

# MSU IN BLOOM

## MSU HORTICULTURE GARDEN NEWS



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Stories for Sprouts and Seedlings	September 18
Stories for Sprouts and Seedlings	October 16
Houseplant and Succulent Sale	November 2
Holiday Make and Take	November 21
Holiday Open House	December 5

# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

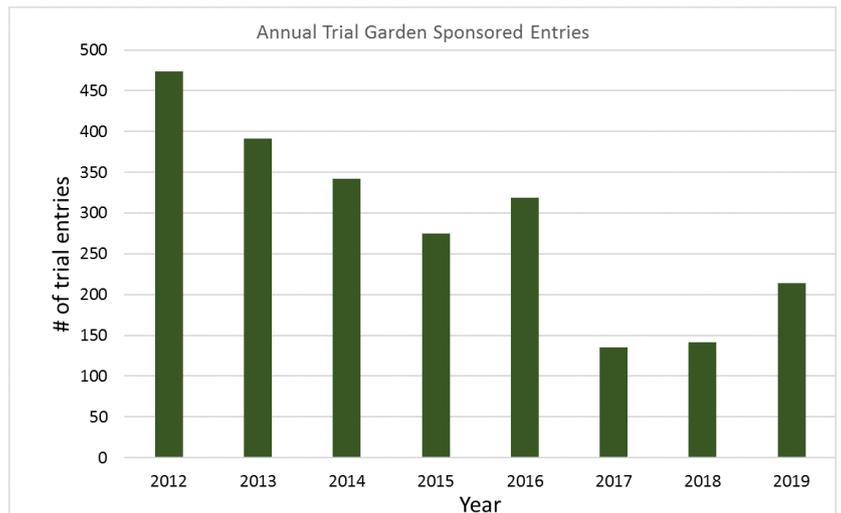
BY KRISTIN GETTER, DIRECTOR OF THE MSU HORTICULTURE GARDENS

## CONSTRUCTION SEASON ALMOST OVER

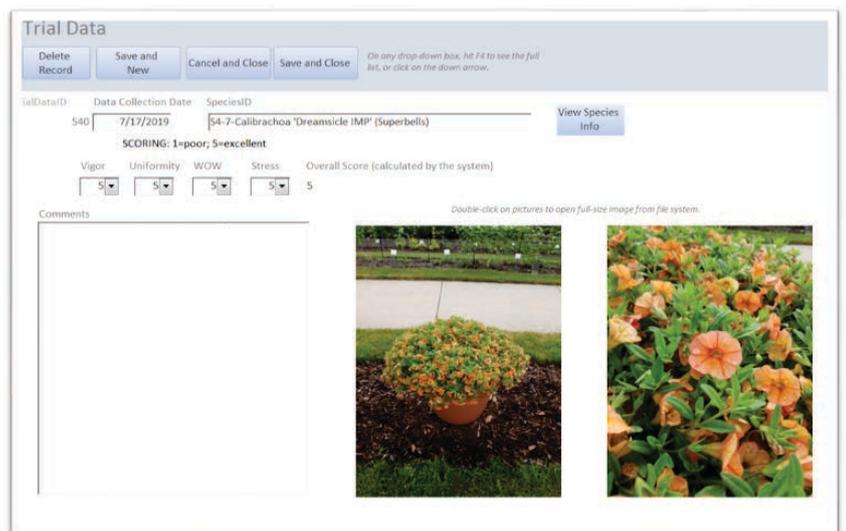
If you've visited our gardens this summer, you've probably noticed all the construction work! We are excited that the Children's Safe Passageway (from our building to the 4-H Children's Garden) is complete AND our garden parking lot is just about done as well! See page 4 for more details.

## ANNUAL TRIAL GARDENS UPDATE

Many of you know that our Annual Gardens are actually a place where industry breeders trial their new cultivars with us. Since the recession, the number of cultivars trialed with us (and other trial gardens) have steadily been decreasing (see graph, right). It has been my goal to increase those numbers. And so far, for 2019 anyways, we have seen a 51% increase over 2018 numbers!!



We encouraged more breeder entries by providing MUCH more data and pictures to the breeder. We now provide three reports each summer (up from one report), each with pictures. We hope the breeders like the new and improved reporting and submit more entries next year and tell their other breeder friends about us!



You might ask yourself, "How can Daedre, our wonderful Annual Trial Garden's Manager, produce three times the data without any added help?". Not to worry, we developed for her a handy new tablet application that helps her collect and report data much quicker and more efficiently!!! An example screenshot is above. Daedre's been such a good sport while we work out the kinks in this new system and we hope that next year the technology will be even smoother. Perhaps we can eventually use similar technology in Bethany's Perennial Gardens to manage her plant collection sometime soon!

### WHAT ELSE DO YOU DO?

I've had a few MSU garden enthusiasts ask what else I do besides overseeing the gardens. My primary job is to teach and most of my teaching load falls in the Fall semester which starts next week. I will teach two courses this semester: HRT 203: Introduction to Horticulture (3 credits with 4 lab sections and about 90 students) and HRT 102: Plants for Food, Fun, and Profit (2 credits, an entirely on-line course with about 60 students). I also co-advise our very active Student Horticulture Association (a.k.a. - Hort Club), which keeps my schedule hopping! So, if you don't see me around as much this late summer and fall - just know that I'm busy teaching the mostly younger generation about our wonderful industry!!!

### MORE MAKE & TAKE!!!!

Due to the wild success of our Spring Make & Takes, we are going to host a Holiday Make & Take this November in place of the Curious Gardener Classes (whose attendance was dwindling). See the details in the picture below. Registration for it will open in September.

The poster features a white background with a pattern of snowflakes and pinecones. The text is centered and uses a mix of serif and cursive fonts. The event title is in a large, green, cursive font. The date and time are in a bold, black, serif font. The location is in a black, serif font. The details are in a white, serif font on a green background.

**MSU HORTICULTURE GARDENS**  
*Holiday Make and Take*  
**Thursday, November 21, 2019 6:00-8:30 PM**

Join us for an evening of creative fun!  
**Plant & Soil Science Building-MSU Campus**  
**1066 Bogue Street, East Lansing, MI 48824**

Each participant will attend  
3 workshops and take home  
items from each.

**\$59 2019 members/ \$69 General**

For detailed descriptions  
and to register visit:  
[www.hrt.msu.edu/holiday](http://www.hrt.msu.edu/holiday)

**6:00 Registration**  
**6:15- Holiday Entertaining on a Shoestring**  
Learn about inexpensive tablescape ideas,  
along with appetizers and cocktails for  
all your holiday gatherings.

**7:00-8:30 Workshops**  
Tending Holiday Plants  
Evergreen Candle Centerpiece

# PARKING LOT 2.0

BY DAN BULKOWSKI, GARDEN AND GREENHOUSE MANAGER

Well, we are getting close to being able to use our garden parking lot again. We've been told that it will be open for the first day of classes, 8/28. Though the entire project will not be completed by then. All of the concrete work and brick inlay installation was completed the last week of July. We were very happy to be able to use the new sidewalk for our Garden Day activities. Then we waited...

Finally, the asphaltting process began about the middle of August. The milling machine came in and ground out the old asphalt to the gravel base. They then did some minor grading and put down the first layer of asphalt. Then the next day they started the top layer, and finished it the following day. The white line striping was completed this week. It sure looks great and ready to use. But the folks in charge want it to set up and harden well before vehicles are on it.

The electrical company is here today pulling the wires for the Pay-by-Plate machines. They will be ready for the first day of classes so the students can happily pay to park in our garden lot. Still to be completed will be the removal of the construction fencing, and placement of the new garden booth. Also, a 24/7 security camera will be installed in the spot where Wilbir used to roost in the middle of the parking lot. The garden map sign will be returned soon and put in the area by the Children's Garden.

So, even though not everything will be done, you will be able to park once again in our garden parking lot very soon. If you pay...



# GREEN WEDDINGS AT MSU

BY SARAH HEIM, WEDDING AND EVENT COORDINATOR

At the MSU Horticulture Gardens, it is important to us that our gardens are places that our communities may come to learn, enjoy, relax, and marvel at. It is also important that in all that we do, we'd like to see that we are making a positive impact on the world around us - on a large and small scale. Recently, we have found another opportunity to 'grow more green' by further reducing our carbon footprint!

A large portion of our foot traffic comes from our weddings and events. This season has been wonderful, and it continues to be just as lovely as the season moves forward. However, weddings and events typically produce a massive carbon footprint, there is lots of travel, electricity, and waste in almost every form involved. The events industry has recognized that it is imperative that we take part in reducing our negative impact on the planet. In turn, there have been marvelous results! It is not easy to get massive numbers of people to follow directions and signs, etc. but it is a very large part of an event planner's job; so getting attendees to participate in recycling and conservation? Bring it on!

Here, at the gardens, our green facilities are already a few steps ahead of the typical venue. For example, we do not need a whole lot of extravagant lighting, and for the largest part of the day, we have good old-fashioned sunlight! We also encourage locality and recommend as many local vendors as possible, as that reduces the carbon footprint significantly as well. Our most recent move has been to partner with the MSU Surplus & Recycling center in helping us achieve zero-waste weddings and events. Through this transition we are so excited to continue working as a team to ensure that a wedding or event at the MSU Horticulture Gardens will be a green one!



Photos taken by Heather Kanillopoulos

# GARDEN DAY RECAP!

BY MARIAH ARTZ, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The MSU Horticulture Gardens hosted another fun and successful Garden Day on Saturday, August 3, 2019! We had 140 attendees and gorgeous weather for some of our outdoor workshops and lunch in the gardens. Our keynote presenter was our own alumni Matthew Ross from Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania. He gave two very informative lectures, "Go Green, Go White, Get Variegated" and "Hidden Gems: The Best Gardens in America You've Never Heard of". In addition to Matthew's lectures, attendees had their selection of nine entertaining and hands-on workshops such as Gardening in a Pickle, Fresh from the Garden Floral Arrangement, and Let's Talk About Shrubs! Attendees were also able to shop in our Green Garden Market Place that showcased a variety of plants and garden accessories from local vendors.

Garden Day would not have been a success without the help from our staff, volunteers, and sponsors! Thank you to our Silver Sponsors (Capital Area Master Gardeners and Michigan Hosta Society), our Bronze Sponsors (LandMark Landscape Inc., Meijer, and VanAtta's Greenhouse and Flower Shop), and our In-Kind Sponsors (Grand Traverse Pie Company and Horrocks Farm Market).



Photos taken by Matthew Ross

## WHAT GARDEN DAY 2019 ATTENDEES SAID

- "Loved, loved, loved both sessions. Just what I needed for the stage I'm at in my garden designs."
- "Inspiring and great information - my first time - will be back!"
- "Experts as well as beginners can all find something to learn."
- "Really enjoyed Matthew Ross, both of his presentations. Liked the workshop choices - MSU can be very proud of its hort grads!"

# TRIAL GARDEN VIEWER'S CHOICE

BY DAEDRE MCGRATH, TRIAL GARDEN MANAGER

If you attended Garden Day on August 3rd this year, you had the opportunity to vote on your favorite plant variety in several categories as part of our plant evaluations in the Trial Garden. We will use this information to inform plant breeders, growers, garden retailers, and more, on the preferences of their target audience- you! I have had several requests to share the results, so here they are:



## **Best Sun Begonia**

Begonia 'BK Collection  
Carmen Red' from  
Beekenkamp



## **Best Calibrachoa**

Calibrachoa 'Cabaret  
Good Night Kiss' from  
Ball FloraPlant



## **Best Petunia**

Petunia 'Supertunia Mini  
Vista Indigo Improved'  
from Proven Winners



## **Best Shade Begonia**

Begonia 'On Top Sun  
Glow' from  
PanAmerican Seed



## **Best Succulent**

Echeveria 'First Lady'

## **Best in Show**

Multi-way tie, could not  
be determined

# STUDENT SECTION

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BY DAEDRE MCGRATH, TRIAL GARDEN MANAGER

## GET TO KNOW ANDREW MELL, 2019 TRIAL GARDEN INTERN



### **What is your major and minor?**

I'm majoring in horticulture with no current minor

### **When do you graduate?**

After fall semester in 2020, hopefully!

### **What made you decide to apply for a position at the MSU Gardens?**

I had just began studying horticulture in the 2019 spring semester, and I thought that working in the horticultural gardens would be a great way to learn about horticulture and get a leg up in all of my upcoming classes. Working with a plethora of plant varieties was an added bonus!

### **What was your favorite part of working at the Gardens?**

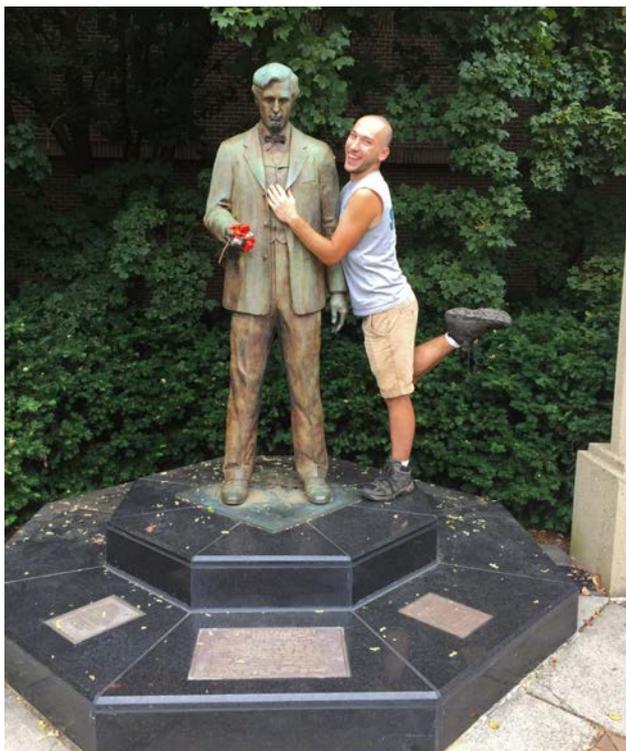
I really enjoyed working up close and personal with plant material, whether it was planting, or transplanting seedlings with a chopstick (an innovative technique, by the way!), or propagating plants by seed or cutting. I just love making things grow!

### **What is a new skill you acquired while working at the Gardens?**

I had the opportunity to try my hand at grafting, which was a very humbling experience. Out of about thirty attempted plants only three survived, which really knocked my "plant-pro" ego down a few pegs. I do not think I would have had any successful grafts if I did not have the tools and greenhouse space provided though, so at least I know now that I can do it!

### **How did your experience at the Gardens influence your professional and/or personal life?**

Professionally speaking, I've had the pleasure of meeting with a few representatives coming from different nurseries around the state, and I've even been offered internship opportunities with them! I still have a ton to do in terms of networking and building my professional profile though. Personally, I've been inspired to grow plants for my friends and family, so much that my friends have actually requested that I stop giving them plants because they can't take care of them all! Oh well, there are always other people looking to take in a few more plants.



**What piece of advice would you give to this year's crew of new student employees?**

Working hard is definitely something that the managers look for in their employees, and it doesn't go unnoticed! You can make a dozen mistakes on the job, but as long as you have a great work ethic and learn from those mistakes, you'll be a favorite. That goes without saying, people who aren't as hard-working will not be regarded well, at all. So put some effort into what you do, do a job that you can say you're proud of! It'll benefit you in the long run.

**If you could chose three words that describe your experience working at the gardens, what would they be?**

Humbling, strenuous and rewarding!

**What are your career goals?**

I'd like to go into plant breeding and see what kind of weird Frankenstein plants I could create. Although the actual plants would probably have some sort of practical use, instead of a celosia-rose hybrid monster like in my imagination.

**What is your favorite non-edible plant?**

Celosia or Coleus probably tie for first place.

**What is your favorite edible plant?**

I could never resist a good Honeycrisp apple!

**What was your favorite snack on snack-days?**

One of my coworkers brought in ice cream sandwiches, but instead of that thin chocolate wafer breading, she used chocolate chip cookies. It was insanely good, but I'd feel a bit ashamed of myself if I ate more than one at a time!

# BEHIND THE SCENES

BY BETHANY TROY, PERENNIAL GARDEN MANAGER

Managing an extensive collection of herbaceous perennial plants takes a lot of work, and subsequently a number of extra pairs of hands to help in the process. Every year, I am lucky to have two student employees under my guidance as they learn the daily duties of maintaining a perennial garden through hands-on experience.



This year, my two students are Alex Maturen and Shane Spence. They have been essential in getting our gardens in tip-top shape, while also helping with multiple larger projects we have completed around the garden. With their help, I receive around an additional 960 people-hours during our peak season – you can imagine how much we value our student help in the summer!

Alex is a Horticulture major at MSU and has been working in the perennial garden for the past two seasons. He appreciates working here because he feels his opinion matters. Alex's favorite plant is probably the coneflower (*Echinacea* sp.) as he enjoys the variety and different kinds that are available. He loves the perennial garden because he likes to observe the progressions and developments as the seasons change, and throughout the years. Alex has been a valuable student for us here, and when he graduates, we will miss him dearly.

Shane is a Bio Molecular Science major and has been with us in the perennial garden just one season and was a valuable member right away. Shane has really picked things up in the garden almost immediately, and his sense of humor is right in line with our goofy endeavors we find ourselves in. Shane looks the happiest when he's climbing trees, and when he's inspecting diseases or damage on leaves and around the garden. A true go-getter who is clearly inspired by the natural world around him, Shane has been an essential part of the perennial garden this year.



## BEHIND THE SCENES - CONTINUED

Helping students in the garden and providing insights on how to manage an outdoor space is extremely rewarding. You can tell they find it rewarding as well, especially when you start troubleshooting pest and disease issues, or are identifying plants. Together we battle weeds, hydrate our plants, find toads and tree frogs, and deadhead (a personal favorite task amongst the perennial garden team). And of course, it doesn't take long to feel pride and ownership in your work here and I can see their dedication and pride behind what they do. Another summer in the books, and another school year begins, in which we continue to fulfill our duty of inspiring students of all majors and backgrounds into the world of horticulture.



# STORY WALK

BY NORM LOWNDS, MICHIGAN 4-H CHILDREN'S GARDEN CURATOR

As you come into the 4-H Children's Garden this summer and fall, have some fun with our StoryWalk®. This is a project that we are doing in cooperation with the Capital Area District Libraries (CADL).

Follow our StoryWalk® book through the garden and both read the book and enjoy the activities (talking, skipping, singing and playing) between stations.

This is a great way to enjoy a book and the 4-H Children's Gardens at the same time!



We look forward to seeing you in the 4-H Children's Gardens this summer! Make plans to visit many times. We will be here. Our plants will be putting on their best show, just for you!

