GARDEN CALENDAR

FRANKLIN GARDEN WALK

The Franklin branch of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association, Inc. hosts its annual Garden Walk on Wednesday, June 12. Five gardens will be open for viewing 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with added evening hours of 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

The Garden Club will serve a buffet salad lunch at the Franklin Community Church at two seatings 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Garden walk tickets are $8 pre-sale and $10/day of the walk. Lunch tickets (a limit of 200) $8. Buy tickets at The Apple Tree Room Boutique in Franklin or order by mail by sending a check payable to "W.N.F.& G.A. Franklin Branch" to P.O. Box 250194, Franklin, 48025-0194. If ordering by mail, be sure to specify lunch seating. On the day of the walk, tickets will be sold at the Franklin Village Gazebo on Franklin Road between 13 and 14 Mile roads. A Gazebo Boutique will feature baked goods, decorative garden crafts and art. The Garden Walk Hotline is (248) 851-2668. Profits support horticultural scholarships, as well as local, state and national environmental and horticultural causes.

ROCHESTER WNFGA

Tickets are on sale for a summer garden walk sponsored by the Rochester Hills Museum and Rochester Branch of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association. The walk will be held 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, June 20. Featured gardens will be located in private yards in downtown Rochester, Rochester Hills and Oakland Township. The tour will offer secluded views of Winkler Mill Pond, as well as the opportunity to experience innovative gardens and waterfalls. Master gardeners will also be available to answer questions. Refreshments will also be available at each of the six featured sites.

A plant sale featuring selected species from each garden is planned for the museum grounds. A map to each garden will be provided with tickets. Tickets are $10 in advance, $12 the day of the event and are available at the Rochester Hills Museum 1-4 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays. The Victorian Rose tearoom of Rochester will cater lunch at the downtown American Legion Hall 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. the day of the event. Lunch is $12 and must be paid for in advance. The museum accepts major credit cards.

The museum is located at 1005 Van Hoosen Road, off Tienken Road, one mile east of Rochester Road.

To order by phone, or for more information, call the museum at (248) 656-4663.

TROY GARDEN CLUB

The Troy Garden Club presents its 28th Annual Garden Walk on Wednesday, July 10, featuring six gardens. Refreshments will be served at several of the gardens. A craft boutique and raffle will also be featured at one of the gardens. Hours are from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., with evening hours 6-8:30 p.m.

Proceeds will benefit various community garden-related organizations.

Walk tickets are $10, pre-sale only, and are limited in numbers with no tickets available the day of the walk. They may be bought at the these Troy locations after June 1: Telly's Greenhouse, 3301 John R.; Troy Historical Museum, 60 West Wattles Road; Wilkop Landscape, 6500 Coolidge Highway.

For more information, call Troy Garden Club, (248)879-8091.

To include your garden walk in this listing, write to Susan Steinmueller, Special Editor, The Eccentric, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, 48009. Or, e-mail the information to ssteinmueller@oc.homecomm.net

DESIGN CALENDAR

BASEMENT REMODELING

Bloomfield Hills Community Education, in cooperation with Oakland Builders Institute, will offer an eight-hour Basement Remodeling seminar from 6-10 p.m. Tuesdays, June 11 and 18, at Andover High School, 4200 Andover Road, Bloomfield Hills.

The seminar is designed to help people make better use of valuable space in their homes by planning and completing a successful basement remodeling. Seminar cost is $85 plus a textbook fee of $8.

Pre-register with payment by Friday, June 7, to Bloomfield Hills Community Education. Call (248)433-0885 to register during regular office hours. The instructor is a licensed builder. Oakland Builders Institute teaches building courses in 38 schools in Michigan. For a free brochure and current schedule of Oakland Builders Institute class locations, call toll-free at 1-800-940-2014. On the Internet: www.buildersinstitute.com.

Too good to be true? He'll put this washer to the test

APPLIANCE DOCTOR

JOE GAGNON

A few months ago I received a call from a company in Ohio that manufactures a washing machine not available in any store across the country. They only produce around 500 of these washers per year and sell them to people who call them or find out about the product. In business since 1976, they started making this washer in 1994, and are well known in the commercial laundry industry.

They are now seeking my assistance to help them launch this product in the regular retail industry.

At this point I must tell you that I am not going to give you information on this company, not until I do a lot more research. So far, they have come to my home with the washer in a trailer and they showed me the inner workings.

It is so amazing that anyone can build a washer this simple that I asked the important question of who they have in different areas authorized to do the warranty repairs if needed. The answer given me is one that I've never heard before in the appliance industry. "We have no service personnel in the country nor do we feel a need for them. This washer can be repaired by any person that can hold a screwdriver." And folks, he wasn't kidding.

They give you a book on how to make necessary repairs and a direct phone line to an engineer at the factory. Can you believe it? A washer so simple that you can do all the repairs yourself. You have read my thoughts on how expensive the cost is today of electronic controls on major home appliances. Well, this washer uses an old fashioned timer with the three necessary cycles to do any wash load plus they have, can you believe it, two rinse cycles. Simple turn knobs for water temperature and load size like the old days. And it is not a front loader like everybody is coming out with. It meets the energy star rating set forth by the U.S. Energy Regulation Agency, holds sixteen bath towels and uses only 1 ounce of detergent. The tubs are stainless steel and you can even get the washer cabinet in brushed stainless steel.

The wash cycle is only 32 minutes long, which means finally, there is a washer that does the job faster than the clothes dryer. I'm telling you that this thing is just out of this world and yet today as you are reading this, I still am not ready to give you a name or place to contact. Wait, I forgot something. It spins so smooth that you can balance a nickel on its' edge, and the nickel will not fall down. Try that on your current washing machine.

The next chapter is to be written in several weeks concerning this best kept secret. I am going to the factory to see it made and make sure I didn't get a con-job. I am going to buy one of these and put it in my basement to make sure it does everything they say it does. I am going to get a list of 20 consumers who have owned one of these for the past 5 years and call them with their opinions. When I have completed all of the detective work, I will make arrangements for a dealer to carry them so that you can see it and purchase it. Please do not call me on this subject until I have had a few months to complete the steps I've described. I will let you know.

Stay tuned.

Joe Gagnon can be heard Saturday and Sunday on 760 WJR. He is a member and past president of the Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals. His phone number is (313) 873-9789.

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