

The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



SEPTEMBER 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

September 5	Business Meeting
October 3	Workshop
November 7	Business Meeting Elections
December 5	Holiday Party

NEXT BOARD MEETING

September 10th - 6:30 p.m.
Classroom at the Library Exchange

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

www.lpmastergardener.org



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Kalamazoo Master Gardeners visit Friendship Botanic Gardens

By: Donna Pouzar

On Saturday, July 13, about 30 Master Gardeners from Kalamazoo, Michigan visited Friendship Botanic Gardens. We met at the Visitors Cabin where Rima Binder, President of FBG, gave a short history about The Gardens before we headed out for the tour. Golf carts were available for those who had difficulty walking.



The tour began with the "heritage gardens" - Romania, Poland Scotland, Germany, Norway, and Lithuania. Brief histories on each garden were presented. The tour moved on to the "Celebration" area where many weddings are performed, the Children's Garden and finally the Bridge Garden and the original entrance, complete with the original entrance sign.



It was a lovely and interesting tour. We enjoyed talking with our fellow master gardeners and exchanging gardening knowledge and fun stories. Members who participated from our association were: Rima Binder, Carol Nolan, Susie Kieffer, Cindy Pagels, Lisa Johnson, and Vicki Lynn Znavor.



ASSOCIATION NEWS

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEPTEMBER'S MEETING

By: Carol Nolan, President

The next general business meeting will be held in Room B at the La Porte County Library. As always, we start with a social time at 6:00 p.m. followed by the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

We will discuss the Christmas Dinner, upcoming November elections for new board members and other topics. There will also be a signup sheet for Sunflower Fair volunteers. At the end of our meeting, Theresa Dzoba-Borg will present a short session of chair yoga.

For those who have not yet advised their size for the new La Porte County Master Gardener t-shirt, there will be a sheet for you to provide your name and size. T-shirts will be available at the October meeting. Those who gave us their sizes at the August picnic, your shirts will be available for pickup at the meeting.

Conservation and Coffee meeting

By: Donna Pouzar

I had the pleasure of attending the August 14th, *Coffee & Climate* meeting at the Soil & Water Conservation District office. Linda Schwab, Education Coordinator, La Porte County Soil & Water Conservation District, gave a wonderful presentation on: *Prairie and Native Pollinator Habitats – Every Patch Counts*.

She talked about the importance of native plants and how they promote healthy soil, reduce the erosion or topsoil due to their deep roots, provide habitat for wildlife by providing a stable food supply and actually provides a cooling effect. Walking in a garden is much cooler than walking on asphalt or concrete.

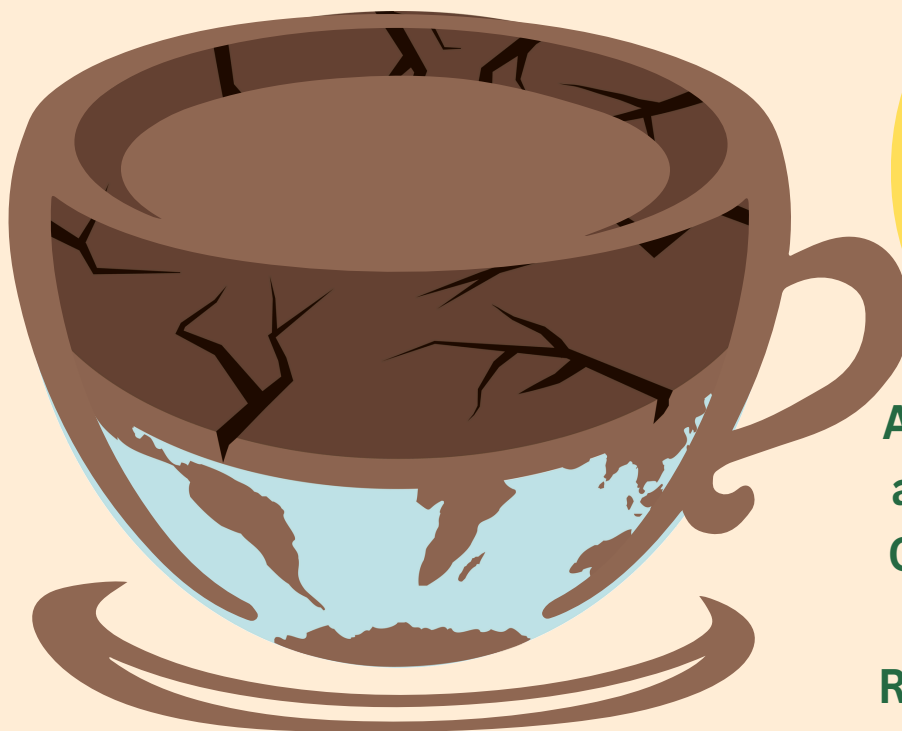
There were about 20 people in attendance from the surrounding La Porte area. Many of them were converting their property into native prairies and including native plants in their home gardens.

After the presentation, Paul Vicari, Soil Conservationist with Soil and Water and Linda took us on a walk through the prairie next to the Extension Office. Paul and his group are in the process of restoring this area back to its natural state. They have removed exotic plants, trees and shrubs which has allowed many native plants to return. A path has been mowed through the prairie so visitors can easily walk through and get an up close and personal look at the variety of native plants and grasses. This summer Paul and his group removed grass on the west side of the Extension Office and created a contained pollinator garden consisting of all native plants.



“Climate & Coffee –Lunch & Learn Edition”, is a monthly series to bring local farmers, landowners and natural resources stewards together to discuss conservation challenges and best practices in a changing environment. Meetings are held at the Soil & Water office from 12:15-1:15 p.m. Information for the September meeting is on the next page.

CLIMATE & COFFEE



Lunch & Learn Series
Bring your lunch, bring a friend!

Event is FREE
No registration required

**Agricultural Challenges
and Best Practices in a
Changing Environment**

Round Table Discussion

Wednesday September 18th

12:15 - 1:15 pm

LaPorte County Soil & Water Conservation District

2857 W SR 2 , Suite B

LaPorte, IN

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FREE FOR THE TAKING!

These buckets (lids are the extension office. These Stop in and check them out.

See Kelsey Guadarrama, Extension Office manager.

Thanks, Carol Nolan, President



IN MEMORIUM

Tina L. Sonderby, 79, Long Beach, Indiana, passed away Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 6:45 p.m. in her home.

She was born June 21, 1945 in Evergreen Park, Illinois, to the late George and Willa Sindelar. On Aug. 26, 1967, in Chicago, Illinois, she married Stephen Sonderby, who preceded her on Dec. 19, 2000. She was also preceded in death by her brother, Robert "Bob" Sindelar.



Tina was a retired educator and a member of the Long Beach Country Club. She enjoyed traveling, golfing, bowling and reading. In 2010 she took the Master Gardener class and became a certified La Porte County Master Gardener in 2012. She served on the board in 2013, was President in 2014, and received her bronze status in 2014. She was a member until 2019.

She had an uncanny way to reach people in a deep positive way. Her sense of humor and quick wit always kept people on their toes and laughing.

Surviving is daughter, Elizabeth (Clint) Marler of Chesterton, Indiana; son, Robert (Carol) Sonderby of Brookfield, Illinois; and grandchildren, Leah, Samantha, Stephanie and Avarie.

2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	CAROL NOLAN
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2024 PROJECT COORDINATORS

Farmers' Market-Michigan City

Kitty Knoll _____ 219-575-1731
 _____ rknollandson@comcast.net

Friendship Botanic Gardens

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

Garden Hotline

Extension Office _____ 219-324-9407

Garden Show

Ann Klosinski _____ 219-872-8367
 _____ annak47@comcast.net

La Porte Builders Assn. Home Expo

Donna Pouzar _____ 219-363-2960
 _____ pouzdlp@icloud.com

Pax Center

Carol Nolan _____ 331-903-0091
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 Karren Coplen _____ 219-390-4118
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Pioneer Land School Tours

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

Pioneer Heritage Garden

Connie Shei _____ 219-362-4866
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Seed Savers

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

Sunflower Fair

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

GARDENING ARTICLES

The Surprising Benefit of Gardening

Planting and pruning have been shown to ease stress, decrease negative thoughts and imbue their participants with a sense of contentment and peace – but new research published in the *JOURNAL OF AFFECTIVE DISORDERS* shows that it can also help you sleep better.

In a review of survey results of more than 62,000 participants, researchers discovered that spending time in the garden each week led to a lower likelihood of sleep complaints: Gardeners reported lower incidences of short sleep, insomnia and even daytime grogginess. The researchers explain this is due to the combination of time spent in nature along with the aerobic activity one experiences during the act of gardening.

Source: First Magazine for Women

Protect Your Heart with Group Gardening

Joining a community garden where you tend to plants alongside neighbors isn't only a fun way to share a favorite pastime with others, it's also a true heart-saver. That's because a new study from MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY shows that community gardeners eat significantly more fruit and vegetables due to a greater interest they take in growing their own food.

That's key since Canadian scientists found that consuming more produce significantly reduces your risk of heart trouble and stroke. That's thanks to their rich supply of fiber, antioxidants and vitamins that keep your heart and blood vessels healthy. To find a shared garden near you, search online for community garden and your town.

Source: Womens; World Magazine

SEPTEMBER GARDEN CALENDAR

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Prepare storage areas for overwintering tender flower bulbs and garden produce.
- Thanksgiving (or Christmas) cactus can be forced into bloom for the Thanksgiving holidays. Provide 15 hours of complete darkness each day, for instance, from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m., for approximately eight weeks. Keep temperature at about 60-65 degrees F. Temperatures of 55°F will cause flower buds to set without dark treatment.
- Dig and repot herbs, or take cuttings, for growing indoors over winter.
- Store leftover garden seed in a cool, dry place. A sealable jar with a layer of silica gel or powdered milk in the bottom works well.
- Bring houseplants moved outside for summer indoors before night temperatures fall below 55°F. Gradually decrease light to acclimate the plants and help reduce leaf drop. Check and control insects and diseases before putting these plants near other houseplants.

- Poinsettias saved from last year can be re-flowered for this year's holiday by providing complete darkness for 15 hours daily from about Oct. 1 until about Dec. 10.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)

- Dig onions and garlic after tops fall over naturally and necks begin to dry.
- Plant radishes, green onion sets, lettuce and spinach for fall harvest.
- Thin fall crops, such as lettuce and carrots, that were planted earlier.
- Harvest crops such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, melons and sweet potatoes before frost, or cover plants with blankets, newspaper, etc., (but not plastic) to protect them from light frost.
- Mature green tomatoes can be ripened indoors. Individually wrap fruits in newspaper, or leave them on the vine, pulling the entire plant out of the garden. Store in a cool location – about 55-60°F.
- Harvest winter squash when mature (skin is tough) with deep, solid color, but before hard frost. Some cultivars will show an orange blush when mature.
- Plant, transplant or divide peonies, daylilies, iris and phlox only if you can apply irrigation during dry spells.
- Save plants such as coleus, wax begonias, impatiens or fuchsia for indoor growing over winter. Dig plants and cut them back about halfway, or take cuttings of shoot tips, and root them in moist vermiculite, soil mix or perlite.
- Watch for garden chrysanthemums to bloom as days grow shorter. Some may have bloomed earlier this summer, which will decrease the number of fall blooms.
- Plant spring-flowering bulbs beginning in late September. Planting too early can cause bulbs to sprout top growth before winter. However, allow at least four to six weeks before the ground freezes for good root formation.
- Dig tender bulbs, such as cannas, caladiums, tuberous begonias and gladiolus, before frost. Allow to air dry, and store in dry peat moss or vermiculite.

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)

- Fall is a good time to plant many container-grown or balled-and-burlapped nursery stock. Prepare a good-size planting hole wider than the ball, but plant at the same depth it grew in the nursery and water thoroughly. Mulching will help protect against large fluctuations in soil temperature and moisture.

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

Jesi Davenport _ ifurness@purdue.edu
 Sue Salisbury __ salisbk@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

PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY/EQUAL ACCESS/AFFIRMATIVE
ACTION INSTITUTION

- Do not be alarmed if your evergreens, particularly white pine and arborvitae, drop some older needles. All evergreens shed needles at some time, but not all at once as deciduous plants do.
- Harvest apples, pears, grapes, and everbearing strawberries and raspberries. For most fruits, flavor is the best indicator of ripeness, although color change also can be a good indicator. However, pears are best ripened off the tree, and grapes change color long before they are fully flavored, so sample the fruit to be sure.
- Remove raspberry canes after they bear fruit.
- Clean up fallen fruits, twigs and leaves around apple (including crabapple) and other fruit trees to reduce disease and insect carryover.
- To promote the lawn's recovery from summer stress, apply high-nitrogen fertilizer at the rate of 0.5 to 1 pound actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. More information on lawn fertilization is available at https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/item.asp?item_number=AY-22-W
- Reseed bare spots or new lawns using a good-quality seed mixture. Seeding in late summer allows the turf to maximize its establishment and rooting prior to the next summer's heat and drought. For more information, see <http://purdueturftips.blogspot.com/2014/08/start-seeding-cool-season-turf-now.html>
- September and October are appropriate months to apply broadleaf weed killers to the lawn. Be sure to follow all label directions, and choose a calm day to prevent spray drift.

THIS is what gardening is all about!

Have photos you'd like to share? Please send them along.

Hummingbird Moth



Eastern Swallowtail



Bumblebee on Phlox