

One kind word can warm
three winter months.

Japanese Proverb

Garden Thyme

January 2023

<https://extension.purdue.edu/porter>

Volume 9, Issue 1



Extension Master Gardener Program
Helping Others Grow

New Program to Train Master Gardeners Starts in February

Purdue University is now accepting applications for a Winter Master Gardeners Program. If gardening is your passion, then consider this accelerated program which will be held twice a week for seven weeks. The classes will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, starting February 7, 2023 and end March 23, 2023.

The program will cover core topics such as: weed identification and control, plant science, soils and plant nutrition, plant diseases and diagnosis, woody or-
namentals, herbaceous ornamentals, insect's identification and control, vegeta-
ble and fruit gardening, pesticides safety and alternatives, lawn care, animal
pests and invasive species.

Applications and payment are due January 19, 2023. The cost is \$200. The num-
ber of participants is limited and on a first come, first-served basis. By success-
fully completing the Master Gardeners class you have an opportunity to join the

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Master Gardeners Association. This associ-
ation is a community
of volunteers who
work to help others
grow better gardens.

Share this information
with your gardener
friends!



WINTER MASTER GARDENERS PROGRAM

DETAILS:

Tuesdays and Thursdays

February 7 to March 23, 2023

5:30 until 8:30 p.m., CST

155 Indiana Ave, Valparaiso, IN,
Room 102A

CONTACT:

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Celebrating PCMG&A Accomplishments!

By Suzanna Tudor
PCMG Class of 2002

Master Gardeners met for their November annual meeting, Wednesday evening, November 9 at the Westchester Library, Chesterton. Milestone awards were presented, Volunteer of the Year 2022 announced and a tasty potluck was enjoyed.

Outgoing President Albers was acknowledged for his three years of leadership to the organization. He expressed his thanks and congratulated all for maintaining their active status. "Without all of you we could not do all that we have been able to do, especially during these last three years of pandemic," stated President Albers.

Congratulations to those earning the following Purdue Extension:

Certified MG

Gordana Gerbic
Jennifer Hawkins
Frank Lizak
Leslie Tyburski

Margaret Mudd with her Advanced MG award.



Advanced MG

Frank Lizak
Margaret Mudd
Leslie Tyburski

Advanced MG

Joanne Adank
Sheri Gow
Jamie Lucchini
Dale Manuel
Bonnie Girton



Advanced MG

Gold 1,000 Hours
Gerry Lehmann

Advanced MG
Gold 2,000 Hours
Janet Magnuson

Janet Magnuson receives her Advanced MG Gold award for 2,000 volunteer hours from County Extension Director, Annetta Jones.



Outgoing president, James W. Albers, admires a beautiful orchid, a gift of appreciation for his years of leadership. Thank you, Jim!

expressed his thanks and congratulated all for maintaining their active status. "Without all of you we could not do all that we have been able to do, especially during these last three years of pandemic," stated President Albers.

Thank you to Membership Co-chairs, Gloria Notaro and Liz Nobles, "hostess with the mostest" duo.



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**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR
2022**

Kathy Ruble



November PCMGA Meeting
Presentation by Jim Albers, President

In the last several years, we have recognized one individual who has made significant and enduring contributions to PCMGA and who symbolizes our motto and mission in “Helping Others Grow!” PCMGA is much like the plants we treasure. Plants either grow and thrive or they wither and die. They grow through nourishment. These last three years of pandemic-induced social drought have stressed PCMGA. We have had only one Gardening Show since 2018. Yet, PCMGA kept growing despite the stress because we received the required nourishment.

The Volunteer of the Year 2022 has been a Master Gardener for 15 years and chaired the Education Committee since 2012. While education has always been central to our mission, it has also been the critical element in the long-term success of PCMGA. Can you imagine a Gardening Show without educational speakers? They are always a major draw. Identifying speakers who are both informative and engaging, and, yes, reasonably affordable, has been key to successful Gardening Shows. In the pandemic drought of the last several years, when we could not have Gardening Shows, we have had nationally recognized speakers in the spring to speak via Zoom.

Not only have the education hours which usually follow our business meetings provided all of us with nourishment, the education field trips have been especially imaginative in the last several years. This past year has featured “Walk and Talks” to several area gardens, a visit to a vineyard and winery and a visit to Pinney-Purdue to learn about the use of drones in agriculture. Throughout the years, educational bus excursions have nourished our social relationships, as well as general botanical knowledge.

When Philanthropy—another way by which we help others grow--needed leadership several years ago, she stepped in as a co-leader to help lead that phase of our mission, overseeing grants and scholarships to help other organization grow their own gardens. These grants were continued during the pandemic drought.

She has been a “go to” PCMGA volunteer in other ways, serving on the Strategic Planning, Appropriations, and Finance Committee, participated in auditing our financial records, looking at alternative meeting sites by visiting each site to evaluate its suitability, and by helping to nurture a book club to emerge as another part of Master Gardener education.

Finally, and by no means least, during the last three years as the Executive Board has met via Zoom, and as we have had hybrid membership meetings, she has served as the back-up Zoom host when LuAnn Troxel could not be present.

Although there might well be other contributions to PCMGA, certainly these are more than sufficient to recognize Kathy Ruble as the PCMGA 2022 Volunteer of the Year!



Kathy Ruble receives the 2022 Volunteer of the Year Award for her dedicated, loyal and exemplary service to PCMGA. To symbolize appreciation for her leadership and service, she was presented a special piece of glass art. Thank you, Kathy!

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A Word from Frank Lizak, Our New PCMGGA President

I am looking forward to an exciting year, working alongside the wonderful and enthusiastic members we have in this organization. Some I have met; many more to meet and get to know.

My maternal grandmother and paternal grandfather were the most influential people piquing my interest in ag and horticulture. I took the leap and completed the Purdue Master Gardener course in spring 2021, after wanting to for many years. I joined PCMGGA in June.

What drew me to the course was the science behind growing plants. My interest is in epidemiology and why plants are having problems, an ongoing learning process.



Photo credit @ Christa Wasilewski

I really got into gardening after buying my first house with my main interest in vegetable crops. I turn a good yield every year and also plant a small plot of corn, mostly in honor of my farmer grandfather.

My wonderful wife, Beth and I have been married nearly 36 years, and have one daughter Raegan, who is married with one daughter, Willow, 4. They live in Wisconsin but visit often. It's nice getting to see her as she grows. And, of course, I am getting her involved in the gardens at my house whenever they come.

Career wise, I am retiring from the Portage Police Department after 27 years on March 1, 2023. I am a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. and have been in public service since my discharge, serving in roles as a medic and volunteer firefighter, and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Outdoor activities, bicycling, water sports, scuba diving, photography and cooking are some hobbies. I enjoy working on small engines and fixing them. Like plants, if it's "broke," I want to fix it.

During the last year and a half I have been learning about this association and getting to know and work with the Purdue Extension office, a good group of people there. Thank you to our Extension Educator, Nikki Witkowski, for making the Master Gardener course enjoyable and welcoming. I look forward to working with the extension office, gaining knowledge and guidance.

I am available to you. If you have a question or have an idea to improve PCMGGA, let me know! I welcome your input and participation in our organized events and programs. It is the knowledge we have learned through our experiences, and the education and scientific research through Purdue University that collectively our group continues to grow, and in that, we can live up to our motto of "Helping Others Grow".

Thank you for your confidence as I take on this role as your president. Even though this role has a title, I want you to know, it is all of YOU, who have made this organization what it is today, and where it goes moving forward. Together, WE can accomplish all our goals, activities, and continued successes.

Best regards and a successful year to all,
Frank Lizak, 2023 President
Porter County Master Gardener Association

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We are so pleased to be back and are enthusiastic about extending a personal welcome to you on January 21, 2023! We've themed this year's Show "Let's Gather Around Gardening." We want to emphasize how thrilled we are to be able to get together again and celebrate our love for growing things. We invite you to join us once again to learn and to grow.



Ann Cierniak, 2023 Porter County Master Gardeners Gardening Show Chair

Let's Gather Around Gardening

17th ANNUAL GARDENING SHOW

January 21, 2023

Porter County Master Gardeners Association



HELPING HANDS NEEDED!

Even if broken—as Terry Marsch displays in this Gardening Show photo from 2007.



Please look at the online sign-up schedule here: <https://signup.com/go/RqzHJJN> and fill out a slot that works for/appeals to you. Thanks, LuAnn Troxel

8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST
Free Door Prizes
Free Parking

Admission at the door:
\$10 Cash or Check
Children under 12 Free

Location:
215 East Division Rd
Valparaiso, IN 46383

Highlights:

- **Seed & Bulb Exchange** - a great opportunity to collect, save and trade seeds and bulbs from our gardens and communities.
- **Presentations** by regional and local gardening speakers.
- **Demonstrations** - hands on "how to" topics on basic gardening skills.
- **The Happening Place** in Building 3 where there are lots of things *TO DO!*
- More than 100 **Exhibitor and Vendor Booths** with products and services for and about gardens and gardening.
- Garden **Photography Contest**.
- Recycled **Yard and Garden Tools** and Decor.
- Gently used **Gardening Books and Magazines**. Bargains begin at \$0.25 each.
- **Children's Corner** educational activities
- **Catered Dining** service
- The chance to win one of **Ten \$50 Cash Door Prizes**
- **Discounted Hotel Rate** for overnight guests
- **Suzie's Café** catering

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The Perennial Plant of the Year® program began in 1990 to showcase a perennial that is a standout among its competitors. Perennials chosen for this honor are suitable for a wide range of growing climates, require low maintenance, have multiple-season interest, and are relatively pest/disease-free.

2023 Perennial Plant of the Year®

Rudbeckia 'American Gold Rush'



At the height of summer, 'American Gold Rush' black-eyed Susan turns up the volume for a long season of dazzling color right up to autumnal frosts. The bright golden-yellow flowers feature arching rays and a reddish halo surrounding dark chocolate cones. Three-inch flowers blanket the compact plant, only 22-27 inches tall with a broader width to 40 inches if given room to grow.

The green leaves and stems are covered in hairs, which gives them a silvery cast—on sunny days, peeking through the blooms to the leaves is a luminous silver-and-gold treat. More than just boosting the ornamental

show, the hairy foliage is resistant to Septoria leaf spot—a debilitating fungal disease that causes unsightly black spotting and premature seasonal decline on some black-eyed Susans. 'American Gold Rush' is a reliable hardy perennial and a great substitute for popular, brassier 'Goldsturm', which is highly susceptible to leaf spotting.

'American Gold Rush' is a stunning focal point in perennial borders and meadows and is brilliant when massed in public or corporate landscapes. Butterflies caper over the blooms, and songbirds feast on the plentiful seed long after the flowers

have passed. The seedheads provide winter interest too. Garden companions are many, including alliums, asters, sages, and native grasses such as little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) and prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*).

'American Gold Rush', is also a 2020 AAS National Winner--one of the first winners from the collaborative PPA and AAS perennial trial. To top off the credentials of this award-winning selection, the National Garden Bureau has named 2023 the Year of Rudbeckia in their perennial class.

Article provided by the
Perennial Plant Association

Hardiness: USDA Zones 4 to 9; AHS Heat Zones 9-4

Light: Full sun to partial shade

Size: 22-27 inches tall and up to 40 inches wide

Origin: Originated from open-pollinated seed sown from the seed parent *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *deamii*. Introduced by Brent Horvath, Intrinsic Perennial Gardens, Hebron, Illinois. 2020 All-America Selec-

tions Winner. *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *deamii* is native to the central states of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio.

Soil: Average, well-drained soils. Adaptable to clay, alkaline or acid pH, and gravelly soils. May flop in rich, fertile soils.

Maintenance: Low-maintenance perennial plant. Cut back in late winter to early spring. Good heat-and-drought resistance once established. Reseeding does occur. Divide as needed to maintain robust habit.

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How Seed Cleaning Led to a Turnip Greens & Biscuit Trip

Turnip greens are part of the cruciferous vegetable family, as are kale and broccoli. They are high in nutrients and low in calories.



Both the root and the leaves of the turnip are edible, but turnip greens refer specifically to the stem and leafy green part of the plant.

By Suzanna Tudor
PCMG Class of 2002

There are plenty of pluses to seed cleaning. After a recent November seed-cleaning and lunch at Culver's, Marlene Vanderlin announced she had turnip greens if anyone wanted some. Sure, I would! Now what to do with all these luscious greens, I asked myself. So I looked up one of my favorite recipe peeps, Brenda Gantt, a southern cook from Andalusia, Alabama. And of course she had one, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=129126882172799>.

Here is how I became acquainted with Brenda. I was trying to find a recipe for making biscuits like my sister-in-laws would tell me how their mother would make them. My mother-in-law was from Oklahoma and had many southern cooking ways. I was told that Mom Tudor would begin with a big bowl of self-rising flour, add buttermilk and somehow it would magically become biscuits! I always wondered how she did that. The answer was found in Brenda Gantt's videos on YouTube and Facebook. It's quite an amazing feat, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=754739671756157>. Brenda soared to fame during the COVID-19 pandemic when her homemade biscuit how-to video went viral.

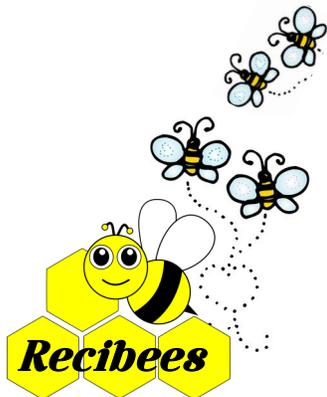
I had the chance to visit her last year, after talking my sister into taking a road trip. Sister Shirley has a place in Panama City Beach, FL—not too far from Andalusia, Alabama, where Brenda lives and maintains a Bed and Breakfast called the Cottle House. It's a small cottage next to her home. I just wanted to see the town of my favorite recipe person, who not only shares delicious and easy recipes but dishes out a lot of love and how to live life too. When we drove by, she was out watering her plants. What luck! Yes, she's also a plant person, fellow gardeners. I got a chance to visit with her, and she even offered to take a selfie of us.



Brenda Gantt and Suzanna Tudor,
Andalusia, AL, February, 2022.

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By Suzanna Tudor

PCMG Class of 2002



Marlene Vanderlin offered turnip greens at a meeting. I took her up on it! Here are my chopped turnip greens and roots ready for Brenda Gantt's recipe. Read my full story on page 7.

— Suzanna



Tip: make sure you use skinless sausage. I cut mine in half as not so big.

Turnip Green Soup

Ingredients

- 1 pound link sausage (skinless), sliced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 quarts water
- 2 (11.7 oz.) frozen turnip greens with diced turnip roots (or fresh if you have them like I did)
- 2 (15.8 oz.) cans Great Northern beans, drained
- 1 (1.4 oz.) package dry vegetable soup mix
- 2 tsp. chicken bouillon
- 2 tsp. creole seasoning
- Dash of hot sauce (optional)

By Brenda Gantt

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Directions

1. In a skillet sauté sausage and onion in olive oil.
2. In a large pot add 2 quarts water and all remaining ingredients, including sausage and onions.
3. Cook on low heat for 1 hour so all flavors blend together.
4. Yum, it is good ya'll!



Not many turnips and small, but add flavor.



Yum, it was good ya'll.

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WHAT HAPPENS DURING DORMANCY?

During dormancy, plants go inactive and conserve their energy until better weather conditions for plants present themselves. Plants are triggered into dormancy because of cold weather, less hours of sunlight exposure, shorter days, and expectations developed from previous winters and seasonal cycles.

During the winter, your dormant plants aren't actually dead, they just suspend their growth and expansion. The roots and core of the plant are still very much alive, just waiting for weather that is more suited for their growth and expansion. It's partially about surviving during harsh weather conditions, and partially about conserving nutrients.

Though growth stops, photosynthesis slows, and respiration slows, that doesn't mean that your plants are not hard at work. The work they do during dormancy is vital to their survival, and the way they use nutrients to thrive during the upcoming growing seasons.

During dormancy, your plants break down and re-make proteins to use for extra growth in the spring. Plants are also hard at work maintaining and strengthening cell membranes, which will come in handy when they begin to expand and multiply when the weather changes.

Nearly all plants go dormant during the winter, whether they are outdoors in the garden or indoor houseplants. The rest period is crucial to the plant's survival and their ability to regrow each year.

Article provided by gardeningchannel.com



Garden Thyme

is a publication of the Indiana
Porter County Master Gardeners Association
www.pcgarden.info

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Suzanna Tudor, Co-Editor
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Earn volunteer credit for contributing to the newsletter;
contact the Extension Office for more information.
219-465-3555

See educational videos of former **PCMGA Gardening Show** seminars found at pcgarden.info on the Member Pages.

The **Purdue** website has added a link to numerous on-line education opportunities:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/education-hours-opportunities/>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/events/>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/continuedhours/>

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