



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

AUGUST 2020

Notes from Joanne

Hello to everyone! I have been working at the garden on Tuesday mornings for the past few weeks and have really enjoyed finally meeting a few of you. The progress in the garden is good for the type of year we have experienced. I know you all see the minor imperfections that could be improved, but from an outsider's perspective it is fantastic and a blessing to all who visit.

I just want to recover a few points that must be followed to allow us to continue working in the garden.

1. Everyone needs to let me, or Clint know when they will be at the garden. This is part of the Exemption for OSU that will allow us to keep the garden open. It is a requirement for contact tracing and to keep the attendance below ten. If you plan on being at the garden you either need to email me at rex.87@osu.edu or call the office at 419-879-9108. The office is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:30 – 4:30. I understand if you want to work other times than Tuesday mornings or wish to work on your own. If you have a set schedule of when you are at the garden each week, I will be glad to write that down. Again, please do not just show up at the garden without notifying me.
2. There is currently NO in person teaching/meetings allowed for the current time. This includes any events, not just at the garden, where you claim to represent the Master Gardeners. I know that these are very educational, but OSU is not allowing in person teaching due to COVID- 19. Unfortunately, this is an area that is currently having to take a back seat due to the current circumstances. We have been encouraged to use Zoom or any other virtual platform to meet these needs.
3. I would appreciate if everyone would please notify me before taking on a large-scale renovation in garden. I am not concerned with normal upkeep or maintenance of an area but adding or removing large areas. I really think the work and improvements that you are making are excellent and will be a great asset to the garden, but I would just like a heads up. This will make my job easier when I know of what is planned for areas and what is the timeline for the improvements. It will also prevent us from stepping on each other's toes. If I know what is planned for a specific area, I can also coordinate additional help when it is needed. Thank you for understanding.
4. Under the current Governor Dewine mandate, you must always wear a mask in public places. If you can maintain a distance of 6 feet in outdoor places, you may remove your mask. If you have been exposed to COVID-19 or are showing any symptoms of COVID-19, DO NOT come to the garden.
5. Also, we have been having some extremely hot weather lately with high humidity. Please be careful. There is cold water in the refrigerator and please seek shade when you feel too hot. If at all possible, please work in the early morning or evening hours. Be safe.

Thank you so much for understanding and I hope we can return to normal times very soon. Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much.

Joanne Rex

Allen Co. OSU Master Gardener Coordinator

Tidbits from Teresa

Foliage is just as important as flowers in a garden. It is the backbone and structure around which everything revolves. Foliage provides interest in its own right and variegated foliage is the eye grabber in the foliage field. Variegated plants come in almost any color imaginable. The green parts of a plant contain chlorophyll which transforms the sun's energy into sugars for growth. No pure white plants for this reason. Yellow has an underlying hint of green as do purple leaves. Some purple leaved plants revert to green in shady spots.

There are two kinds of silver leaves, those who are really silver like cyclamens, lamium and pulmonaria and the silver look-alikes that are covered with fine white hairs giving them a silver appearance like lamb's ears. These have developed hairs to cope with hot dry conditions and so do best in sun.

Variegated foliage has many uses: brighten dark corners, unite a planting scheme by combining colors, and to define neighboring plants. They also add light and texture to a solid green mass and they provide color and pattern over a long period. You don't have to rely on the presence of blooms.

Variegated plants start out as random seedlings, "sports" or mutant variegated shoots on an otherwise green plant. Some are virus-induced, the same way the streaked colors of "Bizarre" tulips came from a harmless virus. In red or purple plants the chlorophyll is masked by anthocyanins. In yellow and white leaves the cells that hold the chlorophyll are absent or imperfect.

Variegated plants are often weaker and have fewer blooms than their all green counterparts, not always but usually. Shelter is more important for variegated plants, especially thin leaved white and yellow types. The sun and wind will brown their edges. Japanese euonymus and variegated dogwood shrubs are very tolerant of rough conditions and others tend to be tricky.

Reversion is when you get all green shoots on a variegated plant. This makes the plant healthier and more robust but these shoots can eventually overwhelm the variegated shoots and should be cut out as soon as you see them. Sports, like many of new hosta varieties, need to be propagated vegetatively. Some varieties need to be cloned to keep the traits of the original sport.

The intensity of leaf color is affected by how much light is available. Generally, variegated rue and certain hostas tolerate more sun than their all green sisters. Purple, maroon and yellow variegated leaves do best in full sun. White and cream tend to prefer shade.

As we move towards the second half of our gardening season I am missing seeing the ACMGVs due to COV19. Much of the enjoyment of being a MGV is in the people you meet and form friendships with. Please hang in there until we can all hang together once more.

Teresa Diehl August 2020

PS ~ Over the past few months we have been blessed by some "garden angels". These include friends of Kay Studer who paid for and helped establish a pizza garden and Allen Tree Service who chipped and ground for us. Tina Decker, a former ACMGV, and her husband Steven created Minions out of tires that are awesome and a big hit with kids. Roxanna Shofstall recieved a donation of "musically named" daylilies from Perennial Plant Peddler. Kay also worked for and recieved a grant to expand our walkway pavers. Glad to be the bearer of GOOD NEWS for a change!



August Notes –

Obviously, we are still in a holding pattern for any meetings this season. The garden continues to look great, though no thanks to me. I have been nursing a very painful back and cannot bend or stoop much—bad news for a gardener!

On the bright side, I have been tending my raised vegetable beds much more attentively this summer. My summer squash has done very well! I found this delicious and easy two-ingredient recipe for baking it (zucchini can be substituted).

Here goes: >>>> > > > > > > > > >

Several small squash washed and cut into 1/4" rounds

Sprinkle with parmesan cheese

Bake at 425 degrees for about 15 minutes

(I use a little salt and pepper and bake on parchment paper)

Hoping to hear some good news soon about this pandemic abating!

Sandy Bindel

Many thanks to Starr Gephart for the new tiles in the hopscotch area. Starr has an artistic gift in mosaics and has added a lot of beautiful art work to the garden, not only in the hopscotch area, but many of the concrete benches. The hopscotch pad was first created in 2002 with a group of children from Big Brothers-Big Sisters along with Master Gardeners who also made a few of the tiles and grouted them. Check out the new tiles on your next visit to the Children's Garden.

Children's Garden from Kay Studer ~ July 2020



PIZZA GARDEN

In May, a young woman approached me at the garden and asked "What happened to the pizza garden that used to be here?" She then shared that her children always loved coming to the garden and it was one of their favorite displays. After chatting for a while, she said she would gladly purchase the plants needed and install them, which she did. Several weeks later, I received a picture with her three children, now teenagers, at the garden. Thank you Bridget Guagenti!



MINIONS

During the process of purchasing new tires for their car, Steven and Tina Decker (MG '99) had an idea for a creative re-use of their old tires. Inspired by a photo they found online, the couple created Minion planters for the Children's Garden with very special "hair." Their local tire shop was happy to supply additional tires for the project. It's a really cute display and the kids love it. Thanks Steven and Tina!