

# The Tollgate Farm News

VOLUME 29

ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2023



## MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers General Meeting On Zoom

**Thursday, January 19, 2023  
7:00 PM**

### ***Learning from the Past***

To start the new year, professional gardener **Gail Morrell** will return with observations, ideas and lessons learned from past years of gardening. Gail loves her job. She enjoys learning new things about plants, pests, and tools. Based on her extensive knowledge of gardening, Gail looks forward to sharing insights on problems to avoid, things to try and successes to build on. She is enthusiastic about garden maintenance, even taking advantage of January opportunities to weed. She provides practical tips and suggestions for the best results in the garden.

In 1991, Gail became a Master Gardener and established a garden maintenance company. She has worked as the head gardener on several estates and is currently the landscape manager for a gated community in Bloomfield Hills. Gail was an instructor and Practical Gardening Trainer at the Michigan School of Gardening and a past president of the Troy Garden Club.

#### **TOLLGATE GARDEN VOLUNTEER IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS**

JAN			FEB		
MEETINGS			MEETINGS		
3	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00 pm	7	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00 pm
14	AGL Planning Meeting – In-person and Zoom	10:00 am	16	TGV General Meeting – Zoom	7:00 pm
19	TGV General Mtg – Zoom	7:00 pm			
JAN			FEB		
WORKDAY ACTIVITIES			WORKDAY ACTIVITIES		
No Workdays in January			No Workdays in February		

# The Tollgate Farm News

## *A Special Thanks!*

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

Andrew Berry  
Jayne Berry  
Cindy Bolterstein  
Gail Sanders Braun  
Susan Bremer  
James Bretz  
Theresa Bridenbaugh  
Inge Brieger  
Doris Daniel  
Lisa Drew  
Kathryn Fitzpatrick  
Brian Frol  
Linda Gobeski  
Gerald Gross  
Shelly Haaseth  
Eve Hadley  
Carmen Hamilton

Karen Harris  
Roy Hybl  
Kathy Johnson  
Ellen Kennedy  
Teresa LaRosa  
Kathleen Light  
R. E. Luetje  
Paul Lukasiewicz  
Cecile MacDonell  
Ann MacLean  
Angie Carter  
Renee Cottrell  
Constance Marcangelo  
Sharon Mazguth  
Beverly McCarter  
Janice McNulty

Sherry Mueller  
Audrey Murphy  
Paul Needle  
Priscilla Needle  
Patti Nehr  
Linda Piasecki  
Barbara Potts  
Dorothy Schmidt  
Mary Sheipline  
Diana Simoni  
Michelle Snow  
Judy Tomaszewski  
Nancy Turner  
Judy Warren  
Lenora Woloszyn  
Sue Woodsum



Photo from MSU Extension website

# The Tollgate Farm News

## FROM THE TOLLGATE FARM MANAGER

### GREETINGS

Roy Prentice

Greetings all,  
After a slow start, one wonders if winter will ever really get here. I'm not complaining about the lack of snow, however, a little dusting does cheer up our drab Michigan winter. I hope and trust that your holiday season was peaceful and fulfilling. Winter is a chance to recharge on the farm and get ready for the coming growing season.



Since there was no snow in Novi, and since my son lives in Marquette, the Prentice family took the holiday season opportunity to pack the dog, daughter Minnette, and Minnette's daughter in the car and headed north for a few days.



Now, Marquette is a town that knows how to do winter!



**Area Garden Leaders Needed:** The gray days of January getting you down? Longing for the rejuvenation of the spring season of growth? Spring will be here before you know it! Now is a great time to consider getting more involved in Tollgate in 2023. Many of our volunteers have taken on the care of one of the gardens on the farm by becoming an Area Garden Leader. Having each of the gardens on the farm cared for by an AGL is essential to keeping our gardens looking their best throughout the season. Being an AGL is easy and makes a real difference for the farm's horticultural collections. Please contact Renee or myself if you are ready to take on a bit more commitment.

**Maple Syrup News:** The maple syrup making project is getting in gear. Tapping maple trees is only about a month away. Collecting and boiling sap once the tapping is complete is very weather dependent. If you are interested in being "in the know" about maple syrup happenings, let me know. I will add you to our maple syrup email list. Being involved in the maple syrup project is a fun way to get out and enjoy the farm early in the season.

**MapleFest:** Be on the lookout for Tollgate's MapleFest event. MapleFest is coming up fast on March 11 and 12. MapleFest brings about 800 people to the farm to learn all about maple syrup making and to eat lots of yummy pancakes. It is a fun event to be involved with as a volunteer or to attend for a fun day in the woods.

I greatly appreciate all that the Tollgate Garden Membership does to keep the farm looking good. Because of the work of our volunteers, Tollgate is a very special place. Even though the cold winds of January are howling outside the door, take heart, spring will be here before we know it.

Roy

Photos provided by Roy Prentice

# The Tollgate Farm News



**Notes from the President**  
**Renee Cottrell**

*"Gardening is full of mistakes, almost all of them pleasant and some of them actually instructive."*

*~Henry Mitchell, author*

Happy New Year to one and all! We are already getting to work for the 2023 season at Tollgate. Our January through March Meetings will be via Zoom, then re-assessed for return to in-person meetings or combined virtual meetings. The TGV Activity Calendar for 2023 is being developed and will be posted on the web at the end of the month. In 2023 we are expecting to complete phase 2 of the Rose Garden renovation, repair of the stairway at the circle drive and replacement of benches due to a generous donation from a friend of Tollgate and the continued support of The Americana Foundation.

**Garden Teams at work:** The Garden Team meeting will be held on Saturday Jan.14<sup>th</sup> to address the needs of the Tollgate gardens, recruit active members for lead roles and teams, establish division lists for the Spring Plant Sale event and identify garden revisions. Being a team member helps in maintaining the gardens, enhances your knowledge base and provides an opportunity for outdoor activity, in a beautiful setting on a regular basis. All Active members welcome to join a team! Contact me if you have an interest.

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

The Tollgate Garden Volunteers receive most of the up-to-date information and announcements via e-mail. Roy or other TGAC approved designees (Kathy Johnson and AGL's) utilize the membership e-mail list for weekly Activity Calendar reminders, team contacts, cancellations, or other special event

notifications. We will try to include updates on the Meadowbrook construction that is planned to continue through the 2023 season.

It is important **to update your membership yearly**, early, and whenever your contact information changes in order to keep you in the loop. Forms are available on the web site, at the end of this newsletter and by request at [tollgatemembers@gmail.com](mailto:tollgatemembers@gmail.com).

If you need to contact any TGAC or Area Garden Leader please call or e-mail Roy and he can forward these contact requests to the correct recipients. Be sure to leave YOUR return contact information.

New members will receive email contact from Teresa LaRosa, Hospitality Chairperson, to orient them to the TGAC contact list, newsletter, web site etc.

Thank you for being a Tollgate Garden Volunteer!

Renee Cottrell, Adv. MG,  
President - Tollgate Garden Volunteers  
[rncottrell4@att.net](mailto:rncottrell4@att.net)



# The Tollgate Farm News



Happy New Year – 2023 is here! This promises to be another bountiful year, and I would like to send a heartfelt thank you to all past and present volunteers who have provided the labor of love and care to this special garden, and to encourage any new volunteers to check us out.



Although winter is here and it can be quite gloomy, the team has embarked on a project to create a PAR Garden Handbook with details on each of the crops that we plant and

harvest each year. This will be an invaluable resource going forward to provide detailed information for any volunteer who is interested in supporting the garden and has questions regarding planting, maintenance, and harvesting, including pest management and cleaning and storage considerations.



Our planting schedule and plans were completed last year and added to the CSA seed order. We may have some additional tasks to help in the greenhouse, as the CSA team helps us

every year by planting and growing transplants – this year for cabbage, alliums, and cucumbers. I will reach out if we are summoned to assist. Our plans include continuing to use companion plants to help with weed and pest control, as well as add variety with borage, parsley, and marigolds. Not only is it fun, but it has proven to be quite beneficial and beautiful.

As we will be adding cucumbers and hot peppers to our crops, we will also be adding stakes and trellises to support these plants. We are still working on the design

and trying to be creative with materials that are sustainable, recyclable, and beautiful of course. If you have any great ideas for this project, we would love to hear about them.



As previously mentioned, we winterized the garden with the oat / pea cover crop, black plastic, and straw over the garlic beds, and will be assessing the success of each in

helping with weed suppression, pest control, and soil amendment. In addition, the irrigation system will need to be fully checked and maintained as we kick off the season.

We will continue to donate to local food pantries as well as Forgotten Harvest and are proud of our contribution to helping with food security. As always, it is important to note that this success must be attributed to the dedicated volunteers and the MSU Tollgate Farm staff, including the very helpful CSA team.



We will continue to divide and conquer with multiple workdays each week – most likely Monday and Thursday mornings, which seem to work best for most volunteers and the organizations that pick up our donations. More information will be forthcoming as we approach our gardening season. Please feel free to

reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Looking forward to another great season in 2023, as well as to welcoming new volunteers who are interested in joining our fantastic team and providing such a valuable service to the community.

Hope to see you in the garden in 2023,

Kathryn Fitzpatrick

Top left photo provided by Nancy Powell  
All other photos by Kathryn Fitzpatrick

# The Tollgate Farm News

## Member Spotlight

This month's member  
caught wearing her badge is:

**Linda Piasecki**



**Years gardening...** on and off for too many years to remember!

**Master Gardener since...** I received my certification/certificate and name tag in December 2022! Yay!

**Volunteer at Tollgate since...** June 2021

**Favorite garden...** All of them! Though I gravitate towards the Xeriscape Garden.

Photo provided by Nancy Powell

## Please Renew Your Membership for 2023

Happy New Year!

Start 2023 by  
renewing your annual  
TGV Membership now.  
You won't have to think  
about it once gardening  
season begins!

Thank you!  
**Angie Carter**

[Tollgatemembers@gmail.com](mailto:Tollgatemembers@gmail.com)



# The Tollgate Farm News

## Tollgate Garden Volunteer Membership Levels

When you renew your TGV membership each year, we ask you to designate your status as an ACTIVE member or a SUPPORTING member. As a reminder, these designations mean the following:

**ACTIVE MEMBER:** Volunteer in the gardens on workdays or individual assignments, volunteer at events and projects on the site, receive all communication and participate in monthly meetings.

- All active volunteers must go through the MSU Volunteer Selection Process (VSP) screening to work on site and maintain their VSP status yearly.
- Extension Master Gardeners (EMG) are screened through the VSP process either at the start of the program when you take the EMG class or when you renew your EMG certification/VSP update each year. If you are an active/current EMG and choose to volunteer at Tollgate, your VSP status is complete.
- Previously certified EMGs who decide to let their certification lapse can still volunteer on the site, but must go through the VSP screening on an annual basis. We have onsite personnel who can help you complete the process.
- If you are an active MSU volunteer through another program or site and have maintained an active VSP status, then your VSP status is complete
- Individuals who have not gone through the VSP screening, will need to pursue the VSP screening before they can be an active volunteer at Tollgate (or at any MSU site or program). We have onsite personnel who can help you complete this process.
- Note that once an individual has participated in the initial VSP screening, they need only approve a background check in subsequent years. No need to obtain references and other activities that are required with the initial VSP screening.

**SUPPORTING MEMBER:** Support the volunteers and participate in monthly meetings.

- Notified regarding monthly membership meetings.
- Informed about Tollgate events via the Farm News newsletter and other informative e-mail notifications.
- Supporter status will **not** allow you to participate as a volunteer in the garden maintenance activities, maple syrup project or any events on site.
- Return to an "ACTIVE" status at any time by completing the VSP screening process.

**A donation is NOT required to renew your membership. All donations are greatly appreciated and go into our account to maintain the gardens.**



# The Tollgate Farm News

## Welcome New Tollgate Garden Volunteer Members

We are glad you are with us! Please feel free to contact Renee Cottrell with any questions on our planned activities and schedules for 2023. You may email your questions about the gardens and volunteering at [rmcottrell4@att.net](mailto:rmcottrell4@att.net). This is a wonderful place, full of educational opportunities, with personal satisfaction and social connections as reward for volunteering. Our membership holds a large amount of collective knowledge and expertise that is willingly shared with a strong team approach to make every effort to direct new members to areas of most interest on the site. We want to guide you to a great experience with the Tollgate Garden Volunteers. Check out these links to start exploring your garden opportunities:

Garden Orientation PDF

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/tollgate/uploads/files/Tollgate%20Garden%20Volunteer%20orientation%20draft2.pdf>

Tollgate web pages for the Gardens

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/tollgate/gardens/>

2023 Tollgate Garden Volunteer Activity Calendar

(link will be provided when calendar is finalized)

Other volunteer info at Tollgate

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/tollgate/volunteering/>



Photo provided by Roy Prentice



# The Tollgate Farm News

## Recognition Dinner Video Available on Zoom – January 21, 2023, 7:00 PM

Were you unable to attend the November TGV Recognition Dinner, but would still love to see the event, including the annual Tollgate PowerPoint presentation by Roy Prentice, door prize winners, special honors for TGV President Renee Cottrell, and the Ginger Meyer Award and Golden Shovel Award presentations? The evening was captured on video by Jim Nelson and Kathy Johnson and is ready to be viewed.

Please join Roy on Zoom on Saturday, January 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM to watch the event. Please click the link below to join the webinar: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/99464284822>

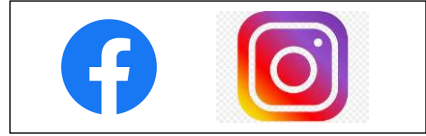
It was a terrific evening for everyone and you will enjoy getting to see it all unfold. Please join us.



Photos provided by Renee Cottrell,  
Nancy Powell, and Mary Bohner

# The Tollgate Farm News

## Tollgate Gardens are on Facebook and Instagram

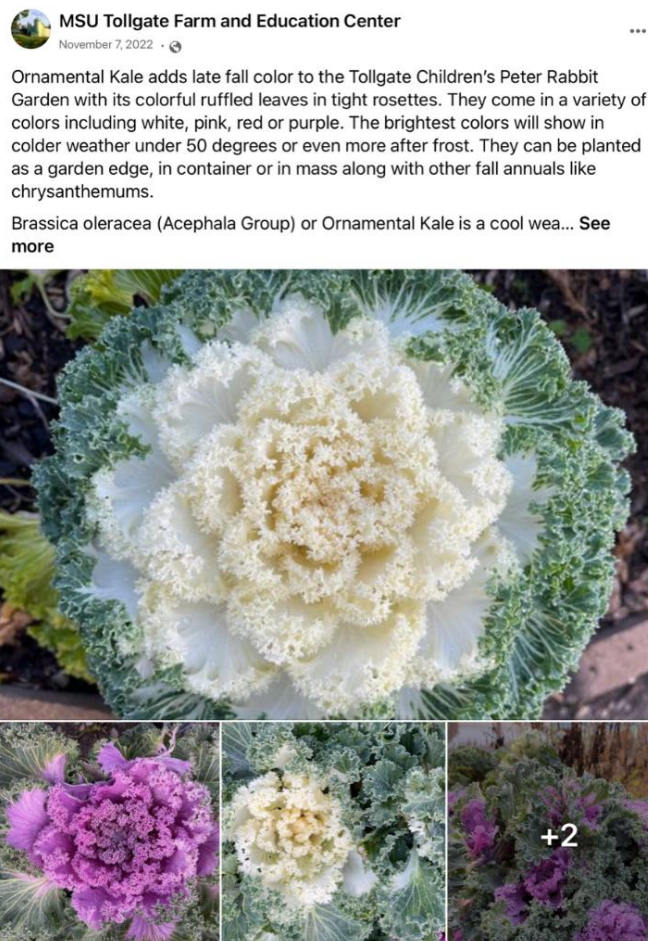


### Share the beauty of Tollgate Gardens on Facebook and Instagram

We are posting photos and information about the gardens on the Tollgate Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ExperienceTollgate>) and Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/msutollgatefarm/>) pages.

Our posts have been well received and we are increasing the awareness of our gardens, providing education on the plants in our gardens and hopefully encouraging some new volunteers. If you would like to help, please send high resolution photos to Kathy Johnson ([kmj@chartermi.net](mailto:kmj@chartermi.net)), along with information about the photo like garden name, plant name, and the time of year the photo was taken. Note: photos can be taken over the last few years. If you would like to draft a brief educational text about the plant and its care, please send that also. Kathy will help finalize the post for you and when completed she will coordinate with the Tollgate social media lead to get it published. We would like to have lots of social media posts on the gardens this year!

Example of a recent Facebook posting:





# The Tollgate Farm News

## ROSE GARDEN WORKDAY



Photos provided by Kathy Johnson



# The Tollgate Farm News

## PRETTY WINTER INTEREST

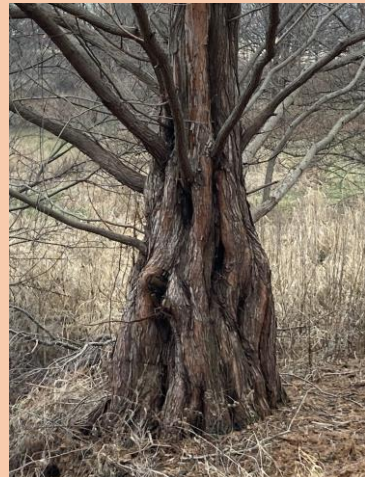


Photos provided by Nancy Powell



# The Tollgate Farm News

## WINTER TREES



Photos provided by Nancy Powell



# The Tollgate Farm News

## THE POND IN WINTER



Photos provided by Nancy Powell



# The Tollgate Farm News

## ICONIC TOLLGATE FARM BUILDINGS



Photos provided by Nancy Powell



# The Tollgate Farm News

## TOLLGATE FARM ANIMALS



Photos provided by Nancy Powell



# The Tollgate Farm News

## BENCHES WAITING FOR SPRING & PEOPLE



Photos provided by Nancy Powell



# The Tollgate Farm News





# The Tollgate Farm News

## Take a Tollgate Picture

Next time you are volunteering at Tollgate, consider taking some pictures for the Tollgate Calendar. The preferred format is jpeg, landscape files. **It is important to send high-resolution photo files at full or actual size.** Send photo files in separate emails, if necessary, to [TGFarmPhotos@gmail.com](mailto:TGFarmPhotos@gmail.com).

Photos are also appreciated for the monthly Farm News. Photo files can be “small-sized” and sent to [napowell77@gmail.com](mailto:napowell77@gmail.com).

Every season is magical at Tollgate. Think about capturing that magic in a photo for the Tollgate Calendar or Farm News.



Top left photo provided by Dave Komraus  
Bottom left, top and bottom right photos by Roy Prentice  
Middle right photo by Norm Powell  
(All photos 2021)

# Tollgate Volunteer Information

## 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 (will be added to the newsletter next month).
- Lunch will be provided on scheduled workdays.
- Active members will continue to get email reminders of these activities.

*We strongly recommend you bring your own tools for your garden activities. All tools borrowed from the toolshed **must** be sanitized with a 10% bleach solution prior to returning the items to the toolshed after use.*

TIP: If you aren't getting  
**The Tollgate Farm News** email,  
check your SPAM folder

**Volunteer Activity Day and  
Meeting information  
will be communicated by email**

## Garden Tools Available for Use at Tollgate

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

## Suggested Gardening Implements to Bring from Home as Needed

Trowel	Plant Division Forks
Pruners	Shrub Rake
Loppers	Sun Screen/Insect Repellent
Garden Scissors	Garden Gloves
Hand Saw	Knee Pads
Weeding Implement	

# Tollgate Garden Advisory Committee (TGAC)

## Farm Manager – Roy Prentice

248-347-3860 Ext.251 [prentic1@msu.edu](mailto:prentic1@msu.edu)

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

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

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

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

**Membership.....** Angie Carter

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

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

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

**Farm News Editor .....** Nancy Powell

- The TGAC meets monthly virtually on Zoom (until further notice) on **the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM.** All Tollgate Garden Volunteer members are welcome to attend and should contact Roy Prentice for meeting link.
- Contact information for individual TGAC members and Area Garden Leaders (AGL) are available by contacting Roy Prentice 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 2023 Tollgate Garden Volunteer membership is valid from **January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.**

For membership questions or to update your current membership information, email  
[tollgatemembers@gmail.com](mailto:tollgatemembers@gmail.com)

For general information and questions, contact  
Roy Prentice or see Website:  
<http://tollgate.msu.edu/volunteering/>

## MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center



28115 Meadowbrook  
Novi, MI, 48377-3128  
[tollgate.msu.edu](http://tollgate.msu.edu)  
Contact Roy Prentice:  
248-347-3860 ext. 251



# MSU TOLLGATE

## VOLUNTEER SIGN IN

### LOGGING YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS HELPS US TELL TOLLGATE'S STORY TO THE MSU COMMUNITY

- USING THE CAMERA ON YOUR SMART PHONE, HOVER OVER THE QR CODE
- A LINK WILL APPEAR
- IF NO LINK APPEARS, YOU WILL HAVE TO DOWNLOAD A QR READER APP
- CLICK ON THE LINK TO THE GOOGLE SIGN IN PAGE
- COMPLETE WITH YOUR INFORMATION
- THIS SIGN-IN PROCEDURE DOES **NOT** LOG YOUR HOURS WITH MSU EXTENSION



**NOTE:** If you prefer to complete your sign-in on your computer, this link will take you to the site:  
[Tollgate Volunteer Sign In 2023](#)

MSU Tollgate gets a lot of credit for all the wonderful volunteers that tend the gardens, make maple syrup, and support programming. The farm would not be the unique place that it is without the support of many willing hands. Traditionally, Tollgate has relied on a sign-in sheet in the volunteer center to capture the hours of volunteer service. Many of our volunteers who work in the maple project or distant gardens may not visit the volunteer center when they are on the farm. To capture all of our volunteer hours, we are trying a new recording system. By following the instructions below and scanning the QR code, you can record your Tollgate hours online from anywhere. After you have scanned the code, you can even bookmark the link so that you can access the hours reporting form without the code.

Thank you for making Tollgate such a wonderful place! Roy



# MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers Membership Form

Please legibly print all entries. Thank you.

2023

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ MI

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Name you would like on badge, if needed

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number

Day \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Evening \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Choose **one only**:

☐ **Supporting member:** I wish to support the volunteers and participate in monthly meetings but will **not** be participating *as a volunteer* in garden activities, projects or other events on the site.

☐ **Active member:** I plan to participate *as a volunteer* in meetings, garden activities and/or other events or projects on the site and have or will complete the required Volunteer Selection Process.

Were you a Tollgate volunteer member last year? 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 or skills to share.

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 emailed, please include an additional \$10 to cover postage.

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**

Questions: **Phone: 248-347-3860 Ext. 251**

Email: [tollgatemembers@gmail.com](mailto:tollgatemembers@gmail.com)

**2023 Membership is valid from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023**

## **Please read this Privacy Policy:**

By filling out and submitting this form you authorize the Tollgate Garden Volunteers (TGV) and MSU to use your contact information to communicate with you via email, newsletters, and other formats. If you wish your email and other identification information to not be used by the TGV and MSU, please check this box ( ). (By checking this box, you will not receive email notification of workdays, or other volunteer opportunities, special events and educational opportunities, or the availability of the newsletter via e-mail.)

In the event of an emergency please notify:

Name

Phone