term/horticulture#stream/0>

\* Dr. Cindy Haynes presented at the Zoo Garden in July - you can watch her presentation on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0K9uwcOkXc> <<https://iastate.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1fa05da86ba64571aa264ab0c&id=1e328ca300&e=5c684c7e1d>>

\* Achieved Master Gardener webinars:  
<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/webinars>

\* Lots of articles on the Horticulture and Home Pest News:  
<https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/> (also links to the IPR podcasts)

# Member Photos — Pruitt's — October 2019



# Yard and Garden: Give Strawberry Plants Winter Protection

October 23, 2019, 4:01 pm | Richard Jauron, Willy Klein

AMES, Iowa – It's time to think about protecting strawberry plants from the winter elements. Horticulturists with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach explain how to properly mulch strawberries to provide protection against winter injury. To have additional yard and garden questions answered, contact Hortline at [hortline@iastate.edu](mailto:hortline@iastate.edu) or 515-294-3108.

## Why is it necessary to mulch strawberries in fall?

Strawberries should be mulched in fall to prevent winter injury. The main threats to the strawberry plants are low winter temperatures and repeated freezing and thawing of the soil through the winter months. Temperatures below +20 degrees Fahrenheit may kill flower buds and damage the roots and crowns of unmulched plants. Repeated freezing and thawing of the soil can heave plants out of the ground, severely damaging or destroying the plants.



## When should I mulch my strawberries?

Allow the strawberry plants to harden or acclimate to cool fall temperatures before mulching the planting. Applying mulch before the strawberry plants have properly hardened may make the plants more susceptible to winter injury. Apply the mulch after the strawberry plants have been exposed to several nights with temperatures in the low to mid-twenties. In northern Iowa, early November is usually the proper time to mulch strawberries. The proper time to mulch strawberry plantings in central and southern Iowa is normally mid-November and late November, respectively.

What materials are suitable for mulching strawberries?

Excellent mulching materials include clean, weed-free, oat, wheat, or soybean straw. Chopped cornstalks are another possibility. Apply approximately 3 to 5 inches of material. After settling, the mulch layer should be 2 to 4 inches thick.

In windy, exposed areas, straw mulches can be kept in place by laying wire or plastic fencing over the mulch. The fencing can be held in place with bricks or other heavy objects.

## Are leaves a suitable mulch for strawberries?

Leaves are not a good winter mulch for strawberries. Leaves can mat together in layers, trapping air and creating space for ice to form. The leaf, air and ice layers do not provide adequate protection. A leaf mulch may actually damage plants due to excess moisture trapped under the matted leaves.

## How do I overwinter strawberry plants growing in a strawberry jar?

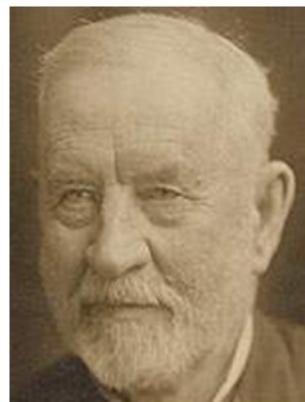
Strawberry plants growing in a strawberry jar or other container will likely be seriously damaged or destroyed if left outdoors in winter. One option is to place the container in a cool location, such as an attached, unheated garage, in November. A second option would be to discard the strawberry plants in fall, dump out the potting soil, store the container indoors in winter and re-plant in spring. Day-neutral strawberries perform well as an annual crop.

**Photo credit: Plant by EduardSV/stock.adobe.com**

# Famous Iowans — 3 Henry Wallace's

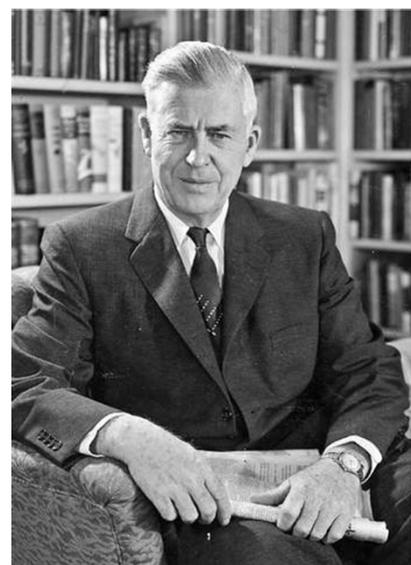
By Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

**Henry Wallace** (1836-1916) came to Iowa from Pennsylvania as an ordained Presbyterian minister in the 1860's. In 1869 he borrowed money to buy some rich Iowa farmland and became adept at turning a profit from land transactions. He gave up preaching in 1877 due to his illness with tuberculosis and began writing agricultural articles for Madison County newspapers. In 1885 Wallace became the editor for Iowa Homestead newspaper but ten years later he resigned and along with his sons started Farm and Dairy magazine in Ames. This publication transitioned into Wallaces' Farmer in Des Moines in 1896. The senior Wallace's fame grew steadily and he was named to the Country Life Commission by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908.



**Henry C Wallace** (1866-1924) was called "Harry" to clarify him from his famous father with the same first name. He graduated from Iowa State University in 1894 and briefly taught in the Agriculture department (dairying). The next year he moved to Des Moines to work full time with Farm and Dairy newspaper and then Wallaces' Farmer magazine. Upon his father's death in 1916, Wallace became editor for the magazine. President Warren Harding appointed him Secretary of Agriculture and he moved to Washington, DC in 1921 as the Great Depression was causing havoc for the nation's farmers along with other citizens. Henry C "Harry" Wallace died in 1924 from complications related to gallbladder surgery. His body was laid in state in the White House prior to transport by train to Des Moines for burial.

**Henry A Wallace** (1888-1965), developed an interest in plants at a young age and developed a friendship with George Washington Carver who was teaching at Iowa State College in Ames. In 1910 Wallace received a BS degree in agriculture from Iowa State. When his father went to Washington in 1921, Henry A. took the reins of Wallaces' Farmer magazine. He was also an early researcher in genetics and agronomy and was one of the first to develop hybrid seed corn. In 1926 he and a group of associates founded Hybrid Corn Company which became Pioneer Hi-Bred Corn Company in 1935. Like his father, Henry A. served as Secretary of Agriculture (1933-1940) and as Vice President of the United States under Franklin D Roosevelt (1941-1945). Later he served as Secretary of Commerce (1945-1946). Wallace was instrumental in helping President Roosevelt develop his New Deal programs including rural electrification, soil conservation, food stamps and surplus grain purchases. His primary objective throughout his multiple careers was to assist farmers any way he could.



**"Wallaces' Farmer"** has played an important role in the communications industry in Iowa and the U.S. for many years. Wallace family members no longer edit the magazine, but *Wallaces' Farmer* continues to be an important part of farm journalism for Iowa and for the country. " (per <http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways/mypath/magazine-called-wallaces%E2%80%99-farmer>)



# Soil Testing in the Garden

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



There's no such thing as a free lunch, even in the garden. Depending on your soil's native fertility and what you grow, your plants might perform for years without needing additional fertilizer. But sooner or later, the free lunch ends. Hungry plants won't squeal like starving pigs, but they eventually will show their unhappiness by displaying stunted growth and off-color leaves. A periodic soil test lets you catch nutrient deficiencies before they progress too far. Besides indicating nutrient deficiencies, a soil test can also provide information on soil acidity, the percentage of organic matter in your soil, and your soil's texture. Remember though that a soil test will not tell you anything about poor soil drainage, insufficient sunlight, or insects and diseases. These threats to plants also can cause off-color leaves and stunted growth, so rule them out first before moving on to a soil test.

Whether you're testing the soil at home or sending it to a laboratory, you'll have to decide what to test for. At the very least, test your soil's pH, which is a measure of how acidic your soil is. If the pH level isn't in the correct range, plants cannot take up nutrients in the soil. You should also test for phosphorus and potassium because plants require both of these nutrients in relatively large amounts. A complete checkup would include tests for nutrients that are essential but needed only in minute quantities, such as iron, manganese, and zinc. If you regularly enrich your soil with an abundance of compost and other organic materials, micronutrient problems are unlikely.

Proper sampling technique is an important part of soil testing. To get a truly representative sample, dig in a few random spots around the test area and mix the soils together. Avoid sampling any anomalous spots such as near a fence or where you fill your fertilizer spreader or once had a compost pile. If the test area itself seems insufficiently uniform because of, say, a large, wet, sunken portion, then divide the area into two or more separate test areas. Areas devoted to different kinds of plants, such as vegetables and lawn, require separate samples. Vegetable and flower gardens, though, may be sampled together.



Collect soil to a depth of 6 inches, which is approximately the depth of most plants' feeder roots. Before you dig, re-

move any surface debris such as wood chips, compost, plant residues, or sod, then make a hole to the required depth. Discard the first shovelful of soil. It's a cone-shaped slice, so it contains a greater proportion of soil from the surface than from lower down. Take another slice, uniformly thick from top to bottom along the edge of the hole you just made.

Throughout your sample preparation, avoid contamination from dirty hands or utensils. Gather

***Continued next page, SOIL TESTING***

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together samples from each test area into a clean, plastic bucket, then mix and crumble them, discarding stones, sticks, insects, and other debris as you mix. Spread the soil on a clean baking pan to air-dry for a day, then remove about a cup for testing.

If you are sending your samples to a lab for testing, you will get a recommendation for fertilizer and for amounts of lime or sulfur needed to adjust the pH level. Fertilizer recommendations are based on what is in the soil and the kinds of plants you intend to grow. Follow these guidelines closely because too much of any nutrient can be as harmful as too little, causing nutrient imbalances, even death, to plants.



## More Grand Opening Photos



## Muscatine County Extension Office

1601 Plaza Place  
Muscatine, IA 52761  
563-263-5701 or 800-992-0894

Krista Regennitter  
Muscatine County Extension Director  
Master Gardener Liaison

. . and justice for all

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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. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Celebrating Master Gardener, Twyla Woodward's 90th Birthday



## 2019 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board

### Board Members

Mary Danner (2019) Chair  
Heather Haroun (2020) Vice Chair  
Rachel Horner Brackett (2020)\* Sec/Treas  
Kathy Haltmeyer (2020)  
Jane Hodge (2019)  
Ron Jensen (2019)\*  
Ed Moreno (2020)  
Maryrose Peterschmidt (2020)

Gretchen Nollman (Intern)

( ) Year term expires as of Dec. 31

\* Going off Board Dec 31, 2019/2020 but eligible for re-election



### 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 pruit.lynn@gmail.com or call 563.260.0234

— Lynn Pruitt, Editor —