

HENDRICKS GARDENER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
HENDRICKS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
December 2023



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

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President's Message

Time flies. Can you believe it's the end of the year? This year we had record attendance at GFAA and AIG, our demonstration garden received Honorable Mention from All American Selections, the plant sale was a huge success, as well as many other projects. **THANK YOU to EVERYONE** for everything you do to make this organization successful.



I'd like to thank our outgoing board members, Teri Mitchum and Andria Grady. I appreciate all the help and support they provided to me and members this year.

I wish everyone a **HAPPY HOLIDAY** and look forward to seeing you at the Winter Dinner and Awards on Tuesday, December 12th.

Debbie

November Meeting Highlights

The November meeting was full of program and committee leadership updates, Winter Dinner plans, an AAS honorable mention award and another very interesting educational program, on vermicomposting.

Eloisa Garza provided an update on the Plainfield Correctional Facility garden program. This year there were some issues related to staff challenges. Eloisa shared that the facility advisory committee fully supports the program and will make every effort to ensure safety. The garden is being moved and will be larger next year. She added that 1700 lbs. of vegetables were harvested from the garden this year!



Dick Meier discussed that plans are underway to replace the raised beds in the Demo Garden. Metal beds will likely be utilized as some of the wood beds are in disrepair. Additional beds might be added



to enhance both the look and gardening potential. Dick also showed the certificate we received for honorable mention in the All American Selections contest this past summer with the whimsical theme.

The educational program was on Vermicomposting, presented by Michele Jones, ANR for Morgan County. Michele was quite knowledgeable about how and why vermicomposting is so beneficial, types of worms which work best, and the supplies and costs, which are relatively inexpensive. As much as 30% of household waste can be reduced and the result is nutrient rich humus which can be added to plants.



Happy Holidays!



Annual Winter Awards Dinner

The Winter Awards Dinner is Tuesday, December 12th. The registration is closed. For all of you planning to attend, check in and social time is at 6:00; with dinner at 6:30, followed by awards. During the social time, there will be appetizers provided by Hendricks Regional Health, along with beer, wine, and soft drinks donated by our MG's.

Entertainment during dinner is being provided by the Danville High School Show Choir under the direction of Lorie Dilanchian. The program will be "Ancient Nostalgic Hit Songs from Early Rock-n-Roll Era." Should be quite entertaining for those of us who remember that era!

For anyone interested in helping, donations of diapers and pull-ups will be accepted for the Hendricks County Department of Children's Services. These donations will be for the emergency care program being housed at the closed Kingsway school. Any size diapers and pull ups would be greatly appreciated; however, need to be plain without characters. Thanks to Winter Dinner co-chairs, Suzy Freeman and Kathleen Kindred for planning this annual festive and fun event!



Winter Dinner Decorating

One of the reasons the Winter Dinner is so festive is the beautiful decorations! Some very creative MG's made table decorations and decorated the large tree for all of us to enjoy. The tree is in the auditorium all month for many events and people to enjoy. Thanks to all who helped!



L - R: Sue Carey, Dee Dee Moore (coordinator), Biljana Tygart, Jo Vickery, Annella Abel, & Tracy Vantryon. Not pictured; Patricia Furner & Deloris Elza.

L - R: Roberta Muir, Ann Selvy & Suzy Freeman. Not pictured; Kathleen Kindred, who helped & captured their creativity in the photo.



MGs Judge at FFA Convention By Vicki Coleman

The 96th annual FFA National Convention Floriculture judging was held at the Indiana State Fair Grounds November 1st. There were teams from Hawaii to Puerto Rico. Hendricks County Master Gardeners were well represented as judges.

The first activity was judging a winning team from each state in how they worked together to set up a flower shop booth. They were given instructions and items and they had 45 minutes to complete their booth and answer questions from the judges. Each team had two judges and each judge judged at least two teams. There is a list of what to judge and each is given a score of 0 to 10.



The afternoon activity was judging pinching a coleus to be ready in 5 weeks for a holiday festival. We were all scratching our heads; judging pinching? They were giving 9 minutes to pinch, and we had 1 minute to ask them 3 questions. The wording was a little different from what we were given but basically, "Why did you pinch the area you pinched?", " Did you accomplish your goal", and "What do you think it will look like in 5 weeks?". This was an individual student practicum. Some of the coleus really got a haircut!



We had to deal with a freezing building, Wi-fi/ computer issues, waiting for the next group, and a very long day. Otherwise, it was a wonderful group of kids and a great program.

Apologies if anyone was left off this list.

Teri Sundine
Debra Pease
Sue Leuschke
Glenda Prysock
Karen Smith
Sue Squiller
Vicki Coleman
Coletta Kosiba
Tracy Vantryon
Kerry Cates
Cindy Pearson

GFAA Committee First Meeting

Although there has been already been prep work occurring, the committee met on 11/13 to begin the official planning of our 37th annual GFAA. This event will take place on April 29, 2024! As previously announced, this is Kim and Steve Somermeyer's last year as co-chairs. The new co-chairs will be Vicki Coleman and Susan Gackenheimer, who will be apprentices this year. Vicki and Susan bring years of experience, dedication, and enthusiasm to GFAA leadership.

A list of all the committee changes and more information will be included in next month's newsletter. Several requests have been made to help with specific activities:

1. Tree Giveaway: newspaper and clean grocery vegetable bags, shredded newspaper or regular paper.
2. Spring bulb flower sale: 4" pots
3. Gardener's Closet: Start looking for & saving garden related items, including books.



Master Gardener Spotlight: Suzy Freeman



Suzy Freeman became interested in gardening, especially vegetables, when she was a young wife. She learned to can, but with four kids and a very busy life, gardening had to be put on hold. Years later, she and her husband Ed

were living in a small town in southern Indiana, when she saw a notice on a bulletin board about a master gardener class in a neighboring county. At the time, it was winter, and the long drive just seemed too much with unpredictable Indiana weather.

Fast forward to 2006 and she again found out about the master gardener class after moving to Hendricks County. She and Ed completed the class in 2008 and have been dedicated gardeners and members of HCMGA for over fifteen years. Suzy has been involved in many programs, projects, committees, etc.; however, her favorites are GFAA and the Hendricks Fair. Whether it is behind the scenes tasks or interacting with

show attendees and fairgoers- Suzy is committed, cheerful, and always has a friendly demeanor.

Suzy truly appreciates the guidance and support she has received from others. MG's Colletta Kosiba and Rosie Lenihan have especially been an inspiration to Suzy. She has learned from their experience, knowledge, presentations, and compassion for gardening. It shows in all she does!

When asked about passions in her life, Suzy immediately replied, her family. She and Ed have four children, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. She loves her family and they do keep her busy.

When Suzy was forty, she obtained her pilot's license. The Freeman's purchased a plane and lived on the east coast.

They would fly to Indiana to be with family, saving a lot of driving time.

Though she does not fly much anymore, they still own the plane, which is at the local airport, Gordon Graham Field. She has many wonderful flying memories!



Suzy also enjoys cooking, doing crossword puzzles, and working a seasonal job at Bear's Nursery in Pittsboro. Though she was supposed to only have one cat, they have four. It is a good thing she loves cats! She loves gardening, and growing vegetables continues to be her favorite. It goes hand-in-hand with her joy of cooking. Suzy is again co-chair of the Winter Dinner this year.

Thank you to Suzy for her years of dedication and "living" the HCMG mission.



Brown Marmorated Stink Bug By Colletta Kosiba

The brown marmorated stink bug gets the award for the biggest pest in Indiana. This stink bug was first seen in Pennsylvania, in September 1998. It is believed that the stink bug hitched a ride from Asia in a shipping container. They are harmful by crunching on over 100 plants such as ornamental fruits and vegetable crops. It is a threat to the agricultural industry.



Beware!! They are seeking your nice warm house to spend the winter. These stink bugs are not harmful to people, houses, or pets. They do not bite, sting, suck blood, or spread disease. They do not eat or bore into wood structures. Stink bugs just want to wait out the winter in your house.

The stink bugs often gather on sunny exterior walls. Like most pests, the stink bug is able to maneuver into very small spaces. All it takes is a slit, crack, or crevice the width of a dime. Inspect your home and seal any place they can squeeze their way in.

Once in the house, you will notice them as they noisily fly around when the lights are on. If you pick them up or squash them, they will release their stink spray with a nasty odor. This is their natural defense mechanism to deter predators, hence their name. When you squish a stink bug, special pheromones are released in the air which could actually attract other stink bugs into your home. While they are a nuisance in the house, they do not pose a threat to us.

Next meeting:

January 16, 2024 General Meeting;
Classrooms A B C