

Over the Picket Fence



The Mason County Garden Club Quarterly Newsletter
(Since 1926—our 85th year)

www.masoncountygardenclub.org

Member

Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc., Central Region, & National Garden Clubs, Inc.

December 2011



Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Let your heart be light
From now on our troubles will be out of site

Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Make the yuletide gay
From now on our troubles will be miles away.

From Your Conservations/Wildlife Committee

Our local and migratory birds are feeding heavily on seeds--love those bird feeders, with the clusters of colorful birds. But isn't it great to plant a nice variety of colorful flowering plants and shrubs. Enjoy the mix of shapes and colors, and then when flowering time is over and the seeds are forming-- leave them alone. Watch them, heavy with seeds, sway in the breeze. Enjoy the shades of gray, tan, and browns with their lovely shapes. Then watch the flurry of birds flocking to the spikes of seeds--this gives them winter feed. Writing this makes me want to check out one of our Garden Walk locations... the one that had planted a backyard full of short sunflowers.
Sandra Zwyghuizen



Christmas is coming the geese are getting fat
Please put a penny in the old man's hat
If you haven't got a penny, a ha'penny will do
If you haven't got a ha'penny
Then God bless you



Holiday Gifts for the

Gardener

These are fun suggestions on the "From Farm to Market" website
www.fromfarmtomarket.com

Stone Soup Garden - "This garden kit contains all the requisite ingredients to grow and cook up a batch of famous stone soup. Inspired by a simple and traditional story about the benefits of sharing, children and adults alike will enjoy growing this medley together until it is ready to be harvested. The kit includes recycled steel case and seed tins, USDA certified organic blue lake pole bean, roma tomato, evergreen bunching onion, little fingers carrot, red acre cabbage and mammoth melting pea seeds, growing directions, six seedling stakes, pencil, the famous stone in a jute pouch and the secret stone recipe, of course ! " \$21.00

Handmade Scottish Gardeners Soap - "For all the times using gloves in the garden was an afterthought, look no further than our handmade gardeners soap. It contains olive oil and unrefined Shea Butter for moisturizing, green clay with pumice powder for some extra scrubbing power and calendula petals to help soothe and add a wonderful fragrance. Best of all it is not tested on animals and is suited for vegans. After a busy morning in the garden pinching back the basil or pulling some weeds, this soap will have your green thumb (and fingers) looking great." \$6.00

Fairytale Gardens - "These handmade garden kits smartly combine three things kids love to do - dig in the dirt, tell stories and eat treats. They are also the perfect outlet for children to express themselves through the design of a personalized garden for their own enjoyment. Inspired by the classic

childhood stories Cinderella, Princess and the Pea and Jack and the Beanstalk, but with a modern twist, each theme garden includes a recycled steel case and seed tins, USDA certified organic seed, growing directions, garden stake, pencil and activity/recipe cards. These kits can be a work of art that celebrates the simple beauty of childhood gardening." \$12.00

Beeswax Hand and Body Salve - "Skillfully blended from ingredients including almond oil, avocado oil, jojoba, beeswax, vitamin E, essential oils of lavender, calendula, rosemary, geranium and tea tree, this all natural, deep penetrating salve will moisturize dry skin, aid in healing minor scrapes and cuts and bring soothing relief to sore muscles and aching joints." \$9.00

Atlas Gardening Gloves - "Recognized by gardeners as some of the most comfortable gloves available. Atlas 370 Gardening Gloves are extremely durable and make the task of tying back roses, pulling weeds or laying brick and stone pleasant on the hands. They feature a thin texturized coating of Nitrile on the palms and fingers which permits great flexibility and excellent grip while also providing resistance to punctures, cuts and abrasion." \$7.00

Other online gardening gift sites include our National Garden Club (www.gardenclub.org) and also www.greatgardeninggifts.com, www.uncommongoods.com and www.gardenguides.com

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!



Things to do now in your garden

Apply anti-desiccant spray now when day time temperatures are above freezing. Apply to your broad leaf evergreens such as holly, rhododendron, azalea, boxwood and laurel. These plants can be subject to severe winter burn due to water loss from the leaves by transpiration. If there is a prolonged thaw in mid-winter, it may be time to re-apply anti-desiccant spray to your broad leaf evergreens, especially if there are more prolonged freezing temperatures on the way.



Watch for frost heaving around your plants. This is when ice forms underneath the soil and expands upwards from the ground causing plants such as perennials to push upwards exposing the crown. As a

preventive measure apply mulch to your garden beds. To remedy, slightly tap the soil back down, and brush the mulch back around the exposed crown of the plant to protect it from the cold.

An increased threat of snow and ice buildup on the branches of trees and shrubs in the landscape occurs as winter progresses. If snow piles up on your evergreens try to carefully brush it away removing the excess weight from the branches. If the snow does not remove easily do not shake the branches. This can cause breakage and damage. If the tree or shrub is covered with ice, permit nature to take its course and allow the ice to melt naturally.



Chestnuts roasting on an open fire
Jack Frost nipping at our nose
Yuletide carols being sung by a choir
All dressed up like Eskimos

Upcoming Local Events

- Dec 1 MCGC Christmas Tea, 1:00 at the Ludington Center for the Arts
- Dec 1-24 Pentwater "Christmas in the Village"
- Dec 2-4 Manistee "Victorian Sleighbell Parade & Olde Christmas Weekend" with the Festival of Trees
- Dec 2 Ludington "Aglow on the Avenue", 5:00 to 8:30 including the holiday parade
- Dec 9 Christmas Craft Night, 7:00 to 9:00 at the Ludington Library
- Dec 10 Christmas in Scottville
- Dec 31 Ludington "Light Up the Lake" with the New Year's Eve Ball Drop and other activities 8:00pm to midnight



Upcoming Michigan Garden Club, Inc. Events

- Dec 3 Cadillac Garden Club Holiday Homes Tour, 10:00 to 3:00, tickets in advance \$10 call 231-510-9047
- April 19-20, 2012 Landscape Design School here in Ludington Contact Suzanne for further information 690-9968



2012 Upcoming Garden/Flower Events

Jan 28 Orchid Show, Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids

Feb18 "Know and Grow 2012" at the Dow Garden, Midland with the "A" team of Allen Armitage and Tony Avent

March 1-April 30 "Butterflies are Blooming", Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids

March 4-11 Philadelphia Flower Show

March 10-18 Chicago Flower Show at Navy Pier

...and the most famous show...

May 22-26 The Chelsea Flower Show on the 11 acre grounds of the Royal Hospital in Chelsea, London (Diane Nemitz can tell you all about this show)

August 18 Household Hazardous Waste Collection, Scottville
Prescription medications and controlled drugs go to the Sheriff; non-controlled drugs can be disposed of in the Yellow Jug Old Drugs program. Jugs are located at Nichols Pharmacy in Scottville, Rite Aid Pharmacy in Ludington, the Ludington Police Department, and the Mason County Sheriff's Office.



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas everywhere we go
Take a look at the five and ten, glistening once again
with candy canes and silver lanes aglow.

PLANT IT PINK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

A thought for your Garden Club, Inc. is Women the Gift of Hope". start arriving after the first consideration to a new pink combination of pinks in door, a pink clematis to garage. Where ever you might use a touch of pink is a way to create awareness about breast cancer and the ongoing efforts to conquer this disease.



Spring garden! The National promoting "Plant it Pink - Give As those garden catalogs of the year, give special flowering scrub, a your planters by the front climb the trellis by your

Said the night wind to the little lamb
do you see what I see
way up in the sky, little lamb
do you see what I see
a star, a star, dancing in the night
with a tail as big as a kite
with a tail as big as a kite.



DID YOU KNOW...MGC, Inc. is not a huge conglomerate. They are a small group of individuals from local garden clubs who have a vision to make this world beautiful and a better place!

Frankincense and Myrrh

If you have heard of frankincense and myrrh, it's probably thanks to the biblical account of the birth of Jesus. According to the book of Matthew, wise men followed a bright star in the east to Bethlehem where Jesus had been born. "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him; and when they had opened their treasurers, they presented unto him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11). So what exactly are frankincense and myrrh?

Frankincense gum extracted of Boswellia are found Middle East. a milky juice hard once the air. Myrrh resin that species of the Commiphora, native to northeast Africa and the adjacent areas of the Arabian Peninsula.



is a resin from the bark trees, which mainly in the It appears as that becomes exposed to is a reddish comes from genus which are

Frankincense and Myrrh were desired for personal, religious and medicinal use. In a time before daily bathing, people would use the sweet smoke from the resin to make themselves smell better. These substances were also widely used in religious ceremonies and burials. In 1500 BC, priests recommended both resins for the treatment of wounds. Other ailments they were once reported to cure included leprosy, plague, scurvy and even baldness.

These products of nature may not be as popular as they once were, but they are still used today in some ways that you might not expect. They are common ingredients in modern perfumes and cosmetics, continuing a tradition that has lasted thousands of years. Scientists are finding new uses for the substances as well; recent studies suggest that frankincense may be beneficial to sufferers of asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, osteoarthritis and collagenous colitis. Researchers have also discovered possible benefits of myrrh in the treatment of gastric ulcers, tumors and parasites.

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
with every Christmas card I write
may your days be merry and bright
and may all your Christmases be white.



Keeping In Touch is the National Garden Clubs, Inc. quarterly newsletter. It is now available online and features information on the all the National projects plus news from the regions. Also, visit the new Flickr site ([Flickr.com/NationalGardenClubs](https://www.flickr.com/photos/NationalGardenClubs/)) and find a wealth of ideas just waiting for you. Here you will find pictures of projects from clubs, districts and states. Send pictures to Robin Pokorski at RobinP@juno.com. We need to put Michigan activities "out there" for everyone to know how terrific Michigan Garden Club members are and show off our outstanding projects.

*****WELCOME *****
CAROL CHRISTOFFERSON



The smiling face of the Pansy represents your smiling face as you join the Mason County Garden Club. As you plant these Pansies in your garden, think about how you are now planted in your new club. As Pansies need sunshine, moisture, and a little pruning now and then to reach their full potential, so do members need nurturing to

grow in knowledge of horticulture, environmental awareness, landscape design, and floral design. New members also help us to fulfill our mission in community projects. We are happy you will be sharing your time with us.

NOW IT IS YOUR TIME TO GROW!!!

Please be sure to add Carol's name and address to your yearbook.

Yearbook changes



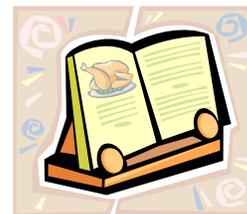
Suzanne Townsend new phone number :

Have You Spent Time on the MGC Website?

Forms for everything, events all over the state can be found there. You can learn all about the Educational Schools. Award information is available and a forum on new things coming in the future. Check now and keep checking!

Recipes—By Popular Request

Spicy Bean Salsa Vicki Houk



- 1 can black beans
- 1 can pinto beans
- 1 can black eyed peas
- 3 cups frozen corn, thawed
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped green peppers
- 1 can chili peppers
- 1-2 cups salsa
- 2-3 large tomatoes, chopped

Drain and rinse all beans. Combine ingredients. Set aside.

In a 2-quart measuring cup mix:

½ cup olive oil

½ cup cider vinegar

1 t. garlic

1 packet Italian dressing mix

OR

Add the garlic to an 8oz. bottle of Italian dressing.

Pour over ingredients and stir.

OPTIONAL: Chopped jalapenos or Frank's Red Hot Sauce

Apple Cake Patty Furst

This cake came to me through Joanne Krone from a PEO cookbook, chapter FG, which is sold at the gift shop of Memorial Hospital in Ludington.

4 cups thinly sliced, peeled apples

2 cups sugar

2 cups flour

1 tsp salt

2 tsp cinnamon

2 tsp. baking soda

1 cup chopped walnuts

2/3 cup (minus 1-2 tbsp. canola oil

1 tsp. vanilla extract

2 eggs

In large bowl place:

Apple slices...run these through the beaters to make them more "chopped". Add sugar, beating again. Now add flour, salt, cinnamon and baking soda, beating well again. Add chopped walnuts, canola oil, vanilla mixing again. Now add eggs, mixing well and pour into a glass 9" x13" pan which has been well sprayed with Pam. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 45 minutes. Check for doneness after baking about 40 min.

Frosting:

1 stick butter

8 oz neufchatel cheese (1/3 less fat cream cheese)

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 and 1/2 Tbsp milk

1# box 10X powdered sugar

Beat together 1st 4 ingredients until fluffy. Now beat in the whole box of powdered sugar. This cake tastes even better the next day if any makes it that far!

Changes that I've made: using brown sugar in cake and adding 1/3 - 1/2 cup of wheat germ and the same of flax seed meal and using part whole wheat flour. I also think a caramel frosting would be delicious!

Applesauce Brownies

Deb Gundersen

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cream together:

½ C. margarine

1 ½ C. sugar

Add:

2 eggs

Sift together then stir in:

½ tsp. cinnamon

2 Tbsp. baking cocoa

½ tsp. salt

1 ½ tsp. baking soda

Finally, stir in:

2 C. applesauce

Pour into greased 9" X 13" pan or sheet cake pan. Sprinkle top with 6 oz. chocolate chips and ½ C. chopped walnuts (more if using sheet cake pan). Bake 30-35 minutes for 9"X13" or 25 minutes for sheet cake. Can sprinkle lightly with brown sugar after baking.

This is a recipe my Grandma Sagers passed on to me. She called it brownies but it is a very moist cake.

Low Fat Cranberry Bars Glenna Paukstis

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1 1/2 cups sugar | 1 1/2 cups flour |
| 1/2 cup applesauce | 1 teaspoon baking powder |
| 1/2 cup Eggbeaters or egg white to make 1/2 cup | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1 teaspoon vanilla | 2 cups whole cranberries |

Stir together the sugar and applesauce. Add Eggbeaters or egg whites and stir well. Add vanilla and dry ingredients. Mix in the cranberries. Spread (batter is stiff) in greased 9x13 pan and bake at 350' for 40 - 45 minutes. Cool and then frost with cream cheese frosting. Yields 24 2' squares.

Cream Cheese Frosting

1 small package lite cream cheese (Neufchatel)
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 1/2 to 2 cups powdered sugar.

Soften cream cheese. Add vanilla and gradually mix in powdered sugar. If too stiff, add a few drops of milk.

These are the cranberry bars Suzanne served at the October meeting—there were lots of requests for the recipe but all the credit belongs to Glenna...it's her recipe!

FLOWER

This information was sent by after she returned from the Central Rapids. We have heard many include it in the newsletter in the Sharon used pansies, phlox, pounded on a couple of muslin great. However, when she tried in salt water, the colors faded. She also "pounded" some book marks and cards. In trying to set the colors, she did not have canning (Kosher) salt and instead used iodized salt so perhaps that's why the colors faded. So be sure to use the canning (Kosher) salt. Anyway, here's the info. Sharon says "Pound away!"



POUNDING

Sharon to members in October Region Convention in Grand comments and thought we would event some of you don't have it. cosmos and impatiens and potpourri bags. They turned out setting the colors by soaking them

Materials Needed:

Cutting Board

Plastic Wrap or Wax Paper

Hammer

Fabric or Water Color Paper

Fresh Flowers & Leaves: Example - dill, viola, pansy, verbena, phlox, black-eyed Susan, geranium, white pine needles and wild grasses

Directions: Place the fabric or paper right-side-up on the cutting board. Place a flower or leaf on top of the material. Cover with waxed paper or plastic wrap.

Tap.Tap.Tap.The fun begins! Gently tap the entire surface of the flower with hammer. (Separate petals and pound separately. Exception, pansy and viola). (Pounding causes the juice to bleed onto the fabric and make a beautiful imprint. To see it, remove the plastic and scrape off tile plant residue.) Repeat process with additional plant material to create your own designs.

Set Print (Fabric): Soak finished print in a strong salt water solution to set print. (Use 1/2 cup canning (Kosher) salt to 1/2 gallon of cold water). Soak 10 minutes, gently rinse in cold water, and dry. (Drying by machine or outside will further set the stain.) Results will vary. Experiment. Enjoy. As with anything of beauty, your design will fade in time.

PENNY PINES

DID YOU KNOW...To date almost \$100,000 has been raised and used in 42 states to sustain national and urban forests? For every \$68 we donate, the U.S. Forest Service purchases 350 seedlings to be planted by the forest service of the selected state. Thank you, Garden Club members, for your contributions to this very worthy project.



Members...this is YOUR newsletter!!

Newsletter Ideas??? Please share them with Suzanne or Gwen. We are always looking for interesting information.

If you have not already done so, please be sure to sign up for the 2012 Committees. Sue Ann Schnitker has the Service Committee list, and Shirley Casler has the Refreshment Committee list. For those members who are already in the sunny south, and have not signed up for the committees, please send an email to Sue Ann Schnitker at garyandsueann@charter.net with your 2012 committee choices.



See you at the December 1 Holiday Tea beginning at 1:00pm at the Ludington Area Center for the Arts. A collection will be taken for donation to one of our very worthy local charities.

Happy Holidays everyone...see you in the spring!
Gwen & Suzanne

