

**TRUMPET**



**VINE**

**National Garden Clubs, Inc.  
Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania – District VII**



*January-March 2020*

*Jackie Stempfer, Editor*

*There are no strangers, just friends we have not met.*



## **GBG GARDEN CENTER**

Save the Date! The annual one-day bus trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show is planned for Wednesday, March 4, 2020. The 2020 theme is “Riviera Holiday” featuring Mediterranean plants. Always an extravaganza, this promises to be a burst of color!





First holiday tree decorated by Pucketos Garden Club. Shown are Judy Schaffer- Alice Stewart - Barb Summers. The Garden Therapy committee made all the recycled decorations for the tree placed in the lobby of the Quality Inn in New Kensington. English cracker favors, decorated tea pots and tea cups were made for the tree.



April is a special month for gardeners. Not only does it have its own National Day on April 14, but the whole month of April is designated as National Gardening month.

Inspecting the garden is probably the most important step and you should not skip it. Most of us are eager to get out and actually do something in the garden after a long winter, but taking stock of what has happened over the winter is so important.

It also gives us a to do list and makes sure that the garden gets started on the right foot.

**Check your Fences and trellises.** Have they started to break or splinter from the moisture? Now is the time to mend them.

**Look over your Raised Beds.** If you use raised garden beds, it is important to check the sides. Are they bowing? Are the joints coming apart? If so, fix them now. You may want to consider cement blocks



In the center part you could grow just about anything. In the holes – carrots, beets, leeks, turnips, lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard would all grow. BUT, the blocks attract sunlight, so you may have to water every day.

Take stock of your patio planters. Dig out the weeds, inspect them for cracks, and refresh the soil for new plantings.

It's a good idea to replenish the soil in planters each spring. Plants will deplete the soil of nutrients, so adding fresh soil will give your potted plants a good start.

## Check Bird Feeders and Bird baths

Give your bird bath a good cleaning. Clean out bird houses and put in fresh feed and bedding for your feathered friends.

Check over your tools. Some may have seen better days and need replacing. Hopefully, you gave them some care before you put them away in the fall.

Once the winter weeds are gone and the perennials are tidied up, lay down some mulch. There are so many reasons to mulch:

- Mulching cools the roots of the plants, meaning that they will need less water once the growing season starts.
- It helps to smother weeds and prevent them from growing. You have spent all that time getting rid of the winter weeds. Make it easy to keep it that way with mulch!
- Mulching feeds the soil as it breaks down and adds nutrients to the soil and it looks great when things start growing.

**Containers for Seed Planting.** Don't wait until it is time to plant seeds before you think about containers. If you don't have a supply of pots for them, start saving household items to use for planting seeds indoors to give them a head start.



egg cartons  
margarine tubs

yogurt containers  
egg shells

citrus rinds.

## Judy's Jottings GNOMES



During my past trips to Germany and just recently to Finland, I became a collector of gnomes. (Just call me Judy the Explorer.) I have placed them in my bedroom and around my living room, but that is not where they are supposed to be.

Gnomes belong in a garden! (Alas, I do not dig in the dirt to garden.)

Garden gnomes are typically described as small squat little men with snowy beards and red pointed caps. (Think Disney's Seven Dwarfs) They serve as garden protection mascots and can only move about at night.

Legend says they would be turned into stone if caught in the light of day. The name comes from 'genomus' meaning 'earth dweller'. These creatures assist with landscape chores during the night-time hours and offer protection to your property. Wil Huygen wrote the book titled GNOMES in 1976. He says they are seven times stronger than humans, live to be around four hundred years old and they rub noses in both greetings and goodbyes. Their favorite foods are nuts, mushrooms, potatoes, fruit, berries and honey.

Here is a short descriptive poem about-----



### Midnight Gnome

There was a garden gnome a funny little man  
he had a big red face and held a water can  
as soon as it was dark and no one was around  
he would water plants all around the ground.

Having quiet helpers in the garden has a long history, dating back to the second century AD, when the Roman emperor Hadrian had hermits living throughout his gardens. In 18<sup>th</sup>-century England wealthy landowners would hire a person to be an “ornamental hermit” in their gardens. These hermits lived in rustic, unheated outbuildings, could not speak to anyone, did not wash, wore disheveled tunics and grew long fingernails, toenails and beards. (Definitely not my type of work) Gnomes are workers, but it is only under cover of darkness that they move around. Provide them with appropriate tools, including a wheelbarrow, so they can work while you sleep. Imagine awakening to a section of your garden all weeded! The first gnomes as we know them today were created by Phillip Griebel in the 1800’s. He made them out of terra cotta and the German people loved them. Gnomes are still sold anywhere in Germany. In 1847 Sir Charles Isham brought 21 gnomes from Germany to decorate his 90 foot rockery in England. Sir Charles’s daughters did not like the statues and upon his death cleared the garden of all but one, which remained from sight until decades later. “Lampy” was crowned the oldest known gnome in the world.

The Royal Horticulture Society of Britain banished the use of gnomes in the Chelsea Flower Shows starting in 2006 and has continued to do so every year. Question – Can you incorporate a gnome in a flower show today in the US? Today, garden gnomes have become a bit of an endangered species when it comes to lawn ornamentation. “Gnome-napping” became the rage in the 2000’s when they were being snatched up and placed at different sites around the world. Owners were sent a web-enabled photo as to their locations. Gnomes have been lately used in major advertising campaigns. Travelocity and Ace Hardware produced commercials featuring these quirky creatures.



Want to try and attract a real gnome to your garden. Here are some tips to try and entice them---

They like to be around plants that attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Grow them in your garden.

Have an endless assortment of wildflowers, ferns, moss and herbs flourishing in your garden.

Place gazing balls in your garden to help them see along with anything shiny or reflects light.

Add wind chimes throughout the garden as they enjoy soft, soothing music.

Provide lots of hideaway spots like logs all through the garden.

If you have success, let your fellow District VII gardeners know!

Judy's purchased gnomes will remain locked up in her apartment. As the saying goes –

“Don't mess with my gnomes!”

Hopefully my four inside gnomes will get bored enough to start cleaning my apartment at night!

Submitted by



Judith Schaffer  
Pucketos Garden Club



## GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION of PENNSYLVANIA 2020 CONVENTION

For the second time in three years, the GCFP Convention will be held in “*our neck of (Penn’s) woods*”. For the first time, it will be a **weekend** convention, starting on FRIDAY, APRIL 17 and ending on SUNDAY, APRIL 19. Hopefully, this new scheduling will attract some of the garden club members who work during the week.

The Convention is being hosted by District IX; Sue Semple, of Greybrooke and Shaler Garden Clubs, is chair; and the Planning Committee has been working for two years to present an enjoyable/educational event: Friday afternoon special workshop, conducted by TONYA YOUNG, will include participants making a heart-shaped or square succulent wreath to take home. DOUG OSTER will speak on Friday night. Saturday morning workshops: *Container Gardening; Bringing the English Garden into Your Backyard; Summer’s Dazzling Gifts (Fireflies)*. Saturday lunch will feature a designer on the AIFD National Board. Saturday afternoon workshops: *Pollinator Friendly Gardening; There is No Drama in Kokedama; Bringing the English Garden into Your Backyard* (repeated). PAUL ZAMMIT, Director of the Toronto Botanical Garden will speak on Saturday night. Sunday’s floral design program will feature MAUREEN CHRISTMAS, a designer from Boston, MA.

I urge you to take advantage of the opportunity to attend a state garden club convention...anywhere in the state...but especially when it’s being held nearby!

The **DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Cranberry** is easily accessible from the PA TURNPIKE (I-76), exit 28 (US-19/I-79). The address: 910 Sheraton Drive, Mars, PA 16046; phone 724-776-6900. It’s not too early to make reservations.

More details and the convention registration form will soon be available on the GCFP website: [pagardenclubs.org](http://pagardenclubs.org)

*Angie Raitano*