



Garden Variety News

A publication of the Morgan County Master Gardener Association, Inc

December 2008

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GENERAL MEETINGS


- 6 PM Social (committees can meet)
- 6:30 PM Business meeting
- 7 PM Speaker/program


DECEMBER MEETING NOTICE

The December meeting will be held at the Morgan County Administration Building at Martinsville IN on December 4, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

The East Middle School Environmental Club will present a program with their advisor, Doug Reynolds.

Members may bring a guest to the meeting. Each member is asked to bring an appetizer or finger food. The hospitality committee will take care of drinks, tableware, and decorations.

 **COOKIES....**We are going to have a cookie exchange at the December meeting. Each member should bring at least 3 dozen cookies. If homemade, type up the recipe and make copies for members to have, if they wish. We will let our student speakers pick out cookies, and then each member will select cookies to take home.

 **CALENDARS...**2009 Master Gardener Calendars and photo note cards will be for sale at the meeting. (See page 2 for additional information about the Calendars)

2009 DUES ARE DUE

Please send \$10.00 with the registration form from the November newsletter to Tom Flatt, Treasurer, at 2035 Hawthorne Drive, Martinsville IN 46151. Other copies of the form may be printed at the website, www.mcmastergardeners.org.

**"The twelve months...
Snowy, Flowy, Blowy,
Showery, Flowery, Bowery,
Hoppy, Croppy, Droppy,
Breeze, Sneezy, Freezy."
- George Ellis**

TENTATIVE 2009 MEETING INFORMATION

- January, 2009 - No meeting
- February 5, 2009 – Community Gardens and KIB Programs – Confirmed for the Mooresville Indiana Public Library.
- March 5, 2009 - Garden Fest planning & Seed Sources, Morgan County Fairground, Wilber Kendall Room
- April 2, 2009 - Daffodils
- May 7, 2009 Ready the gardens at the 4-H building prior to the meeting. What and how to exhibit & show at the county & state fairs by Trena
- June 4, 2009- Perennial plant exchange at Mooresville Library
- July 11, 2009, TBD, Family Picnic Tour of Hilltop Gardens, Bloomington
- September 3, 2009 6:00 PM, Election of officers;
Some Famous Gardeners, Botanists, and Landscape Architects about Whom You Should Know at Least a Little, Kathy Hull, Monrovia Library tentative
- October 1, 2009, 6:00 PM, Children's Garden and LEEDS certification at Monrovia Library, Robbie Stevens,
- November 5, 2009, 6:00 PM, program on bonsai or orchids, tentative. Morgan County Fairgrounds
- December 3, 2009, 6:00 PM, Christmas party, TBD, Morgan County Admin Bldg

MASTER GARDENER CALENDARS

The 2009 Master Gardener Calendar features photos and Haiku by Master Gardeners all around the state and monthly gardening tips by Rosie Lerner. A record of the 30 Year history of MG programming in Indiana is also included.

The price is \$10 per calendar, and for each one sold \$1.25 goes to the Purdue Extension or Master Gardener Association designated by the purchaser, \$1.25 goes to the state MG office, and \$1.25 goes to help pay for the 2009 MG State Conference.

Calendar sales are a good fundraiser to help support MG programming in your county and all over the state.

Photos of the calendar and order forms are available on www.IndyMGConf.org.

This year MG note cards also are available. The winner in each of the seven categories in this year's Master Gardener Photo Contest is featured on the cards.

Seven cards and envelopes for \$7.00. Note card order forms are on the website noted above.

For more information, contact MG Kathleen Hull at 317 996 4380 or hullk@cctrcc.com

NOTE: These will be available at the December Morgan County Master Gardener Meeting.



POINSETTIA OPEN HOUSE

Please plan to join us for the 2008 Consumer Poinsettia

Open House at Purdue University, Horticulture Greenhouse Potting Room, next to the Horticulture Gardens on Marsteller and Harrison and south of the Horticulture building (<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/hort/facilities/images/maps/mapZoom06.gif>).

Sunday, December 7, 2008 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The event is free, open to the general public and will be held in the greenhouse potting room.

Highlights: This year's open house will feature 100 poinsettia cultivars as well as poinsettias produced using environmentally friendly production techniques. Help evaluate new and experimental cultivars to see what the future holds, learn how to care for your poinsettia and enter a drawing to win some of the newest cultivars.

Poinsettias will not be for sale at this event.

THE JANUARY MASTER GARDEN CLASS IS SCHEDULED

This is the finalized class schedule for 2009. Cost is \$85.00 per person, \$100.00 per couple sharing materials.

Please note also that this year's class will be held on Wednesday evenings, 6-9 p.m. at the Mooresville library, starting January 21, 2009.

Jan. 21 – Orientation; Weeds/Pesticides – Chris Parker

Jan. 28 – Soils and Plant Nutrition – Chris Parker

Feb. 4 – Plant Science – Bill Rice

Feb. 11 – Plant Problem Diagnosis – Doug Akers

Feb. 18 – Vegetable Production – Scott Gabbard

Feb. 25 – Lawn Care – Jim Barbour

Mar. 4 – Landscape Design – Steve Mayer

Mar. 11 – Trees/Shrubs – Mary Welch

Keeseey

Mar. 18 – Nuisance Animals – Chris Parker

Mar. 25 – Annuals/Perennials – Trena Trusty

Apr. 1 – Composting/Final/Luncheon – Chris Parker

Apr. 8 – snow date

Update from 2008 State Master Gardener Conference

By Judy Turner

Over 220 Purdue Extension Master Gardeners from around the state met in Indianapolis on September 26 and 27 for the 2008 State Conference. As part of the conference, Rosie Lerner, State MG coordinator, updated the group on recent events. She reminded everyone to check the Purdue Master Gardener website, <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/mg/>, for updates for the reference binders. Click on the link, *Publications*, for a list of publications that have been updated recently.

DATABASE TESTING - A statewide database for reporting volunteer and education hours is now in beta testing. This will be adaptable to individual county needs, but will provide statewide data. There are several more stages of testing, then the database will be rolled out to County Educators, and then to Master Gardeners.

STATE CONFERENCE -Mark your calendars now for the 2009 State Conference in Elkhart on September 10-12. Registration is already open. Information can be found at: www.MichianaMasterGardeners.com.

A tour of the Quilt Gardens in the Elkhart County area will be one of the features of this conference.

Christmas Garden Trivia

When did electric lights for decorating a Christmas tree make their first appearance?

The first electric Christmas lights made their first appearance, in New York, at the house of Edward Johnson, an associate of Thomas Edison, in 1882.

GARDEN TIPS FOR DECEMBER

Excerpt from Rosie Lerner's December Calendar at the Purdue Website. Visit her pages for more information.

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/dec07gc.html>

When shopping for a Christmas tree, check for green, flexible, firmly held needles and a sticky trunk base -- both indicators of freshness. Make a fresh cut, and keep the cut end under water at all times.

Evergreens, except pines and spruce, can be trimmed now for a fresh supply of holiday greenery.

Provide winter protection for roses by mounding soil approximately 12 inches high to insulate the graft union, after plants are dormant and temperatures are cold. Additional organic mulch, such as straw compost or chopped leaves, can be placed on top.

Once the plants are completely dormant and temperatures are consistently below freezing, then the winter mulch can be applied to protect strawberries and other tender perennials. In most cases, 2-4 inches of organic material, such as straw, pine needles, hay or bark chips, will provide adequate protection.

GARDENING SHOW PORTER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS 6th ANNUAL

Saturday, January 24, 2009
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CST
Porter County Exposition Center
IN-49 at Division Road
Valparaiso, IN

Morgan County Master Gardeners who are interested in travelling as a group to the Porter County Master Gardeners Annual Garden should contact Trena Trusty to reserve a spot in one of the two vans that will likely go to this event. We will leave at 7:00 a.m. and return at approximately 9:00 p.m. The cost of admission is \$7.00.

http://www.pcgarden.info/gardening_show
Be sure to visit the website for information about this event. Those of us who attended last year were very happy we made the trip.

DECEMBER HOLIDAYS

- 7 Pearl Harbor Day
- 12 [Poinsettia Day](#)
- 21 [Winter Solstice](#) (shortest day of the year)
- 22 [Chanukah](#) lasts 8 days
- 25 [Christmas](#)
- 26 [Boxing Day](#)
- 26 [Kwanzaa](#)
- 27 [National Fruitcake Day](#)
- 31 [New Year's Eve](#)

Poinsettia History and Lore

The Aztecs called poinsettias "Cuetlaxochitl." During the 14th - 16th century, the sap was used to control fevers and the bracts (modified leaves) were used to make a reddish dye.

Montezuma, the last of the Aztec kings, would have poinsettias brought into what now is Mexico City by caravans because poinsettias could not be grown in the high altitude.

In the 17th century, Juan Balme, a botanist, noted the poinsettia plant in his writings.

The botanical name, *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, was assigned to the poinsettia by the German botanist, Wilenow. The plant grew through a crack in his greenhouse. Dazzled by its color, he gave it the botanical name, *Euphorbia pulcherrima* meaning "very beautiful."

Joel Roberts Poinsett was the first United States Ambassador to Mexico being appointed by President John Quincy Adams in the 1820's. At the time of his appointment, Mexico was involved in a civil war. Because of his interest in botany he introduced the American elm into Mexico. During his stay in Mexico he wandered the countryside looking for new plant species. In 1828 he found a beautiful shrub with large red flowers growing next to a road. He took cuttings from the plant and brought them back to his greenhouse in South Carolina. Even though Poinsett had an outstanding career as a United States Congressman and as an ambassador he will always be remembered for introducing the poinsettia into the United States.

William Prescott, a historian and horticulturist, was asked to give *Euphorbia pulcherrima* a new name as it became more popular. At that time Mr. Prescott had just published a book called the 'Conquest of Mexico' in which he detailed Joel Poinsett's discovery of the plant. Prescott named the plant the poinsettia in honor of Joel Poinsett's discovery.

A nurseryman from Pennsylvania, John Bartram is credited as being the first person to sell poinsettias under its botanical name, *Euphorbia pulcherrima*. In the early 1900's the Ecke family of southern California grew poinsettias outdoors for use as landscape plants and as a cut flower. Eventually the family grew poinsettias in greenhouses and today is recognized as the leading producer of poinsettias in the United States.



Poinsettia Cookies

<http://www.tasteofhome.com/Recipes/Poinsettia-Cookies>

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 egg
1-1/2 teaspoons almond extract
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
Red colored sugar
Red and green candied cherries, quartered

Directions: In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Add egg and extracts; mix well. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Divide dough in half; wrap in plastic wrap. Chill overnight or until firm.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out one portion of dough into a 12-in. x 10-in. rectangle, about 1/8-in. thick. Cut into 2-in. squares. In each square, make 1-in. slits in each corner. Bring every other corner up into center to form a pinwheel; press lightly. Sprinkle cookies with red sugar and press a candied cherry piece into the center of each.

Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes. Cool 1-2 minutes before removing to wire racks.

Yield: about 4 dozen.

Wreath Workshops a Huge Success



By Trena Trusty

A total of 25 people made wreaths at the wreath workshops held in Martinsville and Mooresville. All of the wreaths turned out fabulous!

Participants primarily included people who had never made a wreath before out of fresh evergreens. We had fathers and daughters, mothers and daughters-in-law, grandmothers and grandchildren, husbands and wives participate in this fun and educational activity. A huge thank you goes out to all of the MGs who helped with this activity; Leslie Thompson, Diana Wren, Diane Taylor, Theresa Hawkins, Jill Coffey, Pat Proctor, Margaret Lyles, and Randy Dougherty. Look for the photos on the website from the Martinsville workshop.

East Middle School Garden Put to Bed for the Winter

By Trena Trusty

Ruth Pelouch, Diane Cockerham and Trena Trusty have been working on Wednesdays in November to help the students at EMS clean out the garden for the winter and harvest the last of the produce. On the 12th we pulled onions, cut broccoli and kale, tasted herbs, picked the last of the tomatoes and peppers, and harvested our one gourd along with pulling out annuals and cutting back perennials. On the 19th we did a bit more clean up and planted about 50 crocus and daffodil bulbs.

Highlights of this year's garden based on a loose poll of the adult teaching aides to Mr. Reynolds were the cherry tomatoes and the huge number of Monarchs and chrysalis they produced. Be sure to attend the Christmas meeting on December 4 to see a video presentation by the students who are so proud of this garden project. Or stop by the school for a look see. The hollyhocks were still blooming as of November 19!

Gourds: From Seed to Craft

with Guy Shutt

Saturday - November 22, 2009
Tippecanoe County Extension Office
3150 Sagamore Parkway South
From 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Sponsored by
The Tippecanoe County Master
Gardener Association
&
Purdue Extension
Tippecanoe County

Wreath Decorating Demonstration

By Marg Vanderipe

CHRISTMAS AT THE INDIANAPOLIS ZOO



December 5-30 the Zoo, covered in lights, brings the spirit of the season to Indianapolis. The Zoo opens at 12noon daily, and you can enjoy regular Zoo attractions and the Gardens from then until 9pm, while all the fun holiday activities on the Zoo side are available from 5-9pm.

Marsh Christmas at the Zoo is closed on Christmas Eve & Day and on New Year's Eve. Admission is \$8.50 for adults and \$6.50 for seniors 62+ and youth 2-12. Discount tickets are available at all Central Indiana [Marsh](#) and [O'Malia's](#) store locations. Or receive \$1 off admission by donating a new hat, scarf or gloves to the Julian Center Mitten Tree. Visit the website for additional information on scheduled entertainment at the zoo. <http://www.indianapoliszoo.com/content.aspx?CID=1218>

THINK SPRING



TROPICAL ADVENTURE

As the new year begins, visitors to the Hilbert Conservatory at White River Gardens will find not only an oasis from the winter chill, but a whole new look during this year's Tropical Adventure show. The show itself runs from January 17 to March 15 and will include all those wonderful elements that brighten spirits on cold gray days, including tropical temperatures, some new additions from the Australian plant collection we used at the Koala exhibit, plus colorful and exotic flowers. ***Tropical Adventure is free for members and included with regular Zoo admission.***

Other 2009 Gardening events to mark on your calendars:

- October 3, 2009 Hendricks County Garden Day
- March 14, 2009 through March 22, 2009 **51st annual Indiana Flower & Patio Show** at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, West Pavilion Hall.