



From Rebecca's Desk...

November, 2004

Greetings MSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteers!

Last year at this time I was writing to you to urge you to contact your legislative leadership on behalf of MSU Extension. Lot's of things have happened since then but I am again reminded of how thankful I am that you share your time, talents, energy and support with all of us. MSU Extension is here to serve you and I greatly appreciate what you give to this community—not to mention to me personally!

Because of the budget crisis, things are definitely changing here at the Extension office. As Gordon has noted in previous newsletters, we are becoming more efficient in the way we process paper and postage here. (Some would say that is long overdue!) Please keep us abreast of your e-mail address changes as we will not be able to keep you informed of what is happening here. You WILL continue to receive notices or post card mailings of classes and or special events, so don't panic. Growth is often difficult.

Speaking of changes, it is with a sad heart that we say farewell to our long-time Lawn and Garden Hotline and Special Events Coordinator, Sharon Globig. As Sharon points out in the attached letter, her family needs her at this time and she will be unable to continue. Sharon's talents and her ability to be a team player have been appreciated beyond belief and she will continue to be involved with us as much as the situation will allow. We will miss her.

That puts us in the position of needing to advertise and hire a new coordinator. At the moment I write this, I am not in a position to provide you with a job description. However, it will be available in just a few days so call me if you're interested. Because of the way the position is funded, the technical start date will not be until after the New Year's holiday. Training will occur through the winter months with the hotline gearing up in late April. The position is funded through Kent County for 20 hours per week. P.S. We have lots of fun!

The Grand Idea's Garden fund raising is slowly chugging along! We still NEED you, though, to put your name on a brick! (Benches, trees and tables are also available.) The holidays couldn't be a better time to do it. All donations are fully tax deductible and don't forget, you can buy a special "MSU Master Gardener" logo brick for \$100.00. If every one of our MSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteers bought one brick, we would have it made! I have procrastinated myself, on buying my brick. We will have prototypes here at the office by November 15 if you need ideas or a brochure, just call.

Thanks for all you do!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Finneran". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Finneran
Extension Horticulture Educator





Kent County Master Gardeners

November/
December,
2004

“Green Pages”

This is your final “Green Pages” Newsletter!

Did I get your attention?

As we have been warning you, we will no longer be sending out the “Green Pages” newsletter via snail mail. The age of technology has arrived, even if we’re not ready for it. From now on, you will be notified by e-mail (**if I have your current e-mail address**) when we have news posted. The “news” will probably not be in the format of our current newsletter, rather as announcements, volunteer opportunities, classes, or articles.

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You will be able to easily access the information by typing in our new URL www.stuckongardening.com.

Those of you who do not own a computer can make use of the computers that all public libraries have available. There are a few of you who have asked to have events, etc. mailed to you. The cost for that service will be \$5.00 for the 2005 calendar year [checks payable to MSUE]. Again, the format will probably not be the usual newsletter.

Don’t worry or be dismayed, Becky and the staff are planning to do occasional mailings for special programs and announcements. ALL current news is always posted on the “info-station” bulletin board in the diagnostic office area.

As we approach December 31st, we are continuing to re-certify those of you who have completed your volunteer and education hours. Just a friendly reminder, you will need 15 volunteer hours and 5 education hours to re-certify. If you are desperate for hours, please give me a call and I’ll try to steer you to a few possibilities.

Please review the volunteer opportunities for 2005. Of course, there will be additions. We continue to get requests from organizations for help from MSU Master Gardener Volunteers. If you know of groups interested in our help (horticultural education), have them call for a volunteer request form.

Also included is a synopsis of the “Visioning” report. If you want a detailed report, it is on the website. Hopefully you are all enjoying the Fall plantings, sprucing up, and putting to bed activities. Do you also look forward to about 3 months of just gazing at magazines and the wonderful winter?

Gordon Griffin
Kent/MSU Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator



Occasionally e-mails are sent out for emergency needs. This is the best way to contact you quickly. Please keep us informed of any changes to your e-mail or other address information.

Message from Sharon by Sharon Globig, Hotline Coordinator

Dear Fellow MG's,

A little over three years ago, I took the "Hotline Coordinator" baton from the competent hands of Julia Orefice. In those three years, it has been my pleasure to work with such terrific people as Becky, Debbie, Gordon, and Judy as well as dozens of you. I have come to really appreciate the MSU Master Gardener Volunteer Program in Kent County and all the wonderful people who are a part of it.

Some highlights of those three years include . . .

- The Diagnostics Team grew from three to nine members.
- The move into a new, spacious and pleasant facility with lots of resources at our fingertips made our volunteers more productive and happier to be here.
- The Lawn & Garden Hotline served an average of 2,600 clients per year.
- An Advanced Plant Health Diagnostics Class was implemented with 38 participants. Several of those MG's are now completing their certification.

I continue to be blown away by the number of volunteer hours you put in and the vast and diverse areas in which you donate your time to help others in the gardening arena. If a program can be judged on the basis of the outstanding work done by its volunteers, then this is indeed a tremendously successful program!

As many of you know, my life situation has changed dramatically in the past year or so. I now find it necessary to relinquish my position here at MSUE and pass the "Hotline Coordinator" baton on to another set of capable hands in order to care for my elderly mother in my home this winter. I have struggled with this decision for months and it seems like the time has come for me to take this step.

My most heartfelt thanks goes out to each of you – for your friendship, your encouragement, and your help. Special thanks to my Diagnostics Team and our Hort staff who have so graciously filled in for me in extended absences without a complaint!

As Rebecca and Gordon begin the search for my replacement, I hope you will consider being a part of this dynamic team. The rewards are so numerous that they cannot be counted and the people are the best! I will miss being a part of the team and having day-to-day contact with you. But I do plan to remain an active MSU Master Gardener Volunteer if I can.

Love and hugs,
Sharon

We're Looking for a Few Good Gardens !

Plans are well underway for the 2005 "Stuck On Gardening" Garden Tour to be held on Saturday, July 16, and Sunday, July 17. The interest in this activity is increasing as more people see gardening as an enjoyable, stress-relieving hobby. I am sure that many of you have *very special gardens* that reflect your personalities and horticultural interests. **We need your garden!**

No garden is too large or too small for the garden tour. Our goal is to feature gardens for everyone and anyone. The fact that we feature Master Gardener gardens -- together with the educational component -- makes our Garden Tour unique in the West Michigan area.

We currently have identified seven gardens for next July's Tour; however, we need to have at least three more gardens to give our Tour guests a wide variety of garden experiences. We are specifically looking for gardens in the southeast GR area.

However, please don't let this stop you from thinking about your garden being part of the 2005 (or perhaps 2006) Tour. If you would like your garden to be considered or if you have any questions about what is involved, please give me a call at 336-2544. I will be glad to discuss the possibility of including *your* garden on the 2005 "Stuck On Gardening" Garden Tour!



Announcements

Auction!!!

Thanks for the incredible results of our annual auction. We were able to raise over \$5,000 this year and we think everyone left happy with their treasures.

A very special thanks to the following local businesses who donated items for the auction.

Walter's Gardens	Birdwatcher's
Rockford Hardware	Market Place
Ottawa Kent Perennials	Farmbrook Designs
Jonker's Gardens	Zysk's Farm
Roark's Garden Center	& Greenhouse
Creative Learning Toys	Sterling International
Holistic Care Approach	Dogwood Farms
Fruit Basket Flowerland	"Cin's Eden"
Storm Hill Nursery	Hortech
V & V Nursery	Creekside Nursery
Gemmons	White Oaks Resort
W W Greenhouses	Woodstream
Go Gardening	Spirit Dreams
Sand Hill Farms	Motman's
DeVrooman Bulb Co.	Cambridge Ag. LLC
. Mollema & Sons	Black Swamp Studios
Raindrop Studios	Tech-Pac
Midwest Massage & Salon	Daylilies by Christopher
Shaner Avenue Nursery	Wild Bird's Unlimited
Evergreen Acres	Masterpiece Floral

Hong Kong & Taipei -

We currently have only a few "openings" for this special evening with our own Margo Drake, Class of 2000. She spent time in China recently and has slides to prove it! Please plan on coming and bringing a guest. We will have green tea and Chinese treats instead of popcorn—hope you don't mind.



Please RSVP if you are able to come and enjoy this special presentation. We will offer 2 hours of education credit to those attending. The presentation begins at 7:00 p.m.

We will have books for sale along with our "Stuck on Gardening" sweatshirts as well as our new MSU Master Gardener Volunteer vests. So..., bring your checkbooks and get ready for gift giving.



Nature Program

The Grand Rapids Audubon Club presents a seminar on Monday, November 22, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. in the Grand Rapids Theological Seminary Auditorium at Cornerstone University.

The speaker is Melanie Good who has been the Naturalist at Blandford Nature Center for the past three years. Previously, she worked at Chippewa Nature Center in Midland for five years. She received her Masters of Science in the area of Conservation Biology from Central Michigan University.

Her topic is "Wildlife Plantings Make Your Yard Sing." There is No Charge for admission and this will count as **2 educational credits for MSU Master Gardener Volunteers.**

A Note of Thanks

Tammy DeBaar, Director of Outdoor Education for Lowell Area Schools sent us a nice thank you to those who helped at the Wittenbach Center this summer. She writes:

"Dear Master Gardeners,
These kind folks worked hard this summer and I thought you may want to know. Many put in 10+ hours a week all summer.
Thanks for supporting what we do at the Wittenbach/Wege Center!

Tammy DeBaar"

Volunteers were:

Sue Swanson	Penny Gerdeman
Jim Geib	John & Rene Darling
Jeanne Smith	Jill Smith
Kaye Yonkers	Mary Jo Hayward
Jill Smith	

WAY TO GO—YOU GREAT MSU
MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS!!

Visioning Update—2003-2004

Ten team leaders of our original Visioning Team committees met Wednesday, Oct. 27th to review our progress toward stated goals. These were the goals we originated at a meeting two years ago. Each committee chair reported on progress and expected goals for the 2005 MSU Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Following is a very brief overview of what was discussed. If you have questions regarding any of the reports, please view the complete report on our website – www.stuckongardening.com.

Jr. MSU Master Gardener Program

Judy Sink reported on a very successful summer Garden Tour. Plans are in the works for another great tour on July 16th and 17th, 2005. There were 5 very successful Jr. MG programs held during the year with 43 children completing the requirements. Over 6,000 pansies were distributed to children at the Home & Garden show last February. Plans are to continue our involvement at the Show, including tours for schools, the scavenger hunt, reading corner, and the planting of more flowers by the children.

Trial and Display Garden

You should know by now that our “Grand Ideas Garden” is in the works! We will probably begin excavation this fall – hopefully before the snow flies. Donations are slow in coming, but have been steady. We are really hoping more of you decide to help by purchasing one or more bricks for the pathway. We are looking forward to a ground breaking celebration in the Spring of 2005.

R & R (Social and Activity Committee)

We again had a very successful Spring banquet. Our popcorn & movie nite was held last February, and our “Evening with Mary McLellan” was held in March. The R & R committee has arranged for the Hong Kong & Taipei evening on Nov. 15th, the Wreath Making on Nov. 30th, and arranged several activities for the 2005 year.

Environment/Conservation

This committee has had 2 successful classes over the past 2 years with 20 students participating this year. The goal is to possibly offer classes with a more narrow focus in the year 2005 – i.e. Dune ecology or lake/waterfront issues. The regular “Master Naturalist” class is slated to be offered again in 2006.

Website

We now have a domain name – www.stuckongardening.com where all MSU Master Gardener Volunteers can keep up-to-date on volunteer opportunities, news, and critical links to other information. The website will be continually monitored and updated and should become a great way for you to access information from the warmth of your own home.

Education Committee

The purpose of this committee is to increase horticultural knowledge for MSU Master Gardener Volunteers and the general public. This committee is currently planning educational opportunities for the 2005 calendar year. They are revamping the fall Gardening with Perennials program, and working on a possible water gardening class and a woody plant ID and care class. Some of these will probably not be offered until 2006.

Growth & Financial Accountability

This group helps provide guidance for the Kent MSUE Horticultural Department. They are continuing to provide guidance and advise for the staff in decision making and continue to evaluate long-term financial stability of our program. They assist in determining future staffing to accommodate growth.

Community Gardening

Several attempts have been made to encourage community gardens, without a great deal of success. A garden at Creston Complex is continuing, however, other programs have not had the kind of community support that generates follow through and completion. For this reason, we will focus on more personal, one-to-one efforts through our existing Family & Nutrition program staff here at the Extension, also supporting the urban gardening program. Dialogue continues with other community groups in the effort to develop more community interest in gardening.



Urban Gardening

We have offered an “Urban Gardening” program for 2 years at the “Learning Corner”, on Wealthy and Fuller. A garden for the community was established and has been cultivated now for 2 years. This program will continue to encourage involvement of more central city residents in the life of our program. Two graduates of the program are now official MSU Master Gardener Volunteers.

Garden Therapy

This group was disbanded last year and was recently revived by Betsy Brown, one of our own MSU Master Gardener Volunteers who is also a Horticultural Therapist. We have MGs at Pathfinder Resources, the Women’s and Children’s Center, and the Veteran’s Facility. If there are other MSU Master Gardener Volunteers who wish to help, please give Gordon a call.

Volunteer Opportunities—2005

Extension Hotline

Closed November 1st through the middle of March. Trainees are required to attend a 1 hour orientation session before serving on the hotline. All other MSU Master Gardener Volunteers are welcome to participate as often as you wish.

This is a critical service to our community. If this is something you enjoy (research), please consider bolstering our numbers throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

Extension Office Help

Occasional help is needed. Please call if you are interested and specify times when you may be available.

Extension Garden Development

We will hopefully begin developing our “Grand Ideas” garden in the Summer of 2005. Help will be needed on an on-going basis, to plan, plant, and maintain the garden.

MSU Master Gardener Planning Committees

We have several groups who are following up with our Fall, 2003 “Vision” to extend opportunities for MSU Master Gardener Volunteers. These groups meet to plan and organize activities and set the direction for our organization. Currently, the groups include: Jr. Master Gardener Program, Education, R&R, Environmental/Conservation, Growth & Financial Accountability, Website, and Community Gardening.

MSU Master Gardener Fundraisers

Help will be needed for the Home & Garden Show, scheduled for March 3—6th. People will also be needed during our conference on March 5th. These will be counted as “Extension” hours



Writing Articles for Publication

We welcome your knowledge and skills in a certain area or a specific experience to share with other Master Gardeners. Approved articles will be posted on our Kent County and State MSU Master Gardener Volunteer websites. Before writing an article, please notify the Coordinator for approval.

MSU Jr. Master Gardener Volunteer Program

Call Judy Sink at the Extension office (336-2544—sinkj@msu.edu) to find out how to be involved in this exciting addition to our program. These are opportunities to work with children in schools and other community organizations, encouraging them to become involved in gardening.

MSU Junior Master Gardener “Garden Tour”

This effort is designed to support our MSU Jr. Master Gardener program. Folks are needed for planning the event, and for being present at each garden sight. These count as “Extension” hours.

Urban Gardening Program

We are attempting to bring the Master Gardener Volunteer Program to our city folks. Currently Susan Aalsburg is heading up this effort at the Learning Corner on Wealthy at Fuller. People are needed to help in teaching the class and in encouraging the gardeners.

Speakers

We often get requests for MSU Master Gardener Volunteers to speak at various events, garden clubs, and other gatherings. Most are for small groups. If you have a particular area of expertise and would enjoy sharing your knowledge— THIS IS WHAT THE MSU MG PROGRAM is all about! Please let us know of your availability and interest.

Fall/Winter Volunteer Opportunities

Of course, living in the great state of Michigan, you realize that the late Fall and Winter months leave not many opportunities for gardening, or for volunteering. There are, however, a few options to consider.

Kent/MSU Extension Food and Nutrition Program

This is in the “planning” stages. We have a unique opportunity because this program already is addressing community member’s need for nutrition education. Our part would be in encouraging gardening. This would entail working 1-1 or with small groups of people to teach them (and listen to them) about gardening. In the winter, we would help them plant and care for herbs on the window sill and then in the spring perhaps begin tending a garden. It would be helpful if there are some volunteers out there who speak Spanish because we do reach a sizeable number of Spanish speaking folks. Please let us know of your interest.

Winter Fruit & Vegetable Expo—Education Opportunity from Amy Irish-Brown

What: Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo

When: December 7, 8, & 9, 2004

Where: DeVos Place in Grand Rapids

Volunteers are needed to help control the lights, turn on/off slide projectors, handout papers, etc. No technical skills are needed, just a willingness to learn a few minor details and a little preparedness to keep the talks moving smoothly.

The \$45 registration fee will be waved enabling you to get in the trade show. Parking expenses are not covered. There are over 50 educational sessions over the 3 days. At least one volunteer is needed per session. If you are interested, please sign up with Gordon 336-3283. Amy will contact you with more information before the Expo begins.

Advanced educational credit will be given which also count toward annual re-certification [hour for hour].

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

There are many opportunities for MSU Master Gardeners at FMG. All outdoor and indoor horticulture volunteers may count all of their hours. Most decent activities that involve any aspect of educating the public regarding horticulture also count. We have added the “**Garden Shop**” as an approved activity for MSU Master Gardener Volunteers. However, we will no longer approve the “Butterfly Exhibit” as an approved activity. If you have questions regarding any of these hours, just give Gordon a call.

Cannon Township

Help is needed to prepare the beds for the winter. Continuing help is needed next spring and summer. Please call Pat Herrington—874-6975.

St. John’s Home for Children

MSU Master Gardener Volunteers are needed to maintain annual and perennial gardens on their 20 acre campus. St John’s provides shelter and treatment for over 700 abused and neglected children. They have 8 houses and a Commons Building as well as several established gardens.

Gardeners may determine the time required. The volunteer may work with children, if there is interest. A volunteer is needed to prepare beds, plant annuals, maintain beds as needed through the growing season.

If you are interested, you may visit and take a tour to see if this is something you can do. The address is 2355 Knapp NE. What is really needed is a MSU Master Gardener Volunteer to help coordinate other volunteers, as we have at other volunteer sites. If you are interested, please call Marty Arnold at 361-5227 ext. 21 or Gordon at 336-3283.

Message from Ginny!

By Virginia (Ginny) Wanty, Data Technician

Ginny has a new e-mail address—wanty@msu.edu. Her phone number is 336-3108 and her hours are generally Monday and Wednesdays—10 a.m.—2 p.m. If you need to leave a message for her, just call Gordon at 336-3283.

We have developed a postcard that will serve as a confirmation of volunteer and/or education hours submitted. A MSU Master Gardener Volunteer will receive a postcard each time hours are submitted.

It is helpful to Ginny if both Volunteer and Education hours are totaled on each section of the form.

If you are working on an area of specialization such as Master Naturalist or Advanced Plant Health Diagnostic, **please, please** mention that area of specialization on your form. After you have completed the requirements of the specialization, turn in all your education and volunteer hours on one sheet, if possible.



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

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Advanced Garden Design Workshop	November 6th
A Visit to Hong Kong & Taipei	November 15th
Holiday Centerpiece Workshop	November 30
-----2005-----	
Home & Garden Show	March 3-6th, 2005
Spring "Stuck on Gardening" Conference	March 5th, 2005
Spring Banquet	April 21st, 2005
State MSU Master Gardener Conference	June 20-22nd, 2005
Plant Day at MSU	August 5, 2005
Annual Kent/MSU Field Day	August 19, 2005
Visit to Duwayne's Greenhouse (tentative)	August 23, 2005

Kent MSU Contacts—775 Ball N.E.—Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Both the Kent County And State MSU Master Gardener Volunteer website can be Accessed through the following URL.	Gordon Griffin Kent/MSU Master Gardener Coordinator (616) 336-3283 griff188@msu.edu	Judy Sink Kent/MSU Jr. Master Gardener Coordinator (616) 336-2544 sinkj@msu.edu
	Sharon Globig Kent/MSU Lawn & Garden Hotline Coordinator (616) 336-7734 globigs@msue.msu.edu	Virginia (Ginny) Wanty MSU Master Gardener Volunteer Data Technician (616)-336-3108 wanty@msu.edu
<u>HOTLINE—336-3881</u>		



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