



Quail's Tales

www.HillandDaleGC.org

Hill and Dale is a member of Michigan Garden Clubs and National Garden Clubs

March 2012

President's preface

One the little presidential bonus I've just discovered is the joy of filling out a presidents report for the MGC. Thanks to all who contributed their input so that I could get it done on time.

David

March 8 meeting

It's not spring YET. As much as we're eager to get out into the garden, we're gonna hold off for another month, curl up inside and enjoy Lisa Steinkopf's presentation: "Cultivating Your Green Thumb Indoors." A master horticulturist, Lisa knows how to keep those African violets in bloom, as well as the best way to fight off the dry house winter scourge, spider mites. Your house plants will thank you for attending.

And you might pick up a few tips for getting an early start on plants for the plant gala. May 12 will be here before you know it.

Hospitality will be provided by Sandy Cusack, Joan Angelo and Lisa Steinkopf.

February 9 meeting minutes

President David Henry called the meeting to order at 8:45.

Angela Paul gave the treasurer's report which was approved as given

It was called to our attention to add new member Gail Lutsky to our active member roster.

Everyone was reminded to get into the gardening mindset and start planning

for our annual plant gala in May. Mar Sclawy will be in charge again this year. Yeah Mar. Katie Wemyss said the Spicer Gardens would have plants to contribute, but of course they need to be dug up and potted, as do our own flowers. Member Joan Angelo volunteered to help members in this regard!

Sally Ouellette announced a Flower Exhibition to be part of the Home and Garden Show at the Silverdome March 9-11. Contact her for details.

There were no committee reports or any new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05.

Incredible Edibles—District 1 spring meeting—April 17

The District 1 meeting will be held at the San Marino Club, 1685 E. Big Beaver, Troy, MI 48083 on April 17. Registration will begin at 9 with the meeting starting at 10. Morning program will feature "Delicious Designs—Creating with Fruits and Vegetables" by Sharon Yantis. She will demonstrate designs incorporating the use of fruits, vegetables and herbs.

Afternoon program with feature Trevor Newman and Mark Angelini, owners of Roots to Fruits, discussing how "Edible Landscaping" brings together esthetics, function and utility by incorporating food-producing and other useful plants in the landscape, allowing gardeners to have their yard and eat it too.

As usual, there will be shopping, lunch and chances to catch up with other garden club members. Of course MGC President Nancy Stark will present MGC awards to district clubs.

Club members will also receive a "Recipe for Success," for help when applying for new monetary awards offered for garden club projects incorporating edibles: MGC's *Share the Harvest, Community Gardening Award of Merit* and NGC's *Plantings for Public and Special Places—Gardens with Edibles*.

Members wishing to attend should pay \$25 to treasurer Angela Paul by April 7. That's **BEFORE** our April meeting. Best plan: bring your fee to the March meeting.

Coming up

March 9-11: Home and Garden Show at the Silverdome includes a demonstration of design and horticulture. Plan is to test the appetite for a return to a flower show at the next Home and Garden show.

March 17: Live on water? You might want to attend "Creation, Restoration and Management of Natural Shoreline Landscaping on Michigan Inland Lakes: A Workshop for Property Owners." 9 am to 12:30 at Independence Oaks County Park, Wint Nature Center, 9501 Sashabaw Road, Clarkston. \$35 cost includes a 70-page *Guidebook for Property Owners on Natural Shoreline Landscapes*. Registration deadline is March 9. See Mar Sclawy at the March meeting for a registration form.

March 24: "What's the Buzz on Native Bees." 10 till noon at the UM-Dearborn Environmental Interpretive Center. \$5 at the door. Register online at www.stewardshipnetwork.org and choose Lakeplain Cluster under the "Cluster" pulldown menu. Or call 734.996.3190. Learn how to promote any number of the 400 native species of Michigan bees in your garden.



*Taylor Garden Club
Taylor Conservatory Foundation and
Wayne County Community College District are
Going Green for St. Patrick's Day!*

**4th Annual
Growing Great Gardens**
Saturday, March 17, 2012 8 am - 4 pm
Heinz C. Prechter Performing Arts Center
Wayne County Community College District

*From Motown to Growtown - Lindsay Pielack
Underused Annuals For Your Garden - George Papadelis*

Plus Your Choice of 2 Classes to Attend

Conifers in the Landscape
Easy 3-Season Containers: One Pot Three Combos
Go Nuts for Native: Trees & Shrubs for
Birds, Bees & Butterflies
The Art of Topiary
Backyard Berries & Fruit Trees for the Small Yard
Cultivating Your Green Thumb w/Indoor Plants
A Spot O' Tea
The Wild Garden: First Aid From Weeds
Raise It Up! Growing in Raised Beds
Attracting Hummingbirds to Your Garden
Living Walls From Start to End

Registration

\$25 Early Bird Special - \$30 after Feb. 21
taylorconservatory.org
taylorgardenclub.com
and on Facebook
or contact Pattie K. 313-292-8316

Registration Includes

Coffee & Tea
Bagels & Donuts
Catered by Tim Horton
Lunch Catered by Secret Recipes
25+ Vendors & Exhibitors
w/Garden Related Items
Door Prizes
Garden Goodie Bag

1-2-3 Raffle

6 tickets for \$5.00
ID X80185
Solar Water Fountain
Garden Art Hand-Craft from
Recycled Iron by Local Artist,
Perry Durham
'Bird & Breakfast' Basket

Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors
Walmart - ITC
Total Community Credit Union

Hail and farewell

Please welcome new member Gail Lutzky to the club. Her address is 10026 Burgess, White Lake, MI 48386 add it to your book.

Flo Holzknecht sends news that Gladys King died in her Florida home in February. She was a Life Member of Michigan Garden Clubs and president of Hill and Dale in 1965-1966.

Garden therapy—Pussy Willow Kitten

Bagging for the April project will take place the week of April 2 – 6. Committee members are Katie Wemyss, Ruth Trombley, Jan Henry and David Henry.

How will you serve the club this coming year?

Nominations for club officers will be announced in the April newsletter, with elections to follow in May. If you're interested in running for office please contact a member of the nominating committee. Officers are president, vice-president-program chair, treasurer, recording secretary and garden therapy coordinator.

In addition to the nominating committee, the club has 17 standing committees: Awards, Garden Therapy, Heritage Park Gardens, Horticulture, Hospitality, Junior Gardeners, Membership, Newsletter, Perennial Plant Gala, Publicity, Remembrance, Telephone Tree, Trowel and Error, Ways and Means and Website. You may have noticed that some of the committees have not been very robust of late. If you'd like to rejuvenate them, consider chairing one of them. The new president will be looking for volunteers. If you see no use for them, let's consider dissolving some of them and concentrating our efforts on those we do best.



Horticulture--Hellebores

I was at a friend's house yesterday, and as I walked up to the front door, the hellebores, in full bloom, greeted me. What a fabulous plant!

We are going to talk about *Helleborus* (hell-eh-BOR-us) *orientalis*, also known as the Lenten rose, as it is the most popular variety. The Lenten rose persists for years, reseeds, is in flower for months, and best of all, blooms in the snow. (Or as in our case, this year, in the cold months.)

The blooms are about 2.5 inches across and come in single and double varieties. The flowers are cupped and nodding and range in color from green, white, yellow, pink, purple, maroon, and red. They can even be spotted. I don't think I can find a bad thing to say about this plant.

More cultivars are coming out all the time and the variety is endless. They are hardy in Zone 4-9. According to the new USDA hardiness map, we are now a 6b, so they are perfectly hardy here. Plant them in a partial shade area, with rich, humusy, well-drained soil. Stress the well-drained. The plants will perish in wet winter soil. They would be more forgiving of a dry soil.

And, did I mention, the deer DO NOT eat them! Added bonus. Once established plants seldom need division. But if you want to expand your garden, divide plants in spring, allowing time for them to become established before winter. Consider adding some hellebores to your garden this year. Happy gardening!
-- Lisa



Critter spotting—Signs of spring?

Seems that the first signs of spring in the critter world this year are really *sounds* of spring. As I let Toots and Roxie out for their morning constitutional, I heard the blackbirds whirring in the marsh. They're always the first harbingers of spring, and this time I caught them so early in their return that they hadn't even taken the time from nest building to visit the bird feeder. Or it could be that with the weather so moderate, they haven't had to make the trip. Tasty morsels are already flying around out there.

Canada geese, who generations ago gave up migrating any farther than the closest patch of open water, haven't migrated at all this winter. They still fly around, honking like they're taking off for Florida any second now, but they haven't even left the neighborhood.

The swans have been surprised by weather vagaries this season. We generally don't see them in the winter. But with open water almost constantly available on the lake, we've seen them swimming around as if it were summer.

They always seemed to know when to disappear in the face of weather closing in. Swans can't take off from land—or ice. They need open water to get their air speed up. One night recently, however, they miscalculated (certainly a term of art when dealing with critters with brains the size of a walnut). Wherever they'd been sleeping, they awoke to frozen water around them on the canal and open water w-a-a-a-y down at the mouth of the canal. As graceful as swans appear in water, they lose all that grace on land—and ice. It must be those webbed feet. Ducks waddle; geese waddle. Swans waddle, too, but they're usually too proud to be seen hoofing it.

This time, though, there was nothing for it but to hike down the ice to the open water. Whichever of those life-mated birds had chosen their resting place for the night, that was the bird getting an earful from the allegedly mute spouse as they trudged down the canal, looking (as much as swans could) like two footsore cowboys whose horses had thrown them and run off.

Back in the water, their majesty returned, but we haven't seen them on the canal since.

--Mar Sclawy © 2012