

# The Germinator

July 2020



PUBLISHED BY THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO  
89 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE MAHONING VALLEY AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings Everyone,

I think it's time we get together as a club again. Don't you? I know we are not out of the woods yet, but with reasonable precautions there is no reason why we shouldn't return to some version of normal. Also I just learned of an important reason to reconvene our meetings. 6-30-20 is the 90th anniversary of the inception of the MGCY!! Something to celebrate! Our speaker will be Lynn Zocolo, a long-time friend of the club, and she will speak about youth gardening.

Since the Davis Center will be closed until September, I have reserved the Stacey Pavilion at Austintown Township Park (ATP) for July 8 at 7pm. ATP is located on Kirk Rd. between Route 46 and Turner Rd. We will set up seating to ensure social distancing and I suggest that everyone wear a mask.

One reason why I value being part of MGCY is the access to expertise regarding all aspects of gardening. We need each other's assistance more than ever this time of year. Our flower beds are in full bloom. Our vegetable gardens are producing all manner of edibles. But not all is well in some of our gardens. What is eating our cucumbers? Why are our hanging baskets looking droopy and less than lush? And how can I divert the local deer to my neighbor's garden? Bring your questions and answers to the meeting.

Other issues on our agenda: The status of the Horticultural Show, Canfield Fair, and the Winter Seminar. Most importantly, I want to discuss reinvigorating our civic committee. It is an essential part of our mission to "promote the beautification of the community". I would like someone to step forward and lead this committee and a few others to serve on it.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the July meeting.

*Tom Atkins*

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, —That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

*Declaration of Independence, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph*

*I think of a hero as someone who understands the degree of responsibility that comes with his freedom.*

**Bob Dylan**

*That is the truly beautiful and encouraging aspect of freedom; no one struggles for it just for himself.*

**Fanny Lewald**

*We must be free not because we claim freedom, but because we practice it.*

**William Faulkner**

*We will stand by the right, we will stand by the true, we will live, we will die for the red, white and blue.*

**Unknown**

*Those who won our independence believed liberty to be the secret of happiness.*

**Louis D. Brandeis**

## July Membership Meeting

7pm, Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>  
Austintown Township Park  
Kirk Rd. btn Rt. 46 & Turner

**Speaker:** Lynn Zocolo

**Subject:** Youth Gardening

*All Members Welcome*

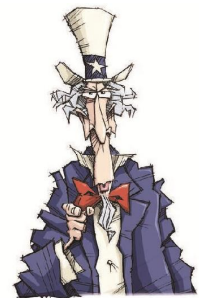
## July Board Meeting

*We may meet again at Austintown Park or another location. All members are welcome and your input is valued. If held, it will be posted on MGCY.org*

## Mill Creek MetroParks

### July Events

*While all indoor venues are closed at least until Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, most outdoor activities are open. Go to [millcreekmetroparks.org](http://millcreekmetroparks.org) for more information.*



## I WANT YOU

TO GRAB A HOT DOG, A SENSE OF PRIDE,  
A GOOD SPOT TO WATCH THE FIREWORKS FROM  
AND TO PUT YOUR POLITICS IN TIME-OUT FOR THE DAY.

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### **Community Garden Donation**

In 2006, club member Ted Vagas helped establish the St. Patrick Parish of Youngstown Community Garden on several vacant lots on Cleveland Ave. The intention was to provide gardening space and education for neighbors, school families and parishioners.

Today there are multiple raised beds and plots providing fresh produce for local families. There is also: A greenhouse; a thriving bee colony; a tool garage; a corn field; and an apple orchard. The facilities have also been used by South Side Academy students and local 4-H groups.

This infrastructure was provided by such non-profits as The Garden Forum of Greater Youngstown, Catholic Extension and the Diocese of Youngstown, the Youngstown Neighborhood Development, Corp., and the Ohio State University Extension.

St. Pat's recently requested that MGCY provide a \$1300 grant for: 1) Top soil for raising areas of poor soil where demolished homes once stood. 2) New gardening tools to be shared by parishioners and neighbors. 3) Repair of the hoop greenhouse. 4) Lumber to repair or replace raised beds. 5) A picnic table. 6) A part-time garden custodian to work between plots and do other miscellaneous tasks.

At the June Board of Gardeners meeting held at Austintown Township Park, the group voted to provide \$600 for the top soil and repair of the hoop house. Signage will be installed advising garden participants that our organization contributed to the project.

### **Keeping In Touch**

During this time of Covid-19 imposed social distancing, closed businesses, and cancelled meetings and events, we sometimes feel like we're stranded on a desert island. We can't allow this bug to distance ourselves from fellow friends and members, especially those who may be sick or in distress. Please email us at [mgygerminator@gmail.com](mailto:mgygerminator@gmail.com) if you know of any member who may be having problems.



Dan Miller is ailing and may like to hear from fellow members and friends. The good news is that Past President Dave Causer is recuperating at home and may like to hear you.

### **Remembering Don Brown**

Men's Garden Club of Youngstown lifetime member Don Brown sadly passed away unexpectedly at Berlin Twsp. home in late May. His dedication to the art of gardening and our organization was only exceeded by his devotion to honoring military veterans. He also had a strong calling for public service.

Don grew up on a 180 acre chicken farm where corn, wheat and maple syrup were also harvested. After graduating from Highland High School in Medina County, he was drafted into the Marine Corps where he served as a forward observer for an 81mm mortar battery. His 14 month tour which ended in 1967 included postings at Kha San, Hue and Dang Ha, areas that saw extensive combat during the 1968 Tet Offensive.

May 3, 1970 was a memorable day for Don and his wife, Shirley. They were living near the Kent State Univ.



campus and celebrating their first anniversary when the demonstrations against the U.S. invasion of Cambodia began. They had a bird's-eye view of the ROTC building burning. As the saying goes, 'Once a Marine, always a Marine', so we're sure he had some strong feelings about the situation. Their home proudly flies the Corps' banner under the Stars and Stripes on a tall flag pole.

Don was a carpenter for over 40 years and built Shirley and his Berlin Twsp. home himself fifty years ago. Doing that hard work for so long can take a toll on a man's back and his was no exception. That might be the reason he started growing his veggies in raised beds.



He then came to believe it was a better way. Taking tips from his main print source, *Square Foot Gardening* by Mel Bartholomew, he found he could customize the soil mixture and temperature to the needs of each vegetable, and better manage hydration, crop rotation, and control of pests and diseases.

*Continued on Page 3*

## Remembering Don Brown continued from pg. 2

Don didn't hoard his gardening knowledge and often gave demonstrations at the Ohio State University Extension in Courtland, the Chatterbox Club and various gardening clubs including our own. On one occasion he showed us how to grow a tomato plant in a 5 gal. bucket. The process included wire mesh to hold the soil and a pvc tube for adding fertilized water. We can't remember why he preferred to cover the buckets and his raised beds with red plastic cloth. Some thought it was to remind the plants what color their fruit should be.

The first week of June, Shirley graciously allowed us access to his small greenhouse and inside we found a 5 ft. tall bucket tomato with fruit already set. Don was involved in a friendly competition with other members as to who would have the first ripe tomato of the season. This plant would certainly have given him a leg up.

He also enjoyed the competition offered by our annual Horticulture Show, especially the Larry Whetson Heaviest Tomato Contest which he won several times. He also won the show's Sweepstakes competition a couple times for the most aggravate points from every section.

He was at a bit of a disadvantage because he showed vegetables almost exclusively whereas other contestants showed a wider variety of plants, yet he still always managed to be in the top three. His battle plan was simple; he just entered what looked good on the day of the show. We're sure he was disappointed that the show was cancelled this year. By the way, this photo was taken by our late *Germinator* photographer Bob Stas.

Don employed what he called "semi-organic" gardening – the use of homeopathic methods first, but when push came to shove, he was willing to go less organic. He also believed in no-stir composting where plant debris was placed in barrels that allowed for a little aeration letting let them sit for two years allowing nature to take its course. The publisher of *Garden Myths* would certainly agree with his method.



War and the Kent State ROTC building burning weren't Don's only experience with smoke and flame. He served as a firefighter and EMT with the Berlin Center Volunteer Fire Dept. for twenty years, six as assistant chief. He never forgot the fireworks factory explosion in Deerfield where, due to secondary fireworks blasts and flying debris, they had to fight the fire from under the truck.

Don had a life-long dedication to his fellow arms forces veterans and, with an honor guard made up of fellow members of VFW Post 9571, participated in hundreds of military burials of vets who requested the service at the Western Reserve National Cemetery in Rittman, OH.



In 2007, the Mahoning-Trumbull County Undertakers Assn. honored the group at the Maronite Center where they were presented Letters of Thanks from President George Bush and other state and local dignitaries, and a flag that had flown over the U.S. Capital.

Although Don will be remembered as a quiet, dignified man who put his all into everything he did, there were times when his dry wit had the room laughing hysterically. He will be forever missed.

## **Articles About Fellow Members**

This and last month's issues of the *Germinator* included short bios of members previously published in the newsletter. We have some interesting members and hope you will help convince them to share their life stories.

## Deterring Garden Pest Animals

**Groundhogs**, woodchucks or gophers are most often found where wooded areas meet a clearing. They spend most of their time in burrows, which can be 50 ft. long, and will often have one main entrance and an emergency escape entrance. In summer and fall, they sleep at night. In winter they hibernate. They most often venture out to feed in early mornings and evenings.



Hogs eat a wide variety of garden and landscape plants and, because they can climb trees and fences, even fruit isn't safe. Their den entrance will have a 10-12 inch hole surrounded by mounded dirt but may be well concealed. Their burrows can undermine home infrastructure. Their holes present a danger to people when stepped into and they can harm pets.

Areas with tall grass, weeds, overgrown shrubs and brush piles are an invitation for these unwanted pests. Because they eat dandelions and clover, lawns should be weed free. Here one has to make a cost/benefit choice as brush piles provide an environment for pollinators, and lawn clover will provide rabbits an easier food source than garden and landscape plants.

Groundhogs can be deterred by sprinkling Epsom salts on leaves and fruit, and it will help some plants grow better. Ammonia-soaked rags strewn along the garden perimeter will provide a stinky barrier but re-applications will be necessary after a shower. Old kitty litter will invoke the fear of predators. There are also granular and liquid repellents available – use as directed. Motion detector water spray devices such as Scarecrow-Sprinkler also work for other unwanted animals. Fencing must be 3-4 ft. high with another 12 inches buried underground and bent outward at a 90 degree angle.

Elimination with lethal body-grip traps are one choice. More humane wire live traps where relocation (at least 5 miles away) is legal is another. Some gardeners swear by baiting with cantaloupe rinds while others prefer using a product know as “woodchuck lure”. Early spring, before the young are born and when burrows are easiest to locate, is the best time. The trap should made less shiny with industrial odors eliminated. It should camouflaged with plant debris and placed near the burrow with logs providing a path to it.



**Rabbits** prefer some plants to others but will dine on anything when hungry enough. They feed mostly in the evening and into the night so any deterrence should be applied at day's end. Scent-based repellents will need to be applied throughout the growing season. They include bone meal (high in nitrogen) and

blood meal (high in phosphorous) which will have to be reapplied every two weeks. Home remedies include hair, black pepper, and the scent of dogs or cats in the yard.

Rabbits will nest in areas similar to groundhogs. Fencing requirements are a bit shorter and less needs to be buried than for groundhogs, but a finer mesh is necessary as rabbits can enter spaces of one inch. They can also chew through plastic mesh so galvanized metal fencing is preferred. They will gnaw on woody plants like blueberries and hydrangeas, especially in winter, so encircle those with 2-4 ft. fencing placed several inches from the plant. There is no need to bury the fencing.

Plants they prefer are pansies, hydrangeas, blueberry stems, peas, young pepper plants, beet greens, violets, Swiss chard and clover. Unless very hungry, they tend to avoid lobelia, snapdragons, petunias, astilbe, peony, iris, columbine, purple coneflower, basil, chives, rosemary, oregano, sage, buddleia, lantana, lavender and viburnum.

**Deer** can most effectively be deterred motion detecting water jets, or a timer-activated radio dialed to a talk show station and set for hours of darkness. Various commercial scent barriers have produced mixed results.



Bambi will eat almost any plant when hungry enough but prefers narrow-leaf evergreens like fir and arborvitae, hostas, daylilies, English ivy and plants that have been fertilized. They don't particularly like toxic plants like daffodils, foxgloves, monkshood and poppies; fragrant plants like herbs, ornamental salvias, peonies, lavenders and bearded irises; and fuzzy or thorny plants like lamb's ear, spirea or roses. They also tend to avoid bleeding hearts (*Dicentra spectabilis*).

**Cats** have an excellent sense of smell so deterring them can involve adding odors they don't like and eliminating those they do. Commercial products include granular powders that contain the scent of predators cats fear like coyote, fox and bobcat. Lion feces doesn't work.



Don't feed your pets outside or leave bits of food behind when cleaning a barbecue grill. When detected, territorial urine spray on walls and doors should be washed away with an enzyme-based odor neutralizer.

Board up all possible holes in sheds, garages and under porches that can be accessed by feral cats and their prey, and clear away brush and vegetation that may attract prey animals. Motion detector water sprays can also be useful. Establish a cat-friendly area away from the garden area by providing catnip and a sand box. Talk to neighbors who allow their pets to run loose. Investigate agencies that deal with feral cats as well as trap-neuter-release programs. Source: [thespruce.com](http://thespruce.com)

# The Germinator July 2020

Thank you to the MGCY Friends for their Civic Fund donations.  
Members are urged to give them a visit.

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MGCY Member

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**Elliot's Garden Center**

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www.gardenartisans.com

**Greenstar Cooperative**

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Youngstown, Ohio 44502  
330-740-2060

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**Men's Garden Club of Youngstown**

123 McKinley Ave.  
Youngstown, Ohio 44509  
www.mgcy.org

**Nick's Wine Cellar**

105 S. Meridian Rd.  
Youngstown, Ohio 44509

**Outdoor Recreation Equipment, 5316**

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330-782-2004

**Parks Garden Center**

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Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330-533-7278  
parksgardencenter@aol.com

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**Robert McGowan, LPL Financial**

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15 Central Square, 2nd Floor  
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330-742-4040

# The Germinator

July 2020



Men's Garden Club of Youngstown Ohio  
c/o Newsletter Editor  
123 McKinley Ave. • Youngstown, OH 44509

[www.mgcy.org](http://www.mgcy.org)



## calendar of events



July 8th.....	General Meeting.....	7:00 PM.....	Austintown Twsp. Park
TBA.....	Board Meeting.....	6:30 PM.....	Austintown Public Library
TBA.....	Steak Fry - General Mtg.....	6 PM - 7 PM.....	At the home of Larry Duck
TBA.....	Scrapers Ball Game.....	5:30 PM.....	Eastwood Field, Niles, OH
TBA.....	Board Meeting.....	6:30 PM.....	Austintown Public Library
Cancelled.....	Setup Horticulture Show.....	12:00 Noon.....	Fellows Riverside Gardens
TBA.....	Horticulture Show.....	7:00 AM.....	Fellows Riverside Gardens
TBA.....	Canfield Fair.....	9 AM - 9 PM.....	Canfield Fairgrounds
TBA.....	General Meeting.....	7:00 PM.....	Fellows Riverside Gardens
TBA.....	Board Meeting.....	6:30 PM.....	Austintown Public Library

## Please Join Us!

The purpose of The Men's Garden Club of 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.

Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the D. D. Davis Center at Fellows Riverside Garden. 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 National Men's Garden Club of America.

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

To join, contact us at: **Men's Garden Club of Youngstown Ohio**



% Membership Committee  
123 McKinley Way  
Youngstown, OH 44509



or on our website at [www.mgcy.org](http://www.mgcy.org)

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