

# Macomb County Master Gardener Association

## Monthly Newsletter

## February 2026



### Contact Information

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Website: [www.macombcountymga.org](http://www.macombcountymga.org)

Macomb County MGA

P.O. Box 380463

Clinton Township, MI 48038

### Board of Directors

Jean Persely—President (2025-2027)

Lisa Lane—Vice President (2025-2027)

Pam Voss—Director at Large (2025-2027)

Pam Horner—Secretary (2024-2026)

Darlene Davies-Warner —Treasurer  
(2024-2026)

### Upcoming MCMGA Education

To register for events, click on the link below:

[Upcoming Meetings \(macombcountymga.org\)](http://www.macombcountymga.org)

Please remember to wear your Master Gardener badge to all events.

### Highlights in this Issue

Letter from the Board	Page 2
Minutes—January Board Meeting	Page 3
Virtual Garden Tour Announcement	Page 4
Membership Renewal	Page 5
MCMGA Seed Library	Page 6
Feb/Mar 2026 Meeting Registration	Page 7
MCMGA Meeting Line-Up	Page 8
Poppy's Podcast	Page 9
Grant Opportunities/2026 WAM Conference	Page 10
Fundraising	Page 11
Virtual Garden Tour—Jean Persely	Page 12-16

### General Information

Follow us on Facebook:  
Macomb County Master Gardener  
Association

If there is anything you would like to  
have included in the next newsletter,  
please send an email to:

[macombcountymga@yahoo.com](mailto:macombcountymga@yahoo.com)

## Letter from the Board

Holy Frozen Tundra! Goodness, this sure is a winter to remember. Thank you for your understanding as we unfortunately cancelled the January education program. We are hoping to have Ron back later this year for tool cleaning and sharpening. The bitter cold and likely dangerous roads had us concerned about everyone's safety. If we had held the program, we felt that many would choose to stay home. It was a hard call to make but am grateful that we erred on the side of caution.

I hope everyone is staying warm –don't forget to head out to your garden and take some beautiful winter photos.

We are knee deep in grant applications being accepted, memberships being renewed, looking for folks to share photos of their gardens in our newsletter via a new highlight – Virtual Garden Walks. We're also seeking out fundraising ideas to help sustain our organization.

Get your grant applications in, be sure to renew your membership online or by mail, send us your garden photos and come up with a fundraising idea or three.

We'll see you on [February 19<sup>th</sup>](#) for The Magic of Monarchs – From Michigan to Mexico and Back Again, with Erin Parker of MetroParks.

# MCMGA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

1/6/26

**Attendees:** Pam Horner, Darlene Davies-Warner, Jean Persely, Pam Voss, David Lowenstein, and Lisa Lane. Jean called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

**Approval of last meeting minutes** – Motion to approve by Darlene, and seconded by Pam V. Motion carried. Next meeting date: 2/3/2026

**MSUE report** – David said that some MCMGA mail was received at the MSU office and Caroline will give us the mail at the next meeting. There is no master gardener conference this year, however, there are other conferences available: 1. 2026 Smart Gardening Conference at WCCCD Ted Scott Campus on March 28<sup>th</sup> in Belleville. 2. Pollinators Conference and Habitat Protection in Flint at Crossroads Village on Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. David also mentioned that he has some funding available for projects and will make an announcement in February.

**Secretary report** – no report.

**Treasurers report** - December treasurer report was reviewed by the board. A motion was made to approve the December treasurer report, it was seconded, and the motion carried. The Square has been set up and we will start using it at the next meeting this month. Six members have paid their membership to-date.

**Education chair report** – Speakers are confirmed through May. Lisa prepared a speaker budget, using \$150 as the average monthly speaker fee. Some are free, and some are higher. The Education survey was prepared and sent for review to the board members. Some comments were provided during the meeting and the form will be updated and provided at monthly meetings for feedback on our speakers.

**Grant chair report** – The 2026 grant program was announced on our web site, in the newsletter and in the Extension Master Gardener newsletter.

## Old Business

- Membership form – uploaded to website as pdf and as google doc; Payment all set.
- Grant recipients posted on website.
- Signup Genius or other – will work on in the next couple weeks.
- Surveys at education events will be handed out at the education events.
- Open-enrollment, MCMGA start member renewal in January, cash, checks or credit cards (on Square) will be accepted. Members can renew on-line thru Go Daddy.
- Website updates from Dec 2025 mtg completed.
- Fundraising ideas – will ask for suggestions at the January meeting.
- Mission updates on SOP/website.
- Review SOP, Roles, Key Dates.

## New Business

- Discuss fundraising options/goals at quarterly membership meeting
- Newsletter: There was a recommendation to highlight committees in the newsletter at a regular schedule (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly) to create awareness of MCMGA activities.
- SOP – ‘Association Approved Projects’ discussion.
- SOP – ‘Adoption and Amendments’ discussion.
- SOP – add a section about ‘All MCMGA accounts and activities shall utilize the MCMGA email address and official mailing address when possible.’
- Website: Jean showed the board how to upload documents.
- Website: Private page access was created for the BOD.

## VIRTUAL GARDEN TOUR—MACOMB COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Do you have a garden that sparks joy, demonstrates innovative techniques, or simply showcases the beauty of your hard work as a Master Gardener? We want to feature YOU!

We're thrilled to announce an exciting new feature for our upcoming newsletters: "Virtual Garden Tours of the Master Gardeners"! We're inviting our dedicated Master Gardener Volunteers to share a virtual tour of their personal gardens with the rest of our association.

This is a wonderful opportunity to inspire fellow gardeners, showcase diverse garden styles, and share practical tips and beautiful visuals.

Why Participate? This virtual tour series aims to:

- Inspire & Educate: Give members a peek into the real-world application of Master Gardener principles.
- Showcase Diversity: Highlight the variety of garden types, plant choices, and design aesthetics within our volunteer ranks.
- Build Community: Foster connection and shared learning among our volunteers.
- Celebrate Your Hard Work: Provide a platform to proudly display your gardening achievements!

What We're Looking For— We're interested in all types of gardens, whether they are:

- A meticulously planned vegetable patch
- A vibrant pollinator haven buzzing with life
- A serene native plant landscape
- A charming container garden on a balcony
- A sustainable rain garden
- Or any space that reflects your passion for gardening!

How to Participate – It's Easy! If you're interested in sharing your garden, here's what we need:

1. A Few Photos: Select 5-10 high-quality photos that best represent your garden. Think about different angles, close-ups of interesting plants, or features you're particularly proud of.
2. Short Descriptions: For each photo, provide a brief caption (1-3 sentences) explaining what's shown, any challenges you overcame, or a helpful tip related to that area.
3. A Brief Narrative: Write a short introduction (100-200 words) about your garden. What's its history? What are your favorite aspects? What gardening philosophy guides you?

If you're excited to share your garden with our association please send your photos, descriptions, and narrative to our mailing address Macomb County MGA PO Box 380463 Clinton Township, MI 48038 or email [Macombcountymga@yahoo.com](mailto:Macombcountymga@yahoo.com) We can't wait to virtually stroll through your beautiful gardens and be inspired by your dedication and creativity!



## Macomb County Master Gardener Association

### 2026 Membership Form

<b>Name</b>			
<b>Address</b>			
<b>City, State, ZIP</b>			
<b>Email</b>			
<b>Phone</b>	<b>Home</b>		<b>Cell</b>

#### I am a:

- ☐ Certified Master Gardener  
☐ Certified Advance Master Gardener  
☐ Master Gardener Volunteer in Training  
☐ Master Gardener Emeritus  
☐ Master Gardener Alumni  
☐ Foundations of Gardening  
 Attendee/Graduate

#### I am interested in volunteering:

**(Please select one or more)**

- ☐ Education Committee  
☐ Hospitality Committee  
☐ Grant Committee  
☐ Advertising  
☐ Fundraising

**Year Certified as EMG:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Speaker topics and/or name suggestions you'd like to see:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Membership dues are \$20. Membership period is January thru December.

#### **Office Use Only**

Application received \_\_\_\_\_ Dues Paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Check \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Updated 12/28/2025

## MCMGA SEED LIBRARY

The MCMGA maintains a seed library for members, free of charge. The seed library is prepared by MCMGA members after collecting seed heads at the end of the season. Saving seeds properly assures purity in the next generation. A seed is a promise of future life. Learning how to avoid cross pollination, timing flower development, collecting the best of a species seeds assures healthy future plants. Many nature lovers want to preserve and protect plants. Our goal is to provide healthy seed to our members.

Proper storage, labeling and testing are done before the seeds are put into the library. First the seeds are stored in refrigeration for a minimum of six weeks to give them a dormancy period, which is required for germination. After the dormancy period is complete, the seeds are tested for viability via several methods to determine the percent that will sprout. The testing usually involves placing seeds in the dark in damp paper towels, some seeds can also be tested in water. Seeds that are viable are packaged up and labeled and added to our seed library.

Volunteers are working on the seed library now and the seed library will be available to the members at the regular monthly meetings in the late winter and early spring. An assortment of seeds will be available, both native and non-native flowers and vegetable plants.

If you would like to learn and participate, please let us know.

Linda Simpson

Seed Library Chair

## FEBRUARY 2026 MEETING

**Date: February 19th, 2026**

**Time: 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm EST**

Location: Robert A. Verkuilen Building  
21885 Dunham Rd, Clinton Twp, MI 48036  
Presenter: Erin Parker

**Topic: The Magic of Monarchs—From Michigan to Mexico and Back Again**

Join Huron-Clinton Metroparks' Erin Parker as we follow the journey of our migrating monarchs from Michigan to their overwintering grounds in Mexico and back again. Learn how you can support monarchs at each stage of their life cycle with your own garden! We'll also explore the Michigan Butterfly Network's butterfly monitoring program to support community science around butterflies!

[Register Here](#)

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## MARCH 2026 MEETING

**Date: March 19th, 2026**

**Time: 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm EST**

Location: Robert A. Verkuilen Building  
21885 Dunham Rd, Clinton Twp, MI 48036  
Presenter: Bevin Cohen

**Topic: Let's Talk Tomatoes!**

Everybody loves tomatoes, but how much do you actually know about this tasty fruit's fascinating history? Author and seed saver Bevin Cohen will share exciting tales of how this South American fruit traveled around the world and back, influencing the cuisines and cultures of the many countries it encountered along its journey. Attendees will also discover tips and tricks to maximize their tomato harvest including mulching, pruning, proper fertilization and so much more!

[Register Here](#)



# MCMGA Meeting Line-Up

**Meeting Time/Location (except as otherwise noted)**

**Time: 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm EST**

Location: Robert A. Verkuilen Building  
21885 Dunham Rd, Clinton Twp, MI 48036

**Date: February 19, 2026**

Presenter: Erin Parker

Topic: The Magic of Monarchs - From Michigan  
to Mexico and Back Again

**Date: March 19, 2026**

Presenter: Bevin Cohen

Topic: Let's Talk Tomatoes!

**Date: April 16, 2026**

Presenter: Ed Blondin

Topic: Monastic Gardens Begged Borrowed  
And Stolen

**Date: May 21, 2026**

Presenter: Jennifer Ott

Topic: Weeds: The Wicked, Wild and Wonderful

**Date: June 18, 2026**

Presenter: Lily Smalstig

Topic: Overview of the Office of Conservation

**Date: July 16, 2026**

Presenter: Wayne Pope

Flower and Garden Photography by Smartphone

**Date: August 22, 2026**

Shadbush Nature Center Garden Tour

Time: 10:00 am -12:00 pm

Location: Shadbush Nature Center  
4101 River Bends Dr., Shelby Township



# POPPY'S PODCASTS

**The Plants We Eat: Jeff Gillman, University of North Carolina**

Don't have 45 - 60 minutes to listen to a podcast?

These run 10 – 20 minutes.

From apples and artichokes to digitalis and peyote, our world is full of amazing plants that we interact with on a daily basis. This greenery can sustain us, intoxicate us, cure us of disease, and even kill us.

Join us as we investigate the surprising history, biology, and culture behind The Plants We Eat. <https://gardens.charlotte.edu/series/the-plants-we-eat/>



Would you like to suggest a podcast to be included in our newsletter?  
Submit a few words about a gardening or nature based podcast that  
we can include in future newsletters to:

**macombcountymga@yahoo.com**

## **2026 Macomb County Master Gardener Association (MCMGA) Grants Available**

Grants are available for up to \$200 for any educational group, not-for-profit organization or other groups /persons providing horticultural education and /or horticultural therapy.

Applicants must be based in, located in and serve residents of Macomb County. A MCMGA Extension Master Gardener (EMG) must be a member of this project. EMG's can join the MCMGA by clicking the online Membership link below.

### **[Membership](#)**

The deadline to turn in grant applications is March 15, 2026. Please review the guidelines and application by clicking the Grants link below.

**[Click Here for the  
Grant Application](#)**

**[Click Here for the  
Grant Guidelines](#)**

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## **2026 Wildflower Association of Michigan Annual Native Plant Conference March 7 and 8, 2026 Kellogg Convention Center**

Join us for the 39th annual Michigan Native Plant Conference, where people come together to learn, connect and celebrate their passion for native plants.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Doug Tallamy

Registration is now open!! For conference details, please visit:

**[WAM Conference - Wildflower Association of Michigan](#)**

# FUNDRAISING

## Macomb County MGA Native Plant Sale

September 20, 2026

Octagon House  
57500 Van Dyke  
Washington, MI  
Noon to 3:00 p.m.



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### Kroger Rewards Program



### **To Sign up Go to Kroger Community Rewards.com**

Sign in/Register for Kroger Rewards Account

Proceed as directed

Edit Kroger Community Rewards

Enter Kroger Plus Card #

Enter NPO-CQ024 or

Macomb County Master Gardener Association

You will see group name on right side of page

Questions/Problems:

877-576-4377

## Jean Persely 2025 Garden Year – Virtual Garden Walk

I love the garden in every season! Join me for my annual in-person garden walk – details at end.



**January – snow blanketed and oh-so beautiful!**



**Bloodroot – seeds are dispersed by ants!**

I enjoy visiting the garden year-round. Having an extended bloom period from March thru December ensures that various wildlife have the resources they need. We start with willow and alder blooms and end with witch hazel.

Leaving plant material up over winter allows ample wildlife habitat. It's amazing to watch so many native bees using stems and leaves. I'm always amazed by this process – it renews me every spring!



Twilight in the garden



I am an ecological gardener who gardens for wildlife. A couple years ago, my voles were quite happy (at least a dozen!) and thoroughly enjoyed my native bulbs. I'm now trying to replace those plants. I have 300+ native plants species, primarily straight species, local genotype, but a nativar and some nearly native species are also present. We moved here in 2010 and started the roadside garden in 2012.

Wildlife is comfortable in the garden.



They don't eat a lot – you can barely tell they've been out to dine.

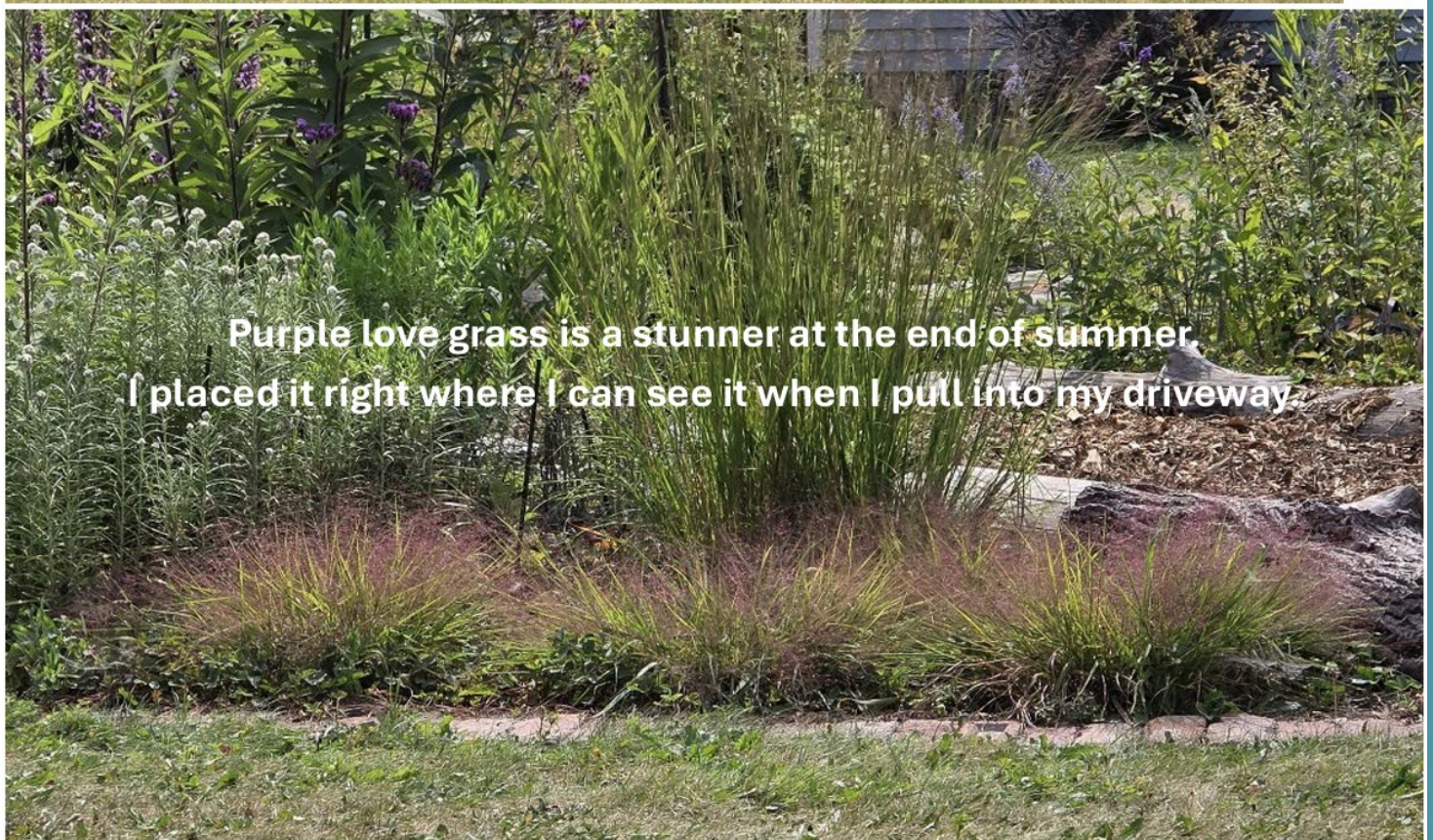
Enjoying the summer garden







Wild Senna loves to rule the garden.  
I reduced the stand after the bumblebees  
enjoyed their blooms.

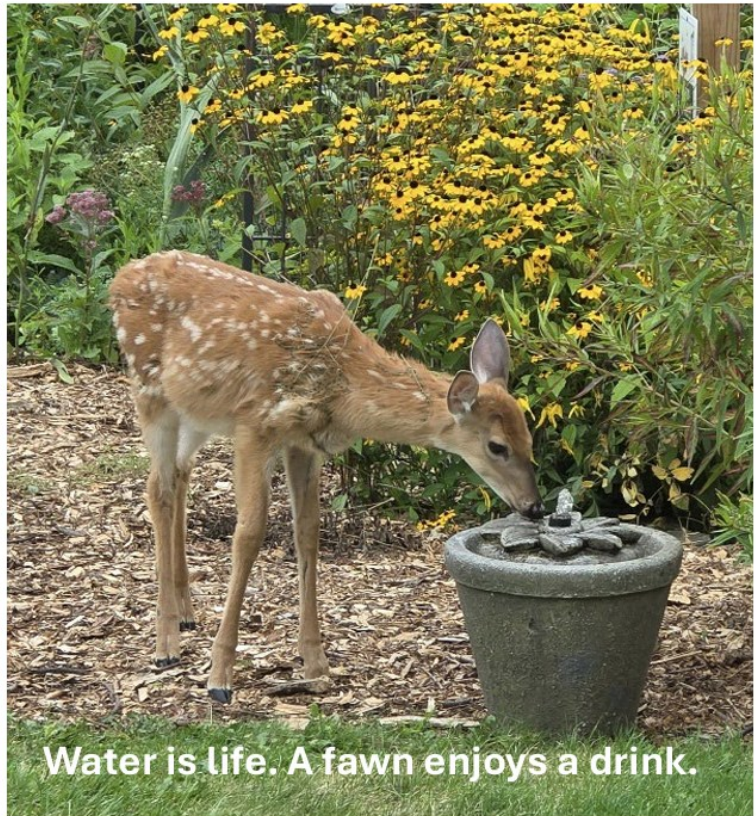


Purple love grass is a stunner at the end of summer.  
I placed it right where I can see it when I pull into my driveway.





Blue vervain in my  
ditch garden



Water is life. A fawn enjoys a drink.



The first garden we installed at this house has seen  
on-going updates.





**Fraternal potter wasp on spikenard.**



**Old field goldenrod with Smooth blue  
and New England asters.**

**Save the date! July 25<sup>th</sup>, 10 am to 1 pm, join me for a garden walk and native plant sale!**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1376361487320162>