



PUBLISHED BY THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

89 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE MAHONING VALLEY AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

President's Message

I wish to thank all those who participated in or helped us prepare for our annual Winter Seminar. Although we received mostly four stars on attendee evaluations, there is always room for improvement. That is how the seminar has evolved into a much anticipated event for so many of our regular guests. It's an ongoing, never ending process.

Special kudos to Tom Arens, our seminar committee chairman. It is sad to say that we came close to disappointing many area gardeners by not having the event this year. The many moving parts of an enterprise such as this, especially booking speakers, need coordination. With no one willing to take the reins, Tom stepped up and did a remarkable job despite having little seminar planning and execution experience.

The crowd was greeted with an excellent array of breakfast pastries, fruit and beverages. The three speakers who made the five presentations were first rate. The Chinese auction could have had more sponsors but there was still plenty to entice bidders. Topping off an excellent lunch were deserts including those made by Linda Arens using Larry Tooker's recipe.

Now we must prepare for our club's next major endeavor, the annual Spring Plant Sale. John Schinker, 330-799-5046, will be needing volunteers soon to prepare inventory at the Mahoning County Career and Technical Center on Palmyra Rd. in Canfield. If you plan to work during school hours, you must pass a background check available at the Mahoning County Sheriff's Office in downtown Youngstown.

As we select our plants for our gardens and beds, think about what you will want to enter at our annual Horticulture Show. Member participation in the event has been anemic in recent years and that has to change. Review past October *Germinator* issues for which plants won the various sections. This will help you decide on plant selection and, hopefully, inspire you to participate. Remember, there are no losers in a flower show, only a lot of people having fun.

Thanks again, and I hope to see you at our April meetings.

Sincerely; *Bruce Brungard*, President

Mahoning County Career & Technical Center

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Mahoning County Career & Technical Center
7300 Palmyra Rd., Canfield, OH**

May 9 - 11, 9am-6pm

Get a jump on Summer with the best plant around!

Here cometh April again. Don't trust anyone, and believe nothing. So technically it's just like any other day.

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Membership Meeting

7pm, Wed., April 3rd

Fellows Riverside Gardens

Speaker: Olivia Dotson

2018 Scholarship Winner

Guests Welcome

Board Meeting

6:30pm, Wed., April 10th

Austintown Library.

All Members Welcome

MetroParks In March

Now accepting g olf leagues, outings & tournaments for 2019.

Green Gardening Class Openings

Family Nature Challenge 1-30

Open Air Painting 2-30

Photo 6

Annual Baby Shower 7

Naturalist Hike 7

City Nature Challenge 11,26-28

Daffodil Weekend & Show 12-14

Eagle Watch 14

Woodcock Courtship 18,19

Birding the Sanctuary 20

Traveling Naturalist 20

Easter Brunch 21

Botanical Mornings 26

Star Party 26

Plant a Seed to Read 27

Wildflowers Tour 27

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Club News

WWW.MGCY.ORG

84 Members • 2 Associates

New Member

Lirpa 'Bud' Phuhlz, 17 Alt. State Rte. 14, North Benton, OH, 44406, stickytrees@sbcglobal.net, 330-483-1153. He emigrated from Poland as a child and, until recently retiring, operated a nursery. He is married (Maria Jean), has 4 children and 6 grandchildren. Bud has endured chronic eating disorders most of his adult life. He found that the cultivation and distilling of, and cooking with certain herb oils have considerably enhanced his appetite. His other gardening interests include growing veggies and tending his fruit orchard. He has suggestions for adding some novel plants to our Spring Plant Sale inventory.

Welcome Aboard!

Rocky Ridge Neighbors & Maple Syrup

Members attending our March membership meeting learned about a West Side neighborhood association involved in a variety of civic activities. Like a step into the past, people know and are concerned for their neighbors, leading to a peaceful, well-maintained area. The area abuts Mill Creek MetroParks, one recipient of funds from its sale of made-from-scratch maple syrup.

Another recipient is the Michael Kusalaba Library where the group meets the last Wednesday of each month. While the group's main source for sap is a grove of 125 sugar maples planted in the Park in 1951, there are 10 young trees at the library. One day these trees will be a learning experience available to many more people.

In addition to the Park and Library, RRN donates to McGuffey Elementary School, Mill Creek Junior Baseball, and the Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens. Founded in 2010, the group shows how participation and pride benefit a far wider community. They also rehab neighborhood houses.

RRN's John Slanina took us back to the early 1600s when Micmac Indians showed European settlers how to tap trees and process the sap. Presidents Washington and Jefferson made an attempt at establishing maple orchards but the project ended in failure. Canada produces 70-80% of worldwide syrup, and fittingly adopted the maple leaf as its national symbol.

John told us that predicting weather patterns is an important factor in determining when to tap the trees. Days with freezing nights and warmer daytime temperatures are ideal. Tapping triggers a defensive mechanism where the tree tries to heal itself by sealing the wounds. Maple sap is only 2% sugar so it has to be

Helping our Valley to Grow Since 1930

processed to reach the 67% standard.

The group processes 400 bottles per year at their recently built Sugar House in the park. Most of the syrup is sold at Fellows and, while the \$15 price is not a bargain, they make a great gift with a wonderful story. And if you're any think like us, you've got to love good maple syrup over the common, high fructose corn sludge.



We Dig It!

The Gardeners of America/Men's Garden Clubs of America will celebrate its 87 years as our umbrella organization with its national convention (theme: *We Dig It!*) July, 15-17. It is fitting that the event will be held in Des Moines, Iowa, near national headquarters in nearby Johnson which is celebrating its golden anniversary. While some events will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites (\$99/night), other activities will be at TGOA/MGOA. Price by June 2nd will be discounted to \$230.

In addition to meetings, workshops and seminars, a tour day will include the Des Moines Botanical Gardens and Terra Park, home of an eight-acre stocked fishing lake, native paintings and accessible play structures. A horticulture show will be held for the third year.

Attendees are encouraged to bring any old organization items including patches, photos or early copies of the national's newsletter, *The Gardener*. Additional details will be in the March-April newsletter and at the TGOA/MGOA website.

Central Great Lakes Region Conference

Our region's conference will be held immediately after the national's and, among the agenda items, will be consideration of awards. The region has an award every category of service, and many deserving members who fit the bill, so members are encouraged to make a nomination.

If you want a fellow member to be recognized... pertinent materials should be brought to the Spring regional meeting, April or emailed to Rodney Toth, rkdahlias@aol.com, Mary Ann Ferguson Rich, mafr43@hotmail.com, or Fred Robinson, firtree@roadrunner.com.

MGCY WINTER SEMINAR

This year's theme was 'A Garden Potpourri – A Mix of Topics from Trees to Turf and in Between', and the event certainly lived up to its billing. The presentations were some of the best we've ever had, not only with the information imparted but delivered in a professional and often humorous way. And it surely helped us fulfill our mission of 'Promoting a better understanding of gardening through education, and to practice horticulture diversity for all segments of the community'.



Truth be told, the D.D. & Velma Davis Education and Visitors Center at Fellows Riverside Gardens has been a bit small for past seminars. With attendance down a smidge this year, one less table helped keep attendees from tripping over each other. Thanks to the three screen setup introduced last year by audio-visual engineer Shaye Cahill and our own Dan Miller, there wasn't a bad seat in the house.

Few people can amp up a crowd better than club emcee Rodney Toth. He kept the mood and agenda flowing like a pro. But one unexpected addition was rock star wannabe Tom Arens and his acoustic six-string performing Pete Seeger's 'Garden Song'. We weren't able to find the lyrics, but did locate a comical version of a song with the same name by Arlo Guthrie.



*Slug by slug, weed by weed,
Boy this garden's got me p'd.
All the insects come to feed,
On my tomato plants.*

*Sunburnt face, skinned up knees,
The kitchen's chocked with zucchinis.
I'm shopping at the A&P's,
Next time I get the chance.*

*Old crow watching from a tree,
He's got his hungry eye on me.
In my garden I'm as free,
As that feathered thief up there.*

Seminar Speakers

With the exception of one presentation, we won't go into much detail about their content. First, because they involved explanations addressing displayed photos. Second, because you should have been there.

Louis 'The Plant Geek' Raymond first displayed an interest in horticulture as a preschooler 'borrowing' geraniums from a nearby garden. After earning college degrees in chemistry, piano, and voice which lead to a successful career as an opera singer, he opted for a career in landscape design.



His largely residential focus has served clientele from Connecticut to California, Canada to the Caribbean, and his designs have appeared in *Good Housekeeping*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*. He gave three informative and, at times, hilarious presentations.

From Sow's Ears to Silk Purses was a before-and-after display of his projects that turned common and even ugly properties into show places. In addition to beautifying the property, most involved providing privacy for residences surrounded by other homes.

Fun Horticulture from my Garden to Yours gave us ideas for our own landscapes by showing how he transformed his own property in Connecticut.

Potted: Gardening on the Edge showed us how to avoid a lot of physical toil with container gardening.

Irvin Etienne is the Horticulture Display Coordinator at The Garden: Newfields, a 152 acre landscape wonder in Indianapolis. This includes: The Ravine Garden which water features 19,000 bulbs, trees, perennials and shrubs; the Formal Garden with roses, perennials, annuals, evergreens and architectural features; and the Nonies Garden that graces the entrance to the Indianapolis Museum of Art.



Irvin helps the horticulturists with plant selection and garden design while designing and maintaining his own areas. He has a particular fascination with tropical species which provide the eye-popping, attention-getting color that makes gardening worthwhile.

Continued on pg. 4

Winter Seminar continued;

Carmen Miranda in the Midwest is a design method using colors exhibited in tropicals and annuals.

Scott Zanon, an OSU grad in agronomy, is the author of *Desirable Trees in the Midwest* and *Landscaping with Trees in the Midwest*. A prolific garden publications writer and a much sought-after speaker, Scott received The Garden Writers Assn. Silver Award in 2015 for his latest book. He belongs to numerous national and Columbus area horticultural organizations.



Favorite Midwest Trees & Turf Tips listed small (30 ft. or less), medium (30-50 ft.), and large (over 50 ft.) trees he feels are best for our region. Scott's presentation also included advice for healthy lawns:

Use a sharp, mulching mower blade, cut to no less than 3" and in alternating patterns.

Fertilize 4 times a year: March 1-15 with crab grass pre-emergent; May 15-30 for broad leaf weed control and Grub-X; Sept. 1st with straight fertilizer; and Nov. 1-15 with high nitrogen.

Thanks For Your Participation

Tom Arens was very pleased with results of the seminar he chaired. In addition to the dedication of Larry Tooker, Dan Miller and Bob McGowan, members provided support by securing sponsors, venue setup, captaining tables and in other areas.



Richard States gave Chinese auction participants a chance to win one of his beautiful photographs, and a collage of his TGOA/MGCA Photo Sweepstakes entries graced the seminar program. We must also



recognize Linda Arens for helping with setup, working the Chinese auction and keeping her husband sane.

Nice to have a woman's touch.

Orchids – Jewels of Winter

Winter Seminar attendees were not only treated to great speakers and good food, but received two eye-popping bonuses at Fellows Riverside Gardens' Davis Center. They had to be impressed by the talent exhibited by local photographers who entered the months-long Nature Photography exhibit.

Another long term attraction is the orchids local growers lent to Fellows' *Jewels of Winter' display*. With a local grocery chain selling orchids for



Valentine's Day, many readers who received one as a gift might like to know how to care for these colorful wonders. Orchids (*Orchidaceae*) are one of the two largest families of flowering plants with 28,000 recog-



nized species encompassing 6-11% of all seed plants.

For most orchids, the most important requirement is 6-8 hrs. of unobstructed sunlight streaming through a south facing window. Medium-high light varieties such as *phragmipediums*, *oncidiums* and *dendrobiums* grow best in bright areas but not directly sunny. Medium-low light is appropriate for *phalaenopsis* (moth orchids – easiest to grow). Low light varieties prefer northern exposure, filtered light.

Orchids can be generally classified according to temperature needs. By knowing the high-low range of its intended location, you can choose a suitable variety accordingly. Most varieties are tropical so humidity is important. Daily misting may be necessary.

Bark mix is the normal medium and soaking every particle is the watering goal. Submerge the plant for 10-15 minutes then let it drain. They are not heavy feeders so, at the most, fertilize at half strength every other watering. Flush them periodically to remove excess fertilizer. *Source: www.bhg.com*



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

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calendar of events



- April 5 General Meeting FRG 7:00 pm
- April 12 Board Meeting APL 6:30 pm
- May 1 General Meeting FRG 7:00 pm
- May 8 Board Meeting APL 6:30 pm
- May 9-11 Spring Plant Sale MCCTC 9:00 am - 6:00 pm
- June 5 General Mtg/Plant Auction Boardman Park 6/7:00 pm
- June 12 Board Meeting APL 6:30 pm

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***



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 123 McKinley Way
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or on our website at www.mgcy.org

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