



Quail's Tales

www.HillandDaleGC.org

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

September 2012

President's preface

It's been a month of challenges for me. On my birthday, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. DCIS, ductal carcinoma in situ. It is a noninvasive cancer contained within a duct.

The following week, my sweet little Westie, Lilly, died. I sobbed more for the loss of Lilly than I did about my disease. My cockatiel bird screamed all day after Lilly died. It was a constant, annoying screech, letting me know he was wondering where Lilly was. And he seemed to be accusing me of driving her away.

The tide is beginning to turn—with one snag. I had a lumpectomy, but I have to go back to have more tissue removed. (The doctor was not happy with the margins around the removed lump and wants to take wider margins on two sides.) I will then have follow up radiation treatments and that should be it.

The best news, however, is that I have adopted a new Westie puppy. She is very cute, but full of a lot of energy and attitude. I named her Phoebe, but I think I should have named her Trouble. She is trying to destroy my house.

Thanks to all who prayed for me. It means a lot. I guess I have life to live and I look forward to living it with Phoebe, Jade and PP.

--Kathleen

September 13 meeting

We've been meeting at Spicer house for years. At the September meeting we'll learn the history of the house and tour the gardens. Hill and Dale tends the entrance garden, but there are three gardens total. We'll find out who takes care of the other two. Hospitality will be provided by Sally Ouellette, Linda Talacki and Ann McMinn.

August meeting minutes

The meeting was called to order by Co-Vice President Jeannine Gundle at 7:45 pm.

Fourteen members and one guest, invited by Ruth Trombley, were in attendance.

All dues are current. We have 27 regular members and three associate members.

The hospitality volunteer sign-up sheet was passed, encouraging everyone to pick a meeting to serve. (Those who don't sign up by the September meeting will be assigned a meeting.)

Gretchen Pugsley gave a very comprehensive overview of the National Garden Clubs and where Hill and Dale fits into this organization of 188,038 members nationwide.

Amy Langdon gave us a description of the Garden Therapy program, who is served and when. She encouraged members to keep track of when they are assigned to serve either for Garden Therapy bagging or attendance needed at the schools.

Mar Sclawy suggested that members who bring home-made goodies to meetings also provide copies of their recipes, at least one copy which will be printed in the newsletter.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. --Joanne Bryngelson, secretary

Favorite recipes from H&D member kitchens

Stepping right up to the plate on Mar's plea to share member recipes, Nancy Adams provided her recipe, served at the August meeting.

Broccoli Tuna Dill Salad

1 can albacore tuna, drained and flaked
Add 2 or 3 (or a few more) cups broccoli florets
½ cup thinly sliced onion (or a little more if you'd like)
½ cup diced celery (or more)
1 (or 2) 8 oz. cans of water chestnuts

In a small bowl, mix

1 cup Hellman's mayonnaise
1 Tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp (or a little more) dill weed
1 tsp white pepper

Pour dressing over vegetables, stirring thoroughly. Refrigerate 3 hours, stirring occasionally so everything blends well.

Recipe from Deanna House.



Blue Star Memorial dedication pictures

Left: Lisa Steinkopf on behalf of Hill and Dale, Joann Jenkins on behalf of Farmington GC and Diane Hague for North Farmington GC accept Blue Star certificates for their clubs.

Right: Chuck Wilder, USN (RET) of American Legion Post 346 plays taps.



Horticulture—When the weather outside grows frightful...

Plants are so smart. Turns out some have mechanisms that protect them from freezing. These mechanisms lie dormant during the summer and wisely unpack themselves when days get shorter.

In the current issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Michael Thomashow, MSU University Distinguished Professor of molecular genetics, demonstrates how the CBF (C-repeat binding factor) cold response pathway is inactive during warmer months when days are long, and how it's triggered by waning sunlight to prepare plants for freezing temperatures.

The CBF cold response pathway was discovered by Thomashow's team, and it has been shown to be active in crop species as they ready themselves for cold weather.

"We knew that when plants are exposed to cold, nonfreezing temperatures, they can better survive below-freezing temperatures," said Thomashow, who co-authored the study with Chin-Mei Lee, MSU plant biologist. "What this new research demonstrates, though, is that plants' defense mechanisms are also triggered by shortening daylight."

It's widely known that waning daylight triggers trees' defenses against freezing, but this has never been demonstrated in crops and other annual plants. His paper not only shows that such plants use shorter days as a cue for the impending winter, but that the mechanism also is turned off during the warm growing season.

"The CBF pathway is actively turned off during the summer to prevent the allocation of precious resources toward unneeded frost protection," Thomashow said. Identifying the genes involved in this process gives researchers the potential tools to fine tune this regulation and increase crop productivity, he added. Thomashow's research is supported in part by the U.S. Department of Energy (Division of Chemical Sciences, Geosciences, and Biosciences, Office of Basic Energy Sciences), the National Science Foundation (Plant Genome Project) and MSU AgBioResearch.

Critter Spotting—Swan wars

As I've noted in the past, mute swans are not mute. They just have really scratchy voices so they avoid vocalizing except when they're alone—or near some kayaker who appears to be totally no threat to them.

On the other hand, the swans who live on our canal have a dad who despises jet skis. When neighbor Ron heads out on his jet ski, he often has to deal with Bruno the Enforcer swan, puffed up and on the attack. One day, Bruno attacked, and Ron was compelled to grab his wing and drag him along to the lake, lest he continue the assault.

Of course, there was a witness, one who turned Ron in to the authorities for cruelty to swans, completely missing cruelty to Ron. The cops were on Ron's side, though, and no one was arrested.

Turns out those lovely swans are not native to Michigan. The first pair were brought to Charlevoix around 100 years ago. They loved the area just as much as the Canada geese, maybe more, as they have a tendency to beat up on the geese as well as jet skiers.

And they're just as reproductive as those darn geese. So much so that the mute swan population in Michigan has tripled in the last 10 years, standing now somewhere north of 15,000.

That's too many for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which maintains that the critters eat far too many water plants and drive out the native swan, the trumpeter swan. (The easiest way to tell the two types apart is that the mutes have yellow bills and the trumpeters have black ones. The trumpeters also hold their necks more upright, while the mutes tend to bend theirs in that graceful arc that makes them a natural for two-swan heart-like pictures.)

Thus, the MDNR has issued a rule allowing the taking of swans under certain circumstances. (You can find the rule on the MDNR website, using swan as a key word.) Some folks think this is great; others think it's the worst possible use of government funds. I know that whichever side you choose, you'll find that 10 pages to explain the circumstances and procedures for swan control are a lot of verbiage.

It boils down to lots more paperwork if you're inclined to personally reduce your local swan population. My thought: if they tend to evict Canada geese and don't poop on the lawn, I'm for 'em.

—Mar Sclawy © 2012