

February Newsletter



Our photographer, Celeste, was in need of assurance that spring was not too far off, so she took herself to a nursery in Connecticut (Loge's in Danielson) and she shared with me some photos she snapped of tropical flowers. One of those pictures was of a camellia, and it brought back pleasant memories of my brief "sojourn" living in an LA suburb ten years ago. February was Camellia month! The garden club I belonged to (shout out to the West Lake Village Garden Club!) had a great speaker one February who gave us a history and overview of the many varieties. I had been unaware that the tea we drink comes from the young leaves of the Camellia Sinesis; camellias have several different flower forms including single, double, anemone form, peony form, rose form double, and formal double; blooming seasons vary with climate and different cultivars. If you plan well and live in a suitable climate, you can have camellias blooming year round! And here's a fun tip for transporting blossoms: stick the cut end into a large grape and it will get fluid and sugar to keep it fresh until you are ready to put the blossom into an arrangement...or to place next to a dinner plate for a fancy meal. My curiosity piqued by the speaker, the following weekend I grabbed my husband and off we went to Descanso Gardens in La Canada. The 19-acre camellia gardens are at their peak in February and it was a glorious day well spent.



Last week, Gary Watros joined us and gave a quick overview of the newly formed Warren Community Garden. For more information, go to: https://www.townofwarren-ri.gov/town_government/departments/parks_and_recreation/warren_community_garden.php

Our featured speaker was our very own Master Judge Vera B, who told us the processes, rules and history of flower shows. She managed to remove some of the intimidation many of us might feel about entering a flower show! The accompanying slide show was terrific.

Thank you also to Bonnie E and Mary Frances S for the lovely Valentines themed treats. The recipe for the Ambrosia can be found as our recipe of the month on our website.

The coming weeks and months will be busy! Here are some dates to put on your calendar:

- February 19, Wednesday, 2:00 at Diana's: outdoor plants for the plant sale will be discussed. Bring a list of any seeds you might be starting.
- March 5, 11:00, location tbd: official Plant Sale Kickoff Meeting
- March 12, General Meeting, 12:00, library. Melonie Massa will lead a hands-on workshop and presentation on Sailor's Valentines
- March 29, Sakonnet Garden is presenting a spring seminar featuring three renowned speakers. For tickets and more information: sakonnetgarden.net/events
- April 10-13, RIFGC Design Specialty Flower Show
- April 15-17, Daffodil Show at Blithewold
- April 24, RIFGC annual luncheon
- May 10, BGC annual plant sale!
- May 15, Beacon Hill Garden Tour...always a treat.

If you have any dates for garden related activities you'd like to share, let me know.

On the advice of the accountant we conferred with, we researched getting a laptop and Quickbooks to keep track of our finances. These expenses were voted on and approved at our meeting last week. I think Carol's job is about to get a lot easier!

Since last fall, we have new members! Please join me in welcoming Audrey Field, Martha Fitting, Paulette LaParle, and Lisa Scanlon. They are all interested in learning more about gardening and garden planning, as well as floral arrangements. And they are all interested in meeting new people with similar interests. I think they will find all of that plus some fun and information that they haven't even considered!

Despite the bitter cold, the torrents of rain, that white stuff that has returned this year, and the unbelievable wind, we are making our way through February. Valentine chocolates help, but what really gets me through is going into my backyard and cutting forsythia branches. I did this about ten days ago, and a huge vase full is now starting to blossom. It gives me hope that spring is not too far off!



Gail