



Garden Thyme

July 2023

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

Volume 9, Issue 4



Frank Lizak
PCMGA President

Good day Master Gardeners,

As we enter July, our gardens are in-- after an “iffy” start. We put all this time into gardening and maintenance to keep our plants healthy. We do this because at our core; we love gardening. But as Extension Master Gardeners, we also share our knowledge with the community through proven scientific practices established by Purdue University, “to help others grow” and enjoy this hobby we love.

As we move past the Garden Walk for 2023, I want to take the time to send out a sincere, *Thank You* to Marty Seroczynski, 2023 Garden Walk Chair,

and her committee, plus all the volunteers.

With July, comes our next event, the Porter County Fair. The sign up for the “Ask a Master Gardener” booth is available. Please look at the sign-up sheet and volunteer some time for the PCMGA. It’s fun, and you meet and interact with people and simply talk about a topic we enjoy-- gardening. I hope to see you there!

Lastly, I just want you all to know, I see all the work that goes on behind the scenes to put on these events. I am humbled by the dedication, but I am proud at the same time, watching our members working together. You keep this association functioning and providing a positive impact on the community.

With the guidance and assistance of the Purdue Extension office and our Extension Educator, Nikky Witkowski, I believe the Porter County Master Gardener Association is the best volunteer organization in Porter County.

Keep up the great work!!



For information regarding the Porter County Fair Flower and Horticulture competition for amateur flower growers and designers, click here:

<https://www.portercountyfair.com/flowers-and-horticulture>

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PCMGA GARDEN WALK 2023

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

Seven Beautiful Gardens

Northwest Indiana's premier garden walk was not only pretty, but it was smart: all about education and sharing. Our homeowners shared their knowledge, and Master Gardeners were in the gardens to help answer questions.



Top left to bottom:

*Tom and Gina Hanson
Danette Lashbrook
Ken and Debby
Rosenbaum*

Top right to bottom:

*Diana and Larry Chupp
Susan and Stuart Franzen
Val (Tim, not pictured)
McGary*



Marty Seroczynski presents Lisa Barton (Kirk, not pictured) with a stone.



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Thoughts About the Garden Walk

By Marty Seroczynski,
2023 Garden Walk Chair

It's funny how one gets gardens for a walk. One was referred by a friend who lives on the same block; one by Chuck Roth after I called him asking for help. Three were suggested by our members. One I found by driving around, and the last one I have been watching for years and saw the amazing changes the owners had made. I, of course, have no shame in pulling in someone's driveway and knocking on their door, or just walking around. One day someone may just call the cops, and our president will have to bail me out. But seriously, I have a list started and other gardens to check out. In the past two years, I have visited many gardens. Some I have rejected for various reasons. What makes a good candidate for a garden walk? Not everyone sees things the same way. I like diversity. I have also seen some homes that have mostly evergreens with blues, greens, blue greens and yellows that are amazing but, unfortunately, on a road that can be dangerous. And with four hundred people crossing both ways, it becomes worrisome. So there are a lot of things to consider when looking. My list will be turned over to someone to carry on with their choice of what a candidate for a garden walk should be.



"We want to thank the over 600 attendees of our PCMGA Garden Walk 2023! It couldn't happen without you! Thanks to our amazing volunteers and super special thanks to the 7 garden owners that invested so much care in preparing such lovely places for us to see!" —Porter County Master Gardeners, Facebook.



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Congratulations to our Philanthropy Recipients!



Alyssa Suprenant is majoring in Chemistry and Environmental Science. She is the deserving winner of the PCMGA scholarship worth \$1000 toward her education and projects with nanoplastics.



Kathy Ruble and Marty Seroczynski, co-chairs of the PCMGA Philanthropy Committee, presented a \$1000 scholarship and nine \$300 grant awards on May 10 at the Westchester Public Library – Baugher Center.

Scholarship Recipient, Alyssa Suprenant, is a sophomore at Valparaiso University, majoring in Chemistry/Environmental Science. Alyssa's projects include the effects of nanoplastics on plant growth and county stream restoration. (Nanoplastics are pollutants that are less than 100nm in size in natural environments that result from the fragmentation of larger plastic debris.)

Grants were awarded to these nine organizations:

1. American Heritage Girls, St. Patrick School, Chesterton: improve vegetable garden; produce goes to Table of Plenty and shelters.
2. Bonner Senior Center, Portage: materials to repair/replace aging raised beds at the center; produce to Portage Food Pantry.
3. Duneland Garden Club, Chesterton: enhance Dogwood Park by adding winterberry shrubs for wildlife.
4. Gabis Arboretum, Purdue Northwest, Valpo: two projects to introduce native ephemerals and woodland plants to replace invasive species.
5. Girl Scout Troop 30410: revitalize community garden at Nativity of Our Savior Parish, Portage. Produce donated to food pantry and soup kitchen.
6. NEO New Vistas High School, Portage: small greenhouse for established horticulture program.
7. Ogden Dunes Beautification Project: add plants, bulbs and shrubs around the revitalized town Fire Department sign.
8. Portage Christian School: fencing around the established garden run by Agricultural Science Class. Produce donated to the Portage Food Pantry and food insecure families at the school.
9. St. John's United Church, Chesterton: amendments and blackberry bushes for their established community garden. Produce donated to Westchester Pantry and Jacobs Table.



Girl Scout Troop 30410 will donate produce to the food pantry and soup kitchen

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Hamstra Gardens

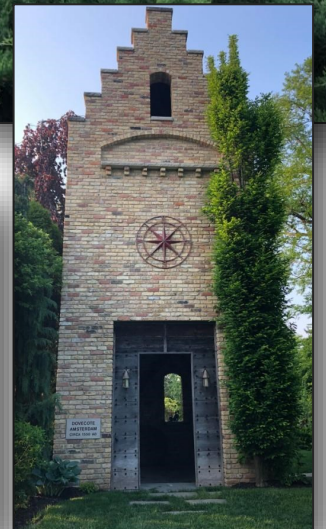
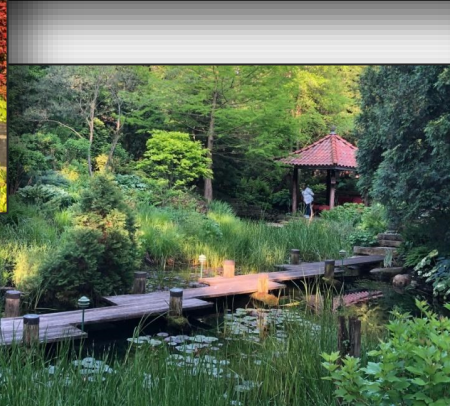
By **Suzanna Tudor**
PCMG Class of 2002

On a perfect May 18th evening a group of MGs received instruction from Extension Educator Nikky Witkowski and toured the beautifully designed and landscaped Hamstra Gardens in Wheatfield, IN.

The present 6 ½ acres began in 1960 on one acre owned by Wilbert and Peggy Hamstra. Hamstra came from a farming background and always wanted a formal garden.

Hamstra Gardens started in a corn-field, with the addition of a pond, trees and carefully selected plants. Through the past 63 years, family members, Landscape architect, Lawrence Hoyle, Purdue horticulture grad, Joyce Bierma-Thomason, and groundskeeper, Jeff Scheurich, have added their hard work, expertise and skills in developing the grounds into what it is today.

Wilbert Hamstra, aka "Wilb," being in the construction business, and inspired by other world architecture and gardens, has also added a temple, chapel, tower, walls and gate hardscapes to compliment the garden.



Nikky Witkowski points out boxwood leaf miner damage and confirms, finding larval stage inside leaf.

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Summer Bus Tour!!!



By Wilma Willard, PCMG Class of 2011

May 25th was a special day for those who trekked to southwest Michigan in a bus to Twixwood Nursery in Berrien Springs and to shop at Varner's Greenhouse and Vite Greenhouse, both in Niles.

Twixwood is a friendly wholesale grower of groundcovers, perennials, carex, and ornamental grasses. They grow groundcovers in flats and perennials in pots. Kindly, they offered our bus tour attendees wholesale price on perennials that day! We were grateful for Homer, our informative tour guide. Owner Tom Kimmel is to be thanked, as well.

Twixwood has five locations, one million square feet of poly space, 360 acres, 60 acres of field growing area, and natural gas at all five of the locations with poly houses. About a third of their container area is outside and unprotected, something possible because of lake-effect milder winter temperatures and lake-effect snow cover. Twixwood is along the St Joseph River and enjoys sandy loam soil. They have 80 full time year-around employees and 80 others who usually work from March through November.



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Do Yourself a Favor

Register for the State Conference in October

Kristine Sandrick, PCMG Class of 2014

One of the most rewarding experiences I've enjoyed as a Purdue Master Gardener is the statewide conference. Typically hosted biannually by one of the state's MG chapters – alternating with the biannual international conference – this year's event is planned for Friday and Saturday, October 6 and 7, at Purdue West Lafayette. I've got a conflict with somethings I already have on my calendar, but I want to figure out how to do it all.

To me, the State Master Gardener Conference is worth the time, a bit of money and effort.

In the past, I was happy to participate in conferences hosted by Tippecanoe and Hendricks County chapters. Local chapter members were thoughtful in marketing, organizing and loading educational programs into their programs. I was impressed.

There were tours of vineyards, members' gardens, lectures and hands-on workshops, trade shows, dinners and awards. Speakers I learned from included Professor, author and advocate for the natural habitat, Doug Tallamy, and Steve Foltz, Head of Horticulture at Cincinnati Zoo – one of the preeminent trial and seed/plant conservation programs in the country.

You can go it alone, and you'll be sure to connect with gardeners from across the state, or team up and share car and possible hotel expenses with your favorite PCMG members. Either way, you'll be glad you took the time to enjoy the experiences with happy gardeners from across the state.

For more information: <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/2023stateconference/>

SAVE THE DATE!



2023 PURDUE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER STATE CONFERENCE

Back Together Again

October 6-7, 2023

PURDUE CAMPUS - West Lafayette, Indiana



More information at
<https://bit.ly/2023EMGStateConf>

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EXTENSION CONNECTION

What's Going On With My Plants?

July 5, 2023 6:30pm - 7:30pm at the Westchester Baugher Library Center

Join Master Gardener and Purdue Extension Educator, Nikky Witkowski, for an interactive program about what your plants are trying to tell you. Nikky can answer your questions about vegetables, fruit, turf and lawn, trees and shrubs, as well as annuals and perennials. This program is for Adults 18 and Up.



Registration begins June 28. Register online or by calling 219-926-9080.

Nikky Witkowski
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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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