

Spring 2018

President's Message



WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

WMNLA Newsletter

Spring!!! Is it here? We seem to be getting the classic Michigan Spring. Warm one week, snow the next week. Do you put those plows and salters away yet? Do we start doing yard clean ups yet? All those typical Michigan Spring questions come roaring back this time of year. And the answers are always a mixture of yes and no's.

We are probably also all thinking about employees and getting the crews back to work. I attended the MNLA meeting this month and I can assure you we are still working to help with the off-season employment issues that plague the green industry as a whole. Next year we should have some real solutions!

With spring comes March Garden Days. It was a bit earlier this year than in the past, and I think everyone will agree with me that it was a great show! I want to personally thank all of those who were involved, especially the March Garden Day committee. With out everyone pulling together, it wouldn't be the show that it is. I personally heard a lot of great feed back from those that attended. Everyone is excited for Spring!!!

The WMNLA Board is taking a break from meeting until June, but we will all remain in contact. We are looking for anyone who may be interested in joining the board so if you, or anyone you know, is interested, please reach out to myself or any of the other board members. There are 2 open spots for next year. I for one can say that it has been a great experience. I have met many great people and have really learned a lot about our industry and the organization. With that, I wish you all a great and prosperous season!

Ryan

Ryan Weesies, WMNLA President

Weesies Garden Center & Landscape

Contact him with comments, ideas, & questions at (231) 894-4742 or ryan@weesies.com



West Michigan Nursery & Landscape Association March Garden Day 2018

Over 200 excited gardeners, speakers, vendors, members and volunteers participated in March Garden Day: A Celebration of Spring. March Garden Day was held Saturday, March 10, 2018 at the Grand Haven Community Center. March Garden Day is a daylong seminar featuring key note speakers, WMNLA member speakers, vendor booths, a display garden and a silent auction. Profits from March Garden Day support the WMNLA Scholarship Fund and Education Fund. Monies are also available to members for CPIG and Master Gardener scholarships.



This is the second year that March Garden Day was 'green'. All paper, food waste and drinkware were biodegradable and composted by Spurt Industries. All paper and cardboard was recycled, water bottles were eliminated and replaced by water stations and biodegradable cups. Our total non recyclable waste and compost was less than a small office waste basket.

We would like to thank the March Garden Day Committee who dedicated many hours of planning to produce this annual event for the community: Lee VerSchure, Kay VerSchure, Reini Moser, Paul Kiefer, Audrey Eaton, Allison Jesky, Jude Hofmann, Chritina Hipshier, Scott Jacob and Pam Cater.



We would also like to acknowledge the help of the many volunteers who were enlisted to help with the silent auction, act as moderators, food waste monitors, and registration hosts among many other duties. We would also like to acknowledge the board of directors (Chris Howe, Ryan Weesies, Keith Hogan, Allison Jesky and Russ Hillman) for their help moderating break out sessions and providing support with the silent auction, and Allison Jesky for the plant i.d. quiz.

Thanks also to Gardens Alive! Farm, Evergreen Acres, and Hortech for providing plant material, growing space, and expertise to make the beautiful indoor landscape and auction.

Members who showcased in the Expo included Grand Haven Garden House, Bartlett Tree Experts, Landscape Design Services, Specialty Gardens, Jonkers Garden, Weesies Brothers Farms, Blackbird Farms, Chips, and Blue Horizon Nursery. The Bookman and MSU Extension also had booths.



Speakers included: Joseph Tychonievich, Greg Dunn of Blackbird Farms, Nicole Mathiasz, Stacey Hirvela of Proven Winners Color Choice, Chris Howe of Hortech, Julie Francke of Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park and Kathi Skorupski.



Look for more pictures on the March Garden Day Facebook page :
<https://www.facebook.com/MarchGardenDay/?fref=ts>

Thank you to Retiring Board Members Ryan Weesies and Chris Howe

WMNLA would like to thank retiring board members Ryan Weesies and Chris Howe for their service. Board members not only attend meetings but help coordinate the annual golf outing and March Garden Day which helps fund WMNLA Scholarships and Education Grants. They also plan educational monthly meetings which help meet the needs of WMNLA member businesses. They also receive and award Education Grant requests.



Ryan served as a Member at Large in 2015-16, as Vice President in 2016-17 and President in 2017-18. Ryan has been instrumental in planning the Annual golf outing which benefits WMNLA Scholarships and Education Grants.



Chris Howe served as a Member at Large in 2015-16 and as Treasurer for 2016-18. Chris' expertise has helped the board realize and refine their roles and responsibilities toward grant and scholarship opportunities. Chris has helped plan and execute educational seminars for monthly meetings as well as prepare an annual budget.

Welcome New Member Blackbird Farms, LLC

Blackbird Farms, LLC
 Owners, Michelle & Gregory Dunn
 5213 Roosevelt St, Coopersville, Mi 49404
 616-606-0220
 Farmer.blackbirdfarms@gmail.com
 Www.blackbirdfarms.net



Gregory and his wife Michelle started Blackbird Farms in 2013 where they grow certified naturally grown produce for local farmers' markets and their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Prior to that, he worked at Trillium Haven Farm in Jenison, Michigan for several years learning the trade. He also works in the off-season as a gardener for Specialty Gardens in Grand Haven, Michigan.

Thank you to all of the companies that donated plants and prizes for the 2018 March Garden Day raffle and auction





**WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY &
LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION**

**PO Box 96
West Olive, MI 49460**

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

Contact Pam Cater at
(616) 402-4885

Email: wmnla2013@gmail.com

2017-18 WMNLA Board of Directors

Ryan Weesies, President, Weesies Garden Center & Landscape
Allison Jesky, Vice President, Hope College
Russ Hillman, Secretary, Bosch's Landscape & Lawn Specialties

Chris Howe, Treasurer, Hortech Inc.
Christina Hipshier, Member at Large, Grand Valley State University
Keith Hogan, Member at Large, Bartlett Tree Experts

WMNLA Horticulture Education Grant Application Deadline—July 1, 2018

The WMNLA Teacher Grant Program is a competitive grant program which awards up to \$500 to 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 was awarded to West Ottawa Community School first grade class for a school garden program.

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, educators 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, 2018

An application and cover letter is available online at www.wmnla.com