

PURDUE

U N I V E R S I T Y

PURDUE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Elkhart County

Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds

17746-E County Road 34

Goshen, IN 46528-6898



The Michiana

Broadcaster

"Helping Each Other Grow!"

Michiana Master Gardeners Association

June 2008

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Spring is when you feel like
whistling even with a shoe
full of slush! ~ Doug Larson

CALENDAR

June 2008

16	Mon.	MMGA Board Meeting—Conference Rm.	<i>12:00 for lunch</i>
24	Tues.	MMGA Member Meeting—Ag Hall <i>Andrews Time</i>	7 PM

I will be the gladdest thing under
the sun!

I will touch a hundred flowers and
not pick one.

Edna St. Vincent Millay "Afternoon on a Hill"

A Look Ahead

July	12	Garden Tour
July	14	Fair set up & Pizza Party
Aug.	26	Garden Tour Appreciation Dinner
Sept.	30	Quilt Gardens of Elkhart County Elkhart county Visitor's Bureau
Oct.	28	A Work in Progress: Wellfield Botanic Gardens- Eric Amt, Executive Director
Nov.	25	Thanks for Giving Carry-In & Food Drive
Dec.		NO MEETING



From The Presidents Desk

Well, it looks like spring is finally here! It seemed like a very long winter, didn't it? I just couldn't wait to get out and dig in the soil to see what was coming up. It always seems like a gift when I find something slowly emerging from the ground.

There are so many things happening in our Master Gardener world this month. Seminars, gardens, flowers and volunteer opportunities are everywhere. And I love every minute of it!

The 2009 State Convention Committee gave a report at our last monthly meeting. I hope all of you are as excited about this project as I am. It's a lot of work, but so worth it. Mary Davis and Judy Baker have everything well in hand and very well planned. There is something for every one of us to do to get involved.

The community PAR garden is looking very good again this year. If you want to help with this extremely worthwhile project, please contact Sue Stuckman. I'm sure she and her committee would love the help.

Garden Tour is coming up before we know it. As you know, the tour this year is in the New Paris, Millersburg area. The hospitality center will be at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds in the Family Arts building. It's going to be a great Garden Tour. If you're interested in helping, contact Rhonda Loucks. I think a few more volunteers are needed to be at gardens the day of the tour.

The tree sale is over and was again a huge success. Heidi Zavatsky and Nancy Brown and their committee have it down to a science. There were very few trees left over. I saw a lot of smiling faces leaving the fairgrounds with their newly acquired trees and shrubs. Volunteers were asked quite a few times to go home with folks to help plant. It's hard not to do it!

Our newest project is with the Extension Homemakers. This group is planting a quilt garden at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds. It will be on the North side of the Extension office by the entrance to the Fairgrounds. Linda Sinon is looking for Master Gardeners to help plant and maintain this garden. Just wait until you see it! It is a thing of beauty. If you like weeding and deadheading (like I do) give Linda a call. She will be glad to put you on the schedule.

Last of all, this month I want to thank Teresa Evans for taking such good care of us by doing our Broadcaster newsletter for so many years. With her new job and family obligations, she doesn't have the time to do the newsletter and has turned the Broadcaster over to the capable hands of Alys Kidder. Please send articles, pictures and announcements to Alys. I know she will do a great job. And be sure to thank Teresa next time you see her.

I hope to see all of you soon. Now go get dirty!

Gwen Ferland

AMG class of 2000

And very lucky to be your president and friend



Weather means more when you have a garden. There is nothing like listening to a shower and thinking how it is soaking in around your green beans. - Marcelene Cox

Master Gardener Bio

Linda Bowser 2004

Working toward Silver



Linda Bowser came to us with the class of 2004. She is a retired school teacher. She almost immediately became co-chair of the Merchandise Committee for Garden Tour and did a fantastic job. She is a very talented lady! Linda said she knew about the Community Garden and wanted to get involved, so needed to go through training to get there. She also continues to participate in the community garden. She thought training was fun and great way to meet people and has enjoyed her new gardening friends. She also likes giving back to the community through Master Gardeners. Linda and her husband Steve, a financial planner with AG Edwards, have lived in Elkhart since 1974. She moved here from Los Angeles. They have two adult children, Matthew, who lives in Indianapolis and is an IT consultant and Angela Billings, who is a speech professor at Clemson University and mother of Nathan, age 5 and Noah, age 1. Linda enjoys art, scrapbooking, stamping, travel, photography and reading and enjoys orchids and perennials and square foot gardening.



Remember when you are dividing your perennials to pot up a few extra for the garden tour!

Master Gardener Bio

Betty Foltz 2003



Working toward Silver

Her interest in gardening started as a child. A few years back, someone sent her a form to register for Master Gardener's and as a result, Betty Foltz joined MMGA through the class of 2003. Betty's garden was part of the 2006 Tour. She and husband Jack live where Cassopolis dead-ends into Beardsley. Their beautiful, historic house is on the river with a steep slope down the bank. They hand-carried literally hundreds of huge stones down the bank to complement the landscaping. The result is beautiful. Betty is also interested in containers, topiaries, perennials and starting seeds. She also recently added water gardening (even before the floods). She said she wants to try everything that comes along and enjoys being in Master Gardeners because you get exposed to so many ideas. She characterized the training as exceptional. Betty is a realtor and has lived in the Michiana area for 45 years. She and husband Jack share their home with Pico, an 18 year old cat that Betty says acts like she is 5 and as of December 26, a Shepherd/Chow mix who is about 10 months old. He was a stray and "found" them when they went for a walk and followed them home. He is appropriately named "Founder." They also have 3 children, Jack II, who lives in Elkhart with wife Dorry and 10 year old Jared and five year old Rylee Ann. Lisa is an electrical engineer who works for Continental AG in Chicago and Troy lives in Phoenix and was recently married to Shannon. Betty has worked on garden tour and the annual dinner. She enjoys redecorating and walking. One final story I always think of when I think of Betty involves someone touring their house to write an article about it. When she stepped onto the wrap-around porch, covered with vines and flowers, she remarked that it was "wildly romantic." I called Jack to verify the quote for the Garden Tour brochure. Yes, he said, that was the quote and he kept

Master Gardener Bio
Christine Goldsborough
2004



Working toward Advanced

Another Master Gardener who started young, with a mother who loved to garden, is Christine Goldsborough, class of 2004. Christine enjoys vegetable gardening, all flowers and container gardening. She said she finds gardening relieves stress. She said she was always too busy with children growing up to do much gardening, but as they grew older, she had more time and saw the information in the newspaper and applied. Those children are Jackie, who is a freshman at Ball State, majoring in journalism and Jamie, a senior at Memorial High School. Christine and husband James own Tom's Auto Salvage. Christine has worked on the Garden Tour, the MGA Hot Line, the Tree Sale and at the fair. She enjoys attending tag sales and auctions and restoring her buys and fishing. She and her husband also farm, raising beef cattle they purchase at the 4:H Fair and growing hay and alfalfa to feed them. A trio of dogs, Crissy, a Beagle, her daughter, Jersey and a confused Husky/ Shepherd mix, Lucille, who thinks she is a Beagle, round out the family. Christine said she loved training and thought Jeff was a great teacher. She said she had a lot of fun and learned a lot. She continues to enjoy MMGA as she continues to learn. She also enjoys meeting other gardeners and learning what they do.



In December, the 2007 Master Gardener class came to a close, and I am proud to announce that 18 gardening enthusiasts graduated from the course. This class put a lot of time and energy into the class and I am very proud of them all. Please help me in welcoming them into our group.

The 2007 Master Gardener class:

Bottom row, from left: Ruth Middleton, Elkhart, Larry Ringle, Bristol, Susan Woolley, Nappanee, Jim Bare, Goshen, Lori Massa, Elkhart, Paul Layne, Mishawaka, Priscilla Helmuth, Elkhart, Nelson Hahn, Nappanee

Row 2, from left: Tammy Mentor, Bristol, Pamela Lightfoot Sullivan, Elkhart, Nancy Ringle, Elkhart, Tandy Stutsman, Elkhart, Laurette DeToro, Granger, Kari Steffen, Syracuse, Kim Craft, Elkhart

Not pictured: Steve Bowser, Elkhart, Kathy Drew, Elkhart, Laura Stevens, Elkhart

Calling All Seamstresses!

We are going to make tote bags for our state meeting. They will be made of duck cloth and will have an appliqué of our lovely logo. We need seamstresses--any level qualifies. If you can stitch a straight seam, you're hired (remember those volunteer hours). The first step will be preparing the logos. If you have a machine with an embroidery program that you can adjust by using a floppy disk or CD with a pattern on it, we need you! (Please let us know your machine type and whether you need a floppy or CD). We will provide the design, material, stabilizer and thread. We would also like to finish some of the seams to prevent fraying--sergers, we need you! We will be having sessions to cut and assemble "packets" that will include the bag, a pocket with the appliqué, thread and webbing for handles. We will also provide instructions and if our seamstresses are interested can have work sessions as a group or you can take home. If you have already signed up, thank you! If you have not and can do any of the above, please contact Linda Sinon, our very own "bag lady." (Please let her know if you have serger and/or embroidery unit.)

Mary Davis '03



Master Gardeners Recipe Box

Party Mix

2 boxes Crispex

1 pkg Pepperridge Parmesan Fish

1 pkg Pretzel sticks

2 boxes Cheese It's (White Cheddar)

2 cups mixed Nuts

2 boxes Bugles

1 pkg dry Hidden Valley Dressing

1 bottle Orville Reddenbacher Buttery Popcorn Oil

These are approximate. Put in what you like.

Mix all together in large container or garbage bag.

Turn regularly for 24 hours.

Store in ice cream pails or any sealed containers.

This makes a very large batch.

(Served half recipe 1/29/08 for MMGA

added Valentine M & M for color and flavor.)

Your classmate,

Joyce Miller '03

Wilted Dandelion Greens Salad from Mother Earth News Magazine

4 slices of bacon, chopped

1 small red onion, diced

2 tsp brown sugar

2 tbsp cider vinegar

1 bunch dandelion greens, washed and dried, stems removed

Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste.

Fry bacon bits in a skillet until they are crisp and have rendered all their fat. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon of the bacon drippings and return the skillet to the burner. Add onion and stir in the sugar and cider vinegar. Pour the hot dressing over the greens, tossing the greens so as to coat them with dressing. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Master Gardeners Recipe Box

Here is the recipe for the Pea and Pasta Salad I brought to the last monthly meeting. I did not create this but discovered it in an older B H a& G magazine. Doris Kehr '06

- 1 c. fresh pea pods
- 8 oz. dried elbow macaroni
- 1 c. frozen peas, thawed
- 1/2 c. mayonnaise or salad dressing
- 1/2 c. dairy sour cream
- 1/3 c. milk
- 1/4 c. horseradish mustard
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1/4th tsp. salt
- 1/4th tsp pepper
- 3/4 c. thinly sliced celery
- 2 Tbsp. chopped onion

Remove tips and strings from pea pods. When you cook the macaroni put pea pods in the boiling water the last minute. Drain and rinse and set aside Mix remaining ingredients together the peas and pasta when they have cooled. Chill 4 to 24 hours.

Master Gardeners Recipe Box

Believe it or not--I am the person that thinks the kitchen is the room you have to walk through to get to the garage-I have an asparagus recipe.

Here goes: In olive oil sauté sliced garlic to flavor the oil. Remove the garlic and sauté asparagus to your personal desired tenderness. The garlic may be placed over the asparagus with a spritz of sea salt/ serve.

Linda Mayberry '96

Roasted Asparagus

In place of the lemon juice, you can drizzle a little balsamic vinegar over the asparagus. Add a little freshly grated parmesan cheese for an extra touch.

1-lb. asparagus spears (thick spears are best for roasting)

1-2 Tbsp olive oil

2-cloves garlic, minced

Kosher salt

Freshly grated black pepper

Lemon juice

Preheat oven to 400F. Rinse clean the asparagus. Break the tough ends off of the asparagus and discard.

Lay the asparagus spears out in a single layer in a baking dish or a foil-covered roasting pan. Drizzle olive oil over the spears, roll the asparagus back and forth until they are all covered with a thin layer of olive oil. (you can also put the asparagus & oil in a plastic bag, and rub the bag so that the oil gets evenly distributed.) Sprinkle with minced garlic, salt, and pepper.

Place pan in oven and cook for 8-10 minutes, depending on the thickness of the asparagus, until lightly browned and tender when pierced with a fork. Drizzle with a little fresh lemon before serving. Serves 4.

Alys Kidder '01

Master Gardeners Recipe Box

ASPARAGUS WITH TOASTED PINE NUTS & LEMON VINAI

1 pound fresh asparagus spears
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons pine nuts
1/2 teaspoon dried whole basil
1/4 cup olive oil
1/2 teaspoon dried whole oregano
1/teaspoon fresh lemon juice
Pepper, freshly ground
1 clove garlic, crushed

Snap off tough ends of asparagus. Remove scales from stalks. Place spears in a steaming rack over boiling water; cover; steam 4-5 minutes or until spears are crisp/tender. Transfer to serving platter.

Sauté pine nuts in a small skillet over medium heat 2-3 minutes until browned. Set aside.

Combine olive oil & remaining ingredients in medium saucepan; stir with wire whisk to blend. Cook over medium heat for 2-5 minutes or until thoroughly heated stirring constantly. Pour over asparagus. Sprinkle with pine nuts. Let stand at room temperature before serving.

[Per Serving: 185 cal (78% from Fat, 9% from Protein, 14% from Carb); 4 g Protein; 17g Total Fat; 7g carb; 3g Fiber; 34mg Calcium; 2mg Iron; 297mg Sodium; 0mg Cholesterol]

Judy Baker '00

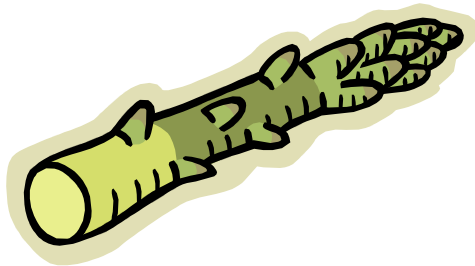
Master Gardeners Recipe Box

Springtime Soup

- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 1C. scallions, chopped thinly,
- 2 C. Creamora,
- 5 C. boiling chicken broth,
- 2med. potatoes, peeled and sliced thinly,
- 2 med. carrots, peeled and sliced,
- 1/4 C. regular rice, uncooked,
- 1 10 oz. pkg. frozen cut asparagus,
- 1 10 oz. frozen chopped spinach,
- 1 teas. salt (optional)

In large heavy-bottomed saucepan melt butter over low heat. Add chopped scallions, cook until golden and tender. Add Creamora and chicken broth all at once, beating with a whisk until smooth. Add potatoes, carrots and rice. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat, simmering 20 minutes. Add asparagus and spinach. simmer 15 minutes longer. Makes 2-1/2 quarts.

This is so good and I think you could add fresh asparagus and simmer a little longer. I also like fresh spears in a garden salad, raw. Jean Rombke '99, Speakers Bureau M. G.



MG ARTICLE: MAIL ORDER CATALOGS

There's just something about holding a catalog in your hands, especially when brightly colored photos accompany the luscious descriptions. As someone who regularly goggles' any unusual plant I hear of, I have come across some previously unknown—to me—sources for plants. But first, a couple of old favorites.

The first one, Bluestone Perennials (bluestoneperennials.com), is a highly rated mail order business. I have never had a bad experience with this company, including on at least two occasions when I lost plants. No questions asked, they were replaced immediately. Prices are reasonable, with most perennials coming in a three pack for around \$14.00. Shrubs are very small, but also very cheap. This year, I am ordering a Forsythia koreana because it is rated for half shade, for only \$6.95. Orders by midnight Feb. 6 will be 20% off (I know, I should have written this last month), so my new little shrub will set me back only \$5.50. The photos in this catalog are so good, and the selection so broad, that we use it on the Plant ID committee when we are preparing for the garden tour.

Another favorite, though I order very rarely, is Plant Delights (plantdelights.com), whose catalog is not only an education, but also a good laugh, as every year, a comic book-like cover makes fun of something in the political realm. And throughout the plant descriptions, owner Tony Avent offers descriptions which you won't find in any other catalog. For example, he says of Hosta 'Electrocution,' "The clump truly looks like it was letting out a final scream while strapped to an electric chair when the switch was pulled." Speaking of Hostas, Avent has introduced many Hostas over the years, and the names alone make reading the catalog a must. Hosta devotees will want to check out the broad selection.

Plant Delights claims to offer over 1000 different perennials, and, if you can find it in your local nursery, with a few exceptions, it probably won't be available on this website.

I couldn't find that Plant Delights requires a minimum order as in the past, but shipping for six plants or less to Indiana is \$19.50, which does make it expensive, since plants start around \$9-\$14 and go up from there. A newly introduced Hosta can easily cost \$40.

New to me, Heronswood (heronswood.com) was purchased by the Burpee Company. The company was founded by Dan Hinkley, a well-known, world travelling plant explorer. The catalog is

There are stunning photos, and if you crave the unusual, even for just admiring, this is indeed a must-have catalog. The selection is not broad, but focuses on new varieties of plants. Prices are accordingly high--would you pay \$14.95 for a single "highly unusual Chinese species" of Pachysandra? Or \$39.95 for a hellebore hybrid, 'Starling,' even if it does have black blossoms? I may just take a chance on a new Ceratostigma 'My

Love,' a golden yellow leaved Plumbago, for *only* \$11.95. I count Plumbago among my favorites, ever since I first saw it at fellow MG class member Deb Fessenden's shady garden during a long ago garden tour.

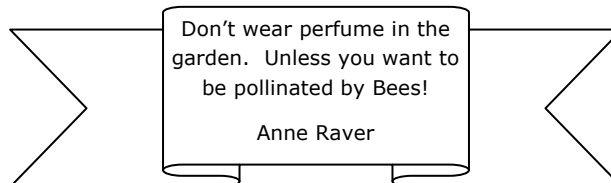
For daylily groupies, Oakes Daylilies (oakesdaylilies.com) offers a much needed fix. I grow a few daylilies, and do not fall in the fanatic category, but a friend who ordered from this catalog last fall praised the size of the plants, and their freebies amounting to around 20% of the order. Also, until March 1, the company is offering free shipping for ordering over \$100 (as I said, it's for fanatics).

While looking for my absolute favorite vine, Boston Ivy 'Fenway Park' which I had to part with when I moved last March, I came across Brushwood Nursery (brushwoodnursery.com). They don't have it either, but it is in their listing, and I was able to put myself on a list to be e-mailed when it become available. It's the plant I miss the most, a less ambitious Boston Ivy with brightly lime colored foliage which glowed all season and again in the fall, with deep red leaves.

Mail order nurseries require caution. Descriptions, even among the best, are typically glowing. I was happy to find Brushwood is one of the top 30 rated by users on the Dave's garden website (davesgarden.com/products/gwd) where there is a guide to gardening by mail. All of the companies above, except Heronswood, which got mixed reviews, are on the top 30 list, and there are a few more there I may just check out this weekend.

Submitted by

Carol Miller, Class of '97



Hi Gardeners

As I sit here and think about the tree sale of 2008, I'm reminded that it is much more than a fundraising event to sponsor MMGA projects and educational opportunities for the community.

In May of last year the committee met to go over what worked and what didn't work at the 2007 sale and we picked out the species to order for the 2008 sale. We learned that Jenny Brosius was allergic to tree molds/pollen...she's a great data keeper and keeps everyone on track; but she would not be able to help on tree prep days and pick-up day. She makes the tags, brochures, sales slips and monitors the cash flow as money arrives with the orders. I'm sure she does a lot more ... I just don't know about it. The committee consists of Anne Overmyer, Jim Maddux, Mary Hesser, Mayrea Reusser, Earl Bailey, Alys Kidder, Judy Baker, Jenny Brosius, Nancy Brown and myself.. It's a given that the committee members work on the three days of the prep and sale. I would welcome anyone else that would like to work on the committee. We meet about 5 times throughout the year. Our biggest responsibility is keeping the tree order forms in our distribution sites. This year we added 7 Martin grocery stores to our list.

Our total in sales was \$11,419.60. The cash sales amounted to \$2,467.50. The most popular was again the white pine, blue spruce and the arborvitae. Next in popularity were the Kousa dogwood and the butterfly bush.

Of course none of this would have happened without the help of all the Master Gardeners who signed to help on prep days and pick-up day. It was dirty and exhausting work; but we had fun too. I got to spend some time visiting with some new interns, Joyce Miller gave me a new recipe and brought some great 2 ½ gallon containers with lids to give away. I thought they were so great, she agreed to bring more the MMGA meeting. They went fast and I'm sure we will put these containers to good use instead of seeing them go to the recycling center. Phyllis Schortgen was working away at packaging trees. We thought she should change positions, but she was having too much fun and didn't want to stop. I'm sure she felt it the next day. We had a chili lunch on Saturday , but could not pack up because Ag Hall was reserved so we had to wait until Sunday to put everything away. Jim Maddux and crew handled all the hard work of returning equipment to the loft in Ag Hall.

Nancy Brown made her magic happen in setting up the sheep/swine building. The first day we unpacked the trees and repackaged them in the designated bundles. The second day we picked the customer orders and prepared for customer pick-up on Saturday. All went smoothly and what few mistakes were made we corrected right away and were ready to go for Saturday.

We meet again in May for our final wrap meeting and pick the species for the 2009 sale. Every year it's been such a pleasure to work with all of you who give of yourself so generously to the good of the cause. Hope to work with you again on the 2009 sale.

Heidi Zavatsky '00

Presented December 11, 2007 via video

Purdue Master Gardener Program Spotlight: Jeff Burbrink

It is our pleasure to present Jeff Burbrink with the 2007 Purdue Master Gardener Coordinator of the Year Award!

New this year, nominations were sought from Master Gardeners around the state to recognize their local county coordinator. The criteria for nomination included communication skills, enthusiasm, leadership, ability to delegate, sensitivity to diverse needs, and encouragement of growth and continued participation.

Though we received many worthy nominations, we were particularly touched by the well organized packet submitted by the Elkhart County MGs.

Here's what Jeff's fan club had to say.

"When Jeff established the early guidelines for the Elkhart Program, he did so with careful thought to what it would mean to class participants, the local extension office, and the region as a whole to have a group of trained volunteers sharing their love and knowledge of gardening with the community."

"Leading by example, his enthusiasm and high standards have made the Michiana Master Gardener Association respected within the county and throughout the state."

"Class members know they are earning the right to be a part of a wide-reaching, well-respected organization and Jeff provides them with the tools and encouragement to become the best educators they can be."

"Whether it's the Garden Tour, the graduating class seminars, or the tree sales program, Jeff is in the background helping others make everything work".

Although quite capable of teaching the classes himself, Jeff enriches the program by bringing in a variety of community experts as speakers in order to expose students to a variety of methods and perspectives. Jeff helps them to understand that the correct answer is more important than appearing to know all the answers. Jeff himself says: "It is really more knowing which questions to ask and where to look for answers!"

Jeff is an excellent facilitator and mentor of the Michiana Master Gardeners. He welcomes students to the program from a variety of backgrounds and interests, provides them with the opportunity to be self-sufficient, yet maintains the structure and consistency necessary to be affiliated with the Purdue Master Gardener Program.

One last quote from one of the Elkhart Co. MGs -- "Jeff is the real McCoy. He is a model representative, devoted to the program. He has the ability to adjust, even under difficult circumstances. He is open minded and understanding. Jeff is a true friend."

Jeff Burbrink is a native of Bartholomew County, Indiana. Born and raised on a grain and beef farm near Columbus, he was a 10 year 4-H member. Jeff joined the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service in 1982 and is now the County Extension Director and Economic and Community Development Educator for Elkhart County.

Congratulations Jeff, on a job well done!



INSIDE THE EXTENSION OFFICE

Submitted By: Kate Rink

Hello fellow gardeners! It's finally Spring! Our "to-do" list is rapidly growing with the onset of warmer weather pulling us outside. It seems as though Mother Nature, fickle as she is, can't make up her mind this year if she wants to be hot or cold. Of course we all opt for the warm weather because as gardeners we certainly have a lot to do. As Northerners, our winters are so long and we become extremely anxious for Spring. So come on Old Girl, give us that sunshine we want. Warm that soil, pop those bulbs and buds. We are so ready to see what gardening season 2008 holds in store for us.

The Extension Office Hotline is in full swing. Pre-planning and training preceded our initial start-up. Our Extension Educator, Andrew Westfall, held training in March for all those interested in participating in the hotline. It was great to see many new faces as well as those who have helped in the past. Gaining volunteer hours for Master Gardener certification is a priority for the newbies but for all of us a broader education of knowledge becomes a plus each time we work.

Andrew guided us through a power point, crash course of our Master Gardener classes. Highlighting information pertinent to incoming questions we will undoubtedly receive. The new class members were given a tour of the Master Gardener room. We focused on the Ortho book, our microscope, the shelves of additional resources in addition to the proper techniques of answering the phone.

Our hours this year will be Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 A. M. to 1:00 P.M. Questions from the previous day are saved from the Extension staff for the next day's Master Gardener. It is nice to have some work waiting for us when we arrive so that we can delve into whatever that problem may be. An experienced Hotline volunteer was paired up with a new volunteer when we signed up for our hours each month. It has worked well in the past to have a mentor.

Our April weather has been chilly enough that we have not had many calls this month. I guarantee that will not be the case next month! From past experience, May and June are our busiest months. Typical questions for the month of April come from people wanting to know when to apply crabgrass preventer and when to start grass seed. A homeowner had a pine tree blow down during a winter storm and wanted to know if she could recycle the shavings. Our MG made several phone calls and reported that the pine mulch ground from her tree would be OK to use.

A few calls came in regarding house plants. One reported having ants in the soil and she wondered what to do as she was moving and didn't want to take the ants with her. It was suggested to remove the plant from the pot and carefully wash the ants away and replace the plant with new soil. Additionally, she could use an insecticidal soap or apply an insecticide in the saucer under the pot. The other call was actually about tomato plants that had been started in the house for later planting outside. This client had black spots looking like dirt on the stem and underside of the plant. Again, the recommendation of the MG was to spray with insecticidal soap or mild detergent for possible insects and to watch the watering program as well as having sufficient light.

Several calls came in that Purdue publications became the easy fix. This being quick information, requiring very little research and a real handy tool for response. Pruning grapes and pruning ornamentals were two of the publications sent to help out.

Another homeowner has had a problem with moss growing in his yard. He had a number of trees in his yard which would create a shady site. Compacted soil, poorly drained soil, low fertility, low or high soil PH, poor circulation, and poor lawn care practices are all sources of moss problems. Modifying the site conditions to favor lawn grasses and discourage moss is a suggested way to manage the problem. Too much shade for acceptable grass growth is a common underlying cause of moss invasion. Pruning trees and shrubs to improve air circulation and light penetration is a good starting point. A soil test could be helpful, as it could be the soil PH is out of line, contributing to the problem. Reduce soil compaction by core aerifying. This may also help correct drainage problems; although serious drainage problems may require more extensive work to correct.

The MG recommended planting a more shade-tolerant grass noting to keep in mind the hours in the day that the lawn receives four full hours of sunlight per day. Grasses don't like less than four hours. Also recommended was pruning some of the limbs in the trees, especially the lower ones. A soil test was recommended to evaluate the fertility.

That is about all we have for the April calls. Brace yourself for May as the weather warms up and all kinds of things are happening in people's yards. The calls keep coming and that gives us a job to do, helping others grow!

2008 GARDEN TOUR ANNOUNCED

Goshen, Indiana – The Michiana Master Gardeners Association announces its 12th annual Garden Tour through the Amish and Mennonite countryside of Elkhart County. The Tour will be held July 12, 2008, with homeowners opening their gardens from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Among the tour's 13 garden locations will be a Centennial farm, working hog farm, and Quilt Garden at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds.

The "Hospitality Center" for the 2008 Garden Tour will be located at the Elkhart County fairgrounds, Home & Family Arts Building, and will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Refreshments will be awaiting guests as they visit the educational displays and demonstrations.

Established potted plants from the Master Gardeners' own healthy plants will be offered at very affordable prices as well as many handcrafted and garden art items. Everyone will have the opportunity to discuss garden interests and to learn more about the Master Gardener program.

Tickets will be \$10 per person and will go on sale Friday, May 23, through noon on Friday, July 11, at locations throughout the county. Tickets may be purchased in Elkhart at Linton's Garden Center, Martin Seed & Supply, Sautter's Floral & Greenhouses, and Martins Pet & Garden Center. In Goshen tickets may be purchased at McIntosh Greenhouse & Garden Center. Other surrounding locations that tickets are available are Fred's Flowers-Nappanee, Ginger Valley-South Bend, Kruse Farm Supply-Bristol, Varnes & Hoover Hardware-Middlebury, Pro Hardware-New Paris.

Tickets may also be purchased from any member of the Elkhart County Michiana Master Gardeners' Association or by mailing a check or money order made payable to Michiana Master Gardeners' Association, c/o Purdue CES Elkhart County, 17746-E County Rd 34, Goshen, IN 46528.

Tickets are limited, so get yours early. If tickets are still available the day of the Garden Tour, they can be purchased at the "Hospitality Center." Michiana Master Gardeners Association holds this event in cooperation with the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service. Proceeds from ticket sales will go toward educational opportunities in Elkhart County communities.

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Winter Injuries on Plants Continue to Appear Through Spring/ Summer

When people sustain an injury, it appears right away and appropriate actions can be taken immediately. Plants however, do not always communicate their symptoms to us right away, making it difficult for proper diagnosis and treatment. One common problem among plants that pops up this time of year that we may not always consider, is injuries and stress that actually occurred during winter months.

Winter injury is common among plants and trees in this area, and it can come in many forms including: die back, frost cracks, root or stem damage, winter browning, and occasionally plant death. The frequency and severity of these injuries will hinge on many factors such as: plant species, plant health, planting site, and the severity of the winter. Here are a few questions we are receiving here at the Purdue Extension Office that can more than likely be attributed to winter injury:

One problem I've seen a few times already this year is the bark of trees suddenly splitting open. This is known as sunscald, and most frequently affects the south and/or southwest side of hardwood trees. Sunscald is caused by extreme fluctuations in temperature that occur when the sun heats up the tree and surrounding area during winter days, which is then followed by extreme cold at night. This injury can be prevented prior to winter by placing tree wrap around the trunk of a tree. Once an injury occurs however, there is little that can be done other than proper tree maintenance. Injured trees should receive plenty of water and fertilizer to encourage vigorous growth. Damaged trunks should also be inspected frequently, as injuries are an ideal spot for insects and disease to enter a tree.

Another common winter injury that frequently affects evergreens is desiccation, or drying out. This occurs when water leaves the plant faster than it is taken up, which is caused in winter months by the ground freezing, thus cutting off the plants water supply. This can be prevented by watering trees during warm winter days, especially if we have had a dry fall. Treatment of this injury is the same as sunscald: water and fertilize appropriately. You may also want to prune off any dead branches to encourage vigor to the healthier parts of the tree. Mulching is also good for both prevention and treatment of desiccation, as it helps to retain moisture around the plant.

One final winter injury to touch on that can often times be seen on the side of roads is injury from salt. Salt spread on roads can damage nearby plants in two ways: burning foliage if it lands on the plant directly, and by affecting water and nutrient uptake of the plant when the salt gets in the soil. Like the injuries above, salt damage is best dealt with through prevention. When selecting species for roadside plantings, select ones that are more salt tolerant such as: white oak, honey locust, and Scotch pine among others. Additionally, watering the site during the winter can help leach the salt through the soil bypassing the plants sensitive roots. As usual, plants that have already sustained damage should be watered, fertilized, and pruned.

For further questions about trees and plants, the Purdue Extension Office of Elkhart County offers the Master Gardener Hotline for all of your home horticulture questions. The hotline can be reached from 9:00am to 1:00pm, Monday through Friday by calling the extension office at: 574-533-0554.

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Michiana Master Gardeners Association
Elkhart County



Mission Statement

The Michiana Master Gardeners Association is a not-for-profit educational organization dedicated to the improvement of the community. Members of the Association have completed the requirements of the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program, working in affiliation with the Purdue Extension Service of Elkhart County. Its specific aim is to improve the quality of life in the community by providing information and technical assistance in the area of home horticulture through the use of trained and certified volunteers.

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