

# Blades and Blooms



Master Gardeners of Clark County  
PO Box 158, Springfield, Ohio 45501-0158

Volume 30 Number 12 December 2023



*Springfield Police Chief Allison Elliott and MGV Kim Bachman lead a toast to MGVs of Clark County in recognition of our 30th Anniversary.*



## Mark Your Calendar

- |    |                 |  |
|----|-----------------|--|
| 1  | 11:30 am        | Plant pricing for the Poinsettias and Pints Sale; OSUE Lg. Conf. Rm.               |
| 2  | 12 pm - 3 pm    | Poinsettias and Pints; Mother Stewart's Brewery (Set-up 10:45 am)                  |
| 5  | 10 am           | Swag Set-up; MGV Barn SPGA/1238 Upper Valley Pike (old Frank's Nursery and Crafts) |
|    | 11 am - 4 pm    | Perennial Cmte. Potluck; Prestwick Village Clubhouse                               |
| 6  | 8 am - 4 pm     | Swag Assembly; 1238 Upper Valley Pike (old Frank's Nursery and Crafts)             |
| 7  | 8 am - 3 pm     | Swag Distribution; Springfield Regional Cancer Center                              |
| 15 | 9 am - 11:30 am | BOT Meeting; OSUE Lg. Conf. Rm.  |
|    | 11:30 am - 1 pm | Potluck Lunch; OSUE Lg. Conf. Rm.  |
|    | 1 pm - 3:30 pm  | Committee Chair Meeting; OSUE Lg. Conf. Rm.  |
| 18 | 1 pm - 3 pm     | MGV Cookie Exchange; OSUE Lg. Conf. Rm.  |



*Wingert Tossey Pavilion decorated for Christmas 2022.*

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## ***In the Gardens...***

This has been an awesome year. A year of progress, inevitable change, and great improvements in the space we call Snyder Park Gardens & Arboretum. I thank you for all of it. We have done and will do great things there in the future and it is all because of your willingness and vision of what can be.

Your support through my term as president of Master Gardener Volunteers has brought me through an uncomfortable place in my development. I have said and done things I likely would never have without being pulled out of my comfort zone and you were there with me.

The Recognition Celebration was a beautiful bright spot in this year and I was happy that the inaugural class was encouraged to celebrate with us. I spoke with one of those class members after the event and they were happy to be included and appreciative of what we have been able to accomplish at SPGA.

Now, onward and upward, for more sidewalks, irrigation, additional beautiful beds, more volunteers, increased cooperation and involvement with organizations of the community and encouragement to reach out in education, health benefits, with pride in accomplishments and dreams. Giving beauty, quiet, pleasant views, and fragrances to calm our frantic and busy lives is a wonderful gift to our community of citizens and visitors alike. Providing healthy foods and education on their origins, pruning practices, gardening how-to classes, wellness and entertainment are our contributions to all who desire to partake.

Looking forward to 2024, we will continue to flourish with our involvement in so many areas: the plant sale fundraiser, yoga and music; our gift to the community, Jubilee; our involvements with Mother Stewart's, the new intern class, the cultivar trials, the docent-led tours, seed saving, and the Kiwanis Children's Garden; and so many other collaborations with cleanups, community service opportunities, and giving back to the area around us!

Thank you for a great 2023 as we look forward to a rewarding 2024 together. I love you all.

Sue Ann Dill  
President



## ***Pam's Posies***

***Pam's Posies is on hiatus this month. Be back next month!***



*MGVs planting spring bulbs along the roadway to SPGA.*



*Allison Volk taking a short break after digging hole for one of the new witch hazels in the gardens.*



*MGVs busy cutting greens for the many swags we will make for the cancer center.*





*Pam Bennett discussing the proper cutting of greens.*



*MGVs with a full truck load of greens for the Cancer Center Christmas Door Swags.*



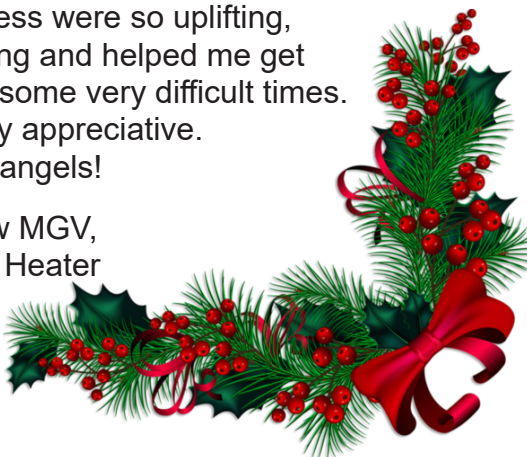
*Pam Bennett and grandkids in a 30th Anniversary picture.*



*Bennett family at the Clark County MGVs' 30th Anniversary Recognition Celebration.*

Thank you everyone for all the well-wishes, visits, prayers, cards, flowers, food, books and gifts that I received during my recovery from my broken femur. Your acts of kindness were so uplifting, comforting and helped me get through some very difficult times. I am truly appreciative. You are angels!

Fellow MGV,  
Janet Heater



11th Loretta Blazer  
14th Judy Wessel  
15th Gloria Sparks  
17th Mark Finnegan  
24th Pam Bennett  
27th Skip Crosbie  
30th Claudia Fett  
30th Theresa Gregory



# **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

## **EARLY OHIO SETTLER'S COMMITTEE**

### **EARLY OHIO SETTLER'S GARDEN 2023 WRAP UP**

On Monday November 6<sup>th</sup>, a group of volunteer settlers arrived on a chilly but beautiful fall morning to cover the garden with a blanket of leaves gathered from SPGA (big thank you Dennis!). We then rolled out chicken wire to hold the leaves in place and then added bricks to hold down the chicken wire, whew! Our garden is essentially "put to bed" for the winter.

We want to update our bulletin board with topics that tell a story about the settlers, their life in Ohio, and what we are planning to grow in next year's garden. Anyone can help with this endeavor!

Thank you to everyone who made the garden a productive and beautiful success. We are a hardworking cohesive group who combine our love for gardening with an interest in history. We sweat together, enjoy all that nature has to teach us together, endure our aches and pains from our garden chores together, brave the cold (and sometimes rain) of early spring and late autumn workdays together. We have laughed together, shared the joy of teaching others the wonder of our garden and the history of the period together, laughed some more together, bonded over shared issues of happiness and heartache of life together, witnessed the lessons of nature together, and made awesome friends!

We want to extend an invitation to new and longtime Master Gardener Volunteers to join our amazing group. As we talk with extended family, friends, and neighbors over the holidays we want to invite them to become Master Gardener Volunteers to learn and enjoy with our group. MGVs have a lot of work to do as SPGA continues to become a lasting beautiful legacy for our community.

If you are out and about in SPGA, check on our garden to ensure that it is fairing well or if anything needs addressed. Our next date for EOS is the 2024 organizational meeting March 18, 2024. In the meantime, stay warm and cozy, keep healthy and work out those muscles for spring! –

Judy Finnegan for EOS Committee



## **RECOGNITION COMMITTEE**

This year's Recognition Banquet, Pearls of Wisdom, truly was a celebration. We honored our past 30 years, and were happy Judy Lachey from the first class was able to join us. Special awards included Ed Wozniak for 6000 hours of service, Deb Brugger as Educator, and Connie Mitchell for the James Looney Award. All attending enjoyed the meal, especially the dessert buffet! Many thanks to the committee for planning, decorating, and cleaning up, including Deb Brugger, Sally Day, Sue Ann Dill, Judy Finnegan, Theresa Gregory, Marilyn Hinderer, Susan Kogler, Rita Lane, Christy Lockhart, Teresa Magill, Pat Martin, Natheta Mercer, Connie Mitchell, Donna Myers, Lois O'Keefe, Jan O'Neill, Karen Parsons, Terry Reid, Karen Titone, Lola Walston, and Gigi Wise.

Kim Bachman, chair





## Backyard News

Late last summer Husband Tom and I had a surprise visitor to our deck: a praying mantis. In the past, we've had many mantids visit our deck (see Visiting mantis), but this one was special. Usually, our mantid visitors are the large Asian mantids, about 6 inches long and green. Our new visitor was much smaller, about two inches long and greyish brown. Was she a baby mantis, destined to grow to six inches and turn green? I rooted around the internet and found a factsheet on



*Visiting mantis*

mantids at [ohioline.osu.edu](http://ohioline.osu.edu). Our visitor was probably a European mantis (*Mantis religiosa*) or a Carolina mantis (*Stagmomantis carolina*). The Carolina mantis is the only mantis native to Ohio, so I hoped our new friend was local.

Over the course of the next many weeks, this little mantis stayed close to the deck. When Tom and I went outside and when we had visitors we

admonished them to watch where they stepped, sat or grabbed the railing, since the mantis seemed to pop up everywhere. Eventually, she settled in on the stair railing. This location seemed to provide her with plenty of food. I speculated that the light from the patio door attracted insects which the little mantis was only too happy to clean up. We observed her eating a house fly and later, a grasshopper half her size. I could only hope she loved brown marmorated stink bugs.

One afternoon Tom and I were trying to work on the deck,

but the little mantis was in our way. I scooped her up and tried putting her on some verbena in a pot. She would be safe there. When I tried to put her down, she started waiving her arms as if to say "No! no!



*Mantis in cake dome.*

Not here!" I put her on the stair railing and she settled in. Had I experienced cross species communication?

Summer faded into fall and still the little mantis stayed on. Had she mated?



*Mantids making more mantids.*

Should she be looking for a place to lay her egg sac? I looked in on her one afternoon and she was not alone. A smaller brown mantis was on top of her, hopefully doing his part to advance the species. Tom and I tried to give the couple privacy, but occasionally we'd peek in. The mantids carried on; picture 2. Their mating ritual lasted 24 hours. Think about that. After they finished up, the female disappeared. The male stayed on the deck, probably with a smug smile on his little triangular face. I had always heard that female mantids ate the male after mating, but I can report that our girl did not eat the male, at least not immediately afterward.

The male hung around for a while, but we eventually lost track of him. Our girl, however, was back at her post on the stair railing. It got later and later in the fall, but our girl persisted. Finally, after a night at 22 degrees, I stepped out onto the deck and found her dead.

I picked her up and took her to Tom's warm and cozy shop. We looked at our girl's little body and marveled at the life cycle we had witnessed. And then her arm moved. She wasn't dead! We put her in a sunny spot under the loblolly pine, but I fretted. We expected another very cold night. Should we bring her in the house? Let nature take its course? That night we were meeting friends for

dinner, fellow gardeners and nature enthusiasts. We put our girl in a little box and presented her to our friends. They have a small greenhouse. Perhaps she could live out her remaining days or weeks in the greenhouse. They were tickled to receive the little mantis. Later that night they sent us a picture. Our girl was not in the greenhouse, she was in their dining room under a cake dome; picture 3! They tried keeping our girl in the cake dome for a few days, plying her with flies, but she was not happy. They took her out to the greenhouse and put her on a Rosemary plant; picture 4. Within an hour she laid her egg sac; picture 5. Her work was done. Our friends have not seen her since. Did she burrow deeper into the greenhouse? It wouldn't surprise me if she popped up in the coming weeks, but her life cycle is truly at its end. All of us are so grateful that we got to bear witness to another perfect miracle.

From my garden to yours, I wish you a Merry Christmas and the Happiest of New Years!

Happy Gardening!  
Susan Miller



*New home on Rosemary.*



*Laying egg sac.*



## Gatherings about Gardens

**A GARDENER'S CHRISTMAS POEM** by Marianne Binetti,  
*GreenPrints Winter 2020-21*

T'was the week before Christmas, and all through the yard,  
Not a gift was given, not even a card.  
The tools were all hung in the carport with care,  
With hopes that St. Nicholas soon would repair,  
The shovel with blade all rusty and cracked,  
The pitchfork still shiny, but handle it lacked.  
When out on my lawn (it's brown and abused)  
I could see poor old Santa, looking confused.  
No list had been left for Santa to see,  
No gardening gifts were under the tree.  
But wait, there's still time, it's not Christmas yet,  
And gardening gifts are the quickest to get.  
You can forget the silk tie, the fluffy new sweater,  
Give something to make the garden grow better.  
If she wants a gift shiny, then don't be a fool,  
It's not a dumb diamond, but a sparkling new tool.  
If fragrance is listed you can forget French perfume,  
It's a pile of manure that'll make gardeners swoon.  
Give night crawlers, not nightgowns, the type of hose that  
gives water. (Anything for the kitchen is not worth the bother.)  
Give a great gift that digs in the dirt,  
It's better than any designer-brand shirt.  
Now look quick at Santa, this guy's not so dumb,  
Under his glove, he hides a green thumb.  
His knees are so dirty, his back how it aches,  
His boots stomp on slugs (he gives them no breaks).  
The guy only works Winter, you can surely see why,  
The rest of the year it's a gardening high.  
Elves plant in the Spring, pull weeds merrily all summer,  
In Fall they all harvest, but Winter's a bummer.  
And so Christmas gives Santa a part-time employment,  
Till Spring when the blooms are his real-life enjoyment.  
So ask the big guy for garden gifts this year,  
Seeds, plants and tools, Santa holds them all dear.  
You see malls may be crowded, vendors hawking their wares,  
But visit a nursery, stress-free shopping is there.  
Now Santa's flown off, to the nursery he goes  
And his voice fills the night with loud Hoe! Hoe! Hoes!



### DECEMBER

Drifting downward through the sky, comes the  
glistening snow;  
Floating, whirling, twirling by, down to earth  
below.  
Snowflakes, snowflakes, large and small, far  
as eye can see;  
Happy children, one and all, into the  
snowflakes flee! ~~Ben Wood

### Grins & Groans:

*Why was the snowman looking through the  
carrots? He was picking his nose!*

*How did Scrooge win the football game? The  
ghost of Christmas passed.*

*What's the Grinch's least favorite band? The  
Who.*

*What would you call an elf who won the  
lottery? Welfy.*

*A copy of "A Christmas Carol" just fell on my  
toe. It hurts like the Dickens.*

**Merry Christmas!** Til next time,  
Judy Finnegan





# MGV activities



*Major work day planting the new sections of the Springfield Foundation Feature Garden beds.*



*Beth Brooks and the youngest Bennett grandson.*



*Dennis Latimer wearing green antlers.*



*Connie Mitchell, the 2023 James Looney Memorial Award winner.*



*Theresa Gregory enjoying a break from cutting greens with a hot dog and a warm drink.*



*Missy Hawley, 2022 Volunteer of the Year for Clark County.*





# THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

## EXTENSION

Ohio State University Extension  
Clark County  
3130 East Main Street  
Springfield, OH 45505



*MGV participating at a Pop-up workday. Three new witch hazels were planted at SPGA.*



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