

Otsego County MSUE Master Gardener Volunteer Newsletter



Volume 3, Issue 6

State-wide Coordinator's Meeting

2009 SPRING

Vision

Michigan State University Master Gardener Volunteer Program trains and coordinates volunteers to share gardening skills and information with Michigan citizens.

Contacts:

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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
MGVP 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

- ◆ New State Coordinator, Mary Wilson conducted the meeting on March 16, 2009.
- ◆ Dr. Steve Lovejoy, MSUE Associate Director of Programs spoke about the tremendous value of the MGVP Program and the importance of getting this message out especially with the proposed State budget cuts that will affect the Program.
- ◆ It is believed a main reason some counties do not offer the MGVP Program is due to the turnover in the County Coordinator position. More communication from administration to the County CED's is key. Without Extension we have no MG Program.
- ◆ Dr. Ruth Borger, Director of ANR Communications reported on marketing research efforts. What works about MGVP, what doesn't and why? 90% of the CED's are supportive of the Program when they know how to fund it. Most counties must generate funds to support their coordinators. The Logo is undergoing a revision to clearly show MSUE as the parent of MGVP in an effort to portray a uniform appearance throughout the State.
- ◆ The importance that Associations must have a member of MSUE as ex-officio member of their leadership was discussed.
- ◆ In an effort to minimize work at the County level, and standardize the Program, the State office is setting up an "Online Centralized Registration System" which enables applicants to sign up for the training classes on line and use credit cards.
- ◆ The Volunteer selection process policy & screening were discussed.
- ◆ Ralph Heiden, keeper of the State Website (and original State Coordinator) is retiring soon. Anyone interested in becoming WebMaster, contact the State Office. mg.msu.edu
- ◆ Lifetime/Emeritus status for MGVPs that cannot actively participate was discussed. Instead of making Statewide policy, it was felt best left to the County Coordinator's discretion.
- ◆ Annual State Conference will be back on track for 2010.
- ◆ Surveys will be taken to assist the Advisory Board with future decisions.



Mary Wilson, State
MGVP Coordinator

MSUE Needs Our Communication

Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm's proposed fiscal 2010 budget calls for combining the Michigan State University-run Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) with MSU Extension and cutting their funding in half to \$32 million. But agriculture is a stabilizing influence on the state's battered economy at \$71 billion in economic impact accounting for a fifth of Michigan's economic output. Investments in the MAES and MSU Extension leverage \$2.33 for every \$1 the state invests.

At this time we are encouraging key stakeholders to get the word to our legislators about the value of MSUE programming and MAES research in our county and region. I have included the contact information for our elected Representatives for your convenience. It is your personal testimonials that help to demonstrate how MSU Extension really makes a positive difference in people's lives, and will help convey the importance of MSUE to our region.

Linda Cronk, CED MSUE-Otsego County

Rep. Kevin Elsenheimer
5721 House Office Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909
517-373-0829
Toll Free: 877-536-4105
kevinelsenheimer@house.mi.gov

Senator Tony Stamas
720 Farnum Building
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909
517-373-7946
www.senate.michigan.gov/stamas/

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-3400

Inside this issue:

<i>Cordinator's Corner</i>	2
<i>Volunteer & Ed Opps</i>	3
<i>Annual Awards Banquet</i>	4
<i>"And The Winners Are" . .</i>	5
<i>AMGA Pres & Treas</i>	6
<i>Demo Garden Projects</i>	7
<i>"Over The Fence"</i>	8
<i>Community Gardens</i>	8
<i>Conservation District</i>	9
<i>Maple Syrup</i>	10
<i>Smile Time</i>	11
<i>Mission/AMG Program</i>	12



Coordinator's Corner



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

From looking at the history of the Master Gardener Program I realize just how deeply my life roots into MSU Extension. In 1914 the Smith-Lever Act authorized to establish the Cooperative Extension Service and with the U.S. Department of Agriculture developed very successful educational programs for farmers across the US. Years later, my Dad farmed and utilized the program's information.

This educational system branched to offer nutrition and home economics info to farmer's wives. My Mom was very involved in this Extension Service program. Later it branched out with a program for kids which became the largest youth program in the US—4-H. As a child, I joined and benefitted from the MSUE 4-H Program.

As a way to extend programming to suburban and urban people and to meet the ever-increasing demand for gardening information, advice and assistance, the Extension Service began offering yet another branch in 1972 known as the Master Gardener Volunteer Program which came to Michigan in 1978. Jack Middleton introduced it in Otsego County in 1996. I took the training program in 1999 and became a volunteer Coordinator in 2005. Perhaps that explains my passion for MSUE's MGVP Program—it's in my blood and my roots.

As I mentioned in my last newsletter, I will continue to be involved in the MGVP, but do not have the time to devote that this wonderful Program deserves from its Coordinator. Many counties have developed and maintain strong, active programs through the establishment of paid MGVP Coordinators. In most cases, counties must generate funds to support this position. This person is an important liaison between the Association and MSUE, the parent of MGVP. During a transitional period, perhaps we could we do the "job" by committee until a volunteer steps forward or we have the funds to hire a Coordinator. Without a Coordinator,



Jeanne Freymuth
Otsego County MGVP
Coordinator

we have no Association. This group is too awesome to let that happen! We have come too far to quit now! Any ideas or comments are greatly appreciated. Jeanne



Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator Job Duties-Otsego (Unofficial)

- ◆ Responsible for overall MGVP Program
- ◆ Should be employee of MSUE or County
- ◆ Represent MSUEs educational outreach programs
- ◆ Coordinate MSUE MGVP training classes
- ◆ Provide additional learning opportunities, workshops and resource materials
- ◆ Maintain MGVP Record Keeping
- ◆ Award MGVP Certificates and other awards
- ◆ Serve as Advisor to AMGA on behalf of MSUE
- ◆ Uphold Mission, Vision and Program Policies
- ◆ Volunteer Management
- ◆ Attend State-wide Coordinator meetings
- ◆ Provide County-based communications to MGVPs
- ◆ Have fun!!

Overview

The specific aim of the Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Program is to develop a network of trained volunteers who can provide the citizens of Michigan with research-based information and technical assistance in gardening and home horticulture. MSU Extension provides the educational training and the Master Gardener Volunteer provides the volunteer service back to Extension.

Our Master Gardeners are involved in so many wonderful projects, we'd like to share who's working on what. Please turn in a picture and short article about your particular project. We'll print it in the next newsletter and put it on the website.



From Michigan Master Gardener Association, Alpine Chapter of Otsego County BY-LAWS

ARTICLE II-AFFILIATION

The Chapter shall be a separate, unincorporated, non-profit related organization of Michigan State University under the oversight of the Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) Otsego County Master Gardener Program. All Chapter activities shall be consistent with the policies of Michigan State University, Otsego County MSUE and the Michigan Master Gardener Program.

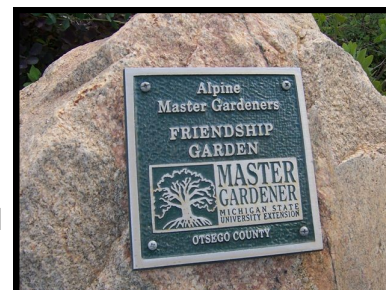
ARTICLE III-PURPOSE

The purpose of the Chapter is to bring together active Master Gardener volunteers to serve as an educational resource to MSUE Otsego County in their common goal of providing horticultural education to the citizens within the community. It will provide its members with up-to-date horticulture information through a variety of educational programs and activities.

Volunteer Opps-15 hrs to recertify



- ◆ Demo Garden Projects—See page 7 for contact information
- ◆ South Maple School Gardens— call Connie Middleton 231-546-3554 or midd3554@centurytel.com
- ◆ North Ohio School Gardens-call Lori Hansen 989-732-7314 or mlhansen34@hotmail.com
- ◆ Lovell's Museum garden project—call Shirley Haskill 989-786-3884 or shaskill@i2k.net
- ◆ Gaylord United Way building gardens-call George Bohr 989-732-6084 or george3@voyager.net
- ◆ Garden Family Program-Com On Aging. Eileen Godak 989-732-1122 or Eileen@occoaonline.org
- ◆ May Library Series—call Carol Lienerth 989-732-0306
- ◆ 2009 Fall Workshop Committee—Marilyn Kaczanowski 231-546-3186
- ◆ MGVP Otsego County Coordinator – call Jeanne Freymuth 732-5348
- ◆ Newsletter—articles, photos, all welcome-call Jeanne 732-5348
- ◆ Make signs for Demonstration Garden – call OCD 989-732-4021
- ◆ Otsego Conservation Spring Seedling Sale – call OCD at 989-732-4021
- ◆ Help with visiting Jr. Master Gardeners—call OCD at 989-732-4021
- ◆ Conservation Day Camp—call Emily at OCD 989-732-4021
- ◆ Native Plant Greenhouse—call OCD at 989-732-4021



MGV Friendship Garden

In 2008, 74 Volunteers reported 2,741 Volunteer Hours!!
Thanks to all for your volunteer efforts! Contact Lori Hansen
Otsego County Record Keeper-732-7314 or mlhansen34@hotmail.com



Educational Opps-5 hrs to recertify

April 25, 2009: MGVP "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 at 989-772-0911, ext. 302.

May 2009: Library Series Gardening. Presentations include May 6 Josh Powell—*Medicinal Herbs*; May 13 John Garcia—*Wild and Tame Mushrooms*; May 20 Suzy Hees—*Stretching Before Gardening*; May 27 Susan Webeler—*Coral Bells and The Many Varieties*. Classes will be held each Wednesday in May from noon-1pm at the Otsego County Library. Contact Carol Lienerth for details 989-0306.

May 30, 2009: Tree Grafting Workshop sponsored by Emmet County MSU Extension & Michigan Nut Growers Association. Speakers: Dennis Fulbright, Mario Mandujano, and Roger Miller. Participants will learn from grafting experts, watch grafting done in the field, practice hands-on and observe conifer grafting. 8:30am-4:30pm, cost \$50.00 includes lunch. Grafting tool kit cost is \$30.00 (optional). Pre-registration is required. Call Cydney at 231-348-1770 for more information.

June 30th-July 11, 2009: The Gardens of France, Purdue University Study Abroad for Master Gardeners and Lovers of Garden History. Visit <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/France>. Call Rosie Lerner at 765-494-1311 or rosie@purdue.edu.

July 11, 2009: Tree & Shrub Diagnostic Workshop at the Emmet County Fairgrounds. Presenters: Russ Kidd, Dean Solomon, Dennis Fulbright and Chris Anderson. Learn to identify insect and disease problems, choose resistant varieties and cultivars, consider plant needs, requirements and care to minimize damage. Cost \$20.00, bring up to 2 shrubs or tree samples for diagnosis. Register by July 4th. 8:30am-11:30am. Call Cydney at 231-348-1770 for more information.

September 26, 2009: The Alpine Master Gardener's Annual Fall Workshop. Call Marilyn for details. 231-546-3186.

Fall 2009: Emmet, Charlevoix & Cheboygan County. MGVP training classes begin September 15th, 5:30-8:30pm, \$225.00. Contact Cydney Steeb for more information at 231-348-1770 or at steeb@msu.edu.

MGVP 2009 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET



MASTER GARDENER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Deadline for Nominations for the prestigious MGVP of the Year Award is March 31, 2009. Send nominations to Jeanne Freymuth, Lori Hansen or Suzanne Stock.

AWARDS BANQUET COMMITTEE

- Jeanne Freymuth, Chair**
Awards and Program
- Karen Blewett**
MC
- Amanda Charles**
Paparazzi
- Mary Fox**
Set up engineer
- Paulette Goddard**
Invitations & Registrations
- Cynthia Hilling**
Theme and decorations
- Dora Jasinski**
Prizes and Favors
- Marilyn Kaczanowski**
Menu
- Susan Webeler**
Set up engineer

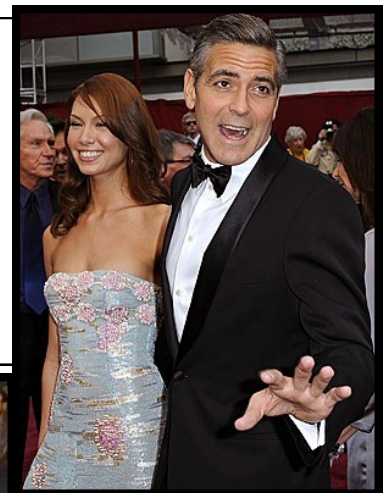
And the winner is

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join us for our sensational 4th Annual Awards Banquet where the Committee will be rolling out the red carpet for this year's Award Banquet attendees and recipients.

Who Master Gardener Volunteers & their guests
What 2009 MSUE MGVP Annual Awards Banquet
Where First Congregational Church Hall
 218 2nd Street, Gaylord
Why To honor our 2008 Volunteers
Speaker: Don Geiss, African Violets
When Wednesday, April 22, 2009 6:00 PM
Cost Active MGVs—\$8.00: Others—\$15.00
Contact Register by April 15th, Paulette Goddard
 For more info, call 231-525-9812

Beware of the Paparazzi

You are a high-profile celebrity now. Fame and fortune comes with a price! Paparazzi, Amanda Charles will be on hand to capture fabulous photos that may end up in the next edition of this Newsletter!

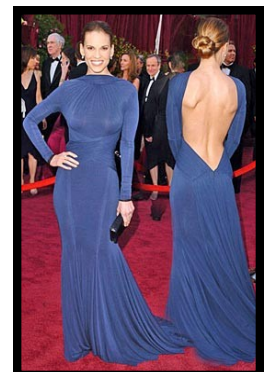


Be prepared to be interviewed by our own, thrilling and exciting, Karen Blewett on the glamorous red carpet.



Attention Darlings and Divas!

Dress for the glitzy Oscar Award Theme. **Prizes** will be awarded to those of you that are "game" for a little extra fun. Dig up your formals, suits and tuxes, mother-of-the-bride attire, formal dinner cruise attire, or stop at a second hand store and pick up something stunning and elegant for the evening.



And The Winners Are



2008 Basic Master Gardener

Sharon Agren
Cathy Brandenburg
Amanda Charles
Nancy Dextrom
Ed Doss
Michelle Lennox
Carol Lienerth
Amy Rivist
Betty Steinhoff



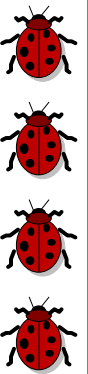
250 Hour Pin Awards

Chris Cook
Sally Jarvis
Jack Middleton
Deb Milbocker
Sharie Plain
Ann Rowland



2008 Advanced Certifications

Susan Dengler
Ruth Doss
Paulette Goddard
Randy Goddard
Cynthia Hilling
Marilyn McIntosh
Ann Rowland



1500 Hour Pin Award

Jeanne Freymuth



2008-Recertified



Margaret Albert
Lorraine Blazic
Karen Blewett
Barb Brown
Bill Brown
Carol Brown
Jean Brown
Dalores Burau
Carol Buxton
Chris Cook
Ginger Daggett
Debbie Daly

Susan Dengler
Ruth Doss
Jeanne Freymuth
Rose Gleason
Paulette Goddard
Randy Goddard
Lori Hansen
Shirley Haskill
Catherine Hilgendorf
Cynthia Hilling
Ann Jaruzel
Sally Jarvis

Dora Jasinski
Marilyn Kaczanowski
Richard Kettner
Roseann Kujawa
Julie Kuras
Heather Lovell
Marilyn McIntosh
Judith McIntyre
Kate Menkes
Connie Middleton
Jack Middleton
Deborah Milbocker

Patricia Osburn
Ursula Owens
Susan Pillsbury
Sharie Plain
Michelle Roberts
Ann Rowland
Suzanne Stock
Gloria Torello
Debra Webster
Sharon Whitmore
Annette Yasin



Awards Banquet Guest Speaker Don Geiss—Professional African Violet Grower

Don Geiss, a professional group through all phases of the demonstrate how to plant, trans- plant, water, light, and trim. Spe- tial planting material and pots be shown along with a particular method of growing the plants will

Even folks who contend that they have had little success with these beautiful plants will find themselves over-awed with the new system.

African violet grower will take our life of an African Violet. He will plant, water, light, and trim. Spe- that should be used for violets will type of watering system. A unique also be demonstrated and the ap-

proach will assure fantastic flowering.

Mr. Geiss is a retired writer and college professor who has conducted many programs. He presently has about 200 violets with many different colors and will bring samples with variegated leaves, striped colors (called chimeras) miniatures, semi-miniatures, fantasies (speckled colors within the main color), two colored flowers, and trailing plants.



Message from AMGA President, Annette

Spring WILL be here and I am getting very excited about little green sprouts peaking through the soil (or snow). This is my favorite season just full of expectation for old returns and new starts.

Alpine Master Gardener volunteers are going to have a banner year. Our four gardens at the Community Garden had a strong renewal effort last year. Looking at the growing list of volunteers, this summer holds much promise for continued progress in making these areas more beautiful and educational. The workbee/meeting with our whole group at the demo gardens is not until June 24th. It is hoped that, if you have not already signed up for an individual garden team, you will contact a team leader for early spring work schedules. The team leaders and current teams are posted on the next page.

This summer holds many other opportunities to practice your Master Gardening skills and accrue volunteer hours. Some of these include working on the Jr. Master Gardener Program (contact Mary Ann Carey at

989-732-4550) and working on the OCD greenhouse project or their community education programs (contact Patricia Osburn at 989-732-4021). A "Master Gardener Day" is also being planned by Home Depot with date to be announced. If you are involved in other projects and would like help please bring them to the attention of your AMGV board.

It was heartwarming to see an Award's Banquet and a Fall Workshop committee form quickly. This type of volunteering is what is needed to make the operations of AMGA less effort and time for a few and get more people involved sharing their skills.

I am looking forward to getting down and "soily" with all of you soon.

Annette
AMGA President



2008 Treasurer's Report wrap up



Seminar and Sales—2008

Net Profit

Spring Plant/Bulb Sale	329
Fall Plant/Bulb Sale	999
Fall Seminar	439

2008 Activity

Cash on hand beginning of 2008	2375
Accounts Receivable beg. 2008	-160
Revenues collected in 2008	2295
Expenses paid in 2008	-1582
Accounts Receivable ending 2008	<u>12</u>
Cash on hand end of 2008	\$2915

\$540 more on hand at end of year vs. beginning.

AMG 2009 Budget

Income:	
Membership Dues	450
No Badge/Dirt Fees	10
Fund Raiser Events	<u>500</u>
Total:	960
Expenses:	
Awards Banquet	200
Donations	200
Postage/Sationary	100
Herb Garden	167
Perennial Garden	101
Friendship Garden	166
Hummingbird Garden	100
Education Programs & Activities	400
Supplies	150
Miscellaneous	<u>50</u>
Total:	1634
NET PROFIT/LOSS	-674

Demo Garden Teams



Spring is here and soon it'll be time to spruce up the gardens!
If you haven't joined a garden team yet—call one of the Project Chairs below.

The June 24th Meeting will be in the Demo Garden along with a work bee. This is a great opportunity to get some volunteer hours with hands-on experience and share knowledge and ideas with fellow Master Gardeners. Join the fellowship and camaraderie and get to know the gardens and gardeners in an informal setting.

Friendship Garden



Project Chair
Annette Yasin
989-731-1008

Lorraine Blazic
Sharon Whitmore
Carol Buxton
Debbie Daly
Randy Goddard
Paulette Goddard
Judy McIntyre
Ann Jaruzel

Perennial Garden

Project Chair
Ruth Doss
989-732-8366

Ed Doss
Cynthia Hilling
Susan Dengler
Marilyn McIntosh
Karen Blewett
Susan Webeler
Mary Fox



Herb Garden

Project Chair
Betty Steinoff
989-732-5366

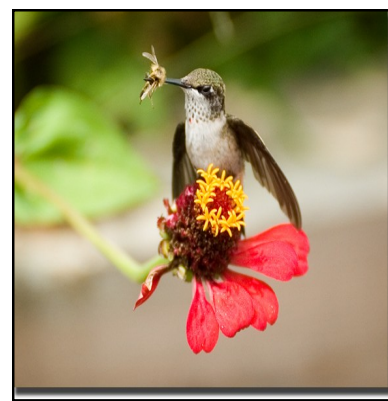


Debra Webster
Carol Brown
Carol Lienerth
Chris Cook
Diane Webber
Susan Pillsbury

Hummingbird Garden

Project Chair
Jean Brown
989-732-3087

Marilyn Kaczanowski
Amanda Charles
Dora Jasinski
Michele Lennox
Jeanne Freymuth
Betty Hartmann
Linda Myers
Sarah Andrew





Over The Fence-Welcome Heather Lovell



**Heather Lovell
MGVP Transfer**

Heather Lovell recently transferred to Otsego from Muskegon County. She took her basic training in 1995 and attended the Summer Conference for Advanced status the same year. Growing veggies is her favorite as she loves the idea of planting and nurturing a seed until it ends up on her plate! For Heather, there is nothing better than a vine fresh tomato and an ear of corn picked and grilled the same night.

As a very little kid Heather first became interested in growing things as she helped her grandma in her flower gardens. Growing up, her parents always had small vegetable gardens, where she experienced the joy of growing her own food and learned how much better it tasted-fresh from the garden. During 4th and 5th grades her gym teacher (of all things!) with proper permission, planted a very large vegetable garden on the schoolyard and enlisted the help of his students. Heather said "We worked on that garden after school, on weekends, and long into our summer break. It was thrilling to carry home bags of veggies from that garden. I remember how proud we all

felt too...I will have that memory with me for the rest of my life. Thanks Mr. Schultz!"

Her favorite gardening activity has always been spring cleanup. After long gray winter days, it's always exciting the first warm, sunny days to see the starts of her perennials coming back to life. "Getting sun-warmed soil under your fingernails is a rite of passage into spring isn't it?" Once done, she relates it's hard to believe it's the same place--everything looks so different from a few hours earlier. It's instant gratification!

She recently read a very funny gardening book "*The \$64.00 Tomato...How One Man Nearly Lost His Sanity*" by William Alexander. "It was a laugh-out-loud chronicle of a city man who moves his family to the country and his quest for the perfect garden. He battles bugs, Mother Nature, mammals and even neighbors. As I read it, I remembered doing the same "stupid" things he writes about and in some cases when I'd read something, my Master Gardener training kicked in - thinking to myself...OH BOY, that isn't going to work! It's a fun read for gardeners...plus it gives you vindication that you certainly aren't alone if you have ever made some the same mistakes he does!" What a treat to have Heather join us in Otsego County. Welcome, Heather.

Community Gardening by Genesee MGVP Fran Harbin

As we all know, the cost of food is on the rise. January has always been a time for price increases at the supermarkets for produce and staples. Many producers will incur greater cost of transportation due to the increase in fuel prices. Many of us will bake a loaf of homemade bread or make our own granola, but few of us will become true homesteaders, living off the land. In these tough economic times, though, there has been an increase in the number of gardens in the country. The concept of community gardening embodies living off the land while bringing people, cultures, and communities together. A community garden is any garden that is set up and worked and harvested by more than one household. The types of gardens vary from those started by homeowners to those started on vacant lots donated by a city or an organization. This concept has been so popular, that developers have begun to incorporate areas for a community garden into the design for housing settlements and communities.

The opportunity for forming bonds exists in the pre-season of gardening, as well as during the gardening activities, and lastly during harvest, storage, and postseason days and months. There are many well established community gardens across the nation and the world. The evidence of community gardening and its positive effects on the lives of those it serves are evident. Neighbors get together, plan, plant, weed, work together, harvest, then preserve and survive better. Everyone has a role to play. Almost every major city has or has had community gardens. How are they started? It is not so hard. Several community gardens flourished in the Flint area last season. Area residents have worked with local officials and transformed neglected properties into bountiful gardens. Some main steps or concerns in getting started: Use the winter pre-season months to get the idea out to the neighborhood; integrate the ideas of all; come to agreement between all members, decide on financing issues; have fun and enjoy the benefits of growing your food, knowledge and relationships! *Fran Harbin MG '07*



Otsego Conservation District Update



Emily Sewell

Spring Tree Sale

Volunteers are essential to the success of our tree sales. As previous volunteers know, there is a lot that needs to happen before customers can walk in and pick up their trees. We would appreciate volunteers on the following days:

- ◆ Packing small fruits April 13th -16th from 8:30am to 4:30pm
- ◆ Packing trees/shrubs April 20th - 23rd from 8:30am to 4:30pm
- ◆ Assisting customers April 24th and 25th from 8:30am to 5:00pm

Visiting Junior Master Gardens

Junior Master Gardeners from Emmet County and Charlevoix will be visiting the Otsego Demonstration Garden June 16th and 18th. Students participating will be in 3rd through 6th grade and will stay from around 10am to 2pm on both days. Anyone interested in assisting or leading hands-on activities as part of this fun afternoon in the Demo Garden can contact the Conservation District at the number below.



Conservation Day Camp

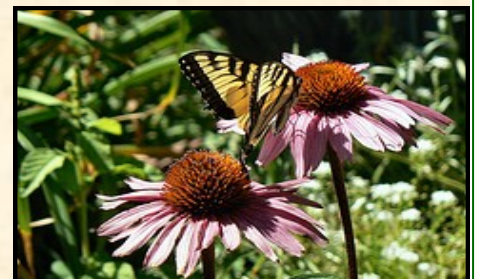
Monday, July 13th (for kindergarten and 1st grade)
 Tuesday, the 14th (for 2nd – 4th grade)
 Thursday, the 16th (for 5th and 6th grade)

Activities are held at the Otsego Demonstration Garden and Conservation Forest from 10am to 2pm each day. Kids will participate in making puddle stones and "toad abodes", going on nature walks, playing educational games and other activities. Tuesday may be of particular interest to Master Gardeners; kids will be designing and planting a "Children's Pollinator Garden" using native plants found to be most attractive to beneficial insects (according to MSU's study).

Native Plants Greenhouse Construction

Construction of Otsego Conservation District's Native Plants Greenhouse continues. Once the outside of the greenhouse is completed more "indoor" volunteer opportunities, such as assembling benches, will be available. Let us know if you are interested in updates on opportunities to help with this project.

Sign up to help at an event by contacting Emily Sewell at 732-4021 or emily.sewell@mi.nacdnet.net. To learn more about the Conservation District and our programs visit our new website, www.otsego.org/conservationdistrict . "



Homemade Maple Syrup

demonstrated by Sienna



According to MSU Department of Forestry's, Mel Koelling and eHow Food & Drink Editor, if you have maple trees in your yard, you are very lucky and can make your own maple syrup. Several species of maple trees grow in Michigan and produce sap suitable for the production of maple syrup, but sugar maple (*acer saccharum*) and black maple (*acer nigrum*) have the highest sugar content and are used by most commercial production.

Producing maple syrup is essentially a matter of concentrating the sugar solution to a predetermined level through evaporation. Heat is used to concentrate the sap and to develop the characteristic maple color and flavor that makes maple syrup so highly desirable. Maple syrup is very expensive in its true form because of the time required to make it and it takes 40 gallons of sap to yield one gallon of syrup. If you have time and follow these simple steps, you can make your own maple syrup.

Equipment:

- ◆ Drill with 1/2" bit
- ◆ Metal or plastic spout
- ◆ Bucket or container
- ◆ Large, shallow pan
- ◆ Candy thermometer
- ◆ Wool or orlon filter
- ◆ Storage containers



Tap 10" diameter Maple trees
2-4 ft from ground



Collect sap from covered
collection containers



Concentrate sap by boiling
inside or outside

1. Choose a spot on your maple tree that is approximately 2 to 4 feet from the ground. Make sure this spot is solid. The tree should be 10 inches in diameter or larger.
2. Drill a hole about 2 inches deep into the tree and insert a collection spout. Place a bucket or other collection container under the spout to catch the sap. Cover to keep out rain water, debris, insects or other foreign material. Sap flow occurs when a rapid warming trend in early to midmorning follows a cool (below freezing) night and may be kept four or five days without reducing syrup quality.
3. Place the sap in a shallow pan and heat to the boiling point. Be careful not to burn the sap. If you have any remaining sap that did not fit in the pan, you may add it as the sap evaporates. Continue boiling until the sap in the pan is highly concentrated.
4. Skim the surface for foam and other materials as the sap boils. A thick— shelled egg cuts down on foam.
5. Monitor the temperature. The maple syrup is done when the temperature reaches 7 degrees above the boiling point of water. (In our area, water boils at 212 degrees)
6. Filter the hot maple syrup through a wool or orlon filter to remove particles such as sugar sand. This will also improve the syrup's appearance.
7. Package the maple syrup while it is still at least 180 degrees to prevent spoilage.



Maple syrup and maple sugar are among the oldest agricultural commodities produced in the United States. Native Americans are generally credited with discovering how to convert maple sap into maple syrup. Last year about 100,000 gallons of maple syrup was produced in Michigan—the most since 1964, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Maple syrup has 50 calories per tablespoon and is fat free. Maple syrup may be used as is or it may be converted into products such as maple sugar, maple candy and maple fudge by concentrating finished syrup to a greater density and stirring the highly concentrated syrup. Recipes for a variety of maple products may be obtained by contacting the local county Extension office or by writing to the Department of Forestry at Michigan State University.



Smile Time



Yard Work Cartoon Puzzle

The pictures below are in the wrong order. For this puzzle, can you arrange them so the cartoon strip tells a story?



www.smart-kit.com



Snapshots at jasonlove.com



"And these came from our orgasmic garden!"

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 those contributing to this issue. Annette Yasin, Chris Cook, Lori Hansen, Emily Sewell, Marilyn Kaczanowski, Cathy O'Connor, Heather Lovell, Sienna.

CONGRATS!

Congratulations to Brent and Gail on their recent engagement.

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.

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: 989-732-5638
Treasurer, Chris Cook: 231-546-4134
Secretary, Karen Blewett: 989-786-7449

2009 AMGA MEETING SCHEDULE

- MARCH 25 "Kirkland Warblers" with Phil Huber (US Forestry Service)
- APRIL 22 Awards Banquet-1st Cong. Church Hall
- MAY 22 "Making a Hanging Basket" with Kate Steel (Blossom Shop)
- JUNE 24 Workbee/meeting at the Demo Garden
- JULY 22 Garden tour/pot-luck at Middleton's
- AUG 26 Garden tour/pot-luck at Carol Brown's
- SEPT 23 "Botanic Garden of NW Mich." Update
- SEPT 26 Fall Workshop
- OCT 28 "The making of cider (hard & soft) business" w/ Dan Young of Tandem Cider Co.
- NOV/DEC Holiday Party

- ◆ There will also be a field trip and
- ◆ Master Gardener Day at Home Depot