

# From the Potting Shed

Feb. 15, 2024

[www.mgofbc.org](http://www.mgofbc.org)



## Let's get physical



And they did! Check out that pile of branches. MG volunteers got a jump start on spring by pruning the crabapples at the Mary S. Topolsky Garden in Teaneck recently. From left, Karen Shaner, Class of 2023; Harriet Steiner, site coordinator and Class of 2019; Peter Cammarano (2023); and Keith Mazanac (2019). Contact [Harriet](#) for more information about volunteering. The site is located at 640 River Road.

## How sweet it is!



Volunteers are needed at the Hermitage Saturday, Feb. 17 at noon to assist with the annual maple sugaring event. See page 3. (At left is the finished product.)

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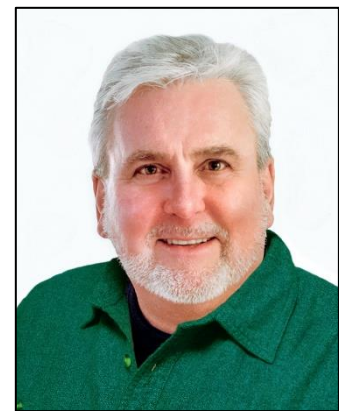
**Meeting news: Tuesday, Feb. 20**

## Paul Split Growing Microgreens from Seed

*February's meeting will be virtual. [Click here](#) to join the meeting at 7:15 pm. Announcements at 7:20 pm; program to follow.*

*Be sure to mute your microphones!*

Paul Split has been part of the green industry since 1971 as a designer and presenter of green workshops and lectures. He specializes in organic, low-maintenance, affordable landscapes, herb gardening, and gardens in glass.



Paul Split

During his hour-long Zoom presentation, Paul will explore an assortment of herb and vegetable seeds, their development, organic growing mediums, fertilization, irrigation, harvest, and uses. He'll demonstrate the use of a propagation chamber along with a kitchen-grown container of microgreens. He'll also assemble a few bottles of herb vinegar straight from the garden.

*Reminder: Our meetings are free and open to the public.*

## WEBINARS

*All times are Eastern.*

**Feb. 22, 6-7 pm:** AARP Virtual Community Center sponsors Backyard Wildlife: Meet Your Neighbors. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. AARP membership not required.

**Feb. 24, 9:30-11 am:** Rutgers Master Gardeners of Monmouth County sponsors No-fail Tips for Gorgeous Container Gardens. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Feb. 26, 6:30-8 pm:** Penn State Extension sponsors Winter Wonderings: Pruning Trees and Shrubs, Off-Season Plants and Practices. Fee: \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Feb. 27, 7-8 pm:** University of Illinois Urbana Champaign Extension sponsors Where Will You Garden-Growing Great Vegetables. Fee \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Feb. 29, noon:** Smithsonian Gardens sponsors Changes in Perennial Gardening in the US Over the Past 50 Years. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Feb. 29, 1 pm:** National Garden Bureau sponsors Ask the Experts About Hostas. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

## MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**Feb. 15, 7 pm:** Thielke Arboretum, 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock. Speaker: Chris Kozar, MG Class of 2020. Topic: Getting Ready for Spring. Fee: \$10; 20% discount for Thielke members. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Free for Thielke volunteers.

**Feb. 15, 7:30 pm:** Teaneck Garden Club, Rodda Center, Room 1, second floor, 250 Colonial Court, Teaneck. Drive up the hill to the rear parking lot. Speaker: Robyn Lowenthal, MG Class of 2011. Topic: All About Coleus. Visit the club's [website](#).

## VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS



Donated seeds are available beginning Feb. 25 from the Garretson Forge and Farm Community Seed Library.

### Free seeds! Garretson Seed Library opens Feb. 25 for the season

*By Liz Scholl, Class of 2011*

Garretson Forge and Farm is excited to host its ninth annual Community Seed Library opening Feb. 25 from 1-3 pm at the farm, 4-02 River Road, Fair Lawn.

All are welcome to stop by and peruse Garretson's collection of open-pollinated, heirloom, and organic seeds, many donated by [Seed Savers Exchange](#), [High Mowing Organic Seeds](#), and [Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Co.](#), along with Garretson Farm's saved seeds. Vegetable, herb, flower, and native seeds are available; stock for individual varieties is limited.

MGs and other gardeners will be available to chat about all aspects of seed propagation and growing as well as organic/sustainable gardening methods.

Garretson Farm established its seed library in 2015 with support from Seed Savers Exchange. The Community Seed Library stocks open-pollinated seeds, which are seeds that produce plants true to the seed they're grown from. Heirloom seeds fall into this category. *Open-pollinated seeds are not hybrid seeds or genetically modified seeds.*

The mission of Garretson Farm's seed library is to:

- Prevent the loss of local seed varieties and the loss of genetic diversity;

*(Continued on page 3)*



## Hermitage needs volunteers for maple sugaring event and spring cleanup



Debra Sweet, Class of 2022, and Chris Kozar (2020) at the Hermitage last year.

The Hermitage needs volunteers to help with the annual maple sugaring event Feb. 17. Rain date is Feb. 18. Volunteers will hand out taps for the trees and help with refreshments. To volunteer, call or text Nancy Moses, a site coordinator, at 201-445-2532. Please arrive by noon. See the flyer sent with the Potting Shed for event information.

The Hermitage is located at 335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus.

Meanwhile, volunteers, new and old, are welcome for the spring cleanup, which will begin March 19-20 from 9:30 am-noon.

Plans for the 2024 season are:

- Seed sowing, which will concentrate on annuals (marigolds, herbs, zinnias, broccoli) and mostly perennials (alyssum, salvia, astilbe, coreopsis, evening primrose, coneflower, pinks;
- Repotting plants to sell at the Hermitage's late spring/early summer plant sale;
- Continue to work on deer-proofing a new vegetable garden area; this new bed contains potatoes, garlic, and herbs and eventually will hold grapevines and additional vegetables;
- Plant more perennials throughout the site;
- Create a path in the butterfly garden area;
- Keep weeds under control by laying down mulch and hoeing and removing them; and
- General upkeep of the beds throughout the site.

Again, prospective volunteers should contact Nancy Moses.

**- Bernadette White, site coordinator and Class of 2021**

### (Garretson, continued from page 2)

- Generate and share seed that's adapted to thrive in local soils and climates;
- Offer access to free seed for all, including first time, low-income, and school gardeners;
- Educate the community about how to save seed as well as connect community members to our collective history of seed as a shared resource;
- Strengthen local food systems and increase food security, starting with seed;
- Raise awareness and mobilize action around seed issues such as GMOs and patenting; and
- Create friendships and partnerships.

After Sunday's event, the seed library will be open regularly beginning in late March when Garretson begins its volunteer days and open house days.

Check the Garretson [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page for dates/times.

If you have open-pollinated saved seed from your garden that you'd like to donate to the community via our seed library, please let us know; we'd love to expand our offerings. In particular, many gardeners are interested in natives.

Send an email to [Liz Scholl](#) for more information or to offer seeds.



Samples of the free seeds available at Garretson Forge and Farm.