

The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



MAY 2024

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2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. (DST) on Thursday at La Porte Main Library Meeting Room B

May 2	Business Meeting
June 6	Workshop
July 11	Business Meeting
August 1	Annual Picnic
September 5	Business Meeting
October 3	Workshop
November 7	Business Meeting Elections
December 5	Holiday Party

NEXT BOARD MEETING

May 13th - 6:30 p.m.
Classroom at the Library Exchange

"THE LATEST DIRT" is published monthly.
The next deadline is May 20, 2024

www.lpmastergardener.org



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Annual Awards Banquet

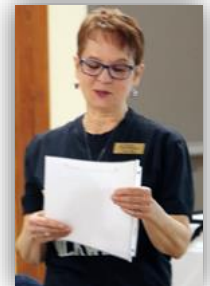
By: Carol Nolan



Our annual awards banquet was held on April 4, 2024. Approximately thirty members and five (5) guests participated and if laughter and the excited buzz in the room

is any indication, everyone had a good time. We even had an unexpected guest appear when a bald eagle flew by.

Donna Pouzar and Marcy Dailey gave a presentation on Butterfly Gardening. The program covered what butterflies are indigenous to NW Indiana; host, nectar and native plants to include in the garden; how to make your own "puddling" station which offers additional nutrients that nectar plants don't. In addition, they highlighted the plight of the Monarch butterfly and what we can do as home gardeners to help them survive. Marcy entertained the group with a new butterfly poem.



They justified my reason for not wanting to get rid of the violets that grow in my front and back yards. Not only are they beautiful when in bloom, but they are also one of the early plants that feed the caterpillars of our pollinators. It was great to have our own master gardeners present the program this year. I am hopeful we will do more of this going forward.

We welcomed twelve interns into the program. They are Tom Boesen, Bev Griffith, Amy Cooper, Lisa Johnson, Janet Davis, Kate Mulcahy, Theresa Dzoga-Borg, Misael Osorio-Conde, Maria Frau, Pam Underwood, Jodi Gray, and Vicki Lynn Znavor. Keep your eyes on this group; they are eager to be involved, and several have already stepped up to the plate and are well on their way to earning their forty hours.

Our 2024 Interns



From left: Jodi Gray, Misael Osorio-Conde, Theresa Dzoga-Borg and Amy Cooper.
Not pictured are: Tom Boiesen, Bev Griffith, Lisa Johnson, Janet Davis, Kate Mulcahy, Maria Frau, Pam Underwood and Vicky Lynn Znavor.

Award Winners



Master Gardener
Nancy Fournier (2021)



Advance Master Gardener
Carol Nolan (2021) Joan Kintzele (2016).
Not pictured: Jan Colwell (2020), Gregory Kellpsh (2019), Robert Kozelka (2020), Cindy Pagels (2020) and Vicki Sparks (2020)



Bronze Master Gardener
Kathleen Fox (2018)
Not pictured: Jacqueline Carroll (2020), Linda Hough (2016), Mary Beth Rebedeau Warden (2010)



Silver Master Gardener
Deborah Sarver (2018)

This year we resurrected the GOLDEN TROWEL AWARD. This award is given to a master gardener who has shown dedication to our mission and is nominated by and voted for by their peers. Karen Sarver, a member of our board, had the honor of overseeing the voting process once the nominating process was complete. The nominees this year were: Mary Davis, Ann Klosinski, Carol Nolan, Estell Pawloski, Donna Pouzar, Connie Shei, and Kathy Staninger.



The winner of the GOLDEN TROWEL AWARD for 2024 is Connie Shei. Connie is project coordinator of the Pioneer Land Heritage Garden and has worked tirelessly all season to keep the Pioneer Garden looking its best and ensuring the plants in the garden are true heirlooms.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CONNIE. WELL DESERVED!

If you did not attend this year's banquet, you can still share the fun and fellowship we have in August when we have our annual picnic and silent auction. Details will be announced at our June meeting.



On a Wing and a Prayer



Marcy Dailey (Copyright Pending)
Recited at the 2024 Annual Awards Banquet

Black and orange orbs of wonder flutter on the air
 Searching out the milkweed as a nursery for their heir,
 Though once in an abundance, it now proves hard to find;
 A dire lack of Asclepias puts these beauties in a bind.
 For host-specific Monarchs, no other plant will do
 To feed their caterpillars, but WE can help them to!
 Just provide a habitat with natives in full sun;
 Milkweed plus some nectar plants encourage them to come.
 Be on the watch for tiny eggs beneath a milkweed leaf;
 These will become the larvae, though their time there may be brief.
 Yes, predators are on the hunt and so you just may choose
 To pluck that leaf and save a life and thus, that threat diffuse.
 For when you opt to bring them in, you get to watch them grow-
 From egg to "cat" to chrysalis, they put on quite a show.
 But the greatest joy must surely be the day when they eclose
 To slowly flap and dry their wings and glide to heaven knows.
 Will you take a vow to help them? For every creature needs
 To live life to the fullest and complete its destiny.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

BITS AND PIECES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Things to Know

- The Hot Line is open for business. I will be working at the desk on Mondays, so anyone who would like a refresher course, come in any time from 9-12. I will be happy to help. A copy of Nikki's training session has been printed and is on the desk as well to help.
- The EMG Website calendar has been updated with dates for the Michigan City Farmers Market. We will be there on the third Saturday of each month. Kitty Knoll has graciously taken over this project. She will bring some fun and new ideas to the event. We need two (2) volunteers from 8-10 and two (2) volunteers from 10-12. At least one of the 8-10 volunteers should be able to arrive around 7:30 to help set up the tables and canopy. The canopy is tall and requires two (2) people.
- A revised schedule of the Pax Center Garden Series is on the EMG website and volunteers are needed for those slots. Karren Coplen and I have found this to be a bit of a slow starter, but what new project is not. The people are eager to learn, and we have been having fun with this. Last week Karren helped the new garden manager with the fine art of grape vine pruning.
- There are more requests coming in for speakers. These requests are a long time coming. I believe we used to have a lot of speaking opportunities, but they seem to have diminished with the onset of Covid. We are experiencing a resurgence. The Men's Club of the First Methodist Church is looking for a speaker on Wednesday, June 19, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. They are requesting a speaker with
- knowledge of the history of the Master Gardener program. Where and when did it start and why? I think we all know the answer to that one. They also want to learn what we are currently doing in our community. The talk will only be for about 20 minutes. This event was originally scheduled for April, but the date changed last week. Surely, we have someone who would like to dust off their speaking skills and fill this spot? Please reach out to Carol Nolan if you are interested.
- The La Porte County Library, Main Branch has also reached out to us and that is still under discussion. More details to come.

SUMMER IS COMING. WE HAVE DONE A TREMENDOUS JOB SO FAR THIS YEAR, WITH A SUCCESSFUL GARDEN SHOW AND ONE NEW PROJECT TO ADD TO OUR SCHEDULES. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

2024 Spring Garden Show Update

By: Ann Klosinski



A year of planning and hard work by everyone involved, including the show committee, Master Gardener volunteers and some of their spouses, ended in a show that was an outstanding success.

Attendance was comparable to the 2022 show with approximately 450 adults and 50 kids coming through the entrance doors, plus there were 44 vendors, and approximately 50 Master Gardener volunteers including two from other counties. Advertising in its many forms that drew the public, in order of frequency cited, was Facebook, friends, yard signs, newspapers, e-mail, garden clubs, MG website and the radio. Note that despite the MG Facebook page having been compromised, others that used social media to spread the word reached more people than any other form of advertising.

Evaluation forms that the attendees submitted showed the variety and quality of the vendors was appreciated. They would like to see more plants and garden related items.... something to strive harder for in the future. The location of the venue was convenient for them. Speaker sessions were well attended, as offering education to the home gardener is our main purpose for the show. There was a long list of suggestions for future topics and demos and hands on tutorials. This year the presentations were weighted on ecology.

Quoting some positive comments: “Great Vendors; keep “Sweet Lou”, her food was delicious; the show was run very well; the staff was awesome and very friendly and informative; cute yard signs”. From an attendee: “What a great garden show yesterday!!!! Well organized, so much to see, good food, nice vendors! Wish I could have stayed for the butterfly class.” There were also some constructive suggestions that will be used to improve future shows.

Every area of the show was popular and made it fun for the entire family. The speaker sessions, the seed table, the basket raffles, the book sale, the MG Q&A table, the beverage and food vendors and the multiple garden and craft vendors for the adults to shop with. “The Kid’s Zone” was enjoyed by the younger folks and the Scavenger Hunt was a hit with them and with the participating vendors, too.

So, what about “the bottom line” that everyone is curious about? A full accounting of the proceeds will be published as soon as all expenses and income are gathered. The monetary benefit of the show ensures that we will be able to continue funding other projects, award grants and possibly scholarships in the future. Investments are also made in things that are needed to make necessary and significant improvements to future shows.

There have been “glitches” affecting past shows. The first year was a disappointment. After all the hard work, attendance wasn’t what we hoped for. Another year our keynote speaker fell ill and had to be taken by ambulance to the hospital. The 2020 show was cancelled just days before because of the Covid outbreak and that affected the following year too. This year the semi-state basketball tournament, unbeknownst to us, was scheduled for the same day as the show and we anticipated a parking problem. Thankfully In the end, everything worked out.

A huge **“THANK YOU”** to all the volunteers for the many hours you spent and the hard work you put into the show, to our generous sponsors and donors, to the vendors both returning and new, and to the wonderful staff at Michigan City High School for being so helpful and gracious. Also, a big thanks to Major McGrath and the ROTC Cadets, who with their youthful energy helped with set-up and teardown at the facility. Without all of you, the La Porte County Master Gardener Spring Garden Show would not be possible.

2024 GARDEN SHOW



Linda Hough, Kathleen Fox and Mary Davis shrink wrapping those beautiful raffle baskets.



Joe Pizzo



Dolly Foster



Susan Reftis



Gift Basket Winner



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES


REVISED DATES FOR PAX CENTER GARDEN SERIES LOCATED AT BRIGHTON STREET GREEN SPACE AND JACKSON STREET GARDENS

By: Carol Nolan

The calendar has been updated on EMG website. We will need two volunteers for one location and if two locations are scheduled for the same day, we will need two volunteers at each location. So far this has been a rewarding experience and I think our volunteers will genuinely enjoy themselves. This is a wonderful opportunity for our interns as well.

The 2024 Planting Dates and "Ask a Master Gardener" schedule is:

Summer Planting

- Brighton Street - Saturday, May 18, 9am-11am (2 volunteers)
- Jackson Street - Saturday, May 18, 12pm-2pm (2 volunteers)
- Brighton Street & Jackson Street - Monday, May 20, 5pm-7pm (4 volunteers)
-  Ask a Master Gardener - Saturday, June 22, 2pm-4pm - Brighton Street (2 volunteers)

EDUCATION

Friendship Botanic Gardens Workshop - May 4

Ever wonder how to prevent deer from destroying all your hard work in the garden? Come to Friendship Botanic Gardens on Saturday, May 4th from 9 to 11a.m. CDT for an informative workshop: "Gardening Mistakes I've Made and Survived and Which Plants Are Deer-Resistant."

Treat mom to a spring day at Friendship Botanic Gardens while learning the tricks and pitfalls of deer abatement from experienced gardening experts. Deer-Resistant plants will be available for purchase.

Cost: Members: \$10, Nonmembers: \$20 (payable at time of workshop).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Free Daffodil Bulbs and Virginia Bluebells

By: Donna Pouzar

Speaking of deer resistant plants? Daffodils and Virginia Bluebells are not on the deer's menu. I have lots of these plants that I need to relocate. If you are willing to come by and pick some up, please contact me. I may also have free Bloodroot plants.

Garden Club Plant Sale Set for May 18

Always a good kick-off to spring, the River Valley Garden Club’s famous plant sale returns on Saturday, May 18, at Harbert Community Park from 10 a.m. to noon. (Michigan time), 13300 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, just north of the Chikaming Township Center.

The sale is held rain or shine – and will feature home grown perennials, ground covers, vegetable plants, bushes and small trees, all from the gardens of our members,” said Elizabeth Palulis, garden club president.

Anyone with an interest in gardening is always welcome at the River Valley Garden Club. The club has field trips, guest speakers, a member’s plant auction, and hands-on workshops in addition to the annual plant sale. The club is also involved in service projects throughout the year. Members come from Indiana and throughout southwest Michigan.

For more information contact Elizabeth Palulis at 269-362-4564 or email her at evpalulis@yahoo.com. Also visit the club’s website, rivervalleygardenclub.org

MAY GARDEN CALENDAR

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Many indoor plants can be moved to shady locations outdoors but only after the danger of frost has passed. Plants will dry out more often outdoors, so keep a close eye on soil moisture. Sinking the pots in soil will help slow down moisture loss.
- Now is a good time to take cuttings of houseplants to increase a collection or share with friends. Stick cuttings to root in media, such as vermiculite, perlite, or potting soil. Roots grown in water tend to be weak from lack of oxygen and do not adjust well to planting in soil.
- Fertilize houseplants according to label directions. Foliage plants require relatively high nitrogen fertilizer; flowering houseplants respond best to fertilizer high in phosphorus.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)

- Plant frost-tender plants after the danger of frost has passed for your area. This includes warm-season vegetables (such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and vine crops) as well as most annual flowers and tender perennials (such as cannas, gladiolus, dahlias, tuberous begonias, and caladiums).

2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	CAROL NOLAN
VICE PRESIDENT	KATHLEEN FOX
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY	ANN KLOSINSKI
RECORDING SECRETARY	THERESA DEZOBO-BORG
TREASURER	SUSAN KIEFFER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE	JOAN KINTZELE
	GEORGETTE BEHENNA
	KAREN SARVER

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Extension Office _____ 219-324-9407

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 Karren Coplen _____ 219-390-4118
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 _____ 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

- Pinch chrysanthemums and annual flower plants to keep them compact and well-branched.
- Make successive plantings of beans and sweet corn to extend the harvest season.
- Thin seedlings of early-planted crops such as carrots, lettuce, spinach, and beets to their proper spacing.
- Harvest early plantings of radishes, spinach, and lettuce.
- Both asparagus and rhubarb season may be delayed this year due to the slow progression of spring.
- Harvest asparagus by cutting or snapping spears at or just below soil level.
- Harvest rhubarb by cutting or grasping the stalk and pulling it up and slightly to one side.
- Control cucumber beetles (which are carriers of bacterial wilt) as soon as cucumber plants germinate or are transplanted to prevent disease.
- Remove blossoms from newly set strawberry plants to allow better runner formation.
- Remove unwanted sucker growth in raspberries when new shoots are about a foot tall.

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)

- Prune early spring-flowering trees and shrubs after flowers fade.
- Plant balled-and-burlapped or container nursery stock, and water thoroughly.
- Remove and destroy overwintering bagworms from landscape trees and shrubs.
- Follow a spray schedule to keep home-orchard crops pest free. While trees are in bloom, use fungicide sprays without insecticide to avoid injuring bees. Follow label directions. More information is available in [Managing Pests in Home Fruit Plantings](#) (Purdue Extension publication ID-146-W).
- Thin apple tree fruits, if needed, about three weeks after petal fall. Apples should be about 8 inches apart. Mother Nature may have taken care of thinning fruit set this year!
- Apply fungicides to roses to control diseases such as black spot.
- Purdue turf experts recommend that if you are going to fertilize your lawn in May, apply 3/4-1 pound of nitrogen (N) per 1,000 square feet with a product that contains 50 percent or more of slow-release fertilizer. Try to schedule the application prior to a rain or irrigate following application to move the fertilizer off leaf blades.

STANDING COMMITTEE

COORDINATORS

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

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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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