



# Garden Club News

## December 2016

PO Box 3253 Teaneck, NJ 07666

[www.gardenclubofteaneck.org](http://www.gardenclubofteaneck.org)

### COME TO GCT'S "ROOM WITH A VIEW" AT SKYLANDS OPEN HOUSE



*Stella Franco, Dannielle Brooks, Robyn Lowenthal (pictured above), Pat Fromm, Olga Newey and Pat Libutti worked on ornaments. Aura Altieri and Lucy Lebron helped with the set up of the room.*

The Holiday Open House at Skylands, *A Gardener's Holiday*, will showcase Manor rooms decorated with ornaments and plants. They can be seen on a self-guided tour Dec. 1-4, 10 AM-4 PM.

The GCT room theme is *A Room with a View*, after E. M. Forster's book of that title, which is about English tourists in Italy. Doug Raska and Robyn Lowenthal developed a room to evoke winter holidays in Italy with ornaments and fresh plants, including oleander, a citrus tree, bay laurel, and fragrant, flowering bulbs. Look for the blue cornflowers in the room, emblematic of a key passage in Forster's book.

Thank you, Doug and Robyn, for bringing us into this event for the first time. 

### MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY 2016-2017

By Peggy Hazard, VP, Membership

#### Welcome, New GCT Member Alex Kinloch



Thanks to all of you who just joined or renewed your membership for 2016-17. We will send out the updated *GCT Membership Directory* in the first week of December via email to all except those who have mail post only. We are looking forward to seeing you soon.

### GARDEN CLUB OF TEANECK CALENDAR DECEMBER 2016 - JANUARY 2017

**Thursday, December 1-Sunday, December 4, 2016, 10-4:** The Holiday Open House at Skylands, *A Gardener's Holiday*. See GCT's exhibit: *Room with a View*. Adults, \$10, Seniors, \$8, Children 6-12, \$5, Children under 6, free.

**Saturday, December 3, 2016, 10 AM:** GCT Business Meeting, Greenhouse.

**Saturday, December 10, 2016, 11AM-2PM:** Holiday Party, Rodda Center. Details: p. 5.

**Saturday, January 7, 2017, 10 AM:** GCT Business Meeting, Greenhouse.

**Garden Club Lectures, Bergen County:** Check the Master Gardeners of Bergen County *Meetings and Events* page: [mgofbc.org](http://mgofbc.org)



See page 5 for details.



**A Letter from  
Robin Jackson,  
GCT President**

Dear Garden Club Members,

Over the past three months, we've had very interesting guest speakers. They have informed, entertained, and encouraged us to expand our thinking and approach to gardening. Based on feedback, the events have been enjoyable. I have noted though, that while we have 80 plus members, we generally see fewer than 30 participants at our speaker events and business meetings. What's going on?

Understanding that life is full of things to do and things we can't do, we are planning a very special event that I hope most, if not all of you, will attend. Please join us for our Holiday Party on Saturday, December 10th, 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM, at the Rodda Center. Our Holiday Party Chair, Olga Newey and team, are working hard to prepare a wonderful celebration for us. Come chat and chew with your fellow club members! Take a look at our calendar for other activities that you may wish to participate in.

As usual, our next business meeting will be held on the first Saturday of the month, December 3rd. We have several important topics to talk about and would like to have your input.

Happy Holidays!

**GCT COMMUNICATIONS**

**Garden Club of Teaneck Newsletter: December 2016**

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**Garden Club of Teaneck website.** Webmaster: Anna Kurz. <http://www.gardenclubofteaneck.org>.

**GCT on Facebook:** Page maintainer: Denise George. <http://www.facebook.com/gardenclubofteaneck/>

**Report from  
Len Schwartz,  
Greenhouse Director**



It's getting cold outside, but our Greenhouse oasis is staying warm, thanks to the sun, our heaters, and the repaired hole in the roof, in that order. Repair of the Greenhouse support columns is waiting for an engineering approval of our proposal.

Then, a decision about who will pay must also be made. So I don't expect work to start immediately. Once it does, those with affected benches will have to move temporarily.

The maintenance group, which was down to two and a half people all last year, has been significantly beefed up with the addition of two new members, Joe Begley and Steve Schultz. They not only have tools, they know how to use them.

The growing medium and pot order for the year was delivered and ready to be used for the Hawthorne School program. This should now be one of the main focuses for our weekly work groups.

If you have an outside plot, please clean it out by very early December. If you are one of the groups responsible for one of the four Greenhouse **upkeep** assignments, please do it.---Len



On Thursday, November 10th in the Greenhouse, Robyn Lowenthal was leading members in making ornaments for the GCT exhibit at Skylands, "Garden with a View". They used star anise, gold rick-rack, cinnamon sticks, vintage Italian postcards, glitter and more in the decorations (p. 1).



## From the Desk of the Horticultural Director

By Doug Raska

Catalog season is here. I've gotten my first two seed catalogs and since we will be growing more from seeds than in the past, I'm excited by the possibilities.

I'm especially interested in more herbs at our sale in May. Pinetree Garden Seed Co. has an amazing array of herb varieties we may try (Pinetree Garden Seeds, <https://www.superseeds.com/>).

Our pots and soil for the season have been delivered. We're going to try bigger 4.5" black pots for our school cuttings this year to try to produce bigger, better plants.

We have lots of members' plants in the Greenhouse to use as mother plants for production. Scented, variegated and double-flowered geraniums are among them. Robyn Lowenthal's big Persian shield plant, variegated bougainvillea, and many other varieties, are there for us to propagate.

Our Skylands Holiday Open House is the first weekend in December. Come have a look to start off your winter holidays.

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## Shoots, Leaves, and Roots By Pat Fromm



One of our responsibilities as a member is to propagate and grow plants for our Hawthorn School program. This year, our Director of Horticulture, Doug Raska, has requested or challenged us, (depending on how we look at it), to be a bit creative with both the selection of plants and propagation methods and come up with a selection of plants as diverse and interesting as our members.

As you make room on your bench for a winter home your plants, think about some propagating. Often, the plant will love it. So will shoppers and fellow members when they see descendants of your plants in our May sale.

Keep in mind that there are many ways to propagate. You can use cuttings (shoots, leaves, and roots), divide your plant, collect seeds from blossoms and air-layer, to name a few.

If you have questions, ask your team leader or Doug Raska. Also, there are numerous websites with information. and we have a very good reference collection in our Greenhouse for reference.

Check out this informative site: <http://www.aces.edu/~gloveta/documents/MGPlantProp.pdf>

## Propagation Possibilities On Our Benches

Photos: Pat Fromm



**Coleus**



**Tarragon**



**Begonia**



**Aloe**

## HAWTHORNE SCHOOL PROGRAM

By Olga Newey  
School Program Director



The Hawthorne School program schedule has been finalized, except for rain dates. It will be in the March issue of the newsletter. Stella Franco is the first grade teacher (*The Story of a Seed*), Sydelle Postman is the second grade teacher (*The Parts of a Plant and Their Function*), and Kathy Skidmore is the fourth grade teacher (*The Oak and the Acorn*).

Our third grade teacher will be out of town; we need a third grade teacher and have a lesson plan, *Propagation*. It's a fun one-and messy. I plan to meet with all the teachers individually in early March to go over the lesson plans and make sure we have what we need to make the experience bloom!

During student visits, it would really be nice if members of the Greenhouse interacted with the students by helping them choose a plant and telling them about it.

Members have been generous in sharing their plants for cuttings. If you would like to raise a different plant, by all means do try. I will need about 800 plants, which will sell for \$1 each.

I have markers and labels in a plastic shoe box and a box of appropriate 4 ½" pots on a bench near the potting area for your use. Please identify the plant and put your name on them so it can be returned.

When your group propagates plants for Hawthorne, please identify your group and group leader in the section you place the finished plants. I can then speak to the group leader if I have a question.

Donations of healthy acorns of different varieties are also needed. They could be without caps, but not broken. Put them in a bag with my name on the desk in the Greenhouse.

I want to thank Len Schwartz and Doug Raska for their help with monitoring the selection and number of plants. They will also provide us with soil and pots.

## POST TALK

By Mark Penchinar  
Vice President, Program



Elaine Silverstein with  
Mark Penchinar on  
Nov. 10th.

Our last guest speaker for 2016 was Elaine Silverstein, who lectured on "The Sustainable Garden". She started with a definition of sustainability, covered composting and recycling autumn leaves on one's own property ("Leave the Leaves"). She then touched on sustainable gardening techniques, such as using native plants and avoiding chemical inputs.

A well-informed, knowledgeable horticulturist, she pointed out "Ten Things Every Suburban Homeowner Can Do To Save the World" through understanding sustainability. She provided observations that were eye openers for the audience, such as "lawns are nothing more than hardscape", "leaves are homes for butterfly larvae", and "plant in a close bunch to save water". Elaine's other handouts, "Guidelines for Sensible, Sustainable Watering" and "Making Compost: It's Easier Than You Think" generated audience discussion.

Elaine is a light and easy speaker who generated interesting questions and rapt attention. She would be a guest I would happily ask to speak again.

## OUTSIDE THE COMMON GARDENS

By Olga Newey

A group (Doug Raska, Pat Fromm, Stella Franco, Ho Wan Ching, Carmin Costa, Dannielle Brooks, Olga Newey, and Laurie Ludmer) have started to help Doug with the maintenance of the outside common gardens.

We plan to meet at 9 AM on Saturdays. We expect to maintain the gardens, label trees and shrubs, harvest seeds, propagate plants for the school program and plant sales, all to enhance our outside space. If you are interested in joining, email me at [cosnew@optonline.net](mailto:cosnew@optonline.net)



**INVITED:** All members. Spouses are welcome. Let Olga know you are coming.

**WHAT TO BRING:** Members whose last names begin with **A-I** bring entrees or salads; Members whose last names begin with **J-Z**, bring desserts. Please email me to let me know if you are coming so we can have enough of everything.

**GAMES: SECRET SANTA:** Miriam Taub has volunteered to take charge of this. We request that you bring a unisex wrapped gift worth no more than \$5. Deposit the gift with Miriam at the appropriate table. We will then read off a name of someone who brought a gift and that person will choose a gift. The more people who contribute, the more fun it will be.

**TRICKY TRAY:** Elyse Constantin will run a Tricky Tray. A box at the Party will be labelled for donation of items.

**SET UP:** Pat Fromm has volunteered to bring the paper products and the tablecloths.

***PLEASE CONTACT ME TO LET ME KNOW YOU ARE COMING.***  
***Olga Newey, Holiday Party Chair: [cosnew@optonline.net](mailto:cosnew@optonline.net)***