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President-Elect Message

Dear Garden Club of New Jersey Members,

We have welcomed 2021 with the hope that our lives can return to some semblance of normalcy as the year progresses. Due to the global pandemic, it has been necessary to cancel all in-person GCNJ events and meetings. However, virtual meetings have become the new norm and have provided us with a platform to continue to meet, discuss, share information, and plan for the future.

Despite the pandemic, GCNJ remains committed to keeping you informed and providing educational experiences. While several state garden clubs have offered virtual courses in Gardening Study and Landscape Design, we in New Jersey are happy to announce the "Go Wild Winter Festival" --a virtual event to celebrate our commitment to conservation. This event was initially scheduled for February but will now be held on Wednesday, March 10, and Thursday, March 11. The program will consist of five virtual presentations by outstanding speakers with an emphasis on protecting our wildlife, air, water, land, and forests.

On March 10th, at 11 am, our first speaker will be **David Wheeler**, Executive Director of Conserve Wildlife. **Bruce Crawford** of Rutgers University will speak at 1 pm and **Mark Falzone**, President of Scenic America, will make his presentation at 2 pm.

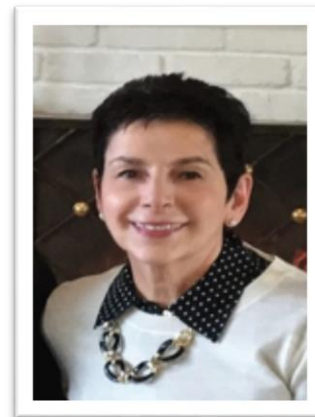
The program for March 11 begins with **Sam Lemheney** and **Melissa Raffel** of the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show 2021 at 11 am and **Sam Pesin**, President of the Friends of Liberty State Park, and **Greg Remaud**, CEO of NY/NJ Baykeepers follow at 1 pm.

For further details and registration, please go to the GCNJ website. Registration is required but is free of charge to all.

Please join us for this educational virtual event. We look forward to seeing you.

Stay well and safe.

Cecelia Millea
GCNJ President-Elect
cmillea@msn.com





MONARCH
GREENHOUSES
.....
for the love of gardening





"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow"
Audrey Hepburn

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The price always includes everything you see, and everything we think you'll need, so you can simply walk into that greenhouse when it's finished and start enjoying it – guttering, staging, tool rack if you have a porch. No builder required – I build the walls, foundations, lay paving slabs or even the herringbone brick pathway if you're having that option. Virginia to Pittsburgh to Maine. 5yr guarantee on craftsmanship. No extra charge for having it bespoke.

www.MonarchGreenhouses.com
732-252-3998

“Go Wild” Winter Festival



Wednesday, MARCH 10

11:00 am – David Wheeler, Conserve Wildlife NJ

“Helping Hands for Wildlife”

While often overlooked in our modern society, wildlife provides us with countless unparalleled benefits - for our health, economy, ecology, food systems, and state of mind. Yet there are so many ways to return their favor by supporting wildlife, especially during a time when more species than ever are declining and at risk of local extinction or extirpation. From volunteering and citizen science to habitat enhancement and advocacy, you can make a difference for wildlife! Join naturalist and author David Wheeler on this far-reaching look into the ways wildlife helps us, and the diverse ways you can be a wildlife champion here in New Jersey.



David Wheeler has served as the Executive Director of the nonprofit Conserve Wildlife Foundation, which works to protect rare wildlife in New Jersey and beyond, since 2012. He taught Environmental Communication at Rutgers University's School of Environmental and Biological Sciences for eight years. Mr. Wheeler regularly hosts wildlife videos and podcasts and has written for the *Star Ledger*, *E the Environmental Magazine*, *NJEA Review*, and other media. He wrote the 2011 book, Wild New Jersey: Nature Adventures in the Garden State, and wrote the foreword to the 2014 Jim Wright book, Bald Eagles in the Meadowlands and Beyond. Mr. Wheeler has spoken

about wildlife and environmental issues on Fox 5 News with Ernie Anastos, NBC10@IssuePhiladelphia, PBS Peril and Promise, and Canadian Public Radio. He earned his M.B.A. from New York University's Stern School of Business and his B.A. from American University in Washington, DC, and was a 2017 Fellow with Lead New Jersey.

1:00 pm – Bruce Crawford, Rutgers University and NJAES

“Designing Gardens to Support the Native Web of Life”

Most people think about adding native plants to the garden, but few think about how to compose an attractive garden designed to benefit our native insect and pollinator populations. Taking into consideration the concepts of creating outdoor spaces and the use of color and texture, Bruce will look at methods for developing attractive gardens that will support the native web of life!

A longtime proponent of unusual and fun plants, Bruce is the State Program Leader for Home and Public Horticulture Director for New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES). He is also an instructor in Landscape Architecture at Rutgers University. A graduate of Bucknell University, Bruce also lectures frequently and has yet to find a plant that he does not like.



2:00 pm – Mark Falzone, President of Scenic America

“Creating a More Scenic America for All People”



Scenic America President Mark Falzone shares how his organization works locally, regionally, and nationally to create a more scenic, safe, and sustainable America. A national environmental nonprofit with more than 40 chapters and affiliates nationwide, Scenic America advocates on issues ranging from billboard blight to scenic byways to utility undergrounding. Among other recent successes, Scenic America's efforts led to the revitalization of the National Scenic Byways Program and the program's funding for the first time in nine years.

Mark Falzone was selected to serve as President of Scenic America in April 2017. Prior to his arrival at Scenic America, Mark served as Deputy Director of the National Immigration Forum, and before that was a five-term elected member of the House of Representatives in Massachusetts. Under Mark's

leadership, Scenic America successfully advocated for the revival and funding of the National Scenic Byways Program and defeated a billboard industry-sponsored amendment that would have gutted the Highway Beautification Act. Scenic America is a supporting member of the coalition to pass the “Liberty State Park Protection Act” and Save Caven Point.

Thursday, MARCH 11

11:00 am – Sam Lemheney , VP and Chief of Shows and Events, The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), and Melissa Raffel, Director of Volunteer Programs, PHS

“2021 Philadelphia Flower Show – Habitat: Nature’s Masterpiece”



An exciting overview of the show scheduled for June 5-13, the nation’s largest and longest-running horticultural event will move outdoors for the first time, making the 2021 Show a history-making experience that will incorporate the beautiful landscapes of Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park in Philadelphia. Sam Lemheney is the Chief of Shows and Events at PHS and directs the strategy, planning, and execution of all events including the annual Philadelphia Flower Show where over 250,000 visitors from all over the world attend. Sam is a judge for flower shows in Singapore, Japan, and South Korea and has judged floats at the Tournament of Roses Parade. After graduating with a degree in Plant Science, he began his career at the Walt Disney Company and managed the Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival.

Melissa Raffel joined PHS in 2020 as the Director of Volunteer Programs at PHS and has more than 20 years of experience in the non-profit space with more than a decade spent managing volunteer programs. Prior to PHS, Melissa worked at the Project Management Institute (PMI), a membership association with 10,000 volunteers worldwide. At PMI, Melissa oversaw policies and procedures related to volunteer engagement, volunteer recognition and satisfaction, as well as training and supporting staff working directly with volunteers. Melissa holds a B.A. in Theater from Russell Sage College and a M.S. in Arts Administration from Drexel University.

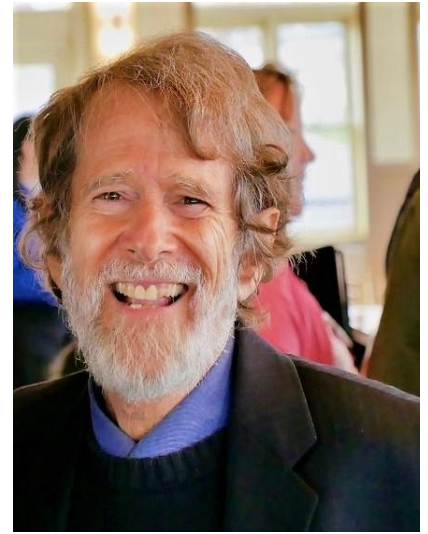


1:00 pm – Sam Pesin, The Friends of Liberty State Park, and Greg Remaud, NY/NJ Baykeepers

“Supporting Liberty State Park”

The Friends of Liberty State Park and NY/NJ Baykeepers are advocating for "The Liberty State Park Protection Act" which will end privatization threats to this national treasure and secure those lands for public enjoyment, environmental protection, and wildlife conservation.

Sam Pesin (right) is the president of the all-volunteer The Friends of Liberty State Park and the son of Morris Pesin, known as the father of Liberty State Park (LSP). He has co-led statewide grassroots movements against LSP privatization with the Friends' ally, the NY/NJ Baykeepers. Sam welcomes the GCNJ support for the LSP Protection Act for our priceless urban park behind Lady Liberty.



Greg Remaud (left) has been an advocate for land preservation in densely developed communities for over 20 years. He has led and partnered in numerous land acquisition, preservation, and restoration projects throughout the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Region. Greg serves on numerous Advisory Boards and has presented on urban land preservation in a variety of forums. He is a trustee on the board of the Meadowlands Conservation Trust, and a board member and past president of the Liberty State Park Conservancy.

Celebrate our Natural Resources!
Register for our free **“Go Wild Winter Festival.”**
Deadline is **March 1.**
Visit the GCNJ website opening page and scroll down.
Click below to get started:

<https://gardenclubofnewjersey.org>

ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT!!

Ban on Single-Use Plastics NJ Legislative Bill Signed into Law



Trash comes in many forms; however, the old cliché, “One Man’s Trash is Another Man’s Treasure,” should not be applied to New Jersey’s plastic problem. True, the state has recycling programs, but unfortunately, in the Garden State (as in most of the world) we are generating more plastic debris than our system can process. Thus, many products are finding their way into garbage dumps and worse, rather than being recycled and repurposed into new reusable products. There is growing evidence that discarded plastics are destroying human health and ecosystems, including the planet’s oceans.

To counteract the negative impact of plastic in NJ, our state legislators have taken action. On November 4, 2020, Governor Phil Murphy signed the Plastic Pollution Reduction Act into New Jersey law. This ban is the strongest anti-plastic law in the nation and will reduce many types of plastic currently used in NJ. Ideally, the ban will reduce unwanted plastics from polluting our communities and waterways. The new legislative ban will take effect in the spring of 2022. This law addresses the growing concern over plastic pollution by banning single-use plastic bags, plastic straws, and polystyrene foam food containers. To have an even greater effect, consumers should avoid buying any products made-of or packaged-in plastic.

Since the invention of plastic more than 100 years ago, its slow accumulation and leaching into our environment is having a devastating impact on oceans, wildlife, and human health. Many of these discarded plastic products have entered waterways where currents carry them out to sea creating gigantic trash vortexes. Currently, there are five of these floating garbage dumps found in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. The largest one is known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch and is bigger than the state of Texas. These floating vortexes of plastic debris do not biodegrade

and continue to grow larger with every day. Simultaneously, the chemicals and particles that leach into the ocean are contaminating the water and sickening and killing marine life.

These poisonous substances break down into tiny pieces that are easily ingested and inhaled, leading to dangerous toxins entering the food chain. In waterways, fish mistake particles as food. In landfills, discarded plastics leach chemicals into our groundwater resulting in contamination of agriculture. These are just a few ways that plastic enters our food chain and end up being consumed. Health risks include cancer, kidney and liver disease, and nerve and brain damage, along with many other adverse effects.

Reducing the manufacture and use of plastic products is a necessary step in correcting the impact of plastic pollution. Gardeners reusing plastic garden pots, prevents them from becoming part of a floating garbage patch. Using reusable water bottles and bags also reduces waste. As a last resort, if you must use a plastic product, please check the ID code, and recycle it accordingly. Remember, the old adage of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle is as applicable today as when the slogan was first introduced in the 1970's.



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Beverly Kazickas
Environmental Chair
Kazickas55@aol.com



Okay, this part of the year is COLD with days during which it may snow, sleet, rain or be a mix of all three. Temperatures may dip into the teens on some nights as the winds cause some of your bigger trees to keep time with the force of your stronger gusts.

Inside your home, however, it is warm with perhaps a roaring fire going in your family room. It is a time for we gardeners to plot, plan and search out our next garden project, come spring and summer. It is the time to check the catalogues and our favorite garden books! However, there is one more thing we can do that will enable you to have a better garden-- and that is to continue to compost throughout the winter months. Think of it as exercise!

I admit, somehow composting in warm weather just seems easier...it's a pleasant walk across the grass to toss eggshells and vegetable peelings into the composter--and then give it a spin. Somehow, that same task in winter seems is a bit harder. You may have to struggle to open the lid on the composter and then struggle again to close the lid securely before giving it a spin. However, when you are back inside, you smile. Yes, that is partially because it's much warmer inside, but also because you know composting in winter is a great way to get the best possible garden next spring and summer.

A few thoughts on winter composting:

Colder temperatures will slow the rate of decomposition, and you still need the right mix of brown and green waste, as well as moisture and oxygen. So, how do we do this successfully?

Begin with brown waste:

Look around your yard for leaves and twigs; then gather paper or cardboard from inside your home such as paper towel rolls or cardboard egg cartons.

What about green waste?

In summer, you would be adding grass clippings but in winter, fruit and vegetable scraps are a perfect substitute.

What do you do for moisture?

Even if it's freezing outside, the inside of a compost pile is warm. If you just have a bin, keep it

covered. Fruit and vegetable scraps will add some moisture, but sometimes water must be added. It's easy to decide how much...put on a pair of gloves, gather a handful of compost from the center, and squeeze tightly. The result should be damp to the touch and feel like a sponge that's been wrung out.

Oxygen is the last essential ingredient.

If you have a spinning composter, simply turn it once a week. If your compost is in a pile, give it a toss weekly with a pitchfork.

Because the cold temperatures slow the process down, it is best to minimize the size of whatever materials are added as a quicker breakdown is enabled. Another way to beat the cold temperatures is to surround the composter with bales of straw or bags of leaves to keep it insulated.



Helpful hints:

So you don't have to go outside too often, use a larger collection bin in your home—a 5 gallon bucket would be fine.

Put your kitchen scraps in plastic bags and put them in the freezer. Use as needed for your composter.

Keep a large garbage bin by your composter to hold brown waste and use as needed.

If none of this appeals to you, try one of the following techniques inside your home, basement or garage:

Vermicomposting-- a method of using worms to transform organic waste into a nutrient-rich fertilizer.



Bokashi composting- an anaerobic process that relies on inoculated bran to ferment kitchen waste, including



meat and dairy, into a safe soil builder and nutrient-rich tea for your plants.

Amazon has kits that will help you get started or you can just Google the names on the internet to find out more about these processes.

Give it a try. It is really a terrific way to jump-start next summer's garden!

In this Covid 19 environment, learn something new—do something new.

Square Foot Gardening Foundation's "Featured Instructor"



Lifelong Rahway resident, Deb Stuart, was recently recognized as the Featured Certified Instructor by the Square Foot Gardening Foundation for her work teaching both kids and adults how to garden. Deborah is District VI Director for GCNJ. Square Foot Gardening, created by best-selling garden author Mel Bartholomew is a simple method of creating small, orderly, and highly productive kitchen gardens that are easy to grow, fun, and take up little space. Vegetables and flowers are grown in raised boxes filled with an organic soil mix and then divided into perfect 12-inch squares. Deb notes that this method is estimated to cost 50% less, use 20% less space, 10% of the water and only 2% of the work compared to single-row gardening.

One of her earliest memories of gardening is the day when she was a little girl wearing a beautifully smocked dress with pristine white socks. She went out to the garden and, when she returned later in a less-than-clean outfit, her mother fussed at her. "I'm not dirty, Mommy," she responded. "It's the earth!"

Deb Stuart is also a Rutgers trained Master Gardener. When she isn't gardening and starting seeds at home, she tirelessly spends time as the President of the Rahway Garden Club.

Deb also manages Rahway's JFK Community Garden as well as teaching kids Square Foot Gardening at Rahway's Helping Hands Learning Academy. In addition, Deb has played a key role in helping me expand my Square Foot Gardening Program for summer campers at three of New Jersey's YMCA's. Deb Stuart has spent her life getting "not dirty" with some truly amazing results.



Raised beds to teach the children of the Helping Hands Learning Academy how to SFG.

Scholarship News

Cathy Shalloo Receives Garden Club Of New Jersey Award

Cathy Shalloo of Brielle has been awarded one of the highest honors of the Garden Club of New Jersey, Inc., the Merit Award of Honor, by President Jeannie Geremia. This award recognizes and celebrates Cathy Shalloos' more than 30 years of service in the community for service, youth development, environmental protection, civic beautification, and philanthropy.

Promoting her “gig” (dressed as the Ladybug Lady), she educates and informs children and adults about the use of ladybugs as predators to destroy plant-eating aphids instead of using garden chemicals or harmful pesticides. She has worked continuously with schools, garden clubs, churches, community groups, and garden nurseries. She also attends educational events for both Monmouth and Ocean County Master Gardeners. Bringing live ladybugs to touch and launch in gardens, as part of her presentations that awe children and adults, Cathy teaches clean gardening practices year after year. If you ask Cathy why she chose the ladybug, she will say it has to do with her lifelong faith, and because the ladybug is a “good bug.” Practicing what she preaches, she approaches anyone using chemicals to ask them to think twice, especially around children or pets. She is a friend to pollinators – bees, butterflies, and helpful insects. She is a champion for our environment.



Cathy Shalloo has served as President for the Bayberry Garden Club as well as having co-chaired and initiated Wreaths Across America. She served on the beautification committee to water, weed and monitor the care of flowers and plants at the historic Curtis House and the Native Floral Garden. In addition, Cathy has served on committees that include the Financial Scholarship Committee (both locally and for the GCNJ), the award-winning Preschool Secret Garden Committee, the spring luncheon/fundraiser (which she created and chaired), Brielle Day booth sales, Hospitality committee, Mantel Design committee, and Brielle library designs.

Cathy was awarded the Perennial Bloom Award by both Bayberry Garden Club and the Garden Club of New Jersey. Together with other Bayberry Garden Club members, she helped create a blue-ribbon holiday themed room design at the Governor's mansion, as well as the first Bayberry Garden Club Garden Tour in Brielle.

Each year, as a member of the Garden Club of Spring Lake, Cathy Shalloo is always willing to help and serve on the annual garden tour committee. She is a seasoned garden club member, wise and friendly, with stories to share, empathy, knowledge, and compassion. She also can tell a really funny joke!

In addition to all she does at the garden clubs, much of her time is also devoted to promoting the Frances Foundation for Kids with Cancer where she has helped raise over \$3,000,000. She has been involved with this group as Executive Vice President and Trustee since it was founded in 2005. Cathy is also an active member of the Rosary Altar Society of St. Marks Church in Sea Girt, Women of Irish Heritage and is a member of Nooks and Crannies, a local Questers Chapter. When time permits, she also presents history-related stories to many groups using her collection of hats.

Cathy Shalloo does not use electronic devices to refresh her memory. She has never used the internet, but can recall names, dates, people and places like no other. If she has a question or wants to promote a worthy event, you will get a visit or a phone call from her with a handmade poster or note. Cathy knows that leading by good example is the best education and that children and our planet should be our most important goals. Celebrating her 85th birthday this year, she looks forward to pursuing her interests and passions, attending meetings and events, and enjoying friendships and family.

Patricia Polunas
Scholarship Chairman
scholarshipsgcnj@gmail.com

From the Awards Desk

In the midst of a Pandemic, the clubs in GCNJ are alive and well!!

2020-21 has been a whopper!!!! No mistake about it, this Pandemic has challenged every club's ingenuity and resilience. And we have prevailed... 34 beautiful yearbooks have been submitted and five selected and passed on to the Central Atlantic Region. Six applications for National Awards have also been forwarded.

There were projects including a stunning coffee table book celebrating a club's 100th anniversary, a zoom "Floral Design" workshop for members, a bird feeder project with a club's youth group, a dedication of a rebuilt town hall after Superstorm Sandy with its garden funded by the town's garden club, to name a few. There was also a submission for the National Award of Excellence for a Non-Member of a garden club. Yes, GCNJ has been busy in its clubs and communities!! So, kudos to all!!! Our clubs and their members are indeed "Jersey Strong". Be sure to take a moment to celebrate that strength and resilience!!

GCNJ Awards, 2020-21 First, an update--

The deadline for submission of club applications for GCNJ Awards this year has been extended until **March 1**.

The application for Awards submissions as well as the GCNJ Awards booklet and rules are on the GCNJ website under **Awards**. Please forward 3 copies of your Awards applications to Peggy Morrissey, 142 Osborne Avenue, Bay Head, NJ 08742 by the March 1 deadline.



Please don't feel that your club has done nothing of award recipient note this year. All of our clubs have made a Herculean attempt to stay in touch with their members and communities. Take a moment to make a list of those projects, zoom meetings, and/or "reach-outs" -- perhaps to your community food bank, veterans or nursing homes, individuals in need of some cheer, or children in need of help. All are worthy of recognition.

Awards are a wonderful way to celebrate the amazing contributions that each of our garden clubs make for their members and communities. They provide a history of accomplishments for each club and a way for newer members to recognize what a privilege and a reward it is to become a garden club member!!

Have a question? Call or write to me.

Peggy Morrissey

Awards Chair

732-330-3636

peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com

YOUTH NEWS

Lucia Junkroft Wins GCNJ Smokey Bear Poster Contest

**Lucia Junkroft with
Rahway Garden Club
President Deborah Stuart**



The Rahway Garden Club is proud to announce that Lucia Junkroft is the 5th-grade winner of the GCNJ 2020 Smokey Bear Contest. She attends St. John the Apostle School and is active in Girl Scouts, cheerleading, track, and other community organizations.

This poster competition celebrated Smokey's 50th birthday and is sponsored by the National Garden Club in conjunction with the U.S.

Forest Service. In light of the devastating wildfires in our country this year, the Smokey Bear Poster Contest is especially relevant, helping to maintain public awareness of the need to prevent human caused wildfires.

The Rahway Garden Club has two separate youth clubs that teach kids and teens how to become future, responsible, and capable stewards of their environment. If you would like to learn more, check our Facebook page.

Rahway Garden Club

Onnolee Allieri

Bob Markey

Co-Youth Chairmen

callieri@aol.com

Bob@MrBobtheGardener.com

What Did Your Club Do Recently???

Despite the cold weather, the political climate and Covid-19, Garden Club of New Jersey Clubs have been trying to persevere and use flowers to bring happiness into the lives of our neighbors and find creative ways of continuing to perform community projects and monthly meetings.

Cranford Garden Club

The Garden Club of Cranford, organized in 1927, federated in 1928, has navigated adversity throughout numerous global challenges in its 94-year history. The pandemic of 2020-21 has affected the entire world in unprecedented ways. The Garden Club of Cranford is no exception. We are coping with the present day and evolving challenges facing our membership. Traditionally, our monthly meeting had been hosted in the home of a member. The format typically included a business overview followed by a program presented by an outside speaker. Each meeting concluded with a delicious offering of tea, savories, and sweets.

Our desire to remain an active club, while adhering to protocol during the pandemic, directed us to explore alternate means of meeting. We have continued to meet outdoors when weather has permitted and alternately using Zoom to meet as an option on a blustery day. We have turned to our own multi-talented membership to present creative, engaging, and fun programs. Each meeting has included a demonstration or discussion.

One program centered on “How to Make Sweater Pumpkins.” Supply kits were distributed to participants in advance. Members followed along on Zoom as a presenter led them through the steps to create a finished, decorative pumpkin. A recorded, private YouTube video was also shared so that members could refer to the process and construct additional pumpkins at a later date.

Another meeting instructed members to bring a small pumpkin, wooden box, or container of choice, along with a bouquet of flowers. Greens and fillers were provided upon arrival at the outdoor site. The speaker guided members in “Creating a Beautiful Thanksgiving Arrangement.” The holiday meeting centered around sharing “Your Holiday Traditions.” Members shared favorite recipes, examples of family traditions or a narrative. Most recently, a member presented “The Art of Weaving” and exhibited her beautiful creations. Many members have since become “hooked”. They are busy constructing their own looms and weaving away the long days of winter.

This year has certainly been “outside of the box” and traditions have been tossed aside. It is, however, important to note that our desire to continue as a club and foster a sense of community has been enthusiastically embraced by all. Wishing everyone safe and healthy days ahead!

The Garden Club of Westfield

All the clubs know the challenges of the pandemic-- social distancing requirements, closed venues,

previously scheduled program speakers no longer available, cancelled or altered fundraising projects, etc. In the beginning, none of us knew the best way to address these challenges. The only advice was to stay flexible with your planning and learn to Zoom. The Garden Club of Westfield has had a good year, focused on fulfilling our civic projects and keeping our members engaged.

We fulfilled all our outdoor projects, including the following:



Planted our Blue Star Garden in time for the 4th of July! Usually this is done by Memorial Day. The delay resulted from the park closure in late spring to all but policemen, drones, and deer! A large photo of the garden appeared in the print edition of the Star Ledger.

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Replanted the six planters at the center of downtown. This photo of the planting crew wearing masks (of course!), appeared in local publications with this caption: "Autumn in Westfield." The Garden Club of Westfield refurbished its seasonal planters in the center of Westfield on November 6. Ornamental cabbages serve as the centerpiece, surrounded by purple and yellow fall pansies."



We kept our members engaged in new ways, for example:

- We met in members' backyards and in parks. During one meeting in a forested area, we saw a fox trot by!
- We got to know each other better and grow as contributors.
- We learned to Zoom for both executive board and program meetings. We first thought Zoom would make us feel more distant but discovered that we felt more connected after we saw into each other's kitchens, living rooms, and dens!

Our current unofficial motto, "Keep on Zoomin' and Bloomin' " should see us through another good year!

Floraphile Garden Club of Cranford

The Floraphile Garden Club of Cranford has enjoyed their outdoor meetings.

Pictured below is President Brenda Flahault and member LeAnn Durner. Displayed below are also some of the crafts the Floraphiles have enjoyed participating in during COVID-- making a club scarecrow for Cranford's Scarecrow Stroll, a fall pillow and a tabletop boxwood topiary.



Our September meeting was held outside in Hanson Park in Cranford, where we had our Welcome Back luncheon, distributed our yearbook/programs and discussed plans for the year.

Our October meeting was held in Hanson Park where we made stenciled autumn pillows and Hospitality prepared boxed lunches. Our November meeting was also in Hanson Park and involved making and decorating topiary trees to take home. Boxed lunches were once again provided. Our December program committee produced a video of a member's backyard with a decorated "she-shed" gingerbread house. A holiday mug, filled with a handmade ornament, tea bag, cocoa packet, and a candy cane was also dropped off at each member's home by the committee..

Our January meeting was held on Zoom with a business meeting followed by the viewing of a video on spring gardening prep, pruning, and types of plantings. We will continue to remain as normal as possible.

Green Thumb Garden Club of Cranford

The Green Thumb Garden Club of Cranford continued the tradition of holding our annual holiday boutique albeit with many changes to ensure safety of members and the public during this unprecedented pandemic. Held outside in December, we crafted miniature decorated boxwood trees, wreaths, arrangements, and our wildly popular gnomes (constructed with recycled tomato cages). Partnering with our town, "Gnome for the Holidays" was a scavenger hunt downtown for residents to find 10 themed gnomes which were won by lucky participants. We were energized and humbled to receive praise from our township for bringing some holiday cheer and community spirit during these times.



Community Garden Club of Hunterdon County

Despite the complications of life this past year and even now, things are happening!!

This club tackled the renovation of the Blue Star Memorial of Whitehouse. Even though many nursery resources were closed, they managed to prepare the soil, choose plantings, and get the job done! Rededication of the site will take place this year in May.



In December, socially distanced and masked members gathered in a garage to make holiday ornaments that were distributed to nursing homes and 14 holiday planters were created to grace Main Street. Members were thankful for a warm December day.



The Garden Club of Long Valley

Our club has been trying to keep things together as has everyone else. We purchased amaryllis bulbs through the club and did a photo challenge. We celebrated National Houseplant Appreciation Day by sharing our favorite houseplants.

In December, we held a Zoom boxwood workshop with the club and community members.



We created small greenery arrangements and delivered them to The St. Luke's Special Needs Ministry. Our youth club, GCLV Sprouts, also did the amaryllis challenge and made kissing balls and a few even tried to make the botanical ice lanterns.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Thank you to those of you who have stepped up to fill the GCNJ Board positions. We greatly appreciate your service and dedication to the Club!

Members of the Nominating Committee present the recommended slate for Board approval.

If you would like to volunteer or know someone who would be interested in the vacant positions, please contact Diana Kazazis, Nominating Chair at <mailto:diana.kazazis@gmail.com>:

Positions Nominating:

- **District 1 Director – Vacant**
- **District 3 Director** - Onnolee Allieri
- **District 5 Director** - Deb Murphy
- **District 7 Director** - Jean Pollock
- **First VP** - Beverly Kazickas
- **Corresponding Secretary - Vacant**
- **Recording Secretary** - Stacy Schaffer
- **D1 Nominating - Vacant**
- **D3 Nominating** - Caron Menger
- **D5 Nominating** - Barbara Mullin
- **D7 Nominating** - Camille Rainiero



Headquarters and Endowment Trustes –Terms to begin 2021 and to expire 2024 -
Joan Cichalski, Jeannie Geremia, Kay Cross

Positions vacated from 2020 - 2023 - Pat Wilson and Tillie Emmert

Members of the Nominating Committee for this year include:

- Diana Kazazis - Chair
- Peggy Morrissey - Recording Secretary
- Onnolee Allieri, Gail Bassolino, Helga Fontus, Tillie Emmert, Teddie Falcone, Jane Bianco, Pat Scarano, Ellen Preissler and Julie Morgan.

CRAWFORD'S CORNER

The Beauty of Bloodroot

The garden truly awakens during the month of April. The once bare earth suddenly comes alive with a multitude of flowers from bulbs and spring ephemerals. Spring ephemerals are plants that flower, seed and go dormant before the shade trees leaf out. This allows them to bask in the spring sunshine before dormancy, avoiding competition from their greedy arboreal neighbors for both water and light. *Sanguinaria canadensis* or Bloodroot is a beautiful wildflower that many consider to be a spring ephemeral, although the foliage will often linger long into late summer.

Sanguinaria canadensis is the only species found within this genus and it is a member of the Papaveraceae or Poppy Family. It is native to Eastern North America, ranging from Nova Scotia south to Florida.

Sanguinaria is from the Latin *Sanguis* meaning blood, referring to the blood red sap in the rhizome. The species epithet is homage to its northern habitat range. The name was crafted by the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) in 1753 when he published his book 'Species Plantarum.'



From late March to mid-April, soft pink flower buds emerge from the rhizomatous roots and stretch upwards to 6" - 8" in height. The appearance of the flower bud is quickly followed by a single leaf, which is initially diminutive in form and found clasping the stem (**see image at left**). Over the ensuing days, the leaf enlarges, but retains its clasping form and has been likened to hands clasped in prayer! The flower bud gradually changes from pink to white and upon opening, the buds reveal 2" diameter flowers with 8-12 white petals encircling a boss of golden yellow anthers (**pictured below**).

The flowers are sweetly scented and attract numerous native bees, including carpenter and mason bees searching for the protein rich pollen. The flowers close at sunset and reopen at dawn, a process found in more advanced

plants called nyctinasty. Plants developed this daily rhythm to protect the flowers from frosts or damage to the protein-rich pollen by rain or late snows when pollinators would not be flying!

Flowers bloom for upwards of 4-5 days, with the petals falling shortly after pollination. Initially, the stamens remain distanced from the stigma to prevent self-pollination, but near the end of blooming, they curl towards the stigma, on the theory that it is better to have potentially weaker seedlings through self-pollination than



no seedlings at all! *Sanguinaria canadensis* forma *multiplex* 'Plena' is a double flowered form. The anthers in this selection have become petaloid, creating an attractive and 'full' flower that blooms for several days longer than the seedling forms. Following bloom, the leaf expands into a bold and very appealing 5"-8" wide palmate leaf with 5 to 9 lobes around the margin, as seen in the **picture to the right**.



During summers with consistent moisture, the foliage will linger well into autumn and often display attractive yellow fall color, as seen in **the image at left**. Otherwise, especially during drought, the onset of dormancy is typically in August and September.

The seeds are black or deep orange red upon ripening in early June and feature another development of advanced plants – a food-rich appendage called an elaiosome. Elaiosome is from the Greek *Élaion* or oil and *Sóma* for

body. Rich in lipids and proteins, the elaiosome co-evolved with the behavior of ants. Ants carry the seed back to their nests where the larva dine on the energy-rich attachment. Once devoured, the ants deposit the seed in an area reserved for waste. Buried amongst the fertile mix of ant frass and the decaying ant bodies, the buried seed germinates and rapidly grows. Although being buried in this concoction may not sound very appealing to us,



to a seed, it is nirvana! Of course, in all likelihood, some of the elaisomes are also eaten en route back to the nests and the seeds are abandoned by the ants, allowing the seeds to be spread far and wide. If you wish to grow this plant from seed, getting fresh seed is imperative or keep it chilled until ready to sow. The name of Bloodroot, as well as the reference to blood in *Sanguinaria*, is from the blood red sap of the rhizome, as **pictured on the left**. Rhizomes are horizontal or creeping stems. The

rhizomes of Bloodroot are located just below the surface of soils, where they rapidly expand and branch to create large colonies. The red sap contains a toxic alkaloid named sanguinarine. The severed rhizome is a startling sight and, on many occasions, I thought I had cut myself after unknowingly slicing a rhizome! Contact of the sap with skin should be avoided, since the toxin will kill skin cells and result in unattractive skin deformation and lesions. Native American Indians extracted the red fluids from the rhizomes for dying materials used to make baskets and in pigments for paint.

Bloodroot is a great garden plant for both its attractive spring flowers and coarse foliage. Although the flowers are relatively short lived, the coarse foliage remains effective throughout much of the summer and provides an effective companion for later blooming woodland plants. To its detriment, Bloodroot is difficult to grow in containers, although the plants transplant easily while in leaf and naturalizes readily from seed. Still uncommon in many Gardens, more gardeners need to learn about the reserved Beauty of Bloodroot!



Bruce Crawford

Program Leader in Home and Public Horticulture, NJAES

Crawford@njaes.rutgers.edu

Editor's Note: Bruce Crawford is a lover of plants since birth and is the Rutgers State Program Leader for Home and Public Horticulture. He is a part time lecturer in Landscape Architecture at the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and regularly participates in the Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education Program. He was also past president of the Garden State Gardens Consortium.



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