

# BLOOMIN' TIMES



Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield | November 2025



Photo by Jeanie Pelikan

## Member Birthdays

Nov. 4 - Maryann Pietruszki

Nov. 27 - Joe Da Rold

Nov. 27 - Joan Kylish

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# Important Dates



## Photography

**11/5, 1 pm** - Still Life: Back to Basics Workshop, meet at Mabel Woloj's

## Community Projects

**11/6, 10 am** - Deliver Cards to Veterans and Plant Cabbages, meet at NJ Veterans Memorial Home

## Community Gardens

**11/7, 10 am** - Shadowlawn Fall Clean-up, meet at Shadowlawn

## Juniors

**11/19, 3:30 pm** - Make a Thanksgiving Centerpiece, meet at Beth Siano's

## Flower Design

**11/25, 1:30 pm** - Make a Thanksgiving Centerpiece, meet at Mountainside Library



# Nancy Wallace Award

By Irene Greenstein and Nancy Smith, Awards Committee Co-Chairs

The October Rake & Hoe General Meeting included a membership wide competition to design a floral arrangement using predominantly herbs in honor of Nancy Wallace. There were 17 entries of all variations of size, shape, and style. The following members came in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place for the 2025-26 Nancy Wallace Award as chosen by their peers:



**1st Place- Sharon Shiraga**

**2nd Place- Linda Parker**

**3rd Place - Carmen Skoletsky**

Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who participated! A special thank you to Nina, Gayle, Karen, and Regina, our co-planners. It was a wonderful event!

## Plant Exchange & Composting



## Designing Without Oasis



# Community Projects





# Leave the Leaves!

By Karen Troiano



This fall has been perfectly beautiful. The trees' colors of red, gold, and chartreuse are brilliant in the autumn sunlight. Soon you will be running for your rakes preparing to discard that blanket of leaves in your garden. STOP! Let's think about this. If you remove those fallen leaves, you will disturb the ecosystem by eliminating important winter protection and insulation from the elements for thousands of insects, caterpillars and chipmunks. Butterfly larvae, including monarchs, and 94% of the moth species rely on that leaf layer for their life cycle. 96% of birds feed their young caterpillars. One generation of chicks will consume 6,000 to 9,000 caterpillars before leaving their nest. You have seen the black-capped chickadees scratch through the leaves for insects to survive the winter. Leaves also provide the moist habitat needed for our declining firefly population.

Thirty five million tons of leaves are wasted in the garbage fills. That converts to 12% of all solid waste accumulated in this country. Rather than mowing or raking those leaves to the curb, relocate them to existing beds where they will decompose, becoming mulch while adding nutrients like nitrogen to support your plants and soil next spring. This process will keep moisture and water in the soil encouraging root growth for your plants while preventing weeds from germinating. You have begun planting native plants; now is the time to think of supporting our wildlife by just repurposing your leaves.



# Club Photography



By Nina Sylvester



By Jeanie Pelikan

# Club Photography



By Nina Sylvester



By Nina Sylvester



By Maryfran Annese