

The Trowel



President's Prose

Volume 3, Issue 4

Dear Members and Friends,

Oh my goodness! Is it almost Christmas again already?! Halloween and Thanksgiving have come and gone and we have already had our first big snowstorm. Where did the year go? I feel like it was yesterday that I was writing the first letter of 2015!



Well, it has been another eventful year for all of us and I am hoping that for most of you it has been a pleasant one. My move is now just a memory and although I do still have belongings in other people's garages etc., I seem to have settled into my little apartment and with pictures on the walls and plants all over the place, I can now call it "home" - in fact the lovely Christmas cactus that belonged to our dear little Geri Beyer is flowering profusely and I feel as though she has found my place and is visiting.

As many of you know, I returned to my beloved South Africa again in October with a small group including two of our members, Jennifer Moore and her fun husband, Tim. We had a marvelous time, enjoyed really nice weather, fine wines, lots of good food and the truly wonderful hospitality of the people. I was able to visit with my sister for which I am always grateful and the whole group met her for dinner in Johannesburg. We had excellent game viewing with sightings of elephant, buffalo, rhino, giraffe and much more and of course the visit to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens was a highlight for all of us. We all dipped our toes into the inviting waters of the Indian ocean at Saint Lucia estuary and on the little cruise saw hippo and crocodiles. It was another terrific adventure – truly wish you could all have been with us.

Our next meeting will herald in a New Year and lots of new ideas and thoughts on how to move our club forward with wonderful programs and even better benefits for all of our members. I do hope that all of you will plan to attend in January and offer your ideas and advice.

We enjoyed a wonderful evening at Jameson's for our Christmas Party on December 8. So good to see so many of you there.

Thank you for all your friendship and your participation this past year – that is what makes our Club so terrific!!

Joyce Basel

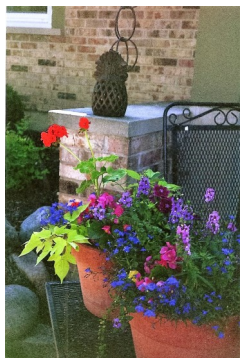
"Christmas is the time to let your heart do the thinking."

Patricia Ciafford

Photo Contest Winners

The second annual Photo Contest was a great success with twice as many applicants as last year - submitted both electronically and by "snail mail". The quality of the images was outstanding and the merits were hotly debated by the Committee members.

The winners were:



First place : Carole L



Second place : Helen P



Third place : Roger T

All of the above are from Bloomingdale this year. A further six images were chosen for "honorable mention" and will be displayed with the winners pictures at the 2016 plant sale. The winners will receive gift certificates redeemable at the plant sale.

The judges were pleased and surprised at the number of submissions from neighboring villages as well as several from non-members of the Club. We would like to encourage everyone whose plants are purchased from the plant sale, and are photo-worthy - to submit their pictures. This is a fun and rewarding competition and we are already looking forward to next year's crop of beautiful images.

Thanks to everyone who participated.

Upcoming 2016 Programs

January 19

Annual Business Meeting

Come gather for some social time, 6:30-7:00 PM, with good friends, followed by the meeting.

February 16

Mel Zaloudek

Spring Wildflowers of the Illinois Woods

Come learn about the little treasures that announce the coming of spring.



March 15

Joannie Rocchi -The Growing Place

She will be demonstrating how we can easily make a pretty terrarium to decorate our homes.



2016 Flower & Plant Sale



Save the date:

May 13 & 14, 2016

The date is a bit later than recent sales as Mother's Day falls so early. If we were to hold the Sale prior to Mother's Day, we'd be selling in April. YIKES!

Community Garden Open House

An open house was held in early September to showcase the 3 community gardens to the community. All involved are hoping to generate interest for next year's gardens, including the availability of rental plots.

Here are some fun photos from the day:



Boy Scout, Eugene (Alex) Solomon, crafted a donation station to be used by all Bloomingdale Community Gardeners as a place to put items they want donated to a food pantry from their gardens



Mike Nowak's September Program

Sadly we don't seem to have any photos of Mike's fabulous presentation. Mike is very committed to community gardening and showed us how he and some neighbors turned an ugly corner lot in his neighborhood into a thriving community garden. Like our community garden, the soil was horrible, so amending it was priority one.



Mike recommended the Facebook site of "The Garden Professors" as one that contains very good blog information. Podcasts and more information can be found at www.mikenowak.net.

I think Mike would agree with the following quote:

"Remember there is no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end."

Scott Adams

Kathi Rose's October Program

Kathi Rose from Kaleidoscope Floral gave a wonderful presentation on flower arranging. She made it look so easy and encouraged us all to give it a try. All the arrangements were raffled off. I was delighted to receive the tall arrangement you see on the right. It lasted for at least two weeks. The center photo below was an arrangement that was made nearly flat which was interesting concept. Perfect for a table centerpiece so as not to be blocking anyone's view of table guests.



Membership

During 2015, we gained several new members, Lynn Cieslowicz, Elaine DeFrancisco, Mary Sue Fornari, Linda Martin, Akhila Meda, Susan Michael and Beverly Miotke. Sadly, we lost a few members and good friends to our club. Here's hoping to a better 2016. Our membership is currently at 60 members strong! A new membership list will be emailed shortly.

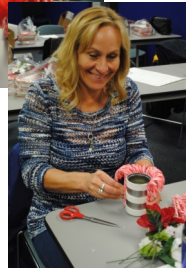
Hard to believe that 2015 is almost in our tail lights! Annual membership dues will be received at our January Business Meeting. We hope that everyone continues to enjoy our fun group.

Our November Program



We all made candy cane centerpieces to enjoy in our homes over the holidays. Lorian's daughters, Judy Markowski, Pat Frank and Sandy Kappeler really enjoyed making theirs.

We also finalized 90 female corsages and 50 men's boutonnieres for the West Suburban Care Center. Thank you to Sue Matula for delivering them all.



Those in attendance also voting on the distribution of our 2015 funds. Below are the details.

BLOOMINGDALE GARDEN CLUB DONATIONS 2015	
District II Luncheon Donation	\$ 47.00
Memorial Day Flowers	\$ 60.00
St. Paul Church (Raffle Basket Donation)	\$ 60.00
Bloomington Township Food Pantry	\$ 700.00
Bloomington VFW Post	\$ 750.00
DPCC (Dupage Convalescent Center)	\$ 400.00
DuPage Pads	\$ 750.00
FOSICK (Friends of Shelter Children in Kenya)	\$ 500.00
Northern Illinois Food Bank	\$ 1,000.00
Peoples Resource Center	\$ 750.00
Poised For Success	\$ 500.00
Stepping Stones	\$ 500.00
Stepping Stones Donation Flyers Goodie Bags	\$ 100.00
University of Illinois Extension Master Gardner Volunteers for Plant Sale	\$ 100.00
Total	\$ 6,217.00

Snowman Crossing Photos

Had a nice group gathered to decorate the Christmas Tree at the Bloomingdale Library this year. Looks like it was a bit brisk by the way everyone was bundled up!



L to R: Shari Aldous, Akhila Meda, Jennifer Moore, Loriann Gulik, Bonni Rothbaum, Carol Lockerbie, Joyce Basel, Henia Sullivan, Maureen Gibson, Bobbi Pulido and Carol Ann Spencer.



Akhila Meda putting on an ornament.

Photos from Helen Price's Son's Wedding

Looks like it was a wonderful time!



Tom & Katie at their "Sneak Peak"



Sister Fun: Mary, Henia and Helen.



Helen Price took these photos in her garden. Morning Glories mixing it up with Victory Blue Salvia and a Praying Mantis in attack mode after being startled by a squirrel. Thanks Helen.

Christmas Party Photos.....



Tim & Jennifer Moore



Dave & Maureen
Gibson



Joyce Basel/Carol Lockerbie



Sandy Kappeler and Pat Frank



Gary & Bonni Rothbaum



Plant "Wedgies"



Cathy Kreis, Dave & Carol Ann Spencer



Linda Kunesh & Henia Sullivan



Joe & Joyce Boryla



Chuck & Shari Aldous



Vivian Krotz & Marilyn Johnson

Plot to Plate Giving Garden Update

Our totals have not changed, but to remind everyone, we harvested 106.6 pounds of produce and had 135.5 hours of volunteer time recorded. This included committee meetings, garden preparation (we almost lost Janiel to the mud), planting, maintenance and harvesting. Shari and I painstakingly planted winter cover crops, Radiko Radishes, Snow Peas and Winter Oats (OK, so we just through seeds to the wind). These crops will help to amend the soil. As of this writing, they are still growing as we have not had enough severe weather to stop their growth.

Hopefully you all have a bag of Leaf "**mold**" wintering at home to give us further organic matter for the garden in the spring. Shari informed me that she is working on the garden plan for next year already. Our committee remains intact, Marilyn Johnson, Shari Aldous, Janiel Price, Kathryn Kacalo and George Holtz with Joyce Basel (ex-officio member). We will resume committee meetings in the New Year.

A Couple of Winter Blues Projects

1. Kenn and Kimberly Kaufman have a new book out called the “Kaufman Field Guide to Nature of the Midwest”. It focuses on the most common aspects of nature, including trees, turtles, flowers, fish and more. Learn more at kaufmanfieldguides.com. I sure love my field guide to birds with all its dog-eared pages for birds I have seen. This one would make a nice addition to anyone’s library. A good book, a hot cup of cocoa, tea or coffee and a good read. Doesn’t get any better!

2. I came across a fun DIY project. We can turn pretty seed packets into fabric!

Scan vintage seed packets at a high resolution. Upload the images to spoonflower.com, following the site’s instructions, to create custom fabric.

Cut the fabric into 21” squares so the images are centered. You will need 1/2 yard of complimentary fabric for the pillow back and a 20” pillow form.

There are step-by-step instructions at hgtv.com/sew-pillow-covers.



“Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.”

Hamilton Wright Mable

Good Cheer—Member Concerns



***Mary Fortino**—Mary was in a serious car accident on December 1. While she has stabilized, she has a long road of recovery ahead. Cards are welcomed, please mail them to her home at 355 Ashford Circle, Unit 1, Bartlett, IL 60103.

***Bobbi Pulido**—Please keep Bobbi in your prayers as she continues to mourn the loss of her dear husband, Ernie.

***Vivian Krotz**—Pray for strength and encouragement for Vivian. She is experiencing a lot of pain recently. She was able to take a break from the ongoing chemotherapy though.

This holiday season is going to be hard for a number of our members who have lost their spouses over this last year: Sandy Kappeler, Esther Ahlrich and Bobbi Pulido. A kind word would be encouraging for them. Please also remember Geri Byer and her family as they still grieve her passing.

The Ten Laws of Gardening

1. Nothing ever looks like it does on the seed packet.
2. Your lawn is always slightly bigger than your desire to mow it.
3. Whichever garden tool you want is always at the back of the shed.
4. The only way to ensure rain is to give the garden a good soaking.
5. Weeds grow at precisely the rate you pull them out.
6. Autumn follows summer, winter follows autumn, drought follows planting.
7. Evergreens go a funny shade of brown in the winter.
8. The only way to guarantee some color all year round is to buy a garden gnome.
9. However bare the lawn, grass will appear in the cracks between the patio paving stones.
10. “Annuals” mean disappointment once a year.



—David Heaton, webmaster Organic Gardening From Down Under

Bloomington Garden Club

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

Email: cathyjk@sbcglobal.net
Phone: 630-351-9336

We're on the Web!
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.

Visitors are always welcome, but we encourage them to join the club after 3 visits in order to help out with the costs of our monthly programming.

2015 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.....Jennifer Moore
Hospitality.....Mary Fortino
*Recording Secretary.....Kelly Vitacco
*Ways & Means.....Linda Kunesch
*Corresponding
Secretary.....Joyce Basel
*Denotes Executive Board

