

Over the Picket Fence



The Mason County Garden Club Quarterly Newsletter
(Since 1926—our 87th year)

www.masoncountygardenclub.org

Member

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

June, 2013



**And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air
Gave proof thru' the night that our flag was still there.**

Francis Scott Key 1814

Memorial Day 2013 brings many things to mind. It is the reminder of the lives of military men and women sacrificed for the freedom we as a nation enjoy today. It is the traditional beginning of summer to be enjoyed by all without fear of the violence of war or oppression because of the protection and vigilance of our

military. It is planting time in the fields and in the gardens to provide food for our tables and flowers to beautify our homes and neighborhoods in this land of the free. However you celebrate Memorial Day, take time to say thank you to all of the fallen members of the military services, and those serving today, for protecting the freedom we so often take for granted.

Flower Show

Chairman Dorothy Hayward and her committee are busy planning the Small Standard Flower Show "Parks and Recreation -- A Tribute to Our Local Ludington Parks" – to be held Friday, Aug 9th at the Community Church in conjunction with Friday Night Live. At the July meeting June Peterson, Master Flower Show Judge from Cadillac, will present a program on the ins and outs of flower arranging to help us all feel more comfortable with the Design portion of the show. As we get busy in our gardens, take notice of those flowers, bushes and trees that may be entered in the Horticulture division. In April Sharon and Dorothy sent out the information on the show and all the criteria. Contact them if you need a copy.



As I was walking a ribbon of highway, I saw
above me an endless skyway
I saw below me a golden valley. This land
was made for you and me.

Woody Guthrie

Hooked on Hydrangeas

- These ever popular beauties like cool, moist, well-drained soil and morning sun.
- Blue hydrangeas like acidic soil. They need soil that has a pH of 5.2-5.6. Kits are available at garden centers to test the pH of your soil. You can lower the pH by applying an acidic organic mulch such as pine needles or pine bark. Commercial products are also available to accomplish this.

- If the pH of your soil is naturally quite high (alkaline), it will be very difficult to get blue flowers. Alkaline soil tends to lock up aluminum, making it unavailable to the plant. However, you can grow fabulous pink hydrangeas.
- Hydrangeas tend to wilt when cut, especially young flowers. Look for mature blooms that feel papery. Cut stems under water and, if blooms look droopy, submerge the cutting - blooms and all - in cold water for 30 minutes.



Member Updates

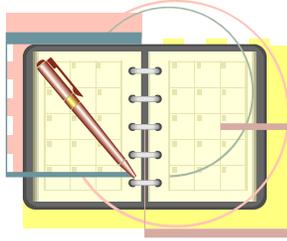
Please be sure to add the following to your yearbooks.

Welcome to our new member - Robert Shirley

New address for Life Member Sue Sabin



The laurel wreath is ready now
to place upon his loyal brow
And we'll all feel gay when
Johnny comes marching home.



Local Farmers Markets

Ludington - Fridays from 3-8 at the James Street Plaza

Scottville - Tuesdays from 4:30-7:30 in the West Shore Bank parking lot

Pentwater - Mondays and Thursdays from 10-1 in the Village Green

Manistee - Saturdays from 9-12 in downtown Manistee

Upcoming Local Events

June 1 Mason-Lake Soil Conservation District Native Plant Sale and
Workshop, Scottville

1 Petunia Parade Weeding Day

14 Flag Day

16 Father's Day

21 Summer Begins

22-23 Meijer Gardens Spring Rose Show, Grand Valley Rose Soc.

22 Petunia Parade Weeding Day

28-30 Meijer Gardens Standard Flower Show, Kent Garden Club

July 4 Independence Day

4 Ludington Freedom Festival and Fireworks

5-6 Scottville Sommerfest

13 MCGC 17th Annual Garden Walk – A Bouquet of Gardens

13 Meijer Gardens Daylily Show, Grand Valley Daylily Soc.

24-27 Western Michigan Fair, Mason County Fairgrounds

26 AFFEW Beach Sweep

27 Petunia Parade Weeding Day

30 “Let Freedom Ring” Patriot Concert, Ludington
United Methodist Church

Aug 9 MCGC Small Standard Flower Show "Parks and Recreation"

15 AFFEW Beach Sweep

17 Mason County Household and Hazardous Waste Collection, Scottville

24 Petunia Parade Weeding Day

Container Gardening

When your garden needs some punch, containers can be the answer. Place them in strategic locations to draw attention to a specific area. Before you select a container, take a good look at your house, making sure the planter you choose will complement the color and style of your home. Orange colored terra cotta pots would clash with a red brick house.

Containers are available in many different shapes and sizes. Think about how big a planter you will need and select one that's a right scale for the site where you intend to use it. A tiny porch will have little room for a big pot, you may want to consider lightweight products such as plastic or foam. Many of these are more portable and are more portable. Wood containers, which match your house, are a good option. Their cost can vary depending on the design and quality of construction.

Make sure your container has enough drainage. There are many containers sold with a tiny hole in the bottom that will not let enough water escape, so poke additional holes either an awl, large nail or screwdriver. This works for plastic, foam or wood containers-- not ceramic. The second part of the drainage equation is keeping the soil in while letting the water out. Plastic window screen, coffee filters, paper towel, newspaper and commercial products can be used. It is also a good idea to elevate your pots, so that the water isn't blocked from exiting out of the drainage holes.

Remove your plant from their nursery pots carefully. If you have a six pack of plants, hold the plant close to the soil surface and squeeze the plants out from their folder from the bottom. If the plant is in a nursery pot, try punching it out from the bottom. If it is root bound, you may have to cut or tear any roots off that are sticking out of the bottom hole of the pot and slide a knife around the inside of the pot before the plant will slide out. If your plant is rootbound, make sure to break up the roots by simply roughing up the roots on the outside by rubbing them. Another way is to use a utility knife and make 3 or 4 vertical cuts around the soil.



container on a large impact. If you need a container that looks good, consider one of the lightweight options such as plastic or foam. These can be painted to match your house, which is also an option. Their construction on the type of wood used can vary, but a container with a tiny hole in the bottom will not let enough water escape, using a hammer with

You're a grand old flag
You're a high flying flag
And forever in peace my you wave.
George M Cohan



National and Michigan Garden Club, Inc. Upcoming Events

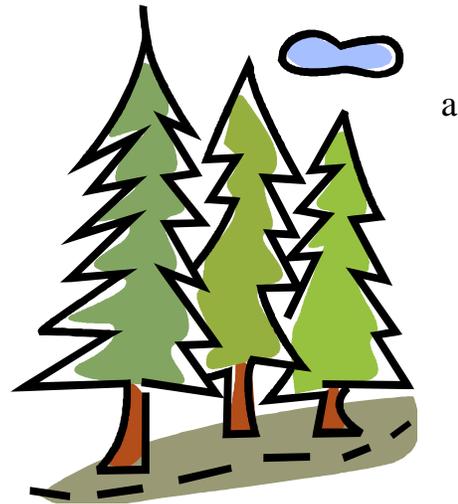
- June 2-8 National Garden Week
5 District V Spring Meeting, Castle Farms, Charlevoix
22 Grand Haven Garden Walk
26 Flower Show Symposium, Ann Arbor
- July 11-13 Spring Lake Garden Club 56th Annual Flower Show
"Film and Flowers"
- Oct 1-2 Landscape Design School, Course I in Ann Arbor. Contact
Mary Pulick marypulick@gmail.com
17-19 Environmental School, Course II in Pleasant Ridge. Contact
Stacey Strutcher 248-546-6538
21-22 Garden Study School, Course III in Niles. Contact Bobbi Quick
bquick50@gmail.com

Penny Pines

Since launching a partnership with the US Forest Service in 2004, National Garden Clubs, Inc. and clubs across the country have collected thousands of dollars for the US Forest Service's Penny Pines program, which is dedicated to replanting damaged forest areas and/or trees indigenous (not just pine trees) to a particular damaged area, whether by fire or other natural catastrophe. . These funds have benefitted over 80 national forests in over 42 states.

According to Art Loesch, NGC Penny Pines chairman, \$68 now covers the cost to plant approximately 350 seedlings, which translates to one acre.

A bit of history—“Why in the world \$68.00?” Well, when the Penny Pines Program started in 1941, a Sports Woman’s Club was working with group of school children on a reforestation program. At that time, pine seedlings cost one penny each and one acre consisted of 680 seedlings. Hence, the first donations the children raised were in the amount of \$6.80 for each acre planted. Over the past 70+ years the amount has been increased to \$68 to allow for increased costs—but still remember and honor those first donations by children.



The Penny Pines donation from a club can be designated to a specific national or state forest and MCGC designates the Manistee National Forest. Rhonda Hildebrandt has chaired this club effort for a number of years. Have your "pennies" ready for Rhonda as she appears at your table during each meeting help save our forests



Where English roses bloom and fade in France
where lilies grow
Among the field of Flanders where
the scarlet poppies blow
Our soldiers are not forgotten though strangers
come and go.

Eula Gladys Lincoln

Summer Gardening Tips

- **Attract It** - There are a number of ways to attract birds to your garden. A simple birdbath is a great start. Place a water container about 10 feet from dense shrubs and other cover that predators may use and keep the water fresh.
- **Build It** - Placing a wildlife brush shelter on your property can add an interesting element to your backyard. Pick a spot and begin stacking your sticks, branches and tangled vines to form a dense, heavy and secure shelter close to the ground to attract a wide variety of visitors.
- **Plant It** - Native plants are an important addition to any garden. They are well adapted to survive in a particular geographic area according to the climate, soil, rainfall and availability of pollinators and seed dispersers.
- **Conserve It** - Water is a precious commodity. Mulching planting beds with newspapers, leaves, bark or wood chips is a start to conserve water.

Where my love of gardening came from...

This month Diane Davis was asked to share with us - "Well, I guess my love of gardening goes back to my Southern roots and a stepmother who loved to garden. I can remember her huge veggie garden and always having fresh veggies on the table at meal times (even though, I have never gotten into raising vegetables). My yard was always full of flowers. The Azaleas are especially beautiful in the South and we would always go to visit the Azalea gardens when they were in bloom. I still smell the Magnolia tree in her yard,.

She always seemed her happiest when her fingers were in the soil. I find that true of myself today. When I was little, I always said that I wanted to have gardens like hers when I grew up and find the happiness she did in her gardens. She has since passed away but has always been my inspiration for loving gardening and the outdoors and the joy of seeing the plants grow and the flowers bloom. My favorite signs that I have in my garden are "Gardening is my Therapy" and "The kiss of the sun for pardon, the song of the birds for mirth, one is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth."





And I'm proud to be an American where at least
I know I'm free
And I won't forget the men who died,
who gave that right to me.

Lee Greenwood

Strawberry Upside Down Cake

2 cups crushed fresh strawberries
3 cups miniature marshmallows
1 (6oz) package strawberry Jello 1
(18 oz) yellow cake mix

Preheat oven to 350 degrees
Spread crushed strawberries on the bottom of a 9x13 baking pan. Evenly sprinkle strawberries with the dry Jello and top with the miniature marshmallows. Prepare cake mix as directed on the package and pour on top of the marshmallows. Bake in preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 40 to 50 minutes.

Cool in the pan for 15 minutes

Run knife around the pan to loosen the sides and turn the cake out onto a serving tray. Store cake in the refrigerator.





A Message from our President

Hello members—

A bloom alert. My primroses are putting on a show. If you are in my area, drive by or stop and look at the flowers. You are welcome to walk through the yard. And be sure to see Gig Rose's wonderful spring garden—with lilacs, crabapple and ornamental cherry, redbud, and soon the rhododendrons. Gig lives near me—about ½ mile away.

I also want to remind you to take a look at the flowers that will be exhibited as horticulture in the flower show, especially the annuals. We should be growing them for 90 days and that means planting time is NOW.

I am waiting to hear from you about exhibits for the design portion of the flower show. We need 12 more exhibitors. Take a look at the options and let me know who is willing to enter an exhibit. There is a special section for those who have never won a blue ribbon in a standard flower show. If by chance you do not have a schedule, let me know.

Sharon

And finally, I would like to recognize my partner on the MCGC Newsletter Suzanne. At the last course of the Landscape Design School here in Ludington, Suzanne was honored with the presentation of a Central Region Life membership. The presentation of this award acknowledged her work as District V Treasurer for the past two years during which she did an exceptional job keeping the records and balancing the account which is audited by the MGC, Inc. Treasurer for the State Finance Committee. Also noted was her stellar job as the Landscape Design School Registrar and committee member.

Compliments have been shared with MGC, Inc. 1st Vice President Elect Marilyn McIntosh "how wonderful both the Courses and the venue hosted by MCGC were for the school:. The exceptional efforts Suzanne put into her MCGC Presidency, yearbooks and newsletters were highlighted also. The Central Region Life Membership fee goes toward the Central Region Scholarship fund. Congratulations, Suzanne, for this well-deserved recognition.

So as the bugler plays out Taps with its
sweet and eerie sound
Pray for these soldiers lying here in this
sacred ground.
Take home with you a sense of pride you
were here Memorial Day
Celebrating the way Americans should on
this most solemn day.
Michelle Kelm



See you at the meeting,
Gwen and Suzanne