



Mississippi Valley Garden Club

March 2016

Save these dates:

Thursday, March 17

7pm

“Top 20 Reasons to Garden”

Lisa Dean, IL Master Gardener
Open House

Public/Former members invited

Monday, March 28

7pm

Board Meeting
Frank's Restaurant

Thursday, April 21

7pm

Plant Exchange

Saturday, April 23

Dig day at Carole Baker's

Monday, April 25

7pm

Board Meeting
Frank's Restaurant

Saturday, May 7

Plant Sale

Saturday, May 21

Bus Trip

2016 Membership: Still have a few stragglers with the dues. 63 have rejoined. We had a total of 88 members in 2015. Hope to have a few more come back. Will be sharing an updated roster soon.

White elephant items: Now is your chance to sort through your gardening supplies and decorations. Bring your gently used “gardening” related items for the table. Tools, decorations, books and garden club apparel are always of interest to another member.

March meeting— Open house: March 17 will be our open house. We hope all members try to attend for the celebration. The public / former members have been invited. **Don't forget to wear your green for St. Patrick's Day.**

Lisa Dean, Illinois Master Gardener will be our speaker. She will present “Top 20 Reasons to Garden”. This will be an interactive reflection of “why” we love “to play in the dirt.” Come celebrate the years of knowledge shared, of projects worked together, and the life-long friendships formed.

Lisa, was with us for the October meeting, Lisa completed the Illinois Master Gardener program in 2006. She attributes her love for gardening to genetics— her father was a farmer at heart, after he retired from the Air Force. As part of the MG speakers' group, she has presented at the Weekend Gardener Conference, the Gateway Home and Garden show, and a variety of smaller clubs. Her favorite garden style is “cottage”, concentrating on small bushes, trailing vines, and a variety of perennials. She and her husband live out from town— surrounded by woods, farm fields, and all the assorted wildlife that goes with such a setting.

April meeting- Plant exchange: This will be the time to share our favorite plants with other members. We will limit it to 3 plants. Any extra plants please save for the plant sale. It will be a random drawing using the attendance tickets. Everyone should take home the same number of plants that they brought.

Plant sale— Its time to start thinking about the plant sale in May. Edith Reed has agreed to be chairman for the plant sale. Please give Edith all the assistance she requests, this is a big undertaking. Assess your plants, see what needs to be divided, if you will have spares. If you are thinking of down sizing your garden, this would be a good time to do it. Sort thru your plastic pots. You can bring the pots to the March and April meetings. Recommended sizes are: approximately 8” tall and 5” wide or 5” tall and 10” wide. Flats with fairly solid bottoms work well for groundcovers. Start saving small cardboard boxes or open flats for the customers to use. Find pictures of your plants, to help describe the plants. **Compost has been delivered to Jan Maxeiner and Carole Baker's homes.**

Bus Trip- Springfield, IL: Sign up will be at the March meeting. Carolyn and her team has set up another awesome trip for us. We will be traveling to the Springfield, IL area. We will be visiting: Hilltop Gardens, Greenview Design Group, Buckley's Prairie Landscaping and Pleasant Nursery. Cost is \$10 for members and \$18 for non-members.

February meeting: Erica Siddle gave us a very informative presentation on "Vegetable Gardening 101". Erica did a great job and was very enthusiastic, for being so young she has had a lot of experience. She started with the planning of the garden, that it is the most important step of a successful garden. Suggested finding and using a good seed catalog. Gave tips on decoding the catalogues. Next step would be deciding what you'll plant: varieties suited for the area, plant and grow what you'll eat, grow what you can't buy and will save you money and grow what your neighbor grows (you know it works in the area). Determining garden location and layout. Think about height of plants; plant corn on north side of garden so it doesn't shade out other crops. Level ground, easy access to water and good soil are a must. She suggests using companion plants, plants that support each other. Some combinations don't make good companions, they take more than their share of resources. (If you would like a list send me an email). Erica reviewed concepts of planting your garden in containers, raised beds, and raised rows. Erica has had good luck with planting in raised rows. It involves more manual labor but she feels it has been worth it. Erica also encourages using newspaper with straw in the walkways to control weeds. She also suggested rotating your crops, for long term success Erica also provided information on tomatoes, which seems to be a lot of people favorite. She reviewed growing them from seeds and starting them inside and hardening them off. Erica suggested if buying plants; buy early for best selection, buy young for easier transplanting and buy 4 inch pots, usually have healthier set of roots. Erica also reviewed the tomato pests: Hornworms, aphids, early blight and bloom rot. It was a very informative and enjoyable presentation. Erica did a very nice job.

Keeping Up: Kudos to **Edith Reed**. We applaud her for stepping up and agreeing to chair our 2016 plant sale. This is a big responsibility.

As our membership numbers continue to increase, we welcome the following members.

Joann Bishop has returned. She took some time to enjoy other activities such as quilting and dancing the jitter bug.

Julia Pernicka is a communication coordinator with the Illinois Heartland Library System. She assist with the website and newsletters. Crafts and rubber stamping are two of her hobbies. Six cats have Julia as their guardian.

Nancy Shipman retired from a Greenville sewing factory which makes band uniforms. She has made over 300 hats and 175 pillow cases for Kids with Cancer.

Sue and Jay Reed have also returned. Jay is retired while Sue works at Walmart. Travel to Florida, Oklahoma and their home in Branson keeps them on the road.

Carole Baker's husband, John, has been plagued with serious health problems. He is recovering at home and we need to keep both of them in our prayers.

Linda Ahrling is now home and recuperating from a recent hospital stay. She had a portion of her kidney removed. I understand tests have confirmed that all is well. We hope to see her at our next meeting.

Please give me a call if you have some news that we can share. Thanks, Vernice Allen, 259-6726

Hospitality: Thank you to everyone who bought goodies for the February meeting. The following folks signed up to bring drinks and desserts for the March meeting.

Desserts: Christy Butler, Juanita Cox, sheet cake from Duke's Bakery

White soda, 2 liters: Linda Eisenreich **Diet soda, 2 liters:** ?? **Cola, 2 liters:** ??

Tea, 1 gal unsweetened: Jaci Sweetman **Ice, 2 bags:** Juanita Cox

President: Susan Hiller

466-4942

VP/Secretary: Susan Ruckman

466-5892

Treasurer: Judy Dare

979-0237

Board Members

Vernice Allen

Carole Baker

George Kahl

Jerry Linker

Dottie Rogers

Paula Zugmaier

Committee Chairs

Carolyn James — Trips

Earlene Harrison — Community Projects

Joanne Bottens — Hospitality

Debbie Winship — Hospitality

Jerry Linker — Historian & Photos

Edith Reed — Plant Sale