



Photos by John Minnis

# Seniors and children pottin' and plantin'

By John Minnis



Our Lady Star of the Sea students and residents of the ShorePointe Village Senior Residence in St. Clair Shores are “Growing Healthy Together” through a six- to seven-week, inter-generational program that teams students, seniors and Michigan State University Extension Service Master Gardeners. Students learn about plants, soil, insects, composting and much more. They then put their skills to use by planting the ShorePointe Village garden and flower beds.

“It’s very educational for the kids,” says Celeste Vacante, activities coordinator at ShorePointe Village.

The program was started five years ago by Shirley Martin, a Master Gardener. “I think this is a great opportunity to reach this segment of the population, the kids,” she says. “Their schedules are so packed, it’s good to have a chance to tell them about the outdoors.”

Eileen Miskiewicz, another Master Gardener involved this year, brought her friend, Jerry Dunbar, of Dunbar Honey Farm in Roseville, to teach the students about the importance of bees. Rosann Kovalcik, of Wild Birds Unlimited, told the kids about birds in their own backyards and wowed them with photos of birds’ favorite foods — caterpillars — and her repertoire of 150 birds songs. Students also made birdhouses and fairy gardens in pairs.

In return, the ShorePointes residents get a pizza party from the students — and much, much more. ☐

