

Extension Outlook

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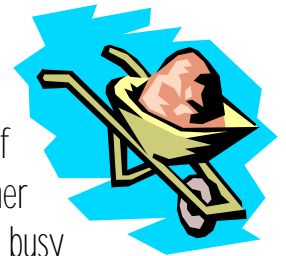
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The Dirt from 640 Temple

Greetings! I am (finally) resurrecting the Extension Master Gardener Newsletter and plan to publish quarterly. I have a new publisher - Master Gardener Nancy Fedon (class of 2000) who is a whiz at newsletters. Thanks to Master Gardener Terri Light (class of 2001), my former publisher, who is busy spreading herself thin with MGGD, the Detroit Garden Center and a new job. You will receive two editions of this newsletter by U.S. Mail, Winter and Spring. After that, the newsletter will be available on the web (web link in the next edition), but will still be mailed to anyone who would prefer that. You must call or email me (see sidebar) to continue to receive a hard copy by U.S. Mail.



Thanks to all of you who called your legislators and the governor in support of MSU Extension's survival. The support we received was overwhelming and clearly stated the importance of the work Extension does throughout the state. The 2004-2005 state budget process is underway and cuts to Extension are being considered yet again. I will keep you posted as information comes in. Thanks also to every single one of you - for volunteering THOUSANDS of hours on a list of projects that go on for days!

Your patience has been incredible as we make and adjust to changes in the Master Gardener Program on both the state and local levels. Our database system is now up and running as a brand new web-based system. (more developments to follow in future editions) Yearly volunteer hours reports (formerly sent in November) will be mailed out in late March this year. The Master Gardener year has changed along with the database and now runs the calendar year - January 1 to December 31.

The 2004 year for volunteer hours is October 1, 2003 to December 31, 2004. This will give additional time to adjust to the new recertification requirements – 15 Volunteer Hours and 5 Educational Hours per year.

Starting this year, volunteer hours reports are due by January 15 instead of October 15. Volunteer hours reports and certification letters are mailed out March 1 (starting 2005) and discrepancies need to be reported to Extension by April 1. These dates will be posted on the web soon, and available in every newsletter. The Awards Ceremony will be in April - April 24th for this year. We are in the process of planning this new event, and could use plenty of input and help! Please call or email me regarding volunteering or for tickets, which will be available in April. This new event has been in the works for two years, and the change was necessitated by the change in the Master Gardener year.

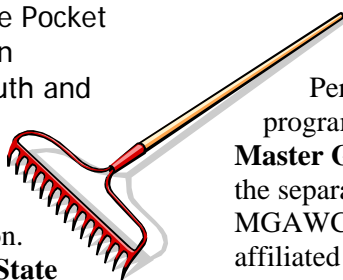
As many of you know, negotiations between MSU Extension and MGAWC ended in September 2003 with a MGAWC membership vote that was in favor of retaining the group's existing bylaws. Unfortunately, this resulted in the group leaving its relationship with MSU Extension. I would encourage Master Gardeners and students to maintain existing ties to this organization, as well as MSU Extension to continue as Master Gardeners.

We'll do our best to keep you updated on all of the changes and exciting new volunteer projects that are developing. Kristin

MASTER GARDENERS NEEDED

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Pocket Park located within the Michigan State Fair Grounds was opened in the summer of 1998. This two acre green oasis contains a fishing pond shaped like the State of Michigan, archery range, pellet gun range and a mock campsite. The beautiful landscape is made up of native plants both in prairie and wetland settings. The Pocket Park was designed for fun filled hands on educational experiences for children, youth and families. Volunteers are needed to help provide tender loving care to the landscape at the Pocket Park.

Schedule to be developed for the 2004 season.
For further information contact: **Michigan State University Extension**
Gary Williams, Natural Resources Outreach Programs Coordinator at 313-833-3299



Michigan Natural Features Inventory produces a quarterly activity report primarily written to inform our funders of activities on our many projects. Our issue for July-September 2003 is now available at:

<http://web4.msue.msu.edu/mnfi/pub/activity/ACTIV164.pdf>

“Let's Go Gardening” Changes:

Per the State Master Gardener Office, the program Let's Go Gardening **will not count for Master Gardener Volunteer Hours** as of 2004 due to the separation of MSU Extension - Wayne County and MGAWC. As a direct fundraiser for a non-MSUE affiliated group, and an MGAWC-exclusive, service marked event, Let's Go Gardening does not fall within the guidelines of the MSUE Master Gardener Volunteer Program. The statewide program is now called "Ask a Master Gardener."

<http://www.isabellacounty.org/dept/msue/04gardencon.pdf>

Above is the web page link for the registration brochure for our upcoming Spring Into Gardening Conference, March 20.

Isabella County MSU Extension 989-772-0911 ext. 215

Thank you to all Wayne County Master Gardeners!! Thanks to your efforts, Forgotten Harvest's Plant A Row for the Hungry campaign grew to record levels for the 2003 growing season! We collected over 17,500 pounds of homegrown fruits and veggies from individual and community gardeners in Metro Detroit, you Master Gardeners logged countless hours of volunteer time in our two community gardens and our information booth at the Michigan State Fairgrounds. Thanks again, and watch here for exciting news about the 2004 season.



From: Forgotten Harvest, 248/350-FOOD (3663)



Take Note!
Romanowski Park Upgrade
With
Farm/ Garden Component

The Greening of Detroit and *The Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Earth Works Garden* have started initial work on an exciting venture for park upgrade as well as introducing a new "twist" at Romanowski Park, near Lonyo, I-94 and Michigan Avenue in Southwest Detroit. Along with working toward upgrading the existing park athletic fields, a mini-farm/garden project is to be established to provide increased access to fresh produce, promote good nutrition; educate youth and the local community on sustainable agricultural practice and care for the environment.

Progress has already begun. The mini-farm/garden is slowly becoming a reality as the Greening of Detroit has already planted thirty sugar maple trees this past fall. The next phase of the farm/garden project is scheduled for April 27th through the 30th when 120 fruit trees are to be planted just on time for Arbor Day! Two other very important aspects of the Romanowski Park upgrade are community involvement and investment, which are being encouraged through community meetings planned for March.

The Romanowski upgrade and mini-farm/garden additions hold exciting possibility not only for the local community but for Master Gardeners as well! Plenty of projects and programs will benefit greatly from the volunteer involvement of MSU Extension Master Gardeners. Please contact Ashley Atkinson (313.237.8733), Br. Rick Samyn (313.579.2100 x211) or Kristin Kendall-Holliday (313.833.2925) to find out more and get involved!

.more dirt



The Diagnostic Clinic is closed for the winter. Please contact Kristine Hahn for an appointment.

Please know online volunteer hour forms and instructions are available on line at this address:

www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/wayne/volunteer/index.htm

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