



For those who share our interest in gardening . . .

May, 2016

Kris Medic, Bartholomew County Extension Educator and Becky Pinto, Master Gardener Newsletter Editor and Advanced Master Gardener, Bronze Level.

"The sun has come out... and the air is vivid with spring light."

-Byron Caldwell Smith, in a letter to Kate Stephens



ID Tech Plants Trees for Students

In news from the National Arbor Day Foundation, ID Tech, partnered with the Arbor Foundation since 2011, is continuing their good works. Their mission is to not only prepare students for the future but also prepare the future for our students. Through their One Camper, One Tree campaign, ID Tech gives back to our communities and the environment by making a donation to the Arbor Day Foundation to plant a tree for every camper who attends their programs. To date, ID Tech has planted more than 150,000 trees, and the organization has continued its support in 2016—with a goal of surpassing 200,000 trees planted in U.S. forests.

Have a Vision for your Landscape? Start Small

I knew what I wanted on the west corner of the house, near the chimney – a white flowering dogwood. When I went to a well-respected local nursery and their nurseryman Darren Collins to get one, he admitted that there would be no guarantee on them as with other trees sold there. “But why?” asked my engineer husband. (I should have warned Darron, he’s an engineer – if you didn’t want him to ask, you shouldn’t have mentioned it)!

“Well, because the transplant survival rate is so low, we just can’t guarantee them,” he answered.

I thought back to when I was working with Columbus-in--Bloom and the Arbor Day tree giveaway at the Recycling Center one year. We were helping give away flowering dogwoods. There were many enthusiastic takers – but not one of the giveaways “took”, according to the folks who reported back. If I’d known then what I know now, I would have known that they were probably out of the ground too long, and that the transplant shock (and perhaps the change of light conditions where they were planted and the lack of feeder roots) conspired to do them in.

I’ve concluded that the best chance for a prized tree addition to your home landscape may be to start small, and pay attention to the details. If you collect tree seeds in the wild, then try to match the growing and light conditions as closely to the mother tree as you can before planting at home.

For helpful hints, visit the following website:

<http://www.doityourself.com/stry/how-to-grow-a-dogwood-tree-from-seeds>

Lasagna Gardening – Why Not Try It This Spring?

OK, so it may not be pretty, but the bonus is there's no digging and no spraying to eliminate unwanted weeds before planting. As long as septic fields and other utilities are avoided, you should be good to go.

1st layer Corrugated cardboard from large appliances or overlapped pieces. or 10 layers of newspaper overlapped 4-6 inches. Soak the cardboard, if using, in a wheelbarrow to allow it fully penetrate.

2nd layer Next is the “green” layer made of yard waste, vegetable peelings, compost or rotted manure. Do not add weeds that have gone to seed.

3rd layer “Brown” layer, such as dried leaves, sawdust or straw – even shredded paper – as long as the layer is 3-4 inches thick.

Continue alternating layers until the bed is as tall as you wish (usually between 18-36 inches thick). Moisten down each layer with water to encourage decompositions.

Cover your completed “lasagna” with burlap, bark chips, or sheets of plastic to keep in the heat and

speed up decomposition and discourage individual layers from blowing around. This cold composting method does not reach seed killing temps; that's why you should have no weed-seed heads in your green layer. And, as with compost piles, don't add meat scraps that could draw varmints and smell foul.

Note: Normally, this bed takes six months to be ready for planting. If the bed is needed immediately, add a 2-3 inch layer of topsoil mixed with compost as the uppermost layer.

Plant!

Pull back layers with your hands to make planting holes. Set plants in holes and pull material back around the roots and water thoroughly.

For more detail from the source publication, *Indiana Gardening/March/April 2016*, see:

http://statebystategardening.com/state.php/in/articles/what_is_lasagna_gardening/

-BP

Editor's note: Patricia Lanza's book, Lasagna Gardening, is available at the Hope Branch of Bartholomew County Public Library.

High-Tech Gardening: Can You Dig It?



I don't know about you, but I find light conditions one of the hardest things to get right in our yard. We seem to always end up having dimmer light conditions than I count on to support blooming things. One reason is that our trees have matured – boy, have they matured - over the twenty plus years we've been living here. We've also taken out a few trees, (or nature has), but the canopies of surrounding trees have filled in more than enough to take away pools of light I tried my best to quickly snatch up and plant.

There may be help for hapless gardeners like me who would like to get a better read on much light is out there, and other gardening conundrums: High tech gardening is here! Sensor-embedded products can do everything from monitor the health of your soil, to honing your watering schedule by syncing it with weather forecasts. It will send data

to your phone for anytime monitoring, from anywhere.

And, yes, there's even a wireless deer fence. I hate myself for being tempted to fall prey to that one, but I'm feeling a very strong pull to check it out...

For more from *Wired* on-line, see: <http://www.wired.com/2016/04/connected-gardening-tech-iot/>

-BP



June 16-18, 2016
West Lafayette, IN

Standard registration ends soon!
<http://www.tippecanoemastergardener.org/2016-mg-conference/>

The Philharmonic *Still* Needs You!

Contact Executive Director Margaret Powers if you can help to educate their staff and volunteers on how to best manage the fine, compact landscape at the headquarters that is now theirs! Even if you do some of the work, it counts as service if you are training someone. Contact Margaret at margaretp@thecip.org or 376-2638.

We found this to be interesting . . .

New Life for Old Potting Soil Amps Up Plant Performance

'Continually planting the same family of vegetables in the one pot can lead to an imbalance and potentially harmful soil microbes.'

You can **add beneficial 'effective microbes'** (or E.M. as they are sometimes known) to your potting mix to maintain a healthy growing environment. Microorganisms can be and 'fed' with diluted molasses and kelp.

Check the soil pH regularly because the level of acidity determines if your plants are getting access to the nutrients in the pot. Using a low-cost **soil pH meter or kit**, now is a good time to check the pH balance.



Most vegetables and herbs thrive in a pH range of 6.2-6.8 with 6.4 being optimum. Dry organic supplements can help re-balance it as needed.

A low soil level in a pot probably indicates that soil nutrients need replacing.

See more at <http://themicrogardener.com/frugal-gardening-re-using-old-potting-mix/>

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Home Food Preservation

Hoosier Harvest
Can It! Freeze It! Dry It!
Do It Safely!

May 31, June 7, 14, 21, & 28,
2016
6:00 – 9:00 PM



For more information
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Master Gardeners can earn Education hours for attending this, or volunteer hours for assisting! Contact Harriet Armstrong using the information shown above.

Hello Master Gardeners:

As you know, a small group of Master Gardeners has been working since late last summer to schedule monthly education programs at the Bartholomew County Library. We have some interesting topics coming up and, by the way, attendance at these can be counted as two Master Gardener education hours.

Our monthly meetings start at 6:00 p.m. in the conference room on the lower level of the Library. Following our speaker's presentation, we conduct a short business meeting to discuss things important to our Master Gardeners. Here's the monthly meeting schedule for the next couple of months.

June 15, "Providing a Safe Haven for Bluebirds"

July 8-16. Bartholomew County 4-H Fair. Master Gardeners will be at the Bartholomew County 4-H Fair for a couple of days during Fair week, so we won't have a program at the Library in July. We'll be sending you information in the very near future about what Master Gardeners are doing at this year's 4-H Fair.

August 17, "Making a Hypertufa Container" demo.

For more information, see page 8!

Happy Gardening!
Naomi McFall

Master Gardener Intern Training is ON for 2016!

Where: the Red Cross building, right next to ours on Repp Drive

When: 9 am until noon

Dates: 11 August to 17 November, all Thursdays

With the new location and time, we'll need lots of Master Gardener support to make the classes successful! Please contact our office to volunteer if you are able. Assisting in Intern Training is a needed service and a great way to meet new Master Gardeners – and to let them meet you!

Hey, Save the Date!

State Master Gardener Conference	16-18 June	Purdue University
Assist Kris: “Flower Power”	21 June 2 pm	Mill Race Center
MGs needed at Downtown Farmers Market	2 July 8:30-12:30	Cummins Parking Lot
Bartholomew County 4-H Fair	8-16 July	Fairgrounds
MGs needed at Downtown Farmers Market	6 August 8:30-12:30	Cummins Parking Lot
MG Intern Training begins!	11 August 9am-noon	Red Cross Building

Contact

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Or

MG newsletter editor, Becky Pinto, bandbpinto@sbcglobal.net

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Hamilton County Master Gardeners Association
Presents the

18th Annual Plant Sale

Indiana Natives,
Perennials,
Annuals,
Vegetables,
**Trees &
Bearded Iris Sale**

GO NATIVE!



Featuring plants grown in the gardens of Master Gardeners,
free gardening information, and expert planting advice

Saturday, May 21, 2016
8:00 am - 3:00 pm
Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds
Exhibit Hall

**Bring
Your
Wagon!**



Please visit www.hcmga.org for more information
"Helping Others Grow"



Bartholomew County Master Gardeners

"Master Gardeners help people and communities grow"



Mark your Calendar for these
Exciting Master Gardener
Programs

May
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday, May 21-22

**Secret Gardens of
Historic Downtown
Columbus Walking Tour**

This walking tour, facilitated by the Historic Downtown Neighborhood Alliance, showcases the beauty and harmony of life in a historic neighborhood while highlighting the splendor and joy a beautiful garden has to offer. Close up and sidewalk viewing of multiple large scale and pocket-size gardens is available.

These gardens are located on Lafayette and Franklin Streets between Fifth and Eleventh Streets.

Join our volunteer Master Gardeners who will highlight garden features and answer questions.

July
July 8-16, 2016

**Visit our Master
Gardeners at the
Bartholomew
County 4-H Fair**

See you at the Fair!

What's more fun than an afternoon or evening at the Fair!

We're working on possibilities for a Master Gardener venue at this year's Fair. So, while you're at the Fair, look for us. We'd love to describe our Master Gardener program and talk about what we're doing in Bartholomew County. We will also have information about how you can go about getting involved. See you at the Fair!



June
Wednesday, June 15, 2016
6:00 - 8:00 pm
Bartholomew County Library
*Providing a Safe
Haven for Bluebirds*

Ray Weatherolt is a retired Life Sciences Teacher, Advanced Master Gardener and Indiana Master Naturalist who comes to us from Sunnyside Master Gardener Association in New Albany, Indiana.

While Ray is a butterfly gardener, he is also dedicated to the preservation of bluebirds.

He will describe what he and his Bluebird Team, which is part of the Floyd County Master Gardeners Association, has done to establish and maintain more than 30 bluebird trails in his area.

He estimates they have constructed more than 1,900 bluebird boxes in a six year period.

Come learn from Ray what he and his group is actively doing to provide a safe haven for our beautiful Bluebirds.



August
Wednesday, August 17, 2016
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Bartholomew County Library
*"Making a Hypertufa
Container" Demo*

Carol Dale, "The Hypertufa Lady"

Hypertufa? What is it? Hypertufa is a medium made from a mixture of Portland cement, perlite (or vermiculite), and water. This mixture lends itself well for shaping into beautiful, rustic, textured containers. Once the technique is mastered, you can make containers in any size.

Come watch Carol demonstrate the making of traditional hypertufa. From there, let your imagination take over.

For more information contact hcmcfall@gmail.com
Session attendance earns 2 Master Gardener Education Hours.

Spring/Early Summer 2016 (Rev. 2)