



over the picket fence

December, 2014

**The Mason County Garden Club Quarterly Newsletter
(Since 1926-our 88th year)**

www.masoncountygardenclub.org

Member

**Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc.,
Central Region and National Garden Club, Inc.**



The hustle and bustle of the holidays are upon us and 2014 is drawing to a close. As we look back this has been a very successful year for our Garden Club. We received numerous District V and Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. awards for the efforts of our members. We had a record breaking Garden Walk and a very successful Fall Plant Sale again thanks to the efforts of our members. Our members planned, planted, watered and weeded many area gardens including White Pine Village, Leveaux Park, the Water Treatment Plant and the parade of petunias in Ludington. We have shared "cups of cheer", gardening projects and crafts along with a smile with senior citizens in our area. All this accomplished with the guidance of our President Mary Ann Ferguson and the Executive Board. As we look forward to next year, let us all make a commitment now to make 2015 an even more successful year with our participation and support in the endeavors of our club.



We've reached the end of another year
Where Christmas time is growing near
Friends and family we hold so dear
Will soon feel the warmth of holiday cheer.



The Historic Christmas Gathering and Luncheon is at the beautiful Cartier Mansion at 409 E. Ludington Avenue on Thursday, December 4 at 1:00pm hosted by Sue Ann Schnitker. Come and enjoy the seasonal surroundings of this historic bed and breakfast. Be prepared to partake of good food and celebrate this most wonderful time of year with our gardening friends. The annual meeting will be conducted and our new officers and directors will be installed during this luncheon. Reservations are required at a cost of \$9. Please contact Sue Ann ASAP if you have not made reservations.



Christmas waves a magic wand over this world,
and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.



Here are eight New Year's Resolutions every gardener should consider as you start planning your garden for next year:

- 1) **Reduce Footprint:** From limiting chemicals in the garden to using eco-friendly equipment, there are many ways to reduce your environmental footprint outdoors. Instead of reaching automatically for an herbicide, why not use a manual weeding tool instead?
- 2) **Save Water:** Did you know that the average household uses 40 percent of its water usage in the garden, and much of that water is wasted? This year, make it a goal to save more of this precious resource.
- 3) **Attract Pollinators:** Welcome birds, bees, butterflies and other pollinators into your garden. Avoid using chemicals in the garden, and plant herbs and flowers to attract these important garden visitors. Consider poppies, sunflowers, lavenders, herbs and other flowering plants, which are beloved by many pollinators. Native plants are particularly good at attracting helpful pollinators to your garden.
- 4) **Grow Edibles ... And Share the Harvest:** Nothing tastes better than homegrown food, and you can't beat the health benefits of freshly picked vegetables and fruits. Growing your own edibles lets you know exactly where your food originated. That's a good thing with some of the recent food security issues we've been facing. Another tip: when you involve your children in the kitchen gardens, it will help ensure they enjoy eating these foods later in the dining room. Kids who grow their own foods tend to love snacking from the garden. Have a large surplus? Be sure to share some of that harvest with those in need.
- 5) **Save Work:** Make a pledge to work smarter in the garden, not harder. Instead of running back and forth for tools, bring them with you! Carry a plastic tub to carry your gardening essentials, and sometimes a note pad, cell phone or sunscreen. You can reduce those weeds from popping up later in the garden by mulching well early in the season. Instead of watering everything by hand, set up drip lines and soaker hoses that save money and time.

6) **Select Easy-Care Plants:** One way to make it easier on yourself this year is by picking plants that thrive in your area and require less work. For example, drought-tolerant yarrow couldn't be easier to grow in a sandy garden. Ask your local gardening center or master gardeners for easy-care plant recommendations for your area. Avoid invasive plants that will cause future problems. And consider native plants that flourish in your region and support your local ecosystem.

7) **Compost:** The first step to having a healthy garden is building healthy soil. By composting your yard and kitchen waste you'll save this trash from going to the landfills, while creating one of the best soil amendment products you can find.

8) **Have Fun:** No matter what you decide to grow in your garden, make a promise to yourself to have fun. Don't be so concerned with horticultural perfection that you forget how much you love gardening. Even if you only remember this one resolution, you'll be off to a good start.

Planet Hero



Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come,
Whispering 'it will be happier'...

— Alfred Tennyson





From the Empress of Dirt - How to set up a Winter Compost Bin

- Use a galvanized trash can with a tight fitting lid. Keep it somewhere you can easily access it during snowy weather.
- Add 10-12" of newspaper, bows, straw or leaves to the bottom.
- Collect kitchen waste including scraps of fruits and vegetables, egg shells, coffee grounds, tea bags (no paper or staples). No processed foods, meat or dairy.
- Freeze the scraps in a heavy-duty freezer bag dedicated to kitchen scraps.
- Add frozen scraps to the bin when the bag is full. The scraps will freeze and thaw, depending on the temperature, with decomposition continuing during the warm spells.
- During thaws, when temperatures stay above freezing for a few days, add a layer of newspaper to the bin. If here in Michigan, we don't have a thaw, the world will not end if you skip this step. You'll just have a very soupy compost in the spring.
- During the winter, keep the lid on tight to avoid the stink and animal invaders.
- In the spring, pour the contents of the winter bin into your regular compost pile and dig in additional browns as needed. The winter stuff will soon break down like any other compost and no kitchen scraps were sent to the landfill. Win, Win!!!



Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.

- Calvin Coolidge



New Years Resolutions for Garden Club Members

- I will attend all meetings if possible
- I will be an attentive listener during meetings and at all programs
- I will share my thoughts and ideas during meetings
- I will accept a chair position or officer nomination if asked
- I will be an active participant in all committees I have selected
- I will notify the committee chair if I will not be available for a meeting or event
- I will find a replacement if I am not able to attend the meeting I am to assist the refreshment committee
- I will try to get to know every member of the club
- I will encourage new members to join
- I will pay my dues by December 31.

We all get the exact same 365 days. The only difference is what we do with them.

- Hillary DePiano





Ten things you can do in 2015 to make every day Earth Day

- 1) Do not buy bottled water. Carry your own refillable container.
- 2) Do not accept stores' plastic bags. Carry your own fabric bags.
- 3) Change incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent or LED light bulbs.
- 4) Check labels. Buy and use recycled paper for printing, toilet tissue, facial tissue, paper towels, etc.
- 5) Take your name off junk and catalog mailing lists.
- 6) Do not idle your car engine over one minute unless at a light. Idling wastes gas and pollutes the air.
- 7) Bring your own cup, plate and utensils to meetings, potlucks, etc to avoid using plastic and styrofoam.
- 8) Stop recreational balloon and lantern launches. They end up in lakes and waterways where birds and aquatic life ingest them and die.
- 9) Do not eat meat or poultry from Cafes (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations). The United Nations states, these meat industries generate more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks combined.
- 10) Support "Made in the USA" including local, state and national businesses.

Planet Hero!



Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.

— Oprah Winfrey



Member updates -

In your yearbook, please make these changes for Deb Laiskonis - email deb@wkla.com and cell phone number 231-690-2688.



Cinnamon French Toast Bake For a snowy winter morning - delicious!

- 1/4 cup butter melted
- 2 cans (12.4oz each) Pillsbury refrigerate cinnamon rolls with icing
- 6 eggs
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup maple syrup

Heat oven to 375'. Pour melted butter into ungreased 13x9" glass baking dish. Separate both cans of dough into 16 rolls; set aside icing. Cut each roll into 8 pieces, place pieces over butter in dish. In medium bowl, beat eggs. Beat in cream, cinnamon and vanilla until well blended; gently pour over roll pieces. Sprinkle with pecans; drizzle with syrup. Bake 20 to 28 minutes or until golden brown. Cool 10 minutes. Remove cover from icing and microwave 10 seconds or until thin enough to drizzle over the top.

Serve with butter and warm maple syrup.



Happy New Year to you,
And when the new year's done,
May the next year be even better,
Full of pleasure, joy and fun.



Upcoming Local Events

2014

December 4-7 Manistee's Victorian Sleighbell Parade and Old Christmas Weekend

December 5-7 and 12-14 "Miracle on 34th Street", Ramsdell Theatre, Manistee

December 6 "Create a Wreath" for Christmas at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottville. Call 757-2051 to reserve a spot.

December 6 and 12 "Country Christmas" at the Mason county Fairgrounds from 6-9pm

December 6 2014 Owl Prowl, Ludington State Park

December 11 WSCC Jazz Band 7:30-9:30pm at West Shore Community College

December 12-13 Snowshoes-Making Class at Ludington State Park

December 13 Fountain Christmas Celebration at the fire station at 5pm

December 14 WSCC Concert Choir 2-4pm at West Shore Community College

December 15 Scottville Christmas Cookie Exchange & Downtown Tree Lighting 5:30-7:30pm

December 17 WSCC Symphony & Chamber Winds, Hart High School Auditorium at 7:30pm

December 18 - 21 "A Christmas Story" at the Ludington Area Center for the Arts

December 20 After Hours used Book Sale, 2:30-7pm at the Pentwater Township Library

December 20 "Behold the Lamb" Christmas concert 7:00 pm. At West Shore Community College

December 21 First Day of Winter

December 25 - January 25 Christmas Tree Recycling Drop-Off at Lewis Farm Market, New Era

December 31 5th Annual Light Up the Lake New Year's Eve Ball Drop with fireworks in downtown Ludington

2015

January 3, 10,17,24,31 Guided Snowshoe Hikes, Ludington State Park at 3 and 10pm

January 3,10,17,31 Lantern Ski and Snowshoeing Event, Ludington State Park from 6-8pm

January 19 Martin Luther King, Jr Day

February 2 Ground Hog Day

February 4 "Master Harold.....and the Boys". 7 and 9pm at the WSCC Center Stage Theatre

February 12 Percussionist David Hall presents "Marimbamania", 7:30pm at the Ludington Area Center for the Arts

February 7 and 14 Guided Snowshoe Hikes, Ludington State Park at 3 and 10pm

February 14 Valentines Day

February 14 Lantern Ski and Snowshoeing Event, Ludington State Park from 6-8pm

February 16 Presidents' Day

February 18 Ash Wednesday

February 27 The Cashore Marionettes, 7:30pm at the Ludington Area Center for the Arts

March 5-8 "The Fox on the Fairway" dinner theater at the WSCC North Lounge

March 7 Spring CommUNITY Auction, 12pm at the Scottville Optimist Hall

March 8 Daylight Savings Time begins

March 14 Pentwater St. Patrick's Day Parade at 12pm

March 17 St Patrick's Day

March 18 Glenn Miller Orchestra, 7:30pm at the Historic Ramsdell Theatre, Manistee

March 20 First Day of Spring

March 29 Palm Sunday



My Happy New Year wish for you
Is for your best year yet,
A year where life is peaceful,
And what you want, you get.



Important reminders

Dues must be paid before year end to continue your membership and be included in the 2015 yearbook. \$30(member), \$35(associate member) or \$15(life member) should be paid to Vicki Houk or Sue Hanson.

All members must sign up for 2015 Standing and Special Events Committees.

All members must sign up for 2015 Refreshment Committees.



What the New Year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the new year.

– Vern McLellan



National and Michigan Garden Club, Inc. Upcoming Events

Dec.6, 2014 "14th Annual Holiday Home Tour "-The Cadillac Garden Club presents their 14th annual Holiday Home Tour, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Visit four area homes decorated in the season's finest! Discounted advance tickets. Sales begin Nov. 1st. Call 231-510-9047 for more information.

April 13, 2015, Gardening Study, Course II - More details to follow.

May 7, 2015 Landscape Design School - Course IV. Hosted by District IIA at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 North Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor, 48105. For more information, contact local chairman, Mary Pulick at marypulick@gmail.com or 734-476-2453.

May 11, 2015 National Garden Club Convention, Louisville, Kentucky (Installation Year)

June 3, 2015 Michigan Garden Club, Inc Convention will be hosted by District V and take place at the Odawa Casino Resort in Petoskey.

Tomorrow, is the first blank page of a 365 page book. Write a good one.
— Brad Paisley

Glenna Paukstis shared the following poem with our members at the November meeting. Although it probably was written with Thanksgiving in mind, it is also appropriate that we give thanks for our garden club friends and beyond as we close 2014 and look forward to 2015.



Garden Meditation
By Rev Max Coots

Let us give thanks for a bounty of people.
For children who are our second planting, and though they grow like weeds
and the wind too soon blows them away, may they forgive us our cultivation
and fondly remember where their roots are;
For generous friends.....with hearts.....and smiles as bright as their
blossoms;
For feisty friends, as tart as apples;
For continuous friends, who, like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding
us that we've had them;
For crotchety friends, sour as rhubarb and as indestructible;
For handsome friends, who are as gorgeous as eggplants and as elegant as a
row of corn, and the others, as plain as potatoes and so good for you;
For funny friends, who are as silly as Brussels sprouts and as amusing as
Jerusalem artichokes;
And serious friends as unpretentious as cabbages, as subtle as summer
squash, as persistent as parsley, as delightful as dill, as endless as zucchini
and who, like parsnips, can be counted on to see you through the winter;
For old friends, nodding like sunflowers in the evening-time, and young
friends coming as fast as radishes;
For loving friends, who wind around us like tendrils and hold us, despite our
blights, wilts and witherings;
And finally, for those friends now gone, like gardens past that have been
harvested, but who fed us in their times that we might have life thereafter.
For all these we give thanks.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
See You At the Meeting: Diane and Gwen

Merry
Christmas

HAPPY NEW YEAR