

Garden Beet

Master Gardener Association of Tippecanoe County

February 2010

A Word from Don

by Don Nead

This is being written on the morning after a very exciting evening when your Board of Directors had an open planning meeting with standing committee chairs and project managers. We worked as a group to lay out what the year 2010 will look like in terms of meetings and projects that are in the mill for this year.

As president of our association I want to say thanks to all those who participated in this open planning meeting – it was a piece of good work!

We also took a look at personnel available through the Volunteer Inventory sheet. About 35% of you have returned the inventory sheet indicating where you were willing to invest your time for this year. We would like to up that to get at least 50% signed in for some specific tasks within the organization. So if you are among the missing, get in touch with one of us so we can get your name on the list of committed workers.

We engaged in an exercise of looking at our strengths and weaknesses, and then taking one of the weaknesses and developing a plan of action to work on the problem. A common issue emerged from all of the groups – those dealing with inactive and non-reporting members. Membership issues and how to solve them is a major issue for us. One of the key factors in this area is the failure of members to report their volunteer and continuing education hours, thus qualifying to continue as a certified Master Gardener. Paying dues to the organization is only a part of being a member, without the hours you do not qualify to be classified as a Master Gardener. Please step up and get those hours in this year, so that when we reach this point next year we do not have to go over the same ground.

Among the strengths that were identified are the following – resources of the Extension Office, the land, the building, and Jeff; public recognition of MGs and awareness of the value of gardening; large membership with a large group of willing volunteers; the Garden Beet; and enough projects to keep us all busy in helping others to grow.

Annual Banquet Info & Directions

Bring yourself, your sweetie (or guest), and your carry-in dish to our Annual Banquet at Beck Center on Tuesday, February 2, at 6 pm. We'll celebrate "master gardening" through Rosie Lerner's presentation on *Gardens of France*, and by awarding Master Gardener and Advanced Master Gardener certificates and honoring our own Outstanding Master Gardener.

Don't forget to bring your carry-in dish!

If you didn't sign up, please go ahead and bring something anyway: appetizer, salad, vegetable, main dish, or dessert.

Beck Center is located on the north side of US 52, about 1-1/2 miles west of Klondike Road (or 1/2 mile west of Co. Rd. 400 West). Look for a Purdue Agronomy sign on the right, a white board fence, and large trees lining the driveway. Beck Center is the first building on the left once you drive in. If you get to Montmorenci you have gone too far.

Upcoming Programs

Unless noted otherwise, each meeting begins with a social time at 6:30 pm, followed by the program at 7 pm.*

**February 2 • 6 pm* • Beck Center
4540 US Hwy 52 West**

**Annual Banquet • MGs Free • Guests \$2
Rosie Lerner: *Gardens of France***

**March 2 • 6:30 pm • Extension Office
Dee & Bill Dilling: *Roses of New Zealand***

From the Secretary

Minutes of the January 5, 2010 meeting of the Master Gardener Association of Tippecanoe County

Program

Tippecanoe County Extension Office: Presentation by Tom Creswell, director of Purdue's Plant and Pest Disease Diagnostic Laboratory: Five step plan for diagnosing plant problems.

1. Define the problem: Is it a problem, or normal for that plant? Must know about the plant first. Describe the symptoms or abnormality you see.

2. Look for patterns – clues as to whether this is caused by a living organism or a non-living cause. Non-uniform damage at a site, to a plant or to part of a plant is more likely to be caused by a living organism, while uniform stress more like to be caused by non-living (mechanical injury, cold injury, chemical contamination, etc.) Need to see the big picture

3. Establish time development of damage – Living organisms typically multiply with time with progressive spread of damage, whereas non-living factors will damage a plant at a given time and is not progressive.

4. Determine potential causes of plant damage- consider all possible causes, living and non-living. Can include fungi, bacteria, nematodes, viruses. Fungi cause up to 80% of plant problems.

5. Synthesis of information to determine probable cause. History + examination of plant + signs and symptoms + photos and descriptions = Probable Cause

Business Meeting

Business meeting called to order at 8:09 p.m. by Don Nead. Guests introduced and new interns presented to the meeting.

Announcement re the annual dinner in February; sign-up sheet passed around the meeting.

Sign-up sheets for volunteer recruitment: Kay Falley accepted forms at meeting and they can be mailed to her.

Sign-up sheets were also passed for purchasing the "Calendar Girls" calendar that the MGATC is selling for fundraising.

Planning meetings: Demo Garden planning meeting will be held on 1/9/10 at Extension Office at 9 a.m. All American Selections and Idea Gardens planning meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday 1/12/10 at the Extension Office. Planning meeting for 2010 in Extension Office Thursday, 1/14/2010 6:30 p.m.; all committee and project chairs will meet to develop a coordinated 2010 calendar.

Approval of December meeting minutes – Motion made and seconded and accepted by unanimous voice vote.

Treasury – December 2009, \$860 income, expenses \$178, checking account balance \$5,544.09 (delivered by Don Nead for Lynn Layden, who was unable to attend.)

Task force recommendations as listed in the agenda:

1. Finance Committee establishment: accepted by unanimous voice vote

2. Nominations minus Audit: accepted by unanimous voice vote

3. Bylaws task force revise bylaws: accepted by unanimous voice vote

4. Redevelop membership, fundraising, volunteer, and publicity committees with at least five members including the chair: accepted by unanimous voice vote

5. Revise job descriptions of standing committees by 3/11/2010 Board meeting: accepted by unanimous voice vote

Standing committees reports

Membership: Need volunteer hours to be reported to Carmen Dunn. Deadline for 2009 hours is Friday, January 8. Interns directed to forms for recording volunteer hours.

Special project reports

Community Gardens – expansion of Cumberland Gardens plots due to capacity filled before Christmas – from 25 plots to 45 plots.

NCHS funding for water lines in Demo Garden approved up to \$21,000!

Announcements - none

Old Business - none

New Business - none

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted for Carla

Barnhart,

Maribeth Slebodnik

Expo Speaker Input

We are selecting speakers for the Expo, and need your input. Who would you like to hear? Is there a special area you are interested in, such as shade gardening or vegetable gardening, for example? Is there someone you think the public would like to hear? E-mail any suggestions to Jackie Scott at scottswoods@verzion.net or Marlene Hodge at marlene.hodge@comcast.net

Your help is appreciated.

Jackie Scott & Marlene Hodge

The Friends of Old Bulbs Gazette

Old House Gardens offers a FREE monthly e-mail newsletter with tips, news, history, links, sales, and special offers. Send an e-mail with "subscribe" in the subject line to newsletter@oldhousegardens.com.

(They promise to NEVER share your email address.) Visit www.oldhousegardens.com to check out their catalog.

Volunteer News

by Kay Falley

All requests from community groups for volunteer speakers have been filled. John and Pequita Behrndt are speaking in April at the Lamplighters Group. Intern Eddie Boes is speaking in May at the Happy Hollow Garden Club. *Thanks to all three of you; your willingness to educate others is very much appreciated.*

Although the Inventory Form included a special project for Ag Day at the Fairgrounds, the Tippecanoe County Extension Service handles this project. Thus, there will be no call for volunteers unless Jeff needs extra help. For those of you who indicated an interest in helping with this project, I apologize for this mistake and thank you for your interest and willingness to help. Please take part in other areas of interest you indicated on your inventory sheet.

Volunteer Opportunities

March 13-21 **Indy Flower & Patio Show**
(TBD) Info Booth workers. Work days TBD.

April 17 & 18 **Spring Fest/Hort Show**
(Sat/Sun) Info Booth workers in Plant Sale Area
Three individuals per shift both days:
10 am to 12:30 pm, 12:30 to 3 pm,
3 to 5 pm

Aug 6-22 **Indiana State Fair**
(TBD) Info Booth workers. Work days TBD.

*Contact Kay Falley at (765) 471-4919 or
kfallay@comcast.net for information
or to volunteer.*

LET US NEVER FORGET THAT THE
CULTIVATION OF THE EARTH IS THE
MOST IMPORTANT LABOR OF MAN.
WHEN TILLAGE BEGINS, OTHER ARTS
FOLLOW. THE FARMERS, THEREFORE, ARE
THE FOUNDERS OF CIVILIZATION.

~DANIEL WEBSTER

Wednesdays in the Wild

Feb 3 1-3 pm **Maple Sugaring at Home**
Retired Forester Don Bickel draws upon 30 years of experience in maple sugaring to showhow to get started in this fun pursuit on a small scale, followed by an outdoor demonstration of tree-tapping process. LNC

Feb 10 1-3 pm **Raptors in Rehabilitation and Education**
Executive Director Carol Blacketer of the Wildcat Wildlife Center will share the unique challenges that are part of rehabilitating raptors. A visit from the center's newest feathered ambassadors will highlight the raptors' role in education. LNC

Feb 17 1-3 pm **Sturgeon Spawning in the Wabash**
Marisol Sepulveda and Reuben Goforth (Purdue professors of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences in FNR) will discuss the basic biology of sturgeon and radio tagging efforts. LNC

Feb 24 7-9 pm **Where Have All the Box Turtles Gone?**
Purdue graduate students Steve Kimble & Andrea Currylow provide a natural history overview of this once common turtle, discuss reasons for its decline, and tell of their diverse turtle research projects. LNC

Mar 3 1-3 pm **Outdoor Moss ID**
Purdue Dendrologist Sally Weeks leads a walk to explore the amazing Fall Creek Gorge in Warren County. The diversity of mosses is spectacular. Some are easy to identify with the naked eye; others are not. We will focus on those easy ones! Carpool leaves LNC at 12 noon. ****PLEASE NOTE:** Rugged terrain; could be slippery. POTHoles

Locations

LNC (Lilly Nature Center/Celery Bog Nature Area): On north side of Lindberg Rd, between Northwestern and McCormick in WL.

POTHoles (Fall Creek Gorge): In Warren County. Limited parking, so join carpool from LNC at noon.

The Latest Dirt

by Flora N. Fauna

The U.S. Naval Observatory Astronomical Applications Department at <http://www.usno.navy.mil/USNO/astronomical-applications> offers a multitude of sun and moon data giving precise times for rising and setting. Here is what it reports for Lafayette, Indiana (longitude W86.9, latitude N40.4) for the first and last days of February 2010. The sun will rise at 7:57 A.M. on the first day and rise at 7:23 A.M. on the last day. That's 26 more minutes of daylight. The sun will set 6:06 P.M. on the first day and set at 6:38 P.M. on the last day – 32 extra minutes of daylight. This is almost one extra hour of daylight between the first day of February and its last day. And the full moon of the last day will offer even more light.

For centuries, cluster-flowered tazetta narcissus has been an important part of New Year's festivities in Asia. Their gold cups symbolize wealth, and if they bloom on New Year's Day, it's said you'll have luck and prosperity throughout the year. To celebrate New Year's Day for the year 4707, which is coming up February 14, the post office is issuing a bright red 44-cent stamp decorated with these traditional narcissus. Search for it at <https://shop.usps.com>.

If you care about conserving historic garden plants, here's some exciting news. The world-class Rogerson Clematis Collection has been granted National Collection status by the North American Plant Collections Consortium. Located in Lake Oswego, Oregon, the Rogerson Collection includes over 650 clematis species and cultivars, including a recent gift from Poland of rare varieties bred by the late Brother Stefan Franczak. Check them out at <http://www.rogersonclematiscollection.org/>.

Winter is for reading. To learn more about antique flowers and gardening visit Calendula Horticultural Books. Owner Heiko Miles (who by day works in a small accounting office) wrote, "The hard economic conditions that caused a significant drop in book sales made me decide to scale back somewhat with the book business this year." But, he adds, "I would rather sell old and rare books than do any other work. I love the wonder books create, the dreams they ignite, and the pleasure they provide. Books are my friends that smile to me from the shelf, full of memories of time shared together. They beckon me to read them again and start the adventure afresh. They provide me with a sense of belonging." And Heiko feels the same way about plants. "Our books

and our gardens," he writes, "both fill an almost primal need within." For hundreds of old, soul-satisfying garden books priced from \$5 to over \$1000, visit www.calendulabooks.com.

Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds of Mansfield, MO, www.rareseeds.com, offers seeds for white vegetables.

'Snowberry' is a very sweet, cherry tomato, popular in Europe, although, hard to find in the U.S.A. It has light, creamy-yellow, one-inch "berries" that have a nice mellow, fruity taste that makes them perfect to eat in fruit salads or right out of the hand. Productive plants set large trusses of fruit.

'White Hailstone' is an early, old-time, white spring radish – this one is superb, great tasting and very mild and crisp.

'Thai White Ribbed' is the most unique looking of Thai eggplants. These are pure white, flat and deeply ribbed; the flesh is mild and tasty.

'Crystal Apple' is a small, three-inch oval cucumber that is bright, creamy white, about the size of a small apple, and sweet, mild and very tender. This variety has become almost extinct in America after being introduced here from Australia around the year 1930 from Arthur Yates and Co. But this type of cucumber is likely to have originated in China. The small fruits are so tender you can eat them skin and all.

'Albino' is a pure white, fairly smooth, round heirloom beet from Holland. Its super sweet white flesh is unusual and tasty. The greens are also good. This beet can be used for making sugar.

'Precoce D'Argenteuil' is an old traditional heirloom asparagus. This gourmet variety is highly esteemed in Europe for its delicious stems with rose-colored buds that can be blanched white.

'Kilimanjaro White' is a unique French marigold with lovely two-inch creamy-white blooms that really stand out in a crowd. White marigolds were long in the making; in fact, Burpee Seed Company spent 56 years searching and breeding before finding success. After years of trying, David Burpee offered \$10,000 to the first home gardener who sent in the right seeds to help make a real white variety; thousands of gardeners responded for years. One lady, Alice Vonk of Sully, Iowa, sent seeds for 21 years, and in 1875, Burpee awarded her the coveted prize for her work – after the company had spent 56 years and \$250,000 testing during the contest years. Now there are several white varieties, including this beauty.

Free Seeds

Special offer from Renee's Garden seed company: Buy five seed packets and one is free. Visit www.reneesgarden.com and enter code: MG009.

Herb Bed

(continued from back)

Lovage is easily grown from root divisions in early spring or by seed, either allowing it to self-sow or planting seed that is stratified for one to two weeks before sowing outdoors. Handpick or snip the leaves and stems at any point during the growing season. Harvest the roots in spring or fall with a needle-nosed spade or garden fork. Gather mature seeds when brown and dry.

Lovage is best known for adding flavor to soups, especially those that contain potatoes, peas, beans, and lentils. The herb may also be used to spice up stews like chili, chicken potpie, stir-fried vegetables, and seafood recipes. Addition of lovage to tasteless vegetables like summer squash adds flavor and savor to it. Adding lovage to salads imparts the essence and tang of fresh celery. Lovage leaves tend to be a little coarse so it is best to chop them delicately before adding to recipes. Similarly, its stems are generally fibrous so discard them before serving. Blanch the leaf stalks of lovage to eat raw like celery.

Whole or ground lovage seeds may be added to candy, meats, breads, aromatic crackers, or biscuits and are used in preparing pickles. Finely shredded fresh lovage roots can be added to salads or cooked and served like any other tasty vegetable if the outer skin of the root is peeled to avoid its pungent taste. Grated and dried lovage roots may also be consumed as an aromatic beverage. Steep one teaspoon finely shredded dry or fresh lovage roots in one cup of boiling water for a vigorous and stimulating tea.

There's a lot to love about lovage and this herb deserves a place of honor in any respectable herb or kitchen garden.

Lovage Potato Soup

1 medium onion, chopped
2 c. potatoes, peeled and chopped
4 oz. spinach, washed, drained, and chopped
2 T. unsalted butter
2 oz. fresh lovage leaves
4 c. chicken stock
salt and freshly ground pepper
a few fresh lovage leaves as garnish

Sauté the onion in butter over a moderate heat in a large saucepan. Add the potatoes and cook a few minutes longer. Add spinach and lovage leaves and sauté a few minutes more. Add chicken stock then simmer uncovered for 25-30 minutes. Purée soup in a food processor or with a hand-held blender. Add salt and pepper to taste and float a fresh lovage leaf on top. A splash of light cream or dollop of plain yogurt can be added to each bowl for a richer soup.

THE MOST NOTE-
WORTHY THING
ABOUT GARDENERS IS
THAT THEY ARE ALWAYS
OPTIMISTIC, ALWAYS
ENTERPRISING, AND
NEVER SATISFIED.
THEY ALWAYS LOOK
FORWARD TO DOING
BETTER THAN THEY
HAVE EVER DONE
BEFORE.

~VITA SACKVILLE-WEST
1892-1962, ENGLISH AUTHOR,
CREATOR OF SISSINGHURST

Garden Beet

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NO OCCUPATION IS SO
DELIGHTFUL TO ME AS THE
CULTURE OF THE EARTH, NO
CULTURE COMPARABLE TO THAT
OF THE GARDEN.
THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Herb Bed by Connie Kingman

In the language of flowers, lovage (*Levisticum officinale*) means hidden virtues and cleanliness. Known as the love herb, lovage was once worn around the neck of women from central Europe when meeting lovers, and many a love potion has included lovage as one of its ingredients. But where did the notion come from that love was induced by lovage?

The name lovage derived its name from the Latin word denoting Ligurian, a province called Liguria that comprises the Italian Riviera in ancient times. By the time its name was translated into English, it was distorted beyond recognition. The name entered English in Chaucer's day as "love-ache" or "love parsley" and over the past 600 years, people were misled by the name lovage and believed it should be used in love potions. Today, the only connection between love and lovage is that breath sweeteners prepared with lovage may stimulate romance.

Lovage is also known as a bath herb, both in cleaning and deodorizing the skin – perhaps this is why it acquired its second meaning in the language of flowers. Add the fresh leaves directly to a hot bath or make a strong tea from the leaves and pour into the bath. Soak and take in the scent while thinking thoughts of love.

Early Greeks and Romans prized lovage for its medicinal value, and during the Middle Ages its root, leaves and seeds continued to be used for medicinal purposes. The contemporary use of lovage in the Alps and Southern Germany can be traced back to those early Middle Ages at the beginning of the ninth century when Charlemagne wrote an edict called *Capitulaire de villis vel curtis imperii Caroli Magni* in which he defined a large number of administrative, legal and agricultural rules. At the end of the document is a large list of culinary and medical herbs that should be grown in every Imperial garden. Lovage is listed there among many other time-honored medicinal herbs.

Modern day folk healers and those

involved in natural medicine use a tea from the leaves to treat arthritis and rheumatism. The herb has also been used to treat colicky babies and adults suffering from urinary problems, intestinal disorders, and as an appetite stimulant. It is even reported that juice from the plant removes freckles.

In the garden, lovage is a perennial herb with leaves that resemble celery. They have a strong aromatic smell and taste. Mrs. M. Grieve states in *A Modern Herbal*, written in 1931, "It is sometimes grown in gardens for its ornamental foliage, as well as for its pleasant odor, but it is not a striking enough plant to have claimed the attention of poets and painters, and no myths or legends are connected with it."

Lovage grows from 3-6 feet tall in 2-3 foot clumps. It prefers full or partial sun and rich, moist soil. While blooming in late spring and early summer, its umbels of yellow flowers indicate its membership in the parsley family. It shares the same characteristics of the other herbal members of that family—fennel, dill, caraway, and angelica – all flowering in flat-topped clusters.

(Continued on page 5)