

December 1, 2003

Dear MSU Extension Master Gardeners,

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the gardener's wish list,  
Were neat little check marks made by the gardener's favorite elf.  
Not one item was missed, not one desire erased,  
But everything was wrapped tightly and so neatly placed.

Oh...was I dreaming there?

Greetings!--From the Kent MSU Extension Horticulture Department—yes we're still here and in good spirits too. We have heard from so many of you regarding the letters you have sent to the Governor and legislators. We just know that they are being deluged with correspondence. Today we can only guess what the budget outcome will be but I'm sure by now—thanks to you, the Governor has taken note of what MSU Extension is all about.

From an emotional standpoint, we appreciate your cheerful, "can-do attitude" which you have taken time to communicate to us. We are planning ahead for '04 and thinking of ways we can be extra-frugal with what we've got.

On a more positive note, I hope you take advantage of our MSU Extension Master Gardener holiday fundraiser that made it's way to your doorstep a few days ago. Gordon, Judy, Sharon and I added a new color of the ever-popular "suede" cotton reverse sweatshirts and have bolstered up inventory of the smaller sizes as the style runs large. Proceeds from these fundraisers significantly help our budget throughout the season. Stop by for a look!

So if you're still looking for that special something for your gardening someone, hum this little tune through the garden centers and you may get your shopping done rather quickly.

The Twelve Days of a Gardener's Christmas.....*By Rebecca Finneran*

On the Twelfth Day of Christmas my true love gave to me...  
Twelve drums of compost,  
Eleven EZ Hose guides,  
Ten deer repellants,  
Nine terra cotta planters  
Eight new nozzles,  
Seven power sprayers,  
Six noodle-head sprinklers,  
Five brass quick-couplers,  
Four new Hostas  
Three French gloves,  
Two balls a gazin' (gazing balls,)  
And an ornamental Bradford pear tree.

Merry Christmas!

Becky Finneran, MSU Extension Horticulture Educator



# Kent County Master Gardeners

## “Holiday Green Pages”

December, 2003

Dear MSU Master Gardeners,

Are you relaxing yet? Gardeners are supposed to spend these long, cold winter days relaxing, looking at catalogs, dreaming of new plants, and probably sorting, and doing some major “urban renewal” if the weather permits. Becky & I have been talking about our urban renewal projects—you know, taking out the old stuff, dividing, and even relegating some plants to the no longer useful pile. But then, when the snow flies, what do you do? Kind of a silly question, but aren’t you glad you live in the great white north where we do have some time to think ahead. Imagine living in a warm climate where the bugs never die, fungus just continues to fung, and plants turn weak and tired! So, relax and enjoy the snow and ice!

Trust me! This will be simpler! The Kent MSU Master Gardener program as well as the state Program has decided to base re-certification on the calendar year. This means that those of you who have already re-certified for 2003 will begin your re-certification year January 1st, 2004, a real bonus for you guys.

If you have not re-certified yet for 2003, we will allow you until March 31st this year only to get in your 10 volunteer hours and 3 educational hours. Remember, beginning January 1st, 2004, you are required to contribute 15 volunteer hours and earn 5 educational credits to re-certify. This still puts us behind most states in our requirements for re-certification.

Those who took the 2003 class, still have until March 31st to become “basic” MSU MGs. You will need to re-certify by January 1st, 2005 (15 volunteer hours and 5 educational credits). If this seems confusing, just read it again, and then call me if you continue to pull your hair out.

I do want to take this time to thank all of you for the incredible amount of time you contribute to our community as representatives of MSU Extension. You DO make a difference in our community and are increasingly finding new ways to share your knowledge with others. Volunteers are special folks who give unselfishly and with joy. If we did not contribute to gardening projects, imagine what a loss it would be to our county and city. Thanks, too, to all of you who wrote letters to our governor and representatives in support of our program.

Here’s to a wonderful, blessed Holiday for all of our MSU Master Gardener friends!

Gracious dreaming to you,

Gordon Griffin, Kent MSU Master Gardener Coordinator

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# Hotline News—December, 2003

Sharon Globig—Kent/MSU Extension Lawn & Garden Hotline Coordinator

Once in awhile we receive an encouraging letter that makes our efforts seem much more important. Following is a letter received on October 29th, 2003 from a happy client.

Dear Mr. Griffin,

I am writing to tell you how much I appreciate the Hot Line maintained by Master Gardeners under the direction of Sharon Globig.

At any rate, I was very pleased with the information Donald Kelley, M.D., a Master Gardener, was able to give me about our annual infestation of lady bugs—Asian lady bugs—several weeks ago. His knowledge was evident, and his advice extremely helpful.

I am very grateful indeed for the assistance the MSU Extension Service offers in this regard and want to say "Thank you very much!"

Sincerely, Katherine McAleenan

## Education Committee News

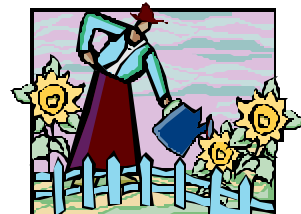
The Education Committee has been focusing on providing educational program "series" which are modeled after the popular "Gardening With Perennials" program offered each fall. The goal is to provide more intensive levels of education for persons desiring Advanced Master Gardener status or advanced continuing education. These programs will be coupled when possible, with one-day Saturday workshops such as "Creating a Backyard Habitat" to provide additional opportunities for working Master Gardeners to get quality instruction. Goals for '04-'05 were set.

A one-day symposium on Landscape Design will be held in the Spring of '04 followed by a more intensive Landscape Design series in the fall. A plant diagnostic series that has classroom time and lab, will also be offered in '04. Water Gardening was targeted for '05 with hands-on installation of a water feature in our new garden. The group is also exploring the development of a "speakers bureau" that would market a number of quality presentations that MSU Extension Master Gardeners can instruct using the technology and facility right here at the MSU Extension office.

## Plant a Row for the Hungry

So far, we have heard from several MSU MGs on the poundage of veggies donated to the "hungry." This will be reported to the national "Plant a Row for the Hungry." Thanks for your work and willingness to donate your produce.

Carol Postma—30 lbs.	Linda Dodge—68 lbs.	Stan Roth—40 lbs.
Gordon Griffin—50 lbs.	Lori Hankinson—45 lbs.	Nancy Hoovler—35 lbs.
Mike Bosold—153 lbs.	Harriet Bromberg—71 lbs.	



**Grand Total—492 lbs. - "Great Growing!"**

## E-Mail Updates

**We would greatly appreciate it if you would inform us of your current e-mail address. This is a convenient and expedient way to contact you with current opportunities and other news. Each time we send out an e-mail, several are returned to us. So...If you have not received a recent e-mail, like in the past month, we probably do not have your accurate address. Just give us a call or leave it on our voice mail, or better yet, e-mail us. Thanks a million!**

**{If you have changed your e-mail address, please include your old address.}**

## Copyright help!

Most of you realize by now that we have several “logos” that are unique to our Kent County MSU Master Gardener Program. We are looking for someone who has experience with copywriting who can help us protect our logo. We are extremely grateful to Tina Cronkhite, who designed all of them for us. She has done a super job and we need to protect her work as well. So..., if you have that expertise, we would greatly appreciate your advice.



## isioning Team Report

Forty ambitious, intelligent, visionary, and ordinary MSU Master Gardeners met Wednesday, October 30 from 5:00-9:00 p.m. to discuss our progress toward our goals. We developed a matrix (good word, eh?) detailing the successes and needs for the coming year. It was extremely gratifying to see the tremendous amount of work that our 10 committees have made in the past 12 months. Looking over the year, we are proud of the fact that an Advanced “Area of Specialization” - Master Naturalist actually was offered and successful. We are also delighted that Judy Sink, who was the committee chair of the Jr. Master Gardener committee became our coordinator of the program. That program also successfully conducted our first Garden Tour last summer. The R&R committee, Retention & Recognition, has set up monthly opportunities for us to get together. The other committees have also done an admirable job in doing a lot of behind-the-scenes work.

We did decide to eliminate the Garden Therapy committee until more specific opportunities arise for MGs. The Diversity committee has now become a concern for every committee. Our concern is that our group become more conscious of involving a more diverse population, which will take sensitivity on the part of all of our groups. We are also trying to determine a new name for the Community Gardening Committee.

Each group then met separately to determine long and short term goals. Following are some of the goals established. Incidentally, there is still a need for members for the R8R committee and the Community Gardening Committee. If you are interested, please call Gordon.

**Community Gardening**—Goal is to develop a list of people, community groups, who want MGs to help with gardening advise, planning, etc. and to set up MGs to meet the need. This committee also works with Tom Carey from West Michigan Environmental Action Council on mutual goals. The committee is considering how to become more involved in the citywide effort for “Community Greening”, an opportunity to improve the appearance of our central city.

**Environment/Conservation**—They will be fine-tuning their goals for next year based on what was learned with the first class. They are also working to involve more of the committee in the planning of future events.

**Demonstration Gardens**—This committee has a lot of work ahead. The first goal is to finalize the concept plan including elevations, site preparation, types of gardens to include, and the naming of the garden. For those of you who may be new, this will be located at our own MSUE site just North of the building.

**Jr. Master Gardeners**—This group needs more trained volunteers to teach the Jr. MG classes in schools and other locations. Judy is planning for 15 more Jr. MG programs for the 2004 year. If interested, please contact Judy Sink—336-2544. The date has already been set for the 2004 Garden Tour—July 17&18.

**Web Site**—We have a great deal of work to do. We are planning to develop a more user friendly site. We believe that we can link to several other sites, but also provide timely diagnostic information, green tips and perhaps find and assign volunteers for new opportunities. We may be able to use our current Kent Co. and State Master Gardener websites; however, a lot of research has to be done before beginning. Stay tuned.

**Education**—See article on page 3.

## Great Consumer Website

Walter's Gardens has two wonderful websites that are worth spending time on, especially during the cold winter months. If you're into daylilies, the following is a complete listing of excellent varieties—[www.designerdaylily.com](http://www.designerdaylily.com). The other is a “shopping list” to help you prepare for next spring—[www.perennialresource.com](http://www.perennialresource.com). Since Walter's is wholesale only, you'll have to find a local source or peruse your plethora of catalogs and order them. In any case, have a wonderful adventure in the warmth of your own home

## Old Volunteer Opportunities — help still needed!

### VanAndel Museum

The VanAndel Museum is requesting Master Gardeners to assist with plantings. The person in charge of the gardens, Sam Wilthuis, is trying to improve the grounds and is in need of guidance and our “professional” opinions. He expects that eventually the museum volunteers can take it over, but it is currently in need of a lot of attention. He would like to see something as well-planned as the Voigt House. Of course, most of the work would be done next Spring; however, planning will need to be

done in the Winter months. Here is a chance for some of you who haven't completed your requirements yet to contribute during the doldrums of winter.

If you have an interest, please give me a call and I'll direct you to Sam.

### Pilgrim Manor

Pilgrim Manor, Home for the Aged, is looking for some help in maintaining their garden. If you are interested, please call Ila Flo Barfuss at 940-9067 or Gordon. The address is 2000 Leonard N.E.

## 2003 Garden Crusader Awards

Check out the Gardener's Supply Company website. They have awarded 7 prizes to people who have gone way above and beyond the traditional volunteer to accomplish amazing projects in their communities. The Grand Prize Winner, Earl Antwine, of New Orleans developed a garden which includes chickens, geese, and rabbits. The garden is now tended by a dozen or so boys from the inner-city who replaced fighting with gardening and caring for the animals. They often end up at his house and have dinner together, in fact, he adopted one of the boys when the boy's mother died.

There are 6 more wonderful stories on the website detailing the experiences and efforts of some very unusual people. To find out more check out [www.gardeners.com/gardening/content.asp?copy\\_id=5551](http://www.gardeners.com/gardening/content.asp?copy_id=5551).

### Mystery Plant of the Month??

**I'm of oriental heritage  
And look like my Western cousin  
My blooms consist of large tear-shaped bracts  
Surrounded by heads of fertile florets.  
I cling!, I cling!, and therefore I am!**



*Japanese Gardens at  
Chicago Botanical Gardens*

The first two persons to identify this plant—species and common name-will win a set of our new note cards with photographs by our own Becky Finneran.

Call 336-3283 or e-mail [griffing@msue.msue.edu](mailto:griffing@msue.msue.edu).

Last month's winner was Joe Nelson who correctly identified the plant as *Pinus Sylvestris*, 'Scotch Pine'. . . .and, where were the rest of you?

## My Favorite Scones » Oatmeal, Lemon, Blueberry

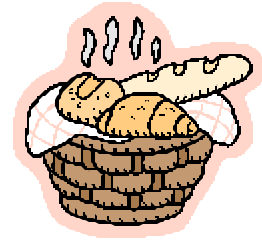
Those of you who attended the “Scones ‘n Tea” night enjoyed these and several wanted the recipe. Thanks, Carol for being so generous with your “secret.”

*Preheat oven:* 375 degree F. Convection, 400 degree F. regular oven

*Combine dry ingredients:* 1 ¾ C. unbleached all-purpose flour, 1 tsp. Baking powder, ½ tsp. Baking soda, ½ tsp. Salt, ½ C. sugar.

*Cut in:* 1 stick/4oz. Cold unsalted butter, about 10 pulses in the food processor.

*Add:* 1 C. old fashioned oatmeal, ½ C. dried blueberries, zest of one lemon.



*Mix:* ½ C. buttermilk (or maybe a little more) and 1 tsp. Lemon oil. Lemon oil is sometimes hard to find but really worth the effort. William Sonoma carries it. Use these liquid ingredients to moisten the flour mixture and knead just until the dough hold together. Pat out on a lightly floured board to about 1 inch thick. Use 3 inch biscuit cutter to cutout scones and place on a cookie sheet lined with parchment or silpat.

Brush scone tops with lightly beaten whole egg.

Bake 15-20 minutes (internal temperature 200 degree F.), lightly brown and moist on the inside.

These scones are best enjoyed fresh and warm but they are easily stored frozen, just reheat in the oven or microwave. Also try variations with your own favorite flavorings and dried fruits.

Enjoy,  
Carol Savage

## Becky’s Scotch Shortbread recipe.

Several people have asked for my Shortbread recipe that we had at the ‘Scones-n’Tea’ night! Well, here we go!

My Grandma Tubbs' Scotch Shortbread (Commentary mine) -By Rebecca Finneran

four sticks of REAL butter (Quality does make a difference here too!)  
one and one quarter cups sugar  
five cups flour

Soften butter until it is really squishy. Blend in sugar and mix in mixer on high until mixture becomes light and fluffy. A little at a time, mix in flour. (If you let a seven year old dump the flour in by the cup full you will be sure to soil your clothing) Dough will be soft but relatively dry. (It tastes good too--I’ve tried it.)

Roll dough into balls (Tennis ball size) and chill for one or two hours. Dough can be kept in freezer too for as long as you need. My Grandma always rolled her cookie out to about 3/8 inch thick and cut them into cool shapes. I don't do this because the more you handle the dough the tougher it becomes. I just slice the dough in rounds and cut the ends into wedges.

People generally like them thicker so I cut a 1/2 inch slice.

Bake in a cool oven 300 degrees until lightly golden at the edges. Depending on how thick you slice them, this will take between 25-35 minutes. Cookies don't raise much so you can really load up the pan. (Did I mention that the dough is good too?)



Now!, aren't you sorry you didn't come to ‘Scones-n-Tea’ nite?

Kent/MSU Extension  
775 Ball Avenue NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

PRSR STD  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Permit No. 216

## Future Dates:

Winter Class of 2004 Home & Garden Show & Spring “Stuck on Gardening” Conference at DeVos Place	Begins Jan. 5 February 26-29 February 28
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## Kent MSU Contacts—775 Ball N.E.—Grand Rapids, MI 49503

<b><u>Kent County Extension</u></b> <b><u>Website:</u></b> <a href="http://www.msue.msu.edu/kent">www.msue.msu.edu/kent</a> Choose Home, Yard, & Garden under Agriculture.	<b>Gordon Griffin</b> Kent/MSU Master Gardener Coordinator (616) 336-3283 <a href="mailto:griffing@msue.msu.edu">griffing@msue.msu.edu</a>	<b>Judy Sink</b> Kent/MSU Jr. Master Gardener Coordinator (616) 336-2544 <a href="mailto:sinkj@msue.msu.edu">sinkj@msue.msu.edu</a>
<b><u>Master Gardener Website:</u></b> <a href="http://www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener">www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener</a> (Both websites will contain our monthly newsletters.)	<b>Sharon Globig</b> Kent/MSU Lawn & Garden Hotline Coordinator (616) 336-7734 <a href="mailto:globigs@msue.msu.edu">globigs@msue.msu.edu</a>	[If you want to belong to our growing number of MGs receiving the newsletter via e-mail, just contact Gordon.]
<b><u>HOTLINE: 616-336-3881</u></b>		



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