

TWIGS

The Garden Club of Greater Lansing



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National Garden Club Central Region,
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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Sept., Oct., Nov., are my favorite months. The fresh and crisp air speak to me. It is screaming beautiful colors of orange, red, plums and gold. The smell of bonfires and roasted marshmallows, with the flavors of apple cider and donuts satisfies my tummy. It is a time of year that provides me great joy. I encourage you to take a drive to view the change in season. Even in the rain the colors look striking against dark or partly cloudy skies. Pop off to a cider mill, pick up pumpkins and gourds. We will have sun soon.



Brockway Mountain Keweenaw Peninsula

Some of our members have been very busy with garden projects. Ann S is attending Flower Show

School. She told us it is intense, well organized, lots of reading and a challenging test. I am sure we will have a new judge soon.



Hay that has been rolled with a colorful backdrop

Joanne, Jenny, Ann L, Nanette, Sherry, Renee, Ann S Sandy, Carol M, Ronnie, and I attended the D2B meeting in DeWitt. We heard from the MGC President about changing in our aging population. How are we going to do what needs to be done with dwindling resources? How will we be sustainable? How do we support clubs to meet the needs of our membership? These were just a few of her comments.

The two presenters were interesting. Our first presenter talked about the formation of Michigan. Our rock development, the bowl within, our glaciers carving out the home to our Great Lakes. Where

we will find some stones but not others. Our second presenter spoke about Proven Winners that are current or new in the line ups that we will see soon. This presentation was about the small changes that are happening in the development and research of plants.

Ann L coordinated the gathering of donations for our basket. It accumulated quite a bid process exceeding its listing costs. Thanks to all who contributed to the basket and Ann for facilitating the process.

The mums, baskets, centerpieces and vendors added to a wonderful day. I encourage you in the future to attend a District meeting. They are small and fun. Joan Lenhard

HORTICULTURE

This is the time of year when our gardens are finished for now and we have time to reflect and to look ahead. This is especially important as we have been developing a community garden in downtown Lansing.

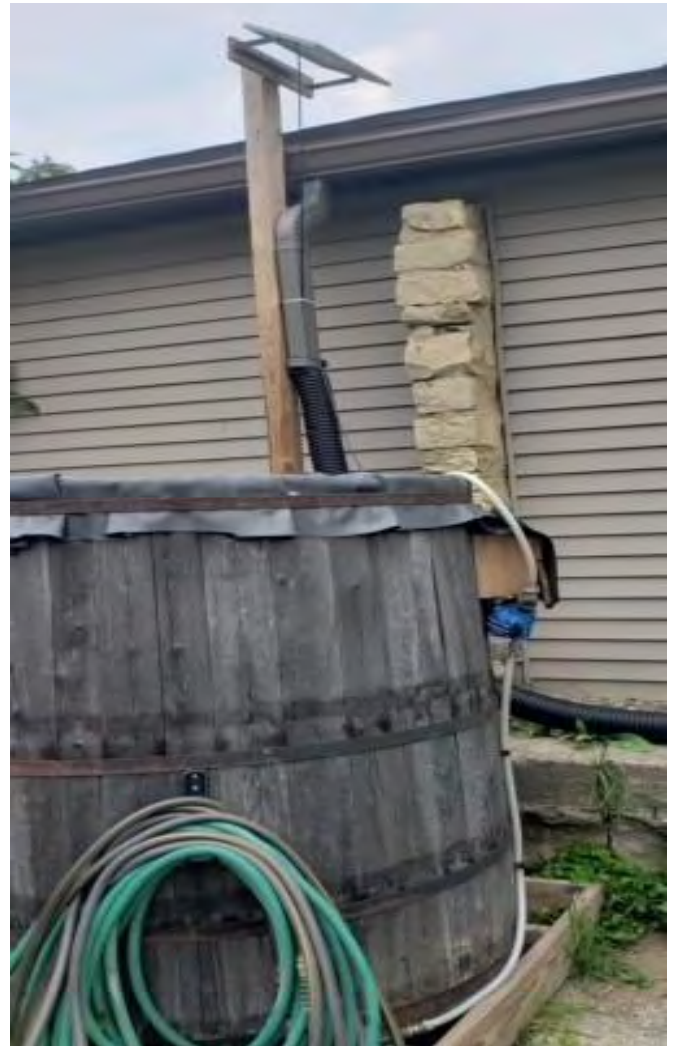
The First Presbyterian Church Community Garden is located about two blocks northwest of the Capital building, in what could be described as a food desert (a green space desert too). We started planning the garden in fall of 2019 and began what work we could do the following spring during the beginning of the pandemic.



View of the garden from the church parking lot.

The garden is in the back yards of two adjacent apartment buildings that back on the church parking

lot. The yards at one time had been used for parking and they were covered with broken asphalt, lots of weeds and miscellaneous debris. The properties had a new owner who signed an agreement with the church for us to develop a garden. Several of us worked with the City of Lansing Garden Project as we developed a plan and now oversee the project.



Rain barrel with solar panel on top

We started with a backhoe to level the surface and remove all visible clutter. Then we still felt uncertain about what remained in the soil, so we agreed that raised beds were the best solution. The level surface was completely covered with crushed limestone that was compacted to establish a clean surface for raised beds and walkways. We received a grant from the City of Lansing to develop green space and used that to purchase lumber and build raised beds. The result was 16 3'x8' raised garden beds, 2 double (3'x16') raised beds, and 4 3'x8' wheelchair accessible beds.

By spring of 2021 we began leasing beds for seasonal use. We learned (from the Garden Project) that gardeners needed to have a small investment in their beds so that they would keep working. We developed a contract for the gardeners to define expectations about what the church provides and what is expected for the gardeners. We charge \$15 for a 3'x8' bed. At the end of the season the fee is refunded to the gardener if they maintain their own beds and clean them out at the end of the season. This also makes them eligible to return for the next growing season.

We have a very old wine barrel that was donated for our use to develop a rain barrel using water from a new downspout on an adjacent building. We also had donations of two picnic tables, and two additional benches, which are used by gardeners and members of the community. These have added to the ambience of the garden.

Summer 2023 was our third year and probably the most successful. We used three beds to grow produce for the church's food pantry, established a picking bed for anyone to pick and sample the fresh veggies (and to keep samplers out of leased beds), and a few beds that were used by Northwest Initiative for their mobile food truck. Remaining gardens were leased both by church members and community residents. Even so, every year has its own challenges. A mother rabbit hopped up into one of our beds and gave us a litter of baby bunnies. One bed had aphids which were contained before they spread. We also had wasps building a nest under the top edge of one of our beds.

Our accomplishments feel very satisfying. Our old wooden wine barrel had continued to spring leaks over the last couple of years. Finally, we were able to find a liner for the barrel that is supple enough to hold the water. For the size of the barrel, we use a pool liner. This year's success is flexible enough to conform to the inside of the barrel without cracking (and leaking) as in the last few years. We also added a submersible pump with a solar powered battery to keep water at the bottom of the rain barrel from becoming stagnant.

Most of our gardeners indicate that they want to return. We're proud of our achievements and look forward to the years (and challenges) ahead. Barb Amundsen

(Content Redacted)

TREASURER

John McCarthy is our new treasurer. I am truly thankful for this help. Remember John works and will not be at mtgs. **THEREFORE**, before a mtg send questions to John, Ronnie and myself so we can get answers. This step is very IMPORTANT. Thank YOU.

BOARD MTG

Monday Nov 6 @ 9:30 @ the church.

CLUB MTG

Mon Nov 13 @ 9:30 @ the church. A brief review of minutes, Q&A then workshop.

Greens Market workshop is the program for the week. Remember to bring your own lunches.



Greens arrangements

MEMBER UPDATES

Tootsie had ankle surgery on Mon Oct 1st. Hopefully she is now pain free.

(Content Redacted)

Greens Market

Thursday, Oct 26 9-3 at the church is a workshop. Picks for decorating trees and the base making process for making the swags. We hope everyone will come for however long you are able to work. Be sure to bring your tools and your lunch. There will be no greens present, so members with allergies to greens can come also. Hope to see you there.

*** If you know of anyone who can help with set-ups or take downs, clean-up please take a moment to ask for their help. We need some able-bodied people for these activities. ***

A detailed list was sent to every member of **ALL** set-up, workshop, take down and clean-up times. Please use that as reference for the help that is needed. You can also email Joanne for questions or concerns.

An abbreviated schedule is as follows @ the church:

Sun 11/12 is set-up 4-6 pm

Mon-Fri 11/13-17 Swags and Wreaths 8:30-3:30 with clean-up on the 17th.

Fri/Sat 11/24-25 Boxwood collect and wash at MSU

Mon-Fri 11/27-12/1 Boxwood Trees and Fresh Arrangements. Clean-up and set-up for sales in the PM of Dec 1.

Sat Dec 2 8:00 am set-up and ready for sales at 9-12. Clean-up 12-4 pm.



Boxwood Trees

SCOTT SUNKEN GARDEN

Members had dug some of the plants and shared at the Oct. mtg. This garden will soon be put to bed.

BLUE STAR MEMORIAL

Construction for the rose garden presented on going challenges to access Blue Star, but Ellen and Sue worked at it!

Thanks, Sherry for your efforts to eradicate the thistle! We will continue that effort in the Spring. This garden has been put to bed! Sue Kesti

EDUCATION & CONFERENCE

Day of Sharing Trinity Church, Tue Oct 24, 9:30-4:15. Registration open. Review the flier on MGC.

UPCOMING FLOWER SHOWS

Holly Jolly Flower Show, Youth and Adult Winter Flower Show for District 2B. Best Western, 2209 University Park Drive, Okemos, MI.



Canyon River Falls Upper Peninsula