Notes from the President ...

I want to welcome our new student graduates from the MU Fall 2020 MG class. We are glad to have you join us. I hope that you can join us for our upcoming work day at Jefferson Farm and Gardens at 4800 E. New Haven Rd. Columbia, 65201. This will be a group workday, meaning any and all members are invited to attend. We will be weeding, spreading compost after removing straw from gardens, etc. The plan is to work on March 20, 9 am to noon. Masks are required if working in close areas, but most of the time we are spread out enough they aren’t needed. These events are a great opportunity to meet and greet many of the HMMG. Bring hard rakes, shovels, pruners, gloves, and wear whatever you like for working in the garden.

I hope this finds all of you out in your gardens or yards enjoying this beautiful weather. It is so nice to have sunshine and warmer temps. I even planted some radishes and lettuce this past week in a large pot on my deck. I have gone to Jefferson Farm and Gardens to pull some of the straw off my rows in the demo garden and found that the soil wasn’t as wet as I thought it might be. I will remove all the straw and put it into our new compost bin. I think it will be ready for compost and planting in soon.

I hope you have all been watching some of the wonderful gardening webinars on line. I have seen some great ones offered by Grow Native/ Prairie Foundation and have plans to see some others soon. Remember these count towards your continuing education hours.

Hope to see everyone at JFG on March 20th.
Until then, Happy Gardening.

- Marie

Reminder! MOMGA Online Reporting Site Shut Down

The Missouri Master Gardener online reporting site was shut down permanently on January 15th, 2021. Previously entered data will be transferred to the new reporting site. Keep track of your 2021 hours on a paper log or spreadsheet, as you’ll be able to add the new hours into the new online reporting and management system.
Keeping Pests out of the Garden

In addition to insects and diseases, gardeners must keep an eye out for two and four-footed pests. Whether or not one of the critters listed below will cause problems in your garden depends a lot on where the garden is located. If woods adjoin your property, squirrels and raccoons may become pests; if you’re surrounded by fields, mice and woodchucks may invite themselves in to dine on your tender young plants.

As you read the control suggestions listed below, you’ll notice that fencing is one of the most common recommendations. Although it can be expensive, it is the most reliable means of keeping most animals out of the garden. Even a sturdy fence is not a 100% guarantee, however; sometimes trapping may be the only solution to an especially persistent woodchuck or raccoon. (Check first with your state Fish and Wildlife Department to find out if there are any regulations governing trapping of the animal you have in mind.) Live traps can be purchased in most hardware stores; get the appropriate size for the animal you hope to catch. When you have the animal in the trap, be sure to take it several miles away before letting it loose so it cannot find its way back to your garden again. (Be aware that relocating animals like this is often fatal to the animal.)

**Mice** A fence of 1/4—inch mesh hardware cloth 12 inches high, with another 12 inches buried underground, will keep mice out. Keep the garden free of weeds and keep the area around the garden mowed; mice do not like to cross an open area and expose themselves to predators. You can also set traps in the garden, but make careful note of where they are so you don’t catch an unsuspecting human harvester.

**Moles** These pests do not feed on plants. They eat insects such as grubs and earthworms, but may damage the roots of plants with their tunneling. In gardens, traps set in tunnels are most effective in controlling moles. To find active tunnels, tamp down the raised soil, which indicates tunneling. The tunnels that are raised a day later are active.

**Woodchucks** Also known as groundhogs, these pests will happily feed on just about everything in the garden. A fence at least 3 feet high, with another 12 inches bent underground (as recommended for mice), is the best way to keep them out. Leave the top 18 inches of the fence unattached to the support posts. This way, as the woodchuck attempts to climb over the fence, it will bend back down under the animal’s weight. A strand of electric fence at the top of a woven wire fence will also discourage them.

**Gophers** In the western part of the country, gophers can raise havoc with gardens, eating roots and the underground parts of plants. Trapping is the most practical solution in... (continued on page 3)
most cases. Find an active runway by probing the soil near a fresh mound of dirt with a crowbar. Set two traps in the runway, one facing each direction. Tie the two traps together, then cover them with soil to keep out all light. If your garden is small, you may want to erect a gopher barrier. It’s a lot of work, but it will do the trick.

A gopher barrier of 1-inch chicken wire will keep this western pest out of permanent beds. Roll out a panel of wire along the bottom of a dugout bed and another around the sides. Carefully attach the chicken wire with baling wire along the lower edge. The wire should last about five years.

Rabbits A fence with 1 and 1/2 inch mesh that is at least 2 feet high should keep rabbits out of the garden. Make sure the bottom is tight to the ground or bury the bottom edge as recommended for woodchucks. Dried blood sprinkled in the garden will repel rabbits, although it will need to be renewed frequently.

Raccoons A fence similar to the one recommended for woodchucks, but 4 feet high instead of 3, will usually keep raccoons out. A strand of electric fencing on top will act as an added deterrent. Some gardeners claim that planting squash vines solidly around the perimeter of the garden (or at least the corn patch) will keep raccoons out; they don’t like to cross over the prickly leaves.

Cats and Dogs Fences work best to keep both your pets and the neighbors’ out of the garden. Cats are a problem mainly early in the season when they like to dig in the newly tilled ground; laying chicken wire or hardware cloth over the seedbed until plants sprout will encourage them to dig elsewhere.

Birds Starlings and crows have an uncanny sense of where you planted your corn seeds. To keep birds from eating seeds or pulling up newly sprouted plants, protect the seedbed with a tunnel of hardware cloth. By the time the plants have outgrown the tunnel, they are no longer at a stage that is appetizing to birds.

Deer A slanted fence is a good way to keep deer out of the garden since their instinct is to try to crawl under a fence before jumping it, and they are less likely to jump a fence that is wide. A slanted fence can be 4 to 5 feet high, while a vertical fence must be at least 8 feet high to keep deer from jumping over it. Deer are also repelled by bags of human hair hung along the edge of the garden, or dried blood sprinkled on the ground, although both need to be renewed frequently.
March Gardening Calendar

Ornamentals
Weeks 1-4:
• Trees, shrubs and perennials may be planted as soon as they become available at local nurseries.
• Fertilize bulbs with a “bulb booster” formulation broadcast over the planting beds. Hose off any granules that stick to the foliage.
• Dormant mail order plants should be unwrapped immediately. Keep the roots from drying out, store in a cool protected spot, and plant as soon as conditions allow.
• Loosen winter mulches from perennials cautiously. Recover plants at night if frost returns. Clean up beds by removing all weeds and dead foliage at this time.

Weeks 1-2:
• Heavy pruning of trees should be complete before growth occurs. Trees should not be pruned while the new leaves are growing.
• Seeds of hardy annuals such as larkspur, bachelor’s buttons, Shirley and California poppies should be direct sown in the garden now.

Weeks 2-4:
• Summer and fall blooming perennials should be divided in spring.

Weeks 3-4:
• Ornamental grasses should be cut to the ground just as the new growth begins.
• Spring bedding plants, such as pansies and toadflax (Linaria sp.), may be planted outdoors now.
• Apply a balanced fertilizer such as 6-12-12 to perennial beds when new growth appears.

Vegetables
Weeks 1-4:
• Any root crops such as horseradish, parsnips, Jerusalem artichokes, or carrots still in the ground from last year should be harvested before new green top growth appears.
• Fertilize the garden as the soil is being prepared for planting. Unless directed otherwise by a soil test, 1 to 2 pounds of 12-12-12 or an equivalent fertilizer per 100 square feet is usually sufficient.

Weeks 2-4:
• Plant peas, lettuce, radishes, kohlrabi, mustard greens, collards, turnips, Irish potatoes, spinach and onions (seeds and sets) outdoors.

Weeks 3-4:
• Plant beets, carrots, parsley and parsnip seeds outdoors.
• Set out broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, Chinese cabbage and cauliflower transplants into the garden.

Fruits
Weeks 1-4: Gradually remove mulch from strawberries as the weather begins to warm.
Weeks 1-3: Continue pruning apple trees. Burn or destroy all prunings to minimize insect or disease occurrence.
Week 2: Cleft and splice grafting can be done now. This must be completed before rootstocks break dormancy.
Weeks 3-4:
• Aphids begin to hatch on fruit trees as the buds begin to open.
• Apply dormant oil sprays now. Choose a dry day when freezing temperatures are not expected.

Week 4: Mulch all bramble fruits for weed control.

Miscellaneous
Week 1:
• Set up nesting boxes for bluebirds.
• Watch for the harbinger of spring (Erigenia bulbosa) blooming in wooded areas.
Weeks 2: Raise purple martin houses this week.
Weeks 4: The white flowers of serviceberry and wild plum are showy in wooded areas.

Source: https://ipm.missouri.edu/MEG/2019/2/March_Gardening_Calendar/
Heart of Missouri Master Gardeners February 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Program- Jim Quinn presented a great program on “Annuals, Perennials, and More Garden Plants for Pollinators”. He gave a lot of information on the best plants for pollinators, along with where we can purchase some of these plants.

Call to order- Marie Pasley, president welcomed everyone to the meeting. She apologized for the lateness in getting the Zoom invite to members and assured us that the invitation and agenda would be sent the week before the meetings in the future.

New member Emily Gustafon was introduced and welcomed to the group.

Minutes- Minutes from the January meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer report- With no questions or corrections to the report it will be filed for audit. Mary Licklider did ask about how the chapter approved expenditures prior to request. The Standing Rules do allow for a small expenditure by committees without prior approval but most request are approved by the chapter prior to purchases. On occasion the officers may approve a minor expenditure if an expenditure must be made prior to a monthly meeting.

Committee reports- Marie reminded members that anyone can sign up for a committee, just contact the committee chairs. She added contact info for officers and chairs on the monthly agenda.

New Member Welcome- Stefanie Gray reported that she will be making contact with new members and sending packets to them. She did ask for volunteers to work with her committee.

Butterfly House- Brenda McGavock stated that the butterfly house netting is to be applied the first of March. She and Chris have done some cleanup but they are waiting for spring weather.

Demo Gardens- Julie Deering reported that there are 3 rows still open in the demonstration area if anyone wishes a row, just contact her. She said that there are 2 loads of compost being delivered to the garden area. She suggested that members read the back of seed packets to determine when to start seeds indoors.

Videos/Wildflowers- Donna Puleo stated that she and Charles Paxton are looking at the wildflower areas to determine what plants are in abundance and may need to be removed. They are keeping a journal of the meadow plant emergence times. Donna said she is investigating equipment needs for making the short gardening videos. She has several members interested in making some short videos but could use more volunteers for making videos.

MOMGA (Missouri MG Association) Update

Old Business- Marie Pasley reported that representatives from Cole and Boone County, Jim Quinn, and Jennifer Schutter, hort speacialist in Kirksville met in a Zoom meeting February 9th. They determined general outline for the Central MO MG Core class. The class will start in mid-August with a Zoom meeting being held each week for 12 weeks. Every other week an in person tour or activity will cover the previous two Zoom session topics to reinforce what was learned. The group
will meet a few more times to finalize the classes.

Charles Paxton asked if any HMMG is a member of the Boone County Extension Council. John Williams stated he is on Council this term. Charles asked if HMMG would be assisting with the Mid Mo Expo this year. Tish Johnson, CPD stated that since the Expo will be held by Zoom, Council was able to take care of presenting the programs. Three programs will be offered to Zoom attendees. Registration info will be sent to members per e-mail. Cost for all three sessions in just $6.

**New Business-** Cheryl Jensen, Garden Leader for the Unite for Health Community Garden, next to the health department on Worley St., called asking for volunteers from the Master Gardeners Club. Her contact info is: 1/573/864/3052 Email :2cherylj@gmail.com

Earth Day- Our current plan is to hold smaller events at various venues in the area, create activities and volunteer opportunities at parks and sustainability sites throughout the region, and host virtual educational events in the weeks surrounding April 22nd. We may have an opportunity to hold a large event in early fall. We would love to hear what you would like to see for future festivals as well as ideas on working within the framework we have been given for this year. Your help in educating others on the importance of protecting the planet is welcome! Please send your suggestions and questions to coordinator@columbiaearthday.org.

Marie reminded us that the reporting web site for reporting volunteering service hours is down until March. Keep a written record of any volunteer time you do. She also reminded members that the business meetings can be counted as volunteer time and the programs can count as continuing education time.

**Announcements-** The March 16th program will be presented by Maggie McCoy with the Greenway Gardens project at MO Botanical gardens. She will discuss sustainability and give us a tour of the gardens.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

*Minutes submitted by acting secretary Marie Pasley*