



Gardenfest

ready, set, grow

Saturday, April 12, 2025 | 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Luecht Auditorium at MCC, Building B, 8900 U.S. Highway 14, Crystal Lake

www.mchenry.edu/gardenfest

Keynote, 9–10 a.m. | Living in the Presence of Plants | Roy Diblik

We all have ideas of what style of gardens we'd like to plant—native gardens, rain gardens, nature-inspired gardens, herb gardens, pollinator gardens, cut flower gardens, ecological gardens, and more. There are plenty of titles and names, but what about the practices behind them? How conscious are you about what these garden names truly mean? Often, these garden titles are vague and even market-driven.

In this session, Roy will share his story of living in the presence of plants, being conscious of their resonance and relationality. Patient and always curious, he has come to understand and develop clear thoughts and ideas about who plants are and how they live—and that defines his story as a grower. As Roy deepened his understanding of plants and collaborated with plant-driven people, he began designing gardens, gradually placing plants in social relationships. This journey led him to become a cultural gardener—a gardener interacting with plants with care and love.

Session One | 10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

Choose one of the following sessions:

Plants with Superpowers

Daniel Gerdes

Discover plants that can have a significant impact and bring big results to your garden and property. In this session, you'll learn how these plants contribute to our wellbeing and work on our behalf, in both built and unbuilt environments.

Hydroponics: Great Plants, No Dirt

Garrett Beier

Are you interested in hydroponics, but don't know where to start? In this session, we will cover what hydroponic growing is, explore the types of systems that are used, and discuss common problems. Come find out if hydroponics is right for you!

Teas, Tisanes, and Tea Gardens

Christina Rank

What is a tea garden and where can you find them? Can you plant your own? Learn all about tea gardens as we explore the history of real tea and herbal tisanes, discussing the differences between the two and explaining how they have been used throughout history. You'll also get to sip on some herbal tisane samples prepared specially for this program!



Orchids Demystified

Johannes Pieterse

A 25-year veteran of the growing industry, Johanne Pieterse (JP) began his career working with his family's cut rose greenhouse in Amstelveen, the Netherlands. At the young age of 26, he purchased and managed his own expansive greenhouse operation which produced 10 million stems annually. In 2012, JP came to the U.S. to manage an 8-acre orchid facility producing 1.8 million Phalaenopsis orchids yearly. His successful career continued when he became the General Manager of a 85-acre facility at Colorpoint, the sixth largest commercial greenhouse operation in the United States. He is the owner of Countryside Flower Shop, Nursery and Garden Center in Crystal Lake and Elburn.

The Culinary Garden #1

Joyce Lande and Raechal Maat

Two of MCC's chefs showcase delicious ways to add flavors from your garden to create sweet and savory dishes. You'll learn how to use garden "waste" parts and incorporate fresh and dried herbs into culinary dishes. We'll also provide tastings and finish with a tour of the culinary lab. *Class limited to 20 students.*

Watercolor Explorations—Additional fee for class and materials: \$45

Venarella Hinkle

Take a journey in watercolor and paint a beautiful Monarch butterfly! This workshop will be a hands-on, step-by-step painting project suitable for beginner and intermediate explorers. The class goal is to finish a painting of the classic floating beauty, the Monarch. All supplies are provided. *This class will take place from 10:15 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Class limited to 24 students.*

Session Two | 11:30–12:30 p.m.

Choose one of the following sessions:

Nature Journaling

Kim Darby and Cathy Klink

Looking for a way to strengthen your connection to nature? Whether you're in your own yard or garden, a local forest preserve, park, or traveling, there are always opportunities to connect with the environment. Nature journaling is a wonderful way to build confidence and increase your awareness of the natural world around you. Join Master Gardeners Kim and Cathy as they walk you through this rewarding practice.

Vegetables 101

Rich Tobiasz

You'd like to grow your own healthy vegetables—but where do you start? In this session, we'll discuss site selection, soil, fertility, and choosing cool and warm season vegetables that are sure to result in success.

Pond Gardening

Barb Kindinger

Barb Kindinger holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture from Kansas State University and has been a Landscape Designer of Countryside for over 40 years. She mixes a passion for design with a love of plants to help create and install for her clients everything from front foundation plantings to patios and water features. Barb is a member with the Landscape Design Association (LDA) and the Midwest Ecological Landscape Association (MELA). When not in her own garden, Barb enjoys biking and traveling with her family.

Gardening In the Shade

Kim Hartmann

Discover shade-loving plants that work well and look great in your home garden. We'll go beyond the most common shade plants and provide new options for those shady places in your landscape. Learn to grow your own garden of "shady characters."

Greenhouse Tour #1

Mandy Hood

The MCC Greenhouse includes three bays of plants and plenty of learning. Join Mandy as she leads a tour of the MCC Greenhouse and discusses the construction, facilities, and plants grown there. Plan to spend a few extra minutes in Bay #3, which houses the hydroponic and aquaponic gardens. *Class limited to 20 students.*



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Session Three | 1:30–2:30 p.m.
Choose one of the following sessions:

A Crash Course in Tree and Shrub Selection

Garrett Beier

Adding trees and shrubs is a great way to diversify your landscape, but choosing the right ones can be quite overwhelming. In this session, we'll cover the most important attributes of different trees and shrubs and discuss conditions that need to be considered before making selections.

Pests and Disease in the Vegetable Garden

Rich Tobiasz

Something is eating your vegetables—and it isn't you. The leaves have spots, and the plant appears to be dying. What's a gardener to do? Join Rich as he discusses the pests and diseases that may affect your vegetable garden.

Arranging a Cut Flower Garden:

Growing with the End in Mind

Dana Garretson

Planning a cut flower garden begins with considering the types of arrangements you want to make, then planning and growing to meet those goals. In this session, we'll explore the types of flowers used in arrangements; discuss how to select plants based on bloom times, sequencing, and types; and walk through the development and care of a cut flower garden.

Beautiful Blooming Bulbs

Kim Hartmann

Be inspired by wide array of colors, forms, and fragrances of spring and summer blooming bulbs. Bulbs extend your season of bloom and add diversity to your landscape. Learn how you can create a stunning bulb display in your home landscape, along with selection and maintenance tips.

Greenhouse Tour #2

Mandy Hood

The MCC Greenhouse includes three bays of plants and plenty of learning. Join Mandy as she leads a tour of the MCC Greenhouse and discusses the construction, facilities, and plants grown there. Plan to spend a few extra minutes in Bay #3, which houses the hydroponic and aquaponic gardens. *Class limited to 20 students.*

Container Gardening—Additional class and materials fee of \$50 per person

Heather Moister

Create a spring-themed container garden to brighten your doorstep! Learn tips and tricks of the trade as you design containers that go beyond plants to become works of art. All supplies are provided. *This class will take place from 1:30–3:45 p.m. Class limited to 24 students.*

Session Four | 2:45–3:45 p.m.

Choose one of the following sessions:

Gardening in Comfort

Betty Lawler and Mary Zorc

Learn how to make gardening fulfilling, comfortable, and safe for gardeners of all ages by replacing commonly used gardening concepts, tools, equipment, and techniques for those that are ergonomically correct and better suited to the gardener's needs. Gardening adaptations can help prevent injury, pain, and limitations, allowing gardeners to continue doing what they love. This class includes a tool demonstration, giving participants the opportunity to see, handle, and ask questions about the tools.

Creating a Moon Garden

Kim Darby, Bonnie Rudolph, and Joan Roth

Learn how to create a moon garden—a magical place designed with evening enjoyment in mind, filled with night-blooming, night-fragrant, and luminous plants that reflect the moonlight and attract nocturnal pollinators.

The Weed Assassin's Guide

Ken Williams

If you struggle to keep up with weeds in your garden, this class contains a lifetime of knowledge in not only killing weeds, but preventing them in the first place. Many traditional garden practices that keep us stuck in endless yardwork are debunked and replaced with science-based, common-sense solutions.

The Culinary Garden #2

Joyce Lande and Raechal Maat

Two of MCC's chefs showcase delicious ways to add flavors from your garden to create sweet and savory dishes. You'll learn how to use garden "waste" parts and incorporate fresh and dried herbs into culinary dishes. We'll also provide tastings and finish with a tour of the culinary lab. *Class limited to 20 students.*



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