



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

JUNE 2021

Notes from Joanne

~ Allen Co. OSU Master Gardener Coordinator

Master Gardener Volunteers –

I can't thank you enough for all the effort that you have put in so far this year. It has been a pleasure to see you at the workdays and see all the progress that is being made in the garden. I hope to continue to see you on Tuesdays as we begin Brown Bag from 11:45 to 12:30. Please try to come a little early and volunteer some hours each Tuesday. Without everyone's effort we cannot keep the garden looking good. There is still tons of work that needs to be done this year. Feel free to come and volunteer any day of the week if you cannot make it on Tuesdays. You can work on any area that you wish or there is a To-Do List posted on the shed door.

Please consider volunteering for Brown Bag on Tuesdays. We still have several spots open, and we would like to have a volunteer speak each week. If you have any new projects that you are learning about, we would love to hear about it. I sent out an email on May 21st with a list of open dates. Without everyone's help we cannot continue this program, and your help is greatly needed.

There has been an extension on the t-shirt order. I will be taking final orders on Tuesday, June 1st. There are still order forms in garden shed if you need one. The email that I sent on May 11th shows a picture and has the price list for Master Gardener apparel. Please make your check out to Allen Co. Master Gardeners.

Our next monthly meeting will be Tuesday, June 15th at 6:30. I hope to see everyone on Tuesdays and at the next meeting. Thank you for all that you do.

Joanne Rex



Tidbits from Teresa

I am always amazed (I amaze easily) at how different each season is from the last one. My doublefile virburnums have been uninspiring for 15 years but this year they were gorgeous. I looked into our woods last week and saw a sea of lavender spikes, a wild flower we have never had in our woods before. I looked it up and they are wild hyacinths. I

found it in the “Spring Wildflowers of Ohio” field guide. The Ohio Division of Wildlife offers a wide range of free informative guides for flora and fauna in Ohio.

Wild hyacinths are in the lily family and are perennial bulbs that are often colonial. Their habitat includes wooded floodplains and they were located in a wet section of our woods. I am curious as to how they got there as we have not seen them in the 28 years we have lived here. They are ephemerals and lure pollinators as well are a favorite of deer. The bulbs are edible and were used in a variety of ways by American Indians. They colonized an area of about 12 by 12 feet in our woods.

An unwelcome visitor to my garden this year is “bed straw”. This is the first time I noticed it at the Children’s Garden as well. It can tolerate freezing temperatures while in the growth stage. This fast growing weed can flower in as little as 8 weeks from germination and sets seed in late spring to mid-summer. Watch for it so you can catch it before then. Most plants produce 100-400 seeds with occasional plants producing 3000 or more seeds. The seeds are viable for up to 3 years. Hand hoeing or weed pulling before they produce seeds can be very effective.

Lots of help is needed to get the Children’s Garden in shape. Come on Tuesday for the brown bag and stay awhile to help take the load off of the regulars. If you could commit to adopting a specific area, that would be awesome. Your volunteer hours make a big difference.

Teresa Diehl

June 2021



June Notes from Sandy B –

June Meeting

For our June meeting we are going to learn about the birds and the bees. Well only the bee part. Actually, only one type of bee—the wonderful honeybee! The by-product of the honeybee is a terrific natural sweetener and can have therapeutic value as well. Not to mention the immense benefit of this small insect in pollinating our crops and flowers.

Ty Shelby is a relatively new and very enthusiastic beekeeper. He will share his knowledge with our group on Tuesday, June 15th at the Children’s Garden. The meeting begins at 6:30 pm. Bring a chair. Bee there!

Sandy Bindel



Photos from Teresa--



Happenings from Kay

Poppies

When something beautiful catches your eye while you're driving, it calls for a U-turn and another look. That's what happened last Wednesday while driving on North Cole Street. A beautiful field of poppies! It was so intriguing, on the third trip to see them, I had to stop and meet the owners, Adam Troyer and his fiancé Chloe. They had just moved into the property last November but along with the previous owner and Adam's father they planted all the seeds in October. He explained how they killed all the weeds first, tilled, removed grass clumps, used a harrow-drag, spread the seed (purchased on Amazon), compacted the seed to the soil, fertilized, and spread a light coat of straw.

Sadly, Adam's father passed away in March, but his work on the poppy field lives on. If you would like to see this field it is located at 5377 N.Cole St., there is a spot to park along the fence, do not park in their driveway, and please stay behind the fence.

More on Poppies

Do you remember the red paper poppies that were handed out around Memorial Day? I do, and here's a little info from *Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds*.

Since WW1, the red poppy has been a symbol of remembrance and a way of honoring those who served and lost their lives in war. Veterans' groups such as the American Legion distribute millions of red paper poppies and encourage people to wear them on National Poppy Day, which is the Friday before Memorial Day each year.

But how did the red poppy become such an iconic flower?

The fierce artillery battles and trench warfare on the Western Front of WW1, in the Flanders region of Belgium, decimated the landscape. In 1915, the second year of the war, soldiers began taking note of the red flowers that sprang up in the killing fields all around them. They must have seemed like a miracle.

Common poppies, *Papaver rhoeas*, need light to germinate, and can lay dormant for 80 years or more until the soil is disturbed. Lime from the destroyed buildings and nitrogen from bombs fertilized them, and they began to bloom in abundance.

In the spring of 1915, Lt. Col. John McCrae, sat overlooking a mass gravesite. He took out a pen and paper and wrote what would become one of the most enduring poems of WW1, "In Flanders Fields."

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders Fields, the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

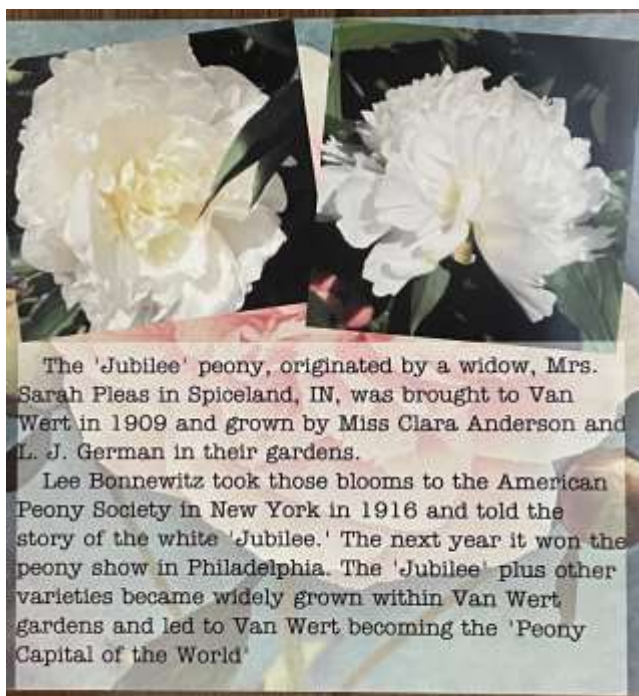
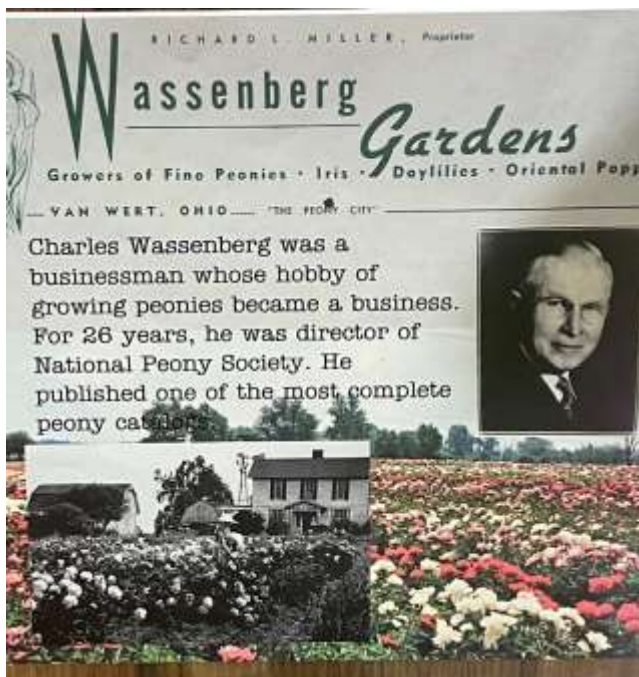
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Peonies

Last week I visited the Van Wert Historical Society and while browsing through the many displays. I came across some interesting information about peonies. Van Wert has always been known for their peony festival and parade, usually held the first weekend in June, but had no idea that it dates back to 1932. Growing peonies in Van Wert began as a hobby by two local businessmen, Charles Wassenberg and Lee Bonnewitz in

the early 1900's but developed into a thriving business, selling peonies all across the country. The peony farm closed in the late 1940's, but the sign still stands on Lincoln Highway just east of Van Wert.

The festival always crowns a "Queen Jubilee" every year. 'Jubilee' was a peony brought to Van Wert in 1908 and sparked the interest of the two businessmen. Today, they still crown a "Queen Jubilee". I thought I would try to find a Jubilee peony and after searching the web, found The Nichols Arboretum at the University of Michigan. They have an extensive collection of old varieties of peonies, including 'Jubilee', along with 800 other peonies. Next week is the peak bloom period, with nearly 10,000 peonies in bloom. So, I'm off on a road trip to Ann Arbor to find 'Jubilee'.



Eric Carle June 25, 1929 - May 23, 2021

Last week, author and illustrator Eric Carle passed away. He wrote my favorite children's book 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. The picture below was posted on Facebook by Oh My Ganache Bake Shop in Ottawa. What a sweet cupcake tribute to Eric Carle.



Submitted by Kay Studer