



from MORRIS Area Garden Club *info* August 2011

Hello, MAGC & Friends

So...how hot is it? ...You learn that a seat belt buckle makes a pretty good branding iron...The temperature drops below 95 F and you feel a little chilly...You discover that in August it only takes 2 fingers to steer your car...You discover that you can get sunburned through your car window...The birds have to use pot holders to pull worms out of the ground...Farmers are feeding their chickens crushed ice to keep them from laying hard-boiled eggs...Cows are giving evaporated milk...

OK, OK, I think you get the idea. I've been hearing all kinds of little quips like these in the past few weeks...some are pretty darn humorous, but the fact is, farmers and gardeners find weather like we are having to be quite...well, let's just say, disappointing.

Watering chores are what will eat up your garden time this month. As always, water deeply and occasionally, rather than shallow and often.

If an annual flower or vegetable is struggling, at this point, just pull it up and pitch it into the compost pile.

If a perennial is sickly or looking otherwise awful, cut it back to just a few inches. It will come back this year or next spring with healthier growth.

Lawns are brown and have gone dormant. You have two choices: Allow it to continue in its dormancy by not watering, or bring it out of dormancy with good, regular waterings. The one

thing you won't want to do is to repeatedly bring it out of dormancy. This is a very stressful situation for turf grass. If you're going to water, keep up with the watering.

It's more economical and better for the environment (and your wallet) if you just allow your grass to remain dormant - it will come back. Be sure to regularly water your largest investments such as trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables - things that will not come back if allowed to die off.

Be sure to water yourself along the way. Keep hydrated, wear sunscreen, a hat and perhaps long sleeves to prevent sunburn. It's very easy to get sun or heat stroke in this weather.

Gardeners are starting to harvest their garden crops. Many fruits, peppers, and squash are in abundance. Think about the less fortunate when you have too many veggies! We Care is opening their door to more and more households in need of assistance.

Be sure to take some of those extra zucchinis, tomatoes, cukes, squash, beans, fruit, etc. to We Care at 520 W. Illinois Ave. Morris during regular office hours. Call them at 815-942-6389 for more information. And thank you for your generosity!

"He who shares the joy in what he's grown spreads joy abroad and doubles his own."

"Tomatoes and oregano make it Italian; wine and tarragon make it French. Sour cream makes it Russian; lemon and cinnamon make it Greek. Soy sauce makes it Chinese; garlic makes it good." ~ Alice May Brock

August in the Garden

Dog Days of Summer can be one of the driest times of the year, so make sure your garden stays well watered. It will need 1 to 1 1/2 inches of water per week. Some containers may require twice a day watering on especially hot days like we've been having. If the soil in containers dries out and begins to pull away from the sides, water slowly and repeatedly, pushing the soil back in place as it absorbs moisture.

Continue to deep-water trees and shrubs if rainfall is sparse with a couple of gallons per tree per week.

You can start your fall crops such as beets, carrots, lettuce, and broccoli.

Start to plan for your planting of fall bulbs. The bulb catalogs will begin to hit your mailbox this month if they haven't already. You have until snow is on the ground to get them planted, but the earlier, the better.

Daylilies may be dug and divided this month. After digging, divide them by gently pulling the divisions from the clump. Each division should have at least 3 stems with roots attached. Cut the foliage back to 6 inches and replant. Water well at first then keep the soil moist, but not wet so the roots will take.

Prune out raspberries and blackberry canes that bore fruit this year. They will not bear again.

Cut back the flower stalks of perennials that have finished blooming.

You'll want to make note of which roses performed well this year and which ones you'll want to replace in the spring. Stop fertilizing roses after the 15th of this month for the rest of the growing season so the plants can toughen up for winter.

Lightly shear straggly-looking alyssum and lobelia plants to encourage a new round of blooms when the weather cools.

Avoid pruning evergreens when it's so hot. Also, pruning them in the fall will encourage fresh new growth that may get nipped by winter's cold. It's best at this point to wait until next spring.

And keep deadheading! For the most flowers and tidiest garden, deadhead daily.

Oatmeal Soap

Turn your leftover soap slivers into oatmeal soap! Gather ingredients: 1/2 cup regular oatmeal, 1/2 cup small soap pieces, 1-1/2 tablespoons cooking oil, and 1 tablespoon water. Put the soap slivers into a plastic bag and pound them into small chunks. Put the chunks into a blender, add the oatmeal, and pulse until grainy. Pour into a bowl and add the oil and water.

Mix with your hands, removing any remaining bigger chunks of soap. Shape the mixture into a ball and let sit until hard, about 2 hours. Be sure to wash the blender thoroughly to remove the soap residue.

Giggles & Groans

Little Susie: "I don't want to eat this squash."

Mommy: "But it's good for you, darling."

Little Susie: "But I don't LIKE it!"

Mommy: "You like pretending. Why don't you pretend it's ice cream?"

Little Susie: "Why can't I just pretend it's gone?"

Going Green

Do you tremble when you open your monthly utility bills? If so, it's probably time for an energy audit — an assessment of your home's energy efficiency. Energy audits help you to identify problem areas, like leaky ducts or ill-fitting windows, where heated or cooled air escapes. To conduct your own energy audit, walk through the house and closely examine the areas around outlets, baseboards, window and door frames, fireplace dampers, pipes and attic hatches. If air can flow through these places, they need caulk or weather stripping.

A professional auditor will go into greater detail using state-of-the-art technology to examine your house room by room. Professional energy audits by certified contractors may be necessary if you plan to take advantage of state or federal energy efficiency home improvement incentives, so consult the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency to find information about incentives and requirements in your area.

Whoever loves and understands a garden will find contentment within. - Chinese Proverb

Symbolic Meanings of Herbs, Flowers and Trees

PART 2:

Marjoram Joy, happiness

Mint Eternal refreshment

Morning glory Affectation

Nasturtium Patriotism

Oak Strength

Orange blossom chastity, purity and loveliness

Oregano Substance

Pansy Thoughts

Parsley Festivity

Pine Humility

Poppy, red Consolation

red chrysanthemum means I love you

Rose Love

Rosemary Remembrance

Rue Grace, clear vision

Sage Wisdom, immortality

Royal Purple Smoke Tree

(Cotinus coggygia)

Growth Rate: Moderate to fast Zone: 5-9

Site Requirements: Full sun - partial shade (purple in full sun), humus-rich, moist, well drained soil

Foliage: Rounded leaves on long stems open pinkish bronze, turns yellow, red and purple in fall. Pink flower plumes in early summer

Form: Rounded to open, often multi-trunked

Height: 15' - 20'

Pruning: To keep the plant shrub-like, cut all stems back to within 2-3 buds from the base, annually, in early spring. For growing as a tree, in late winter to early spring, remove only crossing or wayward stems to maintain a healthy frame.



Arugula

Arugula (aka arugola, rocket, roquette, rugula, Italian cress or rucola) is an aromatic, peppery salad green and is grown for its leaves, flowers and seeds. The leaves and flowers are used raw in salads, sandwiches or can be sautéed or cooked in pasta. The seeds are often used as a flavoring in oils.



Happy Birthday

Celebrating birthdays this month are Teri Heyn on the 2nd, Juarte Pezze on the 3rd, Francine Ciotti on the 15th, Bill Morse on the 22nd and Ginny Bellamy on the 27th. Happy day to you all!



How to Freeze Kale

If you have more kale than you can possibly eat in a week, you can freeze it for future use. Boil a pot of water for blanching. Wash your fresh kale and fold in half and cut off the stalk; discard stalk and cut across the leaf to cut into bite-sized pieces. When you have a goodly amount of cut kale, place in a pot of boiling water. Set timer for 2 minutes. Remove with tongs and immediately place blanched kale into a pot of iced water.

Repeat with next batch. Drain iced kale then take each leaf and spread out onto clean dish towel to dry. Place each piece on a cookie sheet and place in freezer for approx. ½ hour to freeze.

Then place in Ziploc bags. Frozen kale can be saute'd with garlic and olive oil for a side dish or added to soups and/or casseroles. – Organic Gardening

When you finish reading the newsletter, go outside and work in the dirt.

Bruschetta with Shrimp, Tarragon and Arugula

Toasts:

1 (1-pound) loaf ciabatta bread, trimmed and cut into 14 (1/2 inch thick) slices

Olive oil, for drizzling

1 garlic clove, halved

Topping:

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 large or 2 small shallots, thinly sliced

1 clove garlic, chopped

1 pound extra-large shrimp, peeled and deveined

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 Roma tomatoes, chopped

1/4 cup white wine

1/4 cup low-sodium chicken stock

3 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon leaves

1 packed cup arugula, chopped

1/2 cup mascarpone cheese, at room temperature



Directions

Toasts: Put an oven rack in the center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Arrange the bread slices in a single layer on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Bake until light golden, about 10 minutes. Cool for 2 minutes. Rub the warm toasts with the cut side of the garlic. Set aside.

Topping: In a medium skillet, heat 3 tablespoons of oil over medium-high heat. Add the shallots and garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until soft, about 2 minutes. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper to taste and add them to the skillet. Cook until the shrimp are pink and cooked through about 3 to 4 minutes. Remove the shrimp and chop into 1/2-inch pieces. Set aside.

In the same skillet, add the tomatoes and season with salt and pepper to taste. Cook over medium-high heat until the tomatoes start to soften, about 4 minutes. Turn the heat to high. Add the wine and scrape up the brown bits that cling to the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the stock and cook until most of the liquid has evaporated, about 2 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and add the tarragon, arugula, mascarpone cheese, and chopped shrimp. Stir until the mixture is creamy. Spoon onto the toasts and drizzle with the sauce.

When is watermelon ripe? When the stem curls and turns brown and the place where the melon touches the ground turns yellow, it's ready. Rap it with your knuckles and listen for a dull, hollow sound.

ONCE AGAIN: MAGC is in need. We are looking for a new program director and vice president. Some of you new members would work beautifully in these positions. There is a lot of assistance, so you won't be alone in your endeavor. We're looking for new ideas and new blood, so please step up.

Did You Know?

All the way back in August of 1793 - The Louvre in Paris had its grand opening. **1833** - With a population of less than 200, Chicago, Illinois was incorporated as a village. **1948** - Allen Funt's "Candid Camera" made its television debut. **1985** - "Like a Virgin," by Madonna became the first solo album by a female artist to be certified for selling five million copies. Centipedes eat grubs, slugs wood lice and leather jackets. You can tell the difference between centipedes and millipedes by the number of legs on each segment. A centipede has one pair, a millipede has two. Comic book publishing giants Marvel and DC can both chum out whiz-bang serialized adventures, but they disagree on one very important aspect of a Super Hero's origin. Marvel sets all its characters in real cities (New York, Los Angeles, etc.). DC Comics, however, chooses to keep the fantasy alive with places like Batman's Gotham City and Superman's Metropolis. Two-digit Interstate numbers are designed to let drivers know the general direction of the highway. If the Interstate has an odd number, it runs north-south. Interstates with even numbers run east-west. Even though he hated their taste, Mel Blanc insisted on chewing real carrots to provide the chomping sounds for cartoon character Bugs Bunny. The dishwasher was invented by Josephine Cochrane— a socialite who was tired of servants breaking her expensive dishes. *Sooo, now you know.*

Dust

Where does dust come from? A lot of it comes from people. Although we may not see it, our shoes bring in tiny dirt particles that become airborne as we travel from room to room. Our bodies also produce dust-- almost a pound per person per year - in the form of dead skin cells we shed (which in turn support microscopic dust mites). Cigarette smoke and cooking odors are actually made up of tiny particles that eventually settle as dust.

Actual Newspaper Headlines

Farmer Bill Dies in the House
Lung Cancer in Women Mushrooms
If the Rain Doesn't Stop soon, It'll Last for a While
Deer Kill 17,000
Enraged Cow Injures Farmer with Ax
Stolen Pumpkins Found by Tree
Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures
Man Struck By Lightning Faces Battery Charge
Thieves Steal Corn, Charged with Stalking

Thank You

Thank you to Bill and Sue Morse and Esther Ritke for allowing MAGC to take a private tour of their gardens in July. Thanks also to Esther for the refreshments.

Natural Pest Control

Birds are a major contributor to bug control, so keep your yard friendly to them. **Frogs** are great nocturnal feeders, and devour incredible numbers of pests, including slugs. **Dragonflies** feed on flying insects, and their larvae feed on mosquito wrigglers. (In just 30 minutes, the Odonata dragonfly can eat its own weight in some of the fastest flying and most predatory of insects!) Other good bugs include **Ladybugs**, which feed on aphids, mealy bugs, scale and other small insects, and **Centipedes**, which consume slug and snail eggs, and fruit fly pupa. The **Praying Mantis** stalks and devours all types of problem insects. **Spiders** are all predatory, and are very beneficial to the garden. **Wasps** are nearly all either insect predators or parasitoids, and very important in pest control.

Repairing Dog Damage

Repair brown spots in the lawn caused by dogs by digging out the dead grass and roots with a spade, fill the holes with topsoil, and rake it through. Then spread grass seed over the topsoil as recommended on the package. Rake it lightly and mulch with a thin layer of straw or salt hay. Water well for four to six weeks. Don't compost the clumps you dug out, they could contain harmful by-products. A better solution is to train your dog to use only one area of your lawn where you have laid out bark mulch, kitty litter, or another absorbent material. Change the material as needed.

Next Meeting

The annual MAGC field trip is August 16th. This year we will head to Geneva, IL to tour the Peck Farm Butterfly House. The cost for entry is only \$2 per person.

We'll meet in the park n ride next to Dairy Queen on Rt. 47 at 8:00 a.m. and leave at 8:15 for the hour drive to Geneva. We'll ask everyone to pitch in a couple bucks each to help with gas for our drivers. Guest are welcome. See information regarding Peck Farm at <http://www.yelp.com/biz/peck-fam-park-geneva>.

MAGC Officers

President: Debbie Ritke: 815-258-4342

Vice President: **HELP NEEDED**

Secretary: Pam Coley: 815-212-0272

Treasurer/Garden Walk Chair:

Nicole Chaplin: 815-941-0981

Program Chair: **HELP NEEDED**

Hostess Chair: Anne Peacock: 815-942-1006

Historian/Scholarship Chair: Ginry Bellamy: 815-941-2550

Newsletter Editor, Web Administrator: Pam Coley:

815-212-0272 pamc@morrisareagardenclub.com

See you next month!



MAGC Sponsors

Please patronize our sponsors' businesses and let them know you saw their ad in our newsletter and on the web site and let them know that you appreciate their support of our club. Thank you.



dr. megabyte
www.doctormegabyte.com

p: 815.941.0344
e: drmb@doctormegabyte.com

Business & Residential Service
Computer Repair & Support
Virus & Spyware Removal
Wired / Wireless Networking

Adam Meade, Owner

Pam's Tiers of Joy

Unique Cakes, Cupcakes & Cookies for All Occasions
Pam Coley, Owner/Cake Artist



Phone: 815-212-0272
Fax: 815-416-1128

Email: I_am_Pam_10@yahoo.com
www.pamstiersofjoy.webs.com



-Naturally Grown Vegetable and Herb Plants!
-Annuals -Perennials -Hanging Baskets -Shrub Roses

Come Taste our Fresh Homemade Fudge in the Fudge Shoppe!

Susan Siegel (815)741-2693
17250 S. Weber Road, Crest Hill (Fax)815-729-2693
Across from Menards www.cottonwoodfarms.net

If you would like to sponsor MAGC, please contact us at pamc@morrisareagardenclub.com for an application form. Your business card sized ad will appear each month in *The Latest Dirt* and on the MAGC website.

Spring Bluff Nursery, Inc.



41W130 Norris Road
Sugar Grove, Illinois 60554

-Retail Garden Center
-Professional Landscaping
-Trees & shrubs
-Perennials, natives & hard-to-find plants.

Beautiful display gardens on a historic 160 yr. old farm.

Phone: 630-466-4278

www.springbluffnursery.com

COLDWELL BANKER



HONIG-BELL
1222 N. Division St.
Morris, IL 60450

Deborah Ritke, Realtor
Broker Associate

Cell: (815) 258-4342
E-mail: debbie@debritke.com
www.debritke.com



RICH & KATHY HORNBAKER
Owners

815.659.3262 Phone
815.659.3159 Fax



22937-1140 N. Avenue
Princeton, IL 61356

mail@hornbakergardens.com
www.hornbakergardens.com



Green Glen Nursery, Inc.

PHONE 815-722-3133
FAX 815-723-6609

JOHN JECHA

2413 LARAWAY ROAD
JOLIET, ILLINOIS 60433
jjecha@joltmail.net

THANK YOU!!!