



Quail's Tales

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

February 2014

President's preface

We're back—for the second half of the club year. Anyone who doesn't have cabin fever after all the snow we've had must be reading this in Florida or Mexico. Meanwhile, there are seed catalogs and plant catalogs and seed sales at the local nurseries to help us survive till spring. Below you'll find information on a few events to help with that survival. Think green. Be brave. —Mar Sclawy

February 13 program

Dave Galli from the Detroit Institute of Art's "Behind the Seen" speakers' bureau will present "The Essentials," a view of how the DIA operates. In this time of flux in the city of Detroit, with the future of our cultural institutions at risk, this is a great time to revisit what the DIA means to the city and all the people in the metropolitan area and how it does what it does.

Agenda for the business meeting:

- Treasurer's report, with confirmation that our recent audit produced a clean review of the books;
- Jan Henry will suggest ways we can use social media to elevate our presence in the community and beyond;
- Projects to consider with the other area clubs;
 - co-sponsoring a speaker or program that is a little expensive for one club?
 - joint trowel and error program? field trip?
- Sponsoring a member for environmental school, a suggestion from Sherry Sanelli;
- Life membership candidates

- Thoughts on Lu Eaton
- Budgets. We'll be setting budgets for the rest of this year and next year. Members spending club money are reminded to bring their costs from August 2013 through December 2013.

Other thoughts?



Remembering Lu Eaton June 12, 1925 - January 18, 2014

Lucille L. Eaton was born on June 12, 1925 in Detroit, Michigan to Michael and Louise (nee: Tucholsky) Fediuk. She died January 18, 2014 at the age of 88.

Lu was very active in Hill and Dale Garden Club for 47 years. She was also a member of Englewood Shell Club in Florida, the Red Hat Society and T.O.P.S. When she was raising her children, she was a Girl Scout Leader in the Our Lady of Grace Parish in Dearborn Heights and later, because of her love of gardening, became an avid florist. She loved to play poker and would play wherever she found a game. She was also a longtime member of St. William Parish in Walled Lake where she was a member of the Rosary Altar Society. Lu asked that memorials be sent to Hill and Dale Garden Club or St. William Parish.

We'll reserve some time at the February meeting to share memories of this long-time friend, who always had a smile, even when she wasn't feeling that fine.

Remembrance

Jean Moran has been taken ill while in Florida. Sally should have more information at the meeting. Meanwhile, please keep Jean and her family in your thoughts and prayers. Her Florida address is 6616 Sweetbriar Lane, Lakeland, FL 33813 and she would like to get cards she says.

Kathy Heckman, former club member and continuing supporter of the plant gala, is recovering from back problems but hopes to be well enough to help out at the gala again this year.

Congratulations! to Amy Langdon for completing 40 years of volunteer service at Beaumont Hospital as well as heading up Garden Therapy with Ann McMinn.

Garden Therapy—why we do it.

Eleanore Guirlinger reports on the December bagging project: "The kits have been assembled, packaged and Jeannine picked hers up. Delivered to Amy, and Katie will pick hers up this weekend.

"Thanks [Mar] for delivering the supplies.

"Diane provided the greens from her yard, also supplied the plastic bags.

"Shirley supplied the peppercorns and cloves. She also helped prepare the kits.

"She came over from lunch, and then we did the project. Sorry that you and Diane (because she too works) were not able to join us. We laughed, and laughed as the peppercorns rolled around, the feathers flew here and there, and gluing the feathers to the base was a stitch. So my garden club friend, we are done."

And the friendship and fun that accompany Garden Therapy prep are just part of the reward for continuing our work with special needs kids in Farmington schools.



Peggy and Jeannine at Dec meeting

Gretchen and Joan at Holly Berry Brunch

Plant gala will be here in no time—May 17 to be exact

Once again the plan is to share the date with the Farmington Hills plant swap at Heritage Park. Now is a tad early to be digging up perennials for the gala. But it's not too early to think about what you'd like to dig up—provided it comes back from under this restful (!) and insulating blanket of snow. If you're germinating or otherwise in need of pots, Mar has them in all sizes (well, pretty much all sizes). Just let her know what size and how many you need. Also consider garden-related items we can offer.

Horticulture—Get a jump on spring

March 15: Taylor Conservatory Foundation and Taylor Garden Club, in partnership with WCCC District presents its sixth annual **Growing Great Gardens**, from 8 till 4 at WCCC District's Downriver Campus, 21000 Northline Road, Taylor. Dr. Laura Deeter is the morning keynoter, presenting *Hortus Mustus: Plants you just GOTTA have*. Her afternoon program will be *Getting to "know" maintenance: Tips and tricks to make perennials work for you*. Other speakers are Rebecca Titus, CSA farm manager of Titus Farms, speaking on *Vegetables of a different color*; and Jack Barnwell, speaking of the challenges and rewards of creating his signature look in gardens on Mackinac Island. Lunch is included, as are shopping, door prizes and music. Registration is \$35, \$45 after Feb. 21. Mar has registration forms. It's worth five Master Gardener Education hours.

April 26: Gardening and All That Jazz, sponsored by the Master Gardener Society of Oakland County, at Oakland Schools Conference Center, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford, 48328. Speakers and topics are Allan Armitage, *If you are going to spend my money, you might as well buy the right plants*; David F. Perry, *Garden photo magic: Improve your photos while lightening your load with smart phones and point-&-shoot cameras*; Stephanie Cohen, *Native plants: Sustainable, colorful and wonderful*; Stacey Hirvela, *Shrubs: Making your dream garden a reality*

Doors open at 7 a.m. for shopping; programs begin at 8 and continue till 4:15. Food includes lunch and snacks. More time for shopping and two great jazz groups round out the day. Early bird registration (till March 15) is \$70. Thereafter it's \$80. Registration runs till April 16. Mar has registration forms.

Sally says: I ordered several mixed salad greens seeds from John Scheepers because with the drought out west and California price of veggies and salad fixins should skyrocket. Also plan on patronizing local farmers markets. Try this



Mesclun is a salad mix of assorted small, young salad leaves

Critter spotting—What the...?

This winter has produced some unusual critters in our yard. We haven't spotted a snowy owl, usually an Arctic dweller, but reported in Atlanta this winter. Against all the snow in the yard I doubt we could have seen it anyway.

Our millet-free bird seed has proved a hit with the usual feeder visitors: sparrows by the bushel, athletic squirrels, juncos, doves, titmice, nuthatches, jays and cardinals. Unfortunately, we've had significant cardinal tragedies as well. Neighbor Ray spends some time discouraging the sparrow hawk that perches in the tree over his feeder and has no trouble picking off those red birds.

We lost one to the glass panels on the deck. That cardinal clocked himself fatally and fell right into the dog run. Roxie was ecstatic. All I saw were red feathers protruding from her narrow jaws. Too bad for her; she thought she could bring the tasty morsel into the house for a leisurely snack. Wrong. Getting the defunct cardinal from her mouth was surprisingly difficult for such a weak jawed pooch, but I prevailed, tossing the remains outside the dog run and into the hedge. It has since disappeared, further victim to some scavenger I've not yet spotted.

The possum I did spot. It was sitting under the bird feeders, having a slimming nosh, unusual for a critter that's essentially a nocturnal carnivore. It didn't seem much bothered by seeing, coming at it, yelling, "Go away, this food is for birds." As I approached, it turned and meandered off, I in hot pursuit, trying to find out where it is currently residing. For a critter with legs far shorter than mine it moved pretty darn fast as I slogged through knee high drifts. Lost it around a corner, but I'm keeping my eye out. Since possums (formally, opossums) are marsupials, this critter may have a tummy full of offspring, just waiting for warmer weather to emerge. I wonder if they eat groundhogs.

There seems to be something living under the kayaks. Roxie slides on her belly as far under the boats as she can get, so far not reaching what's there. Toots sniffs around the cover on the wrought-iron table, pointing, though I can't see any tracks besides hers in the area. She regularly sniffs her own tracks and is intrigued. The hunts continue. -Mar Sclawy



This squirrel munching on a turkey bone isn't even the evil... one too bad it isn't a ground hog bone

