



Charlevoix Area Garden Club

A PUBLICATION OF THE
CHARLEVOIX AREA GARDEN CLUB,
MEMBER OF
MICHIGAN GARDEN CLUBS, INC.
& NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

February 2026

www.charlevoixareagardenclub.org

President's Message



INDOOR GARDENER
by Helen Beth Swanson

A February wind blows dismally,
The sky is full of dark clouds hanging low,
The Garden lies in numbed frigidity
And waits the falling of another snow.

Today, I planted seeds despite the cold,
For my tomato plants will mind it not.
Their tiny leaves will presently unfold
At my south window; in a flower pot!

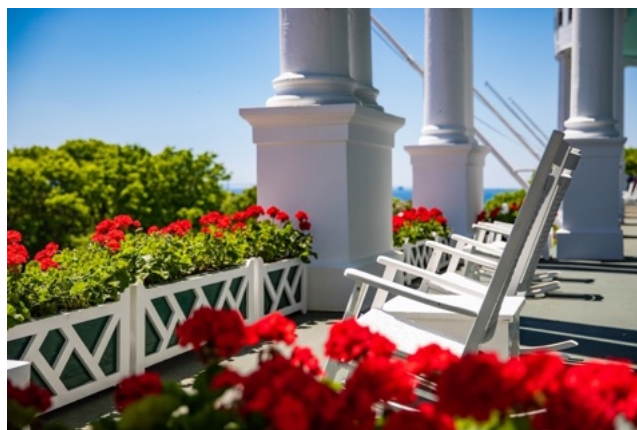
Dear friends, at our February meeting on the 10th Rhea will
get us started with teaching us how to start Geraniums for
our summer gardens and pots!

Hope to see you there,
Mary Lynn and Carolyn

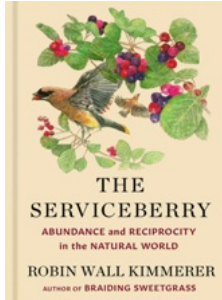
February Membership Meeting

Join us at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, February 10 in the Charlevoix
Public Library's Community Room for our monthly member
meeting.

Carl and Sarah DeCaussin, owners of Mischels Greenhouses, will
speak on "Geranium's Journey to Mackinac Island".



CAGC Winter Book Club



What's a gardener to do during the snowy winter months? We can read about gardening, gardens, and environmental stewardship! Our inaugural book group will meet in February to discuss *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer. This brief book is a bold and inspiring vision for how to orient our lives around gratitude, reciprocity, and community based on the lessons of the natural world.

A book discussion will take place **Thursday, February 26 from 10:30 am – Noon** in the Charlevoix Public Library Trustees Conference Room.

Winter Sowing in Containers for Michigan Gardeners

From MSU Extension

Winter seed sowing is a fantastic way to take advantage of winter's chilly temperatures to help germinate seeds that require cold stratification. Some seeds need cold stratification to break dormancy, meaning they won't germinate until they have experienced a long period of freezing or near-freezing temperatures. Seed dormancy is a mechanism that prevents the seed from germinating too early or when conditions are unfavorable. Cold stratification can be accomplished by refrigerating seeds, but why not work with nature by placing your seeds outdoors? Seeds should be winter sown in containers in the late fall or early winter. In Michigan, this is between November and March.



What you will need:

- Milk jugs, soda bottles or other containers with a top or lid that can hold at least 3-4 inches of potting media. These should be translucent to let light through. Deeper is better. Flat takeout boxes are generally not deep enough for root development.
- Duct tape or twist ties. Don't use paper or scotch tape, as they're likely to come loose over the winter.
- Potting mix, not garden soil. Topsoil, compost and garden soil are heavy and won't drain properly.
- Spray bottle of water.
- Scissors or sharp tool for cutting the plastic jugs and poking holes for drainage.
- Labels.
- Fade-resistant or industrial marker.

Step-by-step directions:

- Prepare containers. Cut around the middle, leaving a hinge. Add drainage holes in the bottom using an awl, drill or another sharp tool.
- Pre-moisten potting media.
- Fill container with media. Don't go up to the very top of the container—leave 0.5-1 inch from the top. Potting mix should be approximately 3-4 inches deep.
- Sow seeds. Follow packet depth instructions, then mist lightly to help settle the soil.
- Label and close. Place a label inside the container. Tape shut and label with permanent marker.
- Place outside in a sheltered spot where they'll get rain and snow and some sunlight. The east side of a building or under a shrub is often good. Keep away from hot spots, like on rocks or next to a south or west wall, or exposed conditions like in the middle of a garden bed.
- If you are using multiple containers, cluster them together. Increasing the thermal mass of your planters by clustering them will help reduce temperature variations.
- Watch and wait until spring. Seeds will stay dormant until the right temperature cues germination.

To read more: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/winter-sowing-in-containers-for-michigan-gardeners>

Note: CAKE Cisma will be hosting a winter sowing workshop on February 28 – see Virtual and In-person Events below.



Welcome Cheri!

At our January Membership Meeting we officially welcomed new member Cheri Hollowell. Cheri was born and raised in British Columbia, Canada. She had a busy life and career in Canada – where she worked for 20 years as an Early Childhood Educator and teacher of the deaf. She also spent 16 years working the Parliament of Canada – most notably for the Ministers of National Defence, Foreign Affairs, Justice Minister and Attorney General, the President of the Treasury Board, and the Minister of Public Safety.

She is the winner of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and founder of the Canadian registered charity "To the Stan and Back" providing post combat wellness programs for veterans and frontline responders.

Cheri is collectively Grandma to 15, Mom to 3 adult children, Step-mom to 5, and wife to Craig Hollowell. She's an amateur gardener who adores frequenting with nature – including daily walks with her dog, Charlie.

National Garden Clubs

The National Gardener 2026 Winter Issue is available online. This digital magazine is published quarterly and available to all garden club members. Read the latest issue here: <https://gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/tng-2026-winter-v1.5.pdf>

Garden Clubs 2026 National Convention

May 4 – May 6, 2026. "Meet Me in St. Louis Where the River Bends and The Arch Reaches the Sky!". Registration is now open for the NGC Convention in St. Louis. If you are interested in attending, register before March 31 to avoid a late fee.

<https://gardenclub.org/events/2026-convention>



Michigan Garden Clubs

The 2026 MGC State Conference will feature a statewide NGC Standard Flower Show

The conference will take place June 7-8 in Ann Arbor. It will feature a Standard Flower Show. Judging will take place on June 7 and any member may enter. Information and rules may be found using the following link:

https://migardenclubs.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2026_Together-We-Grow.pdf



Landscape Design School

Course 1: April 23 – 24, 2026

Boardman Nature Center, Traverse City, MI

Registration opens March 1. Use the following link for more information:

<https://migardenclubs.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/LDS-24-C1-Brochure.pdf>

Gardening School

Course 3: April 17 – 18, 2026

Harbert Community Church, Sawyer, MI

Registration deadline April 3. Use the following link for more information:

<https://migardenclubs.org/gardening-school-course-3-april-17-18-2026/>

Vegetable Garden Awarded Plant America Grant



The Charlevoix Area Garden Club has been awarded a 2026 “Plant America” Grant from the National Garden Clubs, Inc. The funds will be used to expand infrastructure at the Club’s Community Vegetable Garden in order to increase production of fresh, organic produce to be donated to the Charlevoix Community Food Pantry. A committee reviewing grant applications evaluated 127 applications submitted from across the United States, and the club’s Community Vegetable Garden project was awarded \$1960.00.

CAGC created the Community Vegetable Garden in 2024 as a part of the “Plant America – Feed America” initiative and the Michigan Garden Clubs’ “Gardening with Purpose” initiative. The garden is

located in the Charlevoix City Garden plots off of State Street near the Charlevoix airport.

The vegetables grown in the CAGC plot are all donated to the Charlevoix Community Food Pantry. In its 2025 season, the garden produced **over 400 pounds of fresh produce** using organic methods.

With funding from National Garden Clubs’ Plant America Grant, the CAGC is excited to make capital improvements to increase our yield and continue to grow organically. The funds will be used to construct raised beds, new trellises, and drip irrigation lines, and to purchase high quality soil and weed mat. In 2026 we plan to double the size of our garden plot to increase production. We also hope to inspire others in our community to grow their own food and to donate their surplus to those in need.

Virtual and In-Person Events



Yardenalities: A Design Shortcut for a Backyard Makeover, February 7, 12:00 – 1:30 pm. In this online interactive workshop, you’ll explore your style, respond to quick polls, and spot key details that make designs work. Heather Evans (Design Your Wild) and Zoe Evans (Wildr / Plan it Wild) will share how hardscape and native plant choices express each of six Yardenalities — contemporary garden design styles rooted in major landscape traditions. You’ll discover which style resonates with you and learn how to apply it to create a yard that feels cohesive, exciting, and alive.

Sponsored by Homegrown National Park. To register:

<https://secure.givelively.org/event/homegrown-national-park-inc/yardenalities-a-design-shortcut-for-a-backyard-makeover>

Voices of the Land: A Sand County Almanac Community Reading, March 7, 1-4 pm, Charlevoix Conservation District, 303 North Street, Boyne City. Join other nature-enthusiasts in the community to bring Aldo Leopold’s beautiful writing and important message about the land to life! Attendees will receive a free Sand County Almanac book and refreshments on the house.

<https://www.charlevoixcd.org/event>



Winter Seed Sowing Workshop, February 28, Join CAKE Cisma and the Walloon Lake Association and Conservancy in the Charlevoix Conservation District’s Community Room (303 North Street, Boyne City) to learn how to winter sow native plants. Free. RSVP to CAKE Cisma 231-533-8363, ext. 5. Limited space available.



CAGC Events and Community Calendar

February

- 1 Charlevoix Conservation District Tree Sale Orders Begin**, website <https://www.charlevoixcd.org/tree-sale> Or subscribe to their newsletter by calling or emailing Alison: 231-582-6193, alison.adams@macd.org
- 3 Yardenalities: A Design Shortcut for a Backyard Makeover**, 12:00 – 1:30 pm. In this online interactive workshop, you'll explore your style, respond to quick polls, and spot key details that make designs work. Heather Evans and Zoe Evans will share how hardscape and native plant choices express each of six Yardenalities. Sponsored by Homegrown National Park. To register: <https://secure.givelively.org/event/homegrown-national-park-inc/yardenalities-a-design-shortcut-for-a-backyard-makeover>
- 5 CAGC Board Meeting**, 10:00 am, Charlevoix Public Library.
- 7 Open House at Enji-minozhiyaamigak: The Place of Peacefulness Nature Preserve**, 11:30 am – 3 pm. 6413 Division Avenue, Charlevoix (located in Bayshore off of Townline Road). For decades, the forest and shoreline now known as Enji-minozhiyaamigak remained one of the last undeveloped stretches of Little Traverse Bay, and beyond — from Charlevoix to the Mackinac Bridge. Little Traverse Conservancy acquired the property in 2023 and developed an accessible trail that meanders to a lake overlook platform at the beach. <https://landtrust.org/events-template/open-house-at-enji-minozhiyaamigak-the-place-of-peacefulness-nature-preserve/>
- 10 CAGC Member Meeting**, 1:00 pm, Charlevoix Public Library. Carl and Sarah DeCaussin, owners of Mischels Greenhouses, will speak on "A Geranium's Journey to Mackinac Island".
- 11 Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Walk**, 1 pm – 3 pm, Grass River Natural Area, 6500 Alden Highway, Bellaire. Learn how to identify Hemlock Trees and common look-a-likes. Learn how to identify Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Help GRNA be proactive by monitoring consistently for early detections of infestations while enjoying a nice winter walk. RSVP to emma@grassriver.org
- 18 Supranivian Arthropods**, 2-4 pm, Allan and Virginia McCune Nature Preserve, West Parking: 1565 Berger Road, Petoskey. What happens to all of the bugs after the temperature drops and the snow starts falling? For some species, it's just business as usual. Join conservation technician Quinn Sommer on the hunt for supranivian arthropods (bugs that live on snow) and learn how such tiny creatures manage to survive in harsh winter conditions. <https://landtrust.org/events-template/supranivian-arthropods/>
- 26 CAGC Book Discussion: *The Serviceberry***, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, 10:30 am, Charlevoix Public Library Trustees Conference Room.
- 26 The Science of Making Maple Syrup**, 1 – 4 pm, Grass River Natural Area, 6500 Alden Highway, Bellaire. Discover the art of tapping maple trees by learning both traditional and modern methods. Tap into the science of maple syrup production, tree identification, equipment needs, and instructions for small scale DIY projects. To register: https://nmc.augusoft.net/index.cfm?method=ClassInfo.ClassInformation&int_class_id=5442&int_category_id=0&int_sub_category_id=0&int_catalog_id=0
- 28 Winter Seed Sowing Workshop**, Join CAKE Cisma and the Walloon Lake Association and Conservancy in the Charlevoix Conservation District's Community Room (303 North Street, Boyne City) to learn how to winter sow native plants. Free. RSVP to CAKE Cisma 231-533-8363, ext. 5. Limited space available.

- 28 Garden Design – Building Your Perfect Garden, 10 am – Noon.** North Central Michigan College Lifelong Learning, NCMC Health and Science Building, Petoskey. Learn, from instructor Kim Seellinger, the steps to design and build a beautiful landscape in your yard – including plant selection, on-going maintenance, and more. \$40 registration fee: <https://www.ncmclifelonglearning.com/event-6456027?CalendarViewType=1&SelectedDate=2/25/2026>

March

- 5 CAGC Board Meeting, 10:00 am,** Charlevoix Public Library.
- 7 Voices of the Land: A Sand County Almanac Community Reading, 1-4 pm,** Charlevoix Conservation District, 303 North Street, Boyne City. Join other nature-enthusiasts in the community to bring Aldo Leopold's beautiful writing and important message about the land to life! Attendees will receive a free Sand County Almanac book and refreshments on the house. This workshop will be held in the district Community Room.
- 10 CAGC Member Meeting, 1:00 pm,** Charlevoix Public Library. Tom Darnton, President of the Lake Charlevoix Association, will highlight the work they do to preserve and protect the lake and shoreline.
- 21 Nature Journaling, 1-4 pm,** Boyne Arts Center, One Water Street, Boyne City. If you've read *A Sand County Almanac* you're familiar with Aldo Leopold's beautiful nature sketches. Even if you aren't, this workshop will help hone all of your senses and introduce new ways to observe nature around you. \$20 – all supplies included. <https://www.boynearts.org/product/nature-journaling-julie-hermann-sharon-wade-sat-march-21/NNGGWN45WSBNXYOWUPL6TEE5?cs=true&cst=custom>



CAGC Newsletter, Website, and Social Media

Submission deadline for the March newsletter is February 26. Email your photos, information, and articles to newsletter editor Beth Cowie at bethcowie@mac.com. You can also send information and photos for our website and social media.



Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CharlevoixAreaGardenClub/>
Instagram [@charlevoixareagardenclub](https://www.instagram.com/charlevoixareagardenclub)

