



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, October 16

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, , October 16, 2006
5:30 p.m. – Social Hour
6:30 p.m. – Dinner

Where: Vino La Bella
440 Grant Street
Akron, Ohio 44311

Program **Rain Gardens**

A rain garden is an attractive, landscaped area planted with perennial native plants which don't mind getting "wet feet." They are beautiful gardens, built in depressions, which are designed to capture and filter storm water runoff from impervious surfaces around the home, such as rooftops and driveways.

Speaker - Chicory Koren has been the Education Specialist for Summit Soil and Water Conservation District for three years. Previously, she was an earth science teacher for the Cuyahoga Falls School District. Chicory's passion is helping to connect people to the natural environment in which they live.

Board meeting on October 23 at 7 P.M. at the Garden Forum, corner of West Market Street and White Pond Drive. All members are invited to attend.

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

A Message from Your President - Leroy Hart

I am writing this before Cathy and I leave for Europe. Therefore, I cannot discuss what took place at the September meeting and board meeting. However, there is one subject that I would like to discuss with you. This subject is "What can I, as a member of the club, do to support the club?"

For the answer I will speak about what I used to tell my church members when they asked what they could do to support the church. I believe this answer can apply to the club and to any other organization to which you may belong. I told them that they could do four things. They could support the church by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service. How do these four steps apply to the garden club?

Support the club by your prayers - Anyone can do this, even the oldest members, even those who are house bound. Frank Mitch, our sunshine chairman, keeps us informed of members who are seriously ill or who have passed on. We all can pray for the recovery of these members and for the families of those who have passed on. Also, while not exactly a prayer, we can have good and positive thoughts and wishes for the club. We can have a positive attitude and not have negative thoughts about the club.

Support the club by your presence - This is a little more difficult to do. Not every member can attend the meetings. Some are house bound, some cannot drive at night, some have other commitments they feel are more important for the third Monday evening of each month. However, if you can't come to the meetings, you could attend the various work projects that are carried out by the club.

Support the club by your gifts - This isn't as important to the club as it is to the church. The club doesn't have to pay salaries or maintain a building, but it is still important that our dues are paid. It is possible that at some point the club would need to take a special collection to support some large project that is beyond the means of the club's income. Also, the club has an endowment fund whose proceeds are to be used for scholarships. Several members have already made a donation to this fund and you could leave something to the club in your will.

Support the club by your service - This is the most difficult. There are members who are physically unable to work on the Habitat for Humanity homes, for example. But each member should do what he or she is able to do. If it is only to sell tickets for the geranium sale it is a service to the club and is important.

How do I feel the club is doing in meeting these goals? Sometimes I get discouraged. We have lost so many members the past few years and not replaced them with new members. We have about 50% attendance at club meetings, we have the same faithful group of members that show up to work on projects. I have just written my last Johnny Appleseed Broadcaster; in this issue I have written about the other clubs in the region, about their projects, activities etc. We do not compare too well to some of these other clubs, especially Youngstown. On the other hand we are in better shape than some other clubs. We are about in the middle when compared to the other clubs; but I wish we were higher up. Let's work together to make our club better so that we can be up with the better clubs in the region. Let's concentrate on the four steps to support our club.

Thank you for your patience in reading this. This subject has been on my mind for quite a while and now I have, hopefully, finished with it.

Member News

Our long time member Edward L. Carr died September 4, 2006 at Rockynol. Ed was 98, a Life Member, and also an Honorary Member of the Akron club for a number of years after moving to Rockynol. In earlier times he was an active gardener and hybridizer of certain flowering plants. He is survived by his wife, Maurine. At this writing Services were to be announced at a later date.

Reported by Frank Mitch

Officers for 2007

The nominating committee, composed of Andy Bettick, Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich and Frank Mitch, has been working on the slate of officers for 2007. So far these are their recommendations:

President - Robert Bell
 1st Vice President - John Lewis
 2nd Vice President need a volunteer
 Secretary - need a volunteer
 Treasurer - Leroy Hart

The office of 2nd Vice President is an important one. In 2007 the duties of this person are to be the chair of the beautification committee. This person is expected to advance up the ladder of officers, becoming 1st Vice President and President.

Thank You Received

We have received letters from The Ohio State University thanking the club for gifts recently made to them. One was from the Agricultural Technical Institute; this was for our gift of \$2,000 to the ATI's scholarship fund for the benefit of two ATI students. The second was from The Ohio State University Foundation for \$50 which was the amount that we gave to the director of the Secrest Arboretum who gave us a tour of the arboretum at the summer regional conference in Wooster. This gift was designated to the Secrest Arboretum 'Growing for You' Fund.

From One of Our Members (J. E. P.)

The joys of spring are hard to describe,
 Summers warm sun brings flowers galore and veggies too.
 A nip of the frost says fall is here.
 Green leaves turn red and gold.
 The harvests are in .
 Soon a blanket of white snow puts everything to sleep for the long winter.
 But another day, another year and the cycle begins anew.
 What a wonderful world we live in.
 At least from a gardener's point of view.

(Editor's note - Thanks to J.E.P. for this poem. We haven't had a poem in the Gabber since our poet Bob Van Kirk passed away. Will we have another from J.E.P.? I think I know who he is, do you?)

About October

The name of October, our tenth month, comes from the Latin term *octo*, meaning "eighth". This was appropriate until the Romans changed their calendar to make it the tenth month. However, many realized the name was not correct; four times they tried unsuccessfully to change it. They made efforts to honor these four persons: Germanicus, an outstanding general; Antonius, an Emperor; Faustina, wife of Antonius; and Hercules, the Emperor Commodus, who dubbed himself the Roman Hercules. But the old name, October, apparently suited the Romans better and they preferred to keep it.

In the Julian calendar October had thirty days, later another was added. The Greeks and Romans both had several notable festivals in this month; one honored Mars, the god of war, and at that event the "October horse" was sacrificed to him. Another celebration noted the end of their military operations for the year.

In northern European countries, October was known as "Wyn-moneth" (wine month); for at this time the grapes were gathered and the wine was made.

Early Germans called October "Winter-fyllith" or "fullith" because the winter season was supposed to begin at the time of full moon, during the tenth month. On ancient calendars, the sport of hawking was often noted; also October was at times represented as a farmer, carrying a sack of sowing grain.

With the coming of the autumn season there have always been those who get a feeling of melancholy as they watch life decay, and the frost kill the beautiful flowers; yet the month of October frequently is known for its fine weather. Sometimes there are rains and even snow flurries early in October; and such weather is termed "Squaw Winter", and is likely to be followed by

"Indian Summer". The Indians delighted in this warm spell; for during it they could hunt and lay in more food for winter. Also the women could gather nuts and their crops of maize. The pioneers, too, used this time to harvest the last of their pumpkins and root crops.

October has always been associated with the turning and falling of leaves. The Slavs called it the "Yellow Month" because of the change in foliage.

Five Presidents were born in October: John Adams, Rutherford B. Hayes, Chester Arthur, Theodore Roosevelt, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Others of distinction born in October were: Richard III, Gandhi, Jenny Lind, G.W. Westinghouse, James Whitcomb Riley, Cervantes, Eleanor Roosevelt, William Penn, Noah Webster, Eugene O'Neill, Sir Christopher Wren, Sarah Bernhart, Erasmus, John Keats, Johann Strauss, Franz Liszt, and Helen Hayes.

Many unusual and important happenings have taken place during October: in 1066 the Battle of Hastings was fought; in 1535 the first complete English Bible was published; in 1586 Mary Queen of Scots was tried; in 1618 Sir Walter Raleigh was executed; in 1636 Harvard College was founded; in 1781 Cornwallis surrendered to Washington at Yorktown; in 1789 President Washington issued the first Presidential Thanksgiving proclamation; in 1791 the cornerstone for the White House was laid; in 1793 Marie Antoinette was executed; in 1805 the Battle of Trafalgar and the death of Lord Nelson took place; in 1820 Spain ceded Florida to the United States; in 1836 Sam Houston became the first president of Texas; in 1846 there was the first public demonstration of the use of ether; in 1849 Edgar Allan Poe died; in 1854 the famous Charge of the Light Brigade occurred; in 1859 John Brown made his noted raid on the U.S. Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia; in 1861 the transcontinental telegraph line was completed; in 1867 the U.S.A. bought Alaska from Russia for about two cents an acre; in 1871 the great Chicago fire destroyed much of that city; 1879 saw the first incandescent light; in 1883 the Metropolitan Opera House opened in New York City; in 1884 Greenwich time was adopted; in 1890 the Mormon Church forbade polygamy; (Cont. on page 5)

in 1904 the New York City subway started operating; in 1956 Queen Elizabeth opened the world's first atomic power plant; in 1957 Sputnik I was the first man-made satellite to encircle the earth; and in 1962 Walter M. Schirra made his orbital flight.

Besides being noted for its lovely fall colors, October contains some special days. On October 12, Columbus Day, many Americans celebrate the day, back in 1492, when Columbus reached the New World. United Nations Day is celebrated on October 24. On the last day of the month Halloween is celebrated. Protestants celebrate the fourth Sunday of the month as Reformation Day. The Canadians celebrate Thanksgiving on the second Monday of October. Two important Jewish holidays often occur in October, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles).

The October birthstone is the Opal. Even in ancient times the opal was greatly admired. The Romans classed it second only to the emerald.

The name opal is probably derived from the Sanskrit term *upala*, meaning "precious stone". From this it may be assumed that the gem was first introduced to Europeans from India.

This stone is definitely different from all others; and it is impossible to create a synthetic one. The color changes in an opal are the most striking thing seen in jewelry. These various hues can be seen only in a white light. The effect is due to the breaking up of white light caused by interference. The colors change as the stone is viewed from different directions.

The alternate October birthstone is the Tourmaline. The tourmaline, being green, can be confused with the emerald.

The October flower is the Calendula, also Csmos.

Snuggling in for Winter

(This is a paraphrase of an article written by Kathy LaLiberte found in the November 2005 issue of the *Manure Spreader*, the newsletter of the Stow Community Garden Club.)

By the end of October the flowers and vegetables in the garden will be thoroughly killed and it is time to put the garden to bed by cleaning it up and mulching. However, even if you do nothing to the garden it will probably still be fine.

Why cleanup? Removing spent plant material from the garden reduces the amount of disease spores and insect eggs that could cause problems next year. After a hard frost pull out all annuals and cut perennials back to about four inches.

Why mulch? the biggest benefit of winter mulch is that it helps to keep plants dormant and moderates temperature fluctuations. If you have plenty of snow cover from December through March you probably don't need to mulch. Don't rush the mulching, wait till the plant is completely dormant, only after the ground has frozen. Use non-matting materials that will let air through, such as shredded leaves, evergreen boughs, pine needles, straw, chopped cornstalks etc.

Moisture is important. Most winter plant damage is due to moisture problems, not cold temperature. All plants need to go into the winter well hydrated. In dry climates water thoroughly until the ground is frozen. Plants in wet climates have the opposite problem, they become waterlogged and can suffocate or be damaged by frost heaving. The solution for this problem is good drainage. Adding organic matter to the soil and planting in raised beds creates better drainage.

Wind protection makes a difference. If your plants are in an exposed area and there are lots of dry winter winds the plants could use some protection from the wind as well as mulch. Netting or burlap makes a good wind protection.