

Meet the Speakers

Pam Buttz

A Master Gardener for 10 years, Pam enjoys finding ways to garden in all seasons and situations. She has a worm farm and uses earth boxes to keep her flowers and plants up close and personal. *Topics – Earth Boxes.*



Betty Moser

A Master Gardener since 2001, Betty has gardened for more than 50 years. She focuses on herbs and flowers, winning many blue ribbons at the State Fair. *Topics – Herbs, Microgreens, Container Gardening, Seed Starting, Choosing and Displaying Vegetables for Blue Ribbons.*



Marge Evans

Marge is an avid naturalist, gardener and author who specializes in the flora and fauna of Macon County. She taught field biology at Richland Community College and has been a Master Gardener for nearly 25 years. *Topics – Know your Natives, Wildflowers.*



Rich Starshak

Looking for a way to satisfy his desire to help people and his love of seeing things grow, Rich became a Master Gardener in 1995. As owner of The Garden Path, he has designed landscapes for 15 years. *Topics – Landscape Design Tips, Solve Landscape Design Problems, Create a Themed Garden.*



Frank Grgurich

To say Frank is passionate about gardening is an understatement. A Master Gardener for 15 years, his depth of knowledge on the topics he covers is astounding. *Topics – Three-Season Gardening, Hostas, Basic Vegetable Gardening, Farmers Market, Composting.*



Verlyn Rosenberger

Verlyn is a retired school teacher and lifelong lover of learning and knowledge. She has been a Master Gardener for 21 years, and is also a member of the Audubon Society and the Decatur Garden Club. *Topics – Master Gardener Program.*



Barb Hannon

Barb loves flowers and devotes much time to create beautiful gardens in her yard. She has been a Master Gardener for five years and is an expert on using fall and summer bulbs in creative ways. *Topics – Bulbs for All Seasons.*



Jan Sickbert

Jan has been a Master Gardener for 14 years. She enjoys hummingbirds, butterflies, flowers and other gardeners. *Topics – Hummingbirds.*



Elizabeth Jeffery

Elizabeth grew up in southern England, where everyone gardens and the rhododendron hedges grow to 30-foot high. She has extensive training in trees and other woody plants. *Topics – Spring Flowering Trees, Heirloom Seed Saving, Shade gardening, Identify & Control Invasive Plants in Illinois, Dogwoods, Native Shrubs.*



Richard Zerfowski

Having worked in a factory for more than 40 years, Richard wanted to be outside. So in 2005 he became a Master Gardener. Since then, he initiated a variety of projects such as rain barrels, building tomato cages and the Tomato Taste panel, several of which have won the prestigious International Search for Excellence Award. *Topics – Secrets to Growing Great Tomatoes, Soil - It's Where it All Starts.*



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Macon County Extension Office
3351 N. President Howard Brown Blvd.
Decatur, IL 62521

Macon County Master Gardener Speakers Bureau

The Macon County Master Gardener Speakers Bureau is a wonderful resource that provides quality horticultural information to the community on request. All speakers are Master Gardener volunteers who have completed 60 hours of training from University of Illinois Extension and have years of gardening experience.

Master Gardeners regularly speak to garden clubs, schools, businesses, churches, neighborhood groups and civic organizations on a variety of topics. Presentations are a minimum of 20 minutes long, our hands-on programs take longer, and topics can be modified to fill longer time periods. There is no cost, except when noted for a workshop's cost

of materials, however, we can accept honoraria. The Master Gardeners are happy to present the following topics to community groups in the area. If you have a need for a specific topic that is not listed, please let us know and we will try to accommodate your request.

Master Gardener Program

Get the inside scoop of what it takes to become a Master Gardener, and get an overview of the learning gardens and projects they are involved with.

Flowering Plants

Bulbs for All Seasons

Tubers, rhizomes, corms and tuberous bulbs... what are they? Learn about the origin and history of this special group of plants and some versatile, unique uses for them in your garden.



Wildflowers

Take a virtual tour of the spectacular sometime elusive plants growing native all around us. Be inspired to take a walking excursion with a camera to locate these woodland and prairie plants with names like Lady Slipper, Blue-Eyed Mary and White Trout Lilly!



Landscaping

Hostas

Did you know there are 9,000 varieties of hostas? Learn how to raise, propagate and grow this diverse group of plants and ideas for incorporating them into your landscape.

Landscape Design Tips

Get an overview of basic landscaping principles to apply in your yard; including defining spaces, visual continuity, focal points and interest.

Solve Landscape Design Problems

What about those large, small, quirky areas around your house and in yard? Discover some no-fail tips to move from humdrum to WOW!

Start with Seed

Heirloom Seed Saving

Heirloom flowers and vegetables not only come with memories of your grandmother, but these beauties can also be saved year to year, ready to pass on to your own grandchildren. Come hear what makes them special and how to store the seeds safely year to year.

Seed Starting

Learn tips and methods for starting seeds indoors. There are many reasons to do it yourself and it's not hard when you know how!

Soils & Fertilizers

Soil – It's Where it All Starts

Find the secrets to improving the soil in your garden. You will learn how and why to take a soil test, what to add to the soil to make tilling, planting and weeding easier and many other bits of useful information for any garden enthusiast.

Composting

What are the benefits of composting, and how do you do it? Learn how to make "black gold" and why!

Theme Gardens



Create a Themed Garden

What purpose does your garden have? You will learn ways to define your space to elicit whimsy, serenity, sensory delight and other themes.

Shade Gardening

Many garden plants thrive in dappled or part shade. Use variegated leaves or white flowers to bring those quiet corners to life. Learn the sure-fire varieties that bring the shade garden to life.

Container Gardening

Container gardens are the not just for petunias. Explore versatile way to add pop and interest to any location using the filler, spiller and thriller concept and color and plant choices.

Hummingbirds

Did you know a hummingbird will visit an average of 1,000 flowers a day for nectar? Learn everything you ever wanted to know about hummingbirds and more; including attracting these "jewels" to your garden!



Photo courtesy of the Herald & Review

Trees & Shrubs

Dogwoods

Many people know and love the white flowering dogwood, which is native to the East Coast even though the botanical name is *Cornus Florida*. But did you know there are earlier and later-blooming members of the genus *Cornus*? There are also new dogwood hybrid trees and shrubs, offering year-round interest.

Know your Natives

That spindly little tree might be a native dogwood, a wild viburnum or rare Hop Hornbeam, all choice and beneficial Illinois native plants – or it could be the dreadfully invasive bush honeysuckle. Here's your chance to become familiar with that "jungle" out there.

Identify & Control Invasive Plants in Illinois

Invasive plants are not from our area, but grow so aggressively that they can out-compete native species. Knowing how to identify invasive species can help maintain diversity in your yard, local parks and natural places. Learn how to spot some of the worst offenders and the recommended removal methods.

Native Shrubs

Native shrubs support area birds, butterflies and other wildlife. This presentation will highlight choosing and growing garden worthy Midwestern natives and their related cultivated cousins that support local ecosystems.

Spring Flowering Trees

Flowering trees are some of the first and best signs that spring has arrived. See examples and characteristics on favorite or overlooked varieties of spring flowering trees to help you choose the best one for your yard.

Vegetables

Basic Vegetable Gardening

From site selection and soil preparation to care of a crop from seedling to harvest, this class is great for beginners or experienced gardener alike. The speaker will share effective and proven ways to increase your yield as well as your gardening satisfaction!

Farmers Market

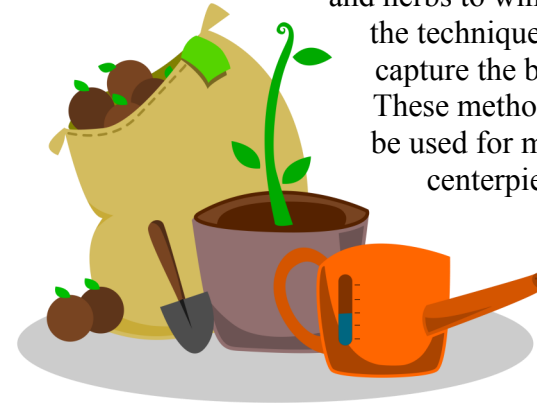
Plan, plant and sell for a profit. Learn how to choose the best plant varieties for customer need and the best techniques for high yield.

Choosing Vegetables for Blue Ribbon Quality

With 30 years of experience to share, this presenter will discuss seed selections, planting and growing strategies as well as harvest tips designed for beautiful and uniform vegetable and herbs to showcase.

Displaying Vegetables for Blue Ribbons

There are set criteria for displaying your vegetables and herbs to win ribbons. Learn the techniques and tips to capture the best attention. These methods can also be used for making fantastic centerpieces.



Do It Yourself Workshops

We offer make-it-take-it workshops on a limited, seasonal schedule. *These sessions have a fee to cover the cost of materials* and will also have minimum/maximum attendance criteria.

Some DIY Workshops are:

- **Flower Arranging**
- **Making Tomato Cages**
- **Container Gardening**
- **Hyper-Tufa Containers**
- **Leaf Casting in Concrete**
- **Fruit and Vegetable Drying**
- **Self-Watering Containers**

Self-Watering Containers

Self-watering containers, like EarthBoxes®, are great for growing plants on a porch or patio! For a fee, it can also be a Do It Yourself Workshop (*See below*).

Herbs

Anything related to herbs! Topics include: annual/perennial varieties, culinary herbs, favorite herbs to grow, international culture (North Africa, Mexico, Germany, Greece and Sweden), recipes and taste testing.



Microgreens

Microgreens are fun, inexpensive and packed with BIG flavor. Come learn about these tiny plants, taste test a yummy variety and plant a microgreen garden to take home.

Secrets to Growing Great Tomatoes

From seed selection to harvest, discover what specific steps to take to grow great tomatoes. You can improve yield, prevent or reduce tomato diseases, and even learn how the weather is always an important factor.

Three-Season Gardening

Stretch the gardening season so you can enjoy fresh veggies earlier in the spring and later in the fall. Mulching, row covers, growing seeds and plant selections are all great methods to get the most for the longest.

Take your Pick!

To book a presentation, fill out the **Speaker Request form** on the Master Gardener page of our website go.illinois.edu/dmp.

Save and email a copy to uie-dmp@illinois.edu or print the form and mail it to the Macon County Extension Office at 3351 N. President Howard Brown Blvd. Decatur, IL 62521.

For more information, contact the Master Gardener Coordinator at 217.877.6042.