

TRUMPET



VINE

Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania - District VII



February/March 2019

Jackie Stempfer, Editor

*Most clubs are still planning/formatting their year, but I wanted to put out the first
TV Newsletter for 2019 to get started.*

Also, please send me items you want to highlight that your club will be doing this year.



Fellow Gardeners:

Although the current weather isn't good for gardening, it is a good time to comb the gardening websites and catalogues to plan for the spring and summer, which will be here before we know it.

I am honored to be your new District Director. I have had a couple of meetings already and have met a lot of you, but I am looking forward to our annual Spring Tea to get acquainted with more of you. The Tea will be on Friday, March 22, at the Sampson Mills Presbyterian Church on Lincoln Way in White Oak, and the cost is \$10 per person. At this gathering, we will hear from the District Presidents about what their clubs are doing, and five District VII judges will demonstrate the new NGC Designs for a Flower Show. Please plan on coming; I am sure you will enjoy it. Looking forward to seeing you.

Margie Wolff
District VII Director

THOUGHTS TO PONDER ON BEES IN JANUARY



Iris Cisarik



During the cold January days to come, here are some facts and thoughts to ponder about the bee population, its existence today and possibly it's future.

For the first time in American history, 7 species of the Hawaiian Yellow-faced bee has been added to the Endangered List. It is Hawaii's only native bee and now is under the Protective Endangered Species Act of 2016. For much of the last 20 years, beekeepers in the United States and Europe have reported losses of 30% higher than normal. One in 4 wild bee species in the United States is at risk of extinction. There are fears that agriculture is suffering because of bee loss. More recently the Rusty-patched bumble bee has been placed on the Endangered List. That is why Maryland and Connecticut banned consumer use of bee-killing pesticides and other states are considering following suit.

The farm bill passed by the House of Representative would exempt pesticide companies from restrictions required under the Endangered Species Act. Even worse, pesticide manufacturers would be exempt from liability for killing off bees if the EPA has approved the chemicals even if research says the pesticides are responsible for the death of bees. One out of every three foods we eat are the result of pollinators such as bees. We can't allow bees to become further endangered or

worse. We can't give the pesticide companies a 'get out of jail free' card for the damage they've caused. When the Senate and House meet to reconcile the differences in the two bills, we want them to reject the Bee-Unfriendly House Version. We need to stop Congress from putting bees in peril.

The Global crop production pollinated by bees is valued at \$577 billion. Pollinators contribute \$24 billion to the United States agriculture industry, making up a third of the food consumed by Americans. California produces 50-80% of the world's almonds which require 1.6 million domesticated bee colonies to pollinate the flowering trees and produce what has become the state's largest overseas agricultural export.

Many species of animals are dependent on bees for their survival because of their food source. Bees are indispensable pollinators of most ecosystems.

There are 30,000 distinct bee species around the world and more than 4,000 in the United States alone.

We (You) can make a case for the Bees and our Environment through petitions, emails, letters, phone calls and more, all delivered to the right people just when it matters most. But you can make even a larger contribution by becoming be a native beekeeper!!!!



Judy's Jottings



"LARCH - What's that?"

Travelling in late November, 2018 to the Austrian Christmas markets, I discovered a tree unknown to me. While taking a sleigh ride outside Innsbruck, I saw lots of pine trees with yellow needles. I assumed that some kind of blight had affected the trees and questioned our local tour guide. "It's a larch tree, that's what they look like in autumn," said the guide. (I felt really stupid after hearing the answer to my question.)

I needed to learn more about this tree that loses its needles!

The larch is a deciduous conifer that grows in cold European climates and can exceed 120 feet tall. It is the fastest growing of all trees and actually celebrates the seasons – feathery green in April, golden-yellow in autumn and needleless black trunks in the winter. Their native home is the Bavarian Alps (just where I noticed them).

The soft, flat needles are only one inch or so long and sprout in little clusters (30 to 40 needles) along the length of the stem. They completely drop to the ground in winter. Pink flowers appear among the needles and become the cones.

Siberian mythology calls the Larch – the World Tree. Legend says God made the male tree and named it a fir and then created a female tree named the larch. Few trees are capable of growing in the tundra, yet *Larix europaea* thrives. When seven or more trees grow together, they become a sacred grove. The Siberian people rim their ceremonial drums with the wood. When burnt, the smoke wards off evil spirits, induces visions and grants protection.

Scottish royalty used the larch from the Bavarian Alps in 1738 under the Dukes of Athall for reforesting the Perthshire hillsides. Over 17,000,000 trees were thriving by 1861 when the 7th Duke introduced a Japanese larch. In 1904 the first hybrid (Dunkeld larch) came into the world. They are still planting the larch throughout Scotland.

NOTE – In a traditional Highland game, the larch is used for the tossing of the caber. (I never really noticed the caber itself, I was too busy guessing what the athletes had on under their kilts!)

The Eastern version of the larch is called the Tamarack and grows in zones 2 to 6 in the northern portions of the United States. The tree thrives in Ohio where it grows in wet, acidic soil found on the shorelines of Lake Erie. This tree soars 50 to 80 feet, far shorter than the European version.

Native Indian tribes used the roots of the larch to stitch together sheets of bark for canoes. Read Longfellow's poem, *HIAWATHA'S SAILING* for mention of the larch in his canoe. A whole verse in *THE CHARACTER OF TREES* by Mike Jones describes this interesting tree ---

“There is a softness in the Larch
Its feathery leaves cascading down
In waterfalls towards the ground;
Small fir-cones scattered all around.”

The larch is protected by its thick bark, yet porcupines can strip off the outer bark and then feed on the inner bark, often killing the tree. It is deer resistant and attracts lots of birds. The wood is so hard it can resist most forest fires. Its timber is tough, waterproof and knot-free. The tree is in demand for roof shingles, yachts and even coffins.

NOTE – The city of Venice, Italy is built almost entirely of Larch-wood. (Wonder why?)

Want to try growing a larch in your garden?

Choose a spot where the tree has ample room to expand. Spread a 2 inch layer of mulch, wood chips or leaves (something organic) around the base of the tree. The site needs at least six hours of sunlight

daily. Plant the tree only in moist soil. Supplement with water only when needed. Only prune in mid-summer to remove injured or diseased limbs. (Who can prune an 80 foot tree easily?)

I now know that a Larch tree will not be an addition to my container garden!

With Arbor Day fast approaching, choosing this tree may not be a good choice unless being planted in a large open space in a park.

There is a saying that travel broadens the mind. My Austrian trip definitely increased my knowledge of the Larch tree, but with all the strudel desserts that I ate, it also broaden another body part.

NOTE – I have an original Austrian apple strudel recipe available from my trip. Haddie Weber already made it and said it was delicious. Contact me if you want a copy of Peter's recipe.

Does anyone in District 7 have an actual larch tree growing in their garden?

Submitted by Judith Schaffer

Pucketos Garden Club



GREENSBURG GARDEN CENTER NEWS



FLOWER POWER!!



PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW BUS TRIP WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2019

Ride along with us to the Philadelphia Flower Show, the biggest indoor flower show in the world! Roam 10 acres to witness the enormous impact that flowers have on our lives.

View stunning landscapes, colorful gardens and amazing floral displays by the world's leading designers. Their creations convey a universal message understood by all cultures and languages. Through these exhibits, experience peace, healing, hope and love through the vibrancy of flowers.

The FTD World Cup takes place at the show and features designers from 20 countries. Their designs will capture how flowers influence the

way we feel, think and act in personal and community ways. This exclusive event has not been held in the United States since 1985.

To enhance your visit, you can add a stroll through the Butterflies Live! Educational exhibit presented by SkyRiver Butterflies. This habitat features native plants that attract butterflies and encourage pollination. More than 1,000 butterflies of 20+ domestic and exotic species are included in the attraction. A separate ticket is required. Cost is \$5 and can be purchased at the show. The Garden Tea can be enjoyed amidst the hustle and bustle of the Flower Show. The tea features light sandwiches and petite treats and an assortment of fine tea. The

tea experience is available for an additional ticket of \$30 @ 2:45 PM (seating is limited).

Feeling creative?? You can join a Make & Take class and choose one of three different crafts – Flower Crowns, Crystal Necklaces or Watercolor Planters. Make & Take cost is \$10. The classes run all day.



Prior reservations are suggested.

Garden Center members price is \$125 which includes the bus, snacks, and the admission to the show. Non-members cost is \$135. If you want to join in the tea, we can reserve that for you also. Reservation deadline is Thursday, February 21.

HYPERTUFA!!

The Garden Center has been doing hypertufa for years. The popularity of these unique garden planters has been growing! Cement hypertufa in all shape and designs are now featured at the Philadelphia Flower Show.

We are having a workshop on Saturday, February 16 at 1:00 PM. Cost is \$20.00. All materials will be supplied. Be sure to wear old clothes and bring a pair of rubber gloves.

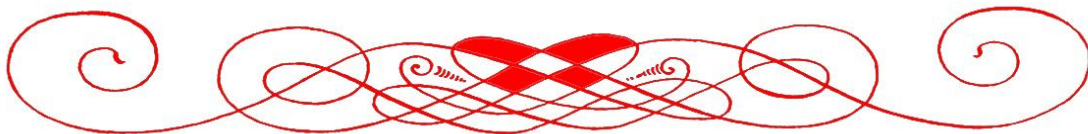
You will take home a round planter (approximately 15" – 18") and will have instructions on how to unmold and cure your creation. The hypertufa can be used as a planter, a bird bath or add a pump for a small water feature – use your imagination!

Space is limited – call Nicky at the office to make your reservation

THINK AHEAD! THINK SPRING! THINK SPRING TEA!

Cold, dark days of winter seem to go faster if you turn your thoughts to GGC's very special Spring event – ANNUAL SPRING TEA – scheduled for SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2019 at Maplewood Presbyterian Church, 108 Woodland Road, Greensburg. Doors open at 11:00. Tea served at 12.

Phone the GGC office – 724-837-0245, or contact Angie Raitano – 724-483-6724.





**NEED SOME ENCOURAGEMENT TO HELP
GET THROUGH THE COLD WINTER DAYS**



Save those milk jugs/liter pop bottles and get started on your “greenhouse”

OR OTHER GREENHOUSE SUGGESTIONS



CHECK OUT “MILK JUG GREENHOUSE.COM”



JOYFUL BLOOMERS

The Joyful Bloomers are having a plant sale on
May 24, 2019 at Kane Regional Center. The
address is 100 9th Street, McKeesport, Pa.
15132. It will start at 10:00 am.