



# THE GARFIELD GARDENER

THE NEWSLETTER OF GARFIELD PARK MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

## January 2026 Next Meeting

### January 2026

GPMGA Planning Meeting  
(Board Members & Committee Chairs Only);  
No Member Meeting  
See you in February!

### February 11

**Topic:** *Packing Seeds*  
**Speaker:** Jill Edwards,  
The Seed Library

*Programs are being planned on a month-to-month basis according to Purdue University Extension Office Guidelines.*

### 2026 Meeting Dates

- March 11
- April 8
- May 13
- June 10
- July 8
- August 12
- September 9
- October 14
- November 11
- December 9

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If you require an accommodation or special assistance to attend these programs due to a disability, please contact Carey Grable at 317.275.9279. Some accommodations may require 2 weeks notice.

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**Learn more at:**  
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[www.IndyMG.org](http://www.IndyMG.org)  
[www.IndyHorticulture.org](http://www.IndyHorticulture.org)

## President's Message: Looking Forward to a New Year

Greetings! Thank you all for allowing me to serve as your president in 2026—it is a tremendous honor.

### Reflections and Intentions for the New Year

With the holiday season now behind us, I hope January provides a chance for everyone to rest and reset. This is a wonderful time to dream about the upcoming gardening year. Many of you are likely receiving seed catalogs in the mail; perhaps you have a few favorites. Personally, I enjoy browsing Johnny's Selected Seeds and Baker Creek. As you make your garden plans, I encourage you to consider what you truly enjoy growing. My own goal is to simplify my gardens, focusing on crops we genuinely like to eat. I also plan to save herbs for later use, grow cut flowers to brighten my home, and ensure my gardens are designed to accommodate my needs as I age.

### Board and Member Activities

The board will be meeting in January to organize plans for the upcoming year. In February, we will gather again to earn volunteer hours by packaging seeds for the Library Seed program, which is led by Jo Ann Klooz. If you are bringing seeds to package, please coordinate with Jo Ann to ensure you have the correct labeling information.

### Looking Ahead to Spring

I am eagerly anticipating the reopening of the fountains and gardens this spring. Please check the conservatory events calendar at <https://www.garfieldgardensconservatory.org/programsevents> for the specific dates when the gardens will open and details about the official opening ceremony for the fountains.

### Upcoming Dates

The board will meet on January 14th at my house. I look forward to seeing all of you on February 12th at the conservatory.

—Kay Martin-Pence, GPMGA President

## 2026 Spring Garden Clinic

The 2026 Spring Garden Clinic will occur from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 7, at Ivy Tech Community College Culinary and Conference Center (2820 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis).

This annual event not only offers a wide array of gardening information but also provides a chance to network with other gardeners. This year's event is sponsored by the Marion County Master Gardener Association (MCMGA), with the support of the Garfield Park Master Gardener Association (GPMGA) and Purdue Extension—Marion County.



Among its scheduled activities, the Spring Garden Clinic typically offers several presentations—each an hour in length—for each of its four time slots. Attendees will have the option of choosing among the presentations offered for each time slot.

(continued on Page 3)



## Conservatory Tours

**January 10 (11:00 a.m.)**  
Adam Musgrove

**January 24 (11:00 a.m.)**  
Arlene Bow  
Oren Cooley

## At the Conservatory

**Saturday, January 17 (11:00 a.m.)**  
*Jurassic Conservatory*  
Garfield Park Conservatory

Did you know Indiana used to be an equatorial swamp? Have you ever wondered why no one finds dinosaur fossils here?



And, what's that tropical-but-native fruit tree that owes its range to vanished herds of mastodons?

To find out the answers, join the staff of the Garfield Park Conservatory for a "conservatory tour through time". Participants will glimpse Indiana's deep past and explore the history of life on land through the "living fossil" plants in the collection.

The cost is \$10 per person (Ages 10 and up). For more information, visit [www.garfieldgardensconservatory.org](http://www.garfieldgardensconservatory.org).

## GPMGA Meeting Minutes: December 10

The Garfield Park Master Gardener Association met at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 10, at the Garfield Park Conservatory.

### Teresa McCurry (President):

- Meeting minutes for November are approved; Welcome to our five new members and many guests joining tonight; Let groups know that grants are available and to submit applications; Thank you to the Garfield Park staff for joining us and for all they do; Certificates for your achievement levels are printed and available to take home; I am honored to have served as president for 3 years and welcome our new president, Kay, and vice president, Danielle

### Cindy Maude (Treasurer):

- Balance was \$7,721.82 at the end of November; More money has been spent since; Stands with wheels will be purchased for new filing cabinets

### Program:

- No program; The conservatory was open for the holiday display.

### Committee Reports:

- Jo Ann Klooz (Program Director): January - No member meeting, board meeting only; February - Seed Library - packing seeds with Jill Edwards; Program committee will meet in January
- Amanda Anez (Hospitality - Snack Coordinator): Board members will bring snacks for February meeting
- Oren Cooley (Newsletter/Publicity Director): Absent
- Vicki Metheaux (Conservatory Tours): Tours are covered
- Carrie Alumbaugh (Plant Sale): 2026 plant sale will be one week earlier than last year due to scheduling conflicts; Mark calendars for May 9th

—Danielle Randles, Secretary

## GPMGA's Next Meeting: February 11

The Garfield Park Master Gardener Association membership will not meet in January. However, as happens every January, the GPMGA Board members will meet this month to plan for the coming year.

The next meeting of the GPMGA membership will occur at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11, at the Garfield Park Conservatory. See you in February.

## 2026 GPMGA Officers/Committee Chairs

### President

Kay Martin-Pence  
guitargirl929@gmail.com

### Previous Past President

Teresa McCurry  
tmccurry@iupui.edu

### Vice President

Danielle Randles  
danielle.n.randles@gmail.com

### Secretary

Adam Musgrove  
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### Treasurer

Cindy Maude  
cmaude@sbcglobal.net

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### Debra Boyer

idealgardenspace@aol.com

### Hospitality—Snack Coordinator

Amanda Anez  
anezartist@gmail.com

### Hospitality—Pitch-In Coordinator

Bill Bernstein  
billbe19@comcast.net

### Historian

Open

### Newsletter/Publicity Director

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### Plant Sale Chair

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carriesalumbaugh@gmail.com

### Conservatory Tour Coordinator

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### Extension Office Contact:

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rusin0@purdue.edu

Please contact the officers and chairs of the Garfield Park Master Gardener Association if you have any questions or suggestions.

## Spring Garden Clinic *(continued from Page 1)*

The 2026 Spring Garden Clinic will feature the following speakers and topics:

### Session 1 (9:30—10:30 a.m.)

John Bonkowski: *Purdue PPDL 2025 Sample Update: Disease Problems and Management*

John Bonkowski will walk through 2025 sample cases observed at the Purdue Plant and Pest Diagnostic lab and discuss how to diagnose the cause and what management options are available. The focus will be on ornamental plants.

Jayde Grisham: *Adventures in Seed Starting*

With a little plant science, learn how to stretch your growing season, your dollars and your options with a variety of seed starting techniques.

Roger Hedge: *Indiana Ferns*

Learn about Roger's fascination with Indiana's approximately 80 species of ferns. Indiana's impressive diversity of fern species can be attributed to the variety of habitats and natural communities found throughout the state, where Roger during his presentation will take participants on a tour of these special natural areas.

### Session 2 (10:45—11:45 a.m.)

Scott Namestnik: *Indiana's Endangered and Threatened Species: What Makes Our Rare Plants Rare*

Indiana State Botanist Scott Namestnik will share factors leading to including plants on the state's endangered and threatened species list. More than 400 vascular plant species are listed as endangered or threatened in Indiana. Some of the rare plants are truly rare globally; others are surprisingly common outside of Indiana.

Karen Mitchell: *What If a Tree Falls in Your Garden?*

Oh, no, a big tree fell in my yard! What was once a shady spot is now all sunshine. How do I re-purpose this location to another type of gardening? Karen has options.

Steve Mayer: *Raised-Bed Gardening: Fresh Ideas*

The Marion County Master Gardener Demonstration Garden has been an award-winning model of gardening examples for several years thanks to Steve Mayer and other Master Gardeners. Raised-bed gardening is one of the many gardening methods tested. Now that some of the raised beds are ready for replacement, find out what was learned in the process and what is recommended as current options.

### Session 3 (12:45—1:45 p.m.)

Amanda Smith & Steve Sass: *Landscaping for Lepidoptera: Creating Habitat for Moth and Butterflies in your Yard*

Join Indiana Nature LLC's founders, Steve Sass and Amanda Smith, as they present about Indiana's rich biodiversity of Lepidoptera and how planting with purpose in home landscapes allows homeowners the ability to support their life cycles.

Dawn Slack: *Native Food Farm: Growing & Eating Local and In-Season*

Imagine having a 200-year-old family farm with invasive plants. Let the transformation begin! Learn how this Wayne County farm has been re-purposed to a native food farm, growing fruits, herbs and vegetables and opening a seasonal restaurant.

Kevin Allison: *Garden Nutrients Made Clear: Soil Tests, Goals & Fertilizer Choices*

When and why do you soil test and how is that done? Then, how do you interpret the results of the soil test? Finally, how do you follow the nutrient and amendment recommendations of that soil test? Kevin knows!

### Session 4 (2:00—3:00 p.m.)

Amy Mullen: *Designing a Kitchen Garden*

Professional garden designer Amy Mullen will take participants through styles of kitchen gardens from around the world, explain how to site and lay out the garden, and discuss the pros and cons of raised beds.

Myrene Brown: *Shade and Woodland Gardening*

Do you have a great deal of shade in your landscape or live in a wooded area? Myrene is experienced at selecting and designing for both shade and woodland plants. She also prefers to emphasize native plants in the landscape.

Kevin Davis: *Plant-Based Eating: The Pros and Cons of a Plant-based Diet*

Plant-based diets have become very popular in recent years. Kevin will help put all the available information into perspective to help you decide what is best for you.

## Garfield Park Master Gardener Association



in association with

### Purdue Extension - Marion County

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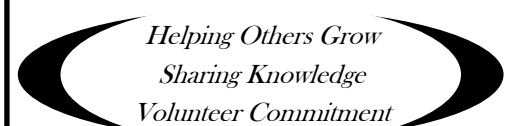
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**Questions:** Contact Carey Grable at [cagrabl@purdue.edu](mailto:cagrabl@purdue.edu) or at 317-275-9290.



## From the Bookshelf . . .

***The New Seed-Starters Handbook***  
(Rodale Organic Gardening)  
by Nancy Bubel and Jean Nick

Learn how to grow more than 200 plants—from vegetables, fruits, herbs and garden flowers to wildflowers, trees and shrubs—with this completely revised and updated guide to starting seeds at home.



This robust, easy-to-use reference explains everything a gardener needs to know to start seeds and raise healthy seedlings successfully. Written by gardeners for gardeners, *The New Seed-Starters Handbook* is filled with practical, step-by-step instructions to start seeds indoors, transplant the seedlings and save seeds to do it all again the following year.

The volume offers helpful advice, hints and tips on how to:

- Choose materials, from seeds and growing mediums to containers and light
- Plan and map space and keep records in a garden diary
- Repel pests and protect against animals
- Work with outdoor structures, including greenhouses
- Save seeds strategically and determine their viability
- Master troubleshooting techniques for every step of the process

Using *The New Seed-Starters Handbook*, one can harvest earlier, grow healthier, and save money by starting seeds at home.

Nancy Bubel has written for *Organic Gardening*, *Mother Earth News*, *Country Journal Magazine*, *Horticulture*, *Family Circle*, *Woman's Day*, and *New Shelter* magazines. She is a member of both the Seed Savers Exchange and the Friends of the Trees Society.

Jean Nick is a lifelong organic gardener, sustainable farmer, scientist, author and environmentalist. She has been writing about organic gardening and healthy lifestyles for the better part of three decades from her organic sheep farm in Pennsylvania.

## 2026 Newfields Winter Horticulture Forum

Newfields' Winter Horticulture Forum (presented by Bartlett Tree) will occur from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 21, at Newfields (4000 N. Michigan Road).

It's time to take those gardening tools out of hibernation and start planning for the season with help from three leading plant professionals. Nick McCullough, Horticulturist, designer, and author, will present on his book, *American Roots*, featuring home gardens across America. Matthew Ross, Executive Director of The Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park in Traverse City (Michigan), will present on the historic Northern Michigan Asylum and how its transformational ideas established the principle of "beauty is therapy". Phil Douglas, Director of Horticulture and Center for Global Initiatives for Denver Botanic Gardens, will present on the implications of habitat destruction and the role botanic gardens play in conservation efforts from the subtropics to the grasslands.

**Nick McCullough**

Award-winning garden designer Nick McCullough has developed a distinctive style he calls Midwest Modern, one that relies on a balance of natural paving and innovative perennial plantings. Based in Ohio, he and his team at McCullough's Landscape & Nursery create and maintain plant centric gardens in and around the Midwest that are both ecologically sensitive and family forward.



**Matthew Ross**

Matthew Ross is the Executive Director of The Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park where he oversees the 26-acre botanical garden, founded by visionaries Kurt and Karen Schmidt and a team of volunteers on the site of the Northern Michigan Asylum Farm. A graduate of Michigan State University, he received a bachelor's and a master's degree in Horticultural Science with an emphasis on Landscape Design Construction Management and Urban Forestry respectively.



**Phil Douglas**

A native Kentuckian, Douglas began his horticulture career at the historic Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum in Cincinnati, Ohio. He now serves as the Director of Horticulture and Center for Global Initiatives at the Denver Botanic Gardens. He received a Bachelor of Science in horticulture from the University of Cincinnati, and a Master of Public Administration from Eastern Kentucky University.



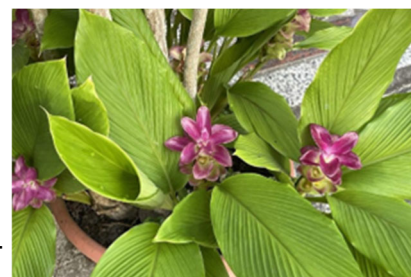
Cost is \$50 for Newfields members and \$65 for non-members. Tickets at <https://discovernewfields.org/events-exhibitions/2026-winter-horticulture-forum-presented-bybartlett-tree-experts>

## 2026 Herb of the Year: Turmeric

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) was named the 2026 Herb of the Year by the International Herb Association.

Turmeric grows 3 to 4 feet high, 3 to 4 feet wide, and needs a spacing of 6 to 12 feet when grown in the ground. A mature plant will produce 8 to 12 leaves; Each can measure up to 40 inches long.

Turmeric does produce small, yellow flowers, but they are sterile and do not have viable seeds. Turmeric likes rich, slightly acidic soil and prefers full sun in the morning and shade in the afternoon. Typically growing during the monsoon season in south-east Asia, it thrives with frequent watering.



Originating in India, the rhizomes of this tropical plant are edible and are boiled, dried, peeled and then ground to produce the spice used for cooking. Botanically, it is considered a spice but is often used like an herb for seasoning foods. It is best known as an ingredient in Indian, Southeast Asian, and Middle Eastern cuisine, where it is used both fresh and ground.

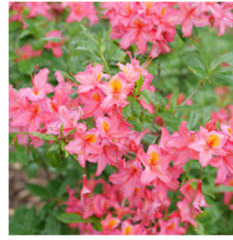
When cut, the fresh roots provide a bright, orange/yellow dye which is used on fabrics and other textiles. Turmeric also is used to color commercially produced foods and is the main ingredient in curry powder.

## NGB: The Year of the . . .

Each year the National Garden Bureau selects one annual, one perennial, one bulb crop, one edible, one houseplant and one shrub as the “Year of the” crops. Plants are chosen because they are popular, easy-to-grow, widely adaptable, genetically diverse and versatile. The selections for 2026 are:

### Year of the Azalea

Azaleas are the crown jewel of the landscape, renowned for their breathtaking, bloom-packed seasonal displays. Advances in hybridizing have yielded reblooming selections, heat-tolerant forms and compact habits perfect for small spaces. Some of the newest hybrids can even flower up to three times a year, a feat unimaginable to early azalea enthusiasts. Native to Asia and North America, azaleas are part of the *Rhododendron* genus.



### Year of the Ficus

Ficus is an incredibly rich and diverse genus of plants that primarily hail from tropical and subtropical regions worldwide. From privacy hedges to towering trees to classic houseplants and even climbing vines, there is a ficus for just about everyone. Also, ficus are native to every continent except Antarctica. Interestingly, tiny wasps pollinate their inflorescences. They don't try to compete with bees and butterflies to form their fruits.



### Year of the Hot Pepper

Peppers (*Capsicum spp.*) are an extremely diverse class of vegetables that bring flavor, color, spice and nutritional benefits to many meals. The genus *Capsicum* originally was domesticated in Mexico and the Andean regions of South America. Continued plant breeding for commercial markets has resulted in high-performing, uniform varieties of jalapeno, bell, snack and poblano peppers. Today, hot and sweet peppers are consumed on most continents and help create regionally distinct cuisine.



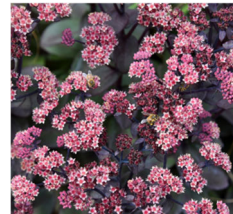
### Year of the Crocus

Crocus is a genus of flowering plants in the iris family (*Iridaceae*), known for their vibrant, cup-shaped blooms. These perennial plants grow from corms and are among the first flowers to bloom in early spring, though some species flower in autumn. The most famous crocus species is *Crocus sativus*, the source of saffron, a valuable spice. Crocuses attract pollinators like bees, which contributes to biodiversity. Their resilience, ease of cultivation and striking colors make them a favorite.



### Year of the Sedum

A favorite among gardeners, the *Sedum* genus is recognized for its durability, drought tolerance and proven ability to thrive in even the most challenging environments. One of the broadest and most well-known perennials, Sedum is a friend to the novice gardener and trusted performer of the veteran landscaper.



### Year of the Impatiens

The enchanting *Impatiens* genus, with over 1,000 species, represents one of nature's most vibrant and diverse flowering families. These “touch-me-nots” first captured botanical interest in the late 1500s, when European explorers discovered them in East Africa and South Asia.



The name “impatiens” comes from their fascinating seed dispersal mechanism – their ripe capsules burst at the slightest touch, ingeniously spreading seeds up to 20 feet away. While most people know the common garden varieties, some spectacular species grow as tall as small trees in the mountains of New Guinea, while others thrive in the mist-shrouded valleys of Southeast Asia. Today, these adaptable plants bring joy to gardens worldwide, from humble window boxes to elaborate botanical displays, continuing to inspire new breeding breakthroughs.

## Perennial of the Year

The Perennial Plant Association has named ‘Blackhawks’ big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) as the 2026 Perennial Plant of the Year.

With near-black coloration and a strong vertical habit, ‘Blackhawks’ big bluestem adds drama to the fall garden. Foliage emerges dark green, developing reddish-purple tips as the summer progresses.

In August, three-parted “turkeyfoot” inflorescences arise and by September the leaves, stems and blooms take on a deep purple hue. More compact than other big bluestem cultivars, ‘Blackhawks’ reaches five feet tall by two feet wide.

Big bluestem is one of the dominant grasses in North America's once extensive tallgrass prairies. Its leaves and stems provide cover and nesting material for birds and serve as a larval food source for several species of skippers.

This species has no major pest or disease problems and requires no maintenance other than cutting back to the ground in late winter. Big bluestem is extremely drought tolerant once established, which may take a few years.

The excellent attributes of ‘Blackhawks’ qualified it among the top-rated selections in the Chicago Botanic Garden's comparative trial of ornamental grasses. This warm season grass is ideal for native, naturalistic and cottage-style plantings.

In late spring and summer, the two-toned effect of ‘Blackhawks’ makes an interesting foil mingled with early flowering perennials. Later in the season, the tall flower spikes add texture and movement among fall bloomers such as black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia spp.*), tall stonecrops (*Hylotelephium spp.*), and asters (*Symphyotrichum spp.*).



## Calendar/Events

### Tuesday, January 27 (7:00 to 8:00 p.m.) - Virtual

*Diseases and Pests Impacting Native Plants*  
*Indiana Native Plant Society, Central Chapter*

As Natural Resources Inspector for the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources, Div. of Entomology and Plant Pathology, Angela Rust has been inspecting Indiana nursery growers and dealers for 30 years. In this talk, she will share her diagnosis process when conducting inspections. Angela holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Entomology from Purdue and is an Authorized Certification Official (ACO) accredited by the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine Program through which she conducts phytosanitary inspections and issues phytosanitary certificates for international export.

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/diseases-and-pests-impacting-native-plantstickets-1979241018165?>

### Friday, February 6 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

*Indiana Sustainability and Resilience Conference*  
*Monroe Convention Center, 302 S. College Avenue, Bloomington*

The Indiana Sustainability and Resilience Conference features training, speakers and panels that cut across sectors and highlight opportunities for collaboration on shared climate resilience goals. The conference will include an expo, poster session, and a networking happy hour. Breakout sessions will cover a range of sustainability and resilience topics, such as Indiana's energy policy, converting brownfields to solar sites, and data centers and their impacts.

Register: <https://www.hecweb.org/events/#calendar-634aca0d-d7f3-43cc-8a3b-68df87688aa3-event-e1e1df45-6b83-4665-b41f-1060f630da22>

### Thursday, February 12 (7:00 to 8:00 p.m.) - Virtual

*Landscape Design with Native Plants in Indiana*  
*Indiana Native Plant Society, Central Chapter*

Join the Indiana Native Plant Society for a broad overview on designing with native plants. This virtual talk may show you some new things about design concepts, plant combinations, maintenance and common pitfalls to avoid when using native plants in an ornamental landscape. Guest speaker is M.J. Meneley, a professional landscape architect in Indianapolis with Guidon, a full-service architecture and engineering firm. M.J. earned his bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from Ball State University in 1996.

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/landscape-design-with-nativeplants-in-indiana-tickets-1979245295960?>

## GPMGA Membership – 2026

Become a member of the Garfield Park Master Gardener Association. Dues are \$15.00 per year and help pay for special activities, speakers, the newsletter and donations to community projects.

Monthly meetings occur on the second Wednesday of the month and begin at 6:30 p.m. Unless otherwise noted at the prior meeting or in the newsletter, meetings are held at the Garfield Park Conservatory, 2505 Conservatory Drive, Indianapolis.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Completion date of Master Gardener Training Class \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Are you volunteering anywhere? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to be included in the 2026 GPMGA Member Directory.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to receive future newsletters by e-mail only.

Submit this form and your \$15.00 annual membership fee to:

Cindy Maude 7416 Rooses Drive Indianapolis, IN 46217

To pay using Zelle, use GPMG for recipient; cmaude@sbcglobal.net for e-mail

## Indianapolis Home Show

### January 16-25, 2026

Indianapolis Home Show  
 Indiana State Fairgrounds'  
 West Pavilion and Expo Hall

The Indianapolis Home Show will occur January 16-25 in the West Pavilion and Expo Hall at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

Circle City Trees' original landscape design will match this year's innovative Centerpiece Home: Lakeside Living, a fully immersive outdoor-inspired experience built around Hoosier Lake, a stunning 2,500-sq.-ft. water feature holding more than 20,000 gallons.

This reimagined centerpiece transforms the Expo Hall into a "natural retreat", complete with 50 tons of natural stone, 40-60 mature trees, and three unique living spaces: a 20' x 24' fully decorated cabin, a 44' destination trailer and a 20' decorated yurt—each offering a unique take on comfort, functionality and connection to living with the outdoors.

For more information, visit: <https://www.indianapolishomeshow.com/>

