

# Down to Earth

Michigan State University Extension Master  
Gardener Program—Genesee County

June 2020  
Volume 18, Issue 6



## Letter from the Program Coordinator

Barslund Judd ([juddbars@msu.edu](mailto:juddbars@msu.edu))

Gardeners,

I hope you have been able to enjoy gardening at your homes as much as I have. The previous owner of our house was kind enough to plant columbines, Siberian iris, poppies, ajuga, cheddar pinks, and even daisies! I have been able to fill in with more poppies, nasturtiums, and alliums. I can't wait to see how the garden fills in next year. My tomatoes are looking excellent, if only my ground cherries looked as good.

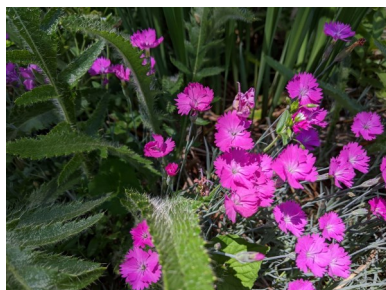


We are now able to work again at our projects and many of you have already started. Each project needs permission from the property owner or manager before work can begin. This only needs to be obtained once by the project lead. Michelle Chockley and I will be updating the project list on VMS to reflect which sites have given us permission to work. Before volunteering on your EMG project(s), you will also need to read the COVID-19 safety checklist located under the state links on the VMS. Please sign it and email it to me before working.

Please take care of yourselves, I miss you all. This has been an unusual experience to say the least. I look forward to seeing you all soon. We will continue to have occasional garden chats on Zoom as well as hosting MGAGCM (Master Gardener Association of Genesee County Michigan) meetings on Zoom when the presenters are willing to use that software platform, so keep an eye out for those links in your email.

Happy gardening!

Barslund Judd



## Inside this issue

Letter from the Coordinator .....	1
Featured MSUE Project .....	2
Feature Article.....	3, 5
Outreach News/Puzzle .....	4
Garden with Kids .....	5
Time to Harvest .....	6
VMS Corner .....	7
President's Note.....	8
Upcoming Events .....	9

## Newsletter Committee

- Sue Crisp (**Project Report**)
- Mary Yelland (**Article Liaison**)
- LaDonna Gamble (**Hotline Articles**)
- Joanne Gensel (**Association Page**)
- Michelle Chockley (**VMS Corner**)
- Carol Pittard (**Editor**)
- Cheryl Borkowski (**Format Editor**)

If you are interested in writing an article for the DTE newsletter, please feel free to reach out to us! We love having new input and hearing new perspectives. We ask that articles have an educational component that is research based and utilizes solid sources.

## Featured MSUE Project



### Flushing City Hall Garden

*By Sylvia Hansen*

In the summer of 2016, Flushing city manager, Brad Barrett, asked me if I would consider updating the small overgrown garden in front of Flushing City Hall, and offered an initial budget for plants and supplies. I agreed to apply for it to become a designated Extension Master Gardener project and began the bed design in fall of 2016. I wanted this small garden in front of the Flushing City Hall to be a real showpiece. I designed the bed with the intent of variation of color, compatible with the architecture of city hall, to include small or dwarf shrubs that year-to-year would need little pruning, and wouldn't outgrow their space. It was also important to me to include complimentary perennials and annuals that would be pollinator friendly.

The garden is roughly an asymmetric triangle shape, flanked on one side by parking lot, on side two by lawn, and the third side has a rock face that drops down to a driveway. I began by measuring out the space and sketching it out on graph paper to determine what size shrubs and perennials would fit. Brad had not set any limitations other than he didn't want the view of the building blocked by the plantings.

nials would fit. Brad had not set any limitations other than he didn't want the view of the building blocked by the plantings.

I should mention here that the garden was almost completely taken over by crabgrass and other weeds and was originally covered by rock mulch with weed block fabric underneath. The only salvageable plant was a pitiful bit of creeping moss phlox trying to escape on the front rock face. In the first work session, about eight EMG volunteers dug out the crabgrass, pulled out the weed block, and shovelful-by-shovelful sifted the small rock mulch out with a compost screener. It was really a laborious process! But the renovation couldn't be done without this important step. The soil was obviously not in the best condition, so we had to add soil amendments. The only plants left at this point were the creeping phlox that were left in place at the front of the bed. So it looked pretty bare, nevertheless, I wanted a real spring show, so we planted LOTS of tulips that would come up in the spring. Then we covered it up with wood mulch.

#### Spring 2017

The tulips just looked great as we planted them in concentrations to form drifts of color for the greatest effect. About the time the tulips were dying back in late May, we were able to dig them out and plant the permanent shrubs, annuals and perennials.

I wanted the foliage of the shrubs and perennials to offer a variety of color for interest even when not in bloom. As the focal point, I chose a single Physocarpus opulifolius 'Donna May' Little Devil ninebark for its dwarf size, and fine, purple foliage. This was planted offset from the center and weighted visually by three Spirea japonica 'Walbura' Magic Carpet, one on one side and two on the other for asymmetrical balance. The spirea has yellow-green foliage with coral tips providing a nice contrast to the ninebark's dark purple. Interspersed around the ninebark were heuchera "Snow Angel" coral bells with variegated green and white foliage, and sedum "Autumn Delight" stonecrop with leaves are creamy white in the center edged in green. Annuals Celosia, marigolds and alyssum were added and this is what it looked like in Summer 2017.

After we removed the annuals in the fall, we replanted tulips which the following spring became a fine (and expensive) snack for some critters. So the decision was made to not plant tulips again, but just to stick with a nice display of annuals every year, alternating marigolds and zinnia with the alyssum.

One of our Extension Master Gardeners, Gayla Heilbronn, who lives nearby takes care of the bed, weeding and deadheading. The city waters and fertilizes this bed when they do the chores for the hanging baskets on the building.

This project has turned out to be a good public relations feature for the city, and good publicity for Extension Master Gardeners, too, as we have also included a discreet sign acknowledging us as the caretakers of the bed. It's small project with a big impact.



#### Directions to project and project lead contact information

Location: 725 E. Main Street, Flushing

Project Lead: Sylvia Hansen

## Featured Article

### Square Ft. Gardening, Part 2 by Cheryl Borkowski

Dec 2019-installed boxes,

April 2020-put down cardboard, straw & leaves

May 2020-put in soil and planted

Peas 8 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/20, plant fall crop	Peas 8 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/20, plant fall crop	Cucumbers 2 1 wk after last frost; sprouted 5/21	Cucumbers 2 1 wk after last frost; sprouted 5/21
Beet 9 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/21	Onion-Green 16 Planted 5/13, sprouted 5/20	Green Beans 6 after last frost, sprouted 5/21, plant fall spinach	Green Beans 6 after last frost, sprouted 5/21, plant fall spinach
Carrot 16 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/21	Onion-Yellow 9 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/19	Flower-Zinna Planted 5/13, sprouted 5/24	Carrot 16 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/24
Strawberry 4 Planted 5/13	Strawberry 4 Planted 5/13	Pepper 1 planted 5/27	Flower-Pansy & Salvia Planted 5/20

Tomato 1 planted 5/20	Tomato 1 Planted 5/20	Pumpkin 2, planted 5/30	Pumpkin 2, planted 5/30
Radish 16 Planted 5/12; sprouted 5/17 Plant 2 <sup>nd</sup> crop	Kale 4 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/19	Spinach 9 Planted 5/13, sprouted 5/20	Lettuce 4 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/20
Lettuce 4 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/20	Flower-Zinna Planted 5/13 Sprouted 5/24	Pepper 1 planted 5/20	Onion-Red 9 Planted 5/12, sprouted 5/20
Strawberry 4 Planted 5/13	Strawberry 4 Planted 5/13	Flower-Pansy & Salvia Planted 5/20	Radish 16 planted 5/12; sprouted 5/17. Then Beets for fall crop 9

See pictures on page 5

Vegetable/Plant	Named Variety	Source
Bush Bean	Calima	Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds
Beet	Early Wonder	Baker Creek
Carrot	New Kuroda	Baker Creek
Cucumber (pickle type)	Muncher	Baker Creek
Kale	Russian Red & White Russian*	Baker Creek/Cory Graham
Lettuce	Endive & Summer Glory Blend	Baker Creek/Cory Graham
Onion – Red		Flushing Lawn & Garden
Onion – Yellow		Flushing Lawn & Garden
Onion - Green	White Portugal	Jenny B's
Peas	Sugar Ann	Baker Creek
Pepper	Sweet Bell – Red Beauty	Wojo's
Pepper	Sweet Bell – Yellow Belle	Home Depot
Pumpkin	Orange Mini	Cory Graham
Radish	Pink Beauty	Baker Creek
Spinach	Verdil Smooth Leaf	Jenny B's
Strawberries (3)	Old North Sea	Baker Creek
Strawberries (12)	Ozark Beauty	Jenny B's
Tomato	Bonnie Best	Wojo's
Tomato	Early Girl	Wojo's
<b>Flowers</b>		
Marigolds	French – Got frosted, died	Jenny B's
Zinnia Seeds	Button Box Mix	Jenny B's
Celosia	Pink – Seed eaten by chipmunks	Cory Graham
Salvia	Purple (May Night)	Wojo's
Pansies	Purple/Yellow/White	Wojo's

## Outreach News

Kay McCullough

At this time, there are no upcoming events that need EMG volunteers. Stay tuned! Stay Home and Stay Safe.

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## Gardener's Logic Puzzle

### Planting the Garden

BASIL	H	K	Q	M	S	W	B	T	D	R	D	U	D	D	H	V	B	O	O	Q	Z	C	D	J	C	X	S	L
BEANS	R	N	G	N	A	B	A	E	O	S	R	E	B	M	U	C	U	C	W	H	A	B	C	N	A	U	S	E
BEETS	J	E	A	Y	P	M	X	T	E	G	A	S	I	F	R	U	R	J	U	R	S	M	O	S	N	P	K	N
CABBAGE	B	E	M	V	X	O	J	G	E	T	Z	U	C	C	H	I	N	I	R	R	I	R	P	F	T	E	B	N
CANTALOUPE	B	F	W	V	F	J	T	M	A	R	S	U	M	P	M	D	K	O	P	P	P	I	L	V	A	P	Z	E
CARROTS	A	L	T	R	H	R	H	A	Q	D	M	S	G	G	V	M	T	S	Y	Y	N	O	S	O	L	P	C	F
CORN	I	D	W	I	D	O	S	G	T	E	P	E	E	B	A	S	I	L	R	S	W	I	N	F	O	E	W	V
CUCUMBERS	I	K	H	S	I	C	G	D	L	O	O	R	L	O	V	R	L	L	R	E	D	A	I	V	U	R	N	U
DILL	T	W	W	S	K	F	P	L	P	C	E	D	Q	O	T	Y	Q	A	R	T	L	V	K	J	P	S	U	P
FENNEL	C	D	J	G	A	V	R	X	T	J	D	S	Q	H	N	A	P	S	T	H	G	L	P	L	E	C	O	L
PARSNIPS	S	F	E	A	X	U	X	S	Y	X	O	V	S	J	A	F	M	L	U	G	I	S	M	E	S	F	R	X
PEPPERS	L	M	C	X	N	A	Q	B	H	V	U	X	O	R	S	G	K	O	Y	S	B	B	U	Z	R	A	U	F
POTATOES	A	B	B	A	C	F	A	S	I	G	G	R	B	F	F	M	W	J	T	D	W	T	P	Y	E	S	H	D
PUMPKINS																												
SAGE																												
SQUASH																												
SUNFLOWERS																												
TOMATOES																												
WATERMELON																												
ZUCCHINI																												



# Gardening with Kids

## Gardening with Kids... Seed Hunt

by Mary Yelland



Seeds are one of the world's most valuable resources. Seeds are vital to life. Many seeds have already been planted. Planting a garden is often thought of as the only time we use seeds. However, they can be found all around us. Some seeds are eaten directly. Seeds are ground into flour or pressed for oil. Some seeds are hidden inside the fruit. Some are small and not recognized. Here are a couple activities to do in thinking about seeds.

### 1. Who is the closest?

Choose a place to sit. Take turns looking for seeds. Who is the closest to a seed? Look around and stretch your thinking. Name some seeds that are around you. What are they used for?

### 2. Go on a seed scavenger hunt.

How many seeds can you find in the room with you? Make a list of seeds you can find in each room of your house. Take the hunt outside. Can you find plants that have produced seeds? Who can find the most seeds? Where did you find them?

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## Square Ft. Gardening Photos



Things are looking good so far. I've discovered there is only 4-5 hours of full afternoon sun in the space. Oops! I forgot how much shade the trees give to this area. Lesson learned, don't rely on winter/early spring sun patterns. I may have to move these boxes next year into a sunnier spot on the east side of the house. The only detriment would be there is not a close water supply, and I'll have to carry water.

# Time to Harvest ..... Strawberries

by Mary Yelland

Strawberries are the most popular berry in the world and the most popular fruit grown by home gardeners. They grow well in most areas of the state. Most of Michigan's strawberries are grown in Berrien, Van Buren and Leelanau counties. There are hundreds of varieties to choose from with more being developed all the time.

Strawberries are generally grown as either June bearing or everbearing. June bearing produce fruit based on the hours of sun and produce their crop around the month of June. Everbearing varieties produce a crop throughout the summer. Their berries are usually smaller. Among the everbearing varieties are day-neutral varieties that do not depend upon the length of daylight to set flowers.

There are many novelties in the strawberry world. Some internet sites pop up claiming to have neon pink, or blue strawberries. While these claims are fake, there are colors of strawberries besides the traditional red berries. White and yellow berries can also be found as well as a newer variety, Purple Wonder, that is a purplish color.

Most strawberry varieties are hybrids and cannot be grown true from seed. However, there are Alpine and heirloom varieties that can be started from seed. Once planted some varieties can produce a crop the summer they are planted, most will need to wait a year. A strawberry patch can last 5-7 years before disease, insects or weeds cause the need to establish a new planting. Whether you grow your own or buy them, it's strawberry season in Michigan and here are a couple recipes in which to use them.

## 100 Calorie\* Strawberry Oatmeal Bars

1 cup rolled oats 1 teaspoon cornstarch  
¾ cup flour 1 tablespoon lemon juice  
½ cup light brown sugar 1 tablespoon sugar  
¼ teaspoon ground ginger VANILLA GLAZE  
¼ teaspoon salt ½ cup powdered sugar  
6 tablespoons melted butter ½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
2 cups diced strawberries 1 tablespoon milk



Combine the oats, flour, brown sugar, ginger, and salt. Pour in the melted butter and stir until it forms clumps and the dry ingredients are evenly moistened. Set aside 1/2 cup of the crumble mixture, then press the rest into an even layer in the bottom of a greased 8x8" pan. Combine strawberries, cornstarch, lemon juice and 1 tablespoon sugar. Scatter over the crust. Sprinkle the reserved crumbs evenly over the top. You will have some fruit showing through. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes at 375°F, until the fruit is bubbly and the topping is browned. Mix vanilla glaze ingredients and drizzle over the top.

\*For 100 calorie bars, cut into 16 bars and omit the vanilla glaze.

## Strawberry Pie

### Crust Filling

1 cup flour 1 quart fresh strawberries washed and stemmed  
½ cup butter 1 cup water  
3 tablespoons sugar 1 cup sugar  
3 tablespoons cornstarch  
3 tablespoons Strawberry Gelatin powder\*

### Directions:

Mix crust ingredients and press in a 9" pie pan. Bake at 375°F for about 15 minutes until lightly brown. (Substitute a premade graham cracker crust if desired.) For filling, mix sugar and cornstarch in a saucepan. Add water and boil until thick and transparent. Remove from heat and stir in gelatin powder until dissolved. To assemble pie, fill cooled pie shell with berries. You can leave them whole or slice them. Pour the glaze over the top of the berries making sure they are completely covered. Chill until set. Serve topped with whipped cream.

\*To substitute for the gelatin, you can replace 2/3 of the water with an additional 2 cups crushed strawberries before cooking.



## VMS Corner

Michelle Chockley—Lead VMS Ambassador (Cell: 810-210-6685)

VMS Log in: <https://michigan.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm>

**Garden Watch 2020 Reminder:** Email Mary Yelland photos of your personal home gardens to post in the VMS photo album. We had 59 the last time I looked! [dmyelland@juno.com](mailto:dmyelland@juno.com)

### This is the year of education!

#### Things to remember when entering Education Hours in VMS:

We have many choices now such as Zoom, Facebook, MSU Webinars, etc.

Follow these instructions to successfully enter your hours into VMS (Volunteer Management System).

#### Event Description:

For Education: Enter where you heard the speaker (Zoom, Facebook, MSU webinar, etc.), the speaker's name and the topic.

#### Apply to Project:

For Education: Use the State Project Selection from the List on VMS under State Links. This list gives a definition for each selection. Choose the one that best fits the speaker's topic. When in doubt, please ask Barslund Judd or one of the ambassadors.

**Note: Ambassadors do not change the hours information. Corrections are only made to “Event Description” and “Apply to Project” to ensure that Genesee County data is accurate and consistent.**

Check with Barslund Judd, Master Gardener Coordinator or one of the VMS Ambassadors if you have questions about whether an educational component counts. Contact info is listed on the VMS home page.

Master Gardener VMS 2.1 - Edit | x

michigan.volunteersystem.org/users/hoursedit.cfm?hournum=0

Paused

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**Event Calendars**

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**Event Description**

**Event Date**

**Apply to Project** Select a Project **REQUIRED**

**Miles Driven** 0

**Volunteer Hours** 0

**Continuing Education** 0

**Population Served**

Contact Ethnicity	Male Adult	Male Youth	Female Adult	Female Youth
White				
Black				
American Indian				
Hispanic				
Asian				
Hawaiian / Pacific Islander				

Type here to search

8:32 PM 5/30/2020

# Master Gardener Association Genesee County

The Master Gardener Association of Genesee County Michigan (MGAGCM) is an association of Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs). Membership is optional for certified Extension Master Gardeners. The MGAGCM provides support to local EMGs through project funding, plant signage, and extra educational opportunities.

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## Note from MGAGCM President—Joanne Gensel

Hello Master Gardeners!

We can finally get back to our gardens.

Please follow protocols described in Mary Wilson's emails sent by Diane Brady on June 1st and 8th. Barslund further explains what needs to be done in order for your volunteer hours to count.

Watch your email for VMS announcements from Barslund regarding educational opportunities presented by our MGAGCM monthly speakers. If the speakers are willing to do a presentation via ZOOM for June and August, a VMS notice will be sent.

Hopefully we will meet live in September.

Happy Gardening!

Joanne

## MGAGCM Board of Directors

<b>President</b>	Joanne Gensel	jhgensel@gmail.com	(810) 339-0764
<b>1st Vice President</b>	Sabrina VanDyke	brie0212@gmail.com	(810) 407-0808
<b>2nd Vice President</b>	Loretta Ellwood	ldellwood@aol.com	(810) 344-7383
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<b>Outreach Director</b>	Kay McCullough	birdieball@aol.com	(810) 635-9341
<b>Communication Director</b>	Mel Kennedy	mkennedy60@charter.net	(810) 275-8822



# Master Gardener Association Genesee County

## Websites:

MGAGCM Website—[www.geneseecountymg.org](http://www.geneseecountymg.org)

MGAGCM Facebook Page —[www.facebook.com/groups/216904628327310/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/216904628327310/)

MMGA Inc Website—[www.michiganmastergardener.org](http://www.michiganmastergardener.org)

MMGA Inc. Facebook Page—[www.facebook.com/MichiganMG/](https://www.facebook.com/MichiganMG/)

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## Upcoming Events:

### MGAGCM Events:

Jan. 16: **Seed Starting 101** – Deirdre Hope

*Project ID: Food: General Gardens*

Feb. 20: **Cactuses and Succulents That Will Prickle Your Fancy** – Barslund Judd

*Project ID: Community: Beautification - Public Areas*

Mar. 19: **Michigan Invasives: A Look At The Past, Present and Future** – with Brian Van Patten

*Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: Invasive Pests and Plants* **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

Ap. 16: **Extension Master Gardener Banquet** [Potluck--MGAGCM provides chicken and beverage--watch for link to sign up!] **Postponed**

May 16: **MGAGCM Native Plant Sale** at Davison Farmers Market (Saturday, starting at 9:00 a.m.) **Postponed until September 12th.)**

May 21: **Flowering Plants for the Cutting Garden** – Jane Giblin **Cancelled and presentation changed to**

**Yellow Stripey Things: Bees, Hornets and Wasps** – Abi Saeed / *Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: IPM - General*

June 18: **Meeting at Wojo's** (Wojo's Speaker...TBA) **Awaiting to see if speaker will do it via Zoom**

June 28: **Genesee County Extension Master Gardener Tour 2020** (Sunday, from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.) **Postponed**

*Project ID: Community: Beautification – Public Areas (If you visit all the sites, you'll get 3.5 Ed. Hrs.)*

July TBD: **MGAGCM July Picnic** (at Crossroads Village) **Cancelled**

Aug. 20: **The Year in Blooms: Pollinators and their Relationship with Native Plants** – Vince Ste. Marie

*Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: IPM - Pollinators* **Awaiting to see if speaker will do it via Zoom**

Sept. 12 **MGAGCM Native Plant Sale** at the Davison Farmers Market (rescheduled from May 16th) [The link has an order form, plant list, and plant information.]

Sept. 17: **Gardening for Pollinators** – Jay Blair

*Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: IPM - Pollinators*

Oct. 10: **Fall Into Spring** **Cancelled**

Oct. 15: **Native Michigan Wildflowers and Why You Want Them in Your Landscape** – Sara Thomas

*Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: Native Plants*

Nov. 19: **Holiday Party**

2020 MGAGCM meetings and or presentations are held on the third Thursday of each month in the GCCARD Building, 601 N. Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502-2009 (except December & unless otherwise noted).