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# The President's Message | Anne Skalka

February 2025

*Dear Members,*

Though the garden may seem dormant under its frosty blanket, there's a surprising amount of activity beneath the snow.

- ***Insulated Growth:*** Snow acts as a natural insulator, keeping the soil at a steady temperature. Roots of perennial plants are quietly resting, preparing for their spring awakening.
- ***Microbial Magic:*** Beneficial microbes in the soil continue breaking down organic material, enriching the earth for next season.
- ***Insect Activity:*** Many overwintering insects, like ladybug larvae and beetles, are burrowed in the soil or hidden among leaves, waiting for warmer days.

So, even in winter, the garden is full of life and quiet preparation. Enjoy the peaceful beauty of this season, knowing your garden is getting ready to flourish again!

Do you see the promise and hope in your garden? Remember to plant a bit of hope every season.

*Sincerely,  
~ Anne Skalka*



## *Happy Birthday!*

Nancy Grant - January 1

Paula Fisher - January 10

Jeff Tryon - January 11

Barbara Bernhard - January 18

Kevin Fair - January 23

Linda Gerasimowicz - January 30

Harry Gamble - February 1

Fredricka Billups - February 2

Camille Rainiero - February 23

## *Don't Forget!*

### *Flowers for Ewing Library*

Linda Gerasimowicz

### *Hospitality Committee*

Sue Fair (Chair), Barbara Bernhard, Ingrid Fair, Kevin Fair, Linda Gerasimowicz, Jill Voorhees

### *Newsletter Deadline*

Submit all info to Jeff Tryon by the 15th of the month via email at: [wtgc-newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wtgc-newsletter@gmail.com)

## *Mark Your Calendar*

**February 12, 10:00 AM via Zoom**

GCNJ Judges Council

**February 3, 6:30 PM**

Hollowbrook Community Center  
WTGC Monthly Meeting. Program:  
"Herbs in the Garden"

**February 24, 10:00 AM via Zoom**

GCNJ Board Meeting

**February 28**

Philadelphia Flower Show, members' Preview Day. Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA.

February 14 | Happy Valentine's Day!





# WTGC History | *Hobbies and Crafts*

by Anne Chmielewski

In past years, the cold days of winter offered the opportunity for West Trenton Garden Club members to share their hobbies. The January Meeting was a time to get to know more about fellow members. One member was an accomplished soloist, who surprised us with an operatic aria, while holding a cuddly puppet. It was a real surprise! Other members showcased quilts, needlepoint, photography, intricate knits, and unusual collectables. Members also talked about travel experiences, ballroom dancing, poetry, and special awards received during their career.

The photos featured with this article highlight Grace Starrett's fabric eggs, and Mille Lovett's stamp campaign.

Grace Starrett was a teacher, accomplished seamstress, and a nature crafter. She presented a pressed flower program on a Philadelphia children's television show, "Captain Noah and His Magical Ark." The Captain Noah show was watched by local children every Saturday morning. Additionally, she interned as an adult teacher at Colonial Williamsburg. Upon completion, she traveled to the Ewing schools, lecturing on Colonial America. Her dining room table was a gathering place for garden club members, as they learned the skill of crafting her special fabric eggs.

Millie Lovett was a talented gardener. Although she lived in an apartment, her in-

door plants flourished. She always achieved blue ribbons and "Best in Show" for her specimens. A West Trenton Garden Club Flower Show Award is given in her honor. She had a unique passion for saving the endangered American Bald Eagle. Members collected postage stamps and donated them to Millie. She coordinated transmittal of the stamps to an organization in Washington, D.C. whose mission was to "Save the Bald Eagle." She inspired members through her efforts and helped us understand that small caring acts can achieve great results!



Grace Starrett  
"Enchanting Eggs"



# WTGC History | Hobbies and Crafts

by Anne Chmielewski

## A short history of our Bald Eagle stamp program

West Trenton Garden Club in late 1994 joined some other 30 organizations to help Florida Audubon in preserving wild life, especially Bald Eagles. We collected foreign, domestic and special issue stamps and postcards. First we mailed the whole envelope, but, it was too expensive. Then changed to cut outs with cancellation date attached to it. First mailed to Audubon in Florida. The buyer was in Canada. Then we mailed directly to B. Schulze in Victoria, B.C. Canada. Later a new buyer was found in USA and all mailings went again to Florida Audubon. The latest request for mailing stamps is to cut  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{1}{4}$  in margin around the stamp.

Florida Audubon maintains a Center for Birds of Prey in Marieland, FL which provides rehabilitation as well education of wildlife. The center provides shelter for food, medical care for birds of prey as well for other creatures. Our stamp program helps offset expenses. Our first shipment was only 150 stamps, the next 250 soon followed by now, some years later 3000 stamps. Some private collections certainly helped. Since 1994 up to June 2003 about 20,000 stamps and over 300 cards and some green stamps have been mailed. By now the center has released 263 Bald Eagles back into the wild.

The average cost for Eagle is \$3000 - Our stamps collected represented all continents and some islands. Some shipments contained stamps from 34 different countries. Stamps which buyers couldn't use were given to local schools for their projects. Over the year we have received "thank you" letters from Florida Audubon for our continued support. West Trenton Garden Club is part of a good project to save wildlife.

William R. Lovell





# Herb Gardening: From Kitchen to Craft

Program by Elle Belcheff | February 3, 2025

**G**rowing herbs in the garden offers numerous benefits. Join us for a session on herb gardening, where you'll learn how to select and grow herbs both indoors and outdoors. Discover how to use fresh herbs in your favorite recipes and salads, and explore creative uses for dried herbs in arrangements, sachets, and other botanical crafts. As a special treat, seeds and three herb plants in containers will be raffled off at the end of the session.



Herbs are so versatile — you can use them in multiple ways beyond the kitchen and recipes. Our own Gabrielle "Elle" Belcheff is ready to share unique ways we can enjoy herbs in our homes, kitchen and garden. Come on out and win something herbal to take home.





# Gallery | *Festival of Trees at Morven*

Barbara Bernhard, Chair

**T**he WTGC is proud to announce that our tree, She Sells Seashells at the Seashore, took second place in the Festival of Trees at Morven! I would like to thank my hard-working committee who spent endless hours, planning, shopping and creating most of the beautiful ornaments on our tree. Thanks also to everyone who came to decorate and take down the tree. It takes a village, and we had a very hard working one, always happily helping out. We couldn't have done it without our delicious dinner meetings hosted by Linda Gerasimowicz. Thank you again to everyone who helped make our tree a winner!

~Barbara Bernhard



From Left: Linda Reasoner, Ginny Sari, Geree Pecht, Dolores Brezak, Linda Gerasimowics, Barbara Bernhard, Zofia Jablonski Feulner, June Miller. (Diane Sanchez and Jill Vorhees are missing from pic)



# Gallery | WTGC Annual Holiday Party

Photos by Lynn Grillo





# Gallery | WTGC Annual Holiday Party

Photos by Lynn Grillo





# Gallery | Longwood Gardens

Visit to the New West Conservatory





# Field Trip | Holland Ridge Farms

Upcoming WTGC Visit to the Tulip Fields

## Option 1 | No Guided Tour

Visit Holland Ridge Farms (no guided tour):

- Weekday admission \$15, Weekend \$17
- Group of 25+ \$13.50
- Date TBD

**\$15 -  
\$17**

## Option 2 | 2-Hour Guided Tour

Guided 2-hour Tour in a Private Hayride Shuttle

- 10 Tulips per person
- Freshly baked cookie
- Thursday, April 24, (morning or afternoon TBD)
- Minimum 15 people

**\$35**

NOTE: Hayride shuttles are available for all general admission holders, but are first come, first served. Wait times vary depending on how busy they are.