

# The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

April 2005 Volume 9, Issue 4

## Christy's combos can't contain themselves

Her hanging baskets and potted containers are overflowing with exuberant colors, leaf textures and plant varieties.

It's the new niche Christy Boehler has created for herself in the family-run business at the corner of South Center and Swan Creek roads.

While a previous engagement will keep Boehler from the April meeting of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association -- putting Grey Gitzen at the speaker's podium -- she was happy to share her own approach to "Creative Containers."

And Boehler has offered some plants for Gitzen's demonstration. When he's done, the containers will be part of the monthly drawing -- so bring your pocketbooks and buy plenty of tickets, Gitzen says.

Her job today is a far cry from the chemical engineering career she planned for herself, before marrying Steve Boehler in 1986 and becoming part of Boehler's Greenhouses.

"I figured a career like that just wouldn't work, because with a greenhouse there's just so much time you have to put into it, so much you have to do. It was 'if you

can't beat them, you might as well join them.' "

With no job title or descriptions, she found herself best suited for production planting, figuring out what new varieties



Christy Boehler and Grey Gitzen examine a camellia plant, one of the many tropicals at Boehler's Greenhouses, 5080 Swan Creek Rd.

ties the greenhouse would introduce from season to season as well as determining how many plants it would need, planting them and shipping them.

However, after attending plant and gardening shows four or five years ago, she began playing with combination containers -- known simply as combos.

The result has brought people from as far away as Florida to buy her creations even though her combinations of colors and plants often "don't work for the guys" at the green-

house.

"They want compact containers, but I'm more eccentric, more willing to try things you might not normally put together," Boehler says.

"I like grasses wiggling out, more asymmetrical looks, to pick up the color of one plant and add another, and really packing the plants in -- I'm a good packer.

"When we started the combos, the mixtures were very new, but now they're on the upswing. Today people want different looks and they want it done for them because they work, they have families and they don't have the time."

Boehler is only too happy to oblige. She relies on previous experience, and keeps a picture file of plant arrangements she's seen in magazines or at garden shows for future reference.

### Next meeting

- 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Wednesday, April 27, at Anderson Enrichment Center, 120 Ezra Rust Drive
- 7 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. business meeting
- 7:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. refreshments
- 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. Grey Gitzen, Advanced Master Gardener, discusses "Creative Containers."
- One-hour education credit

"I keep it if it worked or I try something different -- it all goes in the memory bank.

"But remember we have to make money at this because we're a family business so I have to do containers the guys can handle."

And with some 1,700 hanging baskets alone, not to count the potted containers, that's a lot of planning, planting and pruning that must be accomplished every spring before they're ready to sell.

"I'm limited in the perennials I can use because of the timing of the blooms, so I use mostly annuals, from Proven Winners and Simply Beautiful, because they're more consistent and I need to have them sold."

But that doesn't keep her from sitting in front of her computer during the fall and winter, surveying her plant choices and potential combinations.

"I play off how the plants grow, will it be an ice cream cone shape or a flat fountain effect or a spilled shape? I use up to 10 different plants in a container," says the mother of three.

"New this year are ferns, heuchera, rex begonia, basket grass, hanging Dusty, browallia, not to mention the tropicals.

"We have a jumbo greenhouse and the guys kept telling me they wanted to clean it up last year, but I ended up using a lot of those plants this spring."

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# Minutes of the March 2005 meeting

President Grey Gitzen welcomed all to the Andersen Enrichment Center.

Ruth Sny moved the minutes of the February 2005 meeting be approved as published; Elaine Rappley seconded the motion.

Jan O'Dell read the following treasurer's report:

Balance as of last report	\$4,429.47
Deposits 2/24/05 to 3/23/05	\$955.00
Expenses 2/24/05 to 3/23/05	\$775.00
Balance as of 3/23/05	\$4,609.47

As of 3/23/05 we have 155 paid members.

Nancy Cotcamp moved the treasurer's report be accepted; Sheila Hempsted seconded the motion. Dues were due March 1. Members should see Jan O'Dell if they did not pay by the deadline.

The Summer Master Gardener Conference is Monday to Wednesday, June 20-22. The invitations are mailed April 1.

Dan Hinckley is the keynote speaker. This year, there will be longer sessions Monday afternoon at the Kellogg Center.

The morning classes will remain the same. Cost is \$282.

A sign-up sheet for a May 8 tour of Saginaw botanist Frederick W. Case Jr.'s garden was available.

The Saginaw Township Playscape will have clean-up at the end of April. Volunteers are needed to adopt a week during the summer.

Deb Keller brought a photo album with pictures of the Playscape garden from last season.

Ben Pawlik had a sign-up sheet for the clean-up at the Andersen Rose Garden Saturday, April 16. (Please see Page 5.)

Those who are interested in the Thursday, May 12, Student Spring into Service Day can get the phone number to call from Gail Caird. (Please see Page 5.)

Earth Day at the Saginaw Children's Zoo is Saturday, May 7. Anyone interested in helping Bill Wegner answer visitors' questions about composting can sign up. A rain date is set for Sunday, May 8.

Patti Decker has set clean-up at the Saginaw Children's Zoo for Saturday, April 23 and 30. (Please see Page 5.)

She will email or call anyone interested in helping this year at times when she plans to work there.

The Soil Conservation District needs help with their annual plant sale at the Chesaning Fairgrounds. (See Page 5.)

Gitzen said the Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk is Wednesday, June 15. Volunteers are needed to staff this event. (Please see Page 7.)

Angela Irwin had notebooks available for new members.

Shirley McNier was taking orders for logowear in March and April. Available are ball caps, crushed caps, wind shirts and T-shirts.

Judy Henning and Aileen Cowan gave an update on the fall conference Saturday, Oct. 1.

SVMGA will host three speakers this year. Chuck Martin of Dow Gardens in Midland will discuss native ornamentals.

Jerry Somalski of Bay Landscaping in Essexville will present "Bones of the Garden."

The keynote speaker is Brent Heath from Brent and Becky's Bulbs in Virginia. He discuss companion bulbs and later alliums and lilies.

We also will have six vendors and SVMGA will sell bulbs again.

Aileen Cowan had sign-up sheets for the Farmers Market table at Hidden Harvest Cooks Monday, April 25, and for the Farmers Market survey in late May. (Please see Page 5.)

Cowan also said Gerald Johnson has more shrubs (although she was not sure what kind) available when the ground thaws. You may call him at (989) 752-2536, or cell phone 295-0800.

Information about volunteering at the Saginaw County Rail Trail will be in The Grapevine.

Master Gardener Coordinator Mary Lysogorski asked members who do not have proper badges to let her know.

She also had flyers for a lawn care workshop and tree and orchard care seminar the Saginaw Conservation District is sponsoring.

Irwin said Julie Muladay and Michael Brush enjoyed entertaining at the Christmas potluck and would like to come back next year.

Amy Fitkin may need a back-up garden for the August meeting.

Joe LaForest at Dow Gardens is looking for ladybugs.

Thanks go to Nell Beebe for donating a garden stake, Charlotte Huebner the daisy vase and Jane Chard the wind chimes.

Susanne Smokoska won the vase, Karen Tilden the chimes and Joe Leach the garden stake.

Paul and Mark Begick of Begick Nursery and Garden Center in Bay City discussed new perennials available this year.

*Submitted by Anne Birkam, Secretary*

## Officers for 2005-2006

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Grey Gitzen 792-0615

### Vice President

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Mary Lysogorski 758-2500, ext. 224; e-mail lysogors@msu.edu.

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## Welcome new members!

The following people have joined the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association:

**Mary Weaver**, Saginaw, MG trainee.

# Letter from the President

I've gone through many springs, and each one has been unique. This one is no exception, and just like all the past spring seasons I'm eager to see and find all the plants that are breaking dormancy in our yard. Every day is a surprise.

Just like every other year, this spring brings many volunteer opportunities for our association.

The Dow Event Center has asked for our cooperation in rejuvenating the beds in an existing patio accessible only from the theater lobby, and the containers that are in front of the various venues.

What we need are co-chairs to oversee this project. If you are interested, talk to me at the next meeting. This should be an interesting project and bring attention to the Master Gardeners of Saginaw County.

Ben Pawlick needs help with the rose garden at the Enrichment Center.

Amy Fitkin can use volunteers for the Saginaw Township Playscape, and the

Saginaw Soil Conservation District can use help with their annual tree/shrub sale.

To volunteer to help with the latter project, call (989) 781-4077 ext. 4.

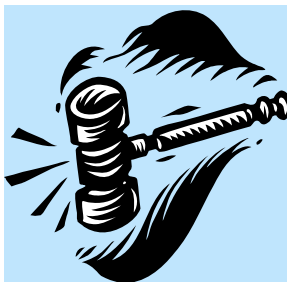
Patti Decker-Colpean could use every one of us for the Children's Zoo cleanup.

What great opportunities to accumulate your 15 recertification volunteer hours.

With little effort you could have all of your commitment done in April and not have to worry about recertification for the rest of the year.

(For more details on any of these projects, please see Pages 5 and 7.)

By now you've all received your invitation to the 2005 Master Gardener Conference.



Those of you who have attended previous conferences will notice that several changes have been made to the agenda.

The state coordinator made these changes at the request of veteran gardeners who wanted more in-depth study on subjects.

As you read the schedule of classes I'm sure you noticed that our organization is well represented. Five of our members are teaching sessions.

If by some chance you have not received an invitation please talk to either Mary Lysogorski or myself at the April meeting.

Remember May is not far off with our annual perennial exchange.

So, as you check your new plant growth for the season; please don't throw away unwanted plants. Pot them for the exchange in May

Grey

## Meet the Gardener — Marilyn Karpicke

Having no clothes in Africa for 10 days didn't stop this Master Gardener until she was invited to a very elegant place.

The tour guide had loaned her a couple of shirts and blouses, but she needed a gown. One of the ladies provided her with a caftan-style dress with jewelry and shoes that didn't fit and off she went to William Holden's Safari Club, staying in luxury for one and a half days!

Marilyn Karpicke says she "is just a putter" but she is so much more than that! While she has traveled the world over, she has managed to make her own impact on Saginaw. She is president of National Woman's Farm and Garden, but says her real joy is "horticultural therapy."

The group provides about a 25-minute hands-on project for one of the follow-

ing: the Millett Learning Center, the Saginaw County Juvenile Detention Center or Saginaw Community Village.

Marilyn prefers working with the kids at the Juvenile home because sometimes the kids open up to the ladies. They are usually proud and pleased with what they have made.

Some of the projects have included stone bird houses, witch corn cob dolls and silver dollar plants made into flowers in a pot. Next month, all will learn to work with soil during May planting.

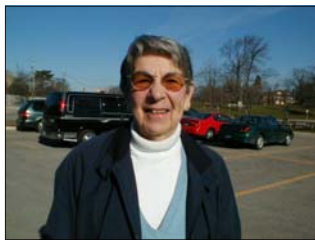
Marilyn was born and raised in Saginaw. Out of high school she worked at Seitners department store downtown for 89 cents an hour. During the war effort she took a job at Grey Iron Foundry working in the magnesium lab doing physical analyses and some chemical analysis.

After a transfer to the employment office, she had the "delightful job" as recep-

tionist. She married in 1963, late in life, she says, but had 23 wonderful years.

Marilyn says she must have received the "dirt digger itch" from a favorite uncle. After her husband passed away

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Marilyn Karpicke prepares to unload her tools at the Saginaw Children's Zoo.

Next board meeting:  
**5:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 4,**  
**at MSU Extension office,**  
**1 Tuscola, downtown**  
**Saginaw**

Newsletter deadline:  
**Monday, May 9**  
Send submissions to  
**Darlene Damp, editor**  
**shrew@att.net**

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

## Odds and Ends

### **Master Gardeners to receive volunteer award pins**

Two dozen Master Gardeners will receive award pins for the volunteer hours they have contributed to the community.

Master Gardener Coordinator Mary Lysogorski will make the presentations, once she has made arrangements for the event.

The honorees, whose volunteer hours ranged from 250 to 4,024 hours, are:

Pat Blakeley, 250-hour award pin; Gail Caird, 500-hour pin; Floyd Callison, 250; Aileen Cowan, 250; Darlene Damp, 250; Patti Decker, 1,000; and Grey Gitzen, 2,000.

Also Bob Gubbins, 250-hour award pin; Nancy Hales, 250; Kathy Haucke; Sheila Hempsted, 250; Judy Henning, 4,000; and Joyce Hetzler, 250.

Also Dolores Hignite, 250-hour award pin; Crystal Kauer, 250; Deb Keller, 250; Debbi King, 250; Nancy Kleekamp, 250; and Joan Martin, 250.

Also Jan O'Dell, 500; Marjorie Papenfuss, 500; Ellie Robertson, 250; Gus Schulwitz, 250; Sally Shepardson, 250; and Ruth Sny, 250.

### **Project grants available — make request now**

SVMGA awarded two more project grants for 2005.

The Saginaw Township Playscape will receive \$200 for plants as will the May 12 Students Spring into Service Day.

That leaves \$950 available in grants of up to \$200 for each project.

Applicants must fill out a Presentation/Project Material Funding Request form and return it to any board member for consideration.

The board reviews requests and notifies recipients of their awards. Funds are allocated on a first-come basis.



Those who receive grants must track what they spend and keep receipts for a final accounting to the board.

Please contact Nancy Hales, 799-2118.

### **Teach a class and earn MG volunteer hours**

Do you have a craft or talent you could share with fellow Master Gardeners and trainees?

Program Director Amy Fitkin is looking for members willing to teach their skills and earn volunteer hours for both class preparation and teaching — while giving class participants something nice to take home.

Past classes have included trough-making, stepping stones and leaf-printing garments.

Class fees typically cover material costs. This is not a profit-making opportunity.

If you are interested in conducting a small class, contact Fitkin at 781-1670 or e-mail her at am12bgarden@aol.com.

### **Co-chairs sought for Dow Center project**

Like designing, planning and implementing?

President Grey Gitzen has just the project for you: The Dow Center's enclosed patio area.

"What they have are two beds, one about 11 x 13 and the other 23 by 36, that need to be refurbished," he explained, after visiting the site.

"Right now they're covered with gravel on plastic."

Perennials and annuals would be used in both sites. Watering will be the center's responsibility.

The gardens, on the west side of the entrance to the auditorium, would be part



sun gardens, due to the enclosure and a columnar shaped oak tree.

Center officials also have asked Gitzen about planting containers in front of the building.

If interested contact Gitzen at 792-0615 or e-mail jgreygzn@aol.com.

### **Benefit aids Choral Society, local gardeners**

A benefit for the Saginaw Choral Society can save gardeners 10 per cent on their purchases at an area greenhouse.

The Choral Society has teamed up with Abele Greenhouse and Garden Center, 3500 Wadsworth, to offer \$20 gift cards for \$18 until Saturday, April 30.

The gift cards can be redeemed at Abele between Sunday, May 1, and Wednesday, June 15, for their face value.

The gift cards are available at the Choral Society office, 326 S. Jefferson, or call 753-1812; Crumb's Gourmet Cookie Café, Attractions Hair and Nail Salon, West Side Decorating or any Choral Society member.

### **Clean Sweep collects unwanted garden products**

Dispose of unwanted pesticides, herbicides and garden products during special collection dates this growing season.

The Saginaw Bay Watershed Pollution Prevention's chemical collection program will operate April 28, May 26, June 30, July 28, Aug. 25, Sept. 29 and Oct. 27.

Any Michigan homeowner can use this service, however, it is by appointment only. Call (989) 758-3685.

### **Tree, orchard workshop meets April 23**

A free hands-on demonstration of tree and orchard care is set for 1 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at the Saginaw County Fairgrounds, 11350 Peet Road, Chesaning.

John Momber, who tends Leahman's Orchard and many others between Saginaw and Grand Rapids is the presenter. Call the Soil Conservation District at (989) 781-4077, ext. 4.

### **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."

# Volunteer opportunities

## Help students improve area school grounds

Master Gardeners are needed to help with "Students Spring into Service Day" on Thursday, May 12.

The event, which includes painting, planting and completing other physical improvements to 10 area elementary schools, celebrates National Youth Service Day.

Teams of 20 high school students, representing 12 high schools, will lead 50 elementary students at each site. Two Master Gardeners will work with each

team.

It begins at 7:50 a.m. with coffee and donuts at the Andersen Enrichment Center. Students will break into team and be bussed to the sites where they will work until about 12:30 p.m. Lunch is provided.

To volunteer, call Joe Madison at 790-6417.

The event is sponsored by Saginaw County's Promise Giving Back Task Force, supported by the Saginaw Com-

munity Foundation, Youth FORCE, United Way of Saginaw County, MSU Extension, Saginaw Intermediate School and other organizations.

## Andersen Center roses...

Ben Pawlik is seeking help to wake up the roses at the Andersen Enrichment Center at 120 Ezra Rust Dr.

Meet at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 16, at the center. Master Gardeners will remove the leaf cover and prune the rose bushes, which takes about three hours.

Please bring a rake and sharp pruning shears. Several tarps will be needed. Heavy gloves also are a good idea.

For information, call Pawlik at 793-4238 or e-mail [Benbzita@aol.com](mailto:Benbzita@aol.com).

## Grab your tools, work gloves, Children's Zoo needs help

The Adopt-a-Garden Committee at the Saginaw Children's Zoo will have a clean-up from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 23.

In addition, Patti Decker Colpean, SVMGA member on the zoo's Horticulture Committee, will have another work day from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 30.

"There is a lot of work that needs to be done," says Decker.

That work, to be completed before the zoo opens or in early May includes

- Cleaning-up existing general garden beds.
- Preparing at least two new beds (one for daylilies and the other for grasses).
- Digging up daylilies, rinsing them off and dividing them before moving them to their new location.
- Moving ornamental grasses.
- Cleaning up the butterfly exhibit.
- Renovating "The Jungle" — the area in front of the office.

"And this is just to name a few things," says Decker.

"There is also talk of a prairie garden, but that one may have to wait. If we are going to do it, I want to do it right and I

know it's more than just spreading a bunch of wildflower seeds."

She said she plans on spending a couple of hours each weekend in April and May at the zoo.

She "will be emailing the Horticulture Committee and anybody else that wants to know what task we will be doing that week. I am hoping that at least a handful will help each week."

Decker hopes to have a zoo orientation for the new Master Gardener class so they can see firsthand where and how they can earn volunteer hours.

"We have also talked about assigning general garden areas to someone or a group to care for," Decker says.

"It is felt this would be less overwhelming than the whole zoo chuck full of weeds.

"I also am planning one work day per month for general garden maintenance (i.e. from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 8, to prepare for "Bugaloo at the Zoo.")

"We also are looking for donated birdhouse or garden items for the "Birds, Bugs, Butterflies and Blooms" event on Saturday, July 23."

The items will be auctioned off to help raise funds to continue garden maintenance at the zoo.



## Hidden Harvest Cooks...

Aileen Cowan is seeking six volunteers for the Farmers Market table at Hidden Harvest Cooks from 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 25, at Horizons Conference Center.

The Farmer's Market also needs volunteers to help with a market survey and answer questions from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, May 27, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 28.

## Soil Conservation District...

The Saginaw Soil Conservation District is seeking volunteers to help with its annual tree and shrub sale in April at the Saginaw County Fairgrounds in Chesaning.

Volunteers are needed to help package trees and shrubs from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, April 21.

Volunteers will put tree and shrub orders together from 8 a.m. until they are done on Friday, April 22.

Volunteers also are needed to hand out orders from 7 a.m. Saturday, April 23, until all orders are picked up.

For information or to volunteer, please call Patti Copes at 781-4077, ext. 4.

## Southbound I-75 Rest Stop..

A clean-up of the Southbound I-75 Rest Stop

*Continues on Page 7*

## Let your turf wake up from long winter's nap

It appears the temperatures are warming, but before we get started on any discussion of turf practices for home lawns, let's talk mowers.

First, find your mower. Next unscrew the blade and take it down to the local hardware store to get it sharpened.

If you take action now, you'll miss the big lines.

Sharp blades are important not only from an aesthetics perspective, but a clean cut reduces water loss and helps prevent pathogen infection in the turf.

Winter has definitely been long this year in Michigan, and we are seeing snow mold in some turf areas.

There might be some pink snow mold and, in other areas, gray snow mold.

Don't get too worked up over the symptoms. Gray snow mold is typically seen in turf areas that were under snow cover for extended periods of time.

The damage from either type of snow mold is typically restricted to the leaf tissue and once the temperature starts to warm the turf will start growing and recover from the damage quickly.

Lowering the mowing height for the first mowing will help remove dead tissue and facilitate soil warming which will help the turf get growing faster.

Be advised not to get carried away with this lowering the mowing height recommendation. At the most drop it 1 inch from your normal mowing height – please don't scalp the turf.

For most, dropping the height a half-inch, usually one notch on your mower, will probably suffice to clean up debris on the lawn from the winter and get that turf going.

Lowering the height a notch will be especially helpful for turf with snow mold damage.

You also might want to consider raking the turf in areas where it was really matted down to help stand it up and mow it off.

Resist the urge to apply something, anything, to wake turf up from its winter slumber.

That turf should be growing before applying either a pre-emergence herbicide (i.e. crabgrass preventer) or fertilizer.

If you applied a late fall fertilizer application, you may not need to apply an early spring fertilizer, but can instead wait until mid-May.



This is the time to show restraint and let the turf awaken naturally.

Applying high rates of fertilizer now will encourage top growth and possibly reduce summer stress tolerance later.

Professional applicators will start applications this month, most likely pre-emergence herbicide and/or light fertilizer applications.

The amount is probably 0.5 lbs. N/1000 ft.<sup>2</sup> or less, just enough to encourage some greening without excessive growth.

Remember, the environmental signal for applying pre-emergence herbicide is when the forsythia bush is in full bloom.

Apply pre-emergence herbicides when soil temperatures at a 2-inch depth reach 50 degrees. In mid-Michigan, that is usually around April 15.

Before you automatically apply a crabgrass preventer, consider whether it is a big problem in your turf.

The best way to control weeds in turf is to encourage a healthy, dense turf that competes with weeds and crowds them out. Mowing high, returning clippings and having a good fertility program are some of the practices that encourage dense turf.

## Use the unexpected in creating container gardens, says Boehler

If Boehler uses a bright yellow-colored

*Continues from Page 1*

grass in a container, she might add a yellow Creeping Jenny, or if it's a dark burgundy-leafed sweet potato plant, she chooses another with that color like a heuchera or coleus.

"I like the unexpected too, like this tapeworm plant. I want our containers to be original. I also like using a lot of different foliage to provide that eye-catching quality."

She's prepared a list of her favorite plants that Gitzen will distribute at the April meeting. Boehler has broken it down into vines and filler; large containers; smaller combinations and suitable perennials.

"There's so many big houses today, that I've found you need the stature of tropicals to carry off the right look.

"That's why we've ordered flowering hibiscus, ficus, ferns, allamanda, passion vines, mandevilla, the shrubby ixora in yellow and orange, plumbago and iresine or the old-time chicken gizzard."

The greenhouse still makes its own soil and pops slow release fertilizer pellets in all of its baskets to promote growth and hardiness.

"If you take that basket home and you're watering it every day or two, in four weeks, those plants are starving and need some kind of enhancement," Boehler says.

"We want our customers to be happy.

"If you're going to doing a lot of three-day weekends, it's probably better to transfer that 10-inch basket of plants to a 12- or

14-inch pot because they'll need more water, if you find they're drying out. That's what I grow – and we still do a lot of hand watering here because we want to make sure the containers don't stay too wet.

"It's a matter of lifting it, not poking your finger in the dirt, to tell whether it needs a good drink."

Boehler has always liked plants.

"I can remember being 7, 8, or 9 and growing things on the dresser in my room – a coleus or a zebra plant. My uncle knew my (future) father-in-law and helped me get the job.

"With a family run business you're always together, working, celebrating holidays.

"We've got to get along, that's why I try to keep family first."



**Volunteer opportunities**

*Continues from Page 5*

Stop is set for 8:30 a.m. Saturday, April 23. It runs until 1:30 p.m.

Gloria Schuler, a Bay City Advanced Master Gardener, serves as the chair of this project.

She suggests volunteers bring pruners, rakes, hand rakes and shovels.

"I stopped in there and there's a lot of pruning to do, plus we'll be dividing the grasses.

"It's also nice if Master Gardeners wear their badges because visitors to the rest stop ask a lot of questions."

Planting dates are 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturday, May 14 and 28. Please bring shovels and hand trowels.

She said Master Gardeners are welcome to work one or two hours — or the whole time, depending on their schedules. Deadheading is done in summer.

The I-75 rest stop is an MSUE-approved project for MG trainees.

For more information, please contact Schuler at 8927679 or [globobarama@excite.com](mailto:globobarama@excite.com).

### **Museum Garden Walk...**

Pat Bourdow is seeking volunteers to answer visitor questions during the annual Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk on Wednesday, June 15.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the April meeting, or you may contact Bourdow at 753-8879.

Volunteers also are needed to help staff the Master Gardener booth at the Saginaw Art Museum, during the Garden Walk.

Volunteers at the booth will distribute information on the Master Gardener program and hand out free shrubs (red osier dogwood and high bush cranberry) and Douglas fir trees.

To volunteer for the booth, contact Grey Gitzen at 792-0615 or [jgreygzn@aol.com](mailto:jgreygzn@aol.com).

The Garden Walk committee are still seeking an additional garden to include on the walk. If you are interested in offering your garden, please let Gitzen or Judy Henning know.

## Upcoming 2005 programs

- 4/27 — "Creative Containers," Grey Gitzen, AMG**
- 5/25 — Plant exchange and tour of Amy Fitkin's garden**
- 6/22 — Tour of Crystal Kauer's garden**
- 7/27 — Tour of Sara Clark's garden**
- 8/24 — Tour of Carmen Lerash's garden**
- Fall plant exchange at Anne Birkam's garden (date to be determined)**
- 9/28 — Joe LaForest, Dow Gardens pest manager, "Identifying Insects"**
- 10/19 — Susan Hunter Scott, AMG. "Ornamental Grasses"**
- 11/16 — Patricia Pennell of Grand Rapids "Rain Gardens"**
- 12/14 — Annual Christmas Potluck**

## ***Bunnies and squirrels help in her garden...***

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she converted her back yard to flower beds, but there was very little sun.

Sitting in the yard one day, she decided she wanted a pond and a pond she built, but she wants a BIGGER pond.

Says Marilyn, as my grandma would say: "too soon old, too late smart."

This time she will not buy a form, she will design her own!

She has a garden of hostas and geraniums strictly for her enjoyment .....and the bunnies and squirrels.

"I plant and they replant!"

She has been a caregiver much of her life and now cares for her 104-year-old aunt. She still plants half a dozen tomato plants for her aunt every year.

Now an Advanced Master Gardener, Marilyn was first intrigued in 1989 by people talking about the Master Gardener classes.

Since taking the classes, she has worked at the Saginaw Children's Zoo Adopt-a Garden, Saginaw Art Museum gardens, and Hartley and Green Point Nature Centers.

She golfs, she bowls and knits, but still gets the "itch to travel" even after trips to the Virgin Islands, Belize, Mexico, Japan, China, Thailand, New Zealand, Australia, Tahiti, Costa Rica, Panama, Switzerland, Denmark and Russia. Wow!

Don't stop now.....she's off to Italy in May with the Michigan State University Master Gardener group guided by state coordinator Mary McLellan. They will tour various gardens around Florence, Tuscany and Lake Como.

"I'm always open for a new challenge," Marilyn says.

So I guess that means the new pond will just have to wait.

*Story by Joan Martin*