



# Quail's Tales

[www.HillandDalegc.org](http://www.HillandDalegc.org)

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

June 2012

## President's preface

Out with the old, in with the new.

I've been working for a few weeks now to try and clean up what was our strawberry bed. The first and last real crop was in 2008. It has now become overrun with grass, thistle, violets, and other assorted weeds, and there isn't even much in the way of strawberry plants.

I've finally got the whole bed turned over and screened to remove what I hope is all of the vegetation. Based on the end of the bed I started on, this was not 100% successful. It's now June, and nothing is planted. I found some really cheap onion sets at the produce store.

I plan to dump those in and see what happens. I'm also planning to see what Steinkopf Nursery has left to fill in a bit. I hope a fall turnover and winter kill will at least allow me to get something done next year with a bit less effort.

In keeping with this month's theme, I'll be turning things over to Kathleen next week. --David

## Plant gala report



We made close to \$1,000 at this year's plant gala, thanks to the hard work of Hill and Dale members and Kathy Heckman. Special thanks to Kathy, who—as usual—brought some interesting plants as well as her personal book of plant identification and worked both Friday and Saturday. Several club members also worked both days, but Mar isn't that good at attendance taking and failed to note the extra work. Still, we're all especially grateful for club members Katie Wemyss and Chris Sechler, who are ailing and yet brought over their plants for the gala, and more.

A few items were lost—some found: Mar's sweatshirt: found by Joanne Bryngelson. A pair of snazzy sunglasses that went home with Mar in a bag of paper bags: whose? An awkward green watering can: seen it?

### May minutes

Slate of officers was nominated. There were no nominations from the floor. Those present elected the slate. New officers named below.

### June meeting

Installation of officers: President Kathleen Postema; vice-presidents and program co-chairs, Jeannine Gundle and Katie Wemyss; secretary, Joanne Bryngelson; and treasurer, Angela Paul will be installed at our end-of-the-club year meeting.

Chairs and duties for the new year include:

Flo Holzknecht—awards; Ann McMinn—Garden Therapy books, Heritage Park gardens; Nancy Adams—Junior Gardeners, ways and means; Gail Lutzky—hospitality; Peggy Dapkus—membership (includes collecting dues); Joanne Bryngelson—phone tree; Chris Sechler—call potential members to discuss the club; Joan Angelo—remembrance and table design; Marcia Stewart—poetry for the yearbook; Sandy Cusack—help with publicity; Sally Ouellette—newsletter, design programs; Mar Sclawy—newsletter, publicity, perennial gala; David Henry—website, yearbook; Jan Henry—proofread; Linda Talacki—program on Floriade; Katie Wemyss—Heritage Park gardens, Garden Therapy; Jeannine Gundle—Junior Gardeners, Garden Therapy; Gretchen Pugley—presentation, on-call VP.

Any volunteers for the horticulture column? Yes, Lisa is a hard act to follow, but give that niche a thought.

If you don't see your name in here, consider what you can do to make the club vibrant and exciting. Perhaps you know someone who had a dynamite presentation that you can recommend to the VP-program chairs.

If you see your name in here but are totally surprised, let Kathleen know that you can't serve and choose some other role to do your part.

Tradition continues as members contribute their favorite snacks to celebrate the new officers and chairs and to thank the outgoing officers and chairs for a fine year. See how many members you can identify by the dish that they bring.



## Blue Star Memorial—July 20

The Blue Star Memorial marker will be unveiled at noon on July 20 at Memorial Park, corner of Oakland and Grand River in Farmington.

All three Farmington garden clubs contributed to purchasing the memorial and planning the dedication. We live in peace and prosperity thanks to those who have served the US in the armed services over more than two centuries. We hope to see many Hill and Dale members at the ceremony.

Dues are OVER due. Pay Angela or Peggy \$25 or risk not being listed in the yearbook.

## Remembrance

Joanne Bryngelson's husband is recovering from heart surgery.

## Bring back those books...

We're still missing a number of officer and committee orientation notebooks.. All members who have a notebook are asked to bring it to the June meeting, even if you've volunteered for a committee for the coming year. Nancy Adams has graciously agreed to revise all the notebooks and get them into the hands of the new officers and committee chairs so we can kick off the new club year in August with updated info and assignments.

## Coming up...

...Garden Therapy planning at Amy's house on June 15

...a month without a meeting. Enjoy July. We'll reconvene in August.

## Horticulture

*The Violet Show!!!! WOW!!!*



### *Critter Spotting—Groundhog redux*

All the signs were there. I wore my Hill and Dale Garden Club tee to Staples and was slapped with a question about basil. “Do you think squirrels are eating my basil plant?” More likely it’s those tiny bugs chewing down on the leaves, I offered. “Nope. Entire leaves are gone.” Hmmm, perhaps a groundhog.

I sympathized with the clerk (offered my standard groundhog remedy: kill ‘em), but secretly I was feeling pretty smug. Neighbor Dan has not complained of a single groundhog sighting so far this year. I hadn’t seen signs of any critter depredations except for an occasional deer snack on the fall blooming clematis.

Perhaps letting the dogs run around outside was doing the trick, herding the hogs to new venues. There was the occasional sniffing of the air when they first went outside, but—hey—that could be anything, perhaps a swell cookout just a whiff upwind. The cow parsnips, a groundhog favorite, seemed intact. There were a few missing leaves in some remote parts of the garden, but we have bunnies and they have more bunnies and ...so it goes.

Then, my pricey Kiss Me Over the Garden Gate, purchased at the Birmingham farmers’ market, started to list. Cause? Missing leaves on one side. Perpetrator? Unknown.

Usually when I let the dogs out during daylight, I let them run loose. Last week, I opened the door and before I could give them the signal to take off, off they took. Roxie running to the right and Tootsie heading straight ahead and down the hill. Two seconds later, running at top speed, a groundhog came pelting past from the right, pursued by Rox.

Hah! It encountered the barricade I had made behind the tool shed: concrete blocks with an old gas can on top. Groundhog could not get under; disaster was imminent. With a mighty heave, it scrambled over the gas can and fled behind the shed. Roxie was just a tad too wide to follow.

But Tootsie was on the far side, sliding her way between the kayaks, all her terrier instincts focused on PREY. Unfortunately, her body wasn't quite up to getting where the groundhog had gone. But, Roxie had come around the other side of the second shed, found a hole in the lattice on the back of the shed and was digging for China—or at least for the groundhog that lay somewhere in between.

I appreciated the effort, but I've also seen groundhog claws. They are expert diggers and those claws make excavation pretty easy. What if the groundhog felt trapped and turned to swipe a paw across Roxie's face? And if not Roxie's, what of Tootsie, still struggling to heft aside the kayaks and execute a pincher movement on the critter from the other side of the shed? It seemed likely that someone was gonna get hurt. Only question was who.

Wuss! That was me, calling off the dogs with the only word strong enough to overcome their dedication to groundhog annihilation: Carrot! Over they trotted, ready for the snack.

And the groundhog, I hoped, was packing a few things and planning a move to another den, one not so close to two dogs who take their hunting instincts seriously—even if their owner doesn't.

—Mar Sclawy © 2012

