

Bloomin' Times

October 2025

Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield



Photo by Jeanie Pelikan

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“The Changing Seasons of Container Gardening”

At our October general meeting,
Chris Endris will guide us in
creating container gardens that
thrive throughout the seasons.



Nancy Wallace Award

Bring your creativity to our
October general meeting!
Create a floral design using
predominantly herbs.
No height or width restrictions.
Designer's choice of elements
and freedom of style.
Include a 3" X 5" index card
with list of plant materials.

The Heart of the Award: Nancy Wallace

Nancy Wallace was an integral part of the Rake and Hoe Garden Club from the beginning in 1952. The waiting list for the Garden Club of Westfield was very long at that time. When a group of women founded a new garden club she became a charter member. Nancy held just about every position in the RHGC over the years, including President.

Nancy's strength was horticulture. She became knowledgeable about native plants, wildflowers, perennials. Along the way of her gardening life she developed an interest in herbs and this soon became her specialty. For many years she had her own business harvesting and selling herb products including lavender wands, sweet dream pillows, and herb fire starters.

Nancy gave programs to a variety of groups including our own juniors. She developed recipes featuring dried herbs and led fundraisers with luncheons in members homes with herbal themes and favors.

All three of her daughters were Junior Garden Club members and today are active tenders of organic vegetable and flower gardeners. Each has a compost pile.

When Miller Cory House became a museum, Rake and Hoe became one of the two garden clubs that maintained the gardens. As the landscapes and gardens were designed, Nancy planned the original herb gardens and was often found there on open days weeding and answering questions. Every other Wednesday Nancy was in the garden trimming and weeding often with her young granddaughter who became a junior docent for special programs. She was very active with the volunteers at the museum and took the leadership in documenting and recording the antique furnishings and other holdings of the museum collection. Researching and collecting antiques was a lifelong focus of her life.



Nancy also worked with Trailside Museum designing and overseeing the Touch and Scent Garden in front of the "new" building. She represented the club on the town tree committee and oversaw our memorial plantings at Mindowaskin Park, including our replanting of the Azalea hill near the stairs to Mountain Avenue.

Nancy Wallace left her imprint all over Rake and Hoe. The Agnes Eggiman Award was her idea and was designed to recognize our own members who went above and beyond their basic membership requirements. She was instrumental in setting up the Clare Brownell Memorial Wildflower Garden working with George Brownell to fulfill his dream. Her own garden provided many of the original plants. She chaired many fundraisers and gave many programs including a medieval luncheon where members dressed the part and ate homemade medieval foods. These are just some of the many connections between Nancy Wallace and Rake and Hoe.

For Nancy Wallace, The Rake and Hoe Garden Club was a lifetime avocation and a focus of her dedication. She always loved gardening and was a master at it, and R & H gave her another opportunity outside of her backyard to pursue this interest. She was an avid supporter and lifetime member of the club. I think she saw it as the perfect way to not only utilize her skills and have fun with her friends, but also to instill and foster the enjoyment of gardening in others. It was a seed that she nurtured her whole life.

By Linda Parker, daughter of Nancy Wallace



Important Dates



Garden B's

10/13, 3 pm - Educational session on use of Merlin & other apps at Inge Bossert's. Followed by potluck.

Artistic Crafts

10/14, 1 pm - Air dry clay botanicals, meet at Mountainside Library

Juniors

10/15, 3:30 pm - Shadowlawn clean-up and rock decorating

Community Projects

10/15, 10 am - Fall clean-up & bulb planting, meet at Jardine

10/20, 9 am - Mini arrangements for Mobile Meals, meet at Baptist Church

10/22, 10 am - Holiday tree ornaments for Jardine, meet at Cheryl Rubin's

10/28, 10 am - Sign cards for Veterans, meet at Maryfran Annese's

Flower Design

10/21, 1:30 pm - Designing without oasis, meet at Mountainside Library

Photography: Judy Kampe Award

Now is the time to start taking pictures for this year's photography competition for the Judy Kampe Award. This year, the Judy Kampe Award will feature two separate popular vote contests: one during the January general meeting and another at the April general meeting. The winners of these two contests will compete in a final round for the prestigious Judy Kampe Award, with the winner being announced at the June luncheon.

At the January general meeting, club members will have the opportunity to enter the following two categories (only one entry per member allowed):

- ***Winter Holidays:*** Capture an indoor or outdoor setting featuring greens, celebrating Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, or New Year's Eve.
- ***Back in Time:*** Photograph an animal, tree, plant, or forest native to New Jersey before European settlers arrived (please avoid invasive species, cars, and airplanes).

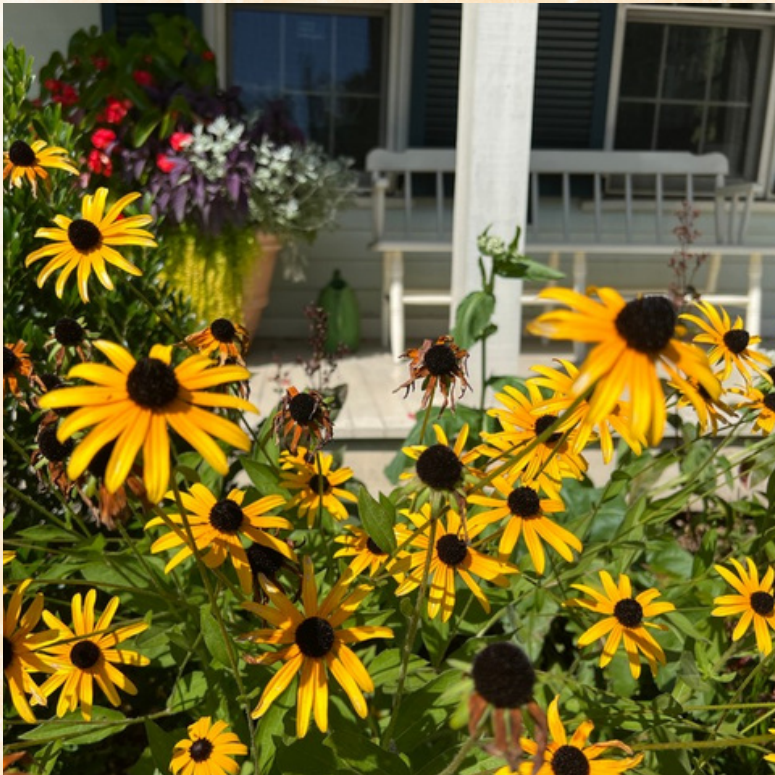
At the April general meeting, members can enter the following two categories (only one entry per member allowed):

- ***Frame Your Way Away:*** Photos that frame a scene, such as views through a window, door, or garden structure. Must include greens.
- ***Let It Moss:*** Any subject featuring moss, lichens, or mushrooms.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Mabel Woloj.



9/11 Levi Cory House Pop-Up Garden



A Tour of Two Native Plant Gardens

By Karen Troiano

On a lovely morning in September, a group of Rake and Hoe club members met for a tour of two native gardens. The first garden was at the home of Bianca Wright in Westfield. In her front yard, Bianca begins with a 'soft landing' garden, an area where native plants grow under a large tree. Seeds fall softly to the earth and naturally germinate. Fireworks Goldenrod is 'Chelsea chopped', she explains, so the back is tall and the front is short and full. Nearby is a 'hell strip', a difficult place to grow most plants because it is hot, arid and affected by the salt applied to winter roads. Bianca boasts three rain gardens that are filled with a variety of native plants including our chosen flower of the year, butterfly weed. Having no sprinkler system, the rain gardens are watered by rain runoff from her roof. As Bianca's backyard is fenced, protecting it from the ravages of deer, the beds are filled with blooming native plants, browning seeds and pods such as Golden Ragwort, Anise Hyssop, and Joe Pyeweed, all low maintenance plants supporting pollinators and birds.

Our next stop was Mary's Meadow. Hidden and growing near train tracks in Cranford, this piece of property is an unexpected delight. Mary singlehandedly eliminates invasive plants to encourage the wild flowers and grasses to grow in her meadow, which her father purchased many years ago. Throughout, she scatters pieces of art including a scarecrow to add the element of fun and surprise. This garden is clearly a labor of love.

Both ladies are members of The Native Plant Society of New Jersey and are passionate about creating and preserving environments that support native plants, pollinators, and wildlife. We are grateful for the time they so generously shared with us.



Juniors September Education Class

By Cheryl Rose Rubin

Robert Lombard from Friends of Brightwood Park spoke about the history and biology of the park to the Juniors. The meeting was moved indoors due to rain.



Cheryl discussed the various colors associated with each season and the energy and feelings they convey. She also asked about how we can think about manipulating color when sketching, planting a garden, or flower arranging. Following this, the children utilized pastels and colored pencils to create sketches inspired by beautiful images of Brightwood Park.



Club Photography



By Jeanie Pelikan



By Margot Partridge



By Maryfran Annese



By Jeanie Pelikan