



# The Garden Gabber



Affiliated with The Gardeners of America Inc. Men's Garden Clubs of America Central Great Lakes Region

Published Monthly: Volume LXVII

December 2008

Number 12

**President:**

John Lewis  
3066 Rohrer Road  
Wadsworth, OH 44281-9576  
☎ 330-336-9336  
email: lewisjc@earthlink.net

## Monday, December 15

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.

**1st Vice President:**

Arthur Britton  
65 Mayfield Ave.  
Akron, OH 44313-6827  
☎ 330-865-5501  
email: garlic65@hotmail.com

**When:** Monday, December 15, 2008  
5:30 p.m. – Social Hour  
6:30 p.m. – Dinner

**2nd Vice President:**

John Cochran  
1675 Slusser Drive  
Tallmadge, OH 44278-3046  
☎ 330-633-20197

**Where:** St. George Fellowship Center  
3204 Ridgewood Rd.  
Copley, Ohio

**Secretary:**

Marti Williams  
2981 Baughman Rd.  
Clinton, OH 44216-9331  
☎ 330-825-5315

**Program:** Firestone High School Madrigal Singers

**Treasurer:**

Leroy Hart  
633 Schocalog Rd.  
Akron, OH 44320-1033  
☎ 330-836-1407  
email:gardengabber@neo.rr.com

This group of talented young people from Firestone High School will perform seasonal music for us. They will probably be in costumes of the Middle Ages when Madrigal singers were a popular form of entertainment. These groups of musicians and singers would travel from castle to castle providing entertainment for the lord of the manor and his guests. Groups of singers, such as this one from Firestone High School, carry on this tradition.

**National Director:**

Frank M. Mitch  
2065 Kemery Road  
Akron, OH 44333-1937  
☎ 330-666-2327  
e-mail:fmm2065@hotmail.com

There will be poinsettias for members and guests.

**Gabber Editor/Historian:**

Leroy Hart  
633 Schocalog Road  
Akron, OH 44320-1033  
☎ 330-836-1407  
email:gardengabber@neo.rr.com

The presentation of service awards to members will be continued by Awards Chairman, Jim Fee. Next year's officers will be installed.

There will be no 50/50 or silent auction this month.

No board meeting in December.

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

## A Message from Your President - John Lewis

Some time ago, Ivan Hertle introduced me to a book he liked very much, *The Botany of Desire* by Michael Pollan. Dummy me, I pretty much ignored his advice to obtain and read this book until recently when browsing through a bookstore I ran across one copy, which I obtained. Again I let the book lie around until one night when Monday night football was really boring and I looked around for something to do. I stumbled across the book, one of the best stumbles of my life. I began to read, and at 3:30 a.m. I put the book down, partially read, and slept fitfully.

The story of John Chapman - Johnny Appleseed - evoked memories in me of the great depression of the 1930s. I was a young boy at the time, 6, 7, 8 living on a farm a few miles outside what is now named Fairlawn, Ohio. Dozens, no, hundreds of men, tired, dirty, ragged, homeless, and hungry, with all their earthly possessions on their back stopped at our door and begged for a bite of food during those years. None were ever refused. One family in particular, a young couple with a little three or four year old girl, trudged down that lonely farm road and stopped. My mom took them in, fed them a big supper, bathed and held, rocked and stroked the hair of that pretty little girl until bedtime. She gave them my bed for the night. The next morning there was a breakfast, probably biscuits and gravy with sausage, probably for the little girl biscuits and syrup as that is usually what I ate, and lots of cold, fresh milk from our spring house. My mom stood waving and crying as they left, trudging down that road - into oblivion. Later I cried as my mom used her home made hot liquid remedy to remove the lice from me, left behind in my bed and comb. The story of Johnny Appleseed came alive for me.

Ivan, my son's and Ira McCan's son's scoutmaster, knows a thing or two about life and our association with the plants. Take Ivan's advice and read this wonderful book in which, to paraphrase a reviewer, the author examines the reciprocal relationship of four human desires - sweetness, beauty, intoxication, and control - with the plants that satisfy them: the apple, the tulip, marijuana, and the potato.

This month we gather together again to enjoy our association with members in our club and celebrate the Christmas season. We'll have a good dinner, similar to the one a year ago, followed by the Firestone High School Madrigal Singers, a very entertaining evening. An impressive group will be installed as officers of the club for the following year. This will conclude my term as president of the club. I'll no doubt get too emotional and shed a tear or two. Forgive me that.

In these monthly messages, I have tried to be somewhat entertaining and in the process also give recognition to members' efforts that I feel are deserving and may not have been done in the past. I fear I have failed. There are so many members that have contributed to our club's longevity and success, and I apologize to all of you for not bringing your efforts to light. As for entertaining, well, I've heard a number of people never read our Garden Gabber. I hope I have not contributed to that.

Thank you, Bill Carney [of the Youngstown club] for your yearly installation of our club's incoming officers. Please accept our gratitude and appreciation for not only our club but the many others you travel to, as we know it is usually a long, snowy, slippery ride and you are not in the least obligated to do so. In the same vein, our gratitude goes to Frank Mitch, of our club, who travels to other clubs to perform the same installation. The multitude of other jobs these two do are too numerous to mention.

**(Continued on page 3)**

**President's message continued:**

In this, my final message, I implore everyone not already involved to somehow get involved in the workings of the club. Do you realize that our club, once the largest in our land, is now surpassed by Youngstown - Youngstown! Not only in numbers, but in commitment, they now practically run the region - and do a good job of it. We have a number of committees, and for those not already committed, pick one in which you may have some interest, expertise, and are physically able and lend your efforts in making our club the model for, and envy of, all other clubs in the land.

In conclusion, I want to personally thank Leroy Hart, our Gabber editor, and his wife, Catharine, who type my handwritten efforts, correct grammar and punctuation, and generally have free rein to try to make readable and some sort of sense out of the meager material with which they have to work - which is also usually late in arriving. Thank you, I really mean it.

Farewell, and great gardening, friends.

(A note from the editor and his wife. Thanks very much to John for his kind words. Most of the time it is Cathy that types John's message. She types so much faster and more accurately than the editor. The editor admits that he is much better at proofreading than she is; this means that if you find errors in the Gabber blame it on the editor and his poor proofreading. It is a pleasure for us to do the Gabber and we hope that the readers get some benefit from it.)

**Welcome New Member**

**Carol Kern** 1555 Sunside Drive, Copley, Oh 44321 phone 330-666-2058

E-mail [vintagetaster@msn.com](mailto:vintagetaster@msn.com). Carol is single and is employed by Akron General Medical Center. She didn't say in what capacity with the hospital. She lists her gardening interests as annuals, conservation, flowers, herbs, lawns, perennials, and specialty gardening.

She was recommended for membership by Grace Cochran.

**Member News**

Harold White's wife, Edna Jeannette White passed away recently. The judge and his wife had been married for 65 years. She is survived by her husband, three children and three grandchildren. Our sympathies are extended to the judge and the rest of the family.

We try to keep the membership informed about deaths, illnesses, etc. as they occur. When you are aware of these you should notify Margaret Gentile at 330-384-8875 and the editor. Margaret sends sympathy cards etc., and the editor needs to know so he can keep the membership informed.

## Beautification Awards

At the November meeting second Vice President and chairman of the beautification committee, Jack Cochran, announced the winners of this year's beautification awards. They were: The commercial award went to the Fairlawn Town Centre located at 2855 West Market Street in Fairlawn. Ms. Rhonda Moore is manager of this center. The residential award went to Grace Cochran for her yard at 1270 Walton Drive in Akron. An honorable merit award went to John Bonocci for the homes at 364 and 368 4th Street in Barberton. Jack said that this is a severely depressed area of Barberton, with empty houses, others in bad repair etc. but these two homes stand out because of their landscaping.

Jack had very nice plaques to present to the winners. He also had made a display of the winning entries, with large size photos of the winners. Jack was assisted on this project by Clark Bordner who as next year's second vice president will be in charge of the beautification program.

## Thanks to Donzell's

The club expresses its thanks to Donzell's Garden Center on East Waterloo Road. Donzell's has provided the club with three \$20 gift certificates to be used as awards to be given to the first three members who recruit three new members into the club. When you stop in to Donzell's tell them hello and thank you from the Men's Garden Club. (Editor's note - Donzell's is a member of the club and a major advertiser in the Gabber when the Gabber ran ads

Submitted by Grace Cochran and Bob Bell, co-chairs, of the Membership Committee

## Spirits of Giving

At Christmas time we are reminded of all of the traditions associated with this holiday season. Among them is the figure of Santa Claus as the

bearer of gifts at this time of year for good little girls and boys.

But we are not alone in having this tradition. Many other countries have similar traditions. Andy Bettick, Dick Cotton, and the editor along with their spouses and a whole bus load of people recently went to Pittsburgh. On this trip we went to PPG Place, the buildings which house the offices of P.P.G. (Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company.) In the main building of the complex was a display of larger than life sized figures called the Spirits of Giving. These figures represented the legendary figures from each country's folk lore that correspond to our Santa Claus.

In Germany the holiday season begins on December 5 with the celebration of Saint Nicholas' Day. On Christmas Eve St. Nicholas brings gifts and pleasant rewards to all good children.

In England Father Christmas travels from home to home riding on a goat or a white donkey laden with treasures. One of these gifts is a Yule log for each fireplace.

In Ireland Saint Stephen is honored on December 26th for his good deeds. On this day, boys go door to door singing for pennies, carrying symbolic wrens made of straw.

In France Pere Noel was the bearer of "luxuries" for French peasants in the Middle Ages. His gifts were left in wooden shoes set out by the children. His mean spirited companion, Pere Fouchette, left only switches for bad boys and girls.

In Italy On Epiphany Eve, January 5, La Befana comes down the chimney with gifts and firewood. She carries a hand bell to announce her presence and waves a cane as a warning to bad children, who will receive only a lump of coal.

In Russia Grandfather Frost travels from house to house bringing gifts on the non-religious holiday of New Year's. He is often seen wearing winter furs or bishop's robes as he travels through the forests of Russia.

(continued on page 5)

In Poland Star Man visits all Polish homes after Christmas Eve supper, bringing small gifts and cookies to the children.

In Norway Julesvenn, the gift bringer of Norse mythology, comes during the midwinter festivities of “Jul” to hide lucky barley stalks around the house.

In Holland the children look forward with excitement to the arrival of St. Nicholas. They put carrots and hay out for his horse and in return they receive gifts, candies, cookies, fruit, and nuts. The children sometimes get letters from St. Nick filled with clever verse.

In the Ukrainian tradition Christmas Eve is celebrated on January 6th with a family feast called “Sviata Vechera” or Holy Supper. On this Eve a special shaft of wheat tied with a “Rushnyk” or ritual towel is carried into the home by the head of the household (hospodar) and put in a place of honor in the corner of the room as a decoration, symbolic of the afterlife and the gathering together of the family at this special time of year.

### About Dues

At the last board meeting it was decided, in order to get the membership roster into the hands of the membership in a more timely fashion, that for a name to be included in the roster the membership must be paid by the date of the January board meeting, January 26. Those who pay later will be listed in the Gabber as additions to the roster. At this point in time only half of the membership, as listed in the 2008 roster, has renewed. Let’s make this 100% by the deadline for the roster.

### 2009 Dues Are Due

- Regular Members - \$35.00 \_\_\_\_\_
- Life Members - \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_
- Associate Members - \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_
- Family Life Members - Spouse is not a Life Member - \$40.00 \_\_\_\_\_
- Family Regular Member - Spouse is not a Life Member - \$60.00 \_\_\_\_\_
- New Life Membership - at any age - One time payment of \$200.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete the following form , enclose your check and bring it to a meeting or mail it to:

Leroy Hart  
633 Schocalog Road  
Akron. OH 44320- 1033

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address (if OK to print in club roster) \_\_\_\_\_