

TWIGS

The Garden Club of Greater Lansing



Member of: Michigan Garden Clubs Inc. District 2B,
National Garden Club Central Region,
National Garden Club Inc.

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The end of the year for the garden club is busy. We need to make sure we have a budget that the membership can vote for operations in the upcoming year. A group of folks is preparing for the Annual Meeting which is a more formal meeting. This includes ordering linens, getting flowers, ordering food, getting desserts and favors. In addition, finding someone to install the current board. We also look forward to a great presentation. We scored high on all points. What a wonderful team of people helping to put this meeting together. **Thank you.**

After the installation we had a special presentation for Ronalee. She was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award, from MGC. This award was presented by Nancy Ryan, the current President of MGC. I loved the fact we were able to keep this information from her. She was quite surprised.

Jean Kaufmann of the Iris Society gave a spectacular presentation. Many of us learned so much about the care and maintenance of irises and how many types let alone varieties. Jean has opened her garden for a tour or two. I know I am looking forward to viewing rows and rows of irises.

Reflecting back on the year we have had diverse presentations. Successful teas in both the summer

and winter. Our GM was a money maker. We provided more philanthropic donations to many groups. We have already started to plan the next year of meetings and events. Still waiting to hear on a few speakers. Program books out late summer.



(Table design for Annual Meeting)

We are a busy club. Hosting Landscape Design School and start planning a Flower Show for our club and district. Never a dull moment.

Nancy Ryan, President of MGC, identified that our club as small as we are in numbers is supportive of ventures within our club and throughout MGC. We are a MIGHTY CLUB.

(Content Redacted)

MEMBER UPDATES

Ann Schoals is fast at work after completing course 1 & 2 of Flower Show School. Ann has entered the show in Holland. This is a very large show.

HELP PLEASE the team from Scott Gardens need additional help in the coming week. It is prepping to get the garden ready for Memorial Day. You will be doing some weeding and planting for the beds. Please contact Sue K., as she is filling in for Sherry who is not available.

APRIL MTG MISSING ITEMS - Ann Schoals had a few watering cans at the April meeting and they are now missing. **PLEASE** see if by chance you took one home, or might have stored them somewhere. The storage room has been checked but if they were tucked away, we would not know. **HELP**.

I am happy to report that members of our club who took LDS have passed. I am sure we will see many of the same faces in September.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual meeting was well designed by the team. Nancy Ryan, our state president was on hand to install the Board. In addition, Ronalee was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Ronnie is extremely active in many committees and chairs many committees since she joined the club. Her leadership and assistance with technology kept us connected throughout C19. Her vast knowledge and connections have helped all of us at some point or another with the garden club. She continues to provide support, knowledge and leadership to all of

us. It was an award that was overdue. Thank you is not adequate when telling her how much she has provided this club.

In addition, to her role in our club, Ronalee is also the treasurer for our District 2B, and the state association. Her leadership in those roles has been very impactful. She also sits on the Steering Committee for the District and MGC. Ronnie looks to improve processes that streamline the service, program or computer technology.

Ann Lipkowitz, our host provided a great space for meeting. Ann also helped make the arrangements for our catering. The rest of the team assisted with floral design. The design chosen was to work off the creations made in our April Ikebana session. What a great complement to our presenter Cristy Bennett.



(Mary Sullivan, Sandy Oleson, Ann Schoals, Jenny Bond, Sherry McCue, Carol Miller)

The presentation of roses identified members at 5, 10, 15, 35 and 40 year increments: 5 year Carol Miller, Mary Sullivan, Sherry McCue and Sandra Flanigan. 10-year Sandy Oleson and Barbara Spottek. 15-year Jenny Bond. 35 years Ann Schoals. 40-years Leigh Kussro.

HORTICULTURE

Spring is my favorite time of year. There is a wonder to seeing leaves emerge on our plants, the bees and butterflies, new growth, buds, flowers and so much more. These transformations that take place before our eyes bring a somewhat magical quality that we all appreciate.

Spring is also by far the busiest time of year in our yards and gardens. Everything seems to happen and

needs attention at the same time. For most of us the magic of spring brings a cost of time, effort, and a need for creativity. I want my garden beds to look clean, plants flourishing and everything in its place. In other words, I want the impossible.

Over the years I have learned that my tasks need to be prioritized. This helps me to stay on track. It also breaks the huge project of my lawn and gardens down into small, achievable steps. I can cross off small steps as they are finished, which at least on paper makes me feel accomplished. My spring cleanup and garden catch up sometimes can last well into June, but that's ok if the most important projects are crossed off.

My first step is to clean up the path to my front door, followed by a very visible perennial garden beside the driveway. These are established garden areas, but need to have mulch worked into the soil, weeds and plant debris removed to compost, and either purchases or at least a note about any bare spaces (plants that didn't come back or that grew away from their original location.)

After these first steps, we move to the front yard which has a shade garden under an old maple tree, with numerous hostas, bright yellow corydalis, woodland poppies and other shade perennials. While the cleanup process is the same, this is a larger area but somewhat manages itself. We remove a few weeds and add mulch, but there is relatively little change from year to year.

From there we move to the back yard. Since I have limited mobility, the plants on and around my deck are especially important. (I use a walker and need to stay on level surfaces). I grow veggies in large patio pots which need an annual layer of fresh soil and some compost each year, and of course new plants. We also add geraniums in patio pots for color and texture.

Outside of the deck there is a pollinator patio garden. Despite our best efforts, lots of mulch and good plant care, this area could be weeded every week. Most likely the birds and insects bring and drop seeds as they visit. We can also see that some of the good pollinator plants, like bee balm and cone

flowers, have invasive qualities and spread very easily. Every year we need to remind the plants to stay where they're planted by removing the extra unwanted "weeds". Remember that a weed is a plant out of place!!!

Remaining gardens wait their turn to be cleaned and trimmed. Usually, the largest and last area to be attacked is a fence line between my neighbor's large unfriendly dog and my back yard. This has been a difficult garden to maintain. It's a very long, narrow garden bed that is backed by a 5' tall fence. Every year we add more ornamental grasses and perennials as we continue to experiment with plant combinations that require relatively little care. So many plants that look great when they're blooming do not fill empty spaces when only their foliage remains.

For each of these gardens we also string soaker hoses that attach to hose timers on outdoor faucets. As I mentioned earlier, our spring cleanup usually lasts until about the middle of June. As a ritual of spring, we enjoy it. Unfortunately, it sometimes feels like we're never finished!!! At least we always do finish to enjoy a couple of months before the chaos of fall clean up begins. Barb Amundsen



(Blue Star Memorial Garden)

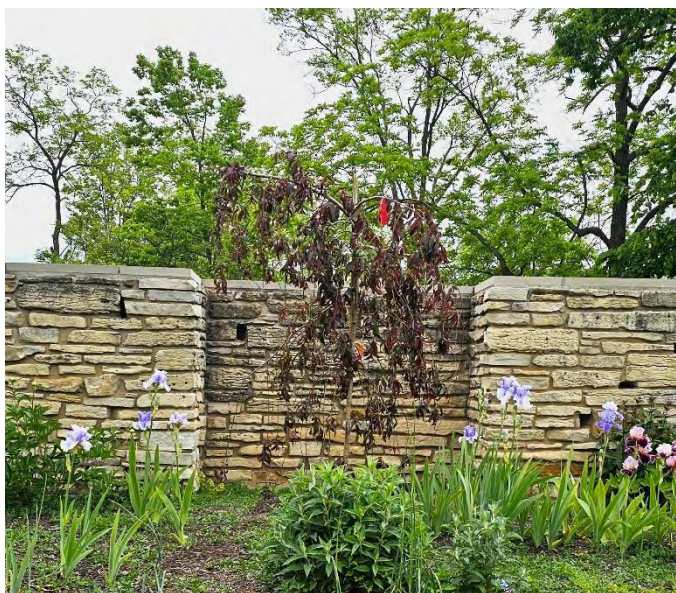
GARDENS

Many eyes are watching the Blue Star Memorial Garden! Ellen Bloomer and Linda Sue Sulzdori live close to Francis Park and update the committee if attention is needed. With attention this garden is shaping up. New committee members met and

reviewed the current sketch of plantings. The Parks staff recently removed old growth from last year's plantings so we will see blossoms before too long. We will place small flags in the plantings for upcoming Memorial Day as we did last year.

Scott Sunken Garden has been tended to as well. However, they have had a few rain days. The team is working hard to shape up the space and get flowers to continue the design development.

The garden was vandalized and a search for a new sculpture has taken place. We are fortunate that we found the same sculpture. This time the Parks department will affix the sculpture. In addition, the team is looking to add a small ornamental tree to further compliment the garden. This will be an event for our Arbor Day committee. The tree has been planted. Starting the garden care got off to a rocky start but is now being rectified.



(New tree at Scott – dedication for Arbor Day to come later)

TREASURER

The operation budget was presented and passed for our upcoming year. An audit review was done for the previous 3 years. All accounts are in balance.

BOARD MTG

Our next board meeting will be in Aug. Look for updates throughout the summer.

CLUB MTG

Our next club meeting is Sept. Look for updates throughout the summer.

REGIONAL INFORMATION

MGC State Conference is June 10-11 in Bay City. This popular conference is going to be educational and full of fun. We have a few members who will be in attendance. Reports will follow.

NGC Project Pathway of Success and how clubs, the district and the state can participate.

Central Region Convention is at O'Fallon, IL October 17-19, 2024

National Garden Club's, Inc. Annual Convention is in Denver, CO, June 2-5, 2024

UPCOMING FLOWER SHOWS

July 18-20 The Garden Olympics, Spring Lake.

Sept 21 YesterYear - Meridian Garden Club.

<https://meridiangardenclub.weebly.com>

LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL - Course 1

The first of four courses in the Landscape Design School was held April 17th and 18th at the Trinity Church in Lansing, hosted by our local Lansing Garden Club. Speakers included **Timothy Banfield, PLA, ASLA**, a Licensed Landscape Architect and Residential Builder; **Leah Knapp, Professor of Biology and Biology Program Director**, The University of Olivet; and **Nancy Lewis, Master Gardener and Naturalist**. The program was excellent. Tons of information was presented so by the end of the second day, our minds were saturated.

We learned about the history of landscape architecture where we discovered where some of our ideas and practices originated. Our Washington D.C. Mall, for example, was patterned after the Palace of Versailles. **Fun Fact: Gingko** is the oldest surviving tree species, the sole survivor of an ancient group of trees dating back to before the dinosaurs.

One of the more important concepts we learned from Tim is **FORM** follows **FUNCTION**. This means the first thing to determine is how a space will be

used. Will it be for relaxation, production (vegetables/fruits), flowers/flower cutting, activities, wildlife habitat, or perhaps have multiple uses? It's an essential concept that has forced me to reevaluate my own yard. Tim also spoke about the elements and principles of design, use of color, how to create a site plan, and developing a landscape garden plan.

His presentation about designing for the environment was particularly interesting and had us considering the sustainability of a plan in order to protect the ecosystem and maintain its natural function. To facilitate its longevity, a good plan meets the current needs without adversely affecting its future use...something to think about when we're considering replacing an entire lawn with a pollinator friendly garden. He discussed the importance of using the resources of a site efficiently, to consider a site's characteristics including structures, soil composition, sun, wind, and water, to work with these features, and to consider maintenance.

There was some discussion on the value of vegetable gardening, which Tim deemed impractical. However, a number of participants (mostly from our garden club) were quick to point out the benefits of home-grown produce.

Leah's passionate presentations on ecosystems were filled with fun facts and information about our world and how the earth's rotation, air movement, and water currents influence the climate on land, creating global habitats. Ecosystems in our yards are considered microhabitats but can be manipulated. She explained how abiotic (nonliving) and biotic (living) factors influence the species in an ecosystem. **Interesting fact:** She told us that fertilizer favors aggressive species and recommended amending the soil with *mycorrhizae spores*. I caution against using fish fertilizer unless you wish to attract raccoons.

She discussed plant/animal interactions, explained how plants defend themselves, and reviewed the methods they use to pollinate their flowers and disperse their seeds. It was interesting to learn how to tell which pollinator would be attracted to what

shape of flower. She mentioned that hummingbirds don't smell and used sight to locate food which was true until a 2021 National Science Foundation study discovered they did indeed smell and used the sense to both find food and alert them to danger. **Fun fact:** All aphids are females and reproduce by parthogenesis (no sperm required).

Using her yard as an example, Nancy presented our final talk concerning xeriscape garden principles. Some guidelines she provided to reduce water usage included mowing turf 3-4" high and mulching appropriately. She also offered examples on how to retain water in a landscape and encouraged us to use native plants which are best adapted to our climate. She urged us to avoid applying **phosphorus** which is very detrimental to our waterways. It's restricted for use on Michigan lawns but is often present in plant fertilizers. To determine if it's present in a fertilizer, look for the row of three numbers on the container and make sure that the middle number is **ZERO**.

This was a wonderful educational two-day seminar, complete with the excitement of a tornado warning that forced us to shelter in the interior hallways. Linda Sue Salzdori

IRIS

Jean Kaufmann is having an open house to view the fields of Iris. It is Sat & Sun 5/25-26, btwn 1-4. You can place orders and pick-up in July after the dig. 5140 Cornell Rd., Okemos. Long winding narrow drive.

GREENS MARKET DAY

A summer work group is scheduled for Mon 6/24. They will meet at the church, learn about bows, pine cone tying, and make the picks for the trees. Please email Joanne or Renee with your intentions to come. It would be nice to have about 5-10 people on hand to learn and practice. Jean Veile will give direction and demonstrate the bow making.