

Roots and Shoots

Volume 30, Issue 3

March 2014

Monroe County Master Gardeners Association

Attend March 25 general meeting

By Susan Lovell



Special points of interest:

- Earn hours volunteering at the Farmers' Market
- Indiana has wonderful public gardens to visit
- Four members earn new badges
- Enter your garden photos in the State Conference contest
- Prune roses after new foliage emerges

Our next general meeting is on March 25, in the extension office meeting room at 6:30 p.m. As we look forward to the spring equinox on March 20, we also look forward to our March speaker, Marie Fleming. Her topics, *Seed Collecting, Saving, and Starting* and *Preparing Your Own Potting Soil*, are sure to jump start our thoughts of spring. Marie is a Certified Permaculture Designer and teacher. Two hours of education credit will be available.

Our refreshment committee volunteers for March are Mary Cusack, Mary Hoffmann, Jessica Wilson, Donna Terry, and Tom Lovell. I can't wait to see what wonderful treats are in store for our attendees to enjoy. Refreshments are available starting at 6:00 p.m. to enjoy during our social time prior to the start of our meeting.

Extra hands to help set up and clean up after the meeting are needed, and if you can come early and/or stay late to help, it will be appreciated. If everyone pitches in, the work will be quickly done.

Inside this issue:

Member news	2
Volunteering at the Farmers' Market	3
Garden Fair event sponsors	3
Garden Fair news	4
Garden Fair free education sessions list	4
Garden Walk is on June 14	5
Help our Grant Program	5

Enter to win a scholarship
to the
Purdue State Master Gardener Conference
in Indianapolis on June 12-14, 2014
Awarded by MCMGA Board
in a drawing at the
March 25 general meeting

Member news

By Evelyn Harrell



Calling all cooks! Calling all cooks! Actually, the call out is going to all bakers, but where's the alliteration in that? With very cold temps hounding us well into March, it's hard to believe that the 5th annual Garden Fair, on April 5th this year, is less than a month away. It is time to dig out your favorite recipe for fruit pie, cookies, or brownies. But, please, **DO NOT INCLUDE ANY NUTS**. We have to be aware of people with that common food allergy. There has not been a signup sheet made available for desserts because you all know the drill. The Spring Thyme Café depends on your contributions of these sweet treats because they are a major draw at the Garden Fair. Will that harbinger of spring—rhubarb—be available by then?

In case you've forgotten, here's what to do when donating food at the Garden Fair:

1. Please bring your food item to the Armory on Friday, April 4, between noon and 3:00 p.m., or as early as you can manage on Saturday morning.
2. **DO NOT** cut the pies or brownies. Volunteers will cut the desserts as uniformly as possible so that everyone gets the same amount for the same price.
3. If you do not bring your food item in a disposable container, please mark the container with your name on the bottom. Containers will be washed and available for you to pick up on Saturday.

Have you visited our Facebook page?

On a different note, be sure to go to our website, www.mcmga.net, and look at the bottom of the screen for the link to our Facebook page. There are informative articles and fun photos—Penny Austin and her sprout friends, for example—and some not-so-fun photos of winter damage, a nasty-looking apple, and something called Nail-head Canker. You definitely don't want to find that in your orchard. Check out our Facebook page!

Grant Committee meets to review grant proposals

Nancy White is heading up the committee to select non-profit community gardening grant winners. Experienced committee members, Mary Carol Paul and Lynn Courson, will help make the selections from so many good applicants. Expect to hear from this committee soon.

Ready for spring?

If you haven't been able to attend a gardening event yet this year, the Morgan County Master Gardener Association's *Gardenfest* will be held at a new location on March 14 from 1:00-8:00 p.m. and on March 15 from 9:00-4:00 p.m. *Gardenfest* will be held at the Hoosier Harvest Church, three miles east of Martinsville on SR 252.

Volunteering at the Bloomington Farmers' Market

By Abe Morris



I completed a large portion of my volunteer hours for my Master Gardener certification by volunteering at the Master Gardeners' booth at the Bloomington Farmer's Market. I found it to be a very enjoyable experience and would highly recommend it. There are few events that draw a wider cross section of the local population. Farmers come from all kinds of neighboring counties, and Bloomington residents, young and old, rich and poor, all come out to the Farmers' Market. It is a premiere place for people-watching and a great way to meet new people. And of course, with fresh produce and plants being sold all over the market, there are tons of people interested in growing food and gardening!

I was initially intimidated by the idea of manning an info booth at an event filled with professional farmers. Who was I to answer gardening questions in such a forum, a lowly Master Gardener intern still working towards my certification? I was still very much learning about gardening myself with a lot more questions than answers. While I did indeed get a few questions I couldn't answer, these were easily solved by providing contact info for the Extension Office. I was, however, able to answer a lot more questions than I thought I would. I received as many questions about the organization and the certification process as I did about specific gardening topics, and the gardening questions were a great way to solidify the knowledge I learned in class.

So sign up for a shift at the Master Gardener booth and go on down to the Farmers' Market. Grab a coffee and maybe a cookie or breakfast sandwich at the fantastic variety of food booths at the market when you arrive and sit back and watch Bloomington unfold in front of you. It's a fantastic way to spend a Saturday morning.

Editor's note: To volunteer to earn hours at the Farmers' Market during the months of April and May, contact Amy Thompson.

Event sponsors at the Garden Fair

By Nancy White

This year we started a new program of sponsorships to help us fund the Garden Fair. These are our 2014 sponsors. Please help us thank them for their support.

Event Program—**Fowler Tree Service**

Complimentary native shrubs—**Midwest Farm Credit**

Reusable shopping bags—**Bloomingsfoods East Garden Center**

Weed prevention materials—**The Preen Company**

Garden Fair news

By Nancy White



This will be the last Garden Fair update in *Roots and Shoots* prior to the April 5 event, so below is some information that you will want to remember.

- ◆ Posters are available to post in your place of work or other locations. Contact Nancy White if you can post one. These 11" x 14" posters include the information on our education sessions.
- ◆ Yard signs will be available for pick-up at the March 25 general meeting. Directions for placement and pick-up will be provided on each sign.
- ◆ Master Gardeners who are working on Garden Fair day do not need to pay the entry fee. But you will not get a door prize ticket unless you do pay the \$2 entry fee.
- ◆ Children under 12 years old are free.
- ◆ See *Member News* in this issue for details on donating baked goods to the Café.
- ◆ Parking for those working on event day will be in the Extension Office lot, south of the Armory. Both the north and south Armory lots will be reserved for our vendors and guests. Please do not plan to park across Walnut Street from the Armory. We do not have permission to use any of those lots.
- ◆ The Master Gardener sales booth will again sell those great soil knives that were such a hit in 2012. This year we have a leather sheath that we will sell separately from the knives. Knives are the same price as 2012 at \$20, and the sheaths are \$10.

Garden Fair free education sessions

By Jeff Schafer



Free education sessions are popular at our annual Garden Fair. Below is a list of this year's sessions.

9:30-10:30, *Rain Gardens*, Todd Stevenson, Monroe County Drainage Engineer

10:45-11:45, *Hardscaping*, Helen Hollingsworth, Monroe County Master Gardener

12:30-1:30, *Monarch Butterflies*, Edie Dyer-Wilson, Sullivan County Master Gardener

2:00-3:00, *Edible Wild Plants*, David Mow, Morgan County, Master Gardener and Naturalist

Garden Walk is June 14

By Mary Jane Hall



The Garden Walk committee is searching for garden delights to offer to members on June 14. Please call (812-345-3985) or email (gardenz4ever@hotmail.com) Mary Jane Hall if you have ideas to share. Gardens for the MCMGA garden walk should provide an educational opportunity for visitors. Think of gardens with unusual features, great design, innovative techniques, interesting hardscape, and, of course, funky plants! Since our picnic is in May this year and not during the Garden Walk, the gardens may be of any size.

The Garden Walk committee will meet on March 13 at 5:00 p.m. at FC Tucker, 487 S Clarizz, to organize our work. More volunteers are always welcome.

Want to help our MCMGA Grant Program?

By Nancy White

We have been asked in the past about ways that someone might contribute to the grant program. This year we will have a spot at the Armory where MCMGA members, visitors, or vendors can contribute to our grant fund. There will also be a display of the 2014 grant winners. Grant winners in past years include Boys and Girls Club, Hilltop Nature Center, Area 10 Area on Aging, BDLC, Middleway House, Wonder Garden, Bloomington Community Orchard, Templeton School, and many others. Please pass the information along about our important grant program. Since we are a non-profit, all donations are tax deductible.

Visit public gardens in Indiana

If you're growing weary of waiting for spring, or you just want to be inspired with new ideas, why not plan a visit to a botanical garden or arboretum?

Indiana has a number of public gardens where you can learn new plants, as well as how to grow them. Botanical gardens and arboreta are essentially living museums with plants as the exhibits. Public gardens can be abundant sources of information about plants that can be grown in your area. Many public gardens have lecture series, tours and other special events.

For a list of Indiana gardens, see http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/gardens_visit.html.

Garden books available at the Monroe County Public Library

The backyard parables: lessons on gardening and life by Margaret Roach (2013)

Thrifty gardening: from the ground up by Marjorie Harris (2012)

The complete guide to lower midwest gardening by Lynn M. Steiner (2012)

Plantiful: start small, grow big with 150 plants that spread, self-sow, and overwinter by Kristin Green (2014)

Decoding garden advice: the science behind the 100 most common recommendation by Jeff Gillman (2011)

High-impact, low-carbon gardening: 1001 ways to garden sustainably by Alice Bowe (2011)

Container gardening by Ian Hodgson (2013)

Fine gardening beds & borders: design ideas for gardens large and small edited by Fine Gardening (2012)

Beautiful backyards by Joan Clifton (2012)

Gardening for the birds: how to create a bird-friendly backyard by George Martin Adams (2013)

Hats off!



New badges:

Jessica Wilson—certified

Sandy Belth—advanced

Gloria Noone—bronze

Ann McEndarfer—silver

Congratulations!

Purdue Master Gardener State Conference photo contest call for entries

The Photo Contest for the 2014 Purdue Master Gardener State Conference is **open for entries 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 up to three 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 the 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 .jpg attachment and emailed to the Photo Contest Co-chairman Meredith Hull at mhull@iupui.edu by the deadline May 1, 2014.

Each photo entry must be submitted as a .jpg 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).

Winter desiccation of woody ornamentals

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist



Arborvitae Winter Desiccation

Winter's howling winds and frigid temperatures are challenging for all woody landscape plants. Although our plants are fully dormant at this time, the plant tissue is still subject to losing too much water - a condition called desiccation.

This year's unusually heavy and consistent snow cover provides good insulation, and most plants went into winter with a good moisture supply this year. However, when the ground is frozen

solid and freezing temperatures are accompanied by high winds, the plants continue to lose moisture without being able to replenish the supply.

Evergreens, and, in particular, broadleaved evergreens such as rhododendron, mahonia and holly, are the most susceptible, because they have a greater surface area through which to lose water compared to deciduous plants.

Evergreens that have suffered from winter desiccation typically have beige to brown leaf edges that are curled, or they may show red or purple discoloration. But even deciduous plants (those that lose their leaves in winter) continue to lose water throughout the winter. Severe desiccation will be obvious as dead twigs and buds. Some twigs will leaf out in spring

only to die back later in summer when additional stress such as heat or drought apply additional pressure.

“We recommend delaying pruning chores a bit this spring so that the toll of winter injury can be assessed. Dead tissue can be removed anytime, but cutting into live tissue leaves the remaining stem more vulnerable to further drying.”

Rosie Lerner

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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@mhcfoodpantry.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.

Spring pruning of roses

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue

Now's the time to prepare your garden roses for the coming growing season. The three primary purposes of pruning are to remove damaged and unwanted canes, promote optimum blooming, and reduce size of the plant, if needed.

Roses are best pruned before the new foliage emerges so that you can easily assess winter damage. Winter mulch and foam covers should be removed as soon as new growth becomes apparent. Since a spring freeze is still possible, it's a good idea to keep the mulch nearby for quick protection.

The next step is to assess the plants for dieback and remove any dead, diseased, or otherwise damaged canes. Even the hardiest roses will suffer some cane dieback, some years more so than others. Damaged canes will appear brown or black. Cut back badly damaged or dead canes down to the base of the plant. Slightly damaged canes only need to be cut back to healthy tissue. Be sure to cut back to an outward-facing bud so that new growth will occur toward the outside of the plant. This ensures good air circulation around the plant, which will help prevent disease infection. Completely remove any suckers or shoots that arise from the rootstock.



Rose cane dieback

More specific pruning directions vary with the growth habit of the plant. Bush-type grafted roses should have four to eight strong canes cut to a uniform height, spreading out away from the center of the plant in the shape of a V. Be sure to remove any canes that arise from below the graft union, whether on the trunk or from roots.

Pruning of climbing roses depends on their specific flowering habit. Ever-blooming climbers that flower throughout the growing season should need little pruning the first few years. As with all roses, remove any dead or weak wood. Thereafter, remove the oldest, longer canes that have become unproductive. Younger canes (two to three years old) produce the most flowers and should be cut back to two or three healthy buds.

Ramblers and large-flowered climbers that bloom only once each year should be pruned immediately after blooms fade, since buds form on the previous year's growth. As with raspberries, canes that bear flowers this year should be completely removed to allow space for the new canes to develop and produce buds for next year's season. (continued on page 11)

It's easy to be green, if you're a plant

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue

St. Patrick's Day seems to bring out the "Wearin' o' the Green" among human folk. But plants wear their green throughout the year, and it is the green that makes plants such unique life forms.

Plants get their green color from a pigment called chlorophyll. Green plants produce their own food supply through a process called photosynthesis, which can only take place when both chlorophyll and light are present.



Green Lettuce

Other ingredients are also essential for photosynthesis to take place. The plant uses light and chlorophyll to manufacture carbohydrates by recombining carbon dioxide, taken in from the surrounding air, and water, taken in primarily by the roots from surrounding soil. Leaves produce most of the carbohydrates since they generally make up the majority of surface area, but stems and buds contribute, too.

Chlorophyll is only able to use a portion of the light that reaches it. On a sunny day, only about 1% of the light received by a leaf will be used in photosynthesis. The rest will be reflected, transformed into heat or used for other plant processes. Conversely, photosynthetic production will be dramatically cut back during cloudy weather or other low-light situations.

Fortunately, not all plants must have maximum light intensity for good plant growth. The optimum light level depends on the species of plant. Some plants require as little as one-tenth of full sunlight. This is why some plants such as impatiens are considered shade plants, while others such as petunias are considered sun plants.

Houseplants also vary in their light needs—keeping in mind that their native habitat is, of course, outdoors. Because light levels inside the home are generally quite low compared to outdoors, we often think of the houseplants in terms of how well they adapt to low light. Most houseplants will grow best in as much light as you can supply in the typical home.

There are a few common houseplants—pothos, snake plant, dracaena and Chinese evergreen—that can adapt quite well to low light. But even these plants do need some light in order to survive. If light is bright enough to read by, these low-light plants will get by.

Spring pruning of roses (continued from page 10)

Shrub roses rarely need to be shaped, and heavy pruning may destroy their natural beauty. Pruning of shrub roses should be limited to removal of dead or damaged wood and thinning of excessive growth.

More information on pruning and general rose care is available in Purdue Extension bulletin HO-128 "Roses," which is online at <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/HO-128.pdf>.

**Monroe County
Master Gardeners
Association**

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Helping others grow!



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Master Gardener Calendar

Friday, March 14, 1:00-8:00 p.m. and
Saturday, March 15, 9:00 a.m.—4:00
p.m., *Gardenfest* presented by Morgan
County, at Hoosier Harvest Church, three
miles east of Martinsville on SR 252

Tuesday, March 25, 6:30 p.m., member
general meeting in the extension office
meeting room; *Seed Collecting, Saving,
and Starting and Preparing Your Own Pot-
ting Soil* presented by Marie Fleming; two
hours of education credit available

Saturday, April 5, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.,
Garden Fair presented by Monroe County
Master Gardeners, at Indiana National
Guard Armory, 3380 South Walnut Street