

April 2013

Volume 14, Issue 3

West Michigan Nursery & Landscape Association

March Garden Day



Everyone is excited for Spring's arrival in West Michigan, and getting motivated to tend to their gardens. With over 200 Michigan gardeners and home owners attending the **March Garden Day** on Saturday, March 16 — the WMNLA Garden Day celebrates the coming of Spring.

Lee VerSchure, Paul Kiefer, Reini Moser, Pam Cater, Audrey Eaton, Allison Jesky, and Lisa Denison, 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 - **Lynne Boezaart, Jeff Rylaarsdam, Tony Hamilton, Gary Katerburg, Kay VerSchure, Kurt Gernaat, Lisa Denison, Jon Mellema, Laurel Nease, Matt Mellema** and the team of **Master Gardener Volunteers**.

We would also like to thank **Tony Hamilton** of BFN Operations, **Paul Kiefer** of Specialty Gardens, **Gary Katerberg** of Evergreen Acres, **Lynn and Rachel Kemme** of Dutch Touch Growers, **Gregg Stoepker** of Bluewater Growers, **Jack Vandenberg and Tim Anderson** of Vandenberg Bulbs for donating plants, expertise and growing space to make the beautiful indoor landscape and auction.

We must thank the generosity of the speakers who gave of their time and shared their expertise: **Jeff Epping** of Olbrich Gardens, **Chuck Martin** of Dow Gardens, **Allison Jesky** of Hope College, **Barb Balgoyen** of Walters Garden, **Dale Kwekel** of Grand Haven Garden House, **Rick Cater, Ken Stanton** of Grand Valley State University, and **John Migas** of Woodlands Nursery

The event raised over \$3000 for WMNLA with over \$2500 raised through the silent auction. Thanks to the generosity of our members who donated the great selection of gardening items 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. (See article on p. 4)

WMNLA members who showcased in the Expo included **Grand Haven Garden House, Bartlett Tree Experts, Landscape Design Services, Specialty Gardens, Jonker's Garden, Weesies Brothers Farms, Fillmore Equipment, Garden Crossings, The Bookman, Kent County Master Gardeners and West Michigan Tree Services.**



*Photos courtesy of
Audrey Eaton, Garden Games,
Pam Cater, Lynne Boezaart*

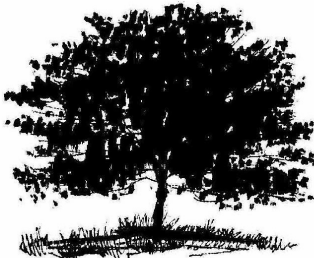
WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

WMNLA News



March Garden Day Photos






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President's Message by Jon Mellema



Jon Mellema, Forever Sod, LLC and Shoreline Landscape & Maintenance, is the 2012/2013 President of WMNLA. Contact him at: Jon.mellema@sbcglobal.net, 231-924-5307

The heart is a bloom, shoots up through the stony ground". These are the first two lines of U2's song "Beautiful Day", and have brought a number of thoughts to me lately. As I walked my fathers property last Sunday, I witnessed snow drops growing, in the hard frost laden ground, and up through the remaining snow. It was definitely a sign that spring is upon us. It also reminds me of the dedication of our industry to get rolling even when the weather is a little tough outside.

The hearts that have been blooming for us, as of late, belong to the members of the March Garden Day committee, as well as the volunteers that again helped to make it happen. Yes, we've had days with better weather, but for those attending, I think you'd be hard pressed to find any that would say spring wasn't already here. Between everyone's warm smiles and excitement, and the plants leafing out and in bloom, it was plenty to get people in the mood for the upcoming season. This was also a very successful day for the WMNLA, continuing to raise money for our scholarship and grant opportunities that further knowledge in our industry. Thank you to all of our speakers, for giving us their time and knowledge on many different things to help many people who work



in their gardens and landscapes for pure enjoyment, not necessity. The surveys of the speakers show that this was the best year ever! Thank you too, to the many persons and businesses that donated items ranging from plants to items that can be used to make gardening easier. A very big thanks needs to be given to the MGD committee members, as well as my fellow board members, as well as past board members, who put in a great number of hours to ensure that March Garden Day 2013 was a success. As you see these people in their other capacities, take a moment to make sure they know how important their efforts have been.

As spring continues, we will be looking for candidates who will be filling the soon vacated spots on our board. Thank you to those individuals for their willingness to give their time to keep the WMNLA moving forward. Don't forget, too, to let area schools and tech centers know about the horticultural grant that we offer. It provides a great opportunity for students to learn what actually happens in our industry, as well as positive experiences from putting the monies to work. Enjoy the spring as it is upon us. Take time to look at the flowers as they shoot up from the warming ground, and make every day a Beautiful Day.

Jon Mellema



WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

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

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2012-13 WMNLA Board of Directors

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WMNLA Horticulture Education Grant Application Deadline—July 1, 2013

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

This program was launched in 2010 with the latest award of \$500.00 from the Horticulture Grant Projects given to Fremont High Schools FFA in 2012.

Applications are reviewed on a competitive basis. Projects that closely match the criteria detailed below will be selected for funding. 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.

Grant Criteria

- ◆ Support education in the greenhouse, nursery or landscaping area.
- ◆ Emphasize the critical need for the special projects to be funded.
- ◆ Include the intended outcome of the project, as demonstrated in student learning.
- ◆ Principal approval must be obtained 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 basic classroom materials, field trips that are not part of a planned educational unit or program, professional development conferences or supplies for student award programs.

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

Applications can be emailed to the WMNLA fund at WMNLA, PO Box 96, West Olive, MI 49460 or emailed to wmnla2013@gmail.com no later than July 1, 2013

An application and cover letter is available online at www.wmnla.com. Contact Jon Mellema at Shoreline Landscape & Maintenance at 231-924-5307 for more information.