

June 2016

Garden Beet

MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OF TIPPECANOE COUNTY



From Two Js

Volunteers make up the backbone of this organization. They reflect unselfish giving of time to help others, improve the beauty of our county, and a desire to work together to achieve our association's goals. Volunteering is the greatest asset we have to offer.

Our 2016 conference will be June 16, 17, and 18. Hats off to Elizabeth and Jolaine as well as the numerous committee chairs involved in the planning of this event. And let us not forget John Orick, who has played a very important role providing direction to the planning committees.

Generally speaking, most people are more interested in themselves and

their success than anything else. Everyone with ambition wants to get ahead and can if equipped with the understanding of how to reach goals they set for themselves. If you were born with curiosity to seek explanations and answers to unknown situations, you are blessed with a special gift. Your gift can be extremely helpful in helping you move forward and become all you can be.

Our conference results depend on people driven towards success and helping their association achieve greatness. What we think or contemplate has a great probability of developing into reality. Our thoughts and enthusiasm radiate our "thoughts" (perhaps un-

consciously) to others and has an affect on their behavior. Always think positive! Positive thinking will benefit you and others around you.

Remember that whatever you can conceive mentally can be brought into materialization. Health, wealth, and happiness must follow if the proper mental pictures are created and "constantly" maintained. Because the law of "cause and effect" is established and does not change.

Emerson posed the question: "What is the hardest task in the world?" His answer: "To Think."

Jerry and John

The Latest Dirt

by Flora N. Fauna

Looking for PDF versions of your favorite garden magazines? Magazines like *Amateur Gardening*, *Gardeners' World*, *Garden News*, and similar ones are available for download in the Garden PDF collection at <http://pdf-magazine-download.com/garden/>. The latest issues of the world's best magazines are just a click away. Most of them are in English, but a number are written in other languages, like Spanish or French. All of the magazines have one thing in common - they're all in easy-to-download PDF format (Note: Be aware that magazines that may be deemed unsuitable are also available on this site.)

According to *The Old Farmer's 2016 Almanac*, the best days in June for

planting above-ground crops are 15-17; for planting below-ground crops are 25, 26; for destroying pests and weeds are 1, 27, 28; for harvesting above-ground crops are 10-12; for harvesting below-ground crops 2, 3, 29, 30; for canning, pickling, and making sauerkraut are 25, 26.

A tip from Renees Garden, written by Beth Benjamin, Horticultural Advisor. "... be strong: resist the temptation to sow seeds of heat loving varieties into your garden until the soil has warmed up and spring weather conditions are warm and settled with outdoor night temperatures consistently in the 50-55° F (10-13° C) range. Rest assured that seeds planted when conditions are warm enough will catch up and surpass stressed seedlings that

Programs

June 6 • 7 p.m. • TCEO

6:30 p.m. Social Time

Doug Jones

Doug's presentation will be on bees.

NOTE: This is a Monday.

July 5 • 7 p.m. • TCEO

6:30 p.m. Social Time

Jan Wright

Jan will speak on flowers.

were planted too early. Don't be fooled by a long warm weekend - wait until the weather has truly warmed up. Read more at <http://www.reneesgarden.com/articles/TopSeedStartingProblems.pdf>.

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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 Donna Cumberland at donna.d.cumberland@gmail.com.

<http://www.tippecanoemastergardener.org>

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/mg/index.html>

MGATC Minutes: May 3, 2016, 7 p.m., TCEO

Cheryl McCool called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and introduced Mickey Penrod who gave a very interesting talk about the Idea and Display Gardens. She currently co-chairs these gardens with Sue Swick. Mickey told us about the history of the gardens from their beginning and how they have grown over the years. The gardens have wildlife habitat certification as well as Monarch Waystation certification. This year the focus is on "Pathway for Polinators" and includes new AAS display beds.

At 7:40 p.m. Cheryl McCool turned the meeting over to Co-President, John Pickett.

The next issue of business was approval of the April meeting minutes. The Minutes were approved as posted in the May issue of the *Garden Beet*.

Pat Miller then gave the Treasurer's Report. She reported that, after posting income and expenses from the Garden Expo, the current checking account balance is \$21,536.01. Pat asked that all receipts be turned in for the Garden Expo. The breakdown for the Expo was: \$1,125 from vendors, \$241.25 from seed sales, \$582.92 from the garden shed, \$4,232.33 from the plant sale and \$531.30 from the dessert café. She also reported that credit card sales from use of the Square came to \$853 and noted that the Square will be used again at the state conference for book sales, conference merchandise sales and the silent auction. In addition, Pat reported that a \$500 anonymous donation was received to be applied to the Idea Garden spot which was previously used for the Gigantics Garden.

Carl Stafford reminded everyone to get their hours submitted.

In regard to membership, Jerry Millard reported that we now have exactly 200 members with hopes of adding more next year.

Jerry Millard also reported that he is working on a Master Gardener Procedure Manual and asked that anyone having copies of the previous manual please get them to him as soon as possible so that he can use them to help create the new manual.

Julieann Davis reported that there is still one plot left in the Community Gardens if anyone is interested.

Lynn Layden reported on Art in Bloom which is scheduled for Saturday, June 25 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in West Lafayette. It will be a bi-centennial sampler of gardens and art in West Lafayette. The Master Gardeners are sponsoring the event and need two or three volunteers for each garden; there will be two shifts 9:30 a.m. until noon; and noon until 2 p.m. She asked that volunteers wear their name badges and suggested they wear a hat if it is a sunny day. She had a sign-up sheet at the back table.

Candace Larson noted that sign-up sheets were also at the back of the room to sign up for GAAP; more volunteers are still needed and should bring their gloves and trowels to work. The schedule is May 5 at Columbian park, May 6 at the courthouse and the pedestrian bridge, May 9 at the art museum, and May 12 at the Indiana Veteran's Home. Times and rain dates are listed in the May *Garden Beet*.

Dee Dee Long reported that plans are moving along for the open house which is scheduled for Sunday, July 10 from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. The band has been confirmed and the Boy Scouts will be helping in the children's area to help the children make Mason Bee homes. Numerous volunteers will be needed. Sign-up sheets were in the back of the room for baking cookies, tomato tasting, growing and donating plants for the plant sale, working in children's area, and tours of the gardens. Pat Henady suggested that a garden shed booth also be included at the open house.

Cheryl McCool reported on the Garden Expo. She said that it was a wonderful day. Attendance this year was down as no advertisement of the event was placed in the *Lafayette Journal & Courier*. Next year, we will make sure that this is not overlooked. Even though attendance was down, the Master Gardeners still made the same amount of money. Cheryl noted that there was great participation in this event and thanked everyone for all their help to make it a success. Cheryl also noted that we will need a person to run the dessert café next year and anyone interested should contact her.

Elizabeth Hartley reported that the state conference registration is close to maximum and all tours are full. Thirty people are registered from Tippecanoe County and Elizabeth had a form for volunteers to complete for name tags and t-shirts; she asked that the completed forms be given to Jerry Millard at the end of the meeting. Jerry Millard reported that many volunteers are still needed for the conference and he would be in the back of the room at the end of the meeting for volunteers to sign up. The state conference is a group effort and we all need to work together to set an example and be the "best." Anyone having silent auction items should give Ed Knoth or Linda Stafford a description of the item.

John Pickett noted that the annual Prophetstown plant sale is on Saturday, May 7, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Joan Sozen reported that the book club met last week and had a great time. Anyone interested in the book club should contact her.

Bill Dilling noted that he had cannabubers and Irish tomatoes available after the meeting.

John Pickett noted that Jim Smith and Jim Mailloux had dahlias for sale in the back of the room.

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MGATC Board Minutes: May 12, 2016, 6 p.m., TCEO

Present for the meeting were Jerry Millard, John Pickett, Jan Sadler, Pat Miller, Dee Dilling, Cheryl McCool, Debbie Ladd, and Karen Mitchell.

The meeting was called to order by John Pickett at 6:05 p.m.

The minutes of the April board meeting were approved as posted in the May issue of the *Garden Beet*.

Dee Dilling reported on cards which have been sent recently.

The board then discussed the recommendation to name the orchard the Jeff Phillips Memorial Orchard. Karen Mitchell noted that the recommendation has extension office and University approval. The board considered several signage options which would include Jeff Phillips as well as other Master Gardeners who have made significant contributions to the organization. Karen will contact Williams Signs to obtain quotes and this topic will be discussed again at the June board meeting.

It was noted that members need to be reminded that the June meeting will be held on Monday, June 3.

Pat Miller then distributed copies of the informative Treasurer's Report which will be posted in the June *Garden Beet*. She noted that the Garden Expo netted \$6,650.66. The only expense was \$62.14 for supplies for the dessert café.

However, next year we need to be sure that the expo is advertised in the *Lafayette Journal & Courier*.

Cheryl McCool further reported that the expo was a great success. The expo was advertised on the radio and she was interviewed on television both on Friday before the event and then again the evening after the event. She will make a note to be sure that the *Lafayette Journal & Courier* is contacted next year. It was also reported that most vendors are planning to come back next year.

Cheryl McCool also reported that the extension board has approved her re-

quest for an additional \$122 for the extension office flag pole garden, to include an Indiana bicentennial flag.

Jerry Millard gave Elizabeth Hartley's report on the state conference noting that registrations now total 214 and tours are full. Jerry reported that he still needs to fill 63 volunteer slots and will be making calls to get additional volunteers. Karen Mitchell noted that both she and her intern will be available to work at the conference. The next planning meeting for the conference is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, at Four Points by Sheraton.

Jan Sadler reported that plans are moving forward for the open house which is scheduled for Sunday, July 10 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Volunteer sign-up sheets were put out at the May monthly meeting; several members signed up but more volunteers will be needed. Jan and Dee Dee Long will be scheduling a meeting with Karen Mitchell in the next couple of weeks regarding plans for the open house. The event will include tomato tasting, a plant and garden shed sale, and the Boy Scouts will help children make Mason Bee homes in the children's area.

Regarding insurance, Karen Mitchell reported that volunteers are covered by Purdue insurance at any event which is partnered with the extension office. Jerry Millard contacted J. T. Emerson at the Mitchell Agency who gave him a quote of \$311/year for \$1,000,000 liability coverage and \$5,000 medical coverage per claim. The quote is based on 200 members. The board authorized Jerry Millard to obtain coverage up to \$400 per year if the coverage covers all of the Master Gardener events (such as the state conference, Garden Expo, open house, Adopt-a-Spots, etc.) and covers all attendees and vendors at these events. He will also check to see if hayrides would be covered at the open house.

John Pickett then discussed grants. He has looked into grants and determined that the first thing that you need to do is decide who you do not want a grant from; you need to find a grantor who most closely matches the need that you have. Next, you need to make personal

contact, give the grantor a history of our organization and describe in detail the project you want to cover. John will investigate grants further including contacting Master Gardeners who have had grants approved and obtain copies of their grant requests to use as reference points for others who are submitting grant requests. As Laurie Madlung is already handling fund raising, Jerry Millard will contact her regarding becoming the organization's Grant Coordinator.

Jerry Millard then distributed copies of proposed guidelines for the Master Gardener Intern of the Year Award. The board discussed the proposed guidelines and made some revisions including changing the name of the award to Master Gardener Rookie of the Year Award. The guidelines were then approved as amended.

The Master Gardener Rookie of the Year Award as well as the Master Gardener Support Person of the Year Award will be announced at the June monthly meeting and guidelines for both awards will be placed in the July issue of the *Garden Beet*. Karen Mitchell stated that the extension office would pay for the awards.

Jerry Millard was contacted asking the Tippecanoe County Master Gardener Association to support Fountain County Landmarks' event entitled "A Day of Gardens & Art" in Attica. The board approved sending one email blast with the flyer attached to all members.

Jerry Millard stated that he will call members of the Finance Committee to schedule a meeting and select a chairperson for the committee.

The board meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Sadler
Recording Secretary

Green Book Update

Please update the phone number for Theresa Silver to 765-414-4225.

MGATC Financial Reports

Financial Report March 1 through April 30, 2016

Beginning Balance	\$ 14, 581.30
Income	
Dues	\$ 27.00
MGA State Conference	\$ 630.00
Grant and Restricted	
Donations	\$ 638.00
Garden Expo (includes cash box funds)	\$7,333.49
Interest	\$.27
Expenses	
Education/Scholarship	\$1,000.00
Member Services	\$ 53.56
Garden Expo cash boxes	\$ 620.49
Ending Balance	\$ 21,536.01

Pat Miller, Treasurer

Garden Expo Financial Report

Income	
Vendors	\$ 1,125.00
Plant Sale	\$ 4,232.33
Dessert Café	\$ 531.30
Garden Shed	\$ 582.92
Seed Box	\$ 241.25
Total Income (less cash box funds)	\$ 6,712.80
Expenses	
Booth Expense	\$ 62.14
Net Income	\$ 6,650.66
Budgeted Net Income from Garden Expo	\$5,575.00

Pat Miller, Treasurer

Minutes

(continued from page 2)

Karen Mitchell introduced all of the participants from the recent "Growing Through Leadership" program. She thanked them for being a part of the first Tippecanoe County leadership program and presented them each with a certificate.

Door prizes were won by Jolaine Roberts, Jeri Bosworth Parker, and Debbie Ladd.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jan Sadler
Recording Secretary*

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the
journey-work of the stars . . . And the running
blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven.

~Walt Whitman

Latest Dirt

(continued from page 1)

🌱 Exclusive New Product, available only through the Proven Winners® online store. The Flower Pillow™ from Proven Winners® includes everything you need to grow a gorgeous container of flowers. The pre-assembled 5" x 8" flower-filled pillow is perfectly sized to fit your 12"-14" container, hanging basket, or window box. To plant, simply water the pillow, place it in your container, covering it with potting soil and leaving just the base of the plants above the soil line. Water it again after planting to help the soil settle, then sit back and watch it grow. Watch the video of this eco-friendly, biodegradable sac, designed like a tea bag, being planted at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luaQG5P4wDU&feature=youtu.be&utm_campaign=The-Flower-illow&utm_medium=email&utm_source=emfluence. Although this

product may seem a silly item for a Master Gardener, it would make a nice gift for those who need to gain confidence at growing things.

🌱 National Garden Bureau, in an ongoing effort to raise awareness of horticulture and support the benefits of gardening, will grant \$5,000 this fall to be split among three therapeutic gardens in North America. Beginning this month, NGB will begin accepting applications from therapeutic gardens that meet the following set of criteria:

1. Have a defined program using the garden to further particular goals for participants lead by a qualified leader. Examples include horticultural therapy, occupational, physical, and vocational or rehabilitation therapy in a garden setting or using gardening to promote positive social relationships within a community.
2. Offer a nature experience/interface for population

served, including, but not limited to veterans, special-needs children or young adults, the elderly and/or those recuperating from specific injuries or addictions.

3. Be used for job-training, skill-building, or food growing for at-risk youth, veterans, or the elderly.
4. Involve a large number of gardeners, clients, patients, visitors or students on a monthly basis. To apply, therapeutic garden applicants should determine that they meet the criteria as outlined in a downloadable document and then complete the application and submit it to the NGB office by the dead-line of July 1, 2016. For more information about this project or the National Garden Bureau, visit: www.ngb.org, and type in Therapeutic Garden Grants and follow #growingforfutures on Social Media.

What's Happening

Art In Bloom

Calling MG volunteers for Art in Bloom!

The eighth annual garden tour, Art in Bloom, will be held in West Lafayette on Saturday, June 25. Master Gardeners sponsor this event and help by serving as docents in the gardens on this free, open to the public, tour. We will have at least two artists in each garden. Volunteer shifts run from 9:30 a.m. to noon, and from noon to 2 p.m. We have several MG's signed up for the morning shift, but I could fit a few more into the AM. I really need help with the afternoon shift. This qualifies as volunteer work, so you will get travel time in addition to your shift. If you decide to tour the other gardens either before or after your shift, you can get education credit, too! Sign-up sheets will be available at the June meeting, but you may sign up by contacting Lynn Layden at layden.lm@frontier.com or 463-2242.

Open House and Tomato Tasting

This year's Open House and Tomato Tasting will take place on Sunday, July 10, 2016, from 1 to 4 p.m. The event will feature guided tours of the Community Gardens, Demonstration Gardens, and Display and Idea Gardens.

Volunteering opportunities abound for this event! Please help out with the tomato tasting, children's area, plant sale, garden shed, cooking hot dogs, baking cookies, growing seedlings, providing tomatoes, parking, set-up and clean-up. Start growing plants for the plant sale and collecting items for the garden shed. We want to sell cole crops like broccoli and cauliflower for fall vegetable planting. If you have perennials that can be divided we would love to have them too.

You will be able to drop off your plants and garden shed items on Saturday,

July 9, 2016, between 3 and 5 p.m. at the Purdue Extension office.

If you have not signed up to work, please consider volunteering and sign up at the June meeting. You can also contact Dee Dee Long, by email at dlong70@ivytech.edu or cell phone at 765-586-2735 and Jan Sadler by email at grammajanx8@comcast.net or cell phone at 317-201-4256.

Battlefield Herb Garden

The herb garden at the battlefield needs revamping. If you have time and a desire to help, please contact County Naturalist Mary Cutler at 567-2993 or mcut@msn.com. A new sign recognizing the MGATC would be nice too. This was an approved project of our association some years ago, so it probably can be resumed without further action, except some TLC and new plants. A brochure detailing plants formerly used is available for revision.

Sheila Koller

MG Book Club

In April the MG book group enjoyed a wonderful tea party at the country home and gardens of Deborah Ladd. The weather was perfect and we were entertained by the family pets and Wrennie, the pet hen.

JoAn Messing

Wednesdays in the Wild

June 1 • 1-3 p.m. • WNC

Up-close Bird ID using Mist Nets
Amanda Beheler & Brian Beheler
Amanda Beheler (avian ecologist with a variety of mist netting experience) and Brian Beheler (Purdue forester/bird enthusiast) will demonstrate the use of mist nets and identify the birds that come to the nets during this program. A wonderful opportunity to get an up-close look at our local birds.

June 8 • 1-3 p.m. • LNC
Geocaching: Where YOU are the Search Engine!

Karen Wiggins

Who doesn't like a treasure hunt? Add technology and you've got geocaching: a family-friendly way to get tech-obsessed loved ones into the great outdoors. Karen Wiggins (Indiana Master Naturalist) will provide tips on getting started, then lead everyone outside to give it a try. Bring your smartphone and/or handheld GPS device, if you have one.

June 15 • 1-3 p.m. • STPK

Geology of Prophetstown State Park
and

Gravel Pit Tour

Angie Manuel & Sean Owens

Angie Manuel (Park Interpretive Naturalist) and Sean Owens (US Aggregates Plant Manager) will co-present this program in which we are taken on a vehicle tour of the US Aggregates gravel pit. Meet at the visitor center. There is a \$2 program fee. The program is limited to 20 people, so pre-registration is required by calling 765-320-0503.

June 22 • 1-3 p.m. • NICHES/ICB

Exploring Indian Creek Basin
Brooke Criswell

Join Brooke Criswell (NICHES Education & Outreach Coordinator) on a walk at this NICHES property in Tippecanoe County to explore the floodplain property, discuss restoration of the habitat, along with plant and animal species of the habitats included (vernal pool, woodland, wet meadow). We encourage muck boots since the property is generally wet.

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Gardening is the
slowest of the
performing arts.

~Anonymous

MGATC Roots

From the June 1998 *Garden Beet*:

The Plant/Garden Sale held on May 9th, 1998 grossed \$248.95. There were 17 master gardeners participating, either by supplying plants and garage sale items, or by helping at the sale. Jump forward to 2016 where we grossed \$6,650.66 which included vendors, a plant sale, a dessert café, a garden shed, and a seed box!

Dee Dee Long

Cheese-On-The-Inside Burgers

- 1/4 c. shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1/4 c. shredded Gruyere cheese
- 1 lb. 90%-lean ground beef
- 1 T. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 1/2 t. paprika
- 1/4 t. freshly ground pepper

Preheat grill to medium-high or preheat the broiler. Combine Cheddar and Gruyere in a small bowl. Gently mix beef, Worcestershire, paprika, and pepper in a large bowl, preferably with your hands, without overworking. Shape into 8 thin, 4-inch-wide patties. Mound 2 T. of cheese mixture on each of 4 patties, leaving a one-half-inch border. Cover each with one of the remaining patties. Crimp and seal the edges closed. To grill: Lightly oil the grill rack by oiling a folded paper towel, and then holding it with tongs, rub the oiled towel over the rack. Do not use cooking spray on a hot grill. Grill the stuffed patties over medium-high heat, about 4 minutes per side for medium-well. Be sure not to press the burgers as they cook or they'll split open, and the cheese will ooze out. To broil: Cover a broiler pan with foil, and coat with cooking spray. Broil the stuffed patties in the upper third of the oven, about 4 minutes per side for medium-well. In either case, let the burgers stand for 5 minutes before serving. Note: Use any mixture of hard or semi-hard cheeses—Emmentaler and Gouda or Asiago and Parmigiano-Reggiano pair well.

Et Cetera

MGATC Hours

Please send in your hours! Only 23 people have sent in hours for 2016. It is obvious from the sign-up sheets that more of you have been doing work for the organization.

One hundred forty-one people sent hours last year and 172 people submitted hours in 2014.

The number of hours you report is not only for your record of donated hours, but also for the organization so it can accurately report how many hours were donated to the community.

Carl Stafford

Thank You, Tie Sewers!

Three hundred fifteen cooler tie/boo-boo bandages were made for the state conference. Special thanks to Karen Ward who saw every step of the process, from cut-out to packaging! Helping were Geri Arney, Ellen Barker, Connie Brown, Dona Brown, Jeri Bosworth Parker, Dee Dilling, Pollyn Aranas, Ruth Ewbank, Cindy Gilles, Konnie Hughes, Phyllis Kockert, Debi Ladd, Betty Riley, Jan Sadler, and Viola Jones. All fabric was donate by this group and we turned out an attractive product. Much appreciation to all these sewing MGs!

Sheila Koller

Battlefield

Stop by the Battlefield and see the pollinator garden planted by Battle Ground youth on Earth Day. They put in \$6,000 worth of plans from Spinn Nursery and it will be fun to see all these natives take off and enhance the area near the nature center.

Sheila Koller



Red Bliss Potato Salad with Blue Cheese, Bacon, and Chives

- 1 1/2 lbs. Red Bliss potatoes
- 3 T. coarse salt
- 1 1/2 oz. Danish blue cheese, plus more for garnish
- 1/2 c. buttermilk
- 1 t. red-wine vinegar
- 1 t. Dijon mustard
- 1 T. minced fresh chives, plus 1 t. for garnish
- 8 bacon strips, cooked until crisp and crumbled

Place potatoes and the salt in a medium saucepan. Cover with water, and bring to a simmer. Cook until a knife pierces through potatoes with little resistance, about 12 minutes. Drain, and let cool slightly. Halve potatoes. Mix blue cheese, buttermilk, vinegar, and mustard in a bowl until well combined. Combine potatoes, while they are still warm, with dressing, chives, and almost all of the bacon in a large bowl. Garnish with blue cheese, chives, and remaining bacon.

When one
tugs at a
single thing
in nature,
he finds it
attached to
the rest of
the world.

~ John Muir

GAAP Planting Days





Herb Bed

(continued from back)

When I asked Handley why he created this innovative product, he answered, "My motivation in developing an alternative to peat moss is the destruction caused by the extraction of the product from very unique and environmentally important wetland habitat. At the time I invented PittMoss® I was concerned with the threatened plants and animals dependent on peat bogs. Since then I have learned that, while only 3% of the planet's land surface, these mighty, mighty habitats sequester nearly a third of all soil carbons. That is more than double the soil carbon banked by all the planet's forests. Europe is moving faster on this issue than us, and in the UK the government and horticulture industry have set voluntary limits to reduce the use of peat moss."

Meeting Handley and talking about his invention peaked my interest in peat moss. Even though I am a Master Gardener and have fifteen years of experience as a garden shop employee and have walked the peaty bogs of Scotland, I realized that I had taken this natural product for granted. I never thought about peat moss beyond the fact that it is made up of partially-decomposed dead vegetation and that it has the ability to improve water absorption in sandy soils, improve air circulation in clay soils, and improve the tilth of both sandy and clay soils.

I remember learning that peat moss usually lowers the pH of garden soils, which is great for acid-loving plants like blueberries, azaleas, and blue-flowering hydrangeas, but, at the same time, may decrease productivity for other plants if the soil is already naturally acidic.

But the one thing I had not realized, though it seems common sense to me now, is that despite being considered as a renewable product, in reality, it takes several millennia for peat moss to form - a very, very slow process. Peat bogs gain less than a millimeter in depth every year, and the delicate community that inhabits the bog cannot be quickly re-established.

With concern over the depletion of peat bogs and the delicate communities they support, perhaps Handley's invention is most timely. I hope his product proves to be beneficial for the long term, and inspires others to solve problems within our world of gardening. Handley is now relocated back home in Crown Point but remains on the board of directors of PittMoss, LLC. Let's hope he has more tricks up his sleeves!

Happening

(continued from page 5)

June 29 • 1-3 p.m. • BEEC

Stream Critters

Mary Cutler

Explore Burnett Creek and find out who lives there. The program will be led by Tippecanoe County Naturalist Mary Cutler. Bring your boots.

LOCATIONS:

BEEC (Brier Environmental Education Center): In Battle Ground, turn by the small sign on the south side of Prophet Street near its intersection with North 9th Street.

LNC (Lilly Nature Center/Celery Bog Nature Area): In West Lafayette, on the north side of Lindberg Road, between Northwestern Avenue and McCormick Road.

NICHES/ICB (Indian Creek Basin): Meet at 1 p.m. in the property parking lot (directions at www.nicheslandtrust.org) or carpool at 12:30 p.m. from LNC.

STPK (Prophetstown State Park): Enter the park via Swisher Road (off North Ninth Street, just south of Battle Ground). Meeting place and cost are listed with the program information.

WNC (Wah-ba-shik-a Nature Center): In Battle Ground, at the end of the Battlefield Monument parking lot off North 9th Street.



GAAP

Wow! GAAP Plants Over 6500 Annuals and Perennials

The many hands of GAAP (Great Annual Annual Planting) made planting over 6500 flowers in our community in four mornings possible and fun. The weather cooperated - a perfect day at Columbian Park and Zoo, somewhat chilly days at the Tippecanoe Courthouse, pedestrian bridge, and the Indiana Veteran's Home, and a cloudy day with a few light sprinkles at the Lafayette Art Museum. Master Gardeners spent from 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours planting at each location.

The total number of plants is hard to calculate because flats either have 24, 36, or 48 plants. Columbian Park and Zoo had 108 flats and 24 individual plants; the court house needed 20 flats; the pedestrian bridge required 174 plants; the Lafayette Art Museum needed 12 flats and 25 individual plants; and the Indiana Veteran's Home had 30 flats, 20 packs of 2, and 239 individual plants.

We could not do this project without our wonderful Master Gardener planters! Almost everyone who signed up came to plant or let me know if they could not come. Many thanks to the following Master Gardeners: Diana Allen, Jan Anderson, Ellen Barker, Connie Brown, Judy Cox, Julie Ann Davis, Dee Dilling, Bill Dilling, Diana Hallenbeck, Jan Hipple, Sue Hiser, Bill Hayes, Pat Engle, Jim Jeray, June Johnson, Candace Larson, Lynn Layden, Elizabeth Lockrey, Cheryl McCool, Melinda Patton, John Pickett, Rita Renick, Jan Sadler, Sue Schlimme, Carol Smith, Linda Stafford, Doris Wallmann, Nancy Werner, and Tom Werner - a total of 29 volunteers. Many hands make the plantings easy! Special thanks to the many super planters who worked two or more days!

Our Master Gardener's dedication to this special planting project makes our community more beautiful for our residents and visitors to enjoy throughout the summer. Be sure to visit these locations to see the lovely gardens.

Sue Hiser, Coordinator

The Herb Bed

by **Connie Kingman**

A couple of months ago I met Mont Handley. I thought he may be of interest to you because he is the inventor of PittMoss®, a peat moss alternative. If you watch the ABC reality shows for would-be entrepreneurs, called “Shark Tank” and “Beyond the Tank,” you may have seen him successfully pitch his product in 2015 and then return this year to acquire even further support from his investors.

What you may find even more interesting is that Handley is a Purdue graduate. After graduation, he worked for Frank’s Nursery and Crafts as an area live goods manager. While in that position he became curious about from where the truckloads of peat moss deliveries originated and began research-

ing the product. This research led Handley to create his first batch of peat alternative as an experiment in 1994. The experiment took place in his garage, using a food processor given to him by his mother. In 1996, he earned an EPA grant, which led to growth research at the Purdue Greenhouses in Lafayette to develop his product. When the grant money ran out, Handley decided to follow other pursuits, until at middle age he returned to perfect his invention.

PittMoss® is an environmentally-friendly alternative to peat moss, which is made from recycled paper that has been rescued from dwindling landfill space, and a proprietary mix of organic additives. Its appearance is fuzzy, resembling laundry lint, and manufactured in the company’s plant,

based in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, in suburban Pittsburgh.

Unlike the drawbacks to using peat moss, PittMoss® eliminates the need for chemical additives and controls for pH imbalances, insects, molds, weed seeds, and it releases far less CO2 into the atmosphere. It protects ground water by reducing runoff of fertilizers and chemicals and reduces demand on strained water supplies. PittMoss® can be made year-round and isn’t subject to seasonal climate changes.

Sounds too good to be true, doesn’t it? But Proven Winners® is a believer and now includes PittMoss® in their potting mixes. For the moment, PittMoss® is available only to commercial greenhouses and nurseries.

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Garden Beet

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