

March 2021

Garden Beet

MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OF TIPPECANOE COUNTY



The Latest Spin from D&J

Dee Dee and Jan

Spring is just around the corner. We are so excited and ready for the snow to disappear and the flowers to start peeking through the ground.

Due to COVID and not being able to have our monthly meetings, we promised that we would have activities that we could safely do together.

The first caravan trip will be to the famous Woldhuis Farms Sunrise Greenhouse in Grant Park, Illinois. This is a 1 1/2 hour drive. Sunrise Greenhouse offers a seemingly endless variety of plants. And with all 350,000 square feet of greenhouse under one

continuous roof, you can shop comfortably no matter what the weather is outside. Many Master Gardeners shop here annually. You can't beat their prices. Also, they do follow COVID guidelines. We will leave from the extension office parking lot promptly at 8 a.m. on April 20. If you are interested, please contact Dee Dee Long at deedeelmg@gmail.com.

If interested, we will also be starting monthly walks in April. Our first walk will be at Prophetstown State Park on April 9. We will meet at Prairie View Shelter parking lot at 10 a.m. We will be taking Trail 1. It's an easy trail and

takes about an hour. The entry fee, if you don't have an annual pass, is \$8 per carload. Most future walks will be at locations with no cost involved.

We would like to have bi-monthly caravan trips to different gardens and monthly walks. If you have any suggestions for either, please let us know.

Hope you plan to attend the March 2 meeting for Master Gardener awards. Our famous Rosie Lerner will give a presentation on Dividing Perennials.

Jan and Dee Dee



Great Gadgets and Tools

By Kathryn Reeves and Mike Hathaway

Wet and cold weather often lingers this time of year, but indoors it's seed starting time! If you're an advocate of reduce, reuse, recycle, TP rolls might be a good choice to add to your seed growing tool kit.

Here's a great tip for preparing the rolls before filling with seed starting mix or potting mix.



Make five diagonal cuts - about 1/2" to 3/4" long. For some reason five flaps work much better than four, and diagonal cuts work better than straight cuts. Space the five cuts evenly if possible, but it's ok if they're not perfectly spaced.



Fold interlocking flaps to form the bottom.

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Programs

March 2 • 6:30 p.m. • Zoom
Dividing Perennials
Rosie Lerner

Rosie is the retired Extension Consumer Horticulture Specialist at Purdue University. This is also the annual awards "banquet."

April 6 • 6:30 p.m. • Zoom
TBA

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.tippecanomastgardener.org>

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



MGATC Meeting: Feb 2, 2021, 6:30 p.m., Virtual

At 6:30 p.m. Karen Mitchell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Karen then asked Mickey Penrod to introduce the speaker. Lenny Farlee, Extension Specialist in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University, gave a high-level presentation: "The Hardwood Forests of Indiana - Regenerating and Sustaining."

Back in the 1800s much of Indiana's landscape was agricultural, but now some has been converted to forests through recovery efforts and by natural regeneration. A problem is that we are losing younger forests. We need forests of all ages to provide diverse wildlife habitats. This can be achieved through well-planned forest management.

Next month will be the virtual awards ceremony. Make sure your hours are current.

About 51 Master Gardeners signed on to the Zoom meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Jeray, Recording Secretary

MGATC Board: Feb 11, 2021, 4 p.m., Virtual

Jan Sadler called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Attending were Pat Miller, Dee Dee Long, Jan Sadler, Mickey Penrod, Maralee Hayworth, Jim Jeray, Cheryl McCool, Kathy Cox, and Karen Mitchell.

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

Pat Miller delivered the treasurer's report. Since the beginning of the month, we received \$100.97 in additional member dues. There were no additional expenses. Those are the only changes to the monthly treasurer's report as it appears in this month's *Garden Beet*.

Membership: As of this meeting 133 members have paid dues for 2021. Pat finalized the list and forwarded it to Karen for the Green Book. The complete member list is now posted on line with a new password.

Treasurer's Report

Income for the month of January was from dues and interest for a total of \$291. There no expenses for the month. There was restricted fund reduction since the 2021 Dues were moved into income giving a balance in the fund of \$20,476. The total of unrestricted funds available is \$19,854 as of January 31.

For reimbursement you can mail your requests to my home address which is

MG Alternate Activities: Because we haven't seen each other, except virtually, for quite some time, Pat, Jan, and Dee Dee have been looking into alternate activities to safely connect with fellow members. These include group walks and caravan trips to places of interest. The first caravan, with individual cars instead of a bus trip, will be in April to Sunrise Gardens. Look for more information in this month's *Garden Beet*.

Garden Expo 2021: Cheryl McCool held a planning meeting two weeks ago to determine the feasibility of holding an Expo this spring. After some research into the continuing COVID restrictions and budget considerations, the committee decided to cancel the Expo for one more year. They scheduled another meeting later this month to begin planning for next year. Vendors have been notified.

3801 South River Road in West Lafayette, Indiana 47906 or you can drop them in the black mail box outside the extension office outer door. If you have any changes to your membership details please send them to me at pmillerathome@comcast.net. The Tax Exempt form for 2021 is located on the MGATC website.

Pat Miller, Treasurer

Bylaws: Several board members sent Jan additional comments and suggestions. She will continue to work with Lynn Layden to set a date for the committee to review and update the MGATC bylaws.

Speakers: The co-vice presidents, Mickey and Maralee, are busy lining up speakers. The April meeting is still open. They are hoping to include some presentations that are less lecture-based and possibly more participative. The board gave them a few suggestions for possible speakers and topics.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Jeray, Recording Secretary

March, when
days are
getting long,
To set right
some wintry
wrong

~ Caroline May, 1887

What's Happening

Wednesdays in the Wild

Wednesdays in the Wild are expected to resume outdoors starting in April 2021. Up-to-date information on these programs will be on Facebook at "Wednesdays in the Wild." For any questions, contact Mary Cutler at mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov or 765-567-2993.

RIP Squad

Volunteer with the Remove Invasive Plants (RIP) Squad and help protect our native plants. A complete schedule will be in the APR-JUN issue of *Native Roots*. For more invasives workday information, contact Patty Jones at removeinvasiveplants.wcinpaws@gmail.com or 765-463-3050. RIP is sponsored by the West Central Chapter of INPS and the Sycamore Audubon Society in cooperation with the West Lafayette and Tippecanoe County Parks Departments.



Ester standing next to her new garden.

INPS Lecture on Orchids

Mar 2 • 7-8 p.m. • Zoom
Orchids of Indiana
Mike Homova

Orchids occur on all continents except Antarctica. Mike will discuss some of Indiana's over 45 naturally occurring species. This Zoom lecture is sponsored by the Indiana Native Plant Society - Central Chapter. For registration and the Zoom link go to <https://bit.ly/3brqln6>.

Best Practices for Pollinators

Mar 2-4 • 9 a.m.-2 p.m. • Zoom
Best Practices for Pollinators

This 3-day summit is organized by the Pollinator Friendly Alliance of the Xerces Society. There will be Zoom lectures on ecologically sound land management practices that promote pollinators, climate resilience, clean water, and lands; practical knowledge, old world methods, and innovation on pesticide reduction, habitat installation, soil health, and more! There is a \$24 registration fee. For more details and to register go to <https://www.pollinatorfriendly.org/events>.

Volunteering

2021 Garden Expo

In case you haven't already heard, due to the continuation of COVID-19, the 2021 Garden Expo has been cancelled. The Expo Committee met and decided it was best to cancel this year.

Extension Office Demonstration Garden

The Extension Office Demonstration Garden is asking for volunteers. They will be holding a Zoom meeting in early March to start planning.

They are taking a new approach this year and will focus on demonstrating different gardening techniques: till vs. no till; organic vs. conventional; companion planting; and different varieties of the same plant, such as tomatoes, peppers, melons, etc.

They will continue to follow Covid-19 guidelines by wearing masks and social distancing.

For more information you can contact one of the co-chairs: Jim Jeray, Dee Dee Long, or Jan Sadler

Our Florida Connection

From our own MG, Esther Chosnek: "My husband and I planted a different type of garden plant in our new north Florida location community. A Little Free Library. We are just 20 miles from Gainesville and the university, but it might as well be 100. Hopefully this will plant the seeds of reading. Maybe next year veggie seeds."

A garden
is a
friend
you can
visit
anytime

~ author unknown

Gadgets

(continued from page 1)



Tuck the point of the last flap under one side of the first flap. There should be a drainage hole in the bottom. If the "pot" doesn't stand straight, you can use a felt marker or short dowel to push down inside and flatten bottom.

The rolls are about 4" tall to start and make a pot about 3 1/2" tall when cut and folded. That's ideal for many plants, especially any that have a long taproot. If you prefer a shorter pot, you can cut an inch or so off the top to begin with. Cutting rolls in half will yield very short pots, only about 1 1/2" tall.

Based on our experience with starting seeds indoors, we've found these TP pots start to fall apart and sometimes get moldy after many weeks. So we think they may be better for seeds that germinate and grow quickly - seeds that are recommended for starting three to six weeks before last frost date. (For winter seed sowing outdoors over several months, we don't

care if they get moldy.) Tiny seedlings can also be transplanted into TP pots.

When transplanting, you can plant the whole TP pot or you can easily tear or peel the paper off. For plants with fragile roots, it may be ok to leave the paper roll on and let it break down in the soil.

A pair of TP rolls can also be made into a cutworm collar to protect transplants. Cut two rolls the long way down. Open the tube to place around the stem of plant, push it down a bit into soil, and then repeat with another roll to cover the open long cut.

Bonus: TP rolls are completely compostable and add carbon to your compost pile. The pile should start thawing out sometime this month. ☺

The Garden Expo had to be cancelled this year, but that means we can all focus on our own gardens and there's always lots to do.

March TO-DO List

- 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).
- Keep planning your garden. Start flower seeds that need six-eight weeks to grow before planting out.

- Munch on some photosynthetic lifeforms (aka vegetables) and start some cold season veg seeds this month.
- Clean pots and tools.
- 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.
- 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.
- Cut back perennials that were left for winter interest before new growth begins later this month. Replant any perennials that have heaved out of the ground during winter.
- Cut back ornamental grasses before new growth begins. Pro tip: Tie up large bunches of ornamental grass before cutting to make it easier. Electric hedge trimmers work well for cutting large clumps.
- See more tasks on houseplants, yard, and garden from Purdue University Extension Consumer Horticulture at: <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/march-garden-calendar/>.
- Watch for the earliest spring bulbs to emerge and enjoy the new season!

Bacon Wrapped Asparagus Bundles

1 1/2 pounds asparagus spears, trimmed
4 to 5 inches long tips

A few grinds black pepper
Chopped chives or scallions, optional garnish

4 slices center cut bacon or pancetta
Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Preheat oven, if using, to 400 degrees F.

Lightly coat asparagus spears in extra-virgin olive oil. Season the asparagus with black pepper. Take a quick count of the spear tips. Divide the total number by four. Gather that number of spears and use a slice of bacon to wrap the bundle and secure the spears together. Repeat with remaining ingredients.

To grill, place bundles on hot grill and cover. Cook 10 to 12 minutes until bacon is crisp and asparagus bundles are tender.

For oven preparation, place bundles on slotted broiler pan. Bake 12 minutes. Serves 4.

~ foodnetwork.com

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Roasted Carrots

1 pound medium heirloom carrots (such as Cosmic Purple or Scarlet Nantes)

2 tablespoons butter, melted

Sea or kosher salt

Ground black pepper

Trim tops from carrots. Scrub carrots and, if desired, peel. Rinse and dry well on paper towels. Cut any large carrots in half lengthwise.

In a foil-lined 15x10x1-inch pan, toss the carrots with melted butter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover carrots with a top layer of foil, rolling edges together to make a packet.

Roast in a 425° oven for 15 minutes. Remove top foil sheet. Roast, uncovered, about 15 minutes more or until carrots are crisp tender, stirring occasionally.

Serve warm, seasoned with additional salt and pepper. - 98 calories per serving. Serves 4, ~ midwestliving.com



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Garden Beet

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