

The Green Patch

A Successful Plant Fair

By Deb Daehnke, Master Gardener

The 16th annual Northeast Nebraska Master Gardener Plant Fair is now history. But in my almost ten years as a Master Gardener and volunteer at the plant fair, this one was definitely one of the best. The diversity of vendors and their appealing displays provided a variety of shopping experiences. You could enhance your plant knowledge learning about roses, shrubs, mushroom composting, new perennials, and rain gardens, and then have lunch at the Master Gardener food booth.



Using wagons to help customers take merchandise to their cars was a new addition this year and such a popular one that we already have plans to add more wagons and helpers. And the plant sitter location becomes more popular each year. You can arrange to place your plants in a secure spot, leaving your hands free to continue more shopping.

is impossible to mention all of them, but chairs Vickie Hingst and Robin Jones and President Ellen Glanzer were very instrumental in keeping this a top notch destination for plant lovers. As Kathy Hayes quoted Chris Carlson in the last Green Patch, "The Plant Fair is for the gardener who wants to know more," and there were many opportunities to learn more.

A thank-you to everyone who helped make the Plant Fair such a success. Proceeds go to providing an annual horticultural scholarship to horticultural students at Northeast Community College. Without our many customers we could not continue this endeavor. Your satisfaction and comments are very important to us.



There were so many volunteers it

So mark your calendars for **April 30 and May 1, 2010** when we will again host the Northeast Nebraska Master Gardener Plant Fair in the Cox Activity Center on the campus of Northeast Community College.



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Safety In Gardening

By Helen Bauer, Master Gardener

No matter where you are, at work or home, you are encouraged to be safe. As we start the annual planting of flowers, landscaping, mowing and other yard work, we need to be thinking safety for ourselves, our families, and our employer. Remember, life does not stop because you are injured or disabled, and that can happen in your own back yard. Yes, working at home, gardening can affect our "normal life" and the lives of all our family, friends and, yes, our employer, depending on the severity of the injury/illness.

Each year about 75 people are killed and about 20,000 are injured on or near riding lawnmowers and garden tractors. One out of every 5 deaths involves a child. This is a daunting amount of injuries and deaths and lives that are affected by a decision that cannot be taken back, all because we did not allow ourselves to think of possible consequences.

In the safety profession, we are taught to identify the hazards of each task/job, find ways to eliminate the hazards or reduce the hazard, implement a plan to eliminate or reduce the hazard, and continue to review known hazards and possible new hazards so we can eliminate or reduce the risk of injury or illness. Let's take a look at some of the hazards you may encounter in the garden:

Tool Hazards
Lawn Mower Hazards
Electrical Hazards
Chemical Hazards
General Hazards

Here are some things that can be done to assure risks of accidents/injuries or illnesses are eliminated or reduced.

Tool Hazards

- Do you have the correct tool for the job?
- Do you store your tools so they don't fall on someone when not in use?
- Are all cutting type tools stored out of reach of small children?
- Do you keep cutting type tools sharpened and in good repair?
- Have you and anyone else using your cutting tools, read the manual or have been shown how to use the tool before its use?
- Do you inspect your extension ladder each time before use for cracks, broken or loose rungs or general weakness?
- Are your ladders long enough and strong enough for the job you are using it for?
- Are your ladders equipped with non-skid feet or pads?

Lawn Mower Hazards

- Does the person who uses the lawn mower always wear heavy shoes?
- Is the trash, etc. that may be in the lawn picked up before mowing?
- Does the lawn mower have safety shields?
- Is the grass catcher used to help prevent objects from being thrown by the rotary mower?
- Do you always turn the lawn mower off (or disengage blade) before crossing gravel drives or walkways?
- Do you always refill the lawn mower and other gas tanks outdoors?
- Is extra gasoline stored in a safety gas can?
- Do you always disconnect the spark plug wire before tipping the lawn mower up to do any servicing under the mower deck?
- Do you keep good mufflers on all gasoline powered lawn mowers, leaf mulchers or snow throwers?
- Do you insist that everyone leave the area of lawn you are mowing (out of line sight of lawn mower)?
- Do you mow across the slope with hand lawn mowers?
- Do you mow up and down the slope with riding mowers?
- Do you always look behind you before backing up a riding mower?
- Do you make it a practice to never pull a hand mower toward yourself?

We can eliminate or reduce the risk of injury or illness

Electrical Hazards

- When using an electric mower or hedge trimmer, do you keep the extension cord out of the uncut area?
- Are the electric outlets used for operating electric mowers, trimmers or portable power tools protected with ground fault circuit interrupters?
- Are extensions cords used for electric mowers and trimmers checked for cracks or broken places before each use?
- Are electric trimmers and/or mowers double-insulated (do not need 3-wire extension cord)?
- Are all portable electric?

Total awareness and a careful thought process can help eliminate hazards in our own yards.

How will this affect my family,
How will this affect my employer....
How will it affect me

Congratulations to 20 year Master Gardeners Mary Ferguson and Carolyn Lingenfelter

New this year was the State Master Gardener Program awarding 20 and 30 year milestones. We already recognize our Master Gardeners with Certificates of Service but the State Program wanted to add this acknowledgement by giving an engraved award.

We frequently ask our Master Gardeners to help in numerous ways. Often this may be above and beyond the "required" hours. This is especially true of our long time volunteers. The State Program wants to show their appreciation in recognizing Master Gardener anniversary dates. In the future, they hope to also recognize the 10 year milestone.

All of you do such a great job with volunteering. Please don't forget to log your hours to stay an active Master Gardener



Carolyn Lingenfelter was able to attend the Siouxland Garden Show in South Sioux City Friday, March 20 where Terri James, UNL Extension Assistant—Urban Gardening in the Agronomy and Horticulture department in Lincoln, presented the crystal engraved vase with the beautiful flower arrangement.

Mary Ferguson was unable to attend but her vase was presented to her by our President, Ellen Glanzer.

Master Gardening has been a very memorable part of my gardening years. The information learned through classes was most certainly the backbone of my favorite pastime. The sharing of experiences with the other gardeners along with Betty Stoley and Kathy Hayes who helped me with my garden at that time and through the years enhanced my knowledge considerably. Meeting people at the club meetings, different plant club affiliations, plant fairs, tours, garden centers, guests in the garden sharing problems and solutions certainly covered many topics with even more information. Fortunately, I have had many opportunities to serve newer gardeners and other people who have problems and not the opportunities that I have been blessed with to help solve them. Year around, I have many questions presented to me and consider it an honor to be able to help a little. Hopefully this contact will never cease. I am very humbled at receiving this tribute and I thank you all very much for being a part of it.



Mary Ferguson

Prayer Plant or *Maranta leuconeura erythroneura*

By Kristine Zachmeyer, Master Gardener

Every grandmother keeps their grandchild not far from thought and prayer. My grandmother was no different. Her house was filled to the brim with flowers; so much so that she created paths to traverse "the jungle." Each plant was like a friend that she lovingly cared for and chatted with. Her beautiful fingers danced across the piano keys, I was sure that was her secret to beautiful plants. Like the plants, I knew that I grew in her care. She was the only one to call me Princess. Even in old age, I can still remember the feeling of basking in her warmth, just as her plants did.

My grandmother couldn't bear to toss a broken piece of plant because it was a future plant to share with someone one day soon.

One special plant was chosen for a place of high honor--on the dining room table was a

prayer plant. The rainbow of colors amused this young granddaughter. I was stunned the first time I saw the leaves close in the evening "in prayer." I could see it move.



The Prayer Plant is a tropical house plant that likes to be misted with room temperature water in the morning. If the leaves remain up in the morning, try moving it to a sunnier place. In too sunny of a spot, the leaves will fade. It may take several moves to find the perfect location. In Nebraska's cold winters keep it away from a window sill. The cold will make the edges turn brown not as I thought; from under or over watering. The Prayer Plant is just one tiny reminder of a grandmother's love.



Herb Butters

Garlic & Chive Butter - In small bowl, blend 1/2 cup softened butter or margarine, 2 cloves finely chopped garlic and 1 Tbsp. finely chopped chives.

Parmesan & Pepper Butter - In small bowl, blend 1/2 cup softened butter or margarine, 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese and 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper.

Fresh Herb Butter - In small bowl, blend 1/2 cup softened butter or margarine and 1 tsp. each chopped fresh basil, thyme and parsley (or your favorite fresh herbs).

Serve the above spreads on baked potatoes, on grilled or broiled steak, tossed with hot pasta, or spread on bread and broiled.

peppered herb cheese ball

Prep: **25 minutes** Chill: **4 hours to overnight**

ingredients

3 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
2 tablespoons snipped fresh **parsley**
4 ounces **goat cheese**
1 clove garlic, minced

3 tablespoons snipped fresh **basil**
1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cracked black pepper
 Assorted crackers

Directions

- In a shallow dish combine 1 tablespoon of the chives, 1 tablespoon of the basil, and the parsley; set aside. In a medium bowl beat cream cheese and goat cheese with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Beat in remaining 2 tablespoons chives, remaining 2 tablespoons basil, the pepper, and garlic. Form into a ball.
- Roll ball in herb mixture. Wrap and chill cheese ball for 4 to 24 hours
- Makes twelve 2-tablespoon servings
- Dried Beef Cheese Ball: Prepare as above, except omit basil and parsley. Beat 2 ounces chopped dried beef, 3 tablespoons snipped fresh chives, and 1 teaspoon **caraway** seeds into cheese mixture. Serve with crisp **rye** crackers or party rye bread.
- Italian Cheese Ball: Prepare as above, except substitute fontina cheese for the goat cheese and beat 2 ounces hard salami and 2 tablespoons finely chopped roasted red sweet pepper into the cheese mixture. Serve with water crackers or **baguette** slices.

HERB WEB SITES

http://www.inmamaskitchen.com/ITALIAN_COOKING/Pesto.html

http://www.elise.com/recipes/archives/001329fresh_basil_pesto.php

<http://www.basic-recipes.com/r/pesto/index.htm>

<http://www.101cookbooks.com/archives/001570.html>

<http://allrecipes.com/Search/Recipes.aspx?WithTerm=pesto>

http://www.elise.com/recipes/archives/001321bruschetta_with_tomato_and_basil.php

<http://italianfood.about.com/od/veggieantipasti/r/blr0204.htm>

<http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Double-Tomato-Bruschetta/Detail.aspx>

<http://www.bhg.com/recipe/cheese/peppered-herb-cheese-ball/>

http://www.americasheartland.org/recipes_tips/tomato_herb_cheese_ball.htm

Daffodils

By Ellen Glanzer, Master Gardener

What beautiful daffodils welcomed us this spring!!! Beautiful?? Well, now we have green and drying leaves that have no special beauty. What does one do? Cut them off? NO! These leaves will tell you when they are done growing by drying up and then you can remove them. Until they start to dry up, they are busy putting nutrients into the bulb that will produce the flowers next year.

I've read that day lilies are good to plant among them so their leaves will cover the daffodil leaves since day lilies begin their big growth after the daffodils are done blooming. I don't want day lilies in my daffodil garden so I plant wave petunias in large clay pots and put them among the daffodil leaves. By the time the petunias are overflowing the large pots, the daffodils are finished growing and are removed and I have color in that flower bed all during the growing season.

4th Annual
4-H
Horticulture
Contest

On Wednesday, June 24th around 7PM, 29 people met at the Don and Dorrine Liedman farm west of Carroll, NE. The reason for this gathering was the 4th annual 4-H Horticulture Contest. Ten 4-H competitors were there with their families. Three from Pierce County and seven from Wayne County with 21 adults consisting of our hosts Don and Dorrine, the 4-H parents, staff from the Pierce and Wayne County Extension offices, and several Northeast Nebraska Master Gardeners.

The activities actually started on Monday afternoon when Don and Dorrine, Wayne Ohnesorg- Extension Educator, and Jim Laycock- Master Gardener set up the course for the competition. The Liedman's have just about every plant on the 4-H State list plus so many more, so choosing just 30 plants to put on the exam was not an easy task. Eleven more difficult plants, most not on

ers. They also explained the whys of doing certain things and not others when exhibiting flowers. Kathy also explained how to select, prepare, and display vegetables for an exhibit. At the end of the demonstration, everyone grabbed a clipboard and the 4-Hers and their parents followed Jim through the course and the Master Gardeners followed Don. At the completion of the route, everyone enjoyed refreshments while the exams were scored.

Prizes were handed out to the top three 4-H competitors. First place Laura Greunke of Wayne County. Second place was a tie between Nicole Sorensen of Pierce County and Sawyer Jager of Wayne County. A coin toss determined the second and third place winners with Nicole taking second place. Three different plants were the prizes and they were able to take their choice respectively. Only one prize was handed out to the winner of the Master Gardener's competition which also ended in a tie. There were two people who got a perfect score, Viann Stange and Marjorie Jansen. The winner again was determined by a coin toss and Marjorie emerged victorious. She also won a nice plant.

The evening turned out to be beautiful weather wise and fun was had by all.

Many thanks go out to Don and Dorrine Liedman for their continuous effort in preparing their yard and garden to share with the 4-H families and the Master Gardeners. Thanks to all the Master Gardeners that help make events like this happen and special thanks go to the endless effort of our Extension offices and their Staff that without them there would not be 4-H or Master Gardener programs.

the 4-H list, were selected and marked for the Master Gardener's competition. They were not given a multiple choice test as were the 4-H kids, their test was fill in the blank.

Wednesday evening started with a demonstration put on by Kathy Hayes and Rosie Frey both Master Gardeners from Pierce on the do's and don'ts when displaying cut flow-



2009 Bus Tour to Lauritzen Gardens & Jan Riggenschach's

The Jan Riggenschach garden is a patchwork of plants growing in open areas of hilly woodland. Jan's casual gardening style is perfectly suited to this country setting.

A few of the many unusual plants seen in this garden were Ram's Horn Willow, with leaves curled like a ram's horn; Empress Tree, a die-back tree with huge leaves; and Basket Grass, a variegated container plant. There was also an abundance of more familiar plants, many of them self seeded, such as Larkspur, Nigella, and Dahlberg Daisies, growing among perennials.

As Jan guided us through the gardens, she pointed out plants that are humming bird favorites and shared useful gardening tips, such as:

- For the best color on Purple Smokebush, sacrifice the flowers and cut it to the ground each spring. New shoots have the best color.
- Place boards on the ground among squash and cucumber vines. In the morning, destroy the squash bugs hiding under them.



Ram's Horn Willow



Some of Jan's top plant recommendations were Summer Skies cupflower, which is more floriferous than other cupflowers; Prime Jim and Prime Jan blackberries, which bear on new wood; and Carmen Italian roasting pepper, a sweet pepper which turns red earlier than other varieties.

I'm sure most of us left Jan's garden with at least one new plant added to our "gotta have it" list. Mine was the Coleus, Red-head.

By Marjorie Jansen, Master Gardener



Travel Architectural Wonders of the World this summer at Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha's Botanical Center

The model railroad garden expands beyond its borders this summer to include 13 world landmark replicas, made of all-natural materials. Created by model railroad garden designer Paul Busse, this temporary exhibit allows the imagination to travel around the world in one visit to the garden. Architectural Wonders of the World is on display through October 31.



The Rose Garden is dealing with the aftermath of the hailstorm of June 2008 and the coldest winter they have had in 12 years. Ultimately, they lost approximately three-fourths of the

plants in the rose garden. They take pride on having many different cultivars and nearly 2,000 roses, and are working toward getting back to these numbers.



Perennials are Plants for the Long Haul

Perennial plants can make a gardener's life much easier. Beds don't have to be replanted, much of the structure of the garden remains throughout the year and plants don't have to be purchased annually. By definition, a perennial is a plant that lives for more than two or three years. But just how perennial is that perennial you just planted?

Many wonderful perennials survive only two or three years. Still, we plant them happily and hope they will continue on by reseeding themselves. Examples include: baby's breath, blanket flower, delphinium, Dianthus, hybrid tulips, lavender, penstemon and Scabiosa.

Other perennials are old reliables we can trust to carry on year after year. For shade, hostas and ferns are dependable comebacks.

Not surprisingly, many of the longest-lived perennials for sun are deep-rooted grasses and prairie plants. They may not look like much in garden centers early in spring, maybe not even the first year or two they're in the ground, but they'll pay off in the long-term. If you're thinking years or even decades into the future, here's some to consider:

Culver's root, *Veronicastrum virginicum*, is a very tall erect perennial with spikes of small, white tubular flowers in July-August. Native to open woods and moist meadows, it prefers moist, well-drained soil in full sun or light shade.

Queen of the meadow, *Filipendula ulmaria*, has fragrant, creamy-white astilbe-like flowers that bloom from early summer into fall. Full to part sun.

Dwarf blue indigo, *Baptisia minor*, has beautiful blue flowers in spring and rich brown seed pods that are great for dried arrangements.

Skullcap, *Scutellaria scoridifolia* 'Mongolian Skies', is very drought-tolerant. Blue/purple flowers in early summer will return if dead-headed.

New Jersey tea, *Ceanothus americanus*, is a native shrub with clusters of white flowers.

Butterfly milkweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*, has dark orange-red flower clusters in summer and attractive seed pods in fall. Plant in full sun in dry soil or raised bed.

Pale purple coneflower, *Echinacea pallida*, is a sweet-scented coneflower with spidery petals that blooms June-July. Also a long-lasting cut flower.

Tennessee coneflower, *Echinacea tennesseensis*, is an adaptable, deep-rooted coneflower with bright, uplifted petals.

Spike gayfeather, *Liatris spicata* 'Kobold' grows to 2 feet and has deep purple spikes.

Other long-lived perennials include: aster, astilbe, balloon flower, bee balm, bleeding heart, Campanula, catmint, daffodil, daylily, evening primrose, hardy geranium, iris, Joe-pye weed, lady's mantle, Lamium, leadplant, Lenten rose, peony, red hot poker, black-eyed Susan, sedum and yarrow.

If you want to cast your vote about short- and long-lived perennials, fill in a quick survey at <http://arboretum.unl.edu> and we'll share the information in next month's "In the Garden."


Source: Karma Larsen, communications associate, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum



'Mongolian Skies' skullcap is very drought-tolerant; it's blue/purple flowers even will rebloom if deadheaded.

The Green Patch Contributors

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Do you have a favorite tool, plant to trade, "Go Green" idea, "What Works for Me" tidbit or a question for other Master Gardeners?

Please get to Pam Greunke (pgreunke2@unl.edu) by August 31 to be included in October's *The Green Patch* publication.

Northeast Nebraska Master Gardeners

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Master Gardeners are people who love plants, gardening, landscaping, and teaching others.

We're on the web at

(Website is under construction)



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What is It?? By Wayne Ohnesorg, Extension Educator

Your challenge is to correctly identify the insect and/or plant. The first Master Gardener to contact me with the correct answer will be the winner. And what do you win? Good question. The winner will receive the bragging rights for that quarter and have their name posted in the next installment of the column as the winner along with the correct answer.

Unfortunately, there were not even any guesses for the last quarter "What is it?" column. The answer as to what caused the feeding damage is roseslugs. Young larvae of roseslugs feed by chewing off the top layer of the leaves leaving papery looking areas where they have fed. Older, larger larvae can eat the entire leaf.



This quarter's picture comes from Madison County. This funny looking object was found in the bushes outside of a building. It is as big around as a quarter. What type of insect would make this kind of structure?

If you think you know, you can give me a call at (402) 329-4821 or shoot me an email (wohnesorg2@unl.edu).

