**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPEN GATE GARDEN TOUR**

**DO NOT USE RAFFLE OR DRAWING IN ANY PRESS RELEASE Or EMAILS. The Club does not have a lottery license with the state.**

Use Open Gate Tour Prize or tour prize – need to check with President and Debbie Tegard Harroun to make sure this is the correct way to mention**.**

For 2024, look to have Save the Date signs prepared to announce the tour a week or two in advance. Possible generic sign announcing Tour one to two Sundays in advance. Will need Fenton City/Township approvals.

**Add QR codes to any signs/flyer/posters/publicity**

**Look into PayPal sales with link from Website**

Will the gardens be handicap friendly?

Also add **no pets** and **no restrooms**?

Indoor advertising at State Bank is run by contractor and our event would not qualify for this advertising.

No farmer market table for selling tickets in 2024

Ask The Laundry if one of the tour signs can be placed at their corner.

**At publicity stations ASK “Do you want to be on our Email List”**

**PUSH TOUR AT:**

* Expo
* MI Gardener
* Socia media sites
* Local Groups or HOA that our members belong to
* Facebook
* Make a second social media account to push event
* Tyronne Pioneer Days
* Ad in St. John Evangelist Church bulletin



**FEBRUARY:** Be prepared for Fenton Expo in the beginning of March.

Banner, Flyers, photos, membership forms, slips or tickets for prizes and press release if ready

In 2023 we became a member and requested a table at EXPO. The cost for membership and table at Expo ran about $200. Overall, we got our monies worth to get our garden club out to the public.

If a Press Release is ready by the end of February, send it to Sharon Stone at Tri County Times. Ask Sharon Stone if she can prepare an article on the JULY garden tour prior to the March Expo.

**MARCH:**

Be ready for the **EXPO**

If not received by early March, follow up with Tour Chair or Garden Committee for information needed to update the Press Release. The Release should include contact persons and their phone numbers. The Press Release should be used for all publicity-related activities. However, the press release may be shortened to accommodate space allotted at various websites, which differs from one site to another. I had different versions, in addition to the full-length press release: an **“abbreviated (or shortened)” version** and a **“very** **brief”** version. Keep all versions in your document file so you can copy each one easily and paste it to the appropriate places on the websites.

Once the tour information is finalized begin publishing the tour on all media websites and outlets. See Excel Spreadsheet for contact information on sites to publish the tour.

Email Final Press Release to Marnie Boehlke and/or Martha Romanowski for submission on FB events and Pat Manion for OPGC website. Ask Marnie or Martha to create a FB event for the garden tour.

Contact Sharon Stone at Tri County times for an article in their spring edition on the upcoming garden tour if an article has not been published before EXPO date.

Also follow up with Sharon Stone for a July article about one month prior to July tour. Nicolette Ellinghauser has drafted the article based on the previous July TCT article to submit to Sharon Stone.

**APRIL**

**Schedule a live TV interview.** Provide names of the individual(s) - usually the chairperson(s) - who will be interviewed. The television interview is scheduled for the Tuesday or Wednesday prior to the Sunday tour date and lasts 3 to 4 minutes. However, ask who will be interviewed and the best date for the interview with their schedule.

Since we were able to secure an interview spot with Matt Barbour of ABC12 News Good Morning, contact Matt at matt.barbour@abc12.com to see if we can get scheduled for publicity spot in July for the tour. In addition to sending Press Release to ABC 12 news, send another copy to goodmorning@abc12.com.

Contact Allison Hillaker at ahillaker@abc12.com for the interview too. Allison is the production editor for Good Morning. Provide photos prior to the interview about two weeks to a month before the aired interview. Our previous tour photos were used as a back drop while our segment was airing.

Send confirming email from ABC 12 to the people to be interviewed. There are very specific time requirements to be at the station.

Will the Club pay for additional radio or press spots. What is the amount of advertising expenses built into the budget.

Contact Barry Tieman (btiemann@fentonschools.org) or Stefanie Simons (ssimons@fentonschools.org) for permission to place our tour Poster on the Fenton Schools Community Bulletin Board webpage.

The FHS process for approval begins with a google doc at:

<https://www.fentonschools.org/page/community-bulletin> board

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1/FAlpQLScLMdv5oa\_uRk3L-4K8K332l42lwMklMVlhf-gV6lH3Y58M6Q/viewform

Fenton Schools will not allow our banner on Baseball field fencing since our event does not support the school district or its students. However, permission was granted for our Tour flyer to be posted on the FAPS Community bulletin board website.

Contact The State Bank in Fenton (kristy.schaffer@thestatebank.com) for permission to have our tour on the Main State Bank Marquee; Also send Kristy a copy of the Press Release.

Ask the bank to include the name and date of the Garden Club Tour on their main outdoor marquee, which has a rolling electronic sign that faces Leroy street.

**Genesee County Master Gardener Newsletter**. They want the information before the 15th of the month. A Master Gardener should make this request. Check with the Genesee County Master Gardeners to see what their new publications date will be for the year.

Contact Deborah Glasstetterd Glasstetterd@aol.com, President Kay McCullough birdieball@aol.com and Mel Kennedy(mkennedy60@charter.net at Genesee County Master Garden to publish our tour info in their newsletter. Mel has several organizations where he has privileges to post garden information.

**Michigan Gardener Newsletter.**  The calendar of July/August events for 2024 is where I published our Tour. They no longer have a monthly magazine.

In 2023 –$160 was spent for late-June and early July web link advertisement. In 2024 this advertising expense was replaced by Fox Radio station 103.9 advertising.

Eric Hoefley (248-594-5563, ext 11) has been our contact person at Michigan Gardener.

In the past a check was forwarded to Michigan Gardener, c/o Eric Hoefley, 30747 Greenfield Rd., Suite 1, Southfield, MI 48076.

**APRIL/MAY:**

Contacted Melissa Haug haugmeli@msu.edu for submission in Oakland Gardener Newsletter.

Use this link for uploading information directly to site: <https://forms.oakgov.com/88>

Cathy Coulture is now on the Michigan Board of Master Gardeners. She may be a valuable contact in the future.

Email press release sent to cgrainger@Migardenclubs.org and Ksauber@Migardenclubs.org (for District2B@migardenclubs.org and, MGC District VI Director at district6@migardenclubs.org)

Make sure we are reaching out to the Highland/Milford area clubs as there were a great presence from that area in 2023.

**May and JUNE:** Double check all websites with calendar of events to make sure our information is posted correctly**.**

One month prior to the date of our tour, pay **for EVVNT** additional advertising campaign ($29.00 or so for the one month). The advertising will begin on the day of payment so make sure to have accurate dates in the calendar.

Email Tessa Stickel at City of Fenton to publish our event on the Fenton City website

emailed kblake@digitalfirstmedia.com **press release for the Oakland Press**

Also follow up with Sharon Stone for a July article about one month prior to July tour. Nicolette Ellinghausen has drafted this article based on the previous July TCT article to submit to Sharon Stone.

Also contact hard-copy newspapers, especially the **Tri-County Times, Flint Journal, Oakland Press, and Pontiac News.** The last two mentioned are hard to reach.

**About 10 days prior the tour**, send to the Tri-County Times, ABC 12 and to anyone else who requests Photos from past events for publication. Can use photos published on our OGGC website.

**IMPORTANT!** Also send photos to OGGC members who update our Facebook page and website.

Tour info will run on marquee beginning July 11. Around the beginning of July or end of June contact Kristy Shaffer with confirmation that tour information is all set.

Our tour was not included on Fenton Chamber marquee even though we were members for 2023.

We need our garden club members to push our event on **their HOA websites** and any other groups they might belong to.

For 2024, I did not push email blasts to Expo attendees as I did not have a database of attendees. In 2023 Email blasts were sent to those attendees from Expo a month and about two weeks prior to event. (Make updates to Expo data base as failure notices come in.)

Many postings on Next Door and What’s Up Fenton appeared weekly beginning end of June. If possible, have another person or tour chair to assist with posting to local FB media sites.

In 2023 Ticket sales were held at the Fenton Farmers Markets for three Thursdays prior to the event.

In 2023 Ticket sales were held at the Tyrone Township Pioneer Days Saturday prior to the event.

In 2023 Ann Barth sold tickets at the Fenton Freedom July 4th celebration at the Fenton Museum.

**Important:** **Send thank you notes to ABC 12, State Bank, all merchants who sold tickets and any other personal publicity we received immediately following the tour.**

2024 ticket sales were approximately 381 people. This number was for actual paid tickets and did not include the roughly 200 tickets the garden club members were given at the June meeting. Have extra tickets available in future.