

# The Tollgate Farm News

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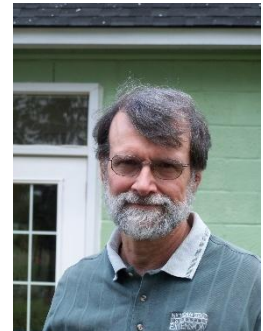
## MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers General Meeting

Thursday, May 15, 2025  
7:00 PM  
(In the Conference Center)

### Science Sampler for Gardeners

#### Dean Krauskopf, Ph.D.

Join volunteers and supporters in the Tollgate conference center to learn about a variety of science topics for gardeners. Retired host of *The Gardening Show* on News/Talk 760 WJR, **Dean Krauskopf, Ph.D.**, will put weather conditions into a broader context, share the latest information about the top problems he expects gardeners will deal with this year, and provide links to accurate information you might use or pass on to others. He will also answer your gardening questions.



Dean retired from Michigan State University as the Integrated Crop Management Agent for Southeastern Michigan for MSU Extension Service. He taught in the MSU horticulture department and at many Master Gardener training classes. Dean often spoke at *Growing with Master Gardeners* conferences, and is the inspiration for Master Gardener Association of Wayne County's Dean Krauskopf Award for volunteer contributions to community education. His doctorate in horticulture is from North Carolina State University.

Links to resources that Dean will discuss include those posted at [Summaries & Follow-up Info from Meetings](#) —, entries dated April 12, 2025; August 9, 2024; April 13, 2023; and March 10, 2022.

### TOLLGATE GARDEN VOLUNTEER IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS 2025

MAY	MEETINGS			JUNE	MEETINGS	
6	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00 pm		3	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00 pm
15	TGV General Meeting - Onsite	7:00 pm		19	TGV General Meeting- Onsite	7:00 pm
MAY	WORKDAY ACTIVITIES			JUNE	WORKDAY ACTIVITIES	
3	Entrance/Nursery (plant div)			7	Spring Plant Sale	9:00 am– 2:00 pm
10	Farmhouse	9:00 am		14	Rose/Entrance	9:00 am
17	Shade/Hosta	9:00 am		21	Office/Heritage/Rain	9:00 am
24	Memorial Day Weekend	9:00 am		28	Pond/12 Mile	9:00 am
31	Rockledge/planting	9:00 am				

# The Tollgate Farm News

## FARM UPDATE FROM THE RESIDENT FARMER - *Destiny Pearson*

The farm is coming to life, and spring is painting the landscape with color and energy! Flowers are blooming, trees are budding, and our gardens are thriving. Thanks to the dedication of our garden volunteers and visiting volunteer groups, the grounds are looking more vibrant than ever — a true testament to the power of teamwork and community care.

And it's not just the plants that are growing — our new baby goats are doing great, the sheep are starting their breeding season, and chicks are still hatching. Life is buzzing in every corner of the farm, and it's such a joy to witness this new season unfold.

With this spring weather came our Hanami Spring Picnic: while rain kept us from celebrating outdoors, the



magic didn't miss a beat. We gathered in the barns, where warmth, laughter, and music filled the space. It was a day full of joy and connection, with smiling faces all around and unforgettable performances that brought the spirit of the season indoors.

We're so grateful to everyone who joined us — from volunteers to performers to families who made the day so special. The farm is blooming, not just with flowers but with community, creativity, and heart.

Here's to more beautiful days ahead!

Photos provided by Destiny Pearson

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT - *Renee Cottrell*

*"It is only the farmer that faithfully plants seeds in the Spring, who reaps a harvest in the Autumn."* -B.C. Forbes, Founder, Forbes magazine 1880-1954

As often happens in Michigan we have seesawed into summer temps again this spring. Spring blooms are bursting, trees are greening and garden activities are in full swing.

Thank you for making the Pancake Brunch event special!

John Woodrich, Rhonda York, Vince Pearson and Roy Prentice helped prepare the meal, cleaned up after and worked in all ways to mark the change from the season of syrup to the time of working in the gardens. The garden volunteers always enjoy the annual pancake luncheon celebration of spring that is hosted by the maple syrup crew!

We will continue to enjoy the camaraderie of group gardening activity per the work activity schedule for upcoming dates in this issue. Active gardeners should monitor Google shared document for garden work tasks to help keep us ahead of the weeds. Some volunteers need or prefer weekday activity assignments and this will provide work details they can do on their schedule. Please greet any new volunteers you may meet in the gardens to thank and welcome them into the group.

May is time for the big gear up for the spring plant sale! Please share your divisions to help our main fund raiser be successful. See the Nursery Notes.

### SAVE THE DATE:

**Saturday, June 7th Spring Plant Sale from 9 am to 2 pm:** This is our primary fund raiser for our garden efforts. Active volunteers are needed in various roles for the event; all volunteers and public are invited to shop.

Thank you all for the support you give for the gardens here at Tollgate. You make this a special place.

Renee Cottrell, President

Tollgate Garden Volunteers

[rncottrell4@att.net](mailto:rncottrell4@att.net)

# The Tollgate Farm News

## PAR Report - Kathryn Fitzpatrick

Our last month in the greenhouse – starting cabbage, kohlrabi, herbs, and lastly cucumbers. We will conclude the month with all our transplants hardened and ready for planting in late May and early June. Our fall garlic looks great, and the collard greens we planted last month will start to emerge this month. These crops will be joined in the garden this month by carrots and companion green onions, summer squash, and pole beans with companion rosemary.



Our seed potatoes have arrived and have been dormant in the cooler. This month they will be cut into pieces with at least one eye and left for a week or so to chit or sprout.

We will be using two varieties – Kennebec and Red Port.

We will be preparing the beds this year with a weed mitigation strategy of exposing and irrigating each bed, waiting for the first bloom of weeds, raking these weeds up, and adding a layer of compost. For pest mitigation we will be using a dip or spray of Surround and limited organic

pesticides to address potato beetles and cabbage moths, along with manual removal.

One major activity this month is reclaiming the pathways from the abundance of weeds and grasses and laying more mulch. Fortunately, we will have some corporate volunteers to help with this exercise, as well as our new adaptive tools to ease the effort.

Happy Spring,  
Kathryn Fitzpatrick

Photos provided by Kathryn Fitzpatrick



## NURSERY NOTES - Peg Palmer

A cool, late spring has resulted in a very slow start to our plant donations. Now that the weather has improved, we hope that you keep Tollgate in mind and bring in your donations soon! We have a new plant donation area – it's easy to access, under the Nursey trellis structure with a separate access door. Roy Prentice gets the credit for the great idea and the installation –including shelves at the rear of the area to increase storage space. The last day to donate plants for the sale is Friday, May 23!! Please bring your donations as soon as possible so that we can get organized for a successful sale. Consult the [PLANTS WANTED LIST](#) for guidance on the plants we are accepting and need the most! Also, if you have one gallon pots, please bring them to the nursery. This is the ONLY size we use and can accept! Place 1-gallon pots under the potting trailer or in the Nursery Shed (in the large tub on the right after you open the door). Please close the shed doors securely when you leave! PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE SALE ON JUNE 7! It's a great way to find some new plants and fill in the bare spots in your garden affordably. The sale features knowledgeable Tollgate Garden Volunteers who are happy to share their knowledge as you make your selections!



**COMPLETE DONATION DIRECTIONS ARE POSTED IN THE NURSERY ([DONATION DIRECTIONS LINK](#))**

1. **IDENTIFY** your donations (common, botanical name & bloom color).
2. **WATER**, if needed.
3. **LEAVE** your donation behind the **YELLOW GATE**.
4. **RECLOSE THE LID** to the pencil/plant stick holder!
5. **CLOSE THE YELLOW GATE!!**

**THANK YOU for your plant donations!**



# The Tollgate Farm News

## IN MEMORIAM – SUE JANCZAREK

Longtime friend, supporter, Tollgate Garden Volunteer Sue Janczarek passed away May 4<sup>th</sup> from cancer. Sue and her husband Mike were active volunteers in the gardens and at events until her health began to decline. Sue was an Area Garden Leader in the Children's prairie, and Demonstration garden. She gave of her time as Treasurer for many years and shared her gardening passion and knowledge with all of us. We extend our deepest sympathy to Mike and the Janczarek Family for their loss.

Photo provided by Roy Prentice



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## AGL Information – Marilyn Alimpich

Finally! It appears Springtime is here. It has been a long time coming. Most of you have received budget approvals and are ready to start planting. If you wish to plant, and haven't yet submitted a budget, our next TGAC meeting dates are May 6 and June 3.

If you have expenditures for which you would like to be reimbursed, please submit your receipts (and credit/debit card statement for online purchases) to Destiny Pearson. You may submit via email (pears278@msu.edu), text (248) 931-7173, mail (28115 Meadowbrook Rd, Novi MI 48377) or deliver them to her office. All reimbursements must be submitted to MSU within 90 days of the sale date. Please DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE 90 DAY PERIOD TO SUBMIT YOUR RECEIPTS. The earlier receipts are submitted the better.

See you in the gardens!

Marilyn Alimpich

Marilyn Alimpich, [masoleil@sbcglobal.net](mailto:masoleil@sbcglobal.net)

[2025 Garden Budget Planner](#)

[Tollgate Label Template Excel Version](#)

[Tollgate Label Template Word Version](#)

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## Find Yourself a Rewarding Team Experience!

Throughout the Tollgate Gardens we have sites that would greatly benefit from a little extra attention and hence, the concept of the Area Garden Leaders (AGLs) and Teams. These teams with a lead volunteer contribute to the overall management of a specific garden by monitoring the needs of the garden, participating in the designated maintenance activity and directing work at the site. The following gardens are requesting assistance and will provide orientation. Joining a team does not prevent you from working in other gardens on Saturday work days. Please take the time to review some of the opportunities listed below. See the link for garden descriptions and orientation for more information.

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/tollgate/uploads/2024-Uploades/Tollgate%20Garden%20Volunteer%20orientation%202025.pdf>

- ☐ Demonstration Gardens: AGL is Lee Kindermann requesting co-AGL and team members
- ☐ Founders/Rose Garden: AGL Joe Pyden requesting team members
- ☐ Rock Ledge Garden: Seeking an AGL and team members
- ☐ Office and Heritage Gardens: AGL Susie Sherman seeking co-AGL and has need for team members
- ☐ Plant A Row (PAR) garden: AGL Kathryn Fitzpatrick requests co-AGL and additional team members
- ☐ Children Gardens - Native prairie: AGL Karen Harris requesting co-AGL and team members
- ☐ Children Gardens - Vine maze: AGL Paula Brose requesting co-AGL and team members
- ☐ Children's Garden Collection: Renee Cottrell currently oversees Children's Entrance, Fence, Pond, East Tollbooth and seeking AGLs and teams
- ☐ Rain Garden: AGL Connie Marcangelo welcomes any interested team members
- ☐ Sakura Japanese Garden: AGL and members needed. A smaller garden area surrounding the tea house, great potential for design development. The Sakura Garden is a more remote

# The Tollgate Farm News

## Demonstration Garden Gets a New Collection

There is a new collection of 12 dwarf conifers in the Tollgate Demonstration Garden. After research and consultation with local collector/expert and longtime friend of Tollgate, Dennis Groh, several selections were purchased from Blue Horizon Nursery. One of the included varieties is *Pinus sylvestris* 'Hillside Creeper'. This is a prostrate Scot's Pine that has a creep-along-the-ground growth habit. You can see more pictures and a further description at: <https://www.iselinurseries.com/colorful-conifers/pinus-pine/pinus-sylvestris-hillside-creeper/> All of the plants were selected for their unique growth habit and interesting characteristics.

The new planting was established May 2 along the north fence of the Demonstration Garden. The project leads are Area Garden Leader Lee Kindermann and Roy Prentice. The dwarf conifer planting replaces a failing viburnum planting that had sustained viburnum beetle damage over several years. Learn more about viburnum beetle here: <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/viburnum-leaf-beetle/>



Photo provided by Karen Harris

## Tollgate Garden Tools

As many volunteers know, tools for volunteer use are kept in the small tool shed at the base of the silo. The Tollgate Garden team works to maintain quality tools for the use of garden volunteers. Donations of garden tools are appreciated. However, sometimes donated tools have not been in good shape or may not be usable in the gardens. We ask that any tool donation be submitted for review by TGAC and be new or gently used. As active garden members, we invite you to share your ideas of what tools would be good additions to Tollgate by submitting a request to Renee for consideration at the monthly TGAC meeting.

If you use tools from the farm's collection, please return them clean to their respective tool sheds/areas. To ensure tools and equipment are returned to the correct storage area, farm staff have now marked items for their designated areas:

**Silo Tool Shed = Pink**  
**PAR = Yellow**  
**Nursery = Pink and Yellow**  
**CSA/SAG = Blue**  
**Animal = Green**  
**Maple = Red**  
**No marking = general Tollgate supplies**

(Items from Maple, Animals, or CSA/SAG have not been painted yet, but those will be the dedicated colors moving forward.)

Your cooperation and assistance will help have tools readily available for everyone working in the gardens.

### Michigan State University Tollgate Garden Volunteers spring Plant Sale

**Saturday June 7, 2025**  
**9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

This major fund raising event helps support the development and maintenance of the educational gardens on the site for Extension programs and visitors. This event is held rain or shine. Experienced Tollgate Garden Volunteers will be assisting with questions and selections for a great shopping experience. The Tollgate Nursery specializes in providing a variety of hardy perennials popular to SE Michigan gardens. Our plants are divisions or seed grown perennials found in our beautiful Tollgate gardens, or are donations from the home gardens of our volunteers, friends of the farm or local supporting nurseries. Reasonably priced sun and shade perennials are available in 1-gallon pots. Look for deals on overstock or specialty plants with premium pricing as noted with signage posted at the sale.

Payment with Cash, Check, Mastercard or Visa will be accepted



Michigan State University  
Tollgate Farm and Education Center  
28115 Meadowbrook Road  
Novi, MI 48377  
248-347-3888 ext. 251  
[www.tollgate.msu.edu](http://www.tollgate.msu.edu)  
Please No Pets allowed

Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the event coordinator two weeks prior to the date of the event. Requests received after this date will be handled on a case-by-case basis.  
MSU is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or various status.

[Tollgate Farm 2025 Plant Sale](#)

[Tollgate Farm Volunteer Sign-up 2025](#)

# The Tollgate Farm News

## Membership Update April 2025

To all of you who donated to help the Tollgate Garden Volunteers 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.

David Anderson  
Janelle Justin  
Pam Rusin  
Jackie Stengel  
Phyllis Stengel  
Anne Trachsel (Fairfax)

Please take a moment to renew your 2025 membership and receive your new identification button for the season!



The new 2025 membership buttons are in the Volunteer building for all active members who have renewed their membership as of 03/01/25. The buttons have both pin and magnet attachments. Please pick up your new button. If there are corrections needed, please email me at [tlrrehab@gmail.com](mailto:tlrrehab@gmail.com). New buttons will be made over the coming month for those who have renewed after 03/01/25. Thanks!  
Theresa LaRosa

[2025 TGV Membership Form](#)  
[2025 Member Levels Reminder](#)

## Links to Forms & Other Info

[Tollgate 2025 Activity Calendar](#)

[Garden Orientation PDF](#)

[Tollgate Garden Web Pages](#)

[Other Tollgate Garden Volunteer Info](#)

### MSU Tollgate Volunteer Sign-In:



Or

[MSU Tollgate Volunteer Sign-in](#)

**NOTE:** If you are unable to access or print any necessary forms from the links, please notify Renee, who will arrange to provide copies. Copies will also be available at all in-person TGV meetings.

### Take a Tollgate Picture

Send photo files in separate emails, if necessary, to Judy Warren, Tollgate Calendar Editor, at [TGFarmPhotos@gmail.com](mailto:TGFarmPhotos@gmail.com). Photos are also appreciated for the monthly Farm News. Photo files can be sent to: [Ductapegirl212@gmail.com](mailto:Ductapegirl212@gmail.com)



Photo by  
Karen  
Harris



# The Tollgate Farm News

## PLANTING THE CONIFERS



Photos provided by Karen Harris



# The Tollgate Farm News

## SATURDAY WORKDAYS RETURN



Photos provided by Linda Piasecki



# The Tollgate Farm News

## Activity Days: January - October

- Activity Day hours are 9:00 am – Noon, unless otherwise noted on the Activities section of the first page of the newsletter and the full year calendar (see Links page).
- Volunteer Activity Day and Meeting Information will be communicated by email.
- Active members will continue to get email reminders of these activities.
- Lunch will be provided on scheduled workdays.
- We strongly recommend you bring your own tools for your garden activities. All tools borrowed from the Tool Shed should be cleaned and sanitized with the wipes provided, prior to returning the items to the Tool Shed after use.

## Tollgate Garden Advisory Committee (TGAC)

### Volunteer Liaison – Destiny Pearson

248-347-3860 Ext.251 [pears278@msu.edu](mailto:pears278@msu.edu)

**President.....** Renee Cottrell

**Vice President .....** Marilyn Alimpich

**Secretary.....** Theresa Bridenbaugh

**Treasurer.....** Karen Harris

### Membership

**& Hospitality.....** Teresa LaRosa

**Communications .....** Kathy Johnson

**Programs.....** Jackie Stengel

**Farm News Editor .....** Linda Piasecki

**Event Coordinator.....**Lori Heiden

- The TGAC meets monthly virtually **on Zoom on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM**. All Tollgate Garden Volunteer members are welcome to attend and should contact Destiny Pearson for meeting link.
- Contact information for individual TGAC members and Area Garden Leaders (AGL) are available by contacting Renee Cottrell at [rmcottrell@att.net](mailto:rmcottrell@att.net) to have message or contact forwarded for response. Contact info can also be found in the Garden Binders in the Volunteer Communication Center.
- Tollgate Volunteer Membership is renewed annually. The 2025 Tollgate Garden Volunteer membership is valid from **January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025**.

- For membership questions or to update your current membership information, email Teresa LaRosa at [tlrrehab@gmail.com](mailto:tlrrehab@gmail.com)
- For general Tollgate information and questions, contact Destiny Pearson or see Website: <http://tollgate.msu.edu/volunteering/>
- TIP: If you aren't getting The Tollgate Farm News email, check your SPAM folder

