

THE

Garden Club of Dearborn

September 2025

NEWSLETTER

Blooming With Purpose Since 1915

BOARD MEETING

October 1, 2025
10:00 a.m.
McFadden Ross House

Upcoming Events

Michigan Garden Clubs

District 1 Fall Meeting
October 15, 2025
Farmington, MI
Registration Required

September Birthdays:

2 Linda Johnson
2 Karen Marzonie
6 Anina Bachrach
10 Shirley Barrick
11 Nanette Fisher
15 Linda Stechison
22 Mary Lenart-Kirchoff
26 Carolyn Lashchuk

October Birthdays:

7 Carol McGarvey
19 Marie Komnenic
22 Cathy Booth
25 Joan Martin

Editor:

Mariya Fogarasi

Chief Photographer:

Otto Baumgart

www.gardenclubdearborn.org

President's Corner



Rose Wiggle

I am excited and honored to once again be your President and eager to welcome everyone back for another inspiring year with the Garden Club of Dearborn. In my upcoming two-year tenure, I will do my best to share information and pass on items of involvement and interest. Let's all work together to continue to foster relationships and share our knowledge and love of gardening. After surviving the Covid years, we continue to increase membership and grow as a club..... let's keep this momentum going!

The coming season is filled with many interesting and inspiring guest speakers, lined up by our new 1st VP of Programs, Kim Kovacs-Gucwa. We have also scheduled our second fundraiser at Dearborn Buddy's Pizza on Thursday, October 23. Also, don't forget that our major fundraiser, the Holly Berry Brunch, is scheduled for December 6th and is fast approaching. Thanks to your volunteering efforts and generous support, the HBB gets better every year. Remember, this event generates most of our funding to continue providing scholarships, enhance civic beautification and so much more.

By now most of you should have a copy of the 2025-2026 GCD Yearbook. I urge you to go through it as it lists meeting dates, speakers, bylaws and various other Club information. I encourage you to take advantage of all the Club has to offer and think about ways in which you can get involved and help support our fabulous 110-year-old Club. You will be rewarded, and working together, we can do so much.

I am so very thankful for all your support.....AGAIN!

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

October 13, 2025 @ 6:00 pm - First Presbyterian Church Dearborn

Speaker: John Hartig-PhD

Presentation: The Rouge River Revived

There is still time to sign up for the Michigan Garden Clubs District One Fall conference in Farmington Hills; our treasurer Laurine Griffin is accepting checks until September 26. With two speakers, ten vendors, raffle baskets, and door prizes, this promises to be an enjoyable event for all and we will also be supporting our new District One Director Karen Block, who attended our meeting today. Thanks in advance to our NGC and MGC representative Linda Johnson who will report on the conference.

Our first 2025-2026 meeting for the Garden Club of Dearborn was blessed with outdoor sunshine, enhanced by our new Michigan Garden Clubs District One Director Karen Block, diversified by noted cook and instructor Mary Spencer, and completed with one of our beloved pot-luck buffets complete with a special Garden Club of Dearborn cake featuring our motto, "Blooming with Purpose since 1915". This produced a delightful combination whose seeds were planted with care by many members and whose blossoms were enjoyed by a total of thirty-seven attendees.



President Rose Wiggle opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a welcome to our guests:

District One Director Karen Block, speaker Mary Spencer, Beth Browne, new members Virginia (Ginny) Russell and Michele Featherston, and David Haynes. Following the introductions, everyone enjoyed the potluck, featuring such beloved "regulars" such as Rose Wiggle's chicken breasts marsala and Laurine Griffin's deviled eggs along with Karen Block's enchiladas (*oh, were they delicious – so much so that we have reprinted the recipe in this newsletter!*).

Kim Kovacs-Gucwa, our 1st VP of programs, introduced Mary Spencer. In many ways, Mary needed no introduction as many of us have seen her in various venues and it was wonderful to have her address our club. Mary is a cook, instructor, and owner of "Taste: A Cook's Place" which offers a variety of cooking classes.

Self-taught with tremendous curiosity about everything to do with food and with an emphasis on fresh ingredients and seasonal cuisine, Mary's cooking class repertoire includes a multitude of ethnic classes and classes on a variety of techniques which include savory cuisine as well as baking. Her classes are loaded with tips and stories that make for an instructional and enjoyable evening. Mary also offers home cooked meals, small group catering, and more. We also learned that Mary is a tv star! Channel 7 has filmed her doing a canning demonstration. We welcomed Mary with a hearty round of well-earned applause.

Mary spoke about cooking using various culinary herbs found in our gardens, sharing her tips and stories and first explaining the difference between herbs

and spices: herbs, either medicinal or culinary, are the leafy green part of a plant while spices are made from the seeds of a plant. She then described regional differences such as: in Italy, you'll find more basil, oregano, and fennel; in northern Europe, it will be dill and fennel, while France uses the more delicate thyme and tarragon. Did you know that the most widely used herb is cilantro? Except for the US, Canada, and Europe, every other ethnicity in the world has used cilantro for years; it was introduced into the US in the mid-seventies. One persistent myth says that people who don't like cilantro have this dislike in their genes, and the herb tastes soapy and off-putting to them.

Mary then differentiated between hardy and delicate herbs: delicate would be dill, chervil, cilantro. Hardy, such as rosemary or mint, would be more adaptable meant for robust dishes – they smell good and last well. For instance, you can take hardy herbs – bay leaves, rosemary, thyme, and throw them into a stew pot when starting, and they will infuse throughout the cooking process (Mary never takes the leaves off the thyme stem; she throws the entire sprig into rice, soup, whatever she's making, it saves time and energy) (and by the way, bay leaves flavor slow-cooked foods such as mushroom risotto very nicely). You can wrap the herbs in food-safe twine (a "bouquet garni") or put them in a piece of cheesecloth or tea infuser. Delicate herbs won't last as long flavor-wise so you want to add them at the end (e.g. basil). Sage, she added, is hearty so you never want to overuse it or your dish will "taste like a Christmas tree" □

Tips from Mary include:

- Never buy chopped, dried bay leaves, always buy them whole.
- Lemongrass or lemon verbena can be used for base flavors (including many perfumes).
- Lemon balm can be used for tea.
- Oregano is the exception – Mary prefers dried to fresh.
- Mint does well in both sweet and savory dishes and packs a punch in her potato salad.
- Chiffonade is a technique to cut herbs: pile the leaves, roll them (like tobacco leaves), slice the roll with a knife.
- Pesto is usually made with basil, but you can also make it with arugula or add parsley and arugula or even carrot greens.
- We usually garnish everything with parsley but why not use chives, great for potato salad garnish and remember their flowers are edible.
- Mary prefers Italian to curly parsley and finds it more flavorful.
- Swish fresh sage leaves in melted butter to have something lovely and crisp you can drizzle.
- Never, ever wash herbs until you are ready to use them!
- You can dry herbs in the oven overnight on low temperature or naturally if your house isn't humid.
- Mary freezes herbs by washing and drying them, rolling them in paper towels, then Saran wrap, then into freezer bags and they should be good for 3-4 months.
- Roast fennel or radishes and serve with oil, salt and pepper. Yummy!

Mary's talk was well-received; there were plenty of questions and I am sure that we were all wishing we could live in her kitchen!



Kovacs-Gucwa & Spencer

Treasurer Laurine Griffin announced our current balance of \$21,585.00.

Mary Bugeia kicked off our year with continuation of the "100 Flowers and How They Got Their Names" by Diana Wells, choosing the chrysanthemum as a traditional fall flower. The name comes from the Greek "chrys" meaning "golden" and "anthos" meaning "flower". The Chinese chrysanthemum, originally a daisy-like wild plant, had been cultivated in Chinese gardens for more than twenty-five hundred years before it came to the West. Infusions of the petals and leaves made wine and medicine, while the dew collected from them was supposed to promote longevity.

The first garden chrysanthemum was exhibited in England in 1795. John Reeves, tea inspector for the East India

Tea Company in China, sent home chrysanthemums and botanical drawings by Chinese artists.

Chrysanthemums are used freely in England and America, but in Italy, perhaps because of the time of year they bloom, they are associated with the dead and are unacceptable in any other context. What flowers mean in different cultures makes them all the more fascinating!



The Garden Club of Dearborn has agreed to maintain the Pollinator and Enabling Garden (PEG) located on the University of Michigan-Dearborn campus, near the Environmental Interpretive Center and Organic Garden, on the hill for quite a few years now. Various study group chairs have taken turns scheduling a time that works for most to meet in the garden and our most recent chair, Karen Marzonie, is stepping down, leaving a vacancy. If you are interested, please speak with any board member. The hours are flexible, the work is rewarding, and it's fun working as a group. Even the flower beds are raised to ease the work.

PEG Garden - Sept. 2025



Yeaw, Jackson & Marzonie



Jackson, Bugeia, Marzonie & Yeaw



Katrina Harris brought us up to date on the Oversharers group which was “born out of abundance and sense of community”. Katrina gave examples of what can be shared and taken to the Senior Center table at the Dearborn Parks & Recreation Department: not just extra fresh produce or flowers but even canned goods are always appreciated. Katrina brought plenty of goodies to share (including gallon bags of frozen tomato paste for sauce) and described how she and her husband have two lots, one for their home and one for food production which includes eleven fruit trees, raised beds, and a greenhouse. They grow, preserve, can, dehydrate, ferment and freeze. Katrina invites anyone to come and see her garden at any time, too. Thank you, Katrina, for this ongoing invitation and for your commitment to Oversharers!



2nd VP of Membership Carol Chrzastek announced our current membership total of 74, which became 76 by the meetings' end. New members Virginia (Ginny) Russell and Michele Featherston were welcomed by President Rose Wiggle with a round of

applause and two pretty kalanchoe plants.

Russell, Wiggle & Featherston



Third Vice President Terri Bungee announced that the Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl poster contest handouts for schools are ready. Whitmore Bolles, Long, and Lindbergh are participating; Howard and Nowlin are possibilities. If anyone has ties to these or other schools through children or grandchildren, please do consider helping us out and advertising the poster contest. It's great fun for the students and rewarding as well.



Fisher & Casillas

Mary Bugeia announced the Belleville public informational hearing objecting to hazardous waste (regarding Wayne Disposal, Inc.'s hazardous waste license application) on Thursday, September 18 from 5-9pm at the Wayne County Community College campus on Haggerty Road in Belleville. She also announced the upcoming AAUW book sale on October 3-5 at the Dearborn Ice Skating Center – books can still be donated and there's a collection box on the porch of the Dearborn Historical Museum's McFadden Ross House.

Karen Block, our new District One Director, introduced herself, thanked Rose for inviting her, and described her job as a liaison between the Michigan Garden Clubs and local clubs, working with local clubs and ensuring everyone is "sailing along on an even keel" and is happy. She wants to hear what makes our club special and is open to hearing both good points as well as any challenges we may have. Karen belongs to the Livonia Farm Clubs and Creative Flower Arrangers group. She showed us a lawn sign from her Livonia Garden Club which we all really liked. The signs cost \$15 and are put in front yards, and Karen says she has people calling her about the club and how they can join. Perhaps a great idea for us?



Rose introduced Marlene Wojtowicz, our Holly Berry Chair for this year and a meeting was held after the General Meeting to get the ball rolling and discuss details. It's never too early to start hunting for potential donations! The donation letter and forms will be sent out soon and Terri Bungee will pass around a list of local businesses at our next meeting so you can sign up to approach them if you have a good contact there or if you frequent the business.

Last of all, we had four raffle winners: Maiyah Devenport won a pair of gardening socks, Ginny Russell won a "365 Days of Gardening" Sunset book, Nanette Fisher won a jar of peony cream, and Rose Wiggle won a candle. If you have anything at home that qualifies as a raffle prize, please contact Judy Polcyn, our raffle coordinator.

Save the date: As Rose Wiggle had mentioned in her President's Corner, our Buddy's Give Back donation program last year was so successful that we are repeating it on **Thursday, October 23**. Tell your family, friends and neighbors and wet your appetite for pizza! Our club will earn 20% of all food and non-alcoholic beverage sales on our designated date. A formal announcement will be sent to Club members soon. Many thanks to Diane Rebori who originally came up with the idea.



Several Garden Club members attended the Butterfly Garden dedication, also known as a pollinator garden and greenspace along with the Pockets of Perception (POP) team mural in Dearborn's Southend at a ribbon-cutting event on August 6th. According to the city press release, the garden blooms in what was once an empty lot near Dearborn's Dix-Vernor corridor. After purchasing the plot of land, the City of Dearborn initiated plans to construct and design a public garden in the once vacant space. The garden, which is the first of its kind in Dearborn, delivers on Mayor Hammoud's mission to deindustrialize parts of the city by implementing more greenspaces in industrialized areas. It was a wonderful event – Garden Club member Cheryl Singley, whose Michigan Rug Hooking club had donated \$500 toward the mural – attended along with Rose Wiggle, Heather Yeaw and Mary Bugeia.



Singley, Yeaw, Wiggle & Bugeia



While our May 2026 meeting will be all about bees, we'd like to call your attention to our member James Harris who was featured in a July Detroit Free Press article about the beehives and pollinator garden on top of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Building in downtown Detroit.

Beehives have been kept on the roof of the building for at least 15 years, Harris says, and believes they were the first in the city to have bees on the roof of a building. If you are a Free Press subscriber, you can find this July 17 article online: "See the Beauty of this unexpected Garden in downtown Detroit".



*In the month of September,
Please remember!
Plant your spring-flowering bulbs like
daffodils, tulips, and hyacinths
For a colorful spring garden*

Garden Club of Dearborn Member's Garden Shares

Garden Club members share their gardens! If you have a photo to share with our membership, please send it to Mariya Fogarasi, editor, at mariyatf@umich.edu with a description. The more variety we have in our newsletter, the better it will be! Any and all contributions are welcome and greatly appreciated!

Rose Wiggle's second bloom
on her splendid Orchid.



Judy Polcyn's hydrangeas were originally pink and she added granules around the "drip line" in spring which changed the pH and added aluminum. She had blue flowers for a few years but after not adding granules this year, she achieved an absolutely gorgeous result!



Carol Chrzastek's first double
Lily bloom from a clipping she
received last Fall.

Garden Club of Dearborn Member's Garden Shares



Katrina Harris wore her period Pioneer School Program clothing and brought a high wheel cultivator (or push plow) at the Historical Museum's vintage sale.

Mariya Fogarasi watched a 10" long painted turtle lay her eggs in Ford Field on July 4th and transplanted them to a secure location in her backyard where she hopes they will hatch. The babies will be taken to the pond where their mother lives.



Karen Block's enchilada recipe was a winner and we are reprinting it here. Thanks Karen for bringing this tasty dish and sharing it with us!

Karen Block's World Famous Enchiladas

When I make enchiladas, I double the recipe and make up as many pans as mixture allows. Is nice to be able to pull out of the freezer when you need a quick meal.

Ingredients

Apprx 2 cups of shredded cooked chicken or turkey breast or thighs

1/8 cup of salsa

1/2 - 3/4 c sour cream (or more; it depends on how much meat you have)

1 cup of corn

Garlic salt, pepper, cumin

6 inch flour tortillas

28 oz can of green enchilada sauce

Shredded Mexican blend cheese

Procedure

Spray a pyrex baking dish with Pam.

Shred cooked chicken or turkey breast or thighs (at least 2 large chicken breasts for a 9x13 pan). I simmer fresh chicken in chicken broth seasoned with garlic salt, pepper, and cumin. You can also use leftovers.

Add about a cup of corn to the shredded meat (optional).

Mix a large spoonful of salsa in enough sour cream to make a goopy paste with the meat/corn mixture. Make sure mixture is not too dry. It should be somewhat sloppy.

Spread the mixture out to evenly distribute the seasoning. Sprinkle mixture with garlic salt, pepper, and cumin to taste. Stir.

Heat a large can of green enchilada sauce in a large skillet till warm. Don't boil.

Place small flour tortilla shells, 3 at a time, in the warm sauce. When softened, remove onto a cookie sheet. Add 3 more to cook while you are preparing the first 3.

Place a generous line of meat mixture across one end of each tortilla. Sprinkle with shredded cheese. Roll up and place in the pan. A 9x13 pan requires about 8-10 rolls to fill.

Spoon additional sauce generously over top of rolls.

Freeze or Bake at 350° until sauce bubbles. Thawed 30-45 minutes; Frozen 60 minutes or more.

When sauce bubbles, sprinkle shredded cheese over the top and return to the oven to melt.

Serve with Spanish rice and black or refried meal and other fixings. Maybe salsa, guacamole, diced green onions, black olives, jalapenos, and margaritas. Yum.