

# TWIGS

## THE GARDEN CLUB OF GREATER LANSING NEWSLETTER

MEMBER OF: MICHIGAN GARDEN CLUBS INC.,

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The April membership meeting has been canceled. We have entered a new phase of life. Community health and safety has become a priority for us all rather than just the professionals. There is an uncertainty for everyone.

Events and news updates are changing hourly but we can weather this and even savor some of this time to get outside and walk the neighborhood, listen to the birds, look at our own gardens. As a community we can emerge stronger.



(Display at Flower Show by Ronalee Polad)

Most of us can accept change and be flexible. In time, we go beyond the familiar stages such as denial, anger, etc. Some have arrived at acceptance and look to the future when we can return to a familiar routine and freedom to go about activities we enjoy.

One thing most gardeners turn to in the winter months is planning our gardens/spaces, looking

through magazines, starting seeds, finding new plants or vegetables. Our season for planning and looking is extended. What are your plans? Can you order seeds? Have you already planted cold weather crops?

Gardeners are also nurturing people. We can join community efforts to help. There are many who are doing for others like preparing meals, shopping and delivering. Phone someone to verify if they need anything or just to chat and brighten the day for both of you.

What are you doing for yourself? Are you using this time to allow yourself time for naps? Maybe read a new book? Get outdoors, listen to the birds sing and explore how nature is still moving toward Spring? Looking forward to our next time together! Sue Kesti.

### HORTICULTURE

The robins are back, snow crocus and snowdrops are in bloom, Buds are swelling fast on early bulb plants and shrubs, and the days are longer. What can possibly go wrong – and then there's coronavirus. One good thought for gardeners is that we often have wished for more time to spend in our gardens. Perhaps this year we'll find that since so many other activities have been curtailed or canceled. Gardens aren't quarantined, and they give us a great place to focus our energies. There is good yard work that can be done now. Just don't plant anything except trees or shrubs (or indoor/outdoor pots) until the frost is totally out

of the ground and there is enough warmth in the air and soil to keep plants healthy. Around the middle to end of May is usually the best time to plant depending on the specific plant and how fast the soil warms.



(Sue Kesti and Ann Schoals preparing Low Profile Design at the Garden Show)

Despite the fun of welcoming early signs of spring, my suggestion is that we don't let ourselves get too tired. That tends to make us more susceptible to illness and we certainly don't need that this year. Another suggestion is that we plan our visits to garden centers when they might be less busy - just after they open in the morning, during the dinner hour, etc. You might need to drive past a couple to times to decide when there are fewer cars in the parking lots.

This is a good time to prune shrubs. Once you can see the leaf and/or flower buds, you can clean up dead branches more easily. You shouldn't prune early flowering branches until after the plants have bloomed, but there is no reason that we can't manage obvious problems. Look for branches that have broken or those that are not developing buds as the rest of the plant is doing. At the same time the structure of the plant is easier to see before it is totally leaved out. Remove branches that adversely affect the shape of the plant or mark them to remove after flowering.

Early spring is also a good time to clean up winter's "interest". I always leave plants with seeds, such as Echinacea (cone flowers) for the birds. I also leave grasses just for the texture they provide. By now those plants have served their purpose.

A spring task that I always enjoy is to check my lists and notes to review both the good and the

problems from last year's gardens. Are problem plants coming up? Which plants have spread? Was the spread expected or will that create a problem? Which plants will need to be moved? Is space available for them or will that require other changes? Where will I put the new plants I've ordered? Do I dare buy more??

It is important to keep some mulch on plants at least until after Easter. The mulch is protecting plant roots until the ground gets warmer. However it is also important to loosen soil and remove dense mulch so that there is air flow to the roots as plants come out of dormancy. Spring rains can penetrate the mulch but dense mulch (such as last fall's leaves) will hold that moisture around the roots which can cause root rot.

An additional challenge is to keep ourselves patient while we wait for consistently warmer weather (nights too). It becomes such a temptation to jump ahead and try to do May and early June tasks in April. Try planting bulbs in a pot to enjoy indoors before moving them outside. Force a branch or two and enjoy them in a vase. Most of all working in our gardens can help to keep us healthy. Barb Amundsen



## FLOWER SHOW

A lot of work was put into the IIB Flower and Garden Show. People were checking in, some layout was still being addressed when the news came the show would be canceled.

(Miniature Jenny Bond)

This was a shock and so disappointing, but very important for the health and welfare of everyone. The silver lining was judging would take place. With the judges on-site in the afternoon, the judging process lasted a few hours.

When completed people were able to take their entry and go home. This was sad as many people

worked long hours to pull together another fantastic show.

Here are entries by The Garden Club of Greater Lansing and there is a video on our Facebook page of most of the show. You can also check out website for pictures. The District IIB Educational Display by Ronalee Polad and the IIB Steering Committee, Blue Ribbon and Educational Award; A Petite Design 5" by Barb Amundsen, White Ribbon; A Petite Design 8" by Jenny Bond, Red Ribbon; Botanical Arts Photography by Ronalee Polad, Blue Ribbon and Joan Lenhard, White Ribbon; Horticulture by Linda Norwood, a Blue Ribbon and a Yellow Ribbon; A Traditional American Design by Joan Lenhard, Red Ribbon; Parallel Design by Joan Lenhard, Yellow Ribbon; Spatial Thrust Design by Jenny Bond, Red Ribbon, Special Award, District Director's Design Award; Low Profile Design by Sue Kesti, Yellow Ribbon and Ann Schoals, White Ribbon. Well done everyone! This show gave us something to think about for September. Take time and look at the pictures and video. Ronalee Polad.

### ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual May Meeting will be held at Brookshire Inn and Golf Club, 205 W. Church Street, Williamston MI 48895. RSVP by May 1st, 2020. Payment of \$27.00 to the Garden Club of Greater Lansing. The April meeting is canceled so send your check to Barb Lowes.

On Monday, May 11th enter the West Banquet entrance. If you have any dietary restrictions please let Barb Spottek know, as the manager said she would be able to arrange for your request. Looking forward to a great meeting.

Chairs for the various committees should think about their reports. Remember to bring 2 copies for our records. **Stay tuned as this event may change.** Barbara Spottek-co chair,.

### LAST CALL FOR DUES

Our membership renewals now stand at 80%, so if you're in the 20% not paid yet, please put your check in the mail to me ASAP. If you're unsure as

to whether you've paid or not, just check your checkbook register. We'd sure hate to leave your name out of our much anticipated new yearbook. Barb Lowes

### MARCH MEETING at VAN ATTA's

Stephanie Hahn presented on Native Plants. Stephanie pointed out that our environment is not static. That plants evolve and change adapting to the environment. Stephanie talked about the differences between species and cultivars. Echinacea purpurea is the species, but cultivars of that plant are grown for specific traits.



Benefits of native perennials once established require less water, care and maintenance. Leaving seed heads on during winter months provide interest and feed birds.

Stephanie talked about the importance of understanding your soil, sun, shade and wooded area. In other words, the environment in which you would develop and plant.

Stephanie identified many natives she likes and would use in a garden. In a sunny area: milkweed, switch grasses, asters, butterfly weed and hyssop. In a wetland or dappled sun area plant: liatris, lobelia, iron weed, iris and hibiscus. In a shaded or edge of the woodland area: bleeding hearts, snake root, wild ginger and trillium (if you can get them legally). This was not an exhaustive list but provides people with a mix of plants that provide seasonal interest, feeds our insects, adds color and texture.

We received a handout that gave us information on native trees, shrubs and perennials. If you are interested in this handout please let me know. We will try to get it on our website. Joan Lenhard

## CORN PROJECT

The Corn Project delivery date is Tuesday, April 14. Sandy Oleson and Sherry McCue are in communication with VanAtta's and following closely what is taking place with our schools. **Stay tuned as this event may change.**

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Ronalee Polad	Barbara Spotttek
Ann Schoals	Mary Sullivan
Donna Craft	Karilyn Mull

## MGC STATE ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 2020

We have many members of the IIB region working towards our State Annual Meeting. Please remember that I will be in need of assistance as time gets closer to the event. I look forward to this group helping out. **Stay tuned as this event may change.** Ann Schoals



(Horticulture entry into the Flower Show)

## WEBSITES

Websites/Calendars to check for gardening events  
Capital Area Master Gardeners –  
[www.mgacac.wordpress.com](http://www.mgacac.wordpress.com)

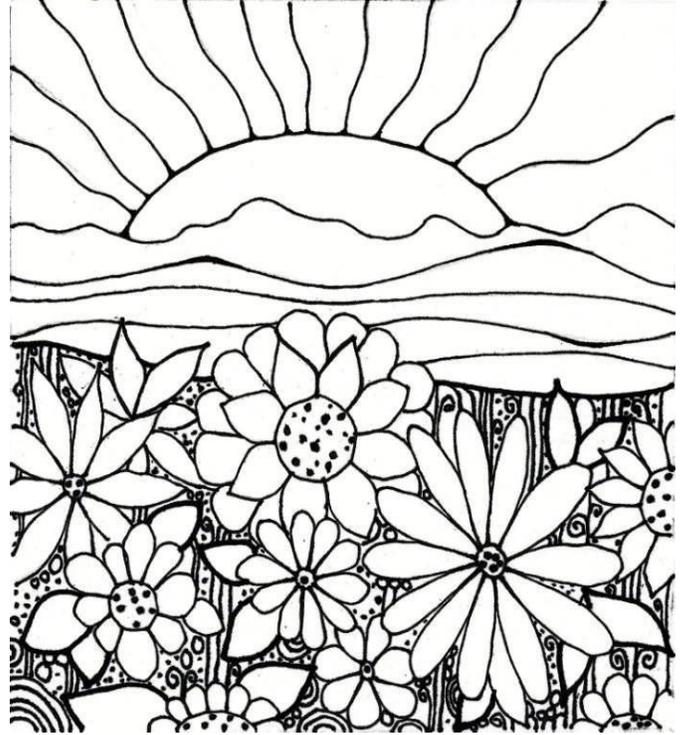
Michigan Master Gardener Association –  
[www.michiganmastergardener.org](http://www.michiganmastergardener.org)

Let's Garden Lansing - [letsgardenlansing.org](http://letsgardenlansing.org)  
Allen Neighborhood Center –  
[www.allenneighborhoodcenter.org/exchange/](http://www.allenneighborhoodcenter.org/exchange/)

Michigan State University Horticulture Gardens -  
[https://www.canr.msu.edu/hrt/our\\_gardens/](https://www.canr.msu.edu/hrt/our_gardens/)

Michigan Volunteer Management System –  
[www.michigan.volunteersystem.org](http://www.michigan.volunteersystem.org)

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