

The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

May 2003 Volume 7, Issue 5

Annual plant exchange tops meeting

Wednesday, May 28, the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association sponsors its annual plant exchange at the home of vice president Aileen Cowan, who will open her garden to members.

Members who have plants they want to contribute – products of their annual spring division and cleanup – may simply pot them up and bring them along. Please provide the botanical name, light requirements, height, color, etc. for each so their future owners will know what they're getting.

Plants are arranged in an open area and each member receives a number. When your number is called, you are free to choose a plant. The process is repeated until everyone has had a chance to choose a plant and the plants are gone.

Any remaining plants are available to chairmen who need plants to supplement their project gardens, or may be given to Habitat for Humanity, which distributes them to its new homeowners.

The event is an exchange, not a trade, so those with new gardens shouldn't feel

as if they can't participate, says Gail Caird, program chairman.

"Just remember, you can look all you want, but you have to wait until your number is selected before you take a plant. It also helps, if you're bringing plants, to get there a little early so you have time to arrange them."

Cowan, a native of St. Charles, lives outside of Chesaning with husband Tom on a 20-acre farm. Two acres are devoted to their home, yard and outbuildings while 13 acres are in production and five acres are woods.

Although members know Cowan as vice president and active volunteer, she harbors a secret desire to become a supplier of native Michigan plant material.

"We have 600 to 800 daylilies, mostly Stellas. That is my foray into farming and I want to broker them out as a wholesale crop," Cowan explains. "Then maybe I'll dabble in what I really want to do – become a supplier of Michigan plant material.

"(The Michigan plant material) is so

hard to get and it can make a really big difference in your garden, what with the winters

we have here, like this past winter. Besides, I think it would be fun, developing a specialty like that."

Up until now, Cowan has simply grown things for her own pleasure, like broomcorn with its huge tassel that can actually be used for a broom, once the seeds are removed.

Next Meeting

7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Wednesday, May 28, at Aileen Cowan's home, 13505 W. Burt Road, Chesaning

7 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Meeting

7:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Refreshments

8 p.m. – Plant exchange

Directions: Take M-52 south through St. Charles, go about 5 miles, turn right on West Burt Road (big sign before), go 3/4 mile. It's the white house with green roof on left.

Bring a lawn chair.

"It has a really big spray, really ornamental. In fact, Tom Leinberger used them in the arrangements for our Christmas party."

But Cowan got a license from the Michigan Department of Agriculture to develop her daylily business. It will become a cash crop, just like the vegetables they sell at roadside, she explains.

Cowan got interested in the master gardener program after a cousin from out

of state mentioned it. When she saw the class advertised in The Saginaw News, she enrolled.

"It was what I needed in my life at the time. I had taken care of my mom through terminal cancer and I

wanted some fun for me, to be out and around people."

People who know Cowan know she doesn't sit still.

"I've been active and tried to get involved," she says. "I've got my pet projects, like Let's Go Garden and the

(Continues on Page 6)

Inside this issue:

<i>Minutes of the March meeting</i>	2
<i>Letter from the President</i>	3
<i>Meet the Gardener</i>	3
<i>Odds and Ends</i>	3 & 4
<i>New perennial offerings in area</i>	5
<i>Beech bark disease in Michigan</i>	6
<i>Volunteer opportunities</i>	7



Aileen Cowan's home on West Burt Road

Minutes of the April 23 meeting

The April meeting of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardeners was called to order at 7 p.m. April 23, 2003, by President Judy Henning. Charlotte Huebner made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as published and Aileen Cowan seconded it.

The Treasurer's report was as follows:

Opening balance	\$8,957.16
Deposits	391.50
Expenses	-1,211.59
Ending balance	8,137.07

As of 4/23/03, we have 152 paid members.

Judy gave out award pins in recognition of volunteer hours to those who had not been at the banquet to receive them. Gail Caird and Judy Henning received applause from the crowd in appreciation for all their time and effort.

List Serv is up and running. Those

who were omitted were requested to sign up. It is the member's responsibility to update their e-mail address.

Membership rosters were available. Please check to make sure your listing is correct.

Those who have trouble opening the newsletter on the Web site, please check with Beth Bedtelyon.

Jan O'Dell detailed volunteer opportunities at the I-75 rest stop; MSU Ag Expo and Saginaw Art Museum.

Aileen Cowen had catalogs from the American Nurseryman Association. If our group accumulates \$1,000 in orders by the May meeting, we can receive 5% discount. There is no sales tax or shipping.

Our group is now a member of the Saginaw Valley Nurserymen Association. Wil Hufton is our representative.

Anne Birkam requested help with volunteers for refreshments.

The Master Gardener program is moving toward specialization, such as "Gardening with Children" and "Garden Design." Volunteer hours will be in the area we choose to specialize in.

The MG Summer Conference is June 23-25. Each county has been asked to put together a project display board. Volunteers will be called when Angela Irwin returns.

Gail Caird distributed copies of a letter from Batschkies, which entitles each of us to earn 20% of our purchases made during the week of May 17-25 for the SVMGA. You must present a letter with each purchase.

Gail also detailed trips to Mill Creek Gardens in Mayville; the Lisiks in Hemlock and a bus trip to Toledo Botanical Gardens in July.

Elaine Rappley needs 20 volunteers for the June 18 Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk.

The Postal Service has requested that we use the correct address for the Extension Office: MSU Extension, 1 Tuscola Street, Ste 100, Saginaw, MI 48607-1287

Following a break for refreshments, George Papadelis spoke and showed slides on "Exciting Shade Gardens." As usual, his presentation was lively and entertaining.

Ellie Robertson, Secretary

Officers for 2003-04

<i>President</i>	
Judy Henning	799-4136
<i>Vice President</i>	
Aileen Cowan	865-8784
<i>Secretary</i>	
Ellie Robertson	792-4356
<i>Treasurer</i>	
Deb Keller	781-1228
<i>Program Director</i>	
Gail Caird	793-1942
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	
Beth Bedtelyon	781-6834
<i>Co-Editor</i>	
Darlene Damp	746-9113

MSU Extension
 One Tuscola Street Ste 100
 Saginaw, MI 48607-1287
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Master Gardener Coordinator
 Angela Irwin, 758-2500, ext. 224
irwina@msue.msu.edu

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May is morel-hunting season in Michigan

Two new MSU Extension publications are available to take the mystery out of collecting wild morels and mushrooms.

"May is Morel Month in Michigan," Bulletin E-2755, is full of information on identifying and collecting edible morels, including when and where to look for them, as well as the startling fact that DNA analysis shows morels are more closely related to animals than to plants.



Morels are found in nearly every county of Michigan. The bulletin contrasts true (edible) and false (poisonous) morels with detailed descriptions and clear photographs.

It gives ideas and recipes for preparing the edible morels (even the edible ones can cause illness if eaten raw), and for preserving them. There also are clear warnings about the toxicity of false morels.

A related bulletin, "Don't Pick Poison," E-2777, lists the 50 large and fleshy

species of poisonous mushrooms in Michigan.

It notes that of the 2,500 species found here, only 60 to 100 are considered edible. The bulletin focuses on the poisonous varieties, with clear written and photographic descriptions. Its intent is to keep mushroom gatherers from being sickened.

Both bulletins are interesting, and valuable resources if you are interested in collecting mushrooms.

I recognized several of the poisonous species from my walks in the woods, and gained a healthy appreciation for the toxicity of the species.

And although I don't think I will ever feel comfortable enough to gather and eat morels, I sent copies of both bulletins to my son at Northern Michigan University.

He and his naturalist friends are planning a "found food" dinner to celebrate the end of the semester.

Review by Gail Caird

Letter from the President

Has spring arrived? The rainfall in May has turned brown grass green, it has given the spring bloomers that extra “oomph” they needed to bloom, and many of the perennials are finally showing their heads.

Because we are living in Michigan, be cautious about planting annuals and even some perennials now. We have been known to have a frost in May. Better to be safe than sorry.

George Papadelis is one of the most knowledgeable and entertaining speakers to grace our meetings. The hour allotted to him was not nearly enough for him to cover all that was on his agenda.

George brought with him many new

and exciting plants to tell us about and best of all, they were for sale. We might have to schedule George for two hours next time we have him.

The May meeting will find us at the home and garden of our Vice President, Aileen Cowan. Our annual spring plant exchange takes place at this meeting. Come to the meeting whether you have plants to exchange or not, there are always plenty for everyone. **Bring a chair for your comfort.**



I wish to congratulate Peggy Shaver on hitting the 3,000 mark for volunteer hours since she was certified as a MG. When you see her, say “Way to go, Peggy.”

We have many **volunteer opportunities** right now and some are short of volunteers. Please take some time at the meetings to check them out and sign up to give a hand. You won’t regret it.

Also, if you sign up for a project and, for whatever reason, you cannot help on the day scheduled, please be courteous and call the project leader and let them know you will not be there.

Take care, think spring,
Judy

Garden Scoop: Meet Gardener Alice Hudson of Saginaw

“There is nothing really special – I really don't do anything.”

Two hours later, this reporter has filled four pages of what this Master Gardener has done, what she's doing now and where she will be June 20 with her friends who don't know where they are going!

Alice Hudson was born and raised in Saginaw with three sisters and one brother. She graduated from Arthur Hill High School and took a job with Michigan Bell Telephone Co. She has worked as an operator for 38 years.

Working with 100 operators in shifts around the clock, they answer 1,000 calls per day. Everyone calls “0,” no matter their situation, Alice says. Just recently a man called, “freaking out,” because he had a big raccoon in his bathtub. Alice told him to shut the bathroom door and call animal control.

From train derailments and fires to wrong numbers, Alice answers calls from across the state. People even call as they are being robbed, she said. Sounds more like 911!

The job is great, says Alice, because she is done by 2:15 p.m. and in her garden.

Gardening was part of her childhood where she listened to stories from her dad while he tended vegetables in a huge city lot. Her mom was an avid gardener and chocolate candy maker, selling pounds of candy to postal workers where she was employed.

Alice has been a widow for 17 years, raising a son and a daughter with the attitude that “life is beautiful, life is energy, life is family and friends.” You see that in her “wheel garden,” the result of an above ground pool that was removed after Alice bought her home 13 years ago.

Fortunately, she remembered reading about a lady's wheel garden and decided she would fill that hole. Once she filled the “spokes,” she went off a little to the left, then the right, then down the back, around the sides. The filling in has never stopped. She has all kinds of perennials and uses 40 to 50 flats of annuals each year.

While taking a cooking class in Bay

City, she noticed one lady's blue jean shirt, which read “master gardener.” She had to know what that was about and enrolled in the class in 1998. Since then, Alice's favorite volunteer position has been the Saginaw Children's Zoo, where she's taken first and third place in Adopt-a-Garden the last two years.

Antiques, travel and villages are only a few of life's interests for Alice. Her collection of Dickens, Christmas and New England villages are nothing, but amazing. She lights them every day and it takes her four hours to dust them!

Although her life has been full with her daughter's wedding, house renovations, garage building and work, Alice will share her lovely garden during the annual Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk 2003, set for noon to 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 18.

When it's over, she'll say, “I'm ready, let's go, who's driving?” and off she'll go with friends on a mystery trip. But she'll be back to watch over that garden.

Story by Joan Martin

**Next board meeting
9:30 a.m. Wednesday,
June 4**

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.”

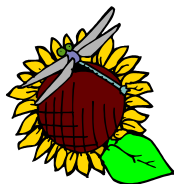
Odds and ends

Butterfly garden needs plant donations

The Saginaw Children's Zoo Butterfly Garden would appreciate plant donations.

The following are examples of non-toxic plants that can be planted: Daisies, Daylily, Johnny Jump-Ups, Lemon Basil, Lemongrass, Thyme, Pansies, Peppermint and Nasturtium. Any non-toxic plant is welcome.

Please call Nancy Hales at 799-2118, or bring plants to the next SVMG meeting Wednesday, May 28.



New stone birdhouse class meets June 9

Instructor Judy Rich will offer another stone birdhouse class from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday, June 9, at MSU Extension, 1 Tuscola, downtown Saginaw.

Cost is \$15. Members may sign up at the May 28 meeting, or mail a check, payable to Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association, to Rich at 1309 Chestnut, Saginaw, MI 48602.

Only several spaces remain. Call Rich at 249-5474 for information.

Fund-raiser reminder

BAY CITY – Batschke's Greenhouse, 1600 E. Euclid, has given members a great opportunity to raise money for SVMGA while making our spring garden purchases.

During the week of May 17-25, all purchases of regular price, in-store merchandise, including plants and hardscape items, will count towards a rebate made to SVMGA.

Batschke's will note the amount you spend, and at the end of the week, will send a check to SVMGA for 20% of the total.

To participate, you must give them a copy of the letter that was handed out at the April meeting. Additional copies of the letter are at the MSU Extension office, 1 Tuscola, downtown Saginaw.

Please note: If you are making

multiple trips to Batschke's, you need additional copies of the letter!

New Master Gardener specialty available

Master Gardeners can work toward certification in a new area of specialization, Gardening with Children.

It is offered in two sessions during the annual Summer Conference at MSU, East Lansing. Sessions are from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, June 23, and all day Tuesday, June 24.

Those seeking to specialize must have a minimum of 15 hours of education, in the curriculum, developed and sponsored by MSU/MSUE horticulturists or others designated by the State Master Gardener Advisory Committee.

In addition, a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer service is required for each area of specialization.

In return, Master Gardeners receive a unique pin upon completion of the specialty education and volunteer requirements.

The class, taught by Dr. Norm Lownds, provides methods to interest and engage kids of all ages in gardening.

As part of the class, each Master Gardener will develop plans for one children's theme garden, a learning activity for kids, learning activity based on the 4-H Children's Garden Web site and more.

For information, call Angela Irwin at 758-2500, ext. 224.

Rhodo lovers rejoice

MIDLAND – Attention all rhododendron lovers!

Be sure to visit Dow Gardens from now through mid-June.

Dow Gardens has one of the largest and most extensive rhododendron collections in the Midwest, featuring nearly 600 varieties. So whenever you go, you should be able to find some in bloom.

Hosta Society plans next meeting

Members of the Saginaw Valley Chapter of the Michigan Hosta Society tours the gardens of Phil and Ginger Lisik, at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 8, at Iva and Geddes roads.

It also features a plant sale and auction, with some plants coming as donations from commercial growers or selling them at a reduced price for the event. Anyone with extra Hostas or shade plants are encouraged to bring them.

The auction will be of the better and hard-to-get plants. Bring a dish to pass for the potluck dinner that follows; meat and beverages provided.

President Elaine Rappley says members also are invited to stop at Celtic Conifers at Dice and Gleaner between 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. There is a nice selection of conifers, including those that grow in semi-shade.

Some 45 people attended the May meeting.

City compost available

The city of Saginaw has opened its compost facility, 2410 Veterans Memorial Parkway, for the season.

It is open from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday and 7 a.m. to noon Saturday.

Compost is free to city residents with identification if they shovel it themselves, or \$5 a half yard if city employees load it for you. Mulch also is available free. For those living outside the city, it is \$10 a yard.

The city also delivers compost: \$30 for 3 yards for city residents or \$40 for three yards for non-residents in the surrounding area. Call 759-1696 to make arrangements.

In addition, Jack's Tree Service, 6755 Davis Road, Kochville Township, offers free mulch, self-serve.



Downtown Farmers' Market opens June 16

The early season Downtown Saginaw Farmers' Market opens at 10 a.m. Monday, June 16.

Hours continue at 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

The full season market opens Saturday, July 12, and extends hours to 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 8 a.m. to noon Saturday. For

(Continued on page 5)

Valley area nurseries offer new varieties of perennial favorites

George Papadellis of Troy gave SVMGA members a preview of new shade plants at the April meeting.

But some nurseries here are offering new perennials this spring, in spite of a lackluster economy.

At Boehler's Greenhouse, South Center and Swan Creek Road, nearly 20 new plants are being introduced this spring. Scott Boehler gave members of Gardening for Gents a preview at their meeting last month.

There are six new peony varieties: **Peacher**, a double fragrant flower with red tipped leaf; **Rosa Plena**, a 32-inch tall variety with coral flowers; **Sebastian Maas**, a full hot pink flower with a touch of white in the center; **Edulis Superba**, pink edged flowers the yellow centers; **Pink Cameo**, a double flower with hot pink petals, 36 inches tall; and **White Angel**, an unusual yellow flower with white and pink fringes.

Those who like poppies now have a

choice of **Patty's Plum**, 5- to 6-inch purple flowers, 36 to 40 inches tall, 2-foot wide; **Garden Glory**, salmon flower with a ruffled edge; **Picotee**, multi-colored, white flowers with ruffled pink and red edges; **Pink Ruffles**, just like it sounds; and **Little Dancing Girl**, a pale pink-blue flower with dark spots at center.

For cimcifuga or bugbane fans, **Black Snake Root**, is a standout, says Boehler, of the 3-foot tall plant with reddish black foliage. They also have **James Compton**.

Karley Rose, a Pennisetum, is their newest ornamental grass, growing 3-foot-tall and 2-foot wide, with better hardiness, richer blue-green foliage, deeper bloom color, and dusty-red flower panicles from May until frost.

Marcus, a sun-loving dwarf salvia at 8 to 12 inches tall, has a dark violet flower from June through July, attracting hummingbirds and butterflies.

Hosta lovers will find **Snowcap**, with its wide brim, and **Thunderbolt**, with a

wide blue-green with gold jagged margin.

Representing sedums, there's **Autumn Fire**, an improvement on Autumn Joy. Its darker red flowers last longer and its stalks are sturdier. Meanwhile, in the columbine family, there's **Woodside Gold**, with chartreuse leaves and lungwort-type flower and for perennial geraniums, **Hocus Pocus**, with lavender flowers on deep bronze foliage, grows 16 inches tall, reblooms if dead-headed June through August.

Boehler's newest bellflower offerings include **Blue Waterfall**, which doubles in size second year and reblooms; **Bernice**, long blooming, double tubular orchid flowers with dark centers; and **Kent Belle**, 2-inch drooping orchid flowers with dark centers.

Pink Beauty, a Creeping Baby's Breath ground cover, has pale pink flowers all summer long while daylilies

Continues on Page 6

More odds and ends

(Continued from page 4)
information, call 759-1779.

Chesaning hosts Garden Walk June 21

The Historic Chesaning Association is hosting its fourth annual Garden Walk from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, June 21, at seven Chesaning area homes.

Tickets are \$7 in advance and \$8 the day of the walk. Call Sue or Gene Beldyga at (989) 845-6110 or Kathy Collins at Neu-Rich Jewelry, (989) 845-3408.

Bay City has garden walk

BAY CITY – Six gardens, including the historic Trombley House, are part of the annual Bay City Garden Club Garden Walk Tuesday, June 17.

It is from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 the day of the walk. Call Shelly Patterson at 892-2024.

Trapping best mole solution

The MSU Landscape CAT alert April 28 quoted the Mole Man saying, "All knowledgeable sources consider

trapping the only effective method of mole control!"

You can visit the Mole Man at www.themoleman.com to learn all about moles.

Eight homes in Mount Pleasant garden walk

MOUNT PLEASANT – The Evening Bloomers Gardeners Club sponsors its annual "Thru the Garden Gate" garden walk from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, June 28, rain or shine.

It features six Mount Pleasant homes: 3942 E. River Road; 3922 E. River Road; 3902 E. River Road; 3882 E. River Road; 3870 E. River Road; and 2245 N. Winn Road; plus two Lake Isabella homes – 1108 Clubhouse Drive, and 1112 Clubhouse Drive.

Tickets are \$5 at the Mount Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce or any of the gardens. Call Betty Assmann at (989) 772-1437.

Hosta show and sale July 19

EAST LANSING – The Michigan Hosta Society hosts a display and sale of hundreds of hosta leaves from noon to 5 p.

m. Saturday, July 19, at the MSU's Plant and Soil Sciences Building, Bogue and Wilson.

There also will be miniature container gardens, displays and floral arrangements.

Thanks for help on 'Making It Safe to Play'

A big thank you to the following master gardeners who donated their time to the "Making It Safe For Play" day on May 8.

Thanks to Debbie Keller and Sheila Hempsted for sharing their knowledge and love of gardening with high school kids as they planted shrubs and perennials at six area parks.

And thanks to Anne Birkam, Nancy Cotcamp, Bill and Judy Wegner, Charlotte Huebner and Debber Keller for the wonderful donation of dozens of plants — we used every single one!

It was a great project and the parks looked wonderful at the end of the day. Thank you all for your help.

Gail Caird

Cowan hosts May session

(Continued from Page 1)

Saginaw Art Museum gardens, where I was really interested in restoration gardening. And I like going to the Andersen Rose Garden for opening and closing roses.”

Her big project now is the Rail Trail, along with the new fairgrounds and Hartley Nature Center, all of which “are right in my backyard.”

“All of a sudden there’s lots of things to do close to home,” she says.

And if that’s not enough, she’s also involved in the Farmer’s Market.

“My dream project is a community garden where everyone has a plot. Gosh, if they can do that in Hell’s Kitchen, I don’t see why we can’t have that in Saginaw County. Maybe we’d be able to do something with St. Mary’s to get it going.

“It bothers me that there are people asking for food when anyone who wanted could have a vegetable garden. Then we could teach people how to can, using the Extension office as a resource for people who want to help themselves.”

She agreed to become vice president because “I feel I have the time to give and if I can do the job, I should do it, rather than waiting for someone else to come forward. And I love working with Judy Henning – she’s practical, nice, likes to laugh and puts up with me!

“I’d really like to see Judy’s vision of the classes come through. Everyone is eager for more education and when you work, it’s not easy going down to Lansing to (the classes.) It seems like with 167 (members), we ought to be able to spread the work out and get it done.”

Members visiting her home this month can expect to see her flower beds dug up, piles of dirt and some boulders from their woods waiting for placement as she considers landscaping ideas for her yard.

“I’m open to suggestions,” Cowan said. “I really want to have a friendship garden, where I put plants I’ve gotten from friends.

“Oh, I have a lot of ideas. When I say to my husband, ‘I’ve been thinking,’ he knows that means a lot of sweat equity is in store for him.”

Story by Darlene Damp, co-editor

Beech bark disease spreads across state

Beech scale (*Cryptococcus fagisuga* Lind) and *Nectria* fungus are affecting American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) and European beech (*F. sylvatica*).

Beech scale was introduced into Nova Scotia in 1890 on imported nursery stock. Since then, beech bark disease has spread throughout much of eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. Affected beech trees were discovered in Michigan in 2000.

Beech bark disease begins when trees are colonized by beech scale, a tiny, sap-feeding insect that excretes white, waxy material as it feeds. Wounds created by the scale insects eventually enable *Nectria* fungi to infect the tree.

Nectria infection causes cankers to form under the bark, which can eventually coalesce and kills the tree. Large, old trees are most vulnerable, and the loss of these trees may affect much wildlife.

Symptoms: Scales initially infect rough areas of beech bark, such as an old branch scars on the tree. Large, old trees are more likely to be colonized by beech scale than young trees with smooth bark. Tar spots can often be found on beech trees infected with the *Nectria* pathogen.

Trees with beech bark disease produce ragged, yellowish foliage and will eventually die. Infected trees sometimes break off in windy conditions, a condition known as beech snap.

Identification: Beech scale excretes white, waxy material as they feed, causing heavily infested trees to appear woolly or whitewashed. Trees that have been infected by *Nectria* may have long, linear cankers under the bark and dead branches in the canopy.

Immature scales and fungal spores can be windblown or carried by birds or people into new areas.

Local nurseries add new perennial selections

Continues from Page 5

Edge of Darkness, 24 inches, has a pansy-like flower, orchid with dark purple edges and reblooms although not as prolific as *Stella de Oro*. **Wineberry Candy**, with pale pink flowers with purple centers, is another rebloomer about the size of *Stella*.

Heliopsis, or False Sunflower, has **Lorraine Sunshine** in its ranks – a variegated yellow leaf with dark green veins and yellow flowers.

Rounding out Boehler’s list are three new mulleins or verbascum: **Summer Sorbet**, 18-24 inches tall, with raspberry peach blooms with purple plum centers, that provide Delphinium-like accent in a sunny place, flowers for months, even if not deadheaded; **Raspberry Ripple**, 18-24 inches tall, lavender with white flowers; and **Caribbean Crush**, 38-48 inches, where each flower is a blend of apricot, mango, burnt orange on gray-green foliage, blooming July to frost in full sun.

Ken Weiers of Kluck Nursery, 1020 Van Wormer, says gardeners will find four new hosta varieties there: **Blue Umbrella**, 48 inches tall with huge, blue-green leaves; **Antioch**, 12 inches tall that tolerates full

sun; **Loyalist**, with pure white leaves edged in green; and **Patriot**, the reverse of *Loyalist* with braided green center leaves with white edges. All have lavender flowers.

Kim’s Knee High, a newer purple coneflower, only grows 18 to 24 inches high, providing a shorter plant in the garden while pulmonaria **Raspberry Splash** grows 12 inches high with dusty raspberry flowers and silver green leaves.

Warren Liken of Bay Landscaping, Essexville, offers **Becky**, a double-petaled Shasta daisy, the grows 30 to 36 inches tall.

“We’re getting more into hostas,” he said, adding the tropical-looking **Blue Angel**, with its large heart-shaped leaf, that grows 48 inches tall; **Carnival**, with its 9-inch-long and 7 ½-inch wide creamy yellow margined leaf, grows 30 inches tall and 16 inches wide; and **Island Charm**, with small white leaf with green margins, that grows 21 inches tall.

“Most of our perennials are in one-gallon containers that allows for massing without being too cost-prohibitive,” he said.

Story by Darlene Damp, co-editor



Volunteer opportunities

The following are current volunteer opportunities, which will aid the community and help fulfill your requirements for certification or recertification.

Master Gardener Coordinator Angela Irwin says the office needs volunteers to **answer homeowner questions**. Call her or Wil Hufton at 758-2500, ext. 224 to let them know when you can work.

The **MSU Ag Expo** is in need of Master Gardener volunteers, working in four-hour shifts, to demonstrate phases of container gardening and seed starting.

Seeds and containers will be donated; help is needed in getting them planted. Contact Joyce Dankenbring at cdcrmom@acd.net or call (517) 543-1588.

The **Bridgeport Museum Children's Garden** needs a coordinator to plan, organize and maintain the museum garden with groups of 4H youth. Contact Jan

Wendland at 758-2500.

The **Saginaw Art Museum**, 1126 N. Michigan, needs volunteers to help plant at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 24 or May 31. Call 752-7164 as soon as possible to volunteer. All cleanup is done; coffee and donuts served to gardeners.

Elaine Rappley is looking for at least 20 volunteers to work two-hour shifts during the **Saginaw Art Museum Garden Walk** from noon to 8 p.m. Wednesday, June 18. Master Gardeners answer questions from visitors and may volunteer at more than one home.

The tour includes the gardens of Joe and Kathy Leach, 1569 Thunderbird, off Geddes, in Shields; Alice Hudson, 3646 Holly Lane, south of Tittabawassee; Grey and June Gitzen, 1400 Coolidge, off State in Lathrup Park; Joann Burditt and Sue Fortune, 3733 State; John and Barbara

Burns, 3656 Lincoln, Carrollton; and Bob and Ann Schnetzler, 1095 Pius, Saginaw Township.

Volunteers can check their assigned times and places or sign up at the May meeting.

Be sure to provide your name and phone number. For more information, e-mail rappleyjunk@aol.com.

Aileen Cowan is looking for help plant shrubs and trees for the **Rail Trail** in St. Charles this month.

She is working with the Saginaw County Parks and Recreation to coordinate the time and date as they will supply machinery.

Planting will probably be a weekday, during the county's business hours. E-mail Cowan at scratchcreations@worldnet.att.net and leave your e-mail address or telephone number.

Caird organizes 2 field trips in early June...but wait, there's more...

It's not too late to sign up for two field trips in June, says Gail Caird, program chairman.

At 1 p.m. Sunday, June 8, Master Gardeners will visit Mill Creek Gardens, 100 E. Murphy Lake Road, Mayville. It features 1,600 varieties of irises, as well as Hostas and other perennials.

Carpoolers will meet at noon at the Kmart parking lot, Gratiot and Center. Directions: Take M46 east to M24 south. Turn west on Murphy Lake Road. (If you get to Millington Road, you have gone too far.) There is no house, only a pole barn at the site.

Interested members also will visit Phil Lisik's nursery at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 11, at Iva and Geddes roads, Hemlock.

Lisik specializes in Hostas and daylilies, but carries other interesting and unusual perennials and woody ornamentals at very reasonable prices, Caird says.

Carpoolers will meet at 6 p.m. at Kmart, Gratiot and Center.

You may sign up at the May meeting, or call Caird at 793-1942.

"The nurseries like to know about how many to expect," she said. "If you have signed up, and are unable to go, please call,



Co-owner Linda Little details operations at Michigan Hydroponics and its Salzburg Winery, both at 2282 E. Salzburg, Bay City.

so that we do not wait for you!"

Last year's bus trip was such a success that Caird as organized another tour, this time to the Toledo Botanical Gardens on Saturday, July 26.

The 20 acres, in northwest Toledo, feature a shade garden with ferns, wildflowers, rhododendrons and azaleas and perennial garden, where collections

are framed by arbovitae and Japanese yews. Other gardens include daylily, color, cottage, green and ornamental grasses.

Visit www.toledogardens.org to see what's in store.

Besides a gift shop, there's a café where MGs will lunch.

From there, the bus will head back to Saginaw, stopping at the Heavenly Scent Herb Farm in Fenton and at The Weed Lady in Grand Blanc, each for about one hour. The bus returns to Saginaw no later than 6 p.m.

Cost of the trip is \$25, plus money for your lunch and any plant purchases you make.

To reserve a seat on the bus, a check, payable to SVMGA, is due at sign up at the May or June meetings or mailed to Caird at 5355 N. Nottingham Drive, Saginaw 48603. There are no refunds unless someone takes your place.

"We will go rain or shine," says Caird.

"We need a minimum of 40 to go on the trip (maximum of 47) by June 26. If there are not enough people to go, all money will be refunded."

Estonian family creates 'perfect' clematis cultivars

Eight new varieties of clematis are available this year, thanks to an Estonian family that persevered, says George Atkinson, Zelenka Nursery marketing director, Grand Haven, in a recent issue of *The Michigan Landscape*.

Despite being forced into collective farming by the Soviet Union, the Kivistik family continued plant breeding, creating a remarkable collection from the Baltics and the Soviet Union.

They crossbred clematis, developing over 40 different varieties.

Their goal was to create cultivars with a compact growth habit and yearly, numerous rich blossoms developing on the current season's growth, lasting spring through summer.

And, because the plants were bred at the northernmost breeding nursery for clematis cultivars, they are hardy to USDA Hardiness Zone 3b.

Eight have come the United States, each reaching at least 5-foot high and trellis width in three years. They are:

- ##Kullus, with wavy 5-inch, pale violet flowers and contrasting brown stamens, blooms early summer into fall.
- ##Marmorì, with wavy 6-inch pale pink flowers, mottled deep pink base with matching anthers, from summer into fall.
- ##Minister, 7-inch light blue single flowers with brown stamens, from early summer to late fall.
- ##Piilu, 2 ½-inch light purple-pink flowers with dark purple-red bars, from late spring to fall. Spring blooms are double; single summer and fall blooms .
- ##Reiman, 5-inch blue-purple single flowers flushed with red, red and yellow stamens, from early summer into fall.
- ##Ruutel, 6-inch dark pure red single flowers with brown stamens from early summer into fall against green foliage. Free-flowering variety.
- ##Silmakavi, 6-inch light blue single flowers with yellow stamens from midsummer into fall. Free-flowering variety.
- ##Viola, 5-inch blue-violet single flowers with showy yellow anthers from early summer through late fall.

Treatment can be tricky for pesky grubs

Recent calls to the Saginaw County MSU Extension Horticulture Hotline have centered on grubs.

We are seeing quite a bit of grub damage from the European chafer in lawns in Saginaw County. The European chafer is a problem throughout most of the southern half of Michigan, south of a line between Muskegon and Bay City.

Before rushing to the garden center to buy insecticide, homeowners should be sure they have grubs. Lawns may look bad for many other reasons (salt injury, etc.). MSU has a good photo at http://www.msue.msu.edu/ipm/CAT03_land/L04-18-03Grubs.htm .

If you see a large dead patch in your lawn, pull up some turf and dig around in the soil to see if you have grubs. If grubs caused the lawn problem, it will be easy to find four or five C-shaped, white grubs or more per square foot. If you straighten them out, they are about an inch long.

If grubs are the problem, treat infested areas of their lawn with an insecticide to prevent more turf damage.

Right now is a good time to treat for grubs while they are actively feeding. Usually there is no point in applying an insecticide after the middle of May, because the grubs will be about done feeding for the spring, but due to a late spring this year you can treat through May 31.

When homeowners visit the garden center, it can be confusing. Diazinon (diazinon) has been used for more than 40 years to protect crops, gardens, lawns and homes from cockroaches, ants, fire ants, grubs, fleas, mites, aphids, beetles and ticks. Some agriculture uses of diazinon will continue, but home and garden uses of diazinon will be phased out through 2004.

Adding to the confusion is the appearance of a replacement product from Spectrum Brand-Spectracide called Triazacide. It appeared on shelves in bags of granular insecticide with a big drawing of a grub on the bag. Dave Smitley, an MSU entomologist, advises this synthetic pyrethroid insecticide (lambda cyhalothrin) is not effective for grub control.

Pyrethroids must be soil

incorporated to kill grubs, and that is not possible to do in turf grass.

In the spring – March 15 to May 30-- and fall, Aug. 15 to Oct. 30, homeowners should use a curative insecticide such as Diazinon, Sevin (carbaryl) or Dylox (trochlorfon) to reduce turf damage.

MSU tests show that Diazinon works best and Sevin has worked better than Dylox. Note: Sevin and Dylox are not effective at a pH above 7.8. Spray insecticides should be followed by a ½-inch of irrigation to move the insecticide into the soil. A coffee mug can be used to measure.

Granular treatments are more practical for low maintenance turf. Wait one week after treatment before re-seeding so the grubs don't eat the grass seed.

To avoid the same problem next year, treat lawns with a preventive insecticide such as Merit or Bayer Advanced Lawn Season-Long Grub Control or GrubEx (imidacloprid) between July 1 and Aug. 15 for optimal control.

Note: these products will not work on large grubs that are present at this time (or next fall), but they are excellent for control of the young grubs present in late July and early August.

Dig up a square foot of turf after Sept. 1 to see if grubs are present in high enough numbers to cause damage. Also watch and sample around thinning patches in the lawn and near any skunk, raccoon or crow damage. Seven to 12 grubs per square foot suggests a need for an application of a curative insecticide the following March.

If grub populations were high the previous fall it would be wise to continue through May.

Because of the myriad of names in use, always look to the "effective ingredient" on the package label.

Provided by Wil Hufton

*"No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, no culture comparable to that of the garden...But though an old man, I am but a young gardener."
- Thomas Jefferson*