

# The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

February 2005 Volume 9, Issue 2

## Worms, bins create rich compost

Bill Wegner never liked gardening.

As a youth, the Bridgeport native did as he was told, tending the family vegetable garden and his father's roses.

After he married in 1964, he put the same kind of enthusiasm into helping wife Judy – an avid gardener – landscape their yard.

"I helped put in the roses and rototilled the yard when she wanted, but I hardly paid attention, except to help eat the vegetables from the garden," joked the former teacher and audiovisual specialist for Wickes Corp.

"I was more into photography, taking pictures of her flowers. But then I saw an article about the new American garden. There were no fussy annuals. Instead there were these sweeping grasses and perennials – a garden for people on the go."

Wegner liked the look of the prairie-style garden, not wild, not formal, but masses of plantings that didn't require constant care.

Now he not only spends most evenings during growing season gardening in his own yard, he composts, lectures on ornamental grasses, serves as president of Gardening for Gents and helps maintain gardens at Wescourt, the Castle Museum of

Saginaw County History and the Saginaw Children's Zoo.

Composting is his topic Wednesday, Feb. 23, when he addresses fellow members of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association. There's also a seed exchange. (See story, Page 4.)



Advanced Master Gardener Bill Wegner in front of his Court Street shop.

"I've been composting with worms for 15 years – not earthworms, but the red wigglers. There's no odor. Judy and I feed them our kitchen scraps, except for meat, and they eat it and turn it into

pails of compost. We also get a liquid fertilizer that we dilute with water and use to feed our plants."

The Wegners, who own Records and Tapes Galore at 1303 Court, also have three large earth machines.

### Next meeting

- 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 23, at Andersen 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. Bill Wegner, a Saginaw Township Advanced Master Gardener, discusses **"Composting."**
- One hour education credit
- **Seed exchange** — Please bring packaged seeds to share

"The Tri-City Consortium was selling them some years back. They sort of look like that robot from 'Star Wars,' R2D2.

"They're about 3-foot-tall and 3-foot-  
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## Mentor families in home gardening

Master Gardeners can share their love of gardening in a new program, co-sponsored by MSU Extension.

The Food Security through Family Gardening Nutrition Education Project will help low-income families promote better nutrition by growing their own food, says Vickie Flynn, project coordinator.

"The thinking is that if we can get children into gardening, it will improve healthy eating habits. Kids today are eating a lot of junk, and not just in low-income families, because people are in such a hurry," Flynn explains.

The goal is to provide access to fresh fruits and vegetables while increasing physical activity and shared family time through tending a garden.

In late summer, families will learn how to can and freeze the food they've grown.

Sponsors say growing vegetables teaches children that plants, like people, need food and water to grow and stay healthy.

Caring for plants also helps develop responsibility and build self-esteem when youngsters see what they can grow.

And children are more willing to taste what they grow.

Master Gardeners will serve as mentors to the families, earning volunteer hours by helping them establish a garden in their yards or in containers.

Some 35 families have signed up. Fifteen will have in-ground gardens; the rest will use containers.

Flynn says preparing the garden would take the most time but once in, Master Gardeners would follow-up by telephone or personal visits, as needed. Flynn hopes to find people to rototill garden beds.

### Inside this issue:

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# Minutes of the January 2005 meeting

President Grey Gitzen welcomed all to the Anderson Enrichment Center.

Elaine Rappley moved that the minutes of the November 2004 meeting be approved as published and Judy Henning seconded the motion.

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

Balance as of last report	\$5,650.29
Deposits 11/19/04 to 1/26/05	\$862.95
Expenses 11/19/04 to 1/5/05	\$748.81
Balance as of 1/5/05	\$5,764.43

As of 1/25/05 we have 39 paid members for 2005.

Gitzen distributed the SVMGA budget for 2005 and asked members to be prepared to vote on it at the February meeting.

SVMGA was awarded a plaque by the Saginaw Conservation District as Partner of the Year. The plaque will be on display at the MSU Extension office. (See photo, Page 3.)

Recertification cards were available for members to pick up.

Volunteers spent many hours entering the information in the state computer system. Gitzen explained that to receive an invitation to the June Master Gardener conference in Lansing, volunteers must get their hours in on time because that is how the list of invitations is developed. Only certified members may attend.

Gitzen asked for volunteers to take care of the atrium plants at the Extension office.

The SVMGA has an opportunity to buy a newer, top-of-the-line computer for \$650 to replace the antiquated volunteer office computer.

Elaine Rappley made a motion to buy the new computer. Darlene Damp seconded the motion; the motion was approved.

For the last two years, the SVMGA has drawn names to pay the conference fee for a member who attended the Summer Conference. To promote prompt membership dues payments, the board decided that members who pay dues by March 1 are eligible for the drawing.

SVMGA will hold its second annual fall conference Saturday, Oct. 1, 2005. Judy Henning and Aileen Cowan are co-chairs. Anyone who has suggestions for speakers should see one of them.

To book the SVSU Ott Education Center for the conference, a \$2,000 down payment is required in January. Nancy Cotcamp made the motion to book the conference center; Ruth Sny seconded the motion. The conference

will follow a similar format as last year. We will sell bulbs again and plan to have six vendors.

A list of standing committees was distributed to members. New members were invited to get a notebook.

Shirley McNier distributed logo T-shirts. She plans to have another logo wear sale in late spring or early fall.

Elaine Rappley said botanist Fred Case will open his Thomas Township garden the first two weekends of May. Up to 25 people may attend at a time. She will make plans for our group to go.

Judy Henning, a member of the Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk Committee, said one more garden is needed. Interested members may contact her.

Nancy Cotcamp announced Make-A-Difference Day is Thursday, May 12.

Gail Caird reminded members they can get flowers from the Freeland Prison for \$2.35/flat for upcoming projects. Orders must be placed in February. Caird also said Butterflies and Blooms at Dow Gardens needs volunteers.

Waunita Pettiford asked members who are mentors to give their trainees a call.

Thanks go to Brian Ott for donating an ornamental garden flower and Grey Gitzen for donating a watering can and MSU garden stone for the monthly raffle.

Dolores Hignite won the watering can, Wayne House the garden stone, and David Quinnan the flower.

Following refreshments David Sutton, the Tri-City Tree Doctor, gave a very informative presentation about tree identification and tree health.

*Submitted by Anne Birkam, secretary*

## Officers for 2005-2006

### President

Grey Gitzen 792-0615

### Vice President

Nancy Hales 799-2118

### Secretary

Anne Birkam 754-7090

### Treasurer

Jan O'Dell 793-4357

### Program Director

Amy Fitkin 781-1670

### Newsletter Editor

Darlene Damp 746-9113

e-mail: shrew@att.net

### MSU Extension

One Tuscola Street, Suite 100  
Saginaw, MI 48607-1287

### Master Gardener Coordinator

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

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## Get head start with pre-germinated seed

EAST LANSING — Garden seeds generally need warmer temperatures to germinate than plants need to grow, so cool soil can be an obstacle to getting the garden off to a quick start in the spring.

One way around this is to germinate seeds before you plant, says Mary McLellan, Extension Master Gardener program coordinator at Michigan State University.

"Pre-germinating seed can be an especially good idea if you're using last

year's leftover seed and you're not sure how well it will perform," she notes.

"Rather than plant it more thickly than usual and hope that it germinates, you can pre-germinate it and know that it's still viable, then plant just the seeds with roots and space them properly at planting.

"If it doesn't germinate, you've saved yourself the effort of planting it in the garden and the time you'd have to wait to find out."

*Continues on Page 6*

# Letter from the President

We have two USDA Zone 6 microclimates in our garden.

The bed in our front yard is filled with miniature roses during the summer months, supplemented by paper white narcissus and muscari in early spring. The paper whites were up about three inches already before the last snow storm.

The bed in the back yard is tucked into a northeast facing corner. In May this bed is filled with Michigan wildflowers. Right now it has snowdrops in bloom.

Such are the tricks of Mother Nature; tantalizing us into believing it is spring before we have experienced even a January thaw.

I was very pleased to see 102 of my fellow Master Gardeners at the January SVMGA meeting. Dave Sutton presented a very comprehensive overview of the problems affecting the trees in mid-Michigan. Thank you Amy for finding such a good speaker to initiate the 2005 gardening season.

I'm happy to report your newly elected Board of Directors has been working hard to bring the association a quality program. We are investigating potential projects that will do credit to MSUE and the association as well as present each of you

new opportunities for accumulating volunteer hours.

Speaking of volunteer hours, I would like to thank the 158 of you who submitted your 2004 hours in a timely fashion before the Jan. 15 cutoff. They were all submitted to the MSU office of the Master Gardener Coordinator before the deadline.

For those of you who have not submitted your recertification hours, please do so as soon as possible. It will save me from having to write you a letter denying you the opportunities afforded Master Gardeners in the Saginaw Valley.

The computer, that was purchased with your approval, has been delivered. We are waiting for the Saginaw County technician to install it in the Master Gardener office in the MSUE building.

For those of you who inquired as to the specifications on the new installation, they are listed in Odds and Ends on Page 4 in the Grapevine. My apologies for



forgetting to bring them to the last meeting. Mea Culpa.

There are a couple of gardening seminars in the area that have interesting topics and will provide Master Gardeners with education hours. "Landscape Diversity" is Saturday, Feb. 26, at the Grace Dow Library in Midland. A total of five education hours are available.

"Spring into Gardening" is being presented by the Master Gardener Association of Isabella County on Saturday, March 19, at the Holiday Inn in Mt. Pleasant, and will have four education hours. (See related story, Page 7.)

Don't forget we will have a seed exchange at our Feb. 23 meeting.

We also will have guests on our program who will give us the lowdown on an exciting new program for Saginaw County. (See related story, Page 1.)

They also will be happy to take any unclaimed vegetable seeds. So, bring all your spare flower and vegetable seeds.

In closing, please remember to turn off your cell phones on your way into the Enrichment Center on Feb 23.

*Grey Gitzen*



Members of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association recently accepted the Saginaw Soil Conservation District's Partnership Award for long-standing and continuing volunteer contributions to the district and its projects. Pictured, from left to right are Mary Jane Lysogorski, Deb Keller, Grey Gitzen, Jan O'Dell, Judy Henning, Nancy Hales and Aileen Cowan.

**Next board meeting:  
5:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 2,  
at MSU Extension office,  
1 Tuscola, downtown Saginaw**

**Newsletter deadline:  
Monday, March 7**  
Send submissions to  
**Darlene Damp, editor**  
[shrew@att.net](mailto:shrew@att.net)

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

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

## Composting...

wide. The top comes off, you put stuff in, lock it, vent it, turn it and you've got this wonderful top dressing and planting medium," Bill Wegner explains.

"It's beautiful stuff, real humus, not like what you get from the city. To me, it's like getting something free. I like to encourage people who don't compost to get started because it's easy."

His talk will examine different methods of composting and may include a visit by some of the hungry worms that produce an estimated 10 gallons of compost a year.

Wife Judy maintains her husband was just jealous when he discovered he couldn't attend Master Gardener meetings and conferences.

The Wegner garden has at least 25 varieties of ornamental grasses, along with other perennials and the annuals Judy starts from seed.

"I try to plan so I don't have so much to do later, like properly spacing when I do my planting and paying attention to signs of potential insect and disease problems," he says.

"I go out every day to look at our garden, and if it's nice, I'll stay out til dark. We start in March, cutting back the grasses and work right up until November, if it's warm enough like this year, when we needed to plant the bulbs we bought at the (SVMGA's) fall conference."

Several years ago, they got interested in conifers, bought some and started a conifer garden. That led to joining the state society and attending a regional conference in Ohio.

"What I really enjoy is meeting other gardeners and hearing different philosophies.

"That's why I like Master Gardeners – there's so many different people and so many different interests."

*Story by Darlene B. Damp, editor*

## Odds and Ends

### **Don't forget your seeds for February meeting**

Bring any spare seeds you have to the Feb. 23 meeting for the annual exchange.

No matter whether you bought them or harvested seeds last fall — all are welcome.

Simply package seeds for vegetables, herbs, grasses, annuals or perennials with any information that will help the recipient, such as name, color, growing conditions, in successful planting this spring and summer.

Advanced Master Gardener Aileen Cowan is seeking milkweed seeds for planting along the Rail Trail. With only a 50 percent germination rate, she says the more you bring, the better.

### **Tsunami hits close to home**

Joe and Kathy Leach avidly watched the tsunami coverage in Southeast Asia during the Christmas holiday – because son Matt was vacationing in Thailand.

Those who want to see his photos may visit his Web site at <http://matthewleach.com>.

On his home page, there is a shield with Thailand printed on it. Click on the shield, and Matt's trip to Thailand – Dec. 26 will appear. Below his name look for the scroll bar, and drag it to the right to see his words and photos about that part of his three weeks in Thailand.

### **Gitzen nips blues in the bud**

SVMGA President Grey Gitzen was interviewed for the Dec. 16 edition of the Detroit Free Press feature section, The Way We Live.

Garden writer Marty Hair not only interviewed the Advanced Master Gardener on ways to beat the winter blues, but sent a photographer to capture his winter gardening activities at his Saginaw Township home.

He's the focus in four of the five

photographs illustrating the story.

A copy of the article is in the Master Gardener office at MSU Extension for those who missed it.

### **SVMGA replaces old computer**

The MG volunteer office has a new computer, thanks to SVMGA members who approved the purchase at the January meeting.

The computer is a Dell Dimension Desktop 8250 Series, with Pentium 4 Processor, 2.4 Ghz, 512mb Ram, DVD Rom Drive, CD-RW Drive, 17-inch flat panel monitor, 60gb hard drive, Window XP pro operating system, network card, modem, sound card and graphics card.

It also has Harmon/Kardon speakers with subwoofers.

SVMGA purchased the computer for \$650 from Aileen Cowan's son, Chris, who bought the computer new in 2003.

### **PLEASE! Turn cell phones off**

As a courtesy to fellow members and speakers at the monthly meetings, members are asked to turn their cell phones off or to vibrate.

A number of cell phones rang during the January meeting, interrupting board members and the guest speaker in his presentation.

### **Henning has new e-mail address**

Advanced Master Gardener Judy Henning has a new e-mail address.

You may reach the former SVMGA president at [judrich@sbcglobal.net](mailto:judrich@sbcglobal.net).

### **Welcome new members!**

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

**James Lichon**, Saginaw, MG

**Lynn Hauk**, Bridgeport, MG trainee

**Sharla Hammer**, Freeland, MG trainee

**Elizabeth Williams**, Saginaw, MG trainee

**Kris Sawdon**, Saginaw, MG trainee

**Grant and Helen Tober**, Birch Run, MG trainees

**Leo R. LeRoy**, Saginaw, MG

There are 89 paid members.

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### **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."

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# March 1 deadline for 2005 membership dues

Annual dues of \$20 for the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association must be paid by Monday, March 1.

Each member **must** also submit a completed application form with the dues payment. Please fill it out in advance.

The application is available below or at the February meeting.

**Members who join by March 1 are entered in a pool to receive the**

**Summer Conference fee (1 member) paid by SVMGA.**

Make checks for dues payable to the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association.

Due to limited funds, individual applications are not mailed to applicants.

If you are unable to attend the February meeting, you may drop or mail your check and application form

to treasurer Jan O'Dell at 5122 Hickory Court, Saginaw, MI 48603. Contact O'Dell at 793-4357 or e-mail odell5122@sbcglobal.net.

Application forms are used for the SVMGA annual roster and to check state certification.

New certification cards have been mailed to Master Gardeners. Those joining from outside Saginaw County must submit proof of certification.

## SAGINAW VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

You are eligible for membership in SVMGA if you turned in your annual 15 hours of volunteer service and 5 education hours in December 2004 and have received a Master Gardener recertification card.

If you did not turn in your hours by the deadline, please contact Master Gardener Coordinator Mary Jane Lysogorski at the County Extension office (phone: 758-2500, ext. 224) to become re-certified.

You **also** are eligible to join if you have recently completed the Master Gardener course, but have not yet completed your volunteer hours. If extenuating circumstances exist, a written request for an extension must be submitted to Mary Jane Lysogorski, Master Gardener Coordinator.

**Dues:** \$20.00 per calendar year. New members paying dues after April 1 should contact Treasurer Jan O'Dell directly for the pro-rated amount. Each additional family member, living at the same address, will be given a \$10 reduction in their membership fee.

The following information will be used for the SVMGA Membership Roster, which is updated annually for members.

**PLEASE PRINT.** If you prefer that the following information is **NOT** published in the roster check here \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**No change in information from last year (check here)** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Master Gardener Status: MG Trainee \_\_\_\_\_ Certified MG \_\_\_\_\_ Advanced MG \_\_\_\_\_

Class Year \_\_\_\_\_ New Membership \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Mail **application form & check**, payable to SVMGA, to: Jan O'Dell, Treasurer, 5122 Hickory Court, Saginaw, MI 48603.

### Make a Difference Day set

Landscaping local elementary schools is the focus of the next Make a Difference Day, set for Thursday, May 12, says Nancy Cotcamp.

The annual project, sponsored in part by United Way of Saginaw County, brings youth and Master Gardeners together to aid local residents and beautify the community.

This spring, participants will focus on 10 elementary schools and involve 200 high school students and some of the young students who attend the schools involved.

Some 20 to 30 Master Gardeners are sought to guide and instruct students in the project. Physical labor is not required, but Master Gardeners may help as much as they like.

The effort usually begins about 8 a.m. and ends at 1 p.m. More details will follow as sites are finalized.

Those interested in volunteering may contact Cotcamp at 797-3390 or e-mail [ncotcamp@chartermi.net](mailto:ncotcamp@chartermi.net).

## Pre-germinated seed useful...

*Continues from Page 2*

Pre-germinating seed is useful when a cool, wet spring or a layer of organic mulch from the previous year has kept the soil from warming up.

It's also useful for catching up when you're planting late, for whatever reason.

Planting pre-germinated seed means you eliminate that week or 10 days (or longer, in cool soil) that it usually takes seeds to germinate and begin to poke stems up through the soil.

If you usually plant seeds in flats and then transplant seedlings into individual containers, using pre-germinated seed saves time, effort and seedlings.

"Once seeds are sprouted and planted in moist soil, most will keep on growing, so you can plant pre-germinated seeds directly into peat pots or pellets or divided seed-starting containers and have a pretty good chance of getting a plant from each one.

"Growth isn't interrupted by transplant shock and root injury, so plants can be ready to go into the garden sooner."

To germinate seeds, simply fold them into a moist paper towel, put the towel in



### Butterflies in Bloom needs help

MIDLAND – Master Gardeners can learn more about butterflies and aid the annual Butterflies in Bloom event at Dow Gardens.

It begins Monday, March 7, and runs through Friday, April 22, at the Conservatory where hundreds of colorful butterflies are in various stages of life, including free flying around visitors.

Volunteers help maintain butterflies, serve as tour guides or assist with related classes and activities for visitors.

For information, call the office at (989) 631-2677.

### Atrium volunteers sought

Master Gardeners or trainees seeking volunteer hours can sign up now to help repot plants in the atrium outside the MSU Extension offices, 1 Tuscola.

Contact Grey Gitzen to volunteer, 792-0615. For MG trainees, these are MSUE-hours.

### Dow Event Center wants garden

Master Gardeners are being asked to help beautify a courtyard guests at the Dow Event Center use during intermission.

Regina Brown Demski, sales and marketing director, will discuss the project at the February meeting.

The courtyard is located on the west side of the theater lobby.

SVMGA board members visited the site but were unable to see the beds due to the amount of snow. President Grey

## SVMGA committees

MSU Extension Office Orientation — Wil Hufton, 792-9323

Mentor coordinator — Waunita Pettiford, 777-6918

Historian — Janet Martineau, 790-7340

Refreshments — Becky Geidans, 781-1552

Member handbooks — Angela Irwin, 777-7947

Membership roster — Nancy Cotcamp, 797-3390

Newsletter mailing — Bonnie Stewart, 793-1442

Newsletter mailing label maker — Debbi King, 791-4001

SVMGA wearables — Shirley McNier, 799-7172

Speakers Bureau — Judy Henning, 799-4136

MSUE Demonstration Garden — Peggy Shaver, 695-5489

Volunteer opportunities — Mary Jane Lysogorski, 758-2500, ext. 224

Raffle — Ruth Sny, 792-5688

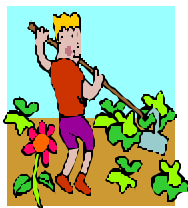
# Workshops ready gardeners for spring

## **Landscape diversity topic of Feb. 26 seminar**

MIDLAND – An all-day plant seminar Saturday, Feb. 26, examines diversifying your landscape through new and unique plant material.

The speakers and topics include:

Harlen Hamernik, Bluebird Nursery in Nebraska, discussing the latest perennials; Douglas Chapman, Dow Gardens horticulturist/director, talking about native woody plant material; Scott Kunst, heirloom bulb expert; Chuck Martin, Dow Gardens horticulturist, discussing wildflowers and



herbaceous materials; and Don List of Baily Nursery, showing his company's latest plant introductions for the Midwest.

The seminar meets at Grace A. Dow Library Auditorium and costs \$50 or \$55 after Friday, Feb. 18, and includes lunch. Master Gardeners earn four hours education credit.

Send check, payable to The Dow Gardens, in care of 1018 W. Main, Midland, MI 48640.

For complete seminar information and registration, visit [www.dowgardens.org](http://www.dowgardens.org) or call (989) 631-2677.

## **Register now for Mount Pleasant spring conference March 19**

MOUNT PLEASANT – Stop the winter blues with the fourth annual Spring into Gardening conference, sponsored by the Isabella County Chapter of the Michigan Master Gardener Association.

It begins at 8:15 a.m. Saturday, March 19, featuring four speakers, vendors, lunch and decorated garden hat contest, at the Holiday Inn Conference Center on M-20. Master Gardeners receive four education hours.

Master Gardener Mike Jenkins of Elm Creek Ltd. in Farwell will demonstrate how waterscaping your home is easier than you think.

Speaker Daisy Kostas, a Master Gardener and member of the First Nation of Crees of Waswanipi in Northern Quebec, will look at traditional and non-

traditional ways of using plants and herbs as medicine and food.

Mike Creller, St. Clair County horticulture agent, will examine the ancient species and modern cultivars of hemerocallis or daylilies, including uses and propagation.

Mary McLellan, Master Gardener state coordinator, will cover the contained garden, including annuals, perennials, vegetables, herbs and even trees and shrubs.

A dozen vendors or more will be on hand to show their latest creations and plant material.

Cost is \$45 for early registration, \$50 after Feb. 20.

A registration form is available at [www.isabellacounty.org/dept/msue](http://www.isabellacounty.org/dept/msue), under the Master Gardener button. Or, send check, payable to MSU Extension – Isabella County to Garden Conference, 200 N. Main, Mount Pleasant, MI 48858-2321 with your name, address, phone and e-mail for confirmation.

## **MSU Ag Week features three MG workshops**

EAST LANSING – The Master Gardener Volunteer Program presents three gardening workshops during Agriculture and Natural Resources Week Tuesday to Thursday, March 8-10, on the MSU campus.

Lynn LaPointe Weise, a registered landscape architect, will teach two of the workshops, Introduction to Garden Design and Advanced Garden Design I.

Both workshops are intense, daylong immersion courses, providing hands-on design experiences.

Their cost is \$85 and \$92 respectively, including instruction, manual, drawing supplies, morning coffee and boxed lunch.

The third session, A Garden Variety, on March 10 features five speakers: SVMGA's own Judy Henning and Judy Wegner on "Seed Starting from Scratch," Kate Koltvedt on the Horticulture Gardening Institute's on-line programs, Beth Clawson on

"Backyard Composting," and Ann Hancock showing perennial vines and climbers to solve landscape challenges.

Cost is \$59, including speakers, handouts, supplies, morning coffee and boxed lunch. It meets in the Engineering Building, Room 1345.

Master Gardeners who attend earn six hours of education credit per workshop, however, you need not be a Master Gardener to attend. Attend all three workshop and pay only \$189.

Registration forms are available at [www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener](http://www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener). Or send your name, address and phone number with check, payable to MSU, to ANR Week Registration – MG Program, A422 Plant and Soil Sciences Building, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1324.

For information, call (517) 355-5191 ext. 1408 or (517) 355-0188.

## **Lay the groundwork, says expert**

TIPTON – Robert Gentry, Adrian parks and forestry superintendent, looks at "Groundwork First" from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 22, at Hidden Lake Gardens, 6280 W. Munger Road.

He discusses how to calculate fertilizer and mulch needs, determine how many plants you need to fill a space, and other basic landscape calculations.

Participants will learn about watering, soil amendments, fertilizing and mulching. Cost is \$16. Master Gardeners receive two education hours. Call (517) 431-2060.

## **Ornamental grasses topic at Green Point center**

Ornamental grasses for the garden is the topic Wednesday, March 2, at Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple, Saginaw.

It is sponsored by the Friends of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge.

Susan Scott, Advanced Master Gardener and SVMGA member, discusses the basics of using ornamental grasses in the garden, with time for questions and answers.

Admission is \$2, or \$5 for a family; free to members of Friends of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge.

# Upcoming 2005 programs

- 2/23 — “Composting” Bill Wegner, AMG,  
and seed exchange**
- 3/23 — “New Perennials,” Paul and Mark Begick,  
Begick Nursery**
- 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**
- 9/28 — To be determined**
- 10/19 — To be determined (note date change due  
scheduling conflict)**
- 11/16 — To be determined**
- 12/14 — Annual Christmas Potluck (note one week  
later due to scheduling conflict)**

## Mentors help local families establish garden...

*Continues from Page 1*

“Obviously, we would like to involve as many families as possible, but I’ve got to make sure we can serve the families we have,” Flynn said.

Donations plus a grant from the Saginaw Watershed Initiative Network will help purchase seeds for the families.

“The grant is for this year only, but if we have success maybe we can keep the grant going,” she says.

Flynn has already completed soil

samples where gardens will be in the ground so that come warmer weather, the project will be ready to go.

Other sponsors of the project include the U.S. Department of Agriculture Family Nutrition Education Program, Michigan Family Independence Agency, and MSU Family Nutrition Program.

Vegetables suggested for gardens include: beets, carrots, cherry tomatoes, collard greens, cucumbers, green beans, herbs, lettuce, okra, onions, peppers, spinach, tomatoes and zucchini – many of which are easily grown in containers.

### **Cincinnati Flower Show 2005**

America’s most acclaimed flower show featuring world class exhibits, social events, gardener’s and plant markets, a lecture series and tours.

Lake Como at Coney Island, Cincinnati, Ohio, April 20 - 24, 2005

Check it out at --- <http://www.cincyflowershow.com/spring.asp>