

Blades and Blooms



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

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Ohio Master Gardener Volunteers are back in Otavalo, Ecuador for the first time in 2 years! We have a wonderful group of 20 women ready to help. Orientation this morning and we are learning about the culture from my very good friend Margarita Fuezez!



Mark Your Calendar

7	10 am - 12 pm	Perennial Cmte. Zoom meeting.
8	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Board of Trustees - OSUE Lg Conf. Rm.
9	11 am - 1 pm	Publicity Cmte. - OSUE LG Conf. Rm.
13	11 am - 1 pm	Fundraising Cmte. - OSUE Sm. Conf. Rm.
17	1 pm - 3 pm	Policy and Procedure Cmte. - OSUE Sm. Conf. Rm.
21	1 pm - 3 pm	Plant Sale Cmte. - OSUE Sm. Conf. Rm.
22	10 am - 12 pm	Landscape with Nature Cmte. - OSUE Sm. Conf. Rm.
23	11 am - 1 pm	Education Cmte. - OSUE Sm. Conf. Rm.

March

2	9am - 4pm	Annual Perennial Flower School - Hollenbeck-Bailey Conf. Center
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Two outstanding days of volunteer work. OSUE MGVs rose to the occasion and created new planting beds, planting cabbage, lettuce, turnips, and potatoes. Worked with the kids at Saminay school to get the job done!

Index

Mark Your Calendar.....	1
President's Corner.....	2
Pam's Posies	2
What's Growing On	3
Birthdays.....	5
Committee Reports	4-5
Backyard News.....	6
Gatherings about Gardens	7

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Anyone who thinks that gardening begins in the Spring and ends in the Fall is missing the best part of the whole year; for gardening begins in January with the dream.

~Josephine Nuese

Dear Fellow MGVS,

Did Punxsutawney Phil see his shadow? Well, let's hope not, because we have much gardening to do and we want to get to it! There is already a buzz in the air with so many committees meeting again. My calendar is full for a Winter month, because we are fully into planning mode. I am anxiously waiting to see the new additions to Snyder Park Gardens & Arboretum this year. Here are just a few:

- Bulbs, bulbs, and more bulbs coming up before you know it!
- New garden accessories like benches and picnic tables
- More sidewalks
- Our beautiful, new entrance signs
- Check out the new perimeter going in at the Garden of Eatin'!
- More yoga
- New music programs
- More garden education programs

We are building something really amazing, here, and it's only possible because of your time, your hard work and your love of gardening. So, pat yourselves on the back...then let's get to work!

Power to the Plants!

Deb Brugger



Spring will be here soon!!

Pam's Posies

Pam's Posies will return next month but she will continue to provide updates on how Natheta Mercer is doing.



Some highlights from the Ohio MGVS trip to Otavalo, Ecuador

WHAT'S GROWING ON

While I was out shopping over the weekend, I was relieved to see that retailers have their seed displays set up for the upcoming growing season. This always brightens my day because it signifies to me that Spring is just around the corner.

I am delighted that in a couple of weeks MGVS will begin the seeding of the All-America Selections plants in the Mitchell Greenhouse. I am looking forward to learning more about the operation and digging deeper into the cultivar trials. Hopefully I will be able to get my hands in the soil and to help care for the seedlings.

Speaking of seeds, Victory Garden seeds will be sent to counties between March 13-31. We will want to distribute the packets as soon as possible so that the lettuce can be planted before the weather gets too hot.

Last year, Clark County Victory Garden volunteers broke the previous record for the total amount of produce grown and donated in a season as well as the largest amount donated in a single day. We were also able to glean about 100 pounds of leftover food that might have ended up in a landfill. In addition, we collected 136 pounds of canned goods during our holiday food drive. All together, our total Grow Ohio donation for the year was 8,436 pounds of food! Thank you all so much for helping to feed the hungry in our community.

The Clark County Local Foods Council is currently in the process of collecting information from the area Community Gardens in order to determine how to best support their efforts in the upcoming year.

January Hands on Connect training was a success! Thank you to everyone who attended and all those who assisted. Navigating the program truly gets easier with practice. Also, I am pleased to announce that we have a fully functional volunteer opportunity up and running on the HOC calendar. We can now sign up directly in HOC for each separate greenhouse workday.

I for one have been practicing running reports. The county hours report shows that Clark MGVS contributed 15,026 Volunteer Service hours plus logged 2,725 Continuing Education hours in 2022. That is just phenomenal!!

We are starting to gear up for 23rd Annual Perennial School coming up on March 2nd. We have widely renowned energetic speakers lined up for this year as well as some great food and FUN!

Registration will be going live very soon. Please watch your email for more information as well as opportunities to help with this event.

~ Beth Brooks



Beth eagerly awaiting Spring garden clean-up.

Dear Master Gardener Volunteers,

I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kindness and compassion that you have shown me and my family during the loss of my son, Rob. We received some many messages, calls, and hugs that it was almost overwhelming. Your kindness meant so much to me and truly touched my heart. I would also like to thank you for the wonderful desserts that you provided for our after-service dinner for the family. I would like to let you know that all leftover food was given to the caring kitchen in Urbana. It was a good feeling to help others with a nice meal. Rob would have wanted that too. He had a big heart and was all about helping others.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Jerri Taylor and family.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

GARDEN OF EATIN' COMMITTEE

In December the Garden of Eatin' got a facelift. Twenty-four stumps were identified as needing to be removed. As the work began additional stumps were found to be rotting, so 50 stumps were removed. As the claw went to pick them up, they broke to pieces. What a mess there was!

The stumps were replaced with twelve concrete pillars from Memorial Hall. A crane was brought in to move and set the pillars from the back barn area to the garden. This change has left some gaps that the team will need to get creative to fill. The Garden of Eatin' definitely has a different look. Visit and See!

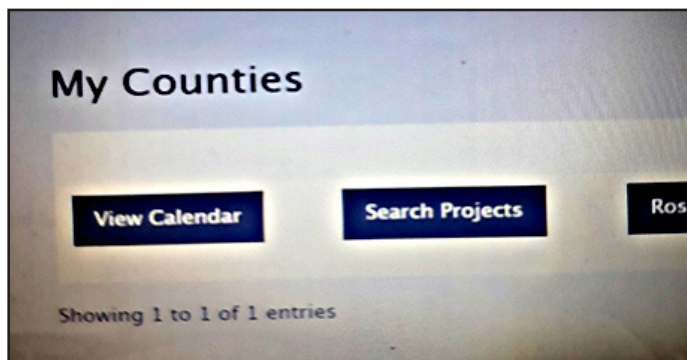
There is a team meeting for the Garden of Eatin' on January 27 at 9 am at the OSU Extension office, in the large conference room.

Teresa Magill and Susie Broidy



MITCHELL GREENHOUSE COMMITTEE

We will start sowing seeds from All-America Selections on February 14th. We have slots for volunteers on February 28th and March 9th, 21st, 28th and 30th. You can sign up using Hands On Connect (HOC) by selecting 'Search Projects', then selecting 'Mitchell Greenhouse'. Refer to following screenshots:



OR contact Theresa Gregory at mstgregy@woh.rr.com or text 937-206-7879 and we will add your name for the day(s) you request, if they are still available.

Thanks for volunteering!

The Mitchell Greenhouse chairs,
Linda McCann, Rosalind Soles, Karen Parsons, and
Theresa Gregory

LANDSCAPE WITH NATURE COMMITTEE

The Landscape with Nature Garden is increasing its size.

This year we will be planting around the Pergola and will soon add our “held-over-winter” honeysuckle vines, and other plants to provide for pollinators.

We are planning to plant additional host plants and trees to provide a windbreak.

We have plans to add a piece from Memorial Hall and construct an area to keep our tools protected within the garden.

Irrigation possibilities will be explored.

Three “Plant by Number” plots, (each 6’ by 10’) will be added to the LWN from plugs from Denise Ellsworth through a USDA IPM/pollinator health grant. Each plot will have a special focus. The focus will be for Specialist Bees, Bumble Bees, or Butterflies and Moths.

Help us prepare! Please come to our planning meeting on February 22, 2023 in the OSUE Small Conference Room at 10:00 am- noon.

Donna Meister, Tom Davidson, Jani Malowney



*Native Plants Started for LWN
by Janet Hannel.*

MGV 2023 Beekeeping Workshop

Fran and Tom Davidson graduated 18 students from the 7-hour course on Saturday, January 14. Each student earned 7 CE (Continuing Education) credits toward this year’s Master Gardener Volunteer program. They also have the option of a one-year free membership in the Ohio State Beekeepers Association (OSBA) and several local Beekeeping organizations.

Tom and Fran Davidson
UF/IFAS Master Beekeepers



*Recent graduated Basic Beekeeping Class with
Graduation Certificates.*

FYI for anyone that needs a meeting room.

The National Trail Parks and Recreation District on Mitchell Blvd. has a room for meetings (up to 30 people).

Call the NTPRD office to schedule.



Happy Birthdays

17 th	Judith Finnegan
17 th	Marty Harley
18 th	Fran Davidson
22 nd	Cynthia Valente

Backyard News

If you recall, last June I wrote about winning an H2Ohio grant that would restore our nine-acre wetland. For generations this land has been used as pasture for cattle and before that sheep. Now we are returning it to its former glory as a wetland. With the help of US Fish and Wildlife, Tecumseh Land Trust and the knowledge of many dedicated land and wildlife professionals we will install a pond that will act as a filter for farm nutrients before they run into Rainbow Run stream, which abuts our property and ultimately flows into the Little Miami River. That translates into cleaner water for Ohio. We will also plant many more native plants – trees, flowers, shrubs – which will support pollinators and wildlife.

In December husband Tom and I found ourselves standing in the middle of the wetland with a handful of pink marking flags. It was time for us to fine tune the area where the pond will be installed. About a month earlier we had set flags marking a rough area for the pond, then Donnie Knight Jr, Land Biologist with US Fish and Wildlife, climbed aboard a forestry mulching machine and cut down plants and assessed the area we hoped to turn into the pond. During his assessment he found that we have a healthy invasion of reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). This grass is native to Europe and Asia. It was first brought to the US in the 1800's to use as forage. It's still grown in our country for forage, but sadly it's very aggressive. It can push out native plants and form single-species stands of grass, and that's what is happening in our wetland. I have noticed over the last summer or two that there has been less Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), a favorite of mine and many pollinators. Now I know why – reed canary grass! One effective way to get rid of this invasion is to drown it, so these grass stands have now become part of our pond design.

Sometimes I get really frustrated with all the invasive plants that are trying to overrun the wetland, but all is not lost. Since we had a dry fall and early winter, Tom and I were able to hike around the wetland and we made some wonderful discoveries. We found a buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) growing along the Rainbow Run stream. I shouldn't be surprised, since buttonbush likes wet areas and is often found along streams and rivers. They have a wonderful flower that looks like a pincushion and are loved by pollinators, even acting as a host plant for several butterflies and moths. If you have a wet area, plant a buttonbush!

We also found a curious pinecone-looking thing on another bush. Since the leaves were gone, we

couldn't figure out what it was. I did some digging around on the internet, but had no luck. I decided to look through a book I have called "The Shrub Identification Book" by George W.D. Symonds. It was first published in 1963. As the cover says, it has "over 3500 illustrations" and one of those illustrations was a willow gall! Before that walk in the wetland, I didn't even know there was such a thing. The good news is they don't hurt the bush, and I'm sure there is a bird or insect that eats the larva inside.

Hopefully, the pond excavators will get started in February. We've been told that migrating birds will really enjoy the freshly disturbed shoreline. I can't wait. I'll be sure to keep you posted!

Happy Gardening,
Susan Miller



Buttonbush. Picture from wildflower.org



Willow gall at Rainbow Run Wetland

Gatherings about Gardens

Excerpted from "Winter is Coming" by Becky Rupp in *Greenprints*

(Even though for us its February and Winter is already here!)

Winter isn't the season for everyone. "I shudder at the approach of Winter," wrote Thomas Jefferson from his mountaintop in (cold) Virginia to John Adams in (colder) Massachusetts. "Winter is icummen in," wrote poet Ezra Pound (Idaho). "Lhude sing Goddamm."

Theoretically, cold shouldn't be a problem for us. As mammals, we're warm-blooded animals, pumping out heat at the rate of 50 kilocalories per hour. The problem is that this toasty warming effect can only go so far. When the surroundings are a lot chillier than we are, warm blood or not, we get cold.

Nature has a lot of ways for coping with cold—but basically, for a lot of us, it's all about air. Fur, for example, traps that layer of warm surface air, keeping it safely close to the skin. The thicker the fur, the more effective it is as insulation: polar bears, for example, are so well insulated that they're invisible to night vision goggles, which zoom in on radiated heat. Ditto for feathers: When birds fluff their feathers in chilly weather, they're trying to trap the maximum amount of insulating air.

People do their best with clothes. Clothing—whether from Armani, Calvin Klein, Walmart, or Tractor Supply—exists to trap air. The insulating value from clothing is measured in units of Clo, in which 0 Clo means stark naked and 1 Clo is the amount of insulation required to keep a relatively sedentary person comfortable at room temperature. The average polar bear's coat is 8.0 Clo! In keeping warm, the secret to effective insulation is layering, in which multiple layers of clothing trap multiple layers of air. (Best, says the Washington Post, is three layers, starting with a set of polyester long johns.)

So what about plants? Some garden plants, faced with Winter, simply turn up their toes and die. Lettuce, tomatoes, beans, cucumbers—all annuals, from the Latin annus, year—give up the ghost at the end of the growing season, leaving their remains to the compost pile. The killer, when it comes to annuals, is ice, which is why many garden plants bite the dust after the first hard frost. When water inside cells freezes, the resultant spiky ice crystals can tear them apart from the inside out; and ice in the matrix outside cells can be just as bad, pulling internal water out through cell walls, leaving behind desiccated husks.



Other plants know to hunker down. Perennials such as asparagus and rhubarb, for example, come back year after year. Chives and horseradish come up time and again; so do daffodils, tulips, crocuses, irises and lilies. Each year their vulnerable tops die off, but all

have back-up storage organs—bulbs, rhizomes, roots—safely sequestered underground.

Deciduous trees and shrubs cope with cold by going dormant. In dormancy, metabolism slows down to a sputter; Winter trees survive the season because they're pretty much out of it. During this dozy state, they're also protected by the arboreal version of antifreeze—sugars and proteins that lower the freezing point of water and fend off ice damage. Maple sap—which, boiled down, turns into maple syrup—is sweet because it functions in the Winter tree as antifreeze.

Some people like Winter, but they wouldn't want to have Winter all the time. As Anne Bradstreet wrote, "If we had no Winter, the Spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome." And, if our gardens didn't sometimes vanish under snow, it wouldn't seem such a miracle to watch them once again turn green.



When February tires
Of her somber dress
She tucks ice diamonds in her hair
With charming carelessness...
Sometimes she enfolds herself
In cloak of ermine snow...
And always, at her waist she wears
A Valentine-red bow!
By Mary R. Hurley

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY EVERYONE!

Til next time, Judy Finnegan



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Matias enjoyed Carri Jagger's candy in Otavalo, Ecuador.

**There are no
garden clean ups
this month.**

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