© 2024 Master Gardener Association of Tippecanoe County

February 2024

# Message from Your Co-Presidents

## Cheryl and Dee Dee

Hello Master Gardeners,

It's hard to believe that 2023 is behind us. The new board is looking forward to working with everyone in Our January Business and Education 2024. meeting was a success with so many of you attending. There were not enough tables for everyone to sit at. That's a good problem to have. Let's keep that momentum going and fill the room every month. If you were not able to attend the January meeting, please come to the February meeting and meet the new board and share ideas.

As we begin the new year, we want to share some of the new projects and activities for 2024.

1. Vegetable Demonstration Garden Design-A committee of 10 has been meeting and making plans to completely overhaul the Vegetable Demonstration Garden. In that design we will have different styles of raised beds, seating and shade areas, wider paths, refurbishment of the high tunnel and storage area. There are so many possibilities, and we look forward to sharing them with you at the March meetina.

### Attention members:

If you have any changes to your membership details, please send them to Pat Miller at pmillerathome@comcast.net



Let's Get Radicle! update



from the co-editors, see page 5

- 2. Bus Trip-The bus trip is back! A committee has been working on a bus trip to northern Indiana in early summer. More information to come.
- 3. The 5-year planning committee is working on the goals for 2024 and 2025, using suggestions given to us in January 2023. We will continue to update you throughout the year.

(Co-Presidents message continued on page 2)

## **MGATC Programs**

February 6, 2024, TCEO 6:00 pm Social time, 6:30 pm Speaker Prairie Plants, Restoration, & Native Plants Speaker: Jenna Parks Freeman, DNR **Interpretive Naturalist from Prophetstown** State Park

March 5, 2024, TCEO 5:30 pm Social time, 6:00 pm Awards Night Carry-in Dinner with speaker following. Gardening as We Age and with Disabilities. Speaker: Stephen J. Swain, ATP, Rural Rehabilitation Specialist Indiana AgrAbility/ National AgrAbility and serves at Purdue University in Agricultural Health and Safety

For more information on upcoming events, contact Sally Casey jscasey04@gmail.com or Alison Roth alison.roth2020@gmail.com

Websites: http://www.tippecanoemastergardener.org/ https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/ Newsletter: Please submit items for the Garden Beet to MGATCGardenBeet@gmail.com

by the 15th of the month for the next month's issue.

Items to be emailed to the membership should be sent to Dee Dee Long at deedee1mg@gmail.com

#### Co-Presidents message continued:

4. The Expo Committee has begun meeting. With membership down this year, we hope you will step up and participate.

We hope you are thinking of ways to get involved and how to make MGATC grow. We have many volunteer opportunities. Partner with a friend, get a small group together, chair one of our projects. The board is here to help you. Take that first step and get involved.

If you have suggestions do not hesitate to contact your Co-Presidents or a board member with your recommendations.

Let's work together to make MGATC an organization that everyone wants to belong to.

Cheryl and Dee Dee

## 

## MGATC Meeting Minutes: January 9, 2024, TCEO

The meeting began with the presentation by guest speaker Karen Mitchell, Consumer Horticulture Specialist Horticulture & Landscape Architecture, Purdue University Extension. The title of her talk was 'Wild by Design: The Art of Gardening for Wildlife'. Karen's talk highlighted the need for conservation starting in our own yards, by providing the elements necessary to support the complete lifecycle of native species. This includes food, water, shelter and native plants (in particular host plants for insects) to support the entire lifecycle, while eliminating as much as possible man-made hazards. At the end of her talk, she provided resources for certification and continuing education.

The business meeting was called to order by Cheryl McCool. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the December 5, 2023 meeting minutes without changes or corrections.

Pat Miller provided details of the treasurer's report. The ending bank balance was \$34,471.40, unrestricted funds balance was \$18,414.67, the restricted funds balance was \$16,056.73, the savings account balance was \$10,558.33 and the gaming account balance was \$767.00.

Dee Dee Long provided an update from the 5-year planning committee. Highlights are as follows:

- Additional signage has been added to Idea and Display gardens. Work will be done with committee chairs of community sites to have new permanent signs installed in 2024.
- In 2023 MG's were asked to volunteer more with the Extension Office, 4-H and Junior Master Gardeners activities. Volunteers did help with the Trunk or Treat activity held in the fall.

- MG's had requested more volunteer opportunities at information booths. In addition to our regular outreach, in 2023 we added Outdoor Explore Event, Convoy of Hope Event. In 2024 we will add the ABC's of Ag (formerly known as Ag Days).
- Vine and Trellis program is back. All new 2023 class members have been assigned to Trellises.
- To increase advertising for the group, MG volunteers put together a scarecrow exhibit for the Prophetstown Trail of Scarecrows, where members were able to meet with the public on several occasions.
- No chair has been identified for the Saturday workshops, even though there is interest in starting this up again.
- Pat Miller updated the group on the bus trip, which is back on the calendar and is in the planning stages for mid-June, to northern Indiana. It will be a day trip that includes trips to gardens, lunch and shopping. A minimum of 25 people will be required. More information will be forthcoming.
- There is a desire to have picnics, classes, or other activities at the gardens. The Display and Idea gardens have been greatly improved, especially the children's garden with special thanks to Pattie Hall. A lawn service has been hired to spray the walkways in the D&I garden. There is a committee working on plans for an overhaul of the Demonstration Garden. Design plans will be provided at the March meeting. This will require several volunteers to make this work to bring the garden back to glory. Once this project is

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#### (MGATC Members Meeting minutes continued)

completed, then the gardens will be ready for picnics, classes, or other activities.

• To build on education opportunities, the group is looking into hosting a MG conference this year or in 2025. A volunteer will be needed to chair this committee.

Cheryl asked for updates from the various committees, which were provided as follows:

- Cindy Gilles updated the group on the upcoming GAAP planting that will be held in May. Signup Genius will be used for signing up.
- Doug Ketterer updated the group on last year's activities at Chatham Square gardens, with respect to overhauling the gardens with new soil and compost.
- Mickey updated the group on the upcoming signup dates in February for the community garden.
   Last year's renters will be sent an email in early February to determine who is coming back. Anyone else interested in renting a plot will need to send in their name to a waiting list. Five dates will be held

in February for renters of plots to attend an information meeting and pay the fee.

#### Other business:

Cheryl reminded the group that there are still open chair positions for the Display and Idea Garden, Demonstration Garden, Saturday workshops, and the AAS Display Gardens.

Garden Expo is on April 27th. Vendors are almost full. A sheet with seed starting dates was handed out for those interested in starting plants for the sale. More information will be forthcoming.

Dee Dee Long will send out an informational email to the group for the Bi-State Annual Conference, to be held at the Beefhouse Restaurant in Covington on January 23rd.

Perry Schnarr won a plant in the raffle drawing.

With no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Kay McCauley, Recording Secretary

## MGATC Board Minutes: January 11, 2024, 6:30pm, TCEO

Attendees: Mickey Penrod, Jim Jeray, Pat Miller, Alison Roth, Dee Dee Long, Cheryl McCool, Mary Kay McCauley, Kathie Cox, and Sally Casey. Georgia Brist was unable to attend. The Meeting called to order at 6:39PM. The minutes of the December 14, 2023 meeting were approved as published in January 2024 Garden Beet.

Pat Miller gave the treasurer's report. Fees paid via the Square application caused odd numbers to be recorded in the dues amount. Pat brought new signature cards to be signed by officers whose signatures are needed for the accounts. Pat also gave an update on membership. We officially have 105 members, which includes one person who has not reported any hours for 2023. Pat is working with the extension office to have the Green Book published for 2024. The new password is sent out after the member list is fully updated. Unpaid members need to be paid by the 15th of January. If they are not paid, they will not be added to the Green Book.

Cheryl and Dee Dee gave an update on Garden Expo. Almost all Expo vendor slots are filled. We will need many volunteers to not only grow plants,

but also volunteer on the day of Expo. Expo is on Saturday, April 27th, with an all-day setup the day before on Friday, April 26th. This year it will cost us to make the popcorn at the Expo. The popcorn machine is borrowed from the Extension Office, but we have to buy the popcorn, oil and bags.

Cheryl and Dee Dee informed the group that we now have a cabinet for storage at the Extension Office. It is located in the basement conference room in the corner. This will first be used for social committee items. They also updated the group on the new conference room layout that will occur at some date in the future. Three big screen TVs will be set up on one of the long walls, along with new PA system installed for better acoustics. More tables can always be added to the room if needed.

Jim Jeray stated that he will continue to make sure the correct information is on the website. Charles Kanitz will continue as webmaster. Any website information updates need to be relayed to Jim.

Dee Dee told the group that Amanda Graupner, who does public relations for Purdue Extension, is

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(MGATC Board minutes continued from page 3)

working on a video of Purdue Extension activities in 2023. Dee Dee is coordinating the gathering of photos to share with Amanda to put together a video of the 2023 Master Gardener activities.

Dee Dee discussed the upcoming ABC's of AG day that is being held in February. A proposed budget of \$250 for the event was approved. Dee Dee and Georgia plan to work together to put together a presentation for the event.

Pat Miller updated the group on the summer bus trip. Imperial Travel has been contacted about a 32 passenger bus, with a 25 person minimum. The trip is tentatively scheduled for mid-June to northern Indiana, details forthcoming. A survey will be sent out to gauge interest in the trip. If the 25 person minimum is not met, the trip may be cancelled.

The board discussed the March Awards banquet dinner. It will be a carry-in, starting with a social hour at 5:30PM, then the meal at 6PM. The guest speaker will start at approximately 6:30PM, with the awards presented after the speaker. Badges earned in 2023 will be awarded, along with Outstanding Master Gardener.

Cheryl and Dee Dee will be meeting with the chairs to find out what their needs are, if they have any special event for the year in order to build better networking between groups. We also discussed ways to increase our publicity on our various activities through social media.

A proposal was made to do a half-day board retreat to better understand how the board operates, to understand the bylaws, etc. for the new members of the board. A tentative date of March 16 was set. Details will be provided in February.

Regarding the monthly meetings, if there is questionable weather, the board decided that there will be a mass email sent to the group if the meeting is going to be cancelled.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25PM.

Respectfully submitted. Mary Kay McCauley, Recording Secretary

## **Treasurer's Report**

### **January 2024 Board Meeting Treasurer's Report**

Income for the month of December was from a bank adjustment and interest for a total of \$10. Expenses for the month were for pathway treatment in the Display and Idea Garden, Garden Expo nursery license, social committee and general expenses for a total of \$856. There were restricted fund additions of \$1,626 for the Garden Expo 24 Vendors and dues and expenses of \$2,456 for Chatham Square soil and hauling and the Compost Project. The balance of the Restricted Funds was \$16,057 as of December 31. The bank balance was \$34,471 as of December 31 and the total of unrestricted funds available is \$18,415. The Savings Account balance was \$10,558 and the Gaming/Scholarship Account balance was \$767 at month end.

Pat Miller, Treasurer

"In the coldest February, as in every other month in every other year, the best thing to hold on to in this world is each other."







from Mike and Kathryn, co-editors

Last month, we proposed that you get radicle in 2024. We thought we'd give you an update on our seed germination tests and plans for growing plants for Garden Expo. Info on how to do this was in the January Garden Beet.

We tested 36 varieties of vegetable seeds. Some of the results were expected, but some amazed us. 10 year old 'Chioggia' Beet had a germination rate of 85% - that was a surprise! We didn't bother testing tomato seeds because our experience tells us they have excellent long term viability when stored properly.

6 yr. old Persian Cucumber Persian 'Baby' had 100% germination. 3 year old Bush Beans 'Endeavor' and 'Jade' 100% germination, but 'Ferrari' had only 10%. ('Ferrari' definitely didn't win this race.) 10 yr. old Asian heirloom Cabbage 'Michihili' only 30% germination, but we have more seed that we need so we'll go ahead and plant extra seeds rather than buy new. Extra plants are great for Expo!

The surplus brassica and leafy greens seeds that sprouted radicles, showing viability, will be sown indoors though winter for microgreens. Try this if your green thumbs are itching to grow veg. You can grow microgreens in a shallow tray on just an inch or so of potting mix or on alternative media (check the MGATC archive for our article on hemp mats for microgreens in May 2020 Garden Beet).





### So what else are we doing to satisfy our desire to get ready to grow and prep for Garden Expo?

Outdoors: continuing to feed the compost pile through the winter and, as we walk through the garden, noting perennials that should be divided and potted up for Expo in the spring.

Indoors: Perusing seed catalogues and trying to restrain ourselves from ordering too much! Cleaning pots and cell packs to help avoid pathogens that affect seedlings - hot soapy water, rinse, then soak in 10% bleach solution, and dry. A strip of paper (junk mail, scrap paper, etc.) placed between plastic pots and cell packs keeps them from sticking together when stacked up and stored.

Such a good feeling when everything is ready for spring sowing and planting!

"While it is February, one can taste the full joys of anticipation. Spring stands at the gate with her finger on the latch."







## What's Happening

#### WEDNESDAYS in the WILD

Registration is required by noon on Monday prior to program:

765-567-2993 or mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov

# Feb. 7, 1-3 pm, Northern Lights: The Nature Conservancy's Conservation Priorities for Northern Indiana, LNC

The Nature Conservancy protects more than 100,000 acres in Indiana. The Conservancy's biggest priorities are now shaped by a new planning tool: the Resilient Conservation Network (RCN). This effort is used to focus limited conservation resources by identifying the most viable landscapes for stewardship. Tom Swinford (Director of Stewardship, Indiana Nature Conservancy) will share what this initiative looks like in northern Indiana. *REGISTRATION is required*.

# Feb. 14, 1-3 pm, Strike a Pose: Photographing Wildlife in our National Parks, LNC

Through photography, Dr. Dan Shepardson (professor emeritus, Purdue University) has captured the majesty and beauty of nature in his travels to many of our most iconic national parks. By respecting wildlife and their environments, he works to capture facial expressions, behaviors, and social and environmental interactions of wildlife. Join us on armchair tours of Badlands, Wind Cave, Glacier & Yellowstone National Parks and learn about the fascinating natural history of these parks along with that of bears, wolves, bighorn sheep, bison, elk, moose, mountain goats, pronghorn antelope and prairie dogs. *REGISTRATION is required*.

# Feb. 21, 1-3 pm, Rachel Carson and the Wonder of Nature, LNC

Wonder, that feeling of surprise and curiosity in response to the natural world, was a subject of study for environmentalist and writer Rachel Carson. Her best known book, *Silent Spring*, alerted Americans to the risks of chemical insecticides. Even while focusing on this serious topic, Carson managed to inspire wonder and foster emotion in her readers. Dr. Frederick Davis (Dept of History, Purdue University) will invite participants to learn more about Carson's legacy, her ideas about wonder, and the role wonder

plays in our own interactions with the natural world. *REGISTRATION* is required.

# Feb. 28, 1-3 pm, Helping Hoosier Hellbenders: An Engaged Approach to Endangered Species Conservation, LNC

Sherri Reinach (Hellbender Project Coordinator, Purdue University) will outline the conservation efforts used to aid recovery of populations of Indiana's largest amphibian, the hellbender, through partnerships among academics, governmental agencies, zoos, and non-profit organizations. Come discover how these partnerships led to the success of finding the first juvenile hellbender in Indiana waterways this summer! REGISTRATION is required.

**LNC (Lilly Nature Center)**: 1620 Lindberg Rd, between Northwestern & McCormick at Celery Bog Nature Area, West Lafayette.

No February volunteer workdays with RIP Squad

- Remove Invasive Plants to help protect the native plants. *Programs will resume in spring/summer.* 

# Feb. 17, 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, Whitley County Master Gardener's 8<sup>th</sup> Symposium

The Whitley County Master Gardeners are hosting their 8th symposium on Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Indian Springs Middle School in Columbia City, Indiana. The topics covered are: Container Gardening of all Types by Jo Ellen Myers Sharp, "It's Only Natural: Backyard Habitat and Native Gardening 101" by Mary Cutler, "Back for the Future" Native Plantings for Water Quality by Brad Clayton, "Invasive Species" by John Woodmansee, and Hydrangeas by Kim Jewell.

The cost is \$40 and registration information can be found at <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whitley-county-master-gardeners-8th-symposium-registration-718001199917">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whitley-county-master-gardeners-8th-symposium-registration-718001199917</a>. For more information visit <a href="https://tinyurl.com/WhitleyMG">https://tinyurl.com/WhitleyMG</a>.

## What's Happening cont'd

For DNR events at State Parks see: https://www.in.gov/dnr/state-parks/programs/program-schedules/

#### For FOS events at Kankakee Sands see:

https://friends-of-the-sands.com/calendar-of-events/ See The Nature Conservancy (TNC) events at Kankakee Sands and other TNC locations around the state:

https://outlook.office365.com/calendar/published/10 90e94c81a6426fb2079298d85371dd@TNC.ORG/4 ee1e251dbcd4e77b629030c873f228935910999974 17263813/calendar.html

Check above URL/calendars for each FOS and TNC event for info on suggested gear and winter clothing. These events and workdays are hosted by DNR in partnership with FOS.

Jan. 24, 2:30pm-4:30pm CT – Long Live the Prairie Chicken! January Workday at Beaver Lake Nature Preserve, part 4, This workday will focus on brush cutting. Please RSVP to learn the exact meeting location. Contact Gus Nyberg (nyberggus@gmail.com or 765-427-4345). Kankakee Sands

Jan. 31, noon-5pm CT – Long Live the Prairie Chicken! January Workday at Beaver Lake Nature Preserve, part 5. At this workday, the group will be burning a brush pile on the north side of Beaver Lake Prairie. Please RSVP to learn the exact meeting location. Contact Gus Nyberg (nyberggus@gmail.com or 765-427-4345). Kankakee Sands

Feb. 7, 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm CT – Brush Cutting in Bluebird Grove of Beaver Lake Nature Preserve. Please RSVP to learn the exact meeting location. Contact Gus Nyberg (nyberggus@gmail.com or 765-427-4345). Kankakee Sands

Feb. 8, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm CT – Friends of the Sands Greenhouse Workday and Potluck Lunch It's seed-sowing time! Help Friends of the Sands sow native plant seeds that we will grow out for our Native Plant Sale in May. Meet at the Kankakee Sands Native Plant Nursery (1492 W 250 N, Morocco, IN). Please RSVP! Contact Jeanette Jaskula (jmjaskula@yahoo.com or 219-869-1004).

Feb. 14, 2:30 to 4:30 pm CT – Bringing Back the Prairie, part 1. At this workday, we will be working to cut and treat woody plants that separate Beaver Lake Prairie and TNC's Kankakee Sands Unit G to the south. Please RSVP to learn the exact meeting

location. Contact Gus Nyberg (nyberggus @gmail.com or 765-427-4345). Kankakee Sands

Feb. 16, 2024, 10 am to 3 pm CT – Brush Pile Bonfire at Beaver Lake Nature Preserve The work group will be dragging cut brush to a burn pile. Please RSVP to learn the exact meeting location. Contact Gus Nyberg (nyberggus@gmail.com or 765-427-4345). Kankakee Sands

Feb. 21, 2024, 2:30 to 4:30 pm CT – Bringing Back the Prairie, part 2. We will be working to cut and treat woody plants that separate Beaver Lake Prairie and TNC's Kankakee Sands Unit G to the south. *Please RSVP to learn the exact meeting location*. Contact Gus Nyberg (nyberggus@gmail.com or 765-427-4345). Kankakee Sands

Feb. 28, 2:30 to 4:30 pm CT – Bringing Back the Prairie, part 3. We will be working to cut and treat woody plants that separate Beaver Lake Prairie and TNC's Kankakee Sands Unit G to the south. *Please RSVP to learn the exact meeting location*. Contact Gus Nyberg (nyberggus@gmail.com or 765-427-4345). Kankakee Sands



## Purdue Extension Monthly Hot Topics for 2024

**Feb. 21, noon to 1pm EST**. Austin Pearson, Climatologist from the Midwestern Regional Climate Center will present "Weather." More information can be found at https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/mastergardener/events/purdue-extension-monthly-hottopics-2024-weather/

"Hot Topics" is a free monthly live Zoom presentation featuring Purdue Extension Professionals discussing their research and area of expertise. You can **sign up** for the series and get monthly reminders for each session at <a href="https://bit.ly/HotTopics2024">https://bit.ly/HotTopics2024</a>

Virtual presentations will earn Master Gardener education hours. All programs are recorded for later viewing if you can't make the noon presentation.

Additional programs will be announced as they are scheduled.

Contact Courtney Ann Schmidt, Extension Educator, Ag & Natural Resources / Health & Human Sciences County Extension Director-Miami County Purdue Extension at <a href="mailto:schmi163@purdue.edu">schmi163@purdue.edu</a>, for details.



## **Recipes of the Month**

Emily Hughes found great recipes for this month. See directions online for these recipes:

Salted Caramel Chocolate Tart https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/ salted-caramel-chocolate-tart

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California Roasted Sweet Potato Kale Salad https://www.ambitiouskitchen.com/sweet-potato-kale-salad/

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# Master Gardener Online Educational Opportunities

# Purdue Extension Master Gardener web-based education at:

https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/mastergardener/continuededhours/

A variety of topics are available to watch anytime to suit your schedule. Earn EMG Education hours.

### **Purdue Landscape Report**

Timely educational topics on lawn care, trees, shrubs, flowers, plant diseases, insect pests, invasive species and more.

To get this twice a month newsletter by email go to: <a href="https://www.purduelandscapereport.org">https://www.purduelandscapereport.org</a> Click on subscribe link. You can also read previous issues online at the same website.



# February Garden To-Do List

- Enjoy all your new garden catalogues. Make crazy long "want" lists of vegetable and flower seeds and plants you have plenty of wintertime left to regain your sanity.
- Check your seed inventory and test germination. Look online for lists of seed viability. Purdue University Extension has a life expectancy list of some vegetable and flower seeds at: https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/st oring-leftover-garden-seed/ lowa State Extension has a longer list of seed average life expectancy at: https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/1999/4-2-1999/veggielife.html
- If you're forcing hardy bulbs like tulips, hyacinths and daffodils in pots, check to see if they need water they should be slightly moist (not wet) to avoid rot.
- Houseplants need more light and humidity, but reduced water during winter.
- Check houseplants for insect pests. Some insecticidal soap is safe for use indoors.
- Start slow-to-germinate seeds like peppers and celeriac mid to late February in a very warm spot and grow under lights (fluorescent or LED). A few perennials need to be started 10-12 weeks before last average frost date in our area April 25.
- Fill bird feeders with seeds and suet cakes.
- If you notice damage to trees and shrubs from foraging animals, apply (or reapply) repellents. Consider deer fencing for next year.
- Wisit a big tropical glasshouse and bask in warmth and humidity. There's Garfield Park Conservatory in Indy; Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory in Fort Wayne; Krohn Conservatory in Cincinnati; Lincoln Park and Garfield Park in Chicago; and Chicago Botanical Garden in Glencoe.
- Wisit a local greenhouse/nursery for a quick mood lifter.
- Buy fresh flowers for Valentine's Day! ♥
- More tips on houseplants, yard & garden see: https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/fe bruary-garden-calendar/
- Stay warm and happy. Spring will happen...only a little more than 85 days until last frost date and Garden Expo.





### **Garden Beet**

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