



Quail's Tales

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

November 2013

President's preface

Oops! We forgot to nominate a member to create an arrangement for the November meeting. We have to thank **Amy Adams** for the fine job she did in creating and explaining her pumpkin creation at the October meeting

By the time we meet this month there will be 48 days left in 2013, most of them dreary. Easy enough to curl into a ball and whine our way to spring. But what a waste. It's the perfect time to plan for spring without the heavy lifting. Seed and plant catalogs are online with everything to tempt a gardener or someone shopping for a gardener. I was going to list some of the sites until I saw how many turned up when I Googled "plant catalogs."

In addition, we have our local nurseries, most of which are more than happy to give us a jump start on next year. Not the least of them is Steinkopf Nursery, just down the road and with a resident expert in all things horticultural in **Lisa Steinkopf**.

Sure, we have two (or is it three?) major holidays between now and the end of the year. They're enough to make us nuts if we let them. Rather than bog down in holiday planning, take the long view. Spring is not that far away, which is so apparent when we consider how fast 2013 is slipping away. —Mar Sclawy

November 14 program and agenda

NOTE THE CHANGE IN LOCATION: We're meeting at the nature center in Heritage park.

Joe Derek, longtime naturalist for Farmington Hills, finally hung up his official duties hat. However, he continues to speak on nature in Michigan, especially in his own yard where he's turned lawn into habitat for plants and the critters that eat them and live among them. He'll share his wisdom and experience in creating native habitat as close to home as we can get. His talk starts at 7:30.

Discussion items for the business meeting include

1. Is Garden Therapy still providing a worthwhile service to the students in special needs?
2. Other clubs volunteered for the spring and fall 2014 District 1 meetings before the Farmington clubs could poll their members for possible joint meeting.
3. What else can the Farmington clubs cooperate on to maximize our thin resources.
4. Budgets.
5. What should be the usual donation to a worthy cause for board members who make a presentation?
6. Board meetings are going bi-monthly.
7. Our super secretary, Joanne Bryngelson is leaving town. We need a new recording secretary. Volunteers?
8. Arrangement for the December meeting will be presented by ????

November's hospitality team is **Angela Paul, Joanne Bryngelson** and **Mar Sclawy**. We'll be roughing it at the Nature Center without our coffee maker and tea pot nearby so if you have to have a hot beverage, bring it along. We'll provide the cider and doughnuts and likely some other toothsome treats as well.

District meeting attendees:



Amy, Ann, Katie, Jeannine, Chris



Jean, Carol, Pauline, Charlotte, Nancy

Not pictured Gretchen, Peggy, Mar and Sally

October 10 meeting minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Mar Sclawy at 7:30 p.m.

Mar thanked the hospitality committee for the evening: **Amy Langdon, Ann McMinn** and **Flo Holzknecht**.

There were 19 members present.

Treasurer, Angela Paul presented the Treasurer's report, including the balance in checking and savings account. She has four paid members for the

District meeting. Two more members volunteered to go with the group to the meeting.

Yolanda Walton was introduced to the membership as our new member. She was pinned by membership chair, **Joan Angelo**.

Mar suggest that we might host either the spring or fall District meetings with the other two Farmington clubs. She agreed to speak with the chairpersons of the other two clubs for their feedback.

At the November meeting there will be a discussion of the continuing of Garden Therapy in the schools. Also, is there a need for monthly board meetings?

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. and was followed by a very informative presentation by Lisa Steinkopf about care and growing of bulb plants.

Respectfully submitted, Joanne Bryngelson, recording secretary

Coming up

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— *Ginkgo biloba*, it's not just for eating

This is the time of year to truly appreciate this ancient tree. It's believed to be about the sole survivor of trees that flourished tens of thousands of years ago. Originating in Asia, it's had millennia to travel around the world, and the ginkgo has found a place in much of it. Its distinctive fan-shaped make it easy to identify. But what really sets it off is its marvelous golden color in fall.

Parts of the tree have been used from ancient times as medicine and food supplements. What's equally important to know is that, like holly, ginkgos are either male or female. While the female flowers are lovely to look at, they produce a noxious smell when they fall to earth, especially when they're trodden underfoot. Shop wisely and well when adding a ginkgo to your landscape. But think about planting one. By fall, you won't regret it.

Critter spotting—Walking the dog(s)

We had a dog walker. The dogs adored her. She chose to become a yoga instructor. We got a new dog walker. She chose to become a yoga instructor. She has a husband, also a yoga instructor, BUT he also walks dogs. The dogs love him, BUT he's cut back to three days a week—to take on more yoga classes. We're seeing a pattern here.

Because there are four days a week without a professional dog walker, I have taken up the slack. We do pretty well. Split second morning routine winds up with a walk that fills in the remaining time till I have to leave for work. Dogs' internal schedules are no more predictable than mine. One time a quick out the door to the first patch of grass (leaves are preferred) will do the trick. Then again, we cover the entire block before the spirit (and breakfast) finally moves them.

Tootsie, the good dog, is pretty darn reliable. Roxie, the lovely but nutty dog, is not. On the other hand, she's the only dog we know who piddles with both her rear paws off the ground. She was pretty wobbly but often managed to move forward on her front paws at the same time.

Now that she's older (she's 5½), she's insisting on coming to a complete halt before continuing with her constitutional. For a dog that weighs only 30 pounds, she can pull me back a step when she stops on a dime, or the walk, or the grass, or the leaves—especially the leaves.

Those leaves are what make fall the most problematic season of the year for walking the dogs. By the time those leaves are nice and crunchy underfoot (and under butt), they are also mostly brown, making it a struggle to locate the morning deposit in the vegetation by the grey light of dawn. I note a fair number of deposits of varying sizes that suggest that others are having difficulty as well and aren't nearly so conscientious about tracking down their pets' contributions to the neighborhood.

So fall is problematic. And winter is just around the corner. Years ago I worked with a fellow who gauged the ferocity of each winter by the number of bags of dog doodles the family picked up in the spring. There were one, two and three bag winters. You can guess which ones were the worst.

We have no fence or dog run. So we use bags daily. I suppose we could think of the coming season in terms of a 90-bag winter. Too depressing, I think.

—Mar Sclawy



