



# over the picket fence

Spring, 2015  
March, April, May

The Mason County Garden Club  
Quarterly Newsletter  
(Since 1926-our 89<sup>th</sup> year)

[www.masoncountygardenclub.org](http://www.masoncountygardenclub.org)

Member: Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc  
Central Region and National Garden Clubs, Inc



## Spring is Like a Perhaps Hand, by E.E. Cummings, 1894 - 1962

Spring is like a perhaps hand  
(which comes carefully out of Nowhere)  
arranging a window,  
into which people look(while people stare  
arranging and changing placing  
carefully there a strange  
thing and a known thing here) and  
changing everything carefully

spring is like a perhaps  
Hand in a window  
(carefully to  
and fro moving New and  
Old things, while  
people stare carefully  
moving a perhaps  
fraction of flower here placing  
an inch of air there) and  
without breaking anything.

Can spring almost be here? There is still snow on the ground and the ponds are still frozen. But as gardeners, we are forever optimistic as we *know* that spring will come again! See inside for ways to get through the early spring itch.



## MCGC Meetings & Field Trips

Another rite of Spring is just around the corner. Our President Mary Ann Ferguson will start her second year by opening the first meeting of 2015 for the MCGC on Thursday, March 26 at 1:00pm at the United Methodist Church, 5810 Bryant Rd, Ludington. This is a Social Potluck and Business Meeting with emphasis on our upcoming year for the MCGC. Several committees have already begun to meet and members will want to hear how things are moving along and where they can help in committee efforts.

Mark your calendar for our April 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. The father-son photography team of Todd and Brad Reed will be delighting us with their skills at capturing the awe-inspiring scenes of western Michigan. They will also give us some tips on nature photography so we can capture our own

In addition to our regular monthly meetings, we have several field trips that are published in the Yearbook, including Loda Lake, Easter County Garden Tour and Nature's Edge. More information will be forthcoming as we get closer to those field trips. So, bring your favorite dish/sandwich/nibbles or deserts to share and enjoy reconnecting with your gardening friends.



## NGC and MGC Schedule for 2015

- ✧ **April 13 - 14** - Gardening Study School, Course II in Traverse City. Contact Bobbi Quick [bquick50@gmail.com](mailto:bquick50@gmail.com)
- ✧ **May 7 - 8** - Landscape Design School, Course IV, in Ann Arbor. Contact Mary Pulick at [marypulick@gmail.com](mailto:marypulick@gmail.com)
- ✧ **May 11 - 18** - National Garden Club Convention, Louisville, KY
- ✧ **June 3 - 5** - MGC State Convention at Odawa Casino Resort, Petosky
- ✧ **August 25 - 27** - Flower Show School, Course I, Midland, MI
- ✧ **September 15** - Fall District V Meeting, Elk Rapids
- ✧ **October 3** – NGC Central Region Convention, Cedar Rapids, IA
- ✧ **October 12 – 13** – Gardening Study School, Course III, Traverse City
- ✧ **May 2-6, 2016** - *“Bloomin’ on the Grand”* - National Garden Club Annual Convention at the Amway Grand Hotel, Grand Rapids.



## **Did You Know?**

- ✧ The Garden Therapy Committee has been meeting each month through the winter with the lovely ladies of Ludington Woods. Diane Davis is again leading this dedicated committee. Soon they will be able to get back outside again and share the love of gardening with the ladies. There's always room for more. So even if you didn't sign up for this committee, contact Diane if you're interested.
- ✧ Sue Hanson and her Garden Walk Committee have already started the planning for July's Garden Walk. Learning from last year's successful walk, the Committee is focusing on selling tickets closer to the event. Help is always needed so contact Sue if you're interested and save Sunday, July 12 on your calendar to do your part that day to make our major fund raiser another big success
- ✧ Deb Laiskonis has signed up her employer WLDN News Talk Radio 98.7 FM as the media sponsor for the 2015 Garden Walk as well as other important events such as the Spring Plant Exchange. A media sponsorship includes radio commercials, interviews, mention on the community calendar and mention on the WLDN Facebook page all at no charge. Thank you Deb for your efforts to make this happen.
- ✧ The Newsletter has a new participant – Sue Hanson has taken over from Gwen Jackson as editor. Diane Davis remains as graphic artist and production manager. Thanks to Gwen for her years of dedicated newsletter creation. And also to Diane for remaining on the team! Sue and Diane would love to have other members contribute to the Newsletter – send us your favorite gardening quotes, tips, and pictures.

## **Calendar of Local Events**

### **March**

**26-MCGC- First meeting of the year**  
United Methodist Church – 1:00 pm

### **April**

**22-Earth Day Celebration, 12-5pm**  
Ludington Area Center of the Arts  
In association with AFFEW  
231-690-9561

**23 – MCGC April meeting**  
United Methodist Church – 1:00pm

**24-25-Mason-Lake Conservation District**  
Spring Tree, Shrub & Seedling Sale  
Mason County Fairgrounds – Ludington  
231-757-3708 ext 3

### **May**

**2-Opening of White Pine Village**

**8- Ludington Farmer's Market**  
North James Street Plaza, Ludington  
(every Friday thru September)

### **May (continued)**

**16-Petunia Parade – Planting 9am**  
Ludington Avenue

**16-Mason County Garden Club**  
**Spring Plant Exchange, 11am – 1pm**  
**Leveaux Park, Ludington**

**19 – MCGC Field Trip to Loda Lake**  
Carpool to site: 11am – 2pm

**21-Flower Sale at Spectrum Health**  
Ludington Hospital  
231-845-2222

**22- Mason-Lake Conservation District**  
Native Tree Sale – 3 -6pm, Scottville offices

**28 – MCGC May meeting**  
United Methodist Church, 1pm

**30-Petunia Weeding Day**  
Ludington Avenue



## National Garden Club

The Environmental Concerns and Conservation Committee of National Garden Clubs, Inc. announces the publication of the new "[Ecology Warriors Workbook](#)". Kids and adults can open new doors for in-depth creative learning and educational opportunities centered on the natural resources of planet earth: our air, water, forest, land and wildlife. Remember, you can Make a World of Difference through the choices you make for the conservation and preservation of our natural resources." For more information related to this subject, you may visit NGC at [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org).



### Cold Crops/Cool Flowers

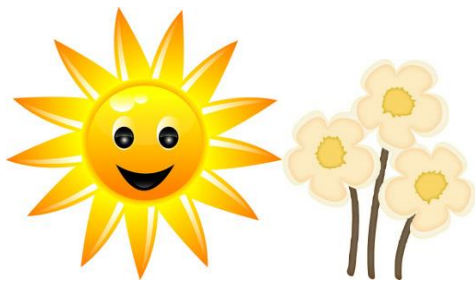
Are you ready to plant your summer plants right now? Do you want to start working your soil and/or moving those perennials? Well, you are still a bit early to do some of the work you want to do at this moment. Planting those summer favorites too early could harm the roots and cause them to go dormant or, worse yet, to die. Soils need to dry out before getting too much "gardener-handling" so keep yourself away from tilling right away.

Instead, put in cold crops for your veggie-fix and cool flowers into containers to get some early spring color. Cold weather vegetables include broccoli, cabbage, carrots, chives, lettuce, peas, radishes, swiss chard and spinach, to name a few. Start them a month before the "last frost" date (here in Ludington, that is JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>!), and they should be good to go! For that spark of color, try any of these in your pots or sunny spots: pansy, violas, sweet William, begonias, primroses, lobelia, nasturtium or snapdragons. And wait for the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June for your summer crops and flowers!

### 2015 Perennial Plant of the Year – *Geranium xcantabrigiense* ‘Biokovo’



What a beautiful geranium! Common names for this plant include Biokovo geranium and cranesbill Biokovo. The plant is a member of the Geraniaceae family. It is hardy in Zones 4 to 8. It will grow in sun as well as partial shade. It prefers average, well-drained soil. It has a delicate scent and can be used as a groundcover. The delicate pinkish-white flowers in spring will give way to reddish-orange fall leaf color.



While we wait for this winter to end, a ray of sunshine could be in your mailbox. **The Proven Winners Garden Book** is available. Contact [www.provenwinners.com](http://www.provenwinners.com) or call 815-895-8130 for your free copy.

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## **Perennials**

Perennials wear out the soil just as any crop does. They are said to be "low maintenance" because soil renewal and replanting isn't an annual affair. Yet maintenance still has to happen. You have two options - do a major periodic renovation every 6 to 7 years or maintain the bed so the soil constantly renews itself.

Fall and early Spring are both good times for major renovation. To renovate, dig up all the plants and bulbs and set them aside. They will be fine above ground for a few days or even a few weeks, so long as they're in the shade and have enough soil or mulch on their roots to keep them from drying out. Weed the bed well and loosen it to a depth of 18 inches. Spread a 4 inch layer of compost or peat and mix it in. Water it to let it all settle and then replant.

A constant renewal starts with organic mulch applied on a regular basis. You can start renewing your beds this spring by applying compost or peat and weeding thoroughly with a garden fork. This loosens the soil to the full depth of the fork, and creates cracks in the soil so the organic matter can filter in more quickly. If you're like most perennial gardeners, you divide and move plants a lot. Every time you do, mix in compost or peat to bring the disturbed area back up to level.

## **Spring Plant Exchange and White Elephant Sale**

While working in your perennial gardens and deciding which ones need to be divided or moved, remember the **Spring Plant Exchange on Saturday, May 16 from 11am to 1pm at Leveaux Park**. The White Elephant Sale was a great success last year so bring your gardening treasures that you no longer need or want for others to enjoy! Contact Dawn Rollenhagen for more details or to volunteer your time.





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## **Yearbook Corrections**

Please make the following changes to your yearbooks:

Page 15 – Pull Petunias: Saturday, Sept. 12

Page 20 – Bake 2 dozen cookies

Page 22 – 8 – 10am – Drop off Arrangements

1 – 3pm – Judging

3:30 – 8pm – Flower Show Open to the Public

Page 27 – Friday, September 18

**Ideas and suggestions are always welcome for the Newsletter . Don't hesitate to contact Sue or Diane with your thoughts and/or pictures .**

**See you at the meeting.....Sue Hanson and Diane Davis**

