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ILLINOIS STATE MASTER GARDENER NEWS

Thank you!

As we close out another year, I want to say thank you again for your volunteer service as a University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener!

Without your help as a Master Gardener volunteers, our ability to educate the residents of Illinois would be greatly more limited. It's your efforts to take important horticulture information and share it out to the world, which make such a huge impact in your communities and in the environment.

Thank you in particular for a great 2021, but we also thank you each and every day for the time and dedication you give to the Illinois Extension Master Gardener program! We hope you have a safe and wonderful holiday season.

A Few Updates:

Don't Forget to Enter Your Hours

- As this year comes to a close, we want to remind you to get all of your continuing education and volunteer hours entered into <u>https://volunteer.extension.illinois.edu/</u> by December 31.
- We know this may be a little earlier than your local deadline in previous years, but in order to ensure that all of our Master Gardener volunteer hours are included in our statewide impact report, we need to move the deadline a tad earlier for the future.
- The important work and hours of volunteering that you complete are instrumental to University of Illinois Extension achieving its mission and we want to ensure that we are able to tell the full story on the impact you are making in your communities. Every single hour that you volunteer makes a difference!

New Continuing Education Series

- New for 2022, we're launching a continuing education webinar series entirely devoted to Master Gardeners. Because these webinars will be directed just towards your continuing education, we'll be able to go more in-depth into topics which will help you better your horticultural knowledge, as well as cover those volunteer specific topics that our other webinars can't necessarily delve into.
- Webinars will take place LIVE on the first Thursday of every month from 1:00-3:00 PM and they will all be recorded and available on Youtube following the session. Some sessions may take up the full two hours and some may be shorter.
- You can register for each monthly session <u>here.</u> Please only register if you plan to attend live. Everyone will have access to the recording the day following the session.
- The first few months of topics are as follows:
 - January 13 (Note this is the 2nd Tuesday)- Photo Sourcing and Presentation Tips for Success
 - February 3- Urban Tree Advanced Training Program
 - March 3- Help Desk 101
 - April 7- Common, Easy-to-Diagnose Plant Diseases
 - Remaining topics to be finalized soon.
- Extension Educators also continue to do an amazing job of creating LOTS of horticulture content and learning opportunities for Master Gardener volunteers. Many of the recordings and upcoming webinar news can be found on <u>this site</u>, as well as on the <u>University of Illinois Extension Horticulture Youtube Page</u>. Plenty of options to get those 10 hours of continuing education in!

Mastering Urban Tree Health and Identification Advanced Training

- Coming again soon! We're finalizing some portions of the online course and look to open registration for this program again in February. Attend the continuing education program on February 3 to hear all about it.
- Visit <u>https://urbantree.extension.illinois.edu/</u> to read a bit about the program in the mean time.

State Conference

- Save the date for September 8-9, 2022 and our next State Master Gardener Conference to be held in Tinley Park!
- The committee is already off and running planning an awesome schedule of tours, workshops and speakers. We can't wait!
- Don't forget, you can still watch recordings of the 2021 conference here.

Jumping Worms and Plant Sales

- Hopefully, you all have heard by now about the invasive species of worm that has spread across Illinois in recent years. Due to the risk of spreading jumping worms within soil, we are recommending that any Master Gardener plant sales do not sell plants that have been dug from other gardens.
- We realize that plant sales can be a huge supporter of local Master Gardener programs, but this new risk can also serve as an opportunity to create a new and unique plant sale opportunity. Instead of offering every type of plant, think about offering a niche type of sale like a native plant sale or vegetable garden transplant sale. Plants that can easily be started from seed and grown in sterile potting mix, therefore eliminating the risk of spread to other gardens. Bare root plants would also be a good option.
- Read more about Jumping worms on our website:
 - Jumping Worms Fact Sheet

Master Gardener Website

 Don't forget to check out the Current Volunteer tab on our MG webpage for updates and links to resources. Check it out at <u>https://extension.illinois.edu/mg.</u>

Upcoming Volunteer Survey

• Also giving you a heads up that you'll be receiving a survey in January asking for feedback about the MG program overall. We're finalizing the questions now and can't wait to gain insight from you all on ways the program can better serve you as a volunteer.

MG Apparel

• Some of you may have noticed that our previous MG apparel ordering link has been unavailable. We are switching vendors and are unfortunately still waiting for the new ordering site to be live. Many apologies for that delay. As soon as the new ordering site is available, we'll let you know!

Thank you again for your volunteer service as a University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener! From myself and all Illinois Extension staff, we greatly appreciate your volunteer service and wish you a Happy Holidays!

- Candice Hart, State Master Gardener Specialist

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