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

(Serving the greater capital region)

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

**VOLUME 84 NO. 3**

(First Chartered 1936)

**March, 2021**

DATE & TIME: Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup> @ 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.

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 Storman*

**Please vote:**

The Board of Directors of the Men's Garden Club of Albany (MGCA) is proposing that we change our name to the Garden Club of the Capital District.

We have been discussing this at our Director's and Membership meetings all year and are now asking for you to vote for or against the proposed name.

Ways to vote (on or before March 25<sup>th</sup>) :

- Attend our membership meeting at 7:30pm on March 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 via Zoom
- Call Russ Greenman (518) 477-8321
- Reply to this message if you received it by Email.

Email Russ at [WB2LXC@verizon.net](mailto:WB2LXC@verizon.net)

**PROGRAM: March 25, 2021 @ 7:00pm**

***Why Raised Beds for Gardening and How to Build Them***

This presentation provides an introduction into raised beds for gardening. The presentation discusses why use raised beds, different pros and cons for raised beds, different options for creating them, and how to locate them within your gardening spaces.

Presented by: **JOHN MARTIN**

**John Martin** has recently retired from Knolls Atomic Power Lab after working in the special projects and R&D department. After settling in with retirement he decided to find a way to give back to the community; hence involvement with the CCE Master Gardener Program. He has been gardening, growing flowers, herbs, and vegetables over the last 35 years and through trial and error has found what works for him. He has taken his experiences and merged them with a number of references and the CCE MG program guidance to create a number of talks. He enjoys helping communities and individuals learn to garden and take care of the environment.

**Topic: Why Raised Beds for Gardening and How to Build Them by John Martin, Master Gardener**

**Time: Mar 25, 2021 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://cornell.zoom.us/j/99062172275?pwd=N1JMNWwxWEdWb0h5Q3Y3TVZaZnZlN2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 990 6217 2275

Passcode: 475458

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# All About Growing Amaryllis

Prepared by David L. Jennings – Member Garden Club of Albany & Master Gardener, CCE of Saratoga County



This is a picture of Dave with his Amaryllis



Typical Growth Habit



Three Bulbs in one container

Even though the Holidays are behind us now...it still seems like the arrival of Spring is a long way off. Our family has a long tradition of bringing a little taste of Spring into our homes by growing several pots of Amaryllis bulbs after the Holidays. We make a little contest out of it to keep things interesting by staying in touch with each other to see whose bulbs bloom first, who has the most flowers, who manages to have the last bloom or even who gets a second blooming stalk out of their bulb.

Amaryllis bulbs make great gifts and take the anxiety out of "What to give or What Size to Buy" since everyone likes to see a beautiful flower blooming on their windowsill to help them get through the "Winter Blues". They are still available at many garden supply stores usually for less than \$10 and you only need to open the box to make sure your bulb is either firm and dormant or has just begun to sprout less than an inch or so.

There are over 600 named varieties in a multitude of colors and sizes, they don't take up much room on your windowsill and the care required to get them to bloom is minimal. Some people choose to simply discard the bulb after it blooms but many people grow their bulb on for many years and force it to bloom again for them year after year with just a little TLC.

**PLACEMENT** – After following the directions of how to pot up your bulb be sure to place it in a well-lit window. Be sure that about 2/3 of the bulb is above the soil after planting and place it in a saucer of some kind to protect the windowsill or furniture from moisture damage. It should be kept away from direct heat sources in an average room of somewhere between 65-72 F. You can then sit back and watch your plant grow with the typical growth habit as illustrated in the middle picture above.



These are what you should see when you open your box



Violet Jennings (Member of the 'Art with Heart' 4H Club) with her giant Bulb

**WATER** – Avoid overwatering. Soil should not be soggy. Use room temperature water keeping soil only slightly moist before they flower. Gradually water more once they bloom adding a dilute solution of fertilizer about once a month.

**REBLOOMING** – After the flowers have faded, cut the flower stalk to an inch above the bulb leaving all the leaves intact. Transplant the bulb to a slightly larger pot with good drainage holes keeping the original soil around the bulb and water as needed. After the danger of frost has passed in late Spring, place the potted Amaryllis outdoors in a partial shade location. At the end of the summer just before the first frost, discontinue watering and allow the foliage to begin to wither and die back. You should then bring the pot in before the frost and cut off all the dried leaves and store it dormant in a cool dark area for somewhere between 6-8 weeks. We put ours in the back of the cabinet under our kitchen sink. After the required resting period you can take it out, move it to a warm well-lit location, water sparingly and start the growing process all over again!

## From the Al Miller archives: March Garden Reminders

### **Repot Houseplants**

As the days begin to grow longer and brighter, houseplants will resume growth. Now is a good time to repot any houseplants with roots coming out of the drainage holes. Choose a pot an inch or so larger in diameter than the current container. Then remove the plant, trim any overly long or circling roots, and repot using fresh potting soil.

### **Root Geranium Cuttings**

Geraniums that you overwintered indoors are probably getting tall and leggy by now. Take 4- to 6-inch cuttings, strip off the bottom set of leaves, dip the cut end in rooting hormone powder, and stick the cuttings in a pot filled with moistened potting soil. Keep the soil moist, and they should root in a few weeks.

### **Watch for Whiteflies**

Houseplants such as hibiscus and geraniums (*Pelargonium*) are often attacked by whiteflies. The adults are tiny, white, mothlike insects that will rise in a flutter when a plant is moved. The immature forms live on the undersides of leaves and suck the plant's juices. If left unchecked, they can cause leaf dieback. Spray plants with insecticidal soap to control them.

### **Start Leeks and Onions**

Plant leek and onion seed indoors now. They need 10 to 12 weeks of growth before they go in the garden. Sprinkle the seed on top of seed-starting mix, keep it moist, and as soon as the seedlings emerge, place the flats under grow lights so they grow strong.

### **Plant in Cold Frames**

As soon as the ground thaws and dries in your cold frame, work the soil, add compost, and plant cold-loving greens crops such as arugula and kale. The seeds will germinate in the cold soil and within 4-6 weeks provide the first early spring greens of the season. Sprinkle the seed throughout the cold frame and eat the thinnings as they grow.

© 2009, National Gardening Association

## **Old Fashion Water Coolers as Containers**

The water cooler, like the horse and buggy has become part of the past. New electric coolers and filtering systems have made them mere memories. But now and then an unglazed container appears in a used furniture shop or antique store, to be sold as a jardinière or plant container. If you see any, buy them. They are excellent for plants, as attractive as any container sold and much less expensive than most.

The long cylindrical glazed tub type has a perforated bottom (about twenty small holes) and usually a two-inch lip on top. It is off white with an ornamental textured finish. Originally, they held the water and were placed inside the unglazed cooler. Another smaller kind of container was a round pot similar to a crock. Squatty, cylindrical flared-lip tubs were also used. Any of these are ideal for growing plants and are good looking wherever you use them.

Plants grow lavishly in water coolers; the walls keep the soil moist and evaporation takes place over a long period so that plant roots are uniformly and moderately moist most of the time. As a result, plants (other than those that prefer dryness) prosper and grow rapidly.

You can use the unglazed water coolers for small trees and shrubs. They look handsome in these lovely shaped containers. Use drainage material at the bottom-pot shards, stone, lava rock-and a rich garden soil. Citrus trees, ferns, Japanese oak and a whole host of other plant varieties are suitable for these containers, and thrive in them. The inserts (the glazed pots) are best for small plants like jasmine or holly or large cane begonias. The shallow pans are excellent for violets, pansies or even "used as bonsai pots. Their shallow depth and textured off-white finish make them very decorative.

# 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** during construction of our second raised bed on I-90 at Exit 7 Westbound. Built to last 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 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



**Joe Herman** planting bulbs at the Albany International Airport

## 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



Time to bring in the big boy toys to plant trees.

## Memorial Garden continued

Along with perennials, shrubs and trees, there are plaques that lists the names of our club members that have Gone to Rest.

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 replacements ordered and installed.



The early days of our Memorial Garden



## 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.





## Gardening from the Heart - 35 years continued



### Seeking Candidates for the Joe Herman Memorial Scholarship Seeking Scholarship Candidates

The Scholarship Committee is currently accepting applications from college students for a \$500 scholarship to be awarded by our club. The scholarship is available to a full-time student currently enrolled, or accepted to begin a college program, with the intent to pursue studies in a horticultural-related field; such as landscaping, agriculture, environmental studies, ecology, forestry or natural resources management. It is open to both male or female applicants of any age, preferably with home residency in the seven-county area of the Capital Region.

Perhaps you have a relative, neighbor or know someone in your circle of friends that would deserve to be given this stipend. The committee will recognize those candidates that have a direct connection to our club, and whom also meet all the application qualifications.

For more information, or if you would like to request an application, please contact **Greg Goutos**, Chair of the Scholarship Committee. Call **Greg** at 518-495-0148, or contact him by email at [ggoutos@nycap.rr.com](mailto:ggoutos@nycap.rr.com). The application deadline is June 15, 2021.

## Youth Gardening

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

### HORTICULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE For children under 12 years of age

**Put the correct answers (letters) in the spaces provided.  
Some questions have more than one good answer.**

1. A trowel is a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. mythical mischief maker.
  - b. small shovel.
  - c. a small bath towel.
2. Horticulture is the study of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. science fiction.
  - b. how to raise horses.
  - c. growing plants.
3. The tomato is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. a fruit.
  - b. a vegetable.
  - c. none of the above.
4. A compost is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. the product of decaying materials.
  - b. a sturdy fence post.
  - c. a broken computer.
5. You use mulch to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. keep animals from eating the plants
  - b. keep the soil from drying out.
  - c. keep the weeds from growing
6. Putting tomato plants in cages \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. makes it easier to pick the ripe ones.
  - b. keeps the tomatoes off the ground.
  - c. keeps animals from eating tomatoes.
7. When you harvest, you \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. put little vest around the plants.
  - b. plant seeds.
  - c. pick ripe fruits and vegetables.
8. Worms in your garden \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. makes it messy.
  - b. aerates the soil.
  - c. keeps people out of your garden.
9. Organic gardeners use \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. chemical fertilizers.
  - b. organ music to encourage their plants to grow.
  - c. non-chemical fertilizers.
10. Picking ripe vegetables often \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. retards plant growth.
  - b. encourages more vegetables to grow.
  - c. damages the plants.

The Vegetable Project's new hoop houses are helping us get an early start on the growing season.

Hello Friends,

I thought the faithful, who came out to start seeds on snowy February days, Feb. 4 at Albany High and Feb. 6 at Myers Middle School, would appreciate today's sighting (even if the photo isn't very good). We have clearly identifiable arugula at Myers (in picture) and equally identifiable mustard at Albany High.

I guess it took the couple of warm days we had on Thursday and Friday to coax these little shoots out of the seed casing. Nothing is more than a quarter of an inch tall and quarter of an inch across. But it's encouraging!

Bill



**History – 30 years ago – by Mr. Tom Baker**  
MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF ALBANY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MONTHLY MEETING  
APRIL 4, 1991

The regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Men's Garden Club of Albany, was held on Thursday evening, April 4, 1991, in the Center for the Disabled.

In the absence of President **Joe Raggio**, **Don Otterness** called the meeting to order at 7:45. **Joe** took over later on in the evening.

The Minutes of the March 7, 1991 meeting were approved as read by the Club Secretary, **Tom Baker**.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

\* REGIONAL MEETING: Will be held in the Morrisville College on April 27, 1991 with coffee at 9:00 am and the business meeting at 10:00 am. Lunch at 12:00 noon will cost \$10.00. A big question may be discussed concerning the validity of the Regional meeting being held at a club non-affiliated with the National Organization.

\* SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE: **Don Otterness** reported that our local recipient is applying for a National Scholarship.

\* Guilderland Plant Sale committee: The committee was notified, without being given a reason from the 20 Mall Management, that the Mall would not be available to our club for our plant Sale. Other places will be looked into.

\* DELMAR PLANT SALE: **Wally Dillenbeck**, reporting for **Herm Mau**. the Sale is just about ready. It was suggested that **Charlie Schade** be asked to get outdoor advertising at such places a Brownell's at the four corners in Delmar.

\* FLOWER SHOW EXHIBIT COMMITTEE: **Andy Cytrynak**, chairman, was absent. However, a general discussion took place on the Show as a whole. These were some of comments: 1. The show contained too many booths that were not related to Flowers or Gardening in general.

2. However, the operation showed that a noble effort was put forth.

3. **Ken York** suggested that it could become a bigger affair if it represented the state as a whole, perhaps by calling it the New York Sate Flower Show.

4. Someone else found fault with the overall planning and organization????

\* FAIR COMMITTEES: It we suggested that the three Fair Committees be combined into one committee. The Altamont and the Schaghticoke Fairs would be a logical combination but the State Fair would not since our club has nothing to do with setting up the exhibit.

\* MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: It was decided that we should give out far more membership applications at our public functions. **Al Miller** was given the OK to have 200 application s printed costing \$18.00 @ nine cents a copy.

It was also announced that **Bernie Schade** has become a Life Member.

\* THE TREASURER'S REPORT: was given at this time since the Treasurer was late. There was a balance, as of March 31, 1991 in the General Fund of \$4,352.02 and in the Memorial fund of \$742.29. In the Endowment and Investment fund there was \$5,965.57.

OTHER BUSINESS

The May 2, 1991 Board meeting will begin at 6:30 in order to package the seeds for the Annual Youth Gardening Project.

**History – 30 years ago – by Mr. Tom Baker** continued  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MONTHLY MEETING  
APRIL 4, 1991

The April 25, 1991 dinner Meeting will be held in Mallozzi's restaurant which was formerly DiBella's. Full details will be published in the Dirt.

Two other topics were briefly discussed, they were:

1. The Expansion of the Club.
2. The proposed Yearbook which was turned over to the History Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50,.

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 - 25 -or 30 years ago" Thanks, **Tom Baker!!!**

### **Spring Garden Day - a great success**

Thanks to **David Chinery** and all that made this program educational, fun, and so easy to attend. The keynote speaker is from Poison Ivy Acres on Cape Cod – and thanks to Zoom - I, and hundreds of others, were not afraid. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rensselaer County held its 23<sup>rd</sup> annual “Spring Garden Day” virtually, on Saturday, March 13. Master Gardeners **Denise Maurer**, **Becky Raymond** and **Barbara Nuffer** held a special panel discussion entitled “Gardening For Mind, Body and Spirit,” guaranteed to get us all ready for gardening in 2021. Keynote Speaker **C.L. Fornari**, author of eight gardening books, radio personality, writer and Master Gardener (and perhaps a mixologist), discussed how to relax and recharge during her presentation entitled “The Cocktail Hour Garden.”

### **Would you like to be a Master Gardener?**

Here is your special invitation to join the Master Gardener program -For more information see our website at [ccerensselaer.org](http://ccerensselaer.org) or phone (518) 272-4210



## Membership

**Dues are Due:** \$25 / member will cover both Local and National memberships.  
Ads payments for 2020 are due – published in the DIRT, Website and at public events  
Please write checks to: Men's Garden Club of Albany  
Mailing address:  
Russ Greenman (treasurer)  
25 Worthman Lane  
Rensselaer, NY 12144

### Dave Harris

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

**Herm Mau** 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.

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

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Today!	Please visit our friends that need our visits and cards
Thursday, March 25 <sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 pm	Monthly meeting featuring a guest speaker from the Cornell Cooperative Extension via a Zoom meeting
Thursday, April 1 <sup>st</sup> at 7:30 pm	Director's meeting – via Zoom

Editor: **Russ Greenman**

### Amazon purchases can support or club

Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

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](https://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>

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*  
*Dave & 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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