



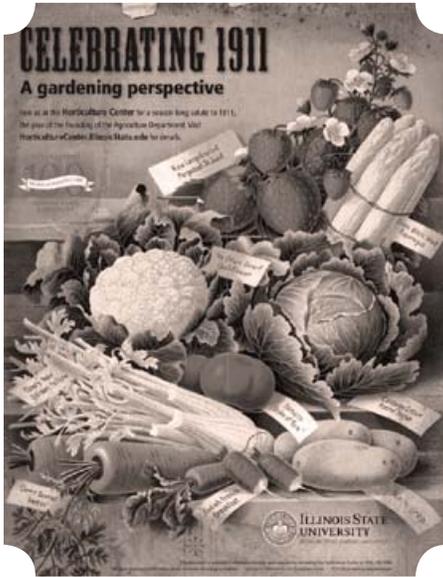
cucurbits

*plants in the gourd family, such as
cucumbers, squash, pumpkins, or melons*

late winter • 2011

**Horticulture
Center**

Illinois State University



100 years of agriculture

This new year marks the 100th birthday of the Department of Agriculture. The Horticulture Center, which is part of the department, is a recent addition on its 100 year timeline. In the early 1850s there were several advocates, including Jonathan Turner, Jesse Fell, and Charles Hovey, who wanted to see a formal agriculture school included as a part of the normal (teaching) school. But there were many things that kept ISNU from adding the agriculture discipline to the University, including the Civil War and the establishment of the University of Illinois as the land grant school in Illinois. It was not until 1911 with the appointment of Irwin Arthur Madden as professor of agriculture that the discipline was finally added to the University. By 1914 the department hired a farm manager and built a farm house, silo, and dairy barn on the site where the Ropp Agriculture Building is situated.

One hundred years ago the definitions of the professions of agriculture and horticulture were not easy to discern. Everyone practiced horticulture to some degree, but there were very few horticulturists. Most people were growing all of their vegetables and herbs as well as crops of corn, oats, and hay to feed their livestock.

The last 100 years have made available to us aspects of horticulture that come with more leisure time as well as economic well-being, including landscaping our homes and playing golf. Almost 40 years ago the official study of horticulture became its own discipline within agriculture. In 1973 Margret Balbach was hired to teach plant science but soon thereafter found herself establishing classes for the entire horticulture sequence.

More recently the desire for fresher produce, supporting local producers, direct contact with the farmer, and for some, purchasing organic foods, has helped to increase the number of farmer's markets and CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) in many communities. With the economic woes, many people have returned to or have chosen to try their hand at home gardening. Nurseries now sell plants, such as patio tomatoes that can be grown in containers. Horticulture remains a discipline that on some level, just like 100 years ago, everyone can dabble in.

So as the department celebrates its 100th birthday, and the Horticulture Center celebrates its sixth birthday, the center takes its place on the timeline and joins in on the celebration. This year's theme will focus on 1911, and we will establish a 1911 garden showcasing what McLean County residents were growing in their gardens at the time. The themed beds will contribute in the celebration by offering an ornamental perspective.

We invite you to visit the center throughout the gardening season and learn about the history of the department, as well as the county we all live in. The season will conclude with a harvest celebration at the Autumnal Festival on October 1, 2011.

—Jessica Chambers, director

Horticulture Center celebrated its fifth birthday

By Jessica Chambers

The Horticulture Center celebrated its fifth birthday at the Autumnal Festival on October 2, 2010. Technically, the center is a little older, but the Autumnal Festival was the cumulative event that we worked towards in 2006. It was the only event that year, so it has become a celebratory way to keep track of how old the center is.

This past fall's festival started like the festival the previous year. I heard the rain coming down at 4:30 a.m. And it was cold. As I have mentioned before, since there is no facility at the center, we are always literally at the whim of Mother Nature. People will tell you a week before, "Looks like you'll have good weather on Saturday." Don't believe it. And don't look at the weather forecast, because it will not help you no matter what it says. So I started the day worried. But by 7:30 a.m. when the volunteers and exhibitors started showing up, the rain ended.

It was still windy and cool, but by 11 a.m. the sun came out. And so began one of the best birthdays that the center has ever had.

In the morning, children were doing several free activities under the yellow striped tent. Local businesses like the Children's Discovery Museum, The Ecology Action Center, and the Normal Public Library had crafts for the children to do, including making fall ornaments, decorating party hats, and having their faces painted. The big white food tent at the entrance to the gardens was busy all day long. People were drinking hot chocolate, munching on popcorn, and eating an assortment of sweets from donuts to pumpkin whoopee pies, as well as lunching on hot dogs and chips. After lunch we celebrated with a large birthday cake that had Jack (the pumpkin mascot for the festival) on it. By the time the festival ended, the food was all gone.

On the west side, attendees went through the three-acre corn maze, as well as the new sunflower maze that was added to this year's list of events. There were many different types of pumpkins and squash to purchase, as well as the season's best crop—gourds. There were big, fat kettle gourds that you could barely pick up, little spinner gourds to put in your pocket, really long dipper gourds that look like snakes, as well as gourds in the shape of apples and pears. It was a gourd lover's dream come true!

The most popular attraction was the hayrack ride. At closing time, there were still people in line for a ride. When Russ Derango, Illinois State Farm manager, came back with what was to be the last group, the adults and the kids waiting in line were cheering and jumping up and down. So he had to do one final ride, officially ending the birthday party at 4:30 p.m.





Volunteer program is celebrating its fifth year

Another anniversary and milestone that will be celebrated at the Horticulture Center this year is its Volunteer Program. The idea for the program came on the day of the first Autumnal Festival. Kent Seymour approached Jessica Chambers, shook her hand, gave her a \$50 donation for the center, and said, “My name is Kent Seymour—do you need volunteers to help weed?”

That was followed by several more interested individuals that contacted the center throughout winter. January was spent researching volunteer programs and specifically looking at the successful volunteer program at Frederick Meijer Sculpture Garden in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Some time was also spent obtaining the approvals from the different departments on campus. On April 3, 2007, the initial meeting of the program was held, and by the end of April it was up and running, creating the Viburnum Garden.

During the past several years these volunteers and friends have become an integral part in the existence of the center. They bring new ideas, enthusiasm, strong work ethics, and support to the center. As you come and visit this year, please take the time to introduce yourself and ask them a question or two that you may have. You’ll see for yourself why they are all vital in making the center such a special place.

Scarecrow favorites

We had more than 20 scarecrow entries this year that were made by individuals, families, businesses, and Illinois State clubs and departments. The silent auction raised more than \$250 for new plant material for the Children’s Garden. The parade included such notables as the Preschoolers, three small kid scarecrows made by the Metcalf preschool class; Hoorah 4 Halloween, was an adult and baby scarecrow wearing coordinating Halloween t-shirts that were made by the Children’s Discovery Museum; and Joy of Fall, was a girl with long braids jumping for fall made by the at Illinois State’s Family and Consumer Science. You can go to the Horticulture Center’s website to see a poster of all the entries. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the scarecrows and supported the center with their time and effort. And thank you to all of the individuals that bid on them and took them home.

Here were the winners and runner ups that were chosen by attendees for specific categories.

Favorite

Hello Fall made by Jeremy, Lydia, and Nicole Wilcox

Hooray for Halloween made by the Children’s Discovery Museum

Preschoolers made by Metcalf Preschoolers

Unique

Gaga for Growing Grounds made by Growing Grounds

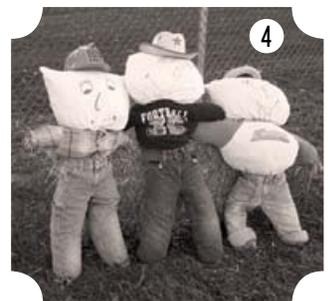
Dr. Gram Stain made by Barb Reinagle and Laura Monczunski, Illinois State
Biological Sciences

Scariest

Four and Twenty made by the Garlic Press

Dr. P.W. made by the ISU Horticulture Center

HorticultureCenter.IllinoisState.edu/events/documents/groupphotosportrait_2010.pdf



1. Four and Twenty
2. Hello Fall
3. Gaga for Growing Grounds
4. Preschoolers

Sculptures in the Garden

By Brittney Whitted

The center hosted its first ever Sculptures in the Garden on September 9. The goal for the event was for the public to gain appreciation for art in the garden and increase their awareness of prevalent environmental concerns through the sculptures that adorned the center. The three sculptors for the event were Grant Walsh, Mac Condill, and Jeff Garland.



The evening began at 5 p.m. when people of all ages began strolling through the gardens, admiring the sculptures, and learning more about environmental concerns, such as the importance and plight of bees.

Grant Walsh, an undergraduate student in the College of Fine Arts, has provided the center with his creativity and passion for nature since 2009. Grant, along with Horticulture Center volunteers, created six sculptures for this event, with his most popular being the Bluebells hung in the trees. The Bluebells, wind chimes constructed from 2-liter bottles, illustrated the amount of plastic that is produced in a year.

Mac Condill, a 1999 Illinois State University Agriculture Department alum and manager at the Great Pumpkin Patch in Arthur, has provided the center with a wealth of knowledge and support since it was established in 2005. He is the center's go to guy for anything cucurbit! For this event,

Condill used what he knew best and created a pyramid of cucurbits (pumpkins, gourds, and squash) showcasing the diversity of the pumpkin family. Condill and his crew set up similar displays throughout the United States this fall, including Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania and the White House in Washington, D.C.

Jeff Garland, a College of Fine Arts alum and teacher at Illinois College in Jacksonville, contacted Jessica Chambers in 2009 about displaying sculptures at the Horticulture Center that he had created. For this event Garland had eight sculptures on display that celebrate nature with their kinetic elements. Garland's most popular sculptures were the Prairie Totem Poles. The original totem pole, which was placed at the entrance of the prairie, was created to celebrate the prairie's flora and fauna. Garland created a new ten-foot totem pole for the event that consisted of a red bird and bear to symbolize education at Illinois State.

Exhibitors were also present to discuss important environmental concerns the world is facing. Matt Aldeman, technical assistant for the Illinois State Center for Renewable Energy, explained the importance and use of the wind turbine, the largest sculpture at the center and its only source of power. McLean County Master Gardeners distributed information on the importance of recycling plastic garden pots and programs available to gardeners in the county. Other exhibitors present were Illinois State Health Promotion and Wellness and the Department of Family and Consumer Science.

The gardens were at their peak, the weather was just right, the sculptures raised appreciation and awareness, and everyone that visited the center had a great time. Once again it was a time for the Horticulture Center, as well as the sculptors, to spread their passion for all things green.

The Horticulture Center would like to thank everyone who was involved in Sculptures in the Garden. The night would not have been the same without you!



Volunteer Spotlight

Linda Busing

By Linda Busing

I decided to volunteer at Illinois State University Horticulture Center when Mike, my husband started working for the center in spring 2008. Mike would come home with stories about what was going on at the center, about people he had met, and about how everyone was so down to earth. Working in an office atmosphere at State Farm, this volunteer opportunity seemed like my chance to get involved with something that Mike and I could do together, and also get me outside to enjoy nature. Since I started volunteering, I have gained more than I bargained for. I have learned a bit about plant life and have had the opportunity to work with a group of volunteers that I really enjoy.

I enjoy seeing the transformation the center takes on, from early spring to late fall. Not having a “green thumb,” I have learned that you do not have to know everything about what you are doing in order to be a volunteer. Fellow volunteers are always more than glad to share their expertise, knowledge, or opinions on the different plants and flowers or whatever we may be doing. While this volunteering can be very physical sometimes, I feel energized after I have put in a good morning’s work of planting flowers, mulching, or doing any special project, such as helping in the vegetable garden.

I am continually amazed at the ideas that the Horticulture Center comes up with to plan such events as the Autumnal Festival each year. It is rewarding to know that I have contributed in my own small way to making the center a place where Illinois State students, kids of all school ages, and the community can come to enjoy and learn while expanding their knowledge of plant life and nature.



Linda and Mike



Linda and Cathy harvesting pumpkins



Volunteer celebration at Sugar Grove Nature Center

By Jacob Kuban

Peering at the Galilean moons of Jupiter, sighting craters on the moon, and celebrating another wonderful year of volunteers with the company of great food at Sugar Grove was the scene for this past year's Horticulture Center Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.

Jessica Chambers put together decorative invitations to the event containing plant material produced at the Horticulture Center. The event, held on November 16, 2010, began with appetizers with wine.

I could feel the closeness of everyone in the Sugar Grove Nature Center. I got to see how this group of volunteers works and socializes so well together, while also accomplishing many goals at the Horticulture Center.

Dinner was served, and many volunteers and workers were recognized for their dedication and spirit towards Horticulture at Illinois State University. A movie then was played that featured pictures of many volunteers in action serving more than 1,500 volunteer hours for the 2010 year.

The evening concluded with guest speakers from Twin City Amateur Astronomers and a showing of Jupiter and close up of the moon. Though it was a chilly night, togetherness and celebrating of each other and the field of Horticulture (with a little hot apple cider) helped keep everyone warm.

The following recipe is an Etta and Brittnay Whitted recipe. We used it for several of the events during the year including the Children's Garden Planting Party and Sculptures in the Garden.

Chewy honey cookies

1 1/2 c. butter/Crisco or half butter and half Crisco

2 c. sugar

1/2 c. honey

2 eggs

2 tsp. vanilla

4 1/2 c. flour

4 tsp. soda

1/2 tsp. salt

Mix and chill several hours. Roll into balls and roll balls into sugar.
Bake on ungreased cookie sheet at 350 degrees for about 14 minutes.

2011 Schedule of events

March 5, 8 a.m.–3 p.m. at Central Catholic in Bloomington

Home, Lawn, and Garden Day

Sponsored by University of Illinois Extension and McLean County Master Gardeners.

The center will have an information booth and exhibit.

April 9, Friday, 10 a.m.–3 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. at IWU Shirk Center

Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo

Sponsored by the Ecology Action Center and Illinois Wesleyan University.

The center will have an information booth and exhibit.

April 29

Arbor Day

The Horticulture Center celebrates all of the trees that have been sponsored.

June 16

ISU Day at the Cornbelters

Join us for a pregame dinner and tour the gardens.

June 29, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Children's Garden Party—Celebrating 100 years of agriculture

Help plant the Children's Garden, work on garden crafts, participate in farming activities and games, and enjoy refreshments. Make sure to wear your gardening clothes!

July 4

The 4th at the Hort

A private celebration for Friends of the center, volunteers, and staff

September 8

Celebrating 1911: An Evening Affair

The Department of Agriculture will be celebrating its 100th birthday this year. As part of that celebration the Horticulture Center will establish a 1911 garden. Spend the evening strolling through the gardens and learn more about the type of food that was grown 100 years ago.

September 9

Celebrating 1911: A Fundraising Dinner Event

A fundraiser event in the evening that includes a tour of the gardens, a guest presenter, and concludes with dinner that has a menu featuring vegetables and herbs from the 1911 garden, as well as other local foods.

October 1, 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Autumnal Festival

Celebrate autumn with your family at our annual Autumnal Festival. Enjoy family activities, purchase your pumpkins and gourds, get lost in our corn maze, and pick out your favorite scarecrow.

November, TBA

Healthy You, Healthy Earth

Illinois State's annual wellness and environmental fair. The event will highlight the Seven Dimensions of Wellness to share information, provide resources, and educate those in attendance about healthy lifestyles and environmental stewardship. The center will have an information booth and exhibit.

November, TBA

Volunteer celebration

Private celebration for volunteers and staff.



Native visitors

This past summer we were lucky to have a couple of native visitors to the center. They included a juvenile red tailed hawk and two blue herons. The hawk munched on our “extra” rabbits and mice, keeping our population in check. We spent volunteer evenings working under his watch. He seemed to have no worries that we were within a couple feet of him. Someone must have invited the blue herons to the 4th at the Hort event because they showed up that evening and were present for a short while.

Wanted: New ideas for a garden

This past summer the center’s official first garden, the *Viburnum Walk*, was removed. As gardeners we want our shrubs and trees to be stately, our roses to look beautiful, and our garden beds to be weeded and mulched to perfection. Sometimes no matter how hard we have worked bad things can happen that are beyond our control. Case in point, the *Viburnum Walk*. Most of the viburnums in the garden were dead or were dying. On closer inspection most of them had viburnum borers at the base of their trunks. The viburnums had been stressed since the second year of their planting because the flow of water coming from Heartland Community College gets back-logged at the center and through the Illinois State University Golf Course. They had very poor drainage, making them more susceptible to disease and pests.

It was sad to pull these plants out because they represented partnerships with the Fell Arboretum, as well as Green View Nursery. A lot of work had gone into the care of these shrubs as they were the volunteers’ first gardening project at the center. But I feel there is also opportunity as well. It is a chance to build and create something than can thrive and do better in that particular situation. I think that is a gift that gardening gives to us—the opportunity of rebirth and to try again. This year we will keep the berms where the shrubs were mulched and weeded, and wait for that new idea. If you have any ideas, please e-mail them to Horticulture@IllinoisState.edu. Perhaps you can a play a part in the rebirth of a garden.



The ISU Horticulture Center would like to thank our volunteers, friends, and donors for a successful season in 2010!

Mary Akers
AGR Classes 203, 252, and 352
Agriculture Alumni

Organization
Brett Arseneault
Kate Arthur
Robert Bone Jr.
Elizabeth Burke
Mike and Linda Busing
Casey's Garden Center
Center for Renewable Energy
Emmi Chambers
Jason and Jessica Chambers
John and Katie Chambers
Sheryl Chambers
David and Laura Coe
Mac Condill
Jonathan Damery

Russ and Clint Derango
ISU Farm
Sue Fish
Patti Florez
Monica Fuller
Jeff Garland
Dave and Deborah Gentry
Janet Goucher
Green View Garden Center
Grieder Landscape & Nursery
Dave Gentry—Growmark
Growing Grounds
Jeremy Haag
Annette Hancock
Annette Herman
Lotus Hershberger
ISU Horticulture Club
Linda Klawitter
Dave Kopsell
Jacob Kuban
Eliot Lagacy
Jennifer Lindquist
Lisa Marshall

Denny Mays
Bill Mitchell
Shirley Murphy
Nick Pershey
Chaemere Poole
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Rob Rhykerd
Mike Rich
Maria and Scott Roberts
Monique Roberts
Tudy Schmied
Chuck and Vicki Scott
Katherine Scott
Eric Seymour
Kent Seymour
Vern Shepherd
David Sparks
State Farm Companies
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Karen Stephens
Joe and Charlotte Talkington
Adria Thomas
Marilyn Townly

Catherine Trowbridge
Janet and John Tulley
Anna Mae Tulley
Grant Walsh
Andy and Etta Whitted
Brittnay Whitted
Gary Wilde
Kevin Wiand
William Wiand
Alyson Yeary

“Go into the world and do well. But more importantly, go into the world and do good.”

—Minor Myers Jr.

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HOURS OF OPERATION

dawn to dusk

LOCATION

the center is located on Raab Road in Normal between Heartland and Lincoln Colleges.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

contact Jessica Chambers at (309) 438-3496 or e-mail Horticulture@IllinoisState.edu

the ISU Horticulture Center is part of the Department of Agriculture within the College of Applied Science and Technology

