



# The Germinator

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Greetings Everyone,*

I hope all of you had happy and healthy holidays. We have enjoyed a relaxing lull in our club's activity, but now it's time to get busy preparing for the annual seminar at the Davis center on 3-11-23. You have already received an email from Pat Murphy who will coordinate the basket raffle that will be held during the seminar. Please consider approaching businesses that you frequent and ask for a donation; or put together your own basket; or go together with another member or two. Remember, Pat wants to know first which individuals or businesses you intend to approach so we don't double or triple up on requests. As the date of the seminar nears, more help will be needed. I'm sure we can count on you.



I am looking forward to our first dinner membership meeting on 2-8-23 at Ala Carte Catering at 7pm. We will be eating buffet style. Guests/spouses are welcome. After our meal we will have a brief meeting and speaker: Lou Vega from the Green Team will tell us about the new county-wide composting initiative. Those of you wishing to attend have most likely have made a reservation. However for others it may not be too late depending on when you contact me. We will have a board meeting prior to the dinner at Ala Carte at 5:30p. You should've already received an email with more details.

Starting in March, and continuing for the rest of the year, we will be having our board and membership meetings at the Stacey Pavilion at Austintown Township Park on Kirk road (between Turner and Rt 46). Date and time will be the same: first Wed of the month; board at 5:30p, membership at 7:00p. This new venue is larger and has more amenities than Boardman Park site: namely, a full kitchen with lots of storage.

Lastly, it is time to submit applications for our annual scholarship awards. If you know a deserving student check out our website for further instructions on the qualifications and application form. Call Bob Schulick if you need more help.

We are still hoping to be able to access the MASCO greenhouse on South Ave so we can prepare for our annual May sale. I know many of you are eager to "dig" in and help out. Stay tuned.

*Tom Atkins*

## **GOGY Annual Winter Seminar**

**Saturday, March 11, 2024**

**Fellows Riverside Gardens**

**Continental Breakfast, Catered Lunch**

**Three Speakers, Four Presentations – See page 2**

*The Gardeners Of Greater Youngstown – [gg-yo.org](http://gg-yo.org) - returns to a full day seminar. Members will be asked to solicit raffle baskets from their favorite local businesses. Also, we'll need volunteers for prior setup, table assistants and any other help to make this signature event a success. Most of all, we want every member to consider attending.*

**Contact Chairperson Clare Neff to see how you can help.**

## **Meeting Schedule**

**Wed., Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>**

**A La Carte Catering  
Canfield, OH**

**Board Meeting – 5:30pm**

**All Members Welcome**

**Membership Meeting – 7pm**

*While we dine, Lou Vega from the Green Team will discuss the countywide composting initiative.*

**Guests Welcome**

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*To waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed.*

Theodore Roosevelt



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## CLUB NEWS

### Another Westside Garden Spot

Mill Creek MetroParks is one regal lady and on her hip sits Bob Coggsall's beautiful landscapes – a worthy progeny. His 100 x 200 city lot must be a joy to neighbors and an eye-catcher for passersby. The need for a lawn mower has become almost nil due to his ever-expanding beds of annuals and perennials in the front and side yards. The rear yard with its mature trees is a work in progress and a haven for native wildlife.



Bob moved to the city's Westside nearly a decade ago after a banking career in New England, and his 'yankee' accent remains strong. He subsequently became a naturalist with Mill Creek MetroParks working mainly at the Ford Nature Center. When our scheduled January membership meeting speaker had to cancel, Bob was recruited as a last minute replacement by his neighbor and member Bob Schulick. We couldn't have been more pleased with the result.

The list of bedding plant varieties, maybe four dozen, he installed is too wide and varied to list here but there are three having some prominence: Low-growing, multi-colored 'Dreamland' zinnias for border edging; multi-colored rudbeckia that takes up a lot of area as it readily self-seeds; and tree lilies, herbaceous bulb plants with large flowers and sturdy stalks.

Bob hasn't forgotten butterflies and hummingbirds. Among the plants to attract them are beebalm and milkweed which he grew as part of project for raising 150 Monarch butterflies. His macro photos of various butterfly species are frame worthy.

His property is also deer friendly to a fault as he supplies them with hundreds of pounds of corn and other feed per year. His generosity has resulted in one doe producing twin offspring several years in a row. We've all heard about albino deer in Mill Creek Park. One

turned out to be a regular visitor tame enough to get within kissing distance. Sadly, the animal was recently killed by a car.

We thank Bob for sharing his experiences with us and we may schedule a tour of his property this summer.



### Winter Seminar Speakers

On March 11th, we will return to hosting a full-day event. This will include a continental breakfast, catered lunch, basket raffle and three first class speakers delivering four presentations.

Speaking twice will be **Dr. Laura Deeter**, Professor and Coordinator of Landscape Horticulture and Horticulture Science at the Ohio State University Agriculture Technical Institute in Wooster, OH. She co-authored *A Complete Guide to Perennials*, contributed to other books, written numerous journal articles and has given many presentations including at our previous seminars. She has been chosen "Instructor of the Year" several times. Her presentations are high energy, instructive and humorous. Her initial presentation will be '*Best Garden-ing Practices*'.



**Dr. Robert McMahon** recently retired as Professor Emeritus at ATI after 29 years where he was Coordinator of the Greenhouse Production and Management Technology. He is president of the Gardeners of Greater Cleveland. His presentation will be a '*Complete Guide to Houseplant Care*'.

**Julie Witmer** has certification from the Royal Horticulture Society in speaking engagements, she works at D.J.'s Greenhouse in Transfer, Pa. She will talk about '*Botanical Opportunities for Unexpected and Diverse Locations*'.



### Linda Biggs Recognized

Linda received a certificate of appreciation for supervising the growing of annuals for our Spring Plant Sale at the Bev Rd. greenhouse. She has also been active in several other GOGY activities.





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## Irreplaceable

The recent passing of long-time member Larry Tooker has left empty spaces in the hearts of those who knew him, and within our organization which relied upon his knowledge and contacts.

They say even the most expert gardeners are always learning and Larry was both. Even with decades of experience, he always picked the brains of other gardeners and was quick to buy new books on horticulture by authors he respected.



For many years and decades ago, Larry was Mill Creek MetroParks horticulture director. He once gave a membership meeting presentation that included photos of changes made under his direction. Sadly, the details of that talk are unavailable. At one time he also owned and operated a garden center.

Barrie Kridler of Kridler's Garden Center in Woodworth recalled his long relationship with Larry including the exchange of information and plants. They also took part in plant sales at Fellows Riverside Gardens, the Holden Arboretum in Kirkland, the Secrest Arboretum at the OSU Research and Development Center in Wooster, the Stan Hywet Gardens in Akron, and the Phipps Botanical Gardens in Pittsburg.

Larry's contributions to our organization were varied and many. Our annual Winter Seminars would not have been nearly as successful without his recruitment of expert and entertaining speakers. He was one of our members who took part in the *Party Line Garden Show*, a radio call-in show offering gardening advice.

Our elm tree restoration and research project saw the planting of American Elm varieties resistant to Dutch Elm Disease.. Larry arranged purchase of resistant trees at a discount. We installed individual trees at numerous locations and, with his help, provided elms for a grove at the Mill Creek MetroParks wetlands project.

For many years, the *Germinator* staff and Larry's club member friends tried to get his consent to a newsletter profile but he was as modest as he was accomplished. As a result, this article does not do his life justice. All we can add is we will miss Larry's kindness, friendship, and contributions to the world of horticulture and our organization.

## Composting Options and Myths

Garden blogger Robert Pavlis has just released his latest book, *Compost Science for Gardeners – Simple Methods for Nutrient-Rich Soil* (\$22.95 at Amazon). The book covers traditional hot composting, cold composting, smaller commercial bins, vermincomposting, Bokashi, eco-enzymes and electronic composters which supposedly produce in a couple of hours. The book also dispels such myths as: Composting is difficult; smelly; attracts rodents; is expensive; takes a lot of room, and is strictly for outdoor gardening.

We have not yet read the book and, instead, have gone to another *Garden Myths* article to investigate Bokashi composting of kitchen scraps. To start you need a special bokashi bucket (\$60-\$150, or \$20 DIY) that has a tight lid and a spigot at the bottom to drain off liquids. Also necessary is bokashi bran of 'effective microbes'.



The process involves putting food scraps in the pail and sprinkling some bokashi bran on top, then squish it down tight to remove air and close the lid. Each time scraps are added, repeat the process. After a few days, liquid will begin to form at the bottom of the pail. This needs to be drained off or it will begin to stink. This liquid is the 'bokashi tea' fertilizer for indoor or outdoor plants. When the pail is full, you can take the contents outside and dig it into the garden soil or add it to the compost pile. Benefits include ability to compost meat and dairy products, no strong odors, no manual labor, no pests and it takes very little (2 weeks) time.

The fact is bokashi isn't composting at all. The scraps are actually fermented or 'pickled', and they come out of the bucket appearing almost the same as they went in. The process is similar to adding yeast to crushed grapes to make wine – the right kind of microbes speed up the fermentation process to reduce unpleasant odors. The scraps only begin to 'compost' naturally when added to soil or compost pile.

Pavlis' writes that bokashi tea offers limited if any benefit to plants and that would only come from the bran microbes. Check out his complete article at His own composting method (throwing scraps - not dairy or meat - into a pile) and not worrying about green/brown ratios, odors, varmints or turning the contents since the pile is outside.



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## ***Audubon Advice on Feeding Birds***

Many who fancy our feathered friends consider the American Audubon Society, [audubon.org/news/11tips](http://audubon.org/news/11tips), the go-to source on everything avian.

Various species feed at different levels giving need for separate feeders and feed: A low platform for ground feeders, and a hopper or tube for shrub and tree feeders.

Offer different seeds in different feeders. Black oil sunflower appeals to the greatest number of species. Offer sunflower, nyjer (thistle) and peanuts in separate feeders. A blend of sunflower, millet and cracked corn will draw sunflower specialists who will toss the millet and corn down to ground feeding birds. A mixture of peanuts, nuts and dried fruit will attract woodpeckers, nuthatches and titmice. Few birds like milo, wheat and oats.



Provide suet in cool to cold weather for insect eaters. In warmer weather, offer a mix of one part peanut butter to five parts cornmeal, and stuff it in a hanging log or large pinecone.

For fruit specialist like robins, bluebirds, orioles, tangers and mockingbirds, soak raisins and currants in water overnight and place them on a table feeder.

For hummingbirds, dissolve 1 part sugar into 4 parts water. No need for red food dye. Sterilize twice a week.

Keep feed dry, cool and away from squirrels and mice by storing it in sealed containers. Watch for contamination.

Squirrel-proof pole-mounted feeders with a cone-shaped baffle at least 17 inches in diameter and at least 10 feet away from the nearest tree or tall structure.

An estimated one billion birds in the U.S die each year from flying into windows especially during breeding season. If possible, place feeders within 3 ft. of windows and hang decorations outside windows to help prevent bird strikes.

Domestic and feral cats kill hundreds of millions birds in the U.S. annually. Keep pet cats indoors or place a bell on their collars.

With bird flu a large and growing problem, sanitation is vital. Empty and clean feeders at least twice a year (spring and fall), especially in warm, humid weather. Scrub with a long-handled bottle brush, rinse with a powerful hose. Then soak the feeder in a bucket of 10% bleach solution. In spring, rake up spilled seed and shells.

## ***Please Be Mine, Valentine***

*The greatest happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved; loved for ourselves, or rather, loved in spite of ourselves.*

Victor Hugo

*Love does not consist in gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction.*

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

*Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired.*

Robert Frost

*There is only one happiness in this life; to love and be loved.*

George Sand

*Love is a single soul inhabiting two bodies.*

Aristotle

*There is no charm equal to tenderness of heart.*

Jane Austen

## ***On the Lighter Side***

*Love is a fire. But whether it is going to warm your heart or burn down your, you can never tell.*

Joan Crawford

I think Cupid must need glasses. The last time I dated a girl, he missed my heart but hit me in the wallet.

This year, I've gotten my wife a Valentine's Day gift that will really take her breath away. I got her a treadmill.

Love is like peeing your pants – everyone can see it but only you can feel is.





# The Germinator

**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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15 Central Square, 2nd Floor  
Youngstown, Ohio 44503  
330-742-4040



# The Germinator



Gardeners of Greater Youngstown  
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www. GG-YO.org



*HAPPY.*  
*Valentine's Day*

## Calendar of Events



- Feb 8 ..... Board Meeting ..... 5:30PM ..... A La Cart Catering, Canfield
- Feb 8 ..... Dinner Meeting .....7:00PM ..... A La Cart Catering, Canfield
- March 1 ..... Board Meeting ..... 5:30PM ..... Austintown Park
- March 1 ..... Membership Mtg .. 7:00PM ..... Austintown Park
- March 10 ... Seminar Setup ..... Noon ..... Davis Center, Fellows Riverside Gardens
- March 11 .. Winter Seminar .....9:00AM .....Davis Center, Fellows Riverside Gardens
- April 5 ..... Board Meeting ..... 5:30PM .....Austintown Park
- April 5 ..... Membership Mtg ... 7:00PM .....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  
% Membership Committee P.O. Box 612  
North Jackson, OH 44451  
or on our website at [www.gg-yo.org](http://www.gg-yo.org)



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