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<http://www.mensgardenclubofalbany.org/>



(Serving the greater capital region)

Celebrating **78** years of service to our community

(First Chartered 1936)

VOLUME 77 NO. 3

March, 2014

March Dinner

DATE & TIME: **Thursday, March 27th @ 6:30pm**
Ladies, we need you to join us - Please!

PLACE: Best Western Sovereign Hotel, 1228 Western Ave., Albany

APPETIZER: Garden Salad

ENTREE: * Pasta Alfredo w/ Chicken

* Stuffed Sole

* Roast Beef

DESSERT: Apple Pie

Price: \$ 20.00

PROGRAM: The Arborists role in maintaining the Power Distribution System

Presented by: Brian Skinner, Senior Arborist, National Grid

Mr. Skinner will explain the processes of managing the National Grid Power Distribution system from the prospective of the Senior Arborist. The utility operates over 36,000 miles of electric distribution, over 10,800 miles of electric transmission lines, and over 600 miles of gas transmission lines in upstate NYS that delivers electricity and natural gas to over 3 million people.

Mr. Skinner has been a practicing arborist since 1971 (29 years doing residential/commercial tree care). In addition to being a Senior Arborist with National Grid since 2000, **Mr. Skinner** is also on the Board of Directors for the New York State Arborists/ ISA Chapter, as their Treasurer; and is an officer for the NYS Urban Forestry Council, as their Vice-President. He is also an ISA certified arborist, ISA certified utility arborist, ASCA registered consulting arborist and NYS DEC registered pesticide applicator.

RESERVATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL: Anyone with interest in this program is cordially invited.

A caller should reach you prior to the meeting for your dinner reservation and your choice of entree. If a caller leaves a message, please make every effort to return his call. If a caller does not reach you by Wednesday, March 19th, please call **Russ Greenman** at 477-8321.

Membership

I'm very sad to report that we have lost two more of our members, **Mr. Ken York (2/23/14)** and seven days later **Mr. Jerome (Jerry) Flax (3/2/14)**. They were, as most gardeners are, dedicated to improving the life of others. They were both extremely brilliant people that made you feel honored to be considered their friend. Until very recently they both went to a weekly book review that **Jerry Flax** may have started, many years ago, and **Jerry** would always say that it is not a book review until **Ken York** shows up with his famous home-made brownies.

Jerome (Jerry) Flax – Gardener Gone to Rest - 3/2/2014

Jerry Flax was like no other person you will ever meet. This is what I hear from literally everyone that knew him. Everyone agrees that by knowing **Jerry Flax** they look at the good in people more so than they previously did. **Jerry Flax** could not see the bad in anyone – even if they were robbing him blind – he somehow found good in them. Always, including his last days, he would worry more about the people around him than himself. We brought an extra dinner to him from the last MGCA meeting, and all he could do was ask if everyone else ate. He loved his wife **Jessie Flax** more than any husband loved their wife. You should see some of the letters he wrote to her. There is no doubt that the world would be a MUCH better place to live if there were more people like **Jerry Flax** to learn from.



Flax, Jerome

ALBANY – Jerome Flax, 91, of Albany, passed away peacefully at his home on Sunday, March 2, 2014. Jerome has finally gone to meet his beloved Jessie Amanda. Son of the late Julius and Alice Flax, he was born in Newark, NJ on March 17, 1922, and moved to Hudson, NY at the age of five. He served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific during World War II for three years, and was awarded two battle stars. He was a 1949 graduate of Siena College, and earned a Masters Degree in 1950 from the

State University of New York. From 1950 to 1965 he was an English teacher in Granville and East Islip, and then in Vernon-Verona, and Medina, where he also coached the debate team. From 1965 until his retirement in 1982, he was employed by the New York State Education Dept. Jerome was an ardent supporter of many organizations that help others. He also was a member and past president of the Friends of Albany Public Library, and a member of the English Speaking Union, the Men's Garden Club of Albany, the Torch Club and the Torah Study Group at B'Nai Shalom Reform Congregation.

In addition to his parents and his wife, Jerome was predeceased by his siblings: Rose F. Seuss, Joseph Flax and Dorothea S. Schips. He is survived by his niece, Joann (Ed) Krawic and nephews Marshall (Nancy) Suess and Mitchell (Michelle) Schips and his friend Fredda Peritz.

Jerome loved to travel with Jessie and was a voracious reader, especially of non-fiction. He shared his love for books with his students and other children in his life. Jerome was the kindest of men. He believed that he had such a wonderful life and insisted on making contributions to those whose lot in life had not been so fortunate. He was always grateful for Social Security, Medicare and the GI Bill, which he believed allowed him to meet Jessie, a fellow teacher, and share an incredible marriage.

Jerome's life was filled with cherished friends, neighbors and the special "Ladies" (and a Gent) who cared for him until his last breath. We are especially thankful for the love, caring and generosity of Kathy and Joe Pingelski, Don Miller, Russell and Maria Greenman, Jeffrey Sullivan, Dr. Richard Propp, Rita Schachne, Oneika Miller, Barbara Davis, Maxine Lepak, Coleen Peart, Camille Johnson, Simone Foster, Dwayne Goldson and Maxine Maul. We are also grateful to Dr. Robert Kelleher for the special care and guidance he gave, and Community Hospice for their caring support.

Funeral services will be held in the Hans Funeral Home, 1088 Western Ave., Albany on Wednesday March 5th at 3:00 pm. Relatives and friends are invited, and may call at the funeral home Wednesday beginning 1:00 pm. A Shiva minyan will be held at 7:00 pm at the home of Dr. Richard Propp, 13 Marion Ave., Albany NY 12203.

Interment will be held at a later date in Evergreen Cemetery in Fabius, NY. In lieu of flowers, it is requested that donations be made to the Friends of Albany Public Library, Inc., 161 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210; or to B'Nai Shalom Reform Congregation, 420 Whitehall Rd, Albany, New York 12208. To leave a message of condolence for the family, send a sympathy card, or obtain directions to the funeral home, please visit

www.HansFuneralHome.com.

Ken York – Gardener Gone to Rest - 2/23/2014

With great sadness I recently learned that **Ken York** (86) has joined other Gardener's Gone to Rest. Since about the time he retired at age 57, **Ken York** has been a double life member of the MGCA. **Ken York** was one of those guys that thought BIG and I don't think his mind ever stopped thinking of ways to improve the community. He wrote extensive project plans for many things such as wildflower plantings along our highways, and how to introduce Daffodils into our communities. He said that if Albany can have a Tulip Fest – Rensselaer County can have a Daffodil fest. He not only wrote about it, he promoted it in government and donated literally thousands of Daffodil bulbs to anyone that would plant them. We planted many around our Adopt-A-Highway raised bed (built by **Ken Abele - thanks!**), and countless 4H groups received Daffodil bulbs from **Ken York**, including the **Country Tigers** that was run by the **MGCA National Youth Chairman – Don Otterness**. My son **Carl Greenman** was fortunate enough to be part of that 4H group. This month **Ken** was giving me all kinds of ideas including the plantings along our rivers to prevent erosion. **Ken** was a great man that had the brains to figure out what needed to be done, the ability, and the willingness to do it. As he got older he continued to put a bug in your ear to try to get something done. He would bring his well-organized ideas to people at all levels of government. I remember him coming to a meeting with several grow light stands that he had designed and built and he told us of his desire to give one of these to as many Elementary schools as possible. He had a detailed plan, soil, seeds and everything needed to insure success in the schools. He, and many of us, went into the schools and delivered the materials to interested teachers. **Ken** would teach the teachers and kids all about gardening and they loved it! I'm sure he built one for every school in the area that would be willing to use it. **Ken** even capped off the ends of a long pieces of gutter and put them on the window sills in the classrooms. Then, the kids filled them with soil, seeds, and water and watched the veggies grow. My son, **Carl Greenman**, was one of the kids that benefited from **Ken York's** generosity. I'm sure it played a big part in how he appreciates the benefits of gardening today. Like all gardeners I know, **Ken York** really did his part to make this world a better place to live. We thank you for that and your friendship over the years.

We will miss you Mr. Ken York

The more I learn about people from **Ken York's** generation, the more impressed I am. The following obituary wonderfully describes the life that **Ken York** lived.

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/timesunion-albany/obituary.aspx?n=kenneth-e-york&pid=169915765&fhid=22123>



Kenneth E. York

York, Kenneth E. EAST NASSUA Kenneth E. York, 86, of Garfield Road died on Sunday, February 23, 2014 at his residence. Born in New Bremen, Ken was the son of the late Lee and Marion Davis York and husband for 54 years of the late Helen Carroll York. Ken served with the 102nd Weather Group in the Army Air Force and received Good Conduct and [World War II](#) Victory medals for his service. He was a graduate of Boonville High School, Utica College of Syracuse University and the New York State

College for Teachers in Albany. Early in his working career, Ken was a history teacher in the Leonardsville, Richfield Springs, West Winfield and Fort Ann school districts. He later served as counselor for the Madison/Oneida Board of Cooperative Educational Services and worked for the New York State Department of Education where he administered the National Defense Education Act of 1958, Title V-A: Guidance, Counseling and Testing. He helped to define, promote and monitor the development of counseling and career services and programs through education for the state of New York. During his tenure he also taught counseling and career development at Siena, the University of Bridgeport and Michigan State University. He retired in 1985. Ken resided in East Nassau for 54 years where he honed his master gardener skills and belonged to many gardening clubs throughout the Capital District and Berkshire counties. People, both near and from afar, admired his beautifully landscaped yard filled with day lilies, hosta and begonias. He was a well-read, salt-of-the-earth kind of man who was a passionate advocate for education and clean water along the Kinderhook Creek watershed, as evidenced by his many contributions to the letters to the editor section in the Times Union. He believed in beautifying New York and recently made his final contribution to the Rensselaer Land Trust. His family would describe him as a visionary.

Ken York – Gardener Gone to Rest - 2/23/2014 - continued

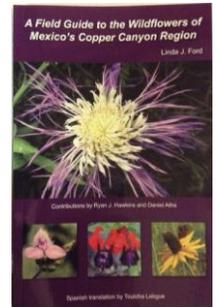
He may have been raised in a past many don't remember, but he was always thinking about the future. His desire was to be an anatomical gift and then returned to the earth in keeping with his philosophy of recycling everything possible. He said, "I'll be everywhere and nowhere after I'm gone." The York family would like to thank everyone who treated him with respect and looked out for him.

He would like people to be kind to one another, appreciate the taste of a fresh strawberry, the bloom on a flower, the smell of fresh soil and to take a moment to find and appreciate the beauty all around. He hoped one day there would be large clusters of daffodils planted in every community garden, sprouting beauty and heralding in the new spring. Ken was the father of the late Steven A. York and William W. York and the brother of the late Elizabeth Lilholt. Survivors include his children, Deborah (the late Robert) Reiter of Stephentown, Richard (Barbara Devine) York of Cape Coral, Fla., Wendy (Charles) York-Briggs of Castleton and Barbara (Michael Woodside) York of Delmar; his brothers, Ronald York of Oneonta and Todd York of Turin. Also, his grandchildren, Casey (Jessica) York, Seth Reiter, Sarah York, Luke (Erin) Reiter, Emily (Matthew) Wicks, David Briggs and Elizabeth Briggs; his great-grandchildren, Christopher, Emma, Kendall, Matthew, Maddia, Lucas, Daniel, Madeleine, Matthew, Cooper, William and Vincent. A gathering to remember Ken will be held in the spring on a date to be determined. The family suggests donations in memory of Kenneth E. York may be made to the Capital District Community Gardens, 40 River St., Troy, NY 12180. Visit perrykomdat.com for private guestbook.

February's Program

Mexico's Copper Canyon: Train, Wildflowers, Hikes, and Culture Presented by: Linda Ford

At our February dinner meeting **Linda Ford** gave a wonderful presentation on the Copper Canyon region of Mexico that includes a series of 20 canyons which includes four massive gorges covering 25,000 square miles. And you thought the Grand Canyon was big. **Linda** has been a Master Gardener for 17 years, is an awesome photographer, and has written a book in English and Spanish named "A Field Guide to the Wildflowers of Mexico's Copper Canyon Region". 10 years ago as a birthday present she chose to go visit the Copper Canyon Region of Mexico and I think she fell in love with the place. After seeing her photos and hearing her stories – who wouldn't love the place? Since there were no books that identified the wildflowers in the Copper Canyon – **Linda Ford** wrote her own. What's even better is that she uses 75% of the money received from the sales of her book to provide scholarships to girls that otherwise probably only receive up to a 6th grade education. She seems to have some very unique connections with people that work with her to provide small tours of the region. These tours include a train ride through some beautiful country, hikes to see many unusual wildflowers, cultural and historic sites and interactions with the Tarahuma Indians (Think of the book Born to Run). If you're brave – Like **Marilou Town** – you can ride the zipline that is the second longest in the world and with the top of the Canyon at 8,000 feet above sea level – it might be a ways down. **Linda Ford** has been taking groups (8 max) to the Copper Canyon region and she has scheduled her next trip for September 21-30, 2014. This trip certainly does seem like a fun and educational trip that would be difficult to do without the knowledge and connections with the local people that **Linda Ford** has. If you want to learn more – check out



www.coppercanyonwildflowers.com

Thank you Linda Ford for a great program!!!!

History - 25 years ago

MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF ALBANY-BOARD OF DIRECTORS MONTHLY MEETING MARCH 2, 1989

The Regular Monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Men's Garden Club of Albany was held on Thursday evening, March 2, 1989 in the Cerebral Palsy Center for the disabled.

At long last, back from Florida, President **Don Lewis** opened the meeting at 7:35.

The Minutes of the February 16, 1989 meeting were approved as read by our Club Secretary, **Tom Baker**.

History - 25 years ago - continued

The Treasurer's Report was approved as read by our Assistant Treasurer, **Don Stevens**. As of February 28, 1989 there was a balance on hand of \$1,859.31 in the General Account, in the Memorial fund there was a balance of \$328.91 and in the Key Advantage Account there was \$5,185.95.

At this point, President **Don** asked the Secretary if it would be possible to receive a copy of the minutes preceding the Board meetings so that he can set up an agenda. The Secretary agreed that this is quite possible.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Program: Wally Dillenbeck, Chairman reminded the Board that the Regular Monthly Dinner Meeting would be held on March 30. The regular Thursday will be Holy Thursday making it difficult for many members to attend. The **Bus Trip** will be on as planned. Full plans may be found in the previous dirt.

Membership: Bill Blackmore, Chairman, was not available for a full report, but **Don Stevens** reported that we have three new members.

Gardening from the Heart: Chairman **Al Miller** reported that the present program which we have been running since the beginning will be moving to the new location on March 15. As was stated in last Month's minutes, it is hoped that a new group can be started once the present move is completed.

Calendar: Charlie Schade reported that there are 18 calendars left, not to be sold, but to be given to new members and guest speakers.

State Fair: No report.

Publicity: Chairman, **Tom Baker** reported that press releases will be forth coming.

Youth Gardening: Don Otterness, Co-chairman, further discussed the idea of a Horticulture Scholarship. He passed around a possible application form and even suggested that the money might come from the interest from the Key Advantage Account.

Joe Huth made a motion which was carried to the affect that the proposition of this Scholarship be put before the General Membership for a final vote.

Transportation: Charlie Kenyon, Chairman, said that he can get rides for members that need them, but first he has to know who they are. **Al Miller** will put a notice in the Dirt.

Advertising for the Dirt: Chairman **Ferd Johnson** reported that the Ads are all in.

Photography: Wally Dillenbeck is interested in getting our Club active in the National Photo Contest. Anyone interested should let Wally know soon for the deadline is near.

Calling: Nothing new to report other than all is going well.

Plant Sale: A call has been put out asking for members to grow pansies, flowering cabbage, and more vegetables in general. Spring planting bulbs will be sold this year.

Bulb Sale: Joe Raggio Chairman, had nothing new to report.

OTHER BUSINESS

President **Don Lewis** read a letter from the Regional President, **Walter Jensen**, encouraging all local clubs to get involved into sponsoring new clubs. At this point, **Ferd Johnson** told of his efforts to get a club started in the Saratoga Area. He contacted the Glens Falls Chamber of commerce for possible leads . He found that **Myron Watkins**, a radio personality is very much interested.

Up coming Regional meetings: May 20 in Rochester and a September meeting in Owego.

Don Otterness, Joe Huth and **Wally Dillenbeck** went to Hudson Falls to look at greenhouse that is being donated to us for our Center Project. They, unanimously decided that it wasn't suitable for our needs. The big reason was the use of glass instead of Plexiglas.

Al Miller expressed a grave concern over the number of unpaid memberships, some of which are Life Members.

Al Miller and **Bob Ireland** are looking in the possibility of having Double Life Memberships.

The National Convention this year is in Portland, Oregon this summer. The registration fee is \$75.00.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:26

Respectfully submitted by **Tom Baker**, Secretary

Editor's note: **Tom Baker** has been faithfully documenting our minutes since way before he had personal computer - but somehow he has managed to digitize all of the minutes he has taken over the years and we now include them in our newsletter under the heading "History - 25 years ago"

Thanks, **Tom Baker!!!**

CLUB ACTIVITIES

Adopt-a-Highway



Albany International Airport Don Wrieden - Chairman



Garden & Flower Show at HVCC

The theme this year is: *Storybook Gardens*

As we have for many many years, we will have an Educational booth at the Capital District Garden & Flower Show that will be held March 21 – 23 at Hudson Valley Community College. This is a great opportunity to let the community know how much we do and how rewarding it would be if they joined the MGCA. We are looking for volunteers to man the booth on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. You can decide what time is best for you. When can you be there? For information contact **Bill Danish** wd12@cornell.edu or leave a message at 286-2791.

Plant Sale May 10th 2014

Don Wrieden - Chairman

We need your help... Every year the MGCA holds its biggest – and only – fundraiser of the year. We strongly encourage our members to prepare items that can be sold on May 10th 2014 at our sale. Some members like Gill O'Brien bring awesome tomatoes, others veggies, and John O'Grady has often brought raspberry bushes. There is talk of digging up some Rose of Sharon (if this ground ever thaws out), planting basil, etc. You get the idea. If you grow it we don't have to buy it from a grower which helps tremendously, especially if we get stuck with items that didn't sell due to bad weather. We are losing about \$2000 per year supporting all of our great projects – please help us by planting something that we can sell the day before Mother's Day – Saturday, May 10, 2014. Thanks!!!!

Harris Memorial Centerpiece

Thanks to the Harris kids!

Each month, the **Harris** family, **Phil**, **Dave** and their sister **Diane** design and create a beautiful centerpiece to honor their parents. We normally raffle it off to raise money for our memorial fund. The more I think about it, the more amazed I am at how much time, talent and money goes into each one of the centerpieces that **Phil** has been bringing, to every meeting, for more years than I can remember. A group gardeners went to the Corned beef and cabbage dinner at their Church – First Presbyterian Church – in Watervliet, NY. And, holy kermerkitroid... The Harris's had the whole place decorated like there was a fancy schmancy wedding going on. What talent and generosity that family has. We can't begin to thank all of you for all you have done for us over the years.

Thanks again to the Harris kids!



Harris Memorial Centerpiece 2/27/2014

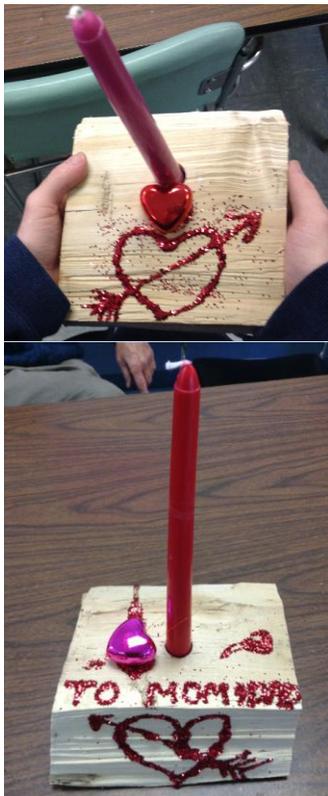
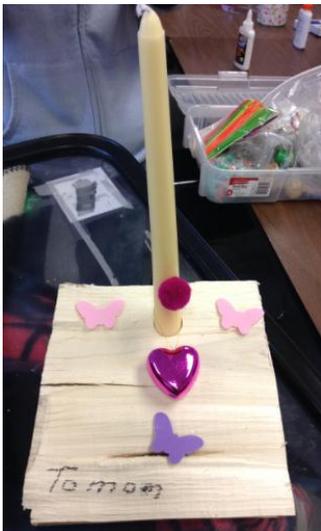
Gardening from the Heart At the Center for Disability Services



Volunteers during February included: **Tom Baker, Russ Greenman, Joe Herman, Greg Shields, and Bruce Wilcox.** We have been keeping busy by planting Snapdragons seeds that were mailed to us from Sunny Florida by **Joe Huth**, planting seeds for Kale that the cooking class at the Center for Disability Services will use to make and sell dog treats. For Valentine's Day we had a choice... Use firewood to keep the house warm, or use it to warm the hearts of others. That's a no brainer... we split the wood and cut it into 20 small sections. After drilling a hole for a candle each consumer came up with all kinds of neat ways to make a nice centerpiece for their family.



Jerry Flax – Volunteer of the Year Award 1988



Memorial Garden at the Albany County Cooperative Extension

Joe Huth / Chuck Scott
Memorial Garden Chairmen



Chef's Choice Orange' Tomato – Contributed by: Bill Danish

Many gardeners value heirloom tomato varieties for their delicious flavor, even though they may lack the desirable characteristics of more modern hybrids such as disease resistance. Now you can get the best of both worlds with 'Chef's Choice Orange' tomato, a 2014 All-America Selections National Vegetable Award Winner.

Bred from the popular heirloom variety 'Amana Orange', which matures late in the season, this new hybrid beefsteak-type tomato delivers the wonderful flavor of an orange heirloom but matures in just 75 days from transplant. It is also resistant to cracking, TMV, and anthracnose. Fruits average about 12 ounces but can weigh as much as a pound. The five-foot tall plants are indeterminate and require support. The leaves cover the fruits well to protect them from sunburn.

'Chefs Choice Orange' is bright orange inside and out, with a superior taste and texture for an early maturing orange tomato. It's excellent for soups and sauces because its intense color does not fade or discolor when cooked.

All-America Selections are new seed varieties that have proven their superior garden performance in trial grounds across North America, as judged by independent experts in impartial trials.



DATES TO REMEMBER

March 6th @ 7:30 pm	Director's meeting – all members invited
April 3rd @ 7:30 pm	Center for Disability Services – 314 Manning Blvd
Every Wednesday : @ 9:00 am	Gardening from the Heart
	Center for Disability Services 700 South Pearl St. Albany, NY
March 21st – 23rd	Capital District Garden & Flower Show at HVCC
March 27th @ 6:30 pm	Dinner Meetings Best Western Sovereign Hotel
April 24th @ 6:30 pm	1228 Western Ave Albany, NY
May 10th 8:00am – 2:00pm	MGCA Plant Sale – Delmar, NY

Russ Greenman and Jack Meagher, Editors

Please support research for **ALS** (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis - **Lou Gehrig's disease**) in memory of one of our most active members - **Mr. Bill Town**

Click on this link to read his story: <http://community.als.net/teamtown>

Website – MGCA

www.mensgardenclubofalbany.com

(please click on the link)

Thanks **Paul Zimmermann!!!**

In Memory

Of My

Loving Wife, Jessie

Jerry Flax

In Memory of

*Louis Meo
&
Richard Stankus*

In Memory of

*Ed Tompkins &
Avrom Koblenz*

Jerry Flax

In Memory of

Jerry Flax

His many friends

In Memory of

*Christian and Mildred
Lebrecht*

In Memory of

*Al and Barbara
Miller*

In Memory of



Bill Town

Joe Herman

*In Memory of
my Dad*



Carroll W. Greenman

Bob

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In Memory of



Grandpa & Great Grandpa

Carroll W. Greenman

Russ, Maria, and Carl

In Memory of my parents



John and Carrie Meagher

They both loved Plants and Flowers

Jack Meagher