

MONTHLY PUBLICITY

MARCH 2020

Livingston County News

Genesee Country Express

LIVINGSTON COUNTY NEWS

Volunteers sought for upcoming 'Ag Literacy Week'

SPECIAL TO THE LCN

The Cornell Cooperative Extension of Livingston County's Ag in the Classroom program is seeking volunteers to help celebrate "Ag Literacy Week" in elementary schools across the county.

"Ag Literacy Week," which takes place annually across New York State, is scheduled for March 16 through 20. Each year, volunteers read a featured book to elementary school students and engage them in an exciting follow-up activity.

The program is currently seeking volunteers for this unique opportunity. Classroom visits can be scheduled throughout the month of March – not just during "Ag Literacy Week."

Volunteers are matched with their local school district whenever possible. Previous education or agriculture experience is not required and readers are provided with all of the nec-

essary supplies prior to their scheduled classroom visit.

This year's featured book is "Right This Very Minute" by Lisl H. Detlefsen.

"Right This Very Minute" connects the foods we find ourselves wanting during the course of a day to the work farmers are doing every day to grow, raise and produce that food. This book takes students on an explorative journey to trace the food on their plate back to its source – the farmer.

This is the 14th year of the program in Livingston County.

During the 2019 celebration, 22 volunteers shared the book "On the Farm, At the Market" with more than 2,100 students in 128 classrooms across Livingston and Monroe counties.

For more information on the program, contact Bernadette Harwood at (585) 991-5420, (585) 335-1752 or via email at beh53@cornell.edu.

LCN – MASTER GARDENER COLUMN

Get savvy about succulents

MASTER GARDENER



JULIE BROCKLEHURST-WOODS

It is that time of year: the holiday decorations have been put away, and there isn't much to look at in our homes on the long dark evenings.

How about a new plant? Many houseplants prefer moist soil, humid air and bright light, not the conditions most of us have in our homes.

So how about succulents, plants that enjoy dry air, and not too much water? These plants are quite popular now, partly for these reasons. There seems to be a myth floating around that they can be ignored. While this isn't true, more of these plants do die due to too much rather than too little water.

It is easy to find growing information on succulents, but much of what I have read is over-generalized. The word "succulent" refers to a diverse group of plants, and their needs do vary, especially in regard to the amount of moisture they will tolerate.

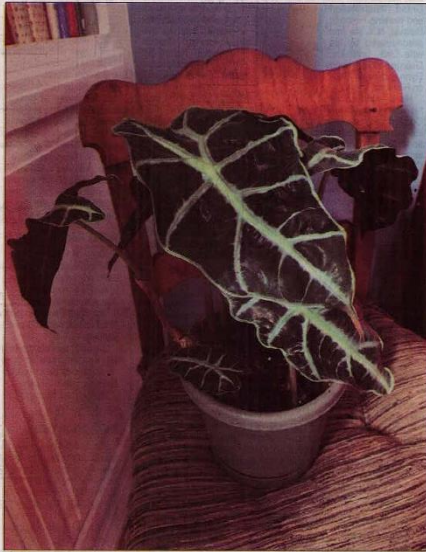
I have tried growing several varieties of succulents with some thriving and others meeting their demise.

Yep, I killed them with too much water. Usually they were smaller plants growing in a container that was too large for their root system, or in a container with inadequate drainage.

It's so much more convenient to use a container without drainage holes, instead of nesting with saucers. Just let the water soak in, then dump out the extra, right? Well, no. The problem is the bottom soil never dries out, just the top. The largest, deepest roots rot first, the ones supporting the outer leaves, and slowly the whole plant goes kaput. The plant will live months, but probably not years.

The other problem with indoor succulents is that they don't get enough light, and they get all stretched out (etiolated).

Echeveria is the name of a popular succulent that grows in a tight rosette, reminding



Julie Brocklehurst-Woods/Social to the LCN

Beloved plant. The African Mask Plant (*Alocasia*) has done well even with just being watered occasionally. Online instructions describe providing moist soil for the plant.

What's fun about many succulents is that it's pretty easy to grow new plants.

us of a flower. I've had it get stretched and miserable-looking when growing in my sunniest window, so I'm done with them. They really need to be kept under grow-lights in winter.

What's fun about many succulents is that it's pretty easy to grow new plants. If your Echeveria gets stretched, cut off the plant tip, let the end dry a day or two, then plant it in a small container. Water it just once, and it probably will root.

Individual leaves can also be rooted, though they will take much longer than a tip cutting to grow into a full plant. But this plant will never grow to a larger size if you chop off its head every year.

I've had the most success with jade and other members of the crassula family;

kalanchoes, and peperomias. My peperomias prefer bright light but not much direct sun, whereas crassulas thrive best in more direct sun.

I also love my African Mask Plant (*Alocasia*). While online instructions describe providing moist soil, I only water it occasionally and it does just fine. It came to me with some succulent plants from a friend who was moving, so for awhile I assumed it was a succulent.

Julie Brocklehurst-Woods has been a Master Gardener Volunteer with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Livingston County since 2002. She enjoys helping all gardeners become successful gardeners, especially helping people identify tools and strategies to prioritize and simplify their gardening tasks. She will answer gardening questions by email: JulieBW48@gmail.com.

Tree, shrub seedlings up for sale

MASTER GARDENER



JULIE BROCKLEHURST-WOODS

The Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District is again offering bare root tree and shrub seedlings at very affordable prices: most are \$1 each, minimum quantity of 10 per variety. Evergreens are three years old, 10 - 18 inches tall; deciduous tree and shrub seedlings are 1-2 years old, 10" - 24" tall. Most are available in minimum single-species groups of 10, for the purpose of land conservation.

For optimal success, be sure to select plants that are well-suited to your environment. The most adaptable trees on this list include Black Tupelo "Gum Tree," Burr Oak, and Tulp Tree. Black Tupelo has lovely red fall foliage, small flowers which are attractive to bees, and 16" fruits which birds enjoy. It has been recognized by Missouri Botanical Garden as a Plant of Merit. Its adaptability makes it suitable as a street tree. Height is up to 80 feet, so it could grow too tall to be located under utility wires.

These seedlings are available to homeowners for use on their own property, not to be re-sold. Tree and shrub landscaping is more supportive of our ecosystem than lawns. Areas of your yard with trees and shrubs will attract more birds and other wildlife, providing shelter and sometimes food.

Shrubs offered this year include Butterfly Bush, Rose of Sharon, purple Lilac, Nitebark, Arrowwood, Buttonbush, Hazelnut and Elderberry. The colors produced by these plants may be a surprise to you. The plants in these offerings are native species plants, and aren't necessarily the same varieties sold in garden centers.

Also available for use as groundcovers are ornamental fountain grass, an apricot daisy, and Hosta Albo Marginata (with white-edged leaves). Two varieties of Siberian iris are also offered this year: Blue King and Snow Queen. These iris are quite adaptable: they grow beautifully in a moist area, but I also remember this plant blooming nicely in my Mother-in-Law's sandy soil on Long Island.

The tree selections are very nice. Offerings include Sugar Maple, Northern Red Oak, Native White Birch, White Oak, Black Walnut and Sycamore, in addition to the adaptable varieties already mentioned. Evergreen trees include Colorado Blue and



Photo courtesy of Missouri Botanical Garden

The Black Gum Tree, a mature example of which is pictured above, is among the seedlings for sale by the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District.

web site, minimum order 25 per species. Google "New York State Tree Nursery" to find what is available.

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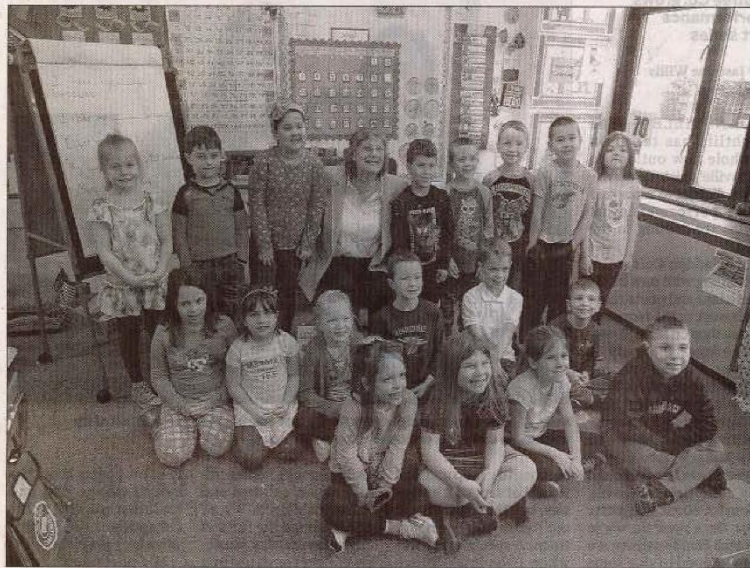
You may obtain the order form by sending an email to Robert.Stryker@ny.natdenet.net, or call (385) 489-0274. Ordering and payment deadline is March 18, 2020. Your purchase must be picked up on April 17 or 18 behind the county Highway Department buildings, 3360 Gypsy Lane at Hampton Corners in Groveland.

The plants being sold in this program are well-suited to our weather and soil conditions. Your purchase of these plants supports the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District programs.

Additional seedling selections are listed on the DEC

GENESEE COUNTRY EXPRESS

Ag in the Classroom seeks volunteers for Ag Literacy Celebration in March



Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes participated in last year's festivities. (PHOTO PROVIDED)

Staff reports

The Cornell Cooperative Extension of Livingston County Ag in the Classroom (AIRC) Program is seeking volunteers to help celebrate Ag Literacy Week in Elementary Schools across the county.

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exciting follow-up activity.

The AIRC program is currently seeking volunteers for this unique opportunity. Classroom visits can be scheduled throughout the month of March – not just during Ag Literacy Week.

Volunteers are matched with their local school district whenever possible. Previous education and/or agriculture experience is not required and readers are provided with all of the necessary supplies prior to their scheduled classroom visit.

This year's featured book is *Right This Very Minute* by Lisl H. Detlefsen.

Right This Very Minute connects the foods we find ourselves wanting during the course of a day to the work farmers are doing every day to grow, raise and produce our food. This book will take students on an explorative journey to trace the food on their plate back to its source – the farmer.

This is the 14th year of the program in Livingston County.

During the 2019

celebration, the Livingston County Ag in the Classroom Program shared the book *On the Farm, At the Market* with more than 2,100 students (128 classrooms) across Livingston and Monroe counties. Twenty-two volunteers participated in Ag Literacy festivities.

For more information on the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Livingston County Ag in the Classroom Program, contact Bernadette Harwood at 585-991-5420 | 585-335-1752 or beh53@cornell.edu.

4-H holds 'Produced in NY' demonstration

Staff reports

Livingston County was brimming with 49 talented 4-H members at the annual Produced in New York Food Demonstration event. Creative use of a New York ingredient was abundant, as 4-H members prepared a recipe in front of judges, offered a sample for evaluation, and answered questions from the judges and audience members.

This year's recipes included Peanut Butter Honey Energy Bites, Cauliflower Soup, Corn Pudding, Maple Snickerdoodles, Meatball Sliders, Blueberry Scones and more.

The event offers a chance to learn about NY food products and demonstrate culinary skills. It also serves as a fun introduction to presenting in public. Since several 4-H members present at the same time, this event can help youth build confidence in a less stressful setting.

4-H Educator Renee Hopkins said, "You can really see confidence bloom during this event."

Youth learn how to harness their nerves and develop confidence in themselves by pushing through those jitters and creating food that families get excited about."

Congratulations to the presenters: Eden Arnold, Dalton Bennett, Julianna Braun, Marshall Braun, Michaela Bugman, Rowyn Carter, Victoria Charlebois, Finn Cole, Jayden Coty, Audrey de Wit, Rian de Wit, Valarie Ellis, Devon Flick, Lindsay Flick, Fiona Gelb, Ty Halpenny, Alyssa Healy, Amara Jerome, Kamryn Jerome, Aydan

Low, Aaron Lubberts, 4-H program through the Cheyenne Lubberts,

Brooke McGregor, Luca Mennucci, Maddalena Mennucci, Madelyn Mulvaney, Logan Nowak, Colten Potts, Courtney Potts, Adrianna Robb, Kaelub Rodgers, Howie Sexton, Lucy Sexton, Lily Sharp, Onnolee Shutt, Reid Shutt, Emily Vattimo and Adelyn VerHague.

Cloverbud presenters (ages 5-7) included: Meredith Bugman, Bridget Cole, Madelyn Coty, Tucker Drum, Nathalie Gelb, Kiara Gramkee, Payton Halpenny, Aryia Marcellus, Giuseppe Mennucci, Elizabeth Mensinger and Sophia Young.

Due to their outstanding demonstrations, the following members have been invited to participate at the Produced in New York Food Demonstrations at the New York State Fair this August: Devon Flick, Lindsay Flick, Aydan Low, Lucy Sexton, Lily Sharp and Reid Shutt.

Many thanks to volunteer judges Joyce Benham, Mary Clark, Carolyn Czarnecki, Ann Davis, Bekah Finster, Marcel Prutkoff, Tim Hayes, Donna Lindsay, Margaret Linsner, Gardner Low, Anna Macauley, Becky Munsch, Ron Niedermaier, Mary Ann Schramberg, Holly Watson, Sue Werner, and Michalle Wolgast.

This year's event was held at the United Methodist Church of Livonia and the Scottsburg United Methodist Church.

For more information about the Livingston County 4-H Program, contact Cornell Cooperative Extension of Livingston County at 585-991-5420 | 585-335-1752.

Children can enroll in the 4-H program through the end of March 2020.