



Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

NOVEMBER 2020

Notes from Joanne

Lowe's Work Day Wednesday, November 11

I called and talked to Lowe's this morning and they would like to schedule the work day on Wednesday, November 11th at 8:00am. I am still not sure what all they are planning on doing, but they did say replacing the fence was on the list. The reason for the postponement was due to lack of volunteers and lack of available materials. Please add this date to your calendar. I imagine that we will be there for most of day and anytime that you can come would be great!

I will plan on being at the garden again this Tuesday, but I will be late. I need to go to Wapakoneta to pick up some completed pavers first. We have a lot of the clean-up work done, but could use a cordless drill or two to remove some signs. Our drill is no longer working. If Lowe's does not donate one, I will purchase one during Christmas sales.

I hope to see you all on Wednesday, Nov. 11th or sooner.

Happy Fall!

Joanne Rex ~ Allen Co. OSU Master Gardener Coordinator



Tidbits from Teresa

I came across this article from the Chalet Nursery and I thought it was a topic of interest to our MGV's.

Every October 1, like clockwork, the phone calls and questions about evergreen needle shedding (especially arborvitae) start coming into Chalet en masse October 1. The understandable concern is, "I have a pile of yellow/rust/brown needles falling from the center of my (arborvitae, pine, spruce, fir, yew, hemlock, etc.). They've dropped off and are blanketing the ankles of my plants like mulch."

The needles (or leaves, if you'd rather) of all evergreens have a finite life expectancy that varies from species to species, but is most often 3 years. Know that's very species-specific and includes not only "needle" evergreens (arborvitae, see above), but broadleaf evergreens (Rhododendron, azaleas, hollies), too.

The concern arises at this time of year as the shedding of the oldest needles/leaves in the interior has begun, and it could understandably be constructed that the plant is dying. It ISN'T! So, why is the plant doing this? As the oldest leaves become "shaded" by outer new growth they aren't exposed to much sun. Nature wisely asks, "Why should you live on when you're not photosynthesizing, not contributing much to the growth and general well-being of this plant? And the response is the plant casts off the oldest needles leaving a leaf-free branch skeleton in the center surrounded by an outer wrap of the most seasons of growth.

Any evergreen (most often arborvitae and yews) that has been pruned regularly, grown in lots of sun and are therefore very dense, may cause this interior shedding to be completely hidden from view. This naked state is covered up and may only be noticeable by looking at the base of the plant, or physically parting the branches to expose the nakedness of the shaded interior.

On the other hand, evergreens are grown naturally with a minimum amount of pruning (pines are an excellent example) and therefore present an open silhouette more readily flaunting their yellowing older needles and cause proportionately more alarm. "It's dying, it's dying." Evergreens that are grown in considerable shade, not much to their liking by the way, will also be more naturally thin and open revealing their shedding secret even when viewed from a distance. As long as the plant is not showing browning or discoloration of the newest growth (outer edges) it's perfectly fine. I repeat, interior shedding at this of year is okay, normal, in fact. Now let me drop one more consideration into this stir the pot even further. This particular little sidebar is primarily at arborvitae. Arborvitae produce noticeable cones, shades of green/yellowish as they develop over the summer, than pine "cones" we all know. From one year to the next they are produced either sparingly, or in years of "banner" fertility quite

noticeably. In those years of biblical fruitfulness, those masses of dark brown cones can give the notion of a plant that's in trouble.

In fairness, heavy fruiting may be a response to earlier environmental stresses-excessive: heat, drought, winter cold...Well, you get it, excessive anything. Often a plant's resources that are diverted to cone production will mean that plant produces less foliage. What exactly am getting at here? It's common that a very heavily-coned arborvitae may look thinner though the body because a plant only density at the expense of lots of cones. Again, normal. Does this resonate with what's going on in garden right now? If so, I hope it affords you peace of mind that your evergreens, are indeed not on the brink of death.

Teresa Diehl

November 2020

November Notes –

As vice-president of ACMGV, my primary duty is to set the meeting schedule for our monthly meetings April-October. I am very hopeful we can proceed in 2021 with a regular slate of meetings. I have my list from this current year, but am open to and I welcome any suggestions for future meetings. Here's hoping this pandemic ends very soon and that normalcy prevails!

~~Happy Thanksgiving~~
Sandy Bindel

Autumn walk on the Heritage Trails canal Auglaize Co. Oct. 18 2020 (by Sandy Laus)



Happenings from Kay

Johnny Appleseed

John Chapman better known as Johnny Appleseed was an amazing figure who traveled through Allen County many times. I contacted Anna Selfridge at the museum for more information and she forwarded this article <https://www.limaohio.com/features/lifestyles/375651/johnny-appleseed>

She also gave the location of the historical marker in Amanda Township which I found along Defiance Trail.

The Johnny Appleseed Tree at the Children's Garden was planted in 2002. It along with a pear, peach, cherry and plum completed the orchard area in the garden. The project was funded through a grant from the Ohio 4-H Foundation, and was called "Growing Awareness II". The grant allowed students to become aware of what historical figures have done to help our country grow and heal. Twenty-seven students from Elida elementary were involved in the project. They all learned a great deal from Mark Mohr, of JAMP who gave an impersonation of Johnny Appleseed about his life, his beliefs and his vision of planting apples for future pioneers.

Unfortunately, all that remains of the orchard area is the unmarked Johnny Appleseed tree. Hopefully, next year the orchard can be replanted and signage added for this truly legendary local hero, America's first environmentalist.



Kay Studer ~ November 2020