

The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

August 2003 Volume 7, Issue 8

Alpine blooms rule at King's garden

Debbi King says she has met so many nice people through the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association, she was more than happy to share her gardens when asked to host a meeting this summer.

"I'm not sure why I took the class originally – it probably sounded like fun – and I'm a joiner," said the mother of two and new grandmother. "I'm always trying something new."

While many members know King as the person who makes the mailing labels, she also served as the association's vice president when the group was first formed.

"I thought 'hey, that would be fun – sit around and talk about our gardens,' but when I went down to MSU for the summer

program and all these people were using the Latin names for the plants, I thought 'oh no, I'm in trouble' and they were all such good gardeners."

Over time, she has learned the Latin names for many plants and to her surprise, finds herself dropping them just as casually in a conversation.

Her suburban garden is geared to attracting birds, from the wren family that annually makes a nest in the tiny house hanging in the tree in front of their



Debbie King adds some perennials to her backyard.

deck to the others that drink and splash in the bird bath or swoop through the colorful array of plants.

"I get on a kick with plants," says King, who works part-time, helping her husband of 35 years, Doug, with his business.

While he sells to General Motors Corp., she does the paperwork and answers the phone. It's only one of many jobs she's had, from real estate and building houses to selling furniture and dried flowers.

"Right now, I'm really into day-lilies," she explains, "and while I was down visiting my daughter in Brighton, I stopped in at that Saguaro (nursery) and found these Alpine plants. Aren't they tiny?"

To showcase the miniatures, she found a variety of troughs and placed them in her flower beds with her other perennials, setting them off with rocks and annuals.

The Alpine blooms are even smaller.

Next meeting

- 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 27, at Debbi King's home, 846 Westchester, Saginaw Township.
- 7 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Meeting
- 7:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Refreshments
- 8 p.m. View gardens
- Directions: Westchester is located in The Village, off Gratiot (M-46) between Center Road and the Saginaw Country Club. Follow Westchester nearly to the end; it's the white house on the right with the green door.
- Bring a chair.

She hopes to make her own troughs for new additions.

"We would really like to make this into a 'secret garden,' private and secluded, and we tried to do that when we hired a professional. He planted 13 Austrian pines, but all we have left are three."

So the Kings installed a privacy fence a couple of years ago and began again, using Debbi's gardening skills. She has incorporated some found objects in her plantings and on the fence to complete the overall look.

"I've also gotten plants from people in the garden club which makes them special," she said, pointing them out during a recent walk around the backyard. It's also easy to see that the grassy area is rapidly being reduced.

"And I like to buy things because of their names," she laughed, pointing to some plants she was getting ready to put in the ground. The birth of her grandson four months ago, who required immediate cranial surgery, has kept her busy running back and forth to Ann Arbor to help her daughter.

"Listen to this, 'Chocolate and Cherries,' now that was too good to pass up.

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Help track Japanese beetles for statewide research project

EAST LANSING – Researchers at Michigan State University are asking state residents to help them better understand a destructive exotic insect that feeds on the fruit and foliage of many plants.

By visiting www.pmcenters.org/northcentral/jbeetle/, Michigan homeowners, gardeners, farmers and others who find Japanese beetles in their environment can quickly report when, where and how many beetles they've seen. They also can describe any damage the beetles have caused.

"We're interested in trying to predict the range of Japanese beetle throughout the north central region, starting with Michigan," says Rufus Isaacs, MSU assistant professor of entomology.

"The Web site is a place where people can provide info on when and where they saw the pest. We also provide photos of other insects that can be mistaken for Japanese beetle."

The site offers options for controlling the pest in the yard, garden or farm field.

Isaacs and a climatologist from the University of Illinois are looking at climate data and beetle sighting reports to predict how far the Japanese beetle will spread across Michigan.

"By getting good info on where it is currently, we can predict how far we expect it to eventually move," Isaacs explains.

"The more reports we have, the better it will reflect what's really happening in the state."

Residents can visit the Web page and report sightings as many times as they encounter the pest. A map showing the beetle's distribution across the state will be developed based on reports and updated each week throughout the summer. Those providing a report will receive a research summary at year's end.

Minutes of the July 23 meeting

The July 23 meeting was called to order by President Judy Henning at 7 p.m. July 23 at the home of Darlene Damp.

Marilyn Karpicke moved that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as published; Charlotte Huebner seconded the motion.

Henning read the treasurer's report:

Deposits	\$119.00
Expenditures	875.00
Balance	\$6,031.77

Paid memberships to date – 161.

Henning spoke of thank you letters received for our donations to Hartley Outdoor Education Center, Green Point Environmental Learning Center and Cushway House.

Patti Decker requested volunteers for the Adopt-A-Garden garden judging on Tuesday, July 29. She also requested help

with weeding at the zoo.

A committee to select gardens for next year's Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk will soon be formed. Anyone interested may call Pat Bourdow at 755-8879.

Some 48 neck coolers remain for sale at \$3 each; tote bags are \$10 each.

Judy Wegner and Mike Muladore are both recovering from surgery.

Anne Birkam requested volunteers for refreshments for the September, October and November meetings.

Damp's husband, Craig, gave a very interesting and informative talk on bees and beekeeping.

Following this the raffle was held and the group enjoyed refreshments and strolling Darlene's beautiful yard.

Ellie Robertson, Secretary

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Treasurer

Deb Keller 781-1228

Program Director

Gail Caird 793-1942

Newsletter Editor

Beth Bedtelyon 781-6834

Co-Editor

Darlene Damp 746-9113

MSU Extension

One Tuscola Street Ste 100
Saginaw, MI 48607-1287

Master Gardener Coordinator

Angela Irwin 758-2500

ext. 224

irwina@msue.msu.edu

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August garden continued...

(Continues from Page 1)

Or what about 'Creeping Wire Vine?'

"I try to stay in the same color palette, pinks, but sometimes the birds help out and I end up with things like those brown-eyed Susans."

Her husband wanted to install a water feature this year, but because of the initial delay in getting her garden ready, they've postponed it until next year.

Instead, he's restrained the picket fence and is working on the wood deck.

"I also was busy helping my daughter get her garden going," King says.

"But I should have some things in bloom – the mallow, turtlehead, fair candles, maybe the hydrangea, and the cranberry viburnum."

While King is ready to try anything that comes along, she's eyeing tying her other love, antiquing, into a possible future business venture.

"I love people and I love meeting people and I think that's why gardening and antiquing are so much alike – you meet such really nice people, who are very helpful.

"You can never learn it all, whether it's gardening or antiques, and that's probably what keeps me interested. There's always something more to learn or read.

"Maybe someday, I'll open an antique shop in some little resort town."

Story by Darlene B. Damp, co-editor

Letter from the President

Summer is zipping by at full speed. We have had days of heavy rain, high humidity, and hot temperatures. And I still have plants waiting to be put into the ground.

I don't know if it is due to the weather but my daylilies have been outstanding and my hydrangeas are going to put on quite a show this year. This has been an odd growing season for some plants.

I am sure all of you are aware that the emerald ash borer has been found in the St. Charles area.

As Master Gardeners and as concerned citizens we need to be able to identify an ash tree and we need to educate ourselves to the symptoms an infested tree exhibits.

When you are out and about in your neighborhood and around town look for ash trees and be watchful of their condition.

For assistance call MSUE at 758-2500, MSU Plant Diagnostic Service at (517) 355-4536, the emerald ash borer hot line at (866) 325 0023, or visit the state's emerald ash borer Web site at www.michigan.gov/mda using the key word "ash borer."

Congratulations to all the committee members of the Children's Zoo Adopt-A-Garden project for taking first place in the contest. Great job!



Those of us who were at the home of Darlene Damp for our July meeting had a double treat, a tour of Dar's beautiful gardens and a talk on "Beekeeping" from her husband, Craig Beins, (45-minute education credit for those attending).

We learned many things about bees and their habits. Thanks Craig and Dar for the jar of honey, it was wonderful.

I haven't heard from any of you who took a castor bean plant as to how they are doing. Please let me know.

Our last outdoor meeting (it pained me to write that) is at the home of Debbi King.

Come and see how Debbi's garden grows.

Take care,
Judy

Meet the Gardener....Pat Bourdow

Pat Bourdow lives and gardens in Kochville Township. She and her husband, Dan, have lived on the property for 34 years. Pat says she literally married the boy next door. She had been an English major at CMU and obtained her degree from SVSU and did graduate work at University of Michigan in Flint.

Pat enjoys poetry and writing. She is a member of the River Junction Poets and has recently written a contest entry entitled "Writer's Block at Writers Camp" for the Poetry Society of Michigan. She is also active as a board member at the Saginaw Art Museum and has been a trustee for Kochville Township, an elective position, for twelve years.

Pat says, in the beginning, their somewhat two-acre yard was used by seven children, their friends and pets. The pond was fished and used for swimming in summer and skating in winter. The long front yard was for ball playing; the driveway always housed a basketball court and a hockey net. Bikes and go-carts and assorted motorized craft circled the yard and driveway. Except for about 45 large trees, any plant material not hugging the house didn't survive for long.

There have always been yews around the large front porch, a weeping beech and the proverbial flowering crab apple. In front of these and around the house were flowers, annuals and perennials, some herbs and a few vegetables.

As children began leaving the nest, the present garden began to emerge. Because the house sets high, the back garden is planted to be viewed from inside the house. New plants are added each year, old ones moved, discarded or given away. Today the garden still hugs the house.

A one-foot decorative concrete path surrounds and contains the garden from front to back. It serves to keep grass out of the garden and keeps the garden from getting larger. What exists is as much as the resident gardener can care for.

The pond is surrounded with natural growth, various grasses and sedges; a bridge at the far end crosses a small stream going into a wetland area. The back property is 24 acres of wetland. This area is home to all manner of wildlife and vegetation.

This, says Pat, has been a wonderful place to raise a family. "Now we enjoy visits from deer, turkey, fox, all kinds of birds, the change

in the seasons and the peace and quiet - and occasionally, grandchildren on assorted motorized vehicles!"

By Pat Bourdow/Joan Martin

**Next board meeting:
Wednesday, Sept. 3**

**Newsletter deadline:
Monday, Sept. 8**

Newsletter Web site: www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/saginaw

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."

Riddles for Gardeners

1. How might you describe a silent person? (Mum)
2. Everyone has these on their face. (Tulips)
3. Good name for a guy's biking club. (Cyclamen)
4. A peevish fairytale creature. (Snapdragon)
5. A woman's nightly footwear. (Lady's Slipper)
6. They hate to wait. (Impatiens)
7. A country of automobile lovers. (Carnation)

Odds and ends

Fall plant exchange date set

Pat Bourdow, Advanced Master Gardener, will host the fall plant exchange at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 10, at her Kochville Township home, 6370 N. Michigan, north of Tittabawassee Road.

It's a great way for members, who are dividing perennials this fall, to share them with others.

Members are asked to pot up their exchange plants and provide the botanical name, light requirements, height, color, etc, so the new owners will know what they're getting.

Members will place their plants in a designated area at Bourdow's home and then wait for their number or group to be called to make a selection – similar to the spring plant exchange.

Used book sale in September

Members who have gardening books they have read and would like to share with others may put them up for sale at the September meeting.

Proceeds from the sale will benefit SVMGA.

Large hardcover books will sell for \$5, while normal size hardcover books will go for \$3; soft cover books will be priced at \$1.

Bring your books and be ready to shop at the September meeting.

Help with Web page

Have pictures of your current MG project?

Master Gardener Coordinator Angela Irwin is seeking two pictures per project and a short written summary of the project for use on a new Web page.

Those who can assist should send or drop off materials to Irwin at the MSU Extension Office.

Later, Irwin says, she would like help scanning the pictures and summaries into the computer for use on the Web page. Volunteers may call her at 758-2500, ext. 224.

Leaf printing class Aug. 18

Learn how to use nature's foliage to make works of art, says Patti Decker.

She offers a class from 6 p.m. to 8 p.

m. Monday, Aug. 18, at the MSU Extension Office, downtown Saginaw.

Participants will do three projects. Bring a T-shirt, sweatshirt, tote bag, cloth napkins, or table runner, which is at least 50 percent cotton, to leaf print on.

"We also will make note cards and a garden apron," she says. "We will be working with paint, so dress accordingly."

Cost is \$5. Call Decker at 792-6633 to register or for information.

SVMGA garden wins first place

The Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association garden at the Saginaw Children's Zoo took first place out of 80 gardens considered by six judges last month.

"It's real exciting," says Judy Henning, president, who, with many others, spent time weeding at the Washington Street facility. "We have a hard-working committee there."

The Bee Garden took second place and the People's Choice Award while the Tri-City Carvers placed third.

Henning reminds members the gardens at the zoo are desperately in need of people to weed flower beds – "some weeds are a foot high," she reports.

Time spent there counts for MSU-directed hours. For information contact Patti Decker at 792-6633.

New round of MG classes begins

MSU Extension will offer an evening Master Gardener class this fall, beginning Wednesday, Aug. 27, and continuing each Wednesday, through Nov. 18.

Sessions meet 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the MSU Extension Office in the Morley Building, 1 Tuscola, behind the Temple Theater.

Classes cover plant science, soils, vegetable culture, small fruit culture, indoor plants, household insects, lawn care, tree fruit culture, flower gardening, woody ornamentals and insect control.

The class costs \$200, including a \$15 non-refundable deposit. For information, call Angela Irwin, Master Gardener Coordinator, at 758-2500 ext. 224.

Clean Sweep collection continues through October

Local homeowners who want to

dispose of unwanted pesticides, herbicides and garden products may do so during monthly collections.

The remaining dates are Thursdays, Aug. 28, Sept. 25 and Oct. 30.

Collections are by appointment only. To schedule a drop-off, call the Saginaw Bay Watershed Pollution Prevention and Chemical Collection Program at 758-3685. There is no charge.

Fenton herb farm has fair

FENTON – The Heavenly Scent Herb Farm sponsors its annual summer herb fair from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 23, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 24, at 13730 White Lake Road.

It features garden tours, herb information sessions and a children's activity center. Some 40 artisans also will display their creations, ranging from candles and pressed flowers to jewelry.

Admission is \$2. For information, call (810) 629-9208.

Let me know who you are!

Due to my faulty memory, I have forgotten who purchased the SVMGA tote bags at the July meeting. Please let me know who you are.

Thanks,
Judy Henning

Roethke Friends say thanks

On behalf of the members of the Friends of Theodore Roethke Foundation, I wish to express our thanks for accepting the project of Ruth Sny to do the grounds of the historic homes of the Roethke family.

Ruth took on an enormous job as these grounds have been left to grow unattended for possibly decades. She and her volunteers were so dedicated to bring back the glory of yesteryear to this landmark of Saginaw's past.

It was so very fitting of your association to take on this project as the history of the family was surrounded by greenhouses and grounds full of flowers. The original business had one-fourth of a million square feet under glass and the greenhouse business covered 22 acres.

We all learned so much from our time with our new friends and supporters

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Start compiling hours for recertification; forms due Sept. 30

Members are reminded that volunteer and education hours are due by Tuesday, Sept. 30.

This is the last year that 10 volunteer hours and three education hours are required. Next year, it will be raised to 15 volunteer hours and five education hours.

Please note that you may NOT carry hours over from one year to the next.

It is extremely important that hours be turned in by the deadline. Approving and recording the data is a huge task, and several year-end reports are held up until all of the data is in.

Please show consideration for the work being done by your fellow Master Gardeners in the office and on the board, and do not add to their workload by putting off turning in your hours.

Forms for turning in hours will be available at the August and September meetings, as well as from the County Extension office.

Please write or print clearly; again, this is the least we can do to ease the task. It is NOT necessary to write down each individual day of volunteering if you are involved in an ongoing project. Simply write the start date, what you did, and the TOTAL number of hours on that project.

For example, you might write: 5/5/03, Adopt-a-garden at the zoo, planning, planting, weeding, watering, answering questions, total hours: 50.

Finally, here is a listing of the education hours from the SVMGA meetings this year:

10/23/02 – “Combining Annuals and Perennials” with Ann Hancock, 1 hour.

11/20/02 – “Taking the Mystery Out of Botanical Names,” Pat Washburn, 1 hour.

1/25/03 – “Twelve Months of Color,” Kurt Batschke, 1 hour.

2/26/03 – “Seed Starting from Scratch,” Judy Wegner and Judy Henning, 1 hour.

3/26/03 – “Wildflowers for Your Garden,” Elyn Meyers, 1 hour.

4/23/03 – “Exciting Shade Gardens,” George Papadellis, 1 hour.

4/30/03 – Michigan Hydroponics Field Trip, Ron and Linda Little, 1 hour.

7/23/03 – “Beekeeping,” Craig Beins, 3/4 hour.

9/24/03 – “Garden Ornaments and Whimsy” with Judy Henning, 1 hour.

Gail Caird, program director

SVMGA member offers review of new book on climbing roses

“Climbing Roses of the World,” by Charles Quest-Ritson, 2003, Timber Press (306 pages, color photo plates).

If you are into roses, this book is a fine reference, historical document and source for availability of old and new hybrid climbers and ramblers – the first book in 40 years on the subject.

The author begins with the historical source, China, and follows the development of the hybrid classifications, noting the famous, German, French, English

and the more recent American hybridizers and their notable introductions.

Roses were an important business in Europe in the 1700s and 1800s. Serious American involvement began in the later 1800s.

The establishment of the American Rose Society in 1892, turned the East Coast florists into a trade association and an outlet for the hybridizers who crusaded for the appreciation of roses as garden plants.

The hybridizers continued their search for

traits, such as repeat blooming, flower size and color and novelty.

My interest in roses stems from a desire to locate and grow heirloom varieties.

The next time I'm in Arizona, I'm going to Tombstone to see the largest Rose tree in the world, the double white, Rosa banksiac, var. banksiac, at 4th and Toughnuts. Planted in 1886, the trunk is 2.5 m in circumference and has spread to cover 800 square meters.

Jed Fulkerson, AMG

Odds and ends continued...

(Continues from Page 4)

of the Roethke Foundation. We look forward to many years ahead as this national and state historic site comes into full “bloom” for all of the Saginaw area.

Thank you again for your support and the wonderful work of all your volunteers with their work throughout the community.

Yours truly,
Joyce Eurich

Help needed at Farmer's Market

Three to six volunteers are need to work for eight days during August, September and October at the Farmer's Market, downtown Saginaw.

Volunteers will administer a survey

(you don't have to ask the questions, the participants just mark on a board) and to take counts on people in attendance (you don't have to count every person continually, we have simplified the process).

Please call Angela Irwin, MG Coordinator, at 758-2500, ext. 224, for information or to help. These are MSUE-sponsored hours.

Parks Commission thanks MGs

On behalf of the Saginaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, please accept a sincere thank you to the Saginaw Valley Master Gardeners for the \$700 donation and the extensive amount of volunteer labor that went into developing the trailhead to the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail

in the Village of St. Charles and the trail eye, located west of Benkert Road.

Your commitment and dedication to this project is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,
John P. Schumde
Saginaw County Parks and Recreation Commission director

Welcome new members

Joan Wendland, Bay City, Master Gardener.

Sherry Burkhart, Saginaw, MG trainee.

Jan Rise, Bay City, Advanced Master Gardener.

There are now 162 paid members.