

March 2022

Garden Beet

MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OF TIPPECANOE COUNTY



Message from Your Co-Presidents Jim and Mickey

Volunteering, helping others (including each other) grow, is our mission. Here are some ideas as pandemic restrictions are becoming less burdensome.

Spring is on the way, and it's time to think about where you would like to work and how much time you can put in. Available time varies from person-to-person, but knowing each person's time commitment helps coordinators plan.

Speaking of coordinators, there are openings now for a coordinator to oversee the Display and Ideas Garden and the Extension Community Gardens. In both cases individual gardeners work independently, but we still need someone to oversee the entire

area for communication and coordination. The Board would be thrilled if a couple of people stepped forward to take this on.

Thinking further out, another election will be held in about 20 months. That's plenty of time to consider joining the Board. Board positions are not as scary or as time consuming as you might think, and they get a lot of support from those who held the position in the past. With almost two years to go, several of the current members have already served over four years on the Board. It's always nice to get in some new blood and new ideas. The expectations for all Board positions are listed online in the Bylaws. Take some time in the next months to see what's expected.

And as an added bonus, you get enough volunteer hours attending one Board meeting a month to meet the 12-hour minimum. Gardeners with bending or mobility issues could fill some positions, for example, corresponding secretary or member-at-large, while they help the club and keep in touch with other members. Perhaps in November 2023 we'll have people lined up to get on the Board - we can dream anyway.

Finally, remember the Expo on April 23. Start your plants and save your boxes. Volunteers will be needed for Friday set-up and the Saturday Expo.

Jim and Mickey

Special Vote

According to the MGATC Bylaws, the membership must vote on all changes. A proposed change to make our Bylaws consistent with the Purdue definition of Alumni Master Gardener was published in the January *Garden Beet* and read at the February meeting. It reads as follows:

Article II, Section 1, Paragraph C: "Alumni Members: Persons who have been approved for Purdue Alumni status by the Extension Master Gardener County Coordinator are, upon payment of dues, eligible for membership in the MGATC as Alumni Members for as long as they maintain that status."

Please be prepared to vote on this change at the March 1 meeting

Springtime is the land awakening. The
March winds are the morning yawn.

~Lewis Grizzard

Programs

March 1 • 6:30 p.m. • Zoom
Landscape for Wilderness
Amber Slaughterbeck

April 5 • 6:30 p.m. • Zoom?
Natural Regions
Scott Namestnik

May 3 • 6:30 p.m. • Zoom?
Birds in Our Landscape
Mary Cutler

For more information on upcoming events, contact Amanda Burge at amanda_personett@yahoo.com.

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.

<http://www.tippecanomastergardener.org>

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



MGATC Minutes: Feb 1, 2022, 6:30 p.m., Virtual

At 6:30 p.m. on February 1st, the monthly MGATC meeting was held virtually. The speaker was Master Gardener Kathryn Reeves. Her topic was "Winter Seed Sowing." She showed how easy it is to use gallon milk jugs or other translucent containers to grow seeds over the winter and get a jump on planting the seedlings with the mini-greenhouse effect that the containers create. This method works especially well with native plants and other seeds that require cold stratification. Plus the seedlings that are grown in these containers don't need hardening off like seedlings grown indoors require.

After Kathryn's presentation there were a few announcements:

Jim Jeray announced that the areas of the Bylaws dealing with Alumni has been changed. The Bylaws will be emailed to everyone so that they can vote to approve the changes before the March meeting.

Mickey Penrod reminded everyone that if they have any questions or comments to contact the Member-at-Large Kathie Cox or the Co-Presidents Jim Jeray and Mickey Penrod.

Dee Dee Long is asking everyone to think about seeds to plant or plants to dig up for the Expo in April. They are looking for volunteers to help with the Expo. They also need cardboard boxes for the plant sale at the Expo. Contact Dee Dee if you are interested.

Katje Armentrout again announced the meetings that are being held for those people interested in renting a plot in any of the Community Gardens. These meetings will be held in the new Extension Offices and are required in order to reserve a spot. The meetings are: 02/24 at 1 p.m.; 02/25 at 10 a.m., 1 p.m., and 5:30 p.m.; 02/26 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Jim Jeray said that he and Andy Hughes have been working on updating the website. There is new content on there for people to check out.

The meeting was adjourned.

- Nancy Cope, Recording Secretary

MGATC Board: Feb 10, 2022, 4 p.m., Virtual

Jim Jeray called the meeting to order at 4 p.m. on February 10, 2022. Present were Jim Jeray, Mickey Penrod, Jolaine Roberts, Kathie Cox, Nancy Cope, Debra Rimer, Jan Sadler, Pat Williams, and Katje Armentrout.

Minutes from the January meeting were approved as published in the *Garden Beet*.

Deb Rimer read the Treasurer Report.

Pat Williams announced the final membership numbers. We currently have 107-108 members, with a handful still in limbo. Last week, there were only 27.4% of the members who had signed the annual agreement required by Purdue. After the push to get people to update their agreements, there are now only about 4% who have not signed them.

It was brought up that there were two people who had been members who now live outside the area but want to still be in touch with the group and receive the *Garden Beet* by email. Pat Williams suggested having a category of "Past Member Supporters." They

could be sent the *Garden Beet* but not receive the other emails with possibly more sensitive group information. If they happened to move back into the area and wanted to re-join, they could do so, which is currently not allowed with Alumni members. It was suggested to list these "Past Member Supporters" in the Green Book so that they could stay in touch with other Master Gardeners. However nothing more was decided other than to table the discussion for now.

It was noted that when the membership is finalized there will be an email purge to clean up the email list. After that is done, an email will be sent out with a new password for the website.

Pat Williams made a proposal that the people who finish the 2022 class get a free year of Master Gardener membership. He noted that the 2021 class only had a handful of graduates who paid for the membership and remained in the group. It was also a very small class. He suggested that the free membership could be a hook to get them

involved in the first year of volunteering, meeting other Master Gardeners, etc. One factor that remains undecided is whether the class will be held in the spring or the fall. It was passed that if the class is held in the spring, the graduates would be given a free year of membership.

Jim Jeray said that the leases with the county for the gardens and the parking spaces have been signed and are posted on the website.

Since Dee Dee Long and Cheryl McCool weren't at the meeting, an update on the Expo was not given.

However, Nancy Cope updated everyone on the publicity for the Expo. The flyer is almost completed. Just a few minor tweaks remain and then it will be ready to send around. She will create an event on Facebook with that flyer. The publicity budget for the Expo has been increased to \$500, but she hasn't decided yet where to put the extra money. The large sign that usually is put in the driveway of the

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Treasurer's Report

February 2022 Board Meeting Treasurer's Report

Income for the month of January 2022 was from Dues and Garden Expo 2022 Vendors, and Bank Interest. Total Income was \$966 plus the transfer of 2022 Dues paid in 2021 from the reserves, \$2,904, for total Income of \$3,871. I am happy to announce that Dues income is \$725 over the amount projected in the 2022 Budget.

Expenses for the month were for the new P.O. Box rental (13 months) for a Total Expense of \$167. Early February, we paid \$400 for the remaining balance on the Swine Barn Rental for the 2022 Garden Expo and made a deposit on the Swine Barn for the 2023 Garden Expo for a total of \$800. The Restricted Fund Balance is \$16,430 (2022 dues amount from 2021 Restricted Fund balance was moved to Income). A total of unrestricted funds available is \$19,588 as of January 31.

Board

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old Extension Office can no longer be there, so if someone has any ideas on where it could be put to catch people's eyes that would be great. The lawn signs that were accidentally thrown out in the moving of the Extension Office have been recreated and ready to go when it gets closer to the Expo. Nancy said that historically, the advertising that people have most commonly heard about the Expo was Facebook, word of mouth, and the Journal and Courier online advertisement. So extra money will be put toward Facebook and the J & C. She will report more as it gets closer to the Expo.

Katje Armentrout said that to get the word out about the new classes required to reserve spots in the Community Gardens, emails were sent to last year's gardeners. Pat Williams will be leading the meetings. They still haven't confirmed a community garden leader, but they have a possible candidate.

Pat Williams asks all members to wear their name tags when attending any in-person meetings since we've all been apart for so long because of the virus.

It was decided there would be no rookie of the year award this year since there were so few graduates from the 2021 class.

Pat Williams said that with the move of the Extension Office, there is less storage space at the new building for the Master Gardener group. He asks that we move some of the contents, and if someone has some extra room in their home or shop, maybe they could store some of it there. It seems that a lot of it is party supplies.

The meeting was then adjourned.

- Nancy Cope, Recording Secretary

Coconut Chickpeas with Winter Squash

Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 red onion (chopped)
- 5 garlic cloves (finely chopped)
- 1 1/2 pounds butternut squash (peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces)
- 1 pound delicata squash (halved, seeded, quartered, and cut into 2-inch-thick slices)
- 1 carrot (large cut into 2-inch-thick slices)
- 1 stalk of celery (cut into 2-inch-thick slices)
- 1 firm-right plantain (cut into 2-inch-thick slices)
- 2 tablespoons cilantro (chopped)
- 1 bird chile (stemmed and thinly sliced)
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- Salt
- 1 can unsweetened coconut milk (3.5-ounce well-stirred)
- 2 lime zest (long strips)
- 2 cups water
- 2 cans chickpeas (15.5-ounce rinsed and drained)
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1/2 cup cilantro leaves (for garnish)

Instructions:

Step 1. In a large enameled cast-iron Dutch oven or heavy pot, heat oil. Add the onion and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the butternut squash, delicata squash, carrot, celery, plantain, chopped cilantro, chile, cumin, and 1 teaspoon salt. Cook, covered, until the vegetables start to soften, about 10 minutes. Add the coconut milk, lime zest strips, and 2 cups water, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to moderately low, and simmer, covered, until the vegetables are tender, 20 to 25 minutes.

Step 2. Add the chickpeas and simmer until heated through, about 5 minutes. Season with salt. Stir in the lime juice. Discard the lime zest strips, and garnish with cilantro leaves before serving.

~By J.J. Johnson

Daffodils,
That come before the swallow
dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty

~ William Shakespeare (*The Winter's Tale*)

What's Happening

Indianapolis Flower & Patio Show

The Indianapolis Flower & Patio Show is March 12-20, 2022 at the Indianapolis Fairgrounds. Below is information on presentations from two of our favorite, local speakers.

- **March 13, 1:30 p.m.**, "Terrariums: Magical, Miniature Gardens," Kathryn Reeves.
- **March 14, 2 p.m.**, "Landscaping with Natives: Messy or Miraculous?," Karen Mitchell.

2022 MG Study Abroad

Registration is now open for The Gardens of Ireland 2022 Master Gardener Study Abroad. This 10-day garden history experience in Ireland is from June 29th to July 9th, 2022. It is only intended for Purdue Master Gardeners and past participants and will be filled on first come, first serve. For more information see:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/MGStudyAbroad/registration-form/>

EAB 2022 Webinars

Spring 2022 webinars are listed below. All webinars start at 11 a.m. For more information go to www.emeraldashborer.info/eabu.php.

- **February 24**, "The Biology and Management of the Invasive Spotted Lanternfly," Holly Shugart.
- **March 1**, "Firewood Rules, Certifications, and Recommendations across the USA," Leigh Greenwood.
- **March 3**, "The Worst Kind of Snowbird: The Invasive of Asian Longhorned Beetle in South Carolina," David Coyle.
- **March 31**, "Tree of Heaven: Management and Identification," Lenny Farley.

Wednesdays in the Wild

Registration is required by noon on Monday prior to each program at mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov or

765-567-2993. Facial coverings and/or physical distancing are highly recommended.

March 2 • 10 a.m.-noon or 1-3 p.m. • SBTF

Maple Syrup & More!

Rich Hines

Join Rich Hines (Owner, Springboro Tree Farms in Brookston) on an indoor/outdoor woodland tour highlighting the maple syrup making process, from tree to table, along with an overview of the stewardship efforts that earned this 35-acre woodland the 2021 Charles Deam Award in recognition of noteworthy forest management practices. Dress for outdoor conditions with sturdy hiking shoes. Bring cash/check to purchase honey and syrup. Masks will be required when inside the sugar shack. Limited to 12 participants.

March 9 • 1-3 p.m. • WNC **Want to Learn Winter Tree ID?**

Sally Weeks

At the Tippecanoe Battlefield, Sally Weeks (Retired Dendrologist, Purdue University) will introduce us to winter tree identification using buds, twigs, bark, and anything else at our disposal. Bring a pocket knife, if you have one. Limited to 20 participants.

March 16 • 1-3 p.m.

DELPHI/MHBT

Monon High Bridge Trail Hike

Lois Johnston and David McCain

Learn about Delphi history as you enjoy a walk with Lois Johnston and David McCain (long-time residents of Delphi) on the newly paved section of the Monon High Bridge Trail. Limited to 20 participants.

March 23 • 1-3 p.m. • CBNA

Exploring the Equinox:

Having Fun With Phenology!

Mary Cutler

Mary Cutler (Naturalist, Tippecanoe County Parks & Recreation Department) will lead this hike focusing on tips and techniques for making phenological studies of local landscapes. This

use of "the science of first appearances" can enhance outdoor experiences as you sharpen your observations of the plant and animal world. How many signs of spring will we discover? Limited to 30 participants.

March 30 • 1-3 p.m. • ROSS BR **Spring at Ross Biological Reserve**

Kerry Rabenold

Spring is both reassuringly predictable and fascinatingly variable. We'll explore the early blooming spring perennial plants found along the trail with Dr. Kerry Rabenold (Professor Emeritus of Biological Sciences, Purdue University) as he shares information about their relationships with pollinators, seed-dispersal strategies, and sensitivity to soil types and disturbances. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring trekking poles, if desired. Limited to 20 participants.

April 6 • 1-3 p.m. • HORT **Woodland Wake-Up at Hort Park & Stewart Woods**

Lenny Farlee

Lenny Farlee (Extension Forester, Purdue Hardwood Tree Improvement & Regeneration Center) will lead this hike in search of spring flora in the rolling woodlands on the west edge of the Purdue University campus. Along the way, evidence of forest ecology principles will abound as well! Wear sturdy hiking shoes. Limited to 30 participants.

LOCATIONS:

CBNA (Celery Bog Nature Area): Meet at the Celery Bog Outdoor Amphitheater at 1620 Lindberg Road between Northwestern Avenue and McCormick Road in West Lafayette.

DELPHI/MHBT (Monon High Bridge Trail): Meet at 1 p.m. in the parking lot for the Monon Trail & Freedom Bridge (more details when you RSVP) or join the 12:30 p.m. caravan from the Tippecanoe Battlefield parking lot off North 9th Street in Battle Ground.

HORT (Purdue Horticultural Park): Meet at 1 p.m. in the parking lot on the west side of McCormick Road just north of its intersection with SR 26 on the west side of the Purdue Campus in West Lafayette.

ROSS BR (Ross Biological Reserve): Meet at 1 p.m. at the Biological Reserve, 451 S 875 W, West Lafayette.

SBTF (Springboro Tree Farms): Meet at the Tippecanoe River public access parking lot, just east of the intersection of Springboro Road and SR 18 (located on the north side of SR 18) to form carpools to drive to the nearby farm.

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

Gadgets

(continued from back)

In most cases, as soon as seeds germinate, the seed tray should be removed from the heat mat. When one group of seedlings starts growing, we move it. Then we sow another seed flat and put it on the heat mat.

We start pepper seeds early this month (and any annuals or perennials that need 8, 10, or 12 weeks). Pepper seeds may need even a bit more warmth than the heat mat provides. Heat rising up toward the ceiling can be 10 degrees warmer than near the floor and peppers love that - so sometimes we put a small seed tray on top of the grow light fixture on our six foot tall wire plant shelving unit. There's no light up there, but plenty of warmth. The seeds need to be checked frequently and as soon as the little cotyledons appear, they get moved under lights.

While seed starting mix and cutting mix should be sterile, you can pot up seedlings, rooted cuttings, and divisions of garden perennials in regular potting mix. Last year in Kathryn's presentation "Dirty Words: A Guide to Potting Mix for a Sustainable Future," she gave a recipe for inexpensive DIY peat-free potting mix: equal parts of well-rotted leaf mold, garden compost, vermiculite or perlite, and topsoil or garden soil. Coir could be substituted for the leaf mold. She also recommended Monty Don's peat-free potting mix: one part sieved garden compost, three parts coir, one part sieved loam or topsoil, and one part sharp sand, perlite, or horticultural grit.

Hang in there. Spring is coming!



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).
- Grow some healthy, happy plants for the Garden Expo!
- Keep planning your garden. Start flower seeds that need many 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 left for winter interest before new growth begins later this month. Replant any perennials that 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 tips 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!



Colcannon Potatoes

Ingredients:

1 medium head cabbage (about 2 pounds), shredded
4 pounds medium potatoes (about 8), peeled and quartered
2 cups whole milk
1 cup chopped green onions
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/4 cup butter, melted
Minced fresh parsley
Crumbled cooked bacon, bacon crumbles can be omitted to make dish vegetarian

Directions:

Place cabbage and 2 cups water in a large saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, until cabbage is tender, about 10 minutes. Drain, reserving cooking liquid; keep cabbage warm in separate dish. In same pan, combine potatoes and reserved cooking liquid. Add additional water to cover potatoes; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook, uncovered, until potatoes are tender, 15-20 minutes. Meanwhile, place milk, green onions, salt, and pepper in a small saucepan; bring just to a boil and remove from heat. Drain potatoes; place in a large bowl and mash. Add milk mixture; beat just until blended. Stir in cabbage. To serve, drizzle with butter; top with parsley and bacon. Makes 12 servings.

By Marilou Robinson

Nutrition Facts: 1 cup: 168 calories, 5g fat (3g saturated fat), 14mg cholesterol, 361mg sodium, 27g carbohydrate (6g sugars, 4g fiber), 4g protein.

Great Gadgets and Tools

By Kathryn Reeves and Mike Hathaway

“National Plant a Flower Day” is March 12. Bees think every day is a good day for flowers. Lobelia “Crystal Palace” is one of our favorites to sow early this month.

What wonderful plants are you planning to grow for the Master Gardener Plant Sale at the Garden Expo on April 23? We’re already growing cuttings of houseplants for the Garden Expo. We’ve also started some seeds that need 8-10 weeks head start. 54 days to go until Expo!



photo: © 2022 Kathryn Reeves

Some seeds benefit from extra bottom heat to get started. A **seedling heat mat** is a great gadget for improved germination. Small 10” x 20” heat mats are made to fit under a standard seed tray. They’re waterproof, use regular 120-volt household current, and provide gentle bottom warmth.

Some heat mats include a wire rack to allow air to circulate under the seed tray and provide even heat. Regular baker’s cooling racks can be substituted for the wire racks. Professional heat mats are manufactured in various sizes and may include a thermostat to regulate heat for specialty plants. Our basic Ferry Morse brand heat mat doesn’t have a thermostat but works effectively.

YOUR MGATC OFFICERS:

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Not all seeds need warm soil to germinate, but for those that do a heat mat works wonders. If you are starting seeds in an unheated greenhouse, cool room (or in our case a barely heated garage) a heat mat is essential gear.

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Garden Beet

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