



October 2010

Indiana Organic Gardeners Association

IN THIS ISSUE**Felege Hiywot
Center****Raised Beds****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.

Message from Our President ...

Many of you know that our friend and fellow organic gardener/farmer, Kelly Funk was struck by lightning in July while working on her and husband John Ferree's organic farm, Seldom Seen Farm (you may recall that IOGA had just visited their farm in October, 2009). The good news is that John was nearby to provide an immediate response and Kelly survived, but she is facing a long hard battle to recover. There have been positive signs – movement in her eyes and sometimes the squeeze of a hand when requested – little signs that mean a lot, when she had been in a coma only weeks before. She continues to be surrounded by loving, supportive friends and family and we continue to be hopeful for a full recovery.



Lynne Sullivan

That rogue lighting bolt struck more than our friend that day. It struck the core of Indiana's organic farming and market community. As news of the tragedy spread, so did the desire to help. Within days, a recovery fund was set up in her name at Huntington Bank to assist the young family with expected medical costs and fundraising events are currently in the works. Work parties (aka Crop Mobs) have been organized to help with necessary farm chores. And countless people have contributed in other very important ways through positive thoughts and prayers. It is amazing and humbling to be part of such a dynamic and caring community.

While the community brings forth donations and labor, much of the organization behind the activities is because of Maria Smietana's tireless efforts. Fellow IOGA member and organic farmer herself, Maria has helped to channel people's desire to help into actual results. Maria and husband Bill Swanson, own and operate Valentine Hill Farm and are no strangers to knowing the challenges facing small, organic family farms. But they also have an acute awareness that people can make a real difference. Many thanks go out to Maria and Bill as well as all the folks who have come together in many ways to show their support.

Just as Kelly and John have touched our lives through a shared love of soil, sustenance and sunshine, we hope we can reciprocate.

For periodic updates on Kelly's condition, you can visit <http://seldomseenfarm.com/>.

If you would like to make a donation to the Kelly Funk Recovery Fund, you can do so at any Huntington Bank branch. Also, many farm market vendors have donation jars at their booths.

If you wish to receive direct updates from Maria that includes ways you can help or if you wish to offer other assistance, you can e-mail Maria at maria@valentinehillfarm.com.

Another way to help John and Kelly, as well as other family farms, is to shop at your local farmer's market and get to know the folks who grow and make your food!

Happy and Healthy Gardening,

-Lynne

Member Profile:

Rod and Janet Glover

IOGA members Rod and Janet Glover live on 1.6 acres southeast of Kokomo, outside of Russiaville. They have wonderful raised beds in their prolific gardens that are explained later in this newsletter. They also have three large compost piles in which they add horse manure from neighbors' horses. Their gardens are doing extremely well, so the compost is clearly working! They also have an Enviro Cycle composter which is right in the garden. This is a handy way to store compost, since it is right where you need it and doesn't have to be lugged from a distant location once you are ready to use it in the garden. Since the garden is exclusively raised beds, there are paths between the beds, and the composter sits on one of the paths, easily usable when needed.



Rod & Janet Glover



Enviro Cycle Composter

Rod is a retired electrician and Janet is a retired teacher. Rod has built every piece of furniture in the house except for one sofa! Not only has he made the furniture, but he starts with logs either given to him by neighbors or which are fallen logs and he uses his own portable sawmill (right next to the house) to make the boards to create the furniture. He has made gorgeous cabinets in the kitchen and dining rooms, has a beautiful long dining room table and matching chairs (in the arts and crafts style), along with beds, coffee tables, and even hardwood flooring. He is definitely a recycler! His furniture is the work of an artist and is very impressive. He likes creating new projects, and also has several fountains outside nestled in among the flower gardens.. Rod also does stone carving, and the carvings decorate in and outside the house. Besides making furniture from scavenged wood, but he also

has made very decorative clocks which are throughout the house. Some of Janet's photos also decorate the house. Janet and Rod have really created a lovely home and it was a pleasure for your editors to visit to get information for the newsletter.

Janet served us a lovely organic lunch and we drank "mint water." She keeps a jar of water in the refrigerator, stuffed with mint stems and leaves. When she wants a cool refreshing drink, the cold mint water really hits the spot! We are glad the Glovers are IOGA members and we appreciate their sharing their expertise with us!



Rod and Janet Glover's Hand Made Dining Room Table and Matching Chairs

July IOGA Meeting

The July 17th meeting of IOGA was held in downtown Indianapolis at the *Felege Hiywot Center*.

Approximately 35 IOGA members and guests enjoyed a great pitch-in lunch in the newly restored 100+ year old home that serves as the headquarters for the Center.

Lynne Sullivan introduced IOGA member Steve Woehler. Steve invented a new type of tomato cage that is sturdy and easy to store. Several members asked questions and three cages were purchased for \$15 each (keepitsimpleveggiecage.com)

QUESTION & ANSWER (Q&A):

*Ann Leatherman reported on the cucumber frame she built. The frame is set at an angle. The main problem she had was growing the cucumbers upright and then training them onto the 4'x6' frame

*One member inquired about pruning fruit trees. Karen Morgan responded that pruning should be done two times a year when the tree is dormant. In the fall pruning is done to control size, keeping in mind that fruit trees produce on the 2nd year wood. In early spring (February/March) pruning is done for clearing, in order to open up the tree so it will get sun inside and all fruits will ripen. Pruning during growing season will encourage growth rather than fruit production. Cutting at a 30-45 degree angle is best for fruit growth.

*Using a blow torch to remove weeds was discussed. Some people used them and reported reasonable success, but one should avoid their use near mulch.

*A two foot chicken wire fence is best to deter rabbits.

*For raised beds, untreated lumber should be used. Cedar is a good choice (but expensive). Regular lumber is fine and it will last 5 to 7 years. Old, inexpensive wood can be found in salvage stores.

*Do squash and melons cross pollinate? Yes. Claudia Clark grew a cross pollinated pumpkin that was green and bitter. Lynne Sullivan reported the same experience.

BUSINESS MEETING:

*Kelly Funk of *Seldom Seen Farm* was struck by lightning a week before our July meeting. Fund raising and money collection is still taking place. For donations, go to any Huntington Bank branch (Kelly Funk Recovery Fund), *Apple Family Farm*, or contact Maria Smietana. IOGA members voted to have IOGA make a donation of \$100 to Kelly and her family.

*For free manure and purchase of organic produce: contact Karen Morgan, near New Castle



*IOGA has been very active this year, attending many events and participating in many initiatives. If someone has suggestions for future events and programs, please contact Lynne Sullivan.

GARDEN TOUR:

Director, Aster Bekele arrived in Indianapolis from Ethiopia in 1973. A student of IUPUI, she chose to live in the Martindale-Brightwood area, a poor, inner city neighborhood of Indianapolis. At that time she was surprised to see how many people regarded themselves as poor, and how they--especially young kids-- would spend many hours at home watching TV. Aster soon realized that there were many children who could use some help, so she started to invite kids to her house and offer them some after school tutoring.

Later Aster married and started to work at Lilly as a chemist. She moved out of the neighborhood. One day she met a young man who told her what impact the tutoring experience had for him. He was now in the service and proud of his accomplishments. Aster decided that she would buy property and devote the place to the enrichment of local children. Her message was going to be: You are not poor, you are just resourceless. One piece of property after another, Aster put together a place that was large enough to accommodate a 20'x20' garden. On this property there are two very old houses, now restored and used for the center. More and more volunteers joined in, and the *Felege Hiywot Center* was born.

The garden is entirely attended by children. They are self sufficient, making their own compost and collecting rain water in two large tanks located by the side of one building. They organically grow a large variety of vegetables and flowers. The vegetables are later used for nutritious meals and healthy snacks. The Purdue Extension is very supportive, providing seeds and instructional material. The *Felege Hiywot Center* offers youth programs at no cost, and its financing is provided solely by corporate/individual donations and grants.

—Rosie Oaks, Secretary

Felege Hiywot Center Garden Tour



Left: IOGA Members Anne and Paul Matzek



Above: IOGA Member Rosie Oaks (left) and Aster Bekele (right) Director of the Felege **Hiywot Center with the Center's Garden in the Background.**



Above: Compost Bin Constructed from Shipping Pallets



Right: Raised Beds

Raised Beds

By Janet Glover

My husband Rod and I have been gardening with raised beds for several years. We're not experts, but we're happy to share some things we've learned. Also, there are many good books and there's lots of great information on the internet about raised bed gardening.

We're fortunate that my husband has a sawmill, and so he cut all of the lumber for our raised beds. We made them 12 to 14 inches deep, which is deeper than many we had seen in books and magazines. That was just our decision because we wanted our beds deeper for root vegetables. I think it would depend on your own personal preferences and on what you want to plant. There's no set depth that's required — it's just a matter of what you want and need.



Rod & Janet Glover's Raised Bed Garden

Anyway, we are fortunate that Rod cuts all of the lumber we need. Our beds are different widths, but for the most part they're 3 to 4 feet wide. The lengths vary, too, depending upon the space that was available to us, but our beds are anywhere from 5 or 6 feet long to 12 or 14 feet long. The size you choose will be up to you and of course is limited by the space you have available. But we would suggest that you make it not more than 3 feet wide — or 4 feet wide at most — just because you want to be able to comfortably reach across the bed. With our wider beds, we have to go around to the other side to reach when we're planting, weeding, or harvesting. And that's not a problem. We don't mind switching to the other side. But it's just a consideration — depending upon whether you want to switch sides or if you want to be able to reach completely across the beds from one side.



Entrance to Rod & Janet Glover's Garden

Showing Their Electrified Fence

metal straps that are used in building decks, and we bend them around the corners of the beds and then attach them with decking screws. These hold the beds together firmly and prevent them from coming apart when filled with soil. Whatever method you decide on, just be sure that you have some way of supporting the sides of the beds so that they don't come apart.

We arranged our garden so that the paths are about three feet wide between the beds. This gives us room to work and room for wheelbarrows and other garden equipment. We put heavy black landscape cloth down on all of the paths, and then we covered the landscape cloth with small limestone. This has worked really well, and the paths look great. Again, you could use whatever you want--limestone, mulch, or anything that you like. But we would

One important thing that we learned is that when you build the beds, you need to attach hardware cloth to the bottom of the beds before you fill them with soil. We use heavy vinyl hardware cloth that we buy at Lowe's, because we felt that the vinyl would last much longer than metal hardware cloth. On the first two or three beds, Rod decided that the hardware cloth wasn't necessary, and almost immediately we had moles in those beds! Needless to say, all of the beds after those have hardware cloth on the bottom. We build the beds and attach the hardware cloth to the bottom using fence staples. Then we turn the beds over and fill them with soil. This is just our method of building beds. You might find a method that works more easily for you, but this is what has worked well for us. With the first beds, we pounded wooden support posts into the ground at several places around the bed in order to keep the sides from pushing out when the beds were filled with soil. Since then, we've found that we like using metal straps better than pounding in the support posts. We buy flat

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suggest using landscape cloth to keep the weeds down, no matter what you decide to use on top of the landscape cloth. We like the look of limestone, and it lasts indefinitely--as opposed to mulch, which will decompose over time.

We're fortunate that Rod's mother has several acres of woods, and Rod has dug all of the soil for our raised beds in that woods--and in the woods of a friend. We wanted organic soil that had never been soaked with farming chemicals, and the woodland soil has been wonderful. You can also buy organic soil, but just be sure to check with someone who can recommend a good source for you. You wouldn't want to end up getting soil that had come from a field where it had been treated with chemicals. We make our own compost and add that to our beds, and we also add well-rotted horse manure that we get from a friend. The compost and manure keep our soil in good condition, and we're fortunate that we live in a rural area and have room for compost and have easy access to rotted manure. We maintain a big compost pile, and we also have an Enviro Cycle composter that makes a smaller amount of compost — but makes it faster. We really would encourage you to compost, even if you only have a small space. There's lots of good information on the internet and many good books that will help you get started — if you're not already composting.



One of the Glover's Three Compost Piles Made with Manure from Neighbors' Horses

We've found that raised bed gardening is much, much easier than a traditional garden plot laid out on the ground. There's much less space to weed, and that really is a plus. Planting, weeding, and harvesting are all much easier with raised beds, and the beds really do look beautiful. We have a sturdy, electrified fence built entirely around our raised bed garden. Raccoons,

groundhogs, deer, rabbits, squirrels, and other bandits would take everything if we didn't have our electric fence. We use a solar charger to electrify the fence, and we have electric wires at three levels--low, middle, and top--so that no matter what size the animal, it won't be able to sneak in under the electric fence. You may not need this where you live--but just be prepared for critters that may want to gobble up your garden! We have strawberries and black raspberries, too, and we cover them with bird netting to keep the birds out. Otherwise, we'd get very few berries to eat!

I'm sure there's much more that I haven't thought to write down, but enough for now. These are things that have worked well for us, but I'm sure that you'll find your own methods that will work well for you.



Rod Glover's Portable Sawmill

Gardening Tip



When one catches Squash Bugs and Japanese Beetles, you usually place them in a jar of soapy water to kill them.

However, If you don't replace the water occasionally, it begins to stink. Marsha Ward suggests to use vinegar instead of water. Works great! Vinegar by itself does not kill the bugs very fast. So just add a few drops of soap or dish detergent to the vinegar. You can use the same jar all season if you wish and have a jar of pickled bugs at the end of the season.

IOGA's October Meeting to Include Tour of IMA Oldfields Estate Gardens

IOGA's meeting October 16 will include a tour of the Oldfields Estate gardens at the Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA). The newly restored gardens were originally installed in the early 1920's by the famous Olmsted Brothers who also designed the gardens at the Biltmore, the Vanderbilt estate in North Carolina. The IMA did extensive research to maintain an appearance of what existed originally, but allowing some flexibility to use modern cultivars if they look like historic varieties. For example, the disease resistant apples *Goldrush* and *Enterprise* are more disease resistant than the traditional varieties that were originally used but their appearance is similar. The IMA researched planting lists from the original garden plans, copies of seed catalogues from 1914-1933, and period photos including those in magazines. Though not a strictly organic garden, they are committed to using no herbicides and hopefully no non-organic fungicides or insecticides.

There are gooseberry and current bushes, commonly used as garden hedges through the 1930's. Instead of the original black currants, the 1952 variety *Consort* will be used since the original variety is the alternate host for the White Pine Blister Rust. White squash were popular including *Golden Hubbard* for which seed is still available. White veggies were en vogue. Heirloom seeds such as the cucumber *White Wonder* introduced by Burpee in 1893 are still available from heirloomseeds.com. Early White Bush summer squash (patty pan squash) was also planted. Heirloom tomato *Brandywine* is being replaced by the less crack-prone Polish immigrant *Soldacki* (1900). There were beans – pole, bush, green, wax, shell and lima. Other vegetables used were celery, sweet corn, radishes, beets, peas, onions, cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, rhubarb, and asparagus. Broccoli was NOT planted and was an extreme novelty at the time. One quarter of the 3,000 square foot garden at the estate was perennials (rhubarb, strawberries and asparagus). This restoration began in 2008 with the first planting in spring, 2009. Along with the vegetables, flowers such as iris, mums, phlox, tulips, lilies, cannas and peonies were also planted.

Less than a dozen estates designed by Olmstead Brothers are still intact. This is a real gem, and the restored gardens will be a treat for IOGA to enjoy!!

Editors Corner

Archive of Past IOGA Newsletters

With the help of IOGA members Virginia Blume and Beulah & Clarence Cobb, we have accumulated an archive of past IOGA newsletters from 1979 to the present. However, we are still missing some issues, a couple of which are recent. If any IOGA member has any of the following IOGA newsletter issues, we would appreciate getting a copy:

2006/01 (Winter)
2001/07 (Summer)
1990/10 (Fall)
1986/07 (Summer)
1985/10 (Winter)
1985/07 (Summer)
1983/10 (Fall)
1982/10 (Fall)
1981/01 (Winter)
1980/10 (Fall)
1980/07 (Summer)
Any before 1979-07 (Summer)

Electronic Version of the IOGA Newsletter

IOGA currently has 90 single and dual members. Of the 90 members, 52 receive only the electronic version of the newsletter (58%). In addition 11 out of the 12 complimentary copies of the IOGA newsletter are sent electronically. That saves about \$48 postage and printing per each issue over what it would be if all newsletters were sent via "snail mail".



Okra

Help! We grew way too much okra this summer. Does anyone have any good okra recipes? If so, please send them to us. Thanks!



Memories from the Past

Indiana Organic Growers Association*

Displays at the 1987-1994 Indiana State Fairs



1993 State Fair Entry - First Prize (\$200)
By George C. & Florrie "Chris" Sears

Lately IOGA's outreach efforts has been our IOGA booth at the Flower & Patio Show and other green type events.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s IOGA had displays each year in the Manufactures Building at the Indiana State fair.

Unlike our current IOGA booth, the displays at the State Fair were unmanned. They were on topics like mulching and composting.

The displays received ribbons with monetary awards.

1994 was the last year IOGA was at the State Fair. The Fair discontinued these exhibits after that year.

*IOGA formally changed its name in 2003 from the Indiana Organic Growers Association to the Indiana Organic Gardeners Association



1989 State Fair Entry - First Prize



Part of the 1994 State Fair Entry - Third Prize
By George C. & Florrie "Chris" Sears



Part of the 1987 State Fair Entry -
Second Prize - Artificial Fruit on Balls



Part of the 1988 State Fair Entry -
Second Prize - By Chris Eickleberry

Ask us...!

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New IOGA Members

Peter Oren, Columbus, IN 47201
Angela Herrmann, Indianapolis, IN 46206
Karen, Katie, & Rebecca Morgan,
New Castle, IN 47362



UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mark your calendar

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

October 16, 2010
January 15, 2011
April 16, 2011
(Plant Auction)
July 16, 2010



Treasurer's Report

3rd Quarter 2010

Opening Balance July 1, 2010 **\$1468.82**

Income

Membership Dues \$ 32.00

Total **\$ 32.00**

Expenses

Newsletter \$ 23.40

Misc.—Stamps \$ 17.60

Hosting Gratuity \$ 50.00

Kelly Funk Recovery Fund \$ 100.00

Total **\$ 191.00**

Closing Balance Sept. 30, 2010 **\$1309.82**

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:

I O G A
7282 E 550 S
Whitestown, IN 46075

Please include ALL of the following information:

Full Name
2nd Name (if dual membership)
Address
Phone Number
Email Address

I prefer my newsletter to be ___ emailed ___ mailed.

IOGA
Meeting
Sat. Oct. 16
11:00 am

Lunch & Meeting at Spurgeon Farm
2500 W. 42nd St., Indianapolis, IN 46228
Followed by Tour of Oldfields Estate Gardens
At the Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA)
4000 Michigan Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46208

11:00	Arrive at Spurgeon Farm
11:15—12:00	Great Pitch-in Lunch (bring food to share plus table service)
12:00— 1:00	Introductions & Gardening Q&A
1:00— 1:15	Business Meeting
1:15— 1:30	Drive to IMA
1:30	Tour of Oldfields Estate Gardens Begins

Join us for lunch and meeting at Spurgeon Farm, home of IOGA member Marilyn Spurgeon, and see Marilyn's lovely vegetable & flower gardens. Following lunch and meeting, we will caravan 10 minutes to the Oldfields Estate Gardens at the IMA. After the garden tour, return to Marilyn's if you wish to dig up perennials she is dividing (bring a shovel & plastic grocery bags). On the tour at the IMA, we will see the newly restored gardens at the Oldfields-Lilly House. The gardens were installed in the early 1920's by the famous Olmsted Brothers. (See article in this newsletter about the gardens.)

For the pitch-in lunch, bring a favorite dish filled with food to share and your plate, fork, and drink. **Also, bring chairs!**

To Spurgeon Farm: Take I-65 to 38th St., then go north on Kessler Blvd. for a short distance to 42nd St. Turn right on 42nd St. Look for a white mailbox soon after a bridge near Cooper Rd. Turn left into Spurgeon Farm and follow the road up to the house. To IMA: Following the lunch and meeting, go back to 38th St. and go east (left) to the 38th St. museum entrance (first light after the river) and turn left into the IMA. Then turn right and follow the signs to the greenhouse parking lot.

Everyone welcome! Questions, call Paula Boone 317-758-4789 or cell phone (if lost) 317-453-9773.

Hoosier Organic Gardener
Claudia and Ron Clark, editors
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Join us!
And bring a friend
IOGA Meeting
Sat. Oct. 16