

# 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.

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### **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE**

This is my favorite time of the year. I can never get enough of the **Autumn Season**. The air is crisp, the skies are deep blue, the moons look brighter and bigger. The trees start the process of laying a carpet of color. Our fall plants shine with colors of reds, blues, oranges, yellows, greens and many shades in between. All of these colors on our plants and trees send us out to be “peepers.” We visit pumpkin, cider and apple fields/markets. We start making soups and stews. We clean out the last vestiges of our flower and/or vegetable gardens and finish canning or roasting. We wait for our “Indian Summer” hoping it lasts for a few weeks. Ahh, the sights, the sounds and smells of autumn bring great joy to me. My only wish is that it truly was Sept-mid Dec. Joan Lenhard

### **NOVEMBER MEETING**

This meeting will be brief. Please be on time so we may review minutes, address current business and proceed into making greens. Please pack your own lunch. Monday Nov 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **BOARD MTG**

Monday Nov 7<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30-10:30 @ GUMC. Bylaw and Constitution meeting at 10:30-11:00.

### **GREENS MARKET**

It's that time of year again! Swag & wreath workshops scheduled for 11/14 thru 11/18/22. Boxwood trees and other arrangements will be 11/21 thru 12/2/22. I arrive at 8:30 each morning, and we finish work at 3:30 PM.

Please look at your calendar and schedule as many work sessions as possible. I encourage members to come as early as possible. Many don't arrive till 10 or 11AM!

If each member will email their planned schedule to me, I will compile a schedule to give me an idea of how many workers to expect each day. Check the list of 'Tools and Supplies' I emailed earlier this week to be sure you have everything you need. Joanne Bauer

### **HORTICULTURE**

Tis the season for traditions and new ideas all coming at once. As I think about the end of October and the month of November, I can't help but think about pumpkins. We use them mainly from Halloween through Thanksgiving and before they give way to other choices. From jack-o-lanterns to pumpkin pie, pumpkin bread, pumpkin spiced lattes to pumpkin shaped candies, this definitely is a sign of the season.



Scientists believe that pumpkins originated in North America about 9000 years ago. The oldest pumpkin seeds have been found in Mexico and date back to somewhere between 7000-5550 BC. Additional ancient evidence of pumpkins has been found in Missouri (4000 BC) and Mississippi (1400 BC).

The name pumpkin originated from the Greek word for "large melon" which is "pepon." "Pepon" was translated by the French into "pompon." The English changed "pompon" to "pumpion." Pumpions didn't look anything like the fruit we have today. They were small, hard and bitter, but they also were nutritious and stored well so could be used in the cold winter months. This made them indispensable for Native Americans who used them as an important food staple to survive long, harsh winters.



Native Americans would grow pumpkins along riverbanks next to maize and beans, a planting technique that allowed the three crops to sustain each other. Corn served as the trellis upon which the beans could climb; beans were nourished by the sunlight and kept the corn stalks stable on windy days, while also nourishing their soil; and the pumpkins sheltered the corn's shallow roots and kept weeds from growing.

Early explorers of the New World took pumpkins back home to Europe and, around the mid-1500s, pumpkins were cultivated in England (pumpions), and France (pompons). Shakespeare referred to the "pumpion" in the *"Merry Wives of Windsor"*. American colonists changed "pumpion" into "pumpkin." The "pumpkin" is referred to in *"The*

*Legend of Sleepy Hollow"*, *"Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater"* and *"Cinderella"*.

Because medieval England had already been making "pyes", or pastries, pumpkin soon became a pie filling, and pumpkin pie made its debut in an English cookbook, in 1675. Early American colonists had their own version of pumpkin pie since they didn't have ingredients for crusts. They cut off the pumpkin top, removed the seeds, filled the cavity with honey, cream, eggs and spices and baked it in hot ashes. The result was somewhat like a custard or a crustless pumpkin pie.

Pumpkin pie was connected to Thanksgiving in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when a magazine editor, Sarah J. Hale, campaigned to make Thanksgiving a national holiday and published recipes—among them pumpkin pie—for the occasion.

Carving pumpkins for Halloween has been traced back to Irish folklore. There was a belief that small lanterns carved from turnips and potatoes could be used to ward off tortured, wandering spirits. In the New World, immigrants used the native pumpkins instead.

Over the years pumpkins became larger and eventually grew with more colors and sizes. Today 45 different varieties of pumpkin exist. There also are a wide variety of culinary, medicinal, and decorative uses for pumpkins. In parts of Central and North America the sap and pulp of pumpkins has long been used as a treatment for burns. Pumpkin seeds were also used by the Menominee people as a diuretic. Native Americans wove dried strips of pumpkins into mats.

We know that fall has come when the pumpkins are ripe. I suggest cutting off the top, removing, cleaning, and roasting the seeds; removing, and cooking the pulp for pie or bread; and using the shell to hold a fall arrangement. Whatever your use, enjoy your pumpkins while they are here. We only have them for these few short weeks. Barb Amundsen

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE BOOK & MEMBER UPDATES

Remember Ronnie sent out corrections via email for last month. Hope you have updated your program book.

Beulah has moved. She has moved into assisted living. Her mail is being forwarded.

## PUBLIC GARDENS –SCOTT & BLUE STAR MEMORIAL

The bees are buzzing even into Fall! Many of the new plantings from Spring continue to flourish as the Lansing Parks staff marked the Blue Star Memorial area for the planned expansion. There is no date given for the completion as Park personnel are managing multiple demands while understaffed.



The City Parks Dept. is committed to this project and I have confidence they will follow through. Thank you to the City of Lansing! Sue Kesti

## CHRISTMAS TEA

Mary Sullivan will host our annual tea. It is scheduled for 12:30pm to 3:30pm on Dec 12<sup>th</sup>. The committee will have a variety of teas on hand and a few goodies to go with it. We ask members to bring finger type foods. We hope you bring your favorite teacup or mug to “Cheer” in the Season. Please carpool where possible. Mary’s west facing windows look out on a little lake so we can see the call of winter. Please feel comfortable wearing a mask. Mark your calendar for a fun afternoon catching up with everyone. Mary Sullivan.

## OCTOBER FIELD TRIP

I was planning a get together for a **pumpkin, color, cider and apple get together**. I have been extremely busy and have not pulled this together. However, I am sharing my info so you can go see some **color, pick up some apples, get a pumpkin or gourd**. Enjoy.

In St Johns you have Philips Cider and Mill, across the street is Uncle Johns cider Mill. Barkham Creek Farms in Haslett (also Clearview Apple Orchard). From Fenton to Ann Arbor there are numerous places to explore. Go out look at the **color** and enjoy **a donut and cider too**. Joan Lenhard