

Roots and Shoots

Volume 30, Issue 3

April 2014

Monroe County Master Gardeners Association

Master Gardeners award grants

By Nancy White



Special points of interest:

- ◆ Earn hours mentoring one of our grant winners
- ◆ Area groups offer spring plant sales
- ◆ Enter contests for container design or photography
- ◆ Vinca minor can be invasive
- ◆ Seed or transplant? Read Rosie Lerner's take
- ◆ Send your favorite recipe to Paula Perron

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The MCMGA grant committee has announced eight 2014 grants to non-profits for gardening projects for the current growing season. In the past four years, we have given grants to 20 different agencies in Monroe County. We should be proud to have helped others grow in many different ways.

One of the 2014 grants will go to The Academy of Science and Entrepreneurship, an MCCSC magnet school, to establish a rain garden on school property. A grant goes to the Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington to enlarge its Camp Rock garden project on Lake Lemon. Crawford House will establish a garden area on its grounds, maintained by the residents.

The Evangelical Community Church will install a simple irrigation system in its church garden where all produce grown is donated to Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Girls INC is using its grant monies to develop a science and wildlife preserve where members will install native plants to attract wildlife. The Bloomington Community Orchard will collaborate with students from Tri North Middle School to plant native shrubs and plants during Youth Global Service Day.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard will offer workshops to allow families to gain gardening skills, and the Boys and Girls Club of Ellettsville will purchase curriculum materials, seeds, and soil for its gardening education project.

One aspect of the MCMGA community grant program is to provide education and support each year to our grant winners. These mentors visit the agency and give guidance on planning and completing the agency's project. Just being an interested friend who offers encouragement often can ensure success with these creative projects. This is not a time-consuming activity but is rewarding, and mentorship qualifies for volunteer hours. If you would like to assist one of our grant winning agencies, please contact Nancy White.

Member news

By Evelyn Harrell



The extension meeting room was filled at the March General Meeting with 63 Master Gardeners, ranging from interns to veterans, who earned two hours of education credit and greatly enjoyed Marie Fleming's informative and engaging talk on collecting and saving seeds and making your own potting soil. The presentation generated a lot of questions both during and after the program. Marie brought several items to give away in a drawing, including a variety of her gathered seeds, leafy starts of goji berry plants, fresh eggs, and maple sap. She also demonstrated how she mixes her potting soil and the tricks she has learned to plant seeds in flats filled with her very friable potting soil. There was an attempt after the meeting to interest her in providing her potting soil for sale at the Garden Fair Master Garden Booth. She said she'd look into it!

Nancy White and Karen King announced that for the first time there were more requests from vendors for booth space than could be accommodated. Nancy also announced that feedback from the vendors indicates they like the idea that profits from the event go to support local gardening efforts through our grant program.

Garden Fair is April 5

By the time you read this, the 5th annual MCMGA Garden Fair will be history. Your participation in the event is necessary to put on such a successful community event. Vendors and attendees are encouraged to fill out a survey expressing their impressions of the event, pro and con, and comments are carefully considered by the planning committee. If you, the members, have thoughts to share, good or not so good, please send them to Nancy at nwhite38@hotmail.com. Your input is extremely valuable!

Our website is updated

Go to our website, www.mcmga.net, for many different kinds of information, including information about the 2014 Purdue Master Garden State Conference and ways to register at the link to *Upcoming Events*. A drawing for a scholarship to the State Conference was held at the March 25 meeting, and Robin Rothe is the winner of the \$100 scholarship awarded by the MCMGA board. Congratulations, Robin!

Have you visited our Facebook page?

While you are online checking out our updated website, also check our Facebook page. You'll find the link on our website.

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Seed collecting a popular topic

By Susan Lovell



In spite of the continuing chilly weather, more than 60 Master Gardeners, interns and guests attended the general meeting on March 25. The meeting room at the extension office was filled to capacity to hear our speaker, Marie Fleming, certified permaculture designer and teacher, present *Seed Collecting, Saving, and Starting*.

Marie recruited volunteers to assist her in separating seeds from unwanted debris (her most recognizable seed was milkweed) and placed them in an envelope for our members to take home to plant in that perfect place.

Marie also discussed the components of a good, rich potting soil specifically for supporting seeds in the early growth period. Her easy manner made seed collecting, saving and starting seem accessible and not a daunting endeavor. We thank her for sharing her knowledge, experience and passion with us.

Special thanks to the refreshment committee for providing the tasty, healthy snacks prior to the start of our session. The volunteers included Mary Cusack aided by daughter Erin; Mary Hoffmann; Jessica Wilson; Dale Wilkins; Muff Johnson; and Tom Lovell.

We were reminded during the meeting of our many upcoming activities, including the Garden Fair, Garden Walk, Front Yard Judging Contest, and our May general meeting. Our general meeting on May 27 will be held at the Fairgrounds Community Building, 5700 W. Airport Road at 6:30 p.m. On our agenda is a pot luck dinner, recognition of our graduating interns, and our popular annual plant swap.

Our refreshment committee for the May pot luck dinner includes Cindy Benson, Laramie Wilson, Mary Cusack, and Tom Lovell.

As always, we will need extra hands to help set up and cover the tables and clean up at night's end. Please call me at 812 339 5914 or email me at smlovell@indiana.edu if you are available to help at the dinner.

Member news (continued from page 2)

May general meeting is Tuesday, May 27

Watch for more information about our May general meeting. There will be a pitch-in supper and recognition of interns, as well as the popular annual plant swap. Who has not benefitted from the plant swap! It's great fun to find new plants for your garden and a wonderful opportunity to find a new home for plants that have outstayed their welcome at your house. Pot them up in some kind of container, mark them with the name and growing information (shade, sun, water preference, height), bring them to the swap, and wave a guilt-free goodbye.

Daffodil Show at Holiday Park on April 19

By Lynn Courson



Need a dose of spring to lift your spirits? The Indiana Daffodil Society is holding its annual Daffodil Show at Holiday Park in Indianapolis on Saturday, April 19, 2:00-5:00 p.m. Numerous examples of all the sub-sections of daffodils will be presented. (Did you know there are over 27,000 varieties of daffodils? However, not all of them will be represented at the show!) A detailed show schedule can be found here: <http://www.indianadaffodilsociety.org/idsevents.htm>. Yes, this is Easter weekend, but the show had to be postponed to this date because the cold weather delayed flowering. In the South, people call jonquils Easter flowers, so I guess this is true for us this year.

Our Garden Walk is June 15

By Mary Jane Hall



This year our annual Garden Walk has a new look and will be held a different day. The walk is Sunday, June 15, and as usual, three of our members have offered their gardens to explore and enjoy. The time is late afternoon, providing plenty of time for Purdue Master Gardener State Conference attendees to return to Bloomington, be rested, and join in the walk. This year we will not have a picnic following the walk; instead, we are having a pitch-in dinner at our May general meeting. Members will receive Garden Walk invitations that provide a list of the gardens, visit times, and driving directions.

Master Gardener Tips and Recipe Book

By Paula Perron



A committee, Pam Hall, Sydley Skolnik, and Paula Perron, has volunteered to gather members' gardening tips and recipes to create a book called *Master Gardeners Garden Tips and Cookbook*.

We now have about half a dozen really good recipes sent to us. Even though the deadline is a few months away, we will gladly receive your recipes and garden tips any time you are inspired to do so.

Just type your garden tips and favorite recipes into an email and send them to mgrcipebook@yahoo.com.

Plant Sales

Submitted by Dave Dunatchik



Friends of McCormick's Creek State Park Annual Native Plant Sale

Saturday, April 12, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

McCormick's Creek State Park Nature Center

Several native plant species available for purchase
Questions contact: sarthur@dnr.in.gov or 812-829-4344

The Friends of Brown County State Park Annual Plant Sale

Saturday, April 26, 9:00 a.m. and runs until sold out, usually around 1:00 p.m.

Brown County State Park Nature Center

We concentrate on native wildflowers, but many other varieties are included.

Questions contact: friendsbcsp@gmail.com or (812) 988-5240

Hoosier Hills Career Center, 3070 N. Prow Road, Bloomington

Thursday, May 8 or Friday, May 9, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Call or email for an order form. Pay when you pick up plants. Order annuals, perennials, vegetables, and herbs now. Pick up plants on May 8 or May 9 between 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. For order form or information, contact Amy at 812-330-7730 or at aremsbur@mccsc.edu.

Indiana Native Plant & Wildflower Society,

Plant Sale & Auction on the theme *Native Alternatives for Gardening*

Saturday, May 10, 2014, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Park Tudor School, Upper Gymnasium, 7200 N. College Avenue, Indianapolis IN 46240 (Use the 71st Street entrance)

Pre-sale presentation starts at 9:30 for a \$10 fee. The fee entitles ticket holders to hear a talk, begin shopping 15 minutes before the general public, and receive a \$10 discount on any auction purchase. Plant sale and book sale open 10:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Live auction of special or rare plants begins at 11:00 a.m. and continues with general sale plants until every plant is sold. For general information, logon to www.inpaws.org.

Purdue State Master Gardener Conference contests

Container Contest

The purpose is to create a unique or breathtaking garden in a container. To enter, contest participants fill out the *Grow It Forward* 2014 Container Contest Entry Form and email the form to dcgardensinbloom@aol.com or mail the form to 1400 Westfield Court, Indianapolis, IN 46220. All entries must be postmarked by May 15, 2014.

Contest rules

The height of the container must measure a minimum of 12 inches.

The diameter of the container must not exceed 24 inches.

The plants must be suitable for a full sun or a shade display.

Color, texture and form of the plants should relate to the container.

Use a minimum of 3 plants of any kind and no more than 7 plants.

Judging will be conducted by *Grow It Forward* conference participants in the categories of **Best Use of Plants**, **Best Use of Color**, **Most Artistic** and **People's Choice Award**. A gift card to an online nursery will be given to winners in each category.

Registration deadline is May 15, 2014. Entries will be accepted on Friday, June 13, 2014 from 7:15 a.m.-8:15 a.m. Submit only one entry per person.

Contest judging will take place on Friday, June 13, 2014 starting at 12:30 p.m. and ending after the evening banquet. Winners will be announced on Saturday, June 14, 2014 at the last general session. Containers can be removed after the last general session on Saturday, June 14, 2014.

If you would like to donate your container for the *Grow It Forward* Silent Auction, we would be happy to accept your donation. Please mark "Yes" or "No" on your registration form.

Photo Contest

The Photo Contest for the 2014 Purdue Master Gardener State Conference is open for entries from March 1 to May 1, 2014.

Any Purdue Master Gardener may enter the photo contest: one need not be attending the conference to enter or win. Each Master Gardener may submit (continued on page 7)

A huge thank you to our members

By Nancy White

By the time this *Roots and Shoots* issue goes to press, the April Garden Fair will have been held. To all who spent time in planning, implementing, and working the 2014 Garden Fair, thank you for helping to meet our Master Gardener purpose of helping others grow. More detailed information on the day's activities will be in our May issue.

Purdue State Master Gardener Conference contests

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up to three (3) digital entries. Of course, photos must have been taken by the Master Gardener entering them in the contest. The entries will be judged by a professional photographer. All entries will be displayed, and winners will be announced at the state conference. Prizes will be awarded to the **Best of Show** and **First, Second, Third place** winners in the following categories:

Plant portraits (generally close ups of individual plants)

Garden Scenes/Landscapes

Vegetables and Fruits

Critters in the Garden

Each photo entry must be submitted as a JPEG attachment and emailed to the Photo Contest co-chairman Meredith Hull at mhull@iupui.edu by the deadline May 1, 2014. The text message of each email entry must include the following:

Master Gardener's name and email address

County of Master Gardener affiliation

Name and email address of the county Master Gardener Coordinator

Title of the photo entered

The Marion County Master Gardener Association will reserve the right to publish copies of the photos entered. For more information about the contest, contact Meredith Hull (mhull@iupui.edu, 317 996-4380).

Designing a flower bed with view in mind

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist



A private garden need only please its owner; after all, taste is very individual. But while beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, there are some basic garden design principles to keep in mind.

An important consideration that drives the rest of the design is function. How will the garden be seen? Is this bed to be enjoyed primarily by those looking out the window from inside the house? Is it to be viewed by people in cars or pedestrians passing by? Or is the bed part of an outdoor room? Do you want to view the bed while sitting out on the patio, or is it meant to entice one to walk through?

The size of the flowerbed will be determined by factors such as function, and, of course, budget. If you're new to gardening, it's probably best to start small at first—you can always expand later.

Most garden books advise three basic design rules. Tall plants to the back, complementary color schemes and massing of flowers for effect. In general, you won't want taller plants to block the view of shorter flowers. However, if the bed can be viewed from all directions rather than just one side, perhaps the tallest plants should be placed in the middle, with smaller plants toward the perimeter. For those with a taste for the extraordinary, dare to defy the rules and create a surprise garden by tucking some smaller flowers behind the taller-stemmed plants. This technique can be effective for gardens that invite intimate visits.

Once you've determined a function, decide on a focal point or a center of attention. The focal point can be a plant or group of plants, a pond, a statue or any other object you want to catch the eye. The other elements of your design should serve to enhance the focal point, not compete with it. Because of the seasonal nature of gardens, the focal point can change throughout the year.

Certain color combinations tend to be more pleasing than others, but what is harmonious to one person may be less so to another observer. A useful tool for color design is known as the color wheel. Colors that are directly across from each other on the wheel are known as complementary. Purple and yellow, blue and orange, and red and green are considered to be complimentary color combinations. Analogous harmony uses colors directly next to each other on the wheel. For example, blue and green or blue and violet are also considered to be pleasing combinations. A color scheme using various shades of a single color is known as monochromatic. A multicolored design will tend to have a more informal look.

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Volunteer opportunities

Compiled by Nancy White

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Gardens	year around	various	Charlotte Griffin, 345-8128
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Herman Young, 322-5700 Jeanie Cox, 360-3587
MCMGA Garden Walk Committee	year around	select gardens and plan picnic	Evelyn Harrell, 339-0572
Bloomington Community Orchard	seasonal	various	Stacey Decker, getinvolved@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org
Cheryl's Garden at Karst Farm Park	summer	design and maintain	Linda Emerson, 345-2913 (cell)
T. C. Steele SHS	seasonal	various	Davie Kean, 988-2785
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens	seasonal	various	Cathy Meyer, 349-2575
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	inquiries & research	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	various	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Newsletter	year around	write articles	Helen Hollingsworth, 332-7313
MCMGA Web Site	year around	various	Stephen Anderson, 360-1216
MG Program Committee Member	year around	plan MG programs	Sandy Belth, 825-8353 Susan Lovell, 339-5914
Middle Way House	seasonal	various	Clara Wilson, 333-7404
Wylie House	year around	various	Sherry Wise, 855-6224
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard	year around	education, resource	Kendra Brewer, garden@mhcfodpantry.org
WonderLab Garden	2 times monthly	various	Nancy White, 824-4426
Hoosier Hills Foodbank	year around	various	Nicole Richardson , 334-8374

Remember to wear your badge when volunteering and keep a record of your hours.

Seed versus transplant

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist Purdue

Some vegetables are best started from seed directly in the garden, while others are best planted as young plants (transplants). Fast-growing, cool season crops such as lettuce, radish and spinach are really best suited to direct seeding into the garden. Some that have really fine seed, or particularly long taproots such as carrots, do not transition well as transplants and perform best if seeded in place. Sweet corn and beans are also usually direct seeded to the garden.

Some crops can be successful with either direct seeding or transplanting, including cucumbers, squash, melons and pumpkins. While the same could be said of peppers, tomatoes and eggplant, gardeners will be able to harvest their crops much earlier by starting with transplants.

Good quality transplants require high light intensity, proper temperature, good-quality growing media and ample space. Some gardeners can provide those conditions well enough to start their own transplants at home. The advantage to growing your own is the vast array of cultivars you can order as seed. But if you can't supply adequate growing conditions, you'll be disappointed with spindly plants that lack good vigor to make the transition to outdoors.

Most gardeners will purchase transplants from local garden centers. While many are tempted to select transplants that have already begun to flower or are already bearing cute, little fruits, knowledgeable gardeners opt for young, vigorously growing plants that are concentrating all their energy on growing leaves and roots. Look for stocky, stout stems and healthy green foliage. These vigorous juvenile specimens will make the best transition to outdoor conditions. Plants that lack sufficient roots and foliage cannot support much crop.

If you haven't already, set out your cool-season crops such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower when soils are dry enough to work. Warm-season crops such as tomatoes, peppers, squash, cucumbers, melons and pumpkins need warm soil, as well as frost-free air temperatures. This year has been quite slow to warm up, compared to average years. Laying clear or black plastic mulch on top of the soil 2-3 weeks prior to planting will facilitate soil warming. Black plastic will also provide weed control.

Predicting frost-free dates is certainly a game of chance, but if you look at the statistics for Indiana, you can divide the state into roughly three sectors. The average last spring frost (36 degrees F) in the northern half of Indiana falls between May 2-11. Most of southern Indiana falls between April 22-May 1. Extreme southwest Indiana falls between April 11-21. There are pockets of exceptions throughout the state and the microclimates in urban areas and up close to houses can permit earlier planting in many home gardens.

Vinca minor—friend or foe?

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist Purdue



Vinca minor, more likely to be known as periwinkle, creeping myrtle or just myrtle, is a commonly used trailing, mat-forming evergreen ground cover. This plant is not only grown for its attractive shiny foliage, but the common name perfectly describes the pretty bloom color. The flowers are most numerous in mid spring, but plants will re-bloom sporadically throughout the growing season. There are some cultivars selected for different bloom color and variegated foliage.

The plant grows to about six inches tall, and, though it rarely sets seed, it spreads quickly by trailing branches that root everywhere they remain in contact with moist soil. Although originally native to Europe and Asia, periwinkle has spread from where it is cultivated here in the United States and is widely adapted and hardy throughout Indiana. Though it prefers rich, moist, fertile soil and partial shade, periwinkle will tolerate poor, dry soils and sunny exposures.

“Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the Indiana Plant Species Assessment Work Group (IPSAWG) recommends that plantings be restricted to areas bordered by sidewalks, lawn and other confined places.”

The same characteristics that make this plant so effective as a ground cover also contribute to it becoming an invasive plant. And the conditions that it particularly thrives in—rich, moist soil and shade—just happen to describe many natural woodland areas. Because of this potential to out compete native plants in natural areas, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the Indiana Plant Species Assessment Work Group (IPSAWG) recommends that plantings be restricted to areas bordered by sidewalks, lawn and other confined places.

Designing a flower bed with a view in mind (continued from page 8)

Grouping many plants of the same texture and color is known as massing. This technique will give greater emphasis to that color and texture and will tend to be more dramatic.

Don't think of your flower garden as a permanent exhibit. Annual flowers will need to be planted new each year. Perennial flowers will come back, but they can be moved when necessary. Think of your garden plants much like the furniture in a room. If you've grown tired of the arrangement, change it!

**Monroe County
Master Gardeners
Association**

Cooperative Extension Service
3400 South Walnut Street
Bloomington, IN 47401



Helping others grow!



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Average Last Day of Last Spring Frost 36°F or Lower

