

The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



AUGUST 2023

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

JULY MEETING MINUTES	2
HOTLINE. MID-SUMMER UPDATE	3
PIONEER GARDEN FAIR UPDATE	4
EXTENSION NEWS	5
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	6
AUGUST GARDEN CALENDAR	6

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. (DST) on
Thursday at Bethany Lutheran Church
102 G Street, La Porte, IN

August 3	Picnic/Potluck
September 7	Business Meeting
October 5	Workshop
November 2	Business Meeting Elections
December	Holiday Party

NEXT BOARD MEETING

August 15th - 6:30 p.m.
Location to be determined.
Members are welcome to attend.

"THE LATEST DIRT" is published monthly.
The next deadline is August 20, 2023



www.facebook.com/MasterGardenersOfLaPorteCountyIndiana
www.lpmastergardener.org



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

THE SPONGY MOTH IN INDIANA INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The spongy moth, *Lymantria dispar*, (formerly known as gypsy moth) is one of North America's most devastating invasive forest pests. The species originally evolved in Europe and Asia and has existed there for thousands of years. In the late 1860s, the spongy moth was accidentally introduced near Boston, MA by an amateur entomologist. Since then, spongy moths have spread throughout the Northeast and into parts of the upper Midwest and Great Lakes states including Indiana.



Map of Indiana Quarantined Counties (Updated July 2023)

The spongy moth feeds on the foliage of hundreds of species of trees and shrubs in North America but prefers oak trees. When spongy moth populations reach high levels, trees may be completely defoliated by feeding caterpillars. Several successive years of defoliation, along with contributions by other stress factors, often results in tree death. Spongy moth can be an expensive, messy problem for homeowners and, when out of control, can cause extensive damage to U.S. forests.

Indiana citizens can help combat this pest by understanding the spongy moth problem and learning about its management. Please use the two links below as sources of reliable, current information:

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/entomology/regulatory-information/spongy-moth>

<https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/GM-1.pdf>

It's Tick Season

It's been said this summer is a very bad "tick season." With this in mind, below are a few links offering excellent information about the different types of ticks in our area; the diseases they carry; tick nests, what they look like and where they can be found; how to protect yourself against these dreaded insects and much more.



<https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-71/E-71.html>
<https://www.healthline.com/health/tick-nest#definition>
<https://www.in.gov/localhealth/franklincounty/files/Ick-tick-website-pdf.pdf>

ASSOCIATION NEWS

La Porte County Master Gardener Association Minutes - July 6, 2023 Bethany Lutheran Church, La Porte

Attending: 19 members

Refreshments: Eunice Conway, Julie Goetz, Ann Klosinski

Call to Order – 6:30 p.m.

President Carol Nolan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Treasurer's Reports

Treasurer Susan Kieffer submitted the April and May reports including income and expenses and balances of accounts.

Secretary's Report

None as Recording Secretary Steve Zolvinski was absent.

Old Business – As noted by President Carol Nolan

- The July meeting was the last opportunity to turn in the surveys. Results will be evaluated and discussed for taking any needed actions for improvements within the Association.
- Grant applications were available for review. Three grants were awarded, and the recipients have agreed to do a presentation on their projects at the October workshop meeting. The recipients are Friendship Botanic Gardens, The Salvation Army and La Porte County Soil and Water Conservation District.
- Volunteers are still needed for the Hot Line. It was noted that it has gotten busier with calls and some walk-ins.
- There were handouts available for the conference at Purdue in October. Carol Nolan will be attending and offered to take interested members in her vehicle.

New Business

- -August Picnic at Red Mill County Park – A sign-up sheet with specifically named sides and desserts (to ensure a variety) was available at the meeting. Randa Magill is contacting a caterer for meat selections.
- Our new Master Gardener, Tom Bosen, has already volunteered to work on several projects including the Hot Line.
- There is a new ANR/HHS secretary at the Extension Office, Sue Salisbury.

What is it?

As a membership activity, Kathleen Fox circulated a picture on her phone. Some members knew it was Hens and Chicks but did not know the unusual growth pictured was that of the male plant.

George and Karen Sarver graduated from the Soil and Water Conservation class and are now “Master Recyclers”. Karen was very enthusiastic about what they learned and shared a wealth of information with the members in attendance, answering any of their questions and encouraging others to take the class.

As a side note, George Sarver said a member of an organization who visited the garden and train display where the Master Gardeners June meeting was held, donated the remainder of the funds (several thousand dollars) needed to erect a proper fence around the display.

Adjournment

President Nolan adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ann Klosinski (for Steve Zolvinski)
Corresponding Secretary

Hotline Mid-Summer Update


By: Stephen Zolvinski



The Master Gardener Hotline has been in full swing since mid-April as dedicated volunteers are answering a range of questions about gardening problems from the general public.

As of early July, eight volunteers have answered a total of 34 inquiries, of which insects topped the list at 20 percent of all calls. Of those, two appeared to be invasive species moving into the region, of which the callers were asked to report to state tracking authorities. These species were spongy moth, re-named from gypsy moth, and possible beech leaf disease, which has yet to be reported in the state. Not all insect inquiries were strictly garden-related, but Master Gardeners were glad to assist! A couple questions involved carpenter ants in a residence, and another caller concerned about a tick bite.

Other major categories included tree problems, 17 percent, lawns, 15 percent and flowers, 12 percent. A complete list follows in the chart after this article. There appears to be no major disease, insect or fungus problems as the issues are scattered over a variety of different categories. Callers reported such things as mold and fungus on lawns, leaf blight on tomato, caterpillars on flowers and beetles on cherry trees. Volunteers eagerly assisted by providing research-based recommendations from Purdue Extension experts and other Midwestern Land-Grant universities.

 Category	Frequency	Percentage
insects	7	20
trees	6	17
lawn	5	15
flowers	4	12
animals	3	9.0
veg	2	6.0
fruit	2	6.0
weeds	2	6.0
other	2	6.0
fungus	1	3.0

The hotline has been an outstanding opportunity for interns to get their feet wet and hands dirty in solving gardening problems. Tom Boesen (Class of '22) and Georgette Behenna (Class of '21) have been on board answering questions to an inquiring public.

Jackie Carroll and Carol Nolan are leading the charge this season by answering the most questions at 12 and nine respectively. Other volunteers keeping up the pace are Karren Coplen, Vickie Sparks, Julie Goetz and Steve Zolvinski.

More volunteers are needed, and it's a great way to expand your gardening knowledge! Just sign up at the "Volunteer Opportunities" link at the Master Gardener Web site. Opportunities are available until September 29.

Let's get growing!

Pioneer Garden is a huge success at the County Fair!

By: Mary Davis

The La Porte County Fair has come and gone with the Pioneer Garden being a huge success. Many plants were in their prime bloom time and looked spectacular for our visitors. Everyone that visited said the garden looked great and asked many questions about the plants that are grown there. We



offered seeds for sale so they can grow their own and the booklet that contains a description of all the plants and history of the pioneer garden.



This year we offered free sunflower seeds, marigold seeds and some gourds to future young master gardeners. We also offered notecards for sale with pictures of the garden taken by our master gardeners. Some of the

volunteers put together a basket with potatoes, flowers and herbs for the pioneer auction on Saturday. It brought in \$30.00 which goes to support Pioneer Land.

We will be harvesting produce throughout the summer and keeping the garden tidy for the fall school tours.



2023 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	CAROL NOLAN
VICE PRESIDENT	KATHLEEN FOX
CO-SECRETARIES	ANN KLOSINSKI
	STEVE ZOLVINSKI
TREASURER	SUSAN KIEFFER
ED. COMMITTEE/	EUNICE CONWAY
SPEAKERS BUREAU	JOAN KINTZELE
	DEB SARVER
PAST PRESIDENT	RANDA MAGILL

2023 PROJECT COORDINATORS

Brown Bag Gardening Series

OPEN _____

Farmers' Market – La Porte

Carol Nolan _____ 331-903-0091
 _____ **cnolan41@yahoo.com**

Garden Hotline

Extension Office _____ 219-324-9407

Habitat for Humanity

OPEN

Friendship Botanic Gardens

Rima Binder _____ 219-878-8128
 _____ **rimabinder@comcast.net**

Pioneer Land School Tours

Linda Hough _____ 219-324-0424
 _____ **ljhough614@gmail.com**

Pioneer Heritage Garden

Connie Shei _____ 219-362-4866
 _____ **jshei@comcast.net**

Seed Savers

Mary Davis _____ 219-877-5339
 _____ **mdavis9757@gmail.com**

Sunflower Fair

Linda Hough _____ 219-324-0424
 _____ **ljhough614@gmail.com**

Garden Show

Carol Nolan _____ (331) 903-0091
 _____ **cnolan41@yahoo.com**

EXTENSION NEWS

Meet Sue Salisbury

Hi!! My name is Sue Salisbury, I have recently started working at the extension office. I am the secretary to the HHS and ANR. I have met several of the Master Gardeners, and you have all been wonderful!! I appreciate the patience and kindness you have all shown me!!

I have been married for 41 years, I have two sons and 5 grandchildren (who are my pride and joy!!) In my spare time I have been raising sheep for the last 30 years. I enjoy westerns on TV and someday I will get to go to Wyoming and Montana to visit a real working ranch!



Purdue Extension Porter/La Porte County Master Gardener Training Program

Purdue Extension is now accepting applications for the Fall Purdue Extension Master Gardener's Training Program.

If gardening is your passion, then the Purdue Extension Master Gardener program may be something you would enjoy.

The classes will be held on Wednesdays starting on August 30, 2023 and ending on December 6, 2023. The class will be held in the afternoon from 1 pm to 4 pm central time. The location is the Purdue Northwest Campus in Westville, IN. The cost for the class is \$200. Applications are due August 1, 2023.

The class will cover core topics such as: weed identification and control, plant science, soils and plant nutrition, plant diseases and diagnosis, woody ornamentals, herbaceous ornamentals, insect identification and control, vegetable and fruit gardening, pesticides safety and alternatives, lawn care, animal pests and invasive species.

All gardeners are welcome. The number of participants is limited and on a first come, first served basis. By successfully completing the Purdue Extension Master Gardener Training Program, you have an opportunity to join your local Master Gardener Association. This association is a community of volunteers who work to help others grow better gardens.

For further details call the Purdue Extension Office at 219-465-3555 or email brow2274@purdue.edu.

PURDUE EXTENSION - PORTER COUNTY
155 Indiana Avenue, Ste #301
Valparaiso, IN 46383
Office: 219-465-3555 Purdue University is an
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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

HOT LINE

By: Carol Nolan

I will be manning the **Hot Line** on Mondays beginning June 12. If any member needs extra training and feels more comfortable volunteering with an experienced MG, please sign up for the following available Mondays. You can do so by logging into MG Manager or by calling the Extension Office and asking Kathy Ulman to reserve the day/days you prefer.

August 7, 14, 21, and 28
September 11, 18, and 25

Farmers' Market – Michigan City

By: Carol Nolan

Also, the Michigan City **Farmers Market** is now on the MG Manager calendar. I have signed up for each week for the 7:30 to 10 slot to set up. I will be back around noon each session to assist with tear down as well. If you want to sign up, below are the dates we are scheduled to be there:

August 19
September 16
October 21

Each volunteer can sign up for a minimum of 2 hours or the full 4 hours, your choice. Starting time is 8 a.m. and closing is 12 p.m. I will bring the canopy, weights, table, and chairs. Those who sign up for 8:00 a.m. slots should be there around 7:30 to help set up. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

AUGUST GARDEN CALENDAR

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Take cuttings from annual garden plants such as impatiens, coleus, geraniums and wax begonias to overwinter indoors. Root the cuttings in media such as moist vermiculite, perlite, peat moss or potting soil, rather than water.
- Order spring-flowering bulbs for fall planting.
- Cut flowers from the garden to bring a little color indoors, or dry for everlasting arrangements.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)

- Keep the garden well-watered during dry weather and free of weeds, insects and disease.
- Complete fall garden planting by direct-seeding carrots, beets, kohlrabi, kale and snap beans early this month. Lettuce, spinach, radishes and green onions can be planted later in August and early September. Don't forget to thin seedlings to appropriate spacing as needed.
- Harvest onions after the tops yellow and fall, then cure them in a warm, dry, well-ventilated area. The necks should be free of moisture when fully cured in about a week's time.
- Harvest potatoes after the tops yellow and die. Potatoes also need to be cured before storage.
- Pick beans, tomatoes, peppers and squash often to encourage further production.
- Harvest watermelon when several factors indicate ripeness: the underside ground spot turns from whitish to creamy yellow; the tendril closest to the melon turns brown and shrivels; the rind loses its gloss and appears dull; and the melon produces a dull thud, rather than a ringing sound when thumped.
- Harvest sweet corn when kernels are plump and ooze a milky juice when punctured with your fingernail. If the liquid is watery, you're too early; if the kernels are doughy, you're too late.
- Keep faded flowers pinched off bedding plants to promote further flowering and improve plant appearance.

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)

- Check trees and shrubs that have been planted in recent years for girdling damage by guy wires, burlap or twine.
- Don't fertilize woody plants now. It stimulates late growth that will not have time to harden off properly before winter.
- Hand-prune and destroy bagworms, fall webworms and tent caterpillars.
- Pears are best ripened off the tree, so do not wait for the fruit to turn yellowish on the tree. Harvest pears when color of fruit changes — usually from a dark green to a lighter green — and when the fruit is easily twisted and removed from the spur.
- Prune out and destroy the raspberry and blackberry canes that bore fruits this year. They will not produce fruit again next year, but they may harbor insect and disease organisms.
- If the weather turns dry, keep newly established plants well-watered. New plants should receive 1-1.5 inches of water every 7 to 10 days.
- Begin seeding new lawns or bare spots in established lawns from mid-August through mid-September.

STANDING COMMITTEE**COORDINATORS**

History Book _____ Donna Pouzar
 Hospitality _____ Eunice Conway
 Librarian _____ Linda Hough
 Newsletter _____ Donna Pouzar
 Speakers Bureau_ See Executive Board
 Sunshine _____ Julie Goetz

Purdue Extension Office __ 324-9407

Sue Salisbury __ salisbk@purdue.edu
 Secretary, ANR & HHS

Interim ANR-Porter County
 Nikky Witkowski _____ 219-465-3555
nikky@purdue.edu

Interim ANR-La Porte County
 Mary Komenas _____ 219-324-9407
mfoell@purdue.edu

The Latest Dirt is published monthly. The deadline for submission is the 20th of each month. Our mission is to publish articles and events of interest to other Master Gardeners and the community. Articles about personal experiences, suggestions on gardening books, catalogs, helpful websites, tips and tricks, book reviews, seminars you've attended are welcomed.

Submission requirements: Articles should be no longer than a page and can include photos. References must be included. Latin names of plants should be italicized. We do not accept articles pertaining to medicinal information. Master Gardeners will get volunteer hours for time spent working on an article.

**Have a garden item for sale or trade?
 Buy, Sell, Trade at the
 Trading Shed**

Place your free ad in The Latest Dirt.

Tools, tillers, mowers, plants - anything garden related. Keep ads brief and provide your phone number and/or e-mail address. Ads will be limited to space available.

Send ads, photos, events or articles by the 20th of the month to:

pouzdlp@icloud.com

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