



# The Trowel

Volume 2, Issue 4

## President's Prose

Hello Dear Members and Friends,

I do hope that you all enjoyed your Thanksgiving with friends and family. What a wonderful celebration and opportunity to be thankful for all the blessings that we enjoy living in this marvelous country. This is really one of my favorite holidays – too bad it is in between Halloween and Christmas and seems to fade somewhat with decorations that accompany those.

You may recall at our Anniversary Celebration we auctioned an African Safari. The winning bidders were long time members Helen Price and Pat Frank and they asked me to design a trip around the Zulu Nyala property so that they could enjoy more of the sights of South Africa. I could not have been more delighted to do so and in October this year, a small group of nine of us departed on the “trip of a lifetime”! We were joined by members Bob and Lynn Gilly and five other delightful ladies. Bob was our “Alpha” male!!

It would take this whole newsletter to tell you about the trip as it was wonderful in every possible way. Some of the highlights though included: the successful hunt of a cheetah on our very first game drive! Many people go to Africa several times and never get to see this amazing event. We watched as she made the “kill” and eventually dragged the impala into the nearby bushes to start her meal. Then a day later while visiting the beautiful little Hluhluwe game reserve, we were surrounded by a huge herd of elephants! In front of us, in the bushes to the right, approaching from the left and behind us as well – it was incredibly exciting! Saint Lucia World Heritage site provided us with huge pods of hippo, crocodiles right alongside the boat and marvelous bird sightings.

The city of Cape Town is the most beautiful in the world, build on the slopes of Table Mountain and providing guests with warm cosmopolitan hospitality and exquisite scenery. Our visit to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens was a highlight for those of us who recognized the various native plants that are now common place in our gardens here at home – such as the lowly geranium and African daisies, and exotics like clivia, bird of paradise, protea and agapanthus. The “grande finale” was Victoria Falls where we strolled along the lip of the great gorge marveling at this fabulous spectacle of nature. Here we stayed at the closest lodge with a gorgeous pool and as we sat in the sunshine, we thought about you all. Our “farewell” dinner was on a wonderful steam train, with dining car reminiscent of the golden era of train travel! A highlight indeed for Bob who is a train buff! None of us wanted to return to a wintry Chicago, however, Helen and Bob have agreed to show us pictures in due course so that we can share our adventure with all of you.

Well, Christmas approaches and then another New Year. I hope that I had a chance to see you all at Jameson's to personally wish you a Blessed Christmas and good health and happiness in the New Year. Please remember that we have several dear members who need your thoughts and prayers especially at this time – Geri Beyer, Mary Fortino, Jo Dabrowski and Marian Jonas. If you can, please send them a little note with your greetings.

*“Good tidings to you, And all of your kin,  
Good tidings for Christmas, And a Happy New Year”  
—We Wish You A Merry Christmas*

## Christmas Party at Jameson's

Nearly 40 of us enjoyed a lovely Christmas dinner at Jameson's on December 9. After the meal, Linda Kunesh led us in our White Elephant gift exchange. Many lovely and some very funny items showed up! Joyce demonstrated our new portable PA system that was given to the club by Ernie and Bobbi Pulido in appreciation for their surprise 50th Wedding Anniversary party. It will be such a good tool at our monthly meetings and other gatherings. Thank you, Pulidos!!!! A very generous cash collection of \$400 was gathered to buy Christmas presents for the children of the clients of Stepping Stones, one of our year-end donation recipients.





## Upcoming 2015 Programs

### January 20

Annual Business Meeting, 6:30 PM

Member, Marilyn Datillo, marking her 30 year anniversary as a cruise specialist and travel agent, will also be sharing details of a romantic River Cruise that she is planning for the Fall of 2015. Cruise Dates are September 16-December 26, 2015. Please arrive at 6pm to hear all about it.

### February 17

Karen Thompson of Thomson Topiaries will demonstrate the art of constructing topiaries and discuss their care. Karen will have topiary frames and supplies on hand for sale that evening.

### March 17

Joel Barcak, Owner of Blumen Gardens in Sycamore, Illinois  
Joel will share his informative and humorous program on  
"Reducing Maintenance Through Good Design. Did you know  
that he considers the most important tool in our garden to be a  
measuring tape?"



Bobbi, Maureen and Cathy will be gathering in late January to plan the rest of the 2015 meetings. We hope you took the time to participate in the interest survey. We strive to make every meeting be interesting and informative to as many of our members as possible.

## Membership Dues and Refreshments for our Meetings...

2015 Membership Dues will be collected at the January meeting. The dues are \$20 for singles and \$25 for couples. Please make checks payable to Bloomingdale Garden Club.

At the January meeting we will be signing up to bring refreshments to our monthly meetings. Please note that if you are unable to attend the meeting you signed up for, you must either find someone else to take your place or drop off your refreshments to another member's home ahead of time.



## Snowman Crossing Gathering...

Several members gathered at the Bloomingdale Library on Sunday, November 30 to decorate one of their Snowman Crossing Christmas Trees. New ornaments were made at our November meeting and we think they just look spectacular!



L-R: Henia, Maureen, Marilyn, Joyce, Jennifer, Loriann, Bobbi, Shari, Bonni, Carole and Sue.



Shari and Bonni

## Recent Program Highlights

### September—Viva les Vines

Nancy Bell from the U of I Extension presented a very informative program on the many different vining plants that can be used in our gardens as well as the support structures that they need. There were many vines highlighted that were new to many in attendance. Here is a website that she loves to use as a source of information and plants. <http://www.silverstarvinery.com/>

### October—Don White—Success With Orchids

If you weren't there, you missed a fabulous presentation. Don not only gave us valuable tips on how to grow orchids successfully, he brought in a wonderful array of plants that he highlighted in his presentation and many were offered for sale. His greenhouse is located in Frankfort, Illinois and is open Monday-Saturday, 9am—4pm. He asks that you please call ahead: 815-469-3774.



Called "Dancing Ladies"  
for a Reason

Don shared this recipe if you have problems with bugs on your Orchids:

Spray with rubbing alcohol to start and then give them a dose of the following: 2 tsp. vegetable oil, 2 tsp liquid soap (any kind). Mix with water in a quart bottle and spray. To clean leaves—use lemon juice or milk—they like the acidity apparently.

### November—A Night of Crafting & Voting on our Year End Donations

We were all very busy doing several different projects: Christmas corsages for West Suburban Care Center residents, new ornaments for the Bloomingdale Library's Christmas Tree Display and those in attendance took home a Christmas Glass Snowglobe decoration.



Emil



Esther & Sue

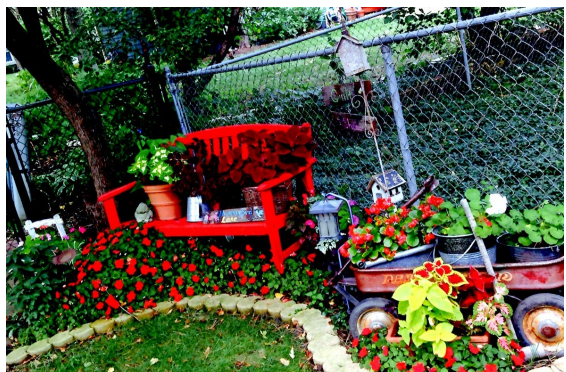


Kathryn



## 2014 Photo Contest Winners and Honorable Mentions

Congratulations to our winners!



First Place: Susan A, Schaumburg

Prizes Are Gift Certificates to our 2015  
Plant Sale:

1st—\$25.00

2nd—\$20.00

3rd—\$10.00



Second Place: Joyce B., Bloomingdale



Third Place: Mary Ellen J.,  
Bloomingdale

Honorable Mentions.....



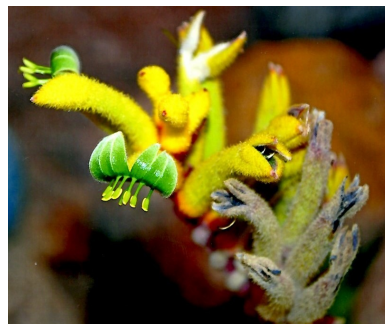
Roger T, Bloomingdale



Marilyn J., Bloomingdale



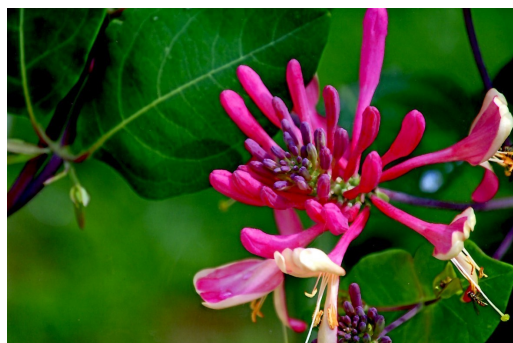
Lauren R., Roselle



Kathy M., Roselle



George H., Bloomingdale



Kathy M., Roselle

## 2014 Year End Donations

<b>BLOOMINGDALE GARDEN CLUB DONATIONS</b>	<b>2014</b>
District II Luncheon Donation	\$ 47.00
Helping Hand Donation	\$ 1,000.00
Memorial Day Flowers	\$ 75.00
Southern Illinois University-Scholarship for James Wallich	\$ 500.00
Bloomingtondale VFW Post	\$ 500.00
DPCC (Dupage Convalescent Center)	\$ 300.00
DuPage Pads	\$ 500.00
Northern Illinois Food Bank	\$ 500.00
Peoples Resource Center	\$ 500.00
Poised For Success	\$ 200.00
Stepping Stones	\$ 300.00
University of Illinois Extension Master Gardner Volunteers for Plant Sale	\$ 100.00
Bloomingtondale Township Food Pantry	\$ 500.00
Character Counts Roselle Family House Fire - Theresa Marotta and Family	\$ 500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,522.00</b>



## 50th Anniversary Silent Auction Safari

The group took their trip this fall. Here is a picture of the group that went:

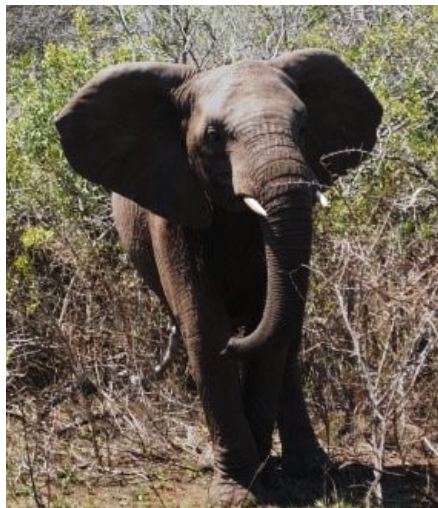


left to right: front row - Helen Price, Joyce Basel, Lynn Gilly, Pat Frank  
back row - Sallee Lowery, Harriet Morrison, Judy Briggs, guide, Bob Gilly, Sharon Plonka

...And here are some of the things they saw!



Zebra in Zambia



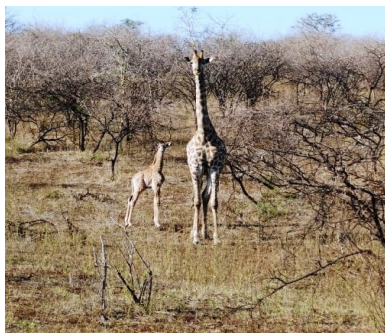
Baby Elephant



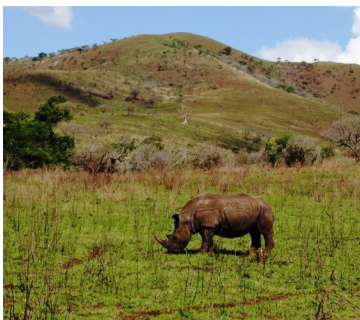
Wildebeest



## More photos from South Africa....



Mom Giraffe with 1 week old baby



Rhino in Hluhluwe



Protea in Stellenbosch



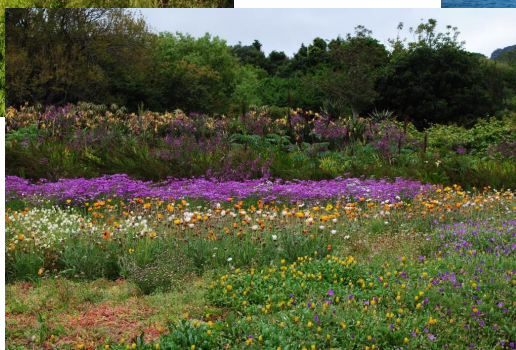
Left: Victoria Falls

Right: Penguins in



Above: Stellenbosch Vineyards

Right: Kirstenbosch



Above: Wharf at Cape,  
fur seals



## Membership News

Helen Price has two exciting pieces of news to share:

Zeffy is going to be a big brother! Helen's daughter, Katie and husband Vince, are expecting a baby boy in May.

Helen's son, Tom, and his fiancée, Kate, are getting married in November or 2015.

Rick Zarek (aka Moose) reports that the biopsies done on his lymph nodes in October were negative, the doctors are still working on a diagnosis. Rick did pass all his tests to become a school bus driver. Hopes to get started in January.

## Poinsettia Pointers

Over 34 million poinsettias are sold each year. This makes them one of the most popular flowering potted plants in the United States.

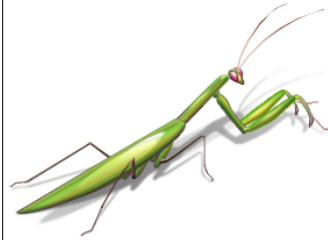


Birds & Blooms Dec/Jan 2015

Should we throw away our poinsettias after the holidays? According to HGTV magazine, December 2014, No!

Bring the plant outside in late winter, storing it in a shed or garage so it can adjust to the cold weather. In the spring, after the frost, plant it in a bed or container in a spot with indirect light. The hole should be twice the width of the pot and shallow enough that half an inch of the root ball is above ground. Prune to eight inches, watering and fertilizing every two weeks, it should bloom again next winter.

## Praying Mantises in Winter?



According to David Mijewski, a naturalist with the National Wildlife Federation, you won't find any adult mantises in winter.

But...they have left signs of life behind. Like many insects, these garden predators die off when there's a freeze, but the next generation lives on in egg cases

that were laid the previous summer or fall. Praying mantis egg cases are fairly large and pretty easy to spot: they look like scraggly gray ping pong balls attached to old wildflower and grass stems, or the twigs of trees and shrubs. As soon as the weather warms in spring, the eggs will hatch, and hundreds of miniature mantises will disperse to begin hunting.

Birds & Blooms Dec/Jan 2015

## Bird Cupcakes

From Birds & Blooms, Dec/Jan 2011

Melt 1 cup shortening and 2 cups chunky peanut butter over low heat, then mix in 5 cups of cornmeal. Fill cupcake tins (use paper liners if you plan to give them away) and top with your choice of nuts, birdseed or dried berries. Cool in the refrigerator.



To give as a gift, arrange on a plate, or stack them and wrap with cellophane. Add a bow for an instant present. These would make fun Christmas gathering favors to pass out to all your guests.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Our member, Helen Price, suggested we remind our membership of the value of volunteering during this holiday and winter season. There are opportunities in every community; from food pantries, homeless shelters, nursing homes, etc. Volunteering not only benefits the recipients, but it will impact you in ways you cannot imagine.

Think about it!

## Wacky Holiday -Squirrel Appreciation Day

Usually the bane of bird feeders, the humble squirrel gets a reprieve every January 21. On this day, give the bushy-tailed rodents a treat and consider the many trees that have sprouted from seeds and nuts that squirrels buried and lost.

Birds & Blooms Extra-January 2014



## 2015 Chicago Flower & Garden Show

**Tickets for the 2015 Show are on sale now!**

**Saturday, March 14-Sunday, March 22**

**Sunday-Wednesday: 10am-6pm, Thursday-Saturday: 10am-8pm**

**Purchase online before March 14, 2015 and save \$2 off the box office price with no service fees!**



The 2015 Chicago Flower & Garden Show, presented by Mariano's, continues to celebrate "Do Green, Do Good." through inspiration, education and motivation. Gardening enthusiasts will be treated to the sights, scents and sounds of blooming perennials, annuals and trees while water features rustle throughout the festival hall of Chicago's acclaimed Navy Pier.



## Good Cheer—Member Concerns

### **\*Marian Jonas (our most senior member)**

Her daughter, Shirley, reports that Marian is feeling a bit lonely and really misses her garden club friends. Perhaps remember her with a phone call or card.

### **\*Geri Beyer**

Pray for strength and continued healing from a serious and contagious infection.

### **\*Mary Fortino**

Healing from surgery on November 13. Continues with chemo/radiation.

### **\*Jo Dabrowski**

Has not been well lately. Please pray for her health to improve.





## The Benefits of Houseplants

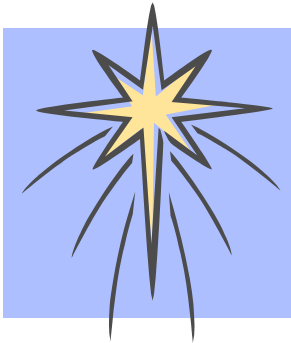
Now that we have all closed up our homes for the winter, Rick Zarek shared this article, “Cleaning Your Home Air Quality With Air Purifying House Plants” from the book, Naturally Clean, by Jeffrey Hollender, Geoff David and Meika Hollender.

Placing houseplants in reasonable abundance throughout the home will result in a healthier atmosphere than that found in a home where no plants are present at all. Here is a list of the top 20 choices for removing gaseous pollutants from indoor air.

Boston Fern (overall best)	Areca Palm	Lady Palm
Bamboo Palm	Rubber Plant	Dracaena Janet Craig
English Ivy	Dwarf Date Palm	Ficus Alii
Peace Lily	Corn Plant	Golden Pothos
Kimberly Queen Fern	Florists Mum	Gerbera Daisy
Dracaena Warneckeii	Schefflera	Spider Plant
Weeping Fig		



Our dear Marian Jonas shared this sweet ditty. Many of you have probably heard it, but it is too funny not to repeat....



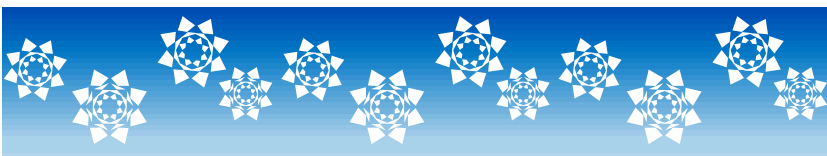
Three Wise Women  
Would have...  
Asked directions,  
Arrived on time,  
Helped deliver the Baby,  
Cleaned the stable,  
Made a casserole,  
Brought practical gifts,  
And  
There would be  
“Peace on Earth”

## And For Our Gentlemen Members...

How Bad is it to not warm up your car in the winter before driving?

Despite what your Dad may have told you, warming your car up isn't the best way to get going. In fact that advice is outdated, says Donny Deyfer, chairman-elect of the Automotive Service Association and a mechanic with 35 years of experience. Older cars used oils that took a long time to circulate through the engine, especially when it was cold. New oils and engines work a lot more efficiently. Most cars built from the late '90s on can be driven right away as long as the temp is above zero degrees Fahrenheit. Letting your car idle in the driveway creates unnecessary emissions, plus it wastes gas. The only time it's a smart choice: when the temperature is below zero. Weather that frigid can affect the power steering and transmission, so turning on the engine and leaving the car in park for 20-30 seconds can help ensure it's fully ready to drive.

HGTV Magazine, December 2014



## Bloomington Garden Club

Meeting Location:  
Bloomington Police Station  
201 S Bloomington Rd  
Bloomington IL 60108

Email: [cathyjk@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cathyjk@sbcglobal.net)  
Phone: 630-351-9336

**We're on the Web!**  
**[www.bloomingtongardenclub.org](http://www.bloomingtongardenclub.org)**



The Bloomington Garden club was formed to encourage the advancement of gardening, development of home grounds and civic beautification. To stimulate interest, knowledge and love of gardening among amateurs. To aid in the protection of native trees, flowers and birds. To further the extermination of noxious weeds and to cooperate with other organizations in the beautification of the community.

Membership is open to all persons at his or her request of application regardless of residence. Annual dues for a single new member are \$20 and \$25 for a couple, when paid January 1-June 30. Half year dues for a single new member are \$10, and \$12.50 per couple when paid July 1 thru December 31.

## 2014 Club Officers/Committees

- \*President.....Joyce Basel
- \*1st Vice President.....Marilyn Johnson  
(Membership)
- \*2nd Vice President.....Roberta Pulido  
(Programs)
- Program Committee.....Maureen Gibson  
Cathy Kreis
- \*Publicity.....Helen Price
- Publicity Committee
  - Newsletter.....Cathy Kreis
  - Website.....Dan Vitacco
- \*Treasurer.....Henia Sullivan
- Good Cheer.....Esther Ahlrich
- Hospitality.....Mary Fortino
- \*Recording Secretary.....Kelly Vitacco
- \*Ways & Means.....Linda Kunesh
- \*Corresponding Secretary.....Joyce Basel
- \*Denotes Executive Board

