

News Release – For Immediate Release

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Purdue Master Gardener Program Seeking New Crop of Volunteers

If you want to sharpen your gardening skills and you have an interest in sharing your knowledge with others, Purdue Extension has the ideal program for you.

Beginning September 10, 2018, a Purdue Master Gardener "Basic Training" series will be offered for residents of Noble and Whitley Counties. The Purdue Master Gardener Program is a volunteer training program that provides a learning framework for participants to increase their knowledge on a wide variety of horticultural subjects. In turn, participants volunteer by teaching others while representing Purdue University. As volunteers, participants grow as they share knowledge and provide leadership and service in educational gardening activities within their communities.

Training sessions will be held on Monday evenings from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. from Sept. 10 through Dec. 17. Participants will be exposed to a wide range of subjects including soil and plant science, diagnosis of plant problems, pesticide safety, and culture of vegetable, flower, landscape, and fruit plants.

Classes for the bi-county training will be held at Merriam Christian Chapel, 3985 S. US Highway 33, Albion, IN 46701. The church is approximately 1 mile northwest of the US 33/SR 9 intersection in Merriam on US 33.

"I think class participants will enjoy learning with people from our neighboring county and sharing ideas," said John Woodmansee, Extension Educator in Whitley County.

Materials and expenses for the series of classes cost \$130.00 per participant. This expense fee covers such items as the Master Gardener student handbook, handouts, name badges, and other materials. These materials all become part of the Master Gardener's personal collection. Couples sharing the same single set of materials may attend for a rate of \$165.00.

A completed application and payment is required for all potential students by Friday, Aug. 31, 2018. Students will have the *option* of purchasing a flash drive (electronic) version of the manual for an additional \$25.

While class participants will be encouraged to create new educational outreach programs, there are already many opportunities for which volunteers are needed. The theme of the Master Gardener Program is "Helping Others Grow."

If you'd like an application to join our league of volunteers or if you have questions about the program, give us a call in Noble County at 260-636-2111 or in Whitley County at 260-244-7615. If you call and simply leave your name and address, we will send you detailed information about the class, including an application.

You may also stop by the Purdue Extension office in the Noble County South Complex located just south of Albion at 2090 N. State Road 9, or at the Whitley County office at 115 South Line Street in Columbia City.

Interested persons may also access local Master Gardener information (including class information) under the "Garden" tab at the local Purdue Extension website at: www.extension.purdue.edu/whitley.

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