

THE GARDEN POST

A publication of the Kalamazoo Garden Council, Inc.

Summer 2024 - Issue 198



Dear Friends,

Welcome everyone to the Kalamazoo Garden Council's one-year trial leadership structure.

Last Spring, our Past-President, Donna Robinson, hosted a "listening session" to see the Council's strengths and weaknesses, and to decide how to proceed going forward. In May, Chris Morgan masterfully came up with innovative proposals to advance us forward with the idea of having co-presidents for the 2024/2025 year and a reduced amount of meetings. We are hopeful this plan will encourage and inspire others to volunteer for leadership in the future.

Our Board of Directors meeting dates for this coming year are listed below and start promptly at 9:30 a.m. in the KGC House library:

- Tuesday, September 10, 2024
- Tuesday, October 8, 2024
- Tuesday, November 12, 2024
- Tuesday, March 11, 2025
- Tuesday, April 8, 2025
- Tuesday, May 13, 2025
- Tuesday, June 17th Annual Meeting (venue / time TBD)



The entire membership is welcome to attend these meetings. We are open to your thoughts and suggestions. Only the Directors have voting privileges. Our goal is to keep the meetings to an hour long, with time at the end to catch-up and visit with each other. Make a point to introduce yourself to a stranger and welcome them.

KGC offers remarkable community service to the Kalamazoo area with a powerful, creative, imaginative group of members. We are looking forward to an exciting year.

Best Wishes,



Andrea Stork

Marcia Wielenga

KGC Co-Presidents



Hello everyone,

As the first Board of Director's meeting of the year approaches, I'd like to thank all of you for your support and enthusiasm as we gathered together last Spring. Under the guidance of discussion leader and former Council President Chris Morgan, we decided to shorten our calendar year and open our presidency to a shared model for this upcoming fiscal year.

Andrea Stork and Marcia Wielenga answered the call to be Co-Presidents; Jeanette Meyer accepted the Recording Secretary position; Renee Healey stepped up as Finance Chair; Sue Conat and Phyllis Straw took up the challenge of mounting a 2024 Standard Flower Show and Kathy Kienle and Mary Beth Montague offered to be Co-Lead Chairs of the 2024 Greens Sale. What a month of May it was! As a result, our Annual Meeting in June was a true celebration and a declaration of faith in the future of our Council. We are in good hands!

I'm looking forward to seeing you throughout the year.

Fondly, Donna Robinson
KGC President 2023-24



KGC Annual Meeting Summary by Donna Thurn

The Annual KGC Meeting was held June 4, 2024, at the Girl Scout Regional Building in Kalamazoo. It was hosted by Western Hills Garden Club with the help of Burke View, Petal Pushers and several KGC Council members. Linda Derfiny, Treasurer, reported our investments are increasing and the organization is financially sound. Donna Robinson gave the "Year in Review" highlighting the shared leadership model, the first Members' Market Yard Sale, the 70th Green Sale, the creation of the Lynn Dinvald Lending Library for flower arrangers, the newly installed Wi-Fi, the members listening sessions and many other events. A farewell to the Gardenettes was given by Donna Knight, Treasurer and Club Director of Gardenettes, as the club is disbanding as of June 2024. A National Garden Club Lifetime Membership was awarded to Sue Conat. Donna Robinson was given a standing ovation and thanked for her leadership through this year of change. After lunch, Todd Barkman, Professor at WMU, gave a presentation on Designing with Your Ecosystem in Mind.



Western Hills VP Donna Thurn (L) and member Denise Clegg make announcements and award door prizes.



Above L-R: **New officers and chairpersons for 2024-25** were introduced to attendees. Co-Presidents Andrea Stork & Marcia Wielenga, Corresponding Secretary Lynn Belco, Council Grounds Grounds Chair Joann Westpinter, Council House Chair Pat Hansson, IT Chair Kathy Kienle, Treasurer Linda Derfiny, and now Past President Donna Robinson.



Sue Conat was presented with a National Lifetime Membership award. She has been a very active member in her club (Kalamazoo Garden Club) and the Council. Sue has been the Chairperson for the Council's Garden Shop, Membership Chair, Editor of KGC's Member Directory, and organized a booth the Wedel's Spring Garden Days for several years. Sue was 2023 Greens Sale Chair and she is currently Co-Chair of the flower show planned for September 2024. This award was well deserved! Congratulations, Sue!



Below: To promote the upcoming flower show, the table centerpiece arrangements were made by members of the Lakeshore Flowers Guild to show different techniques suitable for a flower show entry. The arrangements were used as door prizes at the end of the event. Photos taken by Kathy Kienle



WHY SHOULD YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE FLOWER SHOW?

By Phyllis Straw, Co-Chair of the 2024 Flower Show

- This is an event sponsored by the Kalamazoo Garden Council of which your club and you, as an individual are a member. We want to have each club represented and multiple individuals participate with entries and their presence.
- This is a community event and we need the presence of MANY Council members to be present....it shows that YOU are a team member as is your Club.
- It demonstrates that your club and the council are filled with bright, knowledgeable and creative individuals.
- Your participation is proof of pride in what you are doing, be it horticulture, design, botanical arts, or acting as an informed member of an interesting organization.
- This is an opportunity to let your individual knowledge and talents show – let others see what you can do!
- Flower Shows offer the opportunity to educate the public about what we do in our own and collective organizations and should act as a stimulator for inquiries about memberships.

WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US BY PARTICIPATING IN THIS EVENT IN WHATEVER WAY YOU CAN.



WE HOPE WE WILL SEE YOU AT / IN THE FLOWER SHOW!!

Farwell to the Gardnettes!

By Donna Knight

At KGC's annual meeting, Donna Knight shared an important announcement from the Gardnettes. Due to various reasons, the club voted to disband as of June 30, 2024 after 71 years.

Gardnettes was formed in 1953 by a group of young women who hoped to learn more about gardening and wanted to have an evening out! The club evolved from having the husbands watch the kids the night of the meetings to them being invited to be part of the club! For a period of time our club had wife/husband couples.



Pictured L-R: Patt Hewitt (Petal Pushers) giving a tour of her beautiful gardens to Diane Pilgrim, Brenda Orwig, Donna Knight and Pat Pawlak. Missing from photo are Cleora Mohney, Elaine Ritter, and Jill Toma.

Throughout the years, many of our members have become flower show judges, National Garden Club Life Members, Michigan Garden Club Life Members and at least five have led the Kalamazoo Garden Council as Presidents. The most recent was Cleora Mohney 2009-2011.

The young women hoping to become terrific gardeners have been filled with a wealth of knowledge and are a treasure of patience for many, many aspiring green thumbs! At the end, we were a club with 7 members. We were a small club in number, but mighty in spirit and "best buds"!

Planting the Bank Planters

Pictured at right: **Members of the Lakeshore Flower Arrangers Guild** recently filled the bank planters for the summer season at the First National Bank in Kalamazoo.

L-R: Carole Culver, Kathy Kienle, Norma Stancati, Phyllis Straw, and Susan Rumora



Special thanks to the follow members who contributed photos and/or stories included in this edition of The Garden Post: Kathy Kienle, Donna Knight, Phyllis Straw, Donna Robinson, Andrea Stork, Donna Thurn, and Marcia Wielenga.

Kalamazoo Garden Council Officers 2024-25



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SAVE THE DATE

Monday, September 9, 2024 from 9 a.m.– 3 p.m.: District 3A & Colon Garden Club will be hosting our District 3A meeting entitled “Autumn Gifts of Spring’s Hope” at the En Gedi Campground River Resort and Canoe Livery, Leonidas, MI. Registration info TBA

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 9:30a.m.: KGC Board of Directors Meeting at the KGC House

Friday, September 20 & Saturday, September 21, 2024: “Autumn’s Bounty” NGC Standard Flower Show at the Girl Scout Heart of Michigan Regional Center, 601 W. Maple St., Kalamazoo

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.: KGC Board of Directors Meeting at the KGC House

Friday, December 6 & Saturday, December 7, 2024: 71st Annual Green Sale at the Portage Zhang Senior Center

Follow our website and Facebook page for educational information and upcoming events:
www.kalamazoogardencouncil.org

For questions about this publication, contact Karla Labby, Newsletter Editor, at karlalabby@yahoo.com.

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