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

(Serving the greater capital region)

Celebrating **85** years of service to our community

VOLUME 84 NO. 2

(First Chartered 1936)

February, 2021

DATE & TIME: Thursday, February 25th @ 7:00 pm

Dear Friends,

The Men's Garden Club of Albany has stood the test of time, having brought gardeners together in friendship and fellowship and offered service to the community since 1935. Like other organizations, however, its future is brightest when its spirit reflects the community it is a part of. Therefore, with keen understanding that ideas about community change, the club's board of directors believes that it is time to embark on a new and important journey:



With leadership of our president, **Joe Raggio**, board members agreed in December 2020 to propose to club membership removing the word "Men's" from the club's name and to welcome women, really already valued partners, as formal club members. We are not proposing a new name just yet; indeed, we still are taking stock of the formal requirements for making such a change.

Still, it's really an exciting development for fellows like me who are both proud of our first 85 years and eager to build in the years ahead. Our club has experienced some challenges in recent years. All manner of membership organizations have seen declines in participation over the last generation. Add a worldwide pandemic to that and it's become even more difficult to keep in touch and share the joy of encouraging life from the soil around us. At the same time, interest in gardening is soaring. And few pleasures can bring people with diverse perspectives and experiences together as well as gardening can.

Thus, I look forward to many more years with our old friends and ask all of you to help bring new friends into the group!

Bill Storeman

PROGRAM: Virtual Roundtable via Zoom

The main purpose of this meeting is to see how our fellow gardeners are doing and what they are up to. There has been talk about various types of greenhouses and what seeds can be started in them. Some members are in warmer climates for the Winter and may have a totally different growing season. Please join in and let us know how you have been spending your days. This will be a great opportunity to ask questions and / or share stories about gardening successes and failures.

Proposed Name Change

As **Bill Stoneman** noted, we are proposing a name change that will include women, and let folks know that membership is not limited to just Albany residents. A name that has been proposed for your consideration is **Garden Club of the Capital District**. This puts Garden as the first word, defines us as a club, and states that we are a regional club. We would like your thoughts about the proposed club name, and any suggestions for the website name. As a more compact name, some may refer to us as Garden Club Capital District. This name lends itself to be shortened even further to Garden Club for casual conversation. References to our former name (Men's Garden Club of Albany) and our National organization (The Gardener's of America and formally the Men's Garden Club of America) are up for discussion.

Please join us on **Thursday, February 25th @ 7:00 pm - via Zoom or a phone call** to help us move forward with this major milestone in our 85 year history.

PLACE: Zoom program accessible from anywhere in the world via the Internet
You can "Join using a Browser" Downloading ZOOM is NOT required
A telephone # is supplied for an audio connection with or without a computer.

Join Our Zoom Meeting - Our meetings are **open to everyone** and we hope you can join us.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86380238556> Meeting ID: 863 8023 8556

Or

One tap mobile +19292056099,,86380238556#

DATE & TIME: Thursday, February 25th @ 7:00 pm

Program Thank You!

Last month **Judith Fetterley** presented a well organized and valuable program on **Shade Gardening**. **Judith** gave us many design tips such as arranging plants in groups of 3 or 5 to draw your eyes toward the plantings and showed us how different types of plants can compliment each other. Two fantastic handouts were provided that will help us when selecting plants. As a side note: a friend of mine took a writing class from Judith and suggested that we ask her to do a program for us. Fortunately, I was able to say that **Judith Fetterley** presented a fantastic program for us last Thursday.

Judith Fetterley is a Master Gardener with the Albany County Cornell Cooperative Extension. She also manages a small perennial garden design business, *Perennial Wisdom*, and writes a bi-weekly column, "Out in the Garden," about her adventures in gardens.

We owe a big **Thank You** to **Judith Fetterley** for a Very interesting and informative program.

Membership



I'm sorry to report that we have lost another good friend. **Dave Harris** and his family have always done wonderful things for us and the community. Dave was a real gentleman and he will be missed by all that knew him. One of his family traditions was to bring a beautiful flower arrangement to each of our dinner meetings. **Dave's** brother **Phil Harris** started bringing them around 35 years ago and **Dave** continued the tradition with **Diane** (twin sister) doing the behind the scenes work. They were raffled off and all of the money went to support our Memorial fund.

1942 – 2/8/2021

After graduating from RPI with degrees in Physics and Chemistry, **Dave** decided to share his knowledge with kids. So he taught Physics and Chemistry in Grandville, NY for 36 years. It was there where he got heavily involved in the Lions Club International and became the **Lions Clubs International - District Governor**, District 20-Y2. When he returned to Watervliet he became very active as the Cabinet Secretary / Treasurer for the Albany-Troy Lions club. In addition to 44 plus years of volunteering for the Lions Clubs International, **Dave** was very involved in the church, garden club, and his music. As one couple said at **Dave's** funeral service, **Dave** was the most admirable person they ever knew. Others said **Dave** and his family were nicest most generous people you'll ever meet. We'll miss you **Dave**.

Harris, David A. WATERVLIET David A. Harris passed away peacefully on February 8, 2021. David was the son of the late Andrew and Helen Wanko Harris. A longtime resident of Watervliet, David was a graduate of the Watervliet City Schools and R.P.I. He was a teacher at Granville Central School District. David was a distinguished member of both the Granville and Troy Lions Club. In addition to assisting with the charitable efforts of the Lions Club, David enjoyed his daily walks in his neighborhood and chatting with friends on the block. David had an appreciation for the arts, especially classical music and attended many concert events and performances. David was the brother of Diane H. (Thomas) Ladley. In addition to his parents, David was predeceased by his brother, Phillip R. Harris. Friends may visit at the Konicek & Collett Funeral Home LLC, Watervliet, on **Tuesday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.** A prayer service will be held at 10:30 a.m. Burial will be in Memory Gardens in the Harris family lot immediately following the service. During services face masks are required and all COVID-19 protocols will be followed. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions to the Granville Lions Club, 1 Lions Lane, Granville, NY, 12832 would be appreciated. Online condolences at Konicekandcollettfuneralhome.com

Tom Baker

We thank all those that made tax deductible donations to the MGCA in memory of **Tom Baker**. It was so nice to read the notes from so many people that knew and loved **Tom**.

Herm Mau

Herm has been in and out of Hospice and he's currently at home being cared for by **Mary**. I'm sure she would welcome your calls and perhaps a visit.

Dues are Due: \$25 / member will cover both Local and National memberships.
Ads payments for 2021 are due – They are published in the DIRT, Website and at public events

To date we have received Ad payments from **Becker's Farm, Gade Farm, and Faddegon's**
Please support the folks that support our many activities.

Please write checks to: Men's Garden Club of Albany
Mailing address:
Russ Greenman (treasurer)
25 Worthman Lane
Rensselaer, NY 12144

We continue to welcome 501(c)3 deductible donations that can be dedicated to support our **Memorial Garden, Gardening From the Heart program** at the Center for Disability Services, or the **Joe Herman Scholarship Fund.**

Please send your 501(c)3 tax deductible donation to **Russ Greenman** MGCA Treasurer
Please call **Russ Greenman** at (518) 477-8321 for details



Don Wrieden and Bob Ireland
@ our club's Memorial Garden



Joe Huth and Greg Goutos - Altamont Fair



Joe Herman at the NYS Fair



NYS Fair

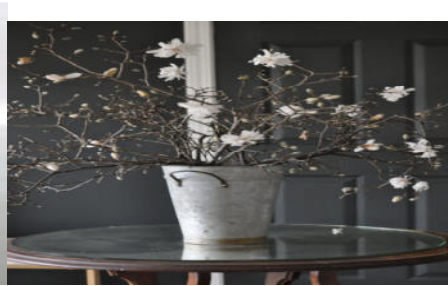
Forcing Tree & Shrub Branches for Indoor Bloom

Prepared by David L. Jennings – Club Member-Gardeners of the Capital District & Master Gardener, CCE of Saratoga County

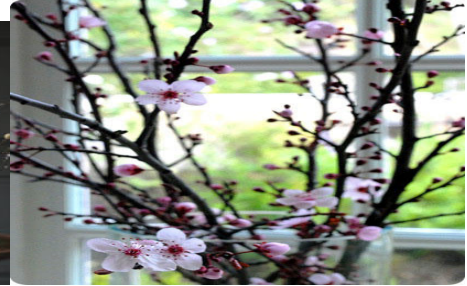
I don't know about you, but I'm more than ready for a little taste of Spring and look forward to seeing those beautiful bursts of yellow flowers on our local forsythia shrubs each year. Wouldn't it be nice if you could enjoy them now though, inside your home on a dark snowy day!! Let me tell you how that is possible...



Forsythia



Star Magnolia



Cherry Blossoms

This age-old practice called "Forcing Tree & Shrub Branches" brings bursts of spectacular color and the beauty of mother nature's blooms inside to chase away those "Winter Blahs". Here's how I do it and a few examples of some of the trees and shrubs that I feel work best for doing so and how many weeks as indicated {example-Forsythia (1 wk)} for how long they take to flower once you bring them inside.

All you really need is a good pair of nice sharp hand pruners and a spring-flowering tree or shrub willing to make the sacrifice of a few non-essential branches. No special expertise is required. You'll be pruning out a few non-essential branches so don't worry about hurting your plant.

These are the trees and shrubs that I recommend you start with and the number in parenthesis is the approximate number of weeks it should take from the time you cut the branches until they should bloom for you. One caution though, don't try to fool Mother Nature too much...branches need at least six weeks of Winter's cold temperatures before they can be brought inside and forced into bloom.

Forsythia (1 wk) branches could have been brought inside anytime in the last couple of weeks and still are my first choice this time of year to be forced into bloom. It's now time to also try your luck at Redbuds (2 wks), Cherry Trees (4 wks) and Red Maples (2 wks). Wait until the end of this month (February) to consider Lilacs (4 wks), Crab Apple (4 wks), Honeysuckle (3 wks), Spirea (4 wks) and various Magnolias (3 wks).

Another option is using Pussy Willows since they are a great choice for forcing indoors, they don't require water and can last for weeks (be sure to wait until the soft downy catkins have started to break out of their castings.)

HOW TO PRUNE BRANCHES – Choose a day when the temperature is above freezing to cut your branches since the milder temp helps ease the transition the plants must make from outside to inside. Be sure to choose branches that are not essential to the pleasing form of the plant or in an overgrown section or toward the back of the plant where it won't be missed. Choose a branch with lots of small buds that are swollen and beginning to open and be sure to make proper pruning cuts just above a node at the proper angle to ensure water uptake.

HOW TO FORCE BRANCHES –

- Once you get your freshly cut branches inside, place them in a container of room temperature water overnight. Some people like to crush the bottom half inch ends of the branches to help with quicker water uptake. Make sure the container is wide and heavy enough to keep branches from tipping over.



- Keep them in a well-lit location away from heaters and direct sun. The brighter the location, the better the quality of bloom will be.
- Change the water every few days so the branches don't begin to rot. Misting the flower buds helps as well. Once they begin to open, display them in a warm area and sit back and enjoy your little taste of Spring. If it doesn't work the first time don't despair, just cut a few branches a week later and try again!

Resource: The Olde Farmer's Almanac

GARDEN CLUB of ALBANY CLUB ACTIVITIES

Adopt-a-Highway - 25 years

We had a good run... We started our Adopt A Highway program back in 1994 by building a raised bed out of Hemlock and lots of rebar. Ten years later in 2004 - we built a raised bed that would last a lifetime. Unfortunately when construction started on the Exit 7 bridge off of I-90 our concrete base, block structure, soil and flower bulbs mysteriously disappeared leaving only the steel we drove down 5 feet to keep the Very thick concrete base from heaving.. **Ken Abele** played a big part during construction of our first and second raised bed on I-90 at Exit 7 Westbound. This was built to last 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 Garden Club of Albany. ps. If you know who borrowed our several thousand pound raised bed - **please ask them to return it**. Perhaps someone with big boy toys on site while working on the bridge knows. Thanks!!! Built to last... Destroyed in hours



Someone that was working on the bridge at Exit 7 of I-90 knows where it is.

This was our Memorial to Mr. Conrad (Connie) Robert

Albany International Airport Don Wrieden – Chairman



Memorial Garden

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



For many years, our club has maintained a beautiful Memorial Garden as a tribute to our “Gardeners Gone to Rest.” The garden is located in Voorheesville on the grounds of the Albany County Cooperative Extension



Along with perennials, shrubs and trees, there are also plaques that lists the names of our club members who have passed away. Thanks to **Joe Huth** we now have 40 new matching name tags. Over the years the name tags were showing their age and now they look fantastic. Thanks **Joe Huth** for all your work to get these ordered and installed.



Jack Meagher (front) and **Chuck Scott** (background)



Gardening from the Heart - 35 years

at the

Center for Disability Services

Volunteers include: **Russ Greenman, Greg Goutos, Joe Huth, Jack Meagher, and Don Wrieden.**



Tom Baker and Al Miller started working on founding the Gardening From the Heart program way back in 1984 but he may say that it really didn't start until 1985. Originally our club had two teams of members that would teach classes, every Wednesday, at two locations with the adults at 700 S. Pearl St. in Albany and with the children at 314 Manning Blvd in Albany, NY.

COVID-19 restrictions kept us out of the building, and we're waiting to hear what the next steps are for our activities at the 700 South Pearl St. location.



Missing Greenhouse and raised beds at the Center For Disability Services 700 S. Pearl

Youth Gardening

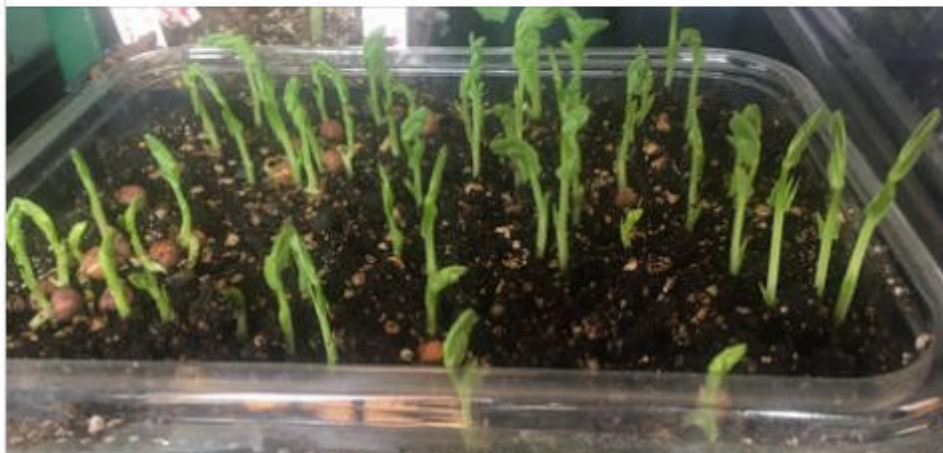
Our Youth Gardening program has found another worthwhile program to support. Check out our very own - **Bill Stoneman's [The Vegetable Project](#)**



Vegetable Project in Albany, NY

18 hrs · 🌐

We called the gustatory adventure pictured here "the closest thing to reliable instant gratification that gardening offers" when we posted about newly sown seeds six days ago, on Sunday, Feb. 14. Some of the babies are already two inches tall now, on Saturday, Feb. 20. We will be eating, no preparing and no cooking necessary, within days. Want to learn how to grow your own?



History – 30 years ago – by Mr. Tom Baker
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** faithfully documented our minutes since way before he had a personal computer - somehow he managed to digitize all of the minutes he had taken over the years and we now include them in our newsletter under the heading "History - 30 years ago"
Thanks, **Tom Baker!!!**

DATES TO REMEMBER

Today!	Please visit our friends that need our visits and cards
Thursday, February 25 th @ 7:00 pm	Monthly meeting - Virtual round table conversation via a Zoom meeting - Join with your gardening questions
Thursday, March 4 th at 7:30 pm	Director's meeting – via Zoom

Editor: **Russ Greenman**

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Log into your Amazon account and Select **Men's Garden Club of Albany**

Support your favorite charity at no extra cost when you shop at smile.amazon.com.

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>



Bill playing with fire --



no one ever fell asleep during his classes

Special thanks to **Paul Zimmermann** for our terrific website

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

Go ahead - click on it - you'll be glad you did.

Thanks **Paul Zimmermann!!!**



In Memory
Of My
Loving Wife, Young
Bruce Wilcox


In Memory of
Louis Meo
&
Richard Stankus


In Memory of
Al & Barbara Miller
Phil Harris
Bill Barr
Christian & Mildred Lebrecht
Ed Tompkins
Avrom Koblenz

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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