



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

DECEMBER 2020

Notes from Joanne

I hope that this newsletter finds everyone happy and healthy. I just want to cover a couple of end of the year items.

Everyone needs to submit all your hours before December 10th on the VMS. For 2020 only you can combine your work and your training hours. You may have any combination of work and training to achieve the 20-hour requirement. For example, if you are required to have 20 hours you could have 15 hours in work and 5 hours in training. Everyone has the 20-hour total requirement unless you were grandfathered in with 10 hours. Also, please put in **ALL** your hours not just the required. If you have done extra, please submit the additional hours also. You may find the VMS does not have as many options for adding your hours as in the past. We had to “clean up” the work hours options due to COVID restrictions, so just put in dump hours if you need to. If you need additional hours, please look for an email that I sent on October 8, 2020. Let me know if you need me to re-send you the list.

We have been told that a Spring Plant Sale will be allowed, so please start planning. Our restrictions will be almost identical to what you did on your own last year. We will have to offer drive up service, wear masks, socially distance and spread the plants out to help will six-foot distancing. If they release new requirements, we will find a way to make them work.

Please stop by the garden and look at our beautiful new bridge and fence. The garden looks beautiful thanks to the donations from Lowe's and hard work from our volunteers and from theirs. A special thanks goes out to Dave and Jenny Webb for designing and building the bridge. It looks fantastic! It is made of Trex Composite Decking, so no more painting!

I hope that everyone has a safe and happy holiday season. Thank you so much for working with me this year and being so kind and understanding. I am actually very sad that the garden season is over and have thoroughly enjoyed spending every Tuesday with you. I cannot wait until spring gets here.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Joanne Rex ~ Allen Co. OSU Master Gardener Coordinator



Tidbits from Teresa

Here it is the last month of a year we hope never repeats itself. COVID19 has changed our lives in many ways. For some of us the Children's Garden was a happy place amid the turmoil and gave me a reason to love Tuesdays. I am so thankful for my 6 foot friends who made an extra effort to keep up the garden. The museum will be decorating the gazebo in lieu of the Christmas Tree Festival this month. Stop by and enjoy the decorations and our new bridge built by Dave and Jenny Webb with lumber donated by Lowes. The Webbs ROCKED IT and we are so thankful. Pictures are on the Children's Garden website.

Here are a few tips for keeping Christmas greens looking fresh longer. 1) Use the freshest greens you can find, local is best. 2) Give them a soak in warm water for 2 to 24 hours. 3) Keep them in water if you can and mist them, especially if they are indoors. 4) Treat with an anti-desiccant spray and cut or crush the stems to facilitate water uptake. Some good varieties to use are boxwood, Douglas and Fraser firs, Scotch pine and White pine. Short needled pines, spruce and hemlock won't last as long indoors. Holly is a beautiful addition but only lasts one week indoors.

Food for the birds in your life:

Purple coneflower: Seed heads are goldfinches favorite and important for their health, also appreciated by jays and cardinals.

Crabapple: Birds eat buds, flowers, fruit and seeds, it has a long season benefit. Robins, bluebirds, waxwings, cardinals and finches enjoy the fruit.

Flowering dogwood: The fruit is fleshy and high in fat and eaten by more than 35 species. Robins build their nests in dogwoods.

White oak: This is the most vital of all tree species for wildlife, especially birds. Oaks host more than 530 species of caterpillars which birds feed to their young, more than any other tree. Wild turkeys and wood ducks eat acorns whole, crows, woodpeckers and flickers crack them open. This is a favorite of bluejays.

Serviceberry: Amelanchier is one of the top bird attracting plants in North America. Flowers attract insects, which attracts birds. The fruits, Juneberries, are delicious for birds like cardinals, waxwings and more. (humans too!) Allegheny serviceberry fruits later and covers a different time period.

Sunflower: This is a late summer through fall food source. Cardinals, chickadees, woodpeckers, nuthatches and gold finches all love sunflower seeds. The seeds ripen just as the migrating species are looking for high fat pre-migration food.

Arrowwood viburnum: Plant 2 or 3 for better berry production. Berries persist all winter into early spring for the first migrants. You will be attracting bluebirds, robins and cedar waxwings.

Merry Christmas to all my fellow Master Gardener Volunteers. I hope you have the opportunity to find beauty and peace this Christmas.

Teresa Diehl

December 2020



December Notes from Sandy B -

On Wednesday, December 11th, 2020, I was fortunate to witness something truly magical! In this disappointing year of Covid, it almost seemed fitting to put the garden to bed on several levels. My thoughts were that we get to close the book on this season and get ready for a bigger and better year in 2021.

Weeelll, then the Lowe's truck arrived along with 11 associates who donated their time and talents to help make the magic happen. It was jaw-dropping! The heroes with the Lowe's "Hero's Program" worked tirelessly all day to install the beautiful new split-rail fence. They off-loaded the other Lowe's-donated supplies and worked alongside our own ACMGV's to rake, spread mulch, fill the Lima Bean sand pit, put away the picnic tables, etc. for winter storage. They were gracious and courteous and had strong backs (and strong work-ethics)! It was nothing short of awesome!

The store also made other donations of tools and sealant to help in the garden. I also need to pause and give kudos to Jenny and Dave Webb for constructing the new bridge with the donated composite wood that was donated by Lowe's. I love to drive by the garden and I smile whenever I think about all that happened that day.

A beautiful way to end the year!

~~MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL~~

Sandy Bindel



Greeting from Gretchen

Sending best wishes for a blessed Christmas and New Year!

Be well,

~ Gretchen

Happenings from Kay

SCOREBOARD: Deer 6 - Eagle 1. Kay 0

It's been an interesting weekend, yes indeed. I spent the whole Thanksgiving weekend alone, here on the farm, but it turns out I was surrounded by wildlife.

Today (Sunday) while taking a walk, before the snow falls tomorrow, I found I had a visitor. Yes, Mr. Buck! And that darn buck has damaged 5 pine trees and 1 arborvitae. Insert my choice words here: #&\$@#!

Then, this afternoon I noticed cars slowing down and looking at something in the corn field. So I jumped in the truck to see for myself. There proudly standing was a bald eagle, so beautiful and magnificent. Took numerous pictures from about 50 feet away, and he didn't seem to mind..... for he was busy devouring one of my cats!

Well, it is the season for giving. I'm thankful for all the moments during these difficult times, trees and cats can be replaced, friends and family cannot. Peace and good health to all.



Kay Studer ~ November 2020