On May 17, join Tollgate volunteers in the conference center to learn the role of Michigan milkweed during the Second World War. Historian and author Gerry Wykes will discuss how milkweed and the contributions of many citizens helped save U.S. aviators and sailors toward the end of WWII.


Greetings All,

We have been checking our many bird boxes in the back fields, recently. Bluebirds, swallows and wrens have taken up residence in several of the boxes. An osprey has been spotted. Despite our best efforts to direct him to the osprey platform near the pond, he indicated that he was just visiting. The first new family of geese has been sighted on the pond (great). Herons, ducks and even a swan are all joining the geese in an aquatic get-together.

Maple Syrup Wrap Up. Thanks to the wonderful work of the maple syrup crew, we had another great year in the Tollgate woods. This year’s efforts produced over 95 gallons of syrup! The season culminated in a luncheon on April 28 hosted by the Tollgate maple syrup tappers. In spite of the foul weather, we had a decent turnout for the lunch and the New Volunteer Orientation which took place on the same day. In addition to the luncheon, volunteers were able to purchase syrup. At the end of the event, most of the 2018 product was sold. I still have a few boxes of the 2018 crop left. I will have the syrup available at volunteer days and other events until it is gone. It was a great year! Thanks to all who made it happen.

New Volunteer Orientation. April 28 also saw Tollgate’s New Volunteer Orientation presentation. We had a good turn-out with many new gardeners checking out Tollgate’s volunteer opportunities. It was a great day to show off the farm and a few pancakes with yummy maple syrup served up to attendees for lunch help our recruiting efforts too!

Earth Day. For the eighth consecutive year, Tollgate teamed up with the City of Novi to conduct the City’s celebration of Earth Day on Saturday, April 21. We had over thirty attendees for this event. The large and determined group focused on the PAR garden area spreading woodchips in the paths. The new layer of mulch really makes the garden area look sharp and should curb the 2018 crop of weeds. As any attendee of one of our Saturday workday’s can attest, it doesn’t take long for 30 people to get a whole lot done.

Plant Sale’s a’Coming. Please help Tollgate by bringing plants to the farm that can be sold at the June 2 plant sale. This is our major fundraiser for the gardens and we need your help to make the event truly successful. If you need pots, there are plenty that can be obtained at Tollgate. Pots and plastic tags are available in the yard barn across the drive from the nursery. Please label any plants that you are bringing to the site so that we can give as much information as possible to our garden shoppers.

See you soon around the farm!

Roy

Photos by Roy Prentice and Darretta Ferasin
Notes from the President

Renee Cottrell

“It may seem we are nurturing our garden, but of course it’s our garden that is really nurturing us.”

Jenny Uglow

It looks like a quick leap from winter to summer this year in Michigan. That usually means less prep time and a head start for the weeds so we will need all the help we can get in the gardens. The spring clean-up days brought out the most dedicated volunteers with weather that was challenging to say the least. We did have a fair turn out of interested new volunteers who attended the orientation. Please welcome them when you see them out on activity days. The maple syrup volunteers provided a wonderful pancake brunch and we are thankful for their generous efforts this season.

See the Activity calendar for details on upcoming Saturday activities. As a reminder we ask that volunteers check the newsletter and emails to know what tools to bring to the Saturday activity days. It helps to be prepared for the activity with the right tools, and for the sun with a hat and skin protection including work gloves.

NEXT UP THE SPRING PLANT SALE

Our major plant purchases for new gardens and additions to existing ones, not to mention our seasonal mulch and compost supplies come from the proceeds from this major fundraiser. Our nursery Team has provided a wish list for donations and has distributed it in email and on the Tollgate website. I hope you are keeping us in mind for your spring divisions (even if popping up just now). Named varieties and botanical names are best but if not known, bloom time and color are helpful. Items blooming in late May and early June are good sellers.

SIGN UP

The sign-up for working the Friday set up and the Saturday plant sale will be circulated at our May meeting, in the volunteer communication center as well as on the upcoming emailed Doodle link. You only need to sign up on one of those options.

See the Nursery Notes Article in this Issue

JOIN A TEAM

I invite any new or established member to join or form a team for one of the garden areas on the site. This is a great way to learn, share and feel connected to what we do here. With all the garden variety is easy to find something you love. Existing areas of interest include the Hosta Garden, Xeriscape and Rain Garden, and other more generalized garden areas to choose. All garden teams welcome new members. Email me to get connected to a team or get a tour of available areas. OR see Roy at any of the monthly meetings or Saturday workdays.

See you all soon. Thanks for being a Tollgate Garden volunteer.

Renee Cottrell, President Tollgate Garden Volunteers

Photos by Renee Cottrell and Darretta Ferasin
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

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 tollgatecalendar@gmail.com.

Nancy Roggers
On May 6, several members of the nursery team met at “Tollgate North” (Deb Kearney's basement greenhouse) for our final propagation session for 2018. The first order of business went quickly, as we carried the trays of seedlings upstairs from the basement and loaded them into a large snowmobile trailer. The trays were then covered with shade cloth to provide a little extra protection from both wind and sun as they acclimate to the outdoors. After 3 days, the shade cloth will be removed, and a few days later the trailer will be moved farther from the house to expose the plants to more of the sun and wind. When the inevitable overnight frost warning comes, the trailer with all the plants in it can be wheeled into the garage with relative ease to provide overnight protection. We finished the evening at Deb's dining room table looking up cultural information on our phones and tablets to create plant tags for about 100 new varieties that will be available at the Spring Sale on Saturday, June 2 from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm.

The Nursery will be open for plant donations through May 19 – so please check the plants wanted list as you work on your spring garden renovations! New plant divisions need a couple weeks to adjust to being potted and look good for the sale, so the earlier you can bring in your divisions, the better. Check your email for the latest plants wanted list – but here are some of the top sellers that we need the most:

*Asclepias tuberosa/Butterfly Weed* and *Asclepias incarnata/Swamp Milkweed* are popular natives that sold out at last year’s spring sale. We will have some new seedlings from our winter propagation activity, but we certainly could sell many more if some of you have plants to divide and donate.

*Paeonia/Peony* is another strong spring seller - when we’ve had them in stock. New divisions will look great for the sale if they’re potted up before too much of that spring growth spurt occurs. Check your gardens to see if you have any good specimens to donate to the nursery.

*Iris germanica* and *Iris siberica* are great spring sellers. We sold out of *Siberian Iris* last year, so we need lots of this variety as well as the more unusual colors of standard size *German Iris* colors (we do NOT NEED more of the typical blue/purple colors).

*Dicentra/Bleeding Heart* and *Polygonatum/ Solomon’s Seal* are shade plants that sell really well at the Spring Sale when we have a good stock available, but both are in very short supply this year.

*Delphinium* has sold in large quantities when we’ve had them in stock – but we only have a handful of the native variety and none of any other cultivars.

Check out the plants wanted list for the status of other plants that you might have in your garden to donate. The annual spring plant sale is a major fundraiser that supports all the gardens at Tollgate – so don’t forget to tell all your friends about the sale on Saturday June 2 from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm!

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. 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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Seedlings Hardening Off in the Snowmobile Trailer in Deb’s Driveway

Photo by Deb Kearney
2018 Tollgate Quilt

“REFLECTIONS”

Tollgate’s own Quilting Bees have completed the 2018 Tollgate Quilt that will be raffled off at the July 21 “Sunset Garden Celebration” open house. The quilt will be at the April Volunteer General Meeting on May 17th. Raffle tickets will be available.

Quilt Pattern: Infinite Possibilities

Approximate Size: 92 inches x 92 inches
(would fit a queen size bed with a 12 inch drop)

2018 Tollgate Quilting Bees:
Susan Bremer
Kathy Coleman
Darretta Ferasin
Gail Kevwitch
Connie Marcangelo
Kay Pratt
Nancy Roggers
Lynn Strong

Quilter: Joy A. Cramer

Raffle Tickets are $2.00 Each or 3 for $5.00

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
Bonnie Boak
Inge Brieger
Kathy Coleman
Marie Collins
RoseMary Curatolo

Nancy Dingleday
Tom and Margo Gray
Gayle Gullen
Brian Maddaford
Kathryn McCauley
Joan Monning

Lisa Mulligan
Mary Sheipline
Tammy Shepherd
Linda Shinn
Nancy Turner
Ron VanPelt
Tollgate’s Ewe and her Lamb

The ewe (center) pictured recently participated in a shearing demonstration. The demonstration ended before the sheep was completely shorn which resulted in an unfortunate and incomplete haircut. That is what happens when a limited number of sheep have to stretch over lots of spring field trips!

Photos by Darretta Ferasin (left) and Roy Prentice (right)
**Disinfecting Garden Tools When Working with Hosta Plants and Roses**

**Hosta Virus X (HVX):** All garden tools coming into contact with hosta plants must be cleaned before and after each hosta is touched to avoid the spread of the Hosta Virus X (HVX) whether you are cutting leaves, scapes (flower stalk) or digging near the root system.

**Rose Rosette Disease (RRD):** All garden tools coming into contact with a rose bush must be cleaned before and after each rose is touched to avoid the spread of the Rose Rosette Disease (RRD) whether you are deadheading, pruning or digging near the root system. RRD is a virus that endangers all ornamental roses. The disease is spread by a microscopic wingless mite and could be transferred by the sap of an infected plant via garden tools to an uninfected plant. Symptoms vary but will be obvious. Unusual leaf color and growth habits are common and the rose often displays ‘witches broom’ type branching. There is no cure. The rose will eventually die.

Sap and soil from either the hosta or rose bush must be removed from your tool before moving to the next plant.

Disinfecting kits or small cleaning packs are available at the Tool Disinfection Stations and can be carried to your worksite. Buckets and a large tub are available to scrub large tools. Below is the current cleaning process:

- **Spray pruners or scissors** with bottle labeled “Alcohol”. Wipe with blue toweling swatch to remove any hosta or rose sap.

- **For trowels, hand weeding tools or hedge trimmers** use the “Lysol® Dual Action Disinfecting Cloths” and let the tool air dry. If these tools are heavily soiled, it may be necessary to scrub the tool in a bucket of water with a couple of drops of “Dawn®” concentrate detergent first.

- **For shovels, garden forks or rakes** scrub the tool with a brush in a bucket of water and a couple of drops of “Dawn®” concentrate detergent and water. Take the bucket to the water spigot near your work location. A large kitty litter box is available for scrubbing rakes. Use the “Lysol® Dual Action Disinfecting Cloths” to disinfect the tool. Let the tool air dry. For lightly soiled tools, the disinfecting cloths can be used alone.

- **Collect used blue wipes, disinfecting cloths and disposable gloves** in the provided kit carrier (plastic tea jug) and dispose of them into the galvanized trash can near the Tool Disinfecting Station. Alcohol is flammable under certain conditions. The trash can also be taken to the worksite.

- **Used detergent water** can be dumped in the dry rock ravine bordering the hosta garden. Other locations will be determined.

- **Disposable gloves** have been provided to wear alone or over your garden gloves. You will find these at the Tool Disinfecting Station. Clean and disinfect gloves that come into contact with the hosta and rose sap.

*The cleaning regimen may extend to other garden areas to prevent the spread of new garden viruses.*

Please return supplies to the station they came from.
Volunteer Activity Day and Meetings Information
248-347-3860 ext. 400

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 binders located in the Volunteer Communication Center.

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

Tollgate Volunteer Information

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 Repellent

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/

The Tollgate Gardens Advisory Council next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 5, 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
michiganstateextension
248-347-3860 ext. 251
Name: ________________________________________________________________
Date Submitted: __________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________
Telephone number: ____________________________________________________
City: _________________________________________________________________ MI.
Day _____ - ______________________________
Zip: __________ - __________
Evening _____ - __________________________
________________________________________
Email: ______________________________________________________________
Name you would like on badge. Please Print Carefully

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.

In the event of an emergency please notify:

____________________________________________________________________

Name __________________________ Phone __________________________