Make plans now to attend the May MCMGA general meeting on Tuesday, May 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Monroe County Fairgrounds Community Building located at 5700 W. Airport Road.

Plan to come early to enjoy thirty minutes of social time and refreshments prior to the meeting. Our refreshments will be provided by Cindy Benson, Mary-Carol Paul, Laramie Wilson, Nancy Page, Amy Thompson, Mary Hoffman, Donna Terry, Dorothy Wilson, and Dale Wilkens. They will have many wonderful treats planned for us.

Master Gardener interns will have completed their classes and test, and we will have the honor to welcome and congratulate our new members.

Our featured speaker, Extension Educator Amy Thompson, will present *Farmer to Farmer—Costa Rica, Coffee, and Chocolate: Experience with Local Producers of Two of Our Favorite Foods*, a description of her trip to Costa Rica last summer and what she learned plus *Procedures for Electronically Reporting Master Gardener Hours*. This session qualifies for one education hour.

Following the meeting, we will have our popular annual plant swap, offering the opportunity to take something new home for your garden or landscape. The plant swap is fun for all gardeners. Tag or mark your plants with names and sun/shade requirements.
Member news

By Evelyn Harrell

Spending the evening of April 2 at the Be More Awards was inspirational for anyone who wants to know more about Bloomington and the many admirable people who make things happen in this community. As Nancy White wrote in her thank-you to attendees, the nomination of Monroe County Master Gardeners (which she submitted) “was a unique opportunity for us to get our message out to folks who may never have learned of our contribution to the Bloomington/Monroe County area.” No, we did not win, but if you lose, you want to lose to the best, and we lost to nominees whose contributions are simply amazing. Again, as Nancy said, “What a pleasure to be among them!”

Master Gardeners attending included Charlotte Griffin, who was also nominated for her work at Hilltop, and Abe Morris, Amy Thompson, David Dunachik, Evelyn Harrell, Helen Hollingsworth, and honorary members Jane Dunachik, Mike Hollingsworth, and Allen White.

Thank you, Garden Fair volunteers

Close on the heels of the Be More Awards was our Fourth Annual Garden Fair. It was a very successful event by all measures. Committee chairs Barb Cappy, Dave Dunachik, Diana Young, Evelyn Harrell, Jeff Schafer, Judy Hawkins, Karen King, and Nancy White held many meetings and planned many things, but their efforts and the success of the event were completely dependent on the many Master Gardener volunteers who gave of their time to hold down many positions throughout the fair. Additional appreciation goes to the many members who baked pies and cookies for the Café.

Garden Walk picnic committee needs your help

The annual Garden Walk will be held on June 15 and will include the gardens of Linda and John Emerson, Moya Andrews, and Sandy Belth. Planning is beginning for the picnic that everyone enjoys after the tours, and Robin Rothe and Marilyn Brinley need your help. The committee will meet one time at the location of the picnic to make a few decisions, and then will assist the host at the picnic to assure that everyone has an enjoyable evening. Please help us with the picnic committee! This assignment does not take much time, and yet the effort benefits everyone who attends that evening. Please let me hear from you at ear4841@comcast.net.

Get ready for our Plant Swap on May 27

See you at the Community Building for our May 27 general meeting for the annual recognition of interns, refreshments, an opportunity to hear of Amy’s trip to Costa Rica, an explanation from Amy of how to report hours electronically, and the popular plant swap!
Exploring our gardens

Submitted by Amy Thompson

Register for Exploring Our Gardens, with Oliver Winery Landscape Supervisor, Marian Keith, on Saturday, June 15; tours are at 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and noon.

Classroom: Oliver Winery Main Campus—8024 N SR 37

Join our landscaping team for tours of our beautiful gardens and grounds and learn from our resident experts about our particular varietals and what's in bloom. Discover interesting insights about the history of the gardens and what make our gardens grow. We'll offer limited availability free tours, but advanced registration is required. From 1:00 p.m.—4 p.m., we'd invite you to come out and Ask-a-Gardner your most vexing landscape questions! Cash tips will be collected, and all proceeds will benefit the Bloomington Garden Club.

Available seats: 20 per tour; tuition: free; advance registration required.

From http://www.oliverwinery.com/oliveru

Master Gardener Manual wins Gold Award

By John Orick, MG State Coordinator

Purdue Master Gardener Manual won the Gold Award (highest level) for one- to full-color popular publications from the Association for Communication Excellence (ACE). ACE is an international professional organization primarily composed of agricultural communicators.

Congratulations to Mary Welch-Keesey, consumer horticulture specialist (retired) and lead author. Congratulations also to the manual team (which included many specialists and educators), and the many contributors and reviewers, including Kevin Leigh Smith and Tim Thompson, Purdue Agricultural Communication, and Rosie Lerner, consumer horticulture extension specialist.

It is a great resource for Purdue Master Gardeners and county coordinators to have quality publications written and produced by dedicated professionals here at Purdue!

Thank you to all who contributed! For more information, log onto http://www.hort.purdue.edu/mg/

BOGA Plant Swap at Bloomington Farmers' Market

The Bloomington Organic Gardeners Association (BOGA) will host a free plant swap on Saturday, May 11, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Bloomington Farmers' Market. Native plants, tree saplings, and seeds are encouraged, but all non-invasive plants are welcome.
Spring means fertilizer: Part II
Granular & concentrate fertilizing: not cheap, but efficient for small gardens By Susan Eastman

I adore standing in my yard casting handfuls of granular fertilizer around. This is an easy joyful way to fertilize everything lightly and keep a garden happy. Following an up-front fertilizing and composting effort during planting, a light scattering of all-purpose, slow-release pellet fertilizer will probably be fine for many plants for the entire season and maybe the next, provided it rains soon. At least that’s my experience.

The slow-release granular fertilizers claim to last up to four months, but I think some nutrients hang around even longer. Be sure to follow the package directions to make sure the scattering is sufficiently light. Overdosing hurts both plants and our shared water supply.

However, new gardens and new plantings need somewhat more serious attention for a year or two. Slow-release fertilizers probably won’t be enough. Of course, soil testing will determine if soils are deficient, but home flower gardeners tend to rely on informal rather than formal testing, using the “stick something in and see how it does” method. Some individual plants, vines, and shrubs will be high acid lovers that do best with annual help—either concentrated or granular.

Instant fertilizing: Quick-release concentrated fertilizers come in balanced (“regular”) and acid formulations, to be mixed with water before application. Because all our limestone makes Southern Indiana clay largely alkaline, lovers of alkaline will be happy with balanced fertilizers.

Plants and shrubs that prefer acid fertilizers should get individual treatment in their youths. It surprised me to learn that geraniums and tulips like acid fertilizers, as do barberry, columbine, and daffodils. And they prefer it in middle as well as old age! Moreover, experts disagree about which plants (such as columbine) like acid: Compare Penn State’s site, //shanna11.hubpage.com/hub/Best-Plants-for-Acid Soil with wildflower.org/plants/result/php?id_plant=AQCA.

Distribution by bucketsful: Being much concerned about efficiency and low labor, but not much about low cost, especially for new gardens or new garden beds, I usually buy at least one box or sack of balanced concentrate and one of acid concentrate fertilizer every spring (or better yet in fall when it sometimes goes on sale!). Bottled liquid formulations don’t go very far in flower beds and are better suited to potted plants. (Once perennial plants are well established, I shift to granular fertilization, because it’s easier.)

My personal preference is for the name brands of boxed fertilizers that dissolve quickly and come divided into mini-packages which then provide convenient measuring units. Peculiarly, most manufacturers seem to think that gardeners are inclined to stand around for hours on end dripping fertilizer on their toes from a bottle attached to a spraying hose. I don’t do teaspoons and tablespoons or even cups, if I can help it, and certainly not lengthy, repeat hand watering. (continued on page 5)
Granular & concentrate fertilizing
(continued from page 4)

Here’s what I do: Using a group of 5-gallon buckets, I dump in half a small package per bucket and fill each bucket with the hose set on high (to stir the fine grains so they dissolve). Then I (or my helper) pour about a eighth or quarter bucket of this water-fertilizer mix around each plant or shrub.

How potent you want the mix to be depends on the size of the plants, and avoiding root-burn is highly desirable. Check the directions on the package. Even a very large garden with many separate beds with differing acid needs can be fertilized by buckets in a couple of hours with two people working. Of course, this is not the stingy, money-saving method: This is the fast, get-it-over-with method. Happily, when combined with a treatment of slow-release granular fertilizer and initial composting, the nutrients plants need seem to linger in the soil so one need not do quick-release treatments every year for established plants and shrubs.

Which plants are acid lovers? You probably don’t need reminding that to get blue hydrangea blooms requires a healthy dose of acid fertilizer. Listed below are the common acid-loving plants and shrubs I currently happen to have, but your own list may be longer (or conceivably shorter).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abelia</th>
<th>Dogwoods</th>
<th>Hydrangeas</th>
<th>Phlox</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azaleas</td>
<td>Ferns</td>
<td>Impatiens</td>
<td>Rhododendrons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barberry</td>
<td>Geraniums</td>
<td>Iris</td>
<td>Roses (very slightly acid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleeding Heart</td>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>Japonica</td>
<td>Tulips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caladium</td>
<td>Hellebores</td>
<td>Lilac</td>
<td>Viburnum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbine</td>
<td>Holly</td>
<td>Magnolia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daffodils</td>
<td>Hostas</td>
<td>Pansies</td>
<td>Zinnias</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which plants need annual treatment? All newly planted shrubs and most annuals and perennials probably need some soil amendment at the time of planting—though ideally your decision would be based on a soil test the way professionals approach the problem. Plants I think of as high-maintenance, such as tea roses and clematis vines, may need your attention. Most roses will survive on slow-release balanced fertilizer, and the shrub varieties will be hard to kill after they are really established.

Greensand: Clematis vines, however, need annual acid fertilizing. Greensand is an organic compound of marine potash (iron-potassium-silica) and about 30 trace minerals, collectively called glauconite. It is excellent for amending alkaline clay soils. (Google sites such as Garden.com and Organicgardeninfo.com for more detailed analyses.)

Greensand comes in small sacks under two or three brand names and is available in limited supply at local garden stores and nurseries. Greensand is slow-release and odorless and can be applied any time of year. A handful, sprinkled around the base of each vine each spring makes for happy and flowering clematis. Actually, Greensand would be good for virtually all plants in southern Indiana clay.
We have lots of folks to thank who helped make our Garden Fair the best one yet. Designscape, Indian Creek Stone Products, and the City of Bloomington Urban Forestry Program (Lee Huss) each donated door prizes worth $100 or more. Almost all of our commercial vendors provided additional prizes. Besides working on committees and at the event, so many Master Gardeners donated brownies, cookies and pies to the Café. Herald-Times provided us free publicity on several days and in several sections.

Nine Master Gardeners served as committee chairs and began planning last September. The Purdue Extension staff produced our Garden Fair information booklet. Countless Master Gardeners sent postcards, hung posters, placed yard signs, and spent time publicizing the event. Mary Jane Hall organized a radio interview with fair details on WGCL prior to event day. All in all, Garden Fair 2013 was a success as our gift to the community.

Fast facts from the 2013 Garden Fair

| 564 | Entry tickets sold |
| 300 | Trees provided for our giveaway |
| 64  | Master Gardeners who volunteered on Fair day |
| 22  | Commercial vendors |
| 12  | Non-profit vendors |
| 66  | Hot dogs sold at the Café (always a crowd favorite) |
| 6   | Charter vendors have been with us every year of the Fair |
| 5   | New vendors in 2013 (including Altra Designs, Indian Creek Stone, Garden n Lawn n Tree, Garden Tower Project) |
| 100s | Hours spent by Master Gardeners planning and implementing this community project |
| $2000 | Master Gardener Community Grant totals awarded to 7 non-profit agencies this April, funded by the 2012 Garden Fair |
The Farmers’ Market is open now, and it’s time to set up our information table on Information Row for a few weeks. Pam Vanzant and Joanne Passanisi are planning to be there on May 4, and Don and Susan Sachjten will be there on July 6. There are nine additional Saturdays before the middle of July, which means lots of opportunities to earn volunteer hours and chat with the visitors to the Farmers’ Market. If you are interested in joining the fun, please email ear4841@comcast.net, and let me know your date preferences. It’s more fun to staff the table in pairs, but many of us have been there without company, and it’s still a good time!

Bloomington Parks & Recreation Community Gardening Summer 2013 Garden/BCO Classes

The Community Gardening Program offers a variety of gardening and orchard management classes. For more information, contact Robin Hobson at 349-3704 or log onto hobsonr@bloomington.in.gov.

**Fruit Tree Planting Workshop**
- **Date:** Saturday, May 25, 2-4pm
- **Registration deadline:** May 22

**Domestic Resilience: Growing Food in the Neighborhood**
- **Date:** Thursday, June 6, 6-8pm
- **Registration deadline:** June 3

**Master Composter Class**
- **Date:** Tuesdays, 6/18-7/16, 6:30-8:30pm
- **Registration deadline:** June 14

**Utilizing Water in the Landscape: Going with the Flow**
- **Date:** Thursday, June 13, 6-8pm
- **Registration deadline:** June 10

**Summer Pruning of Fruit Trees**
- **Date:** Saturday, June 22, 2-4pm
- **Registration deadline:** June 19
Everybody’s home

By Dianne May

Sand, silt, clay….I love films that begin with a shot from high above and descend slowly to focus in on the action. We have to do the long shot when we talk about the formation of soil, a process so slow that we can observe only tiny parts of it around us. Estimates differ on how long it takes to form a single inch of soil. Some say 500 years, some 1,000. A slow process indeed.

Every Master Gardener knows that the physical structure of soil, the part formed from rocks, is made of sand, silt, and clay. If you drop a particle of coarse sand into a glass of water, it will sink about four inches in one second. It will take silt five minutes to fall the same distance. You’ll have to watch a long time, though, to see a particle of very fine clay fall those four inches—860 years. But the difference is more than size.

Volcanic magmas that poured from the earth were made up of different elements. In some places, light, bubbling magmas rich in quartz (made of silicon and oxygen) cooled and broke down into sandy soils. Both sand and silt are mostly quartz, although they can be made of other minerals, even of coral reef. Both sand and silt are largely chemically inert, not contributing much to plant nutrition, even though they play other important roles. Sand keeps soil loose, making room for necessary air and water. Silt holds water in the soil, making it available for plants to use.

Other heavier magmas, rich in minerals, welled up slowly, forming more fertile clay soils. Clay, like sand and silt, contains silicon and oxygen, but it also contains aluminum and minerals critical to life. Along with organic matter, it is chemically active in plant nutrition. Positively charged ions surround each clay particle. Clay absorbs negatively charged ions found in acidic water or given off by plant roots and, in exchange, releases minerals that are then available to the roots. Because clay particles are so tiny—the biggest ones are less than one ten-thousandth of an inch in diameter—they have an enormous surface area where these chemical exchanges can take place.

Although plants pull minerals they need from the soil, the nonorganic part of soil is made largely of silicon (think computer chips) and aluminum (think soft drink cans). These are found only in traces in plants themselves and don’t seem to be essential to life. Nitrogen is the only element we haven’t discussed that is necessary for life. It comes from the air, but plants can’t take it in directly as they do carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. Nitrogen poses an interesting problem. We’ll talk more about it next month.

A note from Science News: There are only a few known deposits of easily accessible phosphate rock, the main source of phosphorous for commercial fertilizers. These are in Morocco (with three-fourths of known reserves), Algeria, and China. U.S. deposits are dwindling. With fertilizer in high demand to grow algae for bio-fuels as well as for intensive agriculture, some scientists are beginning to worry about dwindling supplies and the politics of deposit areas. Another reason to go organic.
Volunteer opportunities
Compiled by Nancy White

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Jobs</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hilltop Gardens</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Charlotte Griffin, 345-8128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG Demonstration Garden</td>
<td>seasonal</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCMGA Garden Walk Committee</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>select gardens and plan picnic</td>
<td>Evelyn Harrell, 339-0572</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bloomington Community Orchard</td>
<td>seasonal</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Stacey Decker, getinvolved@ bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheryl's Garden at Karst Farm Park</td>
<td>summer</td>
<td>design and maintain</td>
<td>Nancy Fee, 332-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. C. Steele SHS</td>
<td>seasonal</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Davie Kean, 988-2785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens</td>
<td>seasonal</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Cathy Meyer, 349-2575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCMGA Horticulture Hotline</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>inquiries &amp; research</td>
<td>Amy Thompson, 349-2575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCMGA Speakers Bureau</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Amy Thompson, 349-2575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCMGA Newsletter</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>write articles</td>
<td>Helen Hollingsworth, 332-7313</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCMGA Web Site</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Stephen Anderson, 360-1216</td>
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<tr>
<td>MG Program Committee Member</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>plan MG programs</td>
<td>Sandy Belth, 825-8353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Susan Lovell, 339-5914</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Way House</td>
<td>seasonal</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Clara Wilson, 333-7404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wylie House</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Sherry Wise, 855-6224</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother Hubbard's Cupboard</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>education, resource</td>
<td>Kendra Brewer, garden @mhfoodpantry.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WonderLab Garden</td>
<td>2 times monthly</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Nancy White, 824-4426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoosier Hills Foodbank</td>
<td>year around</td>
<td>various</td>
<td>Nicole Richardson , 334-8374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember to wear your badge when volunteering and keep a record of your hours.
Queen of flowers

By M. Susan Osborne

Within the garden’s peaceful scene
Appear’d two lovely foes,
Aspiring to the rank of queen,
The Lily and the Rose. ------ William Cowper

The Complete Rose Book by Peter McHoy, Hermes House, 2003 (previously published as The Ultimate Rose Book) and Orthos: All About Roses by Dr. Tommy Cairns, Meredith Books, 1999.

In this review, I have combined two innovative books on roses. The two books are similar, but each offers different aspects of how to grow roses, required care, and diverse uses. I have tried my hand at rose growing and failed miserably. However, like all gardeners, I plant and learn. The 2011 Master Gardener Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana, offered a tour to the Lakeside Park and Rose Garden that had originally been a fish hatchery (you can imagine how beneficial the fish emulsion was to the soil). I was inspired walking among those beautiful roses, located so much farther north than Bloomington, Indiana, and determined that if those roses can grow there, they can grow here. I convinced myself that with time and patience, I should try again to grow a few Indiana weather tolerant roses.

If you have tried growing roses, you know that they can require a lot of TLC. Some are more understanding than others of Indiana cold winters and hot humid summers. However, I decided once I learn the different rose types, the do’s and don’ts, the better processes to follow, then I can hope to anticipate some kind of success.

The Complete Rose Book has six chapters plus sources and suppliers and index. The first 70 pages include some history and classification information. The book addresses growing better roses, including purchasing, planting, routine care, health care, propagation, and pruning techniques for each type of rose. The chapter on rose placement in the garden showcases using other complimentary plants with roses in beds, borders, hedges and boundaries, and as ground cover, as well as uses for climbers and ramblers. Standards and miniatures are not forgotten nor are container plantings. An included 20-page gallery of roses offers a small selection of the varieties that can be obtained from most nurseries and garden centers. The gallery is organized by rose types: ramblers and climbers, floribundas (cluster-flowered), ground covers, hybrid teas (large-flowered) miniatures, patio, and shrub roses. The last three chapters focus on decorating with roses and rose crafts. If you are interested in growing roses and then using them as fresh floral displays or even drying and steaming roses, then this book is ideal for learning ways to use roses in a variety of designs. Step-by-step instructions and required materials are included along with vivid photography. (continued on page 11)
Orthos: All about Roses is a less than 100-page book that concisely covers the basics of growing roses. Chapter headings include A Rose for Every Purpose; Integrating Roses into the Landscape; Rose Garden Sizes; Ready, Set, Grow; Simple Steps to Healthy Roses; and Pruning; and concludes with a 40-page rose gallery to assist with rose selections.

All about Roses places emphasis on purchasing, soil and site, bare root roses versus container grown roses, and container planting. Other topics addressed include growing healthy roses, rose protection and identification of pests and diseases, wintering, and pruning. All About Roses has short paragraphs or short article sections on specific topics (e.g., fertilizers, mulching, selecting a sprayer, lists of roses that are more shade tolerant) integrated within the topic section as a format to summarizing subject matter.

Both The Complete Rose Book and All about Roses include pages and pages of rose photography (and they are really WOW!). The rose galleries include common names, introduction year, and specifics of each showcased rose. Readers learn all the required basics to assist in selecting any type of desired rose. Each book is thorough and written by rose gardening experts, but does not include every rose ever grown. There is redundancy of information, but at the same time the information is dissimilar in its format and presentation. The one defining difference was The Complete Rose Book’s expanded section of design and craft ideas.

The Complete Rose Book and All About Roses are both informative and offered me encouragement and inspiration for growing roses again, but to do it correctly this next time.

Hats off! New badges!
Sydley Skolnik—Certified
Marilyn Bourke—Advanced
Harriet Fulton—Advanced
Congratulations!
Have you potted and labeled your extra plants?  
It’s time for our annual plant swap! See page 1.

2013 MCMGA Board
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Vice President—Education: Sandy Belth  
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Past President: Nancy White  
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Extension Educator: Amy Thompson  
349-2575 afthompson@purdue.edu

Master Gardener Calendar
Tuesday, May 28, 6:30 p.m., Master Gardener general meeting at Community Buildings at the Fairgrounds

Saturday, June 1, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Sustaining Nature and Your Land Day at The Warehouse, 1527 S. Rogers Street, Bloomington; free event, including lunch; for information, log onto MC-IRIS.org

Saturday, June 15, Exploring Our Gardens, at Oliver Winery, 8024 N. SR 37, registration required; for information, log onto oliverwinery.com/oliveru