

The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



MARCH 2022

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2022 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays at the Purdue Extension Office unless otherwise noted

March 3	Business Meeting Via ZOOM
April 7	Awards Dinner Red Mill County Park
May 5	Business Meeting
June 2	Workshop
July 7	Business Meeting
August 4	Picnic – Red Mill Co. Park
September 1	Business Meeting
October 6	Workshop
November 3	Business Annual Meeting Elections
December	Holiday Dinner

NEXT BOARD MEETING

March 8 - 6:00 p.m.
ZOOM

"THE LATEST DIRT" is published monthly.

The next deadline is:
March 20, 2022



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



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

5th Annual Spring Garden Show

By: Wendy Shafer and Maureen Sherrick, Co-Chairs

We hope you've saved the DATE! March 19, 2022 will be our 5th Annual Spring Garden Show at the Michigan City High School! It's been a while, but I think we are ready to get out of the house.

Our theme this year is "*Growing In A Changing World*". We are excited about having two main speakers this year: Bill Wilson, co-founder of Midwest Permaculture and the leading Permaculture Teacher in the US, and Jan Bills, a national speaker and author of the book "Late Bloomer."

Karen Sarver and her team are planning an exciting children's line up of activities, and we have a variety of vendors selling handcrafted items. The food will be prepared by chef Erik Tannehill of the Melt Kitchen. A fantastic door prize will be won by one lucky ticket holder.

The show is sponsored in part by Meijer, Friendship Botanic Gardens, Blooms Greenhouse Grower Outlet, Renewal by Anderson, Entryways Unlimited, Inc., Fenker's Furniture and Chesterton Feed & Garden.

Of course, this event will not be successful without the support of the whole organization. So please sign up for one of the many volunteer opportunities that day. (It's a great way to earn hours and if you volunteer for up to 4 hours, you get in free). We welcome donations to our raffle baskets (contact Wendy), we are especially in need of pet items or pet baskets. And finally, please spread the word to all your friends and families!

The doors open at 8am and the cost is \$10 and children under 12 get in free!

We hope to see all your smiling faces!



ASSOCIATION NEWS

March Business Meeting

The March 3rd Association meeting will be held virtually starting at 6pm.

ATTENTION

Revising Volunteer and/or Education Hours

By: Azad Chahal,
Master Gardener Program Coordinator

If you receive a message about revising volunteer and/or education entries that you made in MG Manager, please make sure you complete this revision process by the 10th of the month so those entries can be approved.

THE LATEST DIRT ON ...

Name: Karren Coplen

Master Gardener Status: Gold



When did you take the MG Class? 2009

Where do you live? 300 Feet from the Michigan state line on 3 acres of mostly wooded land north of La Porte.

Are you originally from LaPorte? If not, where did you live before you moved here?

Born and raised in La Porte. Moved to the country in Hesston, raised my children, chickens, vegetables and goats, and still here after 48 years.

What's your family background?

Husband? Kids? Pets? Raised 3 children and they're all out on their own and spread

out from La Porte, to Fort Wayne, Indiana, to South Carolina. After being single and alone for many years, met my wonderful Jim 25 years ago and we got married, surrounded by friends and family in our own back yard 17 years ago. It was a unique ceremony like no other, and started us on our life together that's still working well for us.

Do you work and, if so, what do you do? Retired graphic designer, and currently enjoying gardening, outside, in the ground, in containers, and in the house in hydroponic growing units. So many different ways to enjoy growing wonderful flowers and vegetables.

How long have you been gardening? All my life. Under duress as a child at home, then by choice on my own land. This place is made up of ancient sand dunes, so very poor soil that's a challenge and we're always adding compost and mulch. We try to grow most of our own vegetables and fruits. We do grow our own salads and tomatoes year round by hydroponics in the house, and more out in the soil, then can and freeze what we are able to for winter use.

Do you have a favorite flower? Vegetable? I think cosmos are my favorite flower. Their enthusiasm in the garden as they wave in the breezes makes me happy. Garlic is probably my favorite vegetable. I enjoy thinking of them slowly growing all winter long to emerge triumphant in the spring just makes me happy. And of course, the taste of garlic is just the best!

What type of gardening do you enjoy the most? Honestly, it's the learning that I enjoy the most. There are so many ways to garden, and experimenting to see what will work this year, is always a joy. We have a 30' by 60' garden in the ground outside, plus permanent growing beds of asparagus and berries, including blueberry bushes. The woods provide us with walnuts, and usually morels in the spring. We love to forage, finding and harvesting dandelions, chives, mushrooms, ramps, and wild growing fruit as it ripens in the spring.

Other than gardening, what other interests/hobbies do you have? Reading, I'm part of a book club, visiting with friends, and I do keep my hand in with the occasional graphic design project. My husband and I are learning Spanish, just to keep our brains active. We practice daily online and attend a weekly class too. Of course, the grandkids are the best, although as they become teen-agers, we see them less often all the time.

THE LATEST DIRT ON ...

Name: Randy Russell

Master Gardener Status: Intern

When did you take the MG Class? 2021

Where do you live? Michigan City, IN

Are you originally from LaPorte? If not, where did you live before you moved here?

Lived in MC all my life!

What's your family background? Husband? Kids? Pets? I am married. Pat and I will be married 36 years in August. We have two children both are married and leading a very productive life and job careers. We have one granddaughter who just turned two and is the joy of our life! No pets.

Do you work and, if so, what do you do? I had a very good career, working at the Department of Water Works – Michigan City, 46 years working my way up the ladder, starting as a grounds keeper at the water towers, moving to reading meters after high school graduation. Took a bid working in the construction / service department installing new service taps, repairing service and main leaks, and installing / removing meters.

Moved to Management in the Engineering Department, maintaining permanent records and drafting new projects. Inspected several large capital projects.

Promoted to Superintendent where I oversaw all department functions 33 years until my retirement in 2021.

How long have you been gardening? I have enjoyed gardening since I was very young and still enjoy it to this day.

Do you have a favorite flower? Vegetable? I enjoy annuals Petunias, Geraniums, Saliva, Impatiens, Marigolds and several more, On the vegetable side: tomatoes, cucumbers, and green beans.

What type of gardening do you enjoy the most? Mostly outdoor annuals and I also take pride in my lawn.

Other than gardening, what other interests/hobbies do you have? I enjoy helping people with things I am able to do.

2022 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	RANDA MAGILL
VICE PRESIDENT	LORRAINE WEDOW
CO-SECRETARIES	KARREN COPLIN
	JACKIE CARROLL
TREASURER	DEBBIE MOORE
ED. COMMITTEE/	EUNICE CONWAY
SPEAKERS BUREAU	DEBORAH SARVER
	MARY DAVIS
PAST PRESIDENT	ANN KLOSINSKI

2022 PROJECT COORDINATORS**Brown Bag Gardening Series**

Karren Coplen _____ 219-390-4118
 _____ karrenc@comcast.net

Farmers' Market – La Porte

Chris Svoboda _____ 614-377-6409
 _____ svoboda.christina@att.net

Garden Hotline

Extension Office _____ 219-324-9407

Garden Walk

Maureen Sherrick _____ 610-737-3398
 _____ shezamurphy@yahoo.com

Habitat for Humanity

Randa Magill _____ 219-851-8618
 _____ rmagill4013@msn.com

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

Megan Countryman _____ 574-532-8480
 _____ mcountry46552@gmail.com

Garden Show

Maureen Sherrick _____ 610-737-3398
 _____ shezamurphy@yahoo.com

Wendy Shafer _____ 219-878-3018
 _____ winterone50@gmail.com

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Builders Association of La Porte County 2022 Home and Lifestyle Expo

By: Donna Pouzar

We are all set for the upcoming B.A.L.C. Home and Lifestyle Expo on March 5th and 6th. Thank you to those of you who are volunteering to work the Master Gardener table for this event. I will be in touch with you via email with more details.



Master Gardener Grow Program

By: Caroline Arnett, Community Wellness Coordinator

Calling all Master Gardeners!

La Porte County Purdue Extension is looking to partner with local Master Gardeners to grow seedlings for distribution among community gardens combating food insecurity in La Porte County.

Extension works with multiple community gardens located throughout our county. According to Feeding America, 13.1% of La Porte County is food insecure. Community gardens, partnered with Extension, serve residents with limited access to nutrition due to living in a food desert, limited transportation, or lack of funds to purchase groceries.

Some of our most sought-after plants are tomatoes (large for slicing and fried green tomatoes), cucumbers, herbs, zucchini, summer squash, Peppers (all varieties but bell are most popular), and melons. The gardens are always very thankful when we receive seeds for collard greens, carrot, and green beans. If you have a plant you would love to grow and donate outside of this list, please let us know as we are always happy to try new items.



Master Gardener - Debbie Moore

If you're interested in partnering with us on this project, please email me, Caroline Arnett, Community Wellness Coordinator at arnette@purdue.edu or call our office at 219-324-9407.



Master Gardener-Greg Kellpsh

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Botanical Gardens and Master Gardener Seminar Information

Fernwood Botanical Gardens	www.fernwoodbotanical.org LPCMGA is a member of Fernwood Botanical Gardens. Membership card can be signed out at the Extension Office.		
Gabis Arboretum at Purdue NW	https://www.pnw.edu/gabis-arboretum		
Friendship Botanic Gardens	www.friendshipgardens.org		
Advanced Master Gardener Training			
Master Gardener Seminars			
Click on this link for more information on these events. https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/events/			
Spring 2022 Virtual EMG Advanced Training Series!			
Date	Event/Time/Fee	Description	Location / Contact
March 24	9:00-10:00 a.m. CDT	“Organic Gardening” Ashley Adair, Purdue Extension Organic Agriculture Specialist and Karen Mitchell, Purdue Consumer Horticulture Extension Specialist	Register for this session at: https://purdue.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6xpLWzov05UIt2S

March Garden Calendar

By: Rosie Lerner

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Begin fertilizing houseplants as new growth appears. Remove spent leaves and flowers to improve appearance and encourage more blooms.
- Start garden seeds indoors for transplanting outdoors later in spring.
- Check stored bulbs and produce for decay; discard damaged items.
- Prune, repot, and clean houseplants as needed.
-

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)

- Prune trees and shrubs (except those that bloom early in spring) while plants are still dormant. If you are concerned about winter injury, delay pruning until after dieback; you can assess desiccation injury as plants come out of dormancy.
- Plant new trees and shrubs as soon as the soil dries enough to be worked. Plant bare-root plants before they leaf out. Soils may be exceptionally wet as winter snows thaw.
- Fertilize woody plants if needed before new growth begins but after soil temperatures reach 40°F.
- Remove winter coverings from roses as soon as new growth begins. Prune out dead canes and fertilize as needed. Delay pruning into live canes until after you can assess winter injury.
- Apply superior oil spray to control scale insects and mites when the tips of leaves start to protrude from buds.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)

- Plant cool-season vegetables and flowers as soon as the ground has dried enough to work. Do not work the soil while it is wet; wait until it crumbles in your hand. If the soil forms a solid ball when you squeeze it, it's still too wet.
- Gradually harden-off transplants by setting them outdoors during the daytime for about a week before planting.
- Follow last fall's soil test recommendations for fertilizer and pH adjustment. It's not too late to test soil if you missed last year.
- Start the seeds of warm-season vegetables and flowers indoors. In northern and central Indiana, wait until the end of March or early April. Transplant seedlings to the garden after the danger of frost has passed. To find the average date of a frost in your area, consult maps provided by the Indiana State Climate Office.
- Remove old foliage from ornamental grasses and perennial flowers.
- Watch for blooms of early spring bulbs, such as daffodils, squill, crocus, dwarf iris, and snowdrops.
- Remove old asparagus and rhubarb tops, and side-dress the plants with nitrogen or manure. Plant or transplant asparagus, rhubarb, and small-fruit plants.
- Remove winter mulch from strawberry beds as soon as new growth begins but keep the mulch nearby to protect against frost and freezes.
- Remove weak, diseased, or damaged canes from raspberry plants before new growth begins. Remove old fruiting canes if you did not remove them last year, and shorten remaining canes if necessary.
- Prune grapevines after you can assess winter injury.

**STANDING COMMITTEE****COORDINATORS**

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

Purdue Extension Office __ 324-9407

Azad Chahal __ aschahal@purdue.edu
 Tina DeWitt _____ dewitt8@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, or 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 either:

DONNAPOUZAR@COMCAST.NET

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