

The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

September 2003 Volume 7, Issue 9

Whimsy no problem for this collector

Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association members may be putting their gardens to bed for the season, but President Judy Henning has ideas for next year.

When the association resumes its regular meetings at Andersen Enrichment Center Wednesday, Sept. 24, Henning will discuss "Garden Ornaments and Whimsy."

"I tell people, 'put in what you like,'" says the Saginaw advanced master gardener who uses found objects and collectibles to give her tiny city garden personality and homespun charm.

"Some people look at it and think, 'junk, junk, junk,' especially if they're like my mom."

Mom, she says, was mortified to see daughter Judy "junk-picking" on a recent garbage day. But the finds were too good to leave behind – a basket from a funeral and a little table that will make a dandy plant stand.

"I only became a collector in the last 15 years," explains Henning, who began with collecting dessert plates decorated with different flowers.

"I got tired of that and packed them away. Then I started collecting chickens because my mother used to raise chickens for the eggs."

What started out with a chicken here and a chicken there now dominates her kitchen and not all 100 or so bird in every conceivable size, shape and material – are on display.

"I still collect them, but now they have to be something special in terms of color or shape. I also have a Snow Babies collection, the miniatures which are hard to find around here, about 130 or so, that I haven't

put out in three years because of my Santa collection."

Her angel collection, numbering 40, and snowman collection, small by comparison at 25, also haven't seen the light of day for the same reason.

"Every year my sister and I make a Santa, something we've done for the last 20 years, except for one year when we went out shopping instead," Henning said.

"I've got 300 Santas now, some up to 3-foot-tall. I collect those Possible Dreams Santas which have Irish Santa, bike-riding Santa, Santa lounging on a beach, I must have a 100 of those alone."

Due to limited space in her home, Henning has become very selective about adding a new Santa to the fold.

"I put them all out at Christmas, and I have so many, now they go in my tree too."

Her affection for watering cans came when her interest turned to gardening in 1996.

"I only had one or two, the plastic kind, when I started but then I started buying all kinds and back then they weren't as popular as they are today so you could pick them up quite cheap.

"Now I have 65 watering cans and many of them hang on my fence. I hate to say this

but my husband and I have to rent a two-car garage for all my stuff!

"You don't have to be a collector to have whimsy in your garden," insists Henning.

"What you need is a really good outlook on life. Of course, it shouldn't insult

Next meeting

- ##7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 24, at Andersen Enrichment Center, Ezra Rust Drive
- ##7 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Meeting
- ##7:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Refreshments, used book sale
- ##8 p.m. – 9 p.m. SVMGA President Judy Henning discusses "Garden Ornaments and Whimsy."

your neighbors.

"But it's a great feeling when people come into my garden and are amazed at what they find – like the old storm windows on the fence, the birdhouses my husband has made, the lightning rods we've found at antique shows.

"I tell people to put in what they like.

"My garden is for my husband and me – I'm just glad so many other people enjoy it too."

Story by Darlene Damp, co-editor



Judy Henning and her whimsical garden ornaments, from watering cans to statuary.

Inside this issue:

<i>Minutes of the August meeting</i>	2
<i>Earn AMG status and/or service pins</i>	2
<i>Letter from the President</i>	3
<i>Recertification hours due</i>	3
<i>Odds and ends</i>	4
<i>Book reviews from AMG</i>	5
<i>Meet the Gardener</i>	5

Minutes of the August 27 meeting

Judy Henning called the Master Gardener meeting to order at 7 p.m. Aug. 27 at the home of Debbie King. Judy expressed our thanks to Debbie and Doug for hosting the meeting.

Aileen Cowan moved that the secretary's report be approved as published; Joe Leach seconded it.

Debbie Keller read the treasurer's report as follows:

Opening balance	6,031.77
Deposits	432.75
Expenses	1,413.74
Closing balance	\$5,050.78

As of August 27 we have 163 paid members.

Judy announced that the SVMGA's Adopt-A-Garden at the Children's Zoo won first place in the contest. She expressed thanks to all whose efforts made this possible.

Gail Caird discussed a newspaper

article about plants and compost being used to remove lead from soil.

Ann Birkam requested refreshment volunteers for November and Ruth Sny called for raffle prizes.

Bill Wegner reminded us that anyone wanting volunteer hours was welcome to weed at Lions' Park every other Saturday with the group or any other time they chose.

Joe Leach asked for volunteers to help with the Christmas potluck.

Judy Henning told the group that Floyd Callison had a quintuple by-pass. He is now home recovering.

The business meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. and members enjoyed refreshments while strolling around Debbie's beautiful yard.

Submitted by Ellie Robertson

Here's how to earn AMG status

Thinking about expanding your gardening knowledge – and earning the Advanced Master Gardener certificate?

To become an Advanced Master Gardener you must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a Master Gardener volunteer
2. Participate in an additional 25 hours of horticulture education within a two-year time period.
3. Volunteer 50 community service hours relating to horticulture within a two-year time period.

The education hours may come from Michigan State University-sponsored or non-MSU-sponsored classes held locally and/or on the MSU campus.

All education programs – whether MSU or non-MSU sponsored – must be approved by the Master Gardener volunteer coordinator, Angela Irwin in Saginaw County. MSU-sponsored program earn one hour of credit for each

hour of training.

Non-MSU-sponsored programs earn one-half hour to one hour of credit for every one hour of training, upon evaluation by the Master Gardener volunteer coordinator.

The state Master Gardener Coordinator will evaluate the International Master Gardener conferences to determine the number of education credits allowed.

A Master Gardener may begin accumulating 50 hours of volunteer service as soon as they complete the initial 40 hours.

The form to keep track of advanced volunteer hours is the same form used for keeping track of basic Master Gardener volunteer hours.

Once completed, the form is turned over to the Master Gardener Coordinator, based on the timeline established.

For information, contact Irwin at 758-2500, ext. 224.

Officers for 2003-04

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 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

Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, disability, age, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status or family status.

Michigan State University, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and counties cooperating. MSU is an affirmative-action, equal opportunity institution.

Pins provide recognition for volunteer hours

All Master Gardeners are familiar with the name badge and the recertification card they receive after completing basic requirements.

But did you know you can earn special pins for all those volunteer hours you put in?

"It's just a way of saying 'thank you,'" explains Angela Irwin, Master Gardener coordinator.

"They may get nothing else for efforts because a lot of times, when volunteers are out gardening, making the community look beautiful, the public may not see who is actually doing the

work."

Master Gardeners receive a gold lapel pin after they accumulate 250 total hours. It comes with a gold bar, showing the number of hours worked.

From there, volunteers who put in another 250 hours, earn a 500-hour gold bar to replace the first bar.

Additional bars are awarded in 500-hour increments.

In 2001-2002, 18 local Master Gardeners earned 250 hours and six put in 500 hours since they were certified. Two received 1,000-hour bars while five more have bars for 1,500 hours or more.

Letter from the President

Fall, my favorite time of the year, arrives Tuesday, Sep. 23.

On one hand, it is sad to see the days getting shorter, the evenings cooler, and the trees changing color.

But, on the other hand, thoughts of hot cider and doughnuts, caramel apples, our brilliant fall colors, and the beauty of the fall flowers is something to look forward to.

Now is the time to plant our spring bulbs, divide and plant our perennials, and start our fall cleanup. The better cleanup we do now will save time when spring arrives.

Debbi King's garden was wonder-

ful.

Her troughs planted with al-pines, her giant butterfly bushes, and all the little touches she added with garden whimsy and ornaments prompted me to go through the garden more than once to be sure that I had not missed anything.

Thanks Debbi for having us.

Thank you to the other members who shared their gardens with us this summer, Aileen Cowan, Kathy Berger and Darlene Damp. Each garden



was special in its own way.

I would like all those who took a castor bean plant from me to take your final measurement of the bean at the end of September and let me know its height.

Mine is rather puny this year, only about 5 ½ feet tall. Oh well, there is always next year.

We will be back at Anderson Enrichment Center for our Wednesday, Sept. 24, meeting. Hope to see you there.

Take care,
Judy

Education, volunteer hours due Sept. 30 for recertification

Less than a month remains for members to file their volunteer and education hours by the Tuesday, Sept. 30 deadline, says Gail Caird, program director.

"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," she explains.

"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."

Members are asked to show consideration for the work being done by their fellow Master Gardeners in the office and on the board, and not add to their workload by delaying turning in their hours, Caird says.

Forms for recertification will be available at the September meeting, as well as from the County Extension office downtown.

"Please write or print clearly; again, this is the least we can do to ease the task," Caird

says.

"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."

Caird also provides a listing of 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," Ellyn 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.

Volunteers, plant donations needed

Volunteers and plant donations are needed for the second annual Make A Difference Day project sponsored by Saginaw County's Promise and the United Way.

Students from local high schools will work with adult volunteers to spruce up the yards of elderly area residents Thursday, Oct. 23.

The project will start about 8:30 a.m., and end about noon.

Master Gardener volunteers provide direction and instruction in planting, pruning, etc.

You may do as much or as little physical labor as you like.

Donations of any extra plant material you might have, particularly shrubs, bulbs, or hardy, tough perennials, also would be appreciated.

Please contact Gail Caird at 793-1942 or sgcaird@hotmail.com for more information, to volunteer, or to arrange plant drop off/pick up.

Thanks!!

Odds and ends

Henning makes plea

President Judy Henning is still missing payment for two Master Gardener canvas tote bags, taken during the July meeting in Bridgeport.

The bags cost \$10 each.

Henning must rectify the association's books by Tuesday, Sept. 30.

"If you can't pay, simply return them," says Henning, who hopes she won't have to make up the difference herself.

Ruth Sny needs goodies

Ruth Sny is looking for goodies for the drawing/fund-raiser at the remaining monthly meetings.

"Several of you have said you have things we could use – well, I need them now," Sny says.

Contact her at 792-5688 if you have something that might draw those dollars from members.

Rail Trail needs help

Aileen Cowan, chairman of the Rail Trail committee, is seeking help in weeding the newly established Rail Trail beds in and near St. Charles.

"The beds are being watered with a truck on a weekly basis so the plantings are doing well," Cowan said.

"But we need to keep up with the weeding. Any help I can get will be appreciated."

The plantings are located in St. Charles at the start of the Rail Trail, off M-52 and in Swan Creek Township, off Benkert and Swan Creek Road.

Interested members may contact Cowan at (989) 865-8784 or scratchcreations@worldnet.att.net.

Don't forget book sale

Members who have gardening books they want to donate for a sale to benefit the SVMGA should bring them to the September meeting.

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 Wednesday, Sept. 24.

Dow Gardens offers tree tours

MIDLAND – Gavin Green, a Dow Gardens forester, leads a tree tour at 1 p.m. Friday, Oct. 17.

He will highlight several favorites and answer questions along the way. Please register by Friday, Oct. 10.

A second tour, at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 18, with horticulturist and director Doug Chapman will help those looking to plant a tree in their yard.

Please register by Monday, Oct. 13. Admission is \$5 for each program or an annual admission card.

Important information!

If you have a change in address, telephone number, or e-mail address, please let Nancy Cotcamp know.

She is the person who maintains our Roster. We cannot contact you if our information is incorrect.

If you are on the mailing list and for some reason are not getting your newsletter, contact Aileen Cowan, **not** Angela Irwin. Angela has nothing to do with the mailing of our newsletter.

Thanks,
Judy

Thanks SVMGA...you're great!

Dear SVMGA,

I really appreciate your thoughtfulness and gift certificate as my job at Extension ended and my new career path, "Circuit Court Swing Secretary" began.

My only regret is that Angela and I didn't get a chance to get the MG office organized.

I truly enjoy working with all the Master Gardeners. You are a great group. Until we meet again. Thanks so much!!

Cheryl Kumar

Gardens has open house

MIDLAND -- Wednesday, Oct. 22, Dow Gardens Library sponsors an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Its 3,000-plus volumes provide a resource for gardeners on individual plants and ideas for garden design to solving pest problems.

Although it is a non-lending library, it is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. most days.

In addition, learn how to use the new plant collection database at Dow Gardens

Visitor Center from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 22.

Collections manager Rich Gillis shows how easy it is to search for a plant and find it in the gardens. He'll also be available to answer questions.

Admission is \$5 or an annual admission card.

It's a Christmas party!

Wednesday, Dec. 3, is the annual Christmas party.

Shirley Oryczak and Joel and Kathy Leach are the event's chairpersons. Those interested in serving on their committee may call Oryczak at (989) 661-2619 or the Leachs at 781-3959.

Plants, compost aid soil reclamation, experts say

A recent article in the Detroit Free Press by Wendy Wendland-Bowyer explained how the ill effects of lead in the soil – a common problem in old industrial cities – can be mitigated by the use of compost or by planting certain plants in the effected areas.

Research has shown soil-based lead can be chemically changed by adding decomposed plant material enriched with large amounts of iron and phosphate.

The compost doesn't remove the lead, but renders it less harmful if ingested.

According to Rufus Chaney, U.S.D. A. researcher, the compost reacts with the lead to make a compound that is very insoluble.

Plants can be used to remove lead from the soil. Daimler-Chrysler is using sunflowers and Indian mustard plants to remove lead-contaminated soil from the former site of a forge plant and foundry on Detroit's Northeast side, instead of hauling the dirt to a landfill. The plants absorb the lead and then are harvested.

According to our own member Sally Shepardson, who has been researching this topic at SVSU, they are either put into a secure landfill, or the lead is extracted from the plants to be recycled for further use.

The Free Press reports that this resulted in a 43 percent reduction in the amount of lead in the soil, and saved the company over a million dollars.

Meet the Gardener....Sharon Rood

"No hoeing for me," was the sentiment of this young lady growing up in Hemlock where her grandparents had about 80 acres of farm land with dairy cattle and chickens.

Her mom had a small vegetable and flower garden where she "unwillingly" did some weeding.

Sharon Rood (Sivey when I met her a few years ago) lives with new husband, Larry, in Hemlock or otherwise referred to as "heaven in the woods."

She made her home there in 1977 and after planting grass around the house, a shade garden was "hit or miss" for a while using mostly annuals and hostas.

In 1998, because of a marital change in her life, Sharon felt the need to meet new people and good friend, Kathy

Haucke, suggested the Master Gardening class.

And what a class of new people that was! Seventy-one aspiring master gardeners!

Sharon said she had no interest in gardening at all growing up, but that started to change when "hit or miss" wasn't working as she had hoped.

With the knowledge from her Master Gardener class, new garden friends and her husband, she says she is expanding her gardens.

Larry, who "loves the end result of gardening," has helped her make islands of gardens around their trees with paving bricks.

Now she'd like more time to shop at new and different nurseries to get a variety of plants, but with a full-time job as Branch

Manager at Wanigas Credit Union (31 years) and a fairly independent 91-year-old mom, she already has her hands full.

Volunteer hours this summer included selling trees for the Soil and Conservation Services at the fairgrounds and mailing out our Grapevine newsletter.

Sharon's future includes gardening, of course, golfing and traveling around the United States after their annual visits to the UP, where they were married, and to Florida where there are children and a new grandchild.

Needlepoint used to be her hobby, before gardening, but now Sharon has a larger canvas and this one is easier on her eyes.

Story by Joan Martin

New books provide details on 'queen of the climbers,' the 'gospel of grass'

"An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Clematis," by Mary Toomey and Everett Leeds, Timber Press, (426 pages, 650 color prints).

Here's a new book on the queen of climbers!

Unique among plants, Clematis varieties can be found in flower nearly every month of the year. The authors' labor of love is backed by the British Clematis Society.

It includes color photos of over 500 species.

The book is divided into two sections. Part 1, includes care and cultivation, such as, history, botany, pruning, propagation and hybridization, pests and diseases.

Part 2 is an alphabetical list of 550 plants.

To meet the specific needs of gardeners who grow Clematis, the authors wrote the book in everyday language.

Appendix 1 separates the Clematis by groups; Appendix 2 by flower color. Appendix 4 lists the hybridizers and

nurseries, including 13 in the USA.

If you would like to see Clematis in some other color than purple, take a look.

"The Lawn Bible," by David R. Mellor, Hyperion Books, 2003, 8.5 X 11 hard paper back (274 pages).

The gospel of grass according to Dave. Mellor is Fenway Park's master groundskeeper.

Remember Ted Williams? OK, the scene from the movie, "Field of Dreams," with the green wall and the electronic scoreboard?

Same place. After a brief introduction to the reader, defining and examining a blade of grass, requirements and kinds of grasses, the book divides into two parts:

The New Lawn (or getting it right the first time) and

2. Old Lawn Renovation (figuring out what's wrong and bringing the lawn up to par).

The written portion includes sage advice from lawn-related product spokesmen,

such as Scott's and Toro and grass keepers from golf, country clubs and baseball parks.

Particularly helpful is the advice on how-to-tell the difference between lawn damage caused by cutworms, sod webworm and grubs.

There also is a list of 38 resources, including Internet sources.

Although my lawn problems are minor league compared to the authors, I found his straightforward approach and suggestions common sense and easy to digest.

Jed Fulkerson, AMG

**Next board meeting:
Wednesday, Oct. 1**

**Newsletter deadline:
Monday, Oct. 6**
Send submissions to Beth Bedtelyon,
Editor
daysendfarm@chartermi.net

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

**To get to know one another,
please wear your name tag at the
monthly meetings.**

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."
