

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| President's Letter | 2 |
| February 2025 Meeting Minutes | 3-5 |
| Happy Birthday Don't Forget! Calendar | 6 |
| Program Bonsai: Craft and Techniques | 7 |
| WTGC History Through the Years | 8-9 |
| Holland Ridge Farm Field Trip | 10 |
| Gallery Herb Gardening with Elle Belcheff .. | 11 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Anne Skalka <i>President</i> | Lorrain Persiani <i>Immediate Past President</i> |
| Linda Reasoner <i>Vice President</i> | Maggie Kramer <i>Club Parliamentarian</i> |
| Rick Lazarick <i>Treasurer</i> | Jeff Tryon <i>Newsletter Editor</i> |
| Karen Lewandowski <i>Recording Secretary</i> | Lynn Grillo <i>Newsletter Design</i> |
| Iliana Okum <i>Corresponding Secretary</i> | |



President's Letter

Anne Skalka | March 2025



Dear Garden Club Members,

Spring is just around the corner, and our gardens are waking up! I see snowdrops and daffodils peeking up already. March is a time of renewal and new beginnings, both for our plants and our club.

This month, we'll have one of our favorite presentations: "Bonsai: Craft and Techniques for your Garden" by Andrew Reasoner. This month's programming reminds us that our indoor "gardens" can be just as thrilling as our outdoor gardens. Many of us spend the long winter months not only dreaming of being outside, but in creating and perfecting our indoor space as well. Soon our winter companions will be flourishing in the spring sunshine.

I'd also like to remind everyone that for the April meeting, Iliana Okum and Lynn Grillo are putting together a presentation of four of our member's gardens, with the creator of the garden narrating the gardens' evolution and aspirations over time.

Thank you for your dedication to the Garden Club and to growing a thriving, supportive community. I look forward to seeing you all at our upcoming meeting and hearing about your spring gardening plans!

Happy gardening and remember in all our gardens we plant hope for the future.

Anne Skalka, President

West Trenton Garden Club

February 2025 Meeting Minutes

Karen Lewandowski

President's Report

The West Trenton Garden Club meeting of February 3, 2025, was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Ann Skalka. She introduced and welcomed guests and new members.

Secretary's Report

Secretary, Karen Lewandowski, reported that the minutes of November's meeting were taken by Linda Reasoner in her absence and were printed in the newsletter from that month. Hearing no additions or corrections, the minutes were filed as reported.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Rick Lazarick, reported a current balance of \$5,794.23. Major expenses included the Drumthwacket and Morven projects and other miscellaneous items. Hearing no additions or corrections, the amount will be filed as reported. Rick also reported that the current WTGC membership stands at 65.

Correspondence

Corresponding Secretary, Iliana Okum, sent get well and thinking of you cards to Monique Bonnier and Alicia Magee. She just found out that Barbara Bernhard is very ill and she will send her a get-well card soon.

Announcements

Anne Skalka acknowledged all January and February birthdays.

Committee Reports

Arbor Day

Anne Chmielewski ordered 90 Red Oak trees to be distributed on Friday, April 26, from the Ewing Library and Birmingham Park.

***Drumthwacket*

Lorraine Persiani's report was on the agenda but not mentioned at the meeting due to her absence. However, she wanted the members to know that the Library had been decorated beautifully by her committee and it was a well-received display.

Living Green/Environmental

Heidi Furman reported that she completed the application for the Sustainable Hospitality Award. She kicked off the program she has developed by having members bring in their reusable water bottles which gave them the opportunity to take part in a special drawing.

Morven

Barbara Bernhard reported that our "She Sells Sea Shells"-themed tree won 2nd place this year.

February 2025 Meeting Minutes

Karen Lewandowski

Poinsettia Sale

Rick Lazarick began a discussion on perhaps dropping the sale of poinsettias due to the poor response this year. We only netted \$483 and barely made a minimum order for delivery. Amaryllis, Christmas Cactus, and Cyclamen may be our choices for next year, as well as finding a different vendor for the sale.

Scholarship Breakfast

Rick Lazarick began a discussion on a possible change in venue for this event. Panera's has a fundraising program that would reduce the expenses and work involved for us, but there are some questions as to what we would be allowed to do. In the meantime, the Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, April 26, from 9-11 a.m. at Hollowbrook Community Center. Raffle baskets will be accepted until April 22nd.

Spring Plant Sale

Elle Belcheff is looking for volunteers to help her with delivery and distribution. A sign-up sheet was available at the meeting. Delivery date will be Saturday, May 3.

Pass the Can

The November meeting brought in \$42.35. All Pass the Can proceeds benefits the NJ Natural Disaster Fund.

Flower Show

Helga Fontus reported that we lost our venue for the show at the Mercer County Office Park. She is actively looking for a replacement place. Our Lady of Good Council Church and the Ewing Library are possibilities. The size of the show may have to be reduced. It was presented to the general membership to come up with some suggestions.

Preservation/Archives Committee

Linda Reasoner reported that her committee has completed compiling the records from the '50s, '60s, '70s and '80s. She brought in some scrapbooks for members to look through.

Awards

Linda Reasoner reported that the 5 applications for various awards were submitted in December. Winners will be announced in June at the GCNJ luncheon. Good Luck to Sustainable Hospitality, Pass the Can, the Mill Hill Garden Project, Trenton Psychiatric Hospital donation program, and Birmingham Park.

February 2025 Meeting Minutes

Karen Lewandowski

New Business

- *Anne Skalka* would like to create a committee to set up a Garden Tour in conjunction with the Ewing Green Team. She will do more research and report again in March.
- *Lynn Grillo* announced an upcoming field trip to Holland Ridge Farms scheduled to take place on Thursday, April 24th, at 1:00. It will be self-guided and a sign-up sheet was passed around for all interested. There is a 10% discount if we have 20 or more members attend. Regular admission is \$15. Carpooling will be available.
- *Anne Skalka* thanked the Hospitality Committee for tonight's refreshments, then picked the \$33 50/50 winner, along with the winners of the potted herbs and other items provided by *Elle Belcheff*. Succulent planters were also raffled off using special tickets earned by bringing a reusable beverage cup to the meeting.
- Our meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. in order to enjoy refreshments and a delightful program, "Herb Gardening: From Kitchen to Craft," presented by *Elle Belcheff*.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Lewandowski, Recording Secretary



Photo by Jeff Tryon
2025 North Jersey Orchid Society Show

Happy Birthday | Don't Forget! | Calendar

March 2025

Happy Birthday!

- Carol Bozarth - March 23
- George McElrath Jr. - March 25
- Jo Ann Seaman - March 29

Don't Forget!

Flowers for Ewing Library

Carol Bozarth

Hospitality Committee

Terry Palise (Chair), Mary Corrigan,
Nancy Grant, Lynn Grillo, Karen
Lewandowski, Alicia Magee

Newsletter Deadline

Submit all info to Jeff Tryon by the 15th
of the month via email at:

wtgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Mark Your Calendar

March 1-9

Philadelphia Flower Show

- Pennsylvania Convention Center,
1100 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA
- Open daily from 10 am to 8 pm;
closes at 6 pm on March 9.

March 3, 6:30 PM

WTGC Monthly Meeting. Hollowbrook
Community Center. Program: "Bonsai:
Craft and Techniques for Your Garden."

March 17

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

March 31, 7 PM via Zoom

WTGC Board Meeting

March 31, 10 AM, Holly House

GCNJ State Board Meeting

Philadelphia Flower Show



Program | *Bonsai: Craft and Techniques for Your Garden*

Andrew Reasoner

Andrew Reasoner returns with a deeper dive into the process of creating bonsai trees. Explore advanced techniques in bonsai crafting, including pruning, wiring, and potting. Gain further insight into the specific needs of bonsai trees and learn how to refine your skills to create and maintain living masterpieces.

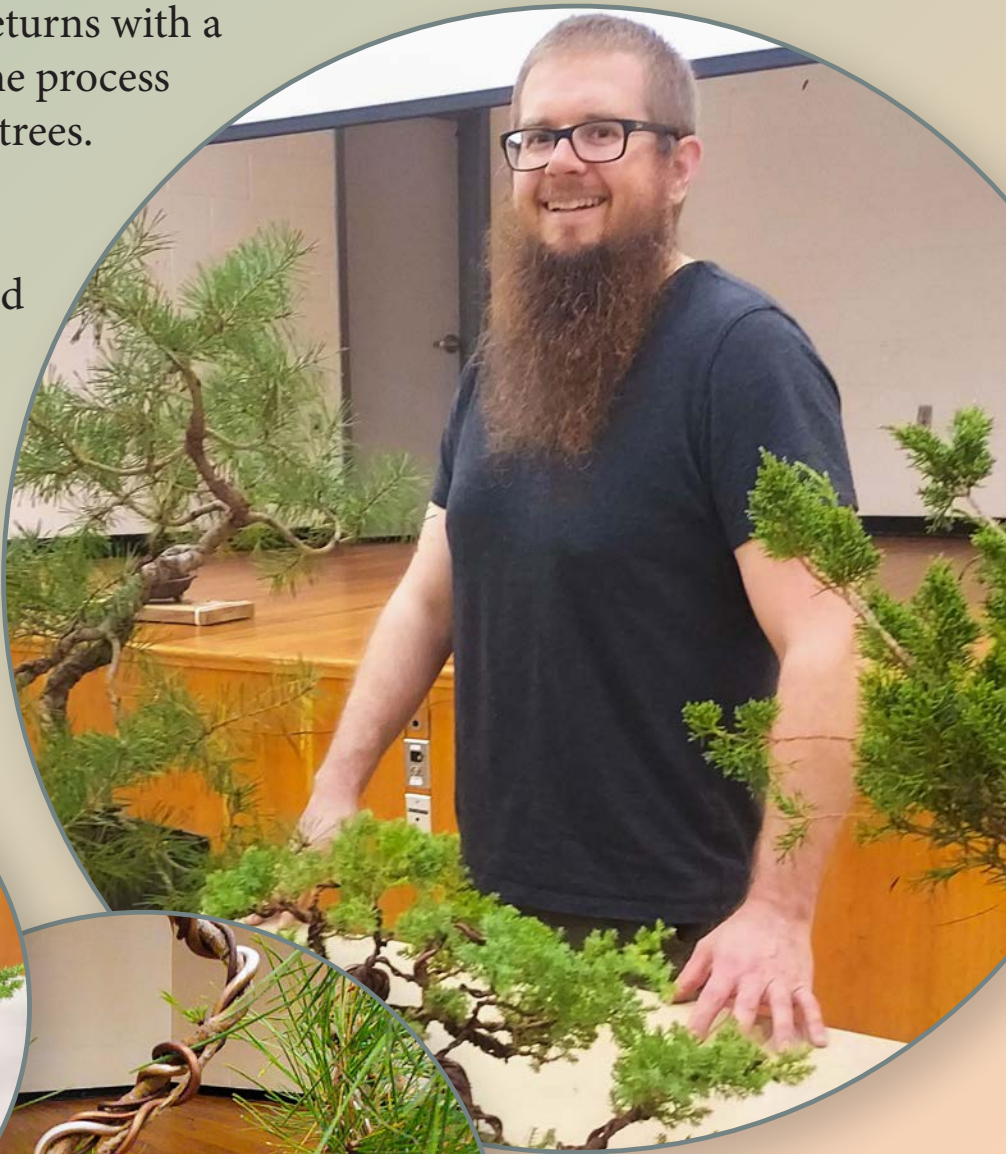


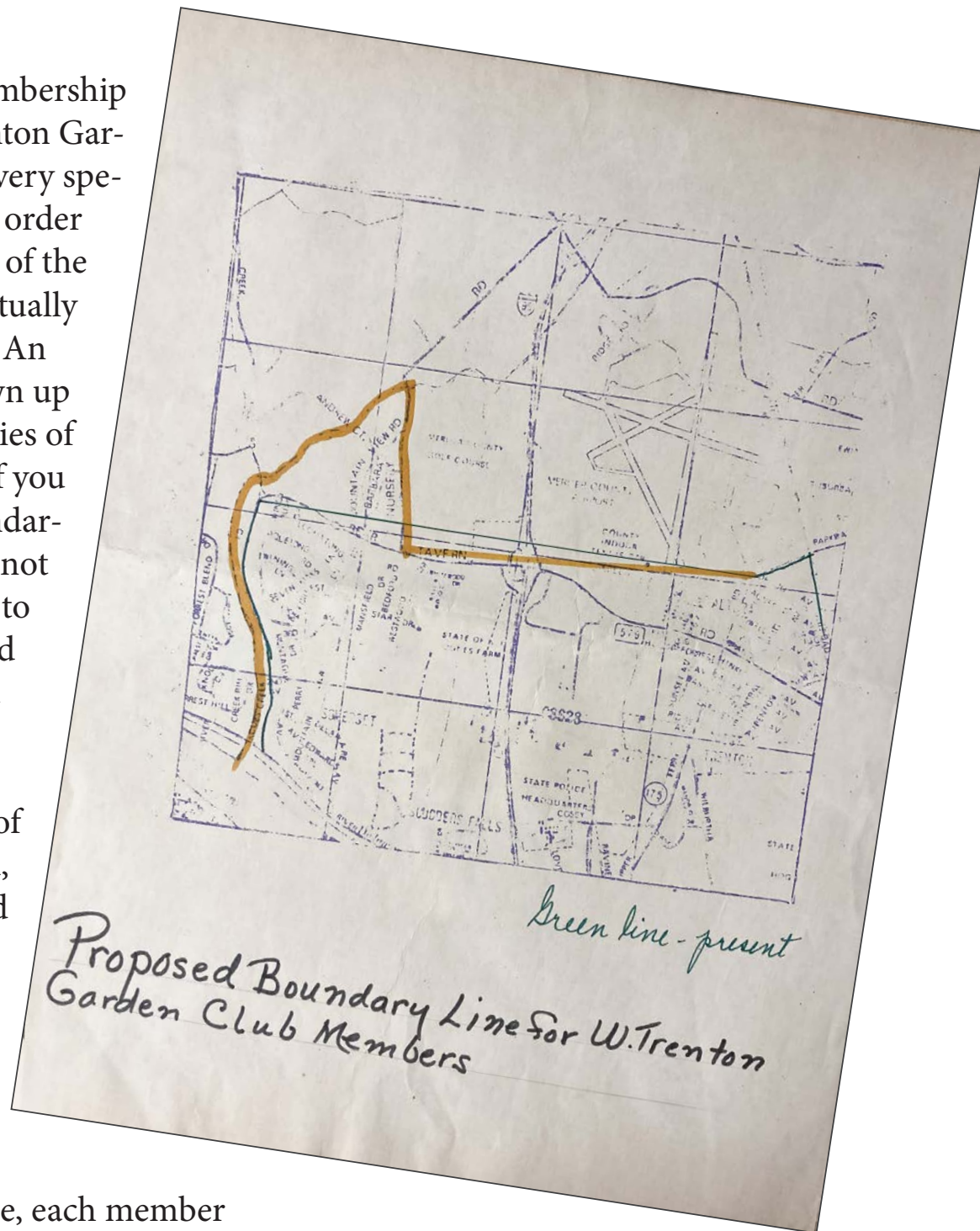
Photo by Lynn Grillo

WTGC History | Membership Through the Years

Anne Chmielewski

In the 1950s, membership in the West Trenton Garden Club was a very special privilege. In order to become a member of the club — you had to actually live in West Trenton! An official map was drawn up defining the boundaries of West Trenton. Even if you lived within the boundaries, membership was not a guarantee. You had to be officially sponsored by a member in good standing. Your name was placed on a waiting list. The number of members was limited, as meetings were held in fellow members' homes. That certainly presented space limitations! Members had responsibilities that had to be met, for example, each member was required to enter a Flower Show. If mandatory requirements were not met, you could forfeit your membership.

Continued next page...



WTGC History | Membership Through the Years

Anne Chmielewski

Continued from previous page...

With the passage of time, membership requirements loosened, and the club became more vibrant and open. In the 1960s, the club no longer had the image of “white gloved women at a tea party.” It is fair to say that we have ushered in a very vibrant and inclusive club membership. A full-spectrum of talents and passions are exhibited by our members. We are open to new ideas, trends and enjoy sharing our knowledge.

My advice: volunteer to be involved in a club project. It is a wonderful opportunity to get to know other members who are curious, talented, and inspiring people.



See pages 12-15 to read the article
"25 Years of Flowers and Friends"
originally published in 1978.

Holland Ridge Farm Field Trip

Thursday, April 24, 2025

\$15

Join Us for a Springtime Field Trip to Holland Ridge Farm

Spring is just around the corner, and what better way to celebrate than with a delightful afternoon at Holland Ridge Farm! Mark your calendars for **Thursday, April 24, 2025**, at 1:00 PM, for a trip to the farm located at 108 Rues Road, Cream Ridge, NJ 08514, and a breathtaking display of blooming tulips and other springtime splendor.

Holland Ridge Farm is renowned for its vibrant fields of tulips, picturesque scenery, and charming farm market. Stroll through acres of colorful blooms, snap some gorgeous photos, and pick your own flowers to bring a little springtime magic home with you.

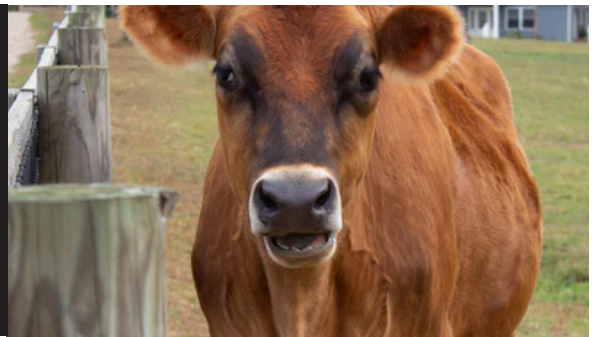
We will carpool to the farm, so if you need a ride or can offer one, please let us know. **To sign up, contact Lynn Grillo**, by email at lgrillo@mac.com or text at 609-954-2191, or sign up at the March meeting. Everyone is welcome to enjoy a wonderful day outdoors!

Let's welcome spring together in the most beautiful way.

Over 8 Million Tulips



Friendly Farm Animals



Hayride Shuttle



Food Trucks & Bakery



Farmers Market



Gallery | Herb Gardening: From Kitchen to Craft

Program by Elle Belcheff | February 3, 2025



Elle Belcheff, photos by Jeff Tryon



Sub. 1978

WEST TRENTON GARDEN CLUB

To: THE TRENTONIAN RUTA SMITHSON

From: The West Trenton Garden Club

Winifred W. Gamble, Publicity
882-0091

Subject: 25th Anniversary of the Club

"25 YEARS OF FLOWERS AND FRIENDS"

In February, 1953, 13 ladies from the West Trenton area, adorned in hats and white gloves, met in the home of Louise Voorhees to form a club which is now known as "The West Trenton Garden Club". On Monday, February 13, 1978 (snow date, February 27), 60 members will meet to celebrate the 25th anniversary of that club. The co-chairmen will be Betty Shotwell and Mildred De Flesco. The committee will be as follows: Grace Starrett, Vera Preine, Linda Arbesman and Barbara Parenelli. Janet Hauber is the current president and Mari Epley and Margaret Nowalinski are the only remaining active charter members. This special celebration will be held in the Ewing Presbyterian Church hall on Scotch Road. Reception will be held in the Fireside Room at 6:30 p.m. and dinner will follow.

Today, the purpose of the West Trenton Garden Club remains the same--quote, "to inform its members of gardening techniques, principles of flower arranging and to encourage civic improvement" unquote--but with a new concept---The ladies have discarded their hats and white gloves and are now doing the 'nitty-gritty'--such as the tremendous landscaping job on the West Trenton Firehouse grounds. Eileen Clement was chairman of this project which was started in 1970. It was a familiar sight to see her at the firehouse at 6 o'clock in the morning and working all day until dark. This was carried through for 3 years. Memorial trees and shrubs were planted honoring loved ones--Tons of pachysandra were planted by her and other members of the club. Today, as you drive by, you will notice a flourishing Blue Atlas Cedar Tree, that makes an outstanding focal point. Eileen Clement was made an Honorary Member upon completion of this project.

In 1957, Kwansan Cherry Trees were sold to each club member. Today, these trees are 25 to 40 feet high and present a breath-taking spectacle when they bloom in the spring.

As the club grew, the meeting place was changed from members homes to the Mountain View Golf Clubhouse. Further expansion forced us to move again to the West Trenton Presbyterian Church hall. The club stages at least two flower shows each year in this building. These shows require extensive planning and the participation of every

PAGE 2
WEST TRENTON GARDEN CLUB
member is mandatory.

In 1962, Winifred Gamble, who was president at that time, founded a monthly newsletter, namely, "The Garden Path"-----This is still being printed and Mary Jane Meehan is the current editor. This same year, the West Trenton Garden Club became a member of the Garden Club of New Jersey which is a member of the National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc.

In March 1965. The West Trenton Garden Club participated in the Philadelphia Horticultural Society's annual flower show in Philadelphia. Madeline Youngs designed a 9x12 area as a Japanese Garden with a sculpture as a focal point. This fabulous array of blooming spring flowers was given an award.

In 1966, during Betty Shotwell's presidency, the West Trenton Garden Club was given a special invitation to stage a flower show in the sample apartment of the very exclusive, newly-built Lafayette House on West State Street in Trenton. The show was entitled, "A Garden of Hospitality" and an arrangement was made to compliment the decor of each room of the sample apartment. Eleanor Navarro did a prize-winning Williamsburg arrangement for the foyer and Winifred Gamble won an award for her arrangement of white daisies in an antique scales in the dining room. This display was open for three days to the public.

In 1974, Irene Berglund of the National State Bank organized 14 garden clubs to do flower arrangements for the Trenton Commons. Mrs. Perlee Solon and her civic improvement committee asked Audrey Harker of the West Trenton Garden Club, to be chairman of the flower shows. This entailed a great deal of co-ordinating but was so successful that the whole affair was televised.

For many years, members of the West Trenton Garden Club entered the National State Bank Christmas Flower Shows and won the highest awards. They also took part in the Broad St. Bank, Arnold Constable and Lit Brothers flower shows.

The club's only fund-raising project is the annual spring geranium sale which is supervised by Barbara Faranelli assisted by the members. Over 4000 plants are sold each year. This project also helps to beautify the community.

A beautification award is given each year to a local garage or business building for the most outstanding and attractive plantings of flowers and shrubs.

To commemorate the Bicentennial, Mari Epley, civic chairman, arranged for the club to present Sarvis Trees, which were George Washington's favorite tree, to every school in the West Trenton area--public, private or parochial. In the same year (1976), Audrey Harker, assisted by other club members, made a collage of New Jersey depicting the variety of cultural, historical, botanical and geographical aspects of New Jersey. Included were the 4 state symbols: the red oak, the violet, the goldfinch and the honey bee. This collage was presented to the Ewing Township Board of Education to be displayed in the various schools specified lengths of time.

Well known ornithologists have lectured at meetings of the West Trenton Garden Club educating the members on how and what to feed wild birds and where to place bird houses to encourage nesting---Hence, this area is known for its variety of wild birds.

One member, upon completion of a new home 20 years ago, learned by joining the W. T. G. C. how to landscape and transform an acre of yellow mud and shale into a botanical showplace. Two rules---Do not plant trees directly in front of your new home (with exception of one show tree) and allow at least 4 feet space between your home and the shrubbery.(This allows space to weed and wash windows.)

Twice a year, individual flower arrangements are made by members of the club for patients of the Fort Dix hospital. Also large arrangements are placed in the entrance room, recreation and dining area. Flower arrangements have been taken to Glen Gardner and Donnelly Memorial Hospitals. Mini Flower gardens have been made in bird cages and hung outside wheel-chair height so patients can care for their individual little gardens each summer day.

The West Trenton Garden Club also sponsors a Junior Garden Club which is a separate entity. Their flower shows, however, are held in conjunction with the seniors. Marcia Felcone is the current chairman of this group. Senior members give workshops and talks to instruct the Juniors.

A biology award is presented to an outstanding student of Ewing High School annually.

Dogwood trees have been planted at two churches in memory of deceased members of our club.

Plantings have also been made at Rambling and Armstrong Parks in Ewing Township.

Evergreens have been planted in front of the Municipal Building and on each side of the stone World War II marker at Fisk School.

Dogwood trees were planted at Ewing High School and also a monetary contribution was given for plantings for a new courtyard at the school.

Participation in the annual 4th of July parade in Ewing Township has always been a "fun" event. In 1976, the club arranged a large float.

The West Trenton Garden Club is rated very highly in the community and frequently some members are asked to judge other garden club flower shows. This is quite an honor. The following have all acted as judges for outside shows: Grace Starrett, Mari Epley, Amy Korn, Florence Good, Winifred Gamble, Vera Preine, Sylvia Forman, Lorraine Whitehouse, Madeline Youngs, Audrey Harker, Lucy Hartig and Margaret Nowalinski.

Grace Starrett also appears quite frequently on television, Channel 6 with the Captain Noah show. Margaret Nowalinski teaches flower arranging at the Adult School at Ewing High and Lawrenceville High.

So, being a member of the West Trenton Garden Club not only gives the pleasure of digging in God's earth in search of beauty and contentment, it enriches the lives of each one so they can reach out and share their knowledge in the community. It also is an organization that reflects a feeling of warm friendliness and steadfast personal regard for each member.

Winifred E. Gamble