

CONFERENCE WRAP UP

Wednesday Evening



Jessica Wright, has worked as Education Coordinator for the Michigan 4-H Children's Garden for the last 15 years. She loves to explore the wonder of plants and find exciting ways to use them.

Jessica's "Cocktails in the Garden" program was an example of Jessica's love to explore. Herbs can be used for so many things in the kitchen, but one of the most exciting things has to be herbal cocktails!

We learned about new herbs such as a great new mint *Mentha spicata* 'Kentucky Colonel' mint, softer mint flavor, not as stringent as peppermint or spearmint nor with the possibility a bitter after taste. Also the new variety of basil *Ocimum basilicum* 'piccolino'.

Resource:

Richters, 357 Hwy 47, Goodwood, Ontario, LOC1A0 Canada. Improved Spearmint, *Mentha spicata* 'Kentucky Colonel' live plants and Plug packs

Johnny's Selected Seeds, 955 Benton Avenue, Winslow, Maine 04901-02601. *Mentha spicata* 'Kentucky Colonel' seed packets.

[PDF of handout for Cocktails in the Garden Recipes](#), Presented by Jessica Wright, Michigan 4-H children's Garden.

Thursday, June 9th – Gardening: The Great Escape

"I particularly liked the Program Book, the food & snacks, the Speakers. Also loved the herb drink presentation and garden walk, despite the rain."

"The best conference I've ever attended."

We are hoping everyone left the conference with many new ideas for their gardens, along with learning something new.

The Ballroom at the Crowne Plaza Hotel was beautiful, spacious, and cheery. The 168 attendees were greeted with hand-made peony arrangement centerpieces created by



Diann Jackman and Mason Sycamore Creek Garden Club. Amazing table favors were created by Judy and Missy Koos and the Dewitt Garden Club. The room was filled with joyful reunions of old friends and excited new attendees.

Along the east wall of the room were tables filled with the most wonderful Silent Auction baskets presided over by Ronnie Polad. Bluebird house baskets, Get

Away baskets filled with books for a summer escape, a rocking camp site chair, wall murals, quilts, the 2B District clubs out did themselves. We made \$2053 from the sale of baskets and \$452 from the sale of centerpieces.



Jenny Bond and her team of designers created some amazing Invitational Floral and Jeweled designs that were rightly displayed on pedestals around the room.



Outside the Ballroom there were 18 vendors eager to fill everyone's shopping needs. Lynn O'Shaughnessy created a veritable shopping heaven. Plants of all kinds mixed with pottery, jewelry, baskets, books, artwork, daylilies specialists, and lavender aroma wafting as the registrants entered the conference.

Thank you for all the hard work of the Committee Chairs and all the behind the scenes hours of meetings and the leadership of Carol Grainger, District 2B Director and Ann Shoals, District 2B Events Coordinator for all their leadership.

LET THE DAY BEGIN!

After the Annual Meeting, State Awards and a delightful luncheon Honoring Club Presidents, the keynote speaker was **Vince Ste. Marie, "The Pollinators—Who They Are and How to Help Them"**. Beyond the well-known honeybee, just who are the pollinators and what do they need to succeed? What is the relationship between pollinators and plants and how are we dependent upon them? What contribution pollinators make to Michigan's agricultural production? These questions and more were

answered in this visually rich and information packed presentation. The follow up question and answer period was very informative.

Resource:

Plants with Purpose were for sale at the conference. Vince Ste. Marie's family farm is located in Manchester, MI, Windy Rock Farm. Email: windyrocknursery@outlook.com. Phone/text to 734-358-8260.

Six Breakout Sessions...Six Great Presenters

Natalie Carmolli, "Creating a Great Escape in Your Own Backyard" presented this fast-paced fun and informative program. Attendees learned just how easy it is to create and maintain a private escape in their own backyard using Proven Winners® ColorChoice® shrubs and a few low-maintenance companion plants.

Resources:

Natalie Carmolli, Marketing and Public Relations Specialist for Spring Meadow Nursery/Proven Winners®, Spring Meadow Nursery 12601 120th Ave., Grand Haven, MI. Email: natalie@springmeadownursery.com. [Landscaping plans and use of plants handout.](#)

Paige Filice, "Gardening to Protect and Beautify Lakes, Rivers and Ponds" highlighted practical landscaping options and gardening techniques that can improve the quality of your favorite water way. Paige gave tips on landscaping practices that collect and slow stormwater allowing nutrients, pollutants and pathogens to be filtered and absorbed into the soil.

Resources:

[Links to Smart Gardening, MSU Extension and various other resources.](#)

Paige Filice, Natural Resources Educator at Michigan State University Extension.

Pooh Stevenson, Pooh is a photographer specializing in fine art photography who presented "Gardening through Photography: A Natural Light Photographer's Story."

Suzannah M. Barrie, "Harvesting, Preserving and Using Herbs" to improve the flavor of food, for use as medicine, to ward off insects, therapeutic qualities and to act as preservatives.

Merry Kim Meyers, “Speaking Scientific”, Say it, find clues within the word to remember it and write it out 10 times to confidently get to the root of those pesky scientific plant names. Everyone came out cheering for the genius of Carl Linneaus and even learned how to pronounce *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*!

Resources:

New Pronouncing Dictionary of Plant Names, American Nurserymen Publishing Company, Chicago, Il.

Wells, Diana, 100 Flowers and How They Got Their Names. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, January 1997.

Coombs, Allen J., Dictionary of Plant Names. Timber Press, Inc., August 1994

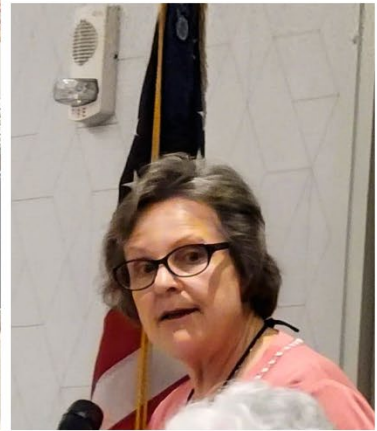
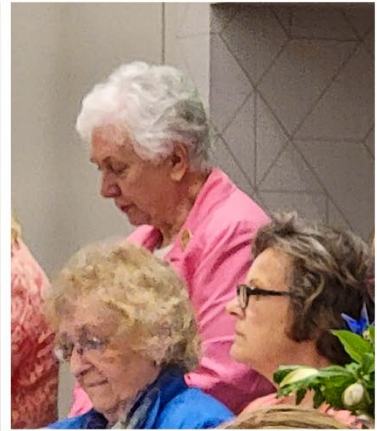
Stearn, William T, Stearn’s Dictionary of Plant Names for Gardeners, A Handbook on the Origin and Meaning of the Botanical Names of some Cultivated Plants. Orion Publishing Group, Limited, June 1996.

Daedre McGrath, “Breeding Breakthrough—Game Changers in the Annual Garden” Daedre explored what makes a new variety stand out from the pack and also stand the test of time. RESOURCE: [Handout](#)



COLLAGE MAKER

Wednesday Evening: Jessica Wright gave a fun presentation on Herbs and Cocktails. In the Conservatory the Interest Groups of 2B had fantastic displays and demonstrations on creating Floral Designs. The Quilters, Crafters, Photographers, and Designers provided information on how to start a District Interest Group. The Meridian Garden Club Pressed Flower Sales were also available.



Thursday Conference: Annual Meeting and Awards, Keynote Speaker.



Vendors: Michael Monroe Studio, Wildlife Art, Illustrated Children's Books; Charlevoix Area Garden Club, Inc. Garden gloves and tools; The Perennial Connection, LLC, Perennials, pots, gardening supplies; Etc. Designs, Whimsical Jewelry; Lazy K Crafts, Sweet Treats; Snow Fairy Cottage, Fairy paintings, Handbound journals, notecards; A2 Pottery, Mugs, pots, bowls; Windy Rock Farm, Perennial wildflowers, Flowering Shrubs and Flowering Trees; S&L Bee Farm, LLC, Honey and Bee Products; Sixteen Sprigs, Lavender Products; Along the Fence Daylilies; Kazoo Books, Books Weathered Nest Vintage Market, Repurposed items and art; Barb Sears, Natural Bat Guano Fertilizer; Kalamazoo Garden Council, Garden Tools; Horizon Hydroponics, Horizonhydroponics.com growing supplies; Mike Underwood, Terrarium plants