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Master Gardeners keep Livingston County green

Gretchen Voyle, Horticulture Educator

Summer is definitely the “growing season” for the Livingston County MSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program (MGVP).

The final three classes of the “Summer Series” program, which was open to the general public, concluded in July. The classes were a plant diagnostic session called “Plant CSI” and “Ergonomic Gardening,” which dealt with how to use your body correctly, taught by a physical therapist. The final class was about using native plants when landscaping. It covered xeriscaping (dry gardening), woodland or shade plants and lakescaping

(landscaping near surface water like lakes and streams).



A Master Gardener volunteer works with Junior Master Gardeners.

Livingston County MSU Extension horticulture educator was the featured speaker for the LACASA (Livingston Area Council against Spouse Abuse) Garden Tour in July and drew large crowds both days.

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The Junior Master Gardener and Master Gardener banquets were planned by the Master Gardener Banquet Committee. The Junior Master Gardener Banquet was held in September and was well attended by the children and their families.

Youth mentoring gets growing with new name

Emily Maurer, AmeriCorps Member

The Livingston County MSU Extension/Juvenile Court mentoring program now has a more concise name: Forward Focus Youth Mentoring. A collaboration between Livingston County 4-H and the Juvenile Justice System, this program matches juvenile offenders with positive adult role models from the community, in an effort to reduce the severity and frequency of delinquent behavior.

With nearly 30 youths currently waiting for mentors, four mentor candidates have made their way through the training stages and are now being matched. Matches should begin in December and will last for six months to one year. New mentor training is ongoing and will continue throughout the year.

Forward Focus
Youth Mentoring

Safe Kids Program receives HealthPlus award

Carrie Shrier, Family and Consumer Science Educator



MSU Extension’s Safe Kids Livingston County Car Seat Fitting Station, was one of 11 agencies honored with the Rainmaker Award from HealthPlus of Michigan. HealthPlus, a health maintenance organization based in southeast Michigan, selects non-profit grant recipients who provide health-related programs with measurable outcomes. This year, the Rainmaker Award provided the Safe Kids Livingston County a \$3,000.00 grant for one year

The Safe Kids Car Seat Fitting Station, located at the Livingston County Department of Public Health and WIC offices in Howell, Michigan, provides car seat safety education, car seat installations by certified child passenger safety technicians and free or low-cost replacement car seats to low-income and/or high-risk families. MSU Extension projects that more than 100 families will benefit from service provided thanks to the HealthPlus award.



Livingston County Sheriffs with new car seats for qualifying families.

Safe Kids Livingston County collaborated with the Livingston County Sheriff’s Department to offer a car seat check on Sept. 27 in recognition of National Child Passenger Safety Week. Children enjoyed popcorn and balloons while climbing aboard county rescue vehicles, including the county Mobile Command Center.

A team of dedicated child passenger safety volunteers, including Livingston County Sheriff’s Department officers, firefighters from the Hartland Fire Department and community volunteers inspected 31 child safety seats and provided 10 new car seats to replace those that were recalled, expired or otherwise unsafe.



Safety volunteer inspects car seat in family vehicle.

MSUE Livingston County moves to new location

On Sept. 22 the Livingston County MSU Extension staff opened the doors of its new office in the county’s East Complex Building, 2300 East Grand River Ave, in Howell.

Staff members were busy for weeks sorting and packing more than 20 years of program supplies, materials and memories from the old building. With the help of the county’s dedicated building and grounds staff, the move was quickly and easily finished.

Once the move was completed the MSU Extension staff worked hard to hit the ground running. Plans are in place to relocate the Master Gardener project gardens, with the help of the Master Gardener volunteers and the Drain Commissioner, next spring.

MSU Extension Livingston County Staff:

Grace Mutua, MSU Extension Director	Teena Munsell, 4-H Program Associate
Roxanne Turner, 4-H Youth Development Educator	Eva Poole, Better Kid Care Educator
Carrie Shrier, Family & Consumer Science Educator	Sharon Fogarty, Administrative Aide
Gretchen Voyle, Horticulture Educator	Fay Hicks, Office Assistant
Dean Ross, Dairy Educator	Kim White, Administrative Specialist

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Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities. Offices in counties across the state link the research of the land-grant university, MSU, to challenges facing communities. Citizens serving on county Extension councils regularly help select focus areas for programming. MSU Extension is funded jointly by county boards of commissioners, the state through Michigan State University and federally through the US Department of Agriculture.