

Green Thumb Prints

Newsletter of the Hancock County
Master Gardener Volunteers



October 2010

*Gardening is our Passion
Education is our Purpose*



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Dates to Remember!

Fridays: Watch for Garden Clean-up date

Tuesdays and Saturdays: MGV Training Classes.

Thursday, October 14: Brown Bag Training, Extension Office, 6:00 Patrick (Garlic); followed by MGV Monthly Meeting, Extension Office, 7:00 PM.

Thursday, October 14: 3rd Grade Days at VB State Park. 9:15 am - 2:00 pm Assistance needed for all or part of the day, especially pm!

October 21: NW Ohio Urban Forestry Seminar, See page 3.

Upcoming Events

Wreath Making Classes at Library: November 16, December 5, 6, and 8. Sign up sheet will be circulated at 10/14 meeting

Coordinator's Corner

by Nancy Kronberg

- September Master Gardener Volunteer Meeting Minutes will be available at the October 14 meeting
- October will be our planning meeting - mgvs will be asked to head next year's committees. This will replace the November meeting. We've opted to skip the pizza & subs. Committee list in on page 9.
- Sadly we say goodbye to a perennial mgv. Caroline Roberts passed away Wednesday, October 6. She was a member of the class of 1997. She was always eager to volunteer and was planning to help with refreshments for the training classes. Beneath her frequently cantankerous persona, she had a kind and gentle side which I was able to see many times. We will miss her.
- All counties have been asked to donate to the Secrest Arboretum rebuilding fund. Any amount large or small is ok. We will discuss this at the meeting. Article on page 2.
- Training classes are going well. We have 15 wonderful class members. We do need assistance with refreshments and set up/tear down. I'll pass the list around again at the meeting. Many thanks to all who have assisted already. Remember all classes this year will count as education hours. We've had some outstanding presentations. I've been recording them and will have links on the office computer as they become available.

Get out and enjoy the beautiful fall weather. Slow gentle rain would be appreciated!

Nancy

Tornado devastation At Secrest Arboretum

On Sept. 16, a devastating tornado hit Ohio State University's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) in Wooster, ravaging the center's Secrest Arboretum.

The tornado, rated at EF-2 on a scale of 0-5 with winds of up to 130 mph, leveled about a quarter of the 120-acre arboretum, including a just-opened visitor pavilion, display gardens and more than 1,000 trees. No one in the arboretum or on the main OARDC campus was seriously injured.



“Some of these trees were over 100 years old,” said Bobby Moser, dean of Ohio State’s College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, of which OARDC is the research arm. “They were planted by Edmund Secrest (the arboretum’s founder) himself. It’s heartbreaking to see this devastation.”

Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, on a tour of the damage two days after the storm, told Moser, “We’ve got to replant and hope that 100 years from now, people will stand back and say, ‘Somebody did the right thing.’ ”

“Give us time,” Joe Cochran (no relation to Ken), the arboretum’s operations manager, said. “We’ll have it looking nice again. We’ll get it done.”

Arboretum Program Director Ken Cochran said cash gifts of any size are welcome. Gifts for memorials and for honoring individuals can be arranged. All gifts are tax-deductible. Individuals, foundations and corporations interested in donating to the arboretum can do so online at <http://www.giveto.osu.edu/secrestfund>. One hundred percent of all gifts to this fund will go directly to the arboretum’s renewal efforts. Donations can also be made by mail. Send checks payable to Secrest Arboretum, fund #308772, to: Secrest Arboretum Fund, OARDC, 1680 Madison Ave., Wooster, OH 44691.

The arboretum remains closed to the public at least until Nov. 1. Volunteer opportunities will be identified shortly.

For more information, call 330-464-2148 or e-mail cochran.7@osu.edu.

Source:

Ken Cochran, Secrest Arboretum, cochran.7@osu.edu, Jane Carroll, carroll.296@osu.edu

Reminder and Thank you!

Thanks to Dianne S., Kay S., and Linda D.
for providing refreshments at the October meeting.

Thanks to Larry Schock
for his presentation on roses during the
September MGV meeting. This was very
educational and enjoyed by all.

"Dreams and Reality - Summer of 2010"

By Bob Campbell (Part III of III)

Note: This is Bob's final article as he shares the reality of his spring gardening dreams. Previous articles were in the August and September editions of the "Green Thumb Prints." We thank Bob for this and all his interesting articles and photos.

There was one more important dream this spring. It was growing 'Summer Nights', a variety of *Heliopsis helianthoides* with dark red stems and golden-yellow blooms with mahogany centers. 'Summer Nights' has not disappointed me; the reality rings true to the dream. In its first two months, it has grown to two feet tall, with several stems and several blooms. The stems are as red as advertised, the mahogany centers as beautiful, and I'm already dreaming about what next year will bring!



Save the Date!!! October 21st NW Ohio Urban Forestry Seminar

This annual educational event is held every fall. This year's seminar is at the new Lodge in Strawberry Park, Holland, Ohio. This is a beautiful facility and you'll have a unique opportunity to see some real life applications of Oak Wilt control efforts. This year's speakers include Alan Siewert (Gold Standard of Urban Forestry) and Lisa Bowers (Bacterial Leaf Scorch,) Amy Stone & Terry Nachtrab (Holland's Oak Wilt Success,) Dave Bienemann (Bowling Green's Ecosystem Inventory,) and more! Registrations will be mailed out in late August, so mark your calendars now. Thanks to the Village of Holland and TMACOG for helping with this event.

Sights and Sounds

By John Andrews

For us, this has been an unusual summer. And no doubt for you also, we have lived through hot summers, but this seemed hotter than normal. We watered plants in the evening when we could stand being outside. Our impatiens, hydrangeas, roses, petunias, marigolds went an extra mile to be stunning. We didn't treat these plants any different this year than other years. But this summer, we were given the chance to see and hear our planet's natives that we are not always fortunate to experience.



Polyphemus Moth

One particular surprise was a *polyphemus* moth which has a wing span of about six inches. My old natural history book says that this moth is common through eastern United States. We took its picture since this is such a rare sight to see.

We have hummingbirds in our yard everyday. But, on Labor Day Sunday, a hummingbird moth came to our flowers by the patio. When this large moth appeared, I called our youngest daughter, Jenny, to get the camera. Luckily, she got a good picture of the white-lined sphinx hummingbird



White-lined Sphinx Hummingbird Moth

moth. Unless you have seen one of these before, it's appearance will startle you. Years ago, we had seen relatives of this moth, but what a nice surprise to see.

Did you notice large numbers of butterflies this year in your gardens? Some are large and very beautiful — like the gorgeous eastern tiger swallowtail.

Unusual insects also stopped here. We are accustomed to katydids and the walking stick. These are not strangers to us, but good to see. The walking stick looks exactly like a green or black stick—walking.

Our property borders a 5 acre woodlot and not many nights ago we heard an owl calling. This turned out to be a barred owl whose call sounds like "Whooo cooks for you, whooo cooks for you all." Another surprise! Deer often walk by our property and in July, we saw a doe with her two fawns.

So, for us, this has been a good summer for sights and sounds. In spite of extreme heat and lack of rain, we had a summer to remember. We hope you did too.

Knowing when it's time to say goodbye

No one willingly lets go of old friends, whether they're human, pets or (ahem) trees. But the reality of life is that there's an aging process that's inevitable and not all problems can be diagnosed and successfully treated. So that old friend that sheltered you from harsh winter winds, shaded you on hot summer afternoons when the heat index was over 100 degrees, greeted you in the spring with a bouquet of flowers must eventually or prematurely be removed.

Four Questions Before Letting Go

Gardeners of all shapes and degrees tend to be incredibly hopeful. For example, when news comes along that there's a new cure for emerald ash borer (have you heard about the fruit juice and dish soap treatment yet?), the urge is to try it without considering four "critical" questions.

- Is the tree healthy?
- Will the tree remain stable if it stays in the landscape?
- What is the relative value of the tree to you?
- What can your budget reasonably handle?

By the time these four questions are answered, the fate of the tree's future should be obvious.



Once a crack has started on a mature, large tree, cabling should not be considered a reliable option. Remove the tree. (Beth Jarvis, UMN Extension).



If you decide to keep the tree, preventative cabling such as this dynamic system greatly reduces the likelihood of failure during wind, ice or snow loading events. A better option would be to prune or remove the cabled branches or tree. (Gary Johnson, UMN Extension & NK comments)

Is the tree healthy?

Health is a measurement of a tree's ability to photosynthesize normally, store energy for growth and tolerance to stresses, and the eventual release of that energy. If a tree has a species-characteristic crown density, leaf color and size as well as a sufficient live crown ratio, it's generally considered to be healthy. Stand under the tree and look up through the foliage. If it's a Norway maple, you shouldn't be able to see a lot of sky. If it's a honeylocust, you should see blue clearly through the crown. That's an example of characteristic crown density. The same goes for leaf color and size. Don't compare oaks with serviceberry.

Live crown ratio refers to the vertical mass of foliage. A healthy tree should have at least a 60% live crown ratio, that is, 60% of its height is photosynthetic foliage. If a tree has abnormally small leaves, a thin crown, a deficient live crown ratio, lots of dieback (therefore, less foliage) and defoliates early due to insects or drought, it's unhealthy.

Trees have a relatively short amount of time to create chemical energy (e.g. sugars) and store them up for

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Knowing when it's time to say goodbye—Continued

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normal functions (e.g. starches provide energy to grow, leaf out, tolerate defoliations). Full leaf expansion doesn't occur until mid-June (sometimes later) and the photosynthetic season is essentially over by the end of August. Weakened trees have difficulty tolerating or recovering from common stresses. If your tree mirrors the image of an unhealthy tree and it's been that way for awhile, it's not likely that investments of chemicals and money will turn it around.

Declines in health are most often associated with repeated defoliations (e.g., Japanese beetle or gypsy moth, hail storms, or anthracnose) or chronic drought (several years of seasonal drought). If nothing has been done in the past to intervene and lessen these stresses, trees progress into a decline spiral from which they rarely recover. Healthy trees on the other hand can recover from problems that are shorter termed (termed inciting events) especially with a little care such as watering, mulching, and controlling defoliating insect pests.



Would you consider this a reliable treatment to prevent this large ash from tipping any further? No? Good! Remove the tree. (Mike Meisch, *UMN Extension*)



Many trees can live for years after root loss on one side, but this drastically reduces a tree's ability to stay vertical during wind storms. (Jacob Ryg, *UMN Extension*)



When large trees are left on narrow boulevards after street widening projects remove much of their roots, this is a pretty common scene for several years. (Gary Johnson, *UMN Extension*)

Will the tree remain stable?

One of the more difficult decisions to let go happens when a tree is obviously "healthy" but is unstable, too risky for the landscape. What? How can that happen? How can something be that healthy looking be bad for us?

Decay. Decay is the most common reason trees fail in wind storms (well, other than the wind). A healthy tree can have extensive decay in the trunk or buttress roots, which makes it an unacceptable risk in the landscape—too likely to prematurely or suddenly fail and cause property or personal damage. If the decay is extensive and especially if there's an opening to the cavity, don't think twice, find someone with a chainsaw. A good arborist can calculate the strength loss due to decay for you. If it's greater than 33%, the risk isn't worth keeping the tree in the landscape.

Dysfunctional roots. Stem girdling roots, roots of big trees squeezed into tiny spaces (like narrow boulevards or small planting spaces) are often the causes for complete tree failures during wind storms. The bigger the tree, the more severe the root problem, the more likely massive damage will result...not may result, but will result.

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Knowing when it's time to say goodbye—Continued

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Severed root systems. Street widening projects, new or repaired buried utilities, roots cut during house construction activities cause instability issues. Most trees (if they're healthy...ironically) recover from construction activities or anything that cuts the normal root spread...only to topple during the next wind storm or the next one or the next one. It's not worth it. If roots are cut within a few feet of a large tree on two or more sides, it's unstable. If it's near a house, utility wires, roads, etc, it's an unacceptable risk.

What's its relative value?

You could hire a certified arborist to calculate the monetary value of the tree, but that's not what I'm referring to. Is there an emotional or sentimental value to the tree? Did Grandpa plant it with you on Arbor Day when you were a kid? Did Mom love the apples it grew and made the best pie from them? Oooh, tough call if it's removal time.

Relative values for everything are as unique as the individuals that own them. Some people collect objects, take pride in weed-free lawns or drive pick-up trucks with carpeting in them. Others purge, are willing to clean bathrooms every day if it means avoiding lawn work or buy trucks for work, not show and wouldn't pay an extra nickel for carpeting.

Trees that are special (unusual species, extra large size), well-placed for shade or blocking a nasty view, showy in the spring or autumn or host a tire swing or tree house are trees that are hard to let go. You may never see another tree like that again, so the cost of care may not be an issue. Whatever it takes to save it will be done...as long as it's relatively healthy and stable.

Individual windbreak trees, individual trees that are part of a woodland or trees that are so far from your house or normal activities area have less value. Their absence will not be as noticeable as the sentimental trees or the tree that you always rely on for shading the patio in the afternoon. Younger or smaller trees tend to tug at the heartstrings less, too. If the tree has only been in the landscape for a few years, there's usually less of an emotional attachment and it probably isn't shading the landscape that much.



This tree has a live crown ratio of more than 90%. A healthy tree should have 60% or more as a measure of its photosynthetic potential. (Gary Johnson, UMN)



This stressed maple has one of the perennial, fungal "target" cankers that are so common on maples. This will not get better, so remove and replant with something other than a maple. (Gary Johnson, UMN)



Yes, this tree is alive but along with having less than 30% live crown ratio, it supports half of a crown of leaves. (Gary Johnson, UMN)

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Knowing when it's time to say goodbye—Continued

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What's your budget?

It often comes down to this: groceries or the ginkgo. Tree care doesn't come cheap, especially if it's a large tree and the care is long term. Trees are an investment, part of the infrastructure of your landscape, just like fences, garages and patios. Deferred maintenance has never worked for building longevity and quality and it doesn't work for trees either.

If a tree is regularly straining your budget by demanding life support maintenance, you'll probably be in favor of removing it. Why on earth would someone on a limited budget invest money year after year controlling apple scab on a crabapple when there are crabapples that are disease resistant? Get rid of the money pit and plant a new, lower maintenance crabapple...they're just as pretty.

If, however, the tree is well-placed, provides a valuable service, is healthy and stable, the investment to keep it healthy and stable is probably money well-spent. Inject that American elm with fungicides that will prevent Dutch elm disease. Treat those bur oaks with oak wilt...they can be saved. Don't let gypsy moth or Japanese beetle repeatedly defoliate that linden...there are both chemical and biological controls for those problems.

A reality check is needed for comparing control options to giving up and removing the trees. The expenses related to keeping trees free of oak wilt or emerald ash borer may seem onerous, sometimes \$100-300 every 2-3 years. However, removing large trees near homes doesn't come free, either. A large tree within dropping distance of a home can cost \$1,000 to \$6,000 or more to remove...and then you're left with nothing but fire wood. No shade, no fragrance, no privacy. All of a sudden, maintenance money seems a bit cheaper.

The final decision.

That well-placed, healthy, mature tree needs some significant pruning and cabling work on it, as well as some other health management treatments...is it worth it? Most likely. Keep in mind that it could be an ash. There are very effective treatments for preventing or treating ash trees for emerald ash borer. Don't give up if the tree is worthy of saving just because it's an ash.

That tree has been repeatedly topped under the power lines for years and looks like a mop on a tree trunk. Get rid of it! It's most likely filled with decay and there are many better alternatives such as smaller trees or trees not planted under the lines. Construction activities have cut the roots within 4-5 feet of your mature silver maple on three sides...it's too risky for it's own good and it's time to replace it. Don't take a chance.

The apples on that Yellow Transparent are unbelievably delicious and you can't buy them in stores anymore! Control the apple maggots and apple scab. Your male ginkgo has a little surprise for you...it's a female and the odor gets a bit stronger each year if you don't clean up the mess in the autumn! What to do? It's your call on this one.

Source:

Professor Gary Johnson, UMN Extension Urban and Community Forestry
Department of Forest Resources

We will try to fill these positions at the October meeting - please volunteer!!!

Project/Committee	2011 Chairperson (s)	Date (If Applicable)
<i>Special Meetings</i>		
Recognition Banquet		April 14
Summer Picnic		August 11
October/November Planning Meeting		October 13
December Potluck		December 1
<i>Community Projects</i>		
Let's Go Gardening		May 7 & 14
Public Library Liaison		
Leisure Living Show		
Wreath Classes		Nov/Dec
Front Garden Maintenance		
Rain Garden Workshops		
Rain Barrel Making Workshop		May
Research & Demo Garden		
Fair Booth		
Speaker's Bureau		
Community Gardens		
<i>Education/Training</i>		
Advanced Training		
<i>MGV Operations</i>		
Membership List/Hours		
MGV Library		
Workstation Schedule		
Newsletter		
Media Coordination		
Field Trips		
Meeting Refreshments		
MGV Apparel		

2010 MGV Hancock County Fair Booth

Thanks to Marilyn Beltz, Sandy Reinhardt, Kenn Trout & everyone who volunteered their time helping answer questions in the booth



Tree (thanks to Tracey Pierce) and Bug electrified boxes



Nancy's super bulb board



Another view



MGV Central Station

BYGLOSOPHY:

"Just before the death of flowers, And before they are buried in snow, There comes a festival season when nature is all aglow."

- Author Unknown



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