

Macomb County Master Gardener

Monthly Newsletter

December 2024



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Board of Directors

Ellen Collins—President
Sara Grix—Vice President
Linda Simpson—Director at Large
Pam Horner—Secretary
Darlene Davies-Warner —Treasurer

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General Information

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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

Letter from the Board

It sure seems like the holiday season came upon us quickly this year! Gone from the local nurseries are all the mums, perennials and shrubs, (maybe you were lucky enough to get a great deal on a new specimen to bring home), while holiday trees, wreaths and poinsettias make their grand appearance. Our efforts turn to all the “joys” of the holidays - shopping, baking, decorating, gift wrapping. The quest for the perfect gift is sometimes elusive. Perhaps a favorite gardening book, a treasured tool, or even the promise to lend a hand in a friend’s garden next year would be ideal. Sharing your gift of gardening knowledge with others would truly be heartfelt and appreciated!

We’d like to remind members that there is no meeting/ educational program this month. On January 16 we will hold our first quarterly meeting of 2025. We will meet in person to handle membership renewals, discuss grant opportunities and other association business. Our member Jim Selegan, will share his knowledge on the origins of Macomb County’s soils. May this be the first of many great educational programs lined up for next year.

Happy holidays to you and your families!

Your MCMGA Board

HOE, HOE, HOE!

By Marianne Binetti

'Twas the week before Christmas, and all through the yard,
Not a gift was given, not even a card.

The tools were all hung, in the carport with care,
with hopes that St. Nicholas soon would repair.

The shovel with blade all rusty and cracked,
The pitchfork still shiny, but handle it lacked.

When out on my lawn, (it's brown and abused)
I could see poor old Santa, looking confused.

No list had been left for Santa to see,
No gardening gifts were under the tree.

But wait there's still time, it's not Christmas yet,
And gardening gifts are the quickest to get.

You can forget the silk tie, the fluffy new sweater,
Give something to make the garden grow better.

If she wants a gift shiny, then don't be a fool,
It's not a dumb diamond, but a sparkling new tool.

If fragrance is listed you can forget French perfume,
It's a pile of manure that'll make gardeners swoon.

Give night crawlers, not nightgowns, the type of hose that gives water.
(Anything for the kitchen is not worth the bother.)

Give a great gift that digs in the dirt,
It's better than any designer-brand shirt.

Now look quick at Santa, this guy's not so dumb,
Under his glove, he hides a green thumb.

His knees are so dirty, his back how it aches,
His boots stomp on slugs, (he gives them no breaks).

The guy only works winter, you can surely see why,
The rest of the year it's a gardening high.

Elves plant in the spring, pull weeds merrily all summer,
In fall they all harvest, but winter's a bummer.

And so Christmas gives Santa part-time employment,
Till spring when the blooms are his real-life enjoyment.

So ask the big guy for garden gifts this year,
Seeds, plants, and tools, Santa holds them all dear.

You see malls may be crowded, vendors hawking their ware,
But visit a nursery, stress-free shopping is there.

Now Santa's flown off, to the nursery he goes,
And his voice fills the night with loud Hoe! Hoe! Hoe! Hoes!

MCMGA Board Meeting Minutes

11/12/2024

Attendees: Ellen Collins, Sara Grix, Pam Horner, Darlene Davies-Warner, Linda Simpson, and David Lowenstein.

Ellen called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes – a motion was made to approve the minutes from the October board meeting, and the motion carried.

Professional Comments:

MCMGA will be sponsoring a gift card for the Horticultural trivia. David recommended that we offer that for the January trivia, date has yet to be set. David also added that a Volunteer dinner will be held on May 7th – holding a silent auction; call for donations after thanksgiving. David informed us that a few volunteers are short hours for this year. If you know of anyone that is short on hours, have them contact David or Kelly – they can get rolled over for next year.

Treasurer's Report:

Ellen reported that the organization's finances are healthy. Credits on the treasurer's report are due to the upcoming workshop and one late pay pal payment from the plant sale. Debits include native plants, October speaker, and gift card (Burke). Copies of the Financial Statements will be available to members at the meetings or by request. Sara made a motion to accept the Treasurer report, seconded by Pam, all in favor, motion carries.

Programs: need speakers for rest of next year. Ellen has an incomplete list of speakers from 2022 – 2024. Ellen asked for help to fill the list. Pam offered to help complete the list and integrate with Dave Putt's 2019 – 2021 list.

Programs discussion:

Friends of the St. Clair River/St Clair County Parks –Sara noted there is a new initiative called Go Beyond Beauty – want people to plant more native plants. Brook Hiller is the contact for Macomb County and St. Clair County. Linda noted that many residents don't have a big enough yard for native plants, so ask her to address that and HOA restrictions. Sara will contact her and try to schedule her in the upcoming months.

Kirsten Lyons – naturalists for Weeds or Wildflowers – works for St. Clair County Parks – Description – what is a weed/wildflower – Sara will try to book this talk.

Sara received a contact at the Edsel Ford Estate who is the landscape manager. The board members agreed this would be an interesting talk. Sara will follow up.

Mushroom Conservancy – Sara reached out and have not heard back yet, will try contacting them again.

Sue Grubba – Ellen has a list of topics that will be shared with the Board to help with selection for April meeting.

Continued on next page

MCMGA Board Meeting Minutes

11/12/2024

Old Business:

- Ellen now has access to the Yahoo email account. Need to add one board member and remove other folks that were past board members. It was suggested to add Pam.
- Set up Zoom account - Ellen should set up the account since she has access to the email.
- By-laws - Jean asked for help in fixing a formatting issue in the by-laws before submitting them. Pam offered to look at it and see if she can help.

New Business:

- New speaker form – created form for speakers to fill out, include name and summary, and contact information. When we have a new topic confirmed, have them complete the form or fill in the form for them. The form includes their name, title of presentation, summary of the topic and a bio of the speaker.
- Jean Persley – in effort for EMGs to know the extension staff a little more, Jean suggested one to two staff members can come and do short presentation at each meeting. They could also have a table at the banquet. Sara will contact Jean to follow up on the extension presentations.
- Transition of officers – Ellen is scheduling banking transfer to Darlene. Darlene is working with the current treasurer report format. In addition, Ellen noted that there are binders with information for the Secretary and Treasurer which will be passed on to the successors.
- Membership Renewals – membership renewals will start in January. Sara plans to add the county of certification to the membership form. She inquired if she should require signing up for a committee when renewing – in the past this was optional. There was some discussion on this and all the board members felt it would be beneficial for the future of the association. We have to ensure that we have a chairperson for each committee to coordinate with. Sara will update the form.
- Newsletters – Pam noted that she will be preparing the January newsletter in December, so any specific information that should be included should be provided by mid-December.

Next board meeting: Tuesday December 10th at 7:00pm via Zoom

Meeting was adjourned at 6:13 pm.

Submitted by Pam Horner

MCMGA 2025 Meetings

Date: January 16th 2025

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

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

Presenter: Jim Selegear

Topic: On the Origin of Macomb County's Soils
- The Science Behind the Soil in our Backyards

Date: February 20th 2025

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

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

Presenter: Tina Kaznowski

Topic: Beans, the Poor Man's Jewels

Date: March 20th 2025

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

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

Presenter: Dan Lepo

Topic: Trees

Date: April 17th 2025

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

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

Presenter: Sue Grubba

Topic: TBD

Date: May 15th 2025

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

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

Presenter: TBD

Topic: TBD

Date: June 12th 2025

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

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

Presenter: Kirsten Lyons

Topic: Weeds or Wildflowers

January MCMGA Meeting Description:

Jim received his undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering, two master's degrees (Ecology and Environmental Engineering) and a Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering. He holds faculty appointments at Wayne State University in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department and in the Geology and Environmental Sciences Department. Additionally, he has worked as a Hydraulic Engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the last 32 years and is the director of their sediment lab in Detroit. His research into soils and sediment makes him an ideal candidate to discuss the origin of our Macomb County soils and to dive deep into the science of soil.

Events and Education

Don't forget to Log Your Ed Hours for MCMGA Past 2024 Education Programs:

Date:	Topic:	Presenter
1/11/2024	"New Membership Camaraderie Games"	MCMGA Board
2/13/2024	"Growing a Better Garden Without the Work"	Luke Marian, MI Gardener
3/21/2024	"We Laughed, We Cried, We Could've Died"	Jean Persely and Lisa Lane
4/25/2024	"Bird Songs in Your Garden"	Bob and Pam Gors, Wild Birds Unlimited
6/16/2024	"Three-Season Gardening for April Through November Blooms"	Diane Reynolds
6/20/24	"Dividing Perennials"	Mary Gerstenberger
7/18/2024	"Incredible Edible Weeds."	Ellen Collins
8/15/2024	"Intro to Foraging" and On-site Exploration	Rachel Mifsud, Will Forage for Food
9/19/24	"The Role Played by Michiganders in the Development of Modern Horticultural Science"	Dave Putt Advanced Master Gardener
10/10/24	"A Seed is a Promise"	Linda Simpson MCMGA Board Member
11/21/2024	"All About Elderberries"	Erin Stewart Heart and Soul Naturals

Recap November Presentation

11/21/2024

“ALL ABOUT ELDERBERRIES”

Presenter: Erin Stewart, Heart and Soul Naturals

Elderberry is a fruit with antioxidants and vitamins that may boost your immune system and help with cold and flu symptoms, tame inflammation, lessen oxidative stress and help protect your heart. They are an alkaline plant. Elderberries provide Beta Carotene which converts to Vitamin A in the body. This vitamin helps to fight free radicals that damage your skin, heart and lungs. Vitamin A also helps to fight inflammation, which can interfere with the proper functioning of cells and muscles. Elderberries also provide calcium and serve as a substantial source of Vitamin C which facilitates body tissue repair and assists in the formation of collagen. Elderberries are also a source of magnesium, potassium, and niacin.

Elderberries should always be cooked or processed before being consumed. Unripe and even ripe berries can contain trace amounts of cyanide. The only parts of the elder tree that can be used are the flowers and ripe berries. Stems, bark, leaves and roots contain a naturally occurring chemical compound called cyanogenic glycoside, which releases the poison hydrogen cyanide.

There are about 30 known types of Elder plants and trees around the world. The European version, known as *Sambucus nigra*, is one most closely tied to your health and healing.

Ways Elderberry has been used for medical treatments:

- Prevent and ease cold and flu symptoms
- Constipation
- Joint & muscle pain
- Reducing inflammation
- Respiratory infections
- Headaches
- Fever
- Kidney problems
- Epilepsy
- Minor skin conditions
- Stress
- HIV & AIDS

Precautions—no data is available regarding elderberry safety in people who are pregnant or breastfeed; people with certain autoimmune diseases should avoid elderberry. Elderberry can worsen the symptoms of an autoimmune disease as it may stimulate more activity in the immune system. Elderberry may reduce the effectiveness of immunosuppressant drugs.

Elderberries can prepared at home in the following ways:

Infusions—steeping dried elderberries in simmering water for a little as 5 minutes to as much as 20 minutes.

Tinctures—a tincture is a concentrated herbal extract prepared with alcohol. Use a 1:2 plant matter to alcohol and let sit in a dark, cool place for 6 to 10 weeks, strain through cheesecloth.

Cordials—use the elderberries strained after preparing a tincture, return them to the jar and fill the jar with fresh honey. Let sit for 4 to 6 weeks.

Syrups—there are many recipes available on-line, our recipe includes dried elderberries, spices, secret ingredients, and honey.

For more information, visit our web site: heartsoulnaturals.com

Important Information

FUNDRAISING



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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