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

(Serving the greater capital region)

Celebrating **82** years of service to our community

(First Chartered 1936)

VOLUME 81 NO. 4

April, 2018

Dinner and Program (everyone's invited)

DATE & TIME: Thursday, April 26th @ 6:30 pm

Note: New location for this month only

PLACE: Avila Retirement Community - directly behind the Teresian House Nursing Home

Address: 100 White Pine Drive

Directions: Northway South to Crossgates Mall Rd. Follow signs to Washington Ave. Extension West. Left at N. Rapp Rd. Follow signs to Avila's Main Building

or -
I-90 to Fuller Rd exit. Left, then right on Washington Ave Extension.
Left at N. Rapp Rd.

APPETIZER: Cream of Asparagus Soup

ENTREE: Honey Baked Ham
Lemon Garlic Chicken Breast
Brown Sugar Glazed Salmon Fillet

DESSERT: Strawberries Romanoff

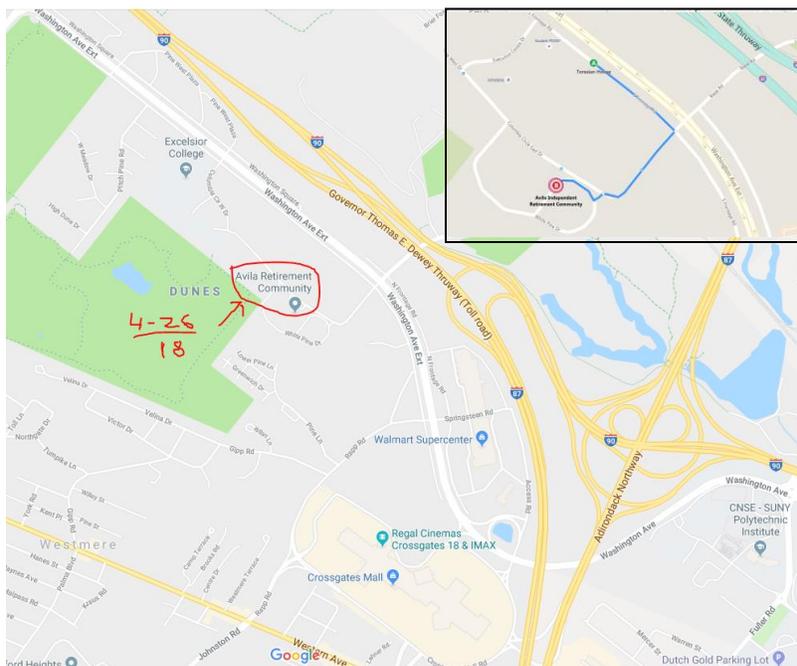
Price: \$ 25.00

PROGRAM: Keep Ticks Away!

Avoiding Lyme and other tick-borne diseases requires avoiding a tick bite! Join **Joellen**

Lampman from Cornell University's New York

State Integrated Pest Management Program as she talks about the different ticks in our area and their biology, the diseases they carry, and how to protect yourself and others from being bitten. Personal protection, habitat management to reduce ticks in the landscape, pesticide control methods, tick removal, and other aspects including online resources will be covered.



Joellen Lampman is the School and Turfgrass IPM Extension Support Specialist with the New York State IPM Program at Cornell University. She has a degree in Natural Resources from Cornell University. As a lifelong environmental educator, she spent 16 years focusing on environmental planning, wildlife habitat management, integrated pest management (IPM for those in the know), water quality and conservation, and environmental communication for Audubon International. Joellen now utilizes the clear knowledge-based, decision-making process of IPM to teach ecology and make a difference, one property at a time. In some circles she is also known as the “tick lady.”

Reservations are required for the dinner

A caller should reach you soon for your reservation. If a caller leaves a message, please make every effort to return the call. If a caller does not reach you by Sunday, April 22nd, please call **Russ Greenman** at (518) 477-8321 – Note: Our intent is to call every member that is interested in our dinner meetings to get their reservation(s). If you are not getting called, and would like to be called prior to each dinner, please let Russ know.

Membership

Tom Baker came down with pneumonia before Christmas and, as of 2/14/2018, **Tom** is regaining his strength in his new apartment. It wasn't that long ago that he was walking 2 miles / day, 365 days / year. And, if you know **Tom**, when he says he is going to do something – he does it. Please let **Russ** know if you would like his **Tom's** new mailing address - his phone number and email address have not changed.

Herm Mau has been battling cancer and is now at home under the care of Hospice. Please include **Herm** and his wife **Mary** in your thoughts and prayers.

March Program - Thank You!

Learning More About the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy by Mark King

Our thanks to **Mark King**, the Executive Director of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, for speaking at our March meeting last month. The Conservancy manages 18 preserves in Albany, Schenectady and Montgomery counties. They have recently seen an increased interest from the public in support of their conservation efforts. One recent undertaking has been their involvement with the expansion of the rail trail that runs from Voorheesville to Delmar, and eventually will connect to Albany at the Corning Preserve. Our club members greatly enjoyed **Mark's** presentation, and enthusiastically support all the good work that the MHLC is doing in the Capital Region!



Plant Sale



Saturday May 12th is the date of our annual **Plant Sale** and only fundraiser. Please consider donating some of the plants you have or will start from seed. Any **donations are welcome and encouraged.**

For years **Gil O'Brien** has purchased and donated cardboard boxes and donated a truckload of tomatoes and other goodies for our sale. This year we are asking you to **bring cardboard boxes** or box lids that will support the transport of plants to the customers vehicle.

History – 30 years ago –
MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF ALBANY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MONTHLY MEETING
APRIL 7, 1988

The Regular Monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Men's Garden Club of Albany was held on Thursday evening, April 7, 1988 in the Cerebral Palsy Center for the Disabled.

The meeting was called to order by President **Joe Huth** at 7:36.

The Minutes of the March 3, 1988 meeting were approved as read by the Club Secretary, **Tom Baker**.

The Treasurer's Report was approved as read by **Paul Hughes** our Club Treasurer. As of March 31, 1988 there was a balance on hand of \$1,318.13. And a balance of \$5,174.10 in the Key Advantage Account. **Paul** was directed to send \$35.00 to the Berkshire Garden Center for our Club membership in the Center. **Paul** also received a letter of appreciation from **Jeff Steele**, The Director of the Center for our participation in the 1987 Harvest Festival and extended an invitation for the October 1, 1988 Festival.

President **Joe** read a letter from **Richard Anderson** asking for a donation for the Garden project at the Ten Broeck Mansion. The Board voted to donate \$100.00.

Joe also read a thank you letter from the Berkshire Garden Center, thanking our club for the \$150.00 donation toward their storm damage recovery program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Plant Sale: Don Stevens and **Herm Mau** are co-chairing this event. We will have Tuberous Begonias for sale: \$1.25 each or five for \$5.50. Flyers will be ready to be passed out at the Ladies Night Dinner. The sale is at the Key Bank in Delmar on May 7, 1988.

Youth Gardening: No report.

Program: Final plans have been made for the Ladies Night Dinner which will be April 28 in the Western Turnpike Golf Club and the price will be \$14.00 with a social hour at 6:00 and dinner at 7:00. **Phil Harris** will present the head table with a floral center piece. **Bill Krug** will provide flowers for the other tables.

The next regular meeting is May 26 and will not be a dinner meeting but will be held at **Paul Steinkamp's** place of business on Martin Road outside of Voorheesville. The meeting will start with a guided tour, followed with a business meeting in the Co-operative Extension Building.

A summer excursion is being looked into for the Catskills. Two dates are being considered: July 31 and August 7.

Memorial: Don Otterness reported that two plantings have to be replaced and that identification markers have yet to be set in place.

Gardening from the Heart: Don Gwinn sent a nice thank you note to the Wednesday morning Garden group at the Center for their donation and sympathy card, on the death of his wife especially since it was signed by the clients.

Regional Flower Show: Don Otterness reported that this function was a great success, with the sponsoring group realizing \$25,000.

Publicity: Jerry Flax and **Edgar Tomkins** are planning to have notices out in area Newspapers concerning the Plant Sale

History – 30 years ago – continued

Transportation: **Charlie Kenyon** and **Clark Zeh** are co-chairmen. A notice will be put in the Dirt suggesting that anybody who needs a ride to any of our functions should let these men know and rides in all probability can be arranged.

Museum: **Ferd Johnson** reminded the group that our club will be responsible for an exhibit in the Lobby of the State Museum in the month of July. There will be a flower arranging show in the near future and if anybody is interested he should contact **Ferd** for details.

Membership: **Bob Ireland** reported that as of April 7 we have 108 members with 35 of these are Life Members.

Awards: **Glenn Witecki** reported that all was in readiness with several awards to be presented including a Bronze Service award.

Schaghticoke Fair: **Ken York** is the Chairman and he is very anxious for this to develop into a significant event with a small but effective exhibit this year, setting our sights on bigger things in the future.

OTHER BUSINESS

It was mentioned that **Charlie Schade** will be in the hospital on April 17 and will be operated on the 18th for a heart by-pass. The source of information will notify the Sunshine Committee of the exact details.

***Al Miller** reported that four ladies have applied for full membership in the **Green Bay Men's Garden Club**. This question will undoubtedly be taken up at the up-coming National Convention in Minneapolis this summer

The National Treasurer, **Ron Haggen** has resigned

Al noted that the April Gardener is one of the better issues.

Wally Dillenbeck reported on the Horticultural Therapy Workshop which was held on April 7, 1988 in the Albany county co-operative Extension building. He felt that it was great success with eighty four people attending.

Paul Hughes was authorized to renew our Liability Insurance coverage for \$1,000,000 at a cost of \$156.00.

The question of a name change for our club was brought up and was discussed at some length with no conclusions being arrived at. **Glenn Witecki** volunteered to further study the matter. He will need a copy of the Club's By-laws.

Bob Ireland told the group that a Judging School is in the process of being formed.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tom Baker, Secretary

** Editor's note: **Tom Baker** has been faithfully documenting our minutes since way before he had a 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 - 30 years ago"

Thanks, **Tom Baker!!!**

GARDEN TALK – By Paul Zimmermann (Past MGCA President)

Biochar – A Soil Amendment Cure-all?

All too frequently I come across some topic that makes me feel as if I've been living in a cave somewhere in the remote jungles of Papua New Guinea. This week my obliviousness was clearly revealed when reading an article on soil amendments and the subject of biochar was mentioned. Let's back up a moment and briefly discuss soil fertility. Most experts (I haven't checked with the White House yet) agree that the key to long term soil health is proper levels of organic content. Soil rich in organic material will host a rich microbial community that will slowly release plant nutrients as well as act as a sponge to hold water. The primary methods you can employ to augment organic content are by adding compost, using mulches, and growing cover crops. So how does biochar fit into the scheme of things?

Biochar is basically a very stable form of carbon (think charcoal). Biochar is made from biomass via a process called pyrolysis. Basically pyrolysis decomposes organic matter in the absence of air.

The high temperatures used in pyrolysis drive off lighter compounds and leaves behind a very stable solid rich in carbon. Not quite diamonds, but precious stuff for your soil. Upon investigation, I discovered that producing biochar may not be the weekend project I had imagined. See the picture below.



So off to Amazon where I discovered several purchase possibilities. Sacrificing next month's Social Security check for the sake of science, three days later a box of absolutely beautiful



biochar was deposited at my door.

Inside I found just what I had expected – little carbon chips.

At this point I'm stumped. There appears to be no standard application rates for biochar, so how much to add to my vegetable beds? If I was targeting soil composition with 5% biochar, then the entire box could do the trick for a 4' by 10' planting bed (to a depth of 6"). Given that the 1 cubic foot box of biochar costs \$42, it better produce miracles. Maybe Jack planted his beans in biochar.

OK. OK. I've really simplified this topic. But here's my takeaway. If you live in a temperate climate, there are better choices for enhancing the organic content of your soil. They might not endure in the soil as long as biochar, but the cost/benefit equation for biochar doesn't appear to compute.



ANNUALS TO START INDOORS - from the Al Miller archives

Ageratum - Sow in February or March. Seed is very fine. Press seeds gently into medium without covering. Prefers warmth for germination. Germinates in 3 to 5 days. Needs 6 hours sun daily. Dwarfs good for edging; tall varieties for cutting.

Snapdragon - Sow in February or March. Seed is fine. Do not cover. Prefers warmth for germination. Pinch out top inch when four inches high to induce branching. Best in full sun but will bloom in light shade.

Aster - Sow in April. Barely cover seed. Germinates in seven days. Prefers full sun but will bloom with six hours daily.

Celosia (Cockscomb) - Sow in April. Prefers warmth for good germination. Barely cover seed. Germinates in seven days. Resents transplanting. Needs full sun and rich soil.

Dahlia (Bedding varieties) - Sow in March. Barely cover seed. Germinates in three to six days. Needs rich, moist soil and full sun.

Lobelia Sow in February or March. Seeds are very fine. Do not cover. Needs long growing season to come into bloom. Germinates eight to ten days. Seedlings are fragile. Take up in small bunches for transplanting. Good for edging.

Marigold - Do not sow until April. Cover seeds just so they cannot be seen. Germinates in five to seven days. Prefers full sun.

Petunia - Sow in February or March. Needs warmth for good germination. Seed is fine. Do not cover. Germinates in five to ten days. Prefers full sun, rich soil.

Zinnia - Do not sow until mid-April; if sown too early plants become "leggy." Cover seed just so that it cannot be seen. Germinates in four to seven days. Prefers full sun and rich soil. .

PERENNIALS TO START INDOORS

Alyssum - Sow in February or March. Barely cover seed. Germinates in five days. Blooms in May. Prefers full sun and is not fussy as to soil.

Delphinium - Sow in February or March. Barely cover seed. Will germinate in temperatures ranging from 60 to 80 degrees. Keep seedling medium constantly moist. Germinates in ten to 20 days:

Dianthus (Hardy pink) - Sow in February or March. Barely cover seed. Germinates in four to six days. Likes limed soil. Needs at least six hours of sun daily. Blooms in May and June.

Lupine - Sow in February or March. Cover seed just so that it cannot be seen. In moist vermiculite it germinates in three to five days. Resents transplanting except when quite small. Transplant to permanent place when three to four inches tall. Prefers full sun and rich, moist soil.

SHASTA DAISY Sow in February or March. Barely cover seed. Germinates in five to seven days. Prefers full sun.

VEGETABLES TO START INDOORS

CELERY

Sow in February. Barely cover seed. Germinates in ten days. Prefers full sun and rich, moist soil.

EGGPLANT

Sow in March. Germinates irregularly in seven to 21 days. When large enough to transplant pot up individually in peat or clay pots. Needs rich, moist soil, full sun.

LETTUCE

Sow in March. Germinates in five to seven days. Head lettuce prefers full sun and deep, rich, moist soil.

PARSLEY

Sow in February or March. Barely cover seed. Germinates in ten days. Transplant to Individual pots five weeks after germination. Needs at least six hours sun daily.

PEPPER

Sow in late March. Barely cover seed. Germinates in five to eight days. Transplant to individual pots. Prefers full sun and good soil.

TOMATO

Sow in mid March. Barely cover seed. Germinates in seven to ten days. Transplant to individual three-inch peat or clay pots, or flats. If plants become leggy, pinch out the top two or three inches to induce branching. Prefers full sun.

Thank You

We especially want to thank all that stopped by our MGCA Educational booth at the **Capital District Garden and Flower** show with special thanks to the new members. We are hoping to see you at our April 26th meeting and get to know you better. One of our new members came back the following day with his daughter and she brought some nice homemade chocolate for **Greg Goutos** - Sorry **Greg**, I didn't want it to go bad - so, I took care of that and it was great!

MEN'S GARDEN CLUB of ALBANY

CLUB ACTIVITIES

Albany International Airport
Don Wrieden – Chairman

Adopt-a-Highway –
On hold until our raised bed is returned



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 build 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 our several thousand pound raised bed - **please ask them to return it.**



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

Built to last...

Destroyed in hours

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

31st Capital District Garden and Flower Show - March 23-25, 2018
<http://gardenandflowershow.com/>



Seren Takezaki
17 yrs. old from Toyama, Japan
Exchange student who is attending
Guilderland HS, hosted by **Greg & Nellie**
Goutos for the school year

Seeds – donated by **Becker's Farm** – used
in our **Gardening From the Heart** program

31st Capital District Garden
and Flower Show - March
23-25, 2018

As always the Capital District Garden and Flower show was a huge success... We got several new members and made a lot of new friends. If you have never seen this show - you should.... Where else can you watch waterfalls, see fish swimming, and see landscaping that most people can't even imagine - and they tear it down after three days.

We especially want to thank **Greg Goutos** and **Seren Takezaki** that came all the way from Japan to help us. **Bill Danish, Russ Greenman, Joe Herman, Bill Stoneman, and Gary Woods** did a fantastic job at setting up and/or manning our booth. It was nice to hear five people tell me that, in the past, they won one of our birdhouses - one was 15 years old and starting to show it's age.

Thanks to all that helped make this such a great success.



Gardening from the Heart at the Center for Disability Services

Volunteers in March included:

Russ Greenman, Joe Herman, Bruce Wilcox, and Don Wrieden. Tom Baker is regaining his strength so that he can return to the GFTH project that **Tom Baker** and **Al Miller** founded back in 1984-85



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

If you have free time on Wednesday mornings – you could consider helping us out – I bet it will do as much good for you as it does for the individuals. – Contact anyone of our volunteers to find out more.

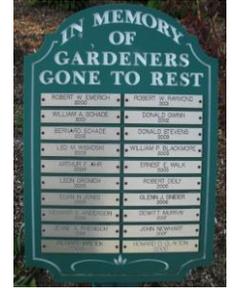


Gardening From The Heart Activities at the Center For Disability Services March 2018





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



**Harris Memorial Centerpiece
Thanks to the Harris kids!**



Each month, the **Harris family, Dave** and his sister **Diane** design and create a beautiful centerpiece to honor their parents and their brother **Phil**. Every month one of their masterpieces has been raffled off since 1980 - **YES, That's 38 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 **Harris** centerpeices that **Phil** and now **Dave** have been bringing, to every meeting, for more years than I can remember. What talent and generocity 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!**

DATES TO REMEMBER

Today!	Please visit our friends that need our visits and cards	
April 5 th @ 7:30 pm	May 3 rd @ 7:30 pm	Board of Director's Meeting All members are invited
Every Wednesday : @ 9:15 am	Gardening from the Heart Center for Disability Services 700 South Pearl St. Albany	
May 12, 2018	Plant Sale (Day before Mother's day) Delmar Dental Medicine (next to St Thomas the Apostle Church) 344 Delaware Ave, Delmar	
April 26 th @ 6:30 pm	May 24 th @ 6:30 pm	Monthly Dinner meeting - Note: location change for April Monthly Dinner meeting - Ladies night

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>

Are you ready for the Hot Pepper ALS challenge?

Challenge Guidelines:

Anaheim Pepper: \$20 minimum donation

Jalapeno Pepper: \$10 minimum donation

Habanero Pepper: \$5 minimum donation

Anything Spicer: \$0 minimum donation

+ Nominate 3 friends

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

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

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

Last, but not least!

For years we have had our website hosted by friends of **Marc Gronich** and **Ted Pochili** and we thank all that were involved in supporting our Clubs' website.

Something happened and we were unable to access the server that contained our website. I went into panic mode and **Paul Zimmermann** invested a considerable amount of time, talent and treasure to get our website built on a new server and is now looking better than ever.

Our Webmaster - **Mr. Paul Zimmermann** really deserves a lot of credit for all he does to support our club.

It is a lot of work to build and maintain a website and keep it up to date with current information - **Paul** does all of that and more... Please make the time to check it out. You can find the current meeting info, past and present editions of the DIRT, fantastic articles written by **Paul Zimmermann**, Membership application, links to growers and horticultural topics... You get the idea - Please check it out and Thank **Mr. Paul Zimmermann** for all he does.



Plant Sale



Men's Garden Club
Of Albany

Sat May 12

(Day before Mother's day)

8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

parking lot at

Delmar Dental Medicine

(next to St Thomas the Apostle Church)

344 Delaware Ave, Delmar



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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