**The Tollgate Farm News**

**Volume 24 Issue 3 March 2018**

**MSU Tollgate Gardens Volunteer General Meeting in the Conference Center**

**Thursday, March 15, 7:00 PM**

**RESTORING DEGRADED AREAS OF THE GREAT LAKES**

Join Tollgate volunteers in the Conference Center to learn about environmental and political success stories related to the Great Lakes and the Detroit River from a limnologist with over 30 years of experience in environmental science and natural resource management. (Limnology is the scientific study of inland waters including lakes, rivers and wetlands.)

**Dr. John Hartig** is currently a Fulbright Scholar serving as the Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Global Governance at Balsillie School of International Affairs in Waterloo, Ontario. The focus of his Fulbright is multi-disciplinary research on cleanup of the Great Lakes. For 14 years he served as Refuge Manager for the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (https://www.fws.gov/). John has received a number of awards for his work, including the 2017 Community Peacemaker Award from Wayne State University’s Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, the 2016 Edward G. Voss Conservation Science Award from Michigan Nature Association, the 2015 Conservationist of the Year Award from the John Muir Association, and the 2013 Conservation Advocate of the Year Award from the Michigan League of Conservation Voters.

Dr. Hartig has authored or co-authored over 100 publications on the environment, including four books: Bringing Conservation to Cities; Burning Rivers: Revival of Four Urban-Industrial Rivers that Caught on Fire; Honoring Our Detroit River, Caring for Our Home; and Under RAPs: Toward Grassroots Ecological Democracy in the Great Lakes Basin. John’s most recent book, *Bringing Conservation to Cities: Lessons from Building the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge*, won a Gold Medal from the Nonfiction Authors Association in the “Sustainable Living” category and a bronze medal from the Living Now Book Awards in the "Green Living" category.

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**TOLLGATE GARDEN VOLUNTEER IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAR</th>
<th>MEETINGS</th>
<th>7:00 PM</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Tollgate Volunteer General Meeting</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAR</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>9:00 AM</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Grass Cutback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Mulch Nursery Paths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Easter/Passover Weekend — No Workday</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>APR</th>
<th>MEETINGS</th>
<th>7:00 PM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>TGAC Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Tollgate Volunteer General Meeting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Volunteer Orientation</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
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<tr>
<th>APR</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>9:00 AM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pond</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Children’s / Nursery Paths</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Spring Clean Up / Nursery Paths</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Spring Clean Up / Orientation and Pancake Brunch at Noon</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
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Greetings All,

March is maple syrup season! The 2018 Tollgate maple syrup season officially got underway Saturday, February 24th with a very successful tree tapping extravaganza! Many eager volunteers came to Tollgate to assist in this activity day. We tapped about 50 trees, all connected to tubing. We now have well over 250 taps in the tubing system. All of that hauling of buckets through the woods, tripping over branches, vines and squirrels is a dimly remembered thing of the past.

For the rest of the season we do not have any scheduled maple related workdays. Our activities in the sugar bush will be dictated by the vagaries of weather. Volunteers interested in the maple syrup project will be informed of events via email. If you are interested in being put on the maple syrup email list, please let me know (prentic1@msu.edu).

Many groups have visited the Tollgate sugar bush this season. We recently had 300 kindergarteners, first and second graders (all on the same day!) visit! Tollgate education staff and the maple volunteers did a wonderful job helping the kids learn about the magic of the maple season. Maple volunteers also played a major role in the recent Tollgate Maple Feast. Registrants to the Feast got a hay ride to the woods, saw how trees were tapped, viewed the evaporator and got a yummy pancake and syrup meal. Thanks to the volunteers and Tollgate staff for making the Feast a great event!

Winter is beginning to lose its grip and there are many signs of spring around the farm. The daffodils are emerging, buds are swelling and volunteer days will soon begin in earnest. Check the Tollgate volunteer calendar and plan to join us in the gardens. You can view the calendar online at: http://www.canr.msu.edu/tollgate/volunteering/Tollgate_Calendar_2018d32.pdf

We have had a few warm days and the gardening season is in sight!

See you soon around the farm,

Roy

Photos by Roy Prentice
What a difference a day makes. Typical March weather keeps us guessing every day. We hope to get some early spring chores done if things dry out a bit so keep your eye out for the announcements of activities or possible cancellations of the same! As with all Activity days dress appropriately for the weather and bring tools helpful for the planned activities. There are some tools to share but not enough for larger volunteer turnouts.

We will be revising the “clipboard” system of communicating garden needs. The volunteer communication center received some sprucing up and our garden information system for volunteers has expanded as well. We will eventually have a 3 ring binder instead of just a clipboard for each garden. It will still have the “things to do list” that is familiar from the clipboards as well as the seasonal garden planner. This is a document that gives a snapshot of what generally needs doing in the garden during the season. In addition we hope to have some sort of schematic garden plot plan to help with identification. Many gardens already have a plant list or one of the garden brochures developed for that particular area. So as you can see, there is more info than is easily displayed on a clipboard. We hope this system will be informative to our newer members as well as helpful in directing activities for each garden area.

We will continue to accept budget requests from those teams that have yet to submit their yearly plan. Our busy time is fast approaching so I encourage you to submit timely so TGAC can review prior to the planting season.

As always, I invite any member interested in joining a dedicated team for one of the many garden experiences here at Tollgate to contact me for further information. I will be happy to hook you up with the existing team leader or tour the site with you for an experience that fits your interests. We have sun, shade, shrubs, perennials, annuals and more. All are great learning experiences with support from TGAC and experienced members.

**Looking Ahead to April:** This is the busy month for all our garden areas and the most enjoyable! We get to spend time in the fresh spring air and swap garden tips with each other as we work to get the garden sites off to a beautiful start. See this issue for upcoming clean-up activities, the Volunteer Pancake Breakfast and more. I hope you can plan ahead to help us on these crucial spring activity days so we can stay ahead of the weeds.

**Reminder:** Update your Tollgate Garden Volunteer membership ASAP to stay in the loop on all our email updates. Send in those forms!

Thank you for being a Tollgate Garden Volunteer.

Renee Cottrell, President
The nursery team finished up our “winter season” on Thursday, February 22 with a second propagation session at Tollgate North. Some carpooled from the Tollgate parking lot and others met us at Deb Kearney’s home where we enjoyed a quick supper of chili with all the fixings, corn bread, some sweets and a couple bottles of wine! After dinner and some socializing, 8 nursery team members started downstairs to the basement greenhouse to check out this winter’s crop of native seedlings.

Our focus this winter has been seed propagation of a variety of native plants. The Nursery has had terrific success selling native plants that we have grown from seed – particularly with the milkweed varieties that are sought out by so many gardeners who want to support Monarch butterflies. This year we added a couple of new milkweed varieties (Poke Milkweed, Prairie Milkweed), along with some perennial favorites. Last year we sold out of Butterfly Weed (Asclepias tuberosa) and were left with just a handful of Swamp Milkweed (Asclepias incarnata)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Botanical Name</th>
<th>New Variety</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swamp Milkweed</td>
<td>Asclepias incarnata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie Smoke</td>
<td>Geum triflourum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly Weed</td>
<td>Asclepias tuberosa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lupine</td>
<td>Lupinus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poke Milkweed</td>
<td>Asclepias exaltata</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie Milkweed</td>
<td>Asclepias sullivantii</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Prairie Clover</td>
<td>Dalea purpurea</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple Prairie Clover</td>
<td>Dalea candida</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Bergamot</td>
<td>Monarda fistulosa</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tall Larkspur</td>
<td>Delphinium exaltatum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Pink</td>
<td>Silene virginica</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showy Goldenrod</td>
<td>Solidago speciose</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Stemmed Goldenrod</td>
<td>Solidago caesia</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transplanted 1/30/2018
Transplanted 2/22/2018
plants after the spring sale – so replenishing our supply of these plants was a key factor in selecting seeds this year. Although this year’s seedlings will be immature plants at the spring sale, we hope they will be an attractive alternative for our customers.

Our final activity at Tollgate North this year will occur in early May, when we meet to bring all these nursery plants up from the basement to “harden off” before moving them to Tollgate later in the month. That evening will also include a “Plant Tag Workshop”, where we will look up cultural information on the many new varieties we have added to the nursery since last spring, so that we will have an accurate plant tag to post for each variety available at the 2018 Spring Sale.

If you’re interested in learning and having fun while involved in a different kind of gardening experience, consider joining the Nursery Team as a ROW LEADER or MEMBER AT LARGE. You don’t need to be a plant or propagation expert to join our team – we have all learned from each other and by doing. Most of our Row Leaders have become experts about the plants in their row through the experience of being a Row Leader and the interaction with others on team. Let me know if you’re interested and I’ll provide you more information about the opportunities available.

Peg Palmer - pegpalmer@mi.rr.com

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2019 Tollgate Calendar Photos

Still in need of photos of the farm for the 2019 calendar. A few people have been kind of enough to submit photos - A big Thanks to you!!

Please submit your photos to tollgatencalendar@gmail.com.

Nancy Roggers

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Renew Your Membership for 2018

It is once again time to renew your membership. Click on this link to the form on the MSU Extension Tollgate Farm and Education Center website: MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers Membership Form. Forms will also be available at the next Tollgate Volunteer General meeting and attached to this newsletter.

Cindy Bolterstein
tollgatemembers@gmail.com
2018 Tollgate Quilt

“Reflections”

Tollgate’s own Quilting Bees are wrapping up the 2018 Tollgate Quilt that will be raffled off at the July 21 “Sunset Garden Celebration” open house. The quilt is being prepared to go to the quilter. Hopefully, we will have the quilt at the April Tollgate Volunteer meeting. Photos of the quilt-in-progress will be at the March meeting along with the sale of tickets.

Quilt Pattern: Infinite Possibilities

Approximate Size: 91 inches x 91 inches

2018 Tollgate Quilting Bees:

Susan Bremer
Kathy Coleman
Darretta Ferasin
Gail Kevwitch
Connie Marcangelo
Kay Pratt
Nancy Roggers
Lynn Strong

Susan Bremer, Nancy Roggers, Connie Marcangelo and Kay Pratt Pin on One of the Three Borders

A Special Thanks!

To all of you who made a donation to help the Tollgate Gardeners make Tollgate a more beautiful place. Your donation is greatly appreciated! The support that you have provided will continue to help our program prosper and grow. Thanks again and Happy Gardening!

Andy and Jayne Berry
Anne Bolz
Barbara Burke
Marie Collins
Susan Cooper
Joseph Costa
Judy Culkin
Sue Grifor
Heather Hamlin

Bob Hauser
Hal Henderlong
Sue and Mike Janczarek
Ellen Kennedy
Lee Kindermann
Therese Nagi
Peg Palmer
Kathleen Prappas
Nancy Strodl

Nancy Taylor
Troy Garden Club
Women’s National Farm and Garden Association
Franklin Branch
Tollgate Volunteer Information

Activity Days

Activity day hours are 9:00 AM to noon unless otherwise noted on the Tollgate Garden Volunteer Important Dates and Events listed on the first page of the Tollgate Farm News or by the Area Garden Leader (AGL).

Lunch will be provided on scheduled workdays. Veggie alternatives are available upon request.

This schedule does not exclude you from working independently on the site. However, on non-scheduled days, your efforts will need to be self-directed with guidance from the garden area clipboards located in the Volunteer Communication Center.

Garden Tools Available for Use at Tollgate

- Spades
- Garden Rakes
- Brooms
- Wheel Barrels
- Weed Buckets
- Leaf Rakes
- Garden Hoe
- Long Handled Garden Forks

List of Suggested Gardening Implements to Bring from Home as Needed

- Trowel
- Pruners
- Loppers
- Garden Scissors
- Your Favorite Weeding Implement
- Hand Saw
- Plant Division Forks
- Shrub Rake
- Sun Screen
- Garden Gloves
- Knee Pads
- Insect Repellant

Tollgate Garden Advisory Council

Farm Manager
Roy Prentice - 248 347-3860 ext. 251
e-mail - prentic1@msu.edu

President ..................... Renee Cottrell
Vice President ............ Marilyn Alimpich
Secretary .................... Dave Komraus
Treasurer .................... Sue Janczarek
Membership .................. Cindy Bolterstein
PR .............................. Rosina Newton
Programs ..................... Jackie Stengel
Farm News Editor .......... Darretta Ferasin

For membership questions or to update your current membership information send email to: tollgatemembers@gmail.com

MSU Tollgate Gardens Volunteers
For general information and questions Contact Roy Prentice or See Website:
http://tollgate.msu.edu/volunteering/

If you aren’t getting The Tollgate Farm News email, check your SPAM folder

Volunteer Activity Day and Meetings Information
248-347-3860 ext. 400

The Tollgate Gardens Advisory Council next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 7:00 PM in the Tollgate Office Building. All Tollgate Gardens Volunteer members are welcome to attend.

Listings to contact individual Council Members and Area Garden Leaders are available at all general meetings and in the Volunteer Communication Center.

Tollgate Volunteer Membership is renewed annually. The 2017 Tollgate Garden Volunteers membership is from December 1, 2017 to November 30, 2018.

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center
28115 Meadowbrook
Novi, MI, 48377-3128
tollgate.msu.edu
Contact Roy Prentice:
248-347-3860 ext. 251
### MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers Membership Form

Please print all entries. Thank you.  

**Date Submitted:** _______________________

**Telephone number:**

**Day** _______ - _______________________

**Evening** _____ - _______________________

**Email:** __________________________________

**Name you would like on badge.**

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**Name:** __________________________________

**Address:** __________________________________

**City:** __________________________________, MI.

**Zip:** __________ - __________

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Were you a Tollgate volunteer member last year?  Yes ( )   No ( )

If yes, do you need a new Tollgate Garden Volunteer badge?  Yes ( )   No ( )

Are you interested in: Serving on a committee or garden project?  Yes ( )   No ( )

If yes, please note below if you have a particular area of interest, e.g., rose garden, children’s garden, hospitality, public relations, computer skills, etc

________________________________________________________

Are you a MSU Master Gardener?  ( ) certified   ( ) candidate   County ____________

(It is not necessary that you be a MSU Master Gardener to volunteer with Tollgate Garden Volunteers. An interest in gardening is all that is required.)

A donation in support of the Tollgate Volunteer organization would be greatly appreciated ($20 suggested). If you would like the newsletter mailed to you rather than receiving a notice of its availability online, please include an additional $10 to cover postage costs. Check here to have the newsletter mailed to you ______

Make checks payable to *Michigan State University*.

**Return to:** Tollgate Gardens Volunteer Office
28115 Meadowbrook,
Novi, MI. 48377-3128
Phone: 248-347-3860 ext. 212

**Note:** Membership is renewed annually.  

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In the event of an emergency please notify:

_________________________________________  _______ -  _______________________

**Name**  

**Phone**