

# Takoma Horticultural Club

*A hardy perennial since 1916*



November 2016

## Creating a Children's Garden: Growing Gardeners

*Merikay Smith and LeeAnne Gellely*

**Wednesday, November 16, 7:30 – 9pm**

**Historic Takoma, 7328 Carroll Ave, Takoma Park MD 20912**

Gardening isn't just for grownups! Inspire kids to learn more about the world of dirt, plants, and bugs. What makes a garden child-friendly? We'll share garden elements that appeal to kids and ideas on how to incorporate these into your garden. This will include inspirations from public children's gardens.

With avid gardeners for parents and grandparents, Merikay has been surrounded by blooming plants and eating home-grown foods all her life. A Master Gardener since 2007, she has a 2-acre garden in Darnestown where, with the help of her husband and son, she is converting a vast expanse of lawn into a healthier habitat of trees, shrubs, and perennials.

LeeAnne is a former editor and writer of nonfiction children's books for the school library market. A Master Gardener since 2014, she enjoys working in the MG Demonstration Garden, mostly in the children's and vegetable gardens. At home, she explores ways to incorporate more native plants into her woodland garden. She always looks forward to digging in the dirt with her five grandchildren.

This event is free and open to the public. No need to RSVP. Please bring a snack to share and wear a home-made nametag or one recycled from another event.

### 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

## Holiday Centerpieces

**Wednesday, Nov 30, at 7pm**

**Heffner Park, Oswego Avenue**

This popular workshop, a make-and-take program for holiday centerpieces, is taking place a little earlier this year. We'll show you how to design and assemble a centerpiece with fresh greens and berries in small cans filled with floral foam. Centerpieces are donated to St Ann's, a local organization that is committed to lifting vulnerable children, mothers and families out of poverty and homelessness.

Cans filled with foam and greens will be provided. We ask that you bring some additional durable greens, cut to no more than 12-inches long. Please do not bring large branches with leaves or insects—it makes a mess that's hard to clean. We will also provide decorations to add to your completed pieces for some extra color.

We have had great fun at this event in previous years and participants have been able to make 3 or 4 centerpieces each and take home a decoration for themselves! This is a members-only event. Please RSVP to [ralavash@gmail.com](mailto:ralavash@gmail.com). —Becky Lavash



*A past holiday centerpiece workshop.*

*Photo: Kathy Jentz.*

## Proposed Slate of Officers For 2017

*President:* Katherine Lambert

*Vice-President:* Barbara Henderson

*Treasurer:* Taffy Turner

*Secretary:* Joan Frye

*Membership Director:* Carole Galati

**Vote at the Nov. 16 meeting!**

## One Hundred Years of THC

*This is the 11th installment of a series giving glimpses of the club at various times during its history, drawn from newsletters, reports, ledgers and other materials available through the help of Diana Kohn and Historic Takoma Inc. Naturally not all of the talented gardeners in the Takoma Horticultural Club were well-known public figures. This installment gives a glimpse of the activities of a member who had the greenest of green thumbs and made a long-lasting impression on those who met her.*

Member participation in the Flower Shows had lagged by 1960, when J. Wallace Talley took the Presidency for the second time. To encourage members to feel confident enough to exhibit their own flowers, he instituted a "Bragging Session" at the end of each monthly meeting. The first session began with the "display of Mrs. Irene Haggerty's beautiful cymbidium orchid, with a spray of eight yellow blossoms. Mrs. Haggerty has had this plant for four years and keeps it on a cool sunny porch. She waters it twice a week. Each bloom lasts six weeks."

A member of the Club at least since 1950, Irene Haggerty had been in the newsletter before. In the early fifties she won a number of firsts in the Flower Shows, including iris and tulip shows, entering specimens as well as arrangements. Annual plant sales were held at the Takoma Park Library grounds, and long-time member Carole Galati remembers buying some of the plants that she brought to the sale in tuna fish cans. Mike Welsh, now the Takoma Park City Gardener, says "Yes, I remember Irene Haggerty. She and her husband lived in Garrett Park. She had an amazing talent for plant and seed propagation and, while active, always sold some wonderful plants at THC's plant sale."

In January, 1950 Mrs. Haggerty was invited to write about her house plants: "I have been raising house plants for 40 years. Some have been dismal failures. Some have been highly successful. All have given me much pleasure. The two that I have enjoyed most are orchids and gardenias.

"I started gardenia culture in 1930. The florist told me to treat it like a geranium. So for five years, I treated about a dozen plants like geraniums and sadly buried every one of them. Then in 1935 I happened to repot one in oak woods dirt. It rained a lot that

summer and my gardenia burst into bloom. From that day forward, until I moved into my present gas heated house in 1940, my gardenias grew like weeds. Here is a partial record of one plant which was bought at [the] 10 cent store on February 6 for 23¢. 'Blossoms 1939: 355. Sold in December for \$1.00 because it was too big to keep in the house.' On July 10, 1942 one plant had 70 blooms at one time. My dozen or so plants of the common variety are all descendant of the 10 cent store plant.

"My orchid culture started in November 1939 when my husband gave me a *Cattleya Mossiae* for my birthday. It produced 2 blossoms in March 1940, and I sat up all night and embroidered and watched it open. The next morning I was beady eyed, but I had seen a fat bud slowly become that most perfect flower, a full blown orchid. Fred also got up a few times to see how it was coming along, and he is definitely not a gardener. From March 1940 until December 1947, when my furnace broke down and they froze, I had 22 blooms.

"I bought 3 other species in 1943. Two bloomed, but one never did. I consider them successful, as one cannot expect 100% performance from everything. Camellia culture is my next project, and whether they do well or fail, it is a lot of fun, and isn't that why we garden?"

—Diane Svenonius



*Irene Haggerty at the annual plant sale. Photo: Historic Takoma.*

### Centennial Garden Ground-breaking



*Groundbreaking for the THC's Centennial Garden took place Oct. 27 with George Leventhal and Peter Kovar doing the honors, watched by Rani Parker, Diane Svenonius, Mike Welsh, Kit Gage, Jeffrey Trunzo and Thada Bornstein. Photo: E. Schramm. Join us on Planting Day Saturday, November 12, 1pm.*

### We Welcome New Members & Dues!

Wow! Is it really November!?! At least the weather gives us a clue now!

Our membership has grown a lot this Centennial Year. Our November 16 meeting is on a wonderful topic: **Creating a Children's Garden: Growing Gardeners**. We will also hold our annual election of THC officers for 2017. Which reminds me—it's not too early to pay your 2017 dues, which are due December 31. We already have 21 members who have paid their 2017 dues!

In the spirit of club support, please welcome our new and returning members: Latha Reddy, Joanna Veltri, Ethan Landis, Paul Crumrine, Teres Stubbs, Susan Davis, Mikkal Kogan, Janine Trudeau, Krysia Avila, Tracey Councill, Karen Fishman, Desiree Luongo and Eliza Booth. Many of them joined or paid dues at our Street Festival bulb sale on October 2.

Before you know it, our November 30 **Holiday Workshop** will be here! And soon after comes our perennial favorite: the **Winter Potluck** on January 19. Both events are for members only. Let me know if you need to check your membership status or have any questions: [cagalati@rcn.com](mailto:cagalati@rcn.com).

—Carole Galati