



## President's Corner

By John Shipley

Let me begin by thanking everyone for the opportunity to serve as your president for the past two years. Looking back, we have had to “mark time” with regard to creating new landscape and vegetable garden projects. The road construction project will bring many changes to the extension office grounds, with still no start date for the project.

Coming to the close of 2017, I think it is appropriate to recognize some of our major accomplishments of the past year.

The remake of the circle garden begun last year, was nearly completed under the leadership of Carolyn Bruce. It began slowly with minor alterations, but Carolyn’s creativity and design proved extraordinary. Thanks to her and to all who helped with the different phases of the project, the garden offers an exciting addition to the front of the building.

A new endeavor, the MG Sprouts program, was initiated by Nanci Shipley. It arose from a presentation of a modified Sprout’s session for the Hiram kindergarten classes as part of their STEM initiative. The entire program followed at New Georgia Library this summer. Both presentations were very well received and additional programs are being planned for Nanci and her “posse”.

The third annual Vegetable Garden Contest was again headed up by Earl Cosgrove, and we had our highest total of 14 entrants. The judges witnessed a wide array of beautiful gardens and experienced techniques. Earl and his wife, Betty, and others made this a successful contest through their many efforts.

This September, Paulding Meadows combined the Master Gardeners with Keep Paulding Beautiful and our 4-H group. Displays with septic systems, soil testing, and weeds attracted people’s attention and prompted interesting discussions. Recycled plastic bottle water sprinklers were decorated by some MG Sprouts’ children and information was distributed to several home school parents for

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possible use in their science curriculum. The two-day community event is always a great opportunity for outreach. Thanks to everyone's efforts, significantly more contacts for the Bulldog Bytes were obtained.

Looking ahead to 2018, we will have many opportunities for service and outreach in the community to promote sound gardening practices. We will begin with the "all-hands-on-deck" event, the plant sale. Now is the time to start potting perennials and propagating from our gardens for plants to share at the sale. Robbie appreciates your efforts in this regard as he prepares for this important financial undertaking.

There are also openings to assist with some community garden initiatives along with the continuing the efforts working with local school garden projects. And, dear to my heart, are opportunities to develop landscape and vegetable garden designs exhibiting various effective techniques. Of course, much of next year's focus will be determined by the timing and progress of the road project.

Again, thank you for all your hard work. I am looking forward to 2018, with new and exciting ways for Master Gardeners to expand their positive effects in our community.

John Shipley, President

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