

# TWIGS

## The Garden Club of Greater Lansing Newsletter Member of: Michigan Garden Clubs Inc. IIB DIVISION, National Garden Club Central Region, National Garden Club Inc.

Volume 40 #12

April 2021

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Distribution: Reba Torongo

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has been showing signs that warmer weather is emerging. We are eager and look forward to the signs of longer, warmer days, rain showers and not snow showers. We look around and see buds on trees swelling, plants are pushing through the ground. Yes it is on its way. Now we are asking ourselves - What do we do to prepare?



(Scott Garden 2021 by Sue Kesti)

We had a wonderful discussion on that for the March program. Some gardeners are ordering more seed varieties to add to the tried and true. What new ones are you exploring? I would love to hear about your adventures. Another mention was a good reminder: get garden tools cleaned and sharpened! Some people are drawing out their garden plans. We had a lot of good ideas on how to approach the true Spring, after Mother Nature let's go of winter.

This year I saved seeds and I am in the midst of trying cold stratification of swamp milkweed seeds. I also saved Zinnia seeds for the first time. I am keeping my fingers crossed for success!

One more new approach this year, is to use a written list for my garden shopping. I usually have an idea of what I want when I go to the garden center, having a written list will help keep me on task reducing the urge to buy everything insight. This came to mind as I listened to Jan Coppola Bills as a speaker for a recent Master Gardener meeting. Her topic was Comfort, Ease and Simplicity in the Garden. I have heard her speak before and I always take away a new idea. This is just one reason why she is such an excellent educator. She reminded me that we have a list when we grocery shop and it makes sense to also have a list for gardening. After all, most of us have limited financial resources. That also ties into her urging us to find comfort in our gardening. Remember to plant what you can physically manage and maintain. Be smart!

Hopefully you will be able to join us for the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, when Pat Lindemann will be our program speaker. He will speak about water in today's society. Waterways, erosion, chemical spills and more continue to threaten our lakes, rivers and streams. Come join us to find out what is going on in the world of water.

Another sign of Spring: The Program and Yearbook committee is working on the 2021-2022 programs. We are eager to be together in person after this year of masks and social distancing. Your health and safety is the primary consideration as programs and locations are planned. Plans will be adjusted depending on COVID, but we have hope.

There is still opportunity to contribute your talents and continue to have a productive and vital garden club. Please consider becoming an officer or committee chair, join a committee and get to know more members. We still need a Vice President and Recording Secretary. Thank you to Suzanne Burger for stepping up to be the new Treasurer. She joined garden club in 2020. Sue Kesti



(A few flower seed packets to sow -JL)

## HORTICULTURE

As I write this message in mid-March, the sun is shining, the temperature will get into the 50's today and the nights are still cool. While it's too early to plant, I want to plan everything all at once to be ready when we reach mid-May. Today as I looked out the window, I remembered the hanging baskets that will be added to my view.

Most rules seem ready to be broken, and there are many ways to fill hanging containers. An old, but tried and true "rule" for any container is to choose plants that include a thriller, a filler and a spiller. In other words, a focus (thriller), enough plants to fill in the space (filler), and something to hang over the sides (spiller). I have also seen gorgeous containers composed of all one type of plant, some without a focal plant, and even some with little hanging material. In some way the plants in a container need to relate to each other – perhaps by color, or by leaf size and contrast, or all herbs, etc. Use your imagination. There are really no limits to possible choices.

When you choose plants for hanging containers be sure that they all need the same care. Plant only sun plants for a basket that will hang in the sun; shade plants for a basket in the shade. Add a slow release granular fertilizer when you plant to help nourish the plants. The amount will vary depending on the size of your container, so follow package directions. Plants in hanging pots dry out faster than those in the ground. Hanging pots are often 12" or less in diameter. Anything much larger is heavy to hang, however pots this small dry quickly. Water your hanging plants every day unless it rains. When the weather is hot and dry, water twice a day. Be sure to water enough that the water runs out of the bottom of the container.

A few years ago I tried a new (lazy) way to fill my hanging containers. I use vinca, which can't run far in a controlled space like a hanging basket. You could use any low growing perennial that has runners. Another good choice would be strawberries. During the growing season, the vinca easily spills over the sides of the pots and can be trimmed to control its enthusiastic growth. Since vinca is a perennial, it can be cut back and left in the pot from year to year. Then in mid-to late May, when it's warm enough for annuals, I can add a filler or just use the extra vinca to fill in space, and my "thriller" becomes begonias, or geraniums, or a taller spike. The filler and thriller can even be changed as the seasons change so that if the geraniums become leggy or stop blooming, change them for something fresh

without needing to start completely over. This is incredibly easy, but my hanging baskets always receive compliments.

Also consider that plants may change throughout the growing season. They may fill out, some form seed pods, some are long blooming, some need regular deadheading or grooming. Another nice fact about adding annuals to a container is that you can always trade plants if something doesn't grow well or look as good as you had hoped. Barb Amundsen

### BOARD POSITIONS & CHAIR OPENINGS

I am pleased to announce that Suzanne Burger will be our next Treasurer. Vice-President -open, Recording Secretary -open. In order to be a viable group we must fill these positions.

### APRIL BOARD MEETING & PROGRAM

If you want to join us for our board or program mtg contact Ronalee to get the zoom link. Pat Lindemann will speak about water. Be sure to join as this topic is something important to all of us as a natural resource. Joan Lenhard

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

Have you contacted Ronalee regarding your membership? If you are maintaining your membership please let her know. This gets you into the directory for the next year. **YOU may make a donation to the GCGL in lieu of your dues.**

#### APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Karilyn Mull	Ronalee Polad
Barbara Spottek	Ann Schoals
Jean Viele	Mary Sullivan
Donna Craft	

### UPDATE ON HOME GARDEN

I think I am in over my head. You can share your opinion with me. I have gone hog wild buying seeds. I hope they are all in but I know more are on back order. What shall I do? I have enough seeds to own a greenhouse and share with all of you.

I will start some of the seeds using the process of cold stratification. I need to hurry up on this as the weather looks like it is changing and I am planning on the change being more permanent the not. Other seeds will just be planted in the ground when the ground has warmed up and we are past the frost date(s) for this area.



(I am waiting on a few. Will have to order from another site)

Here are some resources from: ***HORTICULTURE The Art and Science of Smart Gardening.*** I thought some of you might like using these websites or books as you develop your garden or make changes. They are very simple to use.

<https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>

<https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder>

<https://www.wildflower.org/plants/>  
over 25,000 plants to search data base

[The Living Landscape](#) by Rick Darke and Douglas Tallamy

[Bringing Nature Home](#) and [Nature's Best Hope](#) by Douglas Tallamy

[Gardening for the Birds](#) by George Adams

Plants that produce abundant seed, how to save and propagate the seed and manage the garden:

[Plantiful](#) by Kristin Green

[Cultivating Chaos](#) by Jonas Reif, Christian Kress and Jurgen Becker

[The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden](#) by Roy Diblik

## GUESS THIS PLACE



No one found me. I am in the Healing Garden next to the Radiology Bldg at MSU on Service Rd. Come take a seat this summer.

## MGC NEWS

A one day meeting was held in March. The morning was devoted to information on our state association and how they are moving forward during C19 times. In the afternoon we were treated to two presentations. Our first presentation was on the topic of seeds. Learning how to harvest, care for and use seeds from year to year by Bevin Cohen. The second presentation was on Lavender was by Wynne Wright. Wynne provided us with good practical information on growing, caring and pruning lavender.

MGC is planning a wonderful conference for us via Zoom in June. Please check out the website [www.migardenclubs.org](http://www.migardenclubs.org). Dates are: June 1-3. The committee is working on presenters, meetings and of course great content for us to use in the future. In addition to this great conference we are in need of two (2) delegates for the meeting. They represent the club for election on state and district. Please let me know if you will be attending and could be a delegate. Joan Lenhard

## WEBSITES

Websites/Calendars to check for gardening events  
Capital Area Master Gardeners –  
[www.mgacac.wordpress.com](http://www.mgacac.wordpress.com)

Michigan Master Gardener Association –  
[www.michiganmastergardener.org](http://www.michiganmastergardener.org)  
Let's Garden Lansing – [lets gardenlansing.org](http://lets gardenlansing.org)

Allen Neighborhood Center –  
[www.allenneighborhoodcenter.org/exchange/](http://www.allenneighborhoodcenter.org/exchange/)

Michigan State University Horticulture Gardens -  
[https://www.canr.msu.edu/hrt/our\\_gardens/](https://www.canr.msu.edu/hrt/our_gardens/)

Michigan Volunteer Management System –  
[www.michigan.volunteersystem.org](http://www.michigan.volunteersystem.org)

Sixteen Sprigs Lavender Farm call 803-3081  
<http://www.sixteensprigs.org>  
Facebook Sixteen Sprigs Lavender Farm

National Garden Club  
[www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)  
username: member Password: conserve

Michigan Garden Club  
[www.migardenclubs.org](http://www.migardenclubs.org)  
username: Member Password: mgcgrow

District IIB  
<https://mgcdistrict2b.weebly.com/>  
password: 2bgardeners