

Penn State Extension

Master Gardener Newsletter

Crawford County | February 2014

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Penn State Cooperative Extension in Crawford County, 13400 Dunham Road, Suite A, Meadville, PA 16335

President's Viewpoint

As we eagerly await the arrival of spring and the return of warm spring days with an abundance of sunshine, I am looking forward to helping Valerie by taking over some of her duties and responsibilities as president. I know that all of us appreciate her service and hard work for the organization. I rely on her not only for her great wealth of knowledge but also for her wisdom and understanding.

I have several objectives for the year and I hope that with your support I can become an effective leader. First, I would like to get to know names with faces. You can help by wearing your name badge when attending monthly meetings. Second, I want to establish a better understanding as to the purpose and function of each committee as well as any outstanding concerns. Talking with each committee chairperson would go a long way in helping resolve that objective. Third, I would like to see volunteers for projects be done by a wider range of people. I know that our time is valuable and I will be the first to say that I don't volunteer for some projects because of scheduling conflicts. At times though, a phone call would have gotten me out to help. To that extent, I plan to contact members to ask them for help when various projects need volunteers.

Be patient with me and keep me posted on concerns and issues that you have. I am here to help serve and lead, but I can't read minds.

Ron Menanno

Master Gardener Meeting

Date: Thursday
February 20, 2014

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Crawford County Extension Office
Dunham Road, Suite A, Meadville

Speaker: Ian Arturo

Program: "Trash Burning"



- ◆ Sampling sites in Crawford Co.
- ◆ Materials found in the ash
- ◆ Consequences of ash material leaching into the surrounding soil

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Coordinator's Notes—*Linda Ruggiero*



Thank you all for updating your VMS accounts. Hopefully by now you have all entered hours and continuing education and like the system. There still are a few volunteers that have not updated there accounts. Please do so ASAP. If there is a problem let me know.

VMS: There is still some confusion on the system with recording hours and CE. They must be done separately. Not at the same time. Please enter volunteer hours and then CE hours. They must both have a project selected.

Mileage is only taken when you are driving. If you ride with someone, only the driver gets to take the mileage.

READ BASKET: Items for the Crawford County READ program baskets are due at our next meeting on the 20th. If you have something for the basket we will need it at this time.

FAIR COMMITTEE: The theme for the Fair has been set. DIRT TO SOIL, we will be meeting on the first Mondays of each month. Jan Sweny is the new chair. If you would like to join this committee please let Jan know. The next meeting is March 3rd.

FUNDRAISING: Again this year we will be using the Renee's Gardens seeds for a fundraiser. When ordering seeds remember to include the code: FR833C. We received a check for \$32.15 from them for the seeds we bought last year.

If anyone is interested in signing up on committees the signup sheets will be at the next meeting.

Save the Date:

The 2014 State Master Gardener Conference will be held at the Nittany Lion Inn, June 20—21, 2014. The cost for the Conference will be around \$160.00 for both days, rooms are extra. We have a lot of great classes lined up and we are also looking for "Search For Excellence Awards." Start thinking if any of your projects could be included in this. Please think about attending this Conference and meet some of your neighbors from other counties. More details coming next month.

Why Test Your Soil—*Beth Baldwin-Class of 2013*

We all know the importance of routine medical lab tests monitoring blood sugar, cholesterol, hemoglobin, and other chemical indicators of our general health. Long before medical conditions become serious, such tests allow us to enhance our health and well-being. So too will testing your soil! The results will enable you to enhance the health and well-being of your garden, lawn, or orchard. Just as importantly, knowing the chemical make-up of your soil is the most cost effective way to make your garden grow!

Is your garden soil clay, sand, silt, or loam, or most likely something in between? Good soil has adequate aeration, drainage, water-holding capacity, organic matter, and a good supply of micro flora and fauna. While just looking, feeling, and rolling a ball of soil in the palm of your hand will tell you a lot about its structure, only a soil test can reveal pH, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium and calcium levels. All are essential for good plant growth. pH actually determines how easily the plants in your garden can "up-take" these macro-elements. And, of course, different plants thrive at different soil pH levels, so knowing yours, and how you can modify it, if necessary, to meet the needs of the plants you want is vital.

So, grab a bucket, a shovel, a trowel, and a kid or two and start digging! Rusty or galvanized (zinc-coated) tools should be avoided because they may impact your results. Clear the surface of mulch and leaf litter. Remove a trowel-ful of soil about 6 inches deep and dump into your bucket. Mix (kids



are great at this) and repeat 6-10 times at different locations in your garden. Of course, follow the more specific directions included in; your soil test kit, including requested info about the type of garden//lawn/ orchard you have. But basically, it's as simple as that.

Penn State soil test kits are available at every county extension office for a small fee of \$9.00. You'll get your results by mail in plenty of time to get your garden growing right!



Master Gardener Meeting Minutes January 16, 2014

Valerie called the meeting to order at 6:40pm.

Minutes: Bertha motioned to accept minutes as submitted. Fran 2nd. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Presented by Janice Quinn. Balance as of Dec 31, 13. \$5,968.45 Ron Menanno motioned to approve the treasurer's report as submitted. Kit Martin 2nd. Motion carried.

Committee Sign-Up Sheets and updated MG mailing list on table in middle and people encouraged to sign up. If you are interested in chairing a committee, please indicate on the list. The MG mailing list passed around the room. Please update your information.

Speakers:

Sherri Sullivan-PSMG Facebook. Sherri explained the PENN State Master Gardeners of Crawford County page. She reviewed pictures and events.

Linda Ruggiero-VMS documentation. Linda explained how to access the VMS system through a one-time invitation she will send you via email. She demonstrated how to fill out the forms, edit profile and change your password. The website address is <https://pennstate.volunteersystem.org>. The start date for entering hours is 10/1/13 and the end date is 9/30/14.

Old Business:

Treasurer: Valerie announced we need a new treasurer and Howard Miller volunteered. Valerie called for a vote. All in attendance voted in favor of Howard becoming our new treasurer.

Historian: Bertha is handing over the historian duties to Sherri Sullivan. Please submit pictures of the events, articles etc to Sherri. When submitting please include dates and names of those in the photos.

New Business:

Creek Connections: Coming up on April, 11. The committee puts together a display for school children. This is a one day event sponsored by the Western Conservancy set-up at Allegheny College. The purpose of the program is to educate children about water issues, pollution etc. Lunch and T-shirts provided.

Experimental Garden Sale Date: May 22 to bring plants in and the sale is May 23. We do not have seeds yet. So far the prison and Valerie are starting seeds.

SCI Cambridge Class Expansion: This was so well received last year the program is being expanded. Valerie and the committee will be doing a presentation at the State Conference in June. The inmates have kept a tally of what was grown, the yield and where it went.

Fair Program, Tuesday Aug 19: Valerie received a letter from the Fair asking what our topic and speaker will be. The Fair Committee has no theme chosen yet. Information has to be submitted by 2/14. The presentation will be in the Exhibit building 1 this year. We have been giving cash awards to 4-H students in past years. We did away with the award last year due to budget. It appears we have enough money to re-instate the awards for youth Flower and Vegetable

classes. Paula Rudler motioned to increase the Fair award to 4-H students by \$50. Aldi 2nd. Motion carried.

Announcements:

Workshop: Mercer, Warren. We received information via email regarding upcoming workshops

State Conference: 6/20 & 21

Market House Christmas Tree: We took 2nd place and have a gift certificate for \$10 which must be used at the Market House.

The Great Backyard Bird Count: Will take place 2/14/14 thru 2/17/14. Google the website at “The Great Backyard Bird Count”

The Chocoholic Frolic: Angel motioned to donate items for a garden basket to donate to the Chocoholic Frolic. Julie 2nd. Motion carried. Bring your items to the next meeting.

Coordinator’s Report: Nothing beyond VMS system

Committee Reports:

Community Garden: No

Composting: No

Children’s Education: No

Conneaut Lake Elem Garden: No

Creek Connection: See above

DeArment Park: Planting is May 17 at 8am. There will be a new planting arrangement this year.

Experimental Gardening: See above

Fair: No.

Fair Flower Boxes: Volunteers needed

Finance: No

Hospice House: No

Hot Line: Starting either last week of April or first week in May

Library/Memorial Garden: No

Municipal Services: No

New Class: Starting in Sept

Nominating Committee: No

Pest Education:

Picnic:

Program Committee meeting: Tues night at 6:30

Pocket Garden: Virginia Steiger reported the clients and caregivers at the ARC are being taught how to care for the area. It’s a very small area.

Pollinator: No

Scholarship: Information being distributed to high schools. Changed deadline to apply April 1, 2014

SCI Cambridge: Starting next Wednesday

Plant Sale: Trisha volunteered to chair if Cathy co-chairs. Janice volunteered to do publicity

Steering: No

Additional Discussion items:

Bertha brought a flyer from Colonial Bus Tours, 814-827-9171, to the meeting announcing a bus trip to Cleveland Home & Flower Show on Feb 8, 2014. The bus departs from Titusville at 7:15 a.m. or Oil City at 7:45 a.m. and the cost is \$55.00. Please contact Colonial Bus for further details.

Julie Goss motioned to adjourn, Nanette 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Submitted by: Joyce Parker

An **OUTREACH** program of the
College of Agricultural Sciences

Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research and extension programs are funded in part by Pennsylvania counties, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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✧ Renee's Garden ✧

Plant Your Garden And Grow Cash!

Buy your garden seeds from **Renee's Garden Seeds** and 25% of the order value will be donated to your school or non-profit organization.

Here's how it works:

Simply go to www.reneesgarden.com and choose from the wide selection of seeds for heirloom and gourmet vegetables, cottage garden flowers and culinary herbs, special seed collections and great kitchen garden cookbooks.

At check out, just enter the code **FR833C** in the coupon code box on the checkout page, and that's it! Renee's Garden will send a year-end check to **Penn State Master Gardeners of Crawford County** for 25% of all orders that use this fundraising code. Code expires December 31 each year.

This is a year-round, on-going fundraiser, so order regularly for spring, fall and holiday gifts. Spread the word to your friends and family!

A Note From Renee Shepherd

I am excited to be partnering with your organization to grow cash donations through our fundraising program. Here's a little background about my seed company:

At Renee's Garden, I offer only the varieties that are very special for home gardeners, based on great flavor, easy culture and exceptional garden performance. This seed line is my personal selection of time-tested heirlooms, the best international hybrids and fine open-pollinated varieties. I harvest and use the vegetables and herbs in my kitchen to choose the most delicious, and cut the flowers for bouquets to select the finest colors, forms and fragrances. Our varieties are tested and guaranteed for every major US climate zone.

Our individually written packets offer beautiful watercolor portraits, with personally written descriptions, complete growing instructions, a quick-view planting chart, growing tips, harvesting information and cooking ideas. Inside you'll find superior quality seed—the top germinating, reliable seed usually reserved for specialty growers. Renee's Garden is my practical way to spread the joy of gardening as a meaningful, productive and satisfying activity that connects us to each other and the earth. Please join me!

