

# The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

April 2004 Volume 8, Issue 4

## Landscape architect gives guided tour

Imagine having a garden and money is no object.

Or, flying off to the Netherlands to check out new tulip bulbs for spring planting.

Lynn LaPointe Wiese, a licensed landscape architect, has been there and done that at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania.

The spectacular estate was created by the wealthy DuPont family. They purchased the property, located 30 miles west of Philadelphia, in 1906 and expanded it to include some 1,000 acres.

Today it is a public garden, with four acres under glass in conservatories, English estate gardens, Italian water gardens, a Mediterranean garden, a theater garden, a trial garden, colored fountain displays and even fireworks during summer holidays.

Members of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association will see it from



Lynn LaPointe Wiese is a licensed landscape architect.

Wiese's viewpoint, complete with 140 slides, at the April meeting.

She will trace Longwood's history, followed by what influences it today and the gardens' current horticultural practices. (Please note: her talk begins at 7 p.m.)

"Longwood exposed me more to horticulture – perennials, trees and shrubs — than design," says the Maine native, who managed 18 gardeners during her tenure there.

"I think what really influenced my designs was the experience I had prior to Longwood. I worked in a design and build company in Pennsylvania where you met with clients and, on the spot, had to come up with design solutions and then work out the details back at the office."

Her residential, commercial and institutional designs with that company won numerous local and state-level accolades.

She moved to Michigan several years

### Next meeting

- € 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Wednesday, April 28, at the Andersen Enrichment Center, Ezra Rust Drive
- € 7 p.m. - 8:15 p.m. Lynn LaPointe Wiese discusses "Longwood Gardens"
- € 8:15 p.m. - 8:35 p.m. Refreshments
- € 8:35 p.m. - 9 p.m. Meeting
- € One-hour education credit

ago after her husband was transferred here and now spends her time teaching across this state and northwest Ohio. She also operates her business, Design for Outdoor Living, in Mount Pleasant.

"My business slogan is 'Creating award-winning design with understated dignity and elegance.' What that means is less is more, that if you keep it simple, it can work well," Wiese said.

"In my classes I give a background in design so that you can understand the theory in the books. We talk about how to apply it practically and then take the

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## Art Museum, six homes on Garden Walk

Seven gardens and a variety of vendors are all part of the Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk.

It is from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 16. Tickets are \$10 and available at the museum or any of the gardens.

The annual fund-raiser is sponsored by the non-profit museum, in cooperation with the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association. Funds go to museum programs.

"This year the art museum is on the walk, because of the changes with the new building," explained Pat Bourdow, museum board member and volunteer – as well as a Master Gardener.

"There's some site work to be done in between the old and new buildings, but

they're saying it will be finished in time for the garden walk."

Besides the historical and new gardens at the museum, the walk features six Saginaw area homes. They are:

Mike and Barb Slasinski of Thomas Township who have created a pond, complete with a waterfall spilling over a mountain of rock, and a moss garden.

Planners are still working out safety issues to get visitors back to the grotto behind the waterfall, Bourdow said.

"The garden is such a surprise because from the front there is no indication that this is there," she said.

"The family also have a lot of conifers and perennials on their property."

*(Continues on Page 3)*

## Minutes of the March 2004 meeting

The March meeting of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association was called to order at 7 p.m. March 24, 2004, at the Anderson Enrichment Center.

Elaine Rappley moved the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as published. Nancy Kleekamp seconded the motion.

Treasurer's report:

Beginning Balance	5,809.41
Deposits 2/25-3/24	1,488.00
Expenses 2/25-3/24	117.40
Closing balance 3/24	7,180.01

As of 3/24 we had 152 paid members.

President Judy Henning welcomed Midland Master Gardeners Marian Cimbalik and Ben Franklin who came to observe our meeting.

Winners of the castor bean growing contest were announced. First-place

winner was Ellie Robertson; second place, Mary Anne Malek; third place, Shirley Oryczak and Alice Hudson.

The Habitat for Humanity project was put on hold.

Shirley McNier was named the new chairman of logo wear.

Jan O'Dell discussed the value of the mentoring program, pointing out that the current class is making good use of their mentors.

SVMGA will host a gardening day, called "An Autumn Affair for Gardeners," on Saturday, Oct. 2, at the Saginaw Valley State University Regional Education Building. We will charge \$50.

Frederick W. Case Jr. is the keynote speaker. Members Peggy Shaver and Grey Gitzen also will speak. One hundred people must attend to cover our expenses, but hopefully it will draw 300.

The garden day is open to the public. Although there may be substitutions, there are no refunds. Members approved \$2,000 to reserve the SVSU facility.

Pat Washburn will conduct a shrub survey. Members may indicate their favorites, as well as ones they would never

plant again on sign-up sheets at the meeting.

Master Gardener Coordinator Angela Irwin offered booklets showing activities this spring through Warmbier's in Auburn.

Caird said the Ann Arbor bus trip May 22 needs 40 people by April 26. Cost is \$23.50. Another upcoming trip is to Marshall on July 10, costing \$28.

A spring "Make a Difference Day" is May 13. Members who volunteer will guide high school students in cleaning up yards of servicemen.

Wil Hufton read a MSU bulletin from concerning the harm fertilizing too early and too heavily can do to lawns, especially if you did a late fall fertilizing.

After the break, we were treated to a very interesting talk by Tony Reznick from the University of Michigan.

He discussed rock gardening and showed slides of plants that grow in alpine conditions.

It's surprising that such beautiful little plants can thrive in a lean environment.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Robertson, secretary*

### Officers for 2004

#### President

Judy Henning 799-4136

#### Vice President

Aileen Cowan 865-8784

#### Secretary

Ellie Robertson 792-4356

#### Treasurer

Deb Keller 781-1228

#### Program Director

Gail Caird 793-1942

#### Newsletter Co-Editors

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### April speaker continued...

design theory to your own situation. Design is so difficult because it's a fluid process, not a linear one. I try to help people create steps to get where they want to go."

And while you may not have the \$514 million endowment available to Longwood gardeners, Wiese does try to help people select principles from the estate that could be applied in smaller gardens.

"Everything there is done on such a grand scale, no one can do that on that level," she explains.

However, judging from the response to her classes and the attendance at the summer Master Gardener conference and MSU Garden Day, gardening is healthy in Michigan.

"In the past 10 years there's been a real upsurge in perennials and ornamental grasses," explains Wiese. "But I think there will be an upsurge in annuals in the coming years.

"Whether we like it or not, perennials are a lot of work and not everyone has time to be dividing and replanting perennials.

"Many people want color in their garden and annuals give you that. And, I think it's easier to find someone who is willing to plant annuals at your home in the spring and then rip them out in the fall than trying to find someone to maintain your perennials."

Wiese has a bachelor's degree in recreation and park management from the University of Maine and master's degrees in landscape architecture from Kansas State University and administration from Central Michigan University.

Her three classes are: introduction to design, advanced design and an immersion design class. The average cost is about \$75, including lecture, lunch and take-home manual.

*Story by Darlene B. Damp, co-editor*

## Letter from the President

This is an exciting time in the garden. Almost every day as I walk through my garden I see something new that has emerged from its winter's nap.

This is a good time to mark the areas where you will place the new plants you have ordered.

It is also a good time to make note of those plants that need to be moved to a better growing location. The only loss that I see in my garden (so far) is a Persicaria 'Red Dragon.' This is the second one I have lost in as many years. I have decided to look at this as a new planting opportunity and replace it with something different and hardier.

If you were not at our March meeting, you may not know that plans are underway for our Association to host a one-day fall seminar.

Your Board has done some research into speakers (still doing more research), places, and other factors involved with putting on a seminar.

After being given membership approval to go ahead at the March meeting, the Board has signed a contract with Saginaw Valley State University to use their Re-

gional Education Building for the seminar.

Many volunteers will be needed to make this a success. I will have a volunteer sign-up sheet at the April meeting.

The Board is very excited about this project and hope that you will join in the excitement. We are certainly capable of doing this and I know we will do an excellent job of it. Watch the newsletter for more information as it develops.

Now to a sadder note. Effective April 29, 2004, Angela Irwin will no longer be our Master Gardener Coordinator.

Angela has gone back to school and with three very active daughters, a husband, a couple of dogs, a cat (I think it's only one) and other creatures, she does not have the time (I wonder why?) to give to the position.

Angela will still remain an active member of the MG Association when her time allows. No decision has been



made as to a replacement. I will keep you informed as I become informed.

Angela has done an outstanding job and she will be missed as our Coordinator.

Our April speaker Lynn LaPointe Wiese's presentation on Longwood Gardens will start promptly at 7 p.m. and run until 8:15 p.m.

Our refreshment time will be cut from 30 to 20 minutes (sorry) and our meeting is cut from 30 to 25 minutes. The last few meetings have been very busy with lots happening.

I want to thank Shirley McNier for volunteering to Chair the Logo Wear job and Angela Irwin for volunteering to chair the Members Notebook job.

Remember we have our GARDEN magazine exchange at the April meeting.

Bring in any garden magazine you want to trade and pick up a magazine that appeals to you. Bring **ONLY** garden magazines please.

I hope your garden cleanup is progressing or completed. Planting time is just about here.

Take care,  
Judy

## Master Gardeners to answer planting questions, man vendor table

*(Continues from Page 1)*

Advanced Master Gardener Gail Caird and husband Steve have their Saginaw Township yard on the walk, featuring vegetable and perennial gardens in a suburban setting.

Mary and Terry Andrews, who live in The Village, off Gratiot, are redoing their garden for a completely new look, says Bourdow.

"They were on the walk a couple of years ago, but they're building a deck, having the yard fenced, putting in a pond and they say it will all be done by the walk."

Grace Rousseau of Shields features a variety of metal sculptures in her large

garden. The artwork is the creation of her son.

Neighbors Clarence Luzak and Jymmie Green, have smaller adjoining gardens in Saginaw Township. Their proximity will make it easy to walk from one to the other.

Vendors will include the Mount Hope Herb Farm, with its unusual varieties; a stained glass artist; the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association, which will hand out free tree seedlings along with information about the group and gardening; and "treasure trash" for the garden.

The vendor area opens at 10 a.m. at the museum, 1126 N. Michigan.

Bourdow said not all the details on ven-

dors are complete.

Master Gardeners may work in two-, four- and six-hours shifts at a site, answering visitor questions about plants and growing techniques.

Bourdow said she will have a sign-up sheet at the April meeting for members who want to earn volunteer hours. Or, call her at 755-8879. Please let Bourdow know if you have a site preference.

In addition, Grey Gitzen, who is coordinating the MG vendor table, is seeking help.

Members may sign up at the next meeting or call him at 792-0615.

*Story by Darlene B. Damp, co-editor*

### Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association mission statement

"Joining together as Master Gardeners, our mission is to promote our enthusiasm and knowledge of gardening by a wide variety of educational and volunteer activities in a spirit of fun and friendship."

**Next board meeting:  
Wednesday, May 5**

## Odds and ends

### **Attention trough-makers!**

The upcoming trough-making classes are filled, says Gail Caird, program director.

Those who have signed up and pre-paid for their classes are reminded to bring a pair of good rubber gloves – and dress for mess at the workshops.

Unless this instructor calls you with further instructions, this is the only item class members need to bring.

### **Plant exchange in May**

As you begin spring clean-up, it's not too soon to start thinking about the annual SVMGA plant exchange at the May meeting.

Advanced Master Gardener Grey Gitzen will host the exchange at his Saginaw Township home.

Those who are planning to bring plants should bring them in pots or plastic bags with all the information necessary for their new owners to properly plant them – name, color, height, spread, sun requirements, etc.

### **Treat grubs now**

Don't be bugged by grubs this year.

Now through May 15 and Aug. 15 to Oct. 30 are good times to treat for grubs while they are actively feeding.

There is no point in applying an insecticide after the middle of May, because the grubs will be done feeding for the spring.

Homeowners should use a curative insecticide such as Diazinon, Sevin (carbaryl) or Dylox (trichlorfon) to reduce turf damage. MSU tests show that Diazinon works best and Sevin has worked better than Dylox. Note: Sevin and Dylox are not effective at a pH above 7.8.

(A replacement product from Spectrum Brand Spectracide called Triazacide is not effective for grub control because it must be soil-incorporated to kill grubs which is not possible to do in turf grass.)

Sprayable insecticides should be followed by a ½-inch of irrigation to move the insecticide into the soil. A coffee mug can be used to measure.

Granular treatments are more practical

for low-maintenance turf. Wait one week after treatment before reseeding so that the grubs will not eat the grass seed.

To avoid the same problem next year, treat lawns with a preventive insecticide such as Merit or Bayer Advanced Lawn Season-Long Grub Control or GrubEx between July 1 and July 15 for optimal control. These products do not work on large grubs present at that time, but are excellent for control of young grubs present in late July or early August.

Dig up a square foot of turf after Sept. 1 to see if grubs are present in high enough numbers to cause damage. Also watch for thinning patches in the lawn. Seven to 12 grubs per square foot suggests a need for an application of a curative insecticide the following March.

### **Conifers topic of April talk**

TAWAS CITY – Conifers, trees that produce their seeds in cones, is the topic at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 24, at Tawas United Methodist Church, 20 M-55.

Don Wild, vice president and treasurer of the American Conifer Society, will demonstrate how the adaptability of conifers, which also provide 24 months of color in the garden.

In addition, they are low maintenance. Small ones add unique shapes and textures, while larger, fast growers screen your property, frame your view and provide air conditioning and erosion control.

The program is a presentation of the Sunrise Side Master Gardener Association and Iosco County MSU Extension.

Admission is \$10, or \$5 for Master Gardeners. To register, make check payable and mail to MSU Extension, P.O. Box 599, Tawas City, MI 48764, or register at Iosco County MSU Extension, 420 W. Lake Street, Tawas City.

No telephone registrations will be accepted.

### **Greenhouse sponsors Master Gardener Day**

CARLETON – See new varieties, get combination ideas – and even purchase plants Wednesday, June 2, at Four Star Greenhouse, 1015 Indian Trails Road.

State Master Gardener Coordinator Mary McLellan attended the event last year and

labels it “fun” and will offer two hours education credit to those who attend the entire event.

The greenhouse will have new varieties for 2005 on display with a Supernova presentation, a perennial presentation, a combination planting trial display, a retail display presentation area and more.

Those who plan to attend must RSVP by Friday, May 7, to Kathy Smith at (734) 654-6420 or e-mail her at ksmith@fourstargh.com.

### **New garden needed for July meeting**

Janice Wazny has had to withdraw her garden from the July 28 meeting.

Anyone who is interested in hosting this session should contact Judy Henning as soon as possible at 799-4136.

The summer sessions consist of a short business meeting and an informal tour of the host's garden.

### **Four more projects receive funding**

Four more project requests have received funding from the board.

The spring clean-up for area military families, set for Thursday, May 13, will get \$200 for bulbs and plants.

The Saginaw Township Playscape has approval for \$200 for plant materials and the Saginaw County Rail Trail project will use its \$200 allocation for plantings around gazebos at two rest stops along the route and put boulders at the trail heads.

The Shiawassee Nature Center will use a \$50 allocation to add flowers to the Stroebel Road entrance.

Last month, the Saginaw Children's Zoo project received \$200 for planting materials. Funds still remain for other projects; each project has a \$200 limit.

All proposed projects must be submitted in writing. Project leaders must track all spending and submit receipts for a final report to the board. For information, contact a board member.

### **Logo wear has new chair**

Advanced Master Gardener Shirley McNier is the new chairman of SVMGA logo wear.

(Continues on Page 6)

## Garden conference at Grand Hotel

MACKINAC ISLAND – The MSU Master Gardener Program sponsors a new gardening event Sunday to Tuesday, Aug. 22-24.

It features a world-renowned speaker, private tours, receptions and classes – all amidst elegant surroundings of Mackinaw Island's Grand Hotel.

Participants will gather Sunday evening for a welcome reception on the porch of the famous hotel, surrounded by hundreds of geraniums, then move on to dinner in the main dining room. The Grand Hotel Orchestra performs later in the parlor.

Monday, there is breakfast in the main dining room, followed by a talk by Allan Armitage, a leading gardening expert.

A boxed lunch is served in the Tea Garden, where Steve Bernard, MSU graduate and head of the hotel's grounds, will serve as guide.

The rest of the afternoon is free, with dinner at 6 p.m. (the hotel dress code requires jackets and ties for men, ladies dress accordingly).

Tuesday there is breakfast in the main dining room, with a tour of private gardens on the island.

Cost is \$495 per couple, per night, based on double occupancy, while single occupancy is \$420 per night; both fees include the \$50 conference fee and the meals mentioned above. Conference members may stay Tuesday and Wednesday nights for \$99 per person, per night.

Registration is due Thursday, July 22. Forms are available at [www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener](http://www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener) or visit [www.grandhotel.com](http://www.grandhotel.com). A \$300 deposit is required with registration.

For more information, call the state MG office at (517) 335-5191.

Next board meeting:  
**9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**  
**Wednesday, May 5**

Newsletter deadline:  
**Monday, May 10**

Send submissions to  
**Darlene Damp, Co-Editor**  
**shrew@att.net**  
and  
**Beth Bedtelyon, Co-Editor**  
**sisinc@charter.net**

To view the monthly newsletter on the Web site, please go to:  
**www.msue.msu.edu/**  
**mastergardener/saginaw**

**Please wear your name tags at the meeting — and introduce yourself to someone you don't know.**

## Volunteer opportunities

### Roses at Enrichment Center

Volunteers can help uncover and prune roses at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 17, at the Andersen Enrichment Center.

Bring a rake, sharp pruning shears and heavy-duty gloves. Volunteers also will need a couple of tarps to haul leaves away.

Thank you very 'mulch,' says project leader Ben Pawlik. For information, call him at 793-4238.

### Habitat for Humanity

Master Gardener Karen Tilden is seeking volunteers to help Habitat for Humanity with planting at its homes this summer.

Members will help design the garden areas, incorporating shrubbery provided by Habitat, and teach the new homeowners how to plant and maintain their new landscape. Planting will be done by homeowners so they can earn their "sweat equity" in their new home.

"There will be a sign-up sheet at the April meeting," says Tilden.

For information, call Tilden at 777-

6673 or see her at the upcoming meeting.

### Spruce-up yards of area military families

Volunteers are needed to help spruce up the yards of servicemen stationed overseas in Iraq.

Students from eight to 10 high schools will form teams Thursday, May 13, to "give back" to those in our community who are away serving our country.

Master Gardeners will guide and instruct students on this project. Physical labor is not required, says Gail Caird, but Master Gardeners may help as much as they like.

The day begins at 8 a.m. and ends around 1 p.m.

The project is sponsored in part by United Way of Saginaw County. For details or to sign up, contact Gail Caird at 793-1942.

### Saginaw Children's Zoo

Mark your schedules for spring clean-up of the Saginaw Children's Zoo from 9 a.m. to noon Sunday, April 25, and earn volunteer hours.

In addition, routine maintenance days are planned for noon to 3 p.m. Thursdays on May 13, June 10, July 8, Aug. 12, and Sept. 9 and 9 a.m. to noon Sunday, May 16; Saturday June 19; Sunday, July 18; Saturday, Aug. 28; and Sunday, Sept. 12.

Fall clean-up is Saturday, Oct. 9.

Routine maintenance areas are predetermined by the Horticulture Committee.

Spring and fall clean-up are for the entire zoo facility. Other dates may be available for groups of three or more volunteers.

For information, call Bob Gubbins at 791-6039 or Rene Shaft at 777-6802.

### Southbound I-75 rest area

Volunteers will gather at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 24, at the I-75 Southbound rest area to weed and clean out leftover daffodils.

"We could sure use some strong guys with wheelbarrows to help out," says Gloria Schuler, referring to a load of compost that has to be spread after the beds have been weeded.

## More odds and ends

(Continues from Page 4)

Dorothy Bodeis had requested a replacement after serving in the post for several years.

### **Welcome new member!**

Advanced Master Gardener **Sue Fortune** of Saginaw, class of 2002, has joined SVMGA.

There are now 155 paid memberships.

### **Hosta group hosts hybridizer, free walk**

Clarence Owens, a hosta hybridizer, is this month's guest speaker of the Saginaw Valley Chapter of the Michigan Hosta Society.

The former biology and botany instructor will discuss biodiversity in the garden.

The session begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 21, at the Rustic Inn.

Memberships are \$10 a year or \$25 for three years.

For information, call Elaine Rappley at 781-0570.

The group also plans a free Hosta Walk on Sunday, July 11, featuring six gardens.

It is open to the public.

The gardens featured are: Tom and Deanna Leinberger, 11540 Dice Road, Freeland; Elaine and Jim Rappley, 3800 S. Graham Road, Saginaw; Phil and Ginger Lisik, 1445 Iva Road, Hemlock; Grey and June Gitzen, 1400 Coolidge, Saginaw; Carol Wagner, 1672 Avalon, Saginaw; and Jim and Ellie Vrable, 6225 Chesaning Road, Chesaning.

### **Rock Garden Society has plant sale May 8**

Two local residents will host this month's meeting and plant sale of the Great Lakes Rock Garden Society

The session begins 10 a.m. Saturday, May 8, at Elaine Rappley's home, 3800 S. Graham Road with a tour of her garden, followed by lunch (bring your own).

Rappley has an extensive hosta and perennial collection spread over a number of acres. Her garden was on the Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk several years ago.

The group will then move to the gar-

den of Frederick W. Case Jr. for a tour and plant sale. Case is the recent winner of one of most prestigious horticulture awards in the country.

Anyone may attend the meeting, but to participate in the plant sale, you must be a member. Meetings are held across the state, says Rappley.

"They have great speakers and great plant sales."

Memberships are \$10 and available by mailing a check, payable to the society, to M. Kaericher, Treasurer, 8171 Brookville Road, Plymouth, MI 48170.

### **Avoid problems, start season with tetanus booster**

If it's been years since you had your last tetanus shot and you're planning on digging in the dirt, consider getting a booster this spring.

A gardener can be infected with *Clostridium tetani* spores in garden soil in an injury or open wound.

The spores germinate, release bacteria that multiply and produce a neurotoxin, called tetanospasmin.

This toxin affects the central nervous system, allowing muscles to go into

spasm. The contraction can be powerful enough to tear muscle or cause compression fractures of the vertebrae. Without treatment one in three people die.

Known as tetanus or lockjaw, it must be treated with an antitoxin, removal of the source of the toxin and treatment of the disease's symptoms.

However, it is completely preventable by active tetanus immunization vaccine.

U.S. Army studies show an anti-tetanus shot provides good protection for up to 12 years.

Usually they are begun in infancy as part of the standard DPT shots.

Adults and older teens who have been injured, particularly with puncture wounds, should receive booster immunization for tetanus if their last immunization was more than 10 years ago.

Tetanus immunizations are available at the Saginaw County Department of Public Health Immunization Clinic, 1600 N. Michigan, for \$20.

Clinic hours are 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday, with additional hours on Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

For information, call 758-3840.

## Upcoming programs for 2004

- 4/28 **"Longwood Gardens,"** Lynn LaPointe Wiese, landscape designer
- 5/26 **Garden tour and plant exchange** at Grey Gitzen's Saginaw Township home
- 6/23 **Garden tour** at Nancy Hales' Saginaw Township home
- 7/28 **Garden tour, to be determined**
- 8/25 **Garden tour** at Ruth Sny's Saginaw Township home
- 9/22 **"Native Landscaping Around Ponds,"** Matthew Dykstraw, MSU Extension
- 10/27 **"Pruning,"** Jerry Somalski of Bay Landscaping, Essexville
- 11/17 **"English Gardens"** Peggy Shaver, AMG
- 12/8 **Annual Christmas Potluck**

# Ann Arbor field trip adds new garden stop

Our trip to Ann Arbor just keeps getting better and better!

We have been invited to tour Tony Reznicek's garden (our March speaker) while we are in town.

Here's the new itinerary:

## Saturday, May 22

8 a.m. – Leave from Meijer's on Tittabawassee

9:30 - 10:30 a.m. – Explore Matthei Botanical Gardens. It features herb, rose, English border, international and wildflower areas, as well as a conservatory and a constructed wetlands area.

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. – Tour of U-M Herbarium, a vast collection of pressed and preserved plant specimens from around the world. Tony Reznicek will guide us and explain how important these specimens are as part of the system of plant names and classifications.

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. – Lunch, to be determined

12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. – Tour of Tony's garden

2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. – Saguaro Nursery. Saguaro is well-known for its alpine and rock garden plants. It also has trees,



shrubs, conifers, perennials, grasses, bamboos, ferns, hyacinths, succulents, cacti, orchids, bromeliads, carnivores and voodoo lilies. And...there is a LOT of space under the bus for any purchases!

5 p.m. – Home.

The cost of the trip is \$23.50, which includes entrance to Matthei Botanical Gardens.

ANYONE is welcome to go on the trip – you do not have to be a Master Gardener or SVMGA member.

The sign-up DEADLINE (to reserve the bus, we need 40 people) is Wednesday, April 21. Please note: the deadline is prior to our April meeting.

To sign-up send a check for \$23.50, payable to SVMGA, to Gail Caird, 5355 N. Nottingham Drive, Saginaw, MI 48603.

No refunds, unless the bus is cancelled due to low numbers.

A second field trip is planned for Saturday, July 10, when members will attend the annual Marshall Area Garden Club's "Welcome to My Garden" tour. We will leave from Meijer's on Gratiot at 7:30 a.m.

We will visit six gardens in the area, spending about 20 to 30 minutes at each one. Several are in the historic homes district. We will visit the Garden Market, which is a fabulous collection of vendors dealing in both plant and garden accessories.

There also is an Art Fair going on the same day, which you may also visit. We will be home by 5:30 p.m.

Cost is \$28, including bus and entrance fee for garden tour, due on sign-up. Lunch to be determined – either a sack lunch or on your own. Minimum number is 40, maximum 56.

The trip is open to anyone – you do not have to be a Master Gardener or SVMGA member to attend. No refunds.

To sign-up at the April meeting, bring a check for \$28, payable to SVMGA, or mail it to Gail Caird, 5355 N. Nottingham Drive, Saginaw, MI 48603.

*Gail Caird, program director*

# Creeping Charlie can be difficult to control

EAST LANSING — Some people call it ground ivy; others, Creeping Charlie.

Whatever you call it, it's aggressive and persistent, and if you have it in your lawn or flower garden, you're probably not happy about it.

"Ground ivy is a common invader of lawns," says Ron Calhoun, Extension turf grass specialist at Michigan State University.

"It's especially pesky in shaded, moist, infertile areas, where conditions don't favor a dense, vigorous turf.

"It goes right over edging materials around flower beds and spreads across the top of organic mulches, putting down roots at every leaf attachment."

It's an easy weed to recognize, Calhoun observes. The leaves are roundish with round-toothed edges, and the low-growing plants have square stems and a mint like aroma when you walk on them,

handle them or run a lawn mower over them.

The plant's habit of rooting at leaf nodes allows it to stick to the ground surface like Velcro and makes hand weeding frustrating unless soil conditions are just right. Then, you can pull up long strings of plants. Any rooted sections that stay attached generate new plants, so cultivating garden areas can actually propagate ground ivy, Calhoun says.

Hand weeding may be effective in small areas, but the will of ground ivy to invade often outlasts the gardener's will to weed, he observes.

The best time for controlling Creeping Charlie with herbicides is said to be in the fall, but recent studies have shown that spring, when the ground ivy is flowering, is also a good time.

"The signal to apply a mixture of 2,4-D, dicamba and MCPP/MCPA or 2,4-D and

triclopyr is the appearance of the tiny bluish purple, funnel-shaped flowers, usually in May," he says. "Combination products usually give better results than 2,4-D alone," he notes.

That's the good news. The bad news is that ground ivy control with herbicides will be only temporary unless you control the underlying growing conditions that encouraged the infestation in the first place.

"Combinations of shade, wet soils and poor fertility stack the deck against the turf and in favor of the ground ivy," he says. "Correcting these conditions and setting your mowing height at 2.5 to 3 inches will give the turf a competitive edge."

For more information on lawn care and maintenance, contact your county MSU Extension office and ask about Turf Tips bulletins for homeowners.