

The Grapevine



Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

April 2008 Volume 12, Issue 4

Charlene Harris Is Passionate About Conifers

Please don't ask Charlene Harris to list her favorite conifers – the list is far too lengthy.

The co-founder and former president of the American Conifer Society, Central Region, would rather list her three favorite books on these evergreens that come in an amazing range of colors, shapes, sizes and textures.

"I've grown just about everything in perennials, from hostas to irises," says the Chelsea resident, who is the speaker at this month's Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association meeting.



Charlene Harris

"Conifers are far less work than flowers that only bloom 10 days to two weeks. Instead, you can enjoy them all year long.

"There may not be a flower, but they come in golds, greens, grays and blues. They have movement, texture, structure – all the things people strive for in garden designs.

"You plant a tree, you nurture it and you have something wonderful every day – some-

thing you can't get from flowers. And let me tell you, I'm fussy."

Harris' topic is "Conifers: Backbone of the Garden."

She will discuss conifers that grow in Michigan and show photographs from her own collection and her travels, which add up to more than 100,000 miles in the U.S and abroad.

"I'm not trying to sell anything," says certified Advanced Master Gardener, who has a nursery license.

"But we live in Michigan where there are all these blue spruce and Austrian pines. We've known for 20 years that they will be riddled with diseases that can't be cured and that can spread with the wind.

We need to be aware of what we're doing when we plant these."

Harris was fortunate to spend time with Justin "Chubb" Harper, a "world guru" on conifers, who has donated hundreds of the conifer varieties to establish collections in the U.S., including Hidden Lake Gardens in Tipton.

"Hidden Lake's collection is better than the one at the National Arboretum," Harris explains, where the conifers are older and the majority are dwarf size.

"Hidden Lake has a combination of old and new varieties, 200 plus. Of course, they can't have all of them because some are just not hardy here."

Together Harper and Harris established the society, in the early 1990s, with a few interested people.

"When the Society first started, it barely had enough dollars to pay a hotel bill. Now there is more than one-half million dollars in endowments and savings and membership is increasing."

And before the recession hit, Harris says, conifers were the fastest growing segment of the nursery business.

In fact, interest was so intense, the industry could not keep up, due to the amount of time necessary to produce saleable stock.

"You can't produce them in two years when they only grow an inch or two every year, so you're always behind the curve."

Now, the gardening public is younger with less time, she adds, and less money to invest in what conifers cost.

"As we all age, we need to put something in place, something of interest," Harris

See Conifers, page 7

St. Charles Beautification Day seeks MG volunteers

A tradition that started more than 30 years ago to help students invest in their community in a one-day beautification effort continues Thursday, May 15 in St. Charles.

"It's a rite of passage," says Laura Keeven, who has worked on the effort as a student, parent of two high schoolers and now as a Master Gardener.

"I needed a project to get my volunteer hours to become a Master Gardener so I called

Doug Holem, the teacher who started Beautification Day 34 years ago." Holem was the science teacher who ran the greenhouse that was built in memory of a student who was killed in a car accident in the 1970s.

"He created the annual Beautification Day to give students a project that would use the greenhouse – and help the community.

"He was glad to have the help after so many years, so three of us, Aileen Cowan, Terry Bailey and I formed a committee."

Their job was to determine whether to save the greenhouse or let it go. It was no longer in regular use since Holem's retirement from teaching in 2006.

"We decided to save it," Keeven explains. "It's in good condition; it just needed to be cleaned and fixed up. We're hoping to try and rebuild interest in the greenhouse even though there are no regular classes there."

The greenhouse does come alive every year prior to Beautification Day when students use the facility to transplant thousands of petunias and marigolds – some 6,900 last year.

"When you're a student, you can't wait until high school when you can be involved in this. And we have a lot of graduates who come back to help. Some help with rototilling beds or later on, they adopt a bed and keep it weeded through the growing season.

"Beautification Day is a one-day effort where flowers and containers are planted throughout the community, along with clean-up efforts. By having the students involved they get some ownership and hopefully, that cuts down on any vandalism," Keeven says. "Last year, about a dozen Master Gardeners volunteered for the day. They showed students how to transplant flowers, create colorful planted containers, make rain gardens – even a dry creek bed – and more.

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Minutes of March 26, 2008 meeting

Susan Scott welcomed 93 members to the Anderson Enrichment Center. Due to a scheduling conflict, there was no keynote speaker for this evening. Therefore, no educational credits can be recorded for attending the meeting.

Marilyn Karpicke moved that the minutes of the February 2008 meeting be approved as published; Crystal Kauer seconded the motion. Crystal Kauer read the treasurer's report. As of March 25 we have 143 paid members. No motion was made to accept the treasurer's report.

Lisa Hall, business manager for the Anderson Enrichment Center, introduced herself and informed members of some of the upcoming events taking place at the facility. The Art and Garden Festival, themed Saginaw's Celebrates Summer will be held Wednesday, June 11. There will be educational presentation speakers, vendors, etc., touching on the Arts, Nature and the Humanities. Additional information can be obtained by accessing saginaw-michigan.com then click on the arts link.

Another project being undertaken by Anderson Enrichment Center, in partner with MSUE is educating community members on urban gardening; donations will be sought for select activities.

Volunteers are being sought for helping to maintain the Rose Gardens; Bob Schust will open the gardens on April 14, removing burlap wraps and stakes; from April 19 on, assistance will be needed to maintain the pruning, spraying, etc. to keep the gardens looking their best. Crystal Kauer pointed out an individual needs to be properly licensed to spray chemicals in a public place. Tuesday, May 27, the Women's Farm and Garden Club and the Rose and Garden Society will help with trimming the perennials. Help will be needed to repair, replace and properly locate markers identifying the various plants growing in the gardens. Lisa mentioned some of the ground lights no longer are functional; funding source sponsors are needed to repair these lights. The goal is to restore the gardens to their former glory.

Susan Scott asked members to discuss the various projects they would be working on this year. Scott also gave thanks to Anne Birkam for taking notes during the February meeting and Judy Wegner for heading up the refreshment committee. Scott pointed out Judy placed a sign-up sheet in the backroom for members to assign meeting times for when they will bring in refreshments for the meeting breaks.

Susan Scott indicated she had sign-up sheets for Garden Day, being held Saturday at Horizon Center. The planting days at the Shiawassee Natural Wildlife Refuge are scheduled for March 31 or in case of rain, June 14; you need to bring your own work tools. Stella Thelen has donation forms for anyone interested in donating supplies for this project. Volunteers are requested for a May 17 workday; they would help supervise Girl Scouts in planting, clean up and design of a butterfly garden located at the lot of their headquarters building.

Karen Tilden mentioned the sign-up sheet in place for Shirley McNier's project, maintaining the MSUE demonstration garden. Tilden also asked members to review the members' list placed in the backroom, making any changes or additions to your personal data, or initialing your information if everything is correctly annotated.

Mary Andrews explained why the scheduled speaker for the meeting was unavailable. Andrews reminded members to complete, if necessary, a Project Leader Form for MSUE approved volunteer projects. Andrews reminded members the plant exchange will be held next month at Crystal Kauer's home.

Patty Decker indicated Saturday would be a day set aside for pruning at the Saginaw Children's Zoo. Starting in April, Saturdays from 9 am to noon, volunteers can come and assist in cleaning up and opening the beds at the zoo. Decker said there are two seats available for individuals wanting to join the Horticultural Committee, which meets at 5 pm the second Thursday of each month. Decker has placed a sign-up sheet in the backroom for volunteers who want to be notified of scheduled gardening projects at the zoo. Orientation sessions for the zoo's adopt a garden spaces are being held April 12, at 10 am and noon.

Aileen Cowan informed members this is the fifth and last year that she and Judy Henning will head up the committee responsible for organizing the Autumn Affair Seminar. They are looking for a couple of people to 'shadow' them as they make arrangements to pull this wonderfully educational and social event together. This year's seminar will be held Saturday, October 4, most likely at SVSU.

Cowan has a sign up sheet in place for the

Rail Trail; she indicated no concrete dates have been established for volunteer events. Cowan indicated Dave Sommers of The Greenhouse nursery located in Bridgeport on Gable Road has offered to plant up our containers and store them until we have warmer weather. Association members have taken advantage of this opportunity in the past, and it is fantastic opportunity to get a jump on your spring planting.

Susan Scott discussed for Janet Martineau the Thursday, May 8, 8 am to 1 pm, Make a Difference Day schedule to be at the Rail Trail. Teens from all over the county will be on hand to help with projects at the Rail Trail; volunteers are needed to help supervise these youth.

Scott indicated we would not sell plants at the Saginaw Downtown Farmer's Market this year. Scott lead members in a discussion regarding selling 'cow pots' at the market on their opening weekend, Friday, May 24, 10 am – 3 pm; and Saturday, May 25, 9 am to 1 pm. Melva Bond made a motion that we secure a table to sell 'cow pots' at the Saginaw Downtown Farmer's Market on their opening weekend; Grey Gitzen seconded the motion. Motion was carried.

Grey Gitzen presented recognition MSUE pins to individuals who have achieved milestones in volunteer hour statuses in the following time categories: 250, 500, 1000, 1500, 2500, 4000 and 5500. These recognitions are acknowledged once a year, with a set cut off date as to when figures are tallied.

Bill Wegner asked members to consider volunteering or placing up for nomination individuals interested in holding the Association's board offices starting January of next year. Susan Scott indicated position responsibility descriptions would be placed in the next Grapevine newsletter.

Deborah Keller has a sign-up sheet for volunteers wanting to help, sometime in the month of May, at the Play Scape park located behind the Walmart located on State and Lawndale streets. David Quinnan discussed the sign-up sheet he has for volunteers to work on Rainbow's End Park near the Wal Mart on Bay Road. There will be a meeting for this

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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."

Letter from the president

Well, we have just had a beautiful weekend of sunny days in the 50's and 60's as I write this. It was great to get things done. I have my yard mostly raked, the grasses are cut and bulbs are coming up.

It is also critter watching time. As usual, the birds and squirrels are having a great time chasing each other.

While you are cleaning up your yards, remember to pace yourself and stop and watch what is going on around you and listen to the sounds of the birds.

I had a couple of robins that must have thought my front beds needed roto-tilling the way they were digging and flinging old leaves and mulch around. They were a hoot!

At our March meeting a different format was tried.. Our speaker had cancelled at the last minute so we used the meeting to go over lots of volunteer opportunities and Lisa Hall who is in charge at the Anderson center came to let us know what was coming up there. We then had a leisurely break until the raffle drawing at about 8:45. While we were there from 7-9, the feed back I received is that it was nice to have time to chat with each other for a change as well as not feel so hurried with talking about projects.

We are considering recommending

this for the March meeting in 2009. The final decision on that will be up to the new board but you will get to vote about this at the April meeting.

How many of you were at Garden Day at the Horizon Center? I saw lots of you there! Thank you for supporting this event. It looks like it will be a go again for next year. Did you stop by the Master Gardener tables? We were fortunate to be able to share a space with Bay City Master Gardeners and are considering joining with them again next. Perhaps Midland will join us and make it a Tri City Master Gardener stop.

This was just a great venue for promoting the Master Gardener Program. Besides selling goodly amounts of Cow Pots, we handed out lots of info on the hot line and Fall Master Gardener class. I vote we do this again next year! The exposure was wonderful and it was great fun to talk to so many people interested in gardening!

We, as in the membership, also voted to sell Cow Pots at the opening weekend in May at the Farmer's Market. There will probably be a sign up sheet at the



April meeting for this.

The April meeting will also be the place to pick up your new membership lists. This allows you to keep up to date with member's names, phone #'s, e-mail, etc. If you are unable to make the meeting and would like an updated list, you can e-mail Karen Tilden, our Vice President, at katil7@charter.net and she will e-mail the list to you.

Just a reminder that Dave Somers of The Green House in Bridgeport, phone #777 1880 is again willing to babysit your planters. Bring your containers and pick out dirt and plants and he will take very good care of them until it is safe to put them out in May. The feedback I have is that they are gorgeous when picked up

For those of you who are new to our organization, this is to let you know that you will receive a notebook with member names, projects and other information for your use. Our notebook chairperson is Bonnie Dutcher and she usually has notebooks with her at the meetings. With all the other stuff on the agenda, I sometimes forget to announce this.

Keep Gardening
Toodles

Susan

Next Board Meeting

5:30 p.m. Wednesday,
May 7, 2008 at MSU Extension

Newsletter Deadline:
May 12, 2008 - 5:00 pm
Send submissions to
Sue Stemler, editor
suestemler@chartermi.net

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

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

*It is utterly
forbidden to be
half-hearted about
gardening. You
have got to love
your garden
whether you like it
or not.*

*W. C. Sellar & R. J. Yeatman
Garden Rubbish*

Officers for 2007-08

<i>President</i>	Susan Scott	791-9270
<i>Vice President</i>	Karen Tilden	777-6673
<i>Secretary</i>	Melva Bond	777-4092
<i>Treasurer</i>	Crystal Kauer	792-6874
<i>Program Director</i>	Mary Andrews	797-3319
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Sue Stemler	781-4656
	suestemler@chartermi.net	

MSU Extension 1 Tuscola Street
Saginaw, MI 48607-1287

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

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

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal opportunity institution.

Earn Credit Through Nearby Workshops.

Great Plants & Plant Combinations.....

Greenville Community Center
900 E. Kent St.

Directions: (Off M-57, approx 1 mile east of M-91 or 7 miles west of M-66)

Presented by Montcalm Area
County Master Gardeners

April 17 7:00 pm—9:30 pm

2 Education Credits

Janet Macunovich, author and educator, has been designing, planting and maintaining gardens and landscapes for more than 20 years. Janet is recognized for her no-nonsense practicality, humor and ability to take the mystery out of gardening topics. An Advanced Master Gardener, she is co-founder of the Michigan School of Gardening and the Practical Gardening Institute.

•Great Plants & Plant Combinations:

The Best of the Best Perennials, Trees & Shrubs

Most designers aim for year-round interest, but sometimes the design process gets bogged down in looking for color alone. Janet has suggestions for trees, shrubs and perennials that not only look great together for their seasonal colors, but also for their combined forms, textures and foliage characteristics.

Best yet—these groups are compatible in terms of site requirements, whether sunny, shady wet dry or windy.”

Cost: \$10 at door; \$8 if pre-registered

To pre-register, call 989-831-7500 or
616-225-7500

Second Annual Garden Affair

Forwards Conference Center West Branch

•Maintaining a Healthy Garden

April 22, 2008 8 am—4:30 pm

4.5 Education Credits

Join Janet Macunovich, Key Note speaker, Sue Grubba and Celia Ryker for this day-long seminar. The Garden Market Place will be open during breaks, lunch period and after classes. At 2 pm the Garden Market Place will be open to the public

The following classes are offered:

(Not necessarily in this order.)

•Growing in Difficult Sites

•Gardening for Wildlife

Janet Macunovich

•The Clever Gardener

Sue Grubba

•Michigan Natives in the Landscape

Celia Ryker

Cost: \$45 by April 1; \$55 after April 1

Cost includes lunch.

To register, call 989-345-0692 or email
elier@msu.edu.

The Saturday Morning Gardener

Horticulture Gardens—MSU

•Container Gardening

May 10, 2008 9-11 am

3 Education Credits

Join Vicki Buell, former owner of Homeland Gardens, as she shows you how to design a one-of-a-kind container garden. Vicki's containers many plants you might not associate with container gardening! A container, all media and plants for the container will be provided as part of your registration fee.

If you wish to make a second container, plants, media and containers are available for purchase on a per-item basis in class.

Cost: \$45

For online information on enrollment status of a class, registration forms and maps, go to:
www.hrt.msu.edu/outreach/SMG120.htm

For further information or accommodations for persons with disabilities, call Ann Hancock at (517) 355-5191, ext. 1348.

Saginaw Soil Conservation District Events

Backyard Conservation Series

Presented by Saginaw Conservation District
in conjunction with
Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

Greenpoint Nature Center
3010 Maple Street—Saginaw

This series of **FREE** workshops will cover a broad array of topics from small woodlot management to establishing native plants in your backyard.

•Small Woodlot Management

Dan Keane, Conservation District Forester

April 21 7:00—8:00 pm

1 Education Credit

•Native Grasses and Prairies

Michelle VanderHaar of

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

May 19 7:00 pm—8:00 pm

1 Education Credit

•Native and Beneficial Plants

Verne Stephens of Designs by Nature's

June 9 6:00 pm—8:00 pm

Plants will be available for cash and carry.

2 Education Credits

To register, call:989-781-4077 Ext 4
Register at least 3 days prior to event.

Hands-On Grafting

Abele's Greenhouse & Garden Center
3500 Wadsworth Road—Saginaw

•Hands-On Tree Grafting Workshop

Sidney Grinnell

Nurseryman and plant breeder

April 26 10:00 am—2:00 pm

4 Education Credits

This will be a Hands-On Workshop. Yes! You will graft your own tree!

Fees: \$25 per person/\$35 per couple/ \$10 Youth Fee includes lunch, 1-2 root stock (edible nut or fruit trees), pots and soil.

To register, call 989-781-4077 Ext 4

Registration deadline: 4/21/08

Edible Nut Trees Available For Your Order !

Soil Conservation District will be taking orders for a variety of edible nut trees.

Watch their website at www.saginawcd.org
or call office for order form at 989-781-

Garden Walks and Festivals Begin.

Art and Garden Fest

Wednesday, June 11 brings the Art and Garden Fest to the Anderson Enrichment Center. Speakers, vendors displays and food are all a part of this annual event.

“It runs from 9 am to 3 pm and features four presentations by local experts on topics such as flower arranging, shade gardening and urban gardening”, says Lisa Hill, business manager at the Andersen Enrichment Center. “We’ll have lunch by Jimmy Johns and strawberry shortcake.”

Hill says she is still looking for sponsors and vendors for the festival.

The event also kicks off an eight-week series called Saginaw Celebrates Summer.

Organizations such as the Children’s Zoo, Saginaw Art Museum, Saginaw Bay Symphony and the Japanese Tea House will offer concerts, nature hikes, art displays and lectures during the eight week celebration.

Apple Country Gardeners’ Club Walk

Dust off your walking shoes, grab a pencil and mark your calendar! June 24th is a day to note for garden walking from 12 pm to 8 pm as once again we are treated the Apple Country Gardeners’ Club Walk.

This year’s gardens offers a variety of landscape situations ranging from large, park-like settings to the smaller backyard escapes, but each is certain to delight the eye. Proceeds from ticket sales will help to landscape the new Freeland Community Center.

Tickets are available from club members or call:

Dick Redifer at 989-695-4626.

Bay City Garden Walk

Thursday, June 26, 2008, Bay City Garden Club will proudly present its Garden Walk and Flower Show. Six lush gardens will be open for your viewing pleasure. This year the special attraction of a Flower Show has been added.

The walk will begin at 11 am and conclude at 7 pm. A luncheon with a cost of \$10 will be served at the spectacular Wirt Library, which is also the location of the Flower Show.

Tickets are \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door.

For information, call Joan Wendland 686-8363.

Workshops continued.....

Dow Gardens Offers IPM Walk & Talk Series

Dow Gardens—Midland

Get a firsthand look at different insects and diseases, and how they change through the growing season, all summer long, in this hands-on IPM series. You’ll spend 30 minutes inside and 1.5 hours walking for each session. Don’t miss this chance to tour the gardens while learning IPM with Chuck Martin, Elly Maxwell and Dan Veresh.

● *IPM Overview*

April 10 6—8 pm

● *Monitoring/Scouting*

May 8 6—8 pm

● *Cultural Control*

June 12 6—8 pm

● *Chemical Control*

July 10 6—8 pm

● *Panel Discussion on IPM with experts*

August 14 6—8 pm

2 Education Credits per class
Cost: \$10 each or \$40 for series

To register: Call 989-631-2677 or Visit www.dowgardens.org

Petoskey Hosts Workshop

Emmet County Fairgrounds-Petoskey, MI

● *Beds & Borders Workshop*

April 26, 2008 9 am—12 pm

3 Education Credits

Join Registered Landscape Architect, Lynn La-Pointe Wiese, as she walks through the garden design process to design your own breathtaking beds or borders. Includes 20 page manual.

Cost: \$35

To register, call Emmet MSU Extension Office At 231-348-1770

2008 Nurturing Nature Wednesday Series

Green Point Environmental Learning Center

Cost: \$2.00 per person per class

FREE for Friends members (Dues-\$12 per year)

● *Spring Tree and Wildflower Identification*

May 7 7 pm

1 Education Credit

This involves a hike along the Green Point trails, led by refuge manager Steve Kahl, who will describe how to identify the trees and wildflowers that grow in our area and relate interesting facts about their life history. Dress for the weather and possible muddy terrain.

Plant Sale

Saturday, May 31 7 am-2 pm

Plant and Soil Sciences Building (Corner of Wilson and Bogue)

Choose from a selection of perennials, ornamental grasses, roses, herbs, annuals, cottage garden plants, “cool kid” plants, and shrubs.

Bring your own cart and stock up! Payment is accepted in cash, check, Visa or Mastercard.

Celebrate the Gardens’ 15th year!

Thursday, August 7th Time Info Coming

You are invited to enjoy the beauty of this year’s gardens for an evening in the Horticulture Gardens of Michigan State University..

Make new friends and renew old acquaintances or simply enjoy the gardens.

Garden Day

Friday, August 8th 9 am—3:45 pm

Everyone who appreciates the beauty and wonder of gardens is invited to attend.

There will be two KEY NOTE speakers and 12 workshops to choose from!

Cost: 75—includes lunch and parking

Advance registration required.

For registration information:

Sandy Allen at allens@msu.edu or call 517-335-5191 Ext 1339

Odds and ends...

M-O-O-VE OVER! The Cow Pots Have Arrived !!



And they're selling like mad! In one month's time, SVMGA sold nearly 1,000 pots and President Susan Scott and other SVMGA members took them to Garden Day at Horizons Center, where they sold another box containing 1,000 pots!

It seems everyone wants these little beauties, whose very composition is the stuff of which your greatest compost is made.

Cow Pots, Gloria Schuler, project chair tells us, are a product made from the by-products of "happy cows!" These biodegradable pots will not decompose as quickly or rot as peat pots can.

We will be offering the 3 inch pots for 50 cents each and 4 inch pots for 65 cents each to SVMGA members. The pots will sell at a slightly higher price to the public.

Gloria plans to sell more at the Huron County Master Gardener spring seminar and members approved selling them at the opening of the Saginaw Farmers Market in May. SVMGA will have a table both days, from 10 am to 3 pm Friday, May 23, and 9 am to 1 pm Saturday, May 24.

For further information, contact Gloria Schuler at (H) 892-7679 or (W) 797-0100 or Email at globobarama@excite.com

Tours of Fred Case's Garden Announced

Fred Case will open his garden for FREE tours on May 4th and May 11th, 10 am to 4 pm each day. You may bring a guest.

Fred thinks the 11th will be the best day because everything is running so late this year, but there are no guarantees in Michigan!

If you've never toured Fred's gardens, take this opportunity to see one of Saginaw's true gems!

Attention Project Chairmen

Project Materials Funds Request forms will be available at the next membership meeting.

Rock Garden Tour

The Great Lakes Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society announces a Plant Sale and Garden Tour.

Two of our Saginaw gardens are on this tour: Fred Case and Phil Lisik's.

The date set for this event is Saturday, May 10 from 11 am—3:30 pm.

For information, call 734-996-0692

Saginaw Flower Project 2008

City Councilwoman Amanda Kitterman is helping sponsor the "Saginaw Flower Project 2008". On May 17th, there will be a day of planting flowers all over Saginaw.

If you are interested in helping, call 497-9949 or email

saginawflowerproject@hisministryofsaginaw.com.

Demonstration Garden

Karen Tilden is happy to announce that the committee to refresh and renew the demonstration gardens at extension office has had its first planning meeting.

More volunteers are always welcome.

For info, call Karen at 777-6673.

Additional Projects receive approval for 2008:

Three Projects and Chairpersons received approval at the April 2nd Board meeting for the 2008 year:

Rainbow's End	
David Quillan	\$200
Japanese Gardens	
Holly Furlo	\$200
Make a Difference Day	
Janet Martineau/ Joe Madison	\$200

March Speaker Reschedules

Heidi M. Frei, program coordinator for the Nature Conservancy's Shiawassee River Project, was unable to attend the March meeting after being delayed in Hawaii.

Her talk, "Water Quality in the Shiawassee Basin" is rescheduled for the September meeting.

Need A Container Sitter?

Dave Sommer at The Greenhouse Nursery in Bridgeport is again offering a container planting session in April-and will babysit the containers until the weather warms up and owners collect them. For details on the sessions, call Sommers at 777-1880 to sign up.

Refreshments are Served!

Judy Wegner is the new chairman of the refreshment committee. She offered a sign-up sheet for members to bring snacks and drinks during the remaining monthly meetings. Several openings remain. Contact her at 793-4216 or email jwviolets@charter.net

St. Charles continued from page 1

Keeven is again looking for help this year, both prior to and during Beautification Day.

"We got a lot of positive feedback for the Master Gardeners who volunteered last year and we can always use more help," Keeven told SVMGA members at the February meeting.

Beautification Day takes about five hours and impacts the heart of St. Charles.

"I think it's really made people pay attention to their own yards and made the community much nicer as a result," Keeven says.

She will have a sign-up sheet at the March meeting. Those unable to attend the meeting, may call Keeven at 865-6154 or e-mail her at laira2000@email.com.

She says will let Master Gardeners as dates are set for meetings and work days.

Submitted by Darlene Damp
SVMGA Volunteer

Willing To Be an Officer for SVMGA? Here's What You Need To Know !

All Officers

- Are representatives of SVMGA
- Should be available as a resource for information
- Board meetings will be conducted in a business like manner
- Discussions which occur during board meetings are confidential
- Decisions made by the Board should be based on a broad perspective and what is best for the Association and its' members in the long term

The following responsibilities are in addition to those items included in the SVMGA by-laws.

President

- Will write "letter from the president" for newsletter
- Shall be the official representative of SVMGA
- Collaborate with board to develop short & long term goals and association policies
- Give SVMGA orientation presentation to MG class
- Coordinate activities of SVMGA

Vice President

- Assist project leaders as needed
- Report to President and board on a regular basis regarding committee or project status
- Ensure all volunteers who wish to work on a project are included
- Assist with volunteer selection or solicitation as requested by President

Secretary

- The secretary shall provide a copy of monthly meetings minutes to editor to be published in the newsletter
- Secretary shall place copy of monthly meeting minutes, board meeting minutes and newsletter in appropriate notebooks in MG office
- The Secretary shall provide each Executive Committee member with a copy of monthly board meeting minutes
- Secretary may be asked to complete any correspondent required by the Association

Program Chairperson

- Arrange for speakers as determined by Board decision
- Provide Executive Committee with agreed upon fees and schedule of speakers
- Arrange for any special set-up or equipment needed for Speaker
- Obtain check from Treasurer to pay speaker night of meeting
- Arrange for field trips as determined by Board and submit information to membership and newsletter in a timely manner
- Program Director shall be responsible for correspondence with speakers before and after program activities including confirmation letter and thank yous

Treasurer

- Give financial report at monthly Board meetings
- Forward membership information to Hospitality Committee and provide president with names of new members
- Provide ledger books for audit committee review at end of year
- Provide categorized Yearly Financial Statement of Income and Expenses to be share with membership

Conifers continued from page 1

says. "If I plant one, it's going to live longer than me – and I don't have to do much to take care of it."

Besides her work with conifers, Harris has designed perennial gardens, served as a horticulture instructor, a horticultural therapy instructor and a Federated Garden Show judge as well as winning awards for her garden designs.

Oh, and those books Harris recommends are:

Gardening with Conifers, Adrian Bloom, Firefly Books, paperback & hardcover, 2002:

Every gardener would benefit from having this book. Most recent book on conifers and best for gardeners.

Manual of Cultivated Conifers, Gerd Krüssmann, Timber Press, 1985:

Very technical and detailed. Good for species,

but very limited on recent cultivars. May be a bit technical for beginners, I recommend it for those seriously interested in conifers. It is easy to grow into and includes excellent worldwide information. This book is frequently listed as a reference for conifer articles. It's a must for every serious conifer enthusiast.

Conifers: The Illustrated Encyclopedia (Vols. 1 & 2), van Gelderen and van Hoey Smith, Timber Press, 1996:

I appreciate the taxonomic and geographical distribution discussions in the beginning of Vol. 1 and the Hardiness Zone maps and cone drawings in the back for reference. I use it for loaning out to people who want to seriously study conifers. Great to look at — lacking in technical description, but great "color photo library of conifers" worldwide.

For information on the conifer society, please go to the web site at www.conifersociety.org

Submitted by Darlene Damp
SVMGA Volunteer

Been waiting years for a new lilac to bloom? Here's how to tell right now if it will bloom well this May.

Look for fattened tip buds and sacrifice one to learn to recognize those that will produce flowers.

Use a razor to slice a bud lengthwise, tip to base. Look at its layered interior with a magnifier. If growing conditions were right, tiny flower clusters formed inside that bud last summer and are clearly identifiable now. They may look like minuscule heads of cauliflower, colorless until after spring bud-break.

A Report from SVMGA Fund-Raising Research Committee

Fund Raising Research Committee:

Sue Stemler Chair, Joan Martin, Co-Chair
Peggy Shaver and Tom Leinberger, members

As a result of three very productive meetings, the SVMGA Fund Raising Research Committee came up with several potential fund-raisers to propose to the Board, and hopefully to our membership.

FUND RAISING PROPOSALS – SHORT TERM

PROJECT 1-SHORT TERM.

Clipboards: Durable, molded plastic with heavy duty clip. SVMGA logo to be printed on clipboard.

This product, if 51+ ordered ,	costs \$2.46 each.
Proposed sale price	\$6.00 each
Cost to SVMGA (51)	\$125.46
Total sales revenue	\$306.00
Total net profit	\$180.54

This product can be obtained in 15 working days, **to be offered to our membership at May, 2008** meeting. A very small, easy fundraiser, with Joan Martin willing to promote and handle sales of product.

PROJECT 2-SHORT TERM.

Specialty Pruning Shears. A.M. Leonard pointed thinning shears. This product, which sells for 16.99 in their catalog, can be obtained for non-profits

At a cost of	\$11.49 each.
Proposed sale price	\$20.00 each*
Cost to SVMGA	\$1,149.00
Total sales revenue	\$1,700.00
Total net profit	\$ 551.00

Several notes to this fund-raiser: This product is readily available; a **new** volunteer committee could take pre-sale orders from members at Sept/Oct meetings. In this fashion, actual number ordered can be better determined prior to order placement. This is an ideal article to offer for sale at our October conference and to our members for holiday and birthday gifts for family and friends. These pruners could also be offered at MG classes, any groups that our members or Speakers' Bureau speak to, at Garden Walks, SVMGA conference, Farmer's Market, to name a few.

They are high quality shears, but not with the hefty price tag of Fiskars or Felco products.

PROJECT 3-SHORT TERM.

Used Gardening Book Sale – A suggestion for an easy, entire membership fund-raiser is a **used gardening book sale** at one of our membership meetings. (The committee discussed the possibility of having at the August meeting, but felt that the set-up for this, along with the hotdog roast, would be cumbersome.) It was agreed that a sale at our meeting venue would be much more workable.

This project simply takes one or two volunteers to put it in the newsletter, and make sure tables are setup. Purchase of books could be done through an "honor system", with paperbacks 50 cents, hard covers \$1 and \$2, depending on size.

PROJECT 4-SHORT

We recommend
per person,

IMPLEMENTED

TERM.

that **dues be raised to \$25**
per year.

FUND RAISING PROPOSALS – LONG TERM

PROJECT 1-LONG TERM

NURSERY RESOURCE GUIDE – A handy, sure to be "required reading material" for area gardeners. A small booklet with "pocket nurseries" in a 100 mile radius of Saginaw County. Gathering suggestions for nurseries from Master Gardeners, phone books, Chamber of Commerce listings, a list of smaller nurseries will be compiled. Each nursery will then be contacted for key information to be included in booklet.

This project will require a **minimum of nine months preparation time.** There will be a need for **3-4 members initially**, to conduct research on:

- Proposed size of booklet (i.e. How many nurseries will be included?)
- Cost of printing and assembly
- Determination of costs versus revenue. Will project move forward?

As project moves forward, initial members may choose to continue, or as specialized jobs become required, can complete their portion and hand over to:

- **1 member** required to develop layout format of booklet. This person will remain with project until completion, being responsible for the inclusion of all gathered material.
- **2 members** required to make contacts, phone calls, mailings to obtain all information (Master Gardeners, phone books, Chamber of Commerce listings). Once list is determined, contact of all nurseries.
- **Marketing committee** (number required determined by chairperson and other committee members) will be responsible for "getting the word out". Flyers, inserts in community newsletters, placement at businesses, etc.

- **A thought:** Committee will decide size for listing which will be free to nurseries. If this committee wants to get really ambitious, during initial contacts of nurseries, if nurseries desire additional space (a whole page instead of ½) this could be purchased at a fee.

PROJECT COMPLETION DATE – MARCH, 2009

PROJECT 2-LONG TERM

GARDEN RUMMAGE SALE – Gathering "cool" items for use in gardening, or garden ornaments.

Solicit articles from Master Gardeners, with an emphasis on "saleable" items. Examples: Old tools, windows, mirrors, chairs, old wagons, etc.

- **1-3 volunteers** could handle this project

- Advertise and solicit articles. Handle storage of same. Transport to sale site, set up, and sale.

Many suggestions for **venues** were discussed:

Freeland, in conjunction with Walleye Festival – This would require renting a space at a hall in Freeland. An advantage is that the day after the festival, all items are picked up by local non-profit.

Also consider possible use of Anderson Enrichment Center and/or MSU Extension Office, in conjunction with spring plant sale for this event.

PROJECT COMPLETION DATE – SPRING OR FALL, 2008

Please Read—May be discussed at April Meeting !

PROJECT 3-LONG TERM

SVMGA SPEAKERS BUREAU

- A. **Booklet-** Update and distribute.
 B. **Enhancement of our Speakers' Bureau -** offer **8 week classes**, with MGs instructing. Peggy Shaver is currently participating in Essexville Community classes along with Jerry Somalski, each teaching 4 classes.

If participants sign up for all eight classes, the fee is \$79. Peggy has a minimum of 15 persons per week.

15 participants @ \$80 each = \$1,200!!!!

With 8 MGs participating, the load is not that heavy for each instructor. Each class is 2 hours long. Many facilities are available to the public to host a small group such as this. (Garber Buick has a room that is available at no cost.)

A suggestion for a portion of these monies would be to purchase a laptop computer to allow our members to create PowerPoint presentations for their teaching.

Advertising in local newsletters and community papers will be required to get the good word out.

•This project combines the very best that SVMGA has to offer: The sharing of the expertise and enthusiasm of our members, education about SVMGA and Master Gardener program and raising significant dollars for SVMGA.

PROJECT BEGIN DATE– MARCH, 2008 COMPLETION DATE - ONGOING

PROJECT 4-LONG TERM

OUR SECRET GARDENS – Private, conducted tours of selected SVMGA gardens

Committee would solicit SVMGA members to offer their gardens for small, personalized (6-10 people) tours on a date of gardener's choice. Tours would be conducted by owner in three 2 hour periods. It is intended that there would be a "break" period between each tour, allowing time for homeowner to recoup and avoid overlap of parking in the immediate area.

This could be held in Spring, Summer and Fall, thus providing instruction on a variety of gardens, i.e. Bulbs, hostas, grasses, etc.

This Garden Walk offers less expense and less stress and more volunteer hours for SVMGA and education to the public.

Volunteers required for initial planning of event(s), printing of flyers, materials to be used in advertising the event(s). Minimal volunteers would be required on day(s) of walk. Perhaps one or two at each home to take tickets and direct parking.

Each tour could be offered at \$10 each, as it is an individualized, instructive tour, allowing guests to interact with the gardener and ask questions about the gardens, flowers, planting methods, etc.

•One garden with 3 tours to 10 people = 30 people x \$10 = \$300

•If we have 8-10gardens (easy to do with our membership) = \$2,100-\$3,000

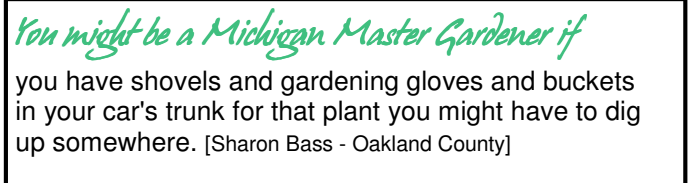
Committee discussed and felt that many guests would select more than one garden to tour, thus bringing total ticket purchases to more per individual than a set ticket price for a Garden Tour of many gardens.

Large garden tours are extremely difficult to undertake, with many volunteers and hours required.

•This project combines the very best that SVMGA has to offer: The sharing of the expertise and enthusiasm of our members, education about SVMGA and Master Gardener program and raising significant dollars for SVMGA.

PROJECT BEGIN – SPRING, 2008 COMPLETION – FALL, 2008

Respectfully Submitted by Sue Stemler—Committee Chair



Minutes continued

volunteer opportunity held Saturday, April 5 at the McDonald's restaurant on Tittabawassee road.

Gloria Schuler discussed how well the CowPots sales are going; Schuler indicated she will be selling them in Ubyly at their Garden Day. A patent is pending for the CowPots; and our association will be listed as the official retailer on the CowPots Website.

Shirley McNier indicated not enough orders were placed for lanyards or the decals to warrant ordering the items. McNier reminded interested members to bring in their garments next meeting and the \$10 payment per garment for having logo wear patches sewn onto the items.

Elaine Rappley informed association members that Fred Case will open his gardens for tours in the month of May. By a show of hands members indicated they are interested in participating in this opportunity. Sign-up sheets will be made available and tour dates given out at the next meeting.

Ruth Averill invited members needing a pre-spring fix to drive by her place, #2 Centerwoods North to see the Winter Aconite growing up around a tree in her front yard, an absolutely breath taking display of nature at it's best!

Thanks go to Darlene Damp for donating the book, Tiny Book of a Lot of Info, Kathy Berger the sweatshirt and Tom Leinberger the Salix Sachalinesis "sekke" from heronswood. Congratulations to our winners: Ruth Sny - book, David Quinnan -sweatshirt and Wil Hufton -"sekke".

Respectfully submitted by Melva Bond, secretary

Volunteer Opportunities.

Shadows Sought

Fall seminar coordinators Judy Henning and Aileen Cowan are hoping several people will volunteer to "shadow" them in their final year of coordinating the annual An Autumn Affair for Gardeners.

"We've been doing this for five years and we're looking for some people to take this over," said Cowan. "It's really not that hard. Judy has a book all prepared describing what has to be done."

This year's event is Saturday, Oct 4th, at Saginaw Valley State University.

Andersen Rose Garden

Master Gardener Bob Schust will open the Andersen Rose Garden this month. He is looking for help pruning the roses and cleaning up the beds on Saturday, April 19th, beginning at 9 am. Please bring sharp pruners, rakes and tarps to remove any leaves.

Lisa Hill, Andersen Enrichment Center business manager will provide coffee and donuts. Lisa said, "The garden relies on volunteers to keep the roses in good shape through the growing season, when it serves as the site for numerous weddings and celebrations."

Volunteers may work there from 9 am to 3 pm, Monday through Friday.

For information call Schust at 781-0473.

Rail Trail Projects...

Aileen Cowan is looking for volunteers to help with several new projects along the Saginaw County Rail Trail.

Those interested may leave their name, phone number and/or email with Cowan at 865-8784 or scratchcreations@att.net

The ZOO Needs YOU

The **Horticulture Committee** at Saginaw Children's Zoo will have regular clean-up sessions every Saturday morning in April and May from 9 am until noon each week (weather permitting - no snow or heavy rain and temperatures above freezing.)

Patty Decker announced that she is **seeking four people to replace outgoing members on the horticulture committee**. The committee meets the second Thursday of each month and works with the zoo administrator on garden planning and planting. Horticulture committee members serve on sub-committees, ranging from tree selection to barnyard plantings.

"You work as much as we can get out of you," Decker joked.

This year the zoo is replacing the train tracks and taking out the old train trestle and tunnel. A new tunnel will be added next year. New animals this year will be miniature horses.

..and more volunteer opportunities at Zoo!

Volunteers will assist in cleaning up garden beds, preparing soil, improving animal exhibits (landscaping), laying down mulch and early planting in the children's farm garden. Additional dates and times may also be scheduled as needed.

All Master Gardeners interested in volunteering at the zoo are encouraged to attend to learn more about what is expected.

Mark your calendar for the following upcoming Zoo Dates:

- Garden Orientation for Gardeners including Adopt-a-Gardens has been scheduled for Saturday April 12th with both a morning and afternoon sessions (10 am and 1 pm) at the Children's Zoo in Discovery Place.
- Earth Day, Saturday, May 3rd from 10 am until 2 pm. Volunteers will be need to help children in the farm garden and with seed starting.
- Garden Clean-up, Saturday November 8th

If you have any questions or would like to be put on the email list for this year of when the Horticulture Committee is doing group work dates, please call Patti Decker at 792-6633 or email at rizzobfrank@aol.com. A sign up list will also be available at the April Master Gardener Association meeting.

Help with planting at Shiawassee Refuge

On May 31st at 9 am volunteers will be needed to help plant 19,000 plugs at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. The area to be planted is on M-13 behind Rose Auto Parts. The expectation is to have 5 or more acres of wetland restored. The Horticulture Program at the Michigan Department of Corrections facility in Freeland is growing the plants to be used. This is a great way for a lot of people to be able to have an impact on our community! This is a one day project so hopefully lots of you will come and help.

There will a sign up sheet at April meeting.

Make A Difference Day

"Make a Difference Day" is set for Thursday, May 8, and this year's project is planting and cleaning up the Saginaw Rail Trail, which runs from James Township to St. Charles.

The annual countywide "Make a Difference" project is spearheaded by United Way and combines the talents of master gardeners, community volunteers and 100-150 high school students in a half-day project of beautifying the environment.

At it is shaping up now, four or five master gardeners are needed this year, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. that day — - two to oversee the digging and planting of three new beds at the Swan Creek/Van Wormer parking lot, one to oversee trimming at the Benkert Park I-pod, and one to oversee trimming at the trail head in St. Charles. Not overly intensive this year for us.

To volunteer, call Janet Martineau at 751-3868 (cell) or e-mail her at jmartineau@thesaginawnews.com

SVMGA Logo Wear

Shirley McNier announces new items available with SVMGA logo:

February thru April orders will be taken. All things must be picked up by April 30th.

After April 30th items will be at the office.

1. Embellish any clothing item with a embroidered SVMGA logo to \$10.00. Purchase your own clothing and bring it to the meetings in March and April. I will take it to Saginaw Knitting Mills in Freeland and the logo will be added and finished items will be available to be picked up at the meeting before April 30th. You can pick from color of tree and color of letters.
2. Lanyards (we need to order 72 items total). Cost of \$2.50 each.
3. Decal (outside car window). Must order at least 24 total. One color white. Cost \$4.50

SVMGA logo order form Have this form with order (filled out)

You must pay when order is placed.

Name _____ Phone _____

Clothing item _____

Color _____ Size _____

Color of tree white/ green / pink / yellow / orange / other _____ Color of lettering _____

Where do you want the logo to be sewn _____

Logo sewn \$10.00 _____

Date _____ Amt. Paid _____

Lanyard \$2.50 _____

Order completed _____

Decal \$4.50 _____

Order delivered _____



Girl Scouts Seek MG Input

Local Girl Scouts plan to install a butterfly garden at the headquarters of the Shiawassee Wildlife Refuge in Mid-May.

There is a leader training day on April 5th and two work days. May 17th will be a clean up day to get ready for planting the butterfly garden. This will include cleaning up the butterfly garden area, working on paths and some tree/bush trimming. If it rains, then it moves to the next day, which is the 18th, a Sunday.

Then on June 14th, the older girls will be helping to teach the younger girls about plants and how to plant them in the butterfly garden. This is meant to be more of a fun day. The time is from 1 pm to 5 pm at the headquarters each day.

They are looking for 2-3 Master Gardeners to help supervise, provide design ideas, clean-up, bed preparation and planting. Those interested may contact Becky Goche at 759-1669 or email becky_goche@fws.gov.



Saginaw Valley Hosta Society announces 2008 Summer Schedule

- April 9th Regular Meeting, Rustic Inn, 7 pm
Tony Reznicek – guest speaker
- May 18th, Garden Tour and Pot Luck
Phil & Ginger Lizik’s
- June 11th Plant Sale
Andersen Enrichment Center, 11am—4 pm
- June 13th Plant Sale, Saginaw Farmers Market
- June 21st Garden Tour, Plant Sale, Auction & Hot Dog Roast
Jim & Ellie Vrables
- June 28th Michigan Hosta Society Leaf Show & Plant Sale
Michigan State University
- July 9th Wine & Dessert Party, Garden Tour & sale of any leftover plants
- Aug. 24th Hidden Lake Gardens Work Day

For information about joining Saginaw Valley Hosta Society or events, call Elaine Rappley at 781-0570 or email rappleyjunk@aol.com

Michigan State University Extension
 Saginaw County
 One Tuscola Street, Suite 100
 Saginaw, MI 48607-1287

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2008 SVMGA PROGRAMS

4/23	Charlene Harris, Michigan Conifer Society "Conifers: The Backbone of the Garden" Andersen Enrichment Center, Saginaw	7:00 pm	9/24	Heidi Frei, Nature Conservancy "Water Quality in the Shiawassee Basin" Andersen Enrichment Center, Saginaw	7:00 pm
5/28	Plant exchange at the home of Crystal Kauer	7:00 pm	10/04	An Autumn Affair—SVMGA Conference (See below) Saginaw Valley State University	
6/25	Garden Tour at the home of Sharla Hammer, Freeland	7:00 pm	10/22	Peggy Shaver, Advanced Master Gardener, SVMGA "Dr. Seuss Plants" Andersen Enrichment Center, Saginaw	7:00 pm
7/23	Garden Tour at the home of Joan Martin, Saginaw Township	7:00 pm	11/19	To be determined Andersen Enrichment Center, Saginaw	7:00 pm
8/27	Garden Tour and Annual SVMGA picnic Japanese Gardens/Children's Zoo Tours/Hotdog roast/Potluck Guests Welcome	7:00 pm	12/09	Annual Christmas party First Presbyterian Church, Saginaw	

On October 4, 2008 at Saginaw Valley State University, Saginaw Valley Master Gardeners Association will sponsor an education seminar, *An Autumn Affair for Gardeners*. It is open to all gardeners and features experts sharing the latest in gardening information. For info: Judy Henning-799-4136 or judrich@sbcglobal.net or Aileen Cowan-989-865-8784 or scratchcreations@worldnet.att.net