

The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2023

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2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

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

February 2	Workshop Lyn Grenough Recycling
March 2	Business Meeting
April 6	Workshop
May 4	Business Meeting
June 1	Workshop
July 6	Business Meeting
August 3	Workshop
September 7	Business Meeting
October 5	Workshop
November 2	Business Meeting Elections

NEXT BOARD MEETING

February 21st at - 6:00 p.m.
La Porte Co. Library Exchange, Mtg. Rm. B
Members are welcome to attend

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



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



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

The American Hosta Growers Association

Hosta of the Year 2023 -*Hosta 'Neptune'*

This unique blue hosta is popular among hosta collectors and makes a nice specimen in the home garden. In spring, the narrow wedge-shaped leaves are bright glaucous blue, and they hold their color well. As the season progresses, they turn more blue green. The heavily rippled leaves are of good substance, displaying some slug resistance.

This hosta has a lovely cascading form that is displayed to best effect when planted on a ledge or in a container. Lavender flowers are produced on arching scapes in late summer to early fall.

Plant with: Cimicifuga, Dicentra, Perennial Geranium, Hakonechloa, Heuchera, Pulmonaria to name a few shade perennials.

Height:	24 Inches
Spread:	47 Inches
Scape Height:	32-39 Inches
Hardiness Zone:	3
Flower Color:	Purple shades
Foliage Color:	Blue shades
Sunlight:	Part Shade (4-6 hrs. Direct Sun) Full Shade (< 4 hrs. Direct Sun)
Water Requirements:	Average water needs, consistent water needs



ASSOCIATION NEWS

February Workshop – February 2, 2023

By: Carol Nolan

The February workshop will be at Bethany Lutheran Church. Social time will begin at 6:00 p.m. The workshop will begin promptly at 6:30 p.m. Our guest Lynn Grenough will speak on recycling.

Lynn has had a lifelong interest in recycling which has been a part of her continual exploration of the influence of humanity's relationship with the built and natural environment. During her master's in architecture program, she chose research projects on "green" subjects such as a grey water reclamation, housing development and the life of a Starbucks cup. After moving back to La Porte, she participated in the inaugural session of the Master Recyclers program with the La Porte County Solid Waste District, and now participates in occasional follow-up trips and various recycling promotional activities.

As a reminder, if you have not turned in your membership forms and dues, please do so at this meeting. Also, please keep in mind our business meetings and workshops will now be held at Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G Street, La Porte IN 46350.

Look forward to seeing you on the 2nd.

La Porte County Master Gardener Association Minutes - January 5, 2023 Bethany Lutheran Church, LaPorte

By: Stephen Zolvinski, Recording Secretary

Attendance: 16 members & 1 guest

Refreshments provided by: Board Members

Call to Order

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

Pending Business

- Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Susan Kieffer postponed the report until next time.

- Secretary's Report

Co-Secretary Ann Klosinski reported no report as this was the first business meeting of the year.

Old Business

- Committee updates

Seed Savers Project Leader Mary Davis made available miscellaneous seeds to membership to use as desired, such as for winter sowing.

- Laptop

President Nolan reported she has the MG laptop. Because of its age, it may be inadequate for use for Association activities, such as the Brown Bag series, educational uses and for speaker presentations. It needs to be updated with Windows software and for other Association uses, such as Zoom calls for meetings.

Discussion: Member George Sarver volunteered to update the laptop for Association use. President Nolan agreed to consult with him so they can determine if it is possible to upgrade it so it will be adequate for uses intended by the Association.

New Business

- Introduction of New Board Members

New members of the La Porte County Master Gardeners Association Executive Board, elected at the Nov. 3, 2022 business meeting, were introduced. They are:

- Carol Nolan, President
- Susan Kieffer, Treasurer
- Ann Klosinski, Communications Co-Secretary
- Steve Zolvinski, Recording Co-Secretary
- Joan Kintzele, Education Committee

- 2023 Membership Application and Collection of Dues

Members were informed that 2023 membership applications and \$20 annual dues are due to the Association by Jan. 31, 2023. Applications and dues were collected at the meeting; otherwise, they can be submitted to the Extension Office.

- Discussion of April Awards Banquet

Treasurer Susan Kieffer noted that except for the April Awards Banquet, August annual picnic & the December holiday dinner, there are 9 monthly meetings. She suggested the Association continue to hold the other business & workshop meetings at Bethany Lutheran Church rather than at the fairgrounds Small Projects Building, since the church is a “clean, safe place and the parking lot is cleared of snow in winter.”

Discussion: Also mentioned as a possible venue was the La Porte County Public Library main location in La Porte. However, it was noted the library does not allow food and drinks for Association hospitality and closes at 7:45 p.m., which might not leave enough time to finish Association meetings.

Along with this discussion item, President Nolan announced she needed help in organizing the April Awards Banquet & the Speakers Bureau needs to decide on and retain a speaker. Awards will be presented to members promoted to a higher Master Gardener level; however, no new members will be inducted since there was not a class in 2022. President Nolan will consult with Extension Office Manager Kathy Ulman to coordinate this matter. Also, an annual membership directory needs to be drafted and printed.

Motion made by Treasurer Kieffer to continue Association business meetings at the Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G Street, La Porte.

- Seconded by Linda Hough
- Approved by unanimous voice vote

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

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

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

_____ **OPEN**

Garden Show

_____ **OPEN**

- Discussion of 2024 Spring Garden Show
President Nolan corrected agenda item to discussion of 2024 Garden Show, as the 2023 show was cancelled due to administrative changes at Extension.
Discussion: President Nolan is the Garden Show chair and is seeking a co-chair; a committee must also be formed for planning. Date is set for March 16, 2024 and President Nolan will take initiative to reserve the Michigan City High School for the event.
- Discussion of 2023 Builders Association Show
Donna Pouzar, project leader for the Association's presence at the 2023 Home and Lifestyle Expo sponsored by the La Porte County Builders Association announced it will be March 4 and 5 at the Blue Chip Casino Hotel in Michigan City. She was seeking members to sign up for two-hour shifts at an Association question-and-answer table.

Motion made by Project Leader Donna Pouzar confirming the La Porte County Master Gardener Association will participate in the 2023 Home and Lifestyle Expo March 4 and 5 at the Blue Chip Casino Hotel Spa in Michigan City.

- Seconded by Susan Kieffer
- Approved by unanimous voice vote
- **Master Gardener History Books**
As Article 6 of the Association bylaws requires a project coordinator for the Association History Book, Donna Pouzar said she is willing to maintain the book. However, she wanted to ascertain if the Association still wanted to continue this activity. The book consists of newspaper clippings and other informational items regarding Association's activities as a valuable record for future Association members.
Discussion: It was agreed a physical record of Association history must be maintained as information on Facebook and other digital platforms can easily disappear. Current volumes of the history go as far back as 1996 and are stored in the La Porte County Extension office room formerly used for the Master Gardener Hotline, now occupied by Walt Sell, state Agriculture & Natural Resources Assistant Program Leader.

Other Business: Master Gardener Classes. As Extension Educator Azad Chahal has resigned, there was a discussion concerning how to recruit and train new members to the Association. At various events, the Association had a sign-up sheet informing interested people about a February 2023 class. The class has been cancelled due to lack of an Educator to organize it. Prospective students/members signed up to be notified of an upcoming class on a sheet at Farmers Market, the Sunflower Fair & other events, but the lists cannot be located to update them on the situation. Carol Nolan will try to find the sheets. As an alternative, interested persons from La Porte County should be informed they can attend training classes at either St. Joseph or Porter counties and upon completion can join the La Porte County Association.

Adjournment As no other business came before the meeting, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

Motion was made by Linda Hough to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Donna Pouzar and approved by unanimous voice vote.

The next membership meeting will be a workshop on Feb. 2, 2023 at Bethany Lutheran Church, 102 G Street, La Porte.

EDUCATION



**Michiana
MASTER GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION**

“Think Spring”



4th ANNUAL GARDEN EXPO

Saturday, February 25, 2023

8:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m. EST

Northern Indiana Event Center

21565 Executive Parkway

Elkhart, IN 46514

Tickets \$10 at the door or on our website michianamastergardeners.com



David L. Culp, Keynote Speaker from Brandywine Cottage in Pennsylvania will be talking about year-round beauty in the garden.

Speakers, Workshops, Food, Vendors, Door Prizes, Silent Auction

“Like” us on Facebook: @MichianaMasterGardeners Visit our Website: michianamastergardeners.com

Michiana Master Gardeners' Association holds this event in cooperation with Purdue Extension.

Please see <http://www.michianamastergardeners.com> for more information.

If you are in need of accommodations to attend this event, please email nborkhol@purdue.edu or call Purdue Extension - Elkhart County at 574-533-0554 by February 10, 2023

Purdue University is an affirmative action, equal access/equal opportunity institution.

Master Gardener Basic Class

Click on link below to find upcoming trainings.
If you click on the training, you will see more details about that session.

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/events/categories/2023-purdue-mg-basic-training/>

Trainings in our area

Spring 2023 EMG Basic Training - Porter County - 02/7/2023 - 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Central
Spring 2023 EMG Basic Training - St. Joseph County - 02/15/23 - 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Statewide Virtual Purdue EMG Basic Training - 2023 - 02/07/23 - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Eastern

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Builders Association of La Porte County 2023 Home and Lifestyle Expo

By: Donna Pouzar

Once again, we are participating in the Builders' Association of La Porte County Home and Lifestyle Expo on Saturday, March 4th and Sunday, March 5th at the Blue Chip Casino in the Hotel Event Center. The show is open on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There are three 2-hour shifts each day with 3 Master Gardeners per shift answering questions from attendees and, maybe, promoting our 2024 Garden Show.



There are a few openings available for the shifts indicated below thanks to many of you who signed up at the January meeting. If you are interested, please give me a call or email me.

Saturday, March 4	10:00-Noon – 1 slot open
	Noon-2:00 p.m. – 1 slot open
	2:00-4 :00 p.m. – 1 slot open
Sunday, March 5	2:00-4:00 - 2 slots open

This is a great time to start getting your volunteer hours early.

INTERESTING FOLK LORE

Thunder any time in February means frost in May!

EXTENSION NEWS

Until a new ANR is hired for La Porte, Nikky Witkowski, Extension Educator, ANR - Porter County and Mary Komenas, Extension Educator, CD, La Porte County will be helping us out approving hours and answering MG questions.

Nikky's contact information is:
nikky@purdue.edu - 219-465-3555

Mary's contact information is:
mfoell@purdue.edu - 219-324-9407

Volunteer Hours for 2022

By: Mary Komenas, Extension Educator, Community Development

This is a friendly reminder to be sure to login to your account in the Extension Master Gardener Manager website and record all of your volunteer and educational hours for 2022. In order to receive awards at the annual banquet, please record your hours by **Wednesday, February 8, 2023**. Eligibility for Master Gardener levels of Awards will be calculated through the MG Manager system.

We truly value all your contributions to the Purdue Extension Master Gardener Program in La Porte County. We hope to see you at Master Gardener meetings and many times throughout 2023.

We will look forward to your "helping others grow."

FEBRUARY GARDEN CALENDAR

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Check water levels in cut flowers daily.
- Check stored produce and flower bulbs for rot, shriveling, or excess moisture. Discard any damaged items.
- Most houseplants require less water in the winter because growth is slow or stopped. Check the soil for dryness before watering.
- Move houseplants to brighter windows, but don't place plants in drafty places or against cold windowpanes.
- Potted spring-flowering bulbs forced into early blooming can make good gifts for a sweetheart. Keep these plants in a bright, cool location for longer-lasting blooms. Forced bulbs make poor garden flowers, and you should discard them as blooms fade.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)

- Order seeds before it's too late for this year's planting.
- Sketch your garden plans. Remember to include plants to replace or replant crops that you will harvest in spring or early summer.
- Prepare or repair lawn and garden tools for the upcoming season.
- Start seeds indoors for cool-season vegetables so they will be ready to transplant to the garden early in the season. You should start broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage seeds five to seven weeks prior to transplanting.
- Test leftover garden seed for germination. Place 10 seeds between moist paper toweling or cover with a thin layer of soil. Keep seeds warm and moist. If fewer than six seeds germinate, then purchase fresh seed.

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)

- Choose appropriate plant species and cultivars, and begin drawing your landscape plans.
- Cut branches of forsythia, pussy willow, crabapple, quince, honeysuckle, and other early spring-flowering plants to force them into bloom indoors. Place the branches in warm water, and set them in a cool location.
- Check mulches, rodent shields, salt/wind screens, and other winter plant protections to make sure they are still in place.
- Prune landscape plants (except early spring bloomers that should be pruned after flowers fade). Birches, maples, dogwoods, and other heavy sap bleeders can be pruned in early summer to avoid the sap flow, although bleeding is not harmful to the tree.
- Delay pruning fruit plants until 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 _____ Julie Goetz

Purdue Extension Office ___324-9407

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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