



# Takoma Horticultural Club



August 2016

## A Centennial Celebration

*The Takoma Horticultural Club is commemorating our first 100 years and cordially invites you to help us observe this milestone occasion.*

**What:** An afternoon reception with live music and light refreshments

**When:** Saturday, August 27 from 3 - 6pm

**Where:** The great room inside the EF Language School at 6896 Laurel St. NW, corner of Eastern Ave., Washington, DC

**Bring:** A single-stemmed flower from your garden to showcase in our display

**Dress:** Garden Party Finery

**RSVP:** Requested by August 24 to [KathyJentz@gmail.com](mailto:KathyJentz@gmail.com)

We still need your help to reach our target! Please consider making a donation to help us highlight THC's contributions to our community over the past 10 decades:

Takoma Horticultural Club was founded in 1916 and is one of the oldest continuously operating garden clubs in the United States. In this 100th anniversary year of the club, we will celebrate its many contributions to the community with a variety of commemorative activities. The 100th Anniversary Committee has been working diligently to plan many activities to mark this important occasion. To do all of this, we need to raise additional funds. We have just secured a \$1,000 grant from the Takoma Foundation for a for our Centennial Park at Piney Branch & Sligo Avenue and, combined with member contributions so far, we are forty percent of the way to our stated goal, but we still need your help to reach our target.

To make your donation, please mail your check by August 5 to the Club treasurer, Taffy Turner, 10207 Lorain Ave, SS, MD 20901. Make checks out to "THC."

100th Anniversary Program Activities Suggested Donor Levels:

- \$ 25 Sedum
- \$ 50 Aster
- \$100 Rhododendron
- \$250 Oak

## Tired of weeding? Take revenge and...Eat Your Weeds!

A rich and satisfying world of nutrition lies at your feet in your own backyard or in that vacant lot or abandoned field. Personally, there are few culinary adventures that tickle my fancy more than to walk out of my house and pick some lovely fresh green plants for a morning smoothie, a salad, a soup or a sauté. They are free, delicious and make me feel nourished and connected to the earth. Most **wild foods**—a less derogatory and more appealing term for edible weeds—are more nutritious than their cultivated relatives. Flavors are often stronger and earthier since they haven't been bred to appeal to modern palates intoxicated by sweet and bland food.



### Lamb's Quarters, aka Wild Spinach or Goosefoot

An analysis of the nutritional composition of Lamb's Quarters shows amounts of calcium, beta carotene, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, and phosphorus that blow amounts found in cultivated greens like spinach, kale and chard out of the water! And that's not even counting the substantial amounts of **phytonutrients, Omega 3 fatty acids, protein, trace minerals and fiber** they contain. Traditional cultures have eaten these wild greens going as far back as the Iron Age and they were especially valued in the spring when they were consumed as a tonic. Quinoa is the seed of a cultivated relative of Lamb's Quarters; beets, Swiss chard and spinach are its close cousins.

### Gathering and Eating Lamb's Quarters

To identify Lamb's Quarters, look for triangular leaves with silvery white undersides. New leaves will have a dusty appearance. They can be found almost any place where the ground has been disturbed. Best to harvest them from unpolluted areas, away from the road or

on roads infrequently traveled to avoid contamination from traffic.

Wild foods are often at their best in the spring, but Lamb's Quarters can be harvested aplenty in mid-summer. It is like the best spinach you've ever eaten, only better—and prepared and eaten in much the same way. Young leaves can be eaten raw in salads and, if one has the patience, the small seeds can be harvested in the fall to be eaten like a grain. Go easy when

eating raw leaves with their high amounts of oxalic acid, which interferes with the absorption of calcium. This can be problematic for individuals with conditions such as kidney stones or gout. Cooking decreases the quantity of oxalic acid.

### How to Cook Lamb's Quarters

Strip off the leaves. Like spinach, Lamb's Quarters cooks down substantially. Don't worry about removing the tiny stems attached to the leaf—they are tender. Wash them in cold water as you would any other greens. One of the best ways to prepare any wild green is the steam-sauté method, taught to me by the inimitable and talented cookbook author and chef, Myra Kornfeld:

*In a large sauté pan over medium heat, saute minced or sliced garlic (2 – 4 cloves) in about 2 Tbs. of olive oil for 30 seconds or until slightly softened. Add in the washed greens with a sprinkling of salt, stirring occasionally with the garlic, for about 3 – 4 minutes until they turn bright green. Add 1/4 cup water and cover, cooking over medium heat for about 15 minutes until the greens are dark and tender and the water has mostly cooked off. Season to taste with salt and pepper —serve with a fresh squeeze of lemon. **Enjoy!***

—Katherine Lambert

In addition to being the Club's President, Katherine is a Certified and Licensed Nutritionist. (See [www.foodwisdomnutrition.com](http://www.foodwisdomnutrition.com)).

## What's coming next...? Special centennial events

### August 10

"Dirty Gertie" leaves the Historic Takoma Window on Carroll Avenue for her annual appearance at the County Fair. Check out the window before she goes!

### August 27

The long-awaited Centennial Celebration at the EF Language School!

### September 21 at Historic Takoma

Nancy Newton, City Gardener Mike Welsh and other long-time members gather to give an Insider View of the Club's history. Come and discuss "what's next" for THC and what you'd like to see.

### October 2

Annual THC bulb sale at the Takoma Park Street Festival

### November 16 at Historic Takoma

Master Gardeners present 'Creating a Children's Garden...Growing Gardeners.'

Check out Takoma Horticultural Club on Facebook!

# One Hundred Years of THC

*Eighth in a series of glimpses of THC history, drawn from the collection of materials made available through the help of Diana Kohn and Historic Takoma Inc., this installment highlights THC's involvement in the "Azalea City" effort of the 1960s and '70s, and the role of Clarence Casey (1897–1997), a THC member for 50 years.*

The "top priority program" for Takoma Park, MD in the 1960's was to become the Nation's 'Azalea City'. An Azalea Committee of professional and amateur gardeners had already formed by May, 1962 and was commissioned by the Mayor and Council; public areas had been chosen for planting; and within a year 5,000 slips were under cultivation and 600 bushes had been placed at the southeast corner of Maple and Philadelphia Avenues, with thousands more planned for other spaces.<sup>1</sup> The City's public works staff helped the committee with supplies, plants and water; the Committee did much of the planting. In 1963, the Club donated a total of \$300 for azaleas in Upper Portal Park, at Piney Branch Road and Eastern Avenue.

Well-suited for the shady city, azaleas were planted in huge numbers for a while, but as time went on Committee efforts tapered off, and the City had fewer resources for maintenance. Many azaleas planted in Upper Portal and other parks succumbed, due in part to loss of tree canopy and resulting exposure, according to present City Gardener Mike Welsh.

In a "second wave" of interest in the '70s and '80s, the Committee regrouped, and several THC members began to start azaleas in their yards, grow them for sale in back of Public Works, and give training on their cultivation. Long-time THC member Clarence E. Casey was a key participant in the revived campaign. Casey and his wife Catherine had joined the Club in 1946. Interviewed in his garden at 504 Elm in 1991, he told the Montgomery *Sentinel* that he worked on the project between 1975 and 1977, and during that time tens of thousands of plants were propagated. Meanwhile, the Club joined the Committee to hold sales each April: "Azaleas:

*Hundreds of excellent plants, many varieties including Mollis and Backacres- locally grown, fully acclimated to local soils..." with a goal of extending Azalea City into private gardens.*

The Caseys also entered the Club's flower shows, winning many awards. Catherine's specialty was delicate and colorful flower arrangements, while Clarence entered individual plants. A plaque in Upper Portal Park, placed by the Club in the early '80s, commemorates the Caseys. Clarence's granddaughter, Judy Casey, asked the City to restore the space, and in 2013 the Club donated \$500 for deciduous (native) azaleas to be planted there. As growing conditions there improve, with more tree cover, Mike Welsh said he would like to restore Glenn Dales to the Park as well.

Judy Casey retains ribbons and photographs of entries, and still cherishes a prize silver plate. She maintains a Facebook page "Commemorating the Life of Clarence Casey" and plans to donate a garden bench in Casey's memory for the Club's "Centennial Park" this fall.

—Diane Svenonius

## Note

<sup>1</sup> As many know, Takoma Park's special relationship to the azalea began with the Club's tenth President, horticulturalist Benjamin Y. Morrison. Perhaps it was while traveling in Asia on his post-graduate fellowship that he was taken by the range of deep brilliant colors of azaleas growing in shade. Later, at home and then working at USDA's Glenn Dale Plant Introduction Station, he began crossing azaleas in great numbers, seeking plants that could survive Washington DC winters. In the 1940s, when the Station was directed to grow plants exclusively for the war effort, Morrison began moving his trial plants to gardening friends in Takoma Park.

## 2016 THC Executive Committee

*President:* Katherine Lambert

*Vice President:* (vacant)

*Treasurer:* Taffy Turner

*Secretary:* Barbara Henderson

*Director of Membership:* Carole Galati

*Webmaster:* Cindy Walczak

*Public Relations:* Kathy Jentz

*Listserv:* Anne Hardman

*Newsletter:* Eileen Schramm, Diane Svenonius

*Bulb Sale:* Nancy Newton

*100th Anniversary Committee Chair:* Kathy Jentz

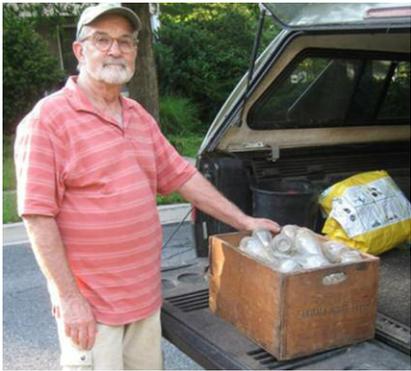
## Benefits of Membership

Well, the summer is zooming by, as we try not to melt and try to keep our gardens from melting. So far, we have been blessed with periodic storms. We are still collecting dues for 2016, so check your membership status if you are not sure. We use your dues to pay for speakers and meeting venues. We also have special Centennial expenses this year. Our Centennial Celebration on August 27 (Save the Date!) is open to members and invited guests. It is going to be quite a party: food, drinks, music and local politicians mingling with all us avid gardeners to celebrate 100 years of Takoma Horticultural Club history!

Please welcome these new and returning members to the club: Kathy Paez, Valerie and Alan Cohen, Karin Johnston, Barbara Barris, Jerry Hurley, Bethany Karn, Sue Meyer and Lynn Title.

Check our website for events and current club information: [www.takomahort.org](http://www.takomahort.org). Thank you, Carole ([cagalati@rcn.com](mailto:cagalati@rcn.com))

**Our THC Doings in July**



Left to right, top row: Wendy Bell's lush and productive back and front gardens (photos: Diane Svenonius, Eileen Schramm); THC shows off 100 years in the July 4th parade, and wins TPIDC Memorial Award (In honor of Belle Ziegler, Ernie Weisman, Ed Hutmire, June Aloji, and Kay Daniels-Cohen). Middle row: Buried Treasure! Mike Welsh unearthed vases from THC's flower shows; Kathy Jentz and Barbara Henderson with winning entries, Flower Show judge Lynn Title explaining winners (photos: Kathy Jentz). Bottom row: Mini flower show, Dirty Gertie, both in the window at Historic Takoma (photos: Diane Svenonius). George Leventhal presents the County Council's proclamation to THC President Katherine Lambert (photo: Kathy Jentz).



**Thank You!**

Centennial Donations reach \$1600! 40% of goal! Thanks to our generous contributors!

**Oak**

Jeff Trunzo  
Carole Galati

**Rhododendron**

Taffy Turner  
Loretta Neumann  
Kathy Jentz  
Diane Svenonius  
Kit Gage  
Anne Hardman  
Melanie Isis  
Anonymous

**Aster**

Anonymous  
Katherine Lambert  
Joanne Douglass  
Meikle

**Sedum**

Frank Malone  
Cindy Walczak  
Jane Godfrey

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