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# The Trowel

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B L O O M I N G D A L E   G A R D E N   C L U B   N E W S L E T T E R

## Greetings from our President



Hello Garden  
Club Friends,

The holiday season has come and gone; I hope you all were able to spend some quality time with family and friends. 2024 is

upon us—my first year as garden club president has flown by! I was joking with Joyce the other day that she still is not done training me, LOL! We were a busy group in 2023, with a lot to reflect on...

We always start the year with our annual business meeting and at that meeting, we voted on donations of \$7,000 to support local charities! After months of planning, our hard work on the Flower & Plant Sale, with the support of the community, resulted in us raising \$6,600! As part of that effort, we donate plants to DuPage Care Center to subsidize the garden program for residents there. Similarly, after diligent planning by the committee and the conscientious efforts of our members, our Plot-to-Plate garden yielded over 500 pounds of fresh produce given to local food pantries! We crafted charming seasonal table arrangements to

brighten the holidays of residents at West Suburban Nursing & Rehab Center, and also collected a lot of toiletries, blankets, personal items, etc. to support the residents there. We have much to be proud of.

All of that work was also accompanied by a lot of fun. We listened and learned from many excellent speakers at our monthly meetings. We spent an afternoon socializing and exploring the lovely home gardens of FuMei and Bob Thrun. We toured the beautiful demonstration gardens at The Gardens at Ball. We celebrated our club's longevity at our 60th Anniversary Gala (where we raised over \$4,000!). And we again enjoyed each other's company and exchanged fun gifts at our annual Holiday Party.

Although we can't do much gardening in the winter, we can garden in our minds while pouring over garden catalogs and magazines, making plans for next gardening season. (And, remember, the days are getting longer now. Spring is almost here. Ha!)

I appreciate each and every one of you and am truly grateful to be part of this club. I wish you all a new year of good health full of love, friends and laughter! Happy New Year!

With Fondness,

Cheryl



# Take All The Time You Need

By Linda Graham

The house didn't get cleaned  
Because the camellias were blooming  
And my soul took all the time it needed  
To honor their flowering.

The house didn't get cleaned  
Because the sun burned away  
the storm clouds at last  
And my body took all the time it needed  
To bask in the warmth and rejoice.

The house didn't get cleaned  
Because one friend turned 50  
And another friend fractured her pelvis  
And another friend spontaneously  
showed up for sushi  
And two more friends got married.

Our hearts took all the time we needed for  
Food and fun and laughter.  
Being together in Sabbath time more  
important  
Than sweeping the dust bunnies.

The house didn't get cleaned,  
And so when friends came over tonight,  
We filled the house with soup and salad,  
Love and light, poetry and music  
Tears and laughter.

And our deepest selves  
Took all the time we needed  
To hold and cherish  
one another  
In the house filled with  
dust bunnies  
And comfort and love.



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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.

# Landscaping with Native Plants

*Jamie Schneck*

David Brooks, a professional naturalist, spoke to our club in September covering drought and pest resistant wildflowers native to Illinois. He said our area is host to 13 different species of milkweed, the host plant for monarch butterflies. Many of them are rare or endangered. Butterfly gardens that include native host plants in addition to nectar sources are best at supporting our local pollinators.

His hand-out included a host of native species

appropriate for gardens for sun and shade, in wet/ moist, average, and dry soil. He also spoke on how to plan ahead, designing plantings, prepping our site, planting, and how to maintain.

He welcomes garden clubs to visit Schaumburg Park District's 135 acre Nature Center at Spring Valley, 1111 E. Schaumburg Road (where he works), throughout the year to learn more about prairie wildflowers and ecology, spring migratory birds, heirloom kitchen gardening and the history of Schaumburg's German farming community.



Chicago receives its name from the French adaptation of 'shekaakwa,' the Algonquin native word for the wild leek or ramp, which was abundant in the oak woods along Lake Michigan.

David Brooks,  
Professional  
Naturalist



## Plot-to-Plate Garden 2023

*Gail Sanders*

As our season has ended, we would like to thank the 20 garden club members who helped the committee weeding and watering our club's garden. With sturdy tomato cages donated by Better Bilt Products of Addison, a new bottle watering system and especially your efforts, the garden made it through heat and drought allowing us to harvest 511 pounds of fresh organic produce to be donated to local food pantries. As with any year, there were successes (195 lbs of tomatoes and 99 lbs of zucchini) and failures (0 lbs green beans—darn you rabbits). We will welcome your help in 2024 to have another productive season.

### Plot-to-Plate Committee:

Susan Glick-Shore • Eileen Spaman  
Gail Sanders • Barbara Weisenburger



Please save juice bottles (about 52 - 64 oz) to be used in watering our 2024 garden. Here is a picture of what we need.





# Happy Trails To You . . .



Our stay-cation this year was local day trips. We found the Evanston Garden Club's work at the Gross Pointe Lighthouse with a beautiful marker for visitors to identify native blooms they had planted along walking paths there.



In October we took my daughter's family to Spring Valley Nature Center in Schaumburg for a cool, crisp, fall nature walk.

Below are photos from another trek at the Chicago Botanic Gardens. There is a surprise there around every corner!

There is so much to explore right in our own backyards! Jamie & Al Schneck





# Time for Fun!

Joyce Basel

Halloween happened right after our marvelous Anniversary Party and I was already feeling the anti-climax of that when the sudden freeze caused everything that was still

alive in my pots to simply die!!! I was in the doldrums and so decided to make my pots look pretty and cheer myself up a little. These are all things that were in my garage gathering dust!! Scarecrows and silk leaves and flowers made everything look a whole lot better for Thanksgiving. After that I started on Christmas lights! Happy Holidays to you all!!



*Floral pots decked out for the holidays create show stoppers at Joyce Basel's front door.*



# Snowman Crossing Library Tree Decorating

*Cathy Gall*

Several of our members decorated the garden club's Christmas tree at Snowman Crossing at the Bloomingdale Library on Sunday, November 26th. It was a bit chilly, but we enjoyed our time together despite the cold. Afterwards we warmed up with some hot chocolate and cookies. It's always nice to spend some time together!

*Joyce and Henia (below) unbury the tree from snow so Hector (right) and everyone else can decorate the tree.*



*From left to right:  
Jennifer Moore,  
Joyce Basel,  
Hector Rivera,  
Henia Sullivan,  
Cheryl Svec, and  
Cathy Gall.*



*Submitted by Cheryl Svec*



# Pointesettia Centerpiece Craft



*Project and Photos by Debbie Matuszak*

Debbie Matuszak took ideas from Linda Steck, Gail Sanders, and the board and organized everything needed to do the Christmas craft project for the residents of the West Suburban Nursing & Rehabilitation Center. We made 35 beautiful pointsettia centerpieces to brighten their eating areas for the holidays.



# Holiday Recipes

## Raspberry Thumbprint Cookies

*littlesweetbaker.com*  
*Laurie made these using Gail's raspberry jam.*



### Ingredients

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 tsp baking powder  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar, divided  
1 large egg  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
1 cup seedless raspberry jam or preserve

### Instructions

- 1) Preheat oven to 325°F and line 3 cookie sheets with parchment paper.
- 2) In a medium bowl, toss together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.
- 3) In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter and 1 cup sugar (reserving the other 1/2 cup for rolling) together on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 or 4 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. Mix in the egg and vanilla extract until incorporated.
- 4) With the mixer on low, stir in half of the flour mixture until just combined. Repeat with the remaining flour mixture.
- 5) Roll the dough into 1" balls and coat in sugar. Place 1" apart on the prepared baking sheets.
- 6) Make an indent in each cookie using a 1/4 tsp round measuring spoon or your thumb. Fill each well with raspberry jam. Slightly overfill so that it's rounded on top because the jam will flatten out as the cookies bake.



7) Bake for 15 minutes or until the edges are lightly browned. *Makes 4 1/2 Dozen*

*Laurie's modifications: 1) Use only 1/2 the sugar called for in the recipe. 2) Use chopped pecans to roll cookies in instead of sugar.*

## BACARDI Rum Cake

*Jamie brought to November craft.*

### Cake

1 cup toasted pecans or walnuts, coarsely chopped  
1 – 15.25 ounce box yellow cake mix  
1 – 3.4 ounce pkg. Instant Vanilla Pudding mix  
4 large eggs  
1/2 cup cold water  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
1/2 cup Bacardi dark rum

(For yellow cake mix with pudding in the mix: Omit pudding, use only 3 eggs and 1/3 cup oil.)

### Glaze

1/2 cup (4 ounces) unsalted butter  
1/4 cup water  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1/2 cup Bacardi dark rum (80 proof)



Preheat oven to 325°F. Grease and flour 10" tube or 12-cup Bundt pan. Sprinkle nuts over bottom of pan. Mix all cake ingredients together. Pour batter over nuts. Bake 45 to 55 minutes. Let cake cool in pan for about 30 minutes. Invert it onto a serving plate.

**Glaze:** Melt butter in sauce pan. Stir in water and sugar. Boil 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in rum.

Prick top of cake. Drizzle glaze over the top and sides of the cake. If desired, brush the excess glaze from the bottom of the plate onto the cake. Allow cake to absorb glaze. Repeat until glaze is used up.



# 2023 Member Christmas Party



*Photos by Jamie Schneck*

Our party at Jameson's Charhouse this year was on a Sunday so we kept things light with a menu that included bruschetta with chopped tomatoes/basil, mini crab cakes, spinach pies, teriyaki chicken skewers, and meatballs in marinara sauce. It was all topped off with a white elephant gift exchange and a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Everything was just lovely and was enjoyed by all!



# 2023 Member Christmas Party (cont'd)



This year was a casual event, where a glass of wine was welcome and friendships were celebrated. We are blessed to come together with open hands and hearts that can honor and assist those around us.

## *And . . . to Celebrating 60 Years!*

We are especially thankful for the years of devotion so many community members have contributed to helping the Bloomingdale Garden Club grow. History started in a garden—and so did we. One idea built upon another brought

us to where we are now, thriving and sharing with those in need. It's a mission, a purpose, a heavenly assignment—the right people at the right place and time doing the right things. The longevity of the club says it all—60 years of inclusivity, even through Covid, and we're still growing. Thanks to you all, for all you do!

## 2024 Upcoming Meetings

**January 16**

Annual Business Meeting

**February 20**

Curative Properties of Tea by  
Marcy Lautenan-Raleig

**March 19**

Fighting Climate Change in Your Backyard  
(and Frontyard) by Mike Nowak

**April 16**

Annual Flower & Plant Sale Prep

**May 10 - 11**

Annual Flower & Plant Sale

**May 21**

Who's Who of Owls by Mark Spraeyer

*In place of meetings, 2024 Summer events will be field trips yet to be determined by the programs team.*



## Bobbie Pulido Honored

The day after our Anniversary celebration, Joyce personally delivered the roses to Bobbie Pulido at Sunrise Senior Living. Bobbie is 83 and while she did not know exactly why she was getting flowers, she was delighted with them.

Joyce





# West Suburban Donations



*Cathy Gall*

Once again the generosity of our club members was apparent in a big way. After 4 ½ days of collecting during the first week of December, the holiday items for the residents at the West Suburban Nursing and Rehabilitation Center were delivered to Vina, the Activity Director. On behalf of the residents, she expressed her continued appreciation for our club's thoughtfulness.

Fleece blankets seemed to have been on the minds of many of our donors this year. A special shout-out to Pauline for her donation of so many double sided fleece blankets that she had lovingly sewn and donated! The attached picture shows her clever color combinations for each side of the blankets! Other donations included socks, gloves and scarves to keep the residents warm, and shampoo, deodorant, lotions, body wash, toothpaste and toothbrushes, snacks, activity books and holiday cards to keep residents entertained.

Many thanks to all who contributed this year!  
You're the best! Happy New Year to All!!







## 2023 Club Officers and Committees

**\*President .....** Cheryl Svec

**\*1st Vice President .....** Marietta Serenda  
(Membership)

**\*2nd Vice President .....** Debbie Matuszak  
(Programs) & Kimberly Kennedy

**\*3rd Vice President .....** Linda Kunesh  
(Ways and Means)

**\*Treasurer .....** Laurie Dring

**\*Publicity .....** Jamie Schneck  
(Website, Trowel, Graphics)

Publicity Contributors

Publications..... Akhila Meda

Proofreading ..... Linda Kunesh

Photo Retouching..... Alan Schneck

Facebook..... Cathy Gall

Website Support ..... Dan Vitacco

**\*Secretary.....** Joyce Basel

Plot-to-Plate Garden ..... Gail Sanders

Susan Glick-Shore, Eileen Spaman, Barbara  
Weisenburger

Good Cheer ..... Jennifer Moore

Hospitality..... Carol Lockerbie

Memorial Garden..... Joyce Basel

Nursing Home Liaison..... Chris Magnatowski

*\*Denotes Executive Board*

## OUR VISION

To educate members and the community about gardening through informative and educational meetings, workshops and activities

- To develop and promote projects for civic beautification and environmental stewardship
- To support philanthropic endeavors which aid the residents of the Bloomingdale community and surrounding areas
- To provide opportunities for fellowship for those interested in gardening and environmental and civic responsibility
- To aid in the protection of native trees, flowers and birds
- To further the extermination of invasive and/or noxious plants

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all persons at his or her request of application regardless of residence. Annual dues are \$25.00 for a single member and \$30.00 for a couple when paid January 1st through June 30th. (\$6.00 pays each member's State Garden Club dues; and \$7.00 for each couple).

Half year dues for new members are \$12.50 for single member, and \$15.00 per couple when paid July 1st thru December 31st.

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.

## Meeting Location:

The 3rd Tuesday of each month. Social time and announcements at 1:15 PM. Program begins at 2. We meet at:

Cornerstone Faith Community Church  
118 S. First Street, Bloomingdale, IL 60108

## Contact Us At:

bloomingtongardenclub@gmail.com

## We're On The Web:

bloomingtongardenclub.org

Let Us Hear From You:  
jschneck1233@gmail.com

Phone: 630-372-6003

Posting Months:

March, June, September and December