



Takoma Horticultural Club

A hardy perennial since 1916



January 2016

Warm Up with THC at the Annual Winter Potluck

Please make plans to join your fellow Takoma Horticulture Club members for a **Potluck and Indoor Plant Exchange on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at Heffner Park**. Early birds with appetizers come at **6:30 pm**, dinner to begin at **7**.

Please bring an appetizer (come at 6:30), main dish, side dish, or dessert. As usual, the club will provide beverages. Heffner has a kitchen with a sink, refrigerator, microwave and a cook top but **no oven**.

For our after-dinner entertainment, we'll have the **Indoor Garden Exchange**. If you don't have an indoor plant you can part with, you can bring garden books, garden magazines, a tool, any garden-related item—or nothing at all is fine, too. Be prepared to give the group a brief description of your treasure. If you bring something, you'll go home with something! Remember to protect your plants from the cold while transporting them.

Please RSVP to me so we know how many tables & chairs to set up.

This is a members-only THC event. You may pay your 2016 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.

It has always been a fun evening and a great opportunity to get to know fellow THC members and meet new friends in a relaxed setting.

Taffy Turner (taffyt@verizon.net)
Home: 301-681-9133
Cell: 301-641-5957

Pay Dues: Avoid Potluck Blues

Cardinals are red,
Bluebirds are blue,
If you haven't paid them,
You know what to do.

On January 20,
Our members will dine
Pay your dues now
And avoid the line!

We can help you renew or join,
Or check your status if need be:
www.takomahort.org
It's really easy as 1,2,3!

Thanks,
Carole (cagalati@rcn.com)

Due to a scheduling mix-up, THC's **3rd annual Christmas centerpiece workshop** did not take place as planned. Nevertheless, organizer Becky Lavash was able to convene a smaller group at Sherrell Goggin's home, and nineteen Christmas centerpieces were made for the residents at St. Ann's Home for Mothers and Children. We apologize to those who signed up and were prevented from attending by this mix-up.



Becky Lavash, Dodie Butler and Taffy Turner creating centerpieces. Photo: Sherrell Goggin.

Takoma Horticultural Club Celebrates a Century

by Kathy Jentz

Takoma Horticultural Club: A Hardy Perennial Since 1916

Takoma Horticultural Club (THC) is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2016 and is believed to be among the oldest, continuously active garden clubs in the nation.

Most of the current 120+ members of the THC are in southern Montgomery County, the bordering areas of Prince George's County, and northwest Washington DC. The club usually meets the third Wednesday of the month at the Historic Takoma headquarters in downtown Takoma Park, MD. The meetings are free and open to the public.

A Fascinating History

The Takoma Horticultural Club (THC) was patterned after the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. The first meeting was held in the Takoma DC Public Library on March 1, 1916 and consisted of employees of the Beltsville Agricultural Research Service who lived in the Takoma area. Mr. D. N. Shoemaker was elected President and the club was then named the Takoma Park Horticultural Improvement Club. Membership was originally restricted to men. After three years they discovered the indispensability of women and in 1919 the Constitution was modified to admit women. This preceded by one year the nineteenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

The aims of the Club have not changed over the years; although several activities have been curtailed, many still continue. The Club originally offered detailed landscaping services free to members. Collective buying of plants, seeds, bulbs, and lime was a popular service. Pruning demonstrations were held as was a large plant exchange where members shared surplus plants.

Flower Shows had a prominent place in the early activities of the Club as a way to stimulate the acquisition of new varieties. The first Narcissus, Dahlia, and Rose shows were held in 1916. Tulip and Iris shows started in 1917. (An early Iris enthusiast was B. Y. Morrison, who went on to found the National Arboretum and develop the Glen Dale azaleas.) In 1923, the first Gladiolus Show was staged. Peony shows began in 1925. In the fall, a combined fruit, flower and vegetable show was held.

During World War I, the THC concentrated on the production of vegetables. It purchased and distributed seeds, obtained and developed garden sites, and sponsored the Boys and Girls Garden Club, which was a forerunner of the 4-H Clubs.

Through its collective buying, exchange sales, information services, lectures, and demonstrations, the Takoma Horticultural Club has influenced the planting of thousands of trees and shrubs, and millions of bulbs and plants.

Club Benefits the Community

The clubs' main method of communication is its Yahoo group email list, which is open to anyone interested in participating in it (see: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/takomahort/>), and its newly revamped web site, www.takomahort.org. A few years ago, the THC did away with its printed newsletter. The cost and time savings from no longer printing and mailing the monthly publication was considerable.

THC membership is \$12 per year. Membership benefits include the aforementioned newsletter and web site, club meetings with expert garden speakers, as well as members-only events including a yearly Potluck Dinner and Indoor Plant Exchange in January, twice yearly Garden Plant Exchanges in spring and fall, a Club Picnic each summer, free garden consultations, and wholesale bulb order.

Many local Takoma Park residents have purchased premium bulbs for their gardens at the THC bulb booth at the Takoma Park Street Festival, which takes place annually on the first Sunday of October. The bulb sale booth is the club's biggest annual fundraiser. For several years, the club has used the proceeds from the bulb sale to purchase gardening books for the City of Takoma Park, MD library and the Takoma branch library in Washington, DC. This year the proceeds will be used to partially fund the club's 100th anniversary celebration.

100th Anniversary Plans

A group of club members has met several times over the past few months to discuss how the THC will celebrate its milestone year. The meetings resulted in two main initiatives being planned now. One is a celebratory party for the end of next summer. The party will include a sharing of the club's history being researched now by a sub-group of members as well as period entertainment and music from the club's founding year. The second part of the 100th celebration will be a commemorative planting in a local city park, which is being selected now by club members and Takoma Park city employees. More details on both initiatives will be shared with club members in the coming months via the club's revived newsletter.

THC members both current and lapsed are encouraged to join us in this year's celebratory efforts. We invite your memories, mementos, and photos of past club events. Contact the club's leadership via Diane Svenonius at dbsvenonius@msn.com.

Kathy Jentz is editor of Washington Gardener Magazine and a long-time DC area gardening enthusiast. Portions of this article originally appeared in the Washington Gardener Magazine and in a previous Takoma Voice column on local garden clubs.

What's New with THC in 2016?

We are working on our Calendar of Events for 2016 and are planning some pretty exciting talks, in addition to our special **Anniversary Year events** (to be announced). Possible talks include gardening with

children, pruning, garden photography and water features in the garden. With a **Spring and Fall Plant Exchange** and our **May/June Open Garden Series** there is something for all. Don't forget our **Fall Bulb Sale** and **two Potlucks!** Look for our Calendar of Events posted on the website

later this month. You just can't beat the \$12 membership fee! We hope to bring you along on our gardening adventures! You can check www.takomahort.org for membership instructions and plans as they take shape, or contact Carole at cgalati@rcn.com.