

# THE GARDEN POST

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*Rosemary "Bunny" LaDuke  
Kalamazoo Garden Council President*

Dear Friends,

Greens Sale was so successful in our new location - I hope you enjoy the pictures. It is always a wonderful, inviting event where we see many old friends. This year I met a colleague from Upjohn that I hadn't seen in more than 20 years. I also ran into my husband's cousin at the Greens Sale who said she guessed maybe she should join a garden club so we could see each other more often. We have had new members who joined a club because their mother or grandmother had enjoyed belonging to a garden club and participating in Greens Sale.

Recently I came across a helpful article by Star Chapter, a nonprofit management organization. According to Star Chapter there are many reasons people join clubs. To learn and to benefit from networking are the two major reasons. Garden clubs provide a way to join others in supporting and improving our environment. By joining, people can learn more about the subject of gardening, horticulture, flower design and arrangement, landscaping, and the environment within a group of community-minded individuals. And, having fun with the other members is a real bonus!

There is strength in numbers, and garden clubs are no exception. Clubs always need new members to keep the club strong and vibrant. To help members become active and involved requires an organized process of "onboarding," including collecting contact information. Star Chapter suggests these steps in introducing new members to a club:

1. Streamline initial information distribution to prospective and new members. Provide just enough material to answer initial questions without overloading.
2. Offer immediate value with educational and networking opportunities. Invite the prospective or new member to join in an upcoming event or activity.
3. Make personal contact. A club member/mentor who will follow up can help the prospective or new member feel wanted and engaged.

Increasing member participation leads to loyalty, retention, and growth for the club. Following up with a member who misses a meeting to let them know they were missed is a good way to build a bond with that member.

In this fiscal year (since June 1, 2022), Burke View Garden Club welcomed two new members: Patricia Gantz-Eernisse and Jill Ann Wenger. Four new members have joined Chula Vista: JoAnne Beertema, Sherri Bronson, Beverly Chaney, and Linda Rus. The Gardenettes have two new members: Karen Lorenz and Elaine Shirk. Helga Mortensen is a new member of Grow & Show Garden Club. And, Kalamazoo Garden Club's two new members are Leslie Roth and Lynn Gerfen. Petal Pushers has a one member, Carol Berg. KGC also gained a new club this year, Lakeshore Flower Arrangers Guild, which began this year with six members, and is meeting regularly at the Council House and growing in membership with 15 new members this year. Congratulations to all of these clubs.

Best Wishes,  
Bunny





The new Portage Zhang Senior Center was a perfect venue for the 2022 annual Greens Sale. It was a huge success in sales, profit and fun! The holiday green arrangements were beautiful and the clubs had many new ideas for their projects this year. Thank you to everyone for their hard work and dedication to the project!



# Invasive Species

By Nancy Lewis, KGC Environmental Chair

This article will be the first in a series of articles about common invasive plants in Michigan. Norway Maple trees will be the focus of this article.

## What are invasive plants?

Invasive plants are mainly non-native and reproduce rapidly, spread over large areas of landscapes, and have few, if any, natural controls.



Rob Routledge Bugwood.org

These could be deer, rabbits, insect predators and/or diseases to keep them in check. They spread quickly and in wide areas because they can spread by runners, large number of fertile seeds or the ability to disperse its' seeds such as birds, wind, and humans.

## Why are invasive plants a concern?

Invasive plants are taking over and degrade natural ecosystems. They disrupt the intricate web of life for plants, animals, microorganisms and compete for limited resources such as water, sunlight, and nutrients. They displace native plants including rare plants and provide less food and shelter for wildlife. About 42% of the species on the U.S. List of Endangered and Threatened Species are at risk primarily because of non-native invasive plants.

## Norway Maple *Acer platanoides*

Origin: Europe and Western Asia - It was introduced as an ornamental landscape plant. Distribution from northeast US, south to GA and, west to Iowa. It has escaped cultivation and invades forests and suburban areas.

Since it evolved in Europe it has diverged genetically from native maples including leaf chemistry, timing of flower and seed set, growth rate and shade tolerance. They have copious winged seeds that are easily and widely spread by the wind. In our native hardwood forests, the oaks, maples, hickories, etc. are having their seedlings crowded and shaded out by the early germinating Norway Maples. Their leaf size and density shade out our native wildflowers also. They quickly become the dominant species and when this happens our oaks will never be able to reproduce themselves. The longer we let them go, the more the invasive Norway Maples push out existing natives.

Norway maple leaves are usually broader than they are high and have 5 lobes.



Joseph O'Brien Bugwood.org

The leaves have brilliant yellow fall color.

When a leaf is plucked from the tree a milky sap is exuded from the leaf stem. This distinguishes Norway Maple from the similar looking native Sugar



Joseph O'Brien Bugwood.org

Maple and can be the easiest way to recognize Norway Maple.

**Native alternatives:** Red Maple *Acer rubrum*, Sugar Maple *Acer saccharum*, Ohio Buckeye *Aesculus glabra*



## MGC District 3A & 3B Spring into The Future Leadership Training

**Thursday, April 13, 2023**

VanBuren Conference Center

409 S. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, MI 49064

Hosted by Lawrence Garden Club

*Registration information available soon.*

As part of the annual Greens Sale, Donna Knight organized a team of KGC members to fill the planters with holiday greens for the winter season at First National Bank on Michigan Avenue in downtown

Kalamazoo. The elves included: Shelley Metz (KA), Brenda Orwig (GA), Pat Pawlak (GA), Elaine Shirk (GA), and Donna Knight (GA). Thank you ladies!



### Kalamazoo Garden Council Officers 2021-23



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Special thanks to members who submitted photos and/or stories for publication in this issue of *The Garden Post*: Donna Knight, Nancy Lewis, and Andrea Stork.

## SAVE THE DATE

### MARCH

**17&18 Spring Expo at Wedel's  
KGC Membership Booth**

### APRIL

**13 MGC District 3 Spring Conference  
Lawrence Conference Center  
Lawrence**

### JUNE

**6-7 MGC State Conference  
Sheraton Inn, Grand Rapids**

**13 KGC Annual Luncheon  
Time & Location TBA**



Affiliated Organizations:

Follow our website and Facebook page for educational information and upcoming events:

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

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