Home Cooking with Mary Spencer

Join garden volunteers in the Zoom-iverse for safe distance learning on Thursday, September 17. Tollgate members look forward to Mary Spencer’s annual cooking demonstrations, especially the samples and recipes. This year, Mary will share her thoughts on home cooking and using fresh harvest ingredients available from your garden, farmers markets and stores. She’ll also answer your questions from possibly cooking at home more than you ever did before.

Mary Spencer’s goal is to make people better cooks. Before Covid (BC), she taught a variety of cooking classes at The Old World Olive Company in Plymouth and at ABC Warehouse locations in Livonia, Troy, Lakeside and Novi. Things are different now so her business, Taste: A Cook’s Place, www.tasteacookspillNace.net, is delivering home cooked five-course dinners with generous portions on Thursdays and Sundays. Mary and Sammy Spencer do contactless deliveries within 20 miles of Plymouth.

Mary has conducted food tours, done menu planning and researched heirloom recipes. She has been teaching cooking for approximately 20 years and has over 5,500 cookbooks in her personal collection.
Greetings all,
August has come and gone. The summer has flown by even in this most unusual of years. No summer camp or groups of any kind, no organized workdays and fewer volunteers on the property are all signs that this is not a normal year on the farm. The one-acre pumpkin patch looks great, huge green leaves cover the ground. With all of the leaves, it is really hard to tell what's out there. Are there many pumpkins? Have they begun to color, or are they still small and green? It feels like Christmas morning just before the presents are opened. Will there be something exciting and cool under the tree, or will there be socks? All will be clear in a couple of weeks. What are we going to do with an acre of pumpkins with no Fall PumpkinFest event? Lots of ideas, but no firm plans as yet. How many pumpkins appear will help guide their fate. If nothing else, I have proved to myself that I am at least a step above a pumpkin growing novice. Good to know for future, more normal, years.

A new adventure for Will Jaquinde: Tollgate CSA vegetable manager, extraordinaire, Will Jaquinde is headed to new adventures. Will has accepted a job as Farm Manager at Bowers Farm. Bowers is an educational farm owned and operated by Bloomfield schools. In the years that Will has been at Tollgate, the CSA has grown tremendously. Will has crafted the program to provide food for many families, support several educational interns, and host other educational programs and events. Will has also been the prime organizer of Tollgate’s spring Maple Feast program. His knowledge and enthusiasm will be missed. Fortunately for Tollgate, Darby Anderson has worked with Will for over three years. Will has helped Darby gain knowledge of all facets of the CSA operation. Darby is looking forward to continuing the CSA and other educational activities that Will has been capably handling. Good luck to Will, wherever the future takes him.

Good luck and best wishes to you all as we work through this new version of reality. I look forward to seeing you all in the gardens again soon. It has been a difficult year in many ways. The farm, its gardens, programs, and open spaces will be here for all when it is needed.

Thanks for all that you do and have done for the farm,
Roy

---

Photo provided by Roy Prentice
Greetings Tollgate Garden Volunteers!

Work in the gardens continues with focus on maintenance and rescue from the weeds. We appreciate the efforts of all who have shared their time towards these efforts.

We have been given the green light to attempt a safe and appointment based fall plant sale. Our ability to demonstrate our compliance to guidelines regarding return to this limited event will help for our future return to programs when the health situation permits. Look for upcoming details!

NOMINATIONS

A call for all interested members! September brings the time to make nominations for the officer positions on your Tollgate Gardens Advisory Committee (TGAC). All elected positions are voted on every year. This includes President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Serving as a TGAC board member contributes to our organization in ways that do not require physical labor and thus opens another opportunity to participate. These hours are considered towards (re-) certification and this opportunity is open to any member. You may nominate yourself or any other willing Tollgate volunteer. Most positions do not require specific experience but general organizational skills and a love of working with people is a plus! Current board members would be willing to educate and transition any newly elected members to these positions. Please consider this opportunity for the growth of our organization as well as your own personal enrichment. We will take verbal messages, written or e-mailed nominations submitted to Roy or any current TGAC member before or on the date of the September 30th. We will vote in October for TGAC positions.

“Autumn repays the earth the leaves which summer lent it.”

Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

Notes from the President

Renee Cottrell

Article VIII SECTION 3. The duties of the Officers shall be:

President: To preside over General Membership and TGAC meetings; to appoint standing committee chairpersons; to oversee the execution of these by-laws and policies in order that the purpose, mission and goals of the TGV may be served.

Vice-President: To perform the duties of the President in the event of his/her absence and such duties of other officers in their absences.

Secretary: To record the minutes of the TGAC meeting; to record membership in the absence of a designated membership chairperson,; to attend to all correspondence of the TGAC and maintain complete files of minutes, attendance and correspondence.

Treasurer: To monitor the fund held in TGAC account at MSU, the budgets for Area Garden Leaders, maintain a complete set of records and to prepare and present monthly and annual financial reports for the TGAC and the General Membership meetings: to surrender all books, records, to the succeeding Treasurer.

Let’s continue to support each other and our communities with safe practices and social distancing in the ongoing efforts to diminish the spread of the Covid 19 virus. Never before has it been so evident on how our interactions are so interwoven with our friends, family, neighbors and communities. Remain hopeful, remain kind and remain safe.

Thank you for being a Tollgate Garden Volunteer.

Renee Cottrell, President
A Fall Plant Sale makes it seem a bit more back to normal... although it’s definitely not a typical Tollgate Fall Plant Sale! If you haven’t looked at your email, check it out – you should have received an invitation to Tollgate’s first “socially distanced” plant sale. We are providing 30 minute sales appointments between 9 am and noon on a couple Saturdays – giving Tollgate Volunteers and other gardeners an opportunity to buy some of our great plants while contributing to the Tollgate Garden Fund that supports all the gardens on the property.

The first day of this new format for a Fall Plant Sale was September 12 – so with this experience now in the rear view mirror, we can celebrate success from the first day of business and be hopeful for another good sale day the following Saturday. Despite only having about half of our available appointments filled for the first sale day, we sold $700 worth of plants! As of this writing there are still plenty of 30 minute appointments available for the second day of Plant Sale - Saturday 9/26 between 9 am and noon. In order to maintain social distance, we accept only 5 appointments for each 30 minute time period, so we could fill up quickly! Nursery workers will be present to help you find what you’re looking for, and everything is $5/pot to keep the math easy! If you didn’t receive an email invite to the sale and want to participate, send an email to tollgateplantsale2020@gmail.com to request an appointment.

THANKS FOR YOUR PLANT DONATIONS!! The Nursery relies on plants donated by Tollgate Gardeners, as well as divisions from plants grown on the property to stock the Nursery. We really appreciate the steady stream of great plants that have magically arrived in the nursery over the past few weeks! It is wonderful to have our rows filling up with fresh, new divisions. And it has been a special pleasure to have seen a few of you in the nursery as you’ve dropped off plants! The Nursery will remain open for donations through September 30 – please plan to drop off your plants before then.

Early in October, we will shift gears to take fall inventory. This means counting the pots in each row, categorized by botanical name. The fall inventory is a critical input to our planning for winter and spring activities. We identify “new” varieties that need to have a “plant tag” created over the winter season. We also determine which pots need to have special winter protection – which may mean moving these pots to a different location to winter under a row cover, or in the shed. Only after we have moved plants to their winter locations can we cut back all the foliage and mulch around the pots in the rows to provide some insulation from the freeze/thaw cycle of a Michigan winter.

Working in the NURSERY is a unique gardening experience that provides an opportunity to learn about lots of different types of plants, as well as the challenges of maintaining healthy perennials in a pot. If you have questions, want to learn more about the Nursery or find out about joining our team for next year, please contact Peg Palmer - pegpalmer@mi.rr.com.

Pictured above: Tollgate volunteer and shopper, Suzie Sherman (left) and Peg Palmer (right). Photo by Roy Prentice
Pictures provided by Roy Prentice
IN THE GARDENS

Pictures provided by Roy Prentice
**Take a Tollgate Picture**

Now that we have permission to resume volunteer activities at Tollgate, consider taking some pictures for the Tollgate calendar. The preferred format is jpeg, landscape files.

Send photo files at full or actual size in separate emails if necessary. Please email your files to Larry Bolam at TollgateCalPics@Gmail.com.

Fall is a beautiful time at Tollgate, think about capturing that beauty in a photo for the Tollgate calendar.

---

**Please Renew Your Membership for 2020**

*Autumn officially arrives September 22nd, enjoy!*

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.

Thank-you!

Angie Carter

tollgatemembers@gmail.com
Tollgate Volunteer Information

Activity Days

Until further notice group work activity days are on hold. Volunteers may work individually at Tollgate following the guidelines established by MSU Extension. You may contact Roy at prentic1@msu.edu to be referred to the appropriate Area Garden Leader/ or Renee to be assigned work activities. Watch your e-mails for updates as available.

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

Garden Tools Available for Use at Tollgate
- Spades
- Garden Rakes
- Brooms
- Wheelbarrows
- 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 Repellant

Tollgate Garden Advisory Council

Farm Manager
Roy Prentice - 248 347-3860 ext. 251
email - prentic1@msu.edu

President ....................... Renee Cottrell
Vice President ............... Marilyn Alimpich
Secretary ...................... Dave Komraus
Treasurer ...................... Sue Janczarek
Membership .................. Angie Carter
PR .............................. TBD
Programs ..................... Jackie Stengel
Hospitality .................... Teresa LaRosa
Farm News Editor .......... Jennifer Roberts

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/

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

The next Tollgate Gardens Advisory Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 6th at 7:00 PM. 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 2020 Tollgate Garden Volunteers membership is from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center
28115 Meadowbrook
Novi, MI, 48377-3128
tollgate.msu.edu
Contact Roy Prentice: 248-347-3860 ext. 251
Name__________________________________________
Date Submitted _________________________________
Address________________________________________
Telephone Number
City ___________________________ MI
Day _____ - ___________________________
Evening _____ - ___________________________
Zip__________ - ________
Email ________________________________

Name you would like on badge

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.
________________________________________________________________

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

2020 Membership is from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020

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

In the event of an emergency please notify:

__________________________________________
Name  Phone