



August 2023



THE Germinator

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings Gardeners,

Some of you know that my family and I spent 12 days in Hawaii recently. When I returned I was struck by how much my plants had grown and how much the Japanese beetles have had their own personal luau in my garden. I don't put out traps or spray them with insecticide. I have a wide mouth container with soapy water in it and use different techniques to dispatch them: plucking, flicking, or tapping (if they're under the leaves). I make a competition of it to see how often I am successful and how often they elude my efforts. So far think I'm batting .750. Not bad.



I have learned, as a gardener, that one of the most important things I can do for my plants is to pay attention to them. Every day, I survey and assess the condition of my plants. I look for telltale signs of disease, insects, or inadequate food, watering, sunlight, etc. I try to respond before it's too late.

Report on the Austintown Township Park deck project: It looks great! Kudos to Mike Banks and his team who built and planted a landscaped perimeter around the new pond deck. Carpenters on the project were Mike Banks, Mike Beaudis, Bruce Brungard, and Tom Liggett. Planters were Helene Viano, Dawn Reed, and Pat Murphy. My hope is that, going forward, we can add more annuals and perennials.

Stay tuned for word on our involvement in the Canfield Fair. We will need someone to chair the booth design committee.

It's time to get ready to enter our August horticulture show. We will discuss this further at our August meeting, and Rodney Toth will provide guidelines for entering the show. Survey your gardens and find a prospective candidate, one that you can nurture and prune to develop to its potential.

I am excited about the recent interest in the club: 3 new members and 4 applicants. Please make them feel welcome. My message to new members: I will be meeting with you soon to help you find a niche in the club.

Happy gardening!

Tom Arns

GOGY Annual Horticulture Show

Saturday & Sunday, August 26th & 27th

Fellows Riverside Gardens – Setup Friday at noon

Sat. -Entry prep begins 7:30am – Judging at 10:30am

Sections: Annuals, Vegetables, Ornamentals, Fruits, Perennials, Dahlias, Bulbs (Tubers/Corms/ etc.), Roses & Potted Plants. \$25 Awards for Heaviest Tomato, Largest Zinnia & Youth Division (16 YOA & Younger) Sweepstakes Winner.

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Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, August 2nd

Stacey Pavilion

Austintown Township Park

Board Meeting, 5:30pm

All Members Welcome

Membership Meeting, 7pm

Speaker: Rodney Toth

Horticulture Show Tutorial

Guests Welcome

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Scrappers Club Outing

Thursday, Aug. 17th, 6pm

Mahoning Valley Scrappers vs



West Virginia Black Bears

Members and their guests will enjoy sandwiches, drinks and dessert at Eastwood Field in Niles followed by the game at 7pm.

Price is \$22 PP. Contact Rodney Toth to reserve your spot.





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Club News

New Members

Karen Vargas is an accountant at a Stow, OH business and, with her husband David is in the process of beautifying their 5 acres in Canfield including selection of the right plants. She is also involved in the Canfield Village Christmas display.

Elsa Higby lives in Youngstown and is a consultant involved in composting, urban farm management, renewable and regenerative agriculture. Her gardening interests include native plants.

Sponsor: Bob Schullick

Terri Hendricks lives in Austintown and is a software analyst. Her gardening interests include growing flowers and vegetables. She is also into horses.

Jim McKenna is a retired teacher and lives in Austintown. His gardening interests include veggies and deer-resistant wild flowers. Once an avid runner, at 85 he now regularly walks and hikes.

Angela McKenna lives in Girard and is a YSU student where she is involved in the college's Environmental Sustainability Society. Her gardening interests include flowers and vegetables. She also enjoys hiking, fencing, foraging and environmental science.

Susanne Murphy lives in Youngstown. Her gardening interests include vegetables, perennials and pollinators.

Welcome Aboard!

Austintown Park Pond Project



Our organization's latest civic project involved building raised beds, planting perennials and annuals and mulching the landscape around the Yeager Pond deck at Austintown Township Park. Mike Banks led the GOGY effort assisted by several other members (see President's Message, pg. 1). As can be seen in the above photo, they did a great job.

The park board has allowed us to hold our meetings there at a discounted cost, and this project is a small way we can thank them. They will tend to watering and weeding. Many thanks to Mike and all members who participated.

Building A Nursery From Scratch

Shane Burgorf worked in the restaurant business until two years ago when he decided to make a career change. From an early age, he had a fascination with horticulture. He had honed his knowledge and skills years ago at the Holden Arboretum and felt it was time to dedicate his life to what he loved.

And so Gnome Home and Garden Nursery was born. Shane is the GOGY 2nd V.P. and gave a presentation on his process of building a nursery business at its July membership meeting. He likes to say, "What's old is new again", meaning the term 'organic' has long been the gardening catchword. Shane, however, feels that 'native' is the ideal gardeners should strive for. Plants native to specific region balance that environment and help deter invasive species.



He started his inventory indoors and, through research and trial and error, found the best and most economical sources for equipment and materials. This includes LED grow lighting, tables, fans, space heaters and heat mats. He uses inorganic fertilizer to limit offensive indoor odors and 'mosquito bits' to eliminate problem insects.

While Shane gave detailed descriptions of his favorite products, two stood out:



The Wilcox 14" trowel (\$23) which he says is indestructible, and the 'Tapener' (\$28-32) for efficiently securing plants. For a complete plant inventory go to www.gnomehomeandgarden.com. The site also includes his thoughts and story. He offers a wide range of perennials, annuals, veggies, fruit, herbs and grasses at reasonable prices.



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Tips for Healthy Tomatoes

Cracked and split tomatoes are not only less appetizing, but are more prone to rot, infections and pests. There are a number of reasons for these blemishes. They include irregular watering, heavy rainfall after an extended dry period, and uneven ripening and irregular growth periods that affect skin elasticity.

Maintaining consistent moisture and nutrients is basic to healthy fruit using fertilizers with lower potassium levels. Overwatering often leads to swelling and splitting. Deep watering once or twice a week is better than daily, shallow hydration. Mulching will help retain moisture and lower root temperature especially during fluctuating weather conditions.

Excessive heat and sunlight strains tomato skin so shading that allows for air circulation should be considered. Planting on the east side of a building or other structure will allow for photosynthesis in the morning and afternoon shade during the hottest hours. Planting as deeply as possible promotes a large, healthy root system. Some gardeners install roots horizontally with just a few true leaves above ground.

Prune away excessive dense plant foliage which not only traps moisture around the fruit leading to rapid expansion but inhibiting air circulation. Pruning will also cause more energy directed toward fruit development rather than vegetative growth. Also remove suckers and branching near the soil where disease causing microbes can be splashed onto the plants.

Support systems help distribute weight evenly avoiding vine stress when heavy fruit begins to mature. Caging works well in this regard. Staking also provides upright stability while increasing air flow and allowing for easier harvesting. Trellises are also an option.

Some companion plant benefit tomatoes. Garlic, mint and parsley repel pests; tall tomatoes shade spinach and lettuce; asparagus repels worm pests; marigold repels hornworm, and basil will enhance flavor. Remove any leaves or fruit that have blossom end rot. Also remove any leaves with brown spots.

Invasive Plants at Garden Centers

Just because a plant is sold at a nursery or big box store doesn't mean it is good for the

environment. Many, including those listed below, tend to displace native plants. Alternatives are offered in this podcast but difficult to hear. Source: [gardeningknowhow.com](https://www.gardeningknowhow.com).

Chameleon Plant (*Houttuynia cordata*) has colorful foliage but spreads rapidly and is almost impossible to eradicate. Alternative: Coral bells.

Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*) is another plant propagated by rhizomes and difficult to contain. Alternative; Balloon flower.

Buddleia (Butterfly bush) has prolific over seeding. Alternative: Sterile Low-And-Behold cultivars don't produce viable seeds.

Flowering Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*) has cross-bred with other cultivars to become invasive. Alternatives: Flowering Dogwood and Serviceberry.

Running Bamboo (*Phyllostachys*) can send runners 100 feet away. Alternatives: Clumping bamboo or ornamental grasses.

Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*) displace wildlife food plants. Alternatives: Oakleaf hydrangea, Red Creek dogwood and blueberry bush.

Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) is not only invasive but harbors disease-causing ticks. Alternatives?:

Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) is not only invasive but toxic to animals and the soil. Alternative: Wild Indigo.

English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) is almost impossible to eradicate. Alternatives?

Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) may die off in our but produces tons of seeds. Alternatives: Native Honeysuckles

Mexican Evening Primrose (*Oenothera sp.*) spreads via prolific seeding and running roots. Alternative: Dianthus.

Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) is a small tree from China that pops up on disturbed land like along railroad tracks and industrial sites. It has been used locally in landscaping. It also harbors invasive, destructive insects like the Spotted Lanternfly.



Spotted Lanternfly

Lycorma deicatala is native to China and first detected in Pennsylvania in 2014. The greatest concentrations are now there and in the mid-Atlantic states, but sightings have been confirmed in Ohio including the Cleveland area. Human activity including the moving of fire wood, plant debris, pets and even infested vehicles enable the insects to spread.



While this pest's first 3 instar stages feed on leaves and soft stems, the 4th instars and adults attack the heavier wood of a wide range of fruit, and ornamental and woody trees including the invasive 'tree of heaven' (*Ailanthus altissima*). Serious infestations can be fatal to trees. Fruit is not attacked but spoiled by mold. Indications of their presence include egg masses and excreted honeydew that turns black with mold and attracts wasps, bees and ants.

Adult females lay eggs in fall on a wide range of hard surfaces. Initially light gray in color, they look like dried mud over time. Egg masses remain until late spring when the first nymphs emerge. The first 3

instars are black with white spots while the 4th instars are red with black stripes and white spots.



Prevention begins with inspecting anything coming from an infected area. Egg masses should be scraped into a container, doused with alcohol and discarded in the garbage. Also remove any trees of heaven, the insect's preferred host. Banding trees with adhesive belts restricts and captures them as they move up tree trunks in morning and down in the evening. Insecticides, including systemic products, are not recommended as they may harm beneficial insects. Try squishing them first.

Installing Shrubs & Small Trees

Proven Winners is a highly respected hybridizer and grower of perennial plants, so we sought its input at provenwinners.com on installing larger perennials.

First check the tag for sunlight requirements. 'Full sun' means 6+ hours of uninterrupted sunlight; 'partial sun/partial shade' means 3-6 hrs. of direct sun or filtered sun throughout the day; and 'shade' means little or no sunlight.



Most shrubs are adaptable to a wide variety of soils but drainage, especially with clay soils, can be problematic. Dig the hole twice as wide and only as deep as the container leaving the soil along the edge for backfilling. Use the shovel to compare container size with hole depth. Fill the hole with water. If the water drains completely after 2 hours, you're good to go. If water remains, choices may be limited to buttonbush, summersweet and dogwood varieties.

Carefully remove the shrub from its container but don't pull its on stems.. Sometimes it is necessary to cut the plastic pot to remove the plant. Rough up the root ball a bit to loosen small roots away from the soil. Unwind any large, woody roots.

Being sure the top of the root ball top is even with the soil level, begin backfilling around the shrub with the excavated soil. Firm the soil slightly around the roots as you go to eliminate air pockets. Continue until the soil level is 1/2" over the root ball. Proven Winners recommends not mixing backfill with peat moss, compost, or other products that may cause drainage problems.

Water thoroughly around the root ball and maintain regular watering the plant's first season. Apply 2-3" of shredded bark mulch around the root zone to keep roots cool and conserve water.

Typically, shrubs begin to grow vigorously in their second season, with growth and flowering increasing as long as conditions remain favorable.





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**Thank you to the Gardeners of Greater Youngstown's Friends for their Civic Fund donations.
Members are urged to give them a visit.**

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Calendar of Events



- July 26-28TGOA National Convention.....Dayton, Ohio
- August 2 Board Meeting 5:30PM Stacey Pavilion, Austintown Park
- August 2 Membership Mtg ... 7:00PM Stacey Pavilion, Austintown Park
- August 26 - 27 ... Annual Horticulture Show Fellows Riverside Gardens
- August 30 - Sept.4 Canfield Fair
- Sept 6 Board Meeting 5:30PM Stacey Pavilion, Austintown Park
- Sept 6 Membership Mtg ... 7:00PM Stacey Pavilion, Austintown Park
- Oct 4 Board Meeting 5:30PM Stacey Pavilion, Austintown Park
- Oct 4 Membership Mtg ... 7:00PM Stacey Pavilion, Austintown Park

Please Join Us!

The purpose of the Gardeners of Greater Youngstown is to create a better understanding of gardening and to encourage and promote the beautification of our community. In order to meet this endeavor, several civic projects are completed each year.

Members receive a monthly newsletter, "The Germinator," which has timely gardening hints, club news and other local and regional horticultural events. Members also become members of The Gardeners of America.

Membership is open to residents of the Mahoning Valley and surrounding communities with an interest in gardening.

To join, contact us at: Gardeners of Greater Youngstown
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or on our website at www.gg-yo.org



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