



Roots & Shoots

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The Promise of the New Year

It's late December and it's raining. What's wrong with the weather? The January issue of *Roots and Shoots* arrives early in the month and it may not feel like January. There may not be snow. There may not even be cold weather. **But** there will be articles in your newsletter about the promise of the New Year. And there will be excitement in the air at the prospect of a new year, a clean slate, and good gardening information.

Watch for frequent opportunities to gain education hours in 2016. Sandy Belth, Education Director, and her committee have lined up interesting speakers and field trips for

our enjoyment. In addition to the workshops previously mentioned in this newsletter for education opportunities this winter and early spring, Purdue University has announced that Rosie Lerner, Consumer Horticulturist and past Master Gardener State Coordinator, and Horticulture Professor Mike Dana will lead a 130 day garden tour and history study of Northern England and Wales this July. You can download the brochure and check out the locations at www.hort.purdue.edu/NEW

Be sure to join us on January 19 at the Extension Office to pick up your copy of the 2016 *folia* and *flora*. The delicious spread of refreshments and

choruses of Happy New Year will begin at 6, followed by two excellent speakers, and an update on the 2016 Garden Fair, and news about new projects.

The year will be what we make of it. Let's make it a good one!

- Evelyn Harrell

“There are two seasonal diversions that can ease the bite of any winter. One is the January thaw. The other is the seed catalogues.”

- Hal Borland

January 26th kicks off 2016 General Meetings

What a great year we had in 2015 with the MCMGs! A huge *Thank You* goes out to Evelyn, her Board of Directors, Amy, and the staff at the Extension Office! As always, we look forward to a fantastic New Year in 2016 so please join us for our first meeting on January 26 at 6:30pm at the Extension Office. Special thanks goes out to Mary Cusack, Karen King, Ann McEndarfer, Nancy Page, Tom Lovell, and Mary Hoffmann for providing refreshments, which will be available starting at 6pm.

We'll have 2 exciting programs at our upcoming January meeting. First, Roger Hartwell will present a program on Heirloom Seeds and their history, and seed saving & propagation. Roger is a Heritage Seed Researcher. He and his family have saved seeds for generations, with some being found in gardens around the Bloomington area. The second program will be from Kris Medic,

entitled *Winter into Spring: A Great Start to the Gardening Season*. Kris is a Board-Certified Master Arborist, Past-President of the Indiana Arborist Association, and currently serving as Purdue Cooperative Extension Educator (Bartholomew County). 2 hours of education credit will be available.

In addition to the education hours earned while attending the meetings, volunteer hours are available for food and drink preparation. We are currently in need of volunteers to provide refreshments for our May and July meetings. A sign-up sheet will be available at the January meeting in case you have the time during these months and are interested.

Finally, our membership guide, 2016 *Folia* and *Flora* will be distributed. If you cannot attend, please arrange to have a friend pick up your guide to save on mailing costs.

- Jeff Schafer



Garden Fair News

Garden Fair applications to commercial vendors have gone out and Karen King and the vendor committee will be contacting all vendors on our list to urge them to make application. If you know of a new vendor of garden products or services who has not ever been part of our Fair, contact Karen at "mastergardenerkaren@yahoo.com" and she will send out an application.

This will be our 7th annual Fair and it takes lots of help from our members to make it happen. Can you help before

the Fair, during the Fair, or after the event? Whichever is your choice, your help is needed. What can you do? You could serve on a planning committee, attend the Fair and work in the Café or at our MG Information booth, or deliver unclaimed door prizes after Fair day. All of these and more are opportunities for you to gain volunteer hours. Please contact Nancy White and you will gain a place to help that will fit your schedule and interest. It takes a village.....

Save all of those garden

catalogues and bring them to the Jan. meeting and Susan Eastman can distribute them to Fair visitors at the MG Info booth. Books on gardening are also in demand so donate those also.

At the Jan. meeting, you will be asked to sign up to place a Garden Fair poster or yard sign. Both items will be available as the Fair date approaches. If you have a yard sign left over from last year, contact Nancy White at nwhite38@hotmail.com so we can keep track of those signs. - Nancy White

MCMGA Grant News

Each year MCMGA awards a series of grants to local non-profit agencies to motivate garden projects. The proceeds from the Garden Fair fund these grants. Grant applications will be available on our website by mid-January. If you participate in a non-profit agency that might want to plan a 2016 gardening or horticulture project, arrange for

that group to submit an application. In past years schools, churches, neighborhood groups, established agencies, pre-school sites, and individuals have been granted funds to start or continue good projects. The application is simple and the funds are waiting to be claimed. Completed applications are due to the Extension Office by Feb. 15.

"Helping others grow!"

The Scotts Miracle Gro Company GRO1000 showcase grant awards is providing funding and education resources to help establish and enhance pollinator gardens. Non-profit, tax-exempt public organizations are encouraged to apply for up to \$1500 in funding for community gardens and greenspaces. The application period is January 1 - February 19, 2016. Award recipients will be announced in April.

Goals of the program include:

- Creating positive community influence and impact
- Involving area youth
- Promoting health and wellness
- Donating harvest yields
- Committing to sustaining or growing the project

More information and application available at <<http://scottsmiraclegro.com/corporate-responsibility/pollinators/>>.

Volunteer Opportunities

Organization	Time	Jobs	Contact
Bloomington Community Orchards 2120 S. Highland Avenue (Winslow Woods Park) www.bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org	Seasonal	Maintenance All levels of expertise welcomed!	Stacey Decker getinvolved@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org
Cheryl's Garden at Karst Farm Park 2450 S. Endwright Road, Bloomington	During growing season	Design & Maintenance	Linda Emerson 812-345-2913 (cell)
Courthouse Native Garden Downtown Square	Seasonal	Maintenance	Todd Stevenson tstephenson@co.monroe.in.us
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens 9499 W. Flatwoods Rd., Gosport	Seasonal	Maintenance & Rejuvenation	Cathy Meyer 812-349-2805
Growing Opportunities Hydroponic Garden Stone Belt Facility—Tenth St., Bloomington	Year-round	Education & Maintenance	Nicole Wooten nicole@insccap.org
Hilltop Garden & Nature Center 2367 E. Tenth St., Bloomington www.hilltop@indiana.edu/~landscap/hilltop	Year-round	Maintenance of Gardens for Shade, Herbs, Pollinators, & Containers	Charlotte Griffin 812-345-8128
Hinkle-Garton Farmstead 2920 E. Tenth St., Bloomington www.facebook.com/HinkleGartonFarmstead	Year-round	Herb, Orchard, Butterfly, & Woodland Gardens Invasives Removal, Soil Reclamation	Danielle Bachant-Bell 812-336-6141 or 812-360-6544 (text) hgfvolunteers@gmail.com
Hoosier Hills Food Bank Will Detmer Park, 4140 West Vernal Pike	Year-round	Plant, Harvest, and Compost (training provided)	Bobbi Boos Call Ryan Jochim 812-334-8374 hhfoodbank.org/volunteer.php
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard 1100 W. Allen St., Bloomington mhcfoodpantry.org/getinvolved/volunteer	Year-round	Seasonal Garden Tasks	Kendra Brewer, Coordinator garden@mhcfoodpantry.org
T. C. Steele 4220 T. C. Steele Rd., Nashville	Seasonal	Maintenance, Invasives Removal	Anthony Joslin 812-988-2785 - leave a message
Wonderlab Garden 308 W. Fourth St., Bloomington	Seasonal	Education, Maintenance, Volunteer Management	Nancy White 812-824-4426 www.wonderlab.org/exhibits/wondergarden
Wylie House 307 E. Second St., Bloomington	Year-round	maintenance of heirloom garden, seed saving	Sherry Wise 812-855-6224 www.indiana.edu/~libwylie/garden.html
MCMGA	Year-round	Various	Demo Garden – Herman Young 812-322-5700 Garden Walk – Mary Jane Hall 812-345-3985 Program – Sandy Belth 812-825-8358 Website – Stephen Anderson 812-860-1216

JUDGES WANTED: NEW “BEST FRONT YARD” AWARDS

The **Best Front Yard awards** have changed! These annual awards for residential gardens have been reduced to **just FOUR total for this coming year**. One each will be awarded in the SouthEast (01), SouthWest (03), NorthEast (08), and NorthWest (04) areas--defined by zip codes but *now including homes in the city fringe* as long as they are in the four zip codes.

Judges:

Many master gardeners have been judges in the past, and experienced ones are now asked to volunteer again, but we would like one new participant in each car. If you are interested in serving as a judge this coming year, please **contact Susan Eastman** (812-332-2996 or eastman@indiana.edu). As always, judges visit areas other than where they live.

Criteria:

Judging will be by groups of three or four per zip code area, and the award criteria remain the same: *gardens should have visual presence, four-season appeal, unusual plantings, and careful maintenance, as well as plantings that take advantage of their spaces, are harmonious, eye-catching, memorable and worthwhile to visit*. Moreover, gardens that have won in the past (more than three years ago) might be suitable for a new picture and a story now. Judges will have a list of eligible and ineligible past winners in the area.

Other Changes:

Selecting the four gardens will take place right after the Garden Fair (**the first two weeks of April**). Also, all four **signs will go out immediately** (as soon as the permission form is signed), and these “improved” signs will now say BEST FRONT YARD in big letters. Homeowners will also get an award certificate.



Sponsors:

Monroe County Master Gardeners Association and the *Herald-Times* sponsor this award. For Master Gardeners, working on the BEST FRONT YARD contest earns volunteer hours, along with a good time doing something fun and worthwhile for the community!

Contact Susan Eastman if interested: 812-332-2996 | eastman@indiana.edu.

How to care for poinsettias

The poinsettia, the most popular holiday plant, is best known as the plant with bright red flowers on a green background. But the showiest part of the poinsettia is the group of colorful specialized leaves called floral bracts that surround the small, yellowish-green structures that are the true flowers. Red is still the most popular color, but bracts may also be pink, salmon-colored, yellow, white or multicolor.

The long-lasting nature of today's poinsettias can only be enjoyed if they receive the proper care in your home. The best way to extend their beauty is to match, as closely as possible, the conditions in which they were produced. Poinsettias are raised in greenhouses where temperatures can be maintained between 65 - 75 F with high relative humidity and high light intensity.

These conditions will be difficult, if not impossible, to match in the home. Natural light intensity tends to be quite low and of shorter duration in the winter. And as we heat the air indoors, the air becomes drier so that relative humidity often drops below the level

of plant and people comfort.

Make the most of the situation by placing your plant near a sunny window, but do not allow the foliage or flowers to contact cold window glass. Artificial light may be needed for extended growing periods. A humidifier will increase both plant and people comfort. Grouping plants together on a pebble tray will help raise humidity around the plants themselves. Both hot and cold drafts can cause leaf drop, so avoid placing plants near doors or heating vents.

Both under- and over-watering can decrease the life of your plant. Plants that are allowed to wilt will begin to brown along the edges of the leaves and floral bracts or may drop leaves entirely. Watering too often will prevent proper aeration of the soil, and roots will begin to decay. Poinsettias should be watered when the top inch of soil feels dry to the touch. If your pot was wrapped in foil, be sure to poke a few holes through the bottom to allow excess water to drain away.

- B. Rosie Lerner



Poinsettia Cyathia



Poinsettias: pink, red, salmon, white

Garden activities for the month of January

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Keep holiday poinsettias and other plants near a bright window. Water as top of soil becomes dry.
- Increase humidity around houseplants by grouping plants together, placing them on a pebble-water tray or running a humidifier.
- Check stored produce and tender flower bulbs and roots for rot, shriveling or excess moisture. Remove and discard damaged material.
- Repot houseplants as they outgrow current pots.

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals and fruits)

- Check young trees for rodent injury on lower trunks. Prevent injury with hardware cloth or protective collars.
- Keep road and sidewalk salt away from plants. Construct a screen of burlap, if necessary, to keep salt spray off plants.
- "Leaf" through nursery catalogs or visit websites and make plans for landscape and home orchard additions. Order plants early for best selection.
- Early spring-flowering trees and shrubs such as forsythia, crabapple, flowering quince, flowering dogwood and honeysuckle can be forced for early indoor blooms by placing cut branches in water in a warm location.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables & small fruits)

- Send for seed catalogs for the garden.
- Sketch your garden plans on paper, including what to grow, spacing, arrangement and number of plants needed.
- Order seeds and plants as early as possible for best selection.
- Wood ashes from the fireplace can be spread in the garden, but don't overdo it. Wood ashes increase soil pH, and excess application can make some nutrients unavailable for plant uptake. Have soil tested to be certain of the pH before adding wood ash.

- B. Rosie Lerner

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.mcmga.net

Roots & Shoots gets a facelift / New Board Members

Our first issue of 2016 debuts our new editor and one of our latest Board Members Heather Daley. Let us know your thoughts on the new look, and please continue to submit your articles!

Programs) and Dorothea Cole-Kiser (Treasurer).

We are excited to kick off 2016 with high levels of energy!

In addition to Heather, the MCMGA is pleased to announce two other recent appointments to the Board, Trish Gustaitis (Vice President –

A special thank you goes out to our long time Editor, Helen Hollingsworth for her years of dedication and support.

Looking for submissions

Submissions and inquiries are encouraged, and should be directed to our editorial office:

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About MCMGA ...

The Monroe County Master Gardener Association, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation in the state of Indiana, affiliated with Purdue University, Cooperative Extension Service, an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.
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