

over the picket fence



Winter, 2022-2023
December, January, February
The Mason County Garden Club
Quarterly Newsletter
(Since 1926-our 97th year)

www.masoncountygardenclub.org

Member: Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc
Central Region and National Garden Clubs, Inc
Club No. 140 – District 5





Thoughts from our President:

It was December 2019. The installation of officers at the Holiday Luncheon has been postponed because I was galivanting around the Caribbean on a cruise ship at that time. I'll never forget that I thought the requirements of the ship – temperature checks, hand sanitizers at every doorway – was a bit overboard (no pun intended). Little did I realize, that a short 3 months later, COVID would be a frightening word in our vocabularies.

And so I started my tenure as President of the Mason County Garden Club. We cancelled several meetings and finally had one in June where officers were finally installed (NOTE to future boards –NEVER delay installation of officers!!). Then in July, I tested positive for COVID but never had symptoms. And another word entered our every day lives: ZOOM. We zoomed from Sept 2020 through March, 2021. Finally, as many got COVID vaccines, we were able to start in person meetings in April 2021. Whew! It seemed like an eternity: August 2020 through March 2021 of ZOOM meetings.

As I leave the office of president, I can say we survived COVID, in fact, we GREW our membership, even though we weren't having in-person meetings. I can say we continued our outdoor projects through the entire 3 years of my presidency and again, flourished. We had several members leave over these years but others have taken their place. We are back to "normal", and hope to stay there. If not, at least we have more tools (mostly related to technology) to deal with it.

I leave the Presidency in good hands, GREAT hands in fact. Sharon Morman takes over as our president. Again. She was our president back in 2010 through 2013.

Thanks for all of your support, Mason County Garden Club! I had a fun ride!!

Sue Ann





December

- 1 Kim AnDyke
- 7 Mary Reeds-Mortensen
- 12 Debra Purtee
- 15 Becky Always
- 21 Bobbie Clingan
- 22 Linda Burns

January

- 1 Betsy VonSprecken
- 4 Sharon Morman
- 6 Jackie Christensen
- 7 Gwen Jackson
- 9 Mary Margaret Scanlon
- 19 Mary Frances Peters
- 20 Dega Shropshire
- 31 Sharon Bluhm

February

- 2 April Quinsberry-Alvarado
- 13 Elsa Witt

Meet Our Newest Members:



Linda Wolven



Susan Kaplan



Randee Smith



Michigan Garden Club Dates to Remember:

1st and 3rd Fridays, 10 – 11 AM- Friday Morning Member Meetings on Zoom:

Find the username and password at www.migardenclubs.org website located on the Member side; topics found in calendar on page 4. *All Zoom sessions produced and delivered in a secure environment and are only available to MGC club members through use of the Passcode and Meeting ID. Member Side Username and Password also available from Club President or District Director.

Upcoming Events Calendar

Dec 2022

2 Member Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom
2 District Director Meeting 11 AM —Noon Zoom
6 District 5 President's Meeting 11 AM Zoom
16 Member Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom

Jan 2023

6 Member Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom
17 District 5 Presidents Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom
20 Member Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom

Feb 2023

3 Member Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom
17 Member Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom
28 District 5 Presidents Meeting 10 AM —11 AM Zoom

Thanks to our dedicated Board for a wonderful Garden Club year. We are looking forward to the coming year with our new Board.

March: Social Potluck. Welcome back to all our Garden Club Members and newest members of the club.

April: Growing Lavender: Patty Harman, Master Gardener and Horticulture Proprietor brought Lavender plants and products to be bought by members and educated us on the care and growing of lavender.

May: Petunia Planting Day: A good turnout for Petunia planting day.

May: Butterflies and Skippers: An educational and slide show presented by Dave Dister, Consulting Ecologist

May Baskets: Members brought May Baskets they created to be exchanged.

June: Spring Plant Exchange & White Elephant Sale: A successful Spring Plant Exchange and White Elephant Sale.

June: Conservation in Home Gardening: Dani McGarry, Executive Director, Mason-Lake Conservation District. Dani covered programs and services provided by the Conservation District, with focus on those related to home gardens.

July: Summer Herb Festival: On The Farm with Bradley Youngstrom: Member, Julie Tews and helpers, attended the festival to represent the Club.

July: Brunch Under The Beech: Members attended a delightful brunch at the home of member, Sandi Luxford.

Aug: Flower Pressing Workshop: Member, Susan Joslin conducted a workshop where members made framed pictures of pressed flowers they had gathered and preserved.

Sept: Fall Plant Sale and White Elephant Sale. A successful Fall Plant Sale and White Elephant Sale.

Sept: Landscape Design & Civic Beautification Awards: Awards presented to local businesses.

AFFEW Presentation: Julie Chambers, President AFFEW. Julie shared some of their environment projects and accomplishments over the past 31+ years here in Mason County.

Oct: Field Trip to Golden Hart Fruit Farm.

Oct: Fall Into Christmas: Bradley Youngstrom, Artist and Designer and Owner, On The Farm demonstrated flower arranging from Fall into Christmas.

Nov: Holiday Wreath/Design Creations: Member, Julie Tews, guided the members in making and decorating Holiday wreaths.

Dec: Holiday Luncheon and Installation of Officers:

Pictures of Events Since Last Newsletter:

Fall Plant Sale and White Elephant Sale- September



Field Trip to Golden Hart Farm - September



Landscape Design & Civic Beautification Awards- September

Gail Martin and Jackie Christensen present awards to Jennifer White from Riemer Law, Melissa Boggs from 1 Ludington Place and WestShore Bank (President Ray Biggs accepting for landscape team).



District 5 Conference in Traverse City - October



Cups of Cheer – October



Garden Therapy at Ludington Woods - October



Holiday Wreath/Design Creation - November



Holiday Luncheon – Table Hostesses - December



Installation of Officers and Life Member Achievement Awards – December



A Gardener's Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for those with us today.

Help us to be ever mindful of the beauties around us.

May we grow with our flowers in gentleness, patience, courage and laughter.

As we turn brown soil and plant your seed, may we learn faith...

Faith in the goodness of the earth, the blessing of the sun, and the fullness of the clouds.

May we be grateful for the privilege of being co-workers with God in the creation of even one tiny flower:

And grant that we may know the great joy that comes from sharing with others..Amen

(Given by Roxy Antzcak)

Poster Contest Description and Winners:

Since 1961 the US Forest Service and the National Garden Clubs, Inc. have worked together to sponsor an annual poster contest that reaches elementary students throughout the United States. Winning artwork is then used by the Forest Service in promotional and conservation education materials. The contest is called Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl and is open for grades 1-5. Smokey Bear was created in 1944 as a symbol for the US Forest Service to prevent forest fires because trees provided the wood needed for WWII efforts. The first poster depicting Smokey Bear was delivered on October 10, 1944 by artist Albert Staehle. Smokey's message is "Only you can prevent forest fires!" This message must be included on the students' drawing of Smokey Bear. Woodsy Owl was created by the Forest Service in September 1971 to inspire children to actively care for the environment. Woodsy's initial message was "Give a hoot; don't pollute!" inviting children to renew, reuse and recycle. In the 1990's a new message became "Lend a hand, care for the land!" which also must be on the contest drawing of Woodsy Owl.

This year the Mason County Garden Club reached out to see if any local schools would be interested in participating in the poster contest. Two schools expressed an interest: Mason County Eastern's 4th grade entered 28 posters and Ludington Area Catholic entered 43 posters from all the classes. Nessa Shoup was the winner at MCE. The LAC winners were Andyn Mirretti 1st grade, Catherine Towers 2nd grade, John Paul Lipa 3rd grade, Avonlea Johnson 4th grade and Sarah Reisterer 5th grade. Only one winner from each class may be sent to the Michigan Garden Club, Inc. to compete statewide. Winners at LAC advanced to the state level. Winners from the state level will advance to the national level and those winners will go to Washington D.C. in the summer to meet with the US Forest Service to celebrate their achievement.

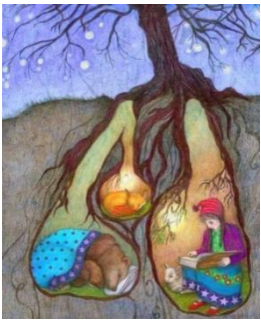
There was also a sculpture contest for grades 4-8. Sculptures must consist of recyclable, reused and/or reduced materials. Only the 4th grade at MCE entered this contest. The winner was Trace Stumbrie. His sculpture was sent on to the Michigan Garden Club, Inc. for state competition.



Mason County Eastern fourth graders work with Mason County Garden Club on sculpture project



Mason county Eastern fourth-graders Trace Stumbrie and Nessa Shoup stand with teacher Carol Rowe, Julie Tews of the Mason County Garden Club, Eric Sherman and art teacher Laurel Prafke. Tews presented Stumbrie with an award for Winning the sculpture contest and Shoup won the poster contest. The garden club worked with local schools in Mason County on a sculpture project using recycled and reused materials. The Mason County Garden Club, in conjunction with the Michigan Garden Clubs from across the state, made it their goal to get kids more involved with their environment in a positive way. For the past few months Julie Tews has been working with Mason County Eastern fourth graders on a youth sculpture contest, put on by the Michigan Garden Clubs, to encourage the youth to keep the planet green. The contest was open to local students in fourth through eighth grades. The projects were judged by the Mason County Garden Club's executive board.



The winter solstice time is no longer celebrated as it once was, with the understanding that this is a period of descent and rest, of going within our homes, within ourselves and taking in all that we have been through, all that has passed in this full year which is coming to a close... like nature and the animal kingdom around us, this time of hibernation is so necessary for our tired limbs, our burdened minds.

Our modern culture teaches avoidance at a max at this time; alcohol, lights, shopping, overworking, over spending, comfort food and consumerism. And yet the natural tug to go inwards as nearly all creatures are doing is strong and the weather so bitter that people are left feeling that winter is hard, because for those of us without burning fires and big festive families, it can be lonely and isolating. Whereas in actual fact winter is kind, she points us in her quiet soft way towards our inner self, towards this annual time of peace and reflection, embracing the darkness and forgiving, accepting and loving embracing goodbye the past year.

"Winter takes away the distractions, the buzz, and presents us with the perfect time to rest and withdraw into a womb like love, bringing fire & light to our hearth". .. and then, just around the corner the new year will begin again, and like a seed planted deep in the earth, we will all rise with renewed energy once again to dance in the sunlight.

Life is a gift ❤️ a Happy winter to you all...

Written by Bridget Anna McNeil

Artwork by Jessica Boehman

How to Feel Happy During a Cold Winter

Have you ever noticed how bad weather seems to drag the spirit down with it? There's nothing you can do about the weather, but there are various things you can do to keep your spirits up until spring.

1. Find things to enjoy about winter. A snowy, icy, cold, or rainy world can be beautiful and often has sounds and [smells](#) all its own. If you're an artist, photographer, or craftsperson, winter provides a great deal of inspiration and different colors to work with. Even if you don't feel that creative, simply watching a winter scene from the comfort of your home can be a pleasant way to relax and enjoy the peace.

2. Take part in winter activities. Enjoy [skiing](#), sledding, or [ice skating](#). Visit someplace nearby while the summer crowds are gone. * If you're a beginner to snow sports, try learning in areas where you won't be worried about more experienced people crowding you out. Local parks and quiet cross country or downhill ski circuits are ideal starting points to encourage you to get out and give new winter sports a go.

*Making snow-men, snow-huts, and snow-lanterns are fun activities for both kids and adults.

3. Stay warm. Whether that means sitting by the [fire](#), snuggling up with a loved one or pet, piling on the blankets, or having a [warm drink](#), keep yourself warm. The best way to stay warm all the time is to wear layers of suitable clothes, especially woolen long-johns, undershirts, and sweaters. And don't neglect your feet – woolen socks and slippers are a must-have for keeping you toasty warm all winter.

*Remember: a significant proportion of body heat is lost through your head - so now is the time to whip out your most fashionable winter hats, berets, earmuffs, headbands, shawls, and other accessories.

4. Find something to do besides stew about the weather. This would be a great time to read that book that's been on your list—or even [write it](#). Play cards, clean the house, cook up a big pot of soup, take up a [hobby](#), or [knit](#) another warm sweater. It's also a good time to sort photos, computer files, fabric stashes, and anything else that has accumulated over the other months of the year.

*Go to the movies more frequently.

*Visit museums, art galleries, astronomy observatories, food-making facilities (for example, chocolate, cheese, etc.), and while away the cold hours in their heated rooms learning something new.

*Use indoor sports facilities such as rock-climbing walls, squash courts, [badminton](#) halls, etc.

*Read [How to keep kids entertained in winter](#) for ideas on keeping children happy in winter.

5. Brighten up. Winter comes with the shortest days and lowest light of the year. Go out if you can. If you can't, or if you're so far from the equator as to have little or no daylight, use [full-spectrum lights](#), [light or white walls](#), and perhaps some vibrant accent [colors](#).

*Learn how to make winter window decorations.

6. Stay active. As much as possible, get yourself outside. Bundle up and take at least a short walk. If the weather does not permit, move around inside. Walk up and down your stairs if you have them. Do a workout tape or use that treadmill or stair machine that is gathering dust. Exercise gets your body temperature up and your blood flowing. It also regulates such things as [sleep](#) and [diet](#). Move around at least a bit each day.

*If you have a dog, keep walking him during winter. It will do both of you the world of good and it's a regular routine that helps to get you outside exercising. Read [How to keep dogs warm in the winter](#) for tips on keeping your dog warm when walking.

*See [How to jog in cold weather](#), [How to walk in the winter](#) and [How to keep running during snow season](#) for lots of helpful winter exercise tips.

7. Browse seed catalogs and plan your garden. There's nothing quite as promising as the idea that spring is around the corner. You could even [start some plants indoors](#) under artificial light.

*See [How to grow winter salads](#) and [How to winter sow seeds outdoors](#) for more ideas.

*Take a walk in your garden or the local park and spotting how the wildlife survives and how the plants are coping. You might like to try identifying trees in winter as well.

8. **Eat properly.** You may tend to eat more in winter, whether because of holidays or because your body craves more energy. Either way, try to keep a [balanced diet](#) including whatever [fruits and vegetables](#) (dried or canned if necessary) you can. Try not to overdo it on the sugars and starch.

*Choose your carbohydrates wisely. It's natural to crave them during colder months and it's important to consume complex carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables and enriched whole grains) over processed food.

*Maintain your vitamin intake. Vitamin B is important, especially folate, to help stop you feeling the blues; this in foods such as lentils, peas, and spinach.

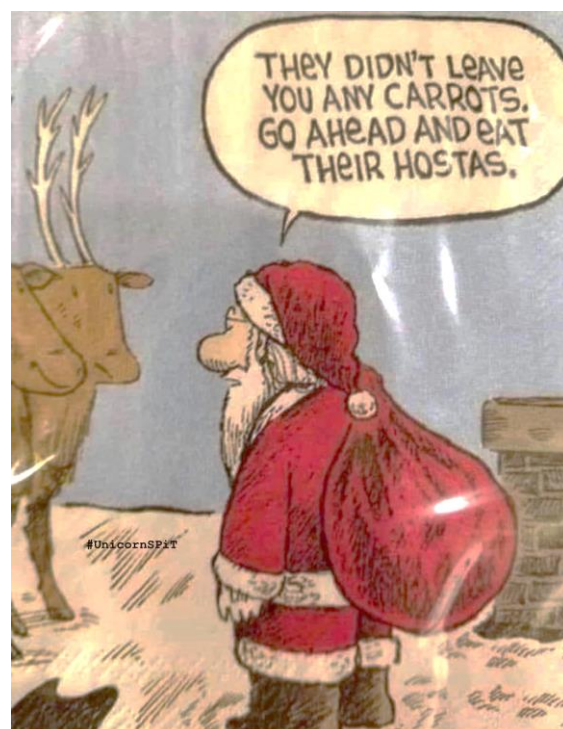
*Ensure that your intake of foods rich in tryptophan is increased because this is the amino acid required to manufacture serotonin, the neurotransmitter that helps you to feel good. Suitable foods include bananas, poultry, dairy produce, and peas.

*Keep up your intake of omega-3 fatty acids to help fight off the blues, eating such foods as cold-water fish and flaxseed and walnuts.

*Avoid any foods that cause you to feel sluggish, such as highly processed foods, saturated fats, and sugary foods. These can worsen any blues because they cause you to feel lethargic and often result in a crash after the initial energy burst. In addition, be careful with aspartame as it can interfere with serotonin functioning and leave you feeling moodier; if you notice any reactions to it, avoid consuming it.

9. **Keep in touch.** Call friends or make new ones. If you regularly attend club meetings, church, or other activities, try not to interrupt your routine just for bad weather. If transportation is a challenge for you, link up with friends or helpful people who can give you a ride to and from your usual activities.

10. **Remember that, without winter, no one would appreciate and love the summers many great qualities.** People manage to draw a lot of inspiration from winter, including spending more family together and using this as a chance to increase skills that will be useful when the weather warms up. Some people even choose to use winter to celebrate important life events, such as getting married in the snow. Whatever your take on winter, in contrast to our ancestors for many previous centuries, our modern lifestyle helps us to keep warm, travel safely, and continue life with a good amount of comfort during winter seasons, all sound reasons for finding something good about living through the coldest months.





Twas the night before Christmas and all through the yard...

Not a plant was left standing, the ground it was hard.
The tools were all hung in the garage with care
A well deserved rest now that the garden was bare.

The bulbs were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of springtime danced in their heads,
I in my Snuggie, my husband with our cat
Had just settled in for a long winter's chat.

When out in the hydrangeas there arose such a clatter,
I dropped my seed catalogs to see what was the matter.
Away to the front door I quickly dashed,
Half expecting to find my yard had been trashed.

When I opened the door, it was suddenly clear.
Here was a sleigh and eight tiny reindeer
With a little old gardener so lively and quick
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick!

More quickly than crabgrass his coursers they came
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name.

"Now Holly! Now Ivy! Now Daisy and Rue!
On Rose, On Petunia, Fern and Lily too!

To the top of the trellis! To the top of the wall!
Now dash away, dash away, dash away all!"

So up to the housetop the reindeer they flew
With a sleighful of gifts and St. Nicholas too.

I closed the front door and was turning around
When he slid down the chimney, hitting the ground.
He was dressed all in red, with Wellies on his feet,
And a poinsettia on his cap made him look really neat.

He stood up quite quickly and went straight to his work
With a composter for Cathy, a Dutch weeder for Dirk.

There were asters for Ann, a pine tree for Paul
And a garden design book for use by us all.
Next came a rain barrel. This was for Rob.
And finally, for me, a ginkgo key fob.

Then laying a trowel aside of his nose
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He ran to his sleigh and gave a quick whistle
And away they all flew like the seeds of globe thistle.

But I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight,

*"Merry Christmas to all gardeners
and to all a good night."*



I hope you have enjoyed this edition of “over the picket fence.” Please help me out with future editions by submitting ideas, articles, recipes and suggestions. I want to be able to continue with the newsletter, as I feel it is important to be able to communicate in this way and you can be a big part in helping me do so. Stay safe and, hopefully, I will see you all soon....Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and God Bless....Diane D.

Club Collect

Keep us, O God, ever mindful of nature’s generous bounty
May we always bear in mind it is ours to trust, to protect,
to nurture and to enjoy.

Mrs. C.C. Caswell

