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The Pittsfield Villager

FEBRUARY 2017

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1st Annual Chili Cook-Off

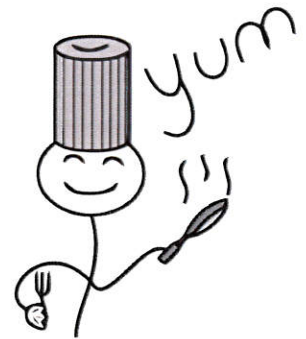
Saturday, February 25th at 3:00pm.

DON'T MISS OUT!

We have room for more Chili Cooks! Please be sure to let us know if you plan to participate to show off your culinary skills. Simply email the Village Office by February 15th. office@pittsfieldvillage.com

Thank you in advance for your participation — whether you're stirring the pot or sampling it.

Call Barb De Longchamp at 734-395-4974
with questions.



Tim Clarkson



On January 20th, the PV staff said "Farewell" to one of their own. Tim Clarkson, who has been a dedicated site maintenance technician for over 10 years here at Pittsfield Village, has retired. He plans to spend time with his beautiful wife, enjoy some much-deserved downtime, and has plans to travel. We will miss his quick wit and technical knowledge, and wish him well in all his future endeavors!


GREEN SPACES • GREAT NEIGHBORS

In the Garden

Lisa Joseph, Staff Horticulturist

Ever since I was a kid, I've been fascinated with worms. My next adventure is vermicomposting, the practice of using worms in an indoor container to turn organic waste into nutrient-rich fertilizer. Worms eat their body weight in food every day, leaving a trail of rich, earthy-smelling humus for their human friends to collect and feed to their plants. The worms that are used in these waste converters are Red Wigglers (*Eisenia fetida*), the most aggressive at breaking down organic materials.

VERMICOMPOSTING PROCESS:

The basics you will need to get started are an aerated container, moist bedding, and about 1,000 red wiggler worms. A good bin size for a 1 to 2-person household is 8" x 2' x 2'. Red worms tend to be surface feeders rather than deep burrowers, so a shallow bin with a large surface area is perfect. Aeration is essential, so if you choose to use a plastic bin, drill holes into the sides of the bin to allow for needed air movement.

After the bedding is prepared, add the worms and gently spread them around. Give them about a day

Bedding material must be able to hold moisture, allow air exchange, and provide a safe medium without harmful chemicals. Some acceptable bedding options are shredded corrugated cardboard, hand torn newspaper into 1" wide strips, shredder paper, leaf mold, and animal manure.

Add the bedding to the bottom of the bin. Mix in a couple handfuls of soil from your garden beds (not potting soil). The garden soil provides grit, which helps the worms to digest food scraps, and it introduces microorganisms into the worm bin that aid in decomposition. Pour in enough water so that the bedding feels like a wrung-out sponge but is not dripping wet. After the bedding is prepared, add the worms and gently spread them around. Give them about a day to burrow into the bedding, then dig a small hole and drop your garbage

"The summer of 2017 is going to be the year that I finally add an abundant amount of cutting flowers to my garden."

REMINDERS

Garden Markers

If you still happen to have PURPLE garden markers in your bed (s), please return them to the office ASAP to be repainted for 2017's spring/summer season.

Ice melt buckets/baskets

Please return all empty baskets or buckets that you may have laying around — we will re-use them!

There goes the neighborhood!

A resident snapped this photo on January 16th and sent it to the office.

WOW!



Looking Ahead:

Craft Night

March 24

..IN THE GARDEN

into the opening. Spread a bit of the bedding over the kitchen scraps to deter fruit flies. Next, cover the bin with black plastic to keep out light and keep in moisture. Feed the worms about once or twice a week (collect kitchen scraps and set aside for feeding). Acceptable food scraps to feed your worms are potato peels, citrus rinds, greens, vegetables, eggshells, coffee and tea grounds, and bread. Avoid adding meat or grease.

As the worms digest the food scraps, they produce castings, which look like dark black threads. After about three months, the bin will be filled with mostly castings, indicating that it's time to harvest the valuable vermicompost. You'll need a bucket or some kind of container for use as a temporary storage for your worms while you clean out their shelter. Gently gather up the worms by removing the bedding a little at a time and letting the worms all move to the bottom of the bin in a big clump to escape the light. Carefully collect the worms and place them in the bucket (use gloves if you're squeamish). Once your worms are safely stored in another container, dump out the completed compost. It's ready to use in the garden or in your planters. During the winter months, simply store it in a large lidded trash bin for later use. Add new bedding in the vermicomposting bin and reintroduce the worms to start the process over again. Vermicomposting is an ingenious symbiotic relationship between humans and worms. I found an excellent online source called Uncle Jim's Worm Farm for all the needed basics. I've decided to make it easy and order the Worm Farm Kit, which comes with all of the necessary supplies for a small worm operation. I will keep you updated on their progress.

The summer of 2017 is going to be the year that I finally add an abundant amount of cutting flowers to my garden. I prefer a bouquet made up of fresh, sweet-smelling local flowers to those purchased from a store or florist any day! The tall spears of Gladioli are definitely on my list after I found a photograph in a magazine featuring a stunning arrangement of brightly-colored Gladioli in a tall vase. Glads are so easy to grow too. Start planting the corms (small bulbs) in Mid-May, then again every two weeks through Mid-June. This schedule will ensure flowers through August. Plant the corms with the pointed side up about four times as deep as their diameter.

Cutting Gladioli for Floral Arrangements:

1. Use a sharp knife or floral shears. Bring a bucket of lukewarm water with you out to the garden.
2. Cut first thing in the morning or at night, not during the heat of the day.
3. Cut spikes with only 1 to 3 flowers opened.
4. Cut diagonally through the stalk and place it in the

Shop Local Year-round

Don't miss your chance to shop local every Saturday at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Fresh produce, bread, coffee, handmade artisan wares and more. 315 Detroit St.

Veterans Memorial Indoor Ice Arena

Come see us and bring a friend or two! We're having public skating on Saturday, Jan. 21 from 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (we have no learn-to-skate lessons scheduled on this day). We're located at 2150 Jackson Ave.

Introduction to Organic Gardening

Join Royer Held, expert gardener and great friend of Project Grow, will be teaching a course on organic gardening, Jan. 28, 10 a.m.-noon at the Ann Arbor Senior Center. Starting with its historical roots, the class will then focus on the soil, from which everything grows and whose care is a central theme of organic gardening. The class will then cover growing vegetables and promoting their growth. Registration fee: \$5. Register now. The class is open to the public, and walk-ins are welcome, space permitting. Cash only. 1320 Baldwin Ave.

Buhr Park Outdoor Ice Arena

A favorite that you'll not want to miss Buhr Blitz Day! Saturday, Feb. 4, 2:30-4:30 p.m. at 2751 Packard Rd. 734.794.6234. Special games, contests and on off ice fun. General admission rates apply.

Mack Indoor Pool Mermaid Classes

Sign up for this unique program for beginners - Mermaid and Merman classes. Saturday Feb. 4 and March 4 we'll host a class from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Mack Indoor Pool, 715 Brooks St. <http://www.a2gov.org/mack>

Ann Arbor Senior Center Community Sing Event

In addition to our regularly scheduled Community Sing program on Sunday, Feb. 5 at 7 p.m. we're also showing the Super Bowl. Singing and football fans are encouraged to join us and bring a dish to pass. 1320 Baldwin Ave. Most participants bring a copy of their own Rise Up Singing Song Book, and or the Rise Again Song book but the Community Sing Program will have some copies of each to lend out each month. For additional information call Recreation Supervisor Pamela Simmons at 734.794.6250 or email your inquiry to pssimmons@a2gov.org. Check out our other Cultural Arts Programs at <http://www.a2gov.org/CulturalArts>.

Splash Day—Mack Pool

Mark your calendar - it's almost time for Splash Day! Saturday, Feb. 11, 2-4 p.m. Games, prizes and activities in and out of the pool! 715 Brooks St.

bucket of water immediately.

5. Once you've collected all of your Glads, place the bucket in a cool dark place for a few hours to allow the blooms to harden off.

6. Use floral preservative in the vase water.
7. As the lower flowers fade, nip them off.
8. Cut about an inch of stem off the bottom of each spike every few days.

Next month, I will write about other desirable cutting garden favorites.

LISA'S FEATURED PLANT:

HIBISCUS 'SUMMER STORM'- Hardy Hibiscus or Rose Mallow
5' x 4'; Full Sun

This variety has velvety wine purple foliage, knock-out 10" diameter light pink flowers with rosy pink veining and a bright magenta eye, and it blooms from mid summer to well into fall. It is late to emerge in the spring so please be patient and don't think that you've killed it!

There are many different varieties available for all tastes. Pay attention to mature width and allow for sufficient room to spread. I have found that this plant has two flaws. First, Japanese Beetles are drawn to both the flowers and foliage and will wreak havoc if not kept in check. Secondly, the spent flowers look a bit like wet tissues hanging from the plant. These will eventually fall off on their own if you don't pick them. I usually just clean up the fallen flowers from around the plant and add them to my compost. Do leave a few in the garden to break down and enrich the soil.

Hibiscus 'Summer Sun' combines well with tall Zinnias, Balloon Flower, white Oriental Lilies such as 'Casa Blanca', Phlox 'David' and 'Katherine', Ornamental Grasses, and Catmint. I also like to plant bulbs around Hibiscus to fill in while it takes its sweet time emerging from the winter rest. The leaves of the Hibiscus will then hide the yellowing bulb foliage.



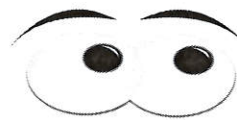
Until next time, bundle up and get out and play.



Rodents are all around us.
Most are cute, furry and
waddle. Some run in wheels
and some run through our
backyards.

This year we have a special waddling rodent known far and wide. He should probably be hired by the National Weather Service for the good he does. It's not Phil from PA but our own Petey from Pittsfield Village. He's here to help predict winter.

Can you find Petey? Somewhere around the neighborhood... He's being held at someone's chest — did he see his shadow? Have fun. No traps allowed. :)



NEIBORHOOD WATCH

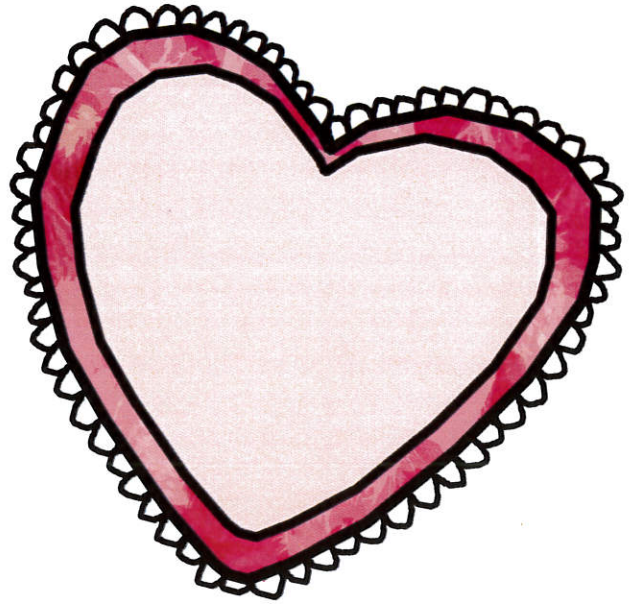
If you are approached
by any solicitors, ask
them for their business card, other credentials,
AND their Peddler's License.

A Peddler's License is required by the City of Ann Arbor for any person or company performing door-to-door sales or soliciting goods or wares.



BE MY VALENTINE

Stop by the Community Building on Monday, February 13 around 5:00 pm to make a valentine for that someone special! Supplies will be provided — just bring your imagination



FEBRUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Groundhog Day	3	4
5	6	7 M & M Mtg 6pm	8	9	10	11
12	13 Valentine Craft Night 5pm 	14 Landscape Mtg 6pm	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 6:15 open forum; 6:30 Board Mtg	23	24	25 3:00pm Chili Cook-Off
26	27	28				

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