

April 2015

Green Thumb Prints



Newsletter of the Hancock County
Master Gardener Volunteers

Gardening is our Passion . . . Education is our Purpose

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Easter Lily - Sign of Spring
- Flower of the Month—Redbud
- Scent, Touch, Sound
- Hints, Tips, Meeting Minutes, More.



Dates to Remember!



Sunday, April 5: Happy Easter!!

Monday, April 6: Community Gardens presentation by Cathy Grossman, Hancock County Library, 6:30.

THURSDAY, APRIL 9: 2014 MGVR
Recognition Dinner, OSU Extension, 6:00.
Potluck.

Thursday, April 9: 21st Annual SW Ohio Perennial School, Clement County Fairgrounds, Contact: <http://clement.osu.edu>.

Wednesday, April 15: WFIN Phone Club, 9:00, Ruth Furiate and Patrick Flinn.

Saturday, April 18: Phenology Program. See page 10.

Wednesday, April 29: Survivor Tree. See page 11.

Upcoming Events

Monday, May 11: Companion Planting presentation by Sharon Hammer Baker, Hancock County Library, 6:30.

Saturday, May 9: Let's Go Gardening.

Coordinator's Corner

—By Bill Jones

The garden and landscape questions are beginning to come in. Hopefully, each of you are finding opportunities to share your gardening knowledge with those around you.

We are getting requests for speakers and I would love to see more of us involved in the Speaker's Bureau. Ruth Furiate has done an excellent job of meeting the requests but often she has had to do the speaking herself. If you would like to get involved I can help you put together a presentation.

Now is the time to begin the outdoor work. We can be pruning our fruit trees, grapes and brambles now. We can also be cleaning up the winter debris from our lawns in preparation for our first mowing. Remember to apply dormant oil to your fruit trees as soon as the temperature remains above 40 degrees for 24 hours.

Please plan to attend our next regular meeting on April 9 at the OSU Extension office at 6:00 PM. We will be enjoying our annual Potluck Recognition Banquet that evening. Marilynn Beltz has planned this event for us with a spring theme. The beverages, plates, and table service will be provided. If each us

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Coordinator's Corner—Continued

(Continued from page 1)

will bring a covered dish we should have plenty for all to eat. I want each of you to know how much I appreciate your contributions to the service of the Hancock County Master Gardeners. The recognition banquet provides us a time to reflect on the ways in which we have served the past year and to especially thank those who have made exceptional contributions. We also have a fun time of eating together and in taking home some nice door prizes.

We were sad to hear from Kelly Greene that she was retiring effective May 8. She has been a great supporter of the Master Gardener program for many years. We are uncertain as to the future of the WFIN Phone Club. We will have Pat Flinn and Ruth Furiate representing us on April 15, but we won't plan on any more programs until we hear from WFIN.

Cheryl Miller has agreed to write our Master Gardener article for the Courier this month. Be sure to look for her article in the Weekend Section on Saturday, April 25.

Have a Happy Easter.

-Bill

Our next meeting is our

RECOGNITION BANQUET AND POTLUCK.

Bring 1 dish to share with others.

Time: 6:00.

Place: OSU Extension Office

Please e-mail Bill Jones if you are planning to attend!!



Get your containers ready

—for planting next month. Salt-encrusted clay pots can be soaked in a solution of 10 parts water to one part chlorine bleach for about a week to remove the salt and disinfect from diseases. Scrub pots and hanging baskets and stock up on potting mix (choose a blend of perlite, vermiculite, and peat moss) in preparation of planting containers.

You're too late!!

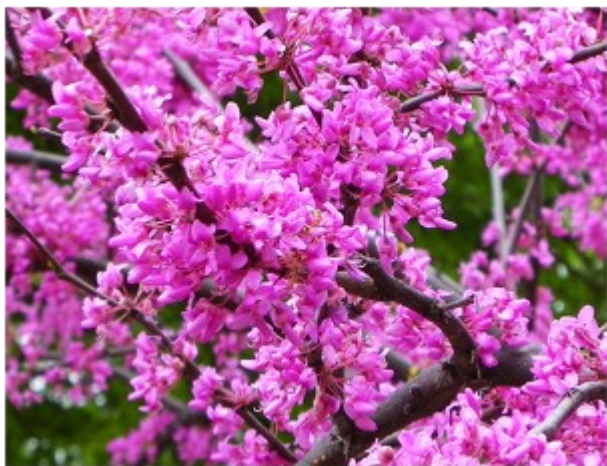
It is probably too late to order seeds for annuals to start indoors. But you can flip through the catalogs to decide what you would like to plant as many popular varieties, including the All-America selections, are sold as bedding plants at garden centers.

Don't be fooled

—into thinking that April is the month you can finally plant the garden. While the weather is certainly warming up (we hope), the soil will still be too cold to plant many flower and vegetable varieties, especially tender transplants like tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, and marigolds. But crops that like cool weather, including peas, potatoes, onions, spinach, lettuce, and parsnips can be planted later this month.

April Flower of the Month – Redbud

By Bill Jones



Eastern Redbud, *Cercis Canadensis*, is a large shrub or small tree native to eastern North America from Southern Ontario south to northern Florida. It generally has a short, often twisted trunk and spreading branches. A 10-year-old tree will generally be around 15 ft. tall. The leaves are alternate, simple, heart shaped with an entire margin, 3-5 inches long and wide, thin and papery, and may be slightly hairy below. The leaves are generally a glossy green in color, however, the cultivar, “Forest Pansy,” has a dark purple color throughout most of the season and the cultivar, “Hearts of Gold,” has chartreuse leaves during much of the season.

The flowers are showy, light to dark magenta pink in color, ½ inch long, appearing in clusters from March to April, on bare stems before the leaves appear, sometimes on the trunk itself. Long-tongued bees such as carpenter bees pollinate the flowers. The fruit are flattened, dry, brown, pea-like pods, 2-4 inches long that contain flat, elliptical, brown seeds ¼ inch long, maturing in August to October.

In some parts of southern Appalachia, green twigs from the Eastern Redbud are used as seasoning for wild game such as venison and opossum. Because of this, in these mountain areas the Eastern Redbud is known as the spicewood tree. It is also known as the Judas tree.

Redbud is tolerant of shade and is commonly found as an understory tree in native woodlots.

The bark of the Redbud tree has been used as an astringent in the treatment of dysentery. There is some documented wildlife use of redbud fruit. Cardinals have been observed feeding on the seeds, and seeds have been consumed by ring-necked pheasants, rose-breasted grosbeaks, and bobwhites. White-tailed deer and gray squirrels have also been observed feeding on the seeds. The flowers of the tree are regarded as important in the production of honey by bees.

Several cultivars of Redbud are available to provide some variety in form and color of the flowers and foliage.

'Alba' and **'Royal White'** - Two forms with white flowers and foliage that lacks any purplish pigmentation as it emerges. It is otherwise similar to the species in size and habit.

'Covey' (Lavender Twist™) - A weeping form that has stiff, contorted, arching branches.

'Forest Pansy' - A very showy cultivar where the foliage emerges a vivid burgundy color. As the foliage



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April Flower of the Month – Redbud —Continued

(Continued from page 3)

matures the underside of the leaves remains purple-red and the upperside turns dark green. The flowers are more purple than the species.

'Pinkbud', 'Withers Pink Charm' and 'Rubye Atkinson' – These forms are similar to the species except that the flowers are clear pink.

'Silver Cloud' – This form has variegated foliage that is irregularly blotched and splashed with white. Green reversions occur and must be removed. This cultivar benefits from shading and a cool location. It does not flower heavily. It is more of a specimen or curiosity plant.

'Flame' ('Plena') - Double pink flowers appear at the same time as the leaves. This form seldom sets fruit.

'Hearts of Gold'- This form has the species flowers in early spring followed by chartreuse leaves.

Dieback/Canker is the most destructive disease that attacks Redbud trees. There is no effective chemical control for the canker. If canker is identified in a tree, prune out and destroy dead branches and infested areas.

Be sure to make pruning cuts at least 3 or 4 inches below the canker, so that the cut is into healthy viable wood. After every pruning cut, be sure to properly sanitize the pruning tools so that the fungus is not transported on the tools to healthy parts of the tree.

The redbud is the state tree of Oklahoma.



How to discourage House Sparrows



Ground-feeding house sparrows prefer to scratch around the base of bird feeders, often taking over the area. Higher placement of feeders will help keep these birds away, and tube or hopper feeders that dangle and sway are good choices, since house sparrows aren't good at hanging on while eating.

Research at the University of Nebraska has shown that a halo with weighted wires hanging past the perches tends to scare off many house sparrows. You'll still get a few, but they won't be as intimidating to other bird species if there's not a whole flock. The example at the left is made with an old squirrel baffle, 1/16-inch galvanized wire and some hex nuts.

You can also scatter cheap corn and millet on the ground, away from your feeders, to attract the bully birds to an easier meal. Use safflower, thistle and black oil sunflower in the feeders for cardinals and finches.



Source: GardenGateE-notes.com

Scent, Touch, and Sound

Sometimes vegetable gardeners get so caught up with planting for our bellies (food), that we neglect the other senses when it comes to gardening.

Taste and sight are typically at the forefront of our minds when we plant a garden. Occasionally we'll remember to plant for scent, while touch and sound are the last senses (if we think of them at all) that we plant for and it's a shame. Because our gardens can -- and should be -- a feast for all of the senses

Scent in the Garden

There is no reason not to include a little scent in the garden. The difference between seeing a garden and *experiencing* it is fragrance. Think of using scented plants like you would salt at the dinner table. A little goes a long way, but including it makes a huge difference.

Keep in mind that plants release scent in numerous ways. Flowers offer seasonal fragrance and at the top of scented flower list is stock, pink jasmine, gardenias, and honeysuckle vines. Then there's chocolate cosmos, lemon verbena, and rose or peppermint scented geraniums.

Some plants produce volatile oils that release their scent when the sun warms their leaves or you brush past or stoke them. Rosemary, lavender, santolina, and southernwood are in this category.

Consider growing plants that perfume the evening or night air. Sweet Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*), night-scented stock (*Matthiola longipetala*) and Flowering tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*) are night scented flowers.

Look also to herbs for incorporating interest as they add color, texture, and scent to the garden.

A Touchable Garden

At first glance, having a garden that encourages touch may seem to be geared towards children. While that's a valid reason to grow touchable plants and even though most of us are decades past our childhoods, we still like to touch. Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*), the silky flowers of gladiolus or corn tassels, the smooth bark of manzanita shrub (*Arctostaphylos spp.*), or the rough-and-smooth textures found on a giant sunflower all fall into the touchable category.

Garden Sounds

Sounds that are born in the garden speak to us way deep down. Past the synthetic sounds of beeping, ringing, whirring, of man-made machines.

Garden sounds are buzzing bees, singing birds, rustling leaves or grasses, crunching gravel, and splashing water hitting soil...rocks...our feet. These sounds both calm and ground us. It's not hard to intentionally plant for natural sound as well as add things such as trickling water.

Plants such as Love-in-a-mist (*Nigella damascena*) that develop seed pods after blooming that hold tiny seeds inside like a shaker, make a nice sound in the soft breeze. Honesty (*Lunaria*), develops gorgeous silvery seed heads that rustle in the wind.

Source: Vegetablegardener.com

Gardening Hints and Tips for April

Peas: One of the first crops you can plant in the spring are peas. This vegetable thrives in cool, moist climates with early plantings normally producing greater yields than plantings later in the season. Wait until the soil temperature is at least 45 degrees F, then plant seeds one to two inches deep and one inch apart in single or double rows. Space rows about 18 to 24 inches apart. Tall growing varieties may require the support of a trellis.

Weeds: Get the jump on weeds by applying a pre-emergent weed killer to beds and borders. Put it down in early April for best results. It works by preventing seeds from germinating, so don't apply anywhere you're planting seeds or hoping self-sowing annuals will appear

For Heat-Loving Plants: Wait to plant seeds of heat-loving crops like corn, green beans, squash, or cucumbers. Soil temperature needs to be 60 F for these seeds to germinate. Garden Tip: Don't have a soil thermometer? 60F is warm enough to walk on comfortably barefoot.

After Bulbs Bloom: Tidy up spring-flowering bulbs by snipping spent blooms of daffodils and hyacinth. Don't braid or clip leaves. Their photosynthetic efforts fuel next year's flowers. Test Garden Tip: If ripening bulb foliage is an eyesore, consider planting bulbs behind partners whose leaves will hide unsightly bulbs. Choices include peonies, daylilies, coral bells, tall sedum hybrids, or perennial geranium.

Containers: For an instant spring show, fill containers with purchased forced spring bulbs from supermarkets and garden centers. Tuck in sweet alyssum for a ground-hugging, sweetly scented filler. Dress spring pots with color, courtesy of flowers that love cool weather: pansy, viola, and snapdragon. Plant flowering stock for a spicy clove fragrance.

Water Gardens: Clear out debris and muck from the bottom of the water garden and add it to your compost heap. Start feeding fish again when water

temperatures hit 50 F or fish are active and eagerly eat food.

Pruning: Finish tree and shrub pruning, but don't touch spring bloomers until flowers fade. You can prune evergreens until late summer. Don't prune later or new, tender growth will get zapped by winter cold.

Start fertilizing roses: If you choose liquid fertilizers, apply every two weeks until August. For slow-release fertilizers, follow package directions, which may suggest adding to soil every 6 weeks. To use homegrown compost, add a spadeful to soil around roses every month. Garden Tip: Some fertilizers include systemic pesticide. The benefit is that as you feed roses, you're also fighting pests. These products can kill beneficial insects and butterflies. Read the label to know the full impact on other insects.

Mower: Tackle mower maintenance if you didn't last month. Replace spark plugs, oil, and air filter. Sharpen the blade. Garden Tip: In early spring, cold nights can make a shed-stored mower slow to start. Set it in the sun an hour or two before starting and let the sun warm the engine. Covering the engine with a black trash bag warms things up even quicker.

Bare patches & crabgrass: If you applied crabgrass preventer when forsythia bloomed, wait to seed bare patches until fall. Why? Crabgrass preventer keeps seeds from germinating -- including turf grass seeds. If you didn't apply crabgrass preventer, seed bare spots now for a lush summer lawn.

Indoors: Continue to transplant houseplants which need repotting. Continue to inspect for pests & control. Complete shaping leggy houseplants

Soil: Make sure that it isn't overly wet. You'll be able to tell by scooping up a small handful. Squeeze to test. Does it fall apart or clump together? If the latter, then be patient. It's still too wet to work the soil. Doing so can cause compaction and lead to poor drainage and weak root growth later in the season.

Master Gardener Volunteers

Monthly Meeting Minutes — Thursday, March 12, 2015

The Brown Bag Training was provided by Cassie Turner OSUE Educator. She presented mandatory training on Activities and Programs with Minor Participants. As OSUE Master Gardener Volunteers, we are expected to behave appropriately when dealing with minors, the elderly, and with handicapped individuals. We are also in a position to recognize the signs of possible abuse and neglect. It is our duty as OSUE MGVs to report suspected abuse and/or neglect.

Before we began our business meeting, Ed Lentz thanked us for our commitment to the MGV program and commented that we are a vital and appreciated part of the community. He spoke of the changes that are being made to the MGV program by OSU. He stated that the OSUE staff and he are working to make the changes “as painless as possible” for us so that we do not become discouraged and less involved.

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 pm. There were 31 MGVs present. Bill Jones recognized Randy Greeno as a new MGV presenting him with certificate, nametag, and lapel pin.

Bill Jones also told us of a call to the extension office from a consumer requesting information on caring for fruit trees. She has 4 apple trees and doesn’t know how to take care of them. He was asking for someone to handle the call.

Donna Johnson brought information on the greenhouse (Country Nook, 1258 CR 100, Fremont) where the MGVs purchased plant plugs last year. Greenhouse opens April 1st.

Marilynn thanked all who helped at the home show and Bill asked for thoughts on our booth, good or bad. Concern was expressed regarding the location and visibility of the booth.

Ruth Furiate would like everyone who did presentations in 2014 to resubmit that information to her as she has lost the information. Ruth Furiate volunteered to write an article for the Courier for October.

PLEASE EMAIL BILL JONES WITH ATTENDENCE INFORMATION FOR THE APRIL 9 RECOGNITION BANQUET.

Karl Farwig stated that the Facebook page is coming along nicely and we would get more “traffic” if we promoted the page ourselves by sharing posts on our own pages.

Please save newspapers to use for mulching at the community gardens. Dick Deerhake stated that there are plots available at the Presbyterian Church gardens.

No mugs are needed for Mugs of Joy but they are accepting floral and decorative picks.

There will be an update on Phenology on April 1st. Contact Bill Jones if you would like to attend this training. Randy Greeno told us there would be a presentation on April 30th from 7-9pm at the University of Findlay about the Survivor Tree. Information will be sent via email.

Randy volunteered for November refreshments and Marty Davis volunteered for September refreshments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01pm.

—Submitted by Lauri Inkrott

SIGN OF SPRING —

THE EASTER LILY

Easter Lilies, (*Lilium longiflorum*), with their large, white, trumpet-shaped flowers and wonderful fragrance are a traditional Easter time treat. *These plants stand as a symbol of purity, hope, renewal and rebirth, and Ohio is one of the flower's leading producers.*

History

Lilium longiflorum is actually a native of the southern islands of Japan. A World War I soldier, Louis Houghton, is credited with starting U.S. Easter Lily production when he brought a suitcase full of lily bulbs with him to the southern coast of Oregon in 1919. He gave them away to friends and when the supply of bulbs from Japan was cut off as a result of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the rising price of the bulbs suddenly made the lily business a viable industry for these hobby growers and earned the bulbs the nickname "White Gold".

How to Choose an Easter Lily

We're all tempted to buy plants that are already in full bloom, but immediate gratification won't translate into long term enjoyment. Here are some tips for choosing lily plants that will last through the holiday season and beyond:

- Choose a plant with flowers and buds in various stages of development, preferably from tight bud to partially opened flower.
- Make sure the foliage is dense, extends all the way down the stem to the soil line and has a uniform rich, healthy, green color.
- Check the plant for signs of insects (eggs, webbing, actual bugs, chewed leaves) and disease (dark spots, crinkling, wilting).
- Select a plant that is about two-times as tall as the pot. A plant that has outgrown its pot will be stressed.



Easter Lily Care in the House

Keep your Easter Lilies blooming by taking a few easy precautions.

- All lilies are extremely toxic to cats and can cause kidney failure. Don't bring lilies into a home with cats.
- Display your plant in bright, but indirect sunlight.
- Protect your Easter Lily from drafts and heat sources, such as fireplaces, heaters and appliances.
- Remove the yellow anthers from the flower centers. This helps prolong the life of the blossoms and prevents the pollen on the anthers from staining the flowers, your hands, clothing, tablecloths, rugs and anything else it can find its way to.
- Cool daytime temperatures in the 60 - 65 degree F. range will prolong the life of the blooms. The temperature can be even cooler at night.
- Water the your Easter Lily only when the soil becomes dry to the touch and don't leave it dry for an extended period of time.
- If the lily's pot is in a decorative foil wrapper, be sure water is not accumulating under the pot. More plants die from over watering than under watering.
- Remove flowers as they fade and wither.

Transplanting and Re-Blooming Easter Lilies

Some suggest to enjoy the plant this year, and buy another next. However, It may be possible to plant your Easter Lily outdoors and have it bloom again for you, next season. The success rate will vary, as with all florist plants that have been forced into bloom. But it is possible and what have you got to lose? Wait until all the flowers have withered and been removed from the plant. Keep the plant watered

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SIGN OF SPRING —THE EASTER LILY—CONTINUED

(Continued from page 8)

and in indirect sunlight until it is ready to go outside.

- Wait until all danger of frost has passed and find a sunny, well draining spot in your garden.
- Amend the soil with some organic matter, if needed. Soil pH should be a neutral 6.5 to 7.0.
- Plant the Easter Lily bulb to the same depth it was in the pot.
- Add an additional 2-inch layer of organic mulch. Lilies like full sun, but cool soil.
- The original leaves and stem will start to brown. When this begins to happen, cut the plant down to a healthy, green leaf. New growth should soon emerge from the base of the plant. Let the plant grow foliage the first year.
- The new growth will turn yellow in the fall and the lily plant can then be cut back to soil level.
- Top dress the soil with bulb fertilizer or blood meal. Work into surrounding soil, making sure not to disturb the lilies roots.
- Apply a few more inches of mulch to insulate the plant through the winter.
- Remove the mulch as the weather warms in the spring.
- Begin applying a balanced fertilizer as soon as new growth appears and monthly until the lily

blooms.

- Be patient. It may take a couple of year's for your plant to build up enough resources to set flower buds. Easter Lilies naturally bloom in June/July, so don't look for flowers next Easter.
- If you've come this far successfully, keep your lily well watered the first year as it establishes itself and then treat it as you would any other lily.

Choosing Easter Lily Bulbs

There are many beautiful white lilies to choose from, but the most popular cultivar grown for Easter Lilies is 'Nellie White'. Nellie was a selection made by lily grower James White and named for his wife. You probably won't have much luck getting your Easter Lilies to reliably bloom for Easter, but they will make a lovely and welcome addition to your summer garden.

When it comes to growing this seasonal spring flower, Ohio is a leading state — third in 2012 and 2013 for the number of Easter lily producers behind Pennsylvania and New York (according to the Dept. of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service).

Sources: Various

Dandelions

Early spring is a great time to spot spray or hand-dig dandelions. If spraying, choose a product that won't kill grass. If digging, wait until after a rain, when soil is soft.

The Master Gardener *Green Thumb Print* is a publication of the Hancock County Extension Office, 7868 County Road 140, Findlay, OH, 45840, 419-422-3851. The Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator is Bill Jones.

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Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration; Associate Dean, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences; Director, Ohio State University Extension; and Gist Chair in Extension Education and Leadership.

For deaf & hard of hearing, please contact Hancock County Extension using your preferred communication (email, relay services, or video relay services). Phone 1-800-750-0750 between 8 am & 5 pm EST Monday-Friday. Inform the operator to dial 419-422-3851.



“What Time is It?”

A Phenology Program

***Sponsored by Hardin County
Master Gardener Volunteers***

Have you ever wondered when plants will bloom or insects will show up in your garden? Here is a program for you!

The timing of flowering plants and when the diseases and insects affect them is a science called Phenology, or “The Time or Season of Things.”

This program will give an idea of what to watch for in your gardens. Join Bill Jones, Hancock County Master Gardener, for a morning of time in the garden.

Program will include:

9 AM - Planting for Pollinators

Barb Snyder, Hardin Co. Master Gardener

10 AM - Phenology

Bill Jones, Hancock Co. Master Gardener

11 AM - How to plant a Bare Root Rose

Charles Searson, Hardin Co. Master Gardener
(a garden demonstration)

**Saturday,
April 18, 2015**

Time: Program 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Doors open at 8:30 A.M.

Cost: \$10.00

Includes Refreshments and Door Prizes

Location: Harco Industries

750 N. Ida Street, Kenton, Ohio 43326

Dave McPherson: 937.935.3970 (for directions)

Program provides 3 hours of Master Gardener Continuing Education

Name _____ Deadline April 11, 2015 – Phenology Program

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Checks payable & mail to: Master Gardeners of Hardin County
c/o Ken Carlson, Treasurer, 16344 St. Rt. 309 E., Kenton, OH 43326

<http://hardin.osu.edu>



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SURVIVOR TREE

2 SPECIAL EVENING EVENTS

The story of an American Elm in the heart of downtown Oklahoma City, the people that saved it, and the healing of a community.



Survivor Tree, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Photo credit: www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org

April 19, 1995, Oklahoma City was the site of one of the worst terrorist attacks on American soil, killing 168 people and injuring more than 680. The blast radius spread over 16 city blocks, causing \$652 million in damages.

Adjacent to the site of the attack stood an 80 year old American Elm, beloved for providing the only shade to the area. Damaged in the blast and covered in potential evidence, the tree was nearly destroyed.

Join us as Mark Bays, Urban Forestry Coordinator, Oklahoma Forestry Service, tells the story of the Survivor Tree—a story of human resilience, recovery, and the healing of a community.

Mark Bays is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, in Forest Management. He has been with Oklahoma Forestry Services for the past 18 years, and has been directly involved with Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation since 1996.



20th Anniversary
OKLAHOMA CITY
NATIONAL MEMORIAL
& MUSEUM

FREE ✓
7:00-9:00PM

TOLEDO

April 29, 2015

University of Toledo

Snyder Memorial

Room 2100

Lot 10 by Glass Bowl Stadium

2801 W Bancroft St

Toledo, OH 43606

FINDLAY

April 30, 2015

University of Findlay

Ritz Auditorium

1000 N. Main St.

Findlay, OH 45840

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Toledo Urban Forestry
Commission



Findlay Shade Tree
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University of Toledo
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