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GET THE SCOOP ON THE FUTURE OF GARDENING TODAY

DAYTON – Winter’s cold chill and blankets of snow make it easy to forget spring is around the corner. But for gardeners, winter means the new planting season is near! Kick off the growing season with informational sessions, hands-on demonstrations and expert advice during Five Rivers MetroParks’ 16th annual Miami Valley Gardening Conference, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, March 5, at the Sinclair Community College Ponitz Center, Dayton.

The future of gardening has arrived! Technology has opened up new possibilities for today’s gardeners. Smart phones and tablets with user-friendly applications have removed many of the barriers to gardening and give new gardeners the ability to trouble-shoot issues with ease. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to learn about some of these apps as well as enter for the chance to win an iPod Touch!

This year’s featured speakers are Dr. Peter Del Tredici and Jeff Lowenfels. Dr. Del Tredici is the senior research scientist of The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University and lecturer in landscape architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Del Tredici’s interests include plant morphology, conifers, bonsai, urban horticulture, plant/microbial symbioses, and tree architecture. He is also curator of the Larz Anderson Collections of Bonsai Plants at the Arnold Arboretum and is an authority on the natural and cultural history of the ginkgo.

A member of the Garden Writers of America Hall of Fame, Lowenfels is a leading proponent of gardening using the concepts of the soil food web. He has written countless articles, hosts a popular gardening television show, and founded a successful program for soup kitchens called “Plant a Row for the Hungry.” A native New Yorker, this Harvard graduate now works as an attorney in Alaska.

The conference also offers a broad variety of speakers covering topics for new gardeners, seasoned veterans and vegetable gardening. New features for this year’s event include cooking demonstrations with Chef Gabe Gardner from Sinclair’s Culinary Arts Department, a casual q-and-a session with the keynote speakers for one-on-one advice, and practical gardening demonstrations.

Registration for this event is \$50 for participants who register by Feb. 18, 2011, and \$60 thereafter, up to the date of the event. Full-time students may register for just \$40. Registration includes all materials in lectures and hands-on sessions, a catered lunch, parking and refreshments during breaks. Check out the full conference roster, schedule of events, directions, online registration and more at the web site www.metroparks.org/conference. For further details, contact Betty Hoevel at (937) 277-6545. Sponsors for this year’s event include Siebenthaler’s Garden Center, Meadow View Growers, Inc., and MacDepot.

ABOUT FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS

Established in 1963 through the efforts of forward-thinking citizens concerned about preserving green space and natural areas, Five Rivers MetroParks has grown to a nationally renowned park system composed of natural area parks, gardens, high-quality river corridors, urban parks and a network of recreation trails. Five Rivers MetroParks focuses on three areas – conservation, recreation and education – as a steward of greater Dayton’s public lands. Educational programs and recreational opportunities are offered year-round for all ages, and diverse natural habitats are being protected and cared for today to ensure their future existence. To learn more about Five Rivers MetroParks, log onto www.metroparks.org or call (937) 275-PARK.

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