

PURDUE

U N I V E R S I T Y

PURDUE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
Elkhart County
Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds
17746 County Road 34, Ste E
Goshen, IN 46528-6898
Cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture

Return Service Requested



Broadcaster

“Helping Each Other Grow!”

Michiana Master Gardeners Association

MARCH 2017

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“DAN’S DIGGINGS”
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE by DAN CARLSON

Greetings fellow gardeners,

I’m sitting at my desk looking out the window. Today there is hardly any snow, temperatures are just above freezing and a warmer week ahead is forecasted. Winter can’t be over yet, but I have a pair of black-capped chickadees showing a great deal of interest in the birdhouse hanging outside my window! Does this mean that March will bring those wet, heavy snows we’ve had before?

I’m looking forward to the Spring Celebration coming up on Saturday, March 4th. Some of you reported that Professor Goldsbrough’s presentation on GMOs at the Porter County Garden Show was done very well. We have something to look forward to, along with Andrew

Robinson of Dow Agriculture. I hope all of you have helped to spread the word with the flyers that were circulated.

The Tree Sale is coming up in April and your help is needed. I've worked it the last three years. It's a great time to get to know some of the other Master Gardeners. If you come prepared with good non-slip shoes, gloves and appropriate clothing for that day's temperature, you will do just fine. How can you call yourself a Master Gardener if you can't deal with dirt and water?

I hope all of you have been supporting our Class of 2016 by attending at least one of their workshops. Information cards were available at the January meeting and will be at the February meeting. Every time I have attended one of these workshops I have learned something.

I hope that all of you have taken time to complete the Bus Trip Survey and have turned it in to Tammy O'Rourke. We need to know how many of you are interested and what type of trip appeals to you.

Yours in gardening,

Dan Carlson

*****A Notice from the Board of Directors*****

If you want to post a Master Gardener Event on Facebook or other social media, you must clear the posting with Nancy Borkholder at the Extension Office to get the proper Purdue information to be included in the posting.





*Day Minder . . .
Watch Us Grow*

March



6	Mon.	Garden Tour Committee Meeting	7 p.m.
14	Tues.	Board Meeting, Extension Office Conference Room	6 p.m.
18	Sat.	Community Garden Seminar, Elkhart Environmental Center	10 a.m.
28	Tues.	Community Garden Committee Meeting, Baker's Nook, Elkhart	9 a.m.
28	Tues.	Member Meeting, MMGA Awards	7 p.m.

April

3	Mon.	Garden Tour Committee Meeting, Extension Office Conference Room	7 p.m.
11	Tues.	Board Meeting, Extension Office Conference Room	6 p.m.
22	Sat.	Community Garden Opening	9 a.m.
25	Tues.	Member Meeting, TBA	7 p.m.

MEETING CANCELLATION NOTICE:

If the President and/or Vice-President feels it would be in the best interest of the membership to cancel an event, a blanket email will be sent out to all members no later than 5 p.m. on the day of the event. For those persons who do not have access to email, a phone call will be made notifying them of the cancellation.

UPCOMING DATES

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Member Meetings, LAST Tues. of the month, Ag Hall, 7 p.m. unless noted

Tuesday, March 28, MMGA Awards
Tuesday, April 25, TBA
Tuesday, May 30, TBA
Tuesday, June 27, TBA
Monday, July-TBA Fair Set-up and Pizza Party
Tuesday, August 29, Garden Tour Appreciation Dinner, 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, September 26, TBA
Tuesday, October 24, TBA (NOTE DATE CHANGE)
Tuesday, November 28, Thanks-for-Giving Carry-In, 6:30 p.m.
No Meeting for December due to holidays

Board Meetings, SECOND Tues. of the month, Ext. Office Conference Room, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, March 14
Tuesday, April 11
Tuesday, May 9
Tuesday, June 13
Tuesday, July 11
Tuesday, August 8
Tuesday, September 12
Tuesday, October 10
Tuesday, November 14
Tuesday, December 12

Attention MMGA Members
Articles for the APRIL Broadcaster will
be due on **MARCH 10TH.**
Please e-mail items to Tammy O'Rourke
at tjotlo@gmail.com before this date.
Thank you.

Garden Tour Committee Meetings, FIRST Monday of the Month, Ext. Office Conference Room, 7 p.m. (unless noted)

Monday, March 6
Monday, April 3
Monday, May 1
Monday June 5
Monday, July 3 (if necessary)
Friday, July 7 Garden Tour Set-up
Saturday, July 8 Garden Tour

Airport Community Garden Meetings & Seminars

Saturday, March 18, 10 a.m., Garden Call-out and Seminar, Elkhart Environmental Center
Tuesday, March 28, 9 a.m., Committee Meeting, Baker's Nook, Elkhart
Saturday, April 22, 9 .m., Garden Opening Date, Elkhart Airport Garden

**MARCH WINDS AND APRIL SHOWERS
BRING FORTH MAY FLOWERS
-An English Proverb**



JEFF BURBRINK: THE VALENTINE/AGRICULTURE CONNECTION
FEBRUARY 13, 2017



Have you ever thought about the connection between agriculture and Valentine’s Day? I would be surprised if you have. As it turns out, the holiday has many ties to agriculture once you put your mind to it.

For instance, one of the most popular gifts to your sweetheart on February 14 is chocolate. Chocolate itself comes from the cacao tree, a tropical plant that produces a pod with 30 to 50 cocoa beans. The beans are removed from the pod, dried and fermented in the sun. I discovered on a trip through South America that the beans are rather bitter, and I have often wondered how anyone actually found a use for them. To improve the flavor, sugar, cocoa butter, vanilla and milk are added to create a sweet treat for your loved one.

Chocolate by itself is often a great gift on Valentine’s Day, but ingenious candy makers have found ways to add other agricultural products to the mix to create unforgettable delights. Nuts of all sorts, mint flavors, and molasses are common in modern chocolate gift boxes. Caramel, otherwise known as toffee in many parts of the world, is a mix of milk, sugar, butter and vanilla that is frequently added to chocolate as one the more perfect combinations of sweets on the planet.

In recent years, a whole Valentine’s industry has popped up involving strawberries and chocolate. Packages of large berries, dipped artistically in chocolate and packaged in heart shaped boxes, can now be shipped worldwide to celebrate your affection for the one you love.

For those on a sugar free Valentine diet, plants can serve as a reminder of your love. Cut flowers, particularly roses, are popular, representing about 80% of all sales at floral shops. Coming in second are potted plants at 14%, with bedding plants, trees and garden plants making up the balance. As you would probably guess, men make the majority of plant purchases, at 82%.

Another Valentine’s tradition is going to dinner with your loved one. Whether you dine on a nice steak, or chicken, or seafood, you are experiencing a connection with agriculture that you may not have thought about. Even a bottle wine with dinner, which may include grapes grown and fermented here in Indiana, ties Valentine’s Day to agriculture in ways we often forget.



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Michiana Master Gardeners' Association
"Helping Others Grow"
18th Annual Public Seminar
WHAT ARE GMO'S?



Presented by:



GOOD?	G	GENETIC
MAYBE?	M	MODIFIED
OFFENSIVE?	O	ORGANISM

Dr. Peter Goldsbrough, Professor of Botany at Purdue University
and
Andrew Robinson of Dow Agriculture

Saturday, March 4, 2017

1:00 to 3:45 p.m.

Greencroft Senior Center

1721 Greencroft Blvd.

Goshen, IN

TICKETS: \$10 PRESALE / \$12 DAY OF SEMINAR

Mail Order Tickets:

Make checks payable to Michiana Master Gardeners' Association

Send Payment to MMGA Purdue Extension-Elkhart County

17746 E CR 34, Goshen, IN 46526

(Tickets will not be mailed, pick up tickets at check in)

Purchase tickets at Martin's Pet & Garden, 116 W. Jackson Blvd, Elkhart, IN

Purdue Extension - Elkhart County 17746 County Road 34, Goshen, IN

Michiana Master Gardeners Association holds its annual seminar in cooperation with Purdue University Extension-Elkhart County, a non-profit organization using its funds for scholarships, community gardens, community outreach and education.

Purdue University is an affirmative action, equal access/equal opportunity institution

WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?
ORIENTAL POPPY BY STAN PALMER

Oriental Poppy (Papaver orientale)

The oriental poppy is a striking plant with its brilliant orange-scarlet, pink, or white flowers held well above its hairy and finely dissected leaves. Oriental poppies grow a mound of leaves in spring and then after flowering the foliage dies away entirely, a property that allows their survival in the summer drought of Central Asia.

The oriental poppy is a perennial flowering plant native to the Caucasus, northeastern Turkey, and northern Iran.

It has a USDA hardiness zone of 3-8. It usually thrives in soil pH 6.5 to 7.5 and in full sun or part shade. Seeds are sown after the potential of frost has passed, the average temperature is approximately 70 °F and when soil has thoroughly warmed. The seeds are sown at a depth of about one centimeter, or less as light may stimulate germination. Oriental Poppies do not handle transplanting or over-watering well. Germination period is 10–20 days. Mulch can be used to protect the plant over the winter and cutting off the stem (deadheading) will produce a second flower.

Aside from its natural brilliant orange-scarlet color, selective breeding, for gardens, has created a range of colors from clean white with eggplant-black blotches through clear true pinks and salmon pinks to deep maroons and plum. In addition its petals may be creased or fringed.



WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?
ORIENTAL POPPY BY STAN PALMER
Continued

Cultivars (those marked AGM have gained the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit):

Name	Color	Name	Color
Aglaja AGM	Salmon pink	Karine AGM	pale pink/red
Barr's White	White	Khedive AGM	Pale salmon/black
Beauty of Livermere	Red	Leuchtfeuer AGM	Orange
Black and White AGM	White/black	Lighthouse AGM	Pale pink/maroon
Brilliant	Red	Maiden's Blush	White
Carnival	White/orange/red	Olympia	Orange
Carousel	White/orange picotee	Papillion	Pink
Cedric Morris AGM	Pale pink/black	Patty's Plus	Plum
Effendi AGM	Pale orange	Perry's White	White
Fatima	White/pink picotee	Picotee	White/orange picotee
GI Joe	Red (double)	Pinnacle	White/red
Helen Elizabeth	Pink	Royal Wedding	White
Indiana Chief	Mahogany red	Türkenlouis	Red
John III AGM	Orange-red	Watermelon	Pink

Oriental poppies are closely related to the great scarlet poppy *Papaver bracteatum*, which can be grown for the commercial extraction of thebaine, a main source for the legal synthesis of opiates. Oriental poppies, however, do not produce any narcotic alkaloids such as morphine or codeine.

Be safe and keep that garden growing!

-Stan Palmer

(This material was taken from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Papaver_orientale&oldid=757240692)

CHIPS AND SPLINTERS BY STAN PALMER**Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*)**

Acer palmatum, commonly known as **palmate maple**, **Japanese maple** or **smooth Japanese-maple** is a species of woody plant native to Japan, China, Korea, eastern Mongolia, and southeast Russia. Many different cultivars of this maple have been selected and they are grown worldwide for their large variety of attractive forms, leaf shapes, and spectacular colors.

The Japanese maple is a deciduous shrub or small tree reaching heights of 20 to 33 ft., rarely 52 ft., often growing as an understory plant in shady woodlands. It may have multiple trunks joining close to the ground. In habit, it is often shaped like a hemisphere (especially when younger) or takes on a dome-like form, especially when mature. The leaves are 2-6 in. long and wide, palmately lobed with five, seven, or nine acutely pointed lobes. The flowers are produced in small cymes, the individual flowers with five red or purple sepals and five whitish petals. The fruit is a pair of winged samaras, each samara 1-1.5 in. long with a .25-.33 in. seed. The seeds of *Acer palmatum* and similar species require stratification in order to germinate. Even in nature, *Acer palmatum* displays considerable genetic variation, with seedlings from the same parent tree typically showing differences in such traits as leaf size, shape, and color. Overall form of the tree can vary from upright to weeping.

Three subspecies are recognized:

- *Acer palmatum* subsp. *palmatum*. Leaves small, 2-4 in. wide, with five or seven lobes and double-serrate margins; seed wings .4-.6 in. Lower altitudes throughout central and southern Japan (not Hokkaido).
- *Acer palmatum* subsp. *amoenum* (Carrière) H.Hara. Leaves larger, 3-6 in. wide, with seven or nine lobes and single-serrate margins; seed wings .8-1.0 in. Higher altitudes throughout Japan and South Korea.
- *Acer palmatum* subsp. *matsumurae* Koidz. Leaves larger, 3-6 in. wide, with seven (rarely five or nine) lobes and double-serrate margins; seed wings .6-1.0 in. Higher altitudes throughout Japan.

Acer palmatum has been cultivated in Japan for centuries and in temperate areas around the world since the 1800s. The first specimen of the tree reached England in 1820.

When Swedish doctor-botanist Carl Peter Thunberg traveled in Japan late in the eighteenth century, he secreted out drawings of a small tree that would eventually become synonymous with the high art of oriental gardens. He gave it the species name *palmatum* after the hand-like shape of its leaves, similar to the centuries-old Japanese names *kaede* and *momiji*, references to the 'hands' of frogs and babies, respectively.



For centuries Japanese horticulturalists have developed cultivars from maples found in Japan and nearby Korea and China. They are a popular choice for bonsai enthusiasts and have long been a subject in art.

Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*)

Continued

Numerous cultivars are currently available commercially and are a popular item at garden centers and other retail stores in Europe and North America. Red-leafed cultivars are the most popular, followed by cascading green shrubs with deeply dissected leaves. Preparations from the branches and leaves are used as a treatment in traditional Chinese medicine.

Acer palmatum includes hundreds of named cultivars with a variety forms, colors, leaf types, sizes, and preferred growing conditions. Heights of mature specimens range from 18 in. to 75 ft., depending on type. Some tolerate sun, but most prefer part shade, especially in hotter climates. Almost all are adaptable and blend well with companion plants. The trees are particularly suitable for borders and ornamental paths because the root systems are compact and not invasive. Many varieties of *Acer palmatum* are successfully grown in containers. Trees are prone to die during periods of drought and prefer consistent water conditions; more established trees are less prone to drought. Trees should be mulched with a thick layer of bark. Well-drained soil is essential as they will not survive in soggy waterlogged soil. Trees do not require or appreciate heavy fertilization and should only be lightly fertilized, preferably using slow-release fertilizer with a 3 to 1 ratio of nitrogen to phosphorus respectively. Nitrogen lawn fertilizer should be avoided in the immediate vicinity of these trees as excessive nitrogen can cause overly vigorous growth that is prone to pathogens.

If space is not a constraint, no pruning is necessary except to remove any dead branches. Trees naturally self-prune foliage that doesn't receive enough light, such as internal branches which are overly shaded by its own canopy. Some growers prefer to shape their trees artistically or to thin out interior branches to better expose the graceful main branches. The form of the tree, especially without leaves in winter, can be of great interest and can be pruned to highlight this feature. Trees heal readily after pruning without needing aftercare. This species should not be pruned like a hedge, but instead methodically shaped by carefully choosing individual branches to remove. They can also be pruned just to maintain a smaller size to suit a particular location. *Acer palmatum* can also be used as espalier.

Over 1,000 cultivars have been chosen for particular characteristics, which are propagated by asexual reproduction most often by grafting, but some cultivars can also be propagated by budding, cuttings, tissue culture, or layering. Some cultivars are not in cultivation in the Western world or have been lost over the generations, but many new cultivars are developed each decade. Cultivars are chosen for phenotypical aspects such as leaf shape and size (shallowly to deeply lobed, some also palmately compound), leaf color (ranging from chartreuse through dark green or from red to dark purple, others variegated with various patterns of white and pink), bark texture and color, and growth pattern. Most cultivars are less vigorous and smaller than is typical for the species, but are more interesting than the relatively mundane species. Cultivars come in a large variety of forms including upright, broom, weeping, cascading, dwarf, and shrub. Most cultivars are artificially selected from seedlings of open-pollinated plants, purposeful breeding is not common, and less often from grafts of witch's brooms.

Material for this article came from:

https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Acer_palmatum&oldid=764559740

Stan Palmer

BUTTERFLY MILKWEED NAMED 2017 PERENNIAL OF THE YEAR
BY B. ROSIE LERNER, PURDUE EXTENSION CONSUMER HORTICULTURALIST

The Perennial Plant Association has named butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), as its 2017 Perennial Plant of the Year. With much focus on pollinator habitat these days, butterfly milkweed is a terrific selection. Butterfly milkweed flowers play host to a wide range of butterflies, and milkweed foliage is the food source for monarch butterfly caterpillars. Bees, wasps and other insects are also frequent visitors.

Butterfly milkweed is native to much of the continental United States and is hardy to U.S. Department of Agriculture plant hardiness zones 4-9. This species thrives best in full sun and well-drained soil and is drought tolerant. Plants reach about 2-3 feet tall with a similar spread. The bright orange/reddish-yellow flower clusters bloom throughout much of the summer. Elongated seed pods develop from the flowers and ripen to release numerous seeds with long silky hairs that aid seed dispersal. Pods should be cut back before they open to prevent unwanted self-seeding.

The Perennial Plant Association selects a different perennial plant each year to promote throughout the nursery and gardening industry. PPA members nominate plants based on several criteria, including low maintenance needs, adaptability to a wide range of climates, pest and disease resistance, wide availability, multiple seasons of interest and ease of propagation. A selection committee then narrows the field to three or four choices from which the members cast their votes. For more information on the Perennial of the Year program, see <http://www.perennialplant.org/>

Previous PPA Perennial Plant of the Year winners:

- 2016 *Anemone* × *hybrida* 'Honorine Jobert' (windflower)
- 2015 *Geranium* 'Biokova' (dwarf cranesbill, hardy geranium)
- 2014 *Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind' (tall switch grass)
- 2013 *Polygonatum odoratum* var. *variegatum* (Solomon's seal)
- 2012 *Brunnera macrophylla* 'Jack Frost' (Siberian bugloss)
- 2011 *Amsonia hubrichtii* (blue star)
- 2010 *Baptisia australis* (blue false indigo)
- 2009 *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' (Japanese forest grass)
- 2008 *Geranium* 'Rozanne' (cranesbill, hardy geranium)
- 2007 *Nepeta racemosa* 'Walker's Low' (catmint)
- 2006 *Dianthus* 'Feuerhexe' (aka 'Firewitch') (cheddar pink)
- 2005 *Helleborus* × *hybridus* (hellebore, Lenten rose)
- 2004 *Athyrium niponicum* var. *pictum* (Japanese painted fern)
- 2003 *Leucanthemum* × *superbum* 'Becky' (shasta daisy)
- 2002 *Phlox paniculata* 'David' (garden phlox)
- 2001 *Calamagrostis* × *acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' (feather reed grass)
- 2000 *Scabiosa* 'Butterfly Blue' (pincushion flower)
- 1999 *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm' (black-eyed Susan)
- 1998 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Magnus' (purple coneflower)
- 1997 *Salvia* × *sylvestris* 'Mainacht' (aka 'May Night') (wood sage)
- 1996 *Penstemon digitalis* 'Husker Red' (beardtongue)
- 1995 *Perovskia atriplicifolia* (Russian sage)
- 1994 *Astilbe* 'Sprite' (dwarf astilbe)
- 1993 *Veronica* 'Sunny Border Blue' (speedwell)
- 1992 *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Moonbeam' (threadleaf coreopsis)
- 1991 *Heuchera micrantha* var. *diversifolia* 'Palace Purple' (coral bells)
- 1990 *Phlox stolonifera* (creeping phlox)



Butterfly milkweed flowers (Photo credit: Michael N. Dana)

A LATE WINTER'S HARVEST
BY JIM CARPENTER

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As I write these words in early February, it is pleasant and dry outside. Some sun and 50 degrees make you start thinking of spring even if the calendar says more than a month of winter is left. But there is one very pleasant task for me to perform before the soil is ever tillable and that is making maple syrup in my backyard.

While I am not blessed to have a single sugar maple tree on my few acres, I am blessed to have an abundance of silver maple trees. Soft maple trees have the same type of maple sugar in their sap as the hard maples do, they just have a lower percentage of it. You might have to boil 30 or so gallons of sugar maple sap to get one gallon of pure maple syrup whereas you might need 50 gallons or more from soft maple trees to produce the same amount of syrup. By the way, 'pure maple syrup' is 66% sugar, no more, no less. Having only soft maple trees to work with, I am reminded of the simple adage, "you work with what you have."

This will be the seventh season that I have been tapping the maple trees on my property and cooking down the sap. The converted chicken house (my 'nature shack') is pretty comfortable to work in but I can't seem to get the stove as hot as I would like. I can't boil off the water very fast. The gathered sap waiting to be cooked can go bad in just several days of warm weather so when the sap is running good I need to stoke the fire every few hours or at least as often as possible. My life is sometimes controlled by the running of the maple sap. But it is only for a fairly short period of time.

After the harsh winters of 2014 and 2015 I decided to scale back on my production last year to tap just the six smaller maples in my back yard. That made for a pretty meager harvest and I really didn't make enough syrup for our own use let alone have any to give away. For several years I had been tapping 6-8 large soft maples about a quarter mile away from my sugar shack. I struggled in the deep snow we had in those years to harvest the sap but I was able produce enough syrup to give some away to family and friends. I am harvesting from the woods again this year.

I especially like to give my syrup as a gift when we are house guests somewhere. My brother-in-law, Ron, from southern Indiana loves to get the pints we would bring but he always made pancakes the next morning and we would consumed most of it. I was sorry I couldn't take him any the last time we visited but he pulled out an unopened pint of syrup I had given him earlier and proceeded to make pancakes for us.

I never meant to write this article so much about tapping maple trees as much as about just being able to catch a brief sniff of spring in the air on these unusually mild days we have been having. I am able to easily look over my garden with no snow around and I can envision what I might plant and where. Of course, we could still get hit pretty good with snow and cold but the calendar is marching on.

While walking around my garden on this mild winter day, I couldn't help gazing in the back area to where the asparagus will make its early spring arrival. I could almost picture those first stalks emerging from the soil. But looks can be deceiving and I know it will be a while until I might start harvesting those first tasty green shoots.

It is days like this that help keep us going when winter seems to go on and on. We will still have some cold weather ahead of us and certainly there have been March blizzards. But when it comes to the weather the bottom line is we will take what we get.

It is time for me to load up the storage buckets in my little ATV and hit the woods to see how the sap is running today. I am temporarily caught up with boiling down sap and it feels good to relax in the house for several hours. That is about to end.

FOR SALE
*****NEW PRICING*****

**Two Pumps formerly used at the MMGA
Airport Community Garden**

Tecumpseh-2 stroke \$100 or best offer

Honda-4 stroke \$200 or best offer

65 feet of hose. Inside diameter of hose is 1" \$65.00 or best offer

Call Heidi Zavatsky at 574-295-5956

UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE AREA-CHECK WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

UNITY GARDENS, South Bend www.theunitygardens.org

Tuesday, March 7, 6 p.m. Grow an Herb Garden

Saturday and Sunday, March 11 & 12, Free Growing Summit

FERNWOOD BOTANICAL GARDEN, Niles www.fernwoodbotanical.org

Saturday, March 18, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Spring Symposium

Wednesday, March 29, 2 p.m., Spring Pruning

WELLFIELD BONTANIC GARDEN, Elkhart www.wellfieldgardens.org

Saturday, March 11, 8 a.m., Birdwalk

CENTRAL HARDWARE, Elkhart 574-293-8861

Saturday, March 18, Charlotte Hubbard, Bee arrival and installation

Chicago Flower & Garden Show, Navy Pier, March 18-26 www.chicagoflower.com

**Fort Wayne Home & Garden Show, Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, March 2-5
www.home-gardenshow.com**

**Indiana Flower & Patio Show, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis, March 11-19,
www.indianaflowerandpatioshow.com**

**West Michigan Home & Garden Show, DeVos Arena, Grand Rapids, March 2-5,
www.showspan.com**

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Begin fertilizing houseplants as new growth appears. Keep spent leaves and flowers removed to improve appearance and encourage more blooms.
- Start garden seeds indoors for transplanting outdoors later in spring.
- Check stored bulbs and produce for decay; discard damaged items.
- Prune, repot and clean houseplants as needed.

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals and fruits)

- Prune trees and shrubs, except those that bloom early in spring, while plants are still dormant. If winter injury is a concern, delay pruning until after dieback; desiccation injury can be assessed as plants come out of dormancy.
- Plant new trees and shrubs as soon as the soil dries enough to be worked. Plant bare-root plants before they leaf out. Soils may be exceptionally wet this spring as winter snows thaw.
- Fertilize woody plants before new growth begins, but after soil temperatures have reached 40 degrees F.
- Remove winter coverings from roses as soon as new growth begins. Prune out dead canes and fertilize as needed. Delay pruning into live canes until after winter injury can be assessed.
- Apply superior oil spray to control scale insects and mites when tips of leaves start to protrude from buds.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables and small fruits)

- Plant cool-season vegetables and flowers as soon as the ground has dried enough to work. Do NOT work the soil while it is wet; wait until it crumbles in your hand. If the soil forms a solid ball when squeezed, it's still too wet.
- Gradually harden off transplants by setting them outdoors during the daytime for about a week before planting.
- Follow last fall's soil test recommendations for fertilizer and pH adjustment. It's not too late to test soil if you missed last year.
- Start seeds of warm-season vegetables and flowers indoors; in northern and central Indiana, wait until the end of March or early April. Transplant to the garden after danger of frost has passed.
- Watch for blooms of early spring bulbs, such as daffodils, squill, crocus, dwarf iris and snowdrops.
- Remove old asparagus and rhubarb tops, and sidedress the plants with nitrogen or manure. Plant or transplant asparagus, rhubarb and small fruit plants.
- Remove winter mulch from strawberry beds as soon as new growth begins, but keep the mulch nearby to protect against frost and freezes.
- Remove weak, diseased or damaged canes from raspberry plants before new growth begins. Remove old fruiting canes if not removed last year, and shorten remaining canes if necessary.
- Prune grapevines after winter injury can be assessed.

BOTTLE CAPS TO BENCHES

We have collected over 400 pounds of bottle caps for our second bench and at this time we are not collecting any more bottle caps for MMGA. If you wish to continue to save acceptable caps for 4-H groups, please drop them off at the Extension Office during business hours.

TREE SALE BY BARB HEETER

As you know, the annual Tree Sale will be held on Saturday, April 22, in the Sheep Swine Arena. For those of you who are new to MMGA, the sale is a joint effort between Michiana Master Gardeners' Association and the Soil & Water Conservation District. Although the sale will be held on Saturday April 22, there are three days of work and fun to get ready for the sale. This is where your help is needed. I had sign-up sheets at the January and February MMGA meetings, and I will have them at the March meeting as well. We need some help on Wednesday April 19 at 12 noon to help unload the trees as they are delivered and get the tables and rolls of paper set up. On Thursday, April 20, we need lots of help to unbundle and rebundle the trees into the pre-orders. This day you will want to wear old cloths and dress warm and wear shoes with rubber soles as the floor gets wet and we do not want anyone to slip. Bring gloves as the trees are very rough on your hands. On Friday, April 21, we will be doing pretty much the same only bundling the trees that are left to be sold on Saturday at the sale. Also on Friday after all of the trees are bundled, we must put all of the tables away and clean the room to get ready for the sale. Each of these days you need to be there at 8 am. On Saturday April 22 it may still be cold but it is not wet or dirty. That day we will be selling the trees that were not pre-ordered. Those persons who did order trees ahead of time will be picking them up. It is a busy day. You will need to be there at 8 am. The doors open for the sale at 9 am and it goes until 12 pm. After the doors close we will need to do more cleaning up.

The Tree Sale is a lot of work but it is a lot fun and a good way to get to know people and you get those precious volunteer hours for your work.

Hope to have your help with this event.

Thank you,
Barbara Heeter, Co-Chair



**Never iron a 4-leaf clover
because you don't want
to "press" your luck**



QUILT GARDEN SPRING EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP BY SONYA NASH

All Quilt Garden site managers, gardeners, volunteers, Review Workgroup members and members of the Michiana Master Gardeners Association are welcome to attend the Spring Education Workshop. A more formal description of the event will be sent out closer to the date to those who RSVP to sonya@amishcountry.org Questions? Call Sonya at [574-903-1148](tel:574-903-1148).

Wednesday, March 29, Ag Hall, Elkhart County Fairgrounds, Goshen

8:15 a.m. Coffee

8:30-11 a.m. Speakers/Educational sessions

Topics to include:

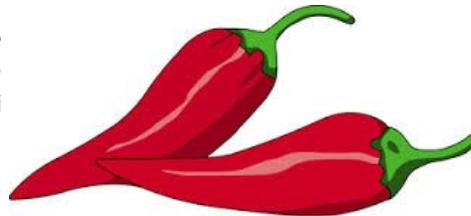
- Updates on Seward Johnson exhibition honoring the 10th anniversary of Quilt Gardens
- Updates on plant delivery/installation
- Worm castings as a fertilizer option
- Jeff Burbrink presenting on plant problem identification and soil, etc.

Sonya Nash is the Director of Group and Experiential Sales and Marketing for the Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau and an Elkhart County Master Gardener

AIRPORT COMMUNITY GARDEN BY TAMMY O'ROURKE

The Community Garden committee held its first planning meeting of 2017 on February 7. After enjoying a delicious breakfast prepared by Heidi Zavatsky, the committee got down to work and planned the following: our spring garden seminar will be held on Saturday, March 18 at the Elkhart Environmental Center from 10-12. Prospective gardeners are encouraged to attend to learn about the community garden and our procedures and policies. We will also cover several educational topics at this time. The garden will be tilled by April 8 and staking and stringing will take place on April 11. The garden opening will be Saturday, April 22 starting at 9 a.m., and this is an "all hands on deck" work day. Our next committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 28 at 9 a.m. at Baker's Nook in Elkhart.

3. If you are interested in joining the Community Garden Committee, please contact Susan Stuckman or Heidi Zavatsky.



INFORMATION FOR OUR MEMBERS

MMGA Board Meeting

January 10, 2017

6:00 p.m. Extension Office

Present: Jeff Burbrink, Dan Carlson, Kathleen Cripe, Connie Garber, Dianna Jackson, Carol Novy, Anne Regier, Bill Roberts, Jenny Schrock, Craig Stiver, Ron Troyer, Cindy Watson; Absent: Kathy Radican and Amy McLaughlin

Dan welcomed the group and called the meeting to order. This was the first board meeting for Dianna Jackson, representing the 2016 class of MMGA interns. It was moved and seconded that the December **Secretary's report** be passed. Anne presented the **Treasurer's report**. The checking account balance is \$8,766.61; money market balance is \$18,751.56; savings balance is \$137.25; and cash on hand is \$200.00, for a total of \$27,855.42. Dues were included in the balance as well as donations (\$700) in memory of Jerry Martin. The Treasurer's report was moved, seconded and accepted. **Educator's report**. Jeff provided an explanation of P Caret as an extension lobby group for the Purdue School of Agriculture used primarily for extension efforts. It's a well-connected group with a few of the Michiana Master Gardeners having attended meetings. He shared that everyone from the 2016 class passed their test and are working on their presentations. Jeff and Nancy trained on 1/9 with a new tracking system for hours and it is more user-friendly. Imported totals are expected by 1/17/17. The system currently isn't set up to print mailing labels and it can't separate out groups. Committee Reports: **Answer Line** Dan Carlson reported that Answer Line hasn't started up for 2017. **Archivist** No report. **Broadcaster** Kathleen Cripe shared that pieces for the Broadcaster were due to Tammy O'Rourke by 1/10/17. **Class Updates** Cindy reported that the 2015 class will have their graduation celebration on 2/7/17 at Essenhau. Dianna Jackson shared that the 2016 class was working on their presentations. Jeff provided cards with each group's presentation information. **Community Gardens** Bill Roberts reported there has not yet been a meeting. Connie Garber mentioned that a donation of an acre behind Walmart has been offered and it has a water source. It was suggested a contact to Church Community Services and their Seed to Feed Program. **Extension Landscaping** No report. **Fair Board** Jenny reported that the Fair Board meets Wednesday, January 11. Tables are available for the upcoming prom for \$500 per table. **Fair Set-Up** Kathleen shared that a schedule will be available at the April meeting. **Garden Tour** Ron Troyer reported that the Garden Tour meeting was held last week and there will be nine gardens on the 2017 Tour. **Membership** No report. **Merchandise** Carol Novy shared that merchandise can be ordered at the January 31 MMGA meeting. **Nominating Committee** No report. **Programs** Dan contacted Loanne Harms and the January presenter has been confirmed. February's meeting speaker has not yet been confirmed. Awards will be presented during the March meeting. **Property Trustee** Connie Garber reported that she hasn't visited the property room. **Quilt Garden** Jenny-no report for the Bristol quilt garden and Cindy-no report for the Goshen quilt garden. Jeff shared that the Bureau of Tourism is installing life-size statues for the 2017 quilt gardens. This is a traveling display for just this year. **Set-up** No report. **Speakers Bureau** Ron Troyer talked with Marilyn and she did a speaking engagement at Waterford Crossing on December 28. Kiwanis would like a speaker. **Spring Celebration** Kathleen reported that Spring Celebration will be held at Greencroft on March 4 from 1:00-3:45 p.m. Ticket prices are \$12 at the door or early bird tickets can be purchased for \$10 at the January 31 MMGA meeting. **Tree Sale** Bill Roberts-Tree Sale orders are due next month. **Webmaster** Craig Stiver-dates are on a Google calendar on the website. **Old Business:** Discussion questionnaire results were included in the January Broadcaster. Fair tent for Thursday, Friday, Saturday-Craig said there was no problem using the tent and he would need to know by April 1. The October MMGA meeting will be October 24 instead of October 31. **New Business:** Guidelines for Facebook postings/groups-Jeff suggested we work with Nancy to brand things properly. Debbie Mann could post things after the branding goes through Nancy. Dan asked that the guidelines be given to Tammy to put in the Broadcaster on a monthly basis. Scholarship Applications-From our budget, a check is written to the Purdue Horticulture Department. Rosie Lerner or Mike Dana knows about it. Dan asked about the possibility of labeling a scholarship in Jerry Martin's memory. Helen wants it to go through the Horticulture Committee for Elkhart County Fair horticulture. The example given was the hanging basket supports. Kate Rink should know of something that the memorials could be used for. A motion was made, seconded and passed that donations for Jerry Martin be given to the Elkhart County Fair Horticulture Committee. Greeters for the January 31 meeting will be Jenny and Ron. Porter County Garden Show, Saturday, January 28-Dan will not be going and asked those going to provide a report at the February BOD meeting. The **next Board meeting is February 14, 2017**. The meeting was adjourned. Respectfully submitted by Cindy Watson, MMGA Board Secretary

MMGA Member Meeting
January 31, 2017
7:00 p.m. Ag Hall

Dan Carlson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Ag Hall. Loanne Harms introduced the **evening's speaker**, Ronda DeCaire, Director of the Elkhart County Park Department. Ronda's topic was the Audubon Christmas Bird Count, an annual one-day citizen science project. It is the longest running citizen science project and began as an alternative to the Christmas Bird Hunt. She shared that this started in 1886 when a group pledged not to harm birds and in 1905 the organization, known today as the National Audubon Society, was formed. The Great Backyard Bird Count is coming up February 17-20, 2017 and for more information visit www.gbcbirdcount.org. The 2017 Elkhart County Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 30, 2017. Refreshments were provided by Connie Garber, Fancheon Resler and Dean Preheim-Bartel. **Business meeting:** A motion to accept the secretary's report was led by Paul Miles and was seconded by Debbie Mann; minutes passed. Anne Regier gave the **treasurer's report**. Checking balance was \$8,766.61; Money Market balance was \$18,751.56; Savings balance was \$137.25; Petty Cash balance was \$200.00; Total funds were \$27,855.42. Anne also shared that \$700 was received in memory of Jerry Martin. Paul Miles moved to accept the treasurer's report and Kathleen Cripe seconded; the treasurer's report was accepted. **Educator's report:** Dan shared that Jeff Burbrink was absent due to his father's knee replacement. On Jeff's behalf, Dan reported that the hours reporting system was not quite ready and to use paper forms for now. He is hoping to have training at the March meeting. Jeff also sent out an email about a MG email scam. The 2016 class seminars are beginning and schedule cards are available. Finally, there was an Elkhart Truth article on Master Gardeners on Sunday, January 29, 2017. **Committee reports/updates: Community Garden**—Sue Stuckman shared that there will be a planning meeting on February 7 and teaching seminar planning would take place. **Programs**—Loanne Harms shared that refreshment volunteers were needed for April and June. **Speakers Bureau**—Marilyn Horvath is the administrator and go-between to match up requests for speakers with a speaker. She looks at the directory for MG interests. Please let Marilyn know if you have a special interest. She needs someone to talk about pollinators for April or May and someone to talk about herbs and herbal teas in May. There are always big requests for children's programs. **Tree Sale**—Barb Heater reported that there were sign-up sheets to work the Tree Sale April 19-22. **Spring Celebration**—Penny Stroup reported that tickets were available this evening for the Spring Celebration on March 4. Posters were available to place in public areas to promote the event. **Garden Tour**—Carol Swartzendruber reminded committees that the meeting was Monday at 7 p.m. The Garden Tour will be July 8 in the Middlebury area. **Bottle Caps**—Gail Weybright reported that enough bottle caps had been collected for a bench. A March workday will be scheduled to clean and sort caps. Gail is resigning from this project. It was suggested that a plaque honoring Jerry Martin be added to the new bench. **Quilt Garden**—Jim Bare is looking for help for the quilt garden here at the Fairgrounds. There will be an upcoming planning meeting. **Dan reported:** Merchandise was being sold this evening; Nancy is back fulltime in the office; Porter County Garden Show—please email Dan if you went to the show; Fair Tent is available Thursday, Friday, Saturday. Do something for youth. If interested, email Dan. **Door prizes** went to Gail Weybright, Marilyn Miles, Gaye Yoder, Dean Linsenmeyer, Ginger Thorne, Anne Overmyer, Jay Whitmer, Craig Stiver, Leanne Kuhns, Loanne Harms, Karen LaChance, Sherrie Zou, Holly McCloud. Next meeting is February 28, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in Ag Hall.

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.

(574) 533-0554
MARCH 2017

**“In all things of nature there is
something of the marvelous”
-Aristotle**