

THE

# Garden Club of Dearborn

February 2025

## NEWSLETTER

### BOARD MEETING

March 5, 2025  
10:00 am  
First Presbyterian  
Church – North Parlor

#### Upcoming Events

Designing a Pollinator  
Garden  
February 26  
6:30-7:30 pm  
Westland Public Library  
6123 Central City Pkwy.  
Registration Req'd

Books, Seeds & Garden  
Tool Swap  
February 27  
5:00-7:00 pm  
UofM Dearborn  
Env. Interpretive Center

February Birthdays:  
24 Ron Wiggle  
26 Linda Gunderson

March Birthdays:  
9 Otto Baumgart  
13 Mary Ellen Matigian  
17 Terri Bungee  
20 Jennie Somers  
29 Judy Polcyn  
29 Sharon Snider  
31 Mariya Fogarasi

Editor:  
Mariya Fogarasi

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Otto Baumgart

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

### *The Shortest Month*

*Will Winter never be over?  
Will the dark days never go?  
Must the buttercup and clover  
Be always hid under the snow?*

*Ah, lend me your little ear, love!  
Hark! 'tis a beautiful thing;  
The weariest month of the year, love,  
Is shortest and nearest to spring.*

*by Adeline Whitney*

### **Next General Meeting**

**March 10, 2025 – 11:00 am**  
**First Presbyterian Church Dearborn**  
**600 N Brady Rd, Dearborn, MI 48124**

Speaker: Captain Robert Burns – Known as the “Detroit River Keeper” of the Friends of the Detroit River.

Topic: “Adventures Monitoring our Beloved Freshwater River”.  
Bob highlights his boating experience patrolling the Detroit River.

[The Friends of the Detroit River is a nonprofit citizen action group organized to protect, preserve and restore the ecological integrity of the Detroit River Watershed. Laurine Griffin's husband, Don, was one of the co-founders.]

Hosts: Marlene & Keith Bankwitz



Our Valentine's Day tea was awash in a sea of pink and red! Anyone entering the church hall was greeted with beautiful tablecloths, centerpieces, a long and delicious buffet table, and best of all – a collection of attractive and assorted teacups, each safely tucked into a Paris Baguette box with a pretty piece of tulle. And as with every good show, there's a story. Hats off (literally and figuratively!) to Linda Johnson who along with Jean Burns, Marlene and Keith Bankwitz, and Kim Kovacs-Gucwa went to great lengths preparing an event which will long be remembered. Altogether, we had 42 members, guests plus our speaker in attendance. Our guests were Jean Burns, Pam Dunworth, Jimmy Harris, Lisa Marchetti, Leslie Rosinski, and Cheryl Singley.



K. Kovacs-Gucwa J. Burns L. Johnson



Club Ladies Admiring the Lovely Teacup Sets

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, our President Cynthia Casillas praised Linda Johnson for an outstanding day and held a short business meeting, emphasizing the board positions which are open and need to be filled by the time we inaugurate our new officers in June:

- Club President
- Award Chair
- Recording Secretary
- First Vice-President (programming)

Please keep in mind that our club needs volunteers to keep functioning – the past years have been superb; in fact, Michigan Garden Club President Nancy Ryan wrote Cynthia a note, congratulating our club on superb performance! The Michigan Garden Club took six of the fifteen Central Region awards at the convention last month and we played no small part: our Garden Club of Dearborn came in first place for the most awards and won a \$25 prize. We need to keep the momentum going. ***Please know that for whichever position might interest you, you will have help from both the outgoing board member as well as from other board members. We are a team.*** Congratulations also to our current awards chair, Karen Marzonie, for submitting the paperwork and supporting documents to earn us the various awards. We can accomplish much but if it goes unreported, it goes unrecognized.



Our most recent award, the National Garden Club Central Region certificate pictured here, is thanks to the work of our Education and Youth Chair, Terri Bungee, and recognizes her work with schools, various planting programs and the Smokey Bear / Woodsy Owl poster program. Terri recently submitted one of our school posters to the state level.



Terri then changed hats to her Chairperson of Sponsorships for her Holly Berry Brunch position and reported having written thank you notes to our sponsors, also sending along a copy of the brochure and ensuring their doors stay open for us down the road, too.

Cynthia had a few more announcements (the revised club logo is almost ready, a potential webmaster has been found, the treasurer's report was not given due to unexpected circumstances) and mentioned important upcoming dates:

March 5<sup>th</sup>: our Garden Club board meeting will take place at 10:00am in the First Presbyterian Church. Anyone is welcome. Among other topics, we will be setting the dates for next year's meetings.

March 26<sup>th</sup>: the annual budget meeting will take place in Laurine Griffin's home at 1pm. We have \$10,000 to be budgeted which will go back into our community. If you are curious about the process or would like to have a say, please come. This is a good time to see where we donate and how we consider spending our money.

L. Johnson K. Harris M. Bankwitz



Linda Johnson explained how she had met both the owner and manager of the newly opened Paris Baguette and convinced them to sponsor our club, donating boxes for the teacups and also a gift certificate. Linda then announced the day's raffle winners by having everyone check for a sticker on the bottom of their teacup, and Marlene Bankwitz won the certificate, most appropriate as she and her husband

Keith donated them. The heart pillow, donated by Cynthia Casillas, was won by Katrina Harris. Every teacup was safely nestled in a Paris Baguette box with foamcore for stability and protection, and a strand of brightly colored tulle added to the attractive take-home memento for each participant. Good advice? Use them as planters with succulents ☺

The buffet – finger foods only – was – in a word – superb! From sweets and cookies and brownies to cheese, meatballs, shrimp, deviled eggs, sausage, olives, everything laid out on pink tablecloths with flowers – this alone would entice anyone to attend our meetings! Cynthia gave us exactly 26 minutes (!) to sample, enjoy, visit, and admire the teacups and each other's hats.



Garden Club Members Enjoying Valentine's Day Teatime

Following the buffet, Mariya Fogarasi read the monthly excerpt from the book "100 Flowers and How They Got Their Names" featuring the rose – the symbol of love, the month of February with Valentine's Day, the flower on our logo, and Clara Ford's favorite flower. Before the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there were only a few roses in the West, one of them being the Apothecary rose, or "rosa gallica" which was used by healers for ailments. The Damask rose, thought to originate in Damascus, was and still is used to make rosewater. In Bulgaria, these roses are harvested commercially to produce 60% of the world's rose oil used in the perfume and cosmetic industries. The roses must be harvested before dawn, and it takes about 3,500 kilograms of rose petals to produce one kilogram of rose oil which sells between \$30,000 and \$35,000.



Roses came to Europe at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century from China. These, unlike the old roses that at best only bloomed twice a season, bloomed continually. Among these are the Tea roses which do not smell of tea – some theorize they were in the same boxes along with tea imports, hence the name. These were tender plants which could not be grown outdoors until crossed with Hybrid Perpetuals, but afterwards became the basis of nearly all our modern roses. The first pink Hybrid Tea rose, bred in France, was called “La France” and was the rose most often given to our grandmothers by their beaux. Many, many roses are hybrids and descendants, named for someone or some place. Last of all, Clara Ford had over 10,000 roses in her gardens (pictured here)!



And then our speaker, Leslie Rosinski, took us on a trip through the traditional Japanese art of flower arrangement: Ikebana. Leslie is the current president of the Detroit Chapter of Ikebana International and is a certified teacher in the Sogetsu School of Ikebana. An interior designer by trade, the Sogetsu School offers a more artistic approach to Ikebana which appeals to Leslie, who began her studies while living in Japan with her family 25 years ago. Ikebana actually started in China but came to Japan in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, where eventually monks would practice the art as offerings in temples. Several years later, the samurai practiced this art and it became known as a practice for aristocrats and as it trickled down through society, the rules were very rigid and complicated.

Eventually, different schools developed with adaptations. The Sogetsu school was founded in 1927 by Sofu Teshigahara, who wanted to bring more art into the arrangement and whose philosophy was based on making the creation your own expression of art and flower. Not all ikebana memories are happy ones: for instance, the art of Ikenobo Ikebana used to be compulsory in school for young ladies (along with cultural practices such as the tea ceremony) and can bring on bad memories, but most thoughts associated with Sogetsu Ikebana are positive.

Leslie's chapter offers workshops from March to December on the second Wednesday of the month, and they sell supplies at that time as well. Before she began demonstrating how to make various arrangements, she told us about a few necessities. The kenzan is used to hold cut flowers in place in an arrangement and usually made of cast iron. Never buy the kenzan at Michael's, cautions Leslie! Look for the words “made in Japan” on the bottom, look at estate sales, make sure you buy the authentic item. Specific scissors are also essential; they may also be called bonsai scissors. Leslie always cut the flowers under water so as not to damage any cells.



Leslie's first arrangement, a Moribana, consisted of a low-sided container with the flowers at various angles and with three main components – heaven, man, earth, after which subordinates may be added. With everything at a different height, the eye is constantly moving within the arrangement. Hydrangeas and cascading cedar eucalyptus were part of another arrangement, and we were told to think about the space surrounding it and not just the flowers themselves, one big different contrast to the floral arrangements we usually make.

Emphasizing that the main feature doesn't always need to be a flower, Leslie then made an arrangement featuring birch branches, a nod to snow and winter, along with mums and baby's breath (which she admitted is not frequently used but which does a wonderful job mimicking snow). She emphasized holding a conversation with the flowers and asking them, "what will show your best view?"



Humor, personal stories about her family in Japan, as well as cultural tidbits filled the talk. Leslie related her recent Philadelphia conference where she signed up for an Iron Ikebana contest and was given flowers and ten minutes to make an arrangement. She told us about the number "four" being a synonym for death in Japan and how when purchasing teacups, you can get three or five cups but never four! Leslie's entire family will return to Japan and the Tokyo neighborhood where they lived when she participates in the April World Convention for Ikebana which takes place every five years, alternating between Tokyo and Kyoto. She will be ordering her flowers ahead of time because, of course, she can't bring them with her.





The Detroit Institute of Arts will celebrate Hinamatsuri, Japanese Girls' Day, on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and Leslie will be in the Rivera Court for the Ikebana workshop. Up to forty participants can sign up on that day. Other features will include a display of hina dolls, a tea ceremony, origami and more, all sponsored by Japan Cultural Development, a non-profit organization fostering friendship between local and Japanese communities through cultural demonstrations in Detroit.



Leslie had all kinds of advice and tidbits which made the talk lively and interesting, too. Use flowers the way they are in nature; you can manipulate plants to do what you want them to do; the leaf manipulation is lots of fun and part of the curriculum in many various schools. Don't be afraid to show imperfections in Ikebana! If a leaf has been nibbled by insects, that's alright; you can still use it and show how something else has previously used this same leaf (would we have thought of this?!). Her last tip: she likes to go through the trash after workshops to find and save items, cuttings, etc. which others have thrown away!

Thank you, Leslie, for a wonderful lecture with lively demonstration complete with all kinds of tips and information. You showed us a completely different way of flower arranging. Thanks also to our president, Cynthia, who looked for the perfect Ikebana presenter over a two-year period before setting up this meeting. I think all would agree that it was not only entertaining but also enriching.



Paint colors release an annual Color of the Year and now, for the eighth year, 1-800-Flowers.com has done the same, selecting a flower and plant each year. The company just revealed the “radiant ranunculus” as its flower of the year and the “sleek snake plant” as its plant of the year. “It’s always exciting for us to reveal our Flower and Plant of the Year, especially as we ring in 2025 – a year filled with anticipation for joy, good fortune, and endless possibilities” according to a

press release. “Our selections not only alight with current cultural moments, but also reflect the latest home décor trends” says Alfred Palomares, vice president of marketing. “The ranunculus, with its vibrant petals, reflects enthusiasm, love, admiration and happiness, while the snake plant reflects longevity, health and growth.”



During the month of February, our thoughts turn not only to Valentine's Day but also to our presidents, and here's a question: when is George Washington's real birthday? Although the federal holiday is held on the third Monday of February, Washington's birthday is observed on February 22<sup>nd</sup> (my mother traditionally baked a cherry pie every year on this day). Did you know that George was actually born on February 11, 1731? How can that be?



George Washington was born when the Julian calendar was in use. During his lifetime, people in Great Britain and America switched the official calendar system from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar (something the rest of Europe had already done in 1582). As a result of this calendar reform, people born before 1752 were told to add eleven days to their birth dates. Those born between January 1 and March 25, as Washington was, also had to add one year to be in sync with the new calendar. Hence by the time Washington became president in 1789, he celebrated his birthday on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and listed his birth year as 1732.

Some of us may celebrate or acknowledge the Lunar New Year which is celebrated by around two billion people worldwide in many Asian countries as well as ethnic communities around the world. Celebrated on the first new moon after winter solstice, the holiday is a time of joy, reflection, and new beginnings and this year, the Year of the Snake arrived on January 29<sup>th</sup>. The United States postal service began issuing stamps to honor the holiday in 1992 and the first series ran until 2007. Most of us have probably interacted with Michigan's eastern garter snake when we do yardwork and we're used to seeing this harmless serpent slither around our bushes and through our grass, proving itself beneficial by eating insects and other pests. Not everyone likes finding snakes. We love seeing them sunning themselves on our concrete path and porches, but you can look up tips on how to rid your yard of snakes. Let's salute the Year of the Snake and remember that its positive attributes are said to include resilience, wisdom, and determination.





Please continue to “flip your lids” for the Snow Woods Neighborhood project! ☺

Our Garden Club is still collecting the plastic caps and lids to be turned into one bench (requiring 200 lbs.) and one table (requiring 400 lbs.) of plastic for the Snow Woods Neighborhood Association. At present, almost 200 lbs. have been collected, so there’s more to be done and the neighborhood is collecting until May 1<sup>st</sup> according to association president Beth Michel. We collect the items (all clean, please) at our monthly meetings; please know this is very much appreciated.







# 2025 Garden Club of Dearborn Valentine's Day Tea

