



Takoma Horticultural Club

A Hardy Perennial Since 1916

www.takomahort.org

January 2012



Winter Green in Fenton Park Community Garden

SAVE THE DATE....

THC's February Meeting will feature a Silver Spring botanist and expert on cold-tolerant plants....



**WINTER-HARDY
CACTUS and SUCCULENTS
with Allen Hirsch**

Wednesday, February 15, 7:30pm
in the Takoma Park Community Center's Azalea
Room, Maple at Philadelphia Avenue.

...

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THC's Annual Winter Potluck

—by Taffy Turner

Happy New Year Fellow Gardeners!

Please make plans to join Takoma Horticultural Club members for a Potluck and Indoor Plant Exchange on Wednesday, January 18, 2012 at Heffner Park at 6:30 pm. (Dinner will begin at 7.)

If you attended last year's potluck, you remember what a great time we had and what wonderful cooks we all are! Please start thinking now about what dish you'd like to bring, as well as a plant or any other garden-related item to exchange (food is required – plants, etc. are not). Please bring a main dish, side dish, or dessert. As usual, the club will provide beverages. Heffner has a kitchen with a sink, a microwave and a cook top, but no oven.

For our after-dinner entertainment, we'll have the Indoor Plant Exchange. If you don't have an indoor plant you can part with, you can bring a book, garden magazines, a tool, any garden-related item – or nothing at all is fine too. Be prepared to give the group a (See Potluck, p.4)

Winter Web Cleaning

No, I'm not talking about eradicating cobwebs from my home (though no doubt several lurk), but rather, doing a little housekeeping on our website. We received a member inquiry asking where meeting information was located on our website... and holy hellebores, Batman, there isn't a word on our website about this very important subject! Therefore I've added a page to outline club meeting basics, venue info, and an overview of what we do at each month's gatherings. Look for it in the newly-debuted sidebar link "Meeting Info".

I also took this opportunity to rename a few of our links that didn't quite seem to convey the page's content. While I hope the new namings are self-evident, here's a chart detailing the mappings from our old sidebar links to new links (which I also reordered a tad in the process):

| old sidebar | new sidebar |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| THC Home | THC Home |
| About THC | Calendar of Events |
| THC News and Events | Meeting Info |
| THC Newsletter | Newsletter Archives |
| Join THC | Join THC |
| From Our Gardens | From Our Gardens |
| Favorite Links | Favorite Links |
| THC Listserv | Club Leaders & History |
| | THC Listserv |

In addition, the "Calendar of Events" page has being reworked—right now it just contains a link to current and past programs. We hope to augment it with other items of note as they arise.

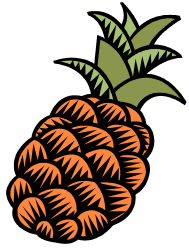


'HGC Jacob' Winter Rose Helleborus Niger blooming now (!) in Carole Galati's garden

I hope you like the changes—especially club member [Carin Brown](#), who wrote in with the original query. I appreciate her taking the time to do so, and I hope other club members will likewise write in with their suggestions and comments, for it helps us keep the website a vibrant and relevant place for our members.

Wishing everyone a web-wonderful 2012!

(Note: your computer may have "cached" some of our pages—i.e., stored the pages to save time in reloading them. If you don't see any changes, just press F5 (in IE) or hit the refresh button to force the pages to reload.)



Collards Today, Mangos in 2022?

—by Diane Svenonius

In the vegetable garden, “volatility” tends to refer to the weather, not the stock market. Every year has its peculiarities, but they seemed to be a little more... pronounced, shall we say?... this Summer and Fall. June and July had stretches of 100+ degree heat, July was desert-dry. The Post announced that wet Augusts were a thing of the past, when suddenly it rained; about sixteen inches of rain fell in September and October. And at the end of a warm December, lettuce was still waving in the breeze and flowers were making like spring had come. I asked some local gardeners how their crops did this Summer and Fall, and about their plans for next year.

Eileen Schramm grows a wide variety of edibles at the side of her house in Silver Spring, near Takoma Park. “Considering all the ups and downs with high heat and hurricanes,” she says, she came out pretty well. “Cherry tomatoes went nuts,” producing massive crops, while heirlooms had a very slow start in the June heat wave, and didn’t recover until fall, when they went into high gear. It wasn’t as good for her beans. Her scarlet runner beans “just sat there as if to say “Are you kidding? Put me in Minnesota.” Snow peas did well, while sugar snaps just sat until a late season spurt. Cukes were not very productive; a white variety did just okay... “heat seems to knock them out.” Eileen loves caraway, and caraway, a biennial, “goes berserk” in hot weather. Native bees love it, but it took her hours to detach the seeds from the plants.

Like me, Eileen has not been lucky with zucchini (the flowers are all boys, or the squash borer appears). This year, as a ‘Z

substitute’, she grew a Korean summer squash from seeds she found in an Asian grocery. It develops a vine like butternut and melon-shaped fruits that look like zucchini. They were a big hit picked young and green, before the skins hardened, and were treated like zucchini – cooked or pickled. Older bigger ones were baked in the oven. Mustard greens did well, and she especially likes a burgundy-stemmed okra -- but they are so pretty she can’t bring herself to thin them. She plants radishes every year and has tried many kinds; French Breakfast is her favorite.

Eileen thinks we may have to start rethinking our gardening approaches... either seeking out heat-withstanding cultivars or plant later in the season.

Anne McDermott gardens at home and in a 400 square foot plot in the Fenton Park Community Garden, and will take on another plot in the coming season. Thinking about what to grow where, she concluded that the critical advantage of the Community Garden is that 7-foot deer fence. Deer have ravaged her leafy greens



at home-- “my chard was just sticks”. So in the coming season she’ll grow things deer don’t like (much) at home, and put their faves in Fenton Park. That means brassicas, like kale, collards, (but not cabbage or broccoli, which didn’t fare well), and alliums- onions, garlic, chives, and especially leeks.

In her community plot she wants to grow more beans, including yellow and purple, and try sweeter milder Asian (see *Mangos*, page 4)

(Mangos, continued from page 3)

varieties of eggplant, golden chard, and turnips, chiefly for their greens. Last year she grew four kinds of squash: Raven, Green Tiger (had to pick twice a day!), Papaya Pear, and a yellow scallop called Sunburst. This year she will cut back on the overly prolific zucchini (guess there were some 'girls' in the Community Garden!) and grow lettuce and spinach again. Anne also wants to expand her flower beds with new space for butterfly attractants, like *asclepias* and *agastache*, zinnias, nasturtiums, and short marigolds by the tomatoes. She



“no longer pines” over things that are lovely or tasty, but just don’t do well in the local climate. “Just let it go”, she says; there are plenty of things that do grow for you here. A new enthusiasm is rapini, a turnip relative... it forms small leaves like collards and is “delish in pasta.”

Eileen and Anne are adventurers, trying different varieties each year. Eileen likes large and small versions of the “black” or “brown” tomatoes, such as Black Krim. Of eleven varieties she grew last year, Anne liked Kellogg’s Breakfast, a tasty orange heirloom beefsteak, and a cherry tomato, Golden Nugget. Eileen has used Johnny’s Select Seeds and Landreth’s for ideas but gets seeds from many places. She had good luck with large packages of Italian seeds that Strosnider’s carried last year. Of several catalogs that she uses, Anne’s favorites for many years have been Pinetree Garden Seeds (many choices, low prices) and Park Seeds; she browses two specialty catalogues for ideas: Totally Tomatoes and Vermont Bean Seeds.

Both start seeds indoors. Eileen’s article on seed-starting appeared in the February *THC News* and can be read at www.takomahort.org. Anne experimented with various lighting arrangements, now uses a multi-shelf structure put together by her

husband, with ordinary fluorescent lights, one cool and one warm. She keeps the seedlings very close to the lights, on a light timer.

Washington Gardener Magazine editor and publisher Kathy Jentz also gardens in Fenton Park Community Garden, and this year enjoyed lots of tomatillos, okra, Sugar Baby and Snow Leopard melons and other crops. Like many of us she had skeletonized bean plants and olive-colored tomato leaves in the hot early summer, then lots of production later in the summer. The “Fenton Friday” entries in her blog washingtongardener.blogspot.com give an entertaining and instructive picture of the ups and downs of the summer of 2011.

Want to Garden with Others?

The Montgomery County Community Gardens Program supervises three community gardens in Takoma Park and nearby Silver Spring, and seven others around the county.

Starting February 1, applications for available plots may be made. Go to their website for more information:
http://www.montgomeryparks.org/permits/find/community_gardens_program.shtm

(Potluck, continued from p.1)

little description of your treasure. If you bring something, you’ll go home with something! It is always a fun evening and a great opportunity to get to know fellow THC members and meet new friends in a relaxed setting.

This is a members-only THC event. You may pay your 2012 dues or join the club at the Potluck. Please bring a check for \$12, made out to THC. We will not have cash to make change. You are welcome to bring a guest.

Heffner Park is on Oswego Avenue, off Ritchie, in Takoma Park. **Please RSVP to me so we know how many tables & chairs to set up:**

Taffy Turner, taffyt@verizon.net, or 301-681-9133 (h), or 301-641-5957 (cell)

Takoma Horticultural Club Donations Support Area Gardens & Gardeners

In 2011, THC donated money to several local institutions to promote gardens and gardening. Funds from the club treasury are supplemented by member dues, and by proceeds from the annual bulb sale. The donations this year were:

- \$865 worth of spring bulbs to Historic Takoma for planting in the City of Takoma Park, and to Holy Cross Hospital for its Healing Garden;
- \$1000 to Brookside Gardens for a commemorative brick (proceeds go to the Garden Fund), and in support of the Green Matters Symposium (see THC News, March 2011);
- \$485 for plants for the Hancock Avenue Rain Garden (see THC News, July 2010);
- \$250 to the Takoma, D.C. Public Library for gardening books (see News, December 2011).

Officers

President: *Sherrell Goggin*

Vice President: *Carole Galati*

Secretary: *Becky Lavash*

Treasurer: *Taffy Turner*

Committee Chairs and Contacts

Membership: *Carole Galati*

Listserv: *Anne Hardman*

Newsletter: *Diane Svenonius*

Public Relations: *Kathy Jentz*

Webmaster: *Sherrell Goggin*

The THC News is published monthly on the listserv and at www.takomahort.org. Contact dbsvenonius@msn.com with comments.

DUES R DUE, DEARS & DUDES

—by *Carole Galati*

Welcome to our newest members, Terry and John Dammann.

Speaking of membership, all 2012 dues are due January 1st. Not sure if you paid your 2012 dues? Please ask me. Go to our website: www.takomahort.org for instructions to join and renew.

All those members who pay their dues will be able to participate in these **Members Only** 2012 events:

- **Winter Potluck (Jan. 18)**
- **Spring Plant Exchange (May 20)**
- **Adkins Arboretum Tour (July 15)**
- **THC Garden Tour (TBA)**
- **Summer Potluck (Sept. 16)**
- **Fall Plant Exchange (Oct. 21)**

You are welcome to pay your 2012 dues at the Potluck on Jan. 18, but only with a check to THC for \$12. There will be no cash for making change at this event.

Thanks and Happy New Year,

Carole (THC Membership)

SEED EXCHANGES

Washington Gardener Magazine

Saturday, January 28th, 12:30pm-4:00pm

Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, MD

Saturday, February 4th, 12:30pm-4:00pm

Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria, VA

Seed Exchange attendees trade seeds, exchange planting tips, hear expert speakers, and collect goody bags full of gardening treats. There is a nominal fee to attend.

Directions at www.brooksidegardens.org

(January 28) and at

www.greenspring.org (February 4).

Details at www.WashingtonGardener.com.

Jakoma Horticultural Club

2012 Calendar of Events

| DATE | EVENT | TIME | AUDIENCE |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Wednesday January 18 | Potluck Dinner & Indoor Plant Exchange Heffner Park | 6:30 pm Social 7:00 pm Dinner | Members Only |
| Wednesday February 15 | Winter-Hardy Cactus and Succulents by Allen Hirsch, Takoma Park Comm. Center | 7:30pm-9pm | Open to Public |
| Wednesday March 21 | Composting Presentation at TPCC Presentation by M.C. Master Gardeners | 7:30pm-9pm | Open to Public |
| Wednesday April 18 | Carnivorous Plants by Michael Szesce | 7:30pm-9pm | Open to Public |
| Sunday May 20 | Spring Plant Exchange at Heffner Park | 1:30pm-3:30pm | Members Only |
| June TBA | Garden tour | TBA | TBA |
| Sunday July 15 | Docent-led tour of Adkins Arboretum and nursery visit | 9am-4pm | Members Only |
| Wednesday August 15 | Kevin Conrad Presentation | 7:30pm-9pm | Open to Public |
| Sunday September 16 | Summer Potluck - Jeff Trunzo's Garden | 3pm-6pm | Members Only |
| Sunday October 21 | Fall Plant Exchange at Heffner Park | 1:30pm-3:30pm | Members Only |
| Wednesday November 14 | Hydroponics/Aquaponics - Aga Traynor | 7:30pm-9pm | Open to Public |
| Wednesday December 12 | Workshop: Making Small Holiday Arrangements For Donation | 7:30pm-9pm | Open to Public |

Annual dues of \$12 are payable on January 1st (www.takomahort.org)