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IOGA MISSION:

To educate ourselves and others in reasons for and methods of environmentally friendly gardening; and to encourage the reduction of chemical dependency in gardens, lawns and farms.

President's Message

In January I wrote that “here we are and into January” and now it’s already April! I was starting to order seeds several months ago, from all those seed catalogs that arrived then decided not to as I’ve still got enough to start my own catalog. I’m betting that most are still good. My winter rye garden cover crop looked good all through our mild Indiana winter so the garden soil should be in darn good shape when I start pulling it out and putting it into the compost bin.

As some of you already found out, we’ve had our web site invaded and thoroughly messed up. A corrective fix has been installed so hopefully it should be OK for a while but we have to think about getting someone locally to professionally monitor it more often and make sure our firewalls, as well as other guards are in place and working. Our initial set up just paid someone to set up the web site but the contract never included weekly or by-weekly monitoring. The initial set up was fine until someone scammed us and then it all fell apart. At the moment I am working on finding someone and have a few leads plus I learned of an individual in Lafayette that might take on our small web site. I don’t expect it to be too costly but we may have to spend something either monthly/yearly to ensure we don’t end up like we just did as that was a disaster. Without the web site we have limited communication with all of you so it’s important to maintain our web site correctly.

There are a lot of other things coming up such as our annual plant and garden auction at the Zionsville library on April 16th (see last page of this newsletter). I’ve designated that to be RTAWCH day. It’s a little mystery for you. Earth Day is April 23rd and that’s a lot of fun downtown. More plant sales coming up in May as on the 7th is the Indiana Plant and Wildflower Society (INPAWS)’s at the Park Tudor School gymnasium starting at 10:15. They have a lot of native plants as well as books. Then, on the 21st of May is the mother of all plant sales, the Hamilton County Master Gardener Association’s, located at the Noblesville County Fair Grounds. They will be selling 10,000 to 13,000 native and garden plants, flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees. They even have red wagons for you to pull around and load up with great plants.

A few pollinator notes from the LA Times 1/6/2016: the bees are threatened by a common pesticide; the EPA finds....neonicotinoid seed coating. Honeybees are hurting, but wild bees and other pollinators need our help too. And a bit of good news....Monarch numbers rise slightly. Leave those dandelions alone in the spring as the bumblebees depend on them for their early nectar and pollen and those ‘bumbles pollinate our tomatoes very effectively.

Keep IOGA organic!

Doug



Doug Rohde

The Rutgers Tomato

If you are interested in freezing and canning tomatoes, the classic Rutgers tomato is a great tomato to consider. At one time the Rutgers tomato was arguably the most famous tomato in the world and once made up over 70% of the tomatoes being processed in the United States. There is some confusion about the Rutgers tomato since there appear to be two versions of the tomato, an indeterminate version and a determinate version.



The Rutgers tomato is one of the most attractive, all purpose tomatoes that is ideal for canning and freezing. The tomato has a pleasing taste, is moderate in size, and is outstanding for its uniform, deep red coloring. The plant produces vibrant red, round fruits on a strong, disease resistant vine. The plant has vigorous healthy foliage that helps ripen more fruit and reduces sunscald. The fruits have heavy walls that are resistance to cracking. The fruits average 2-4 inches across and 2-3 inches high and have an average weight of about 6-8 oz per fruit

The original Rutgers tomato was the result of a cross made in 1928 by the Campbell Soup Co. between the Marglobe tomato and the J. T. D. tomato (named for Dr. John T. Dorrance, of the Campbell Soup Co. who joined the company in 1897 and invented condensed soup). The resulting tomato was further refined by L. G. Schermerhorn at the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station and released on September 19, 1934 as the “Rutgers” tomato. Another version was released in 1943 as the “Rutgers Improved” tomato

So rather than just one single original Rutgers tomato, there were two original versions of the Rutgers tomato. The 1928/1934 version of the Rutgers tomato was an indeterminate tomato. The Rutgers Improved tomato released in 1943 was a more compact, determinate tomato with additional disease resistance. The originals of both varieties have long been lost. What are available today are derivatives of the two original varieties.

(**Indeterminate** and **determinate** are terms describing the growth habits of tomato plants. Indeterminate plants keep growing tomatoes until killed off by frost. They need to be staked or trellised for best results. Determinate plants produce short, bushy, compact, tomato plants that do not require staking. When a determinate tomato plant reaches about 4 feet tall, it sets its fruit and then dies back. Since determinate tomatoes ripen within a short time period, they are a good choice for gardeners who love to can or freeze tomatoes.)

Description of the Original Rutgers Tomato from the New Jersey State Horticultural Society News, Volume 15, Number 6, November, 1934:

“The Rutgers tomato produces a large plant with thick stems and an abundance of vigorous foliage to protect the fruits from sunscald. The fruits are medium to large somewhat flattened at the at the stem end, with a very small stylar scar at the blossom end. The average size of the fruits is 2.7 inches by 2.3 inches with an average weight of 5.8 ounces.

The fruit has thick outer and inner walls, with very small seed cavities, producing few seeds The flesh is firm and red. The ripening begins at the center so that when the fruits are red on the outside they are well colored throughout. ... The taste of the fruit is very pleasing and makes a juice with a medium high percentage of sugar with a low acidity which is just intermediate between the sweet Marglobe tomato and the tart J.T.D. tomato. ...

It is a second early variety. It is adapted for canning, market, and manufacture of a fine flavored, highly colored juice.”

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Some people say that the indeterminate version of the Rutgers tomato tastes better than the determinate version. However, if you have a small garden, the smaller, determinate version of the Rutgers tomato might be the better choice. Below is a list of seed companies (with links) that offer the current versions of the Rutgers tomato.

Indeterminate Version

[Burpee](#) (4-6 oz)
[Fedco Seeds](#) (4-6 oz)
[Ferry-Morse](#) (5-8 oz)
[gardenharvestsupply.com](#) (6-8 oz)
[Harris Seeds](#) (Rutgers 39)
[Morgan County Seeds](#) (6-8 oz) (Most likely Indeterminate)
[Ohio Heirloom Seeds](#)
[Reimer Seeds](#) (7 oz) (Rutgers Improved)
[Reimer Seeds](#) (7 oz) (Rutgers PS)
[Southern Exposure](#) (Rutgers Original Strain)
[Tomato Growers Supply Co.](#) (Rutgers Select)
[Totally Tomatoes](#) (6 oz) (Rutgers Type)
[Victory Seed Co.](#)

Semi-Determinate Version

[Territorial Seed Co.](#) (CS Space Select)

Determinate Version

[Annie's Heirloom Seeds](#) (6-8 oz)
[Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds](#) (8 oz)
[High Mowing Organic Seeds](#) (6-8 oz)
[Nichols Garden Nursery](#) (8-10 oz) (Rutgers VF - Rutgers Improved)
[Olds Seeds](#) (6-8 oz) (Rutgers VF)
[Pinetree Garden Seeds](#)
[Reimer Seeds](#) (7 oz) (Rutgers Select)
[Reimer Seeds](#) (7 oz) (Rutgers)
[R.H.Shumway's](#) (7 oz)
[Southern Exposure](#) (6+ oz) (Rutgers VF [Rutgers Improved])
[Sustainable Seed Co.](#) (16 oz)
[TomatoFest](#) (7 oz) (Rutgers Improved)
[Tomato Growers Supply Co.](#) (6-8 oz) (Rutgers VFA)
[Totally Tomatoes](#) (7 oz)
[Urban Farmer](#) (6-12 oz)

This from a customer of [Reimer Seeds](#):
Rutgers is a winner in my book—the perfect sweetness to acid ratio for my taste buds. Good old fashioned flavor. This tomato has a place in my garden every year.

The Quest for the “Retro” Rutgers Tomato

This from the [August 27, 2012 Seasonal Highlights](#) from Cooperative Extension, a unit of Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, August 27, 2012:

“Dr. Orton and Pete Nitzche, agricultural resource management agent of Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County have been on a quest to find the old original Rutgers tomato strain. The earliest seeds found from a seed bank were from the 1950’s. How closely matched to the original Rutgers were these seeds? It is difficult to tell. When in 2011 we were provided with Marglobe and JTD seed from Campbell’s Soup Company, the possibility of recreating the cross of the original Rutgers — (or close to it) became a reality. This August (2012), from a field trial of crosses of Marglobe and JTD at the Rutgers Snyder Farm, Orton and Nitzsche selected out the most promising plants that most resemble the documented attributes of the original Rutgers tomato. From these selections, further field trials will be run in 2013 with the selections narrowed even further. The results will be made available in a few year as “retro” Rutgers tomato seed.”

January IOGA Meeting

Despite icy roads, 35 members and guests attended the meeting at the Franklin Road Branch of the Indianapolis Public Library. The pitch-in lunch was enjoyed by all and the butternut squash lasagna got rave reviews! Doug Rohde, the new IOGA president, presided over the Q&A (Question & Answer) portion of the meeting. There was a lively discussion about planting blueberries. Adding peat moss to the soil before planting the berries was suggested as a good way to have success with these acid loving plants. Espoma Holly-tone organic fertilizer was recommended. Dwarf plants are now available and fit much better in most gardens rather than having the traditional large bushes. One particular variety that was recommended was peach sorbet blueberries from the BrazelBerries® Collection of edible ornamentals bred specifically for home gardeners.

Planting a cover crop is good for the fertility of the soil but also encourages the presence of pollinators that are beneficial. Having as many types of plants as possible in the cover crop maximizes the number of insects that will be attracted.

When confronted with a plant problem and the plant appears to be struggling, it is very important to first be sure what the problem is before treating the problem. Damage to plants may be from an early frost and not from an insect or disease. If damage is so bad that you resort to a commercial product, read the instructions and use the least toxic product, and use the bare minimum. Products that

treat “bad” bugs also kill “good bugs” and there are many times more good insects than bad ones, so any treatment disproportionately kills more good insects. You should always think how much damage you can sustain before thinking of eradicating a problem. **For an organic gardener patience is important – nature will often take care of itself!**

A question was asked about how to get a neighbor to take down a large totally dead tree that is dangerous and would cause a lot of damage if it fell. It was suggested to contact the board of health or contact an arborist to see how dangerous the situation is.

Someone stated that planting Dutch white clover between your vegetable beds keeps rabbits away. Apparently the rabbits like the clover better than the vegetables. Worth a try!

Another topic that was discussed was the increasing problem of the brown marmorated stink bug...the “bad stink bug.” Visitor Martina Owen had found bugs living in her attic and was concerned about them. After some discussion it was determined that the bugs were likely brown marmorated stink bugs. The brown marmorated stink bug has a natural tendency to seek shelter inside buildings during the winter much like the multicolored Asian lady beetle. The best remedy for stink bugs inside the house may be to vacuum the bugs up and to immediately discard the vacuum bag to eliminate the resulting bad smell. The smell is somewhat like cilantro only not as pleasant.



IOGA President Doug Rohde Leads the Q&A Portion of the Meeting

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The brown marmorated stink bug can be devastating to crops since it appears in large numbers about harvest time so there is no way to treat the problem without ruining the crop. The brown marmorated stink bug feeds on a wide range of fruits and vegetables, including peaches, apples, green beans, soybeans, cherries, raspberries, pears, and tomatoes. It punctures the skin of the fruit causing it to rot.

The brown marmorated stink bug is a native of Japan, Korea and China and was first reported in the United States in Pennsylvania in 1998. The stink bug was first discovered in Indiana in 2010. A distinctive feature of this brown, shield-shaped insect is a light colored band on the antenna and “piano key” like markings along the edges of its body. Also, the marbled pattern on its back, which is what “marmorated” means.



Speaker Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp

In her presentation Jo Ellen pointed out that there are many reasons to encourage wildlife. They provide beauty and enjoyment, they pollinate many million dollars worth of our food, and they are experts at pest control. We think of insects as pollinators, but birds are also pollinators. There would be no birds if there were no insects for them to eat. Humans wouldn't have the food we now have without the insects as pollinators. It is a circle. To support wildlife, we need to provide three things: food, water, and protection. When having water available for birds and butterflies, remember to put a rock or stick in the water as insects can drown in deep water. Plant spring flowers like crocuses and daffodils to attract bees plus Virginia bluebells (bumble bees). Columbines attract hummingbirds. Insects see color differently than humans do so the flowers don't have to be bright red to attract insects. Sunflowers, lantana, flowering tobacco plants are all great for attracting pollinators. So too are zinnias, coneflowers, hosta, phlox, bee balm, salvia, plus fall flowers like sedum and asters. Calament blooms all summer and is an excellent plant for attracting bees, butterflies and beneficial insects. Herbs like fennel, dill and parsley are larval food for butterflies. **When growing herbs, always plant additional herbs for the butterflies.**



IOGA Members and Guests Partaking in a Fabulous Pitch-In Lunch

Where The Wild Things Are

Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp presented an informative program on “Where The Wild Things Are.” Jo Ellen writes the Hoosier Gardener column in the Indianapolis Star and is a popular speaker about garden-related topics and sustainable living. She is author of The Visitor's Guide to American Gardens and the Indiana Gardener's Guide. She brought copies of both books and sold and autographed quite a few of the books.



**Pictures of the
Brown
Marmorated
Stink Bug**

**Bad Bug! Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.
(Note the Light Colored Band on the
Antenna and the “Piano Key” Like
Markings Along the Edges of its Body.)**

David R. Lance, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org



Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs on a Peach

Gary Bernon, USDA APHIS, Bugwood.org



**Eggs and Nymphs of the Brown
Marmorated Stink Bug**

Gary Bernon, USDA-APHIS



**Underside of the Brown
Marmorated Stink Bug**

Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation and Natural
Resources - Forestry , Bugwood.org

LETTERS:



Salt as a Weed Deterrent

(Editors' Note: In the January issue of the Hoosier Organic Gardener mention was made on the possible use of salt on asparagus plants to kill weeds)

It was a great newsletter. I especially appreciated the minutes which were in interesting detail.

However, I think you need to follow up with an article about using salt as a weed deterrent. It is very harmful to the soil, and is never recommended by true organic gardeners... those who understand that the life of the soil is the basis of good organic gardening.

It would be a shame for that bad practice to be perpetuated by an organic group.

Lynn Jenkins

Does Salt Damage Soil?

(Editors' Note: We asked IOGA member Tony Branam to comment on this question. Tony works for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) specializing in soil)

I believe Lynn is right on. The salt soil kills weeds because it is at a toxic level for those organisms above ground, and that same toxicity will impact soil microbes, fungi and other organisms in the soil below ground. Waste motor oil applied to the ground will do the same thing. (I will occasionally sprinkle rock salt in the cracks of my sidewalk as a weed treatment.) At some point I would imagine the saline toxicity impacting the soil organisms (disrupting the food web) to the point they are not providing benefit to the vegetables such as fixing nitrogen and decomposing material for nutrient cycling. It would be similar to constantly watering your garden during a drought with residual chlorine impacting soil organisms thus impacting the flavor of produce. There is a synergistic relationship between good soil health and its organisms to provide available nutrients to the planted crops.

Eventually the sodium ions will begin altering the soil structure as well by pushing out calcium ions (known as dispersion of the soil) impacting water and air movements. Air and water movement through the soils is also vital to plant health. Saline toxicity and saline induced soil dispersion are real problems on crop fields continuously irrigated in the US Southwest and other arid regions of the world. All of this, however, will depend on the types of soils (clay, loam or sand), the amount of salt applied and frequency.

<http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/files/repositoryfiles/ca3810p11-72361.pdf>

To answer your question, yes, I do have some thoughts on this subject. Personally, I would utilize another method of weed control like heavy mulch/compost over layers of newspapers. If others are interested in the use of salt for weed control I would caution moderation and lots of observation. Sorry about my lengthy response. I get a little geeky sometimes talking about dirt.

Take care.

Tony Branam

Raised Beds in Downtown Indy

Nestled behind a black wrought iron fence in downtown Indy, IOGA members Nancy Otten and Dwight Lamb have a really special home. Only twelve years ago it was an empty lot – no trees, no gardens...nothing. Since buying the lot, they have built a charming home with window boxes overflowing with flowers in the front, trees everywhere, and of course their organic garden. The day we visited, Dwight had made apple pies from their Macintosh apple tree and the home smelled wonderful! There is only one tree despite our having been told it takes two different kinds of apple trees to produce apples. They also have a Bartlett pear tree in the front yard and beautiful Rose of Sharon bushes blooming all along the sides of the lot.



Backyard of Nancy Otten and Dwight Lamb in Downtown Indianapolis

The home is poured concrete and is thus very energy efficient and also blocks out any street noise. The back yard is 50' x 110' and the garden is 8' x 18'. Despite the small size of the garden, they get lots of vegetables. When they first started the garden, they turned over the sod and added compost. They continually add more compost each year and they have four compost piles in the back yard to supply the garden. They are growing a variety of vegetables – peppers, chard, eggplant, broccoli, cucumber, Lacinato kale, zucchini, tomatoes and even carrots planted by their granddaughter.

They have Macedonian table grapes which are green when ripe and which are doing well. Dwight has pruned a lot of the branches out of the apple tree since he wants plenty of sun and good air circulation to avoid black spot. They have two rain barrels to water the garden. They also have a small shredder to make mulch from branches they cut so they have their own mulch.

We were impressed with what they have done in the city, starting with a bare lot, and ending with a cozy and attractive home.



Small Backyard Garden



Lacinato Kale, Broccoli, and Corn



Outdoor Potting Table

**Nancy Otten &
Dwight Lamb
Garden Pictures**



Compost Bins



Rain Barrels

**A Cool Tool:
Dwight Uses This
Manual, Hydraulic
Log Splitter for
Splitting a Small
Number of Logs**



LETTERS:



Letter from the Cobbs

(Editors' Note: Beulah and Clarence Cobb are the only charter members of IOGA still members of IOGA. Beulah attended the first organizational meeting of IOGA in the early 1970s.)

Dear Claudia and Ron,

I always enjoy reading the IOGA newsletter. I am very pleased to read about new members – more people wanting to grow good food and to stay healthy.

And the classes! Wonderful. As long as this interest continues the Earth will still stand.

My daughter in Indianapolis wants to plant berries etc. at our farm this spring and I am encouraging her and I think we can work well together.

In November I celebrated my 90th birthday. We have lived on our farm for 40 years. Good years!

I enclose a check for membership.

Best wishes to all,

Beulah Cobb

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mark your calendar

IOGA generally meets quarterly on the third Saturday of the month. Mark your calendar for upcoming meetings.

April 16, 2016
(Plant Auction)
July 16, 2016
October 15, 2016
January 21, 2017



Ask us...!

President – Doug Rohde
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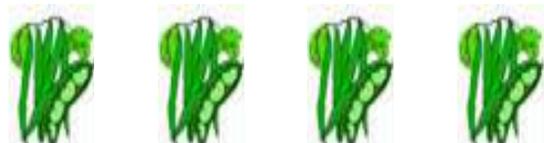
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New IOGA Members

Joyce E. Randolph & Vivian L. Muhammad,
Indianapolis, IN 46218
Bev Agnew, Carmel, IN 46032
Brandon Rust, Indianapolis, IN 46220

Welkom



Earth Day Indiana



free outdoor festival

Saturday April 23 • 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fun, Exhibits, Food, Children's Activities,
Live Music

Military Park

601 W. New York St., Indianapolis

www.earthdayindiana.org

Visit the IOGA Booth



Treasurer's Report



1st Quarter 2016

Opening Balance Jan. 1, 2016 \$5333.45

Income

Membership Dues \$ 678.00

Donations \$ 20.00

Total \$ **698.00**

Expenses

Newsletter (Printing) \$ 133.75

Newsletter (Stamps) \$ 39.20

Liability Insurance \$ 200.00

Speaker Fee \$ 300.00

Earth Day Registration \$ 58.00

Business Entity Report \$ 7.14

Room Deposit \$ 100.00

Total \$ **838.09**

Closing Balance Mar. 31, 2016 \$ **5193.36**

Respectfully submitted by Ron Clark, Treasurer



How do I join IOGA?

Dues are \$10.00 per individual member, and \$12.00 for a dual membership (same address, one newsletter).

To join, please send your annual dues to:

Please include ALL of the following information:

I prefer my newsletter to be emailed mailed.



I O G A

7282 E 550 S

Whitestown, IN 46075

Full Name

2nd Name (if dual membership)

Address

Phone Number

Email Address

**IOGA
Meeting
Sat. April 16
10:30 am**

**Annual Plant Auction at Zionsville Library
250 North 5th Street, Zionsville, IN ([Map](#))**

317-873-3149

10:30 Arrive with Auction Items
11:00—11:45 Great Pitch-in Lunch
(bring food to share plus table service)
11:45—12:40 Introductions, Q&A, and Business
12:45 Auction Begins

Plants, books, and garden items will be available for auction. Your donations are appreciated.
Please label plants. Proceeds will be used to fund future IOGA programs. Each year the IOGA plant auction is attended by recently converted organic gardeners who are looking for plants and ideas, as well as those who have more experience and have lots of plants, tips and techniques to share.

For the pitch-in lunch, bring a favorite dish filled with food ("home-made" and/or "organic" appreciated) to share and your plate, fork, and drink.

From I-465 take the Michigan Rd./421 exit #27. Then go north 2.3 miles and turn left on **E Sycamore** (W 116th St.) and go 1.1 miles. Turn right onto **S 1st St.** and go 0.2 miles, taking the 3rd left onto **W Oak St.** Go 0.2 miles and turn right onto **S 5th St.** Park on the 5th St. side of the library (lower level). **Or**,
From I-65 take the Zionsville exit #130. Go east 4.8 miles on **W Oak St.** through Zionsville and watch for **5th St.** Turn left onto **S 5th St.** Park on the 5th St. side of the library (lower level).

Everyone welcome! Questions, or if lost, call Margaret Smith cell phone (317) 698-0526.

Remember to car pool, if possible.

Join us and bring a friend!

Hoosier Organic Gardener
Claudia and Ron Clark, editors
7282 E 550 S
Whitestown, IN 46075



**Join us!
IOGA Meeting
Sat. April 16**