



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

MAY 2019

Tidbits from Teresa

Here are a few common misconceptions in the gardening world. Myth #1 is to paint pruning cuts. The idea is to seal off the cut surfaces to prevent rot and other diseases. Research shows that wound dressings do not benefit trees and may be harmful. Wound paint prevents the forming of calluses thus interfering with natural healing mechanisms. Make the cut as clean as possible and sterilize the saw/pruning shears and do a slanting cut next to the collar of the branch. Myth #2 Organic pesticides are completely safe. Rotenone extricated from the tropical bean plant is a powerful pesticide, insect spray and piscicide (chemical which is poisonous to fish). In spite of being natural, rotenone has been observed to be six times more harmful to people and different animals than Sevin, a substitute pesticide of comparable activity. Rotenone is banned in a few nations but being used generously in others. Nicotine, pyrethrum and neem are other plant determined pesticides used by nursery workers. All have a degree of effect on different animals. Organic pesticides should be selected deliberately for their benefits, not for the fact that they are "natural." They should be used with a similar alert that you hold for other chemical additives. Myth #3 Amend clay soil with sand. When you use sand to amend clay soil you end up with soil that is more difficult to work up and that has poorer drainage. The clay particles fill in the spaces between the bigger sand particles giving a mortar like texture when blended with water. The best approach to amend heavy clay is to work in leaf mold or compost. This opposes compaction and encourages better drainage. Myth #4 Plant trees in deep holes for stability. What newly planted trees need is width (2 X the distance of the root ball) not depth. The trunk flare should always be above ground and long term staking keeps the tree from developing its own stability. Myth #5 Fill your planting holes with compost and fertilizers. When you fill a planting opening with compost you are giving the plant a nutrient rich and moisture rich area. Just like adult children, it will have no reason to "leave home". By incorporating native soil with some compost and a little fertilizer you are encouraging it to spread its roots

outside of the planting hole and to become established. In clay soil the planting hole can become a bowl that collects water and the plant can become waterlogged.

Plant of the month, *Duetzia*, *Hydrangeaceae* was first described in 1712 but not imported to Europe until the end of the 19th century. It was named after a lawyer, Johann Deutz of Amsterdam. Deutzias are native to China but long cultivated in Japan where their wood was used for bodkins and cabinets and their leaves as furniture polish. Duetzias have curving branched stems, covered with double white blossoms in June. They need very cold winters or they will flower prematurely so they do well in the northern United States. They are very beautiful and should have a poetic or romantic history associated with them but they don't. Maybe their beauty speaks for itself. (photo bottom of newsletter)

Teresa Diehl May 2019

From Sandy Bindel:

May is here already! OK, be honest, who put their gardening tools away last fall without cleaning and sharpening them? Who has gotten their gardening tools out this spring and STILL not cleaned or sharpened them? Last question; Who just doesn't take the time to do this task? I answered ME to all three and unfortunately, I do the same thing EVERY year! So, since May is a difficult meeting to schedule anywhere else because of the flurry of planting activity, I thought we'd just SCHEDULE time to take care of our tools! I tried to find an "expert" to be our speaker. I went to three places I thought might be able to offer expertise. Alas, I found that sharpening seems to be a lost talent to tap! Finally, I consulted Google and shopped at Amazon and decided to share what I've learned on the subject.

Our May ACMGV will be held at the Children's Garden on Wednesday, May 15th beginning at 7pm. It will be a feature named "Garden Tool Care Workshop". So, bring your gardening tools and a friend, especially someone experienced in sharpening tools and we will learn from one another.

Sandy Bindel



LET THE WILD RUMPUS START!

It's that time of the year when we are all running in circles trying to wake up our gardens, clean up the winter remnants, pot up the volunteer plants and divisions from our gardens, shop for new plants and seeds and get ourselves back into gardening shape!

The Children's Garden workdays will start in earnest on Tuesday, May 7 and continue each Tuesday through October. In the month of May I will be at the garden each Tuesday, weather permitting, beginning at 1 p.m. and I will stay until early evening, as long as I have other volunteers present by 6 p.m.

Thanks in advance for your help!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

The Brown Bag Lunch Series has become a well-loved educational event and a tradition for our organization. Vicki Jacobs will be traveling for the greater part of the summer season so she is unable to lead the Brown Bag programs this season. We are seeking a Volunteer who would like to host Brown Bag this year. The duties include contacting fellow MGVS to create a schedule of speakers for the 13 weeks and then being present to host the event at most of the Tuesday sessions. Nanci Mistovich and I are available to cover vacations or a few sessions if needed, but continuity is appreciated by our guests.

Please contact Gretchen with your questions and/or interest in taking on this program for the season. It is a good opportunity for people who love visiting with other gardeners, don't mind making phone calls and/or email contacts and for those of you who may be slowed by physical issues currently. I have already had several volunteers sign up who are willing to speak so you would not be starting from scratch.

PLANT SALE COMING FAST

All of this rain has made it hard to get out into the flower beds to divide plants so the next few weeks will be critical to the success of the Plant Sale. Please gather your pots and soil and pick up some plant labels from the desk at the Children's Garden shed so that you are ready when the soil is fit to dig.

The proceeds from the Plant Sale go directly to the purchase of plants for the garden. We rely on the sale to pay for all the annuals and new perennials, shrubs and trees each year.

Please plan to donate at least 10 plants per volunteer to make the sale a success. Now that we are back to having the plant sale at the Children's Garden we have a wider range of plants we can sell so if you have an abundance of vegetables, herbs or annuals that you are growing from seed, we can sell those also. We also have a table to sell garden décor items and second hand garden books at bargain prices if you have items to share.

If you are unable to donate plants to the sale, please consider making a cash donation to help defray the cost of our plant purchases this year.

There is also the need to dig and divide plants at the Children's Garden for the sale, so please consider volunteering some of your time for that task.

We will accept plants for the sale at the Wednesday, May 15 ACMGV Monthly Meeting which will be held at the Children's Garden and again on Friday, May 17 from 1 – 4 p.m.

The plant sale will be held from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 18th. Tell your friends!

MGV's IN ACTION

Thanks to Chris Fetzer for hosting our ACMGV meeting at the Lauer Historical Farm in April! What a beautiful facility and lovely evening!

Thanks to Teresa Diehl, Sue Hamilton, Jan Krueger, Kay Studer and Marsha Mangin for representing us at the Allen Soil and Water District Tree Packaging Event!

Thanks to Roxanne Shoffstall, Mary Kay Koch, Allison Doerter, Amy Amspoker, Suzy Daley, Margie Bush, Sandy Kennedy, Denise Woodruff, Pam Joseph, Cathy Woodward and Sandy Bindel for helping open the garden on Kohl's Work for Food Day last weekend! We got a great start on waking up the garden! Girl Power!

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Last year we surveyed you regarding your interest in some of the committee work that had fallen by the wayside during our busyness of keeping our heads above water. This year we are going to start reaching out more to you regarding utilizing the committees you signed up for to better our organization.

We will start with the Social Committee to organize and support the snacks and drinks at the monthly meetings so that the responsibility for that doesn't continue to fall on one person's shoulders.

Jenny Webb; Elizabeth Eley; Candy Newland; Marge LaFollate and Sara Badertscher – expect a separate email later this week!

WHAT'S RIGHT NOW

Tuesday, May 7 – Tuesday Work Days begin at 1 p.m.

Wednesday, May 15 – ACMGV Monthly Meeting – at the Children's Garden

– Tool Care Workshop, Plant Sale Plant Drop Off – 7 p.m.

Friday, May 17 – Plant Sale plant drop off 1 – 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 18 – Plant Sale at the Children's Garden – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

~ Gretchen

Duetzia, *Hydrangeaceae*



<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/FullImageDisplay.aspx?documentid=9482>