



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen Co. Master Gardeners

September 2023

Notes from Joanne

I hope that everyone is doing good. I haven't been able to attend Tuesday's workdays for several weeks, and I have missed seeing everyone. Thank you to everyone for your hard work this summer. We still have two more months of workdays ahead of us to keep the garden looking good. Please continue to keep track of your hours. If you cannot enter them yourself, I will be collecting them before the end of the year, and I will submit your hours for you.

We will continue to have workdays on Tuesday morning as usual. Either Nic or I will be there to help. We will plan on packing up the garden the end of October as usual. We will set the day and time next month.

As you are out and about or simply decluttering your home, here are some things that we will be needing for the Christmas Tree Festival. Small baskets, cups, mugs, or bowls with Christmas themes, artificial decorations that we can add to live greenery, vases that will hold foam and an arrangement, ribbon, floral wire, and oasis (wet foam). I know that several have already been collecting items, so thank you. Our live plants are also selling very well at the festival. If you have house plants that need separated, please consider donating them. If you have small pots that could be used for house plants, please donate them also. This is a great fund raiser for the ACMGV and good outreach for others to learn about us. Your donations and time is greatly appreciated.

~ Allen Co. OSU Master Gardener Coordinator

Tidbits from Teresa

"Love is like gardening, the rose outweighs its thorns." Kenneth Paul
September brings its own beauty and challenges, but it is an enjoyable gardening season. Hope you make the time to enjoy it. I decided to research lavender for this month's topic. Aside from its wonderful odor and interesting structure lavender also is one of the best natural pest controls

for organic gardening, (it repels mosquitos and flies due to a compound called linalool). Because there are over 450 varieties, it is important to choose the right variety for your environment.

They fall into three general categories:

- English (*lavandula angustifolia*) is more tolerant of cool winters and humid climates, good varieties are Munstead and Hidcote.
- French (*lavandin* sp) This hybrid crosses the English and Portuguese varieties and has the strongest aroma and cleaning properties. Two seedless or sterile varieties are Provenance and Phenomenal.
- Spanish (*lavendula stoechas*) is drought tolerant and more compact than other varieties and is also called Rabbit's ear lavender.

Since it is native to the Mediterranean's dry rocky soil, its needs are different than our soils. A good mix contains sand, gravel, perlite, peat moss and compost. Don't fertilize as this interferes with scent production, and it needs 10 hours of full sun daily. Lavender is hard to grow from seed, it can take 1-2 months to germinate and 2-3 years to establish roots and put on a show. Lean towards dryer soil, the main cause of death is overwatering and root rot. If in a pot, water it from the bottom.

This plant attracts beneficial predator insects, and the flowers are phenomenal for drawing pollinators to other plants. When it starts to bloom in spring, it is time to harvest. Early morning and the earliest point in the bloom cycle produces the highest fragrance and essential oil content. For bouquets, the opened flowers have the best color. To cut, follow the flower down the stem to a node (where a new leaf, flower or stem has begun to form) and cut just above the node.

Pruning is an essential part of caring for lavender. Unpruned shrubs are more prone to foliar diseases, woodiness and leggy growth. The benefits of twice a year pruning are more flowers, less disease, healthier foliage, better root growth, less woody growth, and a more pleasing shape.

First pruning in spring:

1. Sanitize your pruners.
2. Do this right after the first blossoms (soft pruning), also use when transplanting.
3. Prune back ½ of the green growth after the first flowers start to dry up.
4. Locate the woody crown and go up 2-4" from the base, avoid cutting hard brown parts and you can use your cutting to propagate new plants.

Second pruning in fall:

1. When the last flush of flowers are dry and go to seed, at least 5-6 weeks before the first frost.
2. The main objective of fall pruning is to direct the energy to the roots and is important in zones 6 and below.
3. Keep the plant short to the ground, you can cut up to 2/3 of the growth. As long as you do not damage the crown you won't hurt the plant if you prune hard.



Notes from Sandy B

SEPTEMBER meeting ACMGV

For our meeting we are back in Lima and at a member's home. Gemma Kennedy, one of our newer members, is eager to show us her vegetables that she is very familiar with, but we might not be! She and her husband Greg want to treat us with a Hawaiian Luau!! I think this sounds fantastic and should provide us with a learning opportunity that we rarely get. She also has some plants which she wishes to sell. Among them are: lemon trees, guava, tamarind and pineapple.

Save the date for Tuesday, September 19th at 6 o'clock p.m. (one half hour earlier than regular start time). The luau will feature Hawaiian and Filipino food. Please RSVP to Sandy Bindel. Call or text (419) 230-5143 by Tuesday, September 12th. Bring a chair and guests welcome.

Tuesday, September 19th 6pm (RSVP by the 12th)

280 Squire Lane Lima, OH 45805

Directions: Squire Lane is the first street west of Chiles-Laman Funeral Home on the corner of 117 (Spencerville Road) and Shawnee Road.

Sandy Bindel



Greetings from Gretchen

AH, FALL!

We are coming into my favorite time of the year and in the garden! I love the respite from the heat and how the garden responds to the cooler nights! While I am not a fan of the shorter days, there is just something about this time of the season that feels so rewarding!



Please note that the gardening season at The Children's Garden DOESN'T end when school begins, and Brown Bag is over! We're only 2/3rds of the way through gardening season and there are numerous ways that we can use your help in the coming 8 or 9 weeks!

We will still be meeting on Tuesday mornings at the garden and please watch your email for the addition of 1 or 2 work for food Saturdays before the season ends! We are also hoping to arrange at least one more kid's class in the garden before the season ends!

A GREAT BROWN BAG SEASON!

Thanks so much to Teresa Diehl for her leadership and welcoming friendship in running another successful and fun Brown Bag series this year! Thanks too to everyone who lectured at the series this year! Brown Bag is a great example of the Mission of the MGV program, and you should feel very proud of the impact you make by sharing your gardening experience with our Allen County neighbors! Great job!

~ Gretchen Staley, President



Happenings from Kay

Kay is currently on vacation and has shared some pictures with us.

Things found in the Children's Garden



