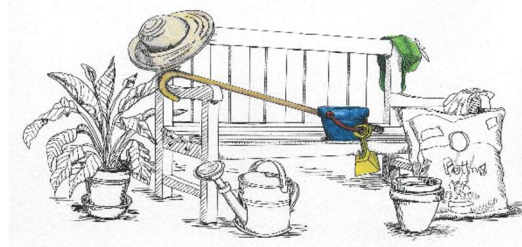


HENDRICKS GARDENER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
HENDRICKS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS



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Cathy Frederick, Secretary

Judy Kenninger,
Communications Director

May, 2020

President's Message

Hello Master Gardeners! It seems like forever since we have seen one another. The May newsletter should be the time to congratulate everyone on another successful GFAA, this year that's not to be. So instead I will start by attempting to get a chuckle, a rusting Cowbell update. Now that its warmer I have found I can go outside and chime in for a duet with my neighbor's son when he practices his drum set. I think we can all agree that "more cowbell" is always good, right? Somehow, I am getting the feeling not all of my neighbors agree with that premise.

I'm sure everyone shares my disappointment that events have been cancelled or postponed including HCMG meetings, scheduled GFAA and rescheduled GFAA, the Plant Sale and Auction rescheduled to September, and others. Purdue has now extended the restrictions on all face-to-face events through July 1. We have been told that Purdue will decide on May 15 whether to extend this policy through July.

Now that 2020 GFAA has been cancelled, we are refunding the fees to all the vendors who invested in booth spaces and offered refunds to the sponsors, although all the sponsors responded to use it elsewhere or hold for GFAA 2021. John Dottenwhy will be picking up the GFAA trees we purchased from DNR, and we will be working to give the trees out to the public or other causes like the Outdoor Learning Center. If anyone is aware of any parks, schools or similar organizations that could use some trees, please let us know. Kim, Steve and others are working to distribute the GFAA seeds to Food Pantries and Community Gardens. However, now that there seems to be a run on seeds like the one on TP a month ago, we may save some for 2021 in case next year's seed donations are reduced.

But FEAR NOT, HCMG is not at a full stop. We are adapting to our ever-changing new normal and finding out what works. The Plant Sale and Auction has been rescheduled to September, so it will be a fall plant sale rather than a spring plant sale. We will still award our annual scholarship if we have qualified applicants, but it will not be awarded at the plant sale as in the past. We are looking into staffing a booth at the July and August Farmers Markets if it is permitted. We are ALLOWED to work in the Demo Garden, even prior to July 1 (with some restrictions of course), so watch the MG Manager for details. The Education Center will
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reopen with volunteers researching and responding to questions from their homes.

As mentioned earlier, there seems to be a run on seeds this year, which indicates many people will be trying to grow their own vegetables and flowers, possibly for the first time. If you know someone in this category, please offer some gentle help and advice if needed. You all have expertise that others do not and are aware of many resources that can help. It's a way we can individually help our community, which collectively can add up to a big impact.

And now a Promo! With a little extra time working in your home gardens this year, I'm sure they're going to look spectacular. Please consider hosting a Social Distance Open Garden. After spending all the extra time in our homes, we'll be anxious to get out and see what others have been doing. Your gardens need not be show quality; we all know that a garden is always a "work in progress." You're not expected to provide snacks, amenities or anything else, you won't need to place X's in your yard 6 ft. apart. Just let fellow MGs tour your gardens. The point is to share and show off your ideas, plantings and accomplishments. Date and time are at your convenience. If interested, please let Sara Fenton know.

Lastly, I really miss seeing all of you and want to make sure I get to see you again. Please take care of yourselves and others. Gardening is great therapy, so turn off the news, get outside and enjoy a slower pace in your own little world, talk to your plants or a bird. Stay in touch and check up on fellow MGs, friends and family via phone, text, email, megaphone, or just yelling across the street. We all know gardeners are strong-willed and determined, so we will get through this. We are also adaptable and will adjust to whatever the new normal will be. Stay safe, stay well, stay strong and stay positive.

--Steve Pearl, President

Adventures in Gardening

The AIG Committee has booked Simon Davies to discuss backyard rain gardens. More details to come, but mark your calendar for October 10.

GFAA Update

Although we are all heartbroken that Gardening For All Ages had to be cancelled this year, Kim and Steve Somermeyer want to thank everyone who volunteered this year and urge us to start planning for our 2020 event. After all, it's less than a year away!

Avon Outdoor Learning Center Background Checks

Avon Community Schools requires background checks for volunteers, including volunteers at the Outdoor Learning Center, the background checks are good for 3 years. Recently some HCMG members were notified that their background checks were expiring and instructed to go online to renew, then charged a fee. Details are still being worked out, but if anyone receives a notice that their Avon Schools background check is expiring, they should contact Karen Smith or Steve Pearl who will put you in touch with the AOLC Education Director to get this done at no cost. Anyone who has already renewed their background check and charged the fee may submit a Reimbursement Form and HCMG will reimburse you.

Master Gardner Status News

Due to cancelations and restrictions associated with Covid-19, Purdue Extension has suspended the Master Gardener minimum volunteer hours' requirement for the remainder of 2020. This means Master Gardeners will be able to report less than 12 volunteer hours and still maintain active status. Please don't jeopardize your health or safety through participation in the program. If you can safely volunteer, please keep reporting these hours in MG Manager. This Information is extremely important for communicating the impacts of the program to funding agencies and stakeholders. There are many opportunities for education hours, and you should continue to report these as well. These two resources can connect you with educational and volunteer opportunities.

- www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/mastergardener/volunteerideas-at-home/
- www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/mastergardener/continuedhours/

Upcoming Dates to Remember

July 28 • HCMG Picnic

September 18 and 19 • Outdoor Learning Center Native Plant Sale

October 10 • Adventures in Gardening

(Note: all dates are subject to change based on conditions related to COVID-19)

