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West Michigan Nursery & Landscape
Association

March Garden Day



Everyone is excited for Spring arriving in West Michigan, getting motivated to tend to their gardens. With 250 Michigan gardeners and home owners attending the **March Garden Day** on Saturday, March 12 — the WMNLA Consumer Event celebrates the coming of Spring.

Lee VerSchure, Tom Czerniak, Paul Kiefer, Reini Moser, Pam Cater, Audrey Eaton, Allison Jesky, and Laurel Nease, the members of the Garden Day committee, planned all year to produce this annual event at the Grand Haven Community Center.

We would like to acknowledge the help of many volunteers who were also enlisted to help with publicity, photos, the silent auction donations, moderators, and . . . of course, the set up and tear down. A big "Thank You" goes to this team - **Rebecca Finneran, Lynne Boezaart, Matt Mellema, Dale Kwekel, Chris Lautenbach, Patrick Berg, Bill Akker, Ryan Bose, Gary & Natalie Katerburg, and Kay VerSchure.**

We could not produce this event without the invaluable help of **Tom Czerniak** of Landscape Solutions West, **Paul Keifer** of Specialty Gardens, **Matt Mellema** of Mellema Nursery, **Gary Katerburg** of Evergreen Acres, **Tony Hamilton & Matt Nease** of Zelenka Nursery Wholesale Center for creating the indoor garden showcase; and **Grand Haven Garden House & Jonker's Garden** for collecting registrations.

We must thank the generosity of the speakers who gave of their time and shared their expertise: **Mark Dwyer** of Rotary Botanical Gardens, **Dr. Ron Calhoun** of MSU Horticulture Dept., **Ann Bosma** of Frederik Meijer Gardens, **Paul Kiefer** of Specialty Gardens, **Greg Kuziak** of Jonker's Garden, **Lee VerSchure** of Westview Farms, **Jan Landry** of Huntree Nursery and **Deane Wassink** of Old Paths Perennial Farm.

The event raised over \$5,000 for WMNLA with over \$3000 raised through the silent auction. Thanks to the generosity of our members who donated the great selection of gardening items & services and plants. Proceeds from March Garden Day help support the WMNLA scholarship fund and the newly established Horticulture Education Grant Fund to support horticulture education in area high schools and technical training centers.



WMNLA members who showcased in the Expo included **Grand Haven Garden House, Bartlett Tree Experts, Landscape Design Services, Specialty Gardens, Garden Games, Hidden Grove Nursery, Jonker's Garden, Fillmore Equipment, MSU Extension Service, Weesies Brothers Farms, and West Michigan Tree Services.**

*Photos courtesy of
Audrey Eaton, Garden Games &
Laurel Nease, WMNLA Coordinator*

WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

WMNLA News

West Michigan Nursery & Landscape Association
March Garden Day Photos



**GVSU Is First Public University
 in MI to Receive
 Environmental Certification**

ALLENDALE — Grand Valley State University is the first public university in Michigan to be certified by the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program (MTESP).

The program is intended to promote and communicate best management practices, to control potential sources of pollution, comply with environmental laws and regulations, adopt pollution prevention practices, and reduce waste. Nine modules were completed to receive certification on the main campus in Allendale, and included evaluating fuel storage systems, groundwater and well protection, and use of green products and recycling.

Ken Stanton, grounds supervisor at Grand Valley, said several construction projects were involved to complete the modules. “We installed a new, more efficient fueling station, a space that is used for mixing and loading pesticides, and a new equipment wash station that collects excess grass clippings from our mowing equipment. All of these developments will help us to magnify sustainable efforts already taking place at Grand Valley.”

Completion of the certification program was also responsible for the development of a campus wide emergency response plan, as well as identifying storm water management practices, that had been previously developed to help eliminate erosion of the ravines on the main campus in Allendale.

Achieving certification ensures that grounds and facilities will be in compliance with applicable state and federal environmental regulations.

For more information about MTESP visit www.mtesp.org. For more information about Grand Valley’s certification, contact Ken Stanton at stantonk@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-3852.



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WMNLA Board Nominees

Four WMNLA members are nominated to serve on the WMNLA Board beginning July 1, 2011. Member businesses are requested to cast their ballot to select two nominees to service on the WMNLA Board for a 3-year term.

- ◆ **Roger DeLong**, *Double L Enterprises* in Montague
- ◆ **Paul Kiefer**, *Specialty Gardens* in Grand Haven
- ◆ **Tony Hamilton**, *Zelenka Wholesale Center* in West Olive
- ◆ **Bob Tein**, *Brookview Lawncare* in Zeeland

Roger DeLong was raised in Fremont and started a career in dairy farming in 1983 in California. He eventually formed a partnership with a dairy owner of an 8000 cow farm merchandising dairy feed and commodities for 9 years and this grew to a \$25 million business. He moved back with his family to Fremont and took up landscaping as a hobby due to health reasons, and began to pursue it as a career with *Double L Enterprises* in 2002 and transitioned from crew foreman to designing and sales. Roger says his friends consider him as a plant geek and has an elaborate plant collection in his personal landscape, including conifers that are quite rare. He and his wife, Kimberly have been blessed with 9 children and two grandsons.

Paul Kiefer became interested in plants at the age of 17, when he learned how to take cuttings and propagate houseplants. In 1994 he graduated with honors from MSU, earning a bachelor's degree in horticulture with a specialization in greenhouse management. Upon graduation he became the Horticulturist at Walnut Creek Country Club in South Lyon, Michigan, where he worked for 8 years creating and caring for an extensive collection of gardens. In 2002 Paul founded *Specialty Gardens*, a business that designs, creates, and maintains beautiful gardens. Paul has been a professional gardener for 16+ years and served as President of the Association of Professional Gardeners in 2006-2007. He currently serves as Vice-President of the West Michigan Professional Gardeners Group, and is a committee member for WMNLA's March Garden Day.

Tony Hamilton has been involved in the green industry for 24 years, started mowing lawns & landscaping during high school. He received an Associates Degree in Landscape Nursery Management from MSU. Tony worked at DeHamer Brother's Landscaping in Grand Rapids installing landscapes for 20 years as a crew leader, sales and design lead for the landscape crews, and sales manager of their wholesale center. Through the economy's ups & downs in the past couple tough years, a lot of owners and employees had to make some hard choices. Tony went on to accept a new job to working for *Zelenka Nursery* as the manager of our Wholesale Center. Tony and his wife have three kids.

Bob Tein started his passion for the green industry in high school working at a local tulip farm and garden. He graduated from Ferris State University with an Associates Degree in Ornamental Horticulture and MSU receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture with emphasis in Landscape Design and Construction. Currently Bob is employed at *Brookview*, a local Lawncare, Landscaping, Fertilizing, and Sports Turf Management company where he heads up the Landscaping division. He believes the WMNLA is an important organization that contributes to the professionalism of our industry and an organization that I want to be a part of. He has been on the board for the Horticulture Club at MSU, and understands the importance of working together with other board members to meet and exceed the Key Annual Objectives.

WMNLA Horticulture Education Grant Application Deadline—July 1, 2011

WMNLA Teacher Grant Program is a competitive grant program with awards up to \$500 to high school programs in the WMNLA serviced counties of Ottawa, Muskegon, Oceana, Allegan and Newaygo during the 2011-2012 school year.

This program was launched in 2009 with the 2010 award of \$500.00 given to the Horticulture Grant Project submitted by Kyle Fiebig, the Operation Hoop House at Montague High School, Montague Agriscience/FFA.

Applications are reviewed on a competitive basis. Projects that closely match the criteria detailed below will be selected for funding. The advisory committee has reserved \$1500 to be awarded to classroom teachers. Grant requests for up to \$500 may be submitted for projects and activities that enhance classroom learning and which require funds

beyond those available through normal school resources. The WMNLA Fund has a special interest in projects or activities designed to give students a better understanding of the green industry, specifically, greenhouses, nursery and landscaping.

WMNLA Teacher Grant Criteria

- ◆ Grant requests must support education in the greenhouse, nursery or landscaping area.
- ◆ Grant requests must emphasize the critical need for the special projects to be funded.
- ◆ Grant requests must include the intended outcome(s) of the project, as demonstrated in student learning.

- ◆ Principal approval must be attained for each grant request to ensure an alignment of the project with focal areas and goals of the school.

Grant funds will not be awarded for the following: basic classroom materials, field trips that are not part of a planned educational unit or program, professional development conferences and supplies for student award programs.

Please assist the WMNLA Fund Committee by making this grant application information known to your classroom teachers as soon as possible.

Applications must be emailed to the WMNLA fund C/O Laurel Nease at info@wmnla.com no later than **July 1, 2011**.

Contact Kyle Lohman at (231) 894-5988 or Jim TenBrink at (616)241-6610 for further information.



**WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY &
LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION**

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For advertising, business news, submission
of articles and WMNLA member news:

Contact Laurel Nease at
(616) 847-8955 Email: info@wmnla.com
www.wmnla.com

2010-11 WMNLA Board of Directors

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President's Message

I'd like you to stop, take a moment, and reflect on the disaster in Japan. Our brothers and sisters experienced a level of devastation that will alter their lives in ways I can only imagine. They need our positive thoughts and prayers....

Troubles overseas sure make most of my problems seem minute. Issues, no matter the magnitude, and our attitude toward them, become pivotal in their resolution.

A wiser man than I once wrote about *Attitude*:

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think, say or do. It's more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home.

The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude... I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it." – Charles Swindoll

At a time when creativity is a must for maintaining the bottom line, we must also remember to stay close to our core values. Sell that. Sell your training, experience, D.O.T.

compliance, the skill level of your crews, plant quality; if you're a drug free work place-like us-sell that too. Seems all anyone wants to know now is, "Are you insured?" That question is valid, but should be one of many, not the only.

Our March Garden Day was a outstanding event again. Many thanks to the MGD board and WMNLA members who put

in so much time to make this event run so smooth. MGD has become a major springtime event that hundreds of people mark on their calendars. Special thanks to those of you who were vendors and/or speakers for the extra effort you put in as well. This event and our golf outing are the two major ways WMNLA raises money for the scholarship and grant funds.

Thank you also to **Tony Hamilton** from **Zelenka**, **Paul Kiefer** of **Specialty Gardens**, **Roger DeLong** from **Double L Enterprises**, and **Bob Tein** from **Brookview Lawn Care** for stepping forward as nominees for the WMNLA board.

After a crazy white February I know I'm looking forward to spring. This week's melt couldn't have come too soon. Get out, enjoy it, cause it's about to break loose for us!

Chris

Chris Lautenbach, Arborist at West Michigan Tree Services in Grand Rapids is the 2010/11 President of WMNLA. Contact him with comments, ideas, & questions at (616) 893-9791 or chrisl@grandarborgroup.com



WMNLA Board Members—Jeff Rylaarsdam and Jon Mellema, with Kurt Grenaat. Not in photo at March Garden Day is WMNLA Board members Allison Jesky, Ryan Bose, Bill Akker & Chris Lautenbach.