

# The Tollgate Farm News

VOLUME 27

ISSUE 10

OCTOBER 2021



Cover photo provided by Roy Prentice

## MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers General Meeting ON ZOOM

**Thursday, October 21, 2021  
7:00 PM**

### ***Tree Talk with Roy Prentice***

An important part of our landscape and our world, trees and other woody plants are often taken for granted. Woodies have adapted to keep their heads above ground all winter long. They deserve our attention and respect.

Join Roy Prentice to learn about trees and other woody plants and their care. Roy will cover identification, planting, pruning and other facets of woody plant culture. Here's a 2012 article about the Tollgate arboretum: [Demonstrating diversity - Nursery Management \(nurserymag.com\)](https://nurserymag.com/demonstrating-diversity-nursery-management/)

Farm Manager of the Tollgate Farm and Education Center since 1993, Roy Prentice has BS and MS degrees in Forestry from MSU. Before Tollgate, Roy was a field research technician for the MSU Department of Forestry growing seedlings, establishing plantings, and conducting field experiments.

#### TOLLGATE GARDEN VOLUNTEER IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS

OCT	MEETINGS		NOV	MEETINGS	
5	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00 pm	2	TGAC Meeting – Zoom	7:00 pm
21	TG Volunteer Mtg – Zoom	7:00 pm	TBD	Recognition Online Event	TBD
OCT	WORKDAY ACTIVITIES		NOV	WORKDAY ACTIVITIES	
2-3	<b>Special Event - Pumpkifest</b>	11:00-5:00		<b>No Workdays in November</b>	
9	Plant Division & Potting	9:00 am			
16	Fall Clean-Up/PAR Activity	9:00 am			
23	Fall Clean-Up/PAR Activity	9:00 am			
30	TBD				

**No Tollgate Volunteer General Meetings in November and December  
The Farm News will not be published in December**

# The Tollgate Farm News

## FROM THE TOLLGATE FARM MANAGER

### GREETINGS

Roy Prentice

Greetings all,

September was a very busy month. Thanks to the nursery team, the Fall Plant sale was a great success, raising nearly \$2,000 for site horticulture projects. It takes a lot of organization and work to host the plants sale. Nursery Area Garden Leader, Peg Palmer, and the nursery team do a wonderful job of providing support for the gardens.

### PumpkinFest

PumpkinFest was a great event again this year. It was wonderful to see so many families enjoying the farm's outdoor spaces. The event was a lot of work for volunteers and staff, but loads of fun too. The event raised a lot of money to support future Tollgate programs and staff.



One of PumpkinFest's challenges is dealing with the trash. PumpkinFest is a Saturday – Sunday affair, but the trash truck doesn't come until Tuesday. With 3,000 people on the site, the dumpster was full by the end of the day on Saturday. What's a Farm Manager to do?



Desperate times lead to desperate measures, and sometimes farm ingenuity comes to the fore. Strapping timbers to the tractor forks provided sufficient "Tamping" action to fit all of PumpkinFest's accumulated trash in the dumpster.



If you have stomped down a basket of trash to fit in that one last apple core, you will know basics of the operation. Mashing Saturday's trash with this new "invention" created lots of space for Sunday's additions.

Thanks for all that you do to support the farm. There are still a few garden workdays left before the end of the year. Fall is a special time to experience Tollgate. Please consider coming to the farm for one of the remaining workdays of 2021 or for a stroll through the grounds. Thanks to all who support the farm, Tollgate is a very special place.

Thanks for all that you do!  
Roy

Photo on left provided by Lynette Leroux  
Photos above by Roy Prentice

# The Tollgate Farm News



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

*"Gardening is not a recipe you follow, it's a relationship you live."*

- Pat Stone, American Gardener

also vote by proxy via phone call/ message to Roy for the same deadline. Look for the ballot in this issue.

**Please Note** – If you have not yet logged your hours on the Tollgate volunteer site using the QR code (see instructions later in this newsletter), you can still add them in before the end of the year. This is NOT used by Extension for Master Gardener records. Rather it is used only at Tollgate for recording visits and volunteer contribution of time to be used in requests of funding and other administrative purposes.

Also in this issue is the 2022 Membership form. Membership is renewed every year for most accurate record keeping. Why not take a few moments NOW, to complete the form and send it in! (Before you snowbirds head south or before holiday planning revs up and you forget). You can contact Angie Carter, the Membership Chairperson, with any questions at [tollgatemembers@gmail.com](mailto:tollgatemembers@gmail.com)

Thank you for being a Tollgate Garden Volunteer.

Renee Cottrell, AMG, President

Congratulations to the Nursery Team for another successful fall plant sale. Your teamwork and dedication to the nursery and fund raising is much appreciated. Likewise, kudos to the PAR team with a bountiful harvest for 2021 of 2,115 pounds of produce, all donated to battle food insecurity in our community. Many thanks to the AGL's and teams, individual garden members who continue to work into the last month of our gardening season to keep our education gardens beautiful and healthy! I was pleased and proud to see a good representation of Tollgate Garden Volunteer members assisting at the Pumpkinfest event. The interests and goals of gardeners and educators on the site are interwoven and it is important to encourage and support each other in our efforts. Thank you for your volunteer efforts at that event.

Renovation of the Rose Garden was initiated with Roy's help. The diseased plant material will be removed and soil levels brought back to initial planting levels. This previously spectacular centerpiece of the Tollgate gardens will be re-designed as a mixed planting bed with roses as the show stoppers.

**Vote Now-** October is the month to vote on all elected positions for TGAC. Though the field of nominees is very limited, we ask that you participate in the voting process – write-in votes are welcome! Please submit your ballot for officer positions by email or U.S. mail by the membership meeting on Oct.21st. You may



# The Tollgate Farm News



**VOLUNTEERS  
TOGETHER  
DIVIDING  
GROWING  
SHARING**

## **NURSERY NOTES** Peg Palmer

**2021 has been another unusual year in Tollgate's Nursery** - but we are making progress back to "normal." We started the year with most of last year's restrictions remaining in place. The question of format, and even whether we would be able to host our traditional Spring Sale continued well into our planning and preparation window! But in the end, we did have a very successful sale!



With a lot of thinking and discussion, we created a plan that would restrict the number of shoppers in the nursery at one time - but still provide an opportunity for our loyal shoppers to participate. This required a 2-day Sale, held from 9 am until 2 pm on both Saturday and Sunday of the second weekend in June.

Shoppers were able to sign up online for 30-minute shopping appointments and we all worked to arrange placement of plants, signage and support staff so that it was easy for shoppers to quickly find and buy what they needed within their allotted time.

**As summer wound down, the Fall Plant Sale returned to Nursery tradition** - we were able to welcome shoppers to the nursery without requiring appointments or limiting attendance!



The fall sale is typically a smaller crowd, but we had a great turnout and enjoyed the opportunity to provide a good variety of healthy perennials at an affordable price! Historically, Tollgate Plant Sales provide a significant source of funding for the gardens. The Nursery Team is pleased that hosting both Spring and Fall sales this year generated over \$7,000 towards maintaining the gardens!

**Other significant Nursery events in the Summer of 2021** include the installation of deer fence



around the entire trellis area of the Nursery. We also closed the Shade House, consolidating all our pots under the trellis nursery, a more efficient layout for us to maintain. The trellis area was equipped a few years ago with overhead sprinklers equipped with automatic timers for all rows except the outside rows on the east side of the nursery, on both sides of the center path. We hope to extend the overhead system to include this area in spring 2022. Then we will be able to rely on automated overhead irrigation for the entire nursery!

Photos provided by Roy Prentice

Nursery Notes continued on Page 5

# The Tollgate Farm News

Nursery Notes continued from Page 4

**October's focus is on closing the nursery for the season.** Taking a final fall inventory is not anyone's favorite chore - but completing this is essential to our planning process. The first use is to determine how many plants will need special overwintering protection to survive the typical Michigan winter in a pot. Although all the plants we stock are hardy in our zone, Michigan's constant winter freeze/thaw cycle makes life even more difficult for plants in a pot! We will use our inventory counts to identify which plants will need special winter handling to deal with these typical Michigan winter conditions. These pots will spend the winter grouped together under a row cover, with some perhaps stored in the nursery shed! This treatment protects plants from excess moisture (rain and snow melt) while providing some extra insulation to moderate the freeze/thaw cycle. Unfortunately, a wet spring may still cause damage to these pots, but we can't control Mother Nature! The fall inventory counts will also be used next spring to identify which plants we need to stock up for the spring sale. This PLANTS WANTED list will be sent out to all of you next spring, with the hope that some of you have these plants in your home gardens to divide and bring to the Nursery!

**Working in the NURSERY is a unique gardening experience!** It provides an opportunity to learn about lots of different types of plants, as well how to maintain healthy perennials in a pot – and generate support for all the Tollgate Gardens. Please contact me if you would like to learn more about the many opportunities of working in the Nursery and joining our team - [palmermargaretanne@gmail.com](mailto:palmermargaretanne@gmail.com)

Please  
Renew Your  
Membership  
for  
2022

**Are you an early bird?  
If yes, consider renewing your  
2022 TGV Membership now.  
The form can be found at the  
end of this newsletter.**

**Thank you!  
Angie Carter**

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



# The Tollgate Farm News



Fall is here, the breeze is cool, and the harvest has reached an end, but a glorious end – 2115 lbs. in total! The volunteers have been tireless and awe inspiring with their dedication and persistence, even as the potato beetles and weeds seemed to be gaining the upper hand. In the end, the PAR Garden volunteers won the war with the following results:

<u>2021 Produce</u>	<u>Total Pounds</u>
Beans	104
Beets	187
Squash	135
Cabbage	353
Carrots	241
Garlic	58
Onion	481
Potatoes	269
Zucchini	152
Radishes	24
Turnips	111
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2115</b>

Over 1000 lbs. more than 2020, and we have plans to address challenges and pest issues for an even better yield next year.



Our final efforts were focused on harvesting the second plantings of beets and carrots, the last of the beans, and the remaining winter squash – the latter of which is curing in the dry ventilated heat of the greenhouse.



The weather has been both a friend and a foe with the hot humid wet conditions increasing the growth of our plants and hastening the ripening of the vegetables, but also contributing to weed and pest problems, and rot, so we did have a fair amount of waste. We will be rotating crops based on crop types and pest/disease issues, moving the bean trellis, raising the beds for better irrigation and drainage, and covering the entire garden with black plastic to discourage weed growth. We will also have some fun with a flame thrower to help with adult potato beetle emergence, plenty of row covers to protect the cabbage and potatoes from pests, as well as the addition of some companion planting for pest control and weed competition.

PAR Garden continued on Page 7



# The Tollgate Farm News

PAR Garden continued from Page 6

We had a great turn out for our planning meeting and have a crop inventory and plan ready for Spring planting.



But our work for the year is not yet completed – we still need to renovate the garden beds and pathways, as well as plant garlic. A call for volunteers to help with the renovation has been issued for Saturday workdays in October – 10/16, 10/23, and 10/30. All 35 beds need a soil / compost mix added and spread, the pathways need fresh wood chips, and it all needs to be covered with black plastic and secured for the winter. All of which I have

great confidence we will achieve!

It is both bitter and sweet to wind down the 2021 season, but wonderful to anticipate the upcoming 2022 season.

Happy Autumn!

- Kathryn Fitzpatrick

Photos on Pages 6 & 7:  
Tarped bed provided by Kathryn Fitzpatrick  
Remaining photos by Lynette Leroux

The PAR team busy harvesting:





# The Tollgate Farm News

## PumpkinFest Round-Up

Thanks to all who made Tollgate's 2021 PumpkinFest a success. Approximately 3000 people attended the two-day event spreading lots of happiness among the attendees and bringing in much needed income to support Tollgate staff and programming. Those who came to the farm were able to take a hayride, eat a S'more and a hot dog, play games, and learn about the farm. The event could not have been held without the help of our many dedicated volunteers. Tollgate is a great place thanks to your support!



Top two row photos provided by Lynette Leroux  
Bottom row photos by Roy Prentice

PumpkinFest photos continued on Page 9



# The Tollgate Farm News

## More PumpkinFest Fun (continued from Page 8)



Top two row photos provided by Lynette Leroux  
Bottom row photos by Roy Prentice



# The Tollgate Farm News

## Trevor Perl - Eagle Project

As the public has returned to Tollgate, so have many young men seeking Eagle projects. Eagle candidates help improve the farm in many ways. Typically, Tollgate hosts 5 - 8 Eagle projects per year. Eagle candidates and their volunteers build fences, create gardens, install paths, improve access to the farm, improve the maple syrup program, and help in many other ways. After over a year of absence due to Covid, Eagle candidates and their projects are returning to the farm.

One of the Eagle Projects being conducted this fall is an improvement to the sap holding capacity for the maple syrup making program. Eagle candidate, Trevor Perl, will be expanding the elevated platform to accommodate a second maple sap tank. Trevor and his crew recently set the posts for their project and plan to complete the platform in the next few weeks. The Tollgate cattle were very interested in the progress of the project. For the record, once they learned that no snacks were involved, the horses were indifferent.

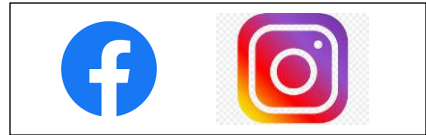


Photos provided by Roy Prentice



# 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 Instagram posting:



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## AROUND THE DEMO GARDEN



Photos provided by Renee Cottrell



# The Tollgate Farm News

**MORE AROUND THE DEMO GARDEN**

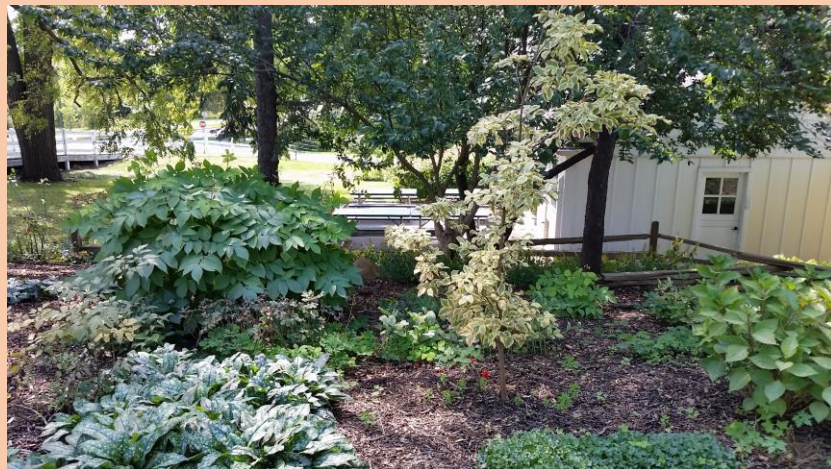


Photos provided by Renee Cottrell



# The Tollgate Farm News

## THE MANY GARDENS OF TOLLGATE



Photos provided by Renee Cottrell



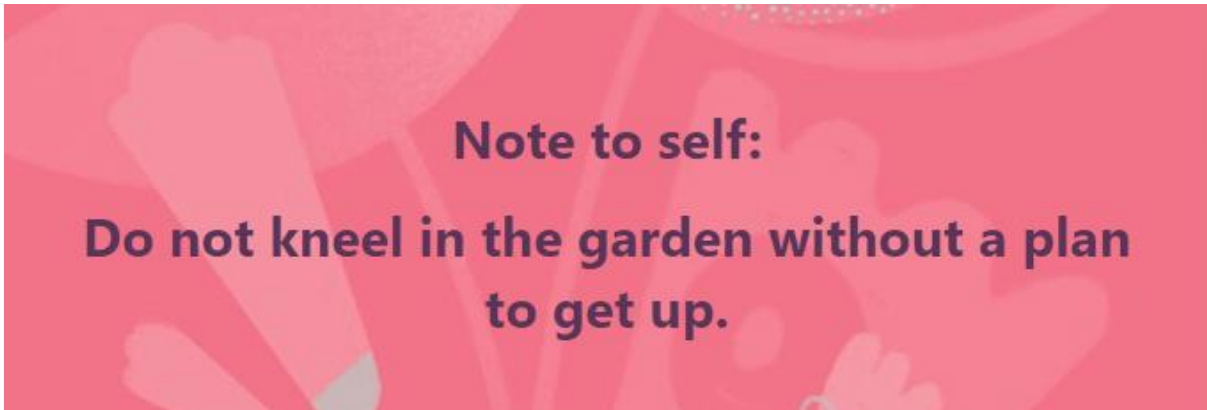
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## THE BEAUTIFUL TOLLGATE SKY



Photos provided by Lynette Leroux

# The Tollgate Farm News



- Two Women and a Hoe FB 7/16/2021



Garden quotes submitted by Kathryn Currier



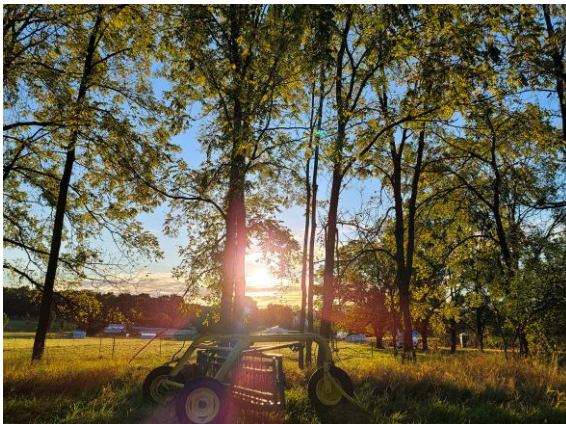
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## Take a Tollgate Picture

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

We are currently looking for someone to take over the calendar project for 2022. Contact Renee Cottrell, if interested, at [rmcottrell4@att.net](mailto:rmcottrell4@att.net).

Late fall is a beautiful season at Tollgate. Think about capturing that beauty in a photo for the Tollgate calendar.



Photos provided by Lynette Leroux



# 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.
- 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:  
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](mailto:prentic1@msu.edu)

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

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

**Secretary.....** Dave Komraus

**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 2022 Tollgate Garden Volunteer membership is from **January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022.**

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 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



**NOTE:** If you prefer to complete your sign-in on your computer, this link will take you to the site:  
[Tollgate Volunteer Sign In 2021](#)

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

## Tollgate Garden Volunteers Ballot for 2022

You may cast your vote for the person nominated or write in yourself or a member of TGV for the following offices. (**NOTE: Be sure if you write in someone's name, that they are willing to fulfill the office**). Please mark your choice and return this ballot by e-mail no later than 7:00 p.m. on **Thursday, October 21, 2021**. Ballot count will be done and reported at the October membership meeting. If you wish to mail your ballot, it should be post marked no later than Monday, October 18, 2021 in order to ensure its receipt at Tollgate in time for the ballot count.

Email responses to [dkkomraus@gmail.com](mailto:dkkomraus@gmail.com)

US Mail your ballot in a separate envelope to:

Tollgate Education Center  
Attention: Tollgate Gardens Volunteers  
28115 Meadowbrook  
Novi, MI. 48377-3128

President	_____	Renee Cottrell	or	_____	_____
					(Write in)
Vice President	_____	Marilyn Alimpich	or	_____	_____
					(Write in)
Secretary	_____	none	or	_____	_____
					(Write in)
Treasurer	_____	Karen Harris	or	_____	_____
					(Write in)





# MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteers Membership Form

Please legibly print all entries. Thank you.

2022

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ MI  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone Number  
Day \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Evening \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name you would like on badge, if needed

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)

**2022 Membership is from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022**

## 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