

March 2020

Garden Beet

MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OF TIPPECANOE COUNTY



The Latest Spin from D&J

Dee Dee and Jan

Great News! Punxsutawney Phil (the world's most famous weather-predicting groundhog) saw no shadow, which predicts an early spring this year. Sure hope he is right! I'm sure you all are getting ready for spring gardening, I know we are! Our annual awards banquet is right around the corner and we are excited to report that many Master Gardeners will be receiving their new level name badge. Congratulations to all who worked so hard putting in many volunteer and education hours. The banquet promises to be a wonderful event with honoring the

award recipients, good food, and a wonderful speaker, Dr. Hye-Ji Kim. Please plan on joining us and bringing a dish to share.

The Garden Expo is sneaking up on us with just two months away. Hopefully you have started your seedlings or maybe even deciding what plants to divide for the Plant Sale. You may also be cleaning your garages and sheds to donate to the Garden Shed, or possibly you are looking up your favorite recipes of pies and cookies to donate to

the Garden Café. Whatever you are doing this winter, please consider donating items and time to the plant expo. It is our biggest fundraiser. By volunteering at the expo, you get to hang out with awesome master gardeners, meet new people, hang out with old friends, and have a good time!

See you at the Awards Banquet!

Dee Dee and Jan



VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteers will be needed for the Purdue University Spring Fest information booth on April 18-19. There will be a sign-up sheet at the March meeting, or you can contact Jan Sadler at jansadler23@comcast.net.

This year's Garden Expo is on Saturday, April 25. If you haven't signed up yet to volunteer, you can sign up at the March meeting or contact Dee Dee Long at deedeelmg@gmail.com.

Volunteers are also needed to chair or co-chair the gardens at the Lilly Nature Center. If interested, contact Dee Dee Long at deedeelmg@gmail.com or Jan Sadler at jansadler23@comcast.net.

It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold; when it is summer in the light and winter in the shade

~Charles Dickens (1812-1870)
Great Expectations

Programs

March 3 • 6 p.m. • TCEO

5:30 p.m. Social Time

Hydroponics and Aquaponics: Fascinating way of growing fruits and vegetables in your home

Hye-Ji Kim

Hye-Ji Kim is an Assistant Professor of Sustainable Crop Production Systems at Purdue University.

This is the annual MGATC banquet carry-in. Dinner will start promptly at 6 p.m. Please bring a dish to share.

April 7 • 6:30 p.m. • TCEO

6 p.m. Social Time

Indiana Invasive Initiative

Amber Slaughterbeck

Amber Slaughterbeck is the Regional Specialist NW Indiana, Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM).

For more information on upcoming events, contact Maralee Hayworth at mhaywort@purdue.edu.

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 deedeelmg@gmail.com.

<http://www.tippecanoemastergardener.org>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/>



MGATC Minutes: February 4, 2020, 6:30 p.m., TCEO

At 6:30 p.m. Mickey Penrod introduced the evening's speaker, Kathryn Reeves, Professor Emeritus of Art from Purdue and a Tippecanoe County Master Gardener. Her presentation, "Winter Seed Sowing" covered: tools, supplies, seeds, and instructions. She explained the convenience and benefits of outdoor seed germination in your own mini-greenhouse.

Jan Sadler called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m.

The December meeting minutes were approved as posted in the *Garden Beet*.

Treasurer Pat Miller reported that we are doing well. The account balance at the beginning of the year was \$19,759.47. Income of \$918.17 included a little more member dues and payments from vendors for the Garden Expo. Expenses of \$174.46 included a reimbursement to the Demonstration Garden and the cost of mailing the *Garden Beet*. The ending balance was \$20,503.18 of which \$8,988.25 is unrestricted and available. The reimbursement for the compost project is still pending. Savings remains at \$10,542.15.

Dee Dee Long announced that Mickey Penrod has volunteered to be Co-Vice President with Maralee and that Sally Casey will be taking on the Office Sign Garden. A big thank you to both. Sally will welcome any help to work on the garden.

Jan reminded members that a volunteer position at the Lilly Nature Center, located at 1620 Lindberg, is still open. Duties include weeding and cleaning the garden and identifying and labeling wildflowers. Nicki Lekas is available to orient a new coordinator, to assist, and to coach.

The Garden Expo will be held at the fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on April 25. Quite a few vendors are interested, and Cheryl McCool has a plan to keep all vendors in the same building. Sign-up sheets for setting

up, cleaning up, and helping during the show were on the back tables. There will be another chance to sign up at the March meeting.

Pat Miller encouraged everyone to make donations to the raffle. She already has a good start and will even pick up donations for anyone who can't bring them to her at the next two monthly meetings. The raffle helps support the annual MG-sponsored scholarships for one student each at Purdue and Ivy Tech.

Karen Mitchell has postcards and flyers promoting the Garden Expo available. We will use the roadside signs again this year, but can't put them out until the week prior.

Monique Fontaine reminded the group that in addition to plants for the plant sale, everyone should start saving boxes for customers to carry out their purchases and to make it easier for them to buy more plants. All work to support the plant sale counts as volunteer hours, including growing and potting plants. Please plant tomatoes six weeks in advance so they will be more compact and less leggy. Smaller is usually better for appearance and for convenient transportation.

Jeri Bosworth Parker is looking for donations to the café. Pies are very popular. We can sell nothing that requires refrigeration, but cookies, bars, trail mix, and the rest sell very well. Make sure all bags are labeled, some buyers look specifically for items that are sugar-free or gluten-free. More information will come out as the date approaches.

And don't forget about clean garden-related tools, magazines, and whatnots for the garden shed! All efforts to support the Garden Expo qualify as volunteer hours.

The March meeting will be the annual awards banquet. It is a carry-in dinner

and begins at 6, one half hour earlier than usual. Bring a dish to share. Karen provided by email and hard copy at the meeting the planned awards and asked for corrections by February 7.

Dee Dee will supply sign-up sheets for GAAP at the next meeting. The dates for GAAP are still being developed.

Karen announced the results of the two survey questions. The first asked about the starting time of the meetings. Of 91 responses, 43 favored the current time, 19 preferred a later start, and the remainder were okay with either. The second question asked if we should continue to hold the holiday dinner at Judi's Catering or move it to a carry-in at the Extension Office. Of 89 responses 41 voted to keep it the same as last year, 21 voted for the move, and 27 had no preference. As a result both will stay the same for now - no change, but the Board will continue to solicit feedback.

Karen reviewed several programs available to master gardeners. Details of the Lunch and Learn have not changed since they were reported last month except that the March 4 program has been cancelled. Slots are still open for the Growing Through Leadership training. Although the application reads \$60, the fee for Tippecanoe master gardeners is \$40 thanks to a remittance from our treasury.

Small Scale Ag Conference sign-up sheets were available in the back of the room. Likewise, the Landscape Design Class applications, \$30 for three days (March 31, April 7, and 14) were on the back tables.

Thirty-two people have already signed up for the 2020 Master Gardener Class in the fall. If you know of anyone interested, encourage them to sign up before the class fills.

Finally, everyone pick up your Green Book to save the cost of mailing.

Treasurer's Report

Income for the month of January is mainly from dues and vendors for the Garden Expo for a total of \$918. Expenses were for projects and *Garden Beet* mailing for a total of \$174. Restricted funds total \$11,515 leaving unrestricted funds for the month at \$8,988. For the restricted funds, the compost project has been paid and we will be receiving grant funds soon to reimburse those expenses. The tax exempt certificate for 2020 is available on the Master Gardener website. If you have any changes to your membership details please send them to me at pmillerathome@comcast.net.

Pat Miller, Treasurer

Minutes

(continued from page 2)

In Other Business, Mickey had two items. She announced that she will be sponsoring two Girl Scouts who are working on gardening projects. One will be building an arbor. The other has a strong desire to learn about bees, so Doug and Patti Jones will act as mentors.

Mickey will be calling people interested in working on AAS projects around the beginning of March.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Jeray, Recording Secretary

Time strode
with the
swiftness
of spring
blossoms

~Terri Guillemets

Expo Exchange

From the Chair

Get Ready for the Garden Expo on April 25 from 9 to 3 at the fairgrounds.

Bring your plants, your extra garden items, your sweets for the café, and yourself to our biggest fund raising event. Get ready for a day of activities, gardening information, plenty of vendors, and excitement. Bring yourself, family, and friends for a wonderful day of activities and join us for the fun!

Cheryl McCool

Terrarium Workshop

Donations wanted for the Garden Expo "Make & Take: Terrarium Workshop": aquarium gravel (any color), beautiful stones/rocks (1" to 3"), and interesting seashells (1" to 3"). Any amount, big or small, even one or two stones, will help! Bring to the Master Gardener meeting on March 3 or contact kathrynreeves@yahoo.com.

Garden Expo Raffle

This year at the Garden Expo we will again be having a raffle of garden related goodies to support the scholarships for Purdue and Ivy Tech students. In 2019 we successfully raised over \$500 and we hope to exceed that level in 2020 with your help. We are looking for donations of new or like new items such as hand tools, pots, garden art, gloves, and other garden related items to fill the raffle baskets. No garden goodies in the cupboard or no time to shop, you can make a cash donation and we will do the shopping for you. We will be accepting donations at the March and April meetings or you can contact Pat Miller at (765) 714-5463 or pmillerathome@comcast.net if you have any questions or need items picked up. Thanks so much for your support of the raffle!

Pat Miller

Garden Shed

Gee-Gaws... Do-Dads... Thing-a- ma-Bobs... Gem-Cracks. These are all the kinds of things we want for the Garden Shed this year. This is a good time to clean out your basement, garage, or wherever you stash all your garden 'stuff.' Donate whatever you no longer use/have room for/know what it is/or want and we'll find a new home for it. The list below will give you some ideas: books and magazines; tools (shovels, rakes, etc.), hand tools; pots/fancy pots (empty of soil); garden flags and holders; fence and garden stakes; bird feeders and houses; garden ornaments; chimes; 'Rusty stuff'; scare-crows; plant markers; clean/unused garden gear like gloves and hats; wreaths; stepping stones; hoses; fountains; artificial flowers; garden furniture; containers that could be used for planters; rain gauges; pavers; baskets; thermometers; outdoor clocks; buckets; garden related picture frames; dishes and linens; garden totes; sprinklers; vases/flower frogs; large/small hooks; etc. All items should be gently used; please no chemicals or fertilizers.

You get the idea ... stuff! Drop your 'thingies' off Friday afternoon or early Saturday morning before the Expo and we'll do the rest. Contact Candy for more info at 765-563-3497 (home), 765-494-7311 (work), or email at candy@purdue.edu.

Candy Sheagley

Just Desserts Café

We need your homemade items for the April 25 Garden Expo! Any type of fruit pie, regular and sugar free; all cookies, regular, sugar free, gluten free; fudge; brownies; snack mixes; etc. All items should be bagged with a label that states what kind of item it is and if it has nuts. Please do not bring any items that need refrigeration.

Jeri Bosworth Parker

Garden Gadgets and Tools

By Kathryn Reeves and Mike Hathaway

If you're an advocate of reduce, reuse, recycle, add re-sharpen to your list. One of the best things you can do to make gardening easier is sharpen tools. Pruners, loppers, shovels, spades, hoes, weeders, trowels, and lawn mower blades all work so much better with sharp blades. Dull tools make every task harder. If you re-sharpen regularly, a fine tooth flat file may be sufficient. It only takes a minute or two. If tools are very worn and dull, start with a coarse tooth flat file. Sharpen now and you'll be glad you did.

Felco sells a diamond-coated hardened steel sharpener (Felco 903) and a tungsten carbide sharpener (Felco 904) for pruners. These work on many brands of pruners, clippers, and knives. And there's a how-to video at http://www.felco.com/us_en/service/index/maintenance.

In our zone, spring pruning time is usually from about mid-March to early April. Prune shrubs in early spring to cut away deadwood and stimulate growth. To avoid losing flowers on spring-blooming trees and shrubs, wait to prune until after their blooms are finished. Prune summer-flowering shrubs by early April. Some summer bloomers respond best to selective pruning, while a few, like buddleia, do best when cut completely to the ground each spring. Most plants that bloom in summer tend to bloom on new wood (current season's growth). So if you cut away old branches, you won't reduce the amount of blooms for this season.

Our favorite tools for pruning are Felco bypass pruners (No. 2 for Kathryn and No. 8 for Mike). Loppers are very useful, especially ones with longer handles to give extra leverage for cutting stout branches. In shrubs with congested growth where a bow saw won't fit, a small pruning saw works well. Safety glasses are recommended when pruning branches. We keep a spray bottle of rubbing alcohol to dis-

infect tools before pruning each tree or shrub to avoid spreading disease. Wiping tool blades with a rag soaked in 10% bleach solution will kill both bacteria and virus.

Conifers (evergreens) should be pruned in late winter or early spring before new growth begins in most cases. Exceptions are pines, such as Mugo, Japanese white or black pine, that can be kept more compact by pinching back or pruning the candles (new growth). "Candling," means taking off 1/3, 1/2, or even 2/3 of each candle. This is a slow but pleasant and easy activity. Kneeling pads and a small bench help when working on shorter shrubs.

As wet and cold weather often lingers this time of year, we browse local libraries for gardening information.

We recommend *The Plant Messiah: Adventures in Search of the World's Rarest Species* (Penguin, 2017) by Carlos Magdalena, botanical horticulturalist at the famous Kew Gardens in the UK, who propagates and grows desperately endangered plants. Awed by his nurturing skills, co-workers give Carlos nicknames like the Plant Whisperer, Plant Pimp, and Plant Messiah. Carlos is said to have a great sense of humor and was persuaded by an editor to use one nickname in the book title. He promotes the idea that, when it comes to conservation, protecting a single species is mostly pointless: you must protect the whole ecosystem. On the last page of his book, Carlos wrote: "Let's turn things around and garden our way out of this apocalypse, green up the world and plant our future."

BTW both Tippecanoe County Public Library and West Lafayette Public Library have copies of *The Plant Messiah: Adventures in Search of the World's Rarest Species*.

YouTube is another great resource to feed our gardening souls during late winter. Rachel Darlington's YouTube channel "Gardening at Douentza" is filled with videos about her orchid collection, garden, visits to green houses, and conservatories. She also posted a 7 part video series of visits to Kew Gardens where she was surprised and thrilled to meet the famous Carlos Magdalena. Rachel's brogue sounds like Kathryn's grandmother, so that's a bonus.

Another favorite YouTube channel is Alan Gray's "Get Gardening!" filmed at his famous East Ruston Old Vicarage Garden. The garden was included in the Purdue Master Gardener study abroad trip in 2018. "Get Gardening!" has short videos on propagation and growing. Who knew that broad bean seeds should be planted on the thin edge, not flat side, for best germination? All the UK gardeners talk very briskly so you may want to slow the audio by adjusting the settings/playback speed to 90% or a bit less.

TO-DO List:

- ◆ Munch on some photosynthetic lifeforms (aka vegetables) and start some veg seeds this month.
- ◆ Start planning and growing plants for the GARDEN EXPO Plant Sale on April 25, 2020.
- ◆ Clean pots and tools.
- ◆ Mark frost dates on calendar. <https://www.weather.gov/ind/frostfreezedate>. The National Weather Service records last frost as late as May 27 or as early as March 30. Farmer's Almanac says our average last frost date is April 23 (50% probability).
- ◆ Collect and dry samples for soil test if the ground isn't frozen.
- ◆ Improve your soil. Spread soil amendments like compost on vegetable beds so the worms have time to incorporate it into the soil.

(continued on page 5)

What's Happening

MGATC Workshop

The next Saturday MGATC public education workshop will be held on March 21st. No other information was available at this time.

Wednesdays in the Wild

February 26 • 1-3 p.m. • LNC
The Flora of Indiana
Scott Namestnik

The flora of our state is influenced by a number of biotic and abiotic factors including bedrock, topography, soils, climate, fire, and glacial history. These factors have led to the delineation of 12 natural regions across the Hoosier landscape, where unique plant diversity is found. Scott Namestnik (IDNR Natural Heritage Program Botanist) will take us on a fascinating botanical virtual tour of our crossroads state!

March 4 • 1-3 p.m. • LNC
*Bird Feeding Basics/
Bird Feeder Construction*
Mary Cutler

Naturalist Mary Cutler (Tippecanoe County Parks & Recreation Department) will provide tips and techniques for attracting birds to feeders and provide an introduction to the most common feeder visitors. Following this presentation, Brenda Moore (Park Manager, Tippecanoe County Parks & Recreation Department) will lead 20 participants in making their own unique wine bottle-inspired bird feeder! Note: attendance for the presentation is unlimited, however only 20

The flowers of
late winter and
early spring occupy
places in our
hearts well out
of proportion
to their size

~Gertrude Smith Wister

feeder kits will be provided at a cost of \$15. Pre-registration is required to build a feeder: contact Mary Cutler at mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov to register.

March 11 • 1-3 p.m. • LNC
*It's Only Natural: Backyard
Habitat and Native Gardening 101*
Mary Cutler

Spring is just around the corner; time to start planning home landscaping projects. Join Naturalist Mary Cutler (Tippecanoe County Parks & Recreation Department) to learn how to begin to provide the natural elements needed for wildlife to call your backyard "home."

March 18 • 7-9 p.m. • LNC
*Woodland Wildflowers:
Nature's Treat*
Dan Childs

Don't wait for summer to follow up on your New Year's resolution to spend more time hiking local trails; as spring approaches many woodland gems can be enjoyed now through late spring. Dan Childs (Author, *Into the Woods*) will identify and discuss some of the beautiful wildflowers featured in his book, which will be available for sale (\$15/cash or check). Part of the book sale proceeds will benefit NICHES Land Trust.

March 25 • 1-3 p.m. • LWTP
*Lafayette Wastewater
Treatment Tour*
Brad Talley

Where does your water go when it leaves your house or place of business? How do we manage this most precious resource? Join Brad Talley (Lafayette RENEW Superintendent) for the answers to these questions and more on this unique tour to view the mechanical, chemical, and biological treatment systems of one of our local wastewater treatment plants.

LOCATIONS:

LNC (Lilly Nature Center/Celery Bog Nature Area): In West Lafayette, on the north side of Lindberg Road, between Northwestern Avenue and McCormick Road at 1620 Lindberg Road.

LWTP (Lafayette Wastewater Treatment Plant): Meet at 1 p.m. at 1700 Wabash Avenue, Lafayette.

Gadgets

(continued from page 4)

- ◆ Rake lawn areas, removing leaves, twigs, debris, and matted grass. Apply grass seed to bare patches.
- ◆ Clean-up debris and leaves that piled up around bulbs and perennials. Do this on a cloudy day so that tender, pale growth is not burned.
- ◆ Replant any perennials that have heaved out of the ground during winter.
- ◆ Cut back perennials that were left for winter interest before new growth begins later this month. Hints: Tie up large bunches of ornamental grass before cutting them to make it easier. Electric hedge trimmers work well for cutting large ornamental grasses.
- ◆ See more tips on houseplants, yard, and garden from Rosie Lerner, Purdue University Extension Consumer Horticulture Specialist at: <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/march-garden-calendar/>.
- ◆ Watch for the earliest spring bulbs to emerge and enjoy the new season!

Broccoli, Cucumber and Tomato Salad

1 English Cucumber
2 cups cherry Tomatoes
3 cups broccoli
3 green onions
1 cup Greek yogurt or sour cream
Salt to taste

Clean and prepare all vegetables for the salad. Prepare Greek yogurt or replace it with sour cream if that's what you have on hand.

Dice green onions into small pieces. Slice cucumber and tomatoes in equal pieces and broccoli in a bit larger chunks.

Season the salad with salt, add Greek yogurt to it, and serve immediately. If you wish to prepare this salad ahead of time, don't add dressing until you are ready to serve. Serves 10, 25 calories per serving

~momsdish.com

Maple-Roasted Sweet Potatoes and Parsnips

- 3 medium sweet potatoes peeled and thinly sliced into rounds
- 3-4 parsnips peeled and thinly sliced
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 leek finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1/3 cup maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 400 F. Place sliced sweet potatoes and parsnips in a medium bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil, salt, and pepper and toss to evenly coat. Arrange the slices alternating between sweet potatoes and parsnips in the bottom of a small baking dish.

In a medium skillet, heat remaining olive oil over medium heat. Saute leek and garlic for 5 minutes. Pour in maple syrup and stir in the Dijon. Continue cooking for 2 additional minutes until syrup starts to simmer. Pour syrup and leeks over the sweet potatoes and parsnips evenly.

Place in the oven for 30-40 minutes until cooked through. Remove from oven and allow to stand 5 minutes. Garnish with parsley and serve warm. *310 calories per serving.*

~simplebites.net, Shaina Olmanson

2020 Garden Expo

Saturday,
April 25th
9am-3pm



Tippecanoe County
Fairgrounds
1406 Teal Rd.
Lafayette, IN 47905

FREE PUBLIC EVENT & FREE LECTURES

Master Gardener
Association of
Tippecanoe
County

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