



# Quail's Tales

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

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

October 2013

## President's preface

**Sally Ouellette** (in her capacity as District 1 Treasurer) and I (as Hill and Dale president) attended the District 1 presidents' meeting on October 2 in Pleasant Ridge. A lot of intriguing ideas floated around the room, together with a MGC presentation on the benefits of belonging to the state and national organizations, the roles of various club officers and what leadership means. I'll be bringing some of the ideas and information to future meetings. If we have time we'll begin the discussion at the October meeting.

Anyone who doesn't have a computer, or access to one, should be revising your holiday gift list. There's a lot of great information on various NGC websites. I'll try to share a lot of it, but I'm hoping that those of you who aren't connected, will consider taking that leap. (It'll also save on postage for the newsletter.)

Starting last month, we've been setting in bold face type, the names of club members the first time their names appear in the newsletter. If you haven't seen your name recently, consider stepping up to help out the club.

And speaking of the newsletter, we've been emailing a fair number of copies to free riders (and you know who you are), who have dropped your membership and continue to get the members' newsletters. We're not asking you to join up if it's not convenient for you, but we are asking that you send Hill and Dale \$5 for a year's email subscription to the newsletter. That's only 50 cents an issue—more pricey perhaps than the community shopper paper, but full of more good stuff. Deadline for subscribing is the end of 2013. We hope to hear from you. We want to keep you in the loop.

—Mar Sclawy

## September 12 meeting minutes

Before the business meeting, **Lisa Rose**, current member of H&D, gave a presentation on the history of African Violets, the various varieties including a Russian violet which had large flowers. Lisa showed how to propagate by leaf cutting and had many samples in various stages of growth. Lisa provided leaves for anyone who wished to try growing. Thank you, Lisa, for a great program.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 p.m. by president Mar Sclawy. Mar thanked **Gretchen Pugsley** for putting together our membership booklets for this year.

The treasurer's report was read and accepted. Treasurer **Angela Paul** announced that the district meeting will be October 23 at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial. The cost is \$25, and it can be paid to Angela at the September or October meeting. Make checks payable to Hill and Dale Garden Club.

**Amy Langdon** did a design which consisted of geraniums and Ikebana flowers.

A new member joined the club: **Yolanda Walton**. Please add her metrics (available at the meeting) to the membership book.

Ann McMinn explained monthly projects for garden therapy. Supplies for each month were given to each project chair. Walnut halves needed for January project.

Presidents' meeting is also a leadership meeting in Pleasant Ridge on October 2. Anyone interested can attend; there is no charge; bring your own lunch.

Hospitality was provided by Eleanore Guirlinger, Diane Dunn, and Shirley Perkins. Eleanore put together a vegetable arrangement that was a work of art.

The state board is looking for traditions that our club has for various holidays to include in their newsletter.

Drawing was held for two violets provided by our speaker. Winners were Gretchen Pugsley and **Nancy Adams**.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Angela Paul, filling in for **Joanne Bryngelson**,  
Secretary

### October 10 program

Back by popular demand, **Lisa Steinkopf** will talk on *Bulbs for Beginners—and Everyone Else*. She'll prep us for spring displays by demonstrating the proper depth and method for fall planting bulbs. She'll also discuss forcing bulbs for the holidays. And if there's time, she'll wind up with how to convince amaryllis to rebloom.

October's hospitality team is **Ann McMinn, Amy Langdon** and **Flo Holzkecht**.

November's team is **Angela Paul** and **Joanne Bryngelson**.

Mar Sclawy will begin discussion on events from the Presidents' meeting.

### Good news!

**Joan Angelo** reports that both **Chris Sechler** and **Lu Eaton** continue to improve. **Peggy Dapkus** will send cards to them as chair of the Remembrance Committee.

### Report from Sedona

**Elaine Gunderson** sent the following email to Gretchen Pugsley:

You are a dear to forward the Hill and Dale Yearbook to me. Thank you!

On looking over the roster, it was heartwarming to see so many of the members from when I was active still promoting the cause. I now think we were from the "Golden Era." I have so many fond memories from working together at the plant sales, flowers shows, fundraiser workshops, etc., etc. They were wonderful times.

This past spring Sandy and Jim Donlon stopped by for an overnight... Jim and Sandy look great.

I am still active in two NGC clubs—Sedona Area Garden Club and High Desert Designers and for the next two years I am Pacific Regional Director. I went back and became a NGC Design Instructor. I love being part of National Garden Clubs, Inc. The passion is still there. Please give my best to all.

[Elaine also sent along a correction to her listing in the yearbook. See Gretchen for the correct info.]

### Coming up—Getting organized for fall and spring

**October 23:** District 1 fall meeting will be held at Grosse Pointe War Memorial. For details and registration, see Angela Paul at the meeting.

**November 11:** Pauline Flynn, part president of Greater Detroit Flower Arrangers presents *Lasting Impressions*, constructing creative and artistic designs for the holidays, at the Garden Club of Dearborn, First Presbyterian Church, 600 N. Brady, Dearborn. One creation will be raffled off.

**November 23-24:** Farmington Garden Club presents *Winter Wonderland*, holiday tables exhibition at Spicer House. Hours: 10 to 4 on Saturday, noon to 4 on Sunday. Tickets are \$10.

**April 24-25, October 23-24, 2014:** Last two Environmental School sessions in District 1.

### Horticulture—Tamarack trouble, and others

We came home from vacation in July to find our healthy tamarack (also known as a larch) leaning—a lot. A vicious summer storm had bent it at a 45 degree angle about five feet up its trunk.

Now what? I called the folks who'd cut down several trees for us last year. They'd be pleased to chop it down, but they had no idea how to straighten it up.

During family reunion I asked my brother-in-law the forester how we might right our tree. He suggested that I could do it myself. I'd have to buy two posts (such as those used by highway departments to erect stop signs) put one on each side of the tree and use strapping material to straighten it up. A brother provided the strapping.

I went shopping for highway department posts. Not readily available.

So I bought metal fence posts and a contraption for pounding them into the ground. Then I looked more closely at the tree. It was very tall, and I am not. Below is a picture of two men straightening the tree, aided by a tall step ladder, a two-foot metal anchor and a braided metal cable as big around as my little finger.



Back went my Home Depot purchases. Off went a check to the folks who really know how to straighten a 20-foot tamarack, a tree we've raised from a two-foot high beginner

Tamaracks love to have their feet wet, perfect for the high water table in our backyard. Among other charming characteristics: they're deciduous and lose their needles in the fall. Before they fall, however, the needles turn a glorious gold. Then they fall and provide a nice layer of mulch around the tree base. They're also very symmetrical, at least when they're not bent over.

After righting the tamarack as much as possible, the tree fellas handed me depressing information on a new condition afflicting trees. I don't have oaks, but those who do should look for oak wilt, recently arrived in Oakland County thanks to "sap beetles." Wilt will also transfer from tree root to tree root. Keep an eye out, and make friends with a reputable arborist to help deal with such scourges early on.

### *Critter spotting—Carpenter bees, and other strangers*

Strange critters in the garden this year. What ARE those fat, mostly black bees that look kinda like bumble bees, but not quite? Glad you asked. They're carpenter bees. Males are shiny black; females are tan. Neither sex is as hairy as a bumble bee. Their wings are more delta shaped than bumble bees. Like other bees, the male looks good, but is stingless. The female looks less daunting but stings like crazy.

Both sexes love to drill holes in wood, especially fascia and other house trim. That makes them not so attractive as pollinators. If they stumble into a flower, they may carry off some pollen, but it's not something you look to them for

Another new visitor this year was a praying mantis. There it sat on the lobelia, praying for something live and tasty to come by. It was still hoping and praying when I moved on to the compost bin I've been feeding since spring.

There are some unattractive small critters that hang out in and on that bin. I look upon them benevolently (though not too closely; they are not pretty). However, they help with reducing vegetable scraps and yard waste to soil. That's a neat trick, one for which we all can be grateful, whether they're chomping down in our yards or at the local yard waste recycling center. --Mar Sclawy