

# **Monroe County Master Gardener Program Survey**

**To help the program committee plan activities and speakers for 2010, please complete and return the following survey by February 15 to**

**MG Survey**

**Purdue Extension Office**

**119 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Bloomington, 47404**

**1. Current projects that MCMG sponsors are on the volunteer list in *Roots and Shoots*. Which ones are the most enjoyable for you?**

**2. What are some projects we could or should sponsor?**

**3. What topics might be used for general meetings or Continuing Education opportunities?**

**4. Brainstorm some places we might visit for short (1-2 hour) fieldtrips. These could be public gardens, state parks, commercial establishments, private gardens, etc. Give locations if possible.**

**5. In *Roots and Shoots*, what items are the most helpful and informative to you? Would you like to see any changes?**

**6. How can we make our general meetings more helpful to you?**

February 2010

# Roots and Shoots

Monroe County Master Gardener Association Newsletter

Volume 26, Issue 2



## Garden Fair will be at the Armory on May 1

Progress toward our first-ever Garden Fair on May 1 is happening, thanks to MGs who have stepped up to serve as chairs of the committees necessary to ensure success. We thank the following for their leadership: Physical Arrangements-Dan Dunak-chik; Food-Cindy Benson; Education-Jeff Schafer; Raffle-Dian Lock; Master Gardener Sales-Vicky Rogers; Publicity-Nancy White; Vendors-Vicky St Myers; and Financial-Diana Young. Each committee needs willing volunteers.

By  
Nancy  
White

Contact any of the above to help. And remember that volunteer hours need to be accumulated each year. Working to make our first annual Garden Fair a success is a special way to gain those hours.

## Author Michael Pollan coming to IU

Well known author Michael Pollan will lecture at the IU auditorium at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, February 26. Titled *Out of the Garden and Onto the Plate: One Writer's Path*, Pollan tells of the path his writing and thinking have taken since he first planted a (disastrous) vegetable garden. The lecture is free, but a ticket, available at the IU auditorium box office, is required. There is a limit of four tickets per person.



Submitted  
by  
Larime  
Wilson

Pollan has been named one of *Newsweek* magazine's top 10 new thought leaders of the 21st century. He appeared in the documentary *Food Inc.*, and PBS has produced a documentary based on his book, *The Botany of Desire*. He has been interviewed on programs such as *Good Morning America* and Jon Stewart's *Daily Show*. He has appeared as a guest on Oprah Winfrey's talk show.

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### Special points of interest:

- We are hosting a Garden Fair on May 1
- Join Ning, our new social networking site
- Send Chuck Holdeman a card; see Member News
- Member handbook, *Folia and Flora*, will be available next month

## Member News

Chuck Holdeman, longtime MCMGA member, has had a long bout with illness this winter. He is now at Meadowood and would welcome cards from his MG friends. Send cards to his home address at 940 W. Briarcliff Drive, 47404.



By  
Nancy  
White

### **Member handbook to arrive in February**

Due to some unforeseen consequences, the publication of our yearbook, *Folia and Flora*, has been delayed. The books will be sent to members by USPS by early February. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

### **Ongoing requirements to be in good standing**

To clear up some information and answer some recent questions, the Purdue Master Gardener requirements for each calendar year to remain in good standing are the following:

Volunteer hours-12 hours

Education hours-6 hours

### **Email address correction**

Please note Barbara Hays email address is [barbsblooms@att.net](mailto:barbsblooms@att.net).

### **Our annual January general meeting**

On January 26, 38 members met at the Allison Jukebox Community Center for a general meeting. Stephanie Solomon, assistant Director at Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, gave the history of the non-profit organization that is the largest client of the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. Begun in 1998, it now houses a food pantry program, a community gardens program, and a nutrition education program. She advised us on some of the techniques used in their community garden to plan for the next growing season such as mapping, calendars and logs. Through trial and error, their gardening program has learned to start seeds early, label seedlings and plants well, plant in graduated crop rotation, prepare beds well, and use lots of straw, chopped leaves, and homemade mulch. Stephanie invited us to volunteer with the clients in their garden or "Plant a Row for the Hungry" in our own gardens. You can contact Stephanie at 812-355-6843.

During the business meeting, a short announcement was made by Jessica Williams, Coordinator of the Hoosier Hills Food Bank, asking for volunteers for that agency. Her contact number is 812-334-8374. Garden Fair chairpersons were introduced, and members were urged to get involved with committees. Garden Fair is on May 1 at the Bloomington Armory. It was announced that our yearbook, *Folia and Flora*, will be mailed to members in early February. Both Dot Owen and Susan Eastman reported on activities for Bloomington in Bloom. They can use some volunteer help also.

Concluding the meeting was Dan Nichols who presented an informational tour through the new volunteer hours recording system that is being developed by Purdue and will be active in all counties later this year. Dan also introduced us to a new social networking program that is being previewed by some MCMGs. If you are interested, contact Dan Nichols directly.

Thanks to the refreshment committee, Susan Eastman, Helen Hollingsworth, Vicky St Myers, and Nancy White, for the attractive and tasty snacks.

## Spring Tonic on March 26

Gardeners can learn to construct butterfly gardens and more at the 2010 Purdue Extension Orange County Spring Tonic. The Spring Tonic, a workshop designed to help gardeners make the most out of their garden space, will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 6 at the Orange County Community Center in Paoli, Indiana. The Orange County Community Center is located at the fairgrounds at 1075 Sandy Hook Road.



Submitted by Amy Thompson, Extension Educator

"The *Tonic* will provide participants with the information they need to help them feel confident with the garden space they are working with," said Hans Schmitz, educator, Purdue Extension Orange County.

**Ray Weatherholt, an advanced Master Gardener and Indiana Master Naturalist, will present the different ways to plan a butterfly garden.**

Ray Weatherholt, an advanced Master Gardener and Indiana Master Naturalist, will present the different ways to plan a butterfly garden. "It is important for people to know what butterflies may be attracted to a garden," he said. "They should know how to make the best use of space and what plants will attract butterflies." Weatherholt uses a six-pack of plants that attracts butterflies in large numbers and makes a garden functional and beautiful. "In a garden, there needs to be a variety of nectar plants and host plants," Weatherholt said.

Weatherholt said the best thing for participants to do to attract butterflies is to fill gardens with as many host and nectar plants as possible. He also will discuss different butterfly species, including the popular monarch.

"The monarch is a butterfly that is welcome in most gardens," Weatherholt said. "One that is not welcome by many gardeners is the common cabbage white butterfly. When the cabbage white lays its eggs on our cabbage they hatch into green larvae that eat cabbage leaves."

Weatherholt also will highlight the life cycles of butterflies, Indiana native plant species that would work in a butterfly garden and the use of pesticides.

Other topics at the Spring Tonic include mulching, tree maintenance, container gardening and the use of stone in a garden. The *Tonic* is open to the public.

Registration is \$35 per person if paid by February 15 and \$40 after the deadline. Make checks payable to Hoosier Hillside Master Gardeners and mail to 723 N. County Road 500 E., Paoli IN 47454. For more information, contact Schmitz at 812-483-7554, [hschmitz@purdue.edu](mailto:hschmitz@purdue.edu), or visit <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/mg/events.html>.

## Members invited to join Ning social network

All members of MCMGA will be receiving an invitation e-mail in the next few days to join the Ning social network we have created for our association. This social network will be dedicated to facilitating communication among MCMGA members on gardening topics and chapter news/events. The focus will be on gardening in Monroe County and Indiana, and the network will have a lot of content tailored to the challenges and rewards of gardening in Indiana and the midwest. I will be the site administrator, but all members can use the site to post content, issue invitations, announce events, etc. It is a private network so that Internet “surfers” will not be able to access our data, and we can minimize e-mail spam. Support will be provided so that no content entered by members is shared outside of this site. Please join this community which has been created for the enjoyment of our members and which should increase our gardening knowledge. Please call or e-mail me if you have any questions about account set-up or use of the system.



By  
Dan  
Nichols

## Bloomington in Bloom offers volunteer opportunities

The BIB planning committees are still waiting for notification of the final dates for judging by the America in Bloom judges in June, 2010. The most likely dates are still considered to be sometime between June 18-20, but actual dates are not yet confirmed. BIB events already scheduled include the Front Yard Contest on June 3-6; Hanging Basket Sale, now through April; Front Yard of the Week Competition; and booths at the MCMGA Garden Fair and the Farmers’ Market Booth beginning in April.

By  
Nancy  
White

Many MGs are volunteering on BIB committees and helping to steer Bloomington to its designation as an official America in Bloom City. Contact MGs Gretchen Scott or Mary Jane Hall to volunteer.

## Special fiber arts program at T.C. Steele State Historic Site

Learn how to use unspun wool and make it into a cohesive fabric. Participants will make felt balls and try hand spinning. Spend a day in the studio creating, inspired by beautiful textiles. The site’s exhibit *Unparalleled: The Paisley Shawl* is still on display. Cost is \$10, and registration is required. This workshop is open to all ages and experience. All supplies will be provided. For more information or to register, contact [tcsteeleshs@dnr.in.gov](mailto:tcsteeleshs@dnr.in.gov) or 812.988.2785. Or visit us online at [indianamuseum.org/tc\\_steele](http://indianamuseum.org/tc_steele) or [www.tcsteele.org](http://www.tcsteele.org).

*Sarah Noggle has presented workshops and demonstrations and taught at fiber guilds across the Midwest, the Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, with the Indiana State Park system and at Elderhostel events in Indiana. Her work tends toward more practical woven items, but sometimes has a whimsical side as well.*

## Baptisia australis 2010 Perennial of the Year

If someone asked me to design my idea of the "perfect" perennial, it would come pretty darned close to being this year's selection for Perennial of the Year. Gorgeous purple-blue flowers, widely adaptable, native, well-behaved, relatively pest-free, and long-lived garden plant all describe *Baptisia australis*, which was named the Perennial Plant of 2010 by the Perennial Plant Association (PPA).

Native to much of the Eastern United States, *B. australis* is a legume and can fix nitrogen in the soil. Commonly called blue false indigo, the name *Baptisia* is derived from the Greek word *bapto*, which means to dip or dye. Early Americans used the plant sap as a dye similar to, though weaker in strength than, the true indigo plant native to the West Indies. There are other species of *Baptisia* with white or yellow flowers.

Although a bit slow to establish, *B. australis* forms a neat, shrub-like plant, reaching about 3-4 feet in height and spread upon maturity. The 12-inch, upright stalks of purple-blue flowers rise high above the bluish-green foliage in May/June. Depending on the weather, the flowers last about three weeks and are followed by interesting seedpods that turn black as they mature and dry. The handsome pea-like foliage makes an excellent filler plant for other flowers after the blooms fade.

*B. australis* adapts well to dry, low-fertility soils and also thrives in well-drained, tended garden beds, yet neatly stays where planted. The plants perform best in full sun but will tolerate some shade, although the stems will be a bit floppy.

Although the plant does not divide or transplant well, the mature seeds can be used to start additional plants. Fresh seed germinates relatively quickly; stored seed is slow and less successful. Mature seeds should be collected just as the pods split open. Remove the seeds from the pods and sort to discard those that have insect damage. Place seeds in hot (not boiling) water and let soak for 24 hours. Pot up the soaked seeds in good quality soil mix, or plant directly in a protected location in the garden.

PPA selects a different perennial plant each year. Members of the PPA are invited to nominate plants based on several criteria, including low maintenance requirements, adaptability to a wide range of climates, pest and disease resistance, wide availability, multiple seasons of interest in the garden and ease of propagation.

### Previous Perennial of the Year winners

2009 *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola'

2008 *Geranium* 'Rozanne'

2007 *Nepeta* 'Walker's Low'

2006 *Dianthus gratianopolit* 'Feuerhexe'

2005 *Helleborus x hybridus*

2004 *Athyrium niponicum* 'Pictum'

2003 *Leucanthemum* 'Becky'

2002 *Phlox* 'David'

2001 *Calamagrostis acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster'

2000 *Scabiosa columbaria* 'Butterfly Blue'

1999 *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *Goldsturm*'

1998 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Magnus'

1997 *Salvia* 'Mainacht' (May Night)

1996 *Penstemon digitalis* 'Husker Red'

1995 *Perovskia atriplicifolia*

1994 *Astilbe* 'Sprite'

1993 *Veronica* 'Sunny Border Blue'

1992 *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Moonbeam'

1991 *Heuchera micrantha* 'Palace Purple'

1990 *Phlox stolonifera*

By  
B. Rosie  
Lerner,  
Purdue  
Extension  
Consumer  
Horticulturist

## Le Vasterival, a special garden in Normandy, delights the eye

I explored this four seasons garden in the summer of 2009 while on a garden tour with other Master Gardeners on a trip organized by Purdue University. Princess Greta Sturdza, who is Norwegian and was married to a Rumanian prince, began this garden in 1957 in Normandy. Although it is only a kilometer from the sea, it is a world apart. It is mostly a woodland garden set among native oak, ash, beech and pine. The soil is acid clay, but each plant is placed in rich, moisture-retentive compost, and everything is heavily mulched with leaf mold. Because of all this individual attention, everywhere one looks plants are bursting with vitality. I was struck by how many of our native plants were used in quantity, like filipendula (*Queen of the Prairie*) and rodgersia.



By  
Martha  
Tarbah

**“The soil is acid clay, but each plant is placed in rich, moisture-retentive compost, and everything is heavily mulched with leaf mold.”**

Princess Sturdza, now in her nineties, is a world-renowned horticulturist and has amassed major collections of rhododendrons, hydrangeas, camellias, and maples, but her garden is not simply a collection of plants. It is light years away from the formal gardens which one thinks of as typically French and which give off an aura of power and wealth rather than simple beauty.

Le Vasterival is an informal garden with paths wandering through the woods and opening out into sunny glades. Masses of astilbes are used under shrubs and trees to emphasize the play of light and shadow in the woodland.

As we walked about the garden the head gardener accompanied us, explaining the design and layout, and how each group of plants was designed with reference to soil and climate conditions.

The princess is now too frail to venture very far into her beloved woodlands; however, as our tour ended, she walked out to meet us on the arm of her housekeeper. Perched on a tree stump, wearing an Master Gardener cap and holding a favorite tool, a lightweight hoe, she welcomed us and spoke of her hope of being able to walk in her garden “next year”, and of her plans to expand it even further in the future. As passionate gardeners ourselves, we understood the hope that one’s garden will live beyond one’s own lifetime. Le Vasterival is a garden for the spirit, exquisite in all seasons.

After gazing in awe at Versailles, Vaux le Vicomte, and other wonderful gardens, we came to this woodland garden by the sea and were charmed. Le Vasterival is located in Varengeville-sur-Mer and is close to several other memorable gardens, including Bois-des-Moutiers and Shamrock, which has the world’s largest collection of hydrangeas.

**Help create a Community Orchard!** Volunteers are needed to plan, plant, maintain, and (eventually!) harvest Bloomington's first Community Orchard. To find out how you can be involved with this project, please attend a public meeting on Monday, February 22 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers at 401 N. Morton Street. For more information, please contact Amy Countryman at (812) 679-8261 or [acountry@indiana.edu](mailto:acountry@indiana.edu).

## Volunteer opportunities compiled by Nancy White

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Garden and Nature Center	year around	various	Greg Speicher, 855-2799 or gspeiche@indiana.edu
Bloomington in Bloom Planning Committee	year around	various	Mary Jane Hall, 824-2762 Gretchen Scott, 330-7548
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Bethany Murray, 339-8876, bethany.murray@gmail.com
T. C. Steele SHS	seasonal	various	Davie Kean, 988-2785
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens	seasonal	various	Cathy Meyer, 349,2800
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	inquiries and research	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	various	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Newsletter	year around	writing, stapling, labeling	Helen Hollingsworth, 332-7313
MCMGA Web Site	year around	various	Barbara Hays, 332-4032
MG Program Committee Member	year around	plan MG programs	Vicky St. Myers, 323-7072 Jeff Schafer, 325-3130
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	Stephanie Solomon, 334-8374
WonderLab Garden	2 times monthly	various	Nancy White, 824-4426
Hoosier Hills Foodbank	year around	various	Jessica Williams, 334-8374

**Please wear your name badge when volunteering.**

**February 2010**

Cooperative Extension Service  
Health Building  
119 West Seventh Street  
Bloomington, IN 47404

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**Complete and mail your enclosed MCMGA  
membership survey today!  
This is your chance to tell program planners about  
programs and field trips that you especially want.**

## **20010 MCMGA Board**

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812-876-2999 pgwinn@bluemarble.net  
**Extension Educator:** Amy Thompson  
812-349-2575 afthompson@purdue.edu

## **Education Opportunities Abound!**

**Saturday, February 20,** 10 a.m.—noon, *Winter Tree ID Workshop*, Brown County State Park  
Cost: \$5; enter north gate, turn left at first park sign, and then turn right.

**Saturday, February 27,** 8 a.m.—3:30 p.m., *Master Gardener Training*, Madison County 4-H Fairgrounds, Alexandria Cost: \$35 Registration form available at orick@purdue.edu or call 765-641-9514

**Saturday, March 6,** 8:30 a.m.—3 p.m., *Spring Tonic*, Orange County Community Center at the fairgrounds at 1075 Sandy Hook Road, Paoli.  
Cost:\$35 [\$40 after February 15] Contact: H. Schmitz at hschmitz@purdue.edu or call 812-483-7554

**Saturday, March 13,** 8:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m., *Gardeners' Gathering*, Operating Engineers Hall, U. S. Highway 41, Terre Haute Cost: \$30 [\$35 after March 1] Contact Cyd Hunter at cydhunter@verizon.net