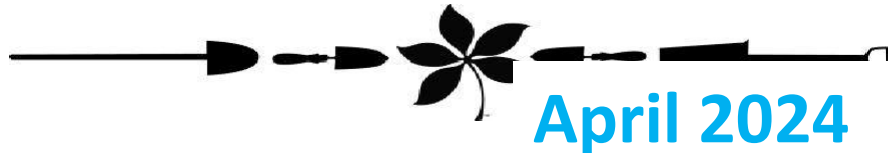


# Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

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## *Notes from Nic*

Thank you to everyone who sent cards, gifts, and messages on the birth of Kolsen. They were all greatly appreciated! Everyone is doing great (minus some sleepless nights here and there) and he is growing like a weed.

Also, a reminder regarding the new marijuana law. As you also know, back in November, Issue 2 was passed which legalized the use of marijuana in the State of Ohio. The University, which includes you as Master Gardener Volunteers, is not permitted to engage in questions we receive from the public or give any presentations on the topic of marijuana. This is a mandate from The Ohio State University Office of Legal Affairs. Here is our official statement we are to use if we are asked about the topic: ***"The Ohio State University cannot answer questions regarding marijuana as it remains a federally prohibited schedule 1 drug and the university is subject to the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act. Thank you"***. If you do get asked and they will not seem to let it go, please have them call the office and I will take it off your plate to deal with.

I am always looking for opportunities to teach, so if you are involved in anything outside MGV and there is an opportunity for me to teach a program, please reach out and I would be happy to work with you to put something together.

I will see you all soon as we start with meetings and garden work in the very near future!



## *Notes from Joanne*

Thank you to everyone who helped donate food or money to make our seminar a HUGE success. We had so many compliments on the food, decorations, and speakers. Thank you to everyone for all your hard work on Friday and Saturday. It was great to see everyone after winter and get for spring.

Opening day of the garden will be Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. Workday will be from 9 am to around noon. With lots of help this day goes very fast. Weekly workdays will be starting on April 30<sup>th</sup> on Tuesdays starting at 9am. Everyone is always welcome to work any day of the week that fits their schedule, but group workdays are Tuesday mornings. If you need to know how to open the garden shed, please contact any of the board members, Nic, or myself.

Please consider doing a Brown Bag event. These start in June and Teresa is still in need of 11 more volunteers. Your subject can be anything to do with gardening and should last about a half hour with 15 minutes afterwards for questions and comments. Our office can help with making copies of handouts if you need them. Keep in mind that all the time to prepare your talk and the talk itself are all volunteer time that can be logged.

We are accepting orders for Master Gardener apparel. I have attached the order forms to this email. ALL orders must be turned in by April 27<sup>th</sup>. We are getting a group discount with the state and your orders include shipping and handling charges. All orders MUST be paid for before I order. Please make your checks out to Allen County Master Gardeners and mail the order form and payment to the address on the form before the 27<sup>th</sup>.



### *Tidbits from Teresa*

There are many ways to propagate plants, some are simple, and others can be pretty complicated. Sexual propagation uses seeds to produce new plants. Home saved seeds for replanting often have poor results due to conditions needed to maintain seed viability. Also, many saved seeds do not “run true” or don’t convey all of the desirable traits of the parent plant. Some cultivars are designed to be sterile so the breeders can keep control of the resale of their product.

You can encourage seeds with hard seed coats to germinate by soaking in warm water (works well with beet seed) or nicking the seed coat with a file or clippers. Along with the right moisture and temperature, seeds also need air and oxygen to germinate. Heavy soils can limit oxygen availability and heavy wet soils compound the problem. If you start seeds indoors avoid using garden soil as it would drain poorly in a container, and you might be introducing unwanted organisms.

Asexual plant propagation uses parts of a plant to make a clone, or exact copy of the parent plant. The advantages of this type of propagation is that it usually is quicker, you can duplicate a sterile plant, and you have better luck than with seeds with tricky germination. Asexual propagation also includes cuttings, layering, division, grafting, budding and tissue culture.

In leaf cuttings you need the stem tip and at least one more leaf. Stem cuttings are sections of the stem without leaves, but they have dormant buds. Stem cuttings benefit from using a root hormone like Rootone. Make sure they are orientated with the top up, some people cut the bottoms at an angle, so they don’t plant upside down.

Layering is when you bury a still attached branch several inches into the soil. Make sure the branch tip protrudes upward. You can speed the process up by “cutting” or wounding the area in contact with the soil and dust the cut with Rootone. This type of layering should be done in the spring and on dormant one year old shoots. Leave this connected to the mother plant until the following spring, then cut it from the plant and leave in the soil a couple more weeks before transplanting. Air layering is done above the ground along a stem and the junction is covered to keep the area moist.

Dividing plants is usually easiest in the spring before new growth begins. (Think ACMGV plant sale!) Dividing shrubs should be done when they are dormant.

Grafting is another way to propagate. The lower part is the understock or stock which becomes the roots, and the upper part or scion becomes the top of the plant. The union of the two must be kept from drying out before it “takes”. As with stem cuttings care must be taken to not insert the stock into the growing medium upside down or the scion tip into the graft. The best time for grafting is in the spring just as growth starts. There are many different grafting techniques, and they are too detailed to mention here.

Tissue culture allows thousands of new plants from a single plant. This technique is used to rapidly multiply new cultivars. Tissue culture establishes an environment with vitamins, minerals and hormones in an agar medium under sterile conditions in a propagation tube. Because of the complexity of creating the ideal conditions and avoiding contamination, the success rate is widely variable. Tissue culture is considered cloning since identical descendants are produced by vegetative reproduction. Many trees (PawPaw), shrubs, vines, and ferns and other perennials form clonal colonies naturally.

It is illegal to propagate for personal gain patented material without permission and plant patents are valid for 20 years. Without this protection to breeders, we would have many less cultivars to enjoy.

If anyone would like to do a Brown Bag, I still have 11 slots open. Potential topics could be: Propagation, grafting, garden pond maintenance, house plants, shrub care, veggie garden issues or 1,000 other topics. I will have a sign in sheet at our April meeting.

Teresa Diehl

April 2024



#### APRIL 2024

We are about to embark on a new growing season! That means ‘let the meetings begin’!! Our first meeting will be organizational in nature. Nancy Miller has again offered her basement for us to meet in a warm, well-lit location.

April weather can be iffy, so I think this is an excellent place to go over our plans for the garden in 2024.

We will be working on removing and replacing the invasive species such as some of the grasses and some other bushes which have proven to be a problem. The large Ailanthus (Tree of Heaven) will be removed also. This will be accomplished with the help of Apollo JVS students and instructor and our own labor. Kay garnered the funds for the replacement plants and tree removal through a Community Grant. We do have a deadline to complete the tasks, so please HELP!

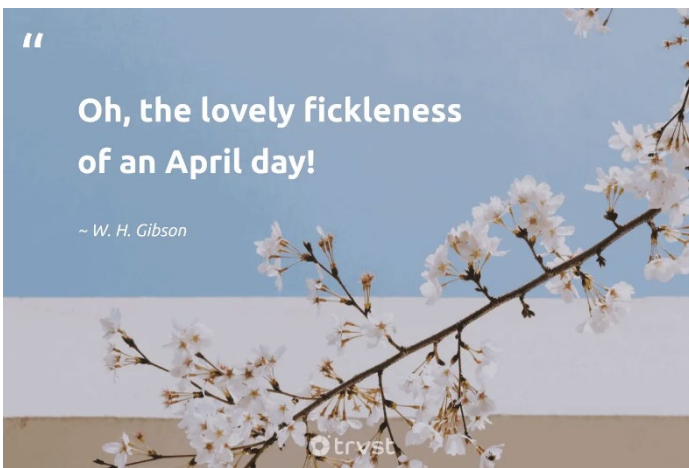
The meeting is Tuesday, April 16th at 7 pm. Nancy's address is 265 N. Fernwood, Lima. Fernwood is between the old American Mall area and Cable Road. Turn north off Market Street. No need to bring chairs! Thanks so much to Nancy!!!

See you there,

Sandy Bindel



## *Greetings from Gretchen*



THANKS FOR A GREAT SEMINAR!

I hope you were as energized by the Art of Gardening seminar as I was! It was so great to see you all and to learn something new from each of the speakers!

Thank you to all of you who played a role in making the seminar successful and beautiful! Thank you to our leaders: Roxanne Shoffstall and Joanne Rex; Denise Woodruff, her husband Robert, and Burlin Sherrick; Allison Doerter; Sandy Bindel; Teresa Diehl; Tim Staley; Marge LaFollate and Mary Payne; to all of you who made both monetary and food contributions! You're appreciated more than we can say!

### SPRINGING AHEAD

It's hard to believe that the new gardening season is here! There's a lot of renovations that are both needed and anticipated. We hope you're ready to roll up your literal and metaphorical sleeves and jump in to help! Please join us for the April meeting as we put more plans together and share more details. Also, please try to keep an eye on your email as we anticipate needing to put out calls for help on somewhat short notice as we work around the weather and our partners.

### GOT SOME SPARE SEEDLINGS?

One of the big projects at the garden will be removing the original Tall Grass Maze around the Oil Derrick and replacing it with a Pollinator Pathway as well as renovating the Prairie Garden in that area. Grant funding has allowed us to order a large number of perennials for the area which will be arriving this Spring, but we will need some starts of some common pollinator friendly annuals to fill in between the baby plants. We will not be sowing seeds in the area because we are using a Preen like product to try to combat the weeds. If you have some spare packets of Zinnias, Cosmos, Sunflowers, etc. on hand please consider starting some now and getting them going for when we are ready to transplant them into that area.

### WHAT'S AHEAD

Master Gardener Meeting – Tuesday, April 16, 7 p.m.  
See the details from Sandy Bindel's post.

Work For Food Day – Saturday, April 27, 9 a.m. to Noon

This is the day we clean up, unpack the shed and start to set up the garden displays. This is a big job so please help if you can. Friends and family are welcome to help as well. We'll have a sign up sheet at the meeting to plan for donuts and pizza! Thanks in advance!

Tuesday Workdays – begin Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> and continue through the gardening season.

Plant Sale – Saturday, May 18, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

This important fundraising event provides money for the plants we buy for to make the garden beautiful and colorful!

As you are cleaning up your gardens and landscapes this Spring please pot up your volunteers and divisions to share for the plant sale. Don't have any spares in your garden? Consider helping an elderly neighbor, friend or family member clean up their garden in exchange for some of the plants that need dug or divided from their gardens. Win/Win!

Spare pots, labels and some used potting soil are available at the shed at the Children's Garden if needed.

Please put this event on your schedule now and plan to help with this event!

~ Gretchen



## Volunteer Voices

*New! – This is new section will have guest articles from our volunteers about anything nature, gardening, or just something that you would like to share. If you are interested in sharing something, just email me your articles the last week of the month and I will be glad to add it. Looking forward to learning more from everyone.*

**We did not have any contributions this month. We would love to hear from you next month.**



## Happenings from Kay

### Eclipse

No time to write this this month, as we are preparing for the big event. Yes, my family is contributing to the influx of people coming to Allen County for the eclipse. We have friends coming from Florida, Colorado, Maryland, Arizona and many cities in Ohio.....it's going to be awesome!