



MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

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September - October, 2008

Dear Readers:

Happy Fall! Don't you just love this time of year? The colors, the smells, the football!!! What's not to love? Gardens are winding down and the heat is being turned up. Time moves so quickly, digs for the 2009 Plant Sale are starting. Remember, if you have plants to divide, Fall is the perfect time.

Just as Fall is a time of change in the seasons we have had many changes for me to tell you about. You may know that Don Lehman, County Extension Director, has moved on and many of you met Linda Huyck at the Graduation Celebration for the Master Gardener Volunteer class of 2007. Linda is wonderful and is very supportive of the Master Gardener Program. Next on the change list is the leaving of O.J. Wing in the MSUE-Montcalm office. O.J. has moved on and Suzanne Krogman is now handling those duties. This change left Suzanne's position open, and is now filled by Heather Haag. I have every confidence in these folks that with their help our program has every opportunity to continue to bloom.

Still there are more changes that have taken place with more to come. As of January 1, 2009 the Master Gardener Training Program administration on the campus of Michigan State University will look very different. As many of you know the Master Gardener Volunteer program has had its own office and staffing. October 31, 2009 will be the last day it will be staffed with Sharon Conley being transferred into another department. State Coordinator Mary McLellan will complete her service at the end of the year. The program is being streamlined back under the umbrella of Extension. The transfer has already started and should be completed by the year's end. As with any merger, or in this case remerge, there are certain to be changes. So stay tuned and I will keep you informed.

I would like to thank the previously mentioned for all they have done for the Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Your contributions have been greatly appreciated and you will be missed. On behalf of all the Master Gardener Volunteers in Montcalm County, may I wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors. The Master Gardener Volunteer program would not be what it is today without each of you and you will not be forgotten.

Happy Gardening,
Debi Kraft
Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator



EDUCATION
FREDRIK MEIJER GARDENS



To register on-line www.meijergardens.org/education/form_register.php
or call 616.975.3147

Pre-registration and pre-payment are required for all classes.

The Fall Vegetable Garden

Tuesday, September 23 - 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

FEE: \$20 members, \$25 non-members

INSTRUCTOR: Ana Bosma, Horticulturist, Meijer Gardens

Join us at Michigan's Farm Garden and learn techniques to extend your harvest, how to plant garlic and cover crops, and properly prepare your garden for winter. You'll see what thrived in our garden and discover which heirloom vegetables are top performers. Ana will also discuss problems that arose and environmentally friendly solutions. A tram will provide round-trip transportation to the farm, so please be prompt and dress for the weather.

Hardy Bulbs for Continuous Spring Color

Thursday September 25 - 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

FEE: \$20 members, \$25 non-members

INSTRUCTOR: Reini Moser, Landscape Designer and Educator

Learn which bulbs to plant this fall to achieve two months of color next spring. Reini will reveal which bulb varieties are deer-resistant and how to combine these with perennials, ground covers and shrubs to achieve maximum impact. She will also include information on how to care for the bulbs after blooming. A native from the Netherlands, Reini is passionate about bulbs and her inspiring images will help you achieve months of colorful combinations.

Get Onboard: Fabulous Fall Grasses

Monday September 29 - 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

FEE: \$20 members, \$25 non-members

INSTRUCTOR: Sarah Rasch, Horticulturist

Board the tram for a tour of the ornamental grasses in our gardens. See a huge range of sizes, forms and textures, including the magnificent ten-foot-tall Giant Chinese Silver Grass, the dwarf 'Little Bunny' Fountain Grass, and elegant native prairie grasses. Gain insight into the best ways to use the different types as Sarah discusses their care and maintenance. Be sure to bring your camera and dress for the weather.

Prepare Your Garden for Winter

Tuesday October 7 - 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

FEE: \$20 members, \$25 non-members

INSTRUCTOR: Ed McKee, Manager of Outdoor Horticulture, Meijer Gardens

Find out what to do this fall to produce a beautiful garden next spring. Discover which perennials to cut back and which ones to leave, how to protect your trees and shrubs for winter weather, what to plant, and how to fertilize in the fall. Ed will present useful tips to ensure a healthier and more beautiful garden next year.

— continued on next page

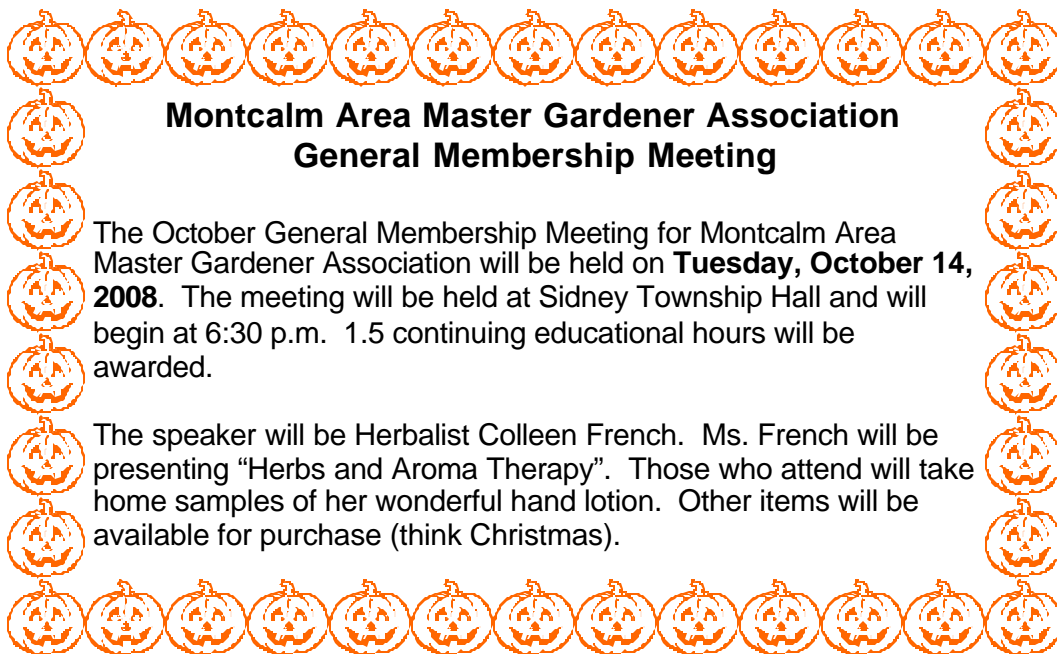
Save Money by Saving Tender Bulbs

Tuesday, October 21 - 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

FEE: \$25 members, \$30 non-members

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Richard Peters, past-president, Grand Valley Dahlia Society

Save your tender bulbs this fall and save money next spring. Dr. Peters will reveal when to harvest your tender bulbs, including dahlias, cannas, calla lilies, tuberous begonias and gladiolas. He will also share proven techniques and provide advice on how to get them growing next spring. Then you will gain hands-on experience cleaning, dividing and preparing tender bulbs for winter storage. Space is limited.



**Montcalm Area Master Gardener Association
General Membership Meeting**

The October General Membership Meeting for Montcalm Area Master Gardener Association will be held on **Tuesday, October 14, 2008**. The meeting will be held at Sidney Township Hall and will begin at 6:30 p.m. 1.5 continuing educational hours will be awarded.

The speaker will be Herbalist Colleen French. Ms. French will be presenting "Herbs and Aroma Therapy". Those who attend will take home samples of her wonderful hand lotion. Other items will be available for purchase (think Christmas).

Volunteers Needed!!!!

We will be having a Fall Dig on **Monday, September 15**, at 10:00 a.m. at Diane Covey's Residence, 5475 Cannonsville Road, Lakeview. If you are going north from Greenville on M91, go thru Langston to Cannonsville Road (second road north of Langston), go east about 2 1/4 miles and it is on the south side of the road.

Please give Celeste Faber a call at 616.754.5678 or e-mail celestefaber@hotmail.com so she will know how many people will be there. Thanks!

FUNDamentally Green IV

Bob Lilienfeld, Advanced Master Gardener Volunteer, MSU Montcalm Extension

"Gardening requires lots of water- most of it in the form of perspiration" by Lou Erickson

This is the fifth of the Going Green Series - Water Conservation and Gardening

Water usage is a particular concern in a large number of American communities. Gardening in turn consumes a significant amount of water and conserving it is probably the most important way of Going Green. In the following paragraphs we will describe some of the most important ways found to conserve water in gardening.

MAXIMIZE WATERING TECHNIQUES

- * Watering cans are an effective way to water the roots of individual plants with minimum water usage.
- * Soaker hoses are a great way to water with minimum water needed. Made from recycled rubber, water is released through micropores and minimum evaporation occurs. This system can be used with a timer, is easily hidden under mulch and requires little maintenance.
- * Drip irrigation is the most efficient (>90%) way to water. The system consists of tubes with a release point next to each plant. Additional plants can be added or removed from the system with minimum effort. The flow can be regulated with a timer.
- * Avoid using over lawn sprinklers whenever possible. They are very inefficient and waste significant quantities of water.
- * Regularly check equipment used for leak.
- * Water lawns in early morning when temperatures and wind are usually the lowest, minimizing water evaporation. Do not overwater.
- * Water thoroughly, occasionally rather than sparingly and often to develop a deeper root system in the plants.
- * Plants prefer rainwater to tap water. Using as much rainwater as possible will improve water efficiency.

PLANT WISELY

- * Plant native and/or drought tolerant shrubs, trees, grasses or ground cover. Once these plantings are established they will require significantly less watering and will most likely survive a drought period without the need to water.
- * Group thirsty plants together, improving your watering efficiency.
- * Avoid over fertilizing your plants and lawn. Applying fertilizer significantly increases the need for watering. Fertilizers containing slow release water insoluble forms of nitrogen should be used. Mulch to maintain moisture in the soil. It also helps to control weeds which compete fiercely with plants for water.
- * Adding organic matter to the soil improves its structure, allowing for greater moisture retention. It also provides additional nutrients for the plants.
- * Deep cultivation encourages deep rooting, which reduces the plant's need for watering.

OTHER WAYS TO REDUCE WATER USAGE

- * Use a longer (at least three inches) cut with your lawn mower. This encourages deeper lawn roots, shades the root system and holds soil moisture significantly better than a closely cropped lawn.
- * Only use ornamental water features that utilize recycled water.
- * Aerate your soil and lawn regularly. This will prevent soil compacting, and allow water to soak thru to the plants to give them more oxygen, nitrogen and nutrients. This prevents water runoff - a real water waster.
- * Soil improvement to maintain ideal water conditions is important - a soil test run at the MSU Montcalm Extension Office will identify ways to maximize soil conditions.
- * Create rain gardens in your landscape to improve water retention and reduce runoff

If you can utilize some of these techniques for water conservation in your gardens you will really contribute to Going Green!!

September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 <i>Board of Directors</i> 6:30 p.m.	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 <i>Heritage Village</i> 9:30 a.m. to noon	11	12	13
14	15 <i>Fall Dig at Diane</i> <i>Covey's 10:00 a.m.</i>	16 <i>CMUE</i> 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 <i>Heritage Village</i> 9:30 a.m. to noon	25	26	27
28	29	30				

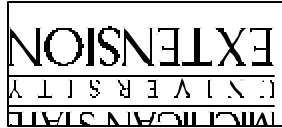
October 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 <i>Heritage Village 9:30 a.m. to noon</i>	9	10	11
12	13	14 <i>Montcalm Area Master Gardener Association General Meeting, 6:30 p.m.</i>	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 <i>CMUE 6:30 p.m. to ?</i>	22 <i>Heritage Village 9:30 a.m. to noon</i>	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER



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www.msue.edu/mastergardener/montcalm/index.htm
www.msue.edu/montcalm (Home, Yard and Garden link)