

The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

March 2003 Volume 7, Issue 3

'Wildflowers' more than weeds: Meyers

TIPTON, MI. – Ellyn M. Meyers has a passion for gardening.

It's not just her full-time career as the director of Michigan State University's Hidden Lake Gardens in the Irish Hills of southeastern Michigan, it's her hobby too.

Meyers will discuss "Wildflowers for Your Garden" at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 26, when Saginaw Valley Master Gardeners meet for their monthly session. Please note: The speaker will talk before the regular meeting.

After teaching high school French, Meyers returned to school, looking for a new career. She has a bachelor's degree in ornamental horticulture from Purdue University.

"I grew up in a family of gardeners and I loved the outdoors," she recalled. "I was fortunate to have an instructor who said that with my background I ought to consider public horticulture administration."

She took the advice, collected a master's degree in that field, and now runs the 775-acre botanical garden and arboretum,

Inside this issue:

<i>Minutes of the February meeting</i>	2
<i>Letter from the President</i>	3
<i>New Secretary couldn't say no to job</i>	3
<i>Newsletter moving to the Web</i>	3
<i>Odds and ends; field trip; classes</i>	4
<i>Get tools ready for spring</i>	5
<i>Ornamental grasses give oomph</i>	6
<i>Volunteer opportunities</i>	7
<i>End of year report</i>	7

created by Harry A. Fee in 1926. It was donated to the university in 1945.

"It's so beautiful and it has a wonderful plant collection. Its dwarf conifer collection is world-renowned. Also its potential is undiscovered yet," said Meyer. "We only get 48,000 visitors annually. It's a big place; we could certainly fit more visitors."

Seven full-time staffers and another 30 seasonal workers keep the grounds, the gift shop and gatehouse operational. Courses and workshops also are offered there throughout the year.

"We're going through strategic planning right now," Meyers explained. "My goals are to make the gardens better known, to enhance the plant collection and to do more to interpret the collection, providing more education at all different levels."

Wildflowers, she says, also have unrealized potential.

"There are so many different kinds. A wildflower to one person is a weed, while another might say it's just a plant out of place or whose potential is not yet discovered."

People use the term wildflowers in different ways, Meyer explained.

"A botanist would prefer 'native plant' or something found in the area. It grows on its own with no assistance from man, but it also could be an introduced plant, exotic or natural," she said.

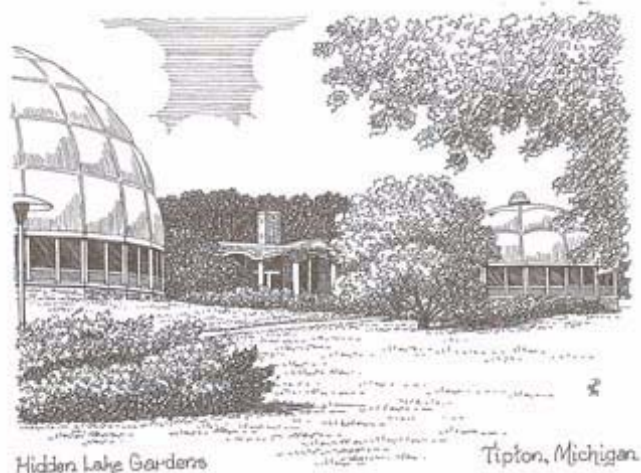
"Look at the orange daylily; it's an introduced European plant that has naturalized here. To some it's gorgeous, to others it's a weed. Lots of plants people say are beautiful are wildflowers and I hope to show some that are fairly easy to grow

Next meeting

- € 7 p.m.—9 p.m. Wednesday
March 26
- € Anderson Enrichment Center,
Ezra Rust Drive
- € 8 p.m. Ellyn Meyer, MSU Hidden Lake Gardens director, discusses "Wildflowers for Your Garden"
- € 8 — 8:30 p.m. Refreshments
- € 8:30 p.m. Meeting
- € One-hour education unit earned

in shade, in sun, in wet conditions or dry. Hopefully, people will find something they like."

Hidden Lake Gardens is preparing for its annual fund-raiser, a spring plant sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 10.



Members get a preview sale May 9.

"We grow a few of the plants and we have six or seven nurseries that provide the plants, trees and shrubs. The sale includes perennials for sun or shade, ferns, native wildflowers, ornamental grasses, quite a few hostas, many of which are new cultivars. We also usually have trillium, May apples and woodland phlox,"

(Continued on Page 2)

Minutes of the February meeting

The February meeting of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardeners Association was called to order at 7 p.m. Feb. 26 by President Judy Henning. Judy Wegner moved to approve the Secretary's report as written in the newsletter; Bill Wegner seconded it.

Deb Keller gave the Treasurer's report:
 Opening balance - \$6,205.00
 Deposits - 2,422.00
 Expenditures - 560.00
 Ending balance - \$8,066.00

Aileen Cowan moved to approve the 2003 budget; Bob Schust seconded it; the motion carried.

Amy Fitkin spoke about the Saginaw Township Playscape, giving a brief his-

tory and seeking volunteers.

Shirley McNier has one opening remaining in her March 19 garden stone class. It meets from 10:00 a.m. to noon and costs \$15.

Henning requested volunteers interested in working at our Saginaw Children's Zoo Adopt-a-garden attend a 7 p.m. March 6 meeting at her home.

Dorothy Bodeis has information and order blanks for SVMGA clothing and tote bags. Contact her to place an order.

Association dues are due March 1.

Margie Englehardt discussed the "Best Foot Forward - Entry Gardens" class March 31, at the Extension office. The deadline is March 10; it costs \$50.

Henning negotiated an agreement to purchase 100 copies of Michigan Gardener magazine each month. They will be available free to members only.

Anne Birkam asked for help with refreshments for May.

Jan O'Dell said volunteers are needed for the Saginaw Conservation District's tree distribution project April 10 -12 at

Officers for 2003-04

President

Judy Henning 799-4136

Vice President

Aileen Cowan 865-8784

Secretary

Ellie Robertson 792-4356

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

March speaker ...

(Continued from Page 1)

Meyer said.

"We get a few tender offerings from our Conservatory, unusual varieties, plus there's hanging baskets, trees, shrubs, vines and ground covers. We group them together so they're easy to find. Last year, we had a rare plant auction for the members."

Members not only have access to the gardens and the early plant sale, but to 300 other gardens in the United States through a reciprocal agreement with the American Horticultural Society.

Hidden Lake Gardens sponsors a Children's Garden Day on Saturday, Aug 2; a Fall Foliage Festival on Saturday, Oct. 4; and a Holiday Festival on Saturday, Dec. 6.

"At home I enjoy a shade garden and a sunny garden," Meyer said. "We've just

the new fairgrounds in Chesaning. Breakfast and lunch are provided.

Darlene Damp said the newsletter will be e-mailed for one more month. Then it will be posted on the Web site, www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/saginaw.

Angela Irwin said 40 openings remain for the "Spring into Gardening" conference at Mount Pleasant.

There is a sign-up sheet to help Grey Gitzen with the annual MG banquet. There will be an orientation for new office workers from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. March 18. Also, there is a need for someone to care for the Extension office fish pond. Irwin also announced Dimension Seed will donate seed to our members. Henning said since most would be vegetable seeds, it could work in conjunction with the Plant a Row for the Hungry program.

Anyone interested in working at the Lansing Home and Garden Show March 13 to 15 should e-mail Mary McClellan.

Henning and Wegner presented an informative, humorous talk on seed starting.

Submitted by Secretary Ellie Robertson, March 5, 2003

moved into a new house with new landscape so we're working on the design. We plan on building a pond for a water feature.

"It's hard for me not to be a collector. I love woodland plants. For a while I was concentrating on epimedium (a ground cover), then heuchera (Coral Bells). I go through phases. I have to fight the urge to collect and work on good design."

But that hasn't kept her from growing "a lot of native prairie plants, quite a few hostas and bulbs."

Hidden Lake Gardens is located two miles west of Tipton on M-50. It is open from 8 a.m. to dusk April through October and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. November through March.

Visit their Web site at www.cpp.msu.edu/hlg or call (517) 431-2060.

Story by Darlene B. Damp, co-editor

Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association mission statement

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

**Next board meeting
 Wednesday,
 April 2**

Letter from the President

Bitter cold temperatures and a lack of snow do not bode well for our gardens. Talk of drought, loss of plants and water bans are the topic of conversations of many gardeners.

Hopefully, the work we did last fall to prepare our gardens for the winter has ensured our plants' survival. Look at it this way, if you lose some plants due to the cold and lack of snow, you have a new plant area.

Our seed exchange was a success with plenty of seeds and variety to choose from. Judy Wegner and I hope you gleaned some tidbits from our "Seed Starting from Scratch" presentation. We enjoyed sharing our experiences with you and hope you left with thoughts of giving seed starting a chance. Some seeds are left from the exchange, so contact me if interested in them.

As I mentioned during the presentation,

I am going to have a contest as to who can grow the tallest castor bean plant. To join the contest, let me know, first-come first-served.

I already have 15 people on the list. I will start the seed for you so they will all be started **at the same time** and no one will get a jump on the other.

There are 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes. Last year my tallest plant measured 10 feet 8 inches. Let's see what you can do.

Whether you win or lose, you will have an unusual plant growing in your garden that is sure to be a conversation piece.

Our March speaker is Ellyn Meyers, director of Hidden Lake Gardens. She will speak to us on "Wildflowers for



Your Garden." I know very little about wildflowers so this is a presentation I am looking forward to hearing. Hope to see you there.

Also at the March meeting, we will have some very beautiful jewelry for sale.

Becky Geidan's husband, who is a jeweler, came across this jewelry and thought we might be interested in purchasing it.

There are pendants for necklaces, a bracelet and some earrings. Each piece has enclosed in it different flowers. Prices range from \$18 to \$45.

Bring cash or checkbook; payment is due at time of ordering. Our Association will make a 10% profit on all sales.

REMINDER: Wear your nametag – dues are past due.

Take care, stay warm, and think spring.

Judy

New secretary couldn't say no to job

She's kept a low profile in Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association, making neck coolers for last year's fundraiser and devoting her spare time to the group's garden at the Saginaw Children's Zoo.

But when Ellie Robertson was approached about taking the secretary's job last year, the Saginaw native knew she couldn't say no.

"I work at H & R Block and this is our busy season, but after they twisted my arm, bludgeoned me, I knew I should do it," teased the St. Mary High School graduate. "I love this group."

She took the Master Gardener class in 1998 after being frustrated by gardening.

"I was not satisfied with what I did in my own yard so when a friend from Midland took the class, I was intrigued. I looked into it and took it in the fall," explained Robertson, who has four children and five grandchildren.

"I've gardened all my life, roses, a little border around the house. I didn't know

that border could be wider, or that I could have something blooming all year long. Now it's become a major obsession. I was driving by Boehler's (greenhouse) and I just popped in to see what they have."

Robertson doesn't have any favorite plant, but she does love to see the color.

"It's just so peaceful to be in the garden," she said. "I think it's the only time that I'm actually there, focused on what I'm doing instead of thinking ahead to what else I have to do.

"Right now, I'm doing away with the grass, not entirely, but I'm going to do away with more. However, I'm keeping my plans under my hat until I'm ready to present it," she joked. "I want to get it all lined up in my head."

Robertson said she was amazed at how involved SVMGA is in the community, with the projects it sponsors and how many people ask the organization for help.

"(As secretary) I just want to do what I can to help Judy (Henning) achieve the goals she's outlined," Robertson said.

Story by Darlene B. Damp



Find us on The Web

Beginning next month, The Grapevine will no longer be individually e-mailed to members.

Instead, the monthly newsletter will be posted on the Michigan Master Gardener homepage, shortly after the newsletter deadline listed in each issue. For example the deadline next month is April 7. A copy should be available by April 9 or 10.

Members may go to <http://www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/saginaw/> to obtain a copy.

Members need to have a current copy of Adobe Reader to download it. Directions for updating Adobe Reader are on the homepage above.

Please contact Beth Bedtelyon, editor, at 781-6834, or at daysendfarm@chartermi.net if you have problems obtaining a copy.

Odds and ends

School of Gardening design class meets April 24

SVMGA will sponsor a second class from the Michigan School of Gardening on Thursday, April 24.

It meets from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the MSU Extension office, 1 Tuscola. Instructor Janet Macunovich will present "Designing the Outdoor Living Room," focusing on plantings around decks, patios and other outdoor areas.

Macunovich, an Advanced Master Gardener, started a landscape design business, Perennial Favorites in 1984.

She has authored six gardening books, writes a weekly gardening column for The Detroit News, and is a featured writer for Michigan Gardening Magazine.

Cost of the class is \$50; a minimum of 15 people must enroll by April 10. Sign up at the March meeting, or by contacting Marjorie Engelhardt at 823-2590. The class is open to any gardeners.

The Michigan School of Gardening was started in 1996 by Macunovich, and offers more than 100 courses for beginning to advanced gardeners, including certification programs in Gardening Fine Arts or Landscape and Garden Design.

SVMGA is experimenting with offering some of the school's classes locally so Saginaw Valley gardeners can avoid the drive to the Detroit area.

For information on the school and its classes, visit www.michigangardening.com.

Openings remain for stone birdhouse class

Ten openings remain for the first in our newly developed series of hands-on classes taught by members.

Master Gardener Judy Rich will demonstrate how to make a stone birdhouse in three separate sessions — from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday, April 14 and May 5, and 9 a.m. to noon Tuesday, May 6, at MSU Extension, 1 Tuscola.

Cost is \$15, and includes all materials. Sign up at the March meeting, or by calling Judy Rich at 249-5474.

Uncover, prune roses April 12

Uncover and prune roses at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 12, at the Andersen Enrichment Center Rose Garden, 120 Ezra Rust Drive.

Bring a rake, sharp pruning shears, lopping shears and tarp to haul leaves. Project takes about 4 hours and provides pruning practice.

Sign up at March meeting or call Ben Pawlik to volunteer, 793-4238.

Horticulture Club has show

EAST LANSING – The Michigan State University Horticulture Club hosts its annual spring show in April.

It features short educational sessions, a display in the conservatory, children's activities and plant sale.

It is from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 26, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 27, at the Plant and Soil Sciences Building.

Topics include Design in the Backyard by Bob Schuttszki; Grasses, by Art Cameron; Backyard Parties and Social Events; Container Gardening; Water Gardening; Perennial Plant Design; and more.

Visit the English countryside in new slide show

A new slide presentation on English gardens is available to local community organizations through the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association.

Developed by Advanced Master Gardener Peggy Shaver, it focuses on public plantings in the Cotswolds and Cornwall with an overview of the famous Chelsea Flower Show.

"It's a composite of different trips I've been on there," said Shaver. "What I've tried to do is put together more than pretty pictures of English gardens. I think people have a preconceived idea of what those are, when really they are much more than simply cottage gardens.

"In fact, I was amazed at the variety, from the gardens at Iford Manor, with its collection of early Italian and Roman pieces, some going back to the sixth century, to the American designed garden at Hever Castle, with its huge Pompeian wall."

Shaver estimates there are slides of 20

First 2003 field trip set

Tour Michigan Hydroponics at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 30.

It includes the tomato and lettuce production areas. The trip is limited to 25; sign up is at the March meeting.

Hosta club elects officers

Elaine Rappley is the new president of the Saginaw Valley Chapter of the Michigan Hosta Society.

Serving with her are Joe Leach, vice president; Jan Meyer, secretary-treasurer; and Phil Lisik, program chairman.

The club will meet in early May to tour botanist Fred Case's gardens then return to Rappley's home for a cookout, plant exchange or sale and tour of her garden.

The group has been invited to tour Lisik Gardens in June and gardens in Jackson in July. For information, call 781-0570 or e-mail rappleyjunk@aol.com.

Magazine exchange in April

Start gathering garden magazines for an exchange at the April meeting.

It's your chance to make space for the magazines you want to keep.

to 25 gardens.

She's added a fair amount of history of each area so the show also serves as part travelogue. Shaver does 15 to 20 presentations a year, including teaching a master gardener class.

Other members also have developed presentations, like Judy Wegner's "African Violets," Judy Ross' "Butterfly Gardening," Sally Shephardson's "The Dirt on Soil Characteristics," or Amy Cataline's "Gardening for Dummies," to name a few.

"Anyone who wants to work out a presentation is welcome to do so," Shaver said.

"We get a lot of requests through community education besides local groups and churches. We'll simply add it to the list the next time we revise the booklet."

See the Association's Gardening Programs booklet.

Story by Darlene B. Damp, co-editor

Get your gardening tools ready for a workout

MIDLAND -- Tired of looking outside and wondering when it will get warm?

Staffers at Dow Gardens use winter to get their tools in shape for gardening season.

Last fall they cleaned the dirt off and applied a thin covering of 3-in-1 or light machine oil to avoid rust, said Dan Veresh, associate horticulturalist.

"We do that with any tools that come into contact with moisture."

"But we don't start to sharpen the tools until spring," said Chuck Martin, curator of woody plants.

"You want to examine the tools first and look for any damage, whether it's a cracked handle on a shovel, or nicks on your pruning blades," Veresh continued.

Both men prefer Felcro scissor-style pruners to the anvil type blade.

"The anvil type crushes the stem too much when you cut, and you get a cleaner cut with the scissor style. You also have more control," Martin said.

If the blades have dulled, use a sharpening stone on the beveled side of the blades first, said Veresh. Before you're finished, run the stone on the flat side of the blades to get out any burrs.

"You want to make sure they have the same plane," he explained.

"When we're working out in the field, we sterilize them from tree to tree – or shrub to shrub – with a little rubbing alcohol we carry in a hand sprayer. It kills any fungus or bacteria so you don't spread it. Just make sure you keep the bottle labeled so no one mistakes it for water and drinks it."

Hand pruners, Martin said, are good for cutting stems up to about ½-inch in diameter, otherwise, you can spring the blade. Larger loppers are used for branches up to ¾-inch to 1-inch wide.

"To sharpen the loppers, we use a file, a small, 8- to 10-inch bastard or steel file to grind out any nicks," said Veresh.

"Personally, I skip the loppers. I prefer a small handsaw instead. The old ones used to be serrated, but now they're razor cut (with six to seven teeth per inch), which gives you a cleaner final cut. When you have a cut with a rough edge, it traps more spores."

To test the sharpness, simply use a twig or paper, Martin said.

"Remember with the handsaw, it's a pull action. More often than not, because the blade is more brittle and doesn't flex, it breaks before you have to sharpen it, but it's easily and pretty cheaply replaced," Veresh said.

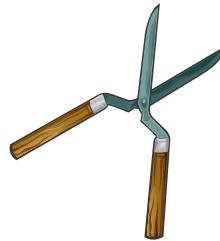
The handsaw should have a locking device so it doesn't fold in while you're using it. Handsaws, which come with 7-inch or 13-inch blades, are good for cutting branches up to 2 inches in diameter.

Dow Gardens staffers suggest checking plastic leaf rakes for broken teeth. However a metal garden rake requires a little oil after cleanup so it's ready for the next job.

"We like a reinforced spring rake which keeps the rake stiffer for better action," Veresh said. "Also check the tines on your metal rakes to make sure they aren't bent."

Both agree the nursery spade, with its D-shaped handle and narrow rectangular shape, is an all-around gardening tool.

"It's used primarily for digging up trees,



to ball the roots, because while you're digging around the tree, you can sever the roots. It's also small enough to shape the tree ball before you wrap it in burlap," Veresh said.

"But it can also do what other garden tools do – as a hoe, for dividing perennials, and if you keep (a sharp) edge on it, it's great for getting out grass and weeds between the cracks in your walk or driveway."

While they use a grinder to flatten out nicks or dings on the nursery spade, Martin said a steel file also works. A sharpening stone afterwards will return a bevel to the front or top of the spade.

For the three-tine garden cultivator, four-tine garden fork or 5-tine pitchfork, check the tines and apply a little oil. The half-moon edger also can be sharpened like pruners.

"We do the same for the round-nose shovel because you use it as a spade and a shovel, for close-up digging," Martin said. "The flat-nose shovel doesn't have to be as sharp, because you're not using it the same way."

He recommends hanging tools up to protect against moisture.

Story by Darlene B. Damp, co-editor

Oak wilt now established in Michigan

Oak wilt infects oaks (*Quercus* spp.). Red oaks are infected more frequently and succumb more rapidly than white oaks.

Oak wilt behaves much like an exotic pathogen, but may be native to North America. First identified in 1944 in Wisconsin, it is now established in at least 21 states and appears to be spreading.

The fungus invades the vascular system of trees, disrupting water transport from the roots to the canopy. Infection may pass from infected trees to adjacent or nearby oaks via root grafts. Long distance spread of oak wilt occurs when picnic beetles and other small sap-feeding beetles carry spores to trees in uninfected areas.

Red oaks experience extensive wilt and defoliation in midsummer. Brownish streaking occurs in the xylem tissue, just below the bark. Oval pressure pads may be found under the bark on the stems of red oak trees that have died within the past

year. For identification on white oaks submit samples to specialists for culture and confirmation.

Symptoms on red oaks develop within weeks and infected trees die within the year. Leaf symptoms are most common in July, wilting and curling around midrib. Leaves may be reddish to bronze at the edges with a distinct boundary between green and discolored tissue. Leaves at branch tips drop in midsummer; others turn dark brown and remain. On dead trees, the newest ring of sapwood will be stained brown. These trees have a stale beer smell, attracting sap-feeding beetles. On some red oaks, oval pressure pads with dark centers form between the bark and wood on the stem and may cause the bark to crack or split. Oak wilt often kills pockets of red oak stands because the fungus is transmitted through root grafts.

SAGINAW VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

You are eligible for membership in SVGMA if you turned in your annual 10 hours of volunteer service and 3 education hours in September 2002 and have received a Master Gardener re-certification card. If you did not turn in hours or receive this card, please contact Angela Irwin at the County Extension office (phone: 758-2500) to become re-certified. You are also 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 may be submitted to Angela Irwin, Master Gardener Coordinator.

Dues: \$20.00 per calendar year. New members paying dues after April 1 should contact the treasurer directly for the prorated 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 SVGMA membership Roster, which is updated annually for members. **PLEASE PRINT.** If you prefer that the following information is **NOT** published in the newsletter check here _____.

Name: _____

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 *SVMGMA* to: Deborah Keller, Treasurer, 1604 N. Thomas Rd. Saginaw, MI 48609.

Looking for easy gardening and oomph? Try ornamental grasses

Ornamental grasses provide four seasons of beauty with little care, says Bill Wegner, who has at least 25 different varieties at his Saginaw Township home.

Come March or April though, once the snow has melted, it's time to cut down the dead stalks and prepare for the new growth.

"You want to cut it as low as you can, because the sun hitting the clump helps the growth," said Wegner, an Advanced Master Gardener. "The only exception would be blue oat grass, which would only need a trim, like you would get at a barbershop. Blue oat grass tends to grow all year long and is somewhat green even now because it is a cool season grass."

Cutting down to the clump is not just a ritual, Wegner says.

"In the old days, the prairie used to burn each year and that took care of the grasses."

Ornamental grasses are perennial

clump formers where the clump enlarges somewhat each year, unlike lawns that send out runners, Wegner explains.

"Spring also is a good time to divide grasses, waiting until you see some green shoots.

We've been at our house for 11 years and I still have not divided any."

Because the clump can get very hard, a sharp-edged shovel or even an axe may be necessary to make the division, he adds.

"When you plant them, you should make space allowances for them, much like you would a tree. And, they don't need any fertilizer or really any kind of codding."



Wegner said some winters he's had trouble with voles, "pernicious little creatures that burrow underneath the ground and eat the roots" but that's all.

"Grasses make a bold statement when most of your perennial garden is 2-foot-high and lower. Grasses make your garden lush, without having to plant a tree.

"And, if you plant an ornamental grass in the spring, it gets almost to its full height in one year. There aren't many plants you can enjoy the whole winter, like an ornamental grass. I love when it's tall and moves with the slightest breeze. It gives kinetic action to the garden.

"And they are ideal for today's gardener, when people are on the go and want to 'forget' it. You know, grasses once covered this whole part of this state."

Story by Darlene B. Damp, co-editor

Volunteer opportunities

The following volunteer opportunities are available:

The Saginaw Conservation District is in desperate need of volunteers for its **annual tree packaging and distribution project** from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, April 10-11, and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 12, at the new Saginaw County Fairgrounds, 11300 W. Peet Road, Chesaning.

Breakfast and lunch are provided. Volunteers can work one day or whatever is convenient, and each receives two blue spruce. Contact Patty Copes at (989) 781-4077 ext. 4.

The **Saginaw Children's Zoo butterfly garden** needs volunteers to help in the design,



planting and preserving the 2003 garden. If you, or anyone you know, master gardener or not – young or old — short or tall — is interested, please call Nancy Hales at 799-2118.

The Michigan Lutheran Seminary is seeking a person to do **periodic integrated pest management assessments**. Please contact Paul Arnhold at 793-2571 ext. 239, or (989) 239-3706.

Master Gardener Coordinator Angela Irwin is seeking volunteers to take care of the **fish pond** at the MSU Extension office downtown. Call 758-2500, ext. 224.

Master Gardeners are sought for Thursday, May 8, beautification and spring clean-up at park and playground sites in the Saginaw area.

Some 10 to 15 Master Gardener volunteers would direct and educate teen volunteers from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. during "Making It Safe For Play," a project sponsored by Saginaw's Promise, the Saginaw Community Foundation, and the United Way, among other organizations.

MG volunteers may do as much or as little physical labor as they wish. Their primary purpose is to share their knowledge with inexperienced but enthusiastic teens from area high schools.

To volunteer, contact Chris Gabriel at United Way, 755-0505, or Alina Doud at the Saginaw Community Foundation, 755-0545.

Association winds up 2002 with final report

The year 2002 ended with the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association (SVMGA) membership totaling 164 members, including Master Gardeners (MG) and Master Gardeners in Training (MGT).

The Association proudly supported and funded the following volunteer projects:

Adopt –A- Garden, Saginaw Children's Zoo, Saginaw, MI

Saginaw Township Playscape, Saginaw, MI

MSUE Display Garden, Morley Building, Saginaw, MI

Great Beginnings Christian Child Care and Kindergarten, Saginaw, MI

Along with the Bay City and Midland Master Gardener Associations, we participated in the beautification of the I-75 Southbound and I-75 Northbound Rest Stops. It was a wonderful opportunity for the three Associations to design, plant and maintain highly exposed garden areas and demonstrate what Master Gardeners are trained to do. At the same time, we educated the public by answering questions concerning the plants at the rest stops and their care. We hope to continue the project in 2003.

Our Presenters Bureau is still going strong. Speakers provide the community with correct, up-to-date horticultural information, the Association's mission. Presenters also added \$667 to the Association's treasury.

For the third year, SVMGA members (three this year) were partnered with the Saginaw Art Museum for its annual, day-long Garden Walk. Gardens are opened for public display and Master Gardeners or Master Gardener Trainees answer gardening questions by visitors. The volunteer MGs and MGTs earn education hours for this project.

SVMGA members contributed thousands of volunteer and education hours in 2002.

Our monthly newsletter, "The Grapevine," continues to be published and distributed to Master Gardeners and Master Gardener Trainees in the Saginaw Valley. Patty Davis and Jan O'Dell retired as co-editors. Beth Bedtelyon and Darlene Damp are editor and co-editor. Members contribute articles and help in the distribution of the newsletter.

We continued to have our catalog exchange, our seed exchange, our very popular spring plant exchange, visits to our members' gardens while adding a fall plant exchange.

Members took our first bus field trip, visiting two gardens and a garden center.

Our members were able to order garden books at 40% to 50% discounts. They also could order clothing with the SVMGA logo. Both benefits will continue.

Making "neck coolers" for our fundraiser added over \$800 to our treasury. This enables us to pay guest speakers and fund our community projects.

The 2003 Executive Board will combine the Michigan Master Gardener By-Laws and the SVMGA By-Laws and present them to members for approval.

As SVMGA President, I am very proud to say that the year 2002 was exciting and productive. I know 2003 will see more Master Gardeners joining the Association. We will continue to do as our mission statement says, "to provide community members with up-to-date consumer horticultural information using environmentally sound practices."

Respectfully,
Judy A. Henning, President
Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

Don't let mosquitoes bug you this year

General information on mosquitoes and mosquito control in Michigan is available at www.mimosq.org while you can peruse information on Michigan West Nile virus at www.michigan.gov/mda and link to West Nile virus.

Welcome New Members

- Carol Rosser**, Saginaw, MGT
- Thomas Brubaker**, Saginaw, MGT
- Marilyn Filter**, Saginaw Township, MG
- Robert Filter**, Saginaw Township, AMG