



# Garden Club News

## February 2011

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## HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE

### Calendar: February 2011

The Garden Club of Teaneck will meet on Thursday, February 10th at 7:30pm. The meeting will be held at the Rodda Center at 250 Colonial Court. Our speaker that evening will be Chris Rubino. Chris will speak to us about Botanical Gardens (see his bio below).

The next Greenhouse Committee meeting will be held at the Greenhouse, on Saturday, February 5th, at 10:00 am.

### Member News

The Holiday Party of the Garden Club of Teaneck was a marvelous success. Everyone had a good time as evidenced by our group picture below. Our special thanks go to Cynthia and Ronald Mckay. The live music provided by Ronald made the night even more festive. Thank you all for a good time.



#### Message from Debbie Morgan, President:

A Very Happy New Year to Everyone!

It is almost time to start the "big" work of our organization, namely the planting of seeds and plugs for the annual plant sale in the spring. For those of you who are not members of the Greenhouse Committee but like to get their hands dirty, please contact our Horticultural Director, Christina, if you wish to

contribute some time to planting. It's lots of fun and a good learning experience.

In this frigid weather, some of us are thinking about the Philadelphia Flower Show in March. I miss that outing myself. As you know, we just could not get enough people to fill a bus, however, hopefully next year we can and I am open for suggestions of other places and shows that we might attend.

Please let me know of any requests. The February program at the Rodda Center is definitely worth braving the bad weather!

I must announce that I will not be in attendance for a while; for I'm having knee surgery on January 26<sup>th</sup> at Holy Name Medical Center and then probably a few weeks in rehab at Prospect Heights in Hackensack.

I will miss everyone tremendously but will be closely following everything. We are fortunate to have very talented people to pick up the reins and carry on!

Thank you to everyone in advance for the good thoughts and prayers.

### **Message from Christina Mackensen, Greenhouse Horticultural Director:**

Snow, Snow, Snow!!!

We have had a lot of it lately, being in the midst of winter. I am sure most of us are weary by now shoveling snow and driving on snow-covered streets. As much as some aspects of snow are unpleasant, snow also has many benefits for the gardener.

A thick blanket of snow acts as an excellent insulator by protecting ground covers, bulbs and perennials, as well as the roots of shrubs and trees. Snow protects the plants from the damages of alternate freezing and thawing of the soil – soil heaving. Underneath the blanket of snow, plants are getting ready to peek through with their leaves and blooms to alight us anew and let us know that Spring is just around the corner. The snowdrops and Lenten roses that we hopefully planted in the fall are some of the first plants to bloom, as well as winter jasmine, winter honeysuckle and witch hazel.

The middle of winter also gives us time to put changes to our garden designs on paper. Perhaps we desire more color, texture or form. By utilizing these design principles, our gardens will become more lively and interesting. Different types of texture – from

fine, medium to coarse- and different types of shapes – upright, round and low – as well as different colors – keep the eyes moving and the landscape more appealing and surprising.

We are lucky to be able to escape the cold winter months for a couple of hours by going to the greenhouse, to help propagating plants and to tend to our own ones. Many members' plants are blooming profusely and make us forget the harsh winter conditions outside.

Now is also the time to get ready for our main mission, to provide beautiful, healthy plants at our spring sale for the community at large. The geranium plugs have been picked up by yours truly and speedily transplanted by the geranium group as well as helping members from other groups. A hearty "Thank You" to all. Next month, the big order of annuals will be picked up and ready for transplanting. Every member is expected to help with this time-consuming task.

Until then, enjoy the rest of the winter as much as you can and keep looking for the first signs of spring, they will appear before you know it. Christina

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## **Ask Sara**

Our "Ask Sara" question this month is: I got a Poinsettias plant for the Holidays how do I care for it all year long?

From The Record Home Magazine Dec.11  
Page 2.

After Christmas Poinsettia Care.

January-March: Keep watering poinsettia when soil is dry, but don't overwater.

April: Gradually decrease water allowing plant to get dry between watering. In about a week, move it to a cooler spot, like a basement or a heated garage at 60 degree F.

MAY: Cut stems back to about 4 inches and re-pot in slightly larger container with new soil. Water well. Place near the brightest window and keep at 65-75 degrees. Continue watering when the soil feels dry. Once new

growth appears, begin fertilizing every two weeks.

**JUNE:** Move poinsettia outside, pot and all. Keep in a partially shaded location and continue to water and fertilize.

**JULY:** Pinch back each stem about one inch to encourage a full branched plant.

**AUGUST-SEPTEMBER:** Prune new stems, leaving three or four leaves on each shoot. Bring plant back indoors and keep in sunniest spot. Continue watering and fertilizing. Make sure temperature stays above 65 degrees.

**OCTOBER:** To re-bloom, poinsettia need about 10 weeks with 12 hours or less of sunlight per day. Keep plant in complete darkness, Such as a seldom-used closet, overnight for about 15 hours. Any exposure to light will delay blooming. Move plant back to a sunny spot during daytime, watering and fertilizing.

**NOVEMBER:** At end of the month keep plant near the window day and night. You should see flower buds at this point.

**DECEMBER:** Stop fertilizing by mid-month. Keep watering and treat the plant the way you did when you first brought it home in bloom. You should enjoy a newly bloomed poinsettia.

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## Recipe of the Month

One of the few things that makes me forget about winter is food, comfort food. With all this snow we needed something really special this month. I know no better comfort food than Macaroni and Cheese.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 pound elbow macaroni
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 tablespoon powdered mustard
- 3 cups of whole milk
- 1/2 cup yellow onion, finely diced

- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 large egg
- 12 ounces sharp cheddar, shredded
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Fresh black pepper

### Topping:

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 5 slices of crispy bacon.

### Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

In a large pot of boiling, salted water cook the pasta to al dente.

While the pasta is cooking, in a separate pot, melt the butter, and stir in the flour, and the mustard. Make sure it is free of lumps. Stir in the milk, onion, bay leaf, and paprika. Simmer for ten minutes and remove the bay leaf.

Add in the egg, and stir in 3/4 of the cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Fold in the macaroni and pour into a 2-quart casserole dish. Top with remaining cheese.

Melt the butter in a pan and toss in the bread crumbs to coat. Top the macaroni with the bread crumbs. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove from oven, let rest for five minutes, and top with crumpled crispy bacon before serving

If anyone has a comfort food recipe they could share with us please send it to me at [msteel@gmail.com](mailto:msteel@gmail.com). I am still looking for a good meat loaf one.

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## February GCT Speaker

At the Garden Club of Teaneck Meeting & Program on Thursday, February 10, 2011: Mr. Chris Rubino will be our guest speaker.

Chris is a native of Buffalo, New York and a graduate of Cornell University. His relevant work experience includes: Retail Nursery Sales; Landscape Design, Installation and Maintenance; Golf Course Maintenance; Horticultural Laboratory Research; The American Rose Society Test Garden; The Cornell University Plantations and Arboretum; The Walt Disney Company; Monrovia Nursery Sales in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, New Jersey and New York. He currently travels extensively to domestic and international gardens looking for new and improved plants to introduce to American gardens.

Chris will give a presentation on five of the best International Botanic Gardens: Wales, London, Montreal, Bali and Fiji.

## Around the Green

One of our old friends, Ray Turkin, will present a photography program at the Teaneck General Store, 502A Cedar Lane on Feb 8th at 7:30 pm. Ray's topic will be "The Wonders of Northern Arizona and More."

Finally, I leave you all with a picture of our Greenhouse in winter:

