



GARDEN THYME

June 1, 2016

<https://extension.purdue.edu/Porter>

Vol. 2, Issue 5



LYNDSAY'S VINE

by Lyndsay Ploehn, Agriculture & Natural Resource Extension Educator

Spring marks a time for graduations, and in Porter County, each year we graduate a new class of Master Gardener Interns. This year we have 26 eager gardening graduates. This is my 6th graduating class, and with each year I learn new things. I don't think we have ever done two years in a row the exact same way.

Last year I started a Master Gardener Training Program Committee. The committee consists of three people who assist with the application process, choosing the location, speakers, and other miscellaneous items. In all other years, the training class lasted a duration of three hours per topic each week. However, this year we decided to try bumping it up to four hours. The reason being most presenters need the full three hours, and it doesn't leave much time for socializing or asking questions. Another change we made this year was location. We held that class in Room 102-A of the Porter County Administration Building, which seats 50 people instead of our usual 30-person maximum spaces we have used in the past. This allowed us to invite past Master Gardeners to attend the classes for education credit and to refresh their memory on some of the gardening topics we cover in the class. Each week we had two to five Master Gardeners attend. This year was also a day-time class from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Since we went over the

This year, Kristine Sandrick was one of the participants on the MG Training Program Committee.



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JUST NAME IT

Spring Surprise

by Beverly Thevenin

How often do you brake for a plant? I couldn't help myself as I was headed to a Master Gardeners newsletter meeting on April 29. A profusion of bright yellow flowers circling a tree reminded me of chrysanthemums, but obviously it was the wrong season. Although it's described as



a ground cover, the plant was at least eight inches high with a 16-inch spread. At the time, some trees and bulbs were in bloom, but there weren't many plants blooming, and it was a joy to see.

The other Master Gardeners who had spied it as well were also curious as to what it could be. However, don't believe the rumors that four MGs were creeping through the neighbors' yards in the rain, in the dark, with flashlights, to find and identify the plant after the meeting. What is it? Select this [link](#) to find out. 🌸



THE TOOL SHED

The Lowdown on Hoes

by Nancy Rosene

Wikipedia says, "A hoe is an ancient and versatile agricultural hand tool used to shape the soil, control weeds, clear soil, and harvest root crops." I've been known to use mine to mix cement, snag garbage out of the pond, and kill snakes. I know readers could name a multitude of uses. There are a multitude of kinds, too.

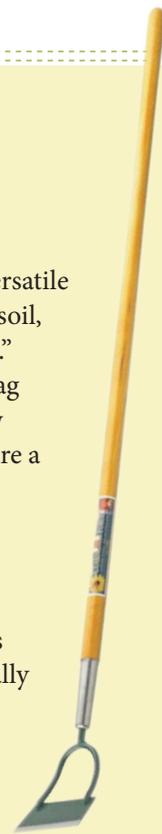
One that is particularly favored by gardeners is called the "Dutch" hoe. The first time I saw a Dutch hoe was during Garden Walk 2014 at the Murphy/Tamalunas Garden. George Tamalunas told me it was his favorite tool. He enthusiastically demonstrated it for me, and I must say I was impressed.

Of the two main classes of hoes, draw and scuffle, the Dutch hoe falls into the scuffle category. Scuffle hoes are used to draw or push through the top layer of the soil. They work best in workable soil to remove small weeds before they have taken a stronghold. Besides annihilating weeds, Dutch hoes can be used to create seed furrows and are great for edging.

Basically there are two types of Dutch hoes (of course there is never just one). Type one has a short handle for hand weeding. The solid, sharp, crescent-shaped blade is offset (look for left or right-handed to assure satisfaction). [See DeWitt Dutch Hand Hoe.](#)

The other version is long-handled and has about a 6-inch wide blade with an open head. Either side of the blade may be sharpened (look for inner or outer to assure satisfaction). See [Joseph Bently Dutch Hoe](#) for one in stock, but I recommend the [Clarrington \(English-made garden tools\) Dutch Hoe](#), if you don't mind waiting until they are back in stock.

Happy gardening! 🌸





VOLUNTEER SPOT

2016 Porter County Fair - Open Class Horticulture-Flower and Vegetable Shows

by Shelli Henry



The Porter County Fair will soon be here and with its arrival is a unique opportunity for Master Gardeners to showcase their talents. The Open Class Horticulture-Flower and Vegetable Shows allow residents of Porter County to share their beautiful flowers, creative floral designs, and perfect vegetables with the community in an environment of learning and leadership.

Entries are evaluated on a variety of characteristics by a panel of judges and points are awarded. Cash prizes of \$5, \$4, \$3 and award stickers are given to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. First place winners are also eligible for the coveted title and bragging rights of “Best of Show.”



How and Why to Enter

Janet Magnuson, superintendent for the 2016 Open Class Horticulture-Flower Show, shared some tips on how and why to enter the Show during the PCMGA April 13, 2016, general meeting. “Get a Premium Book and read all the rules,” she encouraged. “There are lots of hints in there.” Janet said that correct and completed entry tags are imperative for full points and consideration of your exhibit. “Get and fill out your entry tags early. Be sure to use the full botanical name of the plant you are entering.”

By entering the Open Class Horticulture-Flower and Vegetable Shows, you have the chance to share your gifts and help educate our community. And, as Janet so nicely summed it up, “People have fun at the fair.”

Open Class Horticulture-Flower Show

Exhibits for design, bulbs, tubers, rhizomes, grasses, sedges, rushes and roses are accepted on July 21. Exhibits for shrubs, trees and herbaceous perennials are accepted on July 25. Herbs and annual exhibits are accepted on July 28. Entries are submitted each day 7 to 9 a.m. This year the Show will include a “catch all” category for anything that doesn’t qualify for a class on the entry day. Consult the [2016 Premium Book](#) for more details or contact Janet Magnuson, 219-462-5450.

Open Class Vegetable Show

This year’s Superintendent for Open Class Vegetables is Darel Walker, 219-405-5908. Exhibits for the Vegetable Show are accepted on July 20 from 5 to 7 p.m. or on July 21 from 8 to 10 a.m. Vegetables are judged on condition, quality, trueness to type, uniformity and size. 🌱





MR. MCGREGOR'S AND MRS. ROSENBAUM'S GARDEN

The Unpredictability of Gardening

by Beverly Thevenin

While cloudy, rainy days might have you feeling a little down, there are repercussions for the garden as well. Learning to work around the unexpected is a necessity for a successful garden.



This picture shows the Rosenbaum's potato patch on June 27, 2015. This year's weather-related delays are a set back for them.

You can hear the disappointment as Ken and Debbie reported several problems with this year's garden.

"We've had to wait to set out the peppers and tomatoes that we had started inside," Ken said. "And they are getting leggy," Debbie added. Lima beans planted the second week in May rotted in the ground and had to be replanted on May 22. The second attempt has provided uneven germination.

The weather has also delayed harvesting of spinach and peas as well as planting of the annual flowers stored in the greenhouse. Furthermore, the seed company postponed delivery of sweet potato slips until June 1, aware of the weather conditions.

Yet, in spite of the weather, there have been some successes. The peach tree Ken sprayed with water to encase the buds for protection looks promising with many blossoms. "We had to baby the peach tree," Ken said. They also covered the strawberry bed with cloth a few times to protect against freezing, which proved successful as it is now filled with blossoms.

While some things are delayed, the potatoes planted on Good Friday, although slow to break ground, now look good. "Apple trees can take time to blossom," Ken said. The Jonagold blossomed last year, its fifth year, but didn't produce many apples. This year the blossoms look better, and they are hoping for a better crop.



Debbie is growing 16 different herbs for making infusions and as companion planting, including Emily basil, German chamomile, dill, bronze fennel, blue hyssop, English Munstead lavender, lemon balm, lemongrass, sweet marjoram, oregano,

parsley, French rosemary, broadleaf sage, summer savory, Russian tarragon, and English thyme. (Sounds like a United Nations meeting of herbs.)



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← (Continued from Page 4 - **McGregor's Garden**)

← (Continued from Page 1 - **Lyndsay's Vine**)

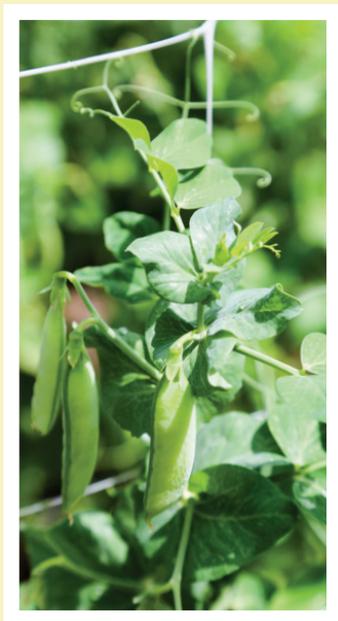
“While researching herbs last year, I was directed by several sources, one being Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Company, to the book *“Carrots Love Tomatoes”* by Louise Riotte,” Debbie explained. The book covers how different plants interact enhancing growth and flavor, as well as aiding in the deterrence of pests.

It sounds like Ken and Debby will enjoy a few days rest before the June calendar starts.

Calendar

June

- Harvest peas – Debbie cans in jelly jars, which yield just the right amount for a casserole or to serve alone. She grew Little Marvel and Tall Telephone from Baker Creek.
- Plant sweet potatoes, pumpkins, flowers and herbs
- Harvest spinach and plant a second crop in that area with beans or carrots
- Harvest strawberries, freeze whole for topping cereal and by weighted amount for jam



July

- Harvest blueberries—freeze whole and make jam later
- Harvest beans—can all
- Harvest garlic—planted in the fall with a complete [Garlic Kit](#) from Gardener's Supply
- Towards end of month, plant fall crops
- Make sure [Vidalia Chop Wizard](#) works or order new one for chopping onions and peppers for freezing 🌶️

lunch hour, we decided to have lunch instead of just a snack break (although every year the snack break is more like a full meal). Each week we looked forward to the meal and what people would bring. Engaging in a meal together is always entertaining. We were fed feasts, while engaging in conversations and education. (See [ReciBEE](#), pages 8 to 9.)

One of the most impactful changes we made this year was adding presentations by the students. During the first class we announced the idea of doing presentations. We allowed each student to pair up with someone with like interests. The criteria included finding a volunteer opportunity that the students could pursue upon graduation of the course.



Topics included:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| How to Present | Beekeeping |
| Dissect a Flower | Tulips |
| Mulch | Oriental Gardens |
| Organic Gardening | Daylilies |
| Square Foot Gardening | Hardscaping |
| Invasives | Tree Planting |
| Sunflowers | |

Presenting gave each student the opportunity to try out their speaking skills in front of a friendly audience, and each presentation revealed a gardening passion living inside of the students. 🌸



MEET A MASTER GARDENER

John Nash

by *Marcia Carson*

Many of you know John as the superstar of the Hot Line. Maybe he has been at your home to diagnose that sick tree or bush. If you have taken the Master Gardener class in the last few years, you probably met John as he helped Lyndsay instruct. You may have met John at a Purdue Extension event or shopping at a local nursery. You may not know that John is a Master Gardener at the Gold Level times two, having accumulated more than 2000 volunteer hours since completing the Master Gardener class in 2010. Every conversation with John makes me realize how little I know about gardening!



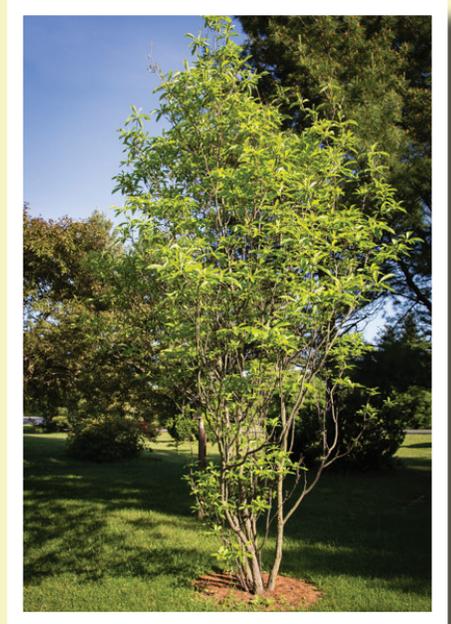
John recently gave Nancy Rosene and me a tour of his garden—or should I say “gardens,” as he has many gardens in his yard, including a large vegetable and herb garden, fruit trees, rhododendrons, holly, maple trees, a greenhouse, and much more. John’s pride and joy is his collection of rhododendrons. His large



yard includes dozens in all colors and sizes, surrounded by other spring bloomers such as dogwoods, azaleas, daffodils and narcissus. Paths encourage you to wander and you are delightfully surprised as you turn a corner and see a new grouping of plants.

Peonies are plentiful, some being over one hundred years old and originally owned by John’s grandparents. An unusual yellow magnolia “Elizabeth” is a showpiece in the front yard, with thousands of soft, velvety yellow flowers.

An extremely rare Franklin Tree, extinct in the wild, also graces the front yard. These trees were discovered during the American Revolution and named by a friend of Benjamin Franklin. Several years ago John received a call from an Englishman, who wanted to see his tree! The gentleman visited, took seeds home, and there is now a colony of John’s Franklin Trees growing in England. Five Crimson King Maples line the winding driveway, four of which John grew from seed from the original tree.



After an informative tour of the gardens, John invited us in for coffee and muffins. We learned more about the history of his trees and flowers and the peat bog down the hill at the creek. John talked about the wood ducks, raccoons, deer, owls and red-tailed hawks that visit his yard. An afternoon with John demonstrated his love of nature, history, and gardening, and his willingness to share his wealth of knowledge. John’s gardens are truly a labor of love, and he requested that we let everyone know he loves visitors. If you want a personal tour, call John at the Purdue Extension Office, 219-465-3555. 🌸



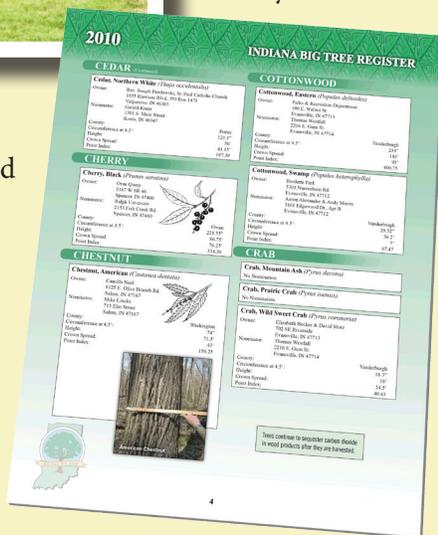
STATE CHAMPION TREES

by Suzanna Tudor



Did you know there is a registry for the largest known native trees in Indiana? Yes, there is, and the list is published every five years. These deciduous and conifer giants are known as state champion trees in the "Big Tree Register." And did you know that Porter County claims

that distinction for a Northern White Cedar (*Thuja Occidentalis*) located at the St. Paul Cemetery right here in Valparaiso? At least it was as of the 2015 publication (soon to be published). For those unfamiliar with its location, it is the third driveway after Graceland Cemetery on Division Road (near Walmart). Take a left after entering the cemetery, and you will see it. There are no signs indicating its notoriety. And think big "arborvitae" when looking for it. "Alternate names are Eastern arborvitae, American arborvitae, eastern white-cedar, swamp-cedar, Atlantic red cedar," according to the USDA [Plant Guide](#).



"The register requires three measurements: trunk circumference, in inches, at 4 ½ feet above the ground; total height, in feet; and average crown spread, in feet. The total size of a tree is calculated using the formula: circumference + height + 1/4 average spread. The tree of each species with the highest total is Indiana's largest. Each tree nominated is verified for species and size before acceptance in the register. The total size of a tree is calculated using a points system," according to the Indiana DNR website. You may view detailed instructions here and also see the list of other state champion trees: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/8169.htm>.



The Northern White Cedar was nominated by Gerald Knarr of Kouts and Rev. Joseph Pawlowski, St. Paul Catholic Church, is listed as owner. Its circumference is 121.1 inches; a height of 56 feet; and crown of 41.15 feet.

Knowing where these big trees are when you are traveling, it might be fun to stop and see some of them. Perhaps you have a big tree in your woods or back yard? Who knows, it could be the next state champion. 🌲

CHAMPION TREE FORMULA

Circumference + Height + 1/4 Average Spread = TOTAL SIZE OF TREE



ReCiBEEs
From Our
Gardeners

New Intern and His Wife Share Two Great Recipes

by Kristine Sandrick



For the sensational lentils recipe, Raeanne recommends either beluga or French green lentils. These stay firm and have a nice texture, which is good for a cold salad, she said. With vegetables providing good complex carbohydrates and lentils for protein, this dish is a complete meal.

Both dishes were so tasty. My husband has already asked if I can make them. Yes, I have the recipes, but will it taste as good as Raeanne's—stay tuned.



We are fortunate this month that good things come in twos, with two wonderful people sharing two new recipes. Please welcome new Master Gardener Intern Michael Fabricant and his wife Raeanne. Michael has had a career in food service management and met Raeanne 16 years ago, when they both worked at Buca di Beppo in Chicago. Raeanne teaches cooking and provides catering through her business, Wanna Feed Ya (wannafeedy.com). They live in Chesterton and have two boys. (Maybe they have two pets, too, but I didn't ask.)

"Food has always been the most important thing next to family," Michael said. Their love of food showed in the dishes prepared and shared for this article: Arugula, Watermelon and Feta Salad with Strawberry Balsamic Vinaigrette and Roasted Gold Beets with Garam Marsala Beluga Lentils.

Both of these recipes can be made with ingredients from your garden.

"People either like arugula or they don't," Raeanne said, adding, "but paired with some sweet blueberries or strawberries and feta...it hits all the notes on your pallet."

Arugula, Watermelon & Feta Salad with Strawberry Balsamic Vinaigrette

For the vinaigrette:

- ½ cup fresh strawberries, washed, hulled and cut into small pieces
- 1 teaspoon sugar or honey
- 1 tablespoon balsamic reduction
- 4 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoon water
- Salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth. Refrigerate until needed. Can be made two to three days ahead.

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← (Continued from Page 8 - **ReciBEE**)

For the salad:

- 6 cups baby arugula, washed and spun dry
- 4 cups seedless watermelon, rind removed, cut into 1” cubes
- 8 ounces crumbled feta cheese (or more if you like!)
- 8 ounces fresh blueberries, washed and any stems removed
- 3-4 springs fresh mint, washed, leaves removed, chopped into fine strips

In a large bowl combine the watermelon cubes and strawberry vinaigrette, toss to coat. Refrigerate until ready to assemble the salad. On a large platter, arrange a bed of the baby arugula and top with the marinated watermelon cubes. Sprinkle the blueberries, then feta, then mint atop the watermelon. Toss just before serving.



Roasted Golden Beets with Garam Masala Beluga Lentils

For the beets:

- 3 large golden beets, washed, peeled, cut into 8 wedges each
- ¼ cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 F. In a medium bowl, toss beets with olive oil, salt and pepper. On a rimmed baking sheet, place two long sheets of tin foil. Place the beets in the foil and wrap tightly to keep steam in during cooking. Place in oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Beets are done when fork tender. Let cool.

For the lentils:

- 1 ½ cups beluga lentils or French lentils
- 3 cups water
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 piece of fresh ginger, peeled
- 1 teaspoon garam masala (Indian spice mix)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Add all ingredients to a medium saucepan and cover. Bring to a boil, then turn down to simmer for 20 minutes. Lentils will retain their shape and have a firm texture when finished. Drain any extra cooking liquid. Set aside.

For the vegetables:

- 1 small zucchini, washed and julienned (or diced)
- 1 small yellow squash, washed and julienned (or diced)
- 1 carrot, washed, peeled and julienned (or diced)
- 1 small red onion, peeled and diced
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoon garam masala (Indian spice mix)
- Salt and pepper to taste (or red pepper flakes for extra heat!)

In a large sauté pan on medium high heat, add the olive oil and heat until it shimmers. Then add zucchini, yellow squash, carrots and onion. Cook until vegetables start to soften, about 5 minutes, then add garlic, garam masala, and salt and pepper to taste. Cook until vegetables are very soft then add the drained lentils. Stir to combine lentils evenly with the vegetable and coat with the oils. Add a little extra olive oil if necessary. Taste and adjust for salt.

To serve:

On a large platter, spread the lentils in an even layer and arrange the beets on top. Garnish with chopped fresh cilantro. 🌿



GARDEN WANDERER

Sunnylands Center & Gardens Rancho Mirage, California

by Marcia Carson



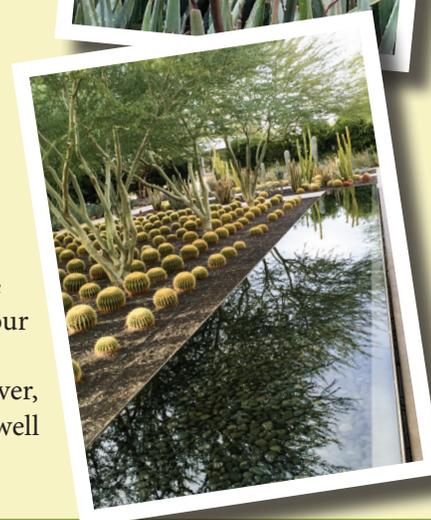
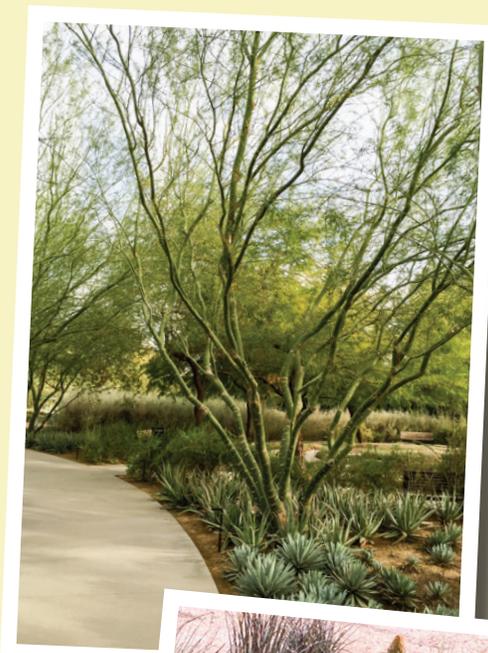
Strolling through [Sunnylands Gardens](#) in Rancho Mirage, California, is like meandering through a painting. With every turn, you are captivated by a variety of textures, colors and light. The gardens are part of the original estate of media tycoon Walter Annenberg and his wife Leonore, which originally included large expanses of green lawn. When landscape architect James Burnett and horticultural consultant Mary Irish redesigned the gardens a few years ago, they used the Annenbergs' collection of impressionist and post-impressionist paintings as their inspiration. The gardens are now committed to being "green," using sustainable practices and technologies. Solar energy, a geothermal system, and irrigation are all utilized, but nearly invisible to visitors. The Sunnylands Center and Gardens are now often referred to as the "Camp David of the West," visited by most American Presidents since Eisenhower. Visitors can take guided tours, view the house, attend educational programs, and participate in yoga and tai chi classes.

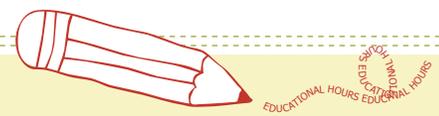
If you are looking for identification tags or plant information, you are in the wrong place. This is not a botanical garden;

this is a feast for the eyes and soul! Cactus and other desert plants, often used individually as specimen plants, are massed together in large expanses, taking advantage of a variety of sizes, textures, and colors.

Most paths are lightly shaded by desert trees, creating dappled light in a hot, sunny desert environment. Reflecting pools provide unique views of the gardens, and benches are placed along the paths to encourage visitors to take time to relax and enjoy the visual and peaceful impact of the plantings.

Sunnylands is certainly an amazing garden. The peaceful, calm, tranquil, and somewhat hypnotizing atmosphere makes you want to stay forever. If you are planning a trip to the Palm Springs area, make sure to include this in your plans. The gardens are closed in summer, however, when average highs are well into triple digits! 🌺





OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer / Educational

To publish volunteer or education opportunities in our newsletter, please contact nrosene@icloud.com.

Volunteer

PORTER COUNTY PARKS - CAMP FUNset

What: Present one-hour interactive program - topic of choice

Where: Sunset Hill Farm, 775 N Meridian Road, Valparaiso, Ind.

When: Tuesday, June 14; Tuesday, June 28; and Thursday August 4; all days from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Info: Tyler K. Perry, Educator/ Naturalist, Porter County Parks and Recreation, 219-465-3641



OPEN CLASS JUDGES NEEDED

What: Two Judges needed for Open Class Horticulture-Flower and Open Class Vegetable

Where: Johnson County Indiana 4-H Fairgrounds, Fitzpatrick Hall, 250 Fairground St., Franklin, Ind.

When: July 16, 12:30 p.m.

Info: Contact Heather Dougherty, 4-H Youth Education - Johnson County, Purdue Extension, hdougher@purdue.edu

PCMGA 2016 GARDEN WALK

What: Volunteers needed for miscellaneous responsibilities for the 2016 Garden Walk

Where: Any one of five different Walk gardens

When: Saturday, July 9

Info: Use this link to connect to VolunteerSpot to select a volunteer assignment and shift

ASK A MASTER GARDENER BOOTH - PORTER COUNTY FAIR

What: Staffing needed for the Ask A Master Gardener Booth during the Porter County Fair

Where: Porter County Fair Grounds, 215 Division Road, Valparaiso, Ind.

When: July 21 to July 30

Info: SAVE THE DATES - Sign-up coming soon via e-mail

Educational

2016 PURDUE MASTER GARDENER STATE CONFERENCE

What: "Cultivating our Legacy" - Co-Hosted by Purdue Master Gardener State Office and Master Gardener Association of Tippecanoe County

Where: Four Points by Sheraton, West Lafayette, Ind.

When: June 16-18

Info: <https://hort.purdue.edu/mg/2016StateConf.html>

GRAND ESTATES & HIDDEN TREASURES

What: A Cultural Journey to Southeast New England

Where: Mark Zelonis, former Deputy Director of Environmental & Historic Preservation at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, will lead you on a personal journey to many of his favorite former haunts. Locations to include Blithewold Mansion, Gardens, and Arboretum; Doris Duke's Rough Point; Blue Garden; Heritage Museums & Gardens; Mount Auburn Cemetery; Isabella Stewart Gardener Museum; Garden in the Woods; and much more.

When: June 19-24

Info: Mark Zelonis at mark.zelonis@att.net or at 317-258-2071; or Jo Ann Carr at joann@interludetours.com or at 317-913-0387

GARDEN DESIGN AND PLANTS CLASS

What: Kerry Ann Mendez, Expert Gardener, Speaker and Author, will be teaching a special garden design and plants class before [The Grand Garden Show](#).

Where: The Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, Northern Mich.

When: Aug. 28, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. EST

Info: Kerry Ann Mendez, 207-502-7228 or www.pyours.com, and [The Grand Garden Show](#) for registration 

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EXTENSION**

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COUNTLESS CONNECTIONS**

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