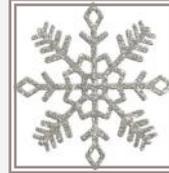




Bloomin' Times

February 2023



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WINTERING IN FLORIDA

Photo by Joan Kylish

CLUB NEWS

FROM THE ARCHIVES

*A collection of tips and items of interest to perk up your spirits as we slog through the last months of winter
...compiled by Richard Pelikan*

February 1996

Bring in those spring blooming branches to force indoors. Most plants take about 4 weeks to force blooms. Forsythia works really well.

February 1997

Save your Amaryllis and make them rebloom by letting the leaves yellow then cutting back to about 2" above soil. They require lots of sun and nutrients, so put [them] in a sunny window, water and fertilize once a month.

Then, put the bulbs to rest between September and November. Withhold water, let the leaves turn yellow and cut off. They need 8 to 10 weeks' storage in their pot with bone-dry soil. Keep them in the dark, at 45 to 50 degrees or so, ideally in a humid locale, so it doesn't dry out too much. Repot if necessary, (add water) and bring out to flower just before the holidays!

February 2002

Eggshells make great seed starting pots. Poke a hole in the bottom of the eggshell. Fill with soil and plant seeds. When seedlings are ready to transplant, crack the shell slightly and bury the eggshell.

February 2011

Don't start your vegetable plants indoors too early. Six weeks ahead of the expected planting date is early enough for the fast growth species such as cabbage. Eight weeks allows enough time for the slower growing types such as peppers.

February To-Do List

- Remove heavy snow from branches.
- Force flowering branches indoors.
- Push any perennials that have been heaved out of the ground by frost action back into the soil gently but firmly.



RHGC General Meeting

February 8, 2023

“Little Island”

Presented by

Liman Cheng



The “Little Island” project on Pier 55 on the Hudson River is New York City’s newest park. Cheng describes his experience in caring for this distinctive garden.

Membership Tea for Annie Dai



L-R: Margot Partridge, Joe Da Rold, Beth Hanscom, Annie Dai
Photographer: Sharon Shiraga, Host and Committee Chair

February Birthdays

2 Jeanette Pelikan
11 Inge Bossert
14 Cathy Becker
16 Pam Kolb
19 Jeanmarie Keenan



20 Peggy Smith
26 Lee Perry
27 Tracy Criscitiello
28 Kay Cross

CLUB NEWS

AWARDS

Kay Cross Award

Nancy Smith

Members of the Judges' Council gave the award to Nancy for her Kitchen table runner, citing the juxtaposition of greens and botanical elements and its harmonious color scheme.



Judy Kampe Award

Diane Genco

The popular vote of RHGC members went to Diane's Woodland Lady, a stunning, whimsical mix of greens and woodland flora.



DTH

Revisited

- * Visitor Comment: "I visited the holiday house tour today and was delighted. I visit such tours around the state every year, and this one was among the loveliest."
- * The President of the Garden Club of Westfield and the President of the Plainfield Garden Club both attended the event and left the Mistletoe Market with arms full. Thanks, Nicole and Kate!
- * Boutique sales grossed \$10,850, and House sales grossed \$4,650.

New Octogenarians



At the December general meeting, members celebrated Alice's and Joe's 80th birthdays.

January Speaker Rob Lombard



UPCOMING EVENTS

2-7 10:00 am
Mobile Meals Workshop
Meet at Baptist Church.
Contacts: Kris Luka / Sharon Shiraga

2-8 3:30 pm Juniors
Valentine Floral Arrangements for
Nursing Home residents
Meet at Betty Clark's.

2-14 1:00 pm
Principles of Floral Design
with Kay Cross
Mountainside Public Library



2-28 6:00 pm
Movie Night with pot-luck dinner
Meet at Beth Hanscom's.
Contact Adah Levin.

Thanks to all of the contributors to this issue:

Richard Pelikan, Barbara Spellmeyer,
Jeanette Pelikan, Sharon Shiraga, Joan
Kylish, Maryfran Annese, Joan Barna,

NEW MEMBERS, 2022-23

Photos by Jeanie Pelikan

Say Hello!

Have you introduced yourself to our newer members? I hear members say they see new faces but are not sure if they are just guests. Remember, our new members are seeing a sea of 70 unfamiliar faces, so please be the one to make the introductions. You might even be making a new friend.



Annie Dai



Ginny Puskar



Betty Estevez Clark



Mabel Woloj



Carmen Skoletsky
Prospective Member



Regina Kelley



Jeanmarie Keenan
Returning Member

CLUB PHOTOGRAPHERS



Photograph by Jeanie Pelikan



Photograph by Jeanie Pelikan



Photograph by Maryfran Annese



Photograph by Joe Da Rold

JUNIORS

January Meeting

The Juniors gathered at the home of Betty Clark to make fairy-house doors, which they will attach to trees at their homes. RHGC members assisting the youngsters included Sharon Shiraga, Joan Barna, Mabel Woloj, Annie Dai, and Betty Clark.

Photos by Betty Clark



Fairy Lore

Fairies are believed to blow away bad dreams, take care of hurt or sick insects, take away your worries, and help distribute snowflakes when it snows. Fairies are fond of bluebell flowers in the garden. They love to eat cake, sweets, and freshly churned butter.

It's fun to imagine that good fairies are doing good things to help protect the Earth.

Joan Barna



Participants include Lila Spadaro, Arline Bound, Arabella Morabito, Anna Athungal, and Grace Dai.

GARDEN POTPOURRI

GARLIC - EXPOSED

At this year's Fall Plant Exchange, then-member Lesley Parness shared garlic bulbs with club members, with wishes for a successful crop. Barbara Murphy, who was one of the lucky recipients, shares this fascinating bit of garlic trivia:

“Garlic can turn blue or green if it is exposed for a long time to any acidic ingredient such as lemon juice or vinegar. The acidity causes the reorganization of the molecules in the garlic cloves. Don't worry; this is perfectly normal and doesn't mean there's something wrong with the garlic. Garlic that has turned blue or green during pickling or cooking is perfectly safe to eat, and the presence of color has no effect on the garlic's flavor. Some cultures even prize colorful garlic. In China, garlic is deliberately pickled in such a way that it turns a jade-green and is consumed during the Lunar New Year, or Spring Festival.”

[FYI: The next Lunar Festival will be on January 22, 2023.]



GARDEN LIMERICKS

I looked out the window and what did I see
A Rose-breasted Grosbeak looking at me
This might sound absurd
But I swear that that bird
Was wondering what kind of bird was - me!

jdr



[In 2022, Barb Spellmeyer spotted a Grosbeak in her yard.]

Plants That Bring Good Luck

Lucky bamboo (*Dracaena sanderiana*):

Did you know that the *Lucky Bamboo* is not a bamboo and that it's in the Asparagus family? Also, the number of stalks is significant. One is truth; Two is love and friendship; Three means happiness and longevity; five stalks are for health; six for wealth, and so on up to 888. Steer away from four; it's bad luck!

Hawaiian Ti plant (*Cordyline minalis*):

Early Polynesians believed the *Ti* plant had mystical powers and brought good fortune to the home. A ti plant with two stalks can double the luck of those living there, while finding love too.

Money tree (*Pachira aquatica*):

Money Trees are often braided together, but in order for the “luck” to work, you need to have three to five braided plants (steering clear of unlucky number four). Additionally, its leaves must have five or more “fingers” to be lucky.



Jade plant (*Crassula ovata*):

In Feng Shui lore, plants with rounded leaves bring good fortune. Jade is a traditional gift given for new homes and businesses. When placed near the entrance, it is said to bring prosperity and success.



Shamrock plant (*Oxalis*):

The four-leaf clover, which is the symbol of good luck, is a genetic mutation of a three-leaf clover. True shamrocks are clovers, and are *trifoliums*, meaning three leaves. The potted shamrock is actually an *Oxalis* and not a clover, so why is it on this list?

Snake plant (*Sansevieria*):

This plant has been deemed to be a good-luck plant because of its ability to absorb poisonous gases from the air, removing toxins such as formaldehyde and benzene.

Source: Gardening Know How, <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/info/good-luck-plants.htm>



“Vision of Beauty 2025”

By Florence Leysene



“The Vision of Beauty” Calendar Committee met many times to review all the submitted entries of flower designs, botanical arts and gardens from designers all over the world. We will produce another outstanding calendar for 2024 based on the high quality of the submissions. With so many entries and such limited space in the calendar, we can only publish a certain amount.

Please continue to send us your beautiful photographs as we are already accepting new entries for the 2025 calendar. There is a new email address to submit your entry form and image. It is vob@gardenclub.org. Be sure to check the NGC Forms page (under awards) for the VOB Entry Form which includes the submission requirements.”

This article was published in the 2023 Winter edition of The National Gardener

Florence Leysene is the NGC “Vision of Beauty” Calendar chair.

41st Connecticut Flower & Garden Show

At the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford

February 23-26

“Gateway to Spring” is this year’s theme. It features expansive live gardens and a nonstop schedule of seminars and demonstrations. Hundreds of booths will showcase handcrafted gifts, fresh flowers, plants, garden ornaments, and more.

Discounted Admission Tickets On Sale at CTFlowerShow.com.

Coming Soon!

Updated Member Handbook

The updated handbook (2023) will soon be available on the RHGC website (www.rakeandhoe.org) For the password, contact Beth Siano (elizabeth.siano@gmail.com) or Diana Kazazis (diana.kazazis@gmail.com). The Handbook contains the club’s Bylaws, History, Committee Descriptions, and a complete listing of previous award winners.

TREES ...

The Town of Westfield has been awarded \$10,000 through the Greening Union County program, to go toward the planting of 100 new trees.

This grant is funded through the Union County Open Space, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Trust Fund, with funds awarded to municipalities on a matching grant basis.



... AND MORE TREES

The New Jersey Forest Service oversees the *Big Tree Conservation Program*, keeping a record of the largest trees in the state since the 1930s. Nearly 100 record-setting trees are in Union County. In addition to height, other factors, such as circumference, crown, and age, make up the requirements for a tree to be a Champion. *Note: Not all of the 100 record-setting trees in Union County are “champions.”* Here are a few of the 39 statewide “Champion” trees in Union County and their heights. Unfortunately, the source does not list the towns they are in.

European Beech—107’	Lawson Cypress—72’
Bur Red Oak—105’	Sawara Cypress—84’
Seckel Pear—35’	Oriental Spruce—38’
London Planetree—100’	Southern Magnolia—54’
Sweet Cherry—47’	Colorado Spruce—72’
Acer Palmatum—42’	Japanese Pagoda Tree—85’



“Champion” Red maple

Lower Alloways Creek Township
Circumference: 22 feet; Canopy: 80 feet