

GARDEN CONFIDENTIAL

NEWS FOR U OF MN EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS IN HENNEPIN COUNTY

March 2016



- Photo - Creative Commons

"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." – Margaret Atwood

As you know, gardeners know all the good dirt!

I have been just itching to get my hands dirty and the brief day of 50 degree warmth the other day was tantalizing me.

Mother Nature's tease drew me outside to revel in the sun and smell the damp earth. I knew it was too early to do anything real out in the soil but a squirrel gave me an excuse to play. He had dug up a few of my carefully placed bulbs and of course they needed to be replanted! They had sprouts on them and needed the dirt just like I did.

For a few minutes I played out there. It was a real soul refresher. I look forward to that Spring day I can smell like dirt.

While we wait for that day, check out:

[Newly revised publications from U of MN Extension for 2016](#)

Monday, April 4th Update Meeting

Holistic Approach to Sustainable Gardening.

Location: Hopkins High School Cafeteria
(enter through Door A)

2400 Lindbergh Dr, Minnetonka, MN 55305

Speaker: Heidi Highland, Owner, Heidi's Lifestyle Gardens, Minnetonka

The Future of Gardening: Environmental Trends Near and Far. After 37 years in the original green industry, Heidi has witnessed that Water, Food and Healing are central themes in the garden. From her travels locally and abroad, Heidi will show you over the top opportunities as well as feasible methods to adopt sustainable practices in your own environments.

MARCH UPDATE CANCELLED DUE TO SPEAKER BEING ILL. WILL TRY TO RESCHEDULE AT A LATER DATE!

Reminder: Let's welcome all of the new interns every time you see them and wear your and wear your nametag to every event or meeting!

*******May Update Session:*******

May 2nd: EMG-HC Day at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chaska! Tours and education just for us
More details and sign-up will appear via Sign-Up Genius

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GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Each October all Hennepin County Master Gardeners are invited to attend our planning sessions. Often we talk about goals and strategies for our program, to help carry it forward into the new year and beyond.

This past October 28 of your peers attended the meeting, including both interns and more seasoned MGs, where we focused on defining our organizational values.

Five interdependent program values were identified:

- Education
- Service
- Community
- Diversity
- Inclusiveness.

After the values were identified, we broke into various work groups to discuss how to use these values as guiding principles for the HCMG Program Goals

All Committees and Sub-Committees are expected to use these goals when setting goals, objectives and activities.

This graphic will be posted online and you are encouraged to consider them in all you do as a Master Gardener. Please see Kate, Carol, Terry or another member of the Leadership Team for more information.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

What's Happening with the Plant Sale Committee?

The 2016 Plant Sale is only three months away. Save the date!

Annual Plant Sale: Saturday, 5/21 - 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Planning for the 2016 HCMG plant sale is well underway. Here are three opportunities for you to participate available NOW.

#1 – Start Seeds

Our plant sale wants and needs seedlings you are willing to start. If you have favorite plants that you start from seed (veggies, herbs, annual flowers, or ornamentals), consider donating some of them to the plant sale. Our customers love the variety we offer and appreciate that we are sharing our favorites with them. If you plan on growing seedlings for the Annual Plant Sale, please let Vicki Young (vyoung@mchsi.com) know what you are growing so she can produce the appropriate labels.

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#2 - Participate at a dig

Master Gardeners with many plant selections have offered their gardens for a dig. Be prepared to help dig, pot, or label depending on your physical ability and interest. We will provide instruction and guidance if you are unsure of your expertise.

#3 - Join a potting day

We need plants from your garden. [Please see this list of desired plants](#) . Particularly in demand this year will be shade plants and pollinators. Bring your desired plants from the list to a potting day to get assistance with potting them up for sale. Even a small clump can yield numerous starters to plant. Please contribute named varieties only, please. (If you're unsure of variety, but have a picture, we may be able to help.) We will need many volunteers to help pot or label.

Digs and potting days will be added to Sign-Up Genius in early March. Volunteer opportunities for set-up day and day of sale will be posted later.

Thanks in advance for making our 2016 Plant Sale a huge success!

What's Happening with the Garden Tour Committee?

The Learning Garden Tour committee has met twice now and planning is underway for our July 9th event. The Garden Shed folks have met and gathered ideas for sales at the tour. In addition to their core group, we have found a lot of interest from new Interns and lots of creative ideas and energy.

We are beginning to lay out our publicity plan and our educational opportunities are shaping up. You can expect that there will be some wonderful educational opportunities at the gardens again this year - including hydroponics!

We've heard there is a lot of interest in working the day of the tour - stay tuned as these shifts will not go up on Sign-Up Genius until sometime in May. Any folks who are interested in working on one of the behind the scene planning committees should simply contact Deb Revier at drevier@comcast.net or Deb Reierson at reierson.deb@gmail.com.

What's Happening with the Community Programs?

The Community-Based Programs team still has many rewarding opportunities available for 2016! We would love to have you join us in the fun.

We are having our Spring 2016 Community Garden Support Workshop on March 12th. Click [HERE](#) for the sign-up. The guest speaker at the workshop will be Michele Grabowski from the Department of Plant Pathology at the University of Minnesota. She will update us on bacterial canker and other emerging vegetable diseases we are facing in community and giving gardens. She will also demo a hot water seed treatment to

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prevent disease transmission and share some IPM techniques. Click [HERE](#) for an early draft of the agenda, but keep in mind it is subject to change.

Thanks to all of you who have already signed-up for some of the great community and giving garden support volunteer opportunities. We still have more if you are interested. Click [HERE](#) to see a summary list, then click [HERE](#) to go to the tab in Sign-Up Genius to scroll through them and sign-up for one. The featured item this month is [THIS](#) new project, supporting the HOPE Harbor permanent-supportive housing residents at the Salvation Army in downtown Minneapolis. They have some small plots in the courtyard that are perfect for teaching square-foot gardening techniques. The [Lake Street Station](#) is another gem or an opportunity still waiting for a lead volunteer. Catch me at the March Update Meeting or at the Workshop if you have questions on any of the other volunteer opportunities.

More on the workshop breakouts about the deep dive on the American Indian gardening culture in 2016: Planned activities on the list include setting up an [American Indian Trail Garden](#) for foraging and for medicinal and spiritual plants, having a progressive garden tour to the American Indian gardens in south Minneapolis ([Little Earth Urban Farm](#), [Mashkiikii Gitigan](#), [Good JuJu](#), [Wuju Wakan](#), etc.), and helping to build a seed library of the indigenous plants passed on through the generations.

Look for us at the [Home and Garden Show](#)! While you may have missed the opportunity to volunteer and get in for free, stop by the [information booth](#) or the [youth activity](#) and cheer on our volunteers.

What's Happening in Youth Education?

Thanks to all who either helped with, or participated in our recent Youth Ed Skills Building Event on 2-22-16. We enjoyed introducing a growing number of HCMGs to Youth Ed!

Want to join the fun in educating youth about gardening topics? Look for our opportunities on Sign-Up Genius under "Youth Education." We currently have openings for St. Louis Park High's Family Science Night on 3-3-16, and we've posted the dates we'll be offering youth ed activities at both the Richfield and Bloomington Farmers' Markets on Sign-Up Genius. The curriculum and materials will be provided....all you've got to do is show up and have fun!

This is the last call for the 2016 Schoolyard Gardens Conference at the U of M Arboretum on 3-6-16. There is a very dynamic keynote speaker (Betti Wiggins, from Detroit) who is sure to infect you with the notion that you can make a difference in young peoples' lives. Here is the link to the U of M Arboretum page featuring this event: <http://www.arboretum.umn.edu/Schoolyards2016.aspx>

What's Happening with Adult Education?

Sustainable Gardening Team

The Sustainable Gardening Team has been busy preparing material for the 2016 speaking season. We have merged two teams into one for this year, adding the Sustainable Lawn Team to the mix.

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The focus on sustainable gardening practices includes some or all of the following:

- Less effort, less maintenance
- Fewer inputs (e.g. water, fertilizer, etc.)
- Water quality
- Plant biodiversity
- Attracting native wildlife

Currently, we have presentation material in three areas:

1. Sustainable Lawn Care: Maintaining Beautiful Lawns with Less Effort
2. Native Plants: Attracting Nature to your Yard with Native Plants
3. Rain Gardens: Using Rain Gardens to Improve Water Quality

We would love to expand our team, which currently has the following team members:

Dave Tobelmann, Darren Lochner, Theresa Rooney, Kari Pastir-Smith, Val McGruder and Jan Schreier.

What's Happening in Communications?

We continue to march through the results from the Communication Committee Planning session held in January. Formulating the priorities and timelines is proceeding apace.

We still need action on the written communication, web design and coding recommendations made in the session. All of these are important underpinnings of effective communication. If you have interest in any of these facets, please contact [Melinda Mattox](#) for details. We'll be advising those who signed-up at the session of our next step and if you didn't have an opportunity to attend contact Melinda Mattox!

HELP! What kinds of questions are people in the community asking you? Please contact [Kathy Frederickson, Editor](#) so we can find answers and post them on Facebook or herein!! Photos Welcome!!!

Newsletter Article Due Date Schedule in 2016

For your convenience, here are the estimated hard deadlines for newsletter articles for the next three months:

Newsletter	Articles due to Kathy Frederickson
April	Thursday, March 24th
May	Thursday, April 21st
June	Thursday, May 26th

March CULTURAL OBSERVANCES

As we interact with Hennepin County's diverse audiences through our volunteering, we learn more about each other. Understanding the holidays and events of a culture provides one opportunity for insight. We would like to share several cultural observances and encourage Master Gardeners to check out additional ones at:

(Source: <http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/CALENDAR-OF-OBSERVANCES-2016.pdf>)

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- March Full Month NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
Honors women as significant agents of historical change.
- March 2–March 20 NINETEEN-DAY FAST • Bahá'í
Baha'is between age 15 and 70 years of age do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset and set aside time for prayer and meditation.
- March 8 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
Celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women worldwide.
- March 8 MAHA SHIVARATRI • Hindu
Also called Shiva Ratri, it is the Great Festival of Shiva.
- March 17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY • Christian
Feast day of the patron saint of Ireland. In the U.S., a secular version is celebrated by people of all faiths through appreciation of all things Irish.
- March 20 PALM SUNDAY • Christian
Observed the Sunday before Easter/Pascha to commemorate the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.
- March 20 VERNAL EQUINOX
The date when night and day are nearly the same length. It marks the first day of the season of spring.
- March 21 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
Call to action to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination worldwide.
- March 21 NOWRÚZ • Zoroastrian
A traditional ancient Iranian festival celebrating the first day of spring and the Iranian New Year. Also celebrated as New Year's Day in Baha'i tradition (Naw-Ruz).
- March 23 HOLI • Hindu
Also called Holaka or Phagwa, this festival celebrates spring and commemorates various events in Hindu mythology.
- March 23 MAGHA PUJA • Buddhist
Also known as Sangha Day, it commemorates the spontaneous assembly of 1,250 arahants, completely enlightened monks, in the historical Buddha's presence.
- March 24 PURIM • Jewish
The "Feast of Lots" marks the salvation of the Jews of ancient Persia from extermination.

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- March 24 HOLY THURSDAY • Christian
Also known as Maundy Thursday, it is celebrated on the Thursday before Easter commemorating the Last Supper, at which Jesus and the Apostles were together for the last time before the Crucifixion.
- March 24 HOLLA MOHALLA • Sikh
An annual event which is a martial arts parade historically coinciding with Holi, the Hindu festival of colors. Celebrations related to Holla Mohalla may be held in various locations over several weekends preceding the actual date of the holiday.
- March 25 GOOD FRIDAY • Christian
Known as Holy Friday in Eastern Christianity, it commemorates the Crucifixion of Jesus on the Friday before Easter/Pascha.
- March 27 EASTER • Christian
Known as Pascha in Eastern Christianity, it celebrates the resurrection of Jesus.
- March 31 CESAR CHAVEZ DAY
Honors Mexican American farm worker, labor leader and activist Cesar Chavez (1927–1993) who was a nationally respected voice for social justice.

NEWS TO KNOW AND THINGS TO DO

Hat Tip of the Month

Goes to **Diane Greiwe**, Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Center Coordinator at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum for her timely tip on computer safety:

In general the majority of SPAM or hacked email account messages are caught by the administrator prior to being posted on MASTGAR.

For email messages posted on MASTGAR that appear to have been hacked, the state office will:

- Inform the volunteer that their account appears to have been hacked. Unsubscribe the volunteer from the list until the issue is resolved. The volunteer can create a new password, re-subscribe to MASTGAR and inform the state office that the steps have been completed.
- Post a message on MASTGAR informing list members that the message was not legit. Delete the email from the MASTGAR archive.

Here is what you can do to protect yourself:

- Update your computer security and change your passwords frequently.
- Delete spam or dubious looking emails without opening them.

Diane also reminds us to please sign your messages with your name and county, if possible.

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New Bee Briefing !!!

It's out! The LWV Minnesota's Bee briefing paper, *The Impact of Neonicotinoids on Honey Bees* can be found on the League of Women Voters Minnesota website under Media – publications – you'll find it at the top of the list of "Briefing Papers": <https://www.lwvmn.org/media/publications>

Sandy Ahlstrom will be available to answer any questions at our next Update Session on 3/7/16.

[Hennepin County calendar Program Manual under Admin section of our website.](#)

[MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED WATER GARDEN GRANTS TAKING APPLICATIONS:](#)

About the grants

No matter where you live, you have waterfront property. When rain falls on your property, it washes off into a nearby storm drain and ends up in a nearby lake, stream or wetland. On the way it picks up all kinds of pollutants and debris. This "storm water runoff" is the #1 source of water pollution in Minnesota.

The best way to prevent this pollution is by keeping water where it lands, letting it soak into the ground and be naturally filtered by the earth. The MCWD can help pay for up to 75% of projects that catch runoff and educate the community on the importance of storm water management.

What you need to know

- Grants are open to any person or organization. The project must be in the MCWD. To check if you are in the District, click [here](#).
- Homeowners are eligible for up to \$2,500 for projects in their yard and up to \$5,000 for native shorelines.
- Grants can reimburse costs of design, materials and labor.
- MCWD requires a design before issuing a grant. A list of design professionals is available at www.bluthumb.org/partners. The District does not design projects.

2016 Deadlines:

Homeowner projects: Apply by June 17

Non-homeowner projects:

- Spring - Apply by March 18
- Fall - Apply by September 26

[Read More](#)

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Opportunities Coming Up at the MN Landscape Arboretum

The landscape arboretum is proceeding apace with their 2016 schedule. Classes and registration information may be found online at <http://www.arboretum.umn.edu/gardeningclasses.aspx>.

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Coming Up from the Minnesota State Horticultural Society

Held at various locations. Enrollment is limited, and pre-registration is required. You can find a list of classes on their web site at <http://www.northerngardener.org/classes/mshs-classes>. Click on the class title to register. If you have any difficulties with registering online, please call their office at 651-643-3601 or 800-676-6747.

Anoka County Home and Garden Show 2016

Pine County Horticulture Day: Registrations are now open for the 14th Annual Pine County Master Gardener Horticulture Day on Saturday, April 2nd from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Pine City High School. **Keynote speaker** is Julie Weisenhorn, Extension Educator on "**Landscaping for Pollinators.**"

Landscape Design Workshops coming up!

Two Landscape design workshops are being offered through the MN State Horticulture Society (MSHS) and U of M Extension:

1. Landscape Design Basics:

Entry and Deck/Patio Gardens -- 4-day class

Students learn to apply sustainable design principles/techniques working on a design of their own.

Instructors: Julie Weisenhorn and Jim Calkins

Four sessions: Tuesdays, March 8, 15, 22 and 29

6 to 9 p.m., U of M St. Paul campus

Deadline for registration: February 22

\$125 MSHS Members, \$130 Non-MSHS members

[Class description/registration](#)

2. Landscape Design Basics -- 1-day class

Students learn to apply sustainable design principles and techniques using the same fictitious home landscape.

Instructors: Julie Weisenhorn and Jim Calkins

One session: Saturday, April 9, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

U of M St. Paul campus

\$105 MSHS Members, \$115 Non-MSHS members

[Class description/registration](#)

Core course access and reference manual

All Master Gardener volunteers can access the online Core Course (view [instructions](#)) free of charge.

The 2014 Core Course reference manual is available for purchase through the [MN Landscape Arboretum gift store](#). The retail price is \$79.95. Current volunteers can purchase the book at a 50% discount -- \$39.95. The volunteer rate is not available online -- volunteers can purchase this in person at the gift store or by phone at 612-301-7619. Shipping is \$12.00.

[View Core Course instructions](#)

[Purchase reference manual](#)

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Classes at the Arboretum

Your Sustainable Yard Series

Achieve a beautiful, cost-effective and sustainable home landscape through a series of five classes at the Arboretum this February - March! Receive the latest insights into growing and management practices in sessions that include Apples, Perennials, Tree Fruits/Berries/Nuts, Trees & Shrubs, and Lawns & Turf through comprehensive, informative presentations. Details and registration under the **Sustainable Yard** tab [here](#).

Additional Arboretum Classes

Winter Plant Walkabout, University-level English Garden History, Scientific Plant Propagation (including hands-on, take-home experiments!), Botanical Latin, Professional-Level Grass ID & Ecology, Carnivorous Plants, and more! View all Arboretum gardening classes [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE at the Arboretum

* Thursday, April 7 **[Pollinator Friendly Gardening](#)** - Meet the Author: Rhonda Fleming Hayes, Extension

Message from the author:

Pollinator Friendly Gardening (Voyageur Press) is the culmination of many years spent creating and enhancing wildlife habitat in my own gardens. I wrote the book so I could share my experience while providing accessible information to everyday gardeners on supporting and sustaining these vital creatures.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Contact Terry Straub, Program Coordinator, at 612-596-2130 or straub097@umn.edu to sign-up for questions about volunteer opportunities unless otherwise noted.

Rain Garden Planting for Pollinators Training

There's still room for those of you wishing to work with Metro Blooms this year. All folks who wish to participate in rain garden workshops (this year's theme is planting for pollinators and rain garden maintenance) are asked to attend. You'll find the sign-up [here](#).

Hennepin County Volunteer Opportunities are posted in Sign-Up Genius. Just sign into your account at www.signupgenius.com and look in **Items I've Been Invited To**.

If you're interested in gaining an in depth understanding of your urban forest and are committed to volunteerism the Core Course dates are set for 2016. Look at what it takes to become a Tree Care Advisor at www.mntca.org/become-tca/Landscape Arboretum

The University of MN Landscape Arboretum has many volunteer opportunities. Learn how to help at http://www.arboretum.umn.edu/volunteer_opportunities.aspx. There are ways to work with both youth and adults! Training is required for most opportunities – check them out today!

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Volunteering for the Yard & Garden Desk and Hotline

Please help staff the Hennepin County slots at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum's Yard & Garden Desk on Saturdays. The hotline needs staffing, too. It's a good way for interns to complete their required 15 researched calls. Visit the State Master Gardener website at www.mg.umn.edu and click on **For Volunteers**.

Answering the Yard and Garden Line Info ACCESS HAS CHANGED!!! From the December Yard and Garden Newsletter: New PHONE NUMBER IS:

612-626-0001

You will then need to press the “*” and use the “#” sign. Mailbox ID is 17590 and PW=427336

Updates to the training will be available soon on the web.

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/master-gardener/>) in the **For Volunteer** section under **Yard and Garden Line** under **Training**.

Visit www.mg.umn.edu to sign-up for a shift. Thanks!

RESOURCES FOR MASTER GARDENERS

Our own State University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener Volunteer web site has a very extensive list on the page **Find gardening answers online**. Sign into the site as a volunteer to access the page. To find it:

- Sign in as you normally would to report your hours.
- You will come to the **For Volunteers** page
- The page has a number of resources for master gardener volunteers. Here is where you will find the gardening answers on line section.

HCMG LEADERSHIP TEAM 2016

Mary Cichon (Youth Education)
Del Hampton (Community Programs)
Tina Falkner (Fundraising)
Carol Garner (Chair)
Darren Lochner (Membership)

Melinda Mattox (Communications & Marketing)
Kate Netwal (Chair Emeritus)
Sue Ponsford (Adult Education)
Theresa Rooney (Member Education Chair)
Stephanie Steel (Secretary / Treasurer)

See the HCMG Directory for contact information.

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Garden Confidential is available online each month at <http://hennepinmastergardeners.org/administration/newsletters/>. To receive the newsletter electronically, notify the Program Coordinator at strau097@umn.edu and a link will be sent to your e-mail address every month.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Hennepin County

479 Prairie Center Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344-5378

8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

Program Coordinator: Terry Straub
612-596-2130 and strau097@umn.edu

Phone: 612-596-2130
Fax: 952-828-7280
HCMG Hotline: 612-596-2118

HCMG website: <http://hennepinmastergardeners.org/>