



# Quail's Tales

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

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

February 2013

## President's preface

February is starting with cold weather (brrr!), and snow, snow and more snow. Enough already. But according to Groundhog Phil, we are supposed to have an early spring. I sure HOPE he's right.

This is the month to send your sweetie a message of love and caring. Also, a good time to think about the gardens. What flowers we will plant and/or what changes we will make in the flower beds. Good time to ponder seed and plant catalogs with a hot cup of tea or cocoa.

Let's make this spring and summer a vision of nature's beauty (one good way would be to help Katie in the Spicer House gardens).

A special thank you to Gretchen for such a nice encouraging card. It came at a perfect time—when my spirits were low. She helped me get a better attitude.

Hope to see you at the meeting.

—Kathleen Postema

## February 14 meeting

Celebrate Valentine's Day at a table, hosting your favorite story book character and designed by Amy Adams and Nancy Adams, Katie Wemyss, Sally Ouellette, and Amy Langdon.

Our judges will discuss the standards by which table designs are judged under garden club rules.

Tables will be set in the Spicer House living room, but members are asked to enter Spicer House by our usual entrance to maintain the surprise until the presentation.

Hospitality is scheduled to be provided by Jan and David Henry and Mar Sclawy, who will attempt to make coffee (among other things). It's Valentine's Day so there may be something sweet and red.

## December 13 minutes

The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. with a delicious potluck provided by the members present. After dinner at 7:55 p.m. the meeting was called to order by chairwoman Kathleen Postema. There were 16 members present.

Peggy Dapkus presented Kathleen with a teddy bear, a sojourn bear, created by Peggy and the Sojourn Bear group at the Costic Center in Farmington Hills. The bears are made for breast cancer survivors.

Motion by Joan Angelo, second by Sandy Cusack to send \$50 to the Belle Isle Conservancy to renew our membership. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was presented by Angela Paul and accepted as presented.

Kathleen reminded the membership that there will be no meeting in January 2013.

The February meeting will feature different style table settings. Nancy Adams is in need of volunteers to take a table. Hospitality for the meeting will be provided by David and Jan Henry and Mar Sclawy.

Garden Therapy bagging for January will be January 2 at the home of Angela Paul. Workers are Joan Angelo and Katie Wemyss.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 to make holiday centerpieces under the capable guidance of Sally Ouellette.—Joanne Bryngelson, Secretary

Remembrance—Joanne Bryngelson is recovering from foot surgery. A card is always a nice thought.

## Yearbook info

We're giving up on our yearbook for this year. So here are some important dates to schedule for the rest of the club year.

Board meetings: March 4, April 1, April 29, June 3.

Club meetings, programs and hospitality:

- March 14—How Sweet It Is, tapping trees for maple syrup with Roger Sutherland, hosted by Peggy Dapkus and Kathleen Postema
- April 11—Attracting Butterflies to Your Garden with Brenda Dziedzic, hosted by Joanne Bryngelson, Katie Wemyss, Angela Paul (Brenda will also be at spring District meeting at Crystal Gardens in Southgate April 17)
- May 9—Terracotta Pot Painting Workshop led by Judy Verglove, hosted by Marcia Stewart and Flo Holzkecht
- June 13—Installation of officers, potluck with Chris Sechler overseeing drinks

Garden Therapy: Check the Garden Therapy handbook for bagging assignments.

## Environmental Studies program

District 1 is hosting the new series of Environmental Studies Schools, with Stacey Stutcher chairing the school. Course I will be on April 25 and 26 at the

Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road. It's located one block south of I-696 and one block west of Woodward.

Course II will run from October 24 to 25 in the same location. Course fee is \$95; make checks payable to MGC Inc. ESS and send them to Gretchen Pugsley.

Preregistration is required. The course begins at 9 am on April 25 with check-in. A current *National Gardener* subscription label is required for each student taking the exam for Consultant's Accreditation.

For more information contact Stacey Stutcher, [fstutcher@yahoo.com](mailto:fstutcher@yahoo.com), 248.546.6538.

### *This 'n' that*

- ◇ Members who are STILL recovering from shingles a year after being attacked repeat their urging to get those shingles shots. If you've had chicken pox, you're at risk for shingles. Skip the pain; get shot.
- ◇ Start thinking about running for club office for the coming year. We've all had a turn, but we'll need to repeat ourselves if the club is to survive.

### *Horticulture—Programs to put you in the mood for spring*

If you're up to date on your plant and seed catalogs, you might want to dip into one of these programs to ready yourself for the garden year:

§ **March 11**, 6:30 to 8:30 pm. *Conifers for Michigan Landscapes*, featuring Bert Cregg, and presented by the Village Gardeners at the Community Room of Lathrup Village Municipal Building, Southfield Road. Guests are asked for a \$5 donation. For more information contact Nancy Strodl, [nstrodle@yahoo.com](mailto:nstrodle@yahoo.com), 248.552.5095.

§ **March 20**, 8:30 am and lasting all day at Crowne Plaza Novi, 27000 Sheraton Drive, Novi, 48377. *Plants of Distinction 2013*, featuring renowned plant experts expanding on great plants while emphasizing MSU Extension's foundational message of "right plant, right place." Cost of \$75 includes lunch and handouts. Call MSU Tollgate Education Center, 248.347.3860 x208, for more info and to register.

§ **March 23**, 9 am to 1 pm. *Seasonal Interest in YOUR Garden* with instructors Master Gardeners Barb Near and Carol Lenchek at Oakland Executive Office Building, 2100 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford. Cost of \$20 includes a reference book and snacks. Advance registration must be made by March 11. Contact Linda Smith, 248.858.0887, email [smithlin@oakgov.com](mailto:smithlin@oakgov.com) for more information and obtain a registration form.

### *Critter Spotting—Where'd all those sparrows come from!*

The migrating diving ducks stayed longer than usual last fall, but when it became apparent that the lake WOULD freeze over (with them in it if they weren't paying attention), they packed up and left town.

The swans hung around till they wound up walking on ice. That was enough to send them on their way.

Then it was time for neighbor Ron and me to set out the bird feeders for those flyers that don't head south for the winter. We've never compared notes on how much bird feed we buy in a season. All I know is that I just finished up my third 30 lb. bag of colorful bird seed. The "color" refers to the birds it's supposed to attract. The feed itself is brown and white. While this premium brand brags that it contains no millet, it does contain vast quantities of some small oval white seed that the birds actually pick out of the feeder and toss on the ground, where it disappears. We can only guess who eats that, but it doesn't appear to be any bird that can make it to the feeder.

Now for those colorful birds. Occasionally, a cardinal couple (female doesn't add a lot to the color palate) drops by for a snack. A blue jay flies in, makes a racket, muscles his way to the dining area and takes off. The little downy woodpeckers clutch the suet feeder and peck away. They don't seem to be making much progress again frozen suet.

Ground feeding juncos (snowbirds) just may be the birds eating those white seeds, come to think of it. Certainly the doves make out all right eating on the ground.

And then there are the sparrows. Ron asked me one day, what ARE all those birds? Sparrows. Lots of 'em. They take up several pages in my *Birds of North America Eastern Region* book, which lists more than 30 varieties of sparrow. Some are a bit more distinctive than the majority, but on the whole, they are a dun-colored lot, distinguished from one another by some standard not readily apparent to the untrained sparrow watcher. I think the individual that divvied them into different categories might just as easily have decided that redheads, blondes and brunettes are different species, rather than slight variations on the basic human condition.

My life list (if I had a life list) might be infinitely longer if I could distinguish among the various sparrow bullies at the feeders. As it is, I just keep on filling those feeders in hopes of catching sight of something a tad more exotic than all those sparrows.  
--Mar Sclawy

Sally says: I used to have a life list but I put it someplace safe so you know how that goes.



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