



GARDEN THYME

NEW WITH OUR
OCTOBER 2015 ISSUE

You now have a new way to earn educational hours as you work towards your next Master Gardener level.



As you read Garden Thyme, keep your eye peeled for the pencil icon. The pencil indicates an opportunity to earn educational hours by reading or viewing online information related to the Garden Thyme article. Then simply go to the Opportunities page of the newsletter to see exactly what to do and how many hours you will earn. Don't miss this opportunity to further your knowledge of the art and science of horticulture, sustainability, environmental stewardship or any number of related topics. 🌸

ENJOY OUR NEWSLETTER AND EARN VALUABLE EDUCATION POINTS!



GARDEN THYME

October 1, 2015

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

Vol. 2, Issue 1



LYNDSAY'S VINE

By Lyndsay Ploehn, Agriculture & Natural Resource Extension Educator

Last month we gathered at our annual fall picnic at Forest Park. What a great evening to eat, visit and share plants with each other. I always enjoy visiting with you all and hearing your stories. In mid-September, I had the pleasure of visiting John and Kathleen Fischer at their property to pick apples and pears and enjoy an ice-cold glass of tea along the Kankakee. Gardening is hard work, but it is so enjoyable when shared with others. I wish I was able to come around to each of your properties and spend a few hours learning about your joys and gardening mishaps.

Sharing stories is what connects us. It's what draws others in to our organization, and I love when you share your stories publicly to impact others. In fact, that is part of our mission as Master Gardeners, to "Help Others Grow." One of the ways we share our story is through volunteering and education. You all give countless hours of your time beautifying your communities, educating your fellow neighbors and serving other organizations. September marks the end of my reporting year, so each October I like to share the numbers I have collected so you can truly see the difference you are making in Porter County.

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2014 - \$106,514.19*

2015 - \$ 80,721.93*

- | | |
|---|---|
| • 88 Master Gardeners turned in hours | • 89 Master Gardeners turned in hours |
| • 28 interns trained | • 27 interns trained |
| • 1,633 Education hours | • 1,682 Education hours |
| • 4,617 Volunteer hours | • 3,499 Volunteer hours |
| • 1,000+ lbs of food donated - food banks | * <i>Indiana Volunteer Rate = \$23.07</i> |

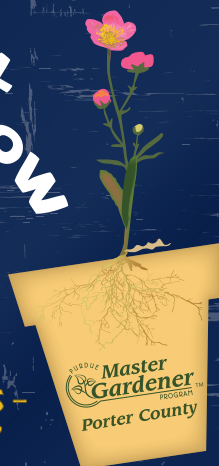
Thank you all for your hard work and service and your effort to keep learning! Please stop in my office, send an email, message me on Facebook or invite me over for iced-tea—I would love to hear your story. 🌸



13TH ANNUAL GARDENING SHOW



**"CELEBRATING OUR ROOTS -
GROWING OUR FUTURE"**



The 13th Annual Gardening Show is an Indiana Bicentennial Legacy Event. What an honor it is to be chosen to kick off Indiana's 200th anniversary celebration! Please plan to join us for this very special event. Explore the individual Gardening Show pages for more details about what's in store for the day. And stop back often as we add more details. Check us out on Facebook and follow us on Twitter as the excitement builds!

Saturday, January 23, 2016 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. CST

CELEBRATING OUR ROOTS - GROWING OUR FUTURE

Honoring Indiana's Bicentennial

By Maureen Phillips, Show Chair

Welcome to the first rollout of plans for our 13th Annual Gardening Show. All our seminars tie into the bicentennial theme, "Celebrating our Roots - Growing our Future." Keynoter, Roy Diblik, will talk about present uses for low-maintenance, native prairie plants that go back to the days of the early settlers. Jean Starr will bring us up to date on our state flower, the peony, and its many cultivars. Vickie Jostes will encourage us to "Invite a Cardinal (our state bird) to Dinner" while Shirley Heinze Land Trust speakers will provide tips on "Preserving Native Habitats." And, in a presentation that will tickle your funny bone, Dr. Fred Whitford will remind us of the land-grant legacy of Purdue, whose Extension heritage we so proudly continue today.

As I write, we're busy cleaning and saving seeds for the [Seed & Bulb Exchange](#). We invite you to join us for these upcoming seed preparation events. We provide tools and packaging materials, as well as, seed heads and pods from

a variety of plants. You also may bring your own saved seeds and learn how to clean and preserve those. We'll also accept your donations of seeds and bulbs for the Exchange. Our goal is to open the Show with 10,000 packets of seed and 1,500-2,000 bulbs as we did last year. Seed cleaning dates and times are listed on page 12 of this newsletter.

Mary Simon has been busy booking [booths](#), and I'm happy to say nearly 70 percent of them are already taken. That means she's likely to make her goal of filling the floors in all three buildings by Dec. 1—great shopping for garden wares all in one place!

Stay tuned for more news on demonstrations, what's happening in "The Happening Place," special goodies just for the bicentennial, new categories in the [photo contest](#) and much more! Keep your eye out for your opportunity to volunteer and make this special Show another resounding success! 🌸



VOLUNTEER SPOT

Mary Simon's the Name, Vendor Shopping's Her Game

By Suzanna Tudor

Did you ever wonder how we fill the 120 booth spaces at our annual Gardening Show? I did too, so I went straight to the person who has been doing this for seven years: Mary Simon.

"Some think I go to a couple of festivals around Valparaiso to get vendors for the Show," said Mary, "but I probably attend seventy."

In fact, she has attended 57 festivals so far for the 2016 Show. She began to rattle off several places, not only in Indiana but Michigan and Illinois too: New Buffalo, Villa Park, Harper College, Chapel Hill, Elkhart, Chicago Garden Show, Berrien Springs, Three Oaks, pierogi festival, grade schools... "

"Wait," I stopped her. "Why do you go to grade schools?"

"Because you never know what you'll find," Mary was quick to respond. "Sometimes I ask myself what am I doing here? But that's where I found the lady who makes the sheep's wool purses and rugs."

Mary could use help with vendor shopping as many times she needs to be in several places at once. In the coming weekend, there are two festivals to attend. Also, Boone Grove's and SELF craft fairs are on the same day, and on Saturday, Oct. 1, there are four, three in Indiana and one in Michigan.



"The best thing volunteers could do is go with me first, so I can show them what I do," Mary shared. "After that they can attend the festivals prepared to look for the kind of gardening-related vendors we seek for the Show and know how to approach them, supplied with the materials they need to give potential vendors. We don't do things like dish towels or stuffed animals."

Booth spaces go for \$80. Some vendors take more than one booth for their products, so booth rentals do not equal the number of vendors at the Show. There is an additional electric fee of \$15 charged by the Porter County Expo. At this writing, Mary called to say we now have 70, paid booth rentals.

There are other challenges to this volunteer position. One of the biggest is getting the fee from previous year's vendors.

"They tell me, oh we are coming next year, but they fail to send in the required paperwork," Mary sighed.

According to Mary, another sticking point is filling the third room where guests are so busy trading seeds and attending demonstrations. Thankfully, one vendor prefers that room. Then there are also those who do not communicate location requirements for set up and surprise us with special arrangements for unloading at 6 a.m. on Show day.

And in case you were wondering about the mind-boggling criteria for booth placement and movement as I did, here's the scoop from Mary. "Those coming back get their old booths if wanted. If they want to move, say from the

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(Continued from Page 4)

third room, they have first priority to the main room, hall or second room first. If they are in the second room and want the first, if someone doesn't come back, they get in the first room if possible."

"For vendor placement, I place only one type of vendor per row and hopefully that includes both sides. I try to space out the not-for-profits, so they are not bunched up. You cannot make all the vendors happy, so I just do my best. One thing is for sure, if a vendor is happy in their spot, never, never, never move them. They may not come back the following year because they claim their old customers will not be able to find them. Kinda like moving the Campbell's soup in the grocery store; that is not a good idea either."



Last year, she was blindsided by an empty booth—one of the first as attendees came into the Expo Center!

"There I was sitting near the entrance about 8:45 and thought something's not right here," Mary shared. "The no-show vendor never contacted me that they weren't coming. I can understand that with bad weather, but last year the weather cooperated. Anyway, we made a quick relocation of another vendor to that spot with the help of teenage boys who were around to help with traffic, and moved door prizes down. We were ready at 9 a.m."

Despite the many challenges, talking to and meeting new people keeps Mary going on her vendor quest. Perhaps you would like to join her? 🌸

JUST NAME IT

Often Mistaken for Poison Ivy

By Kristine Sandrick



This leafy lovely can be found along the ground or climbing high up into trees. It's called a hardy vine that "climbs by small tendrils with sticky pads." It grows in dry to moist soil. With plenty of sun the five, coarse-toothed, dark green leaves turn a bright red in the fall. I've learned it's called Engleman Ivy, but it has a more common name, one that perhaps better describes its nature. Can you name it? Click [here](#) to find the answer. 🌸





MR. MC GREGOR'S GARDEN

Store What You've Reaped Keeping vegetables for winter use

By Kristine Sandrick

Thinking of storing vegetables for winter, I remember as a kid going into Grampa Sandrick's basement and wading knee-deep in cabbages. As a Slovakian transplanted in Robertsedale, Ind., Grampa "stored" cabbage by turning it into sauerkraut. Some vegetables are better fermented or cooked for use over the winter, and others can be kept whole. Here are some favorites from the Hoosier garden along with suggestions for storing now to savor later.

Tomatoes: Let me see a show of hands. How many of you recoil at the thought of eating a hard, barely red, odorless tomato in January? Canning has long been the most popular way of saving tomatoes for winters sauces, soups and stews. But today we can also freeze the pulp and even freeze whole cherry tomatoes, for that matter. Thanks to the Internet and your grandma's cookbook, you can find any canning and storage methods to suit your taste buds.



This winter, I'm going to try my friend Sheila's easy recipe: Wash tomatoes, cut into quarters (for larger fruit) or in half, drizzle with olive oil, add salt and pepper if you like (or save seasoning for later), and roast at 350 degrees until desired doneness. Cool, bag and freeze. I recently used this method and later pureed the tomatoes with homegrown basil to make the best marinara sauce we've ever had.

Carrots: According to the World Carrot Museum(!) during the first five months of storage, the vitamin A content will increase, and if kept cool and dry, will keep their nutrient content for two to three months. Keeping carrots dry will increase shelf life. I recently learned you could store them in sand! If you don't live near the beach, try this: trim off any green, allow carrots to dry in the sun for a day or two to harden the outer skin, and don't wash them until ready to use. After air drying, store carrots in the refrigerator.



Corn: Mother Earth News reports freezing whole ears can have varied and disappointing

results, so you're better off cutting the kernels from the cob. Try this: "To cut corn kernels from the cob neatly and easily, stand an ear on end in the center of a Bundt pan and slice down the side with a chef's knife. The kernels will fall neatly into the pan." Blanch the kernels before freezing. Of course there is always canning, pickling and drying; but if you long for that fresh-picked taste on Super Bowl Sunday, you need the season's best corn—kernels blanched right away then frozen. Fresh corn in your chili sounds good, doesn't it?

[Mother Earth News](#) has wonderful ideas for storing vegetables for winter. Or check out [Purdue's HO-125](#) for some good, old-fashioned solutions. Whatever you do, I hope you're able to enjoy your harvest when we're buried in snow. What could be homier in winter than a pot of stew made with your homegrown vegetables and a loaf of your favorite bread? Mmmm, heaven! 🌸



FROM MY GARDEN

Permaculture

By Shelli Henry



Full and winter months are the perfect time to start planning for next year's gardens. While surveying the lay of your land and dreaming of the perfect plantings for that magazine spread look, you may want to also consider incorporating some permaculture principles into your garden and homestead.

What is Permaculture?

Bill Wilson and his wife are credited with starting Midwest Permaculture in 2007. Bill says, "Permaculture (permanent culture) is a creative and artful way of living, where people and nature are all preserved and enhanced by:

- thoughtful planning,
- the careful use of resources
- and a respectful approach to life.

Thus embraced, these attributes create an environment where all may survive for untold generations."

How do you put Permaculture Principles to work in your garden and homestead?

The ultimate purpose of permaculture is to develop a site until it meets all the needs of its inhabitants, from food and shelter to fuel and entertainment. There is no set formula for developing this type of design, but there are some best practices.

1. Copy nature's blueprint and enhance it with useful plants and animals. Think of the structure of a forest and try to mimic it with your plantings. A canopy of tall trees will give way to smaller ones, flanked by large and small shrubs and, finally, by the smallest plants. Edge

habitats, where trees border open areas, are perfect for fruiting shrubs, such as currants, and for a variety of useful native plants. Mimicking these natural patterns provides for the greatest diversity of plants.



wild blueberries form a guild for acid soil.

2. Stack plants into guilds. A guild includes plants with compatible roots and canopies that might be layered to form an edge. As you learn more about your site, you'll discover groups of plants that work well together. For example, pines, dogwoods and

(Continued on Page 8) ➔



← (Continued from Page 7)

3. Make use of native plants and others adapted to the site.



3.

Resources:

If permaculture intrigues you, there is a wealth of online resources. Try [Permaculture Institute](#) and [Edible Forest Gardens](#) for a start.

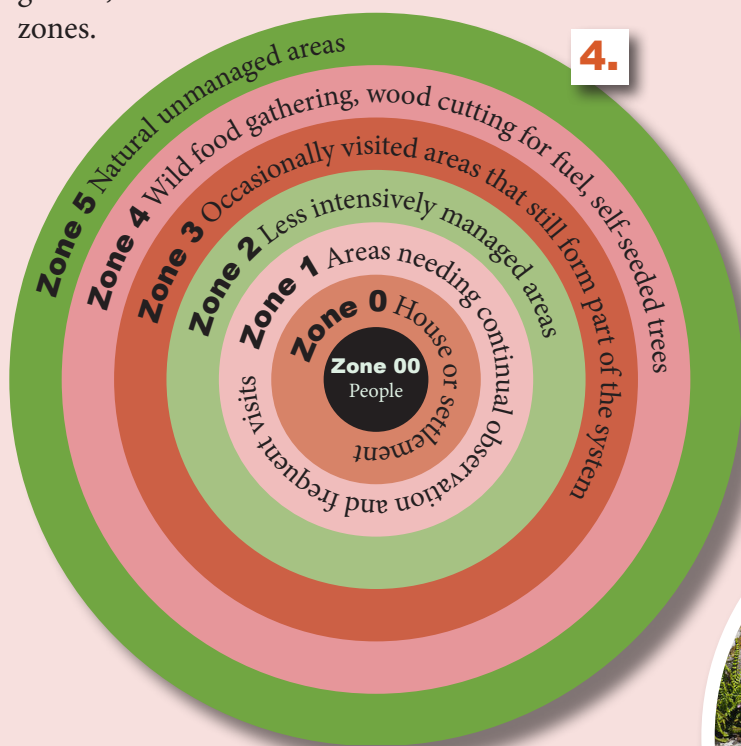


EDUCATIONAL HOURS EDUCATIONAL HOURS

Video Links:

Bill Wilson (Intro and 18-Part Series) - "[Intro to Permaculture](#)" and "[The Case for Permaculture](#)"
David Holmgren - "[How to Change the World with Permaculture](#)"

4. Divide your yard into zones based on use. Place heavily used features, such as an herb garden, in the most accessible zones.



4.

5. Identify microclimates in your yard, and use them appropriately. Cold, shady corners; windswept spots in full sun; and other microclimates present unique opportunities. For instance, try sun-loving herbs like creeping thyme on rocky outcroppings; plant elderberries in poorly drained areas. 🌸



5.



MEET A MASTER GARDENER

Marty Seroczynski

By Marcia Carson



Marty at the Advanced Tree Steward Pruning Workshop.

Master Gardener Marty Seroczynski knows that gardening, as in real estate, is all about location, location, location. Marty moved to Valparaiso from Michigan many

years ago bringing some favorite rhododendrons and azaleas. She soon found out that Valparaiso clay is not as friendly as Michigan sandy soil! That nightmare began her path to mastering Porter County gardening.

Marty heard about the Master Gardener classes by stopping at one of our booths and became a student of Dave Yeager in 2000. Dave suggested Marty earn volunteer hours by helping a well-known aging gardener.

This began one of Marty's most cherished relationships. Eve Gardner had an English cottage garden on Glendale Avenue that was featured in a pre-Master Gardener Garden Walk. Marty gained Eve's confidence and began



An expert on plant varieties, Marty helps to identify a Forest Pansy Redbud (*Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy').

helping her maintain the gardens, which included plants Eve had brought from England as a young bride. Marty and Eve shared plants and a close friendship for many years.

The used magazine sale at the Garden Show was started by Marty and Mary Simon. Marty works with regulars Kathy Ruble, Judy Engel, Dan Ruggaber, Jack Potter and

other volunteers to maintain and create beautiful gardens and pots for Hospice, putting smiles on the faces of the residents and staff. Marty wanted to make sure I included that the annuals, mums and pumpkins for the urns were purchased from the grant money awarded by the Porter County Master Gardeners Association.

"My passion is flowers; my car won't pass a garden center," Marty confessed. A cherished garden of hers is Gethsemane Gardens on North Clark in Chicago, where she purchased her favorite sculpture. She presently works at Four Seasons Landscaping Nursery and is an Indiana Accredited Horticulturist. "Can you ever quit learning?" commented Marty, and this says a lot about her. She is certainly a perpetual learner, as well as a thoughtful, caring volunteer, and is certainly an asset in our community. 🌸



Marty in her garden with her favorite sculpture.



ReciBEEs From Our Gardeners

Beet, Bleu Cheese and Almond Salad

*Recipe submitted by Marcia Carson
(From Better Homes & Gardens Magazine)*
Makes: 6 servings



Fresh from the garden beet salad, this simple dish is so scrumptious that everyone goes back for seconds! It's even better when you grow your own. Beets are easy to grow from seed—and are pretty pest and disease free.

Ingredients

- 7 medium beets (2 ½ pounds)
- 1 small clove garlic
- Salt
- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- ¾ tsp ground black pepper
- 8 oz. Bleu cheese
- 2 oz. Marcona almonds*

* Marcona almonds are a variety of sweet almond, slightly shorter and plumper than sweet almonds typically found at the market. They are far sweeter, moister and softer than traditional almonds.

Directions

1. Trim and peel the beets. Cut 6 beets in bite-size pieces. Place in a steamer rack over a pot of boiling water. Cover the pot and steam 20-25 minutes, until tender.
2. Coarsely grate the remaining beet, place in a large bowl. For dressing, mash the garlic with a pinch of salt to a paste. Add to grated beet, along with the oil, lemon juice, 1 tsp. salt and the pepper. When the beets are cooked, toss them with the dressing. Cool to room temperature.
3. Crumble bleu cheese over the salad and sprinkle with almonds and parsley.



Nutrition Facts (per serving)

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| • 333 calories | • 21 g carbohydrates |
| • 23 g fat | • 6 g fiber |
| • 28 mg cholesterol | • 14 g sugar |
| • 1005 mg sodium | • 13 g protein |



THE TOOL SHED

Bulb Planting

By Shelli Henry

The spring bulbs you've ordered for fall planting have just arrived. Not looking forward to the back breaking chore of planting them all? Perhaps a bulb planting tool can ease your toils and aching body...or maybe not. Let's take a look at some of the many tool choices.

Old School Tools

We've all owned and operated the short handled bulb planter pictured here.

Figure 1: Short handled bulb planter

This tool will work well, if you don't have clay or sandy soils. So, scratch this one for most of us.

An ancient tool that may be more useful for planting smaller bulbs in our area is a dibber or dibbler.

Figure 2: Dibber or Dibbler - Really Old School Tool

To use, simply push the dibber straight down into the ground to the desired depth. Many dibbers are marked in one-inch increments. If necessary, swirl the dibber to enlarge the hole. Lift the dibble straight up to remove it. Now put the bulb in the hole. To cover your new planting, push the dibble into the ground beside the hole and rock it back and forth to push the dirt against the bulb.

Powered Tools

A cordless drill powered bulb auger may also be a practical tool for you; especially if your significant other can be easily duped into helping with projects that involve the words "power" and "new tools."

Figure 3: Powered Bulb Planter

While it is doubtful that there will ever be a fall bulb-planting tool that will save your aching back, at least you can take consolation in that fact that it will be cooler weather to toil in with fewer insects. 🌸



Fig. 1 - Short Handled Bulb Planter
Wolf-Garten Bulb Planter (\$9.95 at bluestonegarden.com)



Fig. 2 - Dibber or Dibbler
Leman's Dibble (\$19.99 at lehmans.com)



Fig. 3 - Garden Auger for Power Bulb Planting
Leman's Dibble (\$29.99 at groworganic.com)



GARDEN WANDERER

The Morton Arboretum

By Lyndsay Ploehn,

Agriculture & Natural Resource Extension Educator



The Morton Arboretum, located in Lisle, Illinois, holds a special place in my heart. I interned at Morton in 2005 and then became a full-time Horticulturist in the Children's Garden there from 2008 to 2010. During my internship the Arboretum celebrated the grand opening of the four-acre Children's Garden, and this year marks its tenth anniversary.

"When Joy Morton established The Morton Arboretum in 1922, he envisioned a "great outdoor museum" of trees. Today, the living collections inspire visitors to appreciate, learn about, plant and protect trees. The

Arboretum champions the world's trees through scientific study, conservation, education and outreach" (www.mortonarb.org).

The Morton Arboretum's 1,700 acres hold more than 222,000 live plants representing nearly 4,300 taxa from around the world. It offers 16 miles of hiking trails, nine miles of quiet roadways for biking, driving or via tram tours. Coming up this fall you can experience the magnificent display of fall color.

Each year the Arboretum features a unique art display around the grounds, and this year's larger-than-life-display features LEGO bricks by Sean Kenney. Sean used 464,770 LEGO bricks + 4,170 hours to create 13 nature-inspired exhibits. You don't want to miss Nature Connects: Art with LEGO bricks, July 17 through Nov. 1, 2015. Use this [link](#) to connect to the YouTube video.



To find out more about The Morton Arboretum, or to plan your next visit please go to www.mortonarb.org. 🌿

COMMUNITY GARDEN STATS

Fit City / Foundation Meadows Park

Linda Mapes, PCMGA Community Garden Coordinator

So far in 2015, 270 lbs. of vegetables were donated to Housing Opportunities, Christian Food Pantry and New Creations; including 140# potatoes, 60# tomatoes, 35# yellow squash, 20# zucchini, 10# onions and 15# peppers!



OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer / Educational

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

Volunteer

SEED CLEANING

What: Help prepare seeds for the Seed & Bulb Exchange - 13th Annual Gardening Show, Jan. 23, 2016, Porter County Expo Center.

Where: TWO LOCATIONS

Westchester Library Service Center

100 W. Indiana Ave., Chesterton, Ind.

Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2015 - 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. CST

Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2015 - 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. CST

Valparaiso Library

103 E. Jefferson, Valparaiso, Ind.

When: Saturday, Oct. 24, 2015 - 9 a.m. - Noon CST, Rm. B

Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015 - 9 a.m. - Noon CST, Rm. B



SPEAKER - WINTERIZING PLANTS

What: Nativity of Our Savior Church is looking for a speaker for a group of ladies who would like information on what to do with plants in the fall

Where: Nativity of Our Savior Church Hall, Portage, Ind.

When: Oct. 6, 6:30 p.m. CST

For Details: 219-465-3555

MASTER RECYCLING PROGRAM

What: Someone with experience in backyard composting to teach a class for the Master Recycling Program

Where: Portage, Ind.

When: Oct. 8, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

For Details: 219-465-3555

VENDOR SHOPPING

What: Vendor prospecting for 2016 PCMGA Garden Show (business card with e-mail and website needed)

Where: Any festival or craft fair

To Forward Details: mudpuppy@grassgardens.net

Volunteers will be channeled through the Porter County Extension Office. Unless otherwise instructed, contact 219-465-3555 to volunteer for opportunities listed.

Educational

PERMACULTURE

What: Reference the article on permaculture, page 6 and 7 in this issue of Garden Thyme.



EDUCATIONAL HOURS

Earn 2 Education Hours by Viewing These Videos:

(Charge these hours to Garden Thyme Newsletter Ed Hours)

Bill Wilson (Intro and 18-Part Series) - "[Intro to Permaculture](#)" and "[The Case for Permaculture](#)"

David Holmgren - "[How to Change the World with Permaculture](#)"

TOVAH MARTIN LECTURES

What: Join the Porter County Master Gardeners Association as we welcome Tovah Martin for two free lectures

Where: Westchester Library Service Center

100 West Indiana Ave.

Chesterton, Ind. 46304

When: Saturday, Nov. 7, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. CST

This event is open to only PGMCA members until Oct. 10, at which time the event will be open to the public if seats remain.

Registration is required. Go to pcgarden.info to register.



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