



The Garden Gabber



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Monday, February 21

Make plans to attend each monthly meeting. It's a great opportunity to socialize, enjoy good food, and to learn more about gardening and our environment.

When: Monday, February 21, 2005
5:30 p.m. – Social Hour
6:30 p.m. – Dinner

Where: Bradley's at the Copley Community Center

Program Judy Parker from Copley Feed & Supply

She says that at this time of year, she likes to tell people about birds and wildlife, and what to plant this Spring in your yard to attract them. She can tell us what works in our area and what doesn't. Perhaps she can tell us what to do about wildlife that we don't want to attract, as well! Come and learn about plants and products to enhance your garden in 2005.

Board Meeting: February 28, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. The Fairlawn Park Garden and Civic Center, W. Market and White Pond, Akron. Coffee or tea provided, snacks welcomed. All members are invited to attend.

Club web site: <http://www.acorn.net/mgcakron>

President's Message --- by Mary Ann Ferguson - Rich

We had a good turnout for the January meeting, despite the cold and snow. Tom Dayton was both entertaining and informative. I found it interesting that as a professional in the horticulture field, he is now strongly advocating the organic method. He discussed methods for developing your soil into a growing powerhouse, and offered alternatives to the heavy use of garden sprays. Home gardeners are having an impact on the environment, and it is not all good! Farmers have been blamed for chemical run-off, but residential areas contribute substantially to the problem. Let's all take a look at our garden practices this season, and see where we might be able to cut back. I have neighbors with horses on two sides of my property and so we have had a fantastic source of compost for many years. Once you get going with compost and see the stunning results (which can all be achieved at a minimal cost), you won't be rushing out to buy tons of commercial fertilizer. I stopped using pesticides years ago, and have given up growing certain things (broccoli, cabbage) because the bugs just devour them. Peppers and tomatoes can grow easily in our area without the need for spray. One of the best ways to avoid insect and soil-borne diseases is to rotate your garden crops. Don't grow the same vegetables in the same spot year after year. I do use the professional potting mixtures from the garden stores in my hanging baskets, along with those time-release fertilizer pellets. Containers are an artificial environment and to get really spectacular results, the commercial methods work best. Last summer at Ohio State during our summer conference, we viewed the results of a container gardening experiment. The professor involved had grown some containers using liquid fertilizer only, and some using the pellets and a liquid fertilizer. The combination method produced visibly superior results. Although I do use compost in my baskets, I still think you need the chemical additions. I console myself with the thought that these containers are limited in size and do not provide much of a source of run-off.



We have been informed that Bradley's will not be operating a catering service after the end of this year. This puts the club at another crossroads. Do we want to continue having dinner meetings? Frank Mitch advises that a number of successful clubs around the country do not have a dinner every month. I know that Youngstown, an extremely active club, has only a couple of meetings that involve a dinner, and those are potlucks or the annual fish fry. The rest of the time they have light refreshments only, and get started with their speaker immediately. The problem has been that it is difficult to find a restaurant or banquet hall that serves a good meal at a price in the \$11-13 range. At the very minimum, we are going to have to have club members come forward to form a committee to investigate alternatives for next year. Our board is currently pressed to the max, we cannot take on any more jobs. We could also consider having a lunch meeting, say noon on Saturdays. Lunch is almost always a less expensive alternative. What does the membership want to do? Please plan on discussing this situation at your table at the February meeting. We want input from all club members, give me a call or an e-mail with ideas or suggestions.

Thank you to all of those who signed up to work at the coat check for the Home & Garden Show at the Knight Center in February. We have filled up most of the times already! I will bring the list again this month and hopefully fill in the few remaining times. This is an easy fundraiser for us, and it's actually fun. If you've never worked the show, it's not too late to sign up.

My husband, David Rich will be handling the beautification awards this year. Please send e-mail or call with nominations.

I look forward to seeing all of you in February, we have much to discuss!

S-Team Report - Feb. '05

Search Team membership is increasing

Two more club members have joined the S-Team as Freelance Armada members

Richard (Dick) Cotton and Val Becker have taken up the banner and are searching for new members for 2005. Remember, all of you, if you bring two new members in 2005 you receive a "Spade" Award from the National office. So good luck Dick and Val, bring them on in!!

(Any MGC of Akron member who joined before 2000 may apply to be the crew chief of the Freelance Armada. Also, you will be named a Co-chair of the Membership Committee.)

We still need more searchers for the Sa-Flotilla; to qualify for this group you must have joined MGCA from 2000 thru 2004. Your crew chief is Karen Ketterman.

Any MGC of Akron member may join the Search Team; all you have to do it contact: Jim Fee Co-chair Membership Committee phone (330) 864-0442

Welcome New Member

Richard (Dick) Edwards - 4666 Dusty's Circle, Akron, Ohio 44319 phone 330-644-0973
E-mail: screwloose@att.net Dick is married to Marcia B. Adair. He is a semiretired consultant. His hobbies are gardening, golfing, boating (kayak and motor boat), and reading. He lists his gardening interests as birds and butterflies, flowers, herbs, landscaping, lawns perennials, and shrubs and trees. Dick was recommended by Andy Bettick.

Member News

Life Member Dean E. Weidman passed away January 29, 2005 at age 93. He was a member of our Akron club since 1988. Dean will be very much missed by his very large family of 4 sons, 10 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Also his church and many organizations including our club will be very much aware of his passing and very much miss his participation. As written in his obituary: "He was an avid golfer, bowler, and always enjoyed working in his flower garden and yard."

Reported by Frank Mitch

Warning

Several of the members have not renewed their membership for 2005. Jim Fee and Bill Moorehouse have been contacting these delinquent members, but if you still have not renewed this may be your last warning. The board at their last meeting decided that this issue of the Gabber would be the last one sent to members who have not renewed their membership. Compared to other clubs and service organizations our dues are very reasonable so it is hoped that members will renew. The board would like to hear your reason for not renewing. Perhaps some changes need to be made in the operation of the club.

Video Library

Our club has an extensive collection of videos that were obtained from the national organization by Andy Bettick. He has turned over this collection to Leroy Hart, the club's historian. The last time that one of these videos was borrowed was in 2000.

Since many of our members have complained that the club does not provide enough instruction on gardening these videos should be more widely used

The videos that we have are:

1. Soil and Gardening Tips - 3 copies
2. How to Grow Flowers - 2 copies
3. Foolproof Flower Beds
4. Trees and Shrubs
5. How to Grow and Nurture Seedlings
6. Hardy Flowering Plants - volume 1 and 2
7. Hardy Flowering Plants - volume 3 and 4
8. Lawn Care
9. Container Gardening
10. Annuals and Hanging Baskets
11. Roses, Tomatoes, Trees, Fertilizer - 2 copies

There is also a video Through the Eye of the Camera, the `1998 TGOA/MGCA National Slide Show

The national also has a very extensive library on all gardening subjects which is available for loan to members. Books are loaned for a period of 60 days. The only cost is for shipping.

These videos, a list of other videos available, and a list of the books available at national, will be available at the next meeting.

Preview of Coming Events

There are several events on the regional and national level to which all members of local clubs are invited. On the regional level there is the Spring Regional Meeting which will be held April 9 at the Kingwood Center in Mansfield. There will be more information about this meeting in the next issue of the Gabber.

The Regional Summer Conference this year will be a one day affair on July 16 in Findlay, Ohio. More information about this meeting in the next issue of the Johnny Appleseed Broadcaster.

The big event of the year is the National Convention which this year will be held at Jupiter Beach Resort, Florida on June 2, 3, and 4. The host club is the Palm Beach Gardens, Florida Club. More information is in the next issue of the national magazine

The main drawback to attendance at the national convention is the cost of the hotel, transportation and registration. However, there are none of these problems involved with attendance at the regional meetings. More of our members should attend these meetings. You would enjoy them.

Walt's Gardening Tips for February

1. Store seed packets of spinach and lettuce in a cool place. Move them to the freezer two weeks before planting. Wrapping them in freezer bags may prevent drying out in a frost free freezer.
2. Mark your calendar for flower shows. At flower shows you meet people with like interests, see different varieties of flowers etc and enjoy the beauty and pleasure of flowers.
3. Because February is light on yard work it is a great time to work your imagination and plan some landscaping changes.
4. Order trees for spring planting.
5. Have your soil tested.
6. Cut branches from forsythia, quince, spirea, flowering almond, and pussy willow to force into bloom. Keep these in a cool room and mist frequently.
7. Birds appreciate your keeping a full feeder, but they will be more grateful for suet.

Regional Awards

We, as club members, are being asked to make nominations for awards to be presented at the regional meeting in July.

The Green Bronze Medal is awarded to a member who has rendered outstanding service to the regional organization.

The Master Gardener Award is awarded to an individual who has performed significant service to gardening in his or her community.

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The Delbert R. Dunbar Award is given to a member who has given outstanding service to the national, regional, or local club.

Make any suggestions of persons to receive these awards to Jim Fee, the chairperson of our club's awards committee by April 1.

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