

GREAT LAKES CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS)

WINTER NEWSLETTER, JANUARY 2026



CALENDAR OF CHAPTER MEETINGS **meeting details below**

You can always check our website for information: <http://glnargs.com/>

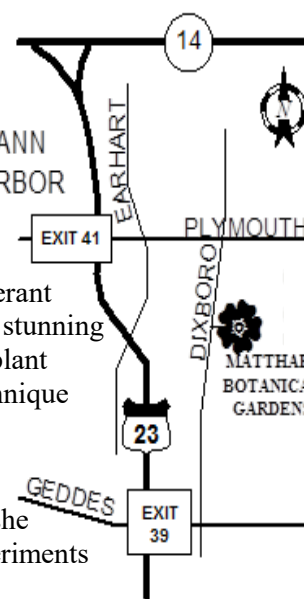
****SATURDAY, Jan. 31: Annual Winter Potluck**

PLACE: Matthaei Botanical Gardens Auditorium

Our traditional Winter Potluck! Please do come. It's a great way to make the winter shorter!

Please welcome Lisa Roper as our speaker for a very special **Winter Potluck**. For the past thirteen years, she has managed the Gravel Garden at the renowned public garden Chanticleer in Wayne, Pennsylvania. A gently sloping site planted with a mix of fine textured grasses, gray-leaved Mediterranean plants, drought tolerant perennials, annuals grown from seed, and hardy succulents, the gravel garden is a stunning and unique landscape. She will introduce some of her favorite plants, talk about plant combinations, cover planting techniques, the importance of "editing," and the technique of using photography to inform design decisions.

After lunch she will talk about some recent endeavors, a new bed surrounding a large *Gleditsia* where most plants are under 2 feet, a section of the garden where she has tried a more well drained mix of grit, gravel and soil, and her split rocks, experiments at crevice gardening in a southeastern Pennsylvania setting.



10:30: Setup

**11:00: Program – The Chanticleer Gravel Garden –
Xeriscaping in the Delaware Valley**

Noonish: Potluck Lunch

Please bring a favorite dish to pass, and your cutlery, cups, and plates. We'll take care of drinks.

1:00: Brief membership business meeting

1:30: Program – Recent Endeavors at Chanticleer: Grit, Gravel, Soil, plus Split Rocks.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! We should have the **spring meetings** all set in stone by the time of the potluck – but I wanted to get this newsletter promptly. **April 18**, we will have Grace Johnson from the Denver Botanical Gardens coming as part of the NARGS speakers tour to give us two talks bracketed by lunch. Our spring plant sale is still to be set up – possibly on **May 23**. We'll have all this set soon! **All the details will be in our Spring Newsletter!**

NARGS 2026 Annual General Meeting –Calgary Alberta: High & Dry in the Chinook.
June 25 – 28. Check the Quarterly or the material on the NARGS website:
(<https://www.nargs.org/2026-agm-calgary-alberta>) for details.

News from NARGS February Carol Eichler, NARGS Board

February 2026:

Lately, I've been wondering, "What does our NARGS membership look like?" I'm kind of a facts and figures person. So I decided to take a look at the membership at the start of this New Year.

The answers are at the end of this article.

1. Let's start with the easy question. How many people belong to NARGS National?
2. What is the percentage of Canadian members?
3. What is the percentage of international members outside of North America? How many countries are represented?
4. Our members come from 49 states. Which state has no members? Is every Canadian province represented?
5. We don't necessarily know which Chapters our NARGS members affiliate with. Some have no affiliation. Instead, which US state has the most members?
6. What region of the US hails the most members? Which Canadian province?
7. Which state(s) and province(s) have more than one chapter?
8. When did ARGs become NARGS?
9. Which Chapter is the oldest?
10. How many followers do the NARGS Facebook pages have?

Answers:

1. At this snapshot in time there were 1,705. This number fluctuates. We do not know how many Chapter members there are but that number should be significantly higher.
2. 9%. 9 of the 10 provinces are represented.
3. 23% from 19 countries
4. Hawaii has no NARGS members.
5. Colorado at 227 followed by New York at 168 (not even close), California with 155 and Washington, Oregon and Pennsylvania closely trailing. North Carolina is the last state to top

100 members to round out the top 7. Forget trying to calculate which state averages the most members per total population, though I suspect that would be Alaska. It is the most sparsely populated of our 50 states and it seems to be holding its own with 26 members.

6. I was surprised by this one. Granted I defined region somewhat arbitrarily, the west only narrowly outnumbered members from the Midwestern heart of our country. In Canada, Ontario has the most.

7. 6: California, Massachusetts, New York, Ontario, Oregon, Pennsylvania

8. January 1994

9. According to the timeline in the NARGS publication, "A History of the American Rock Garden Society (later renamed to NARGS), the oldest chapter is in British Columbia. The Rock Garden Society of Ohio was founded in 1929, 5 years before the official founding of the American Rock Garden Society in 1935. Initially ARGs was organized by geographic regions rather than chapters. Over time more regions were created, so in May 1972 ARGs approved a by-law change to redesignate the regions as chapters.

10. The NARGS FB Organization page currently has 6,300 followers. The NARGS FB Group has 9,600 members. Why aren't all these people members?

Follow-up on Carol's "News from NARGS" Tony Reznicek

Our Chapter has always been a strong one, both financially and in terms of membership. But like all NARGS Chapters – and many other volunteer organizations, no matter how little work a position is, there seems to be an increasingly greater difficulty in getting people to volunteer to help out as officers. It's really very easy to do many of the jobs, so please think about coming prepared at the winter potluck to volunteer. Look at the situation Carol has outlined – NARGS has 1,705 members, The NARGS Facebook Group

has 9,600 members! I agree with Carol's comment. Why aren't these people members!? There won't be any content for these people to enjoy if NARGS shrinks too much. Have we become a society of digital parasites?

We have such great programs and sales in our Chapter, but if we can't get people to help out, eventually, the people who are running things will tire, and cracks will show. So please consider taking a turn as an officer.

Most specifically, we would like someone who has not hosted a spring sale/garden tour ever or recently to step up and volunteer their yard for this May. Your garden does not have to be large and spectacular. Every garden is unique, and rock gardeners, of all people, appreciate small scale gardens.

Now, unlike last winter, where we had mild periods, and even a few tough plants in flower, we have nothing flowering outdoors in Michigan. But some of you may know that I just got back from Chile, so here are some South American alpines for your entertainment.



Alstroemeria umbellata



Maihuenia poeppigii



Chaetanthera villosa

Please send address changes to:

**Linda Gates,
7880 Ernst Road
Manchester, MI 48158**

**Do include any updated email
addresses**

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Great Lakes Chapter:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

email: _____

Send \$20.00 per year (check payable to Chapter) to:
Linda Gates
Treasurer, Great Lakes Chapter, NARGS
7880 Ernst Road
Manchester, MI 48158, USA

OR pay in person at the next GLC meeting

We strongly encourage people to join both the Great Lakes Chapter, and the National Organization.

National Organization:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

email: _____

Send \$40.00 dues (check payable to NARGS) to:
Bobby Ward
Executive Secretary
North American Rock Garden Society
P.O. Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619

OR pay through the NARGS website:

<https://www.nargs.org/join>

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FIRST CLASS