

Roots and Shoots



Volume 28, Issue 2

February 2012

Amy Thompson receives 2011 Purdue Master Gardener Coordinator Award

By Nancy White

Special points of interest:

- Amy Thompson is a winner!
- David Dunatchik needs help on April 30
- You can volunteer and see the Patio & Flower Show
- Karen Sparks enters the world of beekeeping
- Ground coffee beans have uses besides making coffee
- Are you listed in the latest issue of *Folia and Flora*?

Purdue Master Gardener State Coordinator B. Rosie Lerner made a surprise visit to the January 23 general meeting to announce to the group that our extension coordinator, Amy Thompson, is the 2011 Purdue Master Gardener Coordinator of the Year. Amy was nominated by Monroe County Master Gardeners and community members. The criteria for nomination includes communication skills, enthusiasm, leadership, ability to delegate, sensitivity to diverse needs, and encouragement of growth and continued participation.



Amy received a plaque commemorating the award and a bouquet of roses from MCMGA. “Amy, your Master Gardeners just adore you! I want to share just a small sample of what they had to say; in fact they had so many wonderful quotes, it was really tough to pare them down to just this sampling.” Rosie read aloud many of the comments from the materials submitted with the nomination.

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Amy Thompson and Rosie Lerner

Rosie commented on how the nomination was so impressive because many people provided testimony of Amy’s leadership and selfless contributions to our local program. Rosie also mentioned the large number of members present at our meeting that night provided evidence of the health of our Master Gardeners group.

To quote one of the letters included in the nomination materials, “Amy Thompson is the epitome of what is a great county coordinator. She is deserving of this honor for all her efforts and her capable leadership.” Congratulations, Amy!

Member News

By Nancy White



Over 60 members met on January 24 for our general meeting. A special guest, Rosie Lerner, Master Gardener State Coordinator, was introduced and surprised those attending by presenting Amy Thompson with the Indiana Master Gardener County Coordinator of the Year Award. Amy accepted the award and spoke briefly to thank the group. After announcements, Stephanie Solomon from Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, one of our 2011 community projects grant winners, gave a brief overview of their project. She thanked Master Gardeners for providing the gardening opportunity to the young people involved.

Our program, *Pollinators Beyond Bees*, was presented by Cathy Meyer, Monroe County Parks and Recreation naturalist and Sandy Belth, Master Gardener intern. After giving us a biology lesson on the parts and processes of pollinators, especially bees, insects, and butterflies, they stressed the importance of bees, birds, insects, mammals and other pollinators to the success of our gardening activities. They gave us suggestions on how to protect and encourage pollinators and provided contact information and publications for further research. This was an outstanding program, and the overflow crowd was certainly rewarded for attending. We thank both presenters and look forward to hearing more on this important topic.

Thanks to Jeff Schafer and his able committee of Nancy Miller, Helen Hollingsworth, Dave Dunatchik, Susan Eastman, Mary Hoffman, and Charlotte Griffin, for the welcome refreshments.

New intern class begins this month

The 2012 intern class will begin on January 31 and meet thereafter on each Thursday evening into May. Notify Amy if you would like to attend a class as a visitor.

Hobbitt Gardens field trip is next month

Several field trips are planned for Master Gardeners for the coming months. On Saturday, February 25, a "Midwinter's Blues Herbal Getaway at Hobbitt Gardens" in Fillmore will be a full day of fun including lunch for \$35. Sign up is still available from Evelyn Harrell.

Volunteer at the Flower & Patio Show and the Indiana State Fair

Preston Gwinn is our coordinator for both the Indianapolis Flower and Patio Show Information Booth in March and the Indiana State Fair Purdue Information Booth in August. Contact Preston if you would like to gain some volunteer hours with either of these projects.

Welcome to 2012 interns

We welcome our new interns from the 2012 class who have just joined us and will be receiving copies of *Roots and Shoots*. We hope you find the articles and activity listings interesting. We look forward to meeting all of you.

Have you signed up to work at the Indiana Flower & Patio Show?

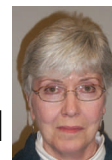
By Preston Gwinn



Sign up for a shift (or two) at this year's Purdue Master Gardener booth at the Indiana Flower & Patio Show. The show runs from Saturday, March 10 through Sunday March 18, 2012. Monroe County Master Gardeners are staffing the booth Thursday, March 15 from 10:00a.m. to 3:30p.m., as well as Sunday, March 18 from 1:30p.m. to 5:00p.m. To sign up, contact Preston Gwinn at 320-2150 or pgwinn@bluemarble.net.

Master Gardener field trips update

By Evelyn Harrell



Thirteen Master Gardeners enjoyed a tour of the Jordan Hall Greenhouse on January 10. John Lemon, supervisor, guided us through a string of rooms that seemed to go on and on, where each room was designed to create an environment suitable to the plants being housed there. It was just by chance that the field trip, intended to be a welcome break from nasty winter weather, fell on a sunny afternoon that was near 60 degrees outside. It was almost as warm outside as it was inside next to the banana tree!

Our next field trip is this month. There are a few spaces left for our trip to the **Midwinter's Blues Herbal Getaway** at the Hobbitt Gardens in Fillmore, Indian, on Saturday, February 25. (Snow date is March 10.) We will leave Bloomington at 8:30 a.m.—departure location to be announced—to arrive at the Getaway by 10:00 a.m. We will hear lectures on companion planting, soil building, insect control, fertilizing, and composting, all with herbs. Plus we will enjoy a lunch and a lecture about cooking with herbs. We will leave Hobbitt Gardens at 2:00 p.m. and arrive back in Bloomington about 3:30 p.m. The cost per person, including lunch and handouts, is \$35, which must be paid two weeks in advance to our host. Please get your paid reservation in the mail to Evelyn Harrell no later than February 8.

An early spring field trip is planned for Wednesday afternoon, April 11, to tour the **Indiana Daffodil Society Show** at Holiday Park in Indianapolis with Master Gardener Kay Cunningham. We will arrive right after the judging is completed. Watch for the sign-up sheet at the March 27 general meeting.

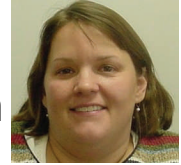
Folia and Flora is here!

By Nancy White

Our annual yearbook of member information is printed and distributed to members who attended our January general meeting. If you have not received yours, a copy is ready for you to pick up at the extension office. If possible, pick up your copy by February 10. If, for some reason, your name does not appear in the book, please check with the office to make sure your membership form and dues were received prior to publication. We will publish an addendum to the book later in February, and your information can be included if you renew your membership soon. Forms are available on our website mcmga.net.

USDA revises hardiness zone map

Submitted by Amy Thompson



The USDA released a revised USDA Hardiness Zone Map via press conference on January 25, 2012. The new map is GIS-based and interactive (print versions by state and region are also available). The data is based on algorithms and includes weather data from 1976—2005 and is considerably more accurate and detailed than the 1990 version. You can enter a zip code and get specific info for your area

Many areas of Indiana are now listed as half a zone warmer than the 1990 version which represents a 5°F difference in zone, but temperature wise, likely only really a degree or two of difference, so it is not as significant a change as it sounds. IMO, microclimates due to other issues in the home landscape will play a more significant role in plant hardiness than the change in hardiness zone classification. For example, Tippecanoe County is now listed as Zone 5b : -15 to -10 (F).

In 1990 most of Tippecanoe County was listed as Zone 5a : -20 to -15 (F).

The new interactive map will now shows the actual average annual low temp used for a specific area. West Lafayette is -11.8 °F, so potentially only 3.2°F warmer than 1990 zone map, but keep in mind that 1990s data was also far less specific.

For example all of Vanderburgh County is now listed as Zone 6b : -5 to 0 (F).

In 1990, the southern half of Vanderburgh Co. was listed as Zone 6b; the northern half of the county was Zone 6a :-10 to -5 (F). The actual average annual low temp in Evansville is -1.9°F

All of Indiana is still zones 5 or 6, as was the case in the 1990 map, so again, we are talking about a very small change of 5°F and mostly less than that if one looks at the actual average low temperature.

Significance for gardeners and homeowners is that this really doesn't change too much for practical gardening, other than when making choices for new plantings. Books and other resources generally list plants to whole hardiness zones, not half, so for the few folks that were formerly zone 5b that will now be a 6. This might give the impression that this opens up a bunch more planting possibilities. But in reality, plants that were marginally hardy in your area before are really still just marginally hardy and will require a protected location to perform well. Also keep in mind that this is all based on annual average low temperatures. There will be years when the low temperatures are considerably lower than the average and typically it is these marginally hardy plants that suffer the most damage.

The interactive map and related resources are at <http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>. Be aware there is an annoying requirement to enter a "Captcha" code to view the interactive map and will repeatedly ask you to do so if you stay on the site a while. USDA said at the press conference that this was to keep the web crawlers from tying up the site and keep others from getting in.

Help is needed on April 20



By David Dunatchik

Over the last couple years we have enjoyed the wonderful response from you, the membership, to our calls for help with the annual Garden Fair. Many thanks to those who have generously shared your time and skills. Our success is only because so many have been willing to help. Once again, we look to you for assistance.

In particular, we need a couple more volunteers who will be available on Friday morning, April 20, to help set up about 35 booth tables and chairs. These folding tables are eight feet long and fairly heavy but teams of two make the setup go quickly and easily. If you can give about four hours of your time on the morning of April 20, please contact David Dunatchik, physical arrangements coordinator, at 812 332-2331 or email him at dddunatchik@att.net.

Secondly, we need several people to collect the plastic tube-bags that protect your delivered newspaper. We need about 200 of these bags to package the shrubs that we give to our guests. If several of you begin to set aside these bags now, we should achieve our goal easily. Please arrange for David Dunatchik to receive the newspaper bags by April 10.

Garden Fair is twelve weeks away!

By Nancy White

Committees are hard at work on our annual Garden Fair, Saturday, April 21, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. at the Indiana National Guard Armory on south Walnut Street. Booths, both inside and outside the building, will feature local and regional commercial vendors and non-profit agencies of interest to homeowners and gardeners. The Master Gardener Information Booth will dispense free shrub seedlings and answer gardening questions. Master Gardeners will also be selling plant markers and a special hand tool. Food will be served all day, and door prizes will be awarded.

At our March general meeting, members will receive postcards for distribution advertising our fair. We also plan colorful posters and yard signs to help get the word out to the community. Be sure you invite your friends and neighbors and tell them to mark the date, Saturday, April 21, on their calendars.

Peggy Rees-Krebs, vendor committee chair, would like us to spread the word that local businesses and services can buy an ad in our program book for \$20. Since our fair books were distributed to over 500 people last year, this is very cheap advertising. Pass this information on to your friends and neighbors also. Those interested can contact Peggy by email at mastergardenerpeggy@comcast.net.

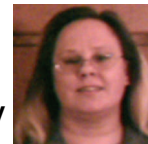


Hats off!

Cindy Benson has qualified for the Master Gardener Bronze level badge.

Master Gardeners tour IU Greenhouses

By Marilyn Brinley



On a beautiful January afternoon, twelve excited Master Gardeners met at the Jordan Hall Greenhouses on the IU campus guided by the director of the greenhouses, John Lemon. The greenhouses are made up of many rooms.



Master Gardeners at IU Greenhouses

One of the first greenhouse rooms we saw was the desert room, filled with plants that were better to look at than to touch. We learned that a cactus (plural, cacti) is native to America, but a *Euphorbia* is from the subtropical and tropical regions of Africa and the Americas. A huge agave plant, which is not a cactus, is the centerpiece for the desert room, and we learned that the leaves of this plant are fibrous and are used to make sisal hemp. Of course, tequila is also made from agave.

We also visited the tropics, with the layers of vegetation from the trees, to the epi-

phytes growing on the trees for support, but not harming the trees, to the vines and down to the ground cover. The epiphytes gather most of their moisture out of the air and their nutrients from litter that gathers in the nooks where they attach to the trees. The vines have adapted long stems to reach up into the dense canopy so that the leaves can reach sunlight and many of the plants on the ground have large leaves to maximize the amount of sunlight captured.

We entered a room containing a large papaya tree, a small coffee tree, a large theobroma cocoa tree, several large cycads and three dwarf banana plants. Then we visited the Lantern House, which is the large greenhouse room at the corner of Third Street and Hawthorne Drive. This room houses a tall Monkey Dinner Bell tree, which gets its name from the fact the fruit makes a sound like a bell when it is ripe, signaling the monkeys that it is time to eat. The tree trunk is also covered in spines. Next to the Monkey Dinner Bell tree is a cycad that is over 100 years old. Around the corner a bird of paradise was beginning to bloom.

We visited a greenhouse room where water trickled down a moss-covered, limestone wall, while ferns perched along the top edge. Coleus and pelargoniums sat on tables, and bougainvillea hung from the ceiling. Another room was filled with amaryllis and fuchsia. Yet another greenhouse room contained lemon trees, pomegranate trees, and coffee plants. This room also had several varieties of carnivorous plants, including sundews, pitcher plants, Venus flytraps, and bladderworts.

The greenhouses employ a staff of four, but biology professors and students often have projects there. Some areas of the greenhouse are used exclusively for research. Most of the money required to run the greenhouses comes from grants, although the daily operating expenses are budgeted items.

Jordan Hall Greenhouses are open to the public during business hours and on weekends. Tours are available to groups over five by appointment with no charge for admission. Enter through Jordan Hall and make your way to the southeast corner of the building to enter the greenhouses.

Web Castings

Gardeners and their friends.

Some 'pre-digested' web offerings provided by local Master

By Karen Sparks



This month we are looking at something very closely connected to all kinds of gardening, the food supply and floral beauty. In fact, without it (them) we would be in way deep trouble. I speak of the rapidly disappearing honeybee. Why this, why now?

Over the last half of January, my husband and I had again been discussing the bigger picture, as retirees. How can we 'give back, using our skills and resources and interests (no, I do not really want to teach mathematics again!) in a way that we will enjoy, can learn about, and will benefit others? The same afternoon, Rob Green, the beekeeping teacher who developed the class over ten years ago, was interviewed on WFIU, and it all clicked: we can do this! I mean, we can become beekeepers, out here at Possum Trot, in Brown County. We have the acreage/space, the time, experience with an apple orchard (15 years, in Wisconsin, 250 trees) and a love of honeybees, not to mention honey and beeswax.

Timing is everything. We had approximately one day to decide to enroll in the January 28, 2012 class, order our hive (to be partly assembled during the 12-hour class) and start all this. We jumped in! The Internet was of course a big player in this decision-making process, but there is some overlapping name confusion. Here is the site of the Indiana Beekeeping School: <http://www.indianabeekeepingschool.com>. It is a non-profit corporation, and the intensive class is offered at several sites around the state, once a year, and this is it for 2012. There are some other choices, see below.

We will be in the Columbus class, and it runs from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (as I write this: that's tomorrow!) The instruction is offered in a remote broadcasting format from Indy, with Mr. Green as the teacher, and assistants and volunteers at each site, in case anyone is interested and for future reference. I will report more later!

So, then, how does one acquire a hive? And how do beekeepers network and connect? Graham's Bee Works in Morgantown is the source of the hive kit that is approved by the school: <http://www.grahamsbeeworks.com>. They have their own shorter classes in February, as well as bees. The Indiana Beekeepers Association also has a meeting in February and is active in many areas: <http://www.indianabeekeeper.com>. This is different from the class above, though the names are similar. I learned that there is also a larger midwest group, which I was unable to locate, with an annual symposium.

So! I would not BEE surprised if we already have MG's who are into bees. Who are you? Don't BEE shy, please let us know! (email me: Karen.k.sparks@mac.com). In the meantime, BEE-have, y'all! (Sorry, could not resist!)

Hilltop Happenings!

By Lea Woodard



Hello Master Gardeners! We are keeping very busy at Hilltop. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day of service, fifteen IU students from the Civic Leadership Development group along with other veteran Hilltop volunteers helped us count and pack seeds, tape trays together, and pack bags of soil for our annual seed kit distribution. Seed kits consisting of four different types of vegetable seeds, one variety of flower seed, soil and a clear plastic clamshell are packaged up and distributed to local elementary schools. Students receive their own individual kit of seeds to plant, watch grow and learn about in the classroom. Teachers of grades K-8 in Monroe, Brown, Greene or Lawrence Counties may sign up to receive these free kits for their classroom at the Teacher's Warehouse; 524 North Fairview Street, Bloomington.

Hilltop will be hosting many City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation People's University home and garden classes this spring including *Raspberry & Blackberry Production for the Home Grower*; *Polyculture: A Brief Introduction to Forest Gardens*; *Edible Landscaping to Suit Your Palate*; *Water: Harvesting and*

Storing It; Cats, Dogs, and Ducks, Oh My!; *Neighbors and Neighborhoods as Villages*, and *Master Composter Class*. You can register for these classes through the City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation website.

Hilltop Garden & Nature Center seeks multiple volunteer leaders from Monroe County Master Gardeners to help direct small groups of 2-10 volunteers with gardening tasks on Hilltop grounds. The volunteer leaders will be trained by the Hilltop Coordinator for each specific task on the day of the volunteer work day. Volunteer leaders will be responsible for training the volunteers for the specific task they will be completing that day as well as helping them perform the task, providing continuous direction, checking for accuracy, and keeping them on task. Tasks could include seed starting, transplanting, planting, mulching, weeding, harvesting, watering, pruning, and/or cleaning pots or tools. Master Gardener volunteer leaders will be expected to answer general gardening questions such as how deep to plant a seed, how far apart certain plants should be planted, or the difference between a weed and desired plants (with direction

from the Hilltop Coordinator). Volunteer work days usually range from 2-4 hours.

Hilltop will provide all volunteer leaders with necessary training and any other materials needed to complete each task. The Hilltop Coordinator and/or Hilltop Volunteer Coordinator will be present during any volunteer work day. Benefits of the position include free produce from Hilltop Gardens and the satisfaction of giving back to the community as well as acquiring necessary Master Gardener volunteer hours. The Hilltop Coordinator or Hilltop Volunteer Coordinator will contact Master Gardener Volunteer Leaders at least a week in advance with dates and times for volunteer opportunities. Volunteer Leaders may be needed at any time of the year during Hilltop's normal business hours, including many Saturdays. Volunteer Leaders are not required to participate at every opportunity, but will be expected to volunteer on at least two occasions throughout the year. If interested in a Volunteer Leader position, please contact Lea Woodard, IU Hilltop Garden & Nature Center Coordinator, 812-855-8808 or hilltop@indiana.edu. Thank you!

Volunteer opportunities

Compiled by Nancy White

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Gardens	year around	various	Charlotte Griffin, 345-8128
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Bethany Murray, 339-8876 bethany.murray@gmail.com
Bloomington Community Orchard	seasonal	various	Stacey Decker, getinvolved@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org
Cheryl's Garden at Karst Farm Park	summer	design and maintain	Nancy Fee, 332-1940
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 and 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	Barbara Hays, 332-4032
MG Program Committee Member	year around	plan MG programs	Evelyn Harrell, 339-0572 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

Non-profit groups may apply for grants

By Nancy White

The MCMGA board announces the 2012 grant program for non-profit groups to stimulate creative horticulture and education projects in Monroe County. The applications are available from the extension office and are due by March 1. A committee of Master Gardeners will review the applications and select the winners. Grant funds will be distributed by April 1. In 2011, six projects were funded representing diverse projects. If you know of a non-profit group that might benefit from a grant, be sure to pass this information along and urge them to complete an application.

Morgan County Master Gardeners' annual GardenFest and Pansy Sale is March 16-17

Submitted by Moya Andrews

The Morgan County Master Gardeners' annual GardenFest and Pansy Sale will be held at the National Guard Armory in Martinsville, Indiana, on Friday, March 16 from 4:00-8:00 p.m. and on Saturday, March 17 from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Pots of beautiful pansies and violas which have been grown just for this event will be sold at \$4. The GardenFest features over 30 vendors with garden related merchandise; free tree seedlings, and packages of seeds which will be given away; free seminars will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday.

Food and drink will be available for purchase.

For more information, log onto www.mcmastergardeners.org or call Pat Schultz at 765-318-1192.

2013 International MG Conference is an Alaskan cruise

The 2013 International Master Gardener Conference is a September 7-14, 2013 IMGCA Alaskan Cruise. Cruise booking starts on May 7, 2012. Log on to <http://www.uaex.edu/imgc2013/> and sign up via Constant Contact to get monthly updates as well as an opportunity to read the FAQ section and newsletters. For information, contact Janet B. Carson at jcarson@uaex.edu.

Grounds for gardening

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist



Do Johnny jump ups jive with java? How about a little coffee on your cucumbers? With so many trendy coffee houses these days, there is a lot of interest in recycling used coffee grounds to divert them from the landfill. And being a plant product, a frequent question is whether coffee grounds are useful for gardening.

There have been a few companies studying the use of coffee grounds as a soil or compost amendment, and there are even a few companies marketing it as such. So here's my cup of counsel.

Coffee grounds are a low-level source of nitrogen, having a fertilizer value of around 2.0-0.3-0.2, as well as a minor source of calcium and magnesium. Post-brewed coffee grounds are reported to be slightly to highly acidic, depending on the source, but no more so than peat moss. So, one could apply them to the soil for acid-loving plants, such as rhododendrons, azaleas and blueberries, etc. They might even help keep your bigleaf hydrangeas blue. Or, you could spread them out over a larger garden area to minimize the pH effect. It's difficult to make a specific recommendation for an application rate, but it's always better to err on the lighter side, since the pH can be variable. A rate of 10 pounds (dry weight) per 1000 square feet would be conservative.

Composting is also an excellent method to recycle the grounds, which have a carbon-to-nitrogen ratio of around 20:1. Use the grounds as you would green, leafy material, mixing with some dry, brown plant materials in the compost. The Environmental Protection Agency suggests adding no more than 25 percent volume coffee grounds. Worm composters report that coffee grounds are an excellent food source for the little critters. Again, be sure to mix the grounds with dry brown materials, even in the worm bin.

Some companies indicate that a shallow layer of coffee grounds can be used as mulch around landscape plants; however, I am hesitant to recommend this. Because of the fine grind that is typically used for brewing, the grounds are likely to pack down tightly, decreasing aeration as well as posing the risk of fungal growth. Likewise, I would avoid using coffee grounds with potted houseplants, not only because of the potential for fungal growth but also potential buildup of soluble salts.

Washington State Master Gardeners found that fruit flies were attracted to coffee grounds, especially in situations such as enclosed compost bins, where moisture content was high. This is yet another reason to avoid using the grounds with houseplants. In more open aerated systems, where the grounds are able to dry down, fruit flies and other pests are less likely to be a nuisance.

February 2012

FIRST CLASS MAIL

MONROE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Cooperative Extension Service
3400 South Walnut Street
Bloomington, IN 47401



Helping others grow!

Have you received your copy of *Folia and Flora*?

If not, arrange to pick up your copy by February 10. See page 3.

2012 MCMGA Board

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Extension Educator: Amy Thompson

812-349-2575 athompson@purdue.edu

Looking for volunteer hours?

By Nancy White

- Join a committee for the Garden Fair. Contact Master Gardener Fair Coordinators David Dunatchik, Diann Lock, Jeff Schafer, or Nancy White for information on committees.
- Sell ads for the Garden Fair program booklet. Contact Peggy Rees-Krebs
- Volunteer to work at the Purdue Master Gardener booth at the Indianapolis Flower and Patio Show in March. Contact member Preston Gwinn for information.
- Help provide refreshments at one of our meetings. Contact Evelyn Harrell.