

Over the Picket Fence



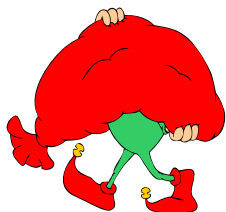
The Mason County Garden Club Quarterly Newsletter
(Since 1926—our 86th year)

www.masoncountygardenclub.org

Member

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

December 2012



America is often called the "melting pot" as it has a mixed bag of traditions from countries around the world. Christmas celebrations in the USA are a perfect blend of many customs and traditions'

As we close out 2012 and end of the year for our Garden Club, Sue Ann Schnitker has planned a festive time "Holidays Around the World" on Thursday, Dec 6 at 1:00 at **Cornerstone Baptist Church**, 121 N. Nelson, Ludington. We will take part in celebrations from around the world, sharing the traditions and history of Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

In Alaska, boys and girls with lanterns on poles carry a large figure of a star from door to door singing carols, and are invited in for supper.



A Holiday Gift for the Gardener

The Midwestern Native Garden: Native Alternatives to Nonnative Flowers and Plants, An Illustrated Guide by Charlotte Adelman and Bernard L. Schwartz, Ohio University Press.

The book lists plants that would give winter interest. It gives you the the family, genus, and species similar and could be used instead book to have on native plants.



bloom spring, summer, fall and winter or nonnative plant by its common name, but follow. Then the native plants that are are given. This an excellent reference

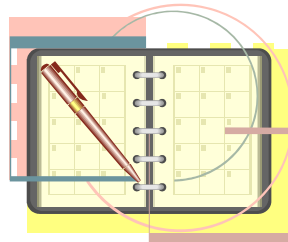
In New Orleans, a huge ox is paraded around the streets decorated with holly and with ribbons tied to its horns.



Yearbook Changes

- Sharon Morman new email:
- Joan Nelson new information:

In Boston, carol singing festivities are famous. The singers are often accompanied by hand bells.



Winter Events

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Dec 6-9 | Old Christmas Weekend and Victorian Sleigh Bell Parade, Manistee |
| Dec 7,8,9 | "White Christmas" at the historic Ramsdell Theater in Manistee |
| Dec 8 | Hanukkah begins for the Jewish community |
| Dec 12 | National Poinsettia Day per a 2002 act of Congress |
| Dec 15 | Santa Express in Scottville at 3:15 and in Ludington at 3:15 |
| Dec 21 | Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year |
| Dec 21 | Winter Solstice Lighting the cemetery in Kaleva at 4:00 |
| Dec 25 | Merry Christmas |
| Dec 25 | Community Christmas Day Dinner at 12 noon at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Ludington |
| Dec 26 | Kwanzaa begins a week long celebration of the African American culture |
| Dec 31 | "Light Up The Night" New Year's Eve Ball Drop in Ludington with many activities during the evening |
| Jan 1, 2013 | Happy New Year |
| Feb 2 | Ground Hog Day |
| Feb 14 | Valentines Day |
| Feb 18 | Presidents Day |



In Hawaii, Christmas greetings are sent to distant neighbors by shooting firearms and letting off fireworks; Santa arrives by boat and Christmas dinner is eaten outdoors.

Visit Meijer Gardens this winter!!!

Meijer Gardens (www.meijergardens.org) in Grand Rapids is a year round attraction for the gardener. Some of the scheduled events this winter include:

Dec 8, 15, 22--Roof Top Reindeer –

As part of the Meijer Gardens' Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World exhibition, live reindeer will be visiting the English Perennial and Bulb Garden for pictures and petting.

Dec 11, 18--The Original Dickens Carolers -

...will roam the corridor in period costume singing holiday tunes to add to the festive atmosphere of the Christmas exhibition.

Dec 11,18-22—Scenic Carriage Ride -

As part of the Christmas exhibition, a scenic carriage ride will take you around the luminescent sculpture park. **Reservations are required.**

Family Winter-Time Walks –

...are going on now Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 through January 3,2013. Enjoy beautiful winter days in the Children's Garden.

2013 Plant Show Series

...will intrigue and delight the serious gardener or the flower fancier. Local plant societies and area experts will showcase orchids, bonsai, iris, herbs and more. Many of the shows will feature workshops, demonstrations or tours. The first in the series is the Orchid Show January 26 and 27.

In California, Santa Claus sweeps in on a surf board.



There were requests for recipes after our wonderful potluck at the November meeting. Here are a couple -

Crock Pot Mushrooms - Betty Orton

Place in crock pot:

4 1# boxes of mushrooms - try not to buy real big ones and leave whole to wash.

Two sticks melted butter

2 packages Hidden Valley Ranch Dressing

Cook on low for 8 hours or high 3-4 hours

Apricot Sweet Potatoes - Gwen Jackson

- 1 29-oz can sweet potatoes, drained
- 1 16-oz can apricot halves, undrained
- 3 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/3 cup golden raisins
- 3 tablespoons dry sherry
- 1/4 teaspoon grated orange rind

Place sweet potatoes in an 11x7 baking dish. Drain apricots, reserving syrup. Arrange apricots over sweet potatoes. Combine sugar, cornstarch, salt, and cinnamon in a medium saucepan. Add water to reserved syrup to equal 1 cup. Add syrup and raisins to cornstarch mixture, stirring well. Bring to a boil over medium heat; stir in sherry and orange rind. Pour syrup mixture over sweet potatoes and apricots. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20 minutes, basting occasionally. Yield: 4 servings.

Salted Caramels - Sue Ann Schnitker

They came from Sam's or Costco...so be on the lookout when you're shopping!!!



In Pennsylvania, the Germans are given gifts by Belsnickle, who taps them with his switch if they have misbehaved.



The National Garden Club (www.gardenclub.org) was founded in 1929 and the Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc (www.michigangardenclubs.org) in 1931. The Mason County Garden Club was organized in 1926 and became federated with NGC and MGC in 1935. This is a long history of focus on the betterment of our world through a knowledge of gardening and design; home and community beautification; good horticultural practices; protection of our environment and conservation of our natural resources. With this in mind, consider one of the many opportunities listed below that will enhance your commitment to the Mission of our club.

April 22-23, 2013--Garden Study, Course II - The host of the school is Michiana Landscape Study Club and the chairperson is Bobbie Quick (bquick50@gmail.com)

April 25-26, 2013--Environmental Studies, Course I - Held in Pleasant Ridge, MI. Chairperson is Stacey Strutcher, 248-6538.

May 9-10, 2013 Landscape Design, Course IV – Last in the series to be hosted by our club at Cornerstone Baptist Church in Ludington. Contact Suzanne Townsend for further information.

May 14-15, 2013 Flower Show School, Course IV - To be held in Okemos. For information contact Lois Snover-Hanson at 517-694-8091 or Kathi Dominguez at 517-669-5112.

May 29-31, 2013 Michigan Garden Clubs Convention – To be held in Holland at the Double Tree Convention Center. Contact Sharon Morman for further information.

June 6, 2013 District V Spring Meeting – Hosted by the Charlevoix Area Garden Club at Castle Farms in Charlevoix. Contact Sharon Morman for further information.

September 24, 2013 District V Fall Meeting – Jointly hosted by Seedums, Perennial, Presque Isle County and Stepping Stone Garden clubs at the UAW Black Lake Conference Center in Onaway.



In New Mexico, people place lighted candles in paper bags filled with sand on streets and rooftops to light the way for the Christ Child.

Looking for a winter blooming plant to brighten your home during the next few months?

African Violet Plants (*Saintpaulia*) are winter plants that grow well indoors. They can bring a little bit of spring in the cold winter months. The petals of the African Violet flower feel like soft buttery velvet and grow in colors of purple, pink, white, blue, red, yellow and cream. This plant needs an indoor temperature of 65-75 degrees. They need to be placed under a light for 12 hours a day for proper growth and blooms. This plant only requires water every few days. If the soil feels dry to the touch, give it some water. If it feels moist, do not water. You may want to place the plant on a saucer or tray with water. This way the plant can absorb the water as needed. If you take good care of your African Violet, it may last you a very long time.



DID YOU KNOW?

“Keeping in Touch,” a quarterly publication from the National Garden Clubs, included a comment by Central Region Director Florence Smith on “two exceptional state projects.” She said that Michigan reported that their partnership with the Michigan-USDA Forest Service to develop the *Loda Lake Wildflower Sanctuary* in the Manistee National Forest is proceeding. The goal of \$20,000 for a teaching pavilion has been accomplished. Phase two is restrooms!



Polish Americans on Christmas Eve spread hay on their kitchen floor and under the tablecloth to remind them of a stable and manger.

When they make up the table for dinner two extra places are set up for Mary and the Christ Child in case they should knock at the door to ask for shelter.

We enjoy bringing the newsletter to our wonderful members four times a year.

Suggestions are always welcome and appreciated.

Don't forget to visit our website www.masoncountygardenclub.org.

It's really nifty and Sue Ann Hanson keeps it updated so that the information is always current.

Recommend it to your friends...
invite them to be a part of our Club.



Happy Holidays to you all
Gwen & Suzanne