

# The Grapevine



Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

March 2007 Volume 11, Issue 3

## 'Her Majesty' Mary McLellan to give update

She's known affectionately as "The Queen" because she "rules" the state Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

"Her Majesty" Mary C. McLellan is this month's speaker for the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association.

And while she may not have the crown and purple robe volunteers bestowed on her during at least one state Summer Conference, McLellan will provide an update on the latest direction and rules of the burgeoning effort to educate Michigan residents on gardening through the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.



**Mary C. McLellan, state coordinator of the Master Gardener Volunteer Program at Michigan State University.**

In 2006, 5,714 Master Gardener volunteers and trainees reported 104,814 education hours and 404,487 total volunteer hours for the year.

"She taught my class," says Grey Gitzen, SVMGA's immediate past president, "but she has not been here in six or seven years."

McLellan was often one of the class presenters, discussing her specialty, houseplants.

"Basically, the only time a Master Gardener would get to meet her is if she was teaching, or they were attending the state conference."

Both he and Judy Henning, also a former SVMGA president, hope McLellan will clear up questions regarding the education element of volunteer projects.

"Nancy Burd (our local coordinator) was at a state meeting for Master Gardener coordinators and came back and said all projects have to have an education component," explained Gitzen.

"We need to know if that means 100 per cent of the projects, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, or if it can happen as people come up and ask about the project we're working on," said Henning.

"It's time we have her here," said Gitzen, "and see if we've gone too far afield."

Henning says she's also interested in getting an answer on whether Master Gardeners receive full credit for working

### Next meeting

- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Wednesday, March 28, at Andersen Enrichment Center, 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., speaker **Mary C. McLellan**, state Master Gardener coordinator, discusses "Master Gardener Program Update"
- **Garden magazine, catalog exchange**
- Please wear your badge.

on projects outside of the county they are certified in.

"And I would like to know who decides that — the local coordinator or is it across-the-board for all county programs?"

"It's time she brought us up to speed on the thinking on the state and national level," Gitzen says.

McLellan, at age 41, dumped her business career, enrolled in a horticulture program and never looked back.

*(Continues on Page 2)*

### Inside this issue:

<i>Cincinnati Flower Show</i>	2
<i>President's letter</i>	3
<i>Meet the Gardener</i>	3
<i>Odds and ends</i>	4
<i>Classes, volunteer opportunities</i>	5
<i>Minutes of the February meeting</i>	6
<i>2006 Annual Report</i>	7
<i>2007 schedule</i>	8

## Attention garden project leaders!!!

Project leaders who want volunteers to get full credit for working this year must have annual approval by Master Gardener Coordinator Nancy Burd.

Burd and Mary Kathryn Andrews are in the process of finalizing the newest Volunteer Opportunities List.

Although Andrews tried to contact leaders of all past projects, some did not return her phone calls and, as a result, have been placed on a holding list.

Those who did talk to Andrews need not worry for 2007. As usual, private gardens do not qualify.

Meanwhile, those Master Gardeners

who began a project without approval by the local Master Gardener coordinator — along with the volunteers who work on the project — only receive half credit for their efforts.

According to the local re-certification administrators, this becomes critical if a Master Gardener has only put in the minimum amount of volunteer work that year.

It can make the difference in whether a Master Gardener re-certifies and can then renew membership in SVMGA.

"The process hasn't changed," says

*(Continues on Page 2)*

## Garden project approval mandatory for full credit...

(Continues from Page 1)

Judy Henning, one of the local administrators.

“Master Gardeners who are leading a garden project must fill out a Project Approval form before they begin anything,” she explained.

“We also ask for ‘before,’ ‘during’ and ‘after’ pictures to track the progress.”

Only gardens at public or non-profit facilities are eligible for approval.

And project leaders who hope to obtain a project grant through SVMGA — up to \$200 per project — are required to have the project first approved by Burd.

Some \$664 still remains in project grants for 2007. (See story, Page 4.)

Project Approval forms are available at the MSU Extension office, 1 Tuscola, or by e-mailing Burd at burd@msu.edu.

Or contact Advanced Master Gardener Mary Kathryn Andrews, by calling 797-3319 or e-mailing iyahmary@yahoo.com.

### Officers for 2007-08

President

Susan Scott 791-9270

Vice President

Karen Tilden 777-6673

Secretary

Melva Bond 777-4092

Treasurer

Crystal Kauer 792-6874

Program Director

Mary Andrews 797-3319

Newsletter Editor

Darlene Damp 746-9113  
shrew@att.net

MSU Extension

1 Tuscola Street  
Saginaw, MI 48607-1287

Master Gardener Coordinator

Nancy L. Burd, 758-2504  
burd@msu.edu

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## Cincinnati Flower Show in April

CINCINNATI — Recognized as one of the premier flower and garden shows in the world, the Cincinnati Flower Show is set for April 21-29 at Coney Island.

It opens with a gala from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, April 20, and continues daily from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, April 21, and Sunday, April 29.

It showcases masterpiece gardens, stunning floral exhibits, Plant and Gardener’s Markets while offering a lecture series.

This year’s theme is “Play in the Dirt.”

More than 60,000 people are expected to attend the show at the beautiful Lake Como at Coney Island.

Admission at the gate is \$20 for adults and \$5 for children, ages 3 to 12. Advance tickets are \$15, available on-line from www.cincyflowershow.com

Some of the show highlights include the Grand Marquee with its spectacular gardens, new varieties, single genus displays and urban living courtyards.

There’s also Dramatic Table Settings, created by combining art, accessories and extravagant floral centerpieces; and Container Gardens using new combinations and concepts for patio, deck or balcony.

Participants also can see Window Boxes, a picturesque avenue of pleasing design, prolific spring blooms and colorful palettes and visit Environmental Educational for tips on composting and creating backyard habitats for wildlife visitors.

Professional Florists includes the region’s designers showcasing contemporary designs to graceful classic styles while Confections in Bloom offers

(Continues on Page 7)

## McLellan to answer questions...

(Continues from Page 1)

“Back then, I was wearing business suits and pantyhose and trying to reach that glass ceiling,” McLellan told The Saginaw News several years ago.

“But I had 100 houseplants at home and I loved it. I loved digging in the soil, that fresh smell of dirt. Without even thinking about it, I gave up my job and got a degree in horticulture — and I had never gardened in my life.”

The Master Gardener Program originated in 1972 when Michigan State University Extension began training lay people to answer horticultural problems.

Saginaw Valley residents may enroll in the 40-hour program offered twice a year in Saginaw County. It covers 11 core subjects related to gardening.

Once they complete the education portion, residents use their new skills, providing 40 volunteer hours of community work, to receive a Master Gardener certificate and designation.

In order to remain certified, Master Gar-

deners must complete a minimum five education hours and 15 volunteers hours annually.

“In our group (SVMGA), it’s only the officers who have had a chance to get together with her,” Henning says.

“I know a lot of the new people want to hear her.

“I remember the first time I went to the state conference, after I had earned the right to go. I can still feel that excitement when I recall that.

“I know some of our membership is disappointed that the state conference has been reduced to one day. Many were looking forward to attending that three-day event in June.

“It was a privilege to be able to go. Now, due to finances, it’s been opened up to more than Master Gardeners,” Henning says.

Adds Gitzen, “We need to see if some of us have become complacent. It’s time to hear what being certified really means.”

### 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.”

## Letter from the president

Hear ye! Hear ye! I have great news to impart!

At our last meeting I asked for volunteers for two positions: one, chair of a Fund-raising Committee, and for someone to take over as chair of the New Member Notebooks.

I am happy to report both positions were filled that evening. I want to thank Sue Stempel, our new Fund-raising Committee chair and Bonnie Dutcher, our New Member Notebook Committee Chair. When you see them, congratulate and thank them for taking these positions.

Well, have you been out looking around at what the melting snow has uncovered? I have been busily scoping out my yard and finding growing plants.

Some of these, I didn't expect to see so soon. I know it's early, but it sure seems like spring time. Of course, I know another snowstorm could come at any time, but I'm optimistic!

How are your bulbs doing? The ones that were up an inch or two in my yard in December seem to have survived. I had read they would be fine, but you still wonder if that in fact is what will happen. I tend to be a gotta-see-it-to-believe-completely kind of gal. That concern taken care of, I want to see something blooming! I need color in my garden!

My cool-season grasses are growing nicely. Now I need to get into the beds to cut them down to two to three inches

so the sun can get to the crowns.

My yard is still pretty soggy so other than picking up all the branches and twigs that are down, other things like cutting these grasses will have to wait awhile. I am anxious to be out there working.



A reminder that there is a gardening magazine exchange scheduled for the March meeting.

I know I have a tendency to save magazines for too long and then need to eliminate some. It's nice to know I can bring them to the meeting and someone else can use the information they impart.

Toodles and happy gardening!

*Susan*

## Meet the gardener — Bonnie Stewart

As the granddaughter of truck farmers, this Master Gardener helped pick, wash, and pack vegetables to take to the Royal Oak Farmer's Market.

She and her siblings would pick strawberries, raspberries, lima beans and flowers — "rows and rows of flowers."

They shelled lima beans, gathered chicken eggs and hand-plucked chickens. The farm was located on Big Beaver Road, and is now the home of Somerset Mall.

Bonnie Stewart grew up in Royal Oak and went to work at NBD (Bank One) in Detroit, where she met husband Dennis. They relocated to Saginaw, Dennis's hometown, living in a duplex where there was no garden.

A second home was purchased from master rose gardeners, who took some of their roses, but left lovely, fertile soil to grow zinnias and zucchini.

Needing more room when Bonnie was pregnant with their third child, she began to look around. She was very excited when she found just the right house and Dennis agreed to go to the open house because the "the Detroit Lions were losing."

The area was very appealing, she says, because of the mature trees, but mature trees produce much shade. Bonnie met the challenge with the typical shade plants we all love.

Some 20 years ago, to the disbelief of many, she built a deck on the top of sand in her side yard and made a path to connect her yard to Brockway. Now a pathway exists around the entire yard.

Drive down Brockway and see the garden Bonnie has now — and you'll want to stop your car and take a stroll.

One admirer took pictures as inspiration for a garden she would plant at her new home in North Carolina and gave copies to a surprised Bonnie.

Some visitors walk by, some roll down their car windows to talk, and others just stop to look.

I have been one of those passers-by to this peaceful scene and have even wished to sit in the chairs nestled there. That was even before I knew it was the Stewart home.

Bonnie and Dennis Stewart retired three years ago, about the same time

grubs settled in, killing the grass along the Brockway side of the yard.

Instead of being discouraged, Bonnie decided to move some sun-loving perennials from the other side of her cedars. Section by section, she added plants until she developed the walk by garden.

Neither snow, nor salt, seem to bother the plants, as they continue to thrive.

*(Continues on Page 7)*



**Bonnie Stewart, right, and friend enjoy her garden at Hawthorne and Brockway.**

Next board meeting:  
**5:30 p.m. Wednesday,  
April 4, at MSU Extension,  
1 Tuscola**

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

View the newsletter at:  
**web1.msue.msu.edu/  
mastgardener/saginaw/**

View the SVMGA web page at:  
**web1.msue.msu.edu/  
mastgardener/saginaw/  
association/**

## Odds and ends....

### Spring bulbs expected for April meeting

Help Susan Scott get bulbs sorted for distribution at the April meeting.

The bulbs are expected to arrive in mid-April.

Forty-seven people purchased \$1,345.35 in spring bulbs.

The sale is a fund-raiser for the Saginaw MSUE office.

Contact Scott at 791-9270.

### Apply now for project grants

Eight more garden projects have received grant approval from the SVMGA board, totaling \$1,336.

They include:

- \$200 for Hoyt

Nursing Center's perennial garden, 1200 Weiss, where project leader Sharla Hammer plans to plant annuals and clematis and buy a trellis.

- \$200 for a bible garden at St. Christopher Catholic Church, Bridgeport, where project leader Joy Gajewski will redesign a courtyard.

- \$36 for the Boys and Girls Club at Merrill Park where project leader Janet Martineau plans to plant annuals in two of the beds.

- \$200 for the Military Space Museum, Frankenmuth where project leaders Dick and Janet Tanner will complete landscaping around the building's sign and add perennials.

- \$100 for the Saginaw Township Playscape, where project leader Amy Fitkin plans to plant annuals in two planters and replenish some of the perennials.

- \$200 for the Japanese Tea House gardens, where project leader Holly Furlo plans to refurbish the garden with trees.

- \$200 for the Dow Event Center, where project leader Ruth Sny will design and plant seven large planters for the season.

- \$200 for the Butterfly Garden at the Saginaw Children's Zoo, where project leader Nancy Hales will plant colorful

annuals and perennials to attract the insects. (The Freeland Prison is no longer supplying bedding plants due to budget cutbacks.)

More than \$600 in project grants remains.

Presentation/Project Material Funding Request applications are available from Karen Tilden, vice president, who then forwards the request to the board for action.

Beginning this year, members will receive the grant once they have turned in all receipts.

Problems in receiving a final accounting for projects led the board to a reimbursement system of awarding grants.

### Ideas needed to raise funds for SVMGA general fund

Full of bright ideas? Like the thought of making more money for SVMGA?

Then join co-chairs Sue Stemler and Joan Martin, on their fund-raising research committee!

They plan to brainstorm for potential moneymakers that not only appeal to SVMGA members, but to those who attend the Oct. 6 fall conference, An Autumn Affair for Gardeners.

We will do the research, gather pricing and delivery information, and then present it to the Board. If approved, it will go to the membership for final approval

### Welcome new members!

Four new people have joined the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association, bringing membership to 141.

They are:

Robyn Bierlein, MG Trainee, 3540 Maple Road, Frankenmuth 48734; 652-2002; robyn3540@aol.com

Laura L. Keeven, MG Trainee, 12050 Stratford Drive, St. Charles 48655; 865-6154; laurazoo@email.com

Noreen Muellerweiss, Master Gardener, 1075 S. Raucholtz Road, Hemlock 48626; 642-5671; cotsheep@msn.com.

Patricia Stankewicz, MG Trainee, 4110 Windemere Drive, Saginaw 48603; 792-1070, 652-6751; paticake356@sbcglobal.net.

We have been assured we will not be responsible for taking the product to various sales sites, although if that interests you, all the better!

Look for the sign-up sheet at the March 28 meeting. Two dates are available: 10 a.m. Wednesday, April 11, or 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 17.

Please indicate your date preference. The one receiving the most sign-ups will be the meeting time.

For information, call Sue Stemler at 781-4656 or Joan Martin at 799-1581, or e-mail [suestemler@chartermi.net](mailto:suestemler@chartermi.net).

This is a great volunteer opportunity for those whose hearts are willing, but their backs are weak.



### More Master Gardeners earn certification

Four Master Gardeners have earned Advanced status while three more trainees are now certified Master Gardeners.

The new Advanced Master Gardeners are Carolyn M. Birchmeier, Holly S. Furlo, Hilary A. House and Mari M. Zimmerman-Thompson.

The new Master Gardeners are Kathleen A. Maidlow, Richard L. Miller and Helen L. Weitzman.

Those who have re-certified: Ruth S. Averill, Karen M. Beougher, Kathryn T. Berger, Barbara J. Boggess, Melva R. Bond-Boyd, Patricia Bourdow, Thomas R. Brubaker, Floyd E. Callison, Christine L. Dvorak, Marjorie J. Engelhardt, Marilyn Filter, and Robert R. Filter.

Also Holly S. Furlo, Sheila A. Hill, Hilary A. House, Wilfrid L. Hufton, Deborah A. King, Nancy Kleekamp, Raeann Krauss, Thomas H. Leinberger, James E. Lytle, Joan M. Martin, Shirley A. McNier, Diane I. Mikolaski, and Katharyn M. Morley.

Also Mike D. Muladore, Lynn Niederstadt, Mary Novak, Cyd Pasterz, Judith L. Porter, Elaine A. Rappley, Sharon Rood, Mary Ellen Russell, Bob Sawyers, Louanne Schultz, Pat Shek, Bonnie C. Stewart, Valerie J. Sulfaro, Les Ticknell, Julie Ann Trinklein, Patricia Yockey and Mari M. Zimmerman-Thompson.

# New volunteer opportunities

## **Mentor MG Trainees...**

Waunita Pettiford is seeking volunteers to mentor graduates of the latest Master Gardener class.

"We have 19 new Master Gardener Trainees who would like someone to talk to them about the association and gardening," she explained.

For more information, or to volunteer, call Pettiford at 777-6918.

## **Family Garden Project...**

The Family Garden Project needs help. This MSUE volunteer project is starting its third growing season.

Project leader Vickie Flynn is seeking volunteers to help clear and till the land for many of the 100 families expected to participate this year.

Most gardens are 16-foot by 14-foot or smaller. Last year, Master Gardener Trainee Ken Maurer did all the new garden tilling.

Master Gardeners also are needed to get the soil ready for planting and to help mentor families through the gardening season.

The project has grown annually, from 30 families in 2005 to 62 families in 2006.

Please contact Vickie Flynn at MSUE

(989)758-2500 ext. 242 or e-mail flynn@msu.edu.

## **District tree sale...**

The Saginaw Conservation District sponsors its annual tree sale in April.

Patti Copes is seeking volunteers to help package trees from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, April 19, at the Saginaw County Fairgrounds in Chesaning.

Volunteers also are needed to fill individual orders from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, April 20, and to hand out orders from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 21.

Breakfast and lunch will be available.

To volunteer, call Copes at 781-4077, ext. 4.

## **Adopt-a-Garden at Zoo...**

Help plan and plant the flower beds at the entrance of the Saginaw Children's Zoo this spring.

Judy Henning needs volunteers who will help put in flowers then weed and water the area during the summer months.

Contact her at 799-4136.

## **Dow Event Center...**

Ruth Sny is seeking volunteers to help plan and plant containers and gardens at the Dow Event Center, downtown

Saginaw.

Last year, volunteers created a large rock garden in the back of the building where patrons go during intermission.

Contact Sny at 928-7315.

## **Saginaw Children's Zoo...**

Patti Decker is seeking volunteers to assist in the zoo gardens this growing season. Contact her at 792-6633 or e-mail rizzobfrank@aol.com

## **Chippewa Nature Center...**

MIDLAND — Chippewa Nature Center is seeking Master Gardeners to provide talks on earth-friendly gardening for its annual Green Garden Day April 21.

This year's theme is soil, but presentations may be on any gardening topic.

At least one Master Gardener would be required to staff this display from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and present and answer questions from visitors.

Call (989) 631-0830 or e-mail jpputts@limitlesspath.com.

## **MG Hotline....**

Phyllis Shlien is looking for help in putting information into the Master Gardener Hotline database.

To volunteer, call her at 642-6656.

# Earn education credits through nearby workshops

## **Conservation District has woodlot management class**

Find out how to get the most from your woodlot in a workshop from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 24.

The session, for private woodlot owners, will meet at Hartley Outdoor Education Center, 12663 Beaver Road, 1.5 miles northwest of St. Charles.

Topics include forestry management practices, crop tree selection and management, invasive species identification and removal, emerald ash borer and a band saw mill demonstration.

Cost is \$25, which includes all hand-outs and lunch. Space is limited.

To see if registration is still available, call the Saginaw Conservation District, at 781-4077, ext. 4.

## **Arborsculpture class meets in late April**

CADILLAC — Richard Reames, a leading expert in arborsculpture, will lead a hands-on class from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 27, 28 and 29.

Arborsculpture is a natural craft that combines pruning, grafting, and the bending of live tree saplings.

The saplings then grow into unique forms that will hold their shape.

Reames will teach participants how to angle and graft one sapling to another to create benches, chairs and other fanciful and utilitarian projects.

The class meets at the 50-acre farm of Bill Parks, eight miles southeast of Cadillac.

Cost is \$270 and includes lunch each

day. Class size is limited to 15.

A \$100 deposit is required, \$50 of which is not refundable.

The remainder is due on or before Friday, March 30.

Those wishing local accommodations may contact the Hampton Inn in Cadillac at (231) 779-2900 and give the group code, C-ASC.

For more information about the class or registration, contact Parks at (810) 742-2853 or (989) 751-1859 or e-mail hobart38@comcast.net.

For more information about arborsculpture, go to [www.arborsmith.com](http://www.arborsmith.com).

To register, send your name, address, phone, e-mail address and check, payable to Mary Jo Hobart-Parks to Bill Parks, 1497 Lyle Street, Burton, MI 48509.

## Minutes of the February 28, 2007 meeting

Susan Scott welcomed 94 members to the Andersen Enrichment Center.

Marilyn Karpicke moved approval of the January 2007 meeting minutes; Wanita Pettiford seconded the motion.

Scott discussed the 2007 Budget, including changes from 2006, such as income vs. expenditures and financial projections of fund-raising ventures. She noted expected expenses are similar year-to-year. Purchase of an LCD projector was tabled, and the number of grant projects was decreased from 15 to 12.

The Christmas Potluck budget increased due to a new location, First Presbyterian Church, which expands the number of members able to attend. It also has food preparation facilities.

Bank charges were another concern, which Treasurer Crystal Kauer said is primarily the cost of checks.

Robert Gubbins moved approval of the 2007 Budget, Judy Henning seconded the motion; motion passed.

Kauer gave the treasurer's report and reported she has invested designated Fall Seminar funds in a certificate of deposit until Oct. 1.

Wanita Pettiford, mentor coordinator, asked for mentors for the new MG Trainees. (See Page 5)

Grey Gitzen announced two upcoming tree sales, one through Global Re-leaf, the other by the Saginaw Soil Conservation District. Volunteers are sought

to help fill orders. (See Page 5)

Mary Andrews discussed revisions to the Volunteer Opportunities List. Project approvals are being re-evaluated by Master Gardener Coordinator Nancy Burd for education components. Once complete, the new list will be on the Web site.

Ruth Sny sought volunteers to help the Soil Conservation District answer gardening questions at the Home and Garden Show March 9-11 at Saginaw Valley State University.

Sny also wanted volunteers to help design planters and the atrium gardens at the Dow Event Center.

Scott asked for volunteers to take over the SVMGA notebooks for new members and to form a fund-raising research committee. (See Page 4).

Anne Birkam is the new historian.

Scott reminded members to bring in old garden catalogs and magazines next month to share with other members.

She also detailed the research by Patty Burnside and Kathy Lewis into the cost for a LCD projector.

Scott asked members to review the proposed Garden Journals on display, a future fund-raiser. While members provided many ideas, printing costs would be prohibitive.

Scott announced the Michigan Horticulture Therapy Association's annual conference March 9 at Michigan State University.

Judy Henning asked for volunteers to

help maintain the SVMGA Adopt-a-Garden at the Saginaw Children's Zoo. A planning session will be March 6. (See Page 5)

Darlene Damp reminded project leaders to get their announcements about upcoming clean-ups into the newsletter.

Patty Decker asked for volunteers to assist in the zoo gardens this growing season. (See Page 5)

Scott asked for volunteers to help sort the spring bulb orders. (See Page 4)

Thanks to Wil Hufton for donating a Lions Club chocolate bunny; Bob Egbert for the two Hibiscus; Abele Greenhouse for the \$20 gift certificate; Sally Shephardson for the \$50 Dow Know & Grow Seminar ticket; Jane Chard for the Front Yard & Back Yard Idea book; Gail Caird for the watering can picture frame, and the anonymous donor for the beehive lantern.

Dick Miller won the chocolate bunny; Ann Draper and Mike Muladore, the Hibiscus; Karen Tilden, the Abele gift certificate; Bonnie Duclos, the Dow Know & Grow Seminar ticket; Laura Keeven, the Front Yard & Backyard Idea book; Judy Henning, the watering can picture frame, and Pat Washburn, the beehive lantern.

Keynote speaker for the evening was Mark Hanner, founder and president of the East Michigan Hosta Society; who discussed "Hosta Culture."

*Submitted by Melva Bond, secretary*

### SVMGA standing committees

**MSU Extension Hotline orientation** — Phyllis Shlien, 642-6656

**Mentor coordinator** —  
Wanita Pettiford, 777-6918

**Historian** — Anne Birkam,  
754-7090

**Refreshments** — Becky  
Geidans, 781-1552

**Member handbooks** —  
Bonnie Dutcher, 624-9011

**Membership roster** — Karen  
Tilden, 777-6673

**Newsletter mailing label-maker** — Debbi King, 642-2940

**Newsletter mailing committee** — Bonnie Stewart, 793-1442

**SVMGA wearables** — Shirley  
McNier, 799-7172

**Speakers bureau** — Judy  
Henning, 799-4136

**MSUE Demonstration Garden** — Sara Clark, 964-7141

**Volunteer opportunities** —  
Mary Kathryn Andrews, 797-3319

**Prize drawings** — Ruth Sny,

928-7315

**Christmas potluck** — Ruth  
Sny, 928-7315

**Not receiving the newsletter?** — Karen Tilden,  
777-6673

**An Autumn Affair for Gardeners** — Judy Henning, 799-4136,  
and Aileen Cowan, 865-8784

**Fund-raising** — Sue Stemler,  
781-4656

**SVMGA Speakers Bureau** —  
Judy Henning, 799-4136

## 2006 annual report shows dedication of local MGS

Well-trained, dedicated, enthusiastic, caring, innovative and inquisitive all describe the Michigan Master Gardener volunteers in Saginaw County.

More than 175 Master Gardener volunteers make up this association of activists who provided 9,698 hours of service to the citizens of Saginaw County in 2006.

Using the rate of \$18.04, provided by the Michigan Master Gardener Coordinator, these hours equate to 4.75 full-time employees with \$174,952 of economic value to Saginaw County.

The association has provided 55,148 hours of quality volunteer effort to the citizens of Saginaw County since the state Master Gardener Coordinator has been tracking such statistics.

The Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association has actively supported and funded several community projects, which include:

- Designing and implementing the Dow Center entrance planters
- Make a Difference Day (both in the spring and the fall)
- Saginaw Township and Kochville Township playscapes
- Adopt-a-Gardens at the Saginaw Children's Zoo
- Michigan's Own Military Museum in Frankenmuth
- Bridgeport Historical Museum
- Southbound I-75 Rest Stop on the Saginaw-Bay county line

Because of our acquired horticulture

knowledge there are several community organizations on which SVMGA members actively serve as committee members and directors. They are:

- Horticulture Committee at the Saginaw Children's Zoo
- Saginaw Art Museum
- The Woman's National Farm and Garden Association
- Steering Committee of the Rose Spectacular at the Andersen Enrichment Center
- Japanese Garden
- Saginaw Valley Hosta Society.

We publish and distribute a newsletter, *The Grapevine*, 11 months of the year.

It is available on-line via the Master Gardener Web site, as well as by U.S. mail, and soon will be available on our own SVMGA Web site.

The writing and distribution of the newsletter is accomplished by Master Gardener volunteers.

The association sponsored its third annual seminar, called "An Autumn Affair for Gardeners," at Saginaw Valley State University on the first Saturday in October.

Learning and continuing education are goals of many Saginaw County Master Gardeners volunteers.

In 2006, 161 Master Gardener Volunteers participated in more than 1,985 hours of lectures and classroom sessions to obtain up-to-date horticulture information to share with the community.

*Grey Gitzen, 2006 president*

## Cincinnati has plants, art, experts...

*(Continues from Page 2)*

floral and horticulture-inspired cakes, created as "sugar art."

The Artists' Studio has art for the garden, inspired by nature. It offers sculpture, porcelain, photography, fiber art and more.

The Gardener's Market features more than 130 horticulture-related vendors from across the U.S.

The Plant Market sells annuals, perennials, shrubs and more from the region's outstanding growers.

There's even an Ask the Experts where leading experts share their passions re-

garding horticulture and cooking.

During the day, stop in for afternoon tea — a traditional English tea with delectable scones, finger sandwiches and petit fours or Jean Robert's Café des Fleurs and Coney Island Cafes, from gourmet to casual dining.

Through the lecture series, notable gardeners, authors and designers share the latest trends, with time for questions from the audience.

And new this year is "Around the World," a fine food and wine-tasting event.

For more information, visit the Web site at [www.cincyflowershow.com](http://www.cincyflowershow.com).

## Stewart's Saginaw Township garden gives joy...

*(Continues from Page 3)*

Bonnie is an Advanced Master Gardener, class of 1994. She has been responsible for folding, labeling, zip coding and mailing SVMGA's newsletter, *The Grapevine*. She also enjoys tending the gardens at the Saginaw Art Museum and Saginaw Children's Zoo.

Since retiring, Bonnie and Dennis traveled out West for a wedding in Long Beach, Calif., where they were guests on the Queen Mary, "a gorgeous old ship."

They also took in the Grand Canyon, Sedona and San Francisco. Another trip was to Venice, Fla.

Happy to be back home — she enjoys cross country skiing and winter — Bonnie wants to see more of the U.S. But she also hopes to visit the lands of their heritage: Ireland, Scotland and Nova Scotia.

She enjoys theater, especially with her three sisters, and enticed her husband to visit the Chicago flower show this month.

Whenever possible, the pair go to

Drummond Island, a childhood get-away for her husband. Says Bonnie, "We watch the freighters and are able to spot them according to size, shape and sound to identify each ship. They are so close you feel you could almost touch the ships."

Peaceful surroundings bring "great pleasure" to this Master Gardener.

Drive down Brockway, west of Hemmeter, and you'll see what she means!

*Story by Joan Martin*

## Evaluate site before planting currants, gooseberries or elderberries

EAST LANSING, Mich. — With the right site, you can grow and enjoy currants, gooseberries and elderberries out of your backyard.

“Hardiness is not an issue with these fruits,” says Mary McLellan, state Master Gardener program coordinator at Michigan State University.

“But they require a cool, moist location with good drainage — they will not thrive in hot, dry places.”

Full sun or partial shade, good air circulation around plants and soils high in organic matter are other traits of a good site. Eliminating quackgrass and other perennial weeds before planting saves a lot of problems later, she notes.

A soil test also is recommended to determine potassium and phosphorus needs so fertilizer can be incorporated before planting. Nitrogen is applied each spring.

Plant in the early spring after mixing

additional organic matter into the soil, such as well-rotted manure, compost or peat. Preparing the site the previous fall may enable you to plant dormant plants as soon as they arrive from the nursery.

Space currants and gooseberries 3 to 4 feet apart in rows 6 to 8 feet apart and elderberries 7 to 8 feet apart in rows 10 to 12 feet apart, she recommends. This leaves room to cultivate around them and promotes good air circulation, which is important in reducing leaf and fruit diseases.

Currants and gooseberries do not need cross-pollination to produce fruit. Elderberries are not self-fruitful, so you’ll want to plant two or more cultivars near each other to provide for cross-pollination.

Weed control is necessary because none of these crops competes well with weeds, McLellan says.

If perennial weeds are eliminated before planting, shallow cultivation followed by mulching should suppress annual weeds and grasses. Mulch help conserve soil moisture, she notes.

Pruning in the dormant season removes weak, damaged or drooping canes, and leaves only the most vigorous canes to produce fruit. Mature gooseberry and currant plants should have eight to 10 bearing canes and four to six new shoots to replace the oldest canes removed each year. Mature elderberry bushes need only six to eight mature canes.

Fungal diseases and a number of insects can attack these crops, McLellan says. If they become abundant enough to cause serious damage, you can get assistance in identifying and managing them from your local MSU Extension office.

*Story from MSU News Services*

## Upcoming SVMGA programs

- 3/28 — Mary McLellan, state Master Gardener coordinator, “Master Gardener Program Update”**
- 4/25 — Mike O’Sullivan, EZ Growin, “How Deep Is the Water?”**
- 5/23 — Annual spring plant exchange at Pat Bourdow’s Kochville Township garden**
- 6/ 27 — Tour of Mary Kathryn Andrew’s Saginaw Township garden**
- 7/25 — Tour of Bridgeport Historical Society gardens with Susan Lawcock and Sandy Lundy**
- 8/22 — Tour of I-75 southbound rest stop at the Saginaw-Bay county line, with hot dog roast**
- 9/26 — Chris Lentner, Kluck’s Nursery, “Landscape Trees”**
- 10/24 — Joel Miller, Goldner Walsh Nursery, “Freaks, Witches Brooms and Chimeras in Michigan’s Landscape”**
- 11/28 — To be determined**
- 12/4 — Annual Christmas potluck, First Presbyterian Church fellowship hall**

**Meetings from January to April and September to December are at the Andersen Enrichment Center. Meetings in May through August are at members’ gardens or other garden sites.**

**Spring and fall plant exchanges are offered annually, along with a variety of field trips, depending on members’ interests. There also is a fall seminar, An Autumn Affair for Gardeners, on Saturday, Oct. 6, to help educate all gardeners on current horticulture practices.**