

Otsego County MSUE Master Gardener Volunteer Newsletter



Volume 2, Issue 3

2008 WINTER

Looking ahead into 2009

Contacts:

Linda Cronk

County Extension Director
800 Livingston Blvd., S-4A-2
Gaylord, MI 49735
989-731-0269

Cathy O'Connor, Secretary

New Hours 8:00-4:30pm M-F
989-731-0272

Jeanne Freymuth, Otsego
County Master Gardener
Volunteer Coordinator
989-732-5348 or
freymuth@freeway.net

Lori Hansen, Record Keeper
989-732-7314

Annette Yasin, AMGA President
989-731-1008

Susan Dengler, AMGA VP
989-732-5638

Chris Cook, AMGA Treasurer
231-546-4134

Karen Blewett, AMGA Secretary
989-786-7449

Mary Wilson, New State Coordinator

Throughout my MSU Extension career, I have had the pleasure of working with the MGVP as an instructor for basic training and Summer Conferences as well as authored and reviewed training materials, coordinated a county program, and served as a member of the State Advisory Committee. In my new role, I hope to help counties successfully develop and sustain their county program.

The MGVP is an invaluable program that enhances our communities, enriches the lives of participants, and builds capacity in our county Extension offices. It is an outstanding educational program that each of us is passionate about. I sincerely believe in the Program and the work of the thousands of volunteers across our state. Together I think we can build on the Program's long standing cohesion and unity and move it forward into an exciting future.

The MGVP Advisory Committee has expressed a desire for MSUE to take a more active role in the Program at the campus level. The MGVP is becoming more integrated into the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. I welcome your ideas and suggestions for making the program an even stronger and more vital initiative. Mary Wilson

MSUE Otsego County CED

Since Phil Alexander retired as MSU Otsego County Extension Director, December 31, 2007, Linda Cronk from Crawford County has been filling in as the interim director. The CED position is expected to be filled on a more permanent basis in 2009.



AMGA Officers-past, present (back) and newly elected (front row).

Inside this issue:

<i>Workshop & Bulb Sale</i>	2
<i>Annual Meeting/Grads</i>	3
<i>Volunteer & Ed Opps</i>	4
<i>President's Report</i>	5
<i>2009 Elected Officers</i>	6
<i>Houseplants</i>	7
<i>Over The Fence</i>	8
<i>Tribute to Anna</i>	8
<i>Conservation District</i>	9
<i>Photography</i>	10
<i>Go Green!</i>	11
<i>Smile Time</i>	12
<i>Mission/AMG Program</i>	13

MGVP Coordinator-Otsego Co

Plant your own garden and decorate your own soul instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers.

Hi everyone!

It's been fun and thanks to all of you, I have truly enjoyed being the MGVP Coordinator for Otsego County, but now I feel I need to step aside and let someone else fill the void. Due to a growing family I'd like to spend more time with, and the UC becoming busier than ever, something has to give. I'm not able to give the Coordinator position the time and attention it deserves. I will, of course, remain actively involved with this fantastic Program.

If you are interested in becoming our local Coordinator, please contact me. The Coordinator works with MSUE to assist and support MGVPs and conduct basic training classes. The Coordinator is an Advisor to the Association and attends all meetings, general and executive.

I couldn't ask to have worked with a more wonderful group. You've all been very supportive and helpful to me. The people (YOU!) are what it's all about and I have grown tremendously throughout this experience. Many thank you's! Jeanne

2008 Fall 'Holiday' Workshop & Bulb Sale



Betty, Randy and Paulette team up to decorate for the workshop.

The 2008 Fall Workshop was "Holiday Decorations from you Garden" featuring Janet Macunovich. The half day workshop was 'hands on' and it was amazing. Janet brought cut evergreen, holly, sage, persistent pods and stems and everything in between to decorate a table center piece, which you can collect from your own garden. What you can create is up to your imagination. Janet also spoke about origins of our traditions, plant symbols and how to gather and store your materials. In addition to the bulbs sale, we had vendors on hand selling bird houses, broom stick wreaths, gardening gloves, candles as well as pine cone decorations that Alpine Master Gardeners made. We had about 60 participants.

Along with some wonderful door prizes and sweet treats the workshop was a success. Special thanks to Gordon's Food, Citizens Bank, Home Depot, Star Bucks Coffee and The Northland Sportsmen's Club. Thank you to all who helped put on this wonderful event. It was a lot of fun.

Amanda Charles
Workshop Project Leader



Ed, Cynthia and Richard set up for the



Janet Macunovich shares her knowledge and expertise.



Sisters, friends, daughters and mom's all had a great time learning and creating. Far right-MGV Sharon and daughter, (also MGV) Amy, to her left.



Chairman, Amanda, posing in front of AMGA's pine cone decorations for sale at the workshop



Jean and Joanne creating centerpieces.



Suzanne Stock shops for treasurers for her feathered friends.



Lunch with Janet after the workshop. (F) Cathy, Susan's Mom, Janet, Susan, (B) Cynthia, Jeanne, Suzanne, Carol, Amanda's Mom and Amanda



Amanda's Mom, Judy, Carol and Amanda.

2008 AMGA ANNUAL MEETING/PARTY



*Susan and Carol
enjoying the festivities.*



*Brent and his guest, a Master
Gardener from Boyne*



*Marian, Carol and Connie
50/50 drawing anyone?*

At the Annual Meeting, November 19, 2008, the nomination committee of Marilyn Kaczanowski, Ed Doss and Cynthia Hilling presented a slate of 2009 Officers as follows: President-Annette Yasin, Vice-Susan Dengler, Treasurer-Chris Cook and Secretary-Karen Blewett. Elected that night, they will serve the calendar year of 2009. Afterwards, we enjoyed a festive appetizer and dessert potluck, exchanged gifts, held auctions, left food for the pantry and pet treats for the animals. The evening was very enjoyable-thanks you Deb Daly and Chris Cook for coordinating the event.

2008 Trainee Class-Graduated & Certified

Please welcome our newest Certified Master Gardener Volunteers

On October 9, 2008 the 2008 Class graduated and are now officially **Certified Master Gardeners**. They took the basic training in January and February and have been busy working on their initial 40 hours of horticultural volunteering in our community.

I'm very proud of this active group who have been involved in a variety of projects such as the Jr. MG Program, Library Series, OCD tree sales, fall workshop, administrative work, demo gardens and several other community gardens. Good job and Congratulations!

We hope to see you at the AMGA meetings and events in 2009!



Graduates (front l-r) Sharon Agren, Cathy Brandenburg, Betty Steinhoff, Carol Lienerth; (middle l-r) Michele Lennox, Bonnie Hervela, Susan Webber; (back l-r) Lois Kalis, Amy Rivist, Diane Webber, Ron Smith, Brent Stoddard

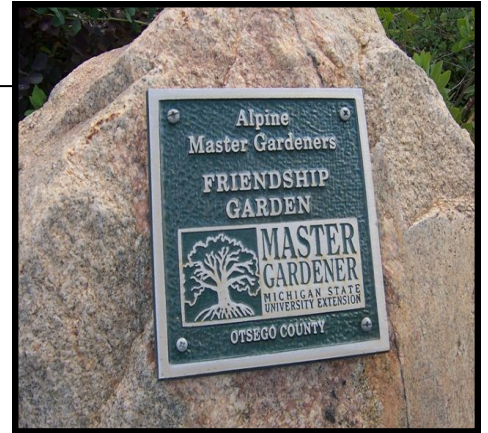
Not pictured: Amanda Charles, Nancy Dextrom, Ed Doss, Mary Fox and Karen Robb

Volunteer Opps-15 hrs to recertify



Contact an AMGA Board Member unless otherwise indicated.
Board contact information on first page of this newsletter.

- ◆ MGVP Otsego County Coordinator – call Jeanne 732-5348
- ◆ AMGA Committee Chairs and Members needed:
 - Program
 - Annual Fall Workshop
 - Annual May Library Series
 - Welcome/Membership
 - Educational Opportunities
- ◆ Awards Banquet Committee –call Jeanne 732-5348
- ◆ Newsletter—articles, photos, all contributions welcome-call Jeanne 732-5348
- ◆ Make signs for Demonstration Garden – call OCD 989-732-4021
- ◆ Otsego Conservation District Spring Seedling Sale – call OCD at 989-732-4021
- ◆ Volunteer at the Small Farm Conference-call Antrim County MSUE– 231-533-8818



MGV Friendship Garden

Thanks to all for your volunteer efforts in 2008; please post them ASAP.

Contact Lori Hansen, Otsego County Record Keeper-732-7314 or mlhansen34@hotmail.com

Educational Opps-5 hrs to recertify

- ◆ **January 5-7:** *Great Lakes Trade Expo* in Grand Rapids. This industry committee highly values our MGVs and has extended an invitation to all Michigan Master Gardener Volunteers to attend the Great Lakes Trade Expo Complete information and registration is located at www.glte.org
- ◆ **January 28:** *AMGA Meeting*. Randy Goddard will instruct birdhouse making hands-on.
- ◆ **January 31st:** Small Farm Conference—10th Annual Northern Michigan. 8:00-5:00pm at the Grayling High School. \$45 (\$30 for 2nd person; \$15 for Youth) Includes a “100 Mile Lunch” using locally grown foods. Call 231-533-8818 www.msue.msu.edu/antrim
- ◆ **February 27:** *AMGA Meeting*. Cathy Brandenburg will instruct on Stone and Mortar decorating of pots, birdhouses, etc... Hands-on.
- ◆ **March 22-26:** *International MGV Conference* in Las Vegas, Nevada. The conference theme is "New Frontiers" in horticulture and gardening and will address issues that gardeners everywhere face -- water conservation, proper plant selection, soil enrichment, pest control -- while also presenting new concepts in environmental stewardship and "green" technologies. Since what is old has become new again, we will also explore historical and traditional plants and methods. Complete conference information is available at <http://www.unce.unr.edu/imgc/>
- ◆ **April 25:** MGV “*Spring Into Gardening Conference*” in Mt. Pleasant. Keynote speaker is Pat Lanza, author of *Lasagna Gardening*. Other speakers are David Wood “New Flowering Shrubs”, Tom Kimmel “Groundcovers for the Midwest” and Patricia Pennell “Rain Gardens and Drought-Tolerant Plants”. Registration brochures will be available in January or email b.laughlin@cmich.edu or call the Isabella County MSUE office 989-772-0911 ext. 302.
- ◆ **May:** Watch for info on the annual *Library series*.

Comments from our 2008 Association President, Susan

Happy Holidays to my fellow Alpine Master Gardeners

It has been a wonderful year for me being your President. I want to thank everyone on helping our group accomplish so many things. I believe one of the greatest pluses in belonging to our group is the friendships I have made. Being fairly new to Gaylord, one of my goals was to meet more people and I have truly done that. The friendships I have made are the best and I



hope to get to know more of you.

I am so pleased with all the progress we made in the gardens this year. I know we will keep these gardens growing and thriving and one day we will be able

to tackle more gardens.

Seeing our fellow gardeners' gardens was another wonderful plus. For those who missed any of the three gardens this year during our summer meetings, hopefully you will get the chance to experience their wonders.

I believe our plant exchanges benefit so many of us. I have always enjoyed sharing parts of my gardens and getting plants I have not grown.

I want to thank Amanda again for chairing our fall workshop. Remember we are looking for someone to step forward to chair next year's workshop. We did make a commitment and I know I have learned so much from the three I have attended.

I also would like to take this moment to thank Jeanne Freymuth for all the work she does for our group.

I wish all a wonderful holiday season. Please be safe in any travels and I will see you in January. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be your President.

Thanks, Lorraine!

The AMGA wishes to thank Lorraine Blazic for her many years of toting refreshment gear and arranging for goodies at our meetings. Volunteers with Lorraine's enthusiasm and friendly nature are what make the AMGA meetings not only educational experiences but a social gathering for old and new friends. Debra Webster has offered to take over Lorraine's duties and we know our hunger is in good hands again.



The Italian Tomato Garden

An old Italian lived alone in New Jersey. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work, as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament.

*Dear Vincent,
I am feeling pretty sad, because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here my troubles would be over.
I know you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days.
Love, Papa*

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

*Dear Pop,
Don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried.
Love, Vinnie*

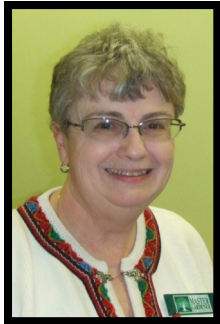


At 4 a.m. the next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son.

*Dear Pop,
Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances.
Love you, Vinnie*



Meet the New Officers for 2009



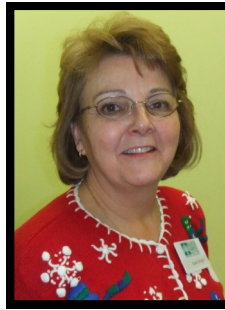
Annette Yasin – President

I am a 2004 graduate of the Master Gardener program and have been a resident of Gaylord for 15 years. Previously I lived downstate in Rochester and Birmingham. My husband of 43 years is a retired GM engineer and I am a "mostly" retired physical therapist. We have one daughter, Ann Marie, a

professor at the University of Southern California in the Art History and Classics departments. She and her hubby live in Los Angeles.

My interest in flowers was fostered by my mother who was a National Flower Show judge and teacher of floral arranging. She also was a charter member of her local garden club in Ohio. Although we never had a large garden as I was growing up I do fondly remember chasing the chickens out of Mom's favorite flowerbed. Some of my other interests include cooking and medieval recreation. I have aspirations of doing a study of medieval gardens and flowers of the Middle Ages when this busy retirement life permits.

As your new president I am looking forward to a fun, instructive, productive year of gardening and friendship.



Susan Kay Dengler – Vice Pres.

I took my Master Gardener classes in the fall of 2006. This became the stepping off point to meeting some very good friends and wonderful gardeners.

I have been in Gaylord for just over three years after being out east for 26 years. I am a born and raised

Michigander and always knew I would return to Michigan. This is what my brothers and I call "our soul place".

I have been gardening for years. As a child one chore was to dig the dandelions and pull grass out of myrtle beds. Guess why I am not a fan of myrtle? My paternal grandfather was a gardener who loved his roses and peonies. I am not a huge rose fan, although I do have some, but do love the peonies. If I had to pick a most favorite flower, it would be the iris. Many of our MGs have offshoots of my walking iris and I hope to have more come spring. That is one of the biggest joys I find in gardening- being able to share plants. Making new gardens is up there too.

I look forward to another year with our Alpine group, working in the gardens, sharing stories and plants.



Chris Cook – Treasurer

Coming from a family that grew a garden to can veggies for the winter to go with the wild game that was already in the freezer, I guess gardening was just a part of living. Planting seeds and watching them grow was exciting for Jeff and I

and our girls, Cyndi and Audrey. I never gave planting much thought, just stick in the seed and watch it grow. Guess I was lucky because they grew. In 2004, I found out how much I didn't know when I became a Master Gardener. Now I have more knowledge, a big book and I still count on LUCK.

As a seed planter, annual flowers would fill my flowerbeds. However, after 4 years of AMG plant exchanges, my interests have turned to perennials, and you can see your mark in my gardens and I "Thank you." I feel like I have my own friendship garden.

As a past treasurer and a past president, I look forward to again serving the wonderful members of the Alpine Master Gardener Association as your 2009 treasurer. "He who plants a seed believes in tomorrow" – and what a wonderful tomorrow AMG will have.

Karen Blewett – Secretary

I have been married for thirty-eight years. Ron & I moved to Lewiston in 2003 and I am STILL getting used to gardening in zone 3b!

I earned my Master Gardener cert in 2001 in Lapeer County. My favorite garden to work in was the Butterfly Garden at Seven Ponds in Hadley, MI.

I earned my Advanced Master Gardener cert in 2004 with the Alpine Master Gardener group. I like working in the Demo garden at the Otsego Conservation District Gardens. All the people that I volunteer with are so much fun! We learn a lot about gardening from each other's successes and failures. I also have enjoyed helping with our "Special Events". This spring I stretched my wings and taught a Library Series demo on container gardening. I thought it went well and liked the interaction with the people.

The best thing about gardening is working with my granddaughter, Madison. She seems to have a "green thumb" & it is fun to pass on my love of flowers to her!

I'm looking forward to continuing with the Alpine Master Gardeners & sharing my "hobby/passion" with others.



Houseplant Propagation by Kate Menkes



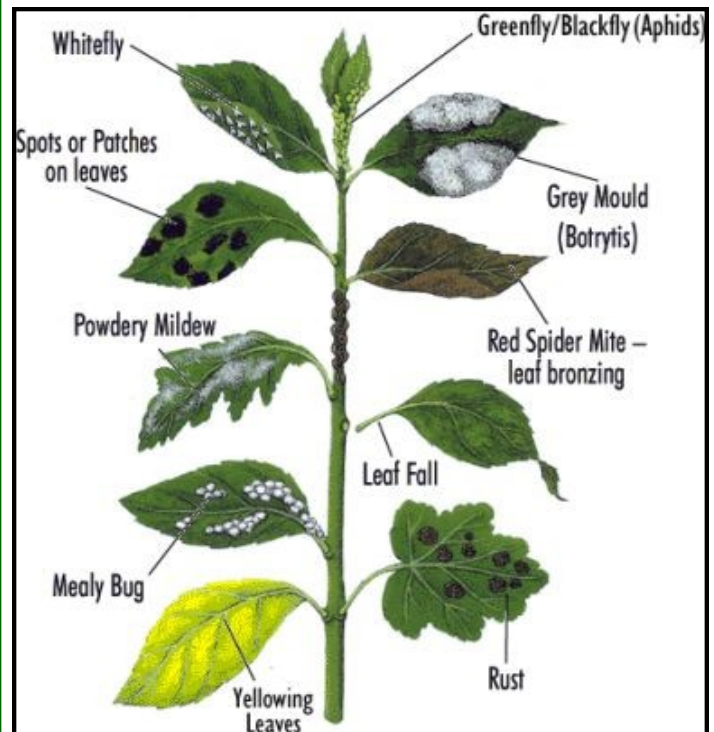
Now that winter is upon us, it is time to get out our gardening gloves. With not being able to work out in our gardens, it is a good time to give some attention to our houseplants. If you can

not get enough of them, many of them can be propagated without any special tools. Here are a couple of ways to increase your collection or give them away as gifts.

- ◆ **Stem cuttings**—all that is needed is water and soil. This is possibly the easiest and most common way of propagating. Select a healthy stem and cut off a length of about 1 to 4 inches. Longer cuttings do not root as vigorously. Make sure you cut below a leaf joint (this is where the new roots will form) there should be several leaves on the cutting. Remove the bottom set of leaves and insert into your planting medium. You can place multiple cuttings in a pot for a fuller effect. This method works well with: Jade plants, ivy, polka dot plant and hoyo vine, just to name a few.
- ◆ **Air layering**—involves rooting the stem of the plant without completely detaching it from its original root system. This is best used for plants that have grown too tall. Decide what you want the new height of the plant to be, at that point and make sure that it is below a leaf node; make an upward cut about one-third through the stem. Make sure that the new wound stays open. Wrap damp sphagnum moss all the way around the stem. Cover the area with plastic. The area is ready when many roots are visible; you are able to cut the stem below the moss and roots. Remove the plastic and then plant in a pot. Rooting may take up to six months, so be patient. This method works well with: Chinese evergreen, Dracaenas and Fig plants.

- ◆ **Divison**—this involves separating the plant that produces multiple crowns or clumps as they mature. Simply remove the plant from its pot; it is important to separate roots with the crowns. The crowns can be divided and then potted separately. This method works well with: Medicine plant, Flame plant and Foxtail fern.
- ◆ **Other methods** for propagation are out there, for more information check out the Michigan State Extension website. Hopefully you will find yourself rooted in propagation and will give all the methods a try.

Troubles associated with Houseplants



Brown leaf tips are mainly seen on houseplants in Winter. Leaf tips turn brown and dry as a result of 'dry' air.

Solution: Stand plants together and away from dry heat sources. Regularly mist plants or stand on trays of gravel topped with water.

Over the Fence by Marilyn Kaczanowski



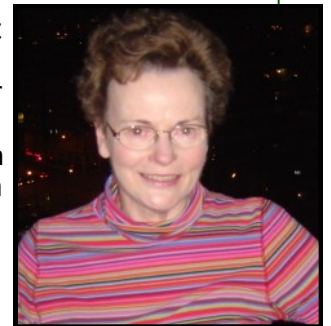
Ruth Doss became a Master Gardener Volunteer in the fall of 2006. She has always been a gardener, even as a young child gardening with her mother in the vegetable garden. They preserved and ate what they grew. Even though Ruth had gardened her entire life, she had her share of errors (haven't we all?). She tried a rose garden at their business, Water's RV, only to find with the sun, wind and cold, her tea roses would not survive. So when she heard about the Master Gardener Program, she thought it would be a good venture for her. She was almost scared off when she found out it was a volunteer organization. 40 hours of volunteer work, how could she possibly do that?

Ruth's favorite plants to raise are perennials. She has lots of perennial beds that she started by using the lasagna method (if you don't know what that is-talk to Ruth, her enthusiasm will inspire you). She loves to watch the plants grow from a small seedling to a mature flowering plant. Her enthusiasm for the lasagna soil preparation method came from a trial bed. She had Ed built her an 8X8 bed in which she layered newspapers, leaves, soil, dairy doo and whatever other organic matter she could find. This was done late fall. Imagine her surprise the next summer when her cosmos grew to 6' tall.

Ruth volunteered to work in the perennial bed at the demonstration garden and guess what they're doing first? Revitalizing the soil using the lasagna method. I can't wait to see how it turns out. Ruth says that the most important thing to remember in gardening is to develop your soil. You can't just take what you have and add a little fertilizer.

Ruth loves visiting gardens; so much so, she went to France last spring with Mary McLellan and had a wonderful time. She told me that all public gardens seem to have the same problem of getting enough volunteers.

Now, what about those roses? With new knowledge from the Master Gardener classes, Ruth is trying another rose bed near the location of the first one was but she's using shrub roses that are hardy for our area and lasagna soil, of course! Good luck, Ruth.



Tribute to our Garden Angel, Anna Biernat



Anna presenting a gift to Shirley Haskill

Anna became an MG in 1996 with passion and vigor. She was on the steering committee to form the Alpine MG Association. Besides the Lovells Museum garden, Anna set up Program for our meetings, worked on the newsletter, kept us advised of the upcoming Educational opps, and created and presented several topics to our group, Library Series and other groups. She was an energetic, giving and caring person who was always smiling and full of fun. We will miss her dearly as she beautifies the gardens in heaven.

Family Request: Please do not send flowers. Contributions can be made to:

Lovells Twp. Historical Society
Att: Anna M. Biernat Memorial Scholarship Fund
8405 Twin Bridge Rd.
Grayling, MI 49738

A note from Anna's Family

To Friends & Family of Anna Biernat,

Many of you already know and many more do not that Anna was diagnosed with terminal cancer in early September. It is with much sadness to report that she passed away Sunday, November 23, 2008 at her home in Lovells. Her sister Sharon and husband Mark were at her side.

Anna Marie Biernat, age 54 was born Aug, 4 1954 in Detroit. Graduated from Oakland University, Bachelor of Fine Arts and lived in Troy, MI until becoming a resident of Lovells MI. Anna's career path was of a creative nature that took her into the world of advertising and visual marketing, holding positions with the J.L. Hudson Co. and major commercial photography studios. Her passion was reading and gardening and was an avid member of The Master Gardener Program. She maintained the gardens at the Lovells Historical Museum and was active with the board of directors. It was her wish to create a scholarship fund through the museum for deserving students from the local area. That fund has now been established. **A Remembrance will be scheduled at a later date in**

And/Or Hospice of Michigan
C/O Mark Ratajczak (Husband)
10023 Twin Bridge Rd.
Grayling, MI 49738

Otsego Conservation District Update



Emily Sewell

Hello everyone!
I am Emily Sewell, Otsego Conservation District's AmeriCorps member. I have definitely enjoyed my service at the Conservation District and meeting many of you at various events or speaking with you in the Demonstration Garden. I hope you all have a happy holiday season and I look forward to seeing you in the year to come. Here is a quick update on the Conservation District's activities:

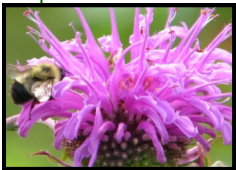
Julie Kuras has recently resigned from the OCD Secretarial position. We wish her and her family the best.

Becki Jacobs has been filling in and will be hired for 3 days a week at the beginning of the year.

Stop in and meet Becki.

Summer Activities

We are already looking forward to another exciting summer. As the Conservation District's AmeriCorps member, I am planning the Conservation Day Camp for kids this July. Last year was the first time the Conservation District held a day camp and it was a huge success! I am also hoping to start a Children's Pollinator Garden as a part of the Demonstration Garden. It will feature native plants from Michigan State University's study "Enhancing Beneficial Insects with Native



Plants" and will be designed and planted by kids. The Conservation District wants kids to get excited about the outdoors and nature through learning about habitat, pollinators and planting a garden. We hope this excitement will inspire kids to be good stewards of our resources so they can continue to be used and enjoyed.

Native Plants Greenhouse is Underway

Construction of the Otsego Conservation District's Native Plants Greenhouse has begun and our "Plant Species for Propagation List" has been approved! We are now several steps closer to being a source of native plant material for northern Michigan. Thanks to our hard-working volunteers (and their cordless drills) the frame of the greenhouse was assembled in November. Our goal is to complete construction and start growing by the end of February. If the weather does not cooperate, we will finish construction of the greenhouse in the spring and reevaluate our plans for when we will start propagation.



2009 Spring Tree Sale

The Otsego Conservation District will be holding its annual Spring Tree Sale this April 24th and 25th. We will continue to have a Small Fruit Fundraiser which helps cover maintenance costs for the Demonstration Garden. With enough small fruit orders, the Conservation District will be able to hire a part-time person to work in the garden. As many of you know there is a lot that has to happen before customers can walk through the doors. Tree packing and other preparation will begin April 20th. We really can't thank past volunteers enough for all their time and hard work; they have made our Tree Sales possible. Although Spring Tree Sale is not for several months, we would appreciate hearing from anyone interested in volunteering. There is no need to commit to any dates or times yet, we are just looking for the level of interest in the Master Gardener community. Please call (989) 732-4021 and speak with Emily Sewell, our volunteer coordinator, to let us know if you would like to help or for more information.

"Huron Pines AmeriCorps is supported in part with funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service under a grant from the Michigan Community Service Commission and contributions provided by host sites participating in the program."

Capture What You Love



Tony Dunaske, landscape and wildlife photographer and teacher

Digital Photography and Digital Photography Workshop Classes with instructor, Tony Dunaske Beginning Saturday, February 21 at The UC

Keep special memories by photographing what you love.

Digital Photography Workshop

This workshop will take the learner from field image capture to printing an art quality print. The basics of image capture will be covered followed by the enhancement of images in Photoshop.

Each session will feature introduction, practice, and application of: resizing, levels, shadow/highlights, dodging, burning, making selections, cloning, sharpening, setting black points, black/white conversion, hue/saturation, contrast control, panoramic stitching and color variations.

Five Saturdays, February 21-March 28th from 1:30-3:30 at the UC. \$150



Photo by MGV Diane Webber

Digital Photography

The objective of this class is to maximize the use of your camera controls to produce the best possible images. This class will include both classroom and field trip activities. Taught by Tony Dunaske. Four Saturdays, February 21-March 14th from 9:30-11:30 at The University Center at Gaylord. Cost is \$120 for all four classes.

For more information or to register, call the University Center at 989-705-3700 or go on-line www.ucgaylord.org.

GO GREEN! EARTH FRIENDLY GARDEN IDEAS

Tending a garden helps you feel better and makes the world a better place. Using natural resources carefully and avoiding chemicals as much as possible make your garden safer for you as well as the insects and wildlife. Here's a few ideas to help conserve resources and make your garden a beautiful place.

- ◆ Mulch conserves water and keeps weeds down without chemicals. Conserve on mulch by laying 2-4 sheets of newspaper before mulching.
- ◆ Water-there's no better way to use water efficiently than with drip irrigation.
- ◆ Recycle plastic pots-check with local nurseries to see if they accept their pots back.
- ◆ Shade-plant a shade tree off the southwest corner of your house for the most shade on hot summer afternoons.
- ◆ Green Lawns-Lawns filter pollutants, prevent erosion and add to your property value. Use organic lawn care products and remember that more is not better. Avoid polluting ground water by reading labels.
- ◆ Use a reel mower to save on gas and oil.
- ◆ Compost-Compost-Compost!
- ◆ Plants filter the air. It takes 15-20 plants to clean a 1500 sq. ft. area. Boston fern, dracaena, rubber plant and spider plants are among the most efficient indoor plants.
- ◆ Organic First Aid-Insecticidal soap gets rid of soft-bodied insects like aphids; Potassium Bicarbonate takes care of powdery mildew; Liquid kelp/first fertilizer provide the macro and micronutrients to make plants thrive; Compost teas help fight foliar disease.





Smile Time



Wordless Workshop™

Freeze-proof plant starter

by Roy Doty



Our thanks go to Gary Fisher, Columbia, TN, for this idea.

We'll pay \$100 for any ideas published, so send in those sketches and notes!

Submit your idea to wordless@readersdigest.com or Wordless, The Family Handyman, 2915 Commers Drive, Suite 700, Eagan, MN 55121.

Only ideas we purchase will be acknowledged. Original contributions become our property upon acceptance and payment.

Check out AMGA Website

For information on upcoming events, educational opportunities, volunteer opportunities, meeting schedules, minutes from previous meetings, by-laws, mission and purpose, photographs, history and much more, log on to Alpine Master Gardener's Website created and updated by Lori Hansen. www.otsego.org/amg

Otsego Conservation District

Tree Sale—April 24 & 25, 2009

732-4021

*Order Seedlings by
March 27, 2009*

KUDOS

A special thanks to Barb and Bill Brown for helping me get this Newsletter in the mail during such a busy time. Jeanne

A TINY ANGEL

Suzanne Stock's 6 week old Great Granddaughter, Brook, passed away in California. She apparently died of SIDS. Bless her family and her tiny soul.

MISSION

Biological environments are essential to life. Michigan State University is a primary provider of plant research and education, dedicated to the preservation and enrichment of life. The Master Gardener Volunteer Program, available to all citizens of Michigan, is designed to develop a cadre of Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) volunteers trained in horticulture. Their knowledge and skills related to basic plant science and home gardening enables these volunteers to improve the quality of life in their communities. This is accomplished by increasing people's appreciation for and use of plants and by providing them with instruction on growing plants using environmentally sound practices.

Alpine Master Gardener Association

2009 MEETING AND PROGRAM CALENDAR

AMGA meetings are held at 6:45pm on the 4th Wednesday of every month, with the exception of November (and no meeting December).

During the colder months, our meetings are held at the United Way building in Gaylord, unless otherwise noted in your meeting reminder. During the summer months, we meet at the Demonstration Garden or member's gardens. In the event of inclement weather, we will meet at the United Way building.

2009 Association Officers

President, Annette Yasin: 989-731-1008
Vice-President, Susan Dengler: 989-731-7901
Treasurer, Chris Cook: 231-546-4134
Secretary, Karen Blewett: 989-786-7449

2009 AMGA MEETING SCHEDULE

- January 28-Randy Goddard-building birdhouses
- February 25-Cathy Brandenburg-Stone & Mortar decorating
- March 25-TBD
- April 22—Awards Banquet
- May 27—Spring Plant Exchange
- June 24—TBD
- July 22—TBD
- August 26—TBD
- September 23—Fall Plant Exchange
- October 28-TBD
- November 18—Officer Election & Holiday Party
- December—No Meeting-Merry Christmas!

