

TWIGS

The Garden Club of Greater Lansing Newsletter

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The New Year brings chances to look forward and examine new opportunities. On a personal level, there are so many things I want to accomplish with my yard but maybe I should look at something small to start. With the upcoming Michigan Garden Club Annual Meeting on June 4, herbs came to mind. My herb garden could be improved. Nothing new has been done there for too long. I want to grow more herbs and that means I need to examine my herb garden and see what I already have. Should I divide and share what I already have or start over? Can I improve what I have? What do I want to add? Last year I grew some herbs on the front porch to avoid the deer grazing. Can I improve that effort?

Our GCGL theme is "Learn, Share, Grow" (page 8 of our handbook). Our programs present learning opportunities. We share what we learn by inviting others to our programs and maintaining gardens in the community. Sharing our knowledge with each other and the community enables us to grow. What a beneficial cycle! What new opportunities await you in 2020? Sue Kesti

HOW CAN I HELP?

There are many areas to be involved in and help in the upcoming months and some of these require planning now. Examples: The upcoming State Garden Club meeting in June is looking for a committee and chair for centerpiece design. Basket for silent auction at the State meeting: It does not need to be one person to gather items

and create a basket. It is fun when this is shared! Let Sue, Ronnie or Joan know if you can work in either capacity.

Hostesses for the March Flower Show: an email has been sent to the membership for an opportunity to sign up before the February meeting, but you can still sign up then. This is fun and you learn a lot during your shift. Invite someone to share this time with you! Let Sue know if you have questions.

Exhibit at the March Flower Show. If you are reluctant to exhibit, at least go and visit the flower show (hostess). You may see that you could exhibit next year! See the schedule available at the February membership meeting.

If you have any questions, would like to get involved but not sure where to start PLEASE talk to Sue K., Ronnie P., or Joan L. We would love to see many familiar faces trying new adventures this year. Your help is needed and appreciated. Sue Kesti

HORTICULTURE

Since Christmas I have a new "toy" to share. My family collectively gave me an aero-garden for Christmas and it's starting to grow. I truly doubt that it will ever save any trips to the grocery store or on-line orders, but I'm beginning to grow a salad and it's fun especially in winter!!

There are several sizes and many choices of aero-

gardens. Mine is about 1ft in diameter and holds six plants at a time. This is a very contained form of a hydroponic system. There is a base that regularly needs refills of non-softened water and plant food. The surface area has openings for six "pods" where the plants grow. Right now my "garden" is growing herbs. These came as a boxed unit. Each pod is filled with growing medium and this unit was already filled with seeds. I also have a box (and obviously can buy more) of non-specific pods with growing medium ready for me to insert seeds that I choose.



Each pod is set into a hole in the base (so that the bottom of the pod is in the water and plant food). The top of the pod is covered by a small plastic cup until the plants germinate and grow to just below the top of the cup. Once they reach that height, the plastic cup is removed and set aside to grow new plants later.

There is a light (series of bulbs) of the same size as the pot diameter and that can be raised or lowered to keep the light approximately 6 inches above the plants. The light is on a timer so that it automatically turns on for a set amount of time

depending on what is being grown. Then it turns off for several hours for the growing plants to rest. When we set this up it started on my kitchen counter, but the light is so bright that we quickly moved my aero-garden to a side table in my family room. It's slightly behind a large Christmas cactus to soften the light for the room.

The plants have everything they need for growth: water, light, air circulation, and nutrients. The temperature is controlled by the light, the water which circulates with a quiet motor, and my house temperature. Regardless of the temperature, my rooms are in the range that plants will easily grow.

After the first two weeks, my aero-garden has basil that is an inch and a half high, with leaves that are each approximately ½ inch in diameter. That was the first plant to germinate. The last one, parsley has only been visible for a few days. The parsley is now the only one that still needs the plastic cup on top. Once I'm more used to the system and caring for it, I plan to switch out a couple of less used herbs for lettuce or other salad greens.

I usually have had limited success in trying to keep herbs going in the house. Other than watering and adding plant food, the only other task is to keep pruning the plants so that they remain approximately the same height. This is to accommodate the height of the light for maximum growth.

Admittedly this is just a small way to bring "green" into my house and to keep going through these cold months. Also I'm sure it will add very little oxygen to my air. However it is a good way to enjoy extra "house plants" that require very little work. And garden fresh salads from my family room sound delicious. Barb Amundsen

GREENS MARKET WORKSHOPS

I am happy to report Greens Market workshops and sales went well in 2019. Beginning with Decorative picks for Boxwood Trees in summer through Swags, Wreaths, Boxwood Trees, Kissing Balls and Fresh Arrangements in November and

December. All workshops were well attended by capable and hardworking members.

Swags, roping and fresh greens sold out before the end of the sale. It is good to have some things remaining for members to buy at reduced prices. And, we like to have items to take to members who are no longer able to participate in Greens Market. Some of our larger fresh arrangements that were not taken were given homes at Grace and Bethlehem Lutheran churches for their decorations. Some members took the rest to nursing homes.

Many thanks to all members who were able to participate in Greens Market. Joanne Bauer

UPCOMING EVENTS

Greater Lansing Orchid Show 2/22-23 Plant Soil and Science Bldg. MSU

Wildflower Conference 3/1-2
www.wildflowersmich.org

Lansing Garden Show 3/12-15 MSU Pavilion

MEMBERSHIP

Dues are once again payable in order to assure that your name is included on the membership roster in our new year book. Thanks to the many members who gave me their dues checks at the January meeting, we are already over 1/3 of members who have paid. The Board has agreed to hold dues at \$26 for regular members, and \$36 for associates. Barbara Lowes

MEMBER UPDATE

Long time member Beulah Voorheis has made the move to Saginaw to be closer to family. This has been a tough decision but one in the making for awhile. With Two Men and a Truck in tow Beulah settled into a senior living center. So far she is adjusting and has said the food is pretty good. Beulah has been a member for 33 years. During those years she attained Master Gardener and managed Scott Historical Sunken Garden for many of those years. Her attention to detail made this little garden a GEM in the city of Lansing.

Beulah was also involved with many activities in the club. She was the Horticulture chair, served on many committees and flower shows. Her talents were many. Reba Torongo



(Card design led by Ronnie Polad center, right-Suz Burger, Deb Albert, Sue Kesti, Susan Epple, Sandy Oleson, Sharon Drake, Daiva Devereaux).

CORN PROJECT

The 2020 Corn Project of the Garden Club of Greater Lansing (GCGL) is under way. GCGL partners with Van Atta's Greenhouse and Flower Shop to provide 3" soil filled pots and seeds to kindergartners and first graders in the greater Lansing area. This project fosters future gardeners and promotes a love of nature. It is one of the many programs that is funded by our annual greens market.

This is the 41st year that the Garden Club of Greater Lansing will be presenting their Corn Project. It was started in 1979 by the late Mae Burgess with just 7 schools in Lansing. Last year we served 28 schools and over 3000 students from Potterville to Haslett. This year's co-chairs, Sandy Oleson and Sherry McCue, are busy contacting schools and gathering supplies. At this time 674 students will be receiving seed.

This year's delivery date is Tuesday, April 14. There will be sign up for volunteer drivers at the February club meeting. You can team up with another member making the day twice as much

fun. Please sign up with Sandy Oleson or Sherry McCue. Drivers are needed on Tuesday April 14th.

MGC ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 2020

Please mark your calendars for June 4th! Our district is hosting the Michigan Garden Clubs Annual Convention. It will be held at the Crowne Plaza on Creyts Rd. in Lansing. Our club will be making arrangements for the tables for lunch. We need a team of people who will take charge and make the arrangements for 25 tables. With a team in place this will be a fun adventure for everyone involved. As plans progress I will need additional help. All hands on deck to help with this major event!! Thanks for your help in advance.
Ann Schoals