

TWIGS

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

I would like to thank everyone for the help they have extended in the last few months. People making phone calls, providing items for our baskets, the annual mtg team getting ready for our upcoming mtg, members of the board getting material ready behind the scenes for voting, program and minutes. People sharing ideas to complete the schedule for our program book. We still have work to do but it has been a joy to see how people have jumped in and helped. **Thank you** to the many people who have helped when I have asked. I do appreciate your kindness.

You have noticed that you are receiving lots of info prior to a meeting. To increase our time for presentation and group work we are asking that you review this information prior to the meeting as we will not be going over this in length. If you have questions we will answer and keep the meeting moving forward. The intent is to have more time for presentations, visiting, and group meeting in areas of interest.

Our speaker, Emily Conway presented information on plant, prairie restoration. She currently is overseeing 30+ sites. This was most informative. She has a few more years left on her PhD and studies.

If you are a master gardener you have many options for education and soon volunteer hours in our gardens. Keep your eyes and ears open and your hands ready to garden. Joan Lenhard

HORTICULTURE

The signs of spring are all around us. This is a glorious time of year. We need to stop and enjoy even as we hurry to catch up before the heat of summer. Despite the work, we are all drawn to the beauty of early flowering trees and shrubs.



(Star Magnolia Barb A front yard)

My favorite tree is the star magnolia. For my yard this is the earliest ornamental tree to bloom, and one of the easiest to maintain. The prolific white flowers look so delicate, but I've had them survive windstorms, late snow and even sleet. My star magnolia is slightly sheltered beside my house, but it's at least 20 years old. The blossoms attract bees, and the thick leaves provide a good home for robins. The only care has been minimal pruning of low branches and occasional waterspouts, and removal of a tall branch that was rubbing on an eavestrough.

Across my driveway from the star magnolia is a dwarf weeping cherry tree. Mine has early white blossoms that cascade down the branches. This tree is only about 4 years old, but it's 5' height is as tall as it will grow. It gets an annual trimming to keep the weeping branches from touching the ground. While it's too low for birds to nest, they do perch on top. It also attracts bees. This is an early spring bloomer that adds to the show.



(Forsythia Barb A)

I can't forget my forsythia. The stems and buds make the shrub look yellow long before the blooms open. I know that some people dislike forsythia as messy or nearly invasive. Again, my forsythia is a very old cultivar and has "stayed in its lane" with no problems. The bright yellow reinforces my many daffodils.

I also have a 50-year-old Hopa crabapple tree. Since there are a number of Hopa crabapples on the market today, I assume that mine was a forerunner of newer species. The prolific deep pink flowers cover my tree at least through mid-May. Hummingbirds love these early blossoms before moving on to garden annuals and perennials. Again it's a survivor with minimal care or attention.

My list of favorite spring flowering trees and shrubs wouldn't be complete without flowering quince. The bright peach blooms are a wonderful addition to any yard. Mine was moved a few years ago to make room for more patio space. It has not been happy in the new location, so I intend to replace it this year.

This list of spring flowering trees and shrubs is so incomplete. This time of year, everyone adds to the wonderful beauty of spring. Some are much easier to live with than others. The choice depends on your preferences and growing conditions. I prefer a yard with a variety of trees and shrubs both visually and to keep plants healthy. Most insects and diseases are plant specific. If one plant has an occasional problem, it will be much less likely to spread to other species of plants than if a yard has several plants of the same variety.

In my yard the spring blooms emerge and overlap in rapid succession, along with an old MacIntosh apple tree, numerous daffodils, hellebores, followed by yucca, lilacs, peonies, iris, and so much more. My yard is just an ordinary yard, but somehow in spring the early blooms give it a touch of magic. It's hard to get anything done indoors except on very rainy days. I'm sure that each of you have favorite gardens scenes and blooms as we wish that spring could last all summer. Barb Amundsen

MAY ANNUAL MEETING

Join us at the Brookshire in Williamston. Get registered by making check out to GCGL for \$26.00 and send to Suz **and** call or email Linda Brownell your RSVP by Sat April 30th. Our meal choice is Chicken Marsala or Vegetarian. Be sure to let Linda know your choice. Write it on your check in the memo. We will end the year with reports from all committees. PLEASE bring three copies. This report

would include what happened at your committee and costs if you have any.

Our guest speaker is Nita Campbell. She is a wealth of information on herbs. She also is involved with the MGC Conference. The committee has worked hard getting our meeting ready for you. See you in Williamston. Joan Lenhard

MGC STATE CONFERENCE

This year the MGC State Conference is in our own backyard. That makes it a great deal to attend. The one-day conference is at the Crowne Plaza on Creyts Road. You only have the cost of the conference - no travel or lodging cost.

The conference has speakers on timely topics. The keynote speaker is Vince St. Marie from Windy Rock Nursery who will talk to us about pollinators. He will have his Plants with a Purpose available for sale.

Natalie Carmolli - will introduce Proven Winners' new shrubs for sun to shade along with an array of other Proven Winner plants. (She is also providing a Silent Auction Basket)

Paige Filice – MSU Cooperative Extension Paige specializes in “Gardening to Protect and Beautify Lakes, Rivers and Ponds”.

Pooh Stevenson – Owner of Owosso Organics and Photography Pooh will be talk about “Photography for Documentation and Pleasure.”

Suzannah Barrie – of Barriebeau Herb Farm, is a well-known herb grower in the Grand Rapids area. She uses herbs in many ways and will offer new ways to “Use Herbs in Your Kitchen.”

Merry Kim Meyers – “Conquering Scientific Names”.

Daedre McGrath - “MSU Trial Gardens What’s New This Year and Breeding Breakthroughs.”

Bring your checkbook, the baskets coming in for the Silent Auction are awesome. We have 19 different vendors with all types of merchandise from plants to bat guano.

There is also an awesome reception the night before, June 8, in the MSU Gardens. We are hosting so bone up on your MSU garden history and the Garden Club of Greater Lansing’s history and involvement in their creation. If you want to help out as a hostess, please let Ronnie know. (You will have to pay admission.)

Go to the website www.migardenclubs.org for more information and to register. All of the speakers and vendors are listed there. You can register for the June 8 reception, which is \$30 or just the Thursday Conference which \$115. Better yet, sign up for both for \$145. See you there. Ronalee Polad

BLUE STAR MEMORIAL

Spring is trying to arrive! Some perennials are starting to emerge, so that gives hope.

The committee is aiming to have Blue Star in shape by Memorial Day and that is coming up soon. Plans include replacing the rose bushes and thinning out the daisies. The upcoming work day for clean-up and maintenance will be announced soon.



(Frances Park Blue Star Memorial)

Thank you to Ellen Bloomer who has been our past chairperson but is now recovering from an injury. Your dedication to the Blue Star Memorial Garden is

appreciated and we wish you well with your recovery. Sue Kesti

SCOTT GARDENS

I used to get sad when I drove by Scott Sunken Garden and saw our statue wrapped up in tarps. Now I think it's a good idea that she doesn't have to look at all the dead stuff around her. These last few weeks are the hardest waiting to start gardening season. Depending on the weather, I'm hoping to schedule a clean-up time in a few weeks and then another time later on for planting. If we can get a good turnout, a few hours should get the garden ready to go. Planting is more spontaneous because of the unpredictable delivery of plants. It can't get much worse than last year's plant arrival. We get the leftover plants from the city's big order but what the contracted vendor provides is unpredictable. I hope we get at least a 24 hour notice to get ready. We could really use our club's "designers" to do a little pre-planning when we find out what's coming so we can reduce the time spent on "I don't know, where do you think it should go?"



(Scott Garden with statuary)

Our regular work day has been Wednesday mornings starting at 8:30 and lasting for about an hour. We have a few morning people who prefer this schedule. However, this season I'd like to add a late afternoon (4 pm?) work session. I'm not in town on Wednesdays until late afternoon and I've talked to a few people who would also prefer working later in the day. Hopefully both groups won't have to work every week. We could try

alternating to see if that's workable. I really am open to suggestions if another date or time would be better or make a difference on your participation. Please let me know your thoughts and if you'll be volunteering.

Looking forward to seeing everyone and starting this project back up again. Stay healthy -- we need you!
Daiva Devereaux

SPRING LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

On Sat 4/23 Ronnie, Suz, Renee, Sherry and Joan traveled to Mt Pleasant and participated in a workshop on leadership. The ideas generated from this small group put a fire under our new members. I find this exciting. Change is happening, change is coming, change can be expected. That message came through very clearly. Each round table of discussion with the questions brought numerous and creative ways in which to solve and think of answers and solutions to problems.

Discussion was about recruiting, mentoring, retaining and growing memberships. Ideas poured in. The GCGL was following some of those recommendations as they are happening around the country in all garden clubs. I was pleased that we are part of the movement for growing and retaining members.

Changing meeting times, have more experiences with hands on programs, communicate in multi-platforms, group ideas and actionable items together, provide more time for touring gardens, engage family, youth and change dues structure, change existing programs and services or find ways to revitalize the old stuff. These are many things we have talked about and some we are doing. This is an exciting time in our history. I look forward to those who are going to lead in the future. They have an abundance of energy and ideas. Let's find a way to encourage, mentor and recruit this new group of visionaries. Joan Lenhard