



# The Germinator

April 2026



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings and Happy Spring!!

April is the month when all the beauty of Spring begins to set in ~ the budding of trees and flowers, birds chirping, and the green-ing of our lawns. All the signs that the earth is waking up!

I'm happily watching the flowering of my daffodils, and emergence of tulip buds, but also realizing how much clean up needs to be done in my garden areas before I can plant anything new. I know many of you are having the same experience! We are anxious to sow new seeds, do some pruning, divide plants (and pot some for our June Plant Auction??), and just overall enjoy this season of new growth.

Speaking of new growth, our greenhouse is a sea of flats of flowers and vegetables in the early stages of growth. Thanks to all who helped with planting plugs, transporting plants from the Kirtz greenhouse to MASCO, and who are maintaining the watering schedule. This is a huge undertaking in preparation for another successful plant sale in May. If you haven't had a chance to pitch in yet, there will be slots available to volunteer during the Plant Sale. Talk with Bruce Brungard to see how you can help.

I mentioned the June Plant Auction, and while that seems far off, it's not too early to consider what perennials you might like to share as you are tending your gardens now.

Finally, the Board tries to offer a variety of speakers/topics for our membership meetings, but we'd like to hear from you if there is a specific speaker or topic that you think would be of interest to our club. Just email or text me with your suggestions.

May your April be filled with the simple pleasures of gardening.

Enjoy,  
Pat



"In the Spring, at the end of the day, your hands should smell like dirt."

Margaret Atwood

## Meet Norm Cappitte

and learn all about gardening on Youngstown's West Side! Norm carries on his family's gardening legacy and enters our Horticulture Show year after year with the most amazing plant specimens. Norm describes what he and his family grow... and why!

## Meetings Schedule

**Tuesday, April 7, 2026**  
**Austintown Township Park**  
**Stacy Pavilion**

**Board Meeting 5:30pm**  
**All Members Welcome**

**Dinner 6:30pm**

**Membership Meeting 7pm**

### Program:

**Amber Murzda**  
**Susan Emerson Nutter**  
**Reforestation**  
**Guests Welcome**

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"Spring has a way of bringing everything back to life, even a broken heart."

Willie Nelson

"Where flowers bloom so does hope."

Lady Bird Johnson

"May the flowers remind us why the rain was so necessary"

Xan Oku



## Club News

### March Meeting Recap

The Ohio State Extension office in Canfield should be on your list as a go-to resource for your gardens. From soil testing to pest and disease identification and management, the Master Gardener volunteers at the extension office help your gardens grow and flourish each year.



Mike McBride is one of the Master Gardener volunteers in the Plant & Pest clinic. He has been a Master Gardener for over 9 years and likes the fact that he can learn as he helps others. Mike began his love of gardening during college when he worked for a landscaping company.

At our March meeting, Mike explained that the clinic operates as a committee within the Master Gardener program. It's just one of many committees supporting the



extension office's goal of community outreach. In 2021, the clinic was recognized at the state level for program excellence.

The majority of customers are local homeowners, but services are also provided to landscape, tree care companies and pest management companies. Clinic services are free to the public, but soil testing has a lab fee. Mike pointed out that over 500 questions are answered and 150-200 soil tests are processed annually.

Remember the Plant & Pest diagnostic Clinic if you run into any garden issues this year!

### Plant Sale Update

The MASCO greenhouse is once again springing to life! After a major issue when the electric went out during this year's big freeze, many plants that we didn't think would survive actually did rebound. Volunteers have been busy planting, watering and nurturing for our annual Spring Plant Sale.



Volunteers are such a vital part of our organization and make this important fundraiser a success. From the left - Scarlett Chlebus, Judy Lesnansky, Birt Underwood, Sue Sopko, Helene Viano and Barb Arquilla help Bruce Brungard start planting. Thanks also to Lisa Nicklash for planting and

taking the picture! But we can't stop there! Plants need water and volunteers are needed on a daily basis to keep these plants

growing. If you haven't added your name to the watering schedule, get in touch with Bruce Brungard or Mike Banks and offer to help. It doesn't take much time, but is so necessary!



It may look a bit sparse at the moment, but we're expecting a full greenhouse before the start of our sale May 6th.

Volunteers are also needed for the sale, from ringing up sales to helping customers with their purchases. Watch for the sign up sheet, or call Bruce to schedule!



## April In The Garden

April is a key month for preparing, planting, and maintaining gardens in Ohio, with opportunities for early spring flowers, cool-season vegetables, and general garden cleanup.

### Preparing Your Flower Garden

April in Ohio marks the transition from winter to spring, making it ideal for cleaning up garden beds by removing leaves, twigs, and debris accumulated over winter. Check for low spots in lawns and backfill with quality topsoil, reseed thin areas, and apply pre-emergent products to prevent crabgrass and annual weeds. Spring equipment maintenance is essential: sharpen mower blades, check belts, and change oil and filters to ensure readiness for the growing season.

Those first few warm days of spring are perfect for getting back in the groove of outdoor gardening. In the Mahoning Valley, there's never a shortage of April gardening tasks to give you a jump on the upcoming growing season. Bulbs continue to bloom in the April garden, perennials are emerging from the ground and spring flowering shrubs are blooming.



- Clean the beds. Remove



plant debris, leaves and trash. Cut back dead sedum stalks and ornamental grass stems before

new growth emerges. Rake out or remove winter mulch from roses.

- Divide perennials. Dig up and split ornamental grasses, hosta and midsummer or fall blooming perennial flowers.
- Start weeding. Get a jump on those weeds when they're still small enough to tackle.
- Plant summer bulbs. Fill in empty spots in the flower garden with gladiolus, elephant ears and dahlia.
- Edge flowerbeds.

Clean up the edges of flowerbeds and remove encroaching grass. Add mulch if needed.



Veggie gardening in the Mahoning Valley begins with working the soil as soon as possible in the spring. Take advantage of dry weather whenever possible.

- Amend the soil. Work 2 to 4 inches (5-10 cm.) of organic compost into the top 6 to 12 inches (15-30 cm.) of soil.



- Sow spring crops. Plant peas, onions, lettuce, radishes, carrots and beets. Sowing early allows these veggies to mature before summer heat results in bolting.

• Transplant cool-season crops. Broccoli, cauliflower, kale, cabbage and bok choy are a few cool-season crops which can be transplanted into the garden in April.

- Plant perennial veggies. Early spring is the ideal time to place those asparagus crowns, strawberry plants and rhubarb in the perennial garden.

Round out your April gardening to-do list with these special tasks:

- Make or empty compost bins. Make room for fresh organic material by emptying or building a new compost bin.
- Mount a rain gauge. Stop guessing when to water. Place rain gauges in an open area. Avoid mounting gauges under trees or drip lines from roofs.
- Examine tools. Replace broken equipment and sharpen tools.
- Survey trees and shrubs. Look for winter damage or disease while the branches are barren. Trim or treat affected areas.
- Clean ponds and water features. Provide maintenance for pumps and replace filters.
- Plant a tree. Honor National Arbor Day on the last Friday of April by adding one or more trees to your landscape.





## Meet Our Members

### The Guys In The Greenhouses



One of our most successful fundraisers is our Spring Plant Sale, held in the days leading up to Mother's Day, the first week of May at the MASCO greenhouse on South Avenue. The majority of plants are grown at this greenhouse, but we are also able to utilize the greenhouse at Leonard Kirtz school, through the generosity of that school's leadership. Preparation and planning for the sale begins early each year, and becomes more intense as time passes. Deciding what plants will sell well, acquiring seeds, plugs and cuttings as well as the flats and pots to plant them in, determining what fertilizers and soil are needed takes time and determination to balance all of the elements with any environmental issues to create a thriving greenhouse. John Schinker managed the challenge of producing healthy plants for our sale. Now, Bruce Brungard and Mike Banks are donating their time and talents to keep John's legacy alive.

**Bruce Brungard** retired from the General Motors Lordstown stamping plant after 30 years. He has always had a small garden at home and in 2008 he was invited to a meeting of the Men's Garden Club of Youngstown by Joe Alessi, a long-time Club member. Although he was never involved in the greenhouse, he eventually started helping out at Leonard Kirtz. John Schinker would start cuttings of Coleus and Wandering Jews in his basement, Bruce would then transfer the cuttings to the Leonard Kirtz greenhouse, taking care of them until they were then transferred for the sale. Three years ago John said he needed help in the greenhouse, Bruce offered to help and last year John asked him to take over. But the responsibilities extend beyond planting seeds and plugs and overseeing the fertilizer. Bruce also schedules plantings, watering crews and volunteers at the plant sale itself. It's definitely a labor of love, that Bruce says would not be possible without the help of members offering to step up. He's more than grateful for members who volunteer.

Bruce and his wife, Debbie are the proud parents of 2 daughters and grandparents of 8.

**Mike Banks** joined the Men's Garden Club of Youngstown - now GOGY - over 11 years ago and hasn't hesitated to help with a variety of projects. Mike taught in Youngstown City schools for both regular and special education classes from first through tenth grades. He also ran his own residential and commercial painting company for 37 years. Mike also kept a garden at home. Mostly vegetables to start, he says, but now mostly flowers. He likes watching things grow, although he does admit it's sometimes a challenge. He faced a major challenge in the greenhouse this year when there was an electric outage during a cold snap. While it originally seemed many plants were lost, the brugmansia and dahlias fortunately survived with Mike's help. Prior to his involvement in the greenhouse, Mike was chair of Community Projects. He's especially proud of working at Gabba Camp, helping a community that needed help the most. He also helps the club, finding the best deals for purchase, most recently 600 six inch pots for just \$46.

Mike and his wife, Joyce, have 2 daughters and 2 sons, with 6 grandchildren and welcoming another in August.



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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.**

**303 Mushroom Company**  
2623 OH St 303  
Streetsboro, Ohio 44241

**Ace Hardware Canfield**  
413 E. Main St. Canfield,  
Ohio 44406  
330-533-7464

**Amish Market**  
6121 South Ave.  
Boardman, Ohio 44512  
330-248-7034  
[www.theamishmarket.net](http://www.theamishmarket.net)

**Baird Brothers**  
7060 Croy Rd.  
Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330-533-3122  
[info@bairdbrothers.com](mailto:info@bairdbrothers.com)

**Blooming Crazy**  
8277 Market St.  
Youngstown, Ohio 44512  
330-758-8131  
[www.bloomingcrazyflowers.com](http://www.bloomingcrazyflowers.com)

**Bluestone Perennials**  
7211 Middle Ridge Rd.  
Madison, Ohio 44057  
[www.bluestoneperennials.com](http://www.bluestoneperennials.com)

**Bread Chef**  
800 E Western Reserve Rd  
Youngstown, Ohio 44514  
330-729-990

**Burton Floral & Garden**  
13020 Kinsman R.,  
Burton, OH,44021  
[www.burtonfloralandgarden.net](http://www.burtonfloralandgarden.net)

**Century 21 Real Estate/Canfield**  
Tibitha Maheney  
6715 Tippicanoe Rd. #102  
Canfield, OH 44506  
330-501-9085

**Crouse True Value Hardware**  
1178 Market St.  
North Lima, Ohio 44452  
330-549-2144  
[www.truevaluetrains.com](http://www.truevaluetrains.com)

**Davidson's Restaurant** 3636  
Canfield Rd.  
Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330-793-0030

**DJ's Greenhouse**  
1004 East Lake Rd.  
Transfer, Pennsylvania 16154  
724-962-1230  
[www.djsgreenhouse.com](http://www.djsgreenhouse.com)

**Edward Jones/Salem**  
**John Wise**  
2380 Southeast Blvd. Unit B  
Salem, OH 44460  
330-332-1256

**Elliot's Garden Center**  
1283 W. Western Reserve Rd.  
Youngstown, Ohio 44514  
330-758-8889  
[www.elliotsgardencenter.com](http://www.elliotsgardencenter.com)

**From The Heart Floral**  
41 Lisbon St.  
Canfield, OH 44406  
330-702-1792  
[www.fromtheheartfloralandgifts.com](http://www.fromtheheartfloralandgifts.com)

**Gardening-Indoor**  
6951 Southern Blvd.  
Boardman, OH 44512  
330-758-0272

**Heritage Country Store**  
364 Lisbon St.  
Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330-533-5551  
[www.heritagecountrystore.com](http://www.heritagecountrystore.com)

**Jimmy's Italian Specialties**  
3230 Belmont Ave.  
Youngstown, Ohio 44505  
[www.jimmysitalianspecialties.com](http://www.jimmysitalianspecialties.com)

**Kim's Confections**  
7 Lisbon St.  
Canfield, OH 44506  
234-414-7099

**L&M Greenhouse**  
43091 Columbiana-Waterford Rd.  
Columbiana, OH 44408  
330-482-3209

**Mijavec Feed & Supply**  
294 Cheriwood Rd.  
Pulaski, PA 16143  
724-964-8933

**Outdoor Recreation Equipment**  
5316 Market St.  
Boardman, Ohio  
330-782-2004

**Parks Garden Center**  
9010 Youngstown-Salem Rd.  
Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330-533-7278  
[parksgardencenter@aol.com](mailto:parksgardencenter@aol.com)

**Petitti Garden Center**  
5509 South Ave.  
Boardman, Ohio 44512  
330-788-0733  
[www.petittigardencenter.com](http://www.petittigardencenter.com)

**Piccadilly Parlour**  
114 S. Broad St.  
Canfield, OH 44406  
330-533-4749  
[www.piccadillytearoom.com](http://www.piccadillytearoom.com)

**Rumpled Queen**  
387 S. Broadway St.  
Salem, OH 44460  
234-320-4014

**Star Supply**  
875 Mahoning Ave.  
Youngstown, OH 44502  
330-746-2969

**Stone Fruit Coffee Co.**  
8414 Market St.  
Boardman, Ohio 44512  
[www.StoneFruitCoffee.com](http://www.StoneFruitCoffee.com)

**The Marketplace at Creekside**  
3680 N. River Rd.  
Warren, OH 44484  
330-856-1641

**Tractor Supply**  
6225 Mahoning Ave.  
Austintown, Ohio 44515  
330-792-8235

**Village Quilter**  
17 W. Main Street  
Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330-533-0545  
[www.villagequiltscanfield.com](http://www.villagequiltscanfield.com)

**Western Reserve Nursery &  
Garden Center**  
1283 W. Western Reserve Rd.  
Youngstown, OH 44514  
330-758-8889

**Whitehouse Fruit Farms**  
9249 Youngstown-Salem Rd.  
Canfield, Ohio 44406  
330-533-4161  
[www.whitehousefruitfarm.com](http://www.whitehousefruitfarm.com)

**The Wild Herb Company**  
157 S. Main St.  
Columbiana, OH 44408  
330-892-0682  
[www.wilderb.com](http://www.wilderb.com)



# The Germinator

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## Calendar of Events

April 7, 2026	Board Meeting	5:30PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
April 7, 2026	Dinner	6:30PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
April 7, 2026	General Meeting	7:00PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
May 6-9, 2026	Spring Plant Sale	10AM-6PM	MASCO Greenhouse	South Avenue
May 12, 2026	Board Meeting	5:30PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
May 12, 2026	General Meeting	7:00PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
June 2, 2026	Board Meeting	5:30PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
June 2, 2026	Plant Auction	7:00PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
July 7, 2026	Board Meeting	5:30PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
July 7, 2026	General Meeting	7:00PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
August 4, 2026	Board Meeting	5:30PM	Stacey Pavilion	Austintown Park
August 4, 2026	General Meeting	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



% Membership Committee P.O. Box 612  
North Jackson, OH 44451  
or on our website at [www.gg-yo.org](http://www.gg-yo.org)

