



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

JUNE 2020

Notes from Joanne

Master Gardener Volunteers-

I would like to formally introduce myself; I am Joanne Rex the new Master Gardener Coordinator with OSU Extension. This is definitely not the way I planned to start a new position, and I am so sorry not to be able to meet each of you in person. I am currently still working from home, but I would like to hear from you. If anyone has any concerns, questions or if you just want to say “Hi” and let me know how things are going, please feel free to contact me. You may email me at rex.87@osu.edu . We are hoping that we will soon be able to return to our office at the fairgrounds on a limited basis. If you plan to visit, please call first at 419-879-9108.

I was able to visit the “Friends of the Children’s Garden” Plant Sale and meet a few of you. I am so glad for the volunteers who were able to come and help with the sale, so a big “Thank You” goes out to them. This week when I visited the garden, I could see lots of changes and improvements have been made. We have some very dedicated “garden fairies” who are working hard in the off time to keep things looking nice. All the perennials were planted, and the pots look great. The mowing is being kept up and slowly it is taking shape. I am so glad that we have some dedicated volunteers.

We are trying very hard to get you back to work. We found out some exemptions have been given to gardens in park areas where no one else is doing the upkeep. Previously only community gardens where food is donated to the area food banks were getting these exemptions, so we applied as soon as we found out other exemptions exist. Clint and I applied for the exemption from Ohio State earlier this month. This would allow for work to continue with Ohio State’s approval at the garden. If we get approval, there will be some restrictions; classes and education still cannot start until after July 7th. However, upkeep of the garden would be officially permitted. So far, we have not heard anything back, good or bad. I was hoping to have news for you, but I will let you know when we hear something. Keep your fingers crossed.

If you have not been watching the recorded webinars at <https://mastergardener.osu.edu/> , there has been some added recently. Click the resources tab for the webinars. The latest is a new invasive insect, the Spotted Lantern Fly, that is in Pennsylvania and probably headed to Ohio. Be sure to check it out.

Clint and I will also be working on starting a Master Gardener Course in the fall/winter months. We will need to start planning the dates, times, and speakers. We would appreciate your input and would like you to answer a question; *How did you get involved or hear about Master Gardeners?* We would like to recruit new members, and input on what has worked in the past would be helpful. There is a strong interest in gardening right now as a new hobby, so we are hoping this will bring us new members. We just need to get the word out. Please send me note at rex.87@osu.edu.

I am by no means a “master gardener” as you all are, but I do enjoy it as a hobby. I am hoping to learn a lot from you and cannot wait to get busy helping when we all get back together. Please stay safe, and happy gardening. **Joanne Rex** Photos submitted can be found in the MG website under Photo Albums



from the desk of Gretchen

PLANT SALE SUCCESS!

Big thanks to all of you who made the “Friends of the Children’s Garden” plant sale! We had a TERRIFIC sale! Our customers were so happy to get out to plant shop and you all did a great job getting it set up and assisting our guests! It was also great to see so many of you and get a chance to catch up.

Thanks for sharing your garden treasures and thanks to those of you who made monetary donations in lieu of plants! You are all such blessings to our organization!

Thanks to those of you who used that time to help plant containers and start to get the garden set up! We got a great start and the garden is starting to look really colorful and fun!



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

I have had the chance to touch base with Joanne a couple times in the last few weeks and she is anxious and excited to get started. Unfortunately, OSU is still “closed” so no educational programming is able to take place quite yet. We are hopeful that there will be some new directives coming out of Columbus as early as next week that might give clearer direction to meetings and programming. In the meantime there will be no Brown Bag Lunch Series or Kids Classes until those events are cleared by OSU. I am hopeful that we will be able to end the summer strong with a shortened Brown Bag series and some kids events, and DEFINITELY the Butterfly Migration Celebration although we may need to look at best practices for distancing to make that happen. So, put your thinking

caps on and be ready to jump into sharing your talents when they say we can GO! Onward and upward!

THANKS FAIRGROUNDS BLOOMERS!

The small but mighty Fairgrounds Bloomers group led by Sue Lyon and including Dianna Hall, Jan Krueger, Marsha Mangin and Larry Brunk have been taking weekly turns checking on the Fairgrounds Gardens in order to keep up with the work there and to do so safely. Thanks for your dedication!

ONLINE TRAINING CEU’S

I have a few requests for reminders of the link for the online training. The full list of current and recorded sessions is available at: <http://go.osu.edu/MGVlearn>

CHILDREN'S GARDEN TIPS AND REMINDERS

Since we are working more independently at the garden, here are a couple reminders and tips for when you are there:

- There are Clorox wipes and latex gloves on the desk/table particularly for picking up trash around the garden and wiping your hands and tools as needed. There is also dish soap on the storage rack for washing your hands with soap and water.
- There are 2 barrels inside the shed. The tan one is for TRASH ONLY and the blue one is for COMPOST only. Please pay attention when you are using those. We are grateful to have the cooperation of the Museum to use their dumpster for trash but want to be cautious not to misuse that and lose the privilege.
- Please DO NOT put trash, plant tags, plastic pots in the COMPOST bags or your weed buckets while you work. We utilize community compost sites to haul our weeds to and there is nothing more frustrating than having to stand in a compost site after a long day of volunteering and pick trash out of what we are dumping.
- There are reusable contractor grade bags alongside the compost and trash bins in the shed. If you fill a bag you can leave it in the shed or back by the dinosaur garden and we will get it disposed of.
- Now that the weather is due to heat up, keep an eye on the flower pots. The irrigation is on but the containers can often use additional water when it gets hot.
- If no one has told you lately, you are awesome! Thanks for your help and commitment!

Gretchen

Tidbits from Teresa

My mind is a complete blank...I can't come up with a new topic for June. Consequently you are in for a rerun....just like the TV Cov-19 fare.

When we visited Blarney Castle in Ireland and I was awed at the size and beauty of the specimen trees especially the arborvitae (*Thuja plicata*) W. North America. I didn't realize the arborvitae had such a large range in size. Bonsai enthusiasts use it for its lush foliage and good trainability. I never considered it a plant that you could "train" to go where you wanted. The trees we saw in Ireland, *Thuja plicata*, also called western red cedar, grow up to 120 feet in zones 6-11 and live 150 plus years. Blarney Castle has been around since the 1100's so I don't know when these trees were planted but most specimens there appeared to be very old but also healthy.

Arborvitae is Latin for tree of life because their sap supposedly can be used for medicinal purposes. They grow well in loamy soil but tolerate clay and sandy soils and from full sun to partial shade and highly acidic to slightly alkaline. They are slow growing and prefer moist soil. If they are not getting enough water the needle tips will start to turn brown and overwatering will cause drooping branches and discoloration. They make a good wind barrier and stand up to snow and ice. The variety "Green Giant" (*Thuja* spp) grows between 3-5 feet a year and quickly makes a good privacy screen. Globe shaped "Little Gem" is a dwarf that only grows about 3 feet tall. The wood is soft and light and smells similar to eucalyptus trees but sweeter. The wood is used to make guitar sound boards. When I research topics for the tidbits I find there is a lot I don't know about plants. Arborvitae has received a resurgence of interest lately and you are likely to see it used as an effective screen in many suburban neighborhoods. New varieties offer options not formerly available.

Cov-19 has turned our MGV world upside down. A limited number of faithful MGVs have been working hard to reclaim the Children's Garden from the wild. We still need much help to get it back in shape. Any hours or even minutes you can lend a hand would be much appreciated. The public is starting to emerge from their dens and they are ready for an uplifting experience. OSU extension is not allowing Joanne Rex, our new coordinator to be involved in any programs until July. This is frustrating for her and makes it tough to get things rolling. In the meantime, keep the faith and contribute when you can and the "Sun will shine tomorrow!".

Teresa Diehl

June 2020



June Meeting – NOT!

Alas, we are not able to resume our normal meeting schedule for ACMGV. Hopefully next month!!!! Meanwhile, the garden is looking pretty great; especially considering the challenges we have faced this year! It's nice to get to see other MG's again and also wonderful to see people in the community enjoying the garden!

Sandy Bindel



from Kay

Last month the topic was the fight with Bishop's Weed in the Woodland Garden. Several people asked, "Why would you ever plant it?" The plant, also known as "snow on the mountain" (aegopodium P. 'Variegatum') is still being sold in nurseries, but is banned in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. One advertisement reads: *Bishops weed is a very tough and quick to spread low growing white and green variegated ground-cover. It prefers afternoon shade and thrives in moist or any soil conditions. Works very well in developed areas with borders or boundaries, however if planted in unrestrained areas left unattended it can become invasive.*

Another advertisement reads: *Bishops weed is regarded as one of the fastest growing drought proof ground covers on the market today providing a quick fill in either sun or shade in the garden. This is a great plant for covering the ground fast with very beautiful foliage. Deer and drought proof it will smother other weeds. Beautiful in drifts, it should be surrounded by paving on all sides where it looks pretty, refreshing and under control. The paving must be solid, or it will run along the cracks. It is also very beautiful surrounded by a gravel driveway. Below ground edging barriers may be used to prevent its spread into the lawn. With the extreme vigor of this plant you will want to select an isolated site where the rootstock can be kept in check. Yes, they do say it can become invasive, and while the Children's Garden does not have the variegated variety the Bishop's weed there has become a serious problem.*

This year you may have noticed that the beautiful hosta area at The Children's Garden is no longer there. The Bishop's Weed was everywhere, so like the woodland garden all the plants had to be removed or destroyed to be able to kill all of this weed. Hopefully by the end of the season there will be a clean-weed free area

ready for planting next spring. **Kay Studer** Photos submitted can be found in the MG website under Photo Albums