



Hoosier Organic Gardener

OCT 2007

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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.

The 100 Mile Diet: My Personal Journal

Part Three

by Ann Leatherman

I have thought and thought about how to implement the concepts of the One Hundred Mile Diet into my family's food and nutrition plan, without causing financial chaos, and outright rejection from the family members who will be most affected. Whatever I do, I have to have my husband's buy-in or he will go out and purchase just such items that I would ban from the household and totally thwart any chance of success. Also, my college-aged child would no doubt be concerned about any decrease in her monthly allowance from the Bank of Mom.



Time is also an issue. In addition, the financial costs need consideration. I already have added about 15% to my food budget just trying to get organic food products for the bulk of the food I eat. Trying to purchase with the limits of organic and local could add another 10-15 % to my food budget; difficult decisions with the cost of higher education these days.

Here is my plan to date:

- I will plan menus and shop for products, particularly fruits and vegetables that are in season in our local climate. I plan to continue to use the local Farmer's markets weekly throughout the year.
- I have extended my concept of local to include the following for practical purposes: (A) local includes the four states with shared borders with Indiana for certain products that may be hard to get within the 100-mile limit but are available within 300 miles or so. (B) Local includes the United States for fruits and

vegetables like oranges and grapefruit (in season only) that are not available at all in the Midwest. (C) Bread baked locally from U.S. wheat or other grains is acceptable as an extension of my concept of local. At least I am supporting local business.

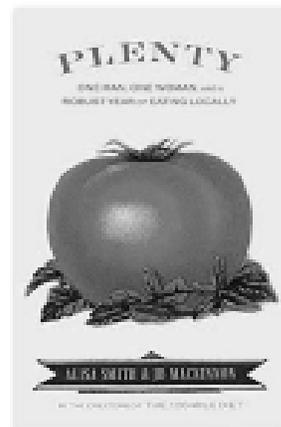
- While organic products are preferred, I have decided to buy local non organic when organic is not available, and will continue to suggest, encourage those suppliers to try transitioning to organic.
- For supplies such as tea, coffee, sugar, and other items that often have to come from other countries my goal is to access products that come from Fair Trade Companies, and organic if possible.
- My husband and I are already in discussions about next year's vegetable garden and changes we might make in what and how much we grow to meet our needs.

I have already placed a home canner on my Christmas wish list and have asked my mother-in-law to teach me to can next year.

I will read *Plenty*, the book by Alisa Smith and J. B.

Mackinnon who ate food raised or grown within only 100 miles of their Vancouver for a full year. Maybe it will go on my Christmas wish list.

Please help me with ideas and suggestions and I will keep you posted on our activities through additional articles.



More info: www.100milediet.org

Ann Leatherman is a long time IOGA member who composts in Indianapolis.



Above left: Suzanne Stevens is excited about a plant in Marilyn's border garden.

Above: Marilyn Spurgeon takes her tool cart with her when she works in her garden.



Left: IOGA members and guests enjoy the tour around the garden.



Left: The huge vegetable and flower gardens are impressive!



Spurgeon Farm

July 2007



Marilyn and Charles Spurgeon hosted our July meeting. The property, situated in the heart of Indy among rolling hills shaded by old growth trees, makes a perfect setting for a variety of native plants. The flat and open area provides for Charles' nut trees and Marilyn's mammoth vegetable garden.



Above and left: Charles Spurgeon demonstrated grafting techniques to the interested crowd.

Right: Marilyn Spurgeon shows her favorite hoe to IOGA members.

NATURE

Silence of the Bees

Oct. 28, 8 p.m. on Nature, PBS,
 "Silence of the Bees"

Honeybees from the beginning have played a key role in human survival. Most fruit trees and vegetable species are entirely dependent on bees to produce, and there's no artificial replacement for natural pollination. But the bees are disappearing. Massive die-offs, first reported in November 2006, are now the subject of international emergency research as scientists race to discover the cause of this ecological disaster. Could it be a disease? Is it caused by pesticides, genetically modified foods or radiation from cell phone towers? Whatever is happening, we must solve the mystery and correct the problem soon or face unimaginable consequences.



IOGA Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2007

The meeting was held at the home of Charles and Marilyn Spurgeon. Linda Rosier called the meeting to order at 11:30 in a lovely outdoor setting shaded by old trees. First on the agenda was the committee to nominate officers to serve 2008 and 2009. Linda has agreed to chair the committee, other members are Ann Leatherman and Pam Sims. Maria Smietana has agreed to accept the nomination for treasurer for another term. Anyone interested in serving on the board please contact Linda.

The Web Committee, currently headed by Linda Rosier, is planning on an update of our website. Hilary Cox agreed to man the IOGA booth for Conservation Day at the Zoo on Sunday, September 16th

Marie Smietana reported that IOGA raised over \$250 in a fundraiser partnered with Wild Oats. Thanks to Maria, Kathy Mascari, Constance Ferry and Lynn Sullivan for their efforts. A questions and answer session followed the business meeting.

After lunch, the group toured the Spurgeon's extensive gardens. There were wooded areas to view native woodland plants; Marilyn's lovely cultivated vegetable/flower garden and Charles's nut trees. It was a delightful, educational experience.

Suzanne Stevens,
 Secretary

Treasurer's Report—3rd Quarter 2007

Opening Balance June 20, 2007 **\$1966.02**

Income

Membership Dues	\$102.00
Donations with Dues	\$5.00
CarmelFest Fundraiser	\$468.99
<u>Bank Interest—June-Aug</u>	<u>\$6.90</u>
Total	\$582.89

Expenses

July 07 Newsletter	\$141.40
Printing-Gardening with Nature	\$12.00
<u>Lapsed Member Mailing</u>	<u>\$52.65</u>
Total	\$206.05

Closing Balance September 30, 2007 **\$2342.86**

Respectfully submitted by Maria Smietana, Treasurer

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mark your calendar

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



January 19, 2008
 April 19, 2008
 July 19, 2008
 October 18, 2008

Imagine the future—Green!



by Rosie Bishop,
president

Most serious gardeners know and live Einstein's assertion that "Imagination is more important than knowledge." I'd say, at least as important, but I won't quibble with a genius. When the brittle leaves of October call us to safeguard their treasure and nodding seed heads promise "winter interest," food for birds and gifts for friends, we can picture tender shoots and fragrant blossoms of May. I also imagine little beneficial insects snoozing peacefully inside dried stems, at rest after the summer garden pest patrol with their tiny security badges hanging nearby.

Yes, an active imagination is a gift for the gardener. But imagination can also envision Indiana gardens chilled and still in January. J-J-J-January! By then our gorgeous green gardens are but composted memories. Ambitious New Year Resolutions are stirring. And cabin fever begins to bring on the itch for seed and shoot and loamy soil. Dream on, Dear Member of IOGA! Like a kid grabbing a sled, "lettuce" go see tender blossoming pea vines, linger over a patch of greens and herbs and savor a healthy meal of locally grown foods. This dream's for REAL!

Meanwhile, in his market garden in Carmel, a lifelong organic gardener and Indianapolis trade show producer, Todd Jameson, was plotting his own dreams for a similar event. Todd has been a friend of IOGA since he invited us to booth space at the Flower and Patio Show. When the two projects joined forces it was like Monarch Mama meets milkweed meadow—a natural match. This dream is happening folks, so, please mark your calendar, be ready to help and tell your friends.

Todd "thinks Indianapolis, though lagging behind trends on the East and West coasts, may have reached a critical mass when it comes to interest in all things healthy and green." (The Indianapolis Business Journal, 9/07) That dream has been at the heart of our IOGA mission. "These days people are very concerned about their personal health, the state of the environment and simply living a better life,"

NATURAL LIVING EXPO



Indiana State Fairgrounds,
January 11-13
www.naturallivingexpo.net



It is in the works and growing as I write and you read. And your ideas are welcome.

When I first heard my good friend, John Gibson, utter, "**Sustainable Indiana 2016**" my jaw dropped and my imagination stre-e-e-etched. I recall the moment and exactly where I was sitting. John is a serious fellow who pursues goals with vigor, so I took it in. Yet, it was some time before I could let my imagination embrace the idea. "Why not Indiana?" John asked. And thus began planning sessions for a sustainable living fair in 2008. I eagerly joined with spirited visionaries from myriad fields whose hopes and ideas watered the seeds of John's dream.

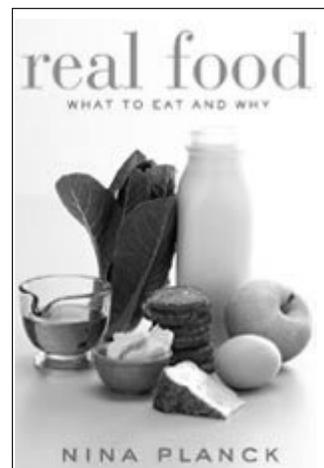
Todd says. He envisions old rustbelt factories sprouting new green businesses such as Sun Rise Solar Inc. in Warsaw, with its burgeoning sales of solar attic fans.

IOGA has a major opportunity to impact the entire event with an organic garden at the main entrance—a prime location to showcase sustainable practices we have long advocated. What would you dream for an educational, inspiring organic garden? *Send ideas to any of the officers or to member/landscape designer, Hilary Cox.* Let your own imaginings stir and honor the genius in us all.

RESOLVE TO BE INVOLVED as a new year's gift to yourself and those who will follow.

Real Food, What to Eat and Why

by Nina Planck,
Bloomsbury USA
2006, paperback, \$14.95



Against some of the current opinions of healthy thinking, author Nina Planck does not consider butter, beef and whole milk the nemesis of a healthy diet. In fact, she relates, people have enjoyed these foods for generations without the harmful effects that modern day doctors blame on these foods.

Raised on a farm in Virginia, Plank ate an abundance of fresh foods at every meal. Going through adolescent diet phases, she tested vegan, vegetarian and lo-fat regimens. Her health, moods, and weight



changes instinctively told her something was not right. Her conclusions: 1) humans are omnivores, not vegetarians; 2) chemicals and industrial foods, especially the artificial sugars and fats, are not good for us; 3) “real” foods in appropriate quantities are necessary for health.

Plank now touts whole milk, butter, eggs, grass-fed beef, as well as the expected whole grains and abundant organic vegetables and fruits. And, oh yes, chocolate...real chocolate! According to Planck, it's clear from our history as hunters/gatherers, that humans are omnivores, and as such,

we should be both adaptive and responsible. We need to understand why we survived well for thousands of years without the dominant plagues of heart disease and cancer. Both became rampant, she claims, after introduction of industrial foods and chemicals. Her conclusions are based not only on her own observations and experience, but also on research,

which is documented with 15 pages of references and a large bibliography. Also helpful in this paperback edition is a glossary of terms, a list of further reading and resources, and especially appreciated, an index.

In her nearly 300 page lively and logical discourse, Plank relates numerous stories and experiences, and

includes the necessary back-up data. She tackles industrial fats including margarine and other commercially concocted saturated, unsaturated, and trans, after which she extols butter, olive oil, lard, even (gasp!) coconut and palm oils. She justifies her support with a serious discussion of cholesterol and puts some of the blame on (surprise!) political lobbying and commercial advertising.

Beef, eggs, milk, fish and cheese all receive the same analysis and discussion, the result being an enlightening book on how our national health has been controlled, not so much by nutritional needs as

by industry desires. And what about her love for chocolate? Plank states, “I have a new respect for chocolate, which I consider one of the great food-drugs, along with wine and cayenne peppers.” It's a style of well-being I can live with!

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www.IndianaLivingGreen.com*

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The praying mantis, which belongs to the Order Mantodea and the family Mantidae, is a master of disguise. These six legged, stick-like insects are perfectly colored to blend into surrounding foliage. Their survival depends upon it as they are a favorite food of birds and other predators. There is actually some debate amongst



Damian Sherling

Male praying mantis

organic gardeners as to whether or not mantises (also known as mantids) are beneficial. Mantids are predators—pure and simple. If hordes of Mexican bean beetles are defoliating your beans, you can bet that nearby mantises will be munching beetles. But if a tasty lacewing or honeybee flies within snagging distance, don't expect a mantis to pass up such an easy meal. To a mantis, all bugs are good bugs—good to eat, that is.

In the United States, mantises are about 2-6 inches long depending on species. Their colors vary, ranging from light greens to browns. They have a triangular-shaped head with a large compound eye on each side. Their eyes are sensitive to the slightest movement up to 60 feet away. They have straight, leathery forewings and very powerful jaws used for devouring prey. They have incredibly sensitive "ears" on the middle section of their thorax (the part of the body to which legs and wings are attached). They have strong, spiny front legs held together so that it looks as if they are praying. They wait, unmoving and are almost invisible on a leaf or a stem, ready to catch any insect that passes. When potential prey comes close enough, the mantis thrusts its pincher-like forelegs forward to catch it, impaling it on the overlapping spines that line the forelegs. The mantis bites the neck of its prey to paralyze it and begins to devour it. Mantises eat insects and other invertebrates such as other mantises, beetles, butterflies, spiders, crickets, grasshoppers, and even spiders. They also eat vertebrates such as small tree frogs, lizards, mice and hummingbirds.

In this part of the country, breeding season is in early fall. The adult female may consume her own mate, severing the male's head while the pair is in the act of copulation. Severing the head stimulates the male to

Praying Mantis



by Damian Sherling

copulate and keeps him there so he remains in the act. It also guarantees the female that the male is not going to eat her first. After mating, the female will lay groups of 12-400 eggs, in a frothy liquid called an ootheca, which turns into a hard protective mass. Last fall, I witnessed a female mantid laying her ootheca, while the male seemed to stand guard at the base of the shrub. The process of laying the entire ootheca can take several hours, so it will usually be in a somewhat protected location, to avoid predators. The ootheca is the overwintering stage, and then small mantids emerge in the spring. Often, their first meal is a sibling. Young mantids or nymphs, also eat leafhoppers, aphids and small flies. It takes an entire summer for mantids to mature to adulthood, going through several moults in the process. Only one generation develops each season.

As you prepare your yard and garden for winter in the coming months, keep a sharp eye out for praying mantis activity. Mantids have been very abundant this year. If you do find an ootheca, you can safely move it to your garden (tie it to something to keep it off the ground) so that when the young mantids emerge in the spring, they can help keep the early pest populations under control. They will stay in your garden as long as there is enough food to eat. This is a great time of year to observe mantids in your garden. Mantids are at their largest and are feeding



Damian Sherling

Beneficial Beanties

Female laying her ootheca

voraciously in order to have enough energy to produce their ootheca. A praying mantis in action is really something to see.

Damian has his MS in Entomology, and enjoys his backyard garden where he teaches his three young daughters about the wonderful world of insects.

The Compost Chronicles

Diary of a Start-Up Organic Farmer

by Maria Smietana



I love the fall garden. Both nature and the gardener settle into a slower pace, since there's not much left to gain or lose this time of year. I meander among the rows of tomatoes, in air now free of sticky heat and biting insects, knowing that there's little more I can do for the vines I fretted over all summer. Many gave their best fruit long ago, and the lazier ones may very well become compost before they recognize their purpose as crop plants. I pick off a hornworm here and a ripe Lemon Boy or Sun Gold there. Occasionally, I taste-test one for quality (the tomato, not the hornworm). As I sow the fall greens, I realize that in a month, I may have a modest load of spinach and lettuce to take to market, or I may have neat rows of green manure. The date of the first hard frost will decide it all for me. In any case, it makes no sense to save the unused seeds 'til next spring, so I plant them, but not with the hopeful urgency that comes with my spring sowings. Such is the nature of autumn.

Steadfast Spouse meanders outside, gloved and hatted as if ready to make war upon every weed still standing. But after ripping up a few handfuls of foxtail and casually picking a half basket of ripe Romas, he declares himself done and heads house-ward. This, mind you, is the same man who feels that any seed order not post-marked by mid-January is hopelessly tardy. Spring would not be the same without his daily admonitions to get the bean seeds in the ground and the tomato seedlings transplanted from the

moment the vernal equinox slides across the calendar. This is also the man who nearly drags the rototiller through barely-thawed March soil, as if to warm the earth by sheer force of will, and who doggedly spends hours weed-whipping thistles in 90 degree June heat. But in fall, he's a totally different garden creature.

I can't point too many garden-gloved fingers, however, as I now lolly-gag significantly between lettuce planting and tomato tasting. Studying the orb spiders, so prolific this time of year, is perhaps my favorite autumn time-waster. When I get tired of waiting for a hapless moth to fly onto the zigzag landing strip that is such a remarkable feature of many orb webs, I help the process along by sneaking a slow-moving grasshopper into the sticky strands that serve as the spider's pantry. I justify the resulting mayhem by noting that as obligate carnivores, the spiders are simply another tool in my artillery of organic farming methods, and I'm just an efficient meal delivery service. We all gotta eat.

My frequently-used *Golden Guide to Spiders and Their Kin* tells me that North America is home to about 180 species of orb spiders, those colorful weavers of the oft-depicted spiral web, and I'm thrilled that at least five of those species are residents in my gardens. That enlightenment aside, however, I admit I like the *Guide to Spiders* for reasons totally unrelated to its taxonomic utility. More than most of its pocket-size relatives in the extensive

"Golden Guide" library, this volume has a particularly suitable pre-Halloween quality. With its hundreds of full-color, larger than life drawings, it's creepy enough to be entertaining even for those who have no particular interest in identifying the planet's Arachnidae. Need to get even with someone who just happens to fear spiders? Leave a copy under their pillow, and enjoy the ensuing reaction. Don't tell them you got the idea from me.

Once my spiders have been fed and burped, I waste more time by chasing the grasshoppers, which I suspect are partly responsible for the small holes gnawed into the skins of my otherwise picturesque tomatoes. But as I haven't yet caught the nibbling in action, I can't declare them guilty. The grasshoppers are even more prolific this year, and represented in greater variety, than the spiders. To identify them all though, is an activity I think I'll save for another fall as that would require carrying around the *Golden Guide to the Insects*. Even a biologist should never be caught with more than one creepy field guide at a time.

Maria Smietana is a regular vendor at Traders Point Farmers Market where she sells home-baked bread and organically grown vegetables. She gardens in Zionsville, IN and is treasurer of IOGA..



Hunter's Honey Farm
3440 Hancock Ridge Road
Martinsville, IN 46151

(765) 537-9430
www.huntershoneyfarm.com

From Martinsville and points south

From the State Road 39 Bypass take State Road 67 South. Turn right on the first road once you are on State Road 67 South which is Old State Road 67. Turn right on Bain road which will be the first road to your right off of Old 67. Wind through the country side and turn left at the "T" intersection of Bain and Goose Creek Road. After you have turned left you will turn right onto the fourth road to the right which will be Hancock Ridge Road. Go about 3/4 of a mile and look for the beehives and Christmas trees on your left to mark the entrance of Hunter's Honey Farm.

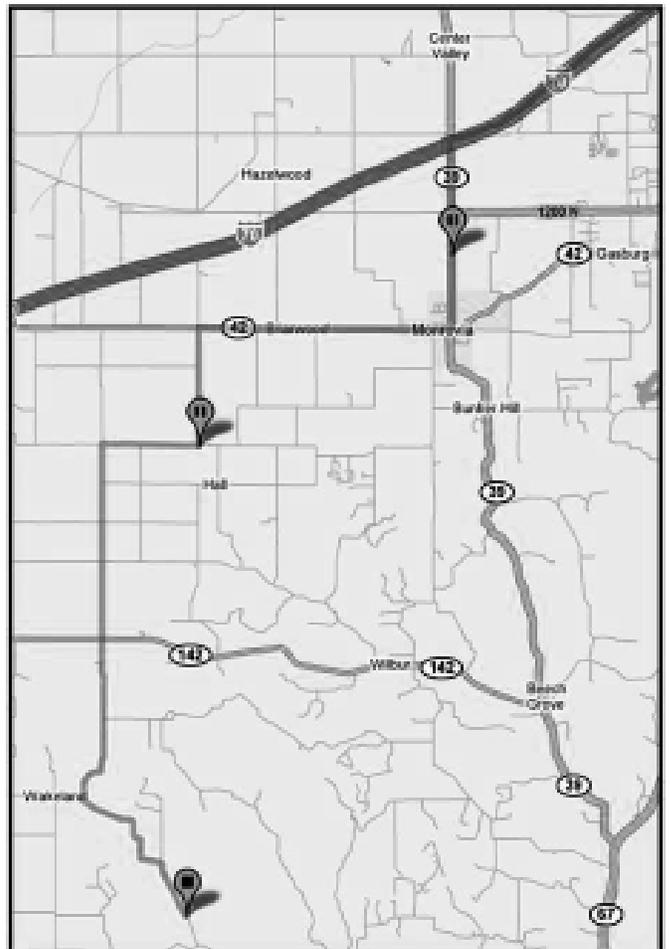


From Indy and points north of Martinsville:



From I-70:

Take State Road 39 South to State Road 42 West (Right Turn). Turn left onto Hall Road and proceed South to the stop sign at Yale Road. Turn right and continue to the stop sign at Herbemont Road. Turn left and continue South on Herbemont Road. You will go through a stop sign at State Road 142 and continue to a yield sign at Hancock Ridge Road. Turn left onto Hancock Ridge. After you pass the church camp and red brick school house, look for the beehives on the right.



SAVE YOUR SEEDS!

IOGA is co-sponsoring a SEED SWAP with Indiana Living Green at the Natural Living Expo on Sun., Jan. 13 at 1:30. If you would like to assist, please contact Lynn Jenkins at 317-769-3456 or LJenks@tds.net

**IOGA
Meeting
Sat. Oct. 20
11:30 to 2:30**

Fall Meeting at Hunter's Honey Farm!

3440 Hancock Ridge Road , Martinsville, IN 46151 (765) 537-9430

- 11:30 – 12:00 Arrive and get acquainted
- 12:00 – 12:45 Pitch-in, Q&A
- 12:45 – 1:30 Update on IOGA programs and activities, Election of board
- 1:30 – 2:30 Honey Barn Tour

Hunter's Honey Farm has been family owned and operated for more than 90 years and three generations. Honey is their main product, but they've also crafted it in many other ways, including beeswax candles, soaps, sauces, candies, and other delicious treats. Their bees also pollinate several crops around the state, making them an invaluable resource to many farmers in Indiana.



Please join us for a pitch-in lunch, a short meeting, then a tour to learn more about the “not-so-secret” life of honeybees. For the pitch-in lunch, please bring a dish to share, as well as your own utensils and beverage. If possible, also bring a lawn chair. Weather permitting, we will be eating and meeting outside.

Maps and directions on page 9

Join us and bring a friend!

Hoosier Organic Gardener
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**JOIN US!
IOGA Meeting
Sat. Oct. 20**