What's Growing On...
The latest news from the Marais des Cygnes Extension Master Gardeners

MAY 2020 | 104 S. Brayman St., Paola, KS 66071 | 913-294-4306 | www.maraisdescygnes.ksu.edu

Highlights from the Board by Betsy Hasselquist

All board members joined the May 12 zoom meeting despite those of us who are technologically challenged. Thanks, Katelyn, for coordinating this meeting.

K-State has cancelled all face-to-face meetings through July 4 and the extension office is closed at this time.

Plant Sale
It was disappointing having to cancel the annual plant sale, our primary fund-raiser which offers numerous diverse and native plants and educational info. Please support our local vendors. On to next year…

Gardens
The Court House and Extension Garden projects are in full swing under extraordinary circumstances. Social distancing needs to be adhered to with one person per garden area.

Trial Garden
Plans revising, with tomatoes at Angela’s garden and the peppers at Shirley’s and Chet’s, with the intention of donating produce to Osawatomie.

Contact garden chairs if interested in working the gardens. And thanks.

Recruitment
Fall classes starting in September are still on. Katelyn will post the application on our website soon and we will accept applications through July 31. Will place sign up yard signs around our area.

Symposium
Postponed until 2022. Still looking for chair(s) for this successful, fun, educational event.

Seeds for Kids
Postponed until 2021. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, plans to promote and distribute seeds were thwarted. Anticipating an expanded program next year.

MiCo Fair
Still scheduled for July 18-25.

Advanced Training
Hoping for some online trainings.

Some programs are being rescheduled for later dates

General Meeting
Scheduled for July 12. Will wait and see re: guidelines, but if possible, will plan an outside venue. Stay safe and keep on gardening! ✿

Extension Office: Sue Burns
816-510-5291
smbohmker@hotmail.com

Trial Garden: Shirley New
913-837-2986/913-207-8981
snew@mokancomm.net

HOTLINE: Originally scheduled to start April 2, the Hotline will not be manned by volunteers for now, but consultants are available to field questions by email or phone.

Follow the Marais des Cygnes EMGs on Facebook at www.facebook.com/mdcemg
Advisory Board
Chairman — Betsy Hasselquist
Vice Chairman — Phyllis Benedict
Secretary — Anita Boyett-Voke
Treasurer — Laraine Crawford
Members at Large
  Sue Burns
  Cathy Stainbrook
  Judy Moser

Committees
Courthouse Garden
  Phyllis Benedict & Kathy Doherty
Trial Garden
  Shirley New
KSU Extension Office Garden
  Sue Burns & Debbie Kitchell
Lakemary Liaison
  Becky Thorpe
Advanced Training
  Laraine Crawford
Awards Banquet
  Donna Cook & Susan Thompson
Symposium
  Susan Thompson & Jeannie Trail
Plant Sale
  Sondra Dela Cruz & Lenora Larson
Garden Tour 2021
  Jan Thompson & Betsy Hasselquist
Publicity
  Judy Moser & Lenora Larson
Seeds for Kids
  Kathleen Brady-Francis & Janette Bennett
Social Media
  Anita Boyett-Voke
Miami County Fair
  Chet McLaughlin & Michael Poss
  Pat Trachsel & Sue Burns
Linn County Fair
  Mike Brown
New Recruits/Mentors
  Jan Thompson & Betsy Hasselquist
Newspaper Articles
  Katelyn Barthol, Extension Agent

Send news and photos to:
  Judy Moser, Newsletter Editor
  judy@springvalleynursery.com

Snapshots from the Gardens

The Extension Office gardens are looking great...

PHOTOS BY BETSY HASSELQUIST

...as are the gardens at the Courthouse.
Many thanks to the garden chairs and to the volunteers who help...at a distance!
Hi All.

Missing my EMG friends and wondering how everyone’s doing.

Our group had such positive momentum going, so it’s disheartening to postpone or cancel so many projects. Hopefully, when things open up again, we can recoup that energy.

I’m still social distancing, staying home mostly or going out to my old homestead. I garden out there in the fertile “floodplain,” and recently planted blueberry bushes. Starting to figure out how to make my shady yard in town more attractive. Ventured out to a nursery. After all, we each have our priorities. LOL

It’s refreshing to have a real spring this year.

People’s experiences, coping mechanisms and behaviors vary unquestionably and not necessarily consistently. For some folks, their day-to-day lives haven’t been affected much by the physical distancing guidelines.

I seem to have good times and some not so good times. C’est la vie. I’m still trying to social distance and yearn to hug my grandkids. I miss my usual routines and social supports, although am working on new routines and do value alone time. No garage sales this season.

Some folks have different views in response to this pandemic, which is a struggle for me as I worry about the future. Missed being with my mom in person on Mother’s Day. Lots of people are missing life’s milestones—birthdays, weddings, graduations. I “get” the desire to return to normal, especially with the relatively few cases of COVID-19 in our area. However, I think we are likely still behind the curve and should continue to take precautions. As a friend said, I’m thankful for my small town, rural existence.

I have been sleeping better and always benefit from spending time out-of-doors. Walking some, could do more. I’m appreciating and taking advantage of my zoom yoga classes and not having to worry about makeup or my hair. I have trouble concentrating at times. Thank goodness for rewind.

Change is hard and we’re still facing many unknowns. It’s difficult to plan and deal with the unknown and factors out of our control. Practice patience, mindfulness, gratitude and loving thoughts and deeds.

Wonder what the new normal will be. Getting on a plane will never feel the same (and wonder if I’ll be able to afford it). Hoping we don’t lose local restaurants and other businesses. I admit I’ve been utilizing online shopping more these days to minimize exposure. Instacart online grocery delivery is quite effortless.

Truly saddened for so many who are struggling with significant losses—loss of a job, how to pay rent or feed their family…and those who have lost loved ones and haven’t been able to be together with dear ones. Thanks to all our essential workers who truly are heroes.

Wishing you and yours good health and serenity.—Betsy

Betsy’s garden is enjoying having her at home so much. Yours too?

MdC EMG Named Teacher of the Year

Patricia Wolfe was recently named Kansas Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year, and she is one of eight teachers in the nation to be honored for using agricultural concepts to teach core subjects in the classroom.

Pat teaches at Lakemary Center. They shared this information on Facebook and indicated that there is more info about Pat and the award on their blog.
Introduction: Insects are a part of every gardener’s life. Each month you’ll meet a common insect with advice on whether you should eradicate, tolerate or embrace this six-legged visitor. Please send Lenora your insect requests!

Smart gardeners appreciate the many beneficial insects in the wild and weird order, Neuroptera, the net-winged insects. There are over 6,000 species bearing appropriate names like Garden Vampire, Ant Lion and Aphid Wolf. With many families and look-alike genera, confusion reigns, but the most common species that we see in Kansas is the Green Lacewing, Chrysoperla rufilabris. The half-inch adults have lovely iridescent green netted wings and golden eyes.

Complete Metamorphosis

Their four-stage life cycle will be familiar to butterfly lovers: egg, larva, pupa and adult. Depending on temperature, a life cycle takes four to six weeks to complete. The female lays about 200 eggs on the underside of leaves during her lifetime, suspending each on a 1/2 inch stalk as a precaution against sibling cannibalism. Depending on temperature, the eggs hatch in a few days and the larvae feed for about 2 to 3 weeks and then spin a silken cocoon to pupate for 2 to 3 weeks or to over-winter before emerging as an adult.

The adults live about a month and frequently come to my mothing lights. Like so many of our beloved beneficial insects, the adults are harmless, shy creatures sipping nectar and eating pollen for sustenance as they pursue the important tasks of finding love and laying eggs. Flying primarily at night, they perform as valuable nocturnal pollinators.

The Beneficial Stage

In contrast to their vegetarian parents, the larvae are fierce generalist carnivores often called “Aphid Wolves” or “Aphid Lions.” Imagine a brown and white alligator with elephant tusks, a creature from your nightmares! These voracious larvae hunt at night, so they are almost blind but very sensitive to touch. They slowly stroll along a leaf, swinging their heads from side to side. Any soft item that they brush against is grabbed by the huge hollow mandibles that inject digestive juices. Prey is subdued in less than 90 seconds. This attack can include an inquiring human finger, so be careful if you find one!

They have an extensive menu of pests such as aphids, thrips, insect eggs, other soft-bodied insects (like their siblings, mealy bugs, whiteflies, etc.) and mites. They are fearless and will even attack prey much larger than themselves like caterpillars. Once the victim is secured and injected, its tissues dissolve and the Aphid Wolf slurps its smoothie, then leaves its meal as an empty husk. An Aphid Wolf eats hundreds of insect pests before it pupates.

Using Lacewings in Your Garden

Gardeners can attract Green Lacewings to be their allies in the garden. As with all IPM (Integrated Pest Management) strategies, there are some rules: you must refrain from using insecticides, even those labelled “for organic.” And as difficult as it is, you must leave pests like aphids because the mother will not lay her eggs except in the presence of prey. In the absence of prey, the larva will eat each other. You must also have flowers for the adults or they will fly away to find better places to lay their eggs. They prefer flowers with shallow nectaries, such as from the Daisy Family like asters and sunflowers and from the carrot family like parsley and fennel.

Green Lacewings are raised and sold as biological control agents and can be purchased as adults, larvae or eggs for release in your garden. The above IPM rules apply. Just Google for sources and specific directions. Eggs are the most cost-effective product, but they must be released into prey or they will eat each other as they hatch. And since they are only active at night, you’ll need a flashlight to see them in action. They can be used along with Lady Bugs in the greenhouse or yard if you need really aggressive pest control, with the advantage that the adult Green Lacewings are not as likely to fly away if you have their favorite flowers in bloom.

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Lacewing eggs on stalks. Note the doomed nearby Oleander aphids.

Lacewing larva with a winged aphid.

Lacewing adult attending my mothing in the late evening.