



36 Tanners Lane, Rensselaer, NY 12144 * (518) 859-0263

pmzimmy@gmail.com

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

(Serving the greater capital region)

Celebrating 79 years of service to our community

VOLUME 79 NO. 2

(First Chartered 1936)

February, 2016

DATE & TIME: Thursday, February 25th @ 6:30 pm
Ladies and the public are cordially invited

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

APPETIZER: Garden Salad

ENTREE: Stuffed Chicken Breast
Penne ala Vodka
Lasagna

DESSERT: Cheesecake

Price: \$ 25.00

PROGRAM: "The Allergy Fighting Garden"

Presented by: **Master Gardener, Diane Madden**

If you love your garden but it causes you sniffle, sneeze, wheeze and makes your eyes water, you probably think there's not much you can do to remedy the situation besides staying indoors or taking antihistamines. Diane Madden, Greenbush Garden Club member and Master Gardener, will explain how your landscaping may be part of the problem. What you plant, where you plant and the role plant breeders have played in your misery will be discussed.

RESERVATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL:

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 their call. If a caller does not reach you (**one week prior to the meeting**) by **Thursday, 18th**, please call Russ Greenman at 477-8321. You are reminded that if you make a reservation for dinner you will be expected to honor your commitment.

December's Program - Thank You! GMO's (Genetically Modified Organisms) **President / Master Gardener - Mr. Paul Zimmermann** presented an interesting and well balanced presentation about the controversies surrounding GMOs in our food supply. **Paul** explained the direct and indirect advantages and disadvantages of GMOs.

Thanks to Paul Zimmermann for another Great program!!!

Dues are past due

Dues are due in small unmarked bills (25 of them) – mailed to **Russ Greenman** \$15 pays for your national membership in the MGCA/TGOA, \$.50 pays for the regional dues, and the remaining \$9.50 pays your local dues. A large percentage of our members are Life members and can ignore this notice.

Welcome Back! Sargent Mark Becker of Becker's Farm



I stopped in at [Becker's Farm](#) to pick up two bags of the **Becker's Mix** soil for the consumers at the Center For Disability Services use to plant their seeds and cuttings. **Mark Becker** gave us a nice discount AND helped me pick out a nice selection of seeds that he donated to the consumers. We will use them at our Wednesday morning sessions as part of our Gardening From the Heart program at the Center for Disability Services.

Sargent Mark Becker just got back from **Al Asad Airbase in Iraq** as part of an engineering group for the Army Reserves. We

certainly are glad to have you back, and our country owes you a big Thanks!
Thanks also for the seeds – we'll put them to good use.

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. Since **Phil** is in room 315 of Eddy Heritage House Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 2920 Tibbits Avenue, Troy, NY 12180 he is no longer able to attend our meetings. Every month one of their masterpieces has been raffled off since 1980 - **YES, That's 36 Years!!!** and the money goes into 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 and Dave** have been bringing, to every meeting, for more years than I can remember. 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.

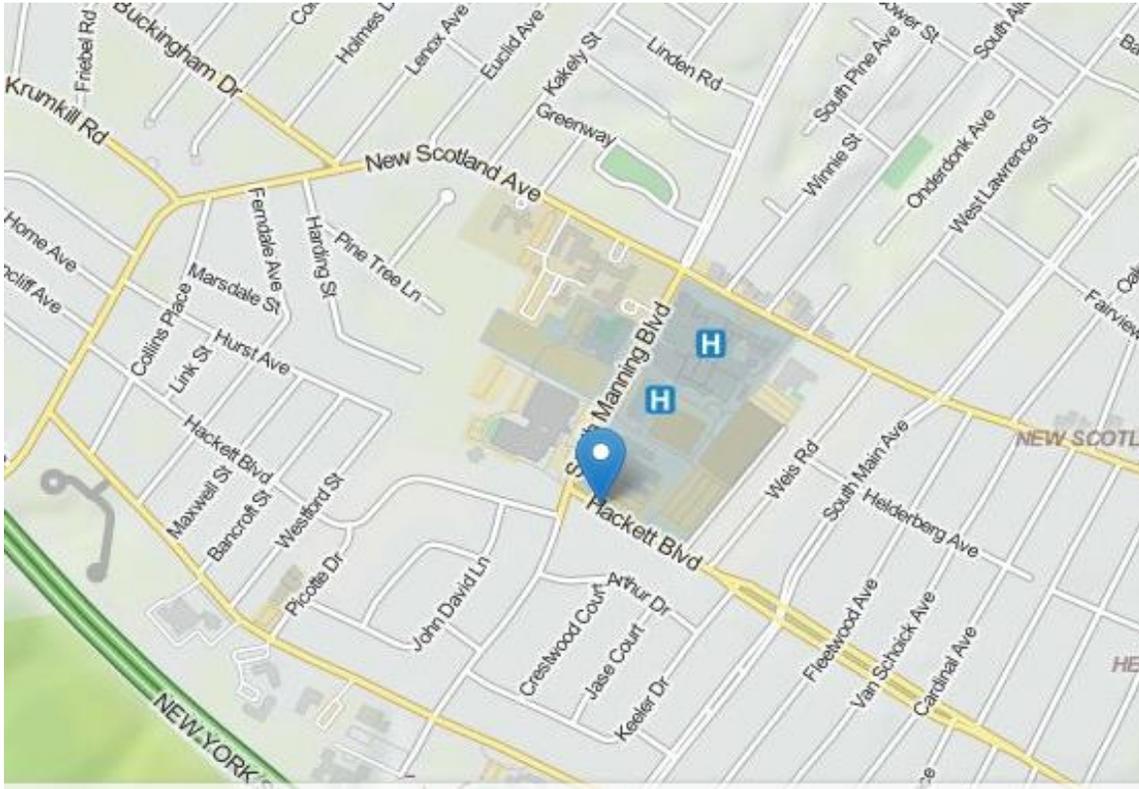
Thanks again to the Harris kids!



**Harris Memorial Centerpiece
Made and donated by the Harris
family**

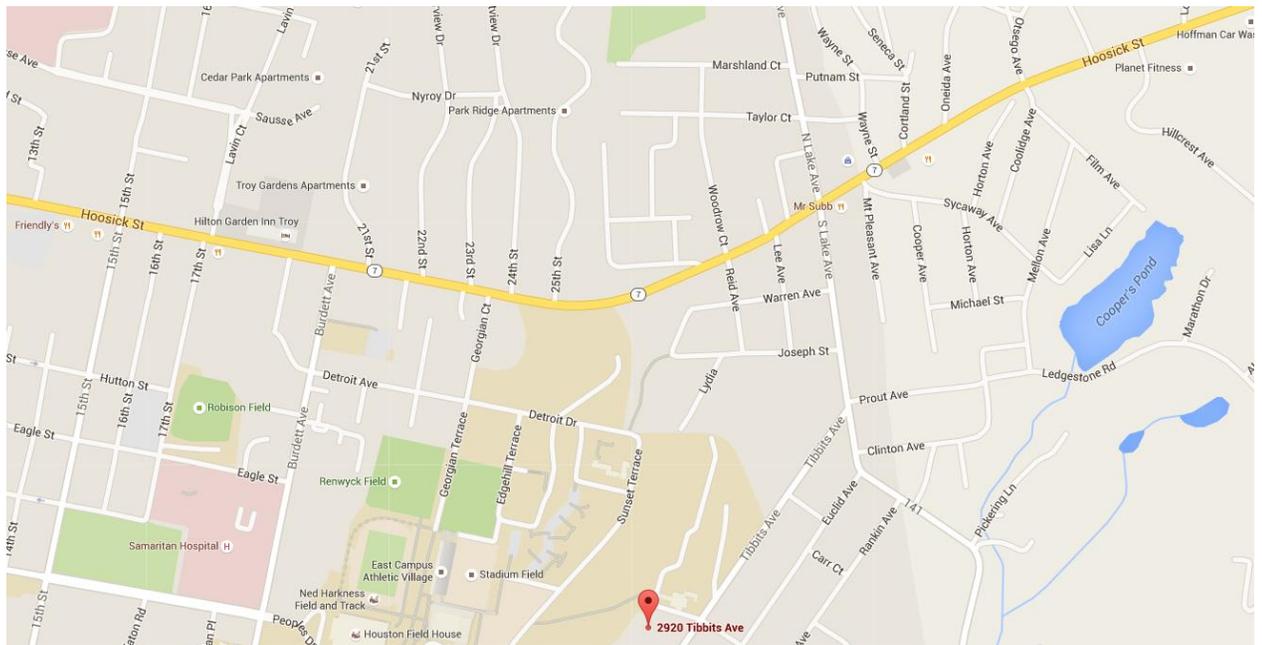
Ed Brohm and **Sal Schiavo** are in the Villa Mary Immaculate Nursing Home
301 Hackett Boulevard, Albany, NY 12208

I'm sure **Ed** and **Sal** would appreciate a visit as it can get lonely being away from home and unable to drive. They certainly could use your encouragement, thoughts and prayers.



Phil Harris is not as well as he has been and could really use some encouragement from his many friends. Please swing by the Eddy Heritage House Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, [2920 Tibbits Avenue](#), Troy, NY 12180 and

visit Phil in room 315. Please try to get out there to help cheer up our friend. There is a good chance that you will also get to see **Dave** and learn something interesting that he has been involved in.



With his work for the Lions Club he has had an opportunity to do many things... including the opportunity for **Dave** and **Phil** to visit a site where dogs are trained to work with the blind. The team (dog and blind person) are trained together and not all dogs are cut out for this type of work.

WINTER COVERS

Text and Photos by Rensselaer County Master Gardener Doug Pratt

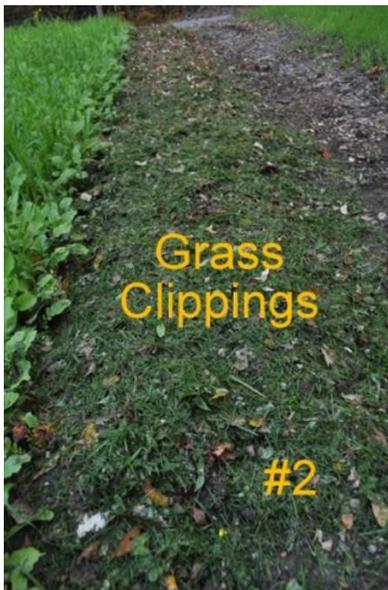
#1.

What: Leaves. These leaves were piled since last fall. Composted? No. Leaf mold? No. Just broken down a little.

When: Applied any time after the soil is warm in the spring.

Why: Keeps the soil temperature stable. Reduces evaporation. Feeds the soil biota. Adds organic and trace minerals.

Cons: Can be a haven for vermin.



#2. **What:** Grass clippings. Spread 1-1/2 to 2" deep. Taken from lawns with no "icides" (for any kind of pest control).

When: After the soil is warm in the spring. Then any time.

Why: Reduces evaporation. Feeds the soil biota. Adds organic matter and a small dose of "N".

Cons: By collecting clippings from the lawn, you are stripping it of organic matter and nutrients.

3. **What:** Straw. Best if harvested before seed heads mature. May be partially rotted or weathered.

When: As mulch, after the soil is warm in the spring. As a winter cover, after a hard frost.

Why: Usually contains few weed seeds. Provides all the benefits of mulch. As a winter cover, protects soil from deeply freezing.

Cons: Expensive. An outside input which must be purchased.



Improving the soil in a vegetable garden is a challenge. Standing crops, cold soil, wet soil and a compost shortage all present special problems. In Grafton, Rensselaer County, NY, we have little in the way of soil. Continuous soil improvement is essential.

No two vegetable gardens have identical soil and conditions. The best solution by far is to take a bed out of production and use the season to grow cover crop for what the soil needs. I find this a sacrifice many gardeners resistant to pursue. Luckily, there are other methods. Here are some ideas.

#4.

What: Buckwheat and autumn eaves combination.

Buckwheat is grown to 6-8" tall then rolled down (not tilled). Then covered with year-old leaves.

When: After the spring harvest. The buckwheat is planted in warm soil. The soft buckwheat rots under the leaves.

Why: Feeds everything! Worms, bacteria, fungi. Adds organic matter. Covers the soil for winter.

Cons: Does not allow for crop production.



#5.

What: Winter rye.

When: Seeded late summer and early fall.

Why: Adds organic matter. Covers soil for winter. Reduces weeds.

Cons: Heavy growth in the spring may make it difficult to turn into the soil.



#6.

What: Radishes and oats. This radish variety is 'Ground Hog.'

When: This is a long crop. This combination needs the bed for the summer, or a good part of it.

Why: Oats make a large root mass near the surface. Radish varieties for cover cropping develop a deep taproot. This root drives into the subsoil, creating channels for worms and crop roots. This crop brings oxygen and moisture deep into the soil and leached nutrients to the surface. These are annual crops. When they die down, they cover the soil with litter over the winter.

Cons: Time. Photo #6 crop was planted Aug. 18th.

Performs better with a longer growing time.

All these covers improve organic levels. Organic material along with oxygen and water feed the soil food web. These living organisms break down nutrients making them available to plants.



Growing Green in 2016

Welcome to Green Bay!

2016 TGOA-MGCA Convention Activities

Wednesday through Friday, July 13, 14, and 15

Check out <http://www.mensgardenclubofalbany.org/> for details

History - 25 years ago
MEN`S GARDEN CLUB OF ALBANY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MONTHLY MEETING
FEBRUARY 7, 1991

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Men`s Garden Club of Albany, was held on Thursday evening, February 7, 1991 in the Cerebral Palsy Center for the Disabled.

President **Joe Raggio** called the meeting to order at 7:38.

The Minutes of the January 3, 1991 meeting were approved as read by the Club Secretary, **Tom Baker**

The Treasurer`s Report was approved as presented by our newly elected Treasurer, **Fred Day**. There as a balance in the General Fund as of January 31, 1991 of \$4,937,61 and in the Memorial Fund \$742.29, the endowment and Investment fund has \$5,987.63.

A letter was read from the Berkshire Garden Center thanking the Club for its generous annual contribution.

From the National Endowment and Investment fund Committee, **Al Miller** informed the Board that his one year appointment expired on December 31, 1990 where as the National Board elected to have **Al** serve a full three year term. **Al** consented to accept. (Was this National?)

The bulk of the remainder of the meeting consisted of working on the committees, chairmen, co-chairmen, and their responsibilities. Everyone had a copy of the agenda, therefore, the Secretary elected not to reiterate the entire details. The agenda is attached.

SOME PROPOSALS WERE MADE:

1. **Ferd Johnson** and **Ken York** will chair the committee for Investigation of Club expansion.
2. Alternate Directory to replace the present Directory will be chaired by **Don Lewis**.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Andy Cytrynak** discussed the plans for the Flower Show. For one thing, **Warren Abele** will give a workshop on Forcing Daffodils.
2. **Edgar Tompkins** made a motion which was carried that would allocate \$150.00 for the Show: \$125.00 is for the entrance fee and \$25.00 incidental expenses.
3. **Oscar Rheingold** offered to donate some Tuberous Begonias for the Exhibit.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00.

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!!!**



MEN'S GARDEN CLUB of ALBANY CLUB ACTIVITIES Albany International Airport Don Wrieden – Chairman



Adopt-a-Highway

Ken Abele during construction of our second raised bed on I-90 at Exit 7 Westbound. Built to last with lots of steel, many yards of concrete, some fancy filter material that **Ken Abele** found to keep the soil from washing out between the blocks, 2" foam insulation (allows us to plant tulip bulbs closer to the edges), many blocks hauled by **Ken Abele** and many yards of nice soil from **Osborne Mills Nursery** on Everett Road in Albany. And most importantly, this was built as a Memorial to an outstanding member - **Mr. Conrad (Connie) Robert**. This project took years to get State and Federal approvals and lots of hard work from members of the Men's Garden Club of Albany. ps. If you know who borrowed this - please ask them to return it. Someone with big boy toys on site? Thanks!!!



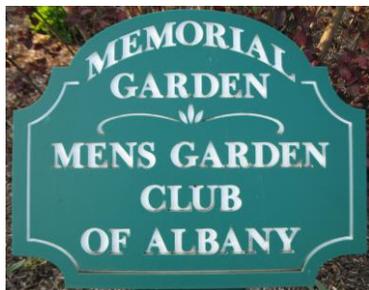
Gardening from the Heart at the Center for Disability Services

Volunteers this January included: **Tom Baker, Russ Greenman, Joe Herman, Jack Meagher, Bruce Wilcox, and Don Wrieden**. During January we took cuttings from a large Coleus plant and started several dozen new plants. We spent two weeks painting clay pots as well as other nearby people and things, and another week to transplant some of our Coleus cuttings into the clay pots. Each consumer was able to take home their very impressive potted plants.

Last year **Joe Huth** developed a plan that provided details as to what, where and when to plant various vegetables and flowers. I took that list to [Becker's Farm](#) and **Sargent Mark Becker** loaded me up with another large bag of seeds. After our Valentine's Day project we will start planting some seeds indoors. Please consider joining us - we have a blast! Our consumers are amazing and they really help us to have a better attitude toward life.



Memorial Garden
At the Albany County Cooperative Extension
Joe Huth / Chuck Scott Memorial Garden Chairmen



Memorial Garden cleanup days
 In an effort to help our members plan



ahead, we have set the following work days to work on the Memorial Garden. We picked the 2nd Monday of each of the following months - **March 14th (prune), April 11th (prune and mulch), May 9th and July 11th** to prepare for our annual Memorial service and picnic.

February 19-21, 2016 - [NY in Bloom](#) - Some of our members have signed up to work - **Thanks!**

March 12, 2016 - [Spring Garden Day](#) -- Saturday, 9:45 am - 3:30 pm - Activities include: Classes, a nice lunch, book & plant sale and auction. \$30 per person includes up to 3 classes, the keynote speaker and lunch. For questions call 518-272-4210. [Click here for full brochure and registration form](#)

March 18-20, 2016 - We will have our Educational booth at the [Capital District Garden and Flower Show](#) Thanks to **Tom Baker's minutes, in this newsletter, we know we have been supporting this show for at least 25 years.**

DATES TO REMEMBER

Today!	Please visit our friends that need our visits and cards
Every Wednesday : @ 9:15 am	Gardening from the Heart Center for Disability Services 700 South Pearl St.
February 19-21 9:30 am - 5:00 pm	New York in Bloom NYS Museum - NY in Bloom
Thursday, February 25th @ 6:30 pm March - <i>possibly</i> changed to March 17 th	MGCA Dinner Meeting (everyone invited) We are trying to avoid Maunday (Holy) Thursday
Thursday March 3 rd @ 7:30 pm Thursday April 7 th @ 7:30 pm	Board of Director's Meeting All members are invited
Saturday March 12 th 9:45 am - 3:30 pm	Spring Garden Day
Monday - March 14 th @ 10:00 am	MGCA Memorial Garden Pruning Albany County Cooperative Extension
March 18-20, 2016 Fri 10-8 Sat 9-7 Sun 10-5	Capital District Garden and Flower Show - Hudson Valley Community College http://gardenandflowershow.com/
Saturday April 23 rd 2016	MGCA Regional meeting with the national president Possibly in the Rome, NY area

Editor: Russ Greenman

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>

Please support the **Constantine Garden Center** – our newest advertiser

In Memory
Of My
 *Loving Wife, Young* 
Bruce Wilcox

In Memory of  
Louis Meo
&
Richard Stankus

In Memory of  
Al & Barbara Miller
Christian & Mildred Lebrecht
Ed Tompkins
Avrom Koblenz
Jerry Flax

In Memory of my parents  
John and Carrie Meagher
They both loved Plants and Flowers
Jack Meagher

In Memory of  
Grandpa & Great Grandpa
Carroll W. Greenman
Russ, Maria, and Carl

 *In Memory of* 
 *Wally Dillenbeck*
and
Don Otterness 
By Tom Baker

 *In Memory of* 

Bill Town
Joe Herman

 *In Memory of* 
my Dad

Carroll W. Greenman
Bob



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 East Greenbush - Across from Columbia Plaza

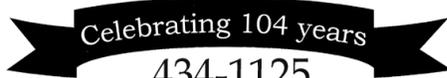
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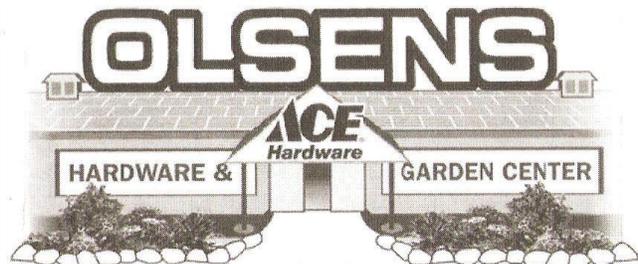
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The following growers donated to our 2015 Plant Sale
 Please help support them with your purchases

- Faddegons Nursery
- Constantine Farm
- Shaker Shed Farm Market
- George's Market and Nursery
- Valoze's Greenhouses
- Troys Landscape Supply
- The Gade Farm
- Pigliaventos Greenhouses
- Krug Farms