

The Tollgate Farm News

VOLUME 27

ISSUE 5

MAY 2021



Cover photo provided by Roy Prentice

MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers General Meeting on Zoom

**Thursday, May 20, 2021
7:00 PM**

Science Updates for Gardeners

Join Tollgate volunteers and supporters for an evening of garden science. Dean Krauskopf, Ph.D., retired host of *The Gardening Show* on News/Talk 760 WJR, will put weather conditions into a broader context, share the latest information about some problems that gardeners may face this year, and discuss citizen science. He will also answer your gardening questions.

Dean retired from MSU as the Integrated Crop Management Agent for Southeastern Michigan. He taught many Master Gardener training classes. His doctorate in horticulture is from North Carolina State University.

Links to details on topics that Dean has covered are available at [Summaries & Follow-up Info from Meetings — \(mgawc.org\)](https://mgawc.org):

- March 4, 2021, Sentinel Tree Monitoring Network
- February 16, 2021, Dean's 2021 presentation
- February 11, 2021, Dean's 2021 links
- May 9, 2019, Dean's 2019 links
- April 13, 2018, Dean's 2018 links
- July 23, 2017, Dean's 2017 links
- April 20, 2016, Dean's 2016 links
- May 23, 2015, Dean's 2015 links

TOLLGATE GARDEN VOLUNTEER IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

MAY	MEETINGS		JUN	MEETINGS	
4	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00pm	1	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00pm
20	Tollgate Volunteer Mtg – Zoom	7:00pm	17	Tollgate Volunteer Mtg – Zoom	7:00pm
MAY	ACTIVITIES		JUN	ACTIVITIES	
1	Spring Clean-Up/Shade Garden	9:00am	5	Office/Rain Gardens	9:00am
8	Farmhouse Garden	9:00am	12-13	Plant Sale (by appointment)	9:00-2:00
15	Nursery Division/Potting	9:00am	19	Entrance/Hosta Gardens	9:00am
22	Rose/Rock Ledge Gardens	9:00am	26	Demo Garden	9:00am
29	Memorial Weekend	n/a			

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FROM THE TOLLGATE FARM MANAGER

GREETINGS

Roy Prentice

Greetings all,

Lots of signs of re-emergence in the gardens. The return of our Saturday workdays has been a big lift. The first workday was very well attended despite having a focus on mulching!



With regular workdays returning, I look forward to getting the gardens looking good. I have missed our workdays. They not only allowed us to make the gardens great, they were a fun, social event for me. I am glad to have them back. Do I dare to dream of hot dogs for lunch?

Lots of avian activity around the site. Ospreys have been visiting the pond on a regular basis. No action on the osprey nesting platform, but lots of “fishing” going on. Great fun to see those big birds plunging into the pond. Maybe not so much fun for the fish.



I took a break from work recently and watched a heron stalking bluegill. Very sly and crafty. I saw him snag two! Did I mention that the Baltimore orioles are back?



Plant Sale's a'Coming. Sign-up for the two-day plant sale has been going very well. Saturday, June 12, is nearly full. The nursery crew has worked hard preparing for the upcoming sale. The plant sale is the major fund-raising opportunity for the gardens. We need your help to make it successful. The nursery is still a bit shy on plants. Recently, you received an email plea for any plants that you may have that could be brought to Tollgate for the sale. Pots and plastic tags are available in the small brown barn across the drive from the nursery. Please label any plants that you are bringing to the site so that we can give as much information as possible to our garden shoppers. If you are dropping off plants, you will find a screen house near the nursery that will give your plants protection until the nursery crew can incorporate them into the nursery. Due to concern for the spread of Hosta Virus X, we are not accepting the donation of Hostas.

See you soon around the farm!
Roy

Workday photo provided by Roy Prentice
Heron photo provided by David Komraus

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**Notes from the President
Renee Cottrell**

Gardening is the best therapy in the world. You can put so much into it and get so much back.

C.Z. Guest, American Journalist

Welcome May flowers and the return of Saturday Tollgate garden work days!

We have been permitted to resume our Saturday group garden activity days under some continued safety precautions. Our group was limited to 25 participants, still allowing a good workforce to accomplish our intended task and for newer participants to benefit from working with our established garden leads and teams. Our first session on May 8th was a group of 10 efficient and motivated gardeners! We maintained our social distancing and adherence to mask use for safety without hindrance to the enjoyment of interacting again during gardening at Tollgate.



Saturday work groups will continue with notifications to our “Active” garden membership and other Master Gardener and trainee contacts who may wish to participate. The calendar on the Tollgate volunteer web page has the planned garden work activities and the sign-up link will have the monthly dates. Consider participating for some fresh air and garden enjoyment. Advanced sign up is required to participate, click here to register: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F49ABA82BA7FF2-garden>

Experienced Active Garden members can continue to work individually or as assigned by their Area Garden Leaders (AGL's). Those wishing to have guided assignments can contact me directly. We would appreciate any help from those comfortable returning to the site under our current safety protocols since the weeds are winning in the gardens. We would love to have the gardens presentable as we are ever hopeful of returning to more public access to the site.

Workday and Garden Bench (next page) photos provided by Renee Cottrell

Notes from the President continued on Page 4.

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Notes from the President continued from Page 3.

THE PLANT SALE is back for spring of 2021! Please consider donating divisions to be sold at this fundraising event. See the Nursery Notes in this edition for more details. We have a green light to conduct a socially distanced plant sale for Saturday June 12, and Sunday June 13 weekend this spring. This is an advanced registration event for shopping and will be staffed by select volunteer and nursery team members to control the social distancing safety requirements. As a member of the Tollgate Garden Volunteers you should have already received an email invitation sent in advance of the public release for sign up for shopping slots. Do not hesitate if you wish to shop, slots may go quickly. Please support our major fundraising event.

Please register **NOW** for your shopping appointment:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F49ABA82BA7FF2-msutollgate>



Thank you to all who have worked hard and sacrificed to keep our communities safe during the pandemic.

Enjoy a safe Memorial Day holiday, your gardens and your families.

Thanks for being a Tollgate Garden Volunteer.

Renee Cottrell, President
Tollgate Garden Volunteers
rmcottrell4@att.net

"It was such a pleasure to sink one's hand into the warm earth, to feel at one's fingertips the possibilities of new seasons."

- Veronica A. Shoffstall



Photo provided by Mary Anne Chadwick

The Tollgate Farm News



**VOLUNTEERS
TOGETHER
DIVIDING
GROWING
SHARING**

NURSERY NOTES Peg Palmer

THANK-YOU for your donations to Tollgate's Nursery! We appreciate the many great donations from Tollgate Volunteers, as well as divisions of plants from the beautiful gardens on the property, but we can still use more! Below are a few suggestions to highlight some of our greater needs (please drop off all donations by Saturday May 22).

Aquilegia (Columbine) – this spring bloomer is usually very popular at the spring sale, particularly if in bloom. Do you have some in your garden that you could share?



Aquilegia vulgaris 'Blue Barlow'

Although ***Chrysanthemum*** (Garden Mum) is a fall bloomer, it has typically sold well at the spring sale. We don't have any yet but would love to have a few for the sale.



Chrysanthemum 'Robinson Red'

We usually sell all the ***Dicentra*** (Bleeding Heart) that we have available at our spring sale. Even after the blooms are gone, the delicate foliage is attractive in the garden all summer.



Dicentra Formosa 'Luxuriant'

Nursery Notes continued on Page 6.

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Nursery Notes continued from Page 5.

Phlox (Garden Phlox) is a staple plant in a sunny Michigan garden, and we could use much more – all colors. If you know the specific cultivar of your donation, that's even better!



Phlox paniculata 'Bright Eyes'

Echinacea (Coneflower) is another staple, with the native purple coneflower (*E. purpurea*), and many cultivars that seem to cover the rainbow. If you have these in your garden, maybe there is a crowded corner that you can clean up and donate the excess to Tollgate!



Echinacea Purpurea 'Magnus'

Lavandula (Lavender) is always on our list because it sells so well, but it is very difficult to overwinter in a pot, and divisions of mature plants don't always do well either. Younger plants with some new growth that can be potted up are the best option, if you have some you could donate.



Lavandula angustifolia 'Mini Blue'

While we fill up the nursery rows, the Nursery Team is busy preparing for the 2021 Plant Sale to be held by appointment on Saturday June 12 and Sunday June 13. If you haven't already scheduled your appointment, sign up [HERE](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F49ABA82BA7FF2-msutollgate): <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F49ABA82BA7FF2-msutollgate> to request your 30-minute shopping appointment!

Joining the Nursery Team is a great way to learn about growing lots of different varieties of plants and contribute to all the Tollgate Gardens through our efforts that raise new plants as well as funds to support the gardens. If you are interested in learning more about the options to join the Nursery Team, email me at: palmermargaretanne@gmail.com

Photos submitted by Peg Palmer from educational websites

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Thanks to the incredibly dedicated and hardworking volunteers, the weed garden has been beautifully transformed back into a vegetable garden – check out the before and after pictures. The dead nettle and grasses really benefitted from the very warm start to Spring, and the white plastic bed covers acted as a greenhouse, further encouraging a bountiful weed crop. The moral of the story for next year is black tarp covering all beds and pathways.

Before:



All thirty-five beds are fully weeded, prepped, with irrigation in place and the timers set, and best of all – 25 beds have been planted so far: 7 beds of potatoes, 5 beds of cabbage, 5 beds of onions, 4 beds of carrots, and 4 beds of beets. This month, we will complete the planting with 1 bed of turnips, 1 bed of radishes, 2 beds of summer squash, 2 beds of winter squash, and 2 beds of pole beans (shared with 2 side rows of garlic).

Before and cabbage photos provided by Kathryn Fitzpatrick
Garlic and onion photos by Lynette Leroux

After:



Cabbage



Garlic



Onion

If you are doing the math, it may seem like I missed a couple of beds, but remember we have 2 beds of garlic planted in the fall of last year. Fortunately, most of our vegetables are cool season crops, so the chilly weather has not really impeded our planting progress.

We have been greatly assisted by the wonderful MSU Tollgate Farm staff who have significantly improved our garden roadway by laying stones to cover the ruts and help with managing the weeds and grass, delivering mulch, and especially CSA help with the row seeder that significantly helps to reduce the time needed to plant and thin carrots and beets.

Not only have the volunteers braved chilly, rainy, snowy, and windy weather to whip our garden into shape, but we have a talented photographer who provided the pictures of the garlic and onions which are progressing very nicely. A heartfelt thank you to this wonderful team!

- Kathryn Fitzpatrick

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Meet the New Guy

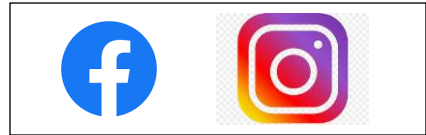
MSU Tollgate recently hired a new Operations employee, **Brett Dan**. After two years of working the grounds, cleaning, and helping with garden and educational projects, Deanna Wagner has left MSU Tollgate to take a job with Greenfield Village. Brett comes to the farm having worked for two years on campus in the south campus farms. As you can see from the image below, Brett is a real “hands on” kind of guy. We are all happy to welcome Brett to the Tollgate team.



Photo provided by Roy Prentice

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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 (kmi@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 Instagram posting:



The Tollgate Farm News

AROUND THE DEMO GARDEN



Top row photos provided by Roy Hybl
Middle photo by Renee Cottrell
Bottom photo by Roy Prentice

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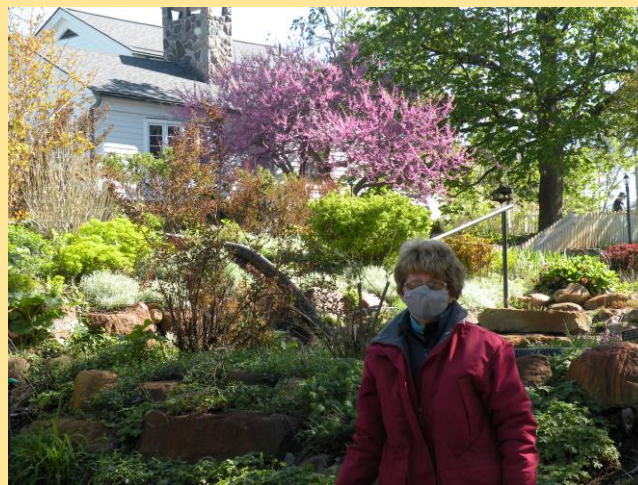
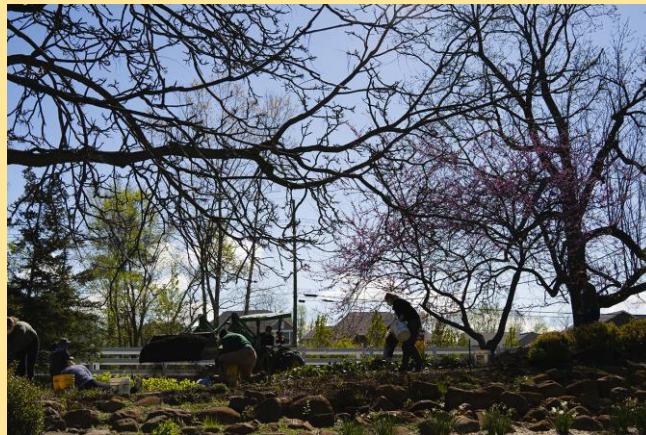
AROUND THE TEA HOUSE



Top and middle photos provided by Renee Cottrell
Bottom photo by Roy Prentice

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GROUP WORKDAYS RETURN



Top row photos provided by Kathy Johnson
Middle photo by Lynette Leroux
Bottom photo by Renee Cottrell

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GROUP WORKDAYS RETURN



Photos provided by Renee Cottrell

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NESTING IN THE PAR GARDEN

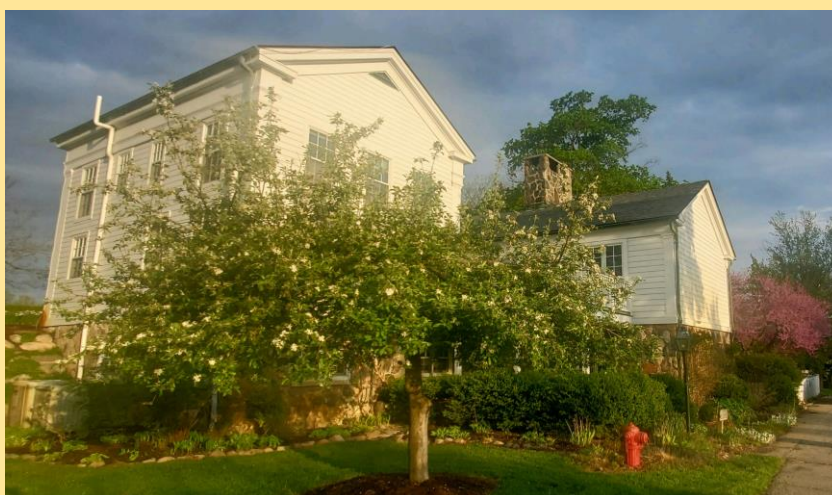


These Kildeer eggs were found by the PAR garden team as they began to weed the garden rows for planting. The team marked the nest and avoided work in that area until the eggs hatched. Kildeer lay their uniquely shaped eggs on the ground. This shape prevents them from rolling out of the nest. The parent bird has a distinctive nest protection display, often using a “broken-wing” act to lure away intruders.

Photos provided by Lynette Leroux
Kildeer information provided by Roy Prentice and
The Audubon Field Guide

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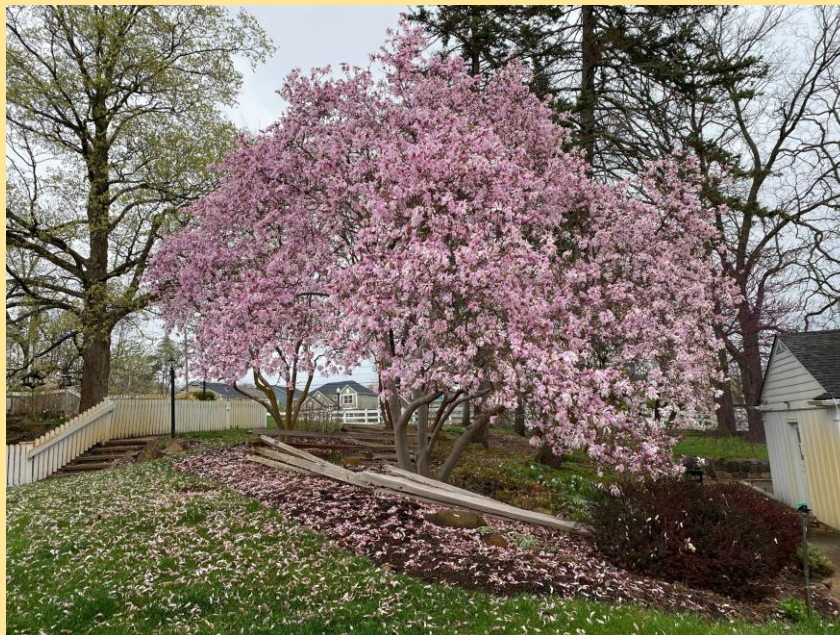
AROUND THE FARMHOUSE GARDEN



Photos provided by Roy Prentice

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AROUND THE SHADE GARDEN



Top and bottom right photos provided by Mary Anne Chadwick
Bottom left photo by Roy Prentice

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A Special Thanks

To all of you who made a donation to help the Tollgate Gardeners 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. Thanks again and Happy Gardening!

Linda Bodzin
Anne Horaczek
Lee Kindermann

David Komraus
Renee Molnar
Audrey Murphy

Georgia Roed
Janet Schenk
Eric Simmons

Please Renew Your
Membership for
2021

(Form is attached to the end of this newsletter.)

Thank you! Angie Carter

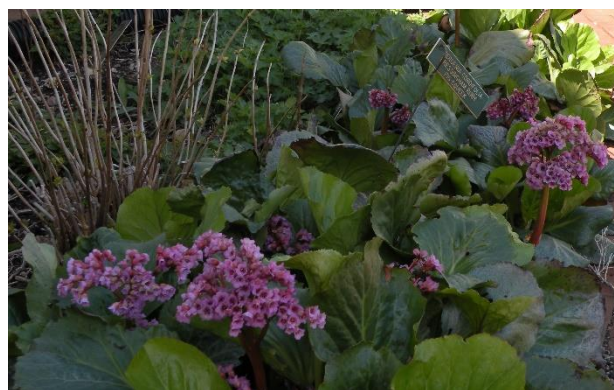
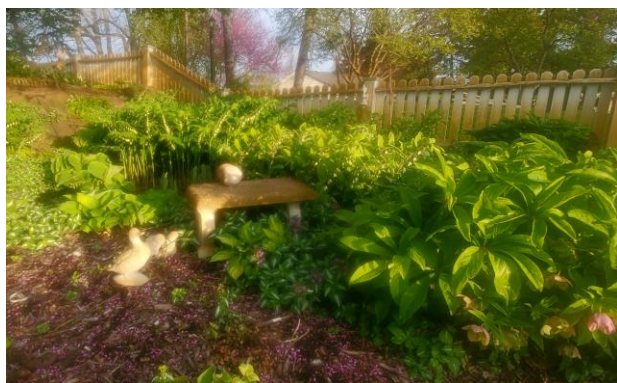
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Take a Tollgate Picture

Next time you are volunteering at Tollgate, consider taking some pictures for the Tollgate calendar. The preferred format is jpeg, landscape files.

Send photo files at full or actual size in separate emails, if necessary, to Larry Bolam at TollgateCalPics@gmail.com

Spring is a magical time at Tollgate. Think about capturing that beauty in a photo for the Tollgate calendar.



Photos on left provided by Roy Prentice
Photos on right provided by Renee Cottrell

Tollgate Volunteer Information

Activity Days

Effective May 8, 2021, we are permitted to resume our Saturday group garden activity days, under some continued safety precautions. Note that the requirement for masks outside has been lifted by MSU. The group is limited to 25 participants.

Advanced sign up is required to participate.

Click here to register:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F49ABA82BA7FF2-garden>

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:
248-347-3860 Ext. 400**

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

President..... Renee Cottrell

Vice President Marilyn Alimpich

Secretary..... Dave Komraus

Treasurer..... Karen Harris

Membership..... Angie Carter

PR TBD

Programs..... Jackie Stengel

Hospitality..... Teresa LaRosa

Farm News Editor Nancy Powell

- The TGAC meets virtually on Zoom (until further notice) monthly 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. Once site is open to public, contact info can be found in the Garden Binders in the Volunteer Communication Center.
- Tollgate Volunteer Membership is renewed annually. The 2021 Tollgate Garden Volunteer membership is from **January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021**.

For membership questions or to update your current membership information, email
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
Contact Roy Prentice:
248-347-3860 ext. 251

MSU TOLLGATE

VOLUNTEER SIGN IN 2021

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

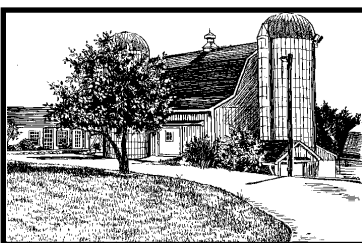
- USING THE CAMERA ON YOUR SMART PHONE, HOVER OVER THE QR CODE
- A LINK WILL APPEAR
- IF NO LINK APPEARS, YOU WILL HAVE TO DOWNLOAD A QR READER APP
- CLICK ON THE LINK TO THE GOOGLE SIGN IN PAGE
- COMPLETE WITH YOUR INFORMATION
- THIS SIGN-IN PROCEDURE DOES **NOT** LOG YOUR HOURS WITH MSU EXTENSION



MSU Tollgate gets a lot of credit for all of 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.

2021

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

2021 Membership is from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021

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