EXTENSION
Master Gardener

Northeast Nebraska Extension Master Gardener

http://madison.unl.edu/mastergardenerhome
https://www.facebook.com/NortheastNEMasterGardeners

MARCH 2026

Hi Master Gardeners,

March is here and with it comes Daylight Savings Time in the early morning hours of Sunday March 20th. We set our clocks ahead and lose an hour of sleep. March is also considered the beginning of spring. Meteorologically, spring begins March 1st and ends May 31st. The meteorological seasons are based on annual temperature cycles rather than on the position of Earth in relation to the sun. Astronomically, spring begins on Friday, March 20th which is the spring or vernal equinox. The season ends with the summer solstice on June 21st. I remember the equinox as the daylight and nighttime hours being (roughly) equal. A more scientific and simple explanation is that the sun is directly above the equator and a result of that is, the sun will rise directly in the east and set directly in the west that day. All that is to say, I'm ready for warmer temperatures and longer days.

These past 6 weeks have been a good time to listen to garden focused webinars and the EMGV Zoom classes. There will be 2 more classes in March, Tuesday evenings 3/3 and 3/10, 6:30-8:00. These classes can be watched at the Extension Office livestream if 5 or more people sign up. Thank you Pam and Taylor for emailing meeting dates and links.

Our Plant Fair is fast approaching. Take time to look at the volunteer sign up sheets, see what time slots work with your schedule and sign up. The planning meetings for Plant Fair start at 8:30, just before our regular monthly meeting and is open to everyone. I am very grateful to Brian Mandl for leading and the all the people who have taken on the responsibility of chairpersons.

I encourage everyone to take a few minutes and read through Suzanne's minutes. It is full of information. She does an excellent job recording the twists and turns of our discussions and what we ultimately decided. There have been good questions asked and good ideas offered in response.

Finally, you are all cordially invited to our next meeting on Saturday March 14th. Ongoing planning for the plant fair starts at 8:30. Our regular business meeting will start at 9:00 followed by our guest speaker, Jill Heemstra from Northeast Community College. Our Hosts are Suzanne Hanlin and Diane Lukens.

I look forward to seeing you,
Kate Pruitt

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES—
If you would like to submit an article or information to share with the Extension Master Gardeners, please submit it by the **22nd of the month**.
Submit your article to: pkesting2@unl.edu

Member Recognition: These members have birthdays/anniversaries in March

Birthday	**Anniversary**
Viola McShannon—March 1 Mary Pat Weber—March 15	No anniversaries this month

Meeting held at:
Nebraska Extension in Madison County
1305 South 13th Street
Norfolk, NE 68701

Northeast Nebraska Master Gardener Coordinator:
***Taylor Cammack*, Extension Instructor**
402-563-4901
tcammack7@nebraska.edu
***Wayne Ohnesorg*, Extension Educator**
402-370-4040
wohnesorg2@unl.edu

Send Information for newsletter to:
Nebraska Extension in Madison County
Attn: Pam Graber
1305 South 13th Street
Norfolk, NE 68701
pkesting2@unl.edu
402-370-4040

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UNIVERSITY OF Nebraska Lincoln

Dates and Trainings to Know and Grow - Mark on Your Calendars

Regular monthly meetings:

(doors open at 8:15 am with meeting to start at 9:00 am and speaker to start at approximately 10:00 am) ***Please remember to wear your name tag to the meetings***

Plant Fair Committee meeting will start before the regular meeting at 8:30 a.m.

March 14— Topic to be determined, Jill Heemstra
April 11— Finalize Plant Fair Plans
April 24/25—Plant Fair
May 16 (3rd Saturday) — No presenter. Plant Fair wrap and plant exchange

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Bank balance as of 2-24-26 $11,527.42
Deposits:
Dues - $80
Plant Fair Sponsorship - $50
Plant Fair Vendor Fees - $50
Plant Fair Banners - $106.08

Expenses:
Meeting Supplies - $13.86

2026 Membership dues are due and can be paid at the meetings or mail to Connie Dvorak. Her address is in the membership directory.

2026— EDUCATION HOURS:

January 10 —1.00 hour "Fresh Flowers" Lauren Walton
February 3—1.5 hours "Fruit Trees" Carol Waters
February 10— 1.5 hours "All About Ants" Jody Green
February 14— 1.00 hour "Pollinator Project" Dan Vanderveen
February 17—1.5 hours "ID Trees by Other than Leaves" Justin Evertson
February 24— 1.5 hours Insect Pollinators and Prairie Habitat

Please remember to keep recording your hours on the Master Gardener website.
https://nebextemgv.org
https://nebextemgv.org/sec_Login/

Members,
Please save articles, thank you cards, etc. about Master Gardeners that could go in the scrapbook. - Deb Daehnke

UPDATING PICTURES FOR THE MEMBER DIRECTORY

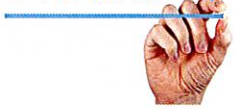
If you would like to update your picture for the directory, I will take pictures after the Saturday meetings or call the office to make arrangements to have your picture taking

NORFOLK DAILY NEWS ARTICLES

Articles for the Norfolk Daily News can be emailed to Ashley at agracey@norfolkdailynews.com
Also, email your article to Pam and she will put it on the Extension Master Gardener Facebook page.

VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP BOOK

The book has been updated for the next year on activities or projects.
The book will be available at the meetings, or you may stop at the Extension Office M-F 8-12 and 1-5.



Taylor Cammack has scheduled Master Gardener Trainings at the Platte County Extension office on the following dates:

March 5th, 5:30-7:30 pm - Taylor Cammack - Poisonous, Prickly, or a Pain

March 12th, 1:00-3:00pm - Master Gardener Presentations, Katie, Marilyn, and Pat

March 19th, 5:30-7:00pm - Pruning day? Planning meeting for the spring garden schedule? (Nothing truly planned for today, but just an option)

March 26th, 1:00-3:00pm - Becky Schuerman, Water Quality Education

All programs will take place at the Platte County Extension Office 2715 13th St. Columbus, NE 68601. Attendance is open to anyone interested!

Minutes from the Plant Fair and Monthly Meeting

Northeast Nebraska Extension Master Gardener Plant Fair Committee Minutes February 14, 2026

Brian Mandl called the meeting to order.

Brian mentioned that Lynn Bloomquist has been busy with family issues but would like to participate in the plant fair if able. If there is anything she can help with, please let her know.

Café- Mary Lux stated she will purchase supplies for the café when gets closer to the plant fair and when can find items on sale. Linda Douglas is still in rehab in Kearney after her car accident.

Advertising- Connie Dvorak has purchased 2 extra banners.

Cashier- Diane Lukens stated that there is an option to rent a card reader that would enable us to scan credit cards and not have to enter them by hand for each customer. Diane will check on cost of rental card reader. Robin Jones motioned that if the cost of the reader is less than $100.00 that we go ahead with the rental. Karen Zierke seconded this motion. Motion was passed.

Brian Mandl passed around the worklist for the plant fair. There are two different sign up sheets. Brian and Pam Foltz will combine the two sheets after members sign up.

Speakers-Kathy Duval is working on speakers for the plant fair. Speakers suggested were someone from Nebraska State Forestry and possibly Marilyn Schmidt. Diane Lukens suggested having a speaker demonstrating how to design planters. Possibly this speaker would then generate more plant sales.

Vendors- Pam Foltz reported that there are 28 confirmed vendors. Diane Lukens stated that she was made aware that Lutheran High students raise vegetable\ plants. She suggested that these students could possibly sell their vegetables at the plant fair. Brian Mandl thought this would potentially be a conflict with the Northeast College Horticulture students.

Cash box- Connie Dvorak mentioned that we need another cash box. Mary Lux made motion with second by Robin Jones. Motion was passed. Cash box will be purchased.

Products to sell at the Plant Fair. It was suggested to have worm casting from Broberg's from Tilden. Connie Dvorak will contact Brobergs.

Meeting was adjourned. Submitted by, Suzanne Hanlin

Northeast Nebraska Extension Master Gardener Meeting Minutes. February 14, 2026

President Katie Pruitt opened the meeting.

She recognized Mary Pat Weber as a new member in training. Guests Glen and Shelly Lammers were introduced. Each member then stated their names and what specific interest they had in gardening.

January minutes were approved with motion by Kathy Duval with second by Karen Zierke. Minutes were approved.

Financial report- Connie Dvorak reported the checking account balance is $11,361.28. She has received $460.00 in dues. Please pay your dues if you haven't yet. Newly registered Master Gardener's in training do not owe dues their first year. Connie has sent e-mails to those who haven't paid dues yet. $1,000 have been collected in vendor fees. She paid $106.00 for two additional banners.

Old Business-
Reminder about Tuesday night education. Pam Foltz will send out a reminder on the Monday before and members need to contact her by noon on Tuesday if they plan to attend in person. If there are at least five (5) confirmed, the training will be held at the Extension office. Others are welcome to attend by Zoom. The information for Zoom is in the newsletter.

Seed sorting and packaging-Viola McShannon's husband has been having some health problems so she has been unable to organize additional meetings. She has asked if someone could schedule another meeting. Joyce Eucker volunteered to contact Vi and schedule another meeting.

Community Garden-Wayne Ohnesorg requested that when signing up to start vegetables that one line represents one plant. He reported that there may be SNAP funds available and would have to be spent by June. Sign up for working in the garden will be next month. Harvest will be Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

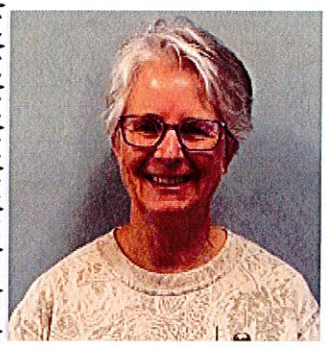
Taylor mentioned that there will be a garden tour mid summer in Columbus. More information to come.

Mary Birch communicated that the Norfolk Vets home where her husband resides, approached her about our group planning a flower bed. Mary asked that if anyone is interested to contact her. The planning time would count as volunteer hours.

New Business-
Wendy Winstead will check to see if UNL is doing trials on vegetables this year.
Celebrate Spring event will be held at Central Community College in Columbus April 22, 2026 from 3-8 pm. Registration is open. Deb Daehnke mentioned that the Flower Power bus trip is also fun.
Hosts for March are Suzanne Hanlin and Dian Lukens. Member biography will be Suzanne Hanlin.
Speaker for March will be Jill Heenstra. Title to be determined.
Meeting adjourned with motion by Suzanne Hanlin with second by Wendy Winstead.

Meeting was adjourned. Submitted by, Suzanne Hanlin

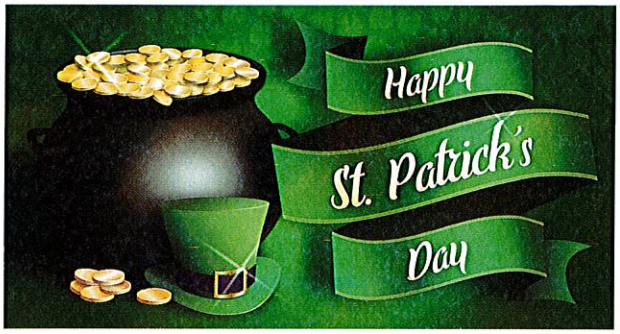
Get to know your Extension Master Gardener Member



Suzanne Hanlin

I grew up on a farm and have always loved being outside. I am the youngest of eight children. After I got married we had a garden when space allowed. I enjoyed vegetable gardening and taught myself to can produce. Four years ago we moved to an acreage west of Pierce. We now have room for a bigger garden and I have become interested in flowers as well as vegetables. I had heard of Master Gardeners and wanted to learn more. I contacted the extension office and got started! I have learned so much from my knowledgeable, nature loving Master Gardener friends.

***April** "Get to Know Your Extension Master Gardener" will be Wendy Winstead*



Did You Know

Can bees remember flowers they have visited before or if certain flowers were visited by other bees? YES! After watching a bee pollinator session through the University of Minnesota, I thought I'd do a little checking.

Some bees are able to detect electrical fields, recognize smelly footprints, notice scent markers that change in a flower, detect pheromones, tastes, colors and ultraviolet light. They can also communicate by a "waggle dance". Although these tactics are much more pronounced than this paragraph can convey, they serve a very important purpose. These all help bees avoid wasting time on flowers that are low or have no pollen left, thus enhancing their ability to find suitable plants.

Bees also don't like pungent smells, so will often avoid, onions, peppermint, and garlic to name a few.

If you've ever been working in your garden and think you recognize a bee from a few days ago, maybe you do. The articles I read were very interesting discussing this subject. You might want to check it out.

Deb Daehnke

EMGV Training/Upcoming Education Opportunities

Virtual/Upcoming Education Training

PlantNebraska's Winter Talks PlantNebraska Plant Talks 2026

GRO Big Red Virtual Learning Webinars GRO Big Red Virtual Learning | Horticulture, Landscape, and Environmental Systems | Nebraska
Monthly starting in March
3/11 The Road to Ripe: Growing Great Tomatoes - Dana Freeman

EMGV Statewide Zoom Trainings Zoom Link: EMGV Statewide Training Passcode: 268458 (No sign-up required)
February-March - 6:30 pm — 8 pm
2/3 - Fruit Trees with Carol Waters
2/10 - All About Ants by Aunt Jody with Jody Green
2/17 - ID Trees by Other than Leaves with Justin Evertson
2/24 Acre Prairie with Ron Seymour
3/3 - Lawn and Landscape Weeds with Elizabeth Exstrom
3/10 - Using Weather and Climate Data for you Gardening Experience with Eric Hunt

Nicole Stoner's In-Person/Zoom Trainings (Info to come)
Friday 2/6 - Pruning Fruit Trees 10 am -12 pm
Friday 3/6 - Shoebox Hydroponics (there is a cost for this) 10 am-12 pm
Friday 3/20 - Herbicide Drift & Damage to Plants - 10 am-12 pm

Faller Landscape In-Person Training Seminars (Info to come)

Education Opportunities Outside of Nebraska
Iowa State Extension's Home Gardening Webinar Series | Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Master Gardener
Penn State Extension Forest Seminar Series Planting for Pollinators (2/10 11 am or 6 pm)
Minnesota State Extension Annual Pollinator Series (Jan 26-28th)

Upcoming in-person dates to remember

February 1st, 2 pm —3 pm - Seed Swap at the Columbus Library
March 14th, Plant Fair at 8:30 am and the meeting at 9:00 am - Monthly Meeting at the Madison County Extension Office
March 8th, 2 pm — 3 pm - Beginner's Guide to Composting at Columbus Library

Celebrate REGISTRATION SPRING GARDENING

Questions? Please call Karen Mroczek at 402-562-1249. We will gladly answer your questions.

AVOR 1700 CCE11 / Register EARLY!
Online registration is unavailable for this event. Please remember to list session choices on registration form.
Tuesday | April 21 | 3-8:30 p.m. | Multiple Presenters | $37

First Name _____ Middle Initial ____ Last Name _____

Home Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Date of Birth _____

Email Address _____

Please complete this section:
Circle ONE topic per session

Session I ~ 6:45 - 7:30 p.m.

A B C D E F

Session II ~ 7:45 - 8:30 p.m.

G H I J K L

Mail registration form with $37 payment to:
Central Community College - Columbus
ATTN: Karen Mroczek
P.O. Box 1027 / Columbus, NE 68602-1027

Central COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Equal Opportunity Institution

Schedule:

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

3 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Registration and the Market Place

Raider Fieldhouse, Columbus Campus

Brimming with luscious plants, pretty flowers, fun garden art and other must have garden items.

Garden Market Vendors

- Central Community College - Columbus
- Ask a Master Gardener Booth
- Country Lane Gardens
- Earl May Nursery & Garden Center
- Green Paws Nursery
- Jenn's Green House
- Kerri's Freshly Baked (*herb artisan breads, cinnamon rolls, and sweet breads*)
- Nodest Home Plants

5 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Keynote: "Succulent Chimenea"

Raider Fieldhouse, Columbus Campus

Presented by Shannon Beck, founder and owner of Nodest Home Plants, Omaha

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Light Meal

Raider Fieldhouse, Columbus Campus

Last chance to purchase "must have items" from the Market Place, which closes at 6:30 p.m.

6:45 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Garden Session I

West Education Center *(short walk from the Fieldhouse)*

Please select one session from below to attend.

A **Recycled Art in the Garden**
Deb Daehnke, Master Gardener, Wayne Co.

B **What's New for 2026 in Plants and Flowers**
Jennifer Day, Wilke Landscape Center

C **The Ever-Versatile Geranium: Zonal, Ivy, Scented**
Marilyn Schmit, Master Gardener, Platte Co.

D **Nebraska's Plant Breeders and How They Have Changed Our Landscapes**
Larry Rauert, Stolley Park Garden

E **Upside Down Kokedama**
Shannon Beck, Nodest Home Plants

F **Common Plant Myths That Will Surprise You**
Kelly Feehan, Emeriti Extension Educator

7:45 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Garden Session II

West Education Center *(short walk from the Fieldhouse)*

Please select one session from below to attend.

G **Pretty Petunia's: Growth and Care**
Marilyn Schmit, Master Gardener, Platte Co

H **Gardening Tips, Hints and Hacks - Part 2**
Janice Jochum, Master Gardener

I **If Trees Could Talk, What Would They Tell Us?**
Kelly Feehan, Emeriti Extension Educator

J **Moles Versus Voles**
Wayne Ohnesorg, Entomologist, Madison County Extension

K **Terrific Trailing Container Garden Plants**
Katie Liebig, Master Gardener, Platte Co.

L **Nebraska's Plant Breeders and How They Have Changed Our Landscapes**
Larry Rauert, Stolley Park Garden

Celebrate SPRING GARDENING

The fee of $37 per person includes a light meal, educational sessions and the Market Place. Online registration is unavailable for this event. Please complete the registration form with sessions choices noted and mail it with your payment to:
Central Community College-Columbus,
Attn: Karen Mroczek,
PO Box 1027, Columbus, NE 68802-1027.

How To Register

1. Invite a friend to attend.
2. Fill out the attached registration form. Each participant must complete a form along with the sessions they would like to attend. Photocopies of the form are accepted. Remember: Circle only ONE topic per each session
3. Make check payable to CCC-Columbus for $37 (which includes a light meal).
4. Mail to:CCC-Columbus, Karen Mroczek, P.O. Box 1027, Columbus, NE 68602-1027
5. Please register by April 11, 2026. No refunds will be issued after this date.

Questions? Please call Karen Mroczek at 402-562-1249. We will gladly answer your questions.

Central COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SIOUXLAND garden SYMPOSIUM

Siouxland Garden Symposium

Keynote Speaker: Dan Fillius

ISU Extension and Outeach Field Specialist Of Horticulture

"Using AI in the Garden" & "Growing Cut Flowers"

Additional Speakers Include:

Dr. Carolina Cordova
Nebraska Statewide Soil Health Specialist
"Healthy Soil, Happy Gardens: Practical Tips for Testing and Improving Your Soil"

Carol Larvick
Emeritus Extension Educator
"Fruit Growing for the Backyard"

Saturday, April 11th, 2026
Check in 8:30am - 9:00am
Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center
900 Larsen Park Rd, Sioux City, IA

Tickets: $50.00 (Lunch Included)
Register at: https://go.iastate.edu/PM9QTO

Registration closes on Friday, March 27th, at 11:59 pm
No Walk-ins accepted

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach
Woodbury County

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

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