



Never Done!

THE GARDEN CLUB OF HARVARD
VOLUME XXX-ISSUE 5



President's February Ponderings

I hope you are all enjoying the quiet beauty of the winter season, even if we don't have much of a snowcover. I can see the early blooms of the Asian witch hazel (our native witch hazel blooms in fall) but the Adonis I photographed in bloom last Feb. 20 is still covered by snow, and I only see one tight bud of the winter aconite today. It is interesting that none of our really early spring blooming plants are native. With our dark cold winters, we have imported whatever might bring us some early color!

Remember it is still winter; tempting as it is, don't be in a hurry to get out and clean up anything in your garden during the warm spells we will likely have in March. The garden 'debris' helps protect our plants as well as insect life through these temperature swings. Practice patience!

I am about to place my seed order for the year, and as I mentioned last month I will be ordering some of the red plastic mulch to try under my tomatoes. If you want a few feet for your garden, please email me before Feb. 26 so I will have enough for anyone who wants to try it. Speaking of seeds: I just got an email from the Federation about a free webinar that I will forward, but I wanted to point out here: Gretel Anspach, who gave our excellent talk on soil last month, is presenting on Propagation, both by seed and asexual methods like cutting, division, and grafting. Based on our experience with her, I expect this talk will be packed with details and practical advice. The presentation is Wednesday Feb. 28 at 6:30 pm. Here's the [zoom link](#):

Be sure the weekend of March 23 is on your calendar: that's this year's Bloom N Art, and you want to be sure to come view the student art along with our Club's flower arrangements. Here's a little flower arranging hint: I had heard that hydrangeas could be revived if they started to wilt by submerging the flower heads completely in water. Well, I discovered recently that this technique can work for other flowers, too. I had Gerber daisies which had drooped in an arrangement, and they stiffened back up and looked great for another couple of days after being submerged overnight. Amazing. I might try this as a preventive measure, even before putting these temperamental flowers in an arrangement.

Next week is our joint meeting with the Woman's Club, which is always a wonderful occasion. Native plants, natural solutions by Michele Fronk Schuckel should be a great talk. I hope to see you all there!

Best wishes, jessie

Joint meeting with the Woman's Club February 26, 2024

Program: Native Plants, Natural Solutions

Speaker: Michele Fronk Schuckel

Michele Fronk Schuckel is the owner and principal designer of Natural Selections,
and a Climate for Health Ambassador.

She will talk about the role that native plants play in helping to mitigate the effects of climate change and the different ways in which natives are helpful to the environment. As a Master Gardener, she will give advice on how to select native plants and how to incorporate them into the home garden.

Library Flowers in March

March 4: Kathleen Turnbull
March 11: Meg Bagdonas

March 18: Fran Maiore
March 25: Pam Marston

GENERAL MEETING

St. Theresa's Church

15 Still River Rd.

9:30 am

***Followed by the
program***

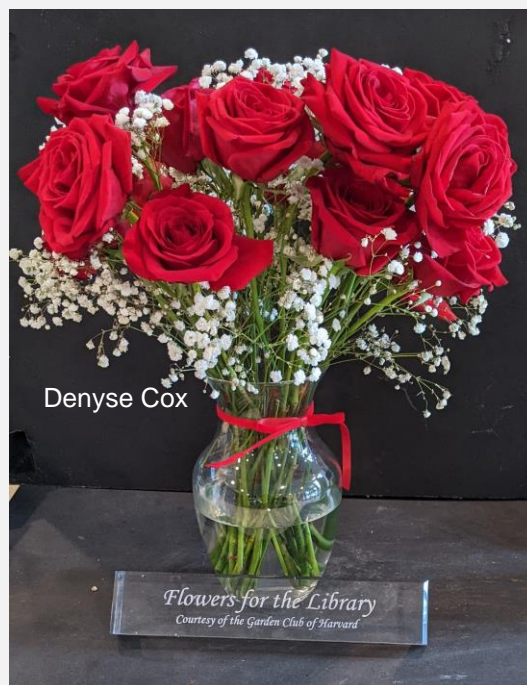
Hospitality Team at the March meeting

Team Leader: Meg Bagdonas
Carolynn Luescher
Margaret Kusner
Nancy Webber

Nancy Hartshorne
Phyllis Clawson
Kathy Dollard

Library Flowers

Info: Mary Jane Ellison



Pictures by Marijke Vallaey

Nature Trails

Info: Pam Durrant



Thursday, February 8
Rathore, Eastern
Greenway (south) and
Tripp

THE BEECH

Its long thin buds in glistening varnish dipt
Are swinging up and down,
While one young beech that winter left unstript
Still wears its withered crown.

And my blood shivers as away it sweeps
Rustling the leaves that cling
Too late to that young withered beech that keeps
Its autumn in the spring.



*Kathy Dollard
thought of this
poem while
walking on the
trail.*

*Excerpt from a
poem by
Andrew Young*



Birch trunk

Trail walks provide an opportunity to walk with friends and become familiar with the wide variety of Harvard conservation land trails and their unique features and plants.

Pictures by Patrick & Marijke Vallaey.

Bloom N Art

Deborah Dowson, AnaMaria Nanra, Marijke Vallaeyes

The 8th anniversary of Bloom N Art is on March 23-24, 2024. Once again, the Garden Club of Harvard, the art department of Bromfield High School and Fivesparks will work together to make this the highlight of early spring.

Viewing of the Bromfield art and Deb Dowson's talk: March 1 at 10:00-12:00 at Fivesparks.

Mock-up on March 15 at Fivesparks and Flower Market trip to Boston on March 20.



To view artwork and floral arrangements, first go to bloomnart.online and then click on [Archive](#).

March 1 at Fivesparks:

At 10:00 am: Viewing of the 2024 artwork.

At 11:00 am: Presentation by Deb Dowson.

Let me tell you something interesting!

Barbara Heim found this worth sharing:

Woodpeckers to the rescue from the blog **Naturally curious with Mary Holland**.

<https://naturallycuriouswithmaryholland.wordpress.com/2024/01/29/woodpeckers-to-the-rescue/>

Plant Sale: May 18

Info: Marijke Vallaes and Carol Herbin

Help wanted!

Looking through your garden photos, and identifying the plant that thrives in your garden, come April and potting season, it will be very helpful to know what you are bringing.

We have very skillful people who identify a plant on a leaf or a root, but most of us haven't reached that level of competency and we need all the help we can get!

In the herb corner by MaryAnn Piasecki

What's the Difference Between Oregano and Marjoram?

Oregano and Marjoram are both species of the genus *Origanum*, whose Latin name comes from the Greek *origanon* (brightness or joy of the mountains). *Origanum* plants are native to the Mediterranean region, North Africa, and Western Asia.

Some of the more common plants called "oregano" include:

1. *Origanum vulgare*, aka wild marjoram and common oregano, has large leaves, and a strong oregano flavor.
2. *Origanum onites*, aka pot marjoram, has smaller leaves and is less sweet than *origanum vulgare*, and pairs well with garlic and onion.
3. *Origanum heracleoticum*, aka winter marjoram, is popular in Italy.

To avoid confusion with oregano species sometimes called marjoram, true marjoram is often referred to as knotted or sweet marjoram.

Oregano plants have a concentration of the aromatic compound carvacrol, which gives it its savory flavor. **Marjoram**, by contrast, is sweeter, as it isn't high in carvacrol. Instead, it gets its flavor from a variety of aromatic compounds including sabinene (fresh, woody), terpinene (citrus), and linalool (floral).



In an herb garden, it can be hard to distinguish between the two culinary herbs, since both marjoram and oregano have oval-shaped, fuzzy green leaves and purple flowers.

Marjoram leaves tend to cluster at the tips of the branches, whereas **oregano leaves** tend to dot the entire stalk of the plant.

Marjoram tastes like a milder, smoother version of oregano. Its delicate floral, citrus, and fresh notes, including those of balsam pine, are more pronounced, giving it a balanced profile.

Marjoram is a cold-sensitive perennial (zone 7). Here in zone 5b it is an annual.

Marjoram contains high amounts of iron, and is a source of both vitamins A and C, and calcium. It contains both manganese and vitamin K.



Cooking With Marjoram

Marjoram can be wrapped in cheesecloth with other fresh herbs to create an aromatic sachet for braises and stews, or sprinkled fresh onto vegetable side dishes. Dried marjoram is a popular addition to salad dressings, meat dishes, and preserved meats such as German sausage. Used in both fresh and dried form, marjoram is subtler than its relative oregano and well suited to delicate vegetables, tomato-based dishes such as tomato sauce and pizza, and poultry seasoning.

Marjoram is an important component of spice blends including: French herbes de Provence: marjoram, lavender, basil, rosemary, thyme, and fennel.

Middle Eastern za'atar: marjoram, oregano, thyme, sesame, and sumac.

Houseplants by AnaMaria Nanra

Although the snow is flying, I'm thinking about the Plant Sale! For the past 2 years, we have experimented with offering a variety of houseplants (and pots) at our annual Plant Sale fundraiser. They have proved to be quite popular and I'm hoping to include them again this year.

All the houseplants on offer have been donations from club members. A couple of us have also painstakingly grown and nursed cuttings, seedlings and babies over the winters to have small offerings ready in May.

Now is the time of year when our houseplants start to emerge from their 'hibernation' state. The gradual lengthening daylight hours tells them it's time to wake up. It's the appropriate time to start fertilizing and if you have plants that need to be divided or pruned, it's a good time to start that process. Cuttings and babies will have a couple of months to establish a decent root system and start growing before we offer them to new homes at the Plant Sale.

Please take a look around your house for any adult plants you'd like to pass along as well as plants that you can divide/cut. If you don't have the right conditions in your house to nurse the babies until May, let me know and I can probably take them. We could also use donations of unwanted flower pots of all sizes if you have some you no longer need. If you have any questions, just let me know!

In the Community



Please bring your green bag filled with much needed items for the food pantry to the general meeting on Monday, February 26.

Save the date: May 5th for the 2024 Spring into Action 5 K

Membership

Info: Nancy Hartshorne

Please update Betsy Morton's email in your records — she mentioned some emails are going to ~~betsy@scottmorton~~ but the correct address is: bmorton0234@gmail.com

It's All About the Soil.

We've heard this before and it's true. There's an old horticultural process that is being used once again called regenerative farming. It actually has been practiced for millennia, especially by indigenous people. But since pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides came into vogue, regenerative farming has fallen by the wayside.


This farming practice is different from farmer to farmer that it's hard to even categorize it. Suffice to say that it involves little use of the "cides" above, and recognizes that the farmer moves the livestock from one area to another area of the farm to prevent overgrazing. The grazing areas may have varying plants, from grasses to annual rye, legumes— (for nitrogen fixing) etc...this way the farmer uses less fertilizer, doesn't till the soil and the soil regenerates on its own with (1) no overgrazing; (2) the use of the excrement of the animals to nourish the land; and (3) the animal's "tilling" with their footprints.

It's not easy to change from one type of management to another and takes many years to achieve; and each farmer has his/her own method of doing so. It's in essence a philosophy, a holistic approach to farming that involves many aspects of life that can't be discussed here. Suffice to say that this protocol is analogous to what we do in our gardens with no tilling and using our compost piles to replenish the soil. At the very least we try to cut down on the above "cides" and fertilizers.

Officers 2023-2024

Officers	
President	Jessie Panek
Vice President	Bill Loehfelm
Recording Secretary	Denyse Cox
Treasury	Deborah O'Rourke
Committee Chairs	
Historian	Carlene Phillips
Hospitality	Meg Bagdonas
Membership	Nancy Hartshorne
Newsletter	Marijke Vallaes
Nomination	MaryAnn Piasecki
Programs	Margaret Murphy, Janice Rusiecki
Publicity	Kate Guthro
Projects	
Annual Lunch	Maria Day, Bobbie Taylor
Civic Beautification	Kathy Jackson, Maribeth Marcello, MaryAnn Piasecki
Garden Therapy	Mary Maxwell, Janice Rusiecki, Nancy Webber
Garden Tour	Katie Gandek, Jud Ratliff, Maria Day
Greens Workshop	Kathy Jackson, Nancy Webber
Graduation Flowers	Kathy Hewett
Horticulture	Betsy Morton
Library Books	Heidi Siegrist
Library/Meeting Flowers	MaryJane Ellison
Nature Trails	Pam Durrant
Plant Sale	Carole Herbin, Marijke Vallaes
Webmaster	Betsy Howard
Yearbook	Carlene Phillips, Marijke Vallaes
Bloom N Art	Deb Dowson, AnaMaria Nanra, Marijke Vallaes

<https://www.harvardgardenclub.org>

Garden Club of Harvard on 

[Bloomart.online](https://www.bloomart.online)

Thanks to Carlene Phillips for proofreading, always much appreciated!