

Shelby County Master Gardener

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION



Volume 27, Issue 1—February 2022

Welcome Back!

President's comments

By Jim McCracken

Welcome to the 2022 gardening season. I'm sure that as an experienced gardener you have started the planning stages of that perfect home garden for this year. It doesn't really matter if it's a vegetable, flower, or perhaps a hybrid of the two. Continue all of your successes and try to improve on those few failures you have experienced in the past. As you continue planning for that 2022 growing masterpiece, consider the following questions:

1. The purpose of your garden, what are you attempting to achieve?
2. Can the growing season be extended for a more plentiful harvest?
3. How can you share the fruits of your labors?
4. Are you recording everything done in your garden for future personal use?

As gardeners, we grow what we like. An individual's garden may evolve throughout the years, but we plant what is pleasing to our senses. I truly believe we use all the senses when determining what is planted and grown. Gardening can also be a beneficial form exercise, stress reliever, provides a sense of accomplishment, and pride.

When trying to extend the growing season use all the research knowledge available along with any knowledge you have acquired over the years. Be creative, thinking outside the box when getting out of your comfort zone. Some investment may be required for equipment or supplies to accomplish a long growing season. Don't limit yourself just to the normal growing season; defeat the enemy, "Mr. Frost"!



Extending the growing season, broccoli photos taken 12/31/21 in Jim's greenhouse

Vegetables or flowers, whatever you grow, most gardeners have a surplus. Waste nothing, share with family members, friends, neighbors, a shut in, local soup kitchen, food banks, and nursing homes. Please share with any individual or group that would appreciate your crop. Always remember another joy of gardening; sharing is caring. Not everyone has the ability to garden, always share your talents in some enjoyable worthwhile manner.

The purpose of recording everything about your garden is for your improvement. It's easy to say, "I'll just remember." The fact is we sometimes forget. Recording makes gardening easier; it's a written history of what you have done. Include a map of your garden, planting dates, variety of seeds planted, pest problems, methods used to control weeds and or pests, weather patterns/conditions, what methods/experiences were successful, and always record any failures. All gardeners produce flops, learn from your mistakes, and always strive to improve yourself as a gardener.

As president this year, I will attempt to lead our club successfully. Please contribute in any way you can. Use your talents and skills picking activities that are enjoyable to you for any of your volunteer hours. Thank you in advance for all you will do for the 2022 Shelby County Master Gardeners organization. 🌱

**First Meeting in 2022 will be
Wednesday, February 16th
Both at Extension and on Zoom
Meeting at 2 p.m.**

Officers & Leadership for 2022

President	Jim McCracken
Vice President	Doris Hibner
Secretary	Nancy Russell
Treasurer	Carol Braun
Volunteer Coordinator	Doug Benson
Extension ANR Educator	Matt Schmerge

Volunteer Coordinator's comments

By Doug Benson



A new year has finally arrived. Let us hope that 2022 is much better than 2021. Once the snow melts. I will be looking for paths that voles have cut through the grass. I'm also anticipating the appearance of the crocuses and other early bloomers.

I am also looking forward to a new year for Shelby County Master Gardeners. The last two years have taken a toll on both our activities and our membership. We had almost no public programming other than some activities with children. For over a year and a half we were unable to meet in person and had to resort to staring at each other on our computer screens. For a variety of reasons, some of our members have chosen to go "inactive," and several have left the program permanently. Thus, we are down to 25 on the active roster. We wish all of them well as they go forward.

Enough about the past; we need to look forward. Obviously, we need to increase our numbers. Matt and I have been discussing how we can design plans for a new training class. Right now, we are seriously considering using the newly developed online course, whereby trainees can work primarily at their own pace but with periodic in-person sessions to develop a sense of camaraderie and to develop better understanding of some of the basic concepts such as plant propagation, diagnostics, tree planting and pruning. It will be important for some of you to act as mentors for the trainees to help them with their training and to connect with the group. You may also be asked to help with some of the in-person activities. This plan is similar to what Miami and Champaign Counties are doing, though they are spreading the training over an entire year. I think we would like to shorten that timeline. If you know of prospects for the training, get me their contact information.

We also need to get back to our primary function of providing information for the public. Two years ago, we had a series of public seminars set for the library, but Covid ended that before it started. I hope that some of you will step forward and work to plan a new series of programs for 2022. We certainly have time to get something going. This will be a topic for discussion at our first meeting. Come prepared to volunteer and to offer potential topics.

We do have some activities already in the works. Conelia will be working with the Versailles library with some planning and education about gardening. She will

be looking for some help. I will be working with Emerson Elementary to establish a pollinator garden. They have a good area to develop; and unlike the failed rain garden project at the middle school, I think this project will be sustained. I would appreciate anyone who is willing to help (I have told them we are committing to planning not digging). They are requesting extra seeds or divisions that would attract pollinators, let me know if you have some. We are also committed to distributing Victory Garden seed packets this spring, but I have not received any details. If anyone else has something in the works, let me know.

Everyone has now created your Hands on Connect account, entered your 2021 volunteer and continuing education hours, and recertified for 2022. I hope you found the process reasonably easy to do. Just as when we started using VMS, it takes time and practice. As you begin to enter hours for 2022, I encourage you to watch the tutorials. If you still have problems or questions, don't hesitate to call or email me for assistance. Remember that going forward, we will not be able to use webinars for volunteer service hours. That's all the more reason to volunteer for some of the educational projects, the hotline starting in May, or writing for the newsletter. And of course, in another month or so, it will be time to help with the memorial garden and other outdoor activities.

Even though we can't use the webinars for volunteer credit, there are many good programs coming up. I will continue to send out emails announcing new offerings. Of course, you can find listings of future webinars and links to recordings of past programs by clicking the "Resources" tab at <https://mastergardener.osu.edu>. Doris Hibner just made me aware of a two-part series about pruning apples, grapes, and raspberries coming up March 1 and 8. Look for an email with more details.

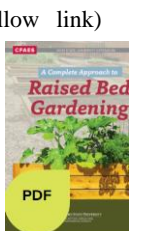
One other item I want to mention before closing is a new OSU Extension publication, "A Complete Guide to Raised Bed Gardening," Bulletin 781. It sells for \$7.50. I will have a copy of it at the meeting.

A Complete Approach to Raised Bed Gardening

(Ctrl + Click over blue words to follow link)

[Raised Bed Gardening - OSU Extension Publications](#)

This is the link to buy the bulletin for \$7.50 or you can get the PDF version for \$5.00



I look forward to seeing many of you at the meeting, Wednesday, February 16. Remember, we are going to start the meeting at 2:00 p.m. I will also try to put it on Zoom as well. 🍏

A True Gardening Idol Died in November

By Jim McCracken

On November 8, 2021 (age 97), Shelby County lost one of the best home gardeners this area ever produced. Carl Zimmerman had an 80' x 220' plot on Sidney-Freyburg Road where he annually would have a garden with few weeds and beautiful vegetables. He would always produce a wide variety of vegetables in his truck patch home garden.



For several years as a gardener, I would be very discouraged and depressed seeing a frail, old man produce his excellent garden. I worked very hard in my garden, usually ending in harvest disappointment. Finally, it occurred to me, why not copy what Carl was doing? By using similar techniques of Carl's my garden improved immediately. I could see progress in my soil texture and richness while my vegetable production skyrocketed. My entire attitude about gardening changed; my work level decreased as I began working in harmony with the soil. By feeding the soil annually, my garden production increased immensely.

As the years passed, I was less intimidated to approach Carl. Actually, I stopped numerous occasions when he was out in his garden to pick his brain concerning tips and skills to improve a garden. During one of our chats, I made the comment, "Carl if you eat those good vegetables you may live forever." He corrected me quickly by saying, "it's not the vegetables that keep me going, it's the labor I put into making this garden." Carl was right! The physical work you must exert to make a large garden successful is overwhelming but rewarding at the same time.

Carl would continue to garden in his 90's but the weeds got the best of him around age 94. Mr. Zimmerman, you have no idea how much of an impact you had on me as a gardener. I will always use your suggestions, work ethic and determination. Nevertheless, most of all I will attempt to pass my love of the soil and passion to garden to future generations. My three granddaughters are my top gardening priority but I am willing to promote gardening with interested youth anytime any place. Thank you Carl Zimmerman for being a role model, a true gardening idol to me and many others in the Anna area. 🍀

Blog and Newsletter

By Ann Heeley

I'm not sure how I subscribed to a blog from Tim Wood, The Plant Hunter. I've received monthly emails from Kerry Meyer at Proven Winners for several years, and I enjoy reading about new plant varieties, Q and A from readers, and other useful gardening articles. And it seems as though Tim Wood, the Plant Hunter, also works in conjunction with Proven Winners at Spring Meadow Nursery, a test garden in Michigan. So that's probably the connection.



Tim Wood



Kerry Meyer

While Kerry's articles focus on annuals, perennials, and container gardening, Tim's focus is on shrubs, trees, new species, and test garden results.

There is no cost to subscribe to either of these two newsletters/blogs, so while the snow piles up and there's nothing more to read in the gardening catalogues, you may want to take a look at one or both of these Proven Winner writers.

Tim Wood, The Plant Hunter: <http://plantquest.blogspot.com/>

Kerry Meyer from Proven Winners: <https://www.provenwinners.com/winners-circle> (this link includes an option to receive *The Gardener's Idea Book* at no charge) 🍀



June 14, 2022



New website: <https://hostacollege.org/>

Hosta College March 19, 2022
will be virtual again this year!

Consists of six 50-minute speaker topics. You could potentially earn 5 hours of continuing ed.

Free to all who register.

Hands on Connect

Here are links to a PDF tutorial and a YouTube tutorial for entering hours in Hands on Connect.

<https://mastergardener.osu.edu/sites/mgv/files/imce/EnterHrsHOC.pdf>

or use this one [Ohio State University \(osu.edu\)](http://Ohio State University (osu.edu))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61penDBypOE>
(skip the ads at the beginning) (Editor could not get this one to work—maybe you will have better luck)

Hands on Connect Training with Doug

You could also watch this recording of the Zoom session Doug did that is specific to Shelby County.

Topic: Zoom session for entering hours for 2022
Start Time: Jan 19, 2022 01:53 PM

Meeting Recording:

<https://osu.zoom.us/rec/share/ZSMMLuQenLE4svk15RLE3ouZrUYV0N6IOUxtudKsJ4OuPoj6BUUqf27zx5300img.uy2sT3H9H6To55cp>

Next newsletter deadline is March 9th which is the Wednesday before the March 16th meeting.
Email your photos, stories, current gardening projects or anything you want to share to:
carolstrayer@yahoo.com
or text message photos to 937-541-4125.

Super Bowl Sunday

May the Best Team Win



What Gardeners Do in the Winter



The People's Garden Feb. 2022

By Conelia Dixon



The People's Garden never sleeps. Believe it. We have been thinking, collaborating, and planning during the winter months so that we can start seeds in February and begin planting in the garden beds in March. This will be our 9th season. I have already contacted three volunteers who love to start seeds for us, and I have picked up the materials for them to do so. I will be starting some myself at my home, which is eggplant to be put in the garden in April or May. I also have some basil seedlings growing that are in a small aqua planter that my nephew gave me for Christmas.

There are four coordinators now, Michelle Stephenson, Deb Grazioso, Annette Kauffman and me. We also have an herb specialist that is a knowledgeable source for us to raise awareness of how to use herbs. We all are working on what classes that we want to offer this season in our fabulous Learning Center. We are also working on how to put the word out in the community about the garden for people who like to volunteer or who want to learn how to have a better garden for their own use. We have a nice brochure and a flyer.

We had a coordinator meeting at the Greenhouse Coffee shop downtown last month and we continue to communicate through the "off-season". We are all passionate about gardening, hard-working individuals and we work together so well, physically in the garden and in presenting to the community and writing articles for the newspaper.

We have replaced almost all the wooden beds with metal...only about six to do yet...thank you to the volunteers with special skills who help. Thanks to Mutual Federal Bank, we have a large new shed to house the mowers that Legion Baseball donated for use at the garden. Thank you, Suzanne, for you and your husband being influential in that effort. Something else new this season will be a ramp for the Learning Center so that ALL people can enter and enjoy the classes or work inside while volunteering. The ramp is being built in a generous volunteer's garage and will be delivered and installed in March or April.

We continue to offer learning opportunities for all in the community and at the garden. We have always been willing, able, and knowledgeable about all things gardening to speak at organizations in and out of the Sidney area, the latest being at the library in Versailles. There is even a hospital group that will be learning about gardening and how it can help with weight loss. Along with promoting The People's Garden, we love to educate others about the benefits of gardening and the wellness it gives in all parts of our lives. There are physical, mental, social, emotional benefits as well as bringing people together to improve cultural ties.

Thanks to all who have helped support The People's Garden during all our growing years... organizations, businesses, individuals, renters, schools, scouts, youth, churches, Soil and Water District, Agape Distribution and Master Gardeners. 🌱



February 21, 2022

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