

May 2005

Roots and Shoots

Monroe County Master Gardener Association, Inc.

From the President

Volume 19, Issue 5



Brrrrr! I am certainly glad that I listened to that old gardener's tale about planting annuals on Mother's Day! Those warm days in March and early April had me convinced that summer was just around the corner. Mother Nature certainly surprised me!

The perennial question (pardon the pun) is – what to plant? Definitely some Callibrachoa – million bells, also some Angelonia – summer mist snapdragon. These have become widely available in the last couple of years. Angelonia has great vase-life for those of you who like to cut flowers. Let me know if you have a great resource for interesting plants. I have been looking for something new in the tall and spiky department. Still looking - but hopeful about New Zealand flax (Phormium). I love giving a new plant an audition!

Just about all the perennials that are going to make it have jumped up in my garden. The last ones up are usually Platycodon, balloon flower, and I do not have enough sunlight to support them. Some of the hostas are huge and some are tiny. I suppose this is a least partly reflective of soil temperature in their microclimate. Now, I need to start to get busy looking for replacement plants. I neglected my garden last fall and will quite literally pay the price for that this Spring. I'll hold off on some replacements with the hope that I'll be able to pick up a few at the Master Gardener plant swap on the 24th.

Now is a great time to pot up divisions. Nothing looks quite so sad at a plant exchange as a poor wilted thing with transplant shock. Pot your plants up early for perky results! To save watering energy – plant the pots in the garden until just before the plant swap. At this time of the year, Mother Nature will do most of the watering for you!

—Mary Jane Hall

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Upcoming Events:

- May 24—Intern Class Graduation & Plant Exchange at Karst Farm Park Commons Area at 6:30 p.m.
- June 18—MCMGA Garden Walk & Picnic at selected gardens at 4-7 p.m. Additional information coming by mail.
- June 23-25—2005 Master Gardener State Conference at Pierce Middle School in Merrillville. See registration info inside.

Volunteer Opportunities Compiled by Nancy White

The central mission of Master Gardeners is to give to the community. Look through the following list, make a telephone call, and report the hours you work to Joanna Howe, 2121 I Street, Bedford, IN 47421. Joanna delights in ordering new badges and awarding them!

Location	Timing	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Garden & Nature Center	year around	various	Marcia Figueiredo, 855-2799
Templeton Garden Project	spring/fall	teaching children	Nancy White, 824-4426
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Mary Alice Parks, 988-1630
T. C. Steele SHS	seasonal	various	Steve Doty, 988-2785
Cheryl's Garden	seasonal	various	Larime Wilson, 339-9705
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens	seasonal	various	Cathy Meyer
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	inquiries and research	Dan Baugh, 349-2575
MCMGA Member Garden Tour	June 18	various	Mary Hawkins, 824-2139
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	various	Dan Baugh, 349-2575
MCMGA Leadership Project	fall	various	Mary Jane Hall, 345-3985
Monroe County Fair	July	various	Barb Baynes, 876-2354 and Esther Minnick, 876-4523
MCMGA Newsletter	year around	Writing, stapling, labeling	Helen Hollingsworth, 332-7313
MCMGA Web Site	year around	various	Barb Hays, 332-4032
Indiana State Fair Booth	August	education	Preston Gwinn, 837-9554
BGC Garden Walk	June 25 & 26	various	Marjorie Gonzales, 333-8301
Middle Way House	seasonal	various	Clara Wilson, 333-7404
Wylie House	year around	various	Sherry Brunoehler, 353-3065
Bloomington Hospitality House	bi-weekly	educate seniors	Rene Thompson, 353-3065
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard	year around	education, resource	Libby Yarnell, 355-6843
Peden Farm Day for Children	May 10 & 11	education	Joyce Peden, 876-4146
Clear Creek School	spring/on-going	Identification, education	Charlie Hawk, 824-7969

Compost Demonstration Assistant Wanted

Debbie Lorton, class of 2005, has agreed to help chair a compost demonstration at the Monroe County MGA demonstration garden at the fairgrounds. She will be comparing different compost bins and collecting data. She would like a helper and if interested please call her at 837-9635.

Compost Greenstuff Needed

If you collect your grass clippings (no chemicals), please drop them off at the fairgrounds at the MCGA garden pile behind the pine trees after May 15th. We need them for only a short while. Please call Debbie Lorton (837-9635) before you bring the grass clippings.

Hotline Help Needed

Wanted: volunteers to man the Monroe County Garden Hotline the week of June 6th through the June 10th while Dan is on vacation! A short training session will be offered to the volunteers. The suggested hours of volunteering are from 1 to 3 PM. Please call Dan if you are interested. The training will discuss resources, introduction to county extension staff, computer use, logging calls etc. This opportunity is open to anyone who has taken the MG exam.

Dan Baugh, 349-2575

Plant Labels

We have plant labels! Five hundred are assigned for the demonstration gardens at the Fairgrounds and the Cheryl Coverdale garden, but we have plenty more. Let me know how many you need. Price: 4 for \$1.

Diana Young, 339-0040

"June Is Busting Out All Over" Garden Walk and Picnic

Please join us June 18, 4:00 P.M.--7:00 P.M. for our first ever summer social! Enjoy a garden walk through three of our own MG members' gardens followed by a pitch-in picnic at Mary Hawkins' garden. Rain or shine, come one, come all and enjoy being surrounded by the beauty of nature and your garden friends. Invitations will be mailed soon with further details.

Chairperson--Mary Hawkins 824-2139 or

e-mail marywalloon@aol.com

2005 Master Gardener Class Report

by Dan Baugh

On Thursday, April 21st thirty-one individuals took the Master Gardener final exam which completed their 13 weeks of Master Gardener training that started at the end of January. The class had 37 members and 36 attended on a regular basis, eager to learn. We are hoping there will be five more individuals who will complete the final exam in the near future.

The comments about the class from the evaluations were quite positive, and most were pleased with the variety of course material covered. Most of the class members indicated that they enjoyed most of the speakers and were pleased that they were so knowledgeable.

Hopefully the class members have made some new friends, have been challenged to volunteer in their communities, and will grow with their education and experiences in gardening. This class is now ready to take on the new opportunities that their new skills and energy will allow them to do.

So others can congratulate them, please attend the upcoming Master Gardener Graduation on Tuesday, May 24th, at 6:30pm at the Karst Farm Park Commons near the Monroe County Fairgrounds.

I, personally would like to thank Gloria Noone, Jackie Claffey, Kris Terrell, the Extension office's administrative assistants and others who helped with the class. They helped with everything from planning to teaching, facilitating, mentoring, and assisting with administrative responsibilities. Of course, thanks goes to the 2005 Class members because without their interest it just wouldn't be have been possible!

We hope to have a 2006 class, so please call in names and addresses any time to our office at (812) 349-2575.

Garden Walk-Around at White River Gardens

Flowering Perennials and Late Bulbs: Wed, May 25 or Sat., May 28 10 a.m. to noon. White River Gardens

Annual Flowers and Ornamental Grasses: Thursday, August 25th, or Sat., August 27.2005, 10 a.m. to noon, White River Gardens

For directions and admission: [http:// www.indyzoo.com/](http://www.indyzoo.com/)

Dr. Mary Welch-Keesey and Steve Mayer will be leading the program. The walk-arounds are free with admission to the gardens.

Pre-register at least a week ahead by calling 317-275-9305, EXT 286 or email iman@purdue.edu

Next meeting: May 24 at 6:30 p.m. at Karst Farm Park Commons Area

Easy Spring Gardening Chores by Marilyn Brinley

There are many jobs to be done both inside and outside at this time of year. However, the jobs do not all need to be backbreaking, tedious and tiring. In fact, acting now can help to cut labor later on in the year and some can even help to reduce pesticide use.

Every spring I tour my garden looking for signs of insect larvae and their “nests”. Bag worms are easy to spot as their bags hang like Christmas tree ornaments from the bare branches of trees and shrubs. It is a simple matter to pull off the offending bags and to dispose of them.

Likewise, the Eastern Tent Caterpillar eggs are relatively easy to spot before the trees have leafed out. The egg mass looks something like hardened syrup girdling the branch. It is quite simple to rub off the egg mass with one’s fingers. If you happen to be a bit squeamish, you can wear gloves for this job.

See, already we have taken care of two pests and used no chemicals. While we are examining our trees and shrubs we might as well take note of the general health and growth of these important landscape ingredients.

Are there branches that have been damaged by last year’s brood of cicadas or by the weather? Are there branches that are growing in an undesirable direction? It is especially important to take care of the ‘watersprouts’ as they are weak growth and often only serve to crowd out other branches. In case the class unit on trees and pruning was too long ago, watersprouts are the upright branches that grow out of branches. Is the plant just generally weedy looking and could benefit from a judicious trimming? Is the tree difficult to mow around because of low-hanging limbs? Has the tree or shrub slowed in its production of flowers and or fruit? Has the plant grown a bit large for its location?

All of the above questions are easy to answer when one’s vision is not obscured by the leaves. Pruning can often be done more easily before the leaves come on, but remember that trimming now will lesson the spring show of blooms. Whether to prune now or to wait until after the flowers fade is a personal decision. Of course, some trees produce copious amounts of sap and should be trimmed in mid-summer or late fall. Again, *The Indiana Master Gardener Program* book has an excellent chapter on pruning and how and when to prune each type of tree or shrub.

Now that the major landscape plants have been taken care of, it is time to move onto the landscaping itself. Are there areas that will need to be remulched? Are there areas where grass and other perennial weeds have gotten a foothold? Has trash and other debris blown into the landscaping? Is there dead plant material that needs to find its way to the compost pile? Are there signs of animal damage that needs to be repaired? Is it apparent that some perennials and or shrubs have overgrown their allotted space? If so, then the answer may be to trim back the over-large plant, to dig up and move it, perhaps dividing it in the process, to move surrounding plants, or to simply expand the bed.

Vinca Minor—Friend or Foe? By B. Rosie Lerner

Vinca minor, more likely to be known as periwinkle, creeping myrtle or just myrtle, is a commonly used trailing, mat-forming evergreen ground cover. This plant is not only grown for its attractive shiny foliage, but the common name perfectly describes the pretty bloom color. The flowers are most numerous in mid spring, but plants will re-bloom sporadically throughout the growing season. There are some cultivars selected for different bloom color and variegated foliage.

The plant grows to about six inches tall, and, though it rarely sets seed, it spreads quickly by trailing branches that root everywhere they remain in contact with moist soil. Although originally native to Europe and Asia, periwinkle has spread from where it is cultivated here in the

United States and is widely adapted and hardy throughout Indiana. Though it prefers rich, moist, fertile soil and partial shade, periwinkle will tolerate poor, dry soils and sunny exposures.

The same characteristics that make this plant so effective as a ground cover also contribute to it becoming an invasive plant. And the conditions that it particularly thrives in -- rich, moist soil and shade -- just happen to describe many natural woodland areas. Because of this potential to out compete native plants in natural areas, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources recommends that plantings be restricted to areas bordered by sidewalks, lawn and other confined places.

2005 Master Gardener State Conference by Peggy Sellers

Register now for Purdue's Second Annual Master Gardener Conference June 22-25, in Merrillville, hosted by Master Gardeners in Lake and Porter counties. All Purdue Master Gardeners, interns, and advanced Master Gardeners are invited to join us for an exciting, informative, and memorable conference. So mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Stephanie Cohen is the keynote speaker for the Friday night banquet. Professor Cohen is the Acting Director of the Landscape Arboretum at Temple University, a nationally recognized horticulturalist and contributing editor for *Country Living Gardener* magazine. Her topic is "Plants for the Front of the Perennial Border—Shorter Is Better."

Two **important changes** have been made since the first notification about this conference—location and price.

1. The new location will be at Pierce Middle School, 199 E. 70th Place, Merrillville, about a block east of Broadway, but in the same vicinity. The school is handicapped accessible.
2. The one-time fee of \$125 will apply throughout, regardless of registration date.

To register, make checks payable to Purdue University and send along with name, address, county of MG certification, phone, email, and choices for Thursday tour and Friday and Saturday breakout sessions to Purdue University, Lake County Government Center, 2293 N. Main Street, A-312, Crown Point, IN 46307

2005 Monroe County Master Gardener Program Schedule

Nancy White and Ann McEnderfer, Program Committee

Date	Program	Location
Tuesday, May 24	Graduation of Intern Class & Plant Exchange	Karst Farm Park Commons Area
Tuesday, July 19	Work Session in Fair Demonstration Garden	Fairgrounds
Tuesday, September 27*	Garden Journaling—Cathy Meyer Rose Care and Propagation	To be announced
Tuesday, November 29	Holiday Party & Carry-in Dinner Holiday Gifts in Baskets, Jars, and Spoons—Sue Berg	First United Church, 2420 E. 3rd S
Tuesday, January 24*	Trees & Reviews of Gardening Books All programs begin at 6:30 p.m.	To be announced *education hours available

Bus Tour to Missouri Botanical Garden & Rigazzi's on the Hill

The Morgan County Master Gardener Association is heading to St. Louis for a day at the Missouri Botanical Garden, a 79 acre facility featuring the Climatron, Linnean House, a maze garden and many more world-class gardens. There is a fabulous Japanese Garden, beautiful water gardens with fountains, the Kemper Center for Home Gardening with lots of great ideas, and the Lehmann Rose Garden that should be in full bloom when we visit.

The cost is \$45 for MCMGA members, and the itinerary for the day's activities is as follows:

- 6:30 a.m. Bus arrives at Marsh parking lot in Mooresville
- 7:00 a.m. Bus departs
- 11:00 a.m. Arrive at Missouri Botanical Garden. On your own to tour as you like
- 4:00 p.m. Board the bus for Rigazzi's
- 4:30 p.m. Dinner at Rigazzi
- 6:00 p.m. Board bus to return home
- 10:00 p.m. Return to Mooresville

Register for the trip by sending check made out the Morgan County Master Gardeners along with your name and telephone number to Trena Trusty, 6895 State Road 39, Martinsville, IN 46151. You may call or email Trena at 317-996-2746, trustygardener@aol.com if you have questions.

Monroe County Master Gardener Association, Inc.

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Bloomington, IN 47404

FIRST CLASS MAIL
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



May General Meeting: Tuesday, May 24th, 6:30 pm

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