

*PURDUE EXTENSION SERVICE***Officers:**

Annie Bright,  
President- 986-3335  
Faye Ure,  
Vice Pres.- 828-0565  
Nancy Knapp,  
Treasurer- 829-2128  
Julie Coffin,  
Secretary- 829-2493

## Starting Seeds, A Spring Ritual

In my neck of the woods, spring is so close you can almost smell it. For gardeners that means it is time to start seeds. Snow bound days have provided us with hours to look through the catalogs and make plans for this year's gardens. Every year I am amazed at the variety of the offerings. There is always something new in the world of horticulture. Many times it is only an old favorite dressed up with a new color and name that gets all the attention. Gardeners get excited when an old favorite is offered in a new color, like the lime green Echinacea that was so hot recently.

Gardeners are an optimistic bunch. We take a tiny hard nugget, push it in the earth, give it a little warmth and water and wait for a miracle. Not all seeds are created the same, the anatomy can differ between species. For angiosperms (flowering plants) the spark of life is packaged in a protective shell called a testa. Also within the testa is, food for the developing embryo. Some seeds take longer to sprout than others, partly due to the thickness of the testa. The cotyledon has to push out of the testa and up through the earth. That is the part that contains the root and what will be the first leaves. The first time I see the tiny green leaves pushing out to the sunlight a feeling of joy comes over me.

A handful of seeds holds the promise of the future. Seeds, like children, need nurturing and the right conditions to thrive. A good foundation of soil is necessary to produce healthy plants. Hardcore gardeners will discuss (argue) what makes the best starting mix. Most agree, a good planting medium contains milled peat moss and some vermiculite. Personally, I think success also depends on the seed and the green thumb of the gardener. When I was in junior high, one of our neighbors was a lady in her 70's. She could grow anything. Every year she produced dozens of tomato seedlings in old coffee cans full of dirt from her backyard. They thrived without planting medium or grow lights. She turned her garden with a pitchfork in late April, and set out the plants she grew in her kitchen window. By mid summer we were sinking our teeth into juicy red globes. Now she was a natural green thumb gardener.

Rugged native plants will reseed themselves and thrive on their own if not disturbed. So will some of the non-native invasive plants. One blossom of Queen Anne's Lace will produce hundreds of seeds. Ragweed, a poor plant that has no friends, produces even more. Some plants seem to spring up everywhere with no help from humans. But if we want tomatoes or broccoli we have to start early. February is time to get out our trays and fill them with starting mix, dampen it and gently lay seeds in rows and sprinkle soil over the little nuggets of life. Potting trays are nice because they have transparent lids to keep in the moisture and the plant development is visible. For those of us who aren't lucky enough to have a greenhouse, they have to do.

Today as my garden is buried deep under a blanket of snow, I will start my gourd seeds. Gourds have a long growing season. If I don't plant the seeds now to get a head start, the plants won't have enough time to mature. Decorating gourds is my new retirement hobby. It is a year round project: start the seeds, transplant them, nurture the plants all summer, harvest the gourds, dry them all winter, clean them, and sand them. Then the fun begins. I can make a bowl, a bird house, or use them as a canvas and paint them. Gourds give me hours of enjoyment. It all starts with a funny shaped seed, a handful of dirt and a belief that Spring is coming soon.

## SCHEDULE FOR URNS

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO WATER THE URNS THE WEEK YOU ARE SCHEDULED, PLEASE CALL TO TRADE WITH SOMEONE. WE HAVE 24 URNS AROUND TOWN. SOME OF THEN ARE WATERED BY THE PERSON WHO PLANTS THEM OR BY JOHN FUHS.

## RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANTING

#1 EXTENSION OFFICE - LINDA HANCOCK \* WATERS OWN  
**#2 & #4 HERITAGE CENTER & RICHARD NORMAN'S - TONY NEFF**  
**#3 & 5 BBP WATER COMPANY & POST OFFICE (2) - FAYE URE**  
**#6 COURTHOUSE PICNIC TABLE AREA (2) - JOANN LIGON**  
**#7 EVENING WORLD - ANNIE BRIGHT**  
 #8 MOOSE - JOHN FUHS \* WATERS OWN  
 #9 VFW - LOIS OHLER \* JOHN WATERS  
 #10 NE CORNER FRANKLIN/MAIN - SUE CIRESI \* JOHN WATERS  
 #11 LANGUELL'S - LINDA HANCOCK \* WATERS OWN  
 #12 HICKAM'S - PAT NEWFORTH \* WATERS OWN  
 #13 BIOMEDIC - JILL BRUSH \* WATERS OWN  
**#14 SW CORNER MAIN / MARKET - NANCY KNAPP**  
 #15 SE CORNER MAIN / MARKET - MARY ANN DUNFEE \* WATERS OWN  
**#16 PETE'S MUFFLER - JOE O'CONNER**  
 #17 VIDEO STORE - BARB BRINSON \* WATERS OWN  
 #18 VALLEY OPTICAL - KAREN FULK \* WATERS OWN  
**#19 NE CORNER MAIN / MORGAN - JOANN LIGON**  
**#20 OC BANK - ANGIE FENDER**  
 #21 MCKAY'S - ANTON NEFF \* WATERS OWN  
**#22 PEOPLE'S BANK - EMILY REDENBARGER**

**URNS IN BOLD NEED TO BE WATERED.**

*NOTE:  
 DUE TO THE  
 COURTHOUSE  
 CENTENNIAL  
 CELEBRATION ON MAY  
 1<sup>ST</sup>, PLEASE TRY TO  
 PLANT URNS AS EARLY  
 AS POSSIBLE;*

## WATERING SCHEDULE

MAY 16-22	ANNIE BRIGHT	986-3335
MAY 23-29	SUE CIRESI	829-2731
MAY 30-JUNE 5	JULIE COFFIN	829-2493
JUNE 6-12	ANGIE FENDER	829-2679
JUNE 13-19	NANCY KNAPP	829-2128
JUNE 20-26	JOANN LIGON	829-4300
JUNE 27-JULY 3	BERTA MEDICUS	876-1100
JULY 4-10	TONY NEFF	
JULY 11-17	JOE O'CONNER	876-3045
JULY 18-24	EMILY REDENBARGER	829-4786
JULY 25-31	FLOYD RICHARDS	876-8731
AUG 1-7	NANCY SPARKS	829-1549
AUG 8-14	FAYE URE	828-0565
AUG 15-21	BARBARA WINDERS	829-6282
AUG 22-28	SUE CIRESI	829-2731
AUG 29-SEPT 4	JULIE COFFIN	829-2493
SEPT 5-11	ANGIE FENDER	829-2679
SEPT 12-18	NANCY KNAPP	829-2128
SEPT 19-25	JOANN LIGON	829-4300
SEPT 26-OCT 2	FAYE URE	828-0565
OCT.3-9	NANCY SPARKS	829-1549

## MINUTES FROM JANUARY PLANNING MEETING

Approximately twenty-one members gathered at the home of Angie Fender for the annual January planning meeting.

Julie Coffin read the secretary's report from the October 7, 2009, meeting. There were no changes or additions to the secretary's report.

Nancy Knapp, the treasurer, caught us up with bank account activity, and reported that the club's account balance is \$1,445.31.

Agenda items were as follows:

**Master Gardener Class:** The Purdue Extension is holding a Master Gardener class in Clay County. Classes begin on Tuesday, February 2 at the Clay County Extension Office in Brazil. Registration is due by January 22. There is also a class scheduled for Greene County--to be held in Switz City. Details can be obtained from the Extension Office.

**Spring meeting:** Annie opened up a discussion about possible speakers for our annual spring "educational" meeting. Berta Moore suggested that an acquaintance of hers who is an expert on native plants might be a possibility. Berta will contact the person and let Annie know whether this is a possibility. There was also some discussion of a meeting about mushrooms and mushroom hunting, but the consensus led back to the possibility of Berta's acquaintance.

**Plant Sale:** The Farmer's Market opens on Saturday, May 1, 2010. We will hold our annual plant sale there--for the third year in a row. Nancy Sparks will make sure we have three spaces reserved. Jo Ann Ligon will be in charge of the sale. As usual, all members are encouraged and welcome to participate by digging and potting plants, labeling them with name and sun requirements, and taking them to the Market on that Saturday morning.

**June Meeting:** Sunday, June 13, was chosen as the date for the annual Progressive. Berta Moore offered her home as a destination, and Jo Ann Ligon's home was volunteered as a second destination. The evening will begin at 4 p.m. at Berta's house, followed by dessert at Jo Ann's house.

**Owen County Fair:** The 2010 Fair is July 18-24--nearly two weeks later than usual. The Open Class building theme is "Down the Yellow Brick Road." In keeping with the theme, members settled on "a yellow arrangement" as the category for the specialty flower contest that the Club sponsors on Tuesday of Fair week. Prizes (of \$25, \$15, and \$10) will go to the cut-flower arrangements that show the most variety (of yellow flowers).

Some discussion followed about making sure that adequate numbers of Garden Club members were on hand to check in flowers on Saturday, help with the judging, and then to check out flowers on the following Sunday. Annie and Berta volunteered to take in flowers and help judge on Saturday, July 17.

PLANT SALE  
IS  
MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> AT  
FARMERS'  
MARKET

2010 OWEN  
COUNTY FAIR IS  
JULY 18-24

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Various other members volunteered to be available for other duties. There has as yet been no word from the Fair Board about whether Club members are needed to patrol the Open Class building during Fair week.

**Fair Display:** The Club will once again have a designated space in the center of the Open Class building for a display. The topic of container gardening and/or "patio pots" was agreed upon. Julie Coffin will be in charge.

**Triangle:** Julie Coffin contacted the Cloverdale High School agriculture teachers and has committed the club to purchasing 150 Wave petunias (half hot pink and half deep purple) from the school's horticulture program. The Club's cost will be only 90 cents per plant. Julie will hold a meeting in April to plan the Triangle plantings and work schedule.

**Urns:** Faye Ure addressed various watering concerns. The job has become too large for many members to want to take on. In addition, there is some confusion about what pots need water because some members take care of their own pots, and others volunteer to water more than their own. John Fuhs volunteered, once again, to water all the pots on the perimeter of the Square. Julie suggested creating a map that shows pot locations and separate symbols to indicate whether each pot is an owner-watered pot or whether it needs to be taken care of by the weekly waterer. Faye is updating the watering list for the summer.

John Fuhs will remove the greens by the end of April. Fresh dirt was put in last fall, so the pots should be ready for planting once the greens are out. Members should plan to have pots planted by May 15. Members may choose their own plants.

**October Meeting:** Connie McCain always graciously hosts this event. We'll leave the planning to her once again, including the choice of date.

**An Additional Meeting:** Some discussion was had about whether the Club could or should hold some type of additional meeting in September or October. The possibility of a "field trip" to visit a notable garden was raised. Members suggested that a day trip by coach might be an enjoyable diversion. After some discussion, it was agreed that the cost of renting a bus or coach needed to be explored before further plans are made.

**May 1 Courthouse Celebration:** A group of community members is planning a celebration on May 1 to note the Courthouse's 100th year of service. There may be opportunities for the Garden Club to get involved, either by participating or contributing. A suggestion was made to replace the somewhat worn-out picnic table at the northeast corner of the Square. Or, the Club could offer to landscape that corner to enhance its appearance. The Club will await further information from the organizing group before any decisions are made.

HELP MAKE  
DOWN TOWN  
SPENCER  
SPARKLE

## THINGS TO DO

### **Marsh Madness**

See Sand Hill Cranes as they migrate north. Greene County is hosting a festival for bird watchers at Goose Pond, **March 5 & 6**. Many events including a chili supper and art fair will occur in Linton. Check out the website at [www.marshmadness.info](http://www.marshmadness.info)

**Master Naturalist Program** in Monroe County. Call 349-2575 to register. Starts **March 25**. Costs \$50.

Gwen Dieter, Soil & Water Educator and Owen County Library are offering 9 sessions of free education in their new program. Participants in the **Owen County Conservationist Classes** will enjoy hands on activities as they learn more about the natural world. Call Gwen at 829-2605 to register. Classes are offered in the day time and at night every month.

### **Indianapolis Flower and Patio Show**

**March 13-21, 2010** Tickets are \$12.

**Rebuild Owen County Yard Sale** at old Winder's Lumber Building  
**March 12 & 13**. Proceeds go to disaster recovery. Bargains!!

**Owen County Artist Show** at the Waldron Arts Center in April  
Opening **April 2** at 6 pm. Come out and support Owen Co. artists.

**Wabash Valley Herb Festival \*Sat. May 8<sup>th</sup>.\*** 9 am – 4 pm  
Plants, herbs, crafts, food at Terre Haute's Fairbanks Park

**Owen County Farmers' Market, every Sat. morning beginning May 1** Vendor fee \$10 per day, Call Ed O'Brien for info. Come to sell, Come to shop. Buy locally grown produce.

**Courthouse Centennial Celebration May 1** at 1 pm

The Courthouse will be re-dedicated in a ceremony on the south lawn. The OVHS band will perform, politicians will speak. The Garden Club is working with the committee to beautify the Courthouse inside and out.

**Earth Day and Arbor Day Celebration** at Cooper Park the **last Saturday of April**.

## USING NATIVE PLANTS IN THE GARDEN

### SAY HELLO TO SPRING WITH THE GARDEN CLUB!

OUR SPRING MEETING WILL BE MARCH 20 AT 1:30 PM AT THE EXTENSION OFFICE. OUR GUEST SPEAKER, DR. EILEEN METRESS, WILL SHARE HER KNOWLEDGE OF USING NATIVE PLANTS TO BRIGHTEN OUR LANDSCAPES. DR. METRESS, A PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO, IS AN AVID GARDENER. SHE ENJOYS USING NATIVE PLANTS IN HER GARDEN AND IS LOOKING FORWARD TO SPEAKING ABOUT HER GARDENING EXPERIENCES WITH US.

#### WE'RE ON THE WEB!

SEE US AT:  
[WWW.BIRDSBYBENT.COM/GARDENCLUB](http://WWW.BIRDSBYBENT.COM/GARDENCLUB)

THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, SO INVITE YOUR FRIENDS. THE CLUB THANKS BERTA MEDICUS-MOORE FOR MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR THIS SPEAKER'S VISIT US.

### *ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION...*

ANYONE WHO LOVES TO GARDEN IS INVITED TO JOIN THE GARDEN CLUB. BEGINNERS AND MASTER GARDENERS SHARE THEIR LOVE OF GROWING THINGS AT MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. VOLUNTEERS WORK ON PROJECTS SUCH AS PLANTING FLOWERS IN THE URNS DOWNTOWN AND MAINTAINING THE GARDEN IN THE TRIANGLE AT THE JUNCTION OF 231 & 46. DUES ARE \$5 A YEAR. CALL THE EXTENSION OFFICE, 829-5020 FOR MORE INFORMATION

