GREAT LAKES CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

FALL NEWSLETTER, SEPTEMBER 2004

CALENDAR OF CHAPTER MEETINGS ** meeting details below**

****SATURDAY, September 18: Garden Tour & Plant Sale**

MEETING: 11:00 am - ca. 3:00 pm

PROGRAM: 11:00 - 1:00 **Garden tour & bag lunch**
David Baker, 3300 E Dobson Place, Ann Arbor
[see map]
1:00 **Auction & Plant Sale**

****SATURDAY, October 23: Fall Meeting**

MEETING: 10:00 am - ca. NOON

PLACE: Matthaei Botanical Gardens, Ann Arbor [see map]

PROGRAM: 10:00 – Business meeting
10:30 – **Tony Reznicek**
"Collectors' plants – or why botanists grow some of the odd (and ugly) things they do"

****SATURDAY, November 13: Fall Meeting**

MEETING: 10:00 am - ca. NOON

PLACE: Matthaei Botanical Gardens, Ann Arbor [see map]

PROGRAM: 10:00 - Business meeting
10:30 – **Nicola Ripley**
"Plants in the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, especially native Colorado plants"

Mark Your Calendars:

****SATURDAY, January 15: Winter Potluck**

Reserve the spot on your Calendar. We'll send out details with a timely postcard in the New Year.

UPCOMING NATIONAL MEETINGS – see below and your Quarterly for details.

Eastern Winter Study Weekend - January 28-30, 2005. Toronto, Ontario
Western Winter Study Weekend - February 25-27, 2005. Everett, Washington

Annual Meeting - "Newfoundland and Labrador: Rock Garden of the North Atlantic" July 14-17, 2005. St. John's, Newfoundland

NARGS members who have not yet attended a national meeting are eligible for a one-time $300 stipend toward the costs of attending either a Winter Study Weekend or an Annual Meeting.
Requirements are that you have been a member of NARGS for one year at the time of your application and have not been to any National meetings (except for one hosted by your own chapter). Members must apply through the Chapter Chair, Don LaFond. Take advantage of this generous offer!

Try *Liatris cylindracea* for summer bloom in the rock garden

By
Tony Reznicek

Alpine plants occur in areas where the growing season can be very short, and they come into bloom as soon as they can to set seed before winter comes again. So having a rock garden full of traditional alpines means that the rock garden blooms profusely in spring. Summer and fall present problems with floral displays since few real alpines are summer or fall blooming. Dryland plants of mountain or high plains but not alpine habitats are tremendously helpful with achieving summer bloom, but their cultivation generally requires somewhat different conditions than true alpines. Mixing dryland plants and true alpines together in the garden is probably especially difficult in our Great Lakes region climate with its humid, usually hot summers where fungal problems can be troublesome with dryland plants unless they are grown in especially dry, exposed sites with good air movement.

There are, however, a few species native to our region which bloom in the summer, are small enough to fit into the rock garden, and which will be reasonably satisfied in regular rock garden conditions. One of the best is in the genus *Liatris*, the blazing stars. Most *Liatris* are big; some can be 4-6 feet tall, and fit better in the sunny perennial garden. One species, *Liatris cylindracea* is quite short, often only 10-12 inches high in full sun in lean soils, and even in rich soils, it is only 2 ft tall. Since it is a stiffly upright plant, not lax and spreading, it can, if grown lean, fit into even a small rock garden. Though there are often only 5-9 heads, they are large, so the plant is quite showy. It blooms in August and early September with bright pink flowers, though there are rarer pale pink and white forms as well.

This is a species native to dry, often calcareous prairies, open jack pine stands, and other open habitats such as dunes and limestone pavements in the southern part of the Great Lakes region. It is evidently a lime lover, and though usually a plant of dry sites, can grow in a range of moisture conditions, from very dry gravel ridges and slopes to upper edges of moist interdunal meadows.

A couple years ago, I started making a path with limestone rocks, and was looking for small things to grow along the edges and between the rocks. Since I left only a bit of space between the rocks, I could not plant into the site in the usual way, so I seeded directly into the cracks. One species I used was *Liatris cylindracea*, from seed gathered from a nearby gravely slope. I can report that it was quite successful so far. Plants germinated well and the seedlings survived quite nicely, just as if this was a natural limestone pavement area. First year plants develop a small rosette of grass-like, leathery leaves. The second year, several of the bigger plants bloomed and they stayed quite short, even in some sites where they got a bit of shade. The only problem was that along these lightly shaded edges, the plants were not upright, but rather leaning – which makes them unsatisfactory for use along a path because they get in the way of walking. The plant clearly wants full sun.

There are other small *Liatris – L. punctata* is another one I have grown, from seed gathered from the high plains of Wyoming. But though it is quite short and very nice, it requires culture more like dryland plants, and my old (20 years!) plant was clearly unhappy this cool, wet summer. I fear for the worst.

There has been a fair bit of work on selecting tall *Liatris* for the perennial garden and for the cut flower industry, but there should also be a lot of scope for selecting good color forms and dwarf plants of *Liatris* for summer bloom in rock gardens. Any takers?

OUR CHAPTER WILL BE DOING THE SEED EXCHANGE THIS WINTER

We will be fulfilling one of our obligations to the National Organization this winter by handling the second round of the NARGS seed exchange. You'll hear more about this at the fall meetings. Please consider helping out. Thanks.

With deep regret, we report the loss this summer of two of the most dedicated and long standing members of the Great Lakes Chapter.

Meroë Kaericher

Meroë, our long-time treasurer, passed away at her home on Aug. 2 after a brief struggle with cancer. We are deeply indebted to her for all her work over the years keeping membership lists up to date, handling the finances at our spring and fall plant sales, and keeping the chapter's financial footing stable. Beyond serving as our treasurer for many years, Meroë was a strong supporter of the chapter in many other ways. She was always willing to help out with problems and pitched in when work of any kind needed to be done. She served on the organizing committee for the Chapters winter study weekend in 2003 and was instrumental in its success. She and her husband Michael attended as many meetings as they could, both of the chapter and the National Organization, and many of us will remember Meroë's eye for the unusual (and expensive) at our plant auctions.

Though we all knew Meroë through our shared gardening activities, she was involved in a great many more activities in conservation and public service beyond our chapter. She volunteered at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens at the University of Michigan. She served on the Salem Planning Commission, and worked to conserve the natural landscape in the Township. She also volunteered for the Salem Historical Society, and worked with (and helped organize) the Fleming Creek Advisory Council as well as the Rouge River Advisory Council. Few people worked harder to make her surroundings a better place for the future generations.

She is survived by Michael, to whom we offer our deepest condolences, and their four sons. We will miss her very much.

Betty Blake

Betty Blake passed away quietly at age 87 Aug. 23. She was active until the very end and attended our meetings faithfully. She was one of the great gardeners in the entire North American Rock Garden Society, and we were very lucky to have her in our chapter. She was an avid seed sower and always brought wonderful plants to our spring and fall sales. Betty was many other things to the Chapter and the National Organization beyond a great gardener. She was a founding member of the Great Lakes Chapter in 1968, served many years (1981-1991) as our treasurer, and served on the board of the National Organization. She authored articles for the Bulletin (now the Rock Garden Quarterly) on *Campanula* (one of her favorite genera), and *Veronica.*

Betty was a wonderful host, always pleased to have people visit her garden near Onsted and our chapter had a number of very enjoyable meetings there.

Two plant cultivars -- *Anemonella thalictroides* 'Betty Blake' and *Phlox bifida* 'Betty Blake' – commemorate her. Her wonderful garden was also featured in a book called "Earth on Her Hands: The American Woman in Her Garden" by Starr Ockenga (Clarkson Potter, $55).

In addition to her many contributions to our chapter, Betty also volunteered at Hidden Lake Gardens in Tipton and Matthaei Botanical Gardens in Ann Arbor, always freely giving of her horticultural knowledge.

We will all miss her and we extend our condolences to her son and two daughters.

Panayoti Kelaidis leads Drakensberg Tour February 1-14, 2005

Panayoti will be leading the first NARGS trip to South Africa next February 1-14. This will be a midsummer trip (in South Africa that is). Co-leading will be J.P. Roux, the head of the Compton Herbarium at Kirstenbosch, the National Botanic Garden of South Africa. Dr. Roux is a former Director of the Drakensberg Botanic Garden, a fabulous public garden, and is a keen horticulturist as well as a fountain of knowledge of this wonderful region. The Drakensberg Mountains are a major center of biodiversity: over 7000 species of plants occur on their summits and in the foothills surrounding them, and February is high summer. On this exciting trip there will be hundreds of bulbs, kniphofias, eucomis, rhodohypoxis, dieramas, and no end of scenery in the great mountains of South Africa. The following website gives more information and details:http://www.geostartravel.com/Drakensberg2005/Drakensberg05.htm For those who don't have access to the worldwide web, you can call Geostar Travel for more information toll free anywhere in North America: 1-800-624-6633. The trip will be advertised prominently in an upcoming bulletin, but this is an opportunity to get a "leg up" and register before it fills.

Spring Programs—2004

by
Laura Serowicz

The April 10, 2004 meeting featured a new talk by Fred Case "American Wildflowers of Mountains and Tundra." Fred likes to work with American alpine plants in his rock gardens and his talk covered the general conditions where they grow in nature.

All the mountains in North America are spectacular, however there are some differences between our mountains and those in Europe. North American Mountain ranges are generally aligned north-south whereas European Mountains tend to be aligned east-west. This means that in North America, when the prevailing winds from the west hit the north-south wall of mountain and the air rises and cools, moisture condenses and drops-mostly on the west slope, which is almost always forested very high. Then as it goes down the east slope it warms up, and takes up moisture, so this side is drier. This is why we have the Great Plains to the east of the Rockies; it is too dry for trees. On the other hand, the mountain ranges in Europe mostly run east-west and the moisture goes all the way along both sides and you don't get the wide range of very wet to very dry conditions (until you get down to the Mediterranean region). This more predictable climate may be why many of the European alpines are easier to grow. But North America does have a lot of wonderful alpines that you can grow too. Fred highly recommends Graham Nichols book "Alpine Plants of North America" [Timber Press] especially for his comments on culture and such. Many wildflower and older ecology books erroneously talk about plant communities by elevation zones, as if only certain things grow in each zone. Plants have their own reasons for where they grow; elevation is just one factor, and often a plant may be found in more than one zone. And the elevations for each zone changes with the latitude so that in Colorado or New Mexico the alpine zone may be at 9-11,000 feet whereas in Alaska or Newfoundland it may be at sea level. But it is still convenient to describe the various habitats by elevational zones and so Fred's talk took us up the mountains and described what we could expect to find in each zone.

The first zone we encounter is the **High Plains** (High Prairies or Foothills) which, at about 6-7500 feet, can be higher in elevation than many of the mountains of Switzerland. One of the many roadside plants on the high plains are dwarf *Phlox*, all dried up by the time you get out there in the spring, but they really are alpine plants on the high Prairie. Another plant you'll find on the high plains is *Pulsatilla ludoviciana*, our native Pulsatilla. The flowers are white inside with blue on the backside and absolutely more delicate and beautiful than *P. vulgaris. Y*ou can find this up the mountains at all sorts of elevations. There are a number of cacti on the high plains, with Opuntias being the most common ones. One of the nicest places to see alpines without any effort is right at the edge of the town of Centennial, Wyoming near Laramie. Every limestone ridge is full of rare phlox, like *Phlox bryoides* and purple locoweed, *Oxytropis lambertii.* You can also find *Lewisia rediviva,* with leaves that come up in the fall, last through the winter then they lose their leaves just as the large pink to white flowers bloom in the spring and *Calochortus,* which live but are hard to flower in the east. *Oenothera caespitosa* is another beautiful plant with huge 4-5" white flowers that thrives but it can take over the garden is. *Penstemon laricifolius ssp. exilifolius* is a white-flowered dwarf penstemon that grows all along the roadside around Laramie, Wyoming, the pink flowered *P. laricifolius* grows in the BigHorns and around Pinedale, Wyoming. *Penstemon whippleanus* has dark, muddy purple to almost black flowers (there is also a pale, butter yellow form) and is fairly long-lived in the garden. The numerous blue Penstemons are very difficult to key out and the keys currently written do not help much. Most of the bigger Penstemons almost act as annuals, none of them live long and you must take cuttings every year. One of the prettiest ones, which ranges from a silvery pink to a rather dark pink and has wonderful blousy flowers, is *P. secundiflora*. Secund means all the flowers facing one way. It will grow and bloom in the scree garden. A dwarf species *P. teucrioides* is a marvelous long-lived mat forming penstemon but you've got to carefully give it a lot of fertilizer to get it to bloom well.

There are some neat bladder pods (*Lesquerella*), little ones and big ones, which are yellow-flowered with silver leaves. They inflate their seedpods which then blow all over the place when ripe. *Sphaeralcea coccinea* is all over the sagebrush in Wyoming and blooms for months in the summer, with its pale orange hollyhock flowers. It is an real American treasure.

The next zone is the **Montane Zone,** which is open, dryish and today much of it is pasture with sagebrush taking over. But there are good things to be found in this zone, like *Penstemon acaulis*, which Fred says is one of the neatest alpines on earth, but which does not seem to grow for anyone but Harvey Wrightman. The Montane Zone has open, park-like areas, with lots of sunshine, and is rather dry. You'll get things like miner's candle, *Cryptantha*, a very handsome biennial borage relative, found around Estes Park, Colorado. You'll also find many western delphiniums with one of the commonest being *D. nelsonii*. Most have a tuberous root, and will live in your garden but are hard to flower. With many of these plants you have to remember that soil temperature may affect whether they make and hold buds or not. *Phlox* are the glory of the west. They are fragrant, small buns, and cantankerous in the garden, but they can be grown. *P. multiflora*, found near Yellowstone, is one of the finest of the large white-flowered phloxes. *Frasera speciosa,* western horse gentian, is big and tall (3-4' tall), with remarkably structured flowers, a very interesting monocarpic plant. The Pinon pines zone of Arizona and Southern California are still a montane zone, but very dry except in the spring. This is the home of *Lewisia brachycalyx*, which flowers in masses of white to pale pink. In the west the word "Park" as in Estes Park and South Park means an area where the winter snow is so deep and the freeze/thaw zone so drastic that trees won't survive. Out in the wetter areas here you get alpine bistort, *Polygonum viviparum*, *Iris missouriensis,* and *Gentiana affinis,* which is a very nice native gentian, the blue and white-flowered *Aquilegia caerulea,* Colorado's state flower, and some *Calochortus* species. In the limestone parts of the BigHorns and further west in the Rockies in limy open areas in the woods you get Mountain Lady's Slipper, *Cypripedium montanum,* whose white flowers occur in pairs. It is very difficult to keep alive in the east since, in spite of being on cold mountains, it does not freeze deep at the roots because it grows in snow flushes, and the snow comes before hard freezes so they never get very cold. They also need to be very dry in the winter. A beautiful native dandelion-like plant, *Agoseris* [*A. aurantiaca* and *A. glauca*] comes in yellow or bright orange. At the upper edge of the Montane Zone in pastures are all sorts of *Eriogonum*, not all of them pretty. They grow in such dry stuff you would swear they would not grow there but most of them will grow here in your garden and even root from cuttings. Some other plants of this zone include: the woolly sunflower, *Eriophyllum lanatum*, also known as Oregon sunshine, *Penstemon eriantherus,* purple flowers with woolly anthers; Many onions, *Allium* species grow in the Rockies, some with pink, nodding straw-like flowers, also *Zigadenus venenosus,* Death Camas, a very showy but poisonous white-flowered onion look-alike, and the phlox relative, *Linanthus*, which grows and blooms for Fred. There are wondrous *Townsendia* from the high prairies up into the alpine zone , in various colors. Most of them are short lived but they are neat plants to grow. In wet places along streams you get monkey-flowers, *Mimulus guttatus* - but beware, they can take over the world. They have now been found in western upper Michigan and they're not sure if it is native or an introduction.

On to the **Hudsonian Zone** (or Subalpine Zone), named for the Hudson Bay region, with dense, dark, cool forests of Spruce, Fir and Pine. You'll see a lot of the same plants there as in the bogs of northern Michigan or in the uplands around Hudson Bay or Alaska. Dense, heavy forest, where plants are limited because of low light and thick mats of needles and humus because decay is slow in cool areas. As you start to go up above the Hudsonian zone you get openings. These openings, if you're on the west side of the mountain, are caused by so much snow that young trees don't grow there. But if you get out to the very edge of the timber along the streams you'll find a lot of coarse vegetation, a lot of willow (*Salix*) sprouts and a lot of moose and occasionally a grizzly. These are big plants not dwarfs. Another thing you may run into on certain mountains is "Krummholtz", which are dense wind and snow dwarfed trees that can be almost impenetrable. The Hudsonian Zone also has many plants we are familiar with here, such as twinflower, *Linnaea borealis*, bunchberry, *Cornus canadensis*, and corn lily, *Clintonia uniflora.* Fred has not succeeded with *C. uniflora* because he has never been able to get it back alive - in the summer it cooks in the car, but he will try to get seed of it. And he has not able to keep *C. borealis*, the yellow one from Michigan, happy, but he's got *C. umbellulata* from the Smokies and it grows and spreads beautifully in his garden with big umbels of white flowers.

Several species of wintergreen are found in this zone, including *Pyrola chlorantha*, *P. secunda,* and *P. grandiflora.* They spread by

runners, which, if you move them carefully and wrap it in moss with a splint so as not to damage the runner you may be successful in transplanting it. At timberline you will find many wet meadows and willow bogs that also contain the low growing *Clematis scottii*, deep pink flowered *Primula parryi*, *Sedum rhodanthum*, Queen's Crown, which grows in a wetter site than King's Crown, *Sedum integrifolium*, the white bog orchid, *Platanthera dilatata*, the white-flowered *Dodecatheon dentatum* and four-petaled shooting star, *D. alpinum*, and also the red *Mimulus lewisii,* which has trouble with our summer heat.

Then comes the **Alpine Tundra Zone**, near the top which, depending on exposure and the way the snow comes, is essentially above the treeline. But the treeline is not a straight line, the ridges and exposure make a difference - where it is more sheltered or wetter the trees go way up, and where wind swept and maybe more snow in the winter the trees go way down. So that for these alpines, one species may go way down the mountain to one of those spots and the others way up to the higher part of the zone. Natural selection happens quickly here and it might be that you find a form of a plant down lower that can take your summer heat whereas the same species from higher up won't. So you need to experiment - Fred recommends you raise from seed when you can, because you get natural selection right in the seed pan. The Alpine Tundra of the BigHorns is heavily pastured and the main mountain there is granite so it's not very good for finding alpines, but there are pockets of limestone that contain some good stuff. In some areas the snow may last for up to 20 years and then melt, so some of these plants have to be prepared to sit down in there for without light and not grow for a long time, then be active again when the snow melts. The plants have to be tough. At Beartooth Lake the substrate is mostly granite with limited flora, but there are limestone remnants with a totally different flora. If you take the time to do some research on where the plants grow or where the seeds come from you'll have more success finding and growing them.

Even on volcanic cinders things can grow. At Craters of the Moon Park in Idaho, the plants are spread out because the crater is about 15 ft deep with cinders from ancient cinder cones and practically no moisture, so each plant must spread its roots wide to grab all the moisture around it, preventing much else from germinating around it - except one, *Lewisia rediviva*, of which a form there has white flowers with red stamens. The showiest plant there is *Eriogonum ovalifolium*, which, in spite of the fact it grows so dry, can be grown here. Fred grows it in his garden but he loses some in hot humid August, so he keeps seedlings and cuttings growing to continue it in his garden. Some of them have buns of leaves that are so tightly held together they look like a gray rose. The flower heads remain all summer and color up as the summer proceeds so they look like they're in bloom all summer, making them great for an alpine garden. Even in the high tundra above timberline there is variation of slope and exposure creating peat bogs and all sorts of habitats to work with up there. Out on the high prairie where it's really dry, if there's a water hole or a spring, cottonwoods and different plants will grow there. It's low and hot but more like the subalpine edge along the stream.

Some plants don't care what elevation they're at, they're all over the place. If you have big cliffs there will be things growing in the permanent shade like *Kelseya uniflora*, which is confined to parts of Montana, southern British Columbia and Wyoming and is one of the neatest little plants. It forms very hard, compact buns, covered with single big pink flowers.

There are all sorts of ecological niches which you may have to create in your garden. Most common is the scree, with weathering rock that is being pulled by gravity down the hill, containing gravel of various sizes, which can be fine or very heavy. The scree is creeping and constantly moving, and there are plants that like that. *Dryas* for instance, needs it and will degenerate in the garden if it just sits on flat ground. Dumping a thin layer of gravel on them every summer can make them develop new growth in the new soil all the time. One thing you do not do in the mountain screes is walk on them - you could start an avalanche. But there are plants that are absolutely spectacular growing on the scree. In limestone there are fine screes and talus slopes, which are broken up rockslides. In the BigHorns there's a muddy, shale rock with the most beautiful and fragrant white phloxes. They are tough, with long roots that anchor them in the ground - as the erosion exposes them they hang on and bloom. You can grow these phlox and they will bloom here. Another kind of formation you get in these mountains is frost-heaving with huge rocks called a fell field, where there is a slope and heavy freeze-thaw cycles working the rocks up to the surface. With gravity, these start down

the mountain thus creating a very active area for flowers. Another habitat in the mountains is where glaciers have created a flat spot with a river of mud and after it all dries up you have a dry riverbed of gravel. This is the place for *Dryas octopetala*, with its eight creamy white petals, and dwarf willows-*Salix* spp., which lie flat on the ground with the catkins taller than the entire plant. There are also snow flushes - very wet, very peaty areas where the snow piles up until very late in the season (August or September) year after year. Plants you will find here include gentians and tiny shrubs like *Cassiope hypnoides* (moss heather). Also in the snow flushes and wet meadows you may find the yellow-flowered avalanche lily, *Erythronium grandiflorum*, the white-flowered *E. montanum*, with yellow centers, or the reflexed lavender flowers of *E. revolutum,* which Fred can't keep.

The pines at high elevations will also be in boggy areas with heath beds that support evergreen shrubs such as *Kalmia polifolia*, the bog laurel, with pink saucer-shaped flowers, *Phyllodoce empetriformis*, mountain heather, full with pink flowers, *Cassiope tetragona,* with white nodding bell-shaped flowers, and Labrador Tea, *Ledum groenlandicum*. At the edges of snow melt areas you will find popping out of the melting snow the mountain marsh-marigold, *Caltha leptosepala*, with white flowers pale blue-tinged on the backs, various buttercups, including *Ranunculus eschscholtzii* and *R. adoneus*, *Trollius laxus*, the cream to pale yellow globeflower, and various louseworts, such as *Pedicularis groenlandica* and *P. lanata*. Many alpines grow on the rocky slopes and open gravely sites in the Alpine Tundra Zone, they include: the alp lily, *Lloydia serotina*, many *Saxifraga* species, such as *S. flagellaris* and *S. aiziodes*, *Claytonia megarrhiza*, spring beauty, with white flowers and huge roots, several *Silene* species, *Erigeron compositus* and *E. lanatus*, pale blue-flowered *Townsendia parryi*, *Phlox pulvinata*, in white and pale blue, the pink-flowered *Douglasia montana*, the beautiful little blue flowers of *Eritrichium nanum* and the larger and easier to grow, *E. howardii*, tiny blue flowers of *Aquilegia jonesii*, and the saxifrage relative, *Boykinia jamesii*.

Fred finds that the Beartooth and BigHorns are the best place for alpines, and the middle of July the best chance of seeing the most alpines. He also had some more advice: never go alone, be off the mountains after noon because of sudden storms, take a walking stick in case of rattlesnakes or, better yet, two ski poles, especially good for walking in boggy areas. If you change your approach to an area you will see different things. Finally, there are useful plants for our gardens everywhere if we can learn how to grow them by observing where they grow in nature.

The June 20 joint meeting with the American Conifer Society was Gary Wittenbaugh demonstrating how to make a hypertufa trough and plant it. The meeting was held in the lovely setting of Richard and Raven Tuttle's Saguaro Nursery. Gary had an excellent how-to handout for people, and we will have some copies of this available at the September meeting for people who are interested but could not attend.

Chapter Officers 2004

Please feel free to contact your officers if you have any questions or comments

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Please send address changes to our Treasurer Michael Kaericher.

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Send $10.00 per year (check payable to Chapter) to:
Michael Kaericher
Treasurer, Great Lakes Chapter, NARGS
8171 Brookville Road
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or pay in person at the next GLC meeting

National Organization:

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

Phone:_____

email/FAX:_____

Send $25.00 dues (check payable to NARGS) to:
Jacques Mommens
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We strongly encourage people to join both the Great Lakes Chapter and the National Organization.

GREAT LAKES CHAPTER
North American Rock Garden Society
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FIRST CLASS

Saturday, September 18th Garden tour and plant sale: We will be visiting a garden new to many of us, David Baker's in Ann Arbor. David has a large lot with diverse garden beds, including a rock garden, perennial beds that should be putting on a great show in the fall, and an extensive woodland garden with mature magnolias, kalmias and rhododendrons with many woodland plants. Make sure you come to see a wonderful garden that we have not yet had open for one of our meetings.

Saturday, Oct 23rd Meeting: Our speaker will be Tony Reznicek, your long time newsletter editor, who likes to grow unusual hardy plants for odd reasons and photograph them – especially if they are small enough to fit into a rock garden setting.

Saturday, November 13th Meeting: We will have Nicola Ripley from the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens in Vail, Colorado speak about Colorado alpines and how they grow them. The Garden is young, founded in 1986, and is the highest botanical garden in the world, at 8200 feet, so they have a spectacular setting and unusual conditions.

PLANT SALE PREPARATIONS for September 18th: If you are a newcomer to our group, you will be surprised at the diversity, number of rarities, and size of our two yearly plant sales. They are one of the best things about being a chapter member, and offer the opportunity to get wonderful and unusual plants at very reasonable prices. Also, the sale is very important to the chapter, as it raises the funds for our excellent speaker program. But because of the size of the sale, we do need to have people try to follow certain rules to make the sale run smoothly and quickly.

At home:

1). Please pot or repot plants at least ten days before the sale. Otherwise, the plants may look ragged.

2). Please select appropriate plants for the sale. Interesting and unusual alpines, woodland plants, and small woody plants are ideal. No large, common woody plants, annuals, common perennials, and tropicals, please.

3). Before you bring the plants, label each pot, with the name of the plant [scientific name, if known, and cultivar or variety, if known]. On the back of the label put your name and the year. This allows people both at the sale or later to ask you about the plant. It also helps us when setting up the sale to talk to you if, for example, you have missed putting a price on the plant.

4). We ask people to price their own plants. You can price your plants at home, if you like, but please use a separate price label. The price labels are pulled out of the pots by the cashier to expedite adding up the total.

At the sale:

1) If you have not priced your plants at home, please use the chapter price labels provided to price each pot. Prices range from $2 to $6.50, but mostly are within the $2 to $4 range. Set your plants as close together as possible on the selling tables. You should try to get your plants to the sale a half-hour or so before the sale starts to get them set up and priced, if necessary.

2) Ask Rosalie Meiland to look at your plants. For every 10 plants you bring, you are given one Red Label. Each Red Label entitles you to one "First Pick." This means that those who did not bring plants must stand back and wait for those with Red Labels to make their First Picks. The time for First Pickers to make their choices is limited to 3-5 minutes depending upon the number of First Pick labels given out. Keep in mind that you still have to pay for the plants.

3) Tell Rosalie if you have brought plants that you think might be of "Auction Quality." These are normally either exceptionally rare and desirable plants not available commercially, plants available only at a very high cost, or large, well-grown specimens of highly desirable plants. She will inform our almighty auctioneers who pass judgment as to which and how many plants to auction. For each of your plants chosen for auction, you will get an additional Red Label.