

Garden Thyme

“Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the gardeners who make our souls blossom.”

Marcel Proust

November 2021

<https://extension.purdue.edu/porter>

Volume 7, Issue 6

2021: Grateful Reflections

By Jim Albers, President of Porter County Master Gardeners Association, PCMG Class of 2016

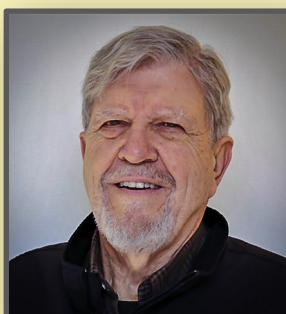
Gardens always begin optimistically. We imagine our perennials, traditional annuals and a few new cultivars all thriving where planted, but, alas, not everything works. Most disappointments this year were the result of circumstances beyond our control—unusual air and soil temperatures and dramatic precipitation variations. Pests were different. We coped but could not avoid some disappointment.

PCMGA likewise began 2021 optimistically—that is, after mourning postponement of the 2021 Gardening Show. We moved to fulfill our mission--inventively cultivating a gorgeous Garden Walk that bloomed six glorious hours in June; we met regularly via Zoom and gathered for an annual picnic; we had a wonderful Library display; we tended Hospice grounds; our philanthropic grants helped others grow; monthly first-rate educational programs were both live-streamed and recorded for later use; launched an attention-getting initiative on invasive species; engaged 600+ Fair visitors; we are cleaning seeds; and, you're reading this in *Garden Thyme!*

With cannas and gladioli dug, shrubs and trees watered, mulches applied, and tools cleaned, sharpened and stored, you can now relax, and give thanks for all things gardening, and enjoy the holidays.

Finally, we give thanks for YOU, our PCMGA members. Thanks for staying with us and pitching in during these challenging times. We could not have accomplished all we did without you. Please renew your membership. The new year promises more great education programs; in-person meetings, socializing, and rewarding projects for which we absolutely need your help!

Be well and Happy Thanksgiving!



Extension Highlights

Nicole “Nikky” Witkowski,
Purdue Extension Educator,
Agriculture & Natural Resources

PCMG member’s status for Extension Master Gardener Program will soon be mailed. You still have time to submit hours. Only six hours of volunteer and six hours of education are required this year. Questions? Contact Nikky.

The state office is rolling out the official name change to the *Purdue Extension Master Gardener (EMG) Program*. Indiana will now match the national name.

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Editor’s Note: Nikky has been with us three years! Thank you for helping us adapt through COVID. Great things will continue as we work together, Nikky!

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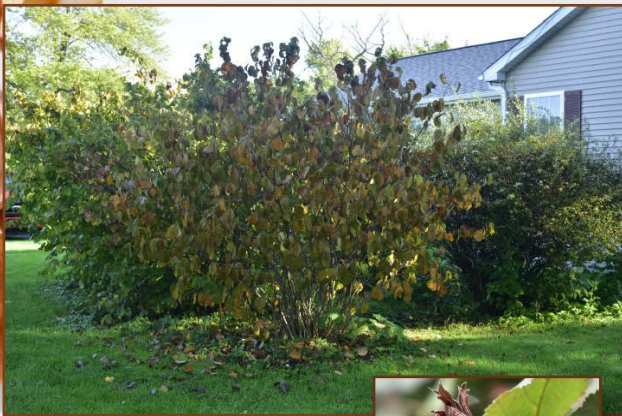
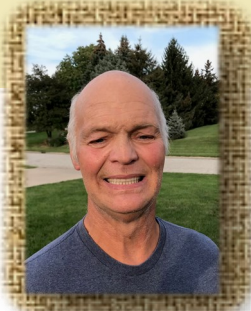
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Welcome
to my
Garden

My Story in a Nutshell: American Hazelnut

By Ron Hermance, PCMG Class of 2019



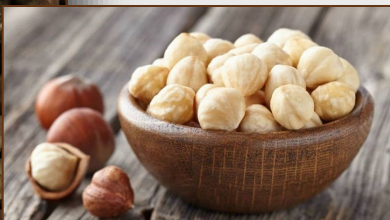
Above: My three American Hazelnut bushes planted in 2014



Below: Tools to dry, clean, and size the harvest of hazelnuts



According to WedMD, hazelnuts contains healthy fat, protein, fiber, and antioxidants.



In 2012, my home orchard was started at my Washington Township residence. Adding American Hazelnut bushes happened when, in 2014, my late wife and I saw the bushes being advertised in the Arbor Day flyer. Grown for nuts and for wind break I went ahead and planted three bushes.

I fertilized the new shrubs for the next 4 years, as I took care of my wife. In 2019, I limed and fertilized the bushes in the spring and got my first good harvest in the fall. The result was three buckets of leaves and nuts. Further care has included pruning the bushes every year when the branches were touching or getting too high. American Hazelnut is a woody plant that reaches 8 to 15 feet.

The Fruit Growers News had a Hazelnut Growing class online. The instructor suggested I attend the Upper Midwest Hazelnut Consortium three-day Conference. It was held by the University of Minnesota and University of Wisconsin Ag. Department. These educational opportunities have been good, and I continue to learn more as I experiment with various growing and harvesting techniques.

This year in mid-September, I harvested all the hazelnuts before the critters started stealing them. Then I took them downstairs to my basement and spread them over the surfaces of two 5-tier hanging baskets. Afterwards, I crushed them on a tarp. To separate the nuts from the chaff, I placed the hazelnuts on a quarter inch framed screen. Finally, running them through a flower pot in which I had drilled half inch holes, helped to size the nuts.

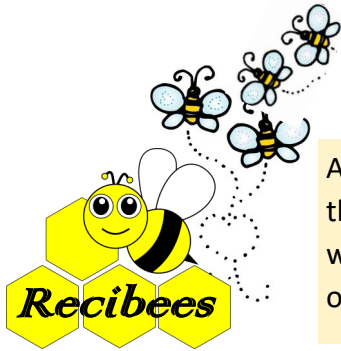
Nuts can be very labor intensive, but the rewards are good. Now my hazelnuts are ready to crack and eat!



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What could be better than a hazelnut flavor brownie with a crispy crackly crust and a rich, fudgy inside surprise? May I present this simple three-ingredient recipe!

All credit goes to Ali Francis and Sabrina Snyder for this easy recipe from *bonappetit.com* using Nutella, which is an irresistible and delectable combination of hazelnut and cocoa.

Easy Nutella Brownies

Yield: 24 bite-sized squares

Submitted by Wilma Willard
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Ingredients:

- 5 Eggs
- 26.5 oz jar of Nutella
- 1 c All purpose flour



Directions:

1. Spray a 9"x 13" baking dish with baking spray, line it with parchment paper, and spray again.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
3. To a large mixing bowl, add 5 eggs. Lightly beat for 10 seconds.
4. Remove the foil top of the Nutella jar, and microwave for 30-60 seconds just to melt, not cook.
5. Add Nutella to eggs and mix with an electric mixer for 1 minute.
6. Add flour and mix all ingredients just until fully incorporated.
7. Pour batter into pan.
8. Optional: Sprinkle top with salt.
9. Bake 24-28 minutes until an inserted toothpick comes out clean.
10. Cool completely before slicing into serving pieces.
11. Keep refrigerated.



Photo credit:

© Marcia Carson

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"Homegrown gourds harvested by grandkids make this display extra special!"

~ Wilma Willard



Crafty Creations

Candle for "Craft Nuts"

Give your home a warm glow with a charming display of earth's nuts. It's as simple as it looks! Needed:

- Candles
- Flame resistant container
- Mixed nuts, unshelled

Place candle in the center of your container. Around it, place nuts randomly or in layers. Be vigilant to always keep nuts lower than the flame. Light, and enjoy the ambience.

Autumn Luminaries

Colorful fall leaves secured within contact paper create this Autumn Luminary. Needed:

- Colorful autumn leaves newly fallen from the tree (dirt-free and dry, but not brittle) or artificial leaves.
- LED light or wicked candle no taller than 4" and no wider than 3".
- Clear contact paper cut 12" (height of luminary will end up 6" after you fold it down) x 16 1/2" (long enough to reach around the candle in a tubular shape. The 1/2" allows for overlap to glue or tape it into a tube.)

1. Lay your contact paper flat, sticky side up. It should be laying "landscape orientation".
2. Arrange leaves on the contact paper on the bottom half. Do not place leaves all the way to the edge and keep them from touching each other.
3. Fold the top edge down to meet the bottom edge, enclosing the leaves inside. An extra pair of hands may help.
4. Smooth out the folded contact paper. Press gently but firmly with your fingers until the leaves are sealed. Trim edges, if needed.
5. Bend, curving the luminary into a tubular shape. Glue or tape the 1/2" overlap.
6. Place it over your LED light or wicked candle.
7. Turn out the lights and enjoy!

NOTE: To make an attractive collection, experiment with various sizes of candles and contact paper for creating luminaries of different heights and widths. Use alternate flat decorations in place of leaves for other holidays and for lovely everyday room decor.



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Nature Watch

Where do you go to see the best fall leaves in Indiana? To these state parks and trails, says *Indystar.com*. And this year, it may not be too late.

Brown County State Park: Fall colors flourish each year throughout Brown County State Park's 16,000 acres, filled with maples, oaks, sycamores and other trees. The state park's website lists the best viewpoints in the park, including their "most popular" vista, Hesitation Point.

Fort Harrison State Park: This is the last forested corner in Marion County, offering colorful views every autumn. Walking trails, picnic areas and fishing sites make up the 1,700 acre-park near Indianapolis.

Monon Trail: Walking the trail gives visitors chances to pass under long stretches of the leafy canopy. In Westfield, the new extension from Grand Park to Sheridan exhibits views lined with oak, elm and maple trees.

Monroe Lake: As the state's largest man-made body of water, Monroe Lake offers fall foliage viewing along the water. Visitors can rent boats near the lake through October. Monroe County also has more than 30 parks, including breathtaking views from the top of Hoosier National Forest.

McCormick's Creek State Park: Indiana's first state park offers a diverse set of trees for fall foliage, in addition to a limestone canyon, flowing creek and scenic waterfalls.

Clifty Falls State Park: The park's waterfalls change moods with the weather and the seasons. Though winter and spring are best to view the waterfalls, the park offers hiking and scenery of "rugged splendor" all year.



Japanese Maple



Autumn Flame Red Maple



Sugar Maple



Paperbark Maple

According to *bobvilla.com*, of the over 125 types of maple trees, here are four beauties that you may want to include in your landscape for fall color.

Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) are dark pink. Landscape focal point or accent tree with year-round appeal.

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) are yellow, orange, scarlet, maroon. Very adaptable, trouble-free shade tree for a wide variety of landscapes.

Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) are orange red. Shade tree with brilliant fall color.

Paperbark Maple (*Acer griseum*) are orange, red. Small shade tree, landscape specimen/focal point, or clustered island planting in large landscapes.

Although providing beautiful color in the fall, it is not recommended to plant the **Norway Maple** nor **Silver Maple** in your yard. Why? The Norway Maple is a prolific seed producer that tends to become invasive. The Silver Maple is known for dropping twigs, branches and forming annoying surface roots.

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Calling for gardening successes and failure stories for 2021—even from Extension Master Gardeners! We all have good intentions, high hopes, and big plans. We sweat and swear (no we don't)! Working hard is supposed to produce amazing results. Well... sometimes it does... and sometimes it doesn't. Growing is Learning and Learning is Growing. Maybe YOU won't make the same mistakes as us! May your garden be blessed with success!



Jill Kilhefner, PCMG Class of 2011

Win: I tried out plant bags after listening to Brie Arthur's webinar this winter and successfully grew about 15# of Yukon Gold potatoes. Now I am trying out carrots. I can grow them on our deck & keep them out of deer and rabbit territory.

Lose: I bought a Sweet Autumn Clematis for my new garden arbor and then sadly learned that these are invasive so....out it will come after I see it bloom once. I'm planning to replace it with a climbing rose. I've never grown roses so it will be a new experience. If anyone can recommend a good one, please let me know!



You Win Some; You Lose Some

Featuring fellow Master Gardeners!

Marlene Vanderlin, PCMG Class of 2018

Win/Lose: What happens when you don't properly stake your beautiful Gladioli...



Glad Tumble



Caladiums, impatiens, coleus, and begonias put on a lovely show.



Pitiful ageratums languish in Spelde garden.



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Hybrid marigold 'Antigua' purchased at Valparaiso fireman's sale.

Dahlias from Elkhart Dahlia Society



a Winner IS JUST A Loser WHO TRIED one more time



Suzanna Tudor, PCMG Class of 2002

Win: I purchased marigolds at the fireman's sale and dahlias from the Elkhart Dahlia Society plant sale. At the fireman's sale, this particular marigold maintains a dwarf habit of short height but with giant flower heads, which adds to its beauty and hardiness. It has loads of blooms that keep coming. I contacted Dave Yeager who grew and donated them to the sale and discovered they are a hybrid called 'Antigua.' According to Dave, seeds may not bring the same results.

Big Win: My beautiful dahlias which netted Best of Show at the fair. It was worth the price, drive to Elkhart and enduring the cold spring day at the outdoor sale last spring. That win gave me a much-needed lift after a very difficult few months.

Lose: To save a bit of cash, I purchased a Black-eyed Susan vine, 'Thumbergia' and 'Lofos,' a red-flowered vine for \$5 each, compared to \$15-\$25 each for Mandevilla vines. Am I ever sorry! Neither vines flowered compared to the beautiful show last year of the Mandevillas—a real big loss. Yes, sadly, you get what you pay for.



Black-Eyed Susan vine = No flowers

Lofoso vine = No flowers

Takeaway:
Spend the Extra \$...
You Get What You Pay For



Beautiful Mandevilla in 2020!



In my border garden, 'Antigua' Marigolds pop with color along with lantana and sweet alyssum. Passersby enjoy their stroll along the sidewalk.

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TIDBITS—GET CRACKIN’

Fun facts about one of nature’s perfect snacks

Pine nuts get their name because they are found inside pinecones.

Almonds need honeybee pollination to help them grow.

Ancient Greeks believe hazelnuts could treat coughing and baldness.

Pumpkin seeds should be eaten raw in order to preserve the healthy fats.

It only takes one ounce of Brazil nuts to obtain more than 700% of your daily value of selenium.

Pistachios get their green color from the same pigment that colors spinach.

You can use walnuts as a gluten-free base for anything that needs a crust.

The shell of a cashew is toxic and is related to poison ivy.

40% of the world's almonds go into chocolate and no one is complaining.

Thank you anuts.com and naturesfield.net

“Fall is also an ideal time to evaluate trees for poor structure, trouble when leaves change more quickly in one spot compared to another, and bark damaged or falling off when it shouldn’t be. Evergreens also shed needles in the fall, so don’t be alarmed when they do,” reminds Nikky Witkowski.

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Newsletter Team

Suzanna Tudor, Co-Editor
Wilma Willard, Co-Editor/Designer

Earn volunteer credit for contributing to the newsletter;
contact the Extension Office for more information.
219-465-3555

Opportunities



SEEDS

All Seed Cleaning meetings now will be held at the Valparaiso Library:

Tuesday, Nov. 2, 2021 Meeting Room B, 1 pm - 3:30 pm

Thursday, Nov. 18, 2021 Meeting Room A, 9:30 am - 12 pm

Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2021 Meeting Room A, 1 pm - 3:30 pm

REASONS TO COME TO SEED CLEANING:

1. We need the seeds to be cleaned and packaged.
2. It's a chance to get together in person with fellow gardeners, talking as you work.
3. If you have flowers, vegetables or herbs that you really like, collect seeds and bring them.
4. When you tell us why you like them so much, your fellow gardeners might like to try a packet or two, besides packaging them for our guests.
5. And if you are packaging seeds and see something you would like to try, go ahead and take home a packet.

Education Rewind



Loving Succulents

Learn what it means to be a succulent plant, which ones to grow and how to care for them to get amazing results with Zann Wilson, a Porter County, Indiana, Master Gardener since 2002. Zann also trained to become a Pinal County, Arizona, Master Gardener in 2012. She is certified in both locations and contributes to both programs annually. Click [here](#) to watch the video. And click [here](#) for additional tips on success with succulents from Debra Lee Baldwin.

See educational videos of former **PCMG** Garden Show seminars found at pcgarden.info on the Member Pages.

The **Purdue** website has added a link to numerous on-line education opportunities:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/education-hours-opportunities/>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/events/>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/>

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