



THE GARDEN GABBER

NEWSLETTER OF
THE GARDENERS OF GREATER AKRON



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

Published Monthly: Volume LXX

March 2011

Number 3

President:

Clark Bordner
225 Norton Ave.
Barberton, OH 44203-1931
☎330-745-4699
email: cbordner@neo.rr.com

1st Vice President:

Sam Morlan
170 Hollybrier Drive
Wadsworth, OH 44281-9475
☎330-336-6269
email: samandlora@wadsnet.com

2nd Vice President:

David Lockledge
620 Beaverbrook Dr.
Akron, OH 44333-2820
☎ 330-865-3665
Email: lochledgede@cityofcf.com

Secretary:

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

Treasurer:

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

National Director:

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

Gabber Editor/Historian:

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

Monday, March 21

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 21, 2011

5:30 p.m. – Social Hour

6:30 p.m. – Dinner

Where: St. George Fellowship Center

3205 Ridgewood Road

Copley, Ohio

Program: Lisa Graf

Lisa Graf from Graf Growers will present a program entitled New Trends in Perennials and Products.

Program Chairman, Sam Morlan, reminds the members to submit to him suggestions of topics they would like to have discussed at the April meeting. Also you can submit questions about gardening that you would like to have answered.

Board Meeting: March 28 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://mgcakron.org> & <http://ohiogardeners.org>

President's Message

Clark Bordner

What a winter we have had! I was driving the other night when we had the flooding and was caught in a lightning storm with dense fog. I had never experienced this before and I will be quite happy not to have such an exciting trip again. The fog amplified the lightning so the flashes were blinding! I am sorry that we had to set a precedent in February when we cancelled the dinner meeting. In retrospect, I am glad we did. The roads were atrocious and club members were better off at home that night. I would like to thank Grace Cochran who got the ball rolling on the cancellation as well as Frank Mitch, Jack Cochran, Bob Bell and others who were involved in notifying members of the cancellation. It turned out that the speaker was sick and would not have been able to attend. I would also like to thank our caterers who were gracious enough not to charge us for preparation of the meal for that meeting. The seed exchange championed by Andy Bettick will be held in March at the dinner meeting. After the severity of this winter, I am certainly ready for spring!

I would like to bring forth some exciting facts about our club in relation to our regional and national organizations. We were the largest club belonging to the national for 2010! We are one of the few clubs that are growing during these tough times. Frank Mitch is national director and Bob Bell is regional president with Lee Hart to succeed him next year. Our club is having a true impact through the leadership of these former presidents at both the regional and national levels. We are fortunate to have such men as a part of our club and I am proud to be associated with all of you!

We have several of our biggest events coming up very soon. For example, our geranium and plant sale is about two months away with the strawberry fest and Habitat for Humanity not far behind. I would encourage you to look into assisting with these as well as other committees if you are so inclined. I am sure that the committee heads would be more than happy to explain what each function is about and what help they could use. The list of committees is in the orange membership roster with committee heads listed with their phone numbers. We will talk more about committees in April but some committees are already planning their events for the year.

I would like to express my condolences to the family of long time member, Ivan Hertle who passed last week. We also have numerous club members and spouses who are in various stages of rehabilitation from injuries or surgeries. If you know someone that is going through surgery or rehabilitation, drop them a card or give them a phone call. Such gestures mean a lot and can actually help speed up recovery time.

I look forward to our dinner meeting in March. Please bring a friend. I am sure that they would be enriched if they are interested in gardening.

Endowment Fund Committee

The committee now has a new member, Frank Mitch. The other members are Bob Bell, Sam Morlan, MaryAnn Ferguson Rich, Grace Cochran and Marti Williams. As of March 1st we have received input from 4 people. This included minutes from November 25, 1996 when a motion was made and passed to establish a "Scholarship/Memorial Fund the use of which will be determined by the Board...." Some Board Members remember that the Endowment Fund was started earlier. I am making a last appeal for any further documentation regarding the original fund. We would also welcome any and all additional input. Provide the committee with ideas. Do you want the Club to have an Endowment Fund or Quasi Endowment Fund. If we have a fund, what should we invest in: how should we spend it. Please email or call any of the committee members and share your thoughts.

Bob Bell, Chair Endowment Committee

Annual Seed Exchange

Because last month's meeting was cancelled the annual seed exchange will be held at this month's meeting. Bring any seeds that you may have to share with your fellow gardeners. Everyone can participate in this program whether or not you bring seeds or are a member of the club. Remember planting seeds is the most inexpensive way to start flowers and vegetables.

Regional Meeting

The first meeting of the Central Great Lakes Region will be on April 9th at Kingwood Garden Center in Mansfield. Business meeting at 10:00 a m, lunch at the Golden Corral, and the speaker, John Martin, subject: gourds. John and his wife are very prominent in the Ohio Gourd Association and they are in charge of the judging at the state gourd show in which several of our members participate as judges. Bob Bell is the Regional President. Enter Kingwood by the Trimble Ave entrance. Last year there was a charge of \$5.00 per car entering Kingwood. We do not know if this charge will apply this year or not. The meeting will be held in the exhibition building.

Member News

Member Ivan E. Hertle passed away on February 22. On February 14, his 90th birthday, Ivan was riding an exercise bike at Rockynol when he suffered a massive stroke.

Ivan joined the club in 1989. He was the power plant manager for Firestone Rubber Company for 39 years. He was a Navy officer in World War II and survived the sinking of his ship during the battle of Okinawa.

Ivan is survived by his son, Richard, also a club member, daughter in law Peggy, two sisters, seven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Ivan will be greatly missed by his family and friends in the club.

Bob J. R. Hriso now has e-mail jhriso@msn.com.

E-mail changes should be reported to Frank Mitch and other changes in addresses etc. to the editor.

About Gourds (taken from Wikipedia)

A gourd is a plant of the family Cucurbitaceae, or a name given to the hollow, dried shell of a [fruit](#) in the Cucurbitaceae family of plants of the genus Lagenaria. It is in the same family as the pumpkin. Most commonly, gourds are the product of the species *Lagenaria siceraria* (the calabash or African bottle gourd), native to Africa, and at a very early date spread throughout the world by human migrations.

Day-blooming gourds are pollinated in the same way as squash, and commercial plantings should have bee hives supplied. Night blooming gourds are pollinated by moths, which are normally present in adequate supply unless they are drawn off by night lights in the area.

Gourds were the earliest plant species domesticated by humans and were originally used by people as containers or vessels before clay or stone pottery, and is sometimes referred to as "nature's pottery". The original and evolutionary shape of clay pottery is thought to have been modeled on the shape of certain gourd varieties.

Recent DNA analyses of bottle gourds found at several sites throughout the Americas has resolved a long-standing mystery, as well as adding evidence establishing the early date of domestication of the bottle gourd plant. As the bottle gourd is native to Africa and not the Americas, archeologists previous to the analyses could only speculate that it had probably floated across the Atlantic. But upon examining the DNA, they found that the American samples most closely matched the varieties of the African bottle gourd found in Asia, not Africa. It was thus concluded that the bottle gourd had been deliberately brought by early migrants from Asia to the Americas, at least 10,000 years ago.

Generally, gourds are used more for utilitarian uses than for food. Only a few varieties are harvested for consumption, mostly in Asia. The shell of the gourd, when dried, has a wooden appearance. Gourd "wood" is essentially cellulose that has no grain, varying in thickness from paper-thin to well over an inch. Drying gourds, which takes months in some cases, causes the internal contents (seeds and fruit matter) to dry out completely, although seeds are often still capable of germination. For the uninitiated, cutting open a dried gourd (with a craft knife or miniature jig-saw) can present hazards; the resulting dust is extremely fine and can cause respiratory problems, and requires adequate protection. A bitter taste or smell is typically evident when opening a gourd that is not completely dry inside.

The harder outer surface lends the gourd to a wide variety of creative appeals, including carving, pyrography, sculpture, basketry, masks, musical instruments, and more. A growing following has emerged in the United States and other Western countries for Gourd art and craft-related purposes. There are many different types of decorative gourds. They include spoon gourds, spoon bicolor, orange warted, and striped pear. The spoon gourd ripens from the top to the bottom. A baby spoon gourd is green and as it grows it changes color. A yellow color overlaps the green and creates a two colored gourd. For decorative purposes the harvester can harvest the gourd early, when it has two colors.

Walt's Gardening Tips for March

1. Do not be hasty in removing mulch from around your plants. Winter kill often occurs when warm days are followed by cold windy nights.
2. Lime parts of the garden where you need to bring up the pH. This should not be done at the same time you apply manure.
3. Get plant beds and seed boxes ready. Change the soil in the boxes and check for needed repairs.
4. Nine mistakes most often made by the beginner:
 1. Rushing the season.
 2. Planting too deep.
 3. Over fertilizing.
 4. Poor watering practices.
 5. Selecting varieties not appropriate for the locale.
 6. Too large of a garden.
 7. Sowing seeds too thick.
 8. Rough transplanting.
 9. Lack of protection after planting.
5. Wood ashes from the fireplace or stove may be put on the garden or in the compost bin. Ashes contain up to 25% potash. Use at the rate of one half cup per square yard.
6. Flowering shrubs should be pruned immediately after flowering in the spring. Buds for next year's flowers will start to form in early summer.
7. Presoak large and thick-skinned seeds for one hour before planting to speed germination
8. Thin out dead or weak canes of climbing roses.
9. Some favorite flowers to attract butterflies are bee balm, cosmos, morning glory, phlox, aster, verbena, zinnia, coneflower, and thistle.
10. If your perennial beds are dull and dreary, take a Sunday drive and observe gardens around town for next year.
11. To make the vegetable garden easier to till and maintain, group perennial plants (asparagus, etc.) along one side of the plot, out of the way of annual plants.
12. Soak roots of bare root apple, cherry, and peach trees overnight before planting. If this differs from advice from the nursery, follow the nursery's advice.
13. Plant and display your containers and baskets in sheltered areas now. Try a combination of pansy, grape hyacinth, heather, and narcissus.
14. Now is a good time to transplant house plants to a new pot. It will give them a new start and fresh soil.

For April

1. Cut back large-flowered hybrid clematis this month for best flower production in summer.
2. Mount mail box in garden area to store small tools.
3. It is important to leave the foliage of spring blooming bulbs to ripen and die back after blooms fade. The foliage is manufacturing food for next year's flowers.
4. A mouse trap mounted to the wall in the garden shed can hold gloves to dry and they can be easily found.
5. When transplanting : A. Remove all flowers to overcome shock B. Use a starter solution of liquid fertilizer C. Transplant on a cloudy day or use a shading device for a few days if the weather is hot and sunny.
6. Harden off plants before planting in the garden. Gradually acclimate them to conditions in the garden. Place them outdoors for a few hours a day, and then gradually increase the outdoor time until the plant is left out over night. A cold frame makes the process easier.
7. To control iris borer, clean up and destroy old foliage before new growth begins.
8. Apply complete slow-release fertilizer to established roses. Begin weekly sprays to control black spot and mildew.
9. Keep indoor seedlings and root cuttings cool. Give them plenty of light for bushy compact growth.