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Blades and Blooms

Master Gardeners of Clark County Volume18 Number 04 April 11

President's Message:

I couldn't hold off any longer. This weekend I broke down and went to a couple of our local greenhouses. Just looking at those smiling pansy faces makes you happy with their big and pretty faces. Of course, I had to look at the perennials. I saw a few new heuchera and a few new irises.

In spite of the cold winter we had, it looks like most of my garden made it and some even multiplied, which is always great for our plant sale. I noticed my witch hazel is in bloom. I am so glad I took the time to plant lots of bulbs last fall as the crocuses are a real joy and the tiny little irises are so colorful. I am also glad that I spent the time building my square foot garden last fall as I planted some early seeds this weekend. I am interested to see if all goes as promoted with the soil recipe.

Master Gardeners have a few busy months ahead of us. Garden cleanup is always exciting. New this year, the perennial gardens will be updated. Also, the garden by the barn will be removed to make way for a porch structure to provide shade for our guests. Our herb gardens are realigned to get ready for our new brick paths. Carolyn had the irrigation people out to fix the system by the field trials so we won't have a swamp there this year. Also, the vegetable garden will be getting drain pipe put in so they won't have a lake in their garden. In addition, our main entrance will be getting a new look. Looks like something for everyone.

Thanks to all who gave of their time to contact our legislators. You can never say too much about OSU Extension and all the good things OSU Extension does for our community (including Master Gardeners). We are a great group and we might as well publicize it.

I have had a couple questions about my sheep comments and how it relates to gardening. Well, I will try to connect some dots by providing some information and history. "During World War I, the head White House groundskeeper and several other gardeners left for military service. Rather than hiring replacements or doing the work himself, President Woodrow Wilson came up with what he considered a brilliant idea. He ordered that a herd of sheep be brought to the White House to graze on the grass. Not only did the sheep keep the grass short at low cost to taxpayers, but their wool was shorn and sold. Sales of the White House wool raised more than $100,000, which was donated to the Red Cross."* How about that! I have a picture, I'll see if Sydney can include it. (See page 7) And no, I wasn't alive then.

Don't forget to come and bring your friends to the Garden Fling on April 2.

Also, remind everyone that we are having our plant sale on May 7. We have some really great plants and some really good deals. Also, don't forget to save your garden related items for our barn sale.

See you on our field trip, in the garden, in the gorge, but most certainly at the Garden Fling. Happy Spring.

Ruth Ann Rahim

*Strange and Fascinating Fact About the Presidents, Charles Reichblum, 2004

Pam's Posies

Finally, the calendar says April – now if only the weather would catch on. As I write this at the end of March, it's cold, snowy, and I still haven't planted anything in the garden. That makes me madder than anything else. At least I was able to get the garden tilled.

We have a facebook page for Master Gardeners of Clark County! Join us and help promote our program. We need you to participate and post comments about your garden, what you are seeing in bloom in the landscape, and other MGV related items! It's not hard, just ask Susie Anderson. Susie was one of those who went kicking and screaming and now finds it fantastic as she keeps up with her family and long-distance grandchildren.

There is also an OSUE MGV state facebook page, search for Ohio Master Gardener Volunteers and "LIKE" us! We can also post our events to this site as well.

Don't forget our *Inclement Weather* policy. If there is any suspicion that we might cancel an outdoor event, call the office to be sure. If the office is closed, we will leave a message on the recorder about the event (a Saturday or evening event). Call first before going to the event!

The Buckeye Yard and Garden Line conference calls begin on the first Tuesday in April. Don't forget to use this resource to help in your garden as well as on the HelpLine. This is an outstanding up-to-the minute resource that provides great information. Be sure to use the online version for color photos and more details about an issue.

Hopefully, we can have our first garden cleanup on April 6. Remember, the garden cleanup efforts are geared to the BIG PICTURE or the entire garden. This day is not meant to be used to work on individual gardens or areas that you have signed up to maintain. This doesn't mean that we won't help in individual gardens. Garden chairs need to get Carolyn any priorities that they have for their particular garden the week before the scheduled cleanup. She and Kathy will let volunteers who come to the cleanup know what needs to be accomplished.

In addition, if you would like to come to the garden cleanup and aren't quite up to bending and digging, or doing some of the more difficult work, please don't let that stop you from coming. There are other things that you might be able to work on and still contribute to the efforts. For instance, what would we do without Carlene providing our energy to work!

Remember, we spent a great deal of money, time and effort on marketing our gardens – we need to keep them looking great all summer!

Thanks for all you do for this program. Thanks to your efforts, the county has given us level funding for 2011. We are still going to be short around $25,000.00 but are looking at all of possibilities of raising fees, cutting travel, supplies, etc. At least we are okay for now. Waiting to hear about state and federal budgets.

Pam

Pamela J. Bennett
State Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator
Extension Educator, Horticulture
Ohio State University Extension

Jo's Notes

Garden Tour Guide Training

If you are interested in being a tour guide for the Gateway Learning Gardens, there will be training on April 25 at 1:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Room & Gateway Learning Gardens.

Notice

For your information, the Horticulture Department has montly meetings the first Monday of each month except July & August at 8:30 a.m. Then on the same day at 10:00 a.m. our OSU Extension has their monthly Office Conference meeting. If you need us, please contact us before 8:30 a.m. or after lunch. Thank you.

Reminder: All fees for recertification, programs, events, etc. that are sponsored by the Master Gardeners of Clark County need to be payable to Master Gardeners of Clark County and mailed to Master Gardeners of Clark County, PO Box 158, Springfield, OH 45501-0158. OSU Extension cannot accept any checks for the Master Gardeners. Thank you.

Carolyn's Co

Garden Clean-Up

Hope to see all of you in t
on Wednesday, April 6 at 9:(
a.m. We have a lot of clean
do for opening the gardens si
March was a wash out. Gar
chairs please send me reques
for what you need done in yc
areas. High priorities will be
cutting grasses and dead foliage that was left for winter interest and of course there will always be the weeds. Placing some of your garden art back out in the garden as the barn is crowded.

I have fertilizer if any of you have your beds clean and want to use it. If you need any other supplies for your garden, give me your order and we will do one large order to save some money.

Also I will be ordering mulch for the paths from Springfield Township, if you want better mulch give me the bag count you will need and I will place the order.

Remember the more hands we have working the more work we get done in a short amount of time.

Job Opening

Master Gardeners are seeking an employee for the summer growing season to work in the Gateway Learning Gardens. Requirements: strong (able to lift 50 lbs.), some garden experience, and a good work ethic. Must be available from May 16, 2011 until end of August. Forty (40) hour work weeks. Knowledge of plants a plus but not a requirement. Application due by April 15, 2011.

Contact Jo Brown at 937-521-3860 for an application or just stop in at the office.

America in Bloom

Here's a chance to earn volunteer hours on April 16 in Springfield helping supervise a crew of Wittenberg students weeding and cleaning flowerbeds to spruce up the city. The beds are located at the southern gateway and in the Welcome to Springfield bed across from the former South High School. A kick-off luncheon is being held at 11:30 a.m. at the Shouvlin Center before sending everybody out to work and you are invited to attend if you like. Vans will transport the students to work areas and you can meet them there. You will supervise the students and make sure they weed and don't remove perennials, prune roses, and cut back grasses. We will have more than one supervisor at each location.

Need about 10-15 able bodied volunteers to help get our city ready for summer. Please join this effort to spruce up Springfield. Please call Carolyn (937.521.3860) and volunteer and if you want to go to lunch or not.

Envisioning a Greener Springfield

A volunteer opportunity available to Master Gardeners this spring is an event occurring on April 30 at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Springfield. This is a fair with booth space for vendors. These vendors will be showcasing energy conserving products and services for home owners and commercial consumers through out the area. Master Gardeners will have a booth showcasing Why Trees Matter, Benefits of Trees, and our tree survey and the information provided to the city. We will also have Integrated Pest Management information available. There will be handouts on both topics on display. I am looking for Master Gardeners who could field questions from the visitors at our display.

We will have a morning shift (10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and an afternoon shift (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.) with three volunteers to a shift. Volunteer hours are awarded for this project and you have the opportunity to do community service. Interested? Call Carolyn 937.521-3860.

Announcements

Cincinnati Flower Show Cancelled.
The show this year has been cancelled to give the sponsors time to revamp the program.
2012 Show is still a go.

Barn Clean-up

Thanks to the barn clean-up crew for an excellent job; Kathy McConkey, Natheta Mercer, Ruth Ann Rahim, Cindy Schneider, Ed Jenkins and Fred Miller. We will try to keep it that way for as long as we can. Put tools away clean and don't leave garden debris in the barn. Special thanks to Carlene Grassle who heard your plea for food at the March General Meeting and responded with breakfast and a delicious lunch. A big thanks to all, and we did not throw away any items belonging to any committees.
Carolyn Allen

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PERENNIAL PLANT & BARN SALE (PP&B)

The sale is coming up – May 7th, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.! We have started putting together a great selection of plants for the sale. If you have plants that you would like to donate, drop off day is Friday, May 6th. I have pots, tags, potting soil available at the greenhouse if you need them. I will also have them available at the April clean-up and the other PP & B work days (April 6, 27, May 2, 4, & 6th - listed in your MGV Calendar).

LaDonna is organizing the Barn Sale part. We will have a spot in the barn set up for donations by April 13th. If you have any garden items, home décor "garden theme" items, garden books, tools, clothing, etc. that you would like to donate for this fundraiser, you will be able to drop them off after this date and we will have a place to store them until the sale.

Flyers and bookmarks advertising the "Perennial Plant & Barn Sale" will be available at the Garden Fling and at the April clean-up at OSU Extension office. Please pick up a sign and some of the handouts to distribute for the sale. We are looking forward to this being a GREAT fundraiser!! Any ideas, or suggestions, please call me – 937-828-1589 or email me: mkh1324@aol.com.
Marilyn Hinderer

PERRENIAL COMMITTEE

We are anxiously waiting for the ground to dry enough to allow our volunteers to get started on the arbor expansion. Meanwhile, anyone who would like to come out on nicer days to do some cutting back of dead vegetation and weeding along the edges of the beds is more than welcome to do so. Until it gets dryer, we should stay on the grass. If in doubt, do the "crumb test" or call and ask Kathy or Carolyn if it's fit. Also, we have done some of the ordering of plants for the shady area along the arbor. These plants should be coming in around mid-April. Get ready for some busy times!
Kathy McConkey & Dot Burkholder

GARDEN FLING

I wanted to remind you all once more that the Garden Fling is *Saturday, April 2nd from 8:30-3:00* at Kenton Ridge High School on 4444 Middle Urbana Road, Springfield. We will need help on *Friday, April 1st from 3-5* to get set-up for the Fling. We will need *help from 7:30-8:30 a.m. g*etting the vendors in and set-up on *Saturday, April 2nd*. Many of you are scheduled to work on Saturday so please be there for your appointed times so no one gets left holding the bag all day. I am praying for good weather and a great turn out and for April 3rd when it will be all over. Master Gardeners can get work hours as well as advance credit from the classes. I hope to see you there either as a worker or as a supporter of the group. Kenton Ridge Booster Club will have breakfast items and will provide a lunch so please support them. Thanks again for all of you who have worked so hard to get this Garden Fling arranged and thanks to all who will set-up and work.

Jean Rickards, 399.5496

FAIR FLOWER SHOW

The Fair Flower Show Committee will meet on Friday, April 8, at 9 a.m. at Paneras. Come join us.
Polly Cooper, committee co-chair 390-2292

HELPLINE

We start HelpLine this month. April and May are easy months for HelpLine. There are only a few phone calls and most of the calls are how to do or when to do something. These are easy months to earn hours, be dry, clean, and sitting down while working. So give me a call for easy hours and bring a friend. I am usually there every day along with Kathy to help get you started and help with any questions and info needed.

Mondays		Thursdays	
Apr. 4	Lola Walston	Apr. 7	Deb Dean
Apr. 11	Open	Apr. 14	Open
Apr. 18	Lola Walston	Apr. 21	Open
Apr. 25	Open	Apr. 28	Open

Please call to fill these open spots.
Rick McKinstry 937-324-5344

Remember: A perfect spring day is when the sun is shinning, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.

WAY TO GROW (WTG) and VICTORY GARDEN (VC) REPORT

We had our first meeting of the year that went quite well. If anyone is confused about the program, the Victory Garden, at the OSU Extension is part of the WTG Community Garden program. The WTG Program has 25 gardens that we service with plants, seeds, and advice.

Most of them grow for their own use. The Victory Garden, along with Benjamin Steel and GFS Service, grow and give all of the produce back to the community through the Second Harvest Food Bank, Springfield.

This year we have added 5 new gardens to the WTG program and will continue with the Victory Garden. We also will be seeding our VG and WTG plants at the greenhouse on the Wittenberg campus. If anyone is interested in helping with the VG and WTG program, we will need help seeding, potting up, and delivering the plants. The Victory Garden will be on hold until Clark Soil and Water Conservation District survey the land and the drainage is installed. Hopefully this project will be completed before tilling and planting need to take place. At that time we will need help with preparing the VG and planting, weeding, and harvest.

Since the weather plays a large part in what we do, our help needed schedule is not on a calendar schedule. Look for e-mails or send me your e-mail address and you will be notified of dates and times. We will have another meeting when we are closer to preparing the VG.

Thanks for all that you do to help

Pam Thullen and Susie Broidy

FUND RAISING

We currently have sold 5 large bricks and 22 small bricks, which is great for just MGV orders. The class of 2006 is still in the lead. All of the brick brochures have been mailed. We currently are out of brochures, but plan to order more if all goes well. The brick pathway has begun. I have everything for the bricks on a spreadsheet, so if you would like something changed, let me know soon as the bricks will soon be inscribed.

Thanks to all who came to Applebee's for lunch and dinner for our fundraiser.

We have ordered many plants at great prices to sell at the plant sale. In addition, please start potting up those plants you would like to donate. Now is the ideal time to get them going and looking great for the sale. Make them look like a plant you would buy!

Ruth Ann Rahim

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Following is the list of Master Gardeners who have volunteered to help provide refreshments for the next five (5) General Business Meetings:

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

Debbie Dean — Kathy Eckell
Kathy McConkey — Terry Reid

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Sandi Birt — Natheta Mercer
Cindy Gootee — LaDonna Lowe

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Jean Rickards — Ed Wozniak
Peggie Elsnau — Sherilyn Johns
Bill Edwards

Wednesday, November 9, 2011

Ed Jenkins — Marcia Roberts
Nancy Vanderglas

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

Lola Walston — Terry Reid
Marilyn Hinderer

Here are a few suggestions: Attendance at our meetings now averages between 50-60 people. To provide enough "snacks" for this "hungry horde," we need six (6) volunteers for each meeting, so I am hoping for some additional phone calls on my land phone answering machine (937.399.4435) offering to help with one of the above dates. Please leave a message and I will return your phone call.

When you sign up to provide food, this also means preparing hot coffee and other beverage choices plus condiments, setting up a table in the Atrium area for the foods, perhaps selecting one person to coordinate everything, and cleaning up afterwards returning the unused cups, plates, etc. to their proper places in the kitchen and closet areas.

Social time begins at 6:00 p.m. Allow about 30 minutes prior to that for set-up. Thank you for any help you can provide. If you have any questions, please call me at 937.399.4435.

Carlene Grassle, Social Chairwoman

GREENHOUSE

I would like to thank everyone who came to the greenhouse on a rainy Tuesday to plant petunias in the city baskets. Every year we have a good time and turn out and this year was no exception. I think this year holds the record for getting them done quickly - about an hour. You guys are amazing!

The baskets were beautiful last year. I hope this holds true for this year, as well. The seedlings planted in February are up too and some of them have been transplanted already. We have just received a delivery of 50 varieties of plugs from Proven Winners. They were planted up into 4" pots and look great! Always fun to see what will be in the field trials every year.

If you haven't seen the greenhouse that we share with NTPRD please come down and see our operation. It's filling up with wonderful smells and beautiful colors. The gates are open from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m

Thanks,

Sally Day and Marilyn Hinderer

RAIN GARDEN COMMITTEE

The next Rain Garden Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 26, 2011 from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at OSU Extension in the Small Conference Room.

Lola Walston

GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP

We talked about becoming involved in the Great American Cleanup at the last general meeting. The date we have decided to work is April 30, 2011 starting at 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. with a free lunch afterwards for those that want to stay. This is the main day of the cleanup, the target area is 28 blocks of downtown. Many volunteers are needed. So far, about 12 Master gardeners have indicated that they are willing to help . It will involve some hard work, but very fulfilling work. Just think how nice it will be to see downtown Springfield litter free! If this goes well, we can then sign up for another area . It is always fun to work together. Please call me at 937-325-5202 or e-mail me at emnm1960@earthlink.net.

We do need to let Clark County Waste Management know how many are coming so they have enough supplies & food for everyone. They will supply gloves, bags and litter grabbers. I need to contact them by April 22 with the number of people coming and if you are staying to eat. Family members and friends are also welcome to join us.

So please come, join the fun!

Natheta Mercer

UTZINGER GARDENS

Spring is finally upon us! Our first clean up date for Utzinger Garden is approaching too. Save the date of Wednesday, April 27 from 9 to noon. If the weather is questionable, please check your email before leaving home. I will post something early if we need to cancel.

We have ordered some new plants and hopefully those will be ready to brighten up some of our areas. We have two new garden chairs this year. Deb Dean has been working hard to revamp the former raised vegetable bed and increase seating area for our guests. Joining Deb in this endeavor, let's welcome Donna Loney and Rosalind Mader. Phil Young will be working wonders in the orchard area. He will be donating some of his heirloom blackberries to replace the red raspberries.

Our early chores will be to cut back any grasses and perennials that were left last fall. I think that is only a few. We will need to remove the anemone in all areas to prep for planting in May. We will also have the raspberries to remove from the raised bed and I will have compost to amend those beds. Hope to see everyone on the 27th.

Cindy Schneider

GATEWAY LEARNING GARDENS COMMITTEE

We met in March and talked with our landscape architect (LA) about an entrance to the garden and he is recommending a few banners that would be on standards that could be used to draw people to the back of the garden. I am waiting to hear back from the sign company on a design and we have an ad hoc committee who are interested in helping to design the banner. We have approval from the Corporate Park committee to install these signs. Hopefully we can get this done before the Gateway Garden Jubilee.

In addition, Eric, the LA, is going to update our master plan to reflect the property that was purchased for the power station as well as leaving the field trials where they are for now. He also added a few rain gardens to the design in order to incorporate this issue into our gardens. Habitat Creations is working on the installation of the brick paver project in the herb garden. This is very exciting as this will make this area more accessible to wheelchairs. In addition, if you haven't purchased your brick make sure you do so for the spring planting that will occur soon.

Pam Bennett

HERB COMMITTEE

The Herb Copmmittee will have a clean up on Thursday, April 28, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.
Peggie Elsnau and Natheta Mercer

GATEWAY GARDEN JUBILEE

The first meeting for the GGJ (Aug. 6, 2011) will be Tues. April 12 from 1-3 at OSU Extension. At this first planning meeting ALL are invited to attend, especially garden chairs. We will be looking for ideas to offer something new and exciting at the GGJ along with our traditional programing. Hope to see you on the 12th.
Lois O'Keefe and Janet Heater

PLANT OF THE MONTH:

RHUBARB
Rheum (RAY-um)

You may be surprised that I'm writing about a vegetable this month. Actually, I'm a little surprised myself. I don't think I've ever written about a vegetable. Well, it is a perennial. Maybe it's because I came across some really good rhubarb recipes and I'm waiting for my rhubarb to be ready to eat. Lots of people either love or hate rhubarb. If you hate it, maybe I'll change your mind.

Rhubarb can be a giant of a plant with huge, often wrinkled leaves and tall branching flower stalks with white to pink flowers. This applies not only to the common garden rhubarb, but also to the strictly ornamental species. You can even cut the tight rose-color flower bud and use it in a bouguet for a structural effect. The plant can create quite a splash in a border and is a stand alone plant. One is usually all you need, but if you want to freeze some, you may want another plant.

Rhubarb does have some undesirable characteristics. For starters, the leaves are poisonous. The leafy part of rhubarb contains oxalic acid that can cause serious problems ranging from a swollen tongue to death. If I had not grown up eating rhubarb every spring, the thought of death could have caused me never to touch the stuff. To eat, cut off the leaves and eat the long stems.. The plants also have a resemblance to burdock, an evil weed producing sticky, round seeds that find their way inthe the coats of pets.

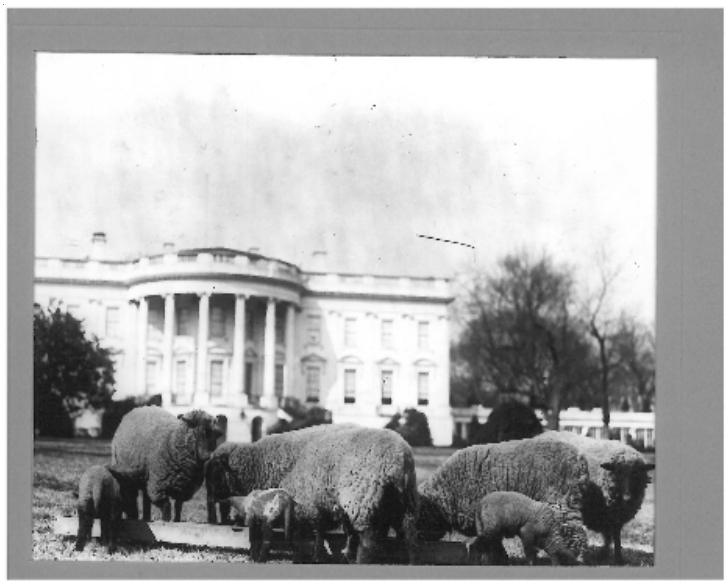
Garden rhubarb will grow about anywhere in full sun or partial shade if the soil is well drained. Most ornamental rhubarbs need plenty of soil moisture and often do best in wet soil. All rhubarbs like an annual top dressing of compost or manure to keep them happy. The plants are slow growing but long-lived and can last for more than 25 years. They don't need much care other than cutting the flowerstalk back after they bloom to avoid the plants producing potentially invasive seeds.

You can multiply rhubarb by division in spring or fall. Dig up the rootball and wash away some of the soil so you can see what your're doing. Cut the clumps into sections with 2 or 3 crowns for fast results or 1 single crown if you want a maximum number of plants. Plant the divisions with the buds about 1-2 inches below the soil line, mulch, and water well. Water regularly the first year until plants are well established. The plants rarely suffer from pests or diseases.

If you think you don't like rhubarb, you might want to try one of my favorite rhubarb recipes for Raspberry Rhubarb Sauce as listed below:

4 1/2 cups sliced fresh or frozen rhubarb
1 cup warm water
1 pkg. (3 oz.) sugar free raspberry gelatin

Place rhubarb in large saucepan. In small bowl, combine water and gelatin and pour over rhubarb. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes or until rhubarb is tender. This looks very pretty served warm or chilled over vanilla ice cream and I love the taste.
Dot Burkholder



Sheep grazing on the grass at the White House during World War I.

Happy Birthday to...

Terry Reid	**4th**
Rosemarie Benning	**6th**
Bonnie Martens	**6th**
Jim Hamilton	**12th**
Janet Heater	**15th**
Sherilyn Johns	**21st**
Willa Eichelman	**26th**
Kathy McConkey	**30th**

SUGARING FUN ON THE "BACK 40"

Cold weather, mixed with bright sunshine, made our "sugaring" day a huge success. Tapping trees, gathering sap, and boiling off the water gave us all a delicious, unexpected treat.

A fun, very successful experience was had by all.

Nancy Vanderglas

Springfield Symphony

PrePerformance Dinners @
Woman's Town Club
805 East High Street
(Parking in rear of home or on street.)

If you want an elegant dining experience in one of the oldest homes on "Millionaires Row," Woman's Town Club invites you to dine at 805 East High Street prior to the Springfield Symphony performance April 16th.

Serving from 5:30 p.m. (so that you can get to the Kuss Auditorium in time for the performance) until 6:30 p.m., you are sure to be pleased. You may place a reservation for dinner even if not attending the evening's performance.

Dinner ($25.00) includes full-course dinner, dessert, complimentary glass of wine, tax and gratuity.

Reservations must be called to Linda Kuhn 937.325.5667 by Tuesday, April 12th.

MenuChoices

Yankee Pot Roast with Vegetables
Smashed Redskin Potatoes
Asparagus
Spinach & Strawberry Salad
Crème Brulee with Fruit or Brownie Sundae
OR
Baked Chicken & Rice
Smashed Redskin Potatoes
Asparagus
Spinach & Strawberry Salad
Crème Brulee with Fruit or Brownie Sundae

www.womanstownclub.com

"And Spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
rose from the dreams of its wintry rest."
- Percy Bysshe Shelley, The Sensitive Plant

Herb of the Month:

GARLIC (Allium sativum) Genus: Allium

The Latin name Allium sativum means cultivated onion.It is in the onion family, Alliaceae, related to onions, shallots, leeks, and chives. Garlic is also known as the stinking rose. It has been used for centuries for culinary and medicinal purposes. Clay models of garlic bulbs were found in Egyptian tombs dating to 3000 BC and actual bulbs were found in Tutankhamun's tomb dating to 1500 BC. Garlic is also mentioned in the Bible in Numbers 11:5.

The garlic plant grows 12 to 24 inches. The stem is green, smooth, and round. The leaves are long, thin and flat from the base. The flowers are white to pink in a round head, mixed with bulbils enclosed in a papery white skin. The root is a bulb made up of several fleshy sections called cloves also enclosed in a white papery skin. Attached to the bulb is a cluster of fibrous true roots.

Almost all of the garlic plant is edible but the most commonly used part is the bulb. The bulb is divided into cloves. These cloves are then used for consumption, either raw or cooked. They have a distinctive pungent flavor that mellows and sweetens with cooking. You can buy garlic fresh, frozen, dried, or in small jars. If buying fresh, choose firm, plump bulbs with dry skins. Also, avoid buying garlic in the refrigerated section in the produce department. Store your fresh garlic in an open container in a cool dark place. Unbroken bulbs store up to 8 weeks but once broken from the bulb cloves will keep 3 to 10 days. In cooking, it is usually crushed or chopped, pressed, pureed, minced, or roasted. It is used with beef, chicken, fish, shellfish, pork, lamb, beans, cabbage, beets, eggplant, mushrooms, potatoes, rice, pasta, tomatoes, and breads. How boring would our menus be without garlic? Just writing this article makes me want to eat hot garlic bread with lasagna!! The side effect is bad breath and body odor - whose been eating garlic?

If you want to prepare oil flavored with garlic at home, refrigerate and use within one week to prevent botulism. Commercially prepared oils have added acids or chemicals to prevent this, so be careful.

If you want to grow your own garlic, plant in October or early April. Temperature and day length are very important. Select large firm bulbs to separate. Garlic plants grow well in a sunny, well drained site. Organic compost should be added to the soil before planting. Plant the cloves 1 inch deep and 8 inches apart with the rows 12 inches wide. They also need even moisture from May to July. Then withhold watering 2-3 weeks before harvesting. They will mature in July or August when top growth changes color and falls over. Tying the stems in a knot is said to increase bulb size. Lift the bulbs out, peel off one or two of the outer leaves and trim off the roots. Braid the tops while they are pliableif you like and dry in a shady place for a week or two. Heat and humidity are very important. Garlic plants are usually hardy, and not affected by pests or diseases. Two problems are nematodes and white rot disease.

China produces 77% of the world's garlic, producing 23 billion pounds annually. Here in the USA, Gilroy, California calls itself the garlic capital of the world. Garlic is grown in every state but Alaska.

Rather than give you a recipe, I will give you substitutions: 1 clove = 1 tsp chopped garlic = 1/8 tsp garlic powder = 1/2 tsp garlic flakes = 1/4 tsp granulated garlic = 1/2 tsp garlic juice.

For medicinal use and health benefits, garlic is said to help prevent heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and cancer. Some clinical research states it helps while another says it does not - what is one to believe? In 1858, Louis Pasteur observed garlic's antibacterial activity and it was used during WWI and WWII to prevent gangrene. Interesting!

To grow your own garlic sounds like fun but I'm going to the grocery to buy my garlic, but I have learned a greater appreciation for garlic that I have enjoyed eating so much, and hope you have too.

Respectfully submitted: Peggie Elsnau and Natheta Mercer

Sources:
The Encyclopedia of Herbs, Arthur O. Tucker and Thomas Debaggio
The MacMillan Treasury of HERBS, Ann Bonar
The Ultimate Herb Container, Barbara Segall
Wikipedia, Internet

Native Plant of the Month

Snow Trillium (*Trillium nivale)*

by Janet Hannel

Finding this diminutive flower in the leaf debris at Clifton Gorge took the help of Ol 'Eagle Eye Joan Corbitt. Once discovered of course, the tiny flowers became much more abundant.

It was worth the search!!! The photo might have been better had I used a trick I noticed in the ODNR website, which is to place a coin adjacent to the flower to reveal its small size. Too late!!

The snow trillium is one of the earliest wildflowers to stick its nose out of the ground- not too far out of the ground, by the way. It appears in limestone and dolomite areas, which limits it to southwestern Ohio. (I'm always on shaky ground when attempting to explain any geology!) The flower is one inch wide, with the usual three of everything- petals, leaves and sepals.

This plant is threatened by the usual suspects- loss of habitat and overgrazing by deer. My friend Tom Hissong said that the deer had wiped out all of the snow trilliums at Aullwood Audubon in Englewood! We are fortunate to have what appears to me to be healthy colonies at Clifton Gorge.

I must add that **Harbinger of Spring** was an additional "life wildflower" for me. This early tiny wildflower was also first spotted by Ol' Eagle Eye.

Mark Your Calendar !

April

1	1-3 pm WAW (Wild About Wildflowers) @Clifton Gorge
	3-5 Setup Garden Fling @ Kenton Ridge High School
2	8:30 am - 3 pm GARDEN FLING @ (7-4) Workers Kenton Ridge HS
4	9-12 START HelpLine
	8:30 am Horticulture OC
	10-12 OSU Staff OC
5	9-12 START BYGL
6	9-12 Garden Cleanup
	12:30 PP & B Sale Work Day
7	9-12 HelpLine
8	9-11 Fair Flower Show Com @ Panera
	1-3 WAW @Clifton Gorge
11	9-12 HelpLine
	1-3 pm Garden Fling Wrap-up
12	9-12 BYGL
	1-3 pm GG Jubilee mtg. @OSUE
	6:30-8 pm 4-H Flower Bed Mtg.
13	9 am Fair Entrance clean up
	6:30 pm Exec Board
14	9-12 HelpLine
15	1-3 WAW @Clifton Gorge
16	**Cancelled - Cincinnati Flower Show**
	11:30 America in Bloom Kick Off @Wittenberg Shouvlin Center
18	9-12 HelpLine
19	9-12 BYGL
20	1-3 pm Finance Com
	B&B Deadline
21	9-12 HelpLine
22	1-3 WAW @Clifton Gorge
24	Happy Easter!
25	9-12 HelpLine
	1 pm GardenTour Guide Training
26	9-12 BYGL
	11-1 Rain Garden Comm.
27	9 am Utzinger CleanUp
	1-3 pm PP & B Sale Work Day
28	9-12 HelpLine
	9 am Herb Comm. @OSUE
29	1-3 pm WAW @Clifton Gorge
30	10:00-4:00 - Envisioning a Greener Springfield @Courtyard by Marriott in Springfield

Ohio State University Extension
Clark County
4400 Gateway Blvd., Suite 104
Springfield, OH 45502-6330

Garden Clean Up
Wednesday, April 7th
9 - Noon

The Master Gardener "Blades & Blooms" is a publication of the Clark County Extension Office, 4400 Gateway Boulevard, Suite 104, Springfield, Ohio, 45502, 937-521-3860. .The Master Gardener Advisor is Pam Bennett.

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