

The Germinator



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 hope that your minds, bodies and gardens are doing well. While the virus is showing no signs of abating, we can still take appropriate safeguards to decrease our risk of contracting it. We've had recent board meetings and a membership meeting, and attendees wore masks, and maintained a social distance.

The big news emerging from a board meeting on 7-15-20 is that the club will be awarding a free year's membership to our first female member: Lynn Zocolo. What a way to acknowledge the 90th anniversary of the club's founding! Many of you may know Lynn as a long-time friend of the club and a noted local gardening educator. She was our speaker at the July membership meeting; and spoke about her many years of work with youth in the "veggie garden" project. She is an energetic, enthusiastic and knowledgeable person-- just the kind of new member we are looking for. We will officially award her membership at our August meeting.

Speaking of the August membership meeting, it will be held at the Stacey Pavilion at Austintown Township Park on 8-12-20, at 7pm. In lieu of our Horticultural Show, we will have what I refer to as a "Gardeners Pride" show. I am asking each member that attends, to bring something from your garden or home that you are proud of. This could be a potted plant or a cutting from an in-the-ground plant. There will be no judging or awards, just an opportunity to educate and brag.

I encourage as many members as possible to attend our next meeting. One of the board members will be calling to personally invite each of you. Even though our activities have been scaled down this year and for that matter, for the indefinite future, we can still carry on as a club. We can discover new ways to fulfill our mission, safely and prudently.

*Hope to see you soon,
Tom Atkins*

JOSEPH LEVY 1940-2020



**REST IN PEACE,
DEAR BROTHER**

August Members Meeting

*7pm, Wednesday, Aug. 12th
Stacey Pavilion*

*Austintown Township Park
Kirk Rd. btn Rt. 46 & Turner
Bring a garden item!*

All Guests Welcome

August Board Meeting

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

Mill Creek MetroParks

August Events

All indoor activities closed until at least September 1st. Most outdoor facilities are open. For more info, go to millcreekmetroparks.org



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St. Patrick's Community Garden

In 2006, club member Ted Vagas established the St. Patrick Parish of Youngstown Community Garden on several vacant lots on Cleveland Ave. With the blessing of Fr. Edward Noga, St. Pat's pastor for 34 years, gardening space and education would be provided for neighbors, school families and parishioners. It's unofficially known as the *The Garden Of Weedin'*.

Today, twenty adults learn to grow fresh produce in twenty raised beds and four ground plots of various



sizes. There is also a Mahoning County 4-H group that comes in periodically to help out and tend to their own projects, one of which is a butterfly/pollinator garden with an angel center piece.



In addition to the growing areas, there is a hoop house for starting and caring for young plants; a four box



bee hive setup providing honey that helps finance the project; and a one acre area, the *Corn Field of Dreams*, where a 20 apple tree orchard also provides funds. Despite the name, no corn was grown there this year.



There is also a beautifully landscaped walking area with benches on the Kenmore St. side of the parish where walking tours are done periodically by doctors and horticulturalists.



Jeff McClain oversees the activities and enjoys the full support of new pastor Fr. Kevin Peters who is also in charge of another Youngstown parish. He strongly urges participating adults to water and weed their individual plots but will help out during dry, hot weather. He recently bought two 100 ft. aluminum hoses that are light, durable and don't kink.

At its June meeting, our Board of Gardeners voted to provide \$600 for hoop house repair and the purchase of gardening soil for new raised beds. Jeff said he will have a sign made and placed in the garden thanking the Men's Garden Club of Youngstown's for its donation.

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 mgcgerminator@gmail.com if you know of any member who may be having problems.



July Meeting & Youth Gardening

With the Corona virus ebbing but still uncontained, it was heartening that our club was able to have its first membership meeting in months at the Austintown Township Park on July 8th. Attendance was better than expected and we got a great presentation by Lynn Zocolo, a long-time Millcreek MetroParks educator.



Among the many hats Lynn has worn at MetroParks, she's been in charge of the park's Veggie Garden Program for youth age 8 through high school for 18 years. The hands-on, 2 year, program for approximately 20 children begins in March and ends in September. Due to the virus, the program was temporarily suspended in April.

Classes include basic gardening skills, cooking and veggie activities with an emphasis on having good clean fun while getting hands dirty. Most meetings include classwork on such subjects as plant, seed and insect identification. Each participant is assigned a 10x15 ft. bed for growing plants. Assisting in their education are veterans of the program, or the "Green Thumbs", some as old as 21.



Lynn and the Veggie Program both share a long history with the Mens' Garden Club of Youngstown. She was one of the first to receive our club's scholarship, and has assisted with our Spring Plant Sales and Winter Seminars. Many of our members including John Schinker, Larry Whetson, Joe Alessi, Bill Carney, Rodney Toth and Bob Schulick have helped mentor Veggie participants. Our club has also donated materials for a tool shed, fencing, beds and seeds.

Lynn says that seeing the enthusiasm expressed by the children reminds many of us why we began gardening in the first place. This was one of several presentations she had done for our club and they have always left us happier and more knowledgeable for the experience. She is a very special lady.

Thanks, Lynn.

Japanese Beetle Traps

This article would probably have been better suited for July because the first of that month, give or take degree days, usually marks several important times for gardeners. Soft neck garlic is ready to harvest, and mums and evergreen shrubs should be trimmed. It also marks the emergence of Japanese beetles (*Popillia japonica*). And if local anecdotal evidence is any indication, this year's invasion is larger than normal.

Gardenmyths.com

recently posted a critique on the effectiveness of beetle traps that use a chemical lure where the bugs check in but never check out. The lure can contain several chemicals, one a female sex hormone that attracts males. Others mimic the odors of one of their favorite foods, dead flowers, that attract both sexes. The catch bag quickly fills and one can assume a massive orgy ensues. The question is what effect traps have on short and long-term populations.



While most studies show that the beetles can be lured from at least a half mile away, climate and wind conditions usually limit attraction to a 250 ft. radius. In most urban settings, this means your immediate neighbors in all directions.

Research shows that traps snare about 75% of the invaders with the remainder munching on your plants. And if the traps are within 30ft. of targeted plants, the damage will likely increase. The post recommends a placement of at least 100ft. away. Spillover can occur when the trap can no longer accommodate new arrivals and some enterprising gardeners have replaced the catch receptacle with a 32gal. garbage bag.

The question is whether deploying traps is a good idea. They work best when established numbers are low preventing the pests from getting a foothold. Little is accomplished when large infestation are the norm. Also, they don't work well in normal-sized urban yards unless everyone in the neighborhood employs them and empties them on a regular basis. You might have better luck herding cats.

Replies to the post included luring robins and starlings to the yard, and the use Milky Spore to gardens and beds in spring and fall.

Deterring Raccoons From Gardens

Fruit and veggies are ripening so we can expect more visits from these masked bandits who are smart, agile and excellent climbers. The omnivorous pests will eat anything from carrion to fruit so everything from apples to zucchini is fair game, and gardens present an easy food source. This is particularly true in locations with wooded and water structure nearby.

Raccoons are nocturnal so their presence is most easily determined by their tracks and the damage they cause. Dug up lawns and ransacked compost piles may indicate they are searching for grubs and insects. Empty bird feeders, toppled blackberry vines, and bent corn stalks, tomato and pepper plants with half-eaten fruit are probably the result of raiding raccoons.



Deterrence begins with removing food sources like pet food and bird seed, and garbage should be kept inside or bins having locking lids. Create a barrier using blood meal, wood ashes, dog or human hair, or a 50/50 mixture of ground garlic and chili powder around the garden. Some gardeners find pinwheels and streamers helpful.



Two-wire electrified fencing with one wire 4-6 inches above the ground and the other at 12 inches have proven to be an effective deterrent. Motion activated water sprayers or bright flood lights as well as a timer-activated radio tuned to a rock station should also be considered.

Gardeners who may be squeamish about trapping raccoons, especially when the result may mean euthanasia, should remember that these 'rabies vectors' pose a danger to people and pets. And there is probably many more where they came from. Traps can be baited with pet food, sunflower seeds or chicken scraps. If one can be assured that beneficial or domestic animals will not be harmed, a mixture of 'fly bait' and sugar-based soda like Coke or Pepsi is a very effective poison.

Ohio law makes it illegal to relocate trapped raccoons anywhere within the state. The animal must be released on the trap location within 24 hours or euthanized. In Pennsylvania, the law is more ambiguous. Residents there who trap raccoons, skunks or other animals deemed to be 'rabies vectors' must consider if the release area will cause a risk to people. Euthanizing may be the best choice because releasing these potentially dangerous animals poses a risk to the trapper as well as people and domestic animals over a wide area.

How Hot Is It?

It's so hot farmers are feeding their chickens crushed ice to keep them from laying hard-boiled eggs.

It's so hot the hens are picking up worms with pot holders.

It's so hot that I miss complaining about cold weather.

It's so hot that I now know what's in store for me when I die.



Cold weather is great because you can add layers to feel comfy. With the heat, you can only take off so much before it becomes illegal.

Tomato Plant Problem

One of our members started his plants from seed indoors and all was well when they were transplanted outside in mid-May. He has been growing the same 5 varieties provided by friends for years but lost track of their names. Some might have been heirlooms but its impossible to tell.

After a few weeks outside, the new top vegetation began to curl. As of mid-July, the plants run from thin and scraggly to small and bushy with very few if any



flowers. While his next door neighbor has his lawn sprayed, the member doubts that herbicide could be the problem because some of the affected plants are a good distance from the neighbor's yard.

When shown the plants, the owner of a noted local nursery thought it might be a mite infestation while one of our scholarship[w]inners couldn't help. If anyone has an idea, email mncygerminator@gmail.com.

The Germinator

August
2020

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

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

Baird Brothers

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330-533-3122
info@bairdbrothers.com

Bernard Daniels Lumber

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Garden Artisans

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www.gardenartisans.com

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Green Team

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www.kushners.com

Lou's Beer & Wine Cellar

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Youngstown, Ohio 44515
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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

Market St.
Boardman, Ohio
330-782-2004

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Canfield, Ohio 44406
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330-629-2473
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August 2020



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

www.mgcy.org



National Bee Day
August 15th

calendar of events



August 12th..... Membership Meeting..... 7 PM..... Austintown Twsp. Park
August 19th..... Board Meeting..... 7 PM..... Austintown Twsp. Park
Sept 2nd (TBA) Membership Meeting..... 7PM..... Fellows Riverside Gardens
Sept 9th (TBA) Board Meeting..... 6:30PM..... Austintown Public Library

The following events have been cancelled:

Steak Fry (August 5th), Scrapper's Game (August 6th or 13th), Horticulture Setup (Aug. 21st) and Show (Aug. 22-23), and Canfield Fair (September 2-7)

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

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