



# THE GARDEN GABBER



NEWSLETTER OF  
THE GARDENERS OF GREATER AKRON

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

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## Monday, February 18

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 18, 2013

5:30 p.m. – Social Hour

6:30 p.m. – Dinner

**Where:** St. George's Fellowship Center

St. George's Antiochian Orthodox Church

3204 Ridgewood Road

Copley OH

**Program:** Urban Gardening

The speaker this month is Rudy Moyer. Rudy is a Master Gardener from Stark County and does a lot of work in Cuyahoga County with urban gardening. He is an excellent speaker, very knowledgeable and entertaining. His topic is how to take some urban gardening practices and use them at home.

Board Meeting: February 25 at 7:00 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, 2726 West Market Street, Fairlawn, Ohio. All members are invited to attend board meetings.

**Club web site:** <http://gogakron.org> & <http://ohiogardeners.org>

## **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE - Sam Morlan**

February is considered the coldest month of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. Candlemas Day, February 1<sup>st</sup> was created by the Church to offset a pagan holiday marking the traditional midpoint of Winter. Some folklore has it that if January ends cold and blustery and February starts out the same we are in for a prolonged winter. We Americans have our own Ground Hog Day which this year portends an early spring, we shall see which predictor is most accurate.

The legend of St Valentine is somewhat murky. The one that I think makes the most sense is that of a priest in Rome. During the third century it was illegal for young men to marry because Claudius, the emperor, thought single men made better soldiers. The priest thought it was unfair and decided to perform marriages anyway. He became a martyr for his beliefs.

With the arrival of gardening catalogs our thoughts turn to spring and summer gardening, I am urging all of you to consider attending gardening seminars that are going on this month in the area. Many of the gardening centers have programs on Saturday mornings. If you see a speaker, you would like to see at our monthly meetings let either Arthur Britton or me know about it. The Master Gardeners of Summit County has many programs through the year that are open to the public. Check out the website at [www.summitmastergardeners.org](http://www.summitmastergardeners.org).

I would like to discuss a subject that I believe is one of the most important tasks that GOGA should be involved in, youth gardening. I am involved with Master Gardeners in a youth gardening program both at the Akron Zoo and at the Salvation Army. It is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. To watch a kid grow something and then eat the product of their efforts is great. Kids are curious and eager to learn. Kids planting potatoes, harvesting and then eating them has been one of the most rewarding experiences for both the kids and me. An article appeared in last month's West Side Leader about our pumpkin and sunflower program. It generated a fair amount of interest among some suburban schools and a few individuals. Those that have contacted me are interested in not only monetary aid but also some gardening advice. We have adequate funds but we need many volunteers to staff anything we commit to. The more volunteers we have the easier it is to staff these projects. I realize a lot of the work must be done by the schools and their pool of volunteers, but we could be very instrumental in educating both the kids and their parents or volunteers. We need people to step forward and let either Al Eddy or myself know if you are at all interested. I have talked to a Scout Master who is involved with the region and he states that there are many scouts out there looking for community service time as well as Eagle Scout projects to help us by doing the heavy lifting. Hopefully, we can make an impact on the community if we can generate enough interest from within the club.

Door prize donations and silent auction items are needed. If you have a unique item you think would be worthy of a place on the auction table, either bring it to a meeting or let Cheryl Bordner know about it. I know its difficult for most of us but you could ask some of the merchants that you frequent for a small gift for a worthy cause. Thanks.

## **Coming Events**

There are some important meetings and events coming that you should mark your calendars for and plan on attending: Saturday April 27, Central Great Lakes Gardeners in Lima. This is a move from our the region's traditional meeting site in Mansfield. The driving time should not be too much different for us. The national convention for the Gardeners of America/Men's Garden Clubs of America will be June 27 to 29 in Springfield, Illinois. The summer conference of the region will be July 19 and 20 in Cleveland, sponsored by the Cleveland club.

More about the national convention and a registration form can be found on the national website and will probably be printed in the Gabber in a later month's newsletter. More information about the regional meetings will also be published in later issues of the Gabber.

## **Impatiens Alert**

The editor is also a member of the board of the Copley Fairlawn Kiwanis club. At this week's board meeting an important topic was discussed. This is also an important topic for our club. The flower sale is Kiwanis' major fund raiser and it is held on the weekend before Mothers' Day as is ours. At the meeting the member in charge of the flower sale said he had been in touch with the owner of Blooming Acres, the club's supplier. He said that he was debating whether to plant impatiens this year. He said there is a virus that attacks impatiens and not only kills the impatiens but also poisons the soil. He will try to learn more about this problem before making a final decision. He did say that Lowe's and Home Depot will sell impatiens. He was worried about the liability issue as we should be. Last year impatiens were 60 per cent of Kiwanis' sales of bedding plants. Impatiens were also a big seller for us and we should carefully consider this problem. It will be interesting to see what the owners of Racine Products, our supplier, say about this problem. We may have to consider, as will Kiwanis, what other flowers can take the place of impatiens.

The editor has heard about this problem from other sources as well and he has also heard that some people had a problem with impatiens last year. Same virus? If so, is the soil poisoned and how will it affect plants planted there this year?

## **Member News**

Elaine Evans passed away recently. There was a nice article about her in the Beacon Journal about her. This article did not mention our club but Elaine was the first female member of our club and was a member for several years. Also, through the years the club has supported her organization, Let's Grow Akron. This organization turns empty and abandoned city lots into community gardens.

As reported at the last meeting Roger Hite had some problems with his heart. His defibrillator went off three times and he spent five days in the hospital. They changed his medications and he will go into the hospital for one day while they put another lead into his heart which will improve its functioning. He says he is better but not yet back to normal.

Charles White was in the hospital for an operation to put a rod in his neck to support the vertebrae there.

John Lewis had a severe stroke in November that put him into the hospital and into rehab for two months. He is at home now and doing better, even though he cannot drive for a while.

Some good news. Did you see the article about Mary Bell ,the orchid lady, in the Beacon? Now do we know where all those beautiful orchids that Jim brings to the horticultural shows come from?

## Cardboard Gardening

It is the time of year when everyone is interested in finding the newest and best ideas, gadgets, plants, seeds, etc. Willie was surprised and very happy to find a wonderful old idea in an old copy of *Birds & Blooms* by Stacy Tornio. It is super cheap and a super simple way to have a better garden. More than just mulch or a weed barrier, it is the key to a whole new approach to gardening - one that lets you spend less and use less while still getting excellent results. And just what is this free, eco-friendly method? It is Cardboard Gardening.

In the fall flatten recycled boxes in garden areas, in the spring a new garden bed of rich soil will be ready for planting. It is a compost pile's best friend, just break into manageable pieces and add to other compost materials. Reduce weeds by placing pieces of cardboard around your plants and water immediate. You can also add soil or mulch on top to reinforce it. Need a new pathway? Just place the cardboard in the shape you want the path to take. Outline with bricks then cover with soil and mulch. You can start new flower beds the same way.

Cardboard containers can be decorated with rope, yarn, cork, ceramic tiles, duct tape, ribbon, paint, wallpaper, material, sticks and buttons to name only a few things that will work, Tape weak areas and line the box with a plastic bag with drainage holes to keep it from getting soggy and water directly in the center to avoid drenching and weakening the sides. Cardboard boxes are the perfect solution for starting seeds because you can keep them growing inside longer, giving you stronger seedlings. Provide them with plenty of light and then plant box and all into your garden when the plants are ready.

A great windowsill herb planter can be made with shoe boxes or just lining up small boxes in a window that gets good light. Fill with soil and herbs. You can also make a shoe box garden with boxes stacked side by side. Just remember shoe boxes aren't very deep, so you'll need to choose items that don't need a lot of growing space. Lettuce, petite carrots and herbs are all good options. For a cleaner appearance leave the lids on the shoe box and just cut a rectangle into the top, add soil and plants.

In your square foot gardens use cardboard boxes to mark off your squares. Add your boxes to a raised bed or an empty space in your yard. These are wonderful ideas for kids to try. It gives kids their own space and they can plan what to put in each square or box.

Jeff Gillman, the author of *The Truth About Gardening Remedies* says it is OK to leave cardboard in the garden to break down on its own as it returns to the ground the same as any wood mulch would. Just remember that cardboard breaks down rapidly and probably won't last longer than a growing season. Don't worry about the formaldehyde in the glue as it is a very low level and decreases with time. It is OK to grow vegetables in cardboard, but do be aware of what the cardboard held before you use it. As an example, you don't want to grow in a box that was used for shipping industrial chemicals. You can get more cardboard ideas on the web at [birdsandblooms.com/mag](http://birdsandblooms.com/mag).

(This article was taken from the newsletter of the Fort Wayne, Indiana club. Every month in this newsletter there is a column by a person who goes by the name of Willie Weedpuller. This is a very enjoyable and informative column which adds a lot to the value of their newsletter.)

## Treasurer's Report

### 2012 Summary

		<u>Income</u>	
Dinners			\$6783.00
50/50			642.50
Silent Auction			78.00
Dues			2175.00
Geranium Sale			7958.00
May Plant Sale			885.00
Calendars			125.00
Interest Savings Account			<u>6.11</u>
Total			\$18,652.61
		<u>Expenses</u>	
Dinners			\$7059.00
Programs			525.60
June Picnic			336.16
Flowers and cake for December Dinner			213.25
Tips for Waitresses			200.00
Dues, National			726.00
Dues, Regional			85.00
Printing			
	Newsletter	207.70	
	Mailing	117.76	
	Membership Roster	170.00	\$495.46
Committees			\$510.38
	Membership	60.00	
	Youth	52.68	
	Service	233.20	
	Publicity	0	
	Endowment Fund	164.50	
Projects			\$376.94
	Crown Point	168.17	
	Habitat	26.89	
	Beautification	0	
	Horticulture Show	181.88	
Donations			\$2540.00
	Memorials	40.00	
	Arrowhead School	200.00	
	Faith Lutheran Church	300.00	
	Scholarships	2000.00	
Geranium Sale			
	Racin Products	5639.70	5639.70
Website Expenses			74.66
Calendars			106.00
Miscellaneous Expenses			5.31
Insurance			175.00
Checkbook			<u>80.13</u>
Total			\$19,148.59

Does not include \$500 to TGOA/MGCA for national conference which was returned by the Youngstown Club.

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"A man who has a garden fair,  
whether small or big,  
with flowers blooming here and there,  
Must bend his back and dig."

"With mystical glory,  
They rise from the sod,  
Who loveth not flowers,  
Knoweth not God."

"Some seek their God in wild, wide places, I, in tranquil little places."

Author anonymous, submitted by Lester Knight