

*Celebrating over 51 Years of Service to the Community*

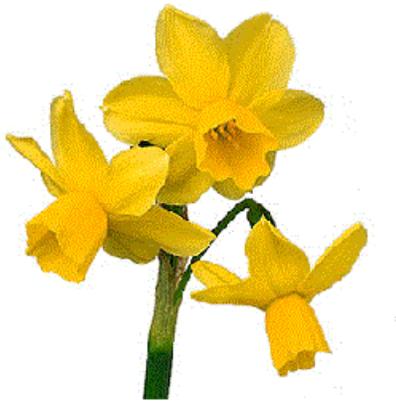
TWINSBURG  
GARDEN CLUB

April 2016

Meetings are held the 2nd  
Thursday of each month at  
Christ the King Lutheran  
Church at 6:30 pm sharp.

## OUR GARDEN PATHS

Volume 11 Issue 3



### Next Meeting April 14

Denny Reiser will present "Beautiful  
Ohio – Amazing Photography"

Spring is here!

Happy Birthday!

Marie Piller - April 21



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Wanda Ongaro, Editor

330.405.1216– Phone

wongaro@adelphia.net

# Last Month's Meeting:



## Project Updates:

**Plant Sale:** Rose S. would like a committee of members to dig and pot plants at the homes of members who have a lot of plants to donate. A group will make the work go much faster.

Kollman's Nursery will work with us on the plant sale. The longtime owners have retired and their daughter and son-in-law are taking over the business.

**Yearbook / Handbook:** The beautiful yearbooks were available for members.

Please advise Judy F. of corrections or additions

She has been doing this since 2004! Great job!

**Library Garden Books:** Denise H. is working with a Twinsburg Public Library librarian to select garden related books that TGC will donate to the library.

**Tour of Homes:** Virginia S. and Karen M. are in the process of contacting people who would like to have their gardens in the Garden Tour. Our tour will be the week after the Master Gardeners' tour.

**Education:** Sue D. talked about the Creative Early Learning Center that wants to partner with TGC to create a vegetable garden for the children so that they can learn about gardening and nutrition through hands-on experiences. Kristen B. and her son will be involved in this project. Other members are encouraged to participate in this endeavor, which allows us to help the next generation appreciate gardening and growing food.

## Other News:

Rose S. talked about Bluestone Perennials, located in Madison, Ohio. She goes to the nursery and picks up bundles of plants, so if a member wants to order something, Rose could bring the order to Twinsburg.

Nancy K. showed us glass flowers that she makes from vintage dishes. We can sell them at our plant sale and she will donate a portion of the proceeds of that day to the club.

## Reminders:

Twinsburg Garden Club shirts are available for \$20. Aprons are \$10.

Deadline for submission of scholarship applications is April 22.

## Presentation:

Favorite Perennials: Plants, Shrubs & Trees for the Home given by Stanley Stine

## Hostesses:

Nancy Kinser & Valerie Wales



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# Other News

**Karen Murphy** had a serious fall and is in a neck brace. She broke bones in her neck and will require surgery. Naomi S. and Ada P. are setting up a garden cleanup group to help Karen. Her gardens are spectacular. The date is Saturday April 23rd at 10:00AM. Let Naomi or Ada know if you can help. Karen is going to make a list of things she wants done and Steve will be there to help direct us. We would like the ladies to bring their own garden tools and their own water to drink.

**Native Plant Education Program.** On two recent Sunday afternoons, January 10th and 24th, TGC member Marcia Carsten hosted two interactive programs on native plants at the Twinsburg Public Library. Marcia has extensive knowledge and passion for native plants. This program was offered free to the public with the library's support. Marcia set up a table with many library books on the subject as well as a large tri-fold education board and handouts on all aspects of native plants. The event was attended by nearly twenty people. Throughout the program Marcia encouraged questions and interacted with the attendees. Those that wanted more information or had questions gave Marcia their email addresses. Thanks to all the members that assisted with this presentation. Hopefully, Marcia will host more programs, you don't want to miss it.

Native trees, shrubs and plants are those that grow naturally in the area with no human intervention. While they may thrive and reproduce in the area, species that were brought in by traveling humans are not native. Choosing native plants for a home garden has several advantages. They have built up a resistance to insects and diseases that are prevalent in the area. They will thrive in our climate. They have deep roots that break up clay soil and require very little attention. And the bonus is they attract pollinators!



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# Upcoming Events

## Straw Bale Gardening

April 16 — 10:00 AM  
Manda's Plant Farm

## Five Unusual Veggies You Should Be Growing

April 23 — 10:00 AM  
Manda's Plant Farm

## GCO Spring District Meeting

April 27 — 10:00 AM  
Cuyahoga Falls Public Library  
Several interesting talks plus lunch. Fee is \$20 for members. Pay fee to  
Marlene H. by April 19th.

## Behind the Scenes in the Greenhouse

April 30 — 10:00 AM  
Manda's Plant Farm

## Cleveland Metroparks Native Plant Sale

May 7 and 8 — 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
North Chagrin Reservation Auditorium

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# Preparing Your Garden for Summer

As the sun starts to shine more often and it seems that winter might finally end, we all look at our gardens and make plans for the summer. But before we get carried away with dreams of garden picnics and pitchers of freshly squeezed lemonade, we have to do a little work to get the garden ready. Here are some steps to take:

## Clean Gardening Tools

Give your tools a clean and a sharpen! Caring for your garden tools not only helps preserve them, it saves you money in the long run and helps prevent the spread of disease. Dirty pruners may introduce bacteria and fungi to fresh pruning wounds. Sharpening your tools will also improve their performance; they'll be easier to work with and will give cleaner pruning cuts. Make sure your hand tools like shovels, hoes, and trowels don't have cracked or dry handles and/or rusted metal parts. Sand down the handles and rub them with linseed oil.

## Prune

Spring blooming trees and shrubs should not be pruned in late winter; their flower buds are ready to open as temperatures warm. Weigela, spirea, hydrangea and non-flowering evergreens can be pruned. Cutting back shrubs and perennials is best done early in the year. Start by hand pruning back to the start of new growth, using shears or loppers. Make sure your cuts are just above dormant buds or close to the main trunks of the plants. The direction of the bud will indicate which way the tree will grow, so think about the shape you want before getting lopper-happy. When you're pruning, stay safe on a sturdy ladder.

Roses really benefit from an early spring chop and will ensure you've got plenty of luscious blooms later on. Rose pruning tips: prune roses just before they start to bud out, keep your pruners sharp for a clean cut, and cut just above buds, keeping the cut at an angle to make sure water can't pool on the bud.

## Sow Seeds

Depending on the germination period, you can start to sow the seeds of plants you want to plant this summer. For best results, they should be grown in a heated propagator or similar. Create the seed beds: moisten compost in small pots and sow your seeds with plenty of space around them. Don't be tempted to crowd them in, you'll get much stronger seedlings if you give them enough space. Cover with a thin layer of

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## Sow Seeds (Continued)

compost and a sheet of glass or a transparent propagator lid, for warmth. When the seedlings have grown their first proper leaves, you can transfer them out to a seed tray and remove the transparent lid. When the seedlings are sturdy-stemmed you can transfer them into larger pots or out into the garden.

## Prepare Beds and Borders

Months of neglect and terrible weather conditions lead to a garden full of leaves, sticks and plant skeletons! Rake up leaves and other debris from your beds. Once new growth begins, it becomes difficult to thin ornamentals without damaging the plant. Plant skeletons can be added to the compost if you are sure they do not harbor any plant disease. When it's dry enough, 'top dress' beds. Top dress garden beds with compost or well-seasoned manure. Resist the urge to dig the bed; established beds have a complex soil ecosystem which is best left undisturbed. Nutrients added from the top will work their way down into the soil. For new beds, spread a 6-inch deep layer of organic matter (e.g. peat moss, compost, rotted manure) and work in deeply. Plants growing in deep, rich soil are less likely to suffer from summer drought. Neaten up the edges of your beds with a lawn-edger.

## Kill the Weeds

Weeds are every gardener's worst nightmare. Any weeds which appear in your garden beds will be easiest to remove now, as the roots are shallow. Manually pulling up weeds from dry soil (wet soil is too heavy and sticky) is time consuming but it's the best way to ensure they don't come back. Use a fork to help loosen the roots so you can pull the whole root out in one go, and remember to wear gloves to protect your skin. As the ground begins to warm, many weeds are lurking beneath the surface just waiting to germinate. Apply a registered preemergent herbicide or apply a thick layer of mulch to keep them from sprouting. A clever weed luring trick is to use clear plastic on the ground to warm the soil and encourage early weed growth. You can then rip out all the weeds before you plant your new annual plants and seeds.

## Divide Perennials

For easier handling try to time the division so emerging shoots are only 2 to 4 inches tall. For larger perennials, use a spade to divide the root mass. Peonies and spring blooming bulbs should be divided in the fall.

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## Mulch

Mulch will conserve soil moisture, reduce temperature fluctuations and minimize the emergence of new weeds. Add mulch to a depth of 3 to 4 inches. Keep the mulch a few inches away from tree trunks and the crowns and stems of plants.

## Garden Pest Control

There are lots of ways you can use natural pest control. Encourage natural predators into your garden by providing a welcoming habitat to ladybugs, praying mantises, birds and frogs. Create barriers around the base of plants, like crushed eggshells that slugs don't like. Start collecting eggshells now and you'll have plenty in stock for when you plant out your seedlings. Use organic deterrents such as Neem. Mix up a natural bug deterrent spray: onion peels or garlic steeped in water creates a spray that bugs detest, and won't damage your plants or other garden wildlife.

## Fertilize

Apply a slow-release fertilizer to young or small shrubs to give them a supply of energy for the growing season. Larger, established plants may not need fertilization after the addition of organic matter to the garden. Top dressing smaller plants will improve the nutrients available to them.

## Create a Composting Area

Compost is the gardener's friend - so get ready to create a nutrient-rich top dressing and soil amendment for your garden. If you haven't already, try setting up a compost area in your garden. This could simply be a ready-made compost bin or you could build a compost bin yourself. Not only will you have somewhere to put your garden waste but your plants will benefit from the rich compost created when it all breaks down! Make sure you have a good mixture of green matter (grass clippings, vegetable peelings, etc.) and brown matter (leaves, paper and wood trimmings). To help the process along you'll need to turn your compost with a garden fork each month to keep it aerated.

If you follow these steps, your garden will soon be ready for summer !

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