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This friendly jack-o-lantern visited the Master Gardener booth at the October 24th Farmers' Market. The Master Gardeners sponsored a pumpkin carving session for kids, resulting in many fantastic jack-o-lanterns, like the one pictured above. Kudos to Laura Chapel, Diamond Geiger, Celia Knapp and anyone else who assisted in this event.

Next Meeting . . .



November 12, 2009
6:30 p.m. at the Extension Office.

Spice up your wardrobe.

Pat Duffy is taking orders for Master Gardener Apparel. Many items are available with either the Penn State logo or the Master Gardener beehive logo.

The last page of the newsletter contains the order form and information about types, sizes, and costs of apparel.



Q. What do you get when you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter?

Answer: Pumpkin Pi.



New E-DATA system

If you want to learn how to use the new Master Gardener E-data training (for reporting volunteer hours), there will be a video teleconference held on **Thursday, November 12, 2009 at 10:00 – 11:30** at the Cooperative Extension office conference room. Pre-registration is required. Please contact the Extension Office for more information.

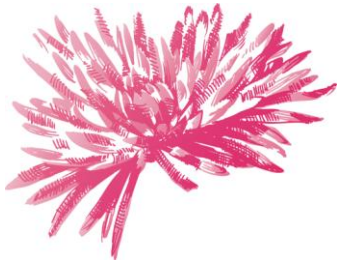
Demonstration Bed

We had a nice turn-out for the annual Master Gardener Demonstration Bed clean-up. These gardeners braved the threatening clouds, cool temperatures, and drizzle to put the demonstration bed to rest. With many helping hands, we were able to complete the clean-up in less than an hour.

Thank you to those who helped with the Demonstration Bed this year.



Chrysanthemum: ubiquitous and hardy By: Christine Jarzab



Chrysanthemum, the ubiquitous autumn flower, has graced our earth for many centuries, having been described in Chinese writing as early as the 15th century B.C.E. Although they are plentiful in today’s gardens, the chrysanthemum did not appear in the Western world until the 1600’s C.E. In the 1700’s, Taxonomist, Carl Linnaeus, described and named this flower by combining the Greek word *chrysos* (gold) with *anthemon* (flower), an apt description of Chrysanthemum varieties available in his era.

Chrysanthemum is a composite flower characterized by ray flowers and disc flowers on the same bloom, although some of the disc flowers are not apparent in certain varieties. Florets take many forms, and have been classified into 13 shapes, including pom-pom, spoon, spider, and anemone. Chrysanthemum is reportedly the largest commercially produced flower in the United States. This is likely due to its lengthy bloom time, capability to bloom on schedule, ease of cultivation, and diversity of bloom colors and forms.

Chrysanthemums are often advertised as “hardy mums”. Although the leaves and flowers are not “hardy” and will die, the roots will survive the winters, if protected. Last autumn I neglected to remove my mums from the garden. The following spring, I was surprised to find the mums poking their heads through the soil. I periodically pinched the stems to stimulate branching and was pleased to enjoy my mums blossom another year.

Although Chrysanthemum is valued for its ease in cultivation, it does occasionally succumb to disease. Common diseases include fusarium wilt, powdery mildew, botrytis, and other stem and leaf rots. This autumn, Virginia quickly quarantined plants infected with chrysanthemum white rust (*Puccinia horiana*), as a wide-spread infestation could adversely affect Virginia’s Chrysanthemum trade. For information about Chrysanthemum diseases, refer to this article: http://www.ppath.cas.psu.edu/EXTENSION/PLANT_DISEASE/pdf%20Flowers/Chrysanthemum%20Diseases.pdf

Resources: National Chrysanthemum Society

Legends of Immortality.

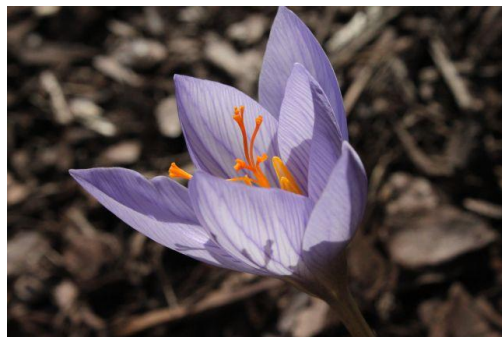
According to Chinese legend, an herb that could bestow immortality grew on Dragonfly Island. This herb could only be picked by the youth. An elderly emperor sent a convoy of youths to this island to obtain this herb. To much disappointment, the youth arrived at a deserted island devoid of the magic herb. They returned only with a golden flower – the chrysanthemum, which became the symbol of China for many centuries.

In a legend similar to Orpheus and Eurydice, Japanese legend claims that when the heavens became overcrowded, Izanagi and Izanami were sent to earth. The goddess, Izanami, perished when creating the god of fire. Izanagi followed her into the Black Night. As she came into his vision, he was pursued by an old witch. Izanagi fled back to earth where he cleansed himself in the river. Before bathing, he removed his jewels and dropped them onto the ground. The jewels turned into three flowers – the iris, the lotus, and the golden chrysanthemum.

Resource: <http://www.flowers.org.uk/>



Grow Your Own Gold By Dan Sorensen



“Money doesn't grow on trees” is a common aphorism often used to persuade impecunious teenagers that their parents just don't have the money to fund their every desire. But in some cases agricultural crops can be so valuable that their cultivation is nearly as profitable as growing money. Saffron is one of those crops. It is the most expensive spice in the world, and is easily grown in Pennsylvania. It is actually a kind of crocus, *Crocus sativa*, that produces grass-like leaves in the spring, goes dormant during the hot dry summer, and produces one or more light lavender blossoms in the fall. The part that is

harvested is the three orange-red stigmas attached to the style in the blossom. Depending on the variety, it takes between 50,000 and 225,000 stigmas to produce a pound of dried saffron valued at as much as \$5000 retail. This can be grown in an area about the size of a football field.

Saffron is an ancient crop that has been valued for medicinal, culinary and aesthetic reasons for thousands of years. It is mentioned in the Song of Solomon (Song of Songs) in the Old Testament. Pigments from saffron have been found in 50,000 year-old cave paintings. Its many uses, high value and consistent demand have ensured that it has played a colorful role in finance and politics throughout history. Alexander the Great used to bathe in saffron infusions to help heal his battle wounds, and later Cleopatra used it the same way, but as an aphrodisiac. The Phoenicians treated ninety illnesses with saffron based medicines. They also used it as a dye. During the Black Death plague in the 1400's it was so much in demand for treatment of the disease, when an 800 pound shipment was hijacked, it sparked a fourteen-week long Saffron War. During the American colonial period the price of saffron was established at the price of gold. Amish farmers in eastern Pennsylvania began producing it in the early 18th century and Lancaster County remains the main saffron producing region in the United States. Because of its high value, less than honest merchants and producers have regularly been caught adulterating the product with turmeric or powdered safflower blossoms. During the reign of Henry the Eighth, the penalty for saffron fraud was death, usually by burning at the stake or being buried alive with the product. Although the penalties are less severe today, the practice of adulteration continues.

Saffron plants thrive if planted in loose, well-drained soils with a high organic content in a sunny location. They appreciate abundant moisture in spring and fall, and are especially tolerant of summer drought as they are dormant at that time. Too much moisture will encourage rot and leaf rust. Plant the corms 3 to 6 inches deep. Deeper planting produces higher quality but lower yield and is advisable in colder climates for improved winter survival. Mammalian pests are the same as for other bulb crops and include mice, rabbits, chipmunks, and voles. Occasionally some birds such as crows may dig recently planted corms.



The cultivated saffron plant is sterile so must be propagated by division of the corms, which is a good thing since the harvested part is also the part that would produce the seed. A corm only lives one year, then produces new cormlets which are dug, divided and replanted. A large corm can produce several flowers in a season. Harvesting of the stigmas is done at full bloom, preferably in the morning shortly after the flower has opened. The three-part stigma may be removed in the field, or the entire blossom may be cut and the stigma removed later. They then may be used fresh or dried at room temperature and stored in an airtight container in a dark place.

How then do you use saffron? A few threads of saffron can be steeped with your favorite tea to give it a new spicier flavor. Saffron threads should be crushed and steeped in hot water for up to 12 hours before use. This allows the best flavor to develop. Some very frugal chefs have been known to use the flavored water and dry the saffron threads for reuse. Saffron powder can be added directly to recipes without the need for the steeping process. Rice dishes are a favorite for adding flavor and color with saffron. A search on Google.com for “saffron recipes” will yield hundreds of hits.



Plant Hardiness Zone Maps by Christine Jarzab

With autumn passing through our area, signifying winter’s approach, I paused to think about the plant hardiness zone map. In particular, I was remembering how those “hardy in zone 5” crepe myrtles my mother planted last year were not hardy. Wondering where the hardiness zones originated, I did some research, only to find that hardiness zones are not an exact science, are often misunderstood, and have caused caustic debate among gardeners.

Hardiness Zone Maps. There are hardiness zone maps for nearly every area in the world. In the United States, the first hardiness map was developed in the 1960’s by the USDA Agricultural Research Services. This map, most recently revised in 1990, identifies 11 zones, with zones being 10°F warmer/colder than their neighboring zone. Most zones are further divided into “a” and “b” zones that are separated by 5°F.

The 1990 USDA map is the most widely used map, however, other organizations have also published maps. A 2006 map published by the National Arbor Day Foundation (NADF) received a chilly reception. This map relied upon temperatures recorded between 1990 and 2004. Critics denounced this map as based upon data gathered during an unusually warm period. Some predicted massive plant demise due to erroneous plant selection by big box shoppers. I suspect much of the criticism arose from the NADF’s use of the map to make a dramatic, political statement about global warming.

A less contentious and highly popular map has been published by Sunset. Although this map was historically reserved for the 13 Western states, Sunset now published hardiness zone recommendations for all of the States. The Sunset zones are considered by many to be more precise because Sunset accounts for a multitude of factors, such as latitude, elevation, and continental air influence. Sunset boasts that whereas the USDA map will only tell you whether your plant



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is expected to survive the winter, Sunset’s map will tell you whether your plant will thrive in your climate.

Warren County’s zone depends upon the map one reads. The USDA map generally places us in zone 5a (-15°F to -20°F), whereas the NADF map assigns us to zone 6 (-10°F to -20°F). Sunset assigns Warren County to Zone 40, with low temperatures ranging from -10°F to -20°F and rainy, warm, variably humid weather that is affected by Lake Erie.

What is a gardener to do? Plant performance depends upon many factors, including temperature, day length, light, precipitation, humidity, and soil conditions. In selecting plants, gardeners need to be aware of the plants’ optimal environment and select plants that prefer the conditions present in the intended garden location.

Zones are an important factor. Remember that zones identify the “average annual minimum temperatures” in each zone. These temperatures are not the lowest temperature that will ever be reached in your zone, but rather are the lowest annual temperatures recorded during a period of years. Thus, a plant may be labeled for your zone, but an unusually cold winter may kill the plant.

Lastly, sometimes it is okay to ignore hardiness zones. Hardiness zones really matter only if you desire the plant to survive more than one season. Most gardeners select plants that are not hardy for their area, knowing that they will not survive the winter (i.e. the so-called “annuals”).

Resources: USDA Hardiness map: <http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/ushzmap.html>; National Arbor Day Foundation map: <http://www.arborday.org/media/zones.cfm>; Sunset Hardiness map: <http://www.sunset.com>

Keep On Gardening With Your Radio By Dan Sorensen

Although the growing season has ended and Winter is preparing to hammer us with his icy fist, we gardeners can still satisfy our garden lust by listening to gardening programs on the radio. In most cities there are AM radio stations that provide interesting shows dedicated to the gardener's interests, usually on Saturday or Sunday mornings. Although we in Warren County are outside the primary broadcast range of most of these stations, with a good radio we can listen in to the stations in the nearest metropolitan areas to get ideas for next year's gardening experience. And now, with the Internet, even if our radios fail us, we can still listen to all of these shows, sometimes at times more convenient for us. Even if neither option is available to you, if you happen to be traveling on a weekend morning, tune to the AM band on your car radio and find one of these or other shows to enhance your gardening experience. What follows is a short list of programs in no particular order that you are most likely able to hear in Warren County. Next month we will provide a listing of gardening television shows you can watch. -DS

CFZM 740 Toronto

This station is the most distant station on our list, but it has one of the best signals partly due to its 50,000 watt transmitter. It can be heard live online at <http://zoomerradio.ca/>. If you can hear it, be sure to check out its music programming during the week, especially if you are from the baby boomer



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generation and earlier.

Saturday 9AM-10AM The Garden Show with Charlie Dobbin. Charlie is an internationally known horticulturist and landscape designer. During her two-decade career, she has become well known for her professional gardening seminars and demonstrations, as well as for her prolific articles in newspapers and magazines on the subject.

On HGTV, Charlie co-hosted the very successful show ONE GARDEN, TWO LOOKS, and is a popular guest on a multitude of other television shows where she dispenses practical and entertaining gardening tips. In 2002, Charlie started her own design and horticultural consulting company, Garden Solutions by Charlie Dobbin. She is also the Horticultural Director for Canada Blooms, Toronto's celebrated Flower and Garden Festival. Charlie also presents a daily garden tip at 3:30 PM every weekday on the same station.

**WJTN 1240
Jamestown**

This is the most "local" station in this list. It should be audible in most of the county, especially the north. The broadcast is also available on the internet at <http://wjtn.radiojamestown.com>

Saturday, 7:30-8:00 AM Let's Get Growing with Adrienne Ploss. Adrienne brings nearly 20 years' experience working in different facets of the horticulture industry and has had her own landscape business for the past seven years, creating Garden Works in 2004. Her horticultural experience includes working for nurseries, garden centers, landscape contractors, and a public garden. She holds an AAS in Nursery Management/Landscape Development from Alfred State College, a BS in Ornamental Horticulture from Cornell University and an MS in Education from Purdue University. During the winter Adrienne teaches horticulture classes through community and continuing education programs. In addition, she lectures on gardening-related topics, and writes articles on gardening. The program can also be heard at any time at <http://www.adriennesgardenworks.com/radio.php>

**CHML 900
Hamilton, ONT**

Another 50,000 watt Canadian station that has an excellent signal into the northern part of the county. Listen live online at <http://www.900chml.com/>

Saturday, 9 AM -11 AM, Room to Grow hosted by **Rob Howard**, garden writer from the Hamilton Spectator and Terra Greenhouses Garden Coach **Laura Bitner**. Let's share some dirt on gardening! Talk with Rob & Laura every Saturday morning and share your successes with gardeners newer to the hobby. Download podcasts to listen at your convenience at <http://www.900chml.com/Station/RoomtoGrow.aspx>

**WKBN 570
Youngstown, OH**

This station provides a fairly good signal into the southwest part of the county with only a 5000 watt transmitter because of its position on the AM band. Listen live online at <http://www.570wkbn.com/>

12 noon -1:00PM Saturday All That Grows with Phil Steiner. Phil has hosted this program for 17 years. He was the Head Horticulturalist of Mellinger's Garden Center and mail-order nursery for 25 years and served as their president for the last 15 of those years. He is currently working independently in landscape



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maintenance and consultation. He is known throughout the Mahoning Valley as the gardening answer man.

KDKA 1020 Pittsburgh

This was the first commercial radio station in the United States. The clear channel 50,000 watt signal is strongest in the southern half of the county, but it can always be heard on the Internet at <http://www.kdkradio.com/>

Sunday, 7 AM – 8 AM The Organic Gardeners -Encompassing all aspects of gardening, The Organic Gardener is a radio program tailored to home gardeners of all skill levels. Co-hosted by **Doug Oster** and **Jessica Walliser**, the show explores a weekly topic through casual discussions, occasional banter and a lot of laughs. Podcasts of the show are available for download at <http://www.theorganicgardeners.com/>

WTAM 1000 Cleveland

Broadcasting from the eastern edge of the midwest, this is another 50,000 watt powerhouse with the strongest signal in the western part of the county. (This station has had four callsign changes in my lifetime.) Available live online at <http://www.wtam.com/>

Sunday, 9 AM – 10 AM In The Garden with Ron Wilson For thousands of gardeners in the Midwest, Ron Wilson is the man to know when it comes to lawn and garden questions. Whether it's crabgrass, dandelions, or tomato plants, Ron is a manager for one of Ohio's premiere nursery/ landscape companies and the past President of the Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association. He has used his OSU education to be a "green industry" expert for over 30 years, and you can tap his knowledge. His show is live Saturdays from 6 AM to 9 AM on 25 other stations. You can hear the full three hours from his home station in Cincinnati by clicking on the podcast button at the top of this page: <http://www.ronwilsononline.com/>

WBEN 930 Buffalo, NY

A 5000 watt daytime signal that is usually easily heard in most of Warren County. Live audio is available at <http://www.wben.com/>

Saturday 11 AM – Noon The Home Garden Show with Ken Brown





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Master Gardener Clothing -- Order Form

Most items are navy with white embroidery logos. Some items are also available in white with navy lettering. Sizes are unisex, but run closer to men's sizes. The polo shirt, T-shirt, and denim shirt have a small logo over the heart. You have a choice of either the Penn State logo and the words Master Gardener or the words Penn State, Master Gardener, and the beehive logo. In the description specify either with beehive or without beehive. The apron and the sweatshirt have a full chest logo and are not available with the beehive.

Samples will be at the extension office until November 12th. The samples are for sale.

Polo Shirt – Navy with logo SMLXL - \$17.00 XXL - \$19.00 XXXL - \$21.00	Sweat Shirt – Navy or White SMLXL - \$21.00 XXL - \$23.00 XXXL - \$25.00
T-Shirt, short sleeve – Navy or White – with logo SMLXL - \$10.00 XXL - \$11.50 XXXL - \$13.00	Apron with 2 pockets - Navy or White One size fits all - \$13.00
T- Shirt , long sleeve – Navy or White – with logo SMLXL - \$12.00 XXL - \$14.00	Denim Shirt – long sleeve – Ladies or Mens – with logo (Men’s has chest pocket, Ladies does not) SMLXL \$19.00 XXL \$22.00 XXXL \$24.00
Fleece Jacket - Navy SMLXL - \$29.00 XXL - \$31.00 XXXL - \$33.00	

Description	Qty	Color	Size	Price	Total

Total _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Make checks payable to Joe De Pue/Quik Stitch (610-863-9166 quikstitch@yahoo.com)

Orders due by November 12,2009 Please bring orders to the November meeting or mail to: Pat Duffy, 1 Glorie Lane, Warren, PA 16365

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