

OPEN GATE GARDEN CLUB OF MICHIGAN

January 2024 Newsletter

MEETING: January 17th AT 6:15 PM

EVENT: Meeting and Presentation

LOCATION: Father Harvey Activity Center



Anyone who thinks that gardening begins in the spring and ends in the fall is missing the best part of the whole year. For gardening begins in January with the dream. ~Josephine Nuese

January Speaker: Mary Butler-Moore: Forgotten Harvest volunteer

Hospitality: list for January

Karen Poloski, Karen Maxon, Nicolette Ellinghausen, Betty Sheehy, Jim Pabst, Julie Buttigieg, Pat O'Keefe, Kathy Girgen, Christine Webster, Suzanne Kelly, Joan Runyan.

I will have sign- up sheets for Hospitality for the rest of the year, please sign up.

Thank you, Lynne Ronthi

Membership: Larry's Trevethan's hip went out again. He is at WellBridge of Fenton awaiting possible hip replacement. He would welcome cards and phone calls at (810) 931-7318.

Garden Tour: Save the date! Next tour is on July 21st, 2024. We have 8 amazing gardens. If you were a chair for the tour last summer, please let Amy Doyle know **yes or no** if you want to continue this job on the 2024 tour

Currently I know we will need a new Equipment Chair. This person is responsible for maintaining an inventory of all equipment, logging equipment in and out of storage as needed and logging equipment in after the garden tour. The equipment is stored on Torrey Road in Fenton.

We also need a person responsible for the bench offered as a raffle prize. This includes assembling the bench, delivering it to Garden #1 before the tour begins, and picking it up after the tour ends. Also, arranging with the winner for local delivery of pickup, and getting a picture of the person on the bench.

Thank you,

Amy Doyle 810.444.7621

Christmas Party: Incredible food, beautiful table decorations, lovely music, fun crafts, cheerful fellowship! See pictures from the party by clicking this link

<https://opengategardenclub.com/image-gallery> or going to the Open Gate Garden Club Facebook page.

Community Expo: We are going to have a table at the Fenton and Linden Community Expo with volunteers to work our booth. Sign up sheets will be at Wednesday's meeting. We are also requesting that you share hard copy photos from our previous garden tours or submissions you entered for previous photo contests. The more the better! This is a wonderful way to market our club and our garden tour. It is a fun community event with most of the local businesses and organizations participating along with activities and food. If anyone has any creative ideas to decorate the booth or table and/or is willing to help, please contact Patsy Essenmacher 810-347-2289.

Starting seeds in Zone 6: The following information is taken from the following website.

<https://www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening/indoor-seed-starting-tips-calendar-zbcz1401/>

When to Start Seeds Indoors: Zone 6 written by Melodie Metje

What are the tricks to successful seed starting? The most surefire I have found with a gadget is by using a heat mat under the seed starting tray. I have almost 100 percent germination rate with it.

You can start seeds in pots you make yourself with newspaper, toilet paper cores, paper towel cores, or paper cups and sterile, organic seed starting mix. A nifty way to do it is to cut used paper towel cores into sections and line with old newspaper. You can plant the whole thing or push out the newspaper insert and compost the core.

There are also peat pellets, peat pots and soil blockers. Peat is not a renewable resource, but there are substitutes for it now on the market. Just read the labels. Soil blockers can be found online and used year after year using only seed starting mix.

The key is using sterile seed starting mix, pots and containers. You can make your own seed starting mix with peat moss or coir (renewable), compost, and worm castings. Just be sure to heat the compost to at least 150 degrees to kill any pathogens before using to start seeds. Place the seeds in premoistened starter mix in the pots and allow to wet thoroughly from the bottom (watering from the top can dislodge seeds). After fully saturated, they are ready to put in a catch pan. Ensure any catch pan you use has been thoroughly washed so all pathogens are killed. Mine has a water reservoir in the bottom of it that wicks the moisture up under the seedlings.

I put my seed starts by a sunny window over a heat mat in a plastic tray and a clear plastic lid that I have had for years that you can buy at any big box store. Keep moist, but not wet, and with the clear cover on until seedling emerges. Once seedling emerges, remove the clear lid. Make sure you label your seedlings as soon as you plant them; you may think you will remember two months from now what was where, but likely not! Now is also a great time to

start keeping a journal. Start tracking what you planted when so you can review next year what worked well to repeat and what didn't work so well to tweak.

Your seedling's first leaves are not "true" leaves, think of them as baby teeth. The second set of leaves are their true leaves. They are ready to be hardened off when they have their first set of true leaves. Seedlings must be hardened and not just thrown outside. You take them out a little at a time, gradually increasing their exposure to sun and cold, only during the daytime. I try to plant when a warm spell is forecasted to minimize the shock.

When to Start Seeds Indoors: Zone 6 Calendar

10-12 Weeks Prior (end Jan/early Feb in Zone 6 garden)

Artichokes, Arugula, Bay, Beans (dry and lima), Blackberries, Blueberries, Broccoli, Cabbage, Catnip
Celery, Chives, Edamame, Endive, Escarole, Fennel, Garlic, Horseradish, Leek, Lettuce, Mache, Mint
Mizuna, Onions, Parsley, Peas, Potatoes, Rhubarb, Shallots, Strawberries, Summer savory, Sorrel
Spinach, Fruit trees and bushes.



Image by Melodie Metje

8-10 Weeks Prior (mid-February in Zone 6 garden)

Bee balm, Celeriac, Eggplant, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lavender, Leeks, Lettuce, Lovage, Marjoram, Mustard, Onions, Oregano, Parsley, Peas, Rosemary, Scallions, Spinach, Thyme, Turnips,

March for Zone 6 Gardens

Artichokes, Broccoli, Chamomile, Chard, Cilantro, Comfrey, Fennel, Lemon verbena, Lettuce, Okra
Onions, Peppers, Raddichio, Sage, Spinach, Summer squash, Tarragon, Tomatoes

April for Zone 6 Gardens

Basil, Beans, Cucumber, Lettuce, Melon, Winter squash, Stevia