



# The Garden Gabber



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

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## Monday, March 17

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, March 17, 2008

5:30 p.m. – Social Hour

6:30 p.m. – Dinner

**Where:** St. George Fellowship Centre  
3204 Ridgewood Road  
Copley, Ohio

**Program:** How to Keep Vegetables Healthy in Your Garden

Our speaker is Sally Miller, Associate Professor of Plant Pathology at Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center.

The ten minute talk will be given by Marti Williams on the subject of Brumancia (Angel Trumpet).

There will be a seed exchange. Bring your extra seeds (flowers and vegetables) and trade them for seeds you don't have.

Board meeting, March 24 at 7:00 pm at the Faith Lutheran Church, 2726 West Market Street, Fairlawn, next door to St. Hilary's. You should park behind the church and come in the back door of the church.

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

## A Message from Your<sup>2</sup> President - John Lewis

I'm sitting here, glancing outside occasionally, where the snow is still coming down and already is hip-deep to a giraffe. I'm wondering why I didn't 't jump the cruise ship and remain in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. But what better time to speak of geraniums.

The board is trying to determine where our geranium sale will be, and for how long, one day or two days. The date of delivery is May 9 and the first, and maybe the only day of sale. We are thinking about going to a different location for Saturday if we cannot stay at the original location on Saturday. Please reserve this date for unloading of the plants and helping with the sale. We are increasing the price of a flat of 18 plants to \$22.00 due to a price increase by our supplier. There may also be a few other type plants for sale this year. We will again offer two \$1,000 scholarships to ATI and the geranium sale is the source of income for the scholarships.

Check out the silent auction and Treasurer's table as you arrive for the March dinner meeting. Grace Cochran is our idea machine and she is working in overdrive. If you bring items for the silent auction, and please do, and some do not sell, please take them home with you as you leave. Bring them again the following month. I believe Grace is running out of room for unsold items. Grace said that she will have a brightly colored table cloth on the table for the silent auction, you can't miss it.

Those of you that have not as yet renewed your membership in the club and plan to do so, please make your remittance soon, so as not to delay the publication of the roster. Last year the roster wasn't published until June; we want to do better this year. It will probably go to the printer sometime in March, so if you want to be included in the roster don't hesitate to get your dues to the treasurer. We already know of several members who will not be renewing this year, but there are also several the membership committee has not been able to contact. If you haven't been contacted by a member of the membership committee then it's up to you to let us know whether you are renewing or not.

The board has decided to open our meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag and country followed by a short invocation. We're sure this will meet with all of your approval.

Finally, we have some reservation, as a club, concerning the Urban Connection Ministries and our involvement. Al Eddy, our go-getter youth gardening committee chairman, is having trouble coordinating his efforts with those of the Connection Ministries. Al has lots of seeds and ideas and is impatient to get started, understandably. Some of their web sites also appear to be a bit shaky. However, the only request asked of us at the last meeting was for tools as individual member contributions. Use your judgment for this request.

As for me, I'm going to take advantage of this chance to maybe do some good and contribute a few new tools. Maybe it will help an organization get just one person onto the road out of poverty and I'll feel some sort of a good accomplishment. I hope that Charley needs a truck to haul all the tools away. Don't forget to bring your seeds for the seed exchange.

(Editor and Treasurer's note - At the board meeting we discussed our liability insurance policy which costs us \$500.00 a year. This is the minimum charge from our insurance company. Bill Moorehouse talked to his insurance agent. State Farm does not have this kind of policy, but the agent thought that \$500.00 was a fair price for such a policy. If we have an insurance agent or lawyer familiar with liability policies in the club the board and I would like to discuss this subject with you before we have to renew this policy next year, ).

## New WEBSITE COMMITTEE Needs Help

At my request the MGC Akron Board agreed to initiate a new Website Committee. Any members interested in assisting are very welcome. Bob Bell and Arthur Britton have indicated an interest in helping the committee. You don't need to know how to make websites, that will be taken care of. We will be communicating by email. You will need an active and daily used email address.

This new committee could be viewed as kind of an editorial committee to assist with improving and maintaining our website. What would the committee members do?

1. Suggest new features for our website.
2. Submit ideas for improving the existing website.
3. Read new information on the website and report errors or problems.
4. Prepare final documents for posting on the website, with Word or Publisher file formats.

A good example is a suggestion from Arthur to post a calendar of events listing important monthly garden tasks. Arthur or someone would need to come up with the content. Then someone would need to create the final Word or Publisher documents for that feature.

An additional possibility is to start an MGC Akron Yahoo discussion group (free of charge). The primary important use of it would be for submission of information and discussion for and about the website. It could be used also for other club topics by other members and club Officers. I have been involved with several such groups and they can be very helpful.

Our MGC Akron website is hosted free of charge by the Akron Summit County Public Library. Please have a look at it if you never have. And please reply to me by email if you are interested in joining this new website committee or in joining a MGC Akron Yahoo discussion group.

<http://www.acorn.net/mgcakron>

Email: [fmm2065@hotmail.com](mailto:fmm2065@hotmail.com)

submitted by Frank Mitch



Akron-Summit County Public Library is proud to present

### The 2nd Annual A Garden Affair: Fun For All!

a daylong garden celebration

**Saturday, April 5, 2008**

Main Library  
60 S. High St., Akron, OH

**9 am-5 pm**

### Make plans to enjoy and learn from our wonderful speakers this year!

- **9:15-10 am Pat Kennedy**, featured in *Mother Earth News*, shares her secrets of vegetable gardening with heirloom seeds
- **10:15-11:15 am Debra Knapke**, well-known Ohio gardening author, shows us the beauty in a Four Season Garden.
- **11:30 am-12:30 pm Bill Hoffman**, from Hoffman's Garden Center, will teach us how to create and maintain a water garden.
- **12:45-1:45 pm Ian Adams**, environmental photographer, takes us on a beautiful photographic journey through Ohio's gardens & arboreturns.
- **2-3 pm Bev Shaffer**, culinary instructor, food writer and cookbook author returns with recipes for all seasons.
- **2-3:30 pm Hands-on Activities for Children & Teens!**
- **3:15-4:15 pm Jim Chatfield**, *Akron Beacon Journal* contributor, discusses diseases & pests that affect our plants.

For complete schedule of events, log on to [www.akronlibrary.org](http://www.akronlibrary.org) or call Science & Technology 330.643.9075

All programs are free & open to the public. Seating is on a first come basis. No reservations or tickets required.

\*Schedule & speakers subject to change

## The Johnny Appleseed Broadcaster

Quite a while ago the publication of The Johnny Appleseed Broadcaster, the newsletter of the Central Great Lakes Region, was suspended because of the cost of printing and mailing it. However, the members of the region decided that the publication of this newsletter should be restarted. Joseph Alessi Jr., a member of the Youngstown club and the former editor of their newsletter, volunteered to be the editor of this new newsletter. However, because of the cost factor this renewed version of the Broadcaster will be delivered to the member clubs of the region in a different manner. Instead of printing a copy for each member of the local clubs, as was done in the past, now the president and editor of each club will receive an e-mail copy. They are to share this newsletter with club members.

Our board has decided not to print a copy for each member. If you would like a copy of the Broadcaster you should ask the president or the editor for a copy. The editor has the Broadcaster on the computer and he can e-mail you a copy which would be much easier and cheaper than his printing out a copy and mailing it to you.

The editor and president have also been asked to share any pertinent information in each copy of the Broadcaster with the members.. The editor can do this in the Garden Gabber.

Mr. Alessi states that there are many publications available to the membership that print articles about gardening. Therefore, the Broadcaster will print in its projected three issues a year only those things which will inform regional members of happenings within the region. This will include messages from regional and national officers. Local clubs should also share information about interesting programs and projects that might be of interest to other clubs.

The regional president, Rodney Toth, of the Youngstown club, in his president's message made an interesting comparison between the requirements for germinating seeds and requirements for developing

and encouraging the members of the local clubs. He said that some seeds need to be heated, others need to be put in the freezer, others need to be soaked, while others need to be scarified. Whatever the seeds need it is very important that these needs be satisfied.

Rodney says that the same goes for the care of local members. Not all members need the same kind of care. Therefore, he says that we need to have varied programs, projects and events so that the varied needs of our members can be met.

The nearest upcoming regional meeting is on April 12 at the Gatehouse of the Kingwood Gardens in Mansfield.

At 10:00 am will be the business meeting. Please bring any nominations for regional awards to this meeting. Lunch at Fire Mountain Buffet - Note We will have a private room @ \$6.99/person.

1:00 pm - Presentation "Rock Gardening" by Dennis James. He is for 25 years the owner operator of DJ's Greenhouse located in Transfer, Pennsylvania. He grows a large selection of unusual plants that many nurserymen will not attempt. His display gardens contain just about everything he sells.

Dennis will give us his basic overview and requirements of good rock gardening, complete with outstanding slides of plants in their native habitat and popular plants on the market today.

Try his website [www.djsgreenhouse.com](http://www.djsgreenhouse.com)

The TGOA/MGCA National Convention will be held this year in Fort Wayne, Indiana on June 12 - 14. The theme of the convention is "Gardening Is Great in 2008". The cost is very reasonable for a national convention, \$198 registration and \$79 per night for a room.

Registration information can be found on the national website [www.tgoa-mgca.org](http://www.tgoa-mgca.org)

The summer regional conference will be Saturday, July 26 at ATI in Wooster.

## Gardening Tips

(Editor's note - At the last board meeting somebody suggested that there be some suggestions of things to do in the garden each month. I remember that at some time in the past Walt Starcher had written such a column each month. I found them; they were in 2001. I'm sure Walt won't mind them being reprinted.)

### For March

1. Lime parts of the garden where you need to bring up the pH. This should not be done at the same time as the application of manure.
2. Do not be hasty in removing mulch around your plants. Winter kill often occurs when warm days are followed by cold nights.
3. Wood ashes from a fireplace or wood burning stove may be put in the garden or compost bin. Ashes contain up to 25% potash. Use at the rate of one-half cup per square yard. Ashes from burned paper are considered less beneficial.
4. Aerify your lawn in the spring or fall. This depends upon what type of turf grass you have.

### For April

1. Have a certified tree technician spray your shade trees with a fungicide to prevent leaf disease.
2. This is the best time to plant most trees in northern Ohio. Most root growth occurs in the spring and fall.
3. Scratch a bar of soap before going into the garden to work. Dirt underneath the fingernails then washes out easily.
4. Mount a mailbox on a post in the garden to

store small tools.

5. As you watch your spring flowers fade, remember that it is important to leave the foliage of bulbs to ripen and die back.

6. Here are some flowers to attract butterflies in the garden: bee balm, cosmos, morning glory, phlox, aster, verbena, zinnia, cornflower and thistle.

7. A mouse trap attached to the wall of a tool shed can be a glove trap; gloves hung there will dry quickly and be easily found.

## Study Seeks Word on Dirty Birds

(Editor's note - This report is from the OARDC report,)

Do starlings spread food borne disease between farms?

OARDC scientists will be using a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to study the relationship between wild birds and E. coli contamination on farms. There is strong evidence that European starlings harbor E. coli and other dangerous microorganisms. Studies conducted by these scientists have found that E. coli strains from European starlings are the same ones found on nearby dairy farms.

Ohio has one of the highest breeding densities of this non-native starling in the country, with some winter roosts holding 600,000 birds. This project targets Wayne County, home of at least one such roost and many dairy farms.

This study will try to tell whether these birds are contributing to infection on farms and perhaps to unhealthy food as a result. They will study ways to reduce the number of these birds or to restrict their access to livestock feeding areas on the farm

(Again the editor - These starlings are a big headache for my wife who is into feeding the birds. Do you have the same problem with them around your bird feeders?)