

Flowers and More in 2004
TGOA/MGCA 2004 Convention
Des Moines, Iowa

It was another wonderful convention thanks to the Des Moines, IA Men's Garden Club. Chairperson, Jerri Scott's enthusiasm permeated the scene. She was Johnny on the spot when it came to helping you and making your stay the best ever.

Ed and I arrived at the Holiday Inn Wednesday afternoon in time to pick up our packet of materials which we went through in our room. A short walk about the hotel brought many hugs and handshakes as we met friends from the past years conventions. (This is the favorite part of the conventions for me.)

Thursday morning started with a 7:30 breakfast in the ballroom followed by a welcoming and overview of the day. Workshops started promptly afterwards at 8:30 am. This was really meant to be a working day. My favorite workshop was "The Quietest Soil Amending Operation in Iowa" lead by Robert Lees, Arpeggio Farms. His explanation on Vermiculture including info on worm castings, bins, etc. was very interesting. For more information you can visit his website at <http://www.arpeggionfarms.com/191966.html>.

The website Meeting was well done by Webmaster, Frank Mitch of the Akron Club. It was well-attended and good ideas and suggestions were exchanged. The judging workshop was interesting and informative. I hope we receive more specifics from national soon.

Being that our club sponsors youth gardens, I found "Stop Global Whining, Get those Kids Involved" by Don Otterness, TGOA Youth Gardening Chair, to be interesting. He is very excited about "Children's Gardens". David & MaryAnn Rich of the Akron Club received the Youth Garden Award.

A workshop entitled "Tips, Tools and a Peek Through the Garden Gate" by Marcia Leeper, Garden Gate Corporate Gardener was very interesting in that Marcia not only had a lot to share but she brought the audience into the conversations and answered questions. She is so down to earth in her approach to gardening.

The Calendar and Photography Awards were given out on Thursday evening. Sherrill Lynch, Member at Large, of Countryside, IL won many of the awards including *Sweepstakes Winner* with highest total score. He also won *Best of Show* for Daisy under water, *Gerbera jamesonii* and *Second Runner-Up* for his Fuchsia Plant slide. Elmo Dinehart of the Gardeners of Spokane won *First Runner-Up* for his Dahlia slide, *asteraceae (compositae)*.

Friday was a fun day. At breakfast the newsletter Awards were given out. Congratulations to Leroy Hart, editor of the Akron Men's Garden Club's newsletter "the Garden Gabber" receiving 2nd Place in the Class A Division

Saturday after breakfast and Scholarships Awards we boarded buses to downtown Des Moines where we were directed to several points of interest. Ed and I found the Historical Museum, the farmers market and the Iowa State Capitol very interesting. The evening started with the President's reception and Banquet. After the guest speaker the assembly said their goodbye's until we meet again in West Palm Beach on June 2 - 4, 2005.

Reported by: Gerry Herman, Stow Community Garden Club President and
Central Great Lakes Region Past President