

February 2026



THE SPADE



The Newsletter of The Gardeners of Greater Cleveland

www.gardenersofgreatercleveland.org

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FEBRUARY 9TH MEETING INFORMATION

Menu

- Beef Tips with Carrots, Celery and Onion
- Mashed Potatoes
- Buttered Corn
- Garden Salad w/ Italian Dressing
- Cookies
- Please RSVP to your Team Captains by **February 1st.**

Program

- Rid-All Green Partnership: "Regenerating Community"

Schedule

5:30-Social in Penthouse
(may purchase drinks from bar or BYOB)

6:15-Dinner

7:00-General Meeting

7:15-Program

President's Letter

As we slog our way through the Arctic winter, January seemed to be a real challenge. Trying to stay warm is most important; we all know Spring will be here before you know it.

February is an exciting time for our club. The scholarship emails and applications have been sent out to area schools and the youth gardening grant applications will be made available in just a couple of weeks. Gardeners continue to plan this coming season's gardens, looking through catalogs and websites for plant/seed sources and new ideas.

Even though we are in a deep winter freeze, the gardening season is not far away. We are organizing our May plant sale, and I encourage everyone to get involved! We have a few awesome members who go out of their way to help make this event a huge success for us. This is a big event for our club and the monies raised will help support our Scholarship Fund!

Something new we started in December; we will be having door prizes at the end of our meetings. It could be only one item or as many I have collected. If anyone has anything they would like to donate for our monthly door prizes, please let me know the night of the meeting or email me that you are bringing something. I look forward to getting many more members participating in our meeting and our Club events. Communication is very important me and our board members

THANK YOU FOR REMEMBERING TO RSVP TO YOUR CAPTAINS
BY THE REQUESTED DATE

I hope to see you all at the February meeting.

Sincerely,
Debbie Daniels



A Visit to Meadow City Native Plant Nursery

-Bob McMahon

On Tuesday, January 13, 2026, Bob McMahon visited Meadow City Native Plant Nursery located in the North Collinwood neighborhood in Cleveland. Bob met with co-founders Dave Tomashefski (and fellow GoGC member!), Julie Slater, and Alyssa Zearley, to observe how their container perennials and woody plants are overwintered.

Perennials are cut back late in the late Fall while container trees are laid on their sides in preparation for covering for the winter. A foam covering is laid over the perennial containers and trees, followed by a single layer of white polyethylene plastic. The plastic is then tucked under the plants and secured on top either by wooden 2 x 4 planks or cables. This arrangement then traps the geothermal heat from the ground to keep the plants from freezing solid yet keeping the plants cold for winter dormancy requirements. Depending on Spring weather conditions, these coverings are usually removed in early March to break plant dormancy and start to produce new growth.

Trees are now being grown in plastic pots that root-prune the plants, preventing circling roots and eliminating the need for customers to trim any roots. A Quonset house containing nuts and seedlings of various tree species is covered with hardware cloth to exclude squirrels. Undergoing winter conditions allows for the stratification of the nuts or seeds, to break their dormancy to allow germination once temperatures warm in the Spring. The seedlings are covered with a sheet of foam to protect against the extreme winter cold.

A new plot of land has been prepared beneath a tree canopy for producing spring ephemeral wildflower seeds. Plants grown from wild-collected Northeast Ohio seed will be planted in these beds. In the future, seeds harvested here will be used to grow more slow-growing spring ephemerals for sale at the nursery. The soil has been covered with leaf mulch and awaits the perennial stock plants in the Spring.

Bob greatly enjoyed his visit with this quality nursery that is expanding as needed and already has an excellent reputation in the Cleveland area, thanks to these three dedicated professionals!



Gardeners of America National Convention Info

-Bob McMahon

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE! The Gardeners of America's national convention will be held July 23-25, 2026, at the Ohio State Wooster Agricultural Technical Institute's campus in Wooster, Ohio. Hotel accommodations will be provided by the Wooster Comfort Suites located conveniently within a two-minute drive from campus. A block of rooms that includes a hot breakfast has been reserved at a group rate of approximately \$160 per night (including taxes and fees) for the evenings of July 22-25, allowing for attendees to arrive the evening before the convention starts and to leave the morning after the convention ends, since the banquet on July 25 won't conclude until approximately 8 PM. The number to call for reservations is (330)-439-0190 and the group number is ZH50K5; tell the staff member that you are booking your room for the 2026 TGOA convention. Your 2026 TGOA Convention co-Chairs are working on a slate of speakers, a field trip, horticulture show, photo contest, and other fun and educational activities to make this an outstanding enjoyable and educational event! Further details will be forthcoming soon!

January Program Recap

-Ginny Dawson

Last month we had a delightful talk by microbiologist, Mopelola Oluwadare. Originally from Nigeria, she studied at The University of Georgia. She has started a composting business in Stow, Ohio called [The MikroLab](#).

Mope gave us some of the latest scientific thinking about why composting is important. Rich soil contains thousands of microorganisms. She pointed out that very little is known about them and how they encourage plant growth. She focused on several types of these microorganisms, including:

- Bacteria which transform nitrogen from soil into a form accessible to plants
- Fungi which transmit genetic information that allows them produce bigger roots to take up water more efficiently
- Protozoa, particularly nematodes, a microscopic round worm, which eats bacteria and decomposes and aerates the soil

She also discussed the successful restoration of a Zinc Pile Superfund Site in 2002. This involved the removal of the heavily polluted soil from an old smelting operation in Palmerston, PA. The area was seeded with native plants and restored to prairie landscape.

She concluded by commenting on how the microbes in our soil depend on each other. They act like a community. Composting is an act of soil stewardship on a cosmic scale that we can all participate in.

February Program

-Deb Kramarz

Rid-All Green Partnership is an 18-acre urban farm and community organization in Cleveland's Kinsman neighborhood that transforms vacant, formerly dumped-on land into a green space for growing, composting, and education. Founded in 2011 by three friends, it serves as a "food desert solution by providing local produce, sustainable soil, tilapia farming, and job training for residents, youth, and veterans.

Executive director, George "Keymah" Durden, of Rid-All Green Partnership, will show a documentary video, highlighting the history of Rid-All and all of its programs. This will be followed by a Q&A session.

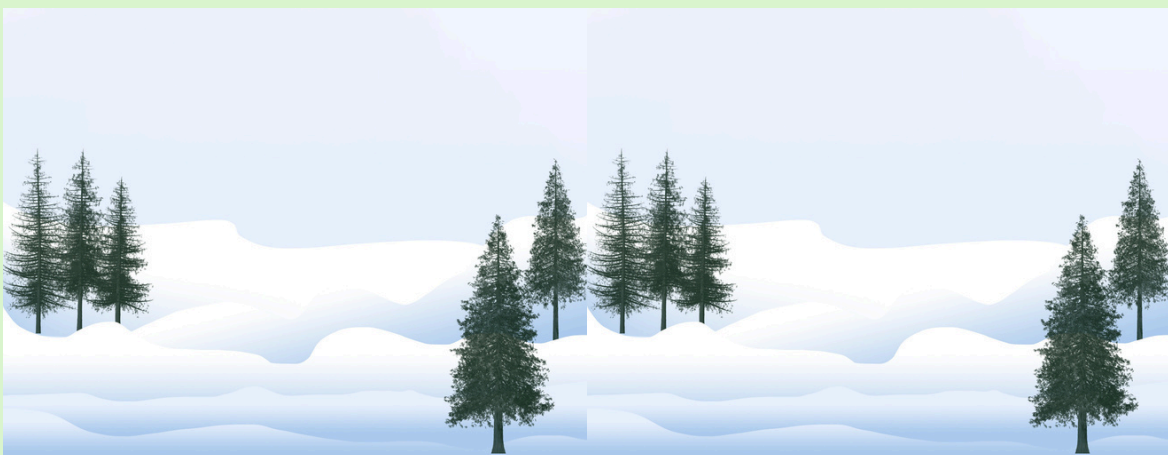
Youth Gardening Grants Open February 1st!

-Steve McIntosh

Thanks to various fundraising activities as well as generous donations from our members, the Gardeners of Greater Cleveland is happy to offer two \$1,000 Youth Gardening Grants for 2026. The purpose of the grant is to provide educators and other individuals who work with young people (K-12) the funds needed to support a sustainable gardening project. The hope is that these projects will inspire participants to become life-long gardeners and teach them the many important life lessons that come from tending to a garden.

Last year, grants were awarded to John F. Kennedy High School in Cleveland and Olmsted Falls High School in Olmsted Falls. The grant application opens February 1st and will close on April 19th. Below is a link to the application. If you have any questions about the grant or wish to help review the applications, please email Steve McIntosh at Steven.A.McIntosh1@gmail.com.

[2026 Youth Gardening Grant Application](#)



Team Captains

(Please Remember To RSVP To Your Team Captain By February 1st)

Team 1

Team Captain: Ginnie Dawson
ginniedawson@gmail.com / 216.849.2781

- Dave Dawson
- Joyce Nesbit
- Carol Poh
- MaryAnn Thesing
- Harold Davis

Team 2

Head Team Captain: Ron Hartmiller,
r_hartmiller@yahoo.com / 216.671.1408

- Garrett Ormiston
 - Hank Doll
 - Lou Drasler
 - Herb Klein
 - Bob Rensel
- Eddie Lagucki

Team 3

Team Captain: Steve McIntosh,
steven.a.mcintosh1@gmail.com/216.392.1222

- Kathy Kosiorek
- Jodith Janes
- Larry Kell
- Bob McMahon & George Roscoe
 - Amy Gatautis
 - Jan Kious
- James & Audrey Kasper
- River Raptor & Riley Aspen
 - Bill Haag
- Joanne Duchon
- Jay Ketchaver

Team 4

Team Captain: Deb Kramarz,
deborahkramarz@aol.com / 216.731.6324

- Fred Robinson
- Bob & Sandra Pindell
- Tom Segelin & Julie Giroux
- Kathy Talty

Team 5

Cathy Ross: estrogen05@yahoo.com
216.970.2854

- Patrick Boggins
- Kelley Adkins
- Debbie Daniels
 - Ed Tuhela
 - Lisa Skufca
- Kelly Rodriguez

Team 6

- Keith Biehl: 440.539.2019 (NO EMAIL)
- Davd & Diane Circle (440.628.8063 Home)
 - Paula & Ron Koenig (440.212.5700)
 - Deva Simon (440.915.0161)

Team 7

Team Captain: Hiedi Winston,
hwinston@naipvc.com / 440.752.2617

- Julie Shaw & Tom Davis
 - Deah Stark
- Sherry Doughten
- Dave Tomashefski
 - Laurie Burke
- Bob DiLiberto & Jan Horvath

Important Dates or Events

(Email Steve @ steven.a.mcintosh1@gmail.com if you would like something included in the next issue of The SPADE)

- **February GOGC Meeting-2/9/26**
- **March GOGC Meeting-3/9/26**



Committees, Officers, & Directors

Current Standing Committees

- *Awards*: Bob McMahon, Tom Segelin, Co-Chairs
- *Communication*: Steve McIntosh (The Spade Newsletter, Website/Social Media);
- *Finance*: OPEN
- *Income Projects*: Debbie Daniels, Chair; Bob McMahon
- *Membership*: OPEN
- *Programs*: Deb Kramarz, Chair
- *Scholarship*: Ed Tuhela, Fred Robinson, Co-chairs; Deb Kramarz,
- *Service Projects*: Garrett Ormiston, Chair; Bob Rensel, Steve McIntosh

Special Committees

- *Cleveland Holden Forest & Garden Council*: Deb Kramarz & Joyce Nesbit
- *National Organization*: Larry Kell, Past President; Bob McMahon, National Director;
- *Youth Gardening*: Steve McIntosh, Chair
- *Willott Iris Garden*: Sandra and Robert Pindell, Ron Hartmiller
- *Friends of the Greenhouse*: Joyce Nesbit
- *1 Bratenahl Place*: Tom Segelin
- *Horticultural Show*: Vacant
- *Nominating*: Bob McMahon, Debbie Daniels
- *Wellness/Memorials*: Team Captains
- *Archive Committee*: Steve McIntosh, Chair

Officers

- *President*: Debbie Daniels
- *1st Vice President*: Kathi Talty
- *Secretary*: Kelly Rodriguez
- *Treasurer*: Hiedi Winston (**Looking for a replacement as Hiedi has served for many years**)
- *Past President*: Steve McIntosh

Directors

- Robert McMahon
- Debbie Daniels
- Ed Tuhela
- Fred Robinson
- Garret Ormiston

