

# The Grapevine

Bulletin of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association

September 2005 Volume 9, Issue 9

## Pest manager emphasizes holistic approach

MIDLAND – When plants don't look healthy, Joe LaForest is the one Dow Gardens horticulturists turn to for answers.

"It's my job to figure out what's wrong and fix it," says the Ohio State University graduate, who recently joined the 110-acre non-profit facility.

He's been diagnosing and treating plant problems ever since, along with offering classes to local gardeners on similar topics.

The Twinsburg, Ohio, native will share his expertise Wednesday, Sept. 28, with members of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association when they return to the Andersen Enrichment Center for their monthly meetings.

"Identifying insects is just the tip of the iceberg for determining what might be wrong with a plant," LaForest says.

"Too often, we hit them with this or with that, without really knowing what the problem is, or if what we did worked, or if environmental factors were impacted.

"Alan Siewart, an Ohio Department of

Natural Resources forester, wrote 'in horticulture, as in medicine, treatment of plant systems without correct diagnoses is malpractice.'

"That's the first time I had ever heard anyone actually say that.

It struck a chord because LaForest had worked first as a tree tech sprayer, then as an arborist, to help pay for college.

"We were using products, that when I got into college and started studying these things, were not as clear cut about what to use. It got me thinking, especially because I knew other companies that were not as scrupulous as the one I worked for. That's when I realized a more holistic approach would be much better."

His major expanded from forestry to also include plant pathology and entomology to give him a broader view. The result has meant more emphasis on biological controls, rather than turning first to chemicals.

"Right now, we have an area in the garden with aphids, and yes, the cement does get sticky from where they are. But when the other staff wanted to spray, I said no. Instead, I put out a sticky card and found there were beneficial predators there that would resolve the aphid



Joe LaForest, pest manager at Dow Gardens, is the Sept. 28 speaker.

### Next meeting

- 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 28, at the Andersen Enrichment Center, Ezra Rust Drive
  - 7 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. business meeting
  - 7:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. refreshments
  - 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. Joe LaForest, pest manager at Dow Gardens, Midland, discusses "Identifying Insects."
  - Please wear your badge.
- NO GUESTS.**

issue."

And, rather than spraying for yellow jackets, or wasps in the Children's Garden, LaForest has resorted to hot water to kill them.

"We certainly don't want to have a lot of chemicals floating around where there are kids," he explained.

"It's just like we've got an ant problem around the gardens and I'm trying a Jerry Baker remedy, using instant grits. Supposedly it gets in their stomachs and 48 hours later they die.

"Of course, I'm skeptical until I see the results for myself."

He's also had to deal with pine saw fly, squishing them as they feed in groups; the azalea saw fly, Japanese beetles in the

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## Don't forget fall plant exchange Sept. 21

Advanced Master Gardener Anne Birkam opens her garden at 2523 N. Oakley, at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 21, for the annual fall plant exchange.

The fall plant exchange will work the same as the spring plant exchange.

Pot or bag plants and label with pertinent information, like the name — common and/or botanical — light requirements, height and color, to help new owners make the right choice for their gardens.

Numbers will be handed out to members on arrival. Plants will be distributed in groups by number.

Those bringing plants for the exchange should arrive a little early and place them on Birkam's driveway.

Only members may attend although you do not have to bring plants to participate.

Those who would like to be comfortable should bring a chair, or plan on

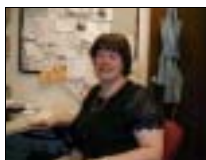
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# MG coordinator job a change for Reese resident

Karen Siegel was looking for a change after six years of substitute teaching in Reese.

“I had known about the Master Gardener classes and it just seemed like this time, it worked out,” she explained.

“When I heard Mary (Lysogorski) talking about what she did during class, I thought ‘oh, that’s interesting.’”



Karen Siegel, new MG coordinator

Little did Siegel know that just several months later, she would become the Master Gardener coordinator.

The position calls for her to spend eight hours a week managing the Master Gardener program and another 20 hours a week as secretary to Mark Seamon, county agricultural agent.

“I’m hoping I can attract more volunteers to take care of things in the office, including the hotline,” said Siegel.

“I’d also like to make the organization more visible, although I think a good job has been done there already and I would like to streamline the way things are done around here.”

She needs volunteers to help file, copy and handle homeowner calls.

“I know people are shy about this because they’re afraid of making a mistake. I did most of my volunteer hours in the office and yes, you can make a mistake, but it’s OK to say you don’t know. If you don’t, Wil (Hufton) knows everything — he really does!”

The Milwaukee, Wis., native has lived in Reese nearly eight years, ever since her husband, the Rev. Steve, accepted his first pastoral call to Trinity Lutheran Church.

Although they went to different high schools, they met playing baritone horn

in the city band. They were married after graduation from college. They have two children, Zachary, 15, and Rachel, 12.

Siegel has worked as a radio reporter, a pastry chef and taught Sunday School for five years at her church.

When she’s not working, she loves to read, quilt, knit, do scrapbooking and “goof around on the computer.”

“I drive my kids around a lot, my son does cross-country and wrestling, my daughter, the piano and oboe and volleyball in season.”

The family have 3/4 of an acre, planted with annuals, perennials, vegetable garden, shrubs, trees and Steve’s 26 rose-bushes.

“My father, my grandfather always gardened and I’ve been gardening as long as I can remember

“When I got the letter about this job, I thought it sounded like fun,” Siegel said.

“I’ve just got a lot I’ve got to catch up on.”

## Officers for 2005-2006

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Nancy Hales 799-2118

### Secretary

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## LaForest doesn’t let insects bug him...

rose garden and turf, euonymous scale and Asian lady beetles.

“Lady bugs are a wide and useful group, not just the Asians that stink up the house and bite you,” LaForest explains.

“Although we are talking about having a class on how to Asian lady bug-proof your house, with the side benefit of insulating your house more.

“I like to offer classes when people can use them.

“Right now, identifying insects, as the season is coming to a close, makes it tough. It’s a matter of using the information, or losing it, I think.”

To help reinforce his talk, LaForest will offer handouts, as well as on-line resources.

Pest alerts, put out by his alma mater, give him a heads-up on what may occur

“Identifying insects is just the tip of the iceberg..” says LaForest.

here, because Ohio tends to be a couple weeks ahead of Michigan.

And there always are his classes, timed to the seasons, or according to a new system at Dow Gardens, on demand.

When LaForest isn’t tracking down plant disease and pests at work, he and his new bride, Lynn Sosnowskie, are taking care of their dog, rabbit and three rats.

Sosnowskie is doing post-doctoral studies in weed science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

“I still enjoy climbing trees from my days as an arborist,” LaForest says.

“And I like teaching other people how to climb trees.”

Story by Darlene Damp, editor

## Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association mission statement

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

# Letter from the President

Every spring I can't wait until it is warm enough to start filling the 40-odd containers we have spotted around the yard and patio.

But now it's fall, I have to empty and clean all those pots, and it's a bit of a chore. Some containers, like the Hemerocallis and Hostas are just cut off and put in the garage to over-winter. The Brugmansia and Plectranthus I over-winter in the basement.

It's all those zone 9 and 10 plants that I succumbed to in April that have to be dug out and composted before the frosts of late September and October arrive and give me fits! Oh, well, that's all part of gardening, and by next February I'll be ordering plants to start all over again next spring.

The Children's Zoo at Celebration Square is moving into the next phase of expansion to better educate the children

as well as we adults in the Saginaw Valley. Changes are taking place and Patti Decker, who is the chair of the zoo Horticulture committee, can use our help.

In the Grapevine, on Page 5, are work session dates. She needs lots of volunteers to help save and relocate perennials, shrubs and trees. If you have a couple of hours to spare, consider putting on your work shoes and gloves and helping Patti and her committee.

I know our primary mission is to volunteer and educate the community, but we need opportunities for fellowship, too.

We have two such chances this month. Wednesday, the 21st, Ann Birkam is hosting our annual fall plant exchange. So you don't have plants to exchange? Come anyway. I'm sure you'll go home with several.



On the 28th we move back into the Enrichment Center after a summer of visiting members' gardens. Many thanks to Amy, Crystal, Sarah and Carmen for hosting our summer meetings.

When you're at the association meeting on the 28th, take a minute and introduce yourself to Karen Siegel, our new Master Gardener Coordinator. She has hit the ground running in her new capacity. Her first assignment was the new Master Gardener Volunteer training which started Aug. 25. She needs volunteer help at the office, so if you have some time, give her a call at 758-2500, ext. 250.

Speaking of help, Wil Hufton has been inundated with homeowner calls this summer.

If you're phone shy, he can use help researching problems.

*Grey*

## City compost keeps weeds down, veggies huge

*Continues from Page 1*

standing for the duration.

"I figure this is the only time I could do this, because my yard is so small," says the librarian for Saginaw Public Libraries.

While her city lot may appear small, Birkam has planted nearly every inch, almost eliminating any grass on her property.

It began with taking out two box elder trees in the front yard and nine tree stumps in the backyard.

When lightning struck an old cherry tree, there was suddenly room for a new shed and a new deck off the back of the house.

"I've always had a vegetable garden," says Birkam. "I didn't really grow flowers before the late 1990s, except sunflowers."

And she has some huge vegetables, nurtured by the compost available to city residents. There's tomatoes, peppers, corn, red and green lettuce, broccoli, carrots, Swiss chard, zucchini, asparagus,

beans, celery, cucumbers, cabbage and even artichokes.

"I make my own tomato sauce and can it. I haven't bought any in years," Birkam says.

Any excess from her garden goes to friends or is donated to local agencies.

Birkam also grows a variety of herbs and has moved them closer to the house for easy access.

A few steps down her garden path and

there's lemon balm, mint, vanilla grass, horseradish, chamomile, dill, lovage, parsley, sage, chives and more.

"I dry them and use them all year long," she says.

"The only problems I run into are slugs and powdery mildew but I don't like to use chemicals — if I kill all the bad bugs, what will the good bugs have to eat?

"I start a lot of seeds indoors on the windowsills or counters and then move them outside when it gets warmer."



Anne Birkam in her backyard garden.

Her flower garden includes flowering shrubs like forsythia, butterfly bush and lilac, along with a variety of perennials, from balloon flower, iris and mums to trumpet vine and cleome.

"I've also got two columnar apple trees. I saw the ones Gail (Caird) had and fell in love with them," Birkam says.

Indoors, she also has houseplants plus she takes seeds and cuttings from her annuals to plant next spring.

Those attending the fall plant exchange may park on North Oakley, on Bond or Durand.

Birkam's house is just off Weiss.

### Welcome new members!

The new additions to the SVMGA membership roster are:

**Joy Gajewski**, Birch Run, MG Trainee.

**Karen Siegel**, Reese, MG Trainee.

There are now 176 members of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association.

## Odds and Ends

### Volunteers can 'Make a Difference' on Oct. 20

Make A Difference Day, set for Thursday, Oct. 20, is seeking Master Gardeners to help students spruce up the yards of 10 senior citizens throughout Saginaw County.

The annual day of "doing good" serves as the kick-off for National Youth Service Day.

Teams of students, representing 10 to 12 schools, along with school staff and Master Gardeners will plant flowers and do fall clean-up for elderly homeowners who are no longer able to do their own yard work, window washing or gardening chores.

The day begins at 7:50 a.m. at the Andersen Enrichment Center where teams assemble and then take buses to the work sites. Teams work from 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and then return to the center for lunch and the trip back to their home school.

"The presence and expertise of Master Gardeners has been one of the keys to making these service days so successful," said Joe Madison, project coordinator.

Master Gardeners who wish to participate may contact Madison at 790-6417 or Gail Caird at 793-1942.

The project is sponsored by Saginaw County's Promise Giving Back Task Force, Saginaw Community Foundation, Youth FORCE, United Way of Saginaw County, MSU Extension, Saginaw Intermediate School District and many other organizations.

### Farmer's Market seeks recipes for cookbook

Master Gardeners are invited to submit their favorite recipes for the Downtown Saginaw Farmer's Market Cookbook.

Please include your name, address and telephone number, along with the recipe name, ingredients, preparation information, and any story that may go along with the recipe.

Addresses and phone numbers are not used in the cookbook — only in case of any question that may arise about the recipe.

The cookbooks are given out during

Harvest Days at the Market.

Please e-mail the recipes as soon as possible to Dan Keane at keanedml@chartermi.net.

### Water lettuce available

Looking for some happy, healthy water lettuce plants for your pond?

One Saginaw Township gardener has too much of a good thing and is selling the excess for \$2 a plant. Her plants originally were purchased at Boehler's Greenhouses.

They say for best results you should have 75% plant coverage in your pond and she currently has 125% coverage!

For more information, call Jackie at 792-0288, evenings.

### Project receipts due now

Final spending reports and receipts for all project funding received this year are due now.

Those who received a deadline extension to buy bulbs for fall planting should submit their reports as soon as final purchases are made.

Project funds, up to \$200 each, are granted on a first-come, first-serve basis after approval by the SVMGA board.

For information, contact Nancy Hales, vice president, at 799-2118, or email charterrebel@sbsglobal.net.

### Bulbs and more bulbs up for sale at fall seminar

Bulbs are ordered for the annual sale at "An Autumn Affair for Gardeners."

The committee has brought back some favorites from last year and selected some new varieties based on keynote speaker Brent Heath's sessions.

The bulbs will come from Brent and Becky's Bulbs, based in Gloucester, Va.

The list includes allium Globemaster, Hair, Schubertii and Neapolitanum; crocus Bluebird, Zwanenberg, Jean d'Arc and Romance; hyacithoides (hyacinths) hispanica Excelsior and Queen of the PI; and iris reticulata Harmony, Pixie and Natasha.

Also available will be muscari Valerie Finnis, Mount Hood and Golden Frangrance; and hippeastrum (amaryllis)

Royal Velvet, Papilio Butterfly, Dancing Queen, Red Lion, Jewel, Nymph and Cocktail.

For those who like daffodils, Avalon, Spellbinder, Thalia and Princess Zaide; the tulips include Striped Belladonna, Zurel, Queen of the Night and Lady Jane.

### Hours for recertification due in December

It's not too soon to start compiling your hours for recertification as Master Gardeners for 2006.

You will need a minimum of 15 hours of volunteer work and 5 hours of education by the end of December.

Education credit is earned by attending SVMGA meetings with a speaker or other classes approved by the state or local MG coordinator.

Volunteer hours are earned by working on projects approved by the MG coordinator.

If you still need hours, please contact Karen Siegel, MG coordinator, at 758-2500, ext. 250, Tuesdays to Fridays, or e-mail her at siegelk@msu.edu.

### Meijer Gardens has bonsai show in October

GRAND RAPIDS — The West Michigan Bonsai Club will display bonsai trees at a fall show Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 8-9 At Meijer Gardens.

Many will be in full fall color and local club members will demonstrate the art of bonsai.

The show is from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 8 and noon to 5 p.m. Oct. 9.

The show is free. Contact Meijer Gardens at (616) 957-1580.

### Color tour at Whiting Forest

MIDLAND — Fall is a spectacular time to visit Whiting Forest when foliage turns brilliant colors.

Join Douglas Chapman, Dow Gardens horticulturist/director, from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 11, to see autumn colors. Admission fee.

# Zoo needs help with plant relocation project

The Children's Zoo at Celebration Square is preparing for a major construction project starting this fall.

As a result, there will be a number of opportunities to volunteer, says Patti Decker, horticulture committee chairperson.

"Volunteers will be needed to prepare and relocate plants, shrubs and trees, clean-up existing beds and for general fall garden maintenance."

The Children's Zoo is an MSU-approved site for Master Gardeners.

The late season dates could help fill in volunteer hours for those still needing to meet requirements for state recertification in 2006.

The following dates, times and contact person are listed here.

"Feel free to call or email the contact person, if you have any questions regarding a specific date or activity," says Decker

"This will be an exciting, fun time and a time to earn volunteer hours."

The work dates include:

• **Saturday, Sept. 17**, starting at 9 a.m., cut back and move hostas.

Contact person: Nancy Hales at 799-2118 or charterrebel@sbcglobal.net.

• **Saturday, Sept. 24**, starting at 10 a.m., general garden maintenance.

Contact person: Patti Decker at 792-6633 or rizzobfrank@aol.com.

• **Sunday, Sept. 25**, starting at 9 a.m., relocating shrubs.

Contact person, Bryan Forrest at 791-3963 or bfbaddog28@sbcglobal.net.

There also is an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast at the Zoo for Train Days from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. It costs \$5 for zoo members, \$6 for nonmembers.

• **Tuesday, Oct. 4**, starting at 9 a.m., trees to be moved.

Contact person, Grey Gitzen at 792-0615 or jgreygzn@aol.com. Or Bryan Forrest at 791-3963 or bfbaddog28@sbcglobal.net.

• **Wednesday, Oct. 5**, starting at 3 p.m., cut, mark and move ornamental grasses.

Contact person: Bob Gubbins at 791-6039 or chipping@SBCglobal.net.

• **Saturday, Oct. 8, GARDENER APPRECIATION DAY**, starting at 9 a.m., general garden clean-up and assist gardeners whose gardens are being relocated.

Lunch will be provided starting at 11:30 a.m. for all garden volunteers.

Please RSVP for lunch by Tuesday, Oct. 4. Garden awards will be handed out

at 12:30 p.m.

Contact person: Patti Decker at 792-6633 or rizzobfrank@aol.com Or Colleen Sproul at colleensproul@hotmail.com.

• **Saturday, Nov. 5**, Clean-up Day starting at 9 a.m., complete garden clean-up and putting gardens to bed for the season.

• Bagels and hot beverages provided.

Contact person: Patti Decker at 792-6633 or rizzobfrank@aol.com Or Colleen Sproul at colleensproul@hotmail.com.

There may be more volunteer work dates added in October, says Decker.

It will depend on the weather and the amount of work that needs to be done.

Contact Decker, if there are any questions, at 792-6633, or rizzobfrank@aol.com.

"The Horticulture Committee also would like to thank everyone who has made this gardening season a success," says Decker.

"The Saginaw Children's Zoo wouldn't look nearly as beautiful if it weren't for the hundreds of volunteer hours, plant donations and dedicated individuals.

"We give you a big thank you!"

## Why move the plants at the Zoo?

The massive relocation of plants, shrubs and trees this fall will begin to make room for a \$1.5 million renovation of the Children's Zoo.

The renovation could take up to three years, depending on the availability of funding.

Construction this fall will enlarge and deepen the existing pond, add a waterfall, a walking bridge, and a wetland area, complete with water or filtration (rain) gardens, says Nancy Parker, zoo director.

In addition, the boat, the River Queen, now located in the center of the pond, would be placed on top of an underwater viewing area of the pond so visitors could see the activity there.

There also will be a new maintenance building plus an expansion of the barnyard. Truck access also will improve.

"This is big," Patti Decker, zoo horti-

culture committee chairman told her fellow members at a recent meeting.

"From the capuchin monkey area to Washington is basically all going to change."

The first stage, involving the pond area, will cost an estimated \$750,000.

Future plans call for an aviary, a floating bridge, a Voyager canoe area and an amphibian walk and more.

"Some of this is still in the rough drawing stage," explains Parker.

"What we do will depend on the amount of money we're able to raise."

"The changes we are making have to be educationally and environmentally oriented," said Nancy Parker, zoo director.

"Right now, with the pond there's not as much opportunity for teaching, but if we add a wetland area with tadpoles,

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

Newsletter deadline:  
**Monday, Oct. 10**  
Send submissions to  
**Darlene Damp, editor**  
**shrew@att.net**

To view the monthly newsletter  
on the Web site, please go to:  
**www.msue.msu.edu/**  
**mastergardener/saginaw**

# Minutes of the August 24, 2005 meeting

President Grey Gitzen welcomed 55 members to Carmen Lerash's home. He thanked Carmen and her husband, Terry, for their hospitality.

Ruth Sny moved that the minutes of the July 2005 meeting be approved as published; Karen Tilden seconded the motion.

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

Balance of last report	\$5,139.23
Deposits 7/27/05 to 8/23/05	\$2,444.80
Expenses 7/27/05 to 8/23/05	\$247.72
Balance as of 8/23/05	\$7,336.31

As of 8/23/05 we have 175 paid members.

Kathy Berger moved acceptance of the treasurer's report; Darlene Damp seconded the motion.

Angela Irwin had notebooks available for new members. Nancy Cotcamp had rosters available.

Grey Gitzen introduced Karen Siegel, the new Master Gardener coordinator. She also is Mark Seaman's secretary and will be in the office Tuesdays through Fridays.

Karen said if members needed to know about volunteer opportunities to call her. She also announced the next class starts Aug. 25 and runs through Nov. 17.

A scholarship is available for the winter class. The class costs \$200. Anyone interested in monitoring for the class should see her. She does not have e-mail yet but should soon.

Judy Henning reported that 89 people have signed up for the fall conference on

Oct. 1.

She encouraged all members to sign up. The vendors are not completely set but will be in place for the conference.

People are coming to the conference from all over Michigan. Conference Publicity Chairman Darlene Damp said an article will appear in the Saginaw News Sept. 4. The deadline for registering is Sept. 16.

Volunteers are needed to do counting at the Saginaw Farmer's Market. A sign-up sheet with dates and times was available.

The Master Gardener traveling case also will be at the market those days so volunteers may be answering questions from the shoppers.

Ruth Sny had a sign-up sheet for the Dow Events Center's atrium garden. A work date has not been set yet.

They will be doing some rock sculptures in the atrium and will need help moving the rocks in.

Volunteers also are needed to sign up for refreshments for September and November.

Patti Decker had a sign-up sheet for the mailing list for fall clean-up at the Saginaw Children's Zoo. So far, work dates are set for Saturday, Oct. 8, and Sunday, Nov. 6.

Other work dates will be in the newsletter. Decker said there are lots of opportunities for moving plants and preparing beds due to a renovation program (See Page 5.)

Two SVMGA members, Alice Hudson and Bob Gubbins, placed in the zoo garden contest this year. Hudson took second and Gubbins placed third.

The Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association received an honorable mention.

Sny mentioned that the dahlia bed at the zoo was looking very nice and thanked the volunteers who worked on it.

Henning asked members to consider giving a donation to the zoo for the loss incurred by the dog attack in August. The insurance does not cover the veterinarian fees or the animals.

After much discussion, Gail Caird moved that SVMGA donate \$1,000 to the zoo for the animals and Waunita Pettiford seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Thanks go to Carmen Lerash for donating the mug set, Judy Henning for donating the address book and an anonymous donor for the Christmas tree pot.

Congratulations to Judy Henning for winning the mug set, Bonnie Duclos for winning the Christmas tree pot and Wil Hufton for winning the address book.

Carmen Lerash thanked everyone for coming and talked about all the work it took to prepare her lovely garden. The meeting was adjourned and members enjoyed refreshments and touring the garden.

*Submitted by Anne Birkam,  
secretary*

## More odds and ends....

### Flower shows at Matthaei

ANN ARBOR — Two flower groups will host their annual shows at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens.

The Ann Arbor Garden Club hosts its 75th anniversary flower show from noon to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 24.

The Michigan African Violet Society show and sale is from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 1-2.

Call (734) 647-7600 or visit [www.sitemaker.umich.edu/mbgna](http://www.sitemaker.umich.edu/mbgna).

### Powdery mildew a problem?

In case you missed Advanced Master Gardener Karen Tilden's advice in The Saginaw News recently about powdery mildew. The Grapevine provides it here.

If you're seeing powdery mildew, the grayish white patches that appear on leaves, she suggests mixing 1 pound baking soda, 1 gallon water and 1/4 teaspoon mild dish soap.

The spray the tops and bottoms of the leaves every 10 to 14 days from spring through fall.

### SVMGA donates \$1,000 to zoo

Members of the Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association voted to give the Children's Zoo at Celebration Square \$1,000.

The funds were earmarked to help the zoo pay for veterinary bills and replacement of animals since its insurance does not cover those expenses.

Several animals were injured when two dogs apparently got into the zoo after hours. The zoo is adding more fencing to resolve this problem.

## Members build rock sculptures at Dow Center

Four members of SVMGA and employees of the Dow Event Center moved a ton and a half of large stones this month to create sculptures in the atrium garden.

"In trying to create plantings there we realized that most of the productions are in the winter and all anyone would be seeing is blank space," said project co-chairman Ruth Sny.

So the committee took its cue from Celtic Conifers in Freeland, layering the rocks until each formed its own "personality."

"We took a more artistic approach and I think we got a lot accomplished," Sny explained to board members.

"The staff really pitched in to help and worked hard. Thank goodness, I don't know how we would have moved all those huge rocks."

Some \$230 worth of large rocks were donated and delivered by Stone Quest in Saginaw Township to the project site.

Members assisting Sny included Grey Gitzen, Waunita Pettiford and Mary Novak.

"Later, we plan to plant some miniature conifers from Celtic Conifers, some of which they will donate to the project," Sny said.

She also said that she, the other co-chairman and the Event Center staff were keeping the containers, that were planted in spring, watered and maintained.

"They still look great," said Gitzen, who helped plant the pots in time for



Ruth Sny admires the group's handiwork after a day of lugging large rocks to the Dow Event Center's atrium garden.

spring proms at the event center.

Center managers approached SVMGA earlier this year for help in beautifying the grounds.

## Meet the Gardener — Sherry Burkhart

Whether she is walking around the block or bicycling some where around the world, "I never see ugly" says this Advanced Master Gardener.

She refers to herself as an outdoor person.

Photography and biking have been special hobbies for Sherry Burkhart. For years she has been a long-distance bicyclist with camera in hand.



Sherry Burkhart is an Advanced Master Gardener.

She loves to photograph gardens, natural landscapes and mountains, which are her favorite.

As a member of Bicycle Adventure Club, Sherry has had many exciting trips through Europe; biking through Switzerland, France, Italy and Germany.

Her favorite spot for biking and picture-taking is New Zealand, where she has been three times to both the North and South Islands.

Sherry, herself was a tour organizer providing maps, lodging and sag wagons. Apparently these wagons are available if

a biker gets too tired along the way. The bikers are not racers, although Lance Armstrong is her hero, says Sherry!

The trips are for pleasure, stopping anywhere along the way, and include groups of 18 to 20 people.

Sherry bikes shorter distances now-a-days, taking photos for her own pleasure. She has done some scrapbooking with her treasures and makes cards, using her photographs, to send as gifts to friends.

Sherry was born and raised in Bay City and after 30 years she moved to Saginaw for marriage and work. After 28 years with the Department of Human Services, she retired with a goal to learn about plants, their development and design.

Sherry said her job with the Family Independence Agency was very absorbing and left little time or energy for gardening.

She may have traded one for another!

Although she took "the class" only two and a half years ago, she is already an Advanced Master Gardener. She has volunteered in the MSU office, garden walks, Saginaw Township Playscape, Saginaw Valley Rail Trail, "Make a Difference Day" and more.

After a year of preparation in her own-garden, Sherry began developing and designing with perennials and grasses to make both full sun and shade gardens.

Included are over 200 Allium bulbs in different beds which bloom from early spring to July.

It hasn't taken her long to love all the varieties most of us enjoy with her specials such as Tiarella, foam flowers and the new Sunrise and Sunset cone flowers.

Sherry pointed out that my garden has "double Ds" - coneflowers with a double decker flower! Who knew!

Sherry boasts of two very special items in her garden made by her son, a ceramic and sculpture major at San Jose College in California.

He built her a six-foot bridge which has "Karley Rose" (grasses with pink plumes) planted on both sides of it.

He also sculpted a cement slab of a mother and son, taken from a picture when he was a year old digging in the garden.

Sherry's advice, "See beauty every where you go. Never see ugly."

*Story by Joan Martin*

## Learn about trees, viburnums

Classes in a variety of plant-related topics are offered this month and next in several locations.

- The Michigan Forestry and Park Association has its annual conference this week at the Midland Center for the Arts.

Two workshops are open and each earn one hour of Master Gardener education credit.

**“Emerald Ash Borer Issues”** from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 15, featuring a technical panel, looking at variations in resistance to the insect.

**“Right Tree Right Place”** with MSU-professor Bob Schutzki looks at the importance of plant diversity from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, Sept. 16.

Eash costs \$5, payable at the door.

- Dow Gardens in Midland offers:

**“Fall Beauties: Viburnums and Others”** from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 28.

Horticulturist/Director Douglas Chapman looks at shrubs that add interest to your fall garden with berries and colorful foliage. Cost is \$5; earns one Master Gardener education credit. Please register by Sept. 21.

**“Fun Fungi Walk”** from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, Oct. 10, with pest manager Joe LaForest on a walk to look for a variety of fungi in the forest.

Participants learn to identify mushrooms and other fungi and become familiar with reading a basic key. Fee: \$5; one-half hour Master Gardener education credit.

**“Herbal Tee Party,”** from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 12, for adults.

Come create beautiful herbal prints on a garment of your choice, using fabric paint and herbs. Fee is \$5; register by Oct. 4.

Includes tour the herb garden, paint and ends with a cup of herbal tea.

- At the Chippewa Nature Center in Midland there is:

**“Fungi, Lichens and Moss,”** with Naturalist Karen Breternitz, meets from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 28.

She will help answer questions about these unusual plants and explore places where they live during a hike.

**“Color Tour on Foot”** from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 19, offers a fall color tour in the Beech Maple woods.

Breternitz discusses why trees change color while participants enjoy the sights and smells of fall.

- The Matthaei Botanical Gardens in Ann Arbor has:

**“Asters and Goldenrods,”** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 18 and 25 and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesdays, Sept. 20 and 27. Cost is \$120.

**“Wild Shrubs and Vines of Southeastern Michigan”** from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays, Sept. 26 and Oct. 3, and 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 8 to look at their importance in the natural world and how some exotics are invading native habitats. Cost is \$75.

To register, call (734) 647-7600 or visit [www.sitemaker.umich.edu/mbgna](http://www.sitemaker.umich.edu/mbgna).

## SVMGA committees

**MSU Extension Office orientation** — Wil Hufton, 792-9323

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

**Historian** — Janet Martineau, 790-7340

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

**Member handbooks** — Angela Irwin, 777-7947

**Membership roster** — Jan O’Dell, 793-4357

**Newsletter mailing label-maker** — Debbi King, 791-4001

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

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

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

**MSUE Demonstration Garden** — Peggy Shaver, 695-5489

**Volunteer opportunities** — Karen Siegel, Master Gardener Coordinator, 758-2500, ext. 250 or 224

**Raffle drawings** — Ruth Sny, 792-5688

**Not receiving the newsletter?** — Nancy Hales, 799-2118

**Items for the newsletter** — Darlene Damp, 746-9113 or [shrew@att.net](mailto:shrew@att.net)

## New pond will focus on nature with frogs, wetland plants...

*Continues from Page 5*

frogs and fish, visitors will be able to see the activity there.

“We also want to add a beaver lodge for kids to look at, although there won’t be any beavers,” she explained.

“You’ll also be able to see the layers of earth. And with the boat we’ll add details, like winches and things.”

The pond area would be completed in the spring. Frogs and fish would be added once it is complete.

“What we’re trying to do is plan exhibits that can take care of themselves and we can do that by focusing more on nature.”

Parker said the zoo is depending on the horticulture committee to provide the expertise for planning and implementing plantings for the renovated area.

“We’re looking to the hort committee to plan the plantings. You’re a very knowledgeable group and we want your expertise,” Parker said.

“This is the most we’ve ever been in-

involved in any changes,” Decker told committee members.

“You’re going to pick the trees or the people who will help you pick the trees,” Parker said.

Current plans call for the removal of eight ash trees, one crabapple and one maple while a Japanese lilac will be moved to a holding area for replanting on the site once construction is complete.

Zoo staff have already prepared a holding area to protect plant material to be moved by volunteers this fall.

# Register now for Oct. 1 gardening seminar

The Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association invites you to see what the fall season holds for great growing and year-round enjoyment. The second annual conference is from 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 1, at Saginaw Valley State University Regional Education Center, Ott Auditorium.

The university is located off M-84 (Bay Road), near Pierce Road, between Saginaw and Bay City.

You do NOT have to be a Master Gardener to attend. The seminar, including four classes, box lunch and snacks, costs \$50. No refunds; substitutes are acceptable. **Call to see if registration is still open.** Master Gardeners receive 4 education hours.

## Conference speakers and their topics:

- Keynote speaker Brent Heath, of Brent and Becky’s Bulbs, hybridizers of daffodils and third generation of bulb growers in Virginia, introduces you to **“Bulbs as Companion Plants,”** with exquisite slides. He returns to the podium for growing **“Lovely Long-lasting Lilies and Awesome Alliums.”**
- Jerry Somalski of Bay Landscaping in Essexville, examines how to create the perfect backdrop for your plantings in **“Bones of the Garden.”**
- **“Native Woody Ornamentals”** with Chuck Martin, Dow Gardens horticulturist, examines how they provide scale, structure, foliage, floral and seasonal interest.
- A variety of vendors will be available. SVMGA will sell bulbs for fall planting.

## Conference schedule

8:15 a.m. Registration/refreshments	1 p.m. “Native Woody Ornamentals,” Chuck Martin
8:45 a.m. Welcome	2 p.m. Break/Snack/Vendors
9 a.m. “Bulbs as Companion Plants,” Brent Heath	2:15 p.m. “Lovely Long Lasting Lilies and Awesome Alliums,” Brent Heath
10:30 a.m. Break/vendors	
10:45 a.m. “Bones of the Garden,” Jerry Somalski	3:45 p.m. Conference Wrap-up/Questions and Answers
Noon Box lunch/vendors	4 p.m. Vendors

## Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a Master Gardener? \_\_\_\_\_

Select **one** box lunch entrée (includes chips, cookie, drink):

- Shaved roast beef/ham with Cheddar     Stuffed Greek Salad Pita     Turkey Caesar wrap

Make check, \$50 for each person attending, payable to Saginaw Valley Master Gardener Association. Mail to SVMGA Treasurer Jan O’Dell at 5122 Hickory Court, Saginaw, MI 48603. For information, call Judy Henning at (989) 799-4136, e-mail judrich@sbcglobal.net, or Aileen Cowan at (989) 865-8784, e-mail scratchcreations@att.net.

Brochure/registration form available at [www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/saginaw](http://www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/saginaw).