





John Orick delivered a presentation Saturday morning on how the Master Gardener Program began, what we need to do and where we need to go in the future to continue our mission, and a state-wide summary on the number of direct contacts made, volunteer hours and the dollar value of those volunteer hours, along with many other contributions made by Master Gardeners all across the state.



Tree I.D. Walk  
John Woodmansee

Many workshop options were offered including Purdue Garden and Greenhouse tours, tree ID walk, and planting demo. Gardening while aging and plant disease diagnostics were some of the favorites as well as home hydroponics and landscape design. Others enjoyed learning alternatives to pesticides and fertilizers in turf as well as vermicomposting.

Links to the handout were provided to attendees via QR codes. Be sure to inquire with each of these ladies what their favorite sessions might have been.



Ben McCallister, Purdue Urban Forestry Specialist demonstrating the proper way to plant a tree.

This year Purdue celebrated 45 years of Master Gardening in Indiana. Happy Anniversary to us!

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

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### NOVEMBER 2, 2023 Business Meeting - Elections

By: Carol Nolan

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November 1, 2023, is our annual meeting at which we will have elections for any open spots on the board. During this meeting, we will also discuss other issues that need to be addressed as well. **It is very important that members attend this meeting if possible.** Remember, we now have a ride share list of phone numbers if a ride is needed.

There are three openings on the board and a slate of three nominees will be presented for acceptance or refusal. Our expectations are high for 2024 but without you, we will not succeed.

Thank you.

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### Hotline Drifts Silent for 2023 Season End

By: Stephen Zolvinski

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The Master Gardener Hotline phone line drifted into autumn slumber on September 29 with a final caller inquiring about a late-season hydrangea issue. In all, September closed out the growing season with eight calls concerning flowers, fruits, trees, shrubs and one about a lawn.

September volunteers eagerly assisted on calls that ranged from whether apple seeds could be planted for a fruitful crop to a common late-season inquiry about overwintering a calla/cana lily. In all, September's four volunteers extended knowledge and experience based on extension-based research to ease the callers' questions. As a back-up, some calls were referred to the Purdue Plant & Pest Diagnostic Lab at the West Lafayette campus for follow-up or confirmation of the local Master Gardener diagnosis.

For the 2023 season, a total of 14 volunteers shown the light to LaPorte County's residents' vexing gardening problems. While tree problems topped the list at 16 percent of calls, it was the "other" category following up in second place, which covered a sundry array of issues such as what to do about poison ivy to ground cover over septic systems or between raised beds. This category also concerned general information about the Master Gardener program or seeking a referral for disposing walnuts.

The season drew a total of 14 volunteers since the phones started ringing on April 12. Carol Nolan and Jackie Carroll led the charge by answering 20 and 16 calls, respectively, followed by Steve Zolvinski, 10, Anne Klosinski, eight, and Estelle Pawloski, seven. Also contributing their valuable time were Georgette Behenna and Vicky Sparks, four each; Julie Goetz, Karren Coplen and intern Tom Boesen, two each, and Stacy McGinnis, Sharon Strujenske and Cindy Pagels, one each.

Now the Hotline room remains vacant; the clatter of the phone line remains mute, all in anticipation of the glow of spring to absorb all gardeners' souls. Below is a summary of the 2023 issues handled by our volunteers.

Category 	Frequency	Percentage
tree	11	16
insects	8	12
other	10	15
flower	6	9
lawn	7	10
animals	6	9
fruit	7	10
Shrub	3	5
plants	2	3
Fungus	2	3
veg	2	3
weeds	2	3
berry	1	2




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### NEED A RIDE?

By: Carol Nolan

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While reviewing the survey, we found a consistent concern regarding lower participation in our meetings. We are hoping to increase member participation by offering rides to those who are not able to get to the meetings on their own. We are happy to provide the following contact information to our members. If anyone else would like to get on the list of drivers, please let aboard member know.

- Sue Kieffer – 219-362-4498 - Please leave a message. (La Porte area)
- Joan Kintzele – 901-853-5818 - Please note Joan will not be available during the months of January/February - Please leave message (Fish Lake area)
- Ann Klosinski – 219-872-8367 - Please leave a message (Michigan City/La Porte)
- Carol Nolan – 331-903-0091 – Please leave a message (La Porte and surrounding areas)

Please note: If a call to any of these drivers is not picked up, please leave a message. The driver will reach out to you.

Thank you.

# NOVEMBER GARDEN

## HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- As houseplant growth slows, apply less fertilizer and water.
- If plants are dropping many leaves, move them closer to sunny exposures, such as west- and south-facing windows. Artificial lights may be needed to supplement particularly dark rooms.
- Pot spring-flowering bulbs with tips exposed to force into bloom indoors. Moisten soil and refrigerate 10 to 13 weeks. Transfer to a cool, sunny location, and allow an additional three to four weeks for blooming.
- Continue dark treatment for poinsettias by keeping them in complete darkness from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily until early December or until red bracts begin to show.

## GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)

- If frost hasn't taken your garden yet, continue harvesting.
- Harvest mature green tomatoes before frost, and ripen indoors in the dark. Store at 55-70 degrees F. The warmer the temperature, the faster they ripen.
- Harvest root crops and store in a cold (32 degrees F), humid location. Use perforated plastic bags as an easy way to increase humidity.
- Remove crop and weed plant debris from the garden and add to the compost pile. This will help reduce the carryover of diseases, insects and weeds to next year's garden.
- Fall tilling, except in erosion-prone areas, helps improve soil structure and usually leads to soils warming and drying faster in the spring. This allows crops to be planted earlier.
- Apply mulch to strawberries to prevent winter injury or death to their crowns. Wait until temperatures have hit 20 degrees F to be sure plants are dormant. If mulch is applied too soon the plant's crown can rot.
- Dig and store tender flowering bulbs, and keep in a protected location.
- Complete planting of spring-flowering bulbs.

### 2023 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	CAROL NOLAN
VICE PRESIDENT	KATHLEEN FOX
CO-SECRETARIES	ANN KLOSINSKI STEVE ZOLVINSKI
TREASURER	SUSAN KIEFFER
ED. COMMITTEE/ SPEAKERS BUREAU	EUNICE CONWAY 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**

**YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)**

- Prevent rabbit and rodent feeding damage by erecting physical barriers, such as metal mesh (one-fourth inch) hardware cloth. Pull mulch a few inches away from the trunk, as the mulch provides a warm winter home for rodents. Chemical repellents also are available, but their effectiveness is temporary and not foolproof.
- Prevent frost cracking (or sunscald) by wrapping trunks with commercial tree wrap or painting the south- and southwest-facing sides of the trunk with white latex outdoor paint. Young, thin-barked trees such as maples and many fruit trees are especially susceptible. Be sure to remove the tree wrap by early spring to prevent overheating of the bark.
- Remove dead, diseased or damaged branches.
- Protect the graft union on rose bushes by mounding soil around the plants and adding mulch on top. Wait until several killing frosts have occurred so plants will be dormant when covered. Plants covered too early may be smothered.
- If you are planning to order a "live" Christmas tree, prepare its planting hole before the soil freezes. Mulch the area heavily to prevent freezing, or dig the hole and put fill in a protected, nonfreezing area such as a garage or basement.
- Clean up and discard fallen leaves and fruits around fruit plants to reduce disease carryover.
- Continue mowing lawn as needed. As tree leaves fall, run them through your mower (remove bagger), allowing the shredded leaves to remain on the lawn. Be sure to mow only when grass and leaves are dry.
- A November application of fertilizer can help keep lawns green into winter and boost early spring recovery. Apply one-half to 1 pound actual nitrogen, per 1,000 square feet of lawn. See "Turfgrass Management: Fertilizing Established Cool-Season Lawns" for more information on lawn fertilization.

**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](mailto:salisbk@purdue.edu)  
 Secretary, ANR & HHS

Interim ANR-Porter County  
 Nikky Witkowski \_\_\_\_\_ 219-465-3555  
[nikky@purdue.edu](mailto:nikky@purdue.edu)

Interim ANR-La Porte County  
 Mary Komenas \_\_\_\_\_ 219-324-9407  
[mfoell@purdue.edu](mailto:mfoell@purdue.edu)

*The Latest Dirt* is published monthly. The deadline for submission is the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to:

**[pouzdlp@icloud.com](mailto:pouzdlp@icloud.com)**

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