

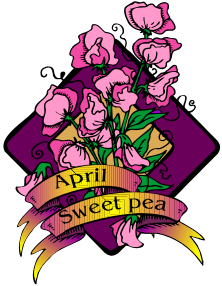
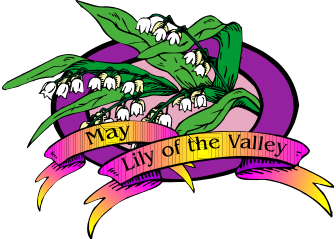
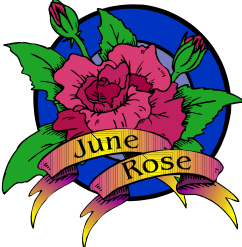
Roots & Shoots



Master Gardener
Society of
Oakland County, Inc.



April – May 2015

	<p>April 7, 2015 @ 6:30pm MGSOC General Society Meeting & Location Telly's Greenhouse, 3301 John R, Troy Speaker: George Papadelis Education: "New Annuals and Perennials for 2015"</p> <p>A business meeting will take place, prior to the start of our Educational Program.</p>
	<p>May 12, 2015 @ 6:30pm MGSOC General Society Meeting & Location Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church 5631 North Adams Rd, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304 Speaker : David Michener or Robert Grese Education: "The Peony Garden in Nichols Arboretum"</p> <p>A business meeting will take place, prior to the start of our Educational Program.</p>
	<p>June 9, 2015 @ 6:30pm MGSOC General Society Meeting & Location Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church 5631 North Adams Rd, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304 Speaker : Keith Berven Education: "Care and Raising Dahlias"</p> <p>A business meeting will take place, prior to the start of our Educational Program.</p>



Notes from Carol

Spring is finally here! You may have noticed more volunteer opportunities in the Oakland Gardener which is a definite sign that winter has loosened its icy grip on us.

Most of the Farmers Market information tables will start in May. The sad news is that the Wixom market closed for good at the end of last year. We appreciate your help, **Teresa Ververis**, throughout the years as Team leader for Wixom. The good news is that we will be back at the Rochester Farmers Market this year after a few years' hiatus. The Market Master (a certified MG!) has agreed to bring and take away our supplies each week. Thank you, **Sandy Kondos**! You'll find information on the market sign-ups in your inbox in early April.

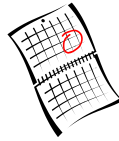
Denise Jones will once again head up the Ask a Master Gardener program which has volunteers assisting customers at local garden centers in exchange for donations to our MG Program. This help leaves their employees freed up to unload trucks, water plants etc., while we answer plant questions for their clients. This program takes place on Saturdays in May. Once we know which garden centers are onboard we'll send the volunteer plea to you. The garden centers offer discounts to our volunteers on the day they are volunteering.

Our **Volunteer Recognition Banquet** is on May 14. The committee is busy planning a great event! Look for the invitation to come to your inbox the first week in April. If you are hoping to get your basic and/or Advanced Certificate at the Banquet, make sure you have your hours completed and submitted into the VMS by April 1.

Our Continuing Education Committee classes in our Michigan Garden Travelogue series were fun and we are hoping that you hit the road this year and visit the many public gardens we have in Michigan. Here are always concepts that can be translated to your yard.

Our April and May classes will be **Seasonal Color in Your Garden** on April 11 and **Spice up Your Garden with Herbs** on May 9.

I hope you can take advantage of the gardening/volunteering season and wish you every success both in your own gardens and in your volunteer projects!



The Year at a Glance—MGSOC Meetings/Events for 2015

April 7	George Papadelis	New Annuals and Perennials for 2015	Telly's Greenhouse, 3301 John R, Troy
April 25		MGSOC Conference	Oakland Schools Center
May 12	David Michener or Robert Grese	The Peony Garden in Nichols Arboretum	
May 18		MGSOC Board Meeting	7PM @ Extension Office
June 9	Keith Berven	Care and Raising Dahlias	
July 14	Donna and Les Abel	All About Garlic	
July 24-26		Trip: Chicago Botanical Gardens, Milwaukee, and More	SOLD OUT. Call Sandie Parrott 248-394-1532 to be waitlisted.
August 11	Heather Glenday	What's Going on in the Garden	
August 17		MGSOC Board Meeting	7PM @ Extension Office
September 8	Janet Macunovich	Bulbs: Choosing, Planting & Growing	
October 13	Karen Burke	Dehydrating Vegetables: Basics and Beyond	
October 19		MGSOC Board Meeting	7PM @ Extension Office
November 10	John Gaydos	New Annuals for 2016 and How to Use Annuals in the Garden	
November 16		MGSOC Board Meeting	7PM @ Extension Office
December 8	Holiday Potluck		

2015 Educational Conference

The **Master Gardener Society of Oakland County, Inc.** is pleased to announce that tickets are on sale for their **3rd Annual Educational Garden Conference “Gardening and All That Jazz – Innovation and Sustainability For Your Garden.”** Ticket sales are brisk and only a limited number are available so don’t miss out on this opportunity. The date is **Saturday, April 25, 2015** and based on the success of last year’s event, it will quickly sell out so you’ll want to purchase your tickets soon. Early bird tickets are \$70, after March 14 they will be \$80.

The educational conference is a day-long event and will be held at Oakland Schools Conference Center, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, in Waterford. This conference is open to the public; you need not be a Master Gardener to attend.

For more information, visit the home page of our website, www.mgsoc.org. There are two ways to purchase your ticket from the site. You can buy the tickets via online registration (through Intuit) using a credit card with the link on the home page. Or, you can print the registration form and mail a check to their registrar. Both options are available under “**News and Events**” from the home page. If you have questions, please direct them to our registrar via e-mail, **Nancy Strodl, at: nancy@mgsoc.org**. Brochures are available at the monthly MGSOC, Inc. General Meetings and at key gardening locations around the area. The important thing is to sign up, and do it soon!

In addition to the outstanding keynote speakers, the event features live jazz featuring Dave Bennett, clarinet prodigy from Waterford, and Kerry Price, jazz /blues vocalist and pianist from Royal Oak.

This event also includes a large garden market of many local vendors and artisans selling garden related artwork and plants. Continental breakfast and lunch is included.

As in past years, this year’s keynote speakers will again include innovative, nationally-known speakers. They are:

Will Allen

Will Allen is an urban farmer who is transforming the cultivation, production and delivery of healthy foods to under-served urban populations. As the son of a sharecropper, former professional basketball player, ex-corporate sales leader and longtime farmer, he is recognized as a national leader in urban agriculture and food policy. After a brief career in professional basketball and a number of years in corporate marketing at Procter & Gamble, Will Allen returned to his roots as a farmer, using his retirement package to purchase a plot of inner-city land with greenhouses, where he established and functions as the CEO of the country’s preeminent urban farm and non-profit organization, Growing Power.

At **Growing Power** and in community food projects across the nation and around the world, Allen promotes the belief that all people, regardless of their economic circumstances, should have access to fresh, safe, affordable and nutritious foods at all times. Using methods he has developed over a lifetime, Allen trains community members to become community farmers, assuring them a secure source of good food without regard to political or economic forces.

In 2008, Allen was named a *John D. and Katherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellow*, a “genius grant,” only the second farmer ever to be so honored. He is also a member of the *Clinton Global Initiative*, and in February 2010, he was invited to the White House to join First Lady Michelle Obama in launching *Let’s Move!* – her signature leadership program to reverse the epidemic of childhood obesity in America. In May 2010, *Time* magazine named Will one of *Time 100 World’s Most Influential People*. In 2011, Allen was named one of the “World’s Most Powerful Foodies” by Michael Pollan and Forbes Magazine in its World Power Issue and the NEA Security Benefit Corporation Award for Outstanding Service to Public Education in 2012 for his work with children, teachers and schools.

Allen also experienced an illustrious career in sports. In 1966, he was a member of the Richard Montgomery High School State Championship Basketball Team and named to the Washington Post’s All-Metro Basketball Team, the first player ever to be named three times in the history of the award. As a high school All-American basketball player, he received over 100 scholarship offers to colleges and universities.

In 1967, Allen became the first African-American basketball player at the University of Miami Florida and one of Miami’s all-time leaders in scoring and rebounding.

Post-college, Allen played professionally in the American Basketball Association and then for a Belgian team in the European Professional League.

Allen was inducted in the Atlantic Coast Conference Hall of Legends in 2010 and in 2011, received the highest honor that can be bestowed to a collegiate athlete, the Theodore Roosevelt Award from the National College Athletic Association, his name enshrined at the NCAA Hall of Champions in Indianapolis, Indiana.

On May 10th, 2012, Will Allen became a published autobiographer of the book, *THE GOOD FOOD REVOLUTION: Growing Healthy Food, People, and Communities*.

In the fall of 2012, Will Allen was the first ever inductee into the *Richard Montgomery High School Hall of Fame*. Richard Montgomery is Allen’s high school alma mater in Rockville, MD. He lives with his wife in Oak Creek, Wisconsin.

Matthew Benson

Matthew Benson is an award-winning photographer, writer, and organic farmer whose engaging and informative presentations, workshops and book signings are extremely popular with the Garden Clubs of America, where he is on the National Speaker's Tour.

Magazine clients include *House & Garden*, *Traditional Home*, *Better Homes & Gardens*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Esquire*, *GQ*, *This Old House*, *The New York Times*, *Garden Design*, *Country Home*, *Country Living*, *Country Gardens*, *Saveur*, *Martha Stewart Everyday Food*, *Martha Stewart Everyday Baking*.

Book contributions include the *Garden Primer*, *Garden Style*, *The Home Outside*, *Saveur Cooks*

Everyday Italian, The Garden Design Book of Gardens, Small Space Gardens, Rodale: Perennials, Roses, Annuals, Container Gardening, Manspace, In Season, Cook This Now, and A Good Appetite.

He is a contributing editor and television spokesman for Rodale's *Organic Gardening*, and writes and photographs frequently on issues of small-scale farming, sustainability, organics and food justice. He writes a popular blog at *Organic Gardening.com*, the *Accidental Farmer*. His latest book projects are *Urban Farms*, and *The Photographic Garden: Mastering the Art of Digital Garden Photography*, *Four Season Farm Gardener's Cookbook* by Barbara Damrosch and Eliot Coleman, and *Growing Beautiful Food* based on the growing's on at his organic farm in the Hudson Valley.

Raised and educated in Europe, with a Masters Degree from Columbia University, he is a trans-Atlantic sailor and certified alpine ski instructor. Architecture, design, and biodynamic organic farming are ongoing interests, as is the restoration of Stonegate Farm, the 1860s Carpenter Gothic farm he shares with his wife Heidi, and children Daisy Marlana and Miles.

Kerry Ann Mendez

Kerry Ann Mendez is dedicated to teaching the art of low-maintenance perennial gardening and landscaping. As a garden consultant, designer, writer and lecturer, she focuses on time-saving gardening techniques and workhorse plant material as well as organic practices. She has been in numerous magazines including *Horticulture*, *Fine Gardening*, *Garden Gate* and *Better Homes and Gardens' Garden Ideas & Outdoor Living*. Mendez was a featured guest on HGTV and hosted Capital News 9's *In the Garden* television segment as well as info segments for Channel 13. Mendez was awarded the 2014 Gold Medal from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, an honorary medal presented to outstanding horticulturalists, plant innovators, and those who have made significant contributions to the enjoyment and appreciation of plants and the environment. She is a garden columnist for *518 Life* and *Today's Garden Center* magazines and writes freelance pieces for regional and national magazines.

As a presenter for *Horticulture* magazine's 2010 and 2011 webinar series, her webinars attracted thousands of gardeners from around the country. Kerry works at Estabrook's Nursery in Kennebunk, Maine. She has the unique privilege of being a national spokesperson for Proven Winners and Espoma. Kerry is a self-taught gardener with over 25 years of experience and a 'passionate perennialist' that enjoys mixing humor with practical information. Kerry's top-selling first book, *The Ultimate Flower Gardener's Top Ten Lists*, was released in March 2010; followed by her second book, *Top Ten Lists for Beautiful Shade Gardens* in March 2011. Kerry's third book, *The Right-Size Garden: Simplify Your Outdoor Space with Smart Design Solutions and Plant Choices*, will be released in February 2015. It provides time-tested answers for aging and time-pressed gardeners. For more about Kerry and her business, Perennially Yours, visit www.pyours.com.

Winter Ravaged Trees



Heidi Densmore, certified arborist from Mike's Tree Surgeons, gave a timely talk for our March meeting. It is almost time for us to go out and look at what this past winter hath wrought on our beloved trees. The past two winters have been extremely cold, especially as compared to the previous 20 years. Our hardiness zone represents the lowest temperatures we are likely to see each winter on average for a given location. For the most part, it is wisest for us to choose trees that are hardy in zone 5. Microclimates in protected areas can give a little more leeway. Non-native dogwoods, redbuds, cherries, Japanese maples, boxwood, *Taxus*, *Rhododendrons*, hollies, *Azaleas* and ornamental evergreens all tend to be sensitive. If you see a tree that looks damaged, take a wait and see approach because trees can be quite resilient. The tree that looks like a goner in April may leaf out in June.

Deer browsing can be a big problem, especially in cold winters when food is scarce. Although a deer-browsed tree may look awful in the immediate aftermath, sometimes it regenerates new growth and saves you the trouble of pruning. Arborvitae, yews, burning bush, *Viburnums*, *Hydrangeas*, *Rhododendrons*, *Azaleas* and *Euonymus* are all quite susceptible to deer browse, but if they are hungry enough, deer will eat almost anything. Repellents can be effective.

Desiccation can occur in windy and/or sunny locations. Evergreens can discolor especially when facing the southeast. You can protect them with burlap, but the trees should be allowed to get some sun. It is best to wrap them loosely or set up a screen. Grafted trees are more sensitive to the hazards of winter. Frost cracks and sunscald can occur especially on sycamores, but also on maples, apples, cherries, horse chestnuts, lindens, walnuts and willows. Usually the trees form scar tissue, and no major damage is done. If there is loose bark, you can scrape it off with a knife. Deer also rub their antlers on the bark. Spiral wrap can be used to protect trees from frost cracks and deer rubbing or burlap can be put on a coated wire fence around the tree.

Salt damage is another hazard of winter and can cause browning of evergreens. Especially along roads we need to choose salt tolerant species. Girdling by small animals like voles, rabbits and squirrels can do considerable damage by killing whole branches. Shrubs can be pruned right to the ground and will usually regenerate very nicely.

Snow and ice breakage (a real problem last year) also takes a toll on trees. Shallow-rooted trees like evergreens and small ornamental trees sometimes suffer root damage when it is very cold with little or no snow cover.

After the damage of winter, there is yet another hazard waiting for our woody ornamentals. After the trees have begun to bud out, spring frost can injure the delicate new growth. Two years ago after a mild winter and a week of 80 degree temperatures in mid-March, trees were caught short by several nights of hard frost in April. In Michigan, the cherry, apple and peach crops were wiped out for the year.

Although we cannot predict or control the weather, we can minimize winter damage in several ways. We can select hardy cultivars which are native to our area. We can avoid late summer

and early fall pruning and fertilizing which tends to stimulate new growth which can be damaged by the cold. Trees and shrubs should be adequately watered until the ground freezes. Mulch conserves soil moisture and insulates the roots. Protect evergreens from wind and salt spray with burlap. Use a repellent to keep animals from browsing and girdling. I have had excellent results with a product made of pig blood. It's messy and nasty to be out in November spraying blood everywhere, but the deer and the gnawing animals simply won't touch anything I have sprayed.

Once you have diagnosed winter damage, don't panic and assume the tree is dead or damaged beyond repair. If given time, most trees will recover. They may not flower as well this spring, but they probably will recover. Fertilize and water well to encourage strong root systems.

HAPPY SPRING!

Submitted by Jean Gramlich

The Black Cat May Not Eat Your Hydrangeas but the Deer Might



Cheryl English, Advanced Master Gardener and Potter of the Black Cat Pottery, gave the Society of Master Gardeners a presentation on “Hydrangeas in the American Garden” at their February meeting. The joy of Cheryl English’s presentation was in her command of the language, in her synergistic view of the gardening process and in her unique, at times cynical, but humorous view of the world we live in. Certainly her knowledge of the selection, care and feeding of hydrangeas is encyclopedic but her presentation was so much more than that.

Cheryl says that her roles as artist and gardener are symbiotic: that is, that the identities are intertwined, that one informs and grows the other. She brought samples of her Black Cat Pottery (shown in many local galleries) that illustrate echoes of her gardening in their replication of flowers, leaf patterns and colors. Her studies in Art History and Greek and Roman Architecture allow her to “speak with authority” as she decodes the Latin and Greek in the genus and species names and she encourages us to do the same when using the terms. Her language ranged from esoteric terms to colloquial slang. Two examples: *Hydrangeas* are named after a Greek vessel, the hydra, that holds the water to mix with wine; when questioned about pruning old and new growth, her suggestion was that we take out the part that “looks yuckier.”

As she discusses *Hydrangeas* and other classes of plants, Cheryl stresses the impact of selected plantings on the total garden. She stresses the importance of native plants that provide the nectars and pollinators that attract the insects, that attract the birds, that provide an environment in which multiple layers of creatures can live. It seemed to me she was quite casual about the invaders that drive us nuts as we watch our precious plants decimated. Her approach is different: plant a tomato just for the hornworms and plant your tomatoes where the birds can see the hornworms; fence your treasures so the deer cannot get to them or plant “decoy plants” in front

of your treasures that will be eaten in preference to them. Interestingly, she says insects are “the food of the future”; she sees insects as workers who convert protein to a usable form. Definitely a pacifist approach rather than a chemical one.

Cheryl placed particular emphasis on two of her favorites: *Hydrangea quercifolia* (Oakleaf Hydrangea) and *Hydrangea arborescens* (specifically Annabelle). The *arborescens* is the only *Hydrangea* native to this part of the country and the *quercifolia*, while not native, gives good performance in four seasons. Both are recommended in a “Great Plant for American Gardens” by the American Horticultural Society. While Cheryl took us through the characteristics of the various cultivars of *Hydrangea* that “catch the eye”, she noted for special attention a Japanese *Hydrangea* vine *Schizophragma hydrangeoides* which while slow to start will climb 20 to 30 feet and can be obtained in a pink color.

Cheryl opens her garden for visitors and does gardening and pottery workshops throughout the year. Further information can be obtained at cenglish@blackcatpottery.com. 🐱

Submitted by Marilyn Frey

Call for Articles



This newsletter depends on you to submit articles for its bi-monthly editions. If you have visited an interesting garden while on vacation, have attended a noteworthy class, or are knowledgeable in a gardening-related topic, please feel free to write an article to share and submit it for publication in a future edition. You may report your writing time as Volunteer Hours.

The deadline for the June – July Edition is May 15, 2015.

E-mail your articles to Roots & Shoots editor Dick Wanat at rwanat155056mi@comcast.net



FLOWERS AND ALL THAT JAZZ



Classic Jazz, Big Band, Dixieland, Swing, Jazzalot, The Jazz Scene, Jazz and Blues, Michigan Jazz Festival, Jazzaret, B'Jazz Vespers, and Gardening and All That Jazz, are words that roll off the tongue of Sally Bolle, a Master Gardener since 2011, and a jazz enthusiast forever.

Sally and her husband Bill are on the Board of Directors for the Greater Detroit Jazz Society, LLC. Bill is the Manager/Treasurer/Legal Advisor, and Sally is the Director, Newsletter Designer/Editor, and Promotion Person. Producing "The Jazz Scene" newsletter bi-monthly, takes a lot of time, devotion, and perseverance, however Sally loves it. Sally and Bill and their spouses belonged to the Jazz Society for many years. After each of their spouses passed away, their friendship continued, which later turned into love. They had a romantic surprise wedding when all of their friends, and several jazz bands were gathered together to honor well-known jazz artist Emily Laura, when she was 90 years old. Now it is 8 years later, and they are still making wonderful jazz music together. You can get a schedule of "*Jazz at Shields*", at www.GreaterDetroitJazzSociety.com.

Thanks to Sally, once again Kerry Price, an accomplished pianist and vocalist listed in *Who's Who of American Jazz and Blues Singers*, will perform on the piano in the morning. The Dave Bennett Quartet, who is in demand around the United States, will be performing for your lunch time dining and shopping pleasure at our Third Annual Educational Garden Conference, on Saturday, April 25, 2015.

Sally and her mother lived with her Grandparents in Big Rapids, since she was 4 months old. Being in the garden with her Grandmother, Martha Whitfield, growing all of their delicious vegetables and beautiful flowers put a love of gardening in her heart. I can vision Sally as a little girl sitting in the garden, eating a carrot she had just picked. It gives Sally a wonderful feeling when she can now look into her garden and see the peonies that originated in her Grandmother's garden.

Sally took piano lessons when she was 8 years old and later became the accompanist for the Youth Chorale at All Saints Episcopal Church in Pontiac. Sally continues to play, furthers her study of jazz piano, and accompanies Bill on his string bass. Horses were another interest for Sally. She grew up riding, then when married had a horse farm for 30 years in Ortonville. Her daughters, Molly and Meghan, also rode horses and entered many A & B Shows in Oakland County. Sally had a huge organic garden and regularly donated vegetables to their church.

General Motors was fortunate to have Sally work for them for 30 years. When she retired, she was the Publishing Manager. After retirement Sally moved to Big Rapids and worked for the Downtown Development Authority. We are pleased that Sally is now putting all this knowledge to work for MGSOC.

Sally received her MG certificate in 2011, obtaining many of her hours designing and coordinating the MG Cookbook. She accumulated enough hours for her Advanced Master

Gardener certificate when she helped with the planning and designing of the brochure and the "Save the Date" card, for the first MGSOC Conference. Sally also designed the new logo and pin for MGSOC. She is on the Garden Conference Committee, and helps with the Hospitality Committee. In the past she has worked on Project Support.

Sally has been on the board of MGSOC for the past two years as 1st Vice President, and she is a co-team leader for Bowers Farm. Her interest in Bowers farm came from the fact that she personally knew Charles Bowers for many years, as he was her mother's high school friend and later became their family doctor. Last year at Bowers Farm, the volunteers worked 978 hours, producing 340 pounds of produce which was donated to Open Door in Pontiac. This year they plan to have two working days, Wednesday and Saturday. If you are interested in volunteering at the farm, you may call Sally at 248/909-8668 for information. Bowers farm is a wonderful place to obtain knowledge in gardening as well as hours for your volunteer record.



On January 13, 2015, Sally was presented the Sylvia Schult Award.

*The Sylvia Schult Award
Recognizes a MGSOC
volunteer's dedication
and achievement
in serving the society
and its goals in 2014*

Along with gardening and jazz music, Sally and Bill have 2 rescued dogs, Rocky, a six year old Boxer and Louie a small Chihuahua. Two feral cats live in a heated house outdoors, and one kitten lives upstairs in their home. In the picture below ten-year old grandson, Kendrick, is holding their blind cat, Doc.

All of this jazz music wafting through the air must be good for her gardens. In 2011, approximately 1000 people attended the Troy Garden Walk and strolled through Sally's beautiful and spacious gardens. Crimson King Maple, Little Leaf Linden, White Pines, Rose of Sharon, *Bougainvillea*, *Hydrangea*, *Delphinium*, Cone Flowers, *Lamium*, Roses, down to the wonderful smell of Sweet Woodruff, as well as Ferns, *Hosta*, and many flowers, all greet you in different areas of the garden. There is a nicely curved stone wall you can sit on that makes you feel part of the garden. Let's not forget the beautiful butterfly and herb gardens as you amble along. As

you can see by the pictures below, there is much beauty to see everywhere. Their latest addition is a dry creek bed going into the forest to the Sprague Tributary, leading to the Rouge River.

Bill and Sally both enjoy planning and working in their garden. It must be all that plucking on the string bass for so many years that make Bill's fingers love to go out and pull weeds while Sally plants the flowers.

Troy Garden Walk 2011



Grandson Kendrick



Submitted by Sylvia Schult



*The Martha Humphrey Award
recognizes a MGSOC volunteer
who has gone
above and beyond
in contributing
their time and energy
at Bowers Farm
for the year 2014*

Robert Denver's interest in vegetable gardening began when he was a teenager growing up in Waterford, and his parents had a garden. Spending many hours tending the vegetables, and learning their ways instilled a desire for gardening that never left him. Years later, when Robert bought his first home, he was happy to design and plant his own garden. Generally, Robert likes to have a style of garden and plants based on texture and interesting leaf structure, rather than flowers.

After high school graduation, Robert was in the Navy for six years. Aboard the USS John F. Kennedy, he traveled far and wide; the Mediterranean Sea and nearby regions, Spain, France, Italy, Egypt, Morocco, and many other interesting places.

Robert learned about the Master Gardener class from a co-worker, whose wife was taking the course. He thought the course he took in January was well organized and enjoyed it a lot. Robert received his MG Certification in 2008 and his Advanced MG Certificate in 2012.

The MG class is where Robert met Beth Brown who introduced him to Bowers Farm, and he was hooked. There are over 20 gardens that MGSOC maintains. Working the flower, herb, and vegetable gardens is a great pleasure for Robert. Last year he improved the design of the gardens. Everyone was so happy with all of his hard work, creations, suggestions, and improvements. Robert received the Martha Humphrey Award in January, 2015 for his work at Bowers Farm in 2014.

Robert works at Volkswagen in Computer Security. He will graduate from Baker College in June of this year, with his degree in Computer Security.

Robert truly follows the motto of the USS John F Kennedy
Date Nolite Rogare - Latin for "Give, be unwilling to ask"

**"Ask not what your country can do for you;
Ask what you can do for your country"**

Submitted by Sylvia Schult

Free First Friday at Cranbrook

On March 6, 2015, there was an evening panel discussion and lecture held at Cranbrook Institute of Science entitled '*Plastic Pollution in the Great Lakes*'. It was a very informative and enlightening event courtesy of MASCO free first Fridays. There was an exhibit viewing at 6:00 p.m., '*Plastic Waters: From the Great Lakes to the Oceans*', which consisted of displays of samples taken from oceanic gyres, or colossal areas of circulating currents where great collections of plastic pollution have accumulated. Many of these remnants are still in their macro form, whole or partially broken down junk, no less than 5 millimeters in size. These massive accumulations are what I was personally more aware of. But plastics in our waterways are a two headed beast, and I found myself getting a clearer picture of the poly problem as a whole. The term microplastics refers to anything less than 5 millimeters in size. Something so small can go unnoticed for a long time, even in great amounts. I looked into microscopes set up to view tiny plastic particles in beauty and skin care products, even toothpaste. These microbeads as they are referred to, are generally more in the 1.25 millimeter range, or smaller...down to 4/10,000 of a millimeter. The shapes range from jagged, used as exfoliants, to spherical, to create a smoother feel during application of lotions or soaps. Some are used simply to provide visual appeal or color. When we shower them off or spit them out they go directly into the fresh water treatment systems, and end up being carried into our streams and lakes. Microplastics can also be the result of macros breaking down over time, reduced to literal plastic dust.

Beginning at 7:00 p.m. presentations were made by Friends of the Rouge, Clinton River Watershed Council, and Alliance for the Great Lakes. Also mentioned was Friends of the Detroit River. As the evening continued I would come to understand that these organizations are doing far more than holding clean-up days for our waterways. The enormous amount of macroplastics these folks gather are removed *before* they have a chance to reduce in size to the point they can no longer be collected. That understanding caused an even greater appreciation for these groups and their collective mission. Spring is coming and clean-up days are around the corner. Consider offering volunteer time to these spectacular efforts.

At 8:00 p.m. the main lecture, '*An Ecological Perspective of Microplastics in the Great Lakes*', was given by Jennifer Daley, research fellow with University of Michigan, and her presentation was dynamic. Microplastics are at every level in our waterways, at the surface, in the water column, and in the bed material on the bottom. They are being found in small organisms and large, embedded in the gut and digestive systems. Small fish sometimes mistake them for eggs and consume them, and larger fish eat the small fish, so the plastics keep working their way up the food chain. In some cases the base materials that make up these particles are being found absorbed into the gut tissue itself. That is as far as current research has gone, but who could think that these chemical compounds would stop there. Tissue research is the next logical step.

Education begins with awareness, and leads us to action, and this is most certainly a problem we must continue to hammer away at; once again our greatest resource is at stake. As a first step you may consider not purchasing products which contain these plastic microbeads. The specific ingredients you should look for on the label are, polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), and

polyvinyl chloride (PVC). The wording 'contains microbeads' may be on the label as well. These ingredients lists have become so long, and the lettering so small you may literally need a magnifying glass to read them. Don't give up; it's too important. A loftier goal would be a statewide ban on plastic microbeads. It is clearly a possibility as Michigan would not be the first, but instead would be following the state of Illinois in their 2014 ban of personal products containing plastic microbeads. Way to go, Illinois.

In summing up, I feel incredulous. Once again I feel as though I have had the wool yanked over my eyes. But it's not even good old, real wool; I wish it was. It's something more like a polyester blend, which is far scarier if you think about it.

Submitted by Timothy McGee

...from the cabbage patch



everyone.

Please remember to notify our Corresponding Secretary, Nancy Schmid, with member news so she can forward the appropriate correspondence to our fellow Master Gardeners. As corresponding secretary, Nancy sends cards of cheer, congratulations and condolences to our members as the situation warrants and Nancy would welcome being alerted to any such opportunities. She would also appreciate knowing whether or not the member wishes to share their news with

Nancy has been a Master Gardener since 2010 as well as a member of the Project Support Team since then. Nancy is also the keeper of the Master Gardener cookbooks so please keep her in mind if you have news to share or need a gift for gardener.

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I am always amazed by the first day I can walk out in the morning air and smell spring. To me, that elusively precious scent of spring is more wonderful than the sweet smell of good compost to the tenth power. And much rarer. No bottled or canned spray or oil has ever equaled that eau according to my olfactory system. Part of the thrill is the anticipation and part of the thrill is what makes racehorses leave the gate.

Gentle gardeners, start your engines!

After spending the last several weeks with houseplant therapy and hauling sixty-some gallons of rainwater from my basement stash so far, I felt compelled to plant some kind of seeds or I might die. Just as the waning sunlight triggers SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), the increasing amounts of daylight trigger something in gardeners very similar to its boosting the photosynthesis in plants. Perhaps it's a shot of vitamin D. In some of us, it manifests itself in varying degrees of madness, most of which are harmless unless you have a partner who consistently puts containers you were saving for seed-starting in the recyclables. Or the jars and shakers you might have collected to save seeds and use to distribute the crushed eggshells we've been saving.

It took many, many months to empty that giant shaker of parmesan cheese. Fortunately you have to buy two at a time at the big box store so there's a spare in the pantry and I will be embellishing many different dishes with a dusting of grated cheese. It could last for years.

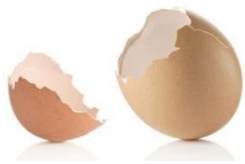
Recycling containers has long been a hobby and an excuse for getting carry-out. Before our sanitation company began taking polystyrene foamy stuff (not a scientific term), I found many uses for the trays, especially the bright yellow ones. They are perfect for making sticky traps to catch the fungus gnats that are so common in the winter houseplant community. The flyers are attracted to the color and when you spread them with Tangle Foot or even Vaseline, mount them on a plastic fork and plant them in a pot, you have a very effective Amish bug zapper.

You can make you own pots by rolling strips of newsprint around a circular object of the appropriate diameter, seal with tape on the bottom and plant the whole thing when it comes time. I learned that more paper is better than less because it breaks down quite rapidly and you can be left with a puddle of plant and potting soil that knows no boundary. I prefer to use my newspaper for mulching. Pots are no longer a problem around here because I find empty pots and flats anonymously dropped off by the gate throughout the season, oddly just a few feet away from my 'Home of a Master Gardener' banner. Some come back from my veggie plant customers because they know that those plants are potted up at least twice and those particular pots are of great importance in the process. Plus, the Dingo gave up eating plastic so the pot crisis has pretty much subsided. It tickles me that many of the donations still have the plant tags in or on them.

Other alternate-use items: empty toilet paper rolls make great cutworm collars and empty wrapping paper rolls are good for trapping earwigs. Wide rolls can be cut to lengths suitable for

seed starting containers as well, depending on the type of plant you want to grow. Treat them similarly to peat pots as they need a containment system. For years I lusted after the heat mats for sale in my catalogs. In a light table, the bottom light can warm the upper tray but the bottom, especially being closer to the floor, really can use something extra. Heating pads set on low do a remarkably economical job and I could buy six for the price of one in the catalog. And not pay shipping. The MSUE Home Gardening bulletin from 03/10/2015 had the suggestion of using rope lights for a heating device and I am seriously thinking about wiring up one of the cold frames with one. Anything to push the season which is expected to be cool since the Great Lakes had so much ice cover, very similar to last year.

Years back I theorized that if the APS units I purchased were made of a Styrofoam type material, I should be able to extract the same kind of insulating benefit from pieces of packing material I had. Rather than having to raise and lower the light bars on the grow table, I raise and lower the flats by adding and subtracting sections of packing material. I use the blue foam containers that mushrooms come in to start onions and flower seeds. (Of course just recently the packaging has become either blue plastic or cardboard.) You can use one as a tray and put in a layer of packing peanuts and then top that with another tray that receives drainage holes and a filling of seed starting mix. You can place them in clean plastic bags or top with plastic cling wrap. Some packing peanuts are made out of corn and decompose so it pays to know what you're using. An easy way to check them is to drop one on the floor and see if the dog will eat it. I heard one of the family pups munching away one afternoon and realized the source of her snacking material was packing material from a shipping box that had recently been opened. The peanuts were biodegradable. In the past I have found flyers in the packaging to alert the recipient but there wasn't such a thing in the box. They never stood a chance in the compost coffin because the Dingo loves corn and she will find it. She eats birdseed. It's embarrassing.



Even eggshells get recycled. Tomatoes get a good dose of them as do the Hostas. We do not compost eggshells because a vermicomposter told me that they are too rough on the worm's skin. I just give Himself a mortar and pestle and a bag of eggshells and it temporarily keeps him from crabbing at the TV. They are almost powder when he's done, even the worms wouldn't mind. I have tried using the cartons for seed starting but the APS units work better for me, as do other items on hand. The cartons kept drying out and I couldn't handle the guilt of planticide. You really need something deeper, like yogurt containers. And, as in any seed starting endeavor, one must always consider drainage issues.

By now you should be well into the garden planning stage and know what you want to do. It's always a relief to me when I get the last vegetable crop planted. The hectic pace seems to slow just for a bit before I realize that flowers would be nice. And I usually start seeing things I don't like around my yard. I swear it's not my imagination that the imported cabbageworm butterflies come earlier each year. I never catch the leaf miners on the columbine. When the cherry tree has aphids, though, I see lady beetle larvae in just a few days. It imperative that we know what's going on in the gardens before it's too late.

Four years ago, Mother Earth News published responses from their reader polls regarding gardening challenges related to pest and weed control. In the pest control data, the emphasis was

strictly organic. When it came to weeds, the emphasis was on control strategies such as strong tools and good gloves, with sidebars on top-rated mulch types and top-rated organic herbicides. (Forgive me for being giddy over my 22 bags of shredded leaves.)

The top-rated common garden pest? Slugs. Of the three top organic methods of dealing with them, eggshells were rated last, with a 66% success rate. Hand-picking had an 87% success rate, but picking by chickens, garter snakes and especially ducks offered the most long-term success. One morning last summer I was letting the Dingo out and came face to face with a snail, a rather large snail, that had traveled up the storm door glass. I couldn't recall ever seeing one of these locally before. It was very pretty and I knew it was going to cook in that southern exposure and a hot driveway unless I did something. So I "hand-picked" it...

The second best-rated method of slug control is the ever-popular beer trap, with an 80% success rate. This does not surprise me because unless you have several traps to fill, you get to drink what you don't use. I don't believe that method would do well at Nutcase because I suspect the Dingo would drink the beer and eat the slugs. She is pure hell-on-paws when it comes to grasshoppers, which came in as hated pest No. 9. She plucks them mid-air (these hyphens are killing me). Squash bugs came in as the second most despised pest and the ducks just didn't do it this time. Along with hand-picking, neem, and row covers were the main tools of defense, with companion planting having mixed reviews. This not being a scientific study, I am sure the number of variables among the respondents was all over the map. A few people suggested putting open pizza cartons under the plants and then jostling the plants early in the morning when it's cool so that adult and juvenile squash fall into the boxes and then you slip them into a bucket of soapy water. I would suggest placing the boxes or whatever you use as a catch tray a day before you plan to jostle, so neither side in the battle gets surprised. Delaying planting allows for more natural enemies to be present to battle squash bugs and row covers were quite useful. I grew an amazing crop of cabbage butterflies under my row covers because I didn't put them on early enough.

Pest control at night is much more exciting than your everyday pest control. All you need is a good head lamp, proper clothing, an old plastic spoon or pancake flipper with the longest handle possible and a bucket of death. If you market the adventure correctly, night bug whacking can be family entertainment. Many of the pests are minimally active and easily captured. Japanese beetles (Pest #6) are easily dispatched while semi-paralyzed by the coolness coma. If you're a morning person, early works also. Know ahead of time that it is not unusual for the neighbors to wonder about you.

Aphids came in at number 3 most hated garden pest but most respondents were successful with various methods of control such as pruning, horticultural oil and insecticidal soap but attracting beneficials is much more peaceful. Plants like *Alyssum*, *Calendula*, *Zinnias*, *Cosmos* and *Nasturtiums* are excellent choices for interplanting in the vegetable garden. My usual recommendation, depending on the victim, is target practice with a hose and a strong spray of plain water. The plant needs to be fairly sturdy to stand up to a blast but it's quick and the subject gets watered as a bonus. I've noticed that the site matters a lot as to which plants may be attacked and which are left alone. Stressed plants are very attractive to aphids and I have been amazed at the difference a mere three feet makes.

My little white butterflies came as pest number four. Spinosad and Bt were popular but paper wasps and yellow jackets were highly effective at eliminating the offspring of the little Bs. I see a lot of butterflies but rarely a worm. The paper wasps share the shed with the rat bastard squirrels and the yellow jackets like to live in holes made by chipmunks and snakes around here. Paper wasps have much better attitudes than yellow jackets. Spinosad is OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) approved and in addition to caterpillar larvae it controls leaf miners, thrips, Colorado potato beetle larvae, fire ants and fleas. It can also kill bees and other beneficials, so I prefer the flower method.

Squash vine borers were next on the chopping block as pest number five. It just so happens that butternut squash and some varieties of pumpkin (*Cucurbita moschata*) are less bothered by these creatures. Squash with hollow stems are more susceptible to becoming nurseries as are bush type summer squashes. When a plant is attacked part of the stem is sacrificed, either by the maturing of the larva or the treatment of it. Open-pollinated varieties sprawl with multiple stems and often make more roots where the vines touch the ground so there is more energy available to fight the loss of an appendage. When I find a collapsed stem and figure out what caused it, the borer will be visited by a piece of very hot wire inserted into the affected stem and then I mound soil around the wound and say a little prayer. Delayed planting and row covers were also listed as other tools in the garden cart of merciful controls, although other sources of information said to plant early. Planting early comes with certain suggestions though. Row covers are recommended and growing parthenocarpic varieties which don't need pollination. Otherwise you will need to pollinate by hand, which is a lot of work. The adult squash borers are moths with narrow wings, 1 to 1 ½ inches long. They have olive-brown forewings, clear hind wings and their abdomen is red with black marking in a row. Their back legs have long fringes. The larvae are plump, up to an inch long, wrinkled and have brown heads; reminiscent of a grub but more curvaceous. Eggs are flat, brown and singly laid at the base of a stem.

Watch the bases of stems for green frass and you'll know if you've been chosen. If so, slit the stem, remove the borer whatever way works for you and finish off with more soil. Cleanliness is key also. Get rid of the vines after harvest and it's recommended that the soil be cultivated at that time. If you till in the spring, let the site sit for a few days so the birds can drop by and "recycle" what's left. While they may be pests sometimes, birds can be often very helpful in controlling insects in the garden. I detest the grackles who strut around the Nursery and totally waste the suet in a matter of minutes, but they also do a good job of ridding the lawns of grubs. I can always tell who has a grub problem in the neighborhood by watching where the grackles party.

Speaking of partying, don't forget about the "Ask a Master Gardener" program. With all of today's technology, answers are just a few pokes away if you have a smart phone. My ongoing battle with a very popular seed company regarding the lack of resistance info in their catalog for twelve pages of tomatoes has caused me to hang my head. I complimented their beautiful catalog but lamented the lack of info. I got a letter back saying they are addressing my concerns **online**. My point was that many in the communities we serve are looking to grow their own food to survive and really don't have the financial strength to allow them a smart phone. I have only a dumb phone and a book with pictures makes a much bigger impact at the sites we serve. And I

only get mildly hysterical if someone “borrows” my catalog. A smart phone I would have to wear around my neck.

The most important thing about working with the public is having the right information for them. Going to sites maintained by MSU you will find tons of important information. Start with www.michiganfresh.msue.msu.edu for info on starting seeds and caring for young plants. Michigan Fresh was developed by Michigan State University Extension to help consumers learn how to tend to home gardens, use fresh produce and reduce spoilage. A lot of the information in the Master Gardener cookbook was taken from these sources. There are at least 65 crop specific bulletins that you can download for free. If you print off a few, especially for the most popular backyard garden crops like peppers and tomatoes, I suspect you will have no problem passing them on.

I will have to wait until the next issue to get you the lowdown on the rest of pests. Stay tuned. I had also planned to mention grafted plants, but as usual, I was easily distracted. This is my March madness.



The Michigan Fresh [Starting Seeds](#) fact sheet available at www.michiganfresh.msue.msu.edu provides instructions and handy tips for starting seeds and caring for young plants. You can also contact your local MSU Extension expert with any questions related to seed starting and general gardening.

[Michigan State University Extension](#) developed [Michigan Fresh](#), an initiative created to help consumers learn how to tend to home gardens, use fresh produce and reduce spoilage. In addition to [Starting Seeds](#), over 65 Michigan Fresh fact sheets and videos are available for free downloading from the MSUExtension web site at www.michiganfresh.msue.msu.edu. You can also find Michigan Fresh on [Facebook](#) and [Pinterest](#).

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Mission Statement

It is the Master Gardener Society of Oakland County's Mission to assist, enable, and encourage its members to use their horticultural knowledge and experience to help the people of their communities, enrich their lives through gardening and good gardening practices.

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