

Alta Vista Garden Connection

March, 2016
Editor—Sandy Irwin



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STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW

BRING YOUR GENTLY USED GARDEN TOOLS TO THE MARCH MEETING — The Community Beautification Committee is collecting tools for two area schools who have vegetable gardens (Mountain Oak and Coyote Springs). Toni Ristich is heading up the collection and her wonderful husband has volunteered to clean, oil, repair and sharpen them. **BRING ALL DONATIONS TO THE MARCH MEETING, AS THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE.**

UNABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING? Just call or email Sheron Vandedetti for an excused absence — 776-0662 or sav16230@q.com

2016-2017 BUDGET — Attached to this newsletter is the proposed 2016-2017 Budget. You will have your opportunity to ask questions at the March meeting.

STUFF TO DO

There are a plethora of area events next month. Here are but a few:

April 22 — 10:30 AM-3 PM — KALEIDOSCOPE OF GARDEN COLORS — The Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs presents their garden party fundraiser at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel South Mountain. This event will include workshops, a sumptuous lunch, a Chico's fashion show and garden speaker, Tom Ogren. For registration forms, visit www.azgardenclubs.com/home/calendar. **REMEMBER TO BRING DONATIONS FOR OUR RAFFLE BASKET FOR THIS FUNDRAISER TO THE MARCH MEETING — THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST CHANCE TO CONTRIBUTE. WE HAVE A BIG BASKET AND WE ARE LOOKING TO FILL IT TO THE TOP!**



April 30 — 10 AM-3 PM — PRESCOTT AREA IRIS SOCIETY PRESENTS KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOR 2016 — Prescott's Festival of Iris at Mortimer's Nursery, Willow Creek Road. Further information, visit prescottirissociety.org

April 30 — 8:30 AM-2 PM — HIGHLANDS CENTER "GROW NATIVE" PLANT SALE

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ALTA VISTA GARDEN CLUB BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**February 23, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER: President Dede Erceg called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Linda Pratt called the roll. The theme was “your favorite bird.” There were 31 members present and 5 guests. Guests Ann Baugh, Susan Tolley, Linda Williams, Roberta Pelayo and Gloria Lewine were also welcomed. Dede introduced new member Karen Crossley.

MINUTES: Ann Krsiean motioned that the minutes of the January meeting be approved as printed. Motion carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Nicki Elms reviewed the statement ending January 31, 2016, noting that we had total assets of \$13,388.83. There being no discussion, the treasurer’s report was accepted and sent to Audit.

PENNY PINES - Lauren Newington reported that \$68 had been donated to this project and a certificate dedicated to the 19 Hotshots had been delivered. She requested that Club Members make suggestions as to who would be the recipient in the future. Suggestions included former Club Member, Maggie Sullivan, and Kayla Mueller. Dede mentioned that individual Club Members could also donate to this project on their own.

ROSE PRUNING - Dianne Murphy reported that Club Members would be pruning roses at the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden on Wednesday, February 24, and sent a sign up sheet around.

GARDEN TOUR UPDATE - Renie Collier introduced the liaisons for each garden and their teams. She stressed how important it was for each Club Member to participate in this fundraiser.

MARCH GARDENERS’ DAY OUT - Renie announced that she was collecting the fee at this meeting for the Wine & Design event to be held at Allan’s Flowers.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: Toni Ristich reported that two “Get Well” cards were sent out to Mary Ann Mira and Marjorie Puckett.

COMMITTEES - Diane Moyer requested that all Club Members sign up to serve on at least two committees in the coming year. Also on the sheets that were distributed, please indicate if you would be willing to serve as Chair.

PRUNING WORKSHOP - Loretta Brisof reviewed her and Ruth Lysak’s experience at Coyote Springs School as part of a Beautification Committee project. The school has a large garden and Loretta and Ruth demonstrated the pruning of 3 apple trees and 1 cherry tree. Ann K. pointed out that working with children is one of the goals of both the national and regional garden clubs.

50/50 RAFFLE: \$40 was collected and guest, Ann Baugh, won \$20.

BUDGET - Dede reviewed the budget process noting that the proposed budget would be sent to Club Members with the newsletter for the two consecutive months. Questions should be emailed to Nicki. After discussion and possible revisions, the Club Members would vote on approval during the May meeting. Dede noted that there were two aspects of the budget that may not require a by-law change with respect to the amount of funds in the Miscellaneous Donations line item and public and social expenses. She noted that the proposed budget was for two years and that each line item is double. It was also pointed out that the budget is only a guideline.

ADJOURNMENT: Dede adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Irwin, Acting Recording Secretary

The Bridled Titmouse

~ Mary Ann Mira



Bridled Titmouse

I often write about birds that visit my backyard, but I'm sorry to say that this beauty doesn't hang out in my backyard. The Bridled Titmouse is the most strikingly marked of the American titmice and chickadees. Unfortunately for me, this bird lives in oak and mixed oak-pine-juniper woodlands as well as in some riparian habitats, not in the grasslands of Prescott Valley.

The Bridled Titmouse has a black bib and a white-and-black patterned face. It is an active little crested bird of southwestern woodlands. Their preferred habitat is in the mountains in eastern and southeastern Arizona and extreme southwestern New Mexico in the United States to southern Mexico. In lower canyons of the mountains in Arizona, the Bridled Titmouse is often one of the most common birds at all seasons, with small flocks moving about and chattering in the oaks as they search the branches for insects.

They forage in various trees and bushes but especially in oaks, hopping actively among branches and twigs, pecking at bases of leaves, often hanging upside down. They mainly eat insects, especially caterpillars, but also seeds, nuts and berries. They will feed on the ground briefly as well and will come to bird feeders for seeds or peanut-butter mixtures. They open seeds by holding them with feet and pounding with their bill.



Titmouse on suet feeder

The Bridled Titmouse Nests in cavities in trees as well as in nestboxes. Their nest is a cup of grass, cottonwood down, flowers, fur, leaves and grass. The Bridled Titmouse is the only North American member of its family that appears to have helpers at the nest regularly.



Bridled Titmouse

Since this bird does not migrate, you can see them year round if you're in the right habitat. We are fortunate that the Prescott area offers a desirable place for this bird to live, since it is not common in any of the other states in the U.S. other than New Mexico! If you're a bird watcher like me, you will have to take yourself to the right habitat to see this bird, unless you live in the right place

UPCOMING GARDENERS' DAY OUT

By Debbie Mathern

Bird Walk on the Butte Creek Trail Thursday, April 14



You are invited to join Eric Moore owner of Jay's Bird Barn. On Thursday, April 14, for a Nature/ Bird Walk in Stricklin Park off Sherwood Drive in Prescott. We will meet in the Jay's Bird Barn parking lot at 8 AM and carpool to the park where we will take a gentle walk on the Butte Creek Trail that parallels Butte Creek. Eric will point out the flora and fauna in the park and will discuss how you can attract wild birds to your yard by landscaping with native plants. The walk will be about a half mile and will last about 1-1/2 hours. Feel free to bring water, snacks, hat and wear shoes appropriate for a trail with uneven surfaces Don't forget to bring your binoculars! There are no restrooms available There is no charge for the hike. Following the hike, it's brunch at Waffles & More.

WHAT'S NEXTSchedule of Events

March 22	1:00 PM	Alta Vista Garden Club Meeting Yavapai Title, 1235 E. Gurley Street, Prescott Program – Round Table Discussion: Iris, Roses & Dahlias – presented by our own Dede Erceg, Anita Zytkowski and Pat Moomey
March 26	9:30 AM	Watters Garden Center – Advanced Container Designs
April 2	9:30 AM	Watters Garden Center – Drip Irrigation Design and Installation
April 14	8:00 AM	Gardeners' Day Out – Bird Walk on Butte Creek Trail
April 22	10:30-3 PM	<i>Kaleidoscope of Garden Colors</i> – presented by the AZ Federa tion of Garden Clubs. Visit azgardenclubs.com/home/calendar .
April 23	9-12	Highlands Center – What You Need to Know to Grow
April 30	8:30-2 PM	Highlands Center – “Grow Native” Plant Sale
April 30	10-3	Prescott Area Iris Society presents Kaleidoscope of Color 2016, Prescott's Festival of Iris at Mortimer's Nursery, Willow Creek Road. Further information, visit prescottirissociety.org
June 18	8:00 AM	ALTA VISTA GARDEN CLUB – PRESCOTT AREA GARDEN TOUR
Oct. 22	10 AM-3 PM	SAVE THE DATE – AZ Federation of Garden Clubs Northern District Meeting hosted by Alta Vista Garden Club at the Phippen Museum

SAVE THE DATE . . .

SATURDAY, JUNE 18TH PRESCOTT AREA GARDEN TOUR

Contributed by Dianne Murphy



Remember, Saturday, June 18, 2016, is the biennial garden tour featuring six outstanding gardens in the Prescott area. It is the major fund raiser for the club. Proceeds from this event go toward the Alta Vista Garden Club's work in local education, conservation and beautification projects. Also, all participants and a guest are invited to an after-party brunch on Sunday, June 19. At our April meeting we will have a slide show with a brief description of each garden.

We look forward to all Club Members' participation in this fun event.

CLUB MEMBERS WORK HARD

On February 19th Ruth Lysak and Loretta Bresof were invited by Brent Welsh, teacher of the gifted/ talented students and habitat teacher, to Coyote Springs Elementary School in Prescott Valley. Mr. Walsh's class of 4th graders greeted the Alta Vista Garden Club members in their school habitat garden where they were to be presented with a pruning program.

During the 1 1/2 hr. period, 10 students did hands-on pruning of 3 apple trees and a cherry tree. They learned how to prune & cut dead or broken branches and watersprouts growing at the base of fruit trees. The students were taught proper and safe pruning to help make their fruit trees receive more light and produce better fruit. The students will now pass on their new pruning skills to other students in their habitat classes.

In preparation for Spring, Club Members have been diligently keeping our community beautiful by working at the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden and Fire Station #1 on White Spar.

AND . . . CLUB MEMBERS PLAY HARD



FEBRUARY GARDENERS' DAY OUT –

Club Members traveled to Scottsdale for the Celebration of Fine Art on February 18th. Nine members and guests attended this fun event. A yummy lunch at the White Chocolate Grill and a stroll through the gallery was a wonderful day.

MARCH GARDENERS' DAY OUT –

On March 9, fifteen Club Members had a rollicking time at Allan's Flowers. First we were treated to wine and snacks and then on to a creative workshop. Jim Barry, the flower guy, taught us how to weave leaves or "leaf manipulation" known in the flower biz. And then came the zen-inspired floral design creations made from curly willow, larkspur, roses, solid star and genestra as our fill. He taught us that "less is more" when creating your own design.



HAPPY APRIL BIRTHDAYS TO



- 11 – Marjorie Cole
- 12 – Renie Collier
- 19 – Cynthia Brush
- 22 – Nan Maxfield

FROM THE WEEDPATCH

Heirloom Flowers

Contributed by Carol Westfall

Do you at times feel like the world is too much with you? Too much political chatter...too much noise...too much violence...too much rushing around, even though we are told we should be slowing down. Do you long for the simpler days, when there was a slower, more steady rhythm to life, but lots more enjoyment? No, I'm not selling tranquilizers, but you might benefit from some heirloom flowers...you know, those blossoms that make you 12 years old again and take you back for a visit with your sweet mother or grandmother... when there really was time to smell the roses in every sense of the phrase.



We have talked about heirloom plants in the Weed Patch before, but mostly about vegetables. Even in the plant world, there is dissension. One group generalizes that heirlooms are cultivars that have been nurtured, selected, and handed down from one family member to another. Those open-pollinated, naturally selected plants proved to be hardy in their region, resistant to pests and adaptive of the climate over a period of time. Another group places the age tag on heirlooms at 50. Another group says it must be 100 years old, and another group declares that the end of World War II is the standard. From then on, they claim, hybrids began to be used by the growers and promoted by the seed companies. This was good for the seed growers because the farmers became dependent on them to furnish the seed for their crops on an annual basis; those hybrid plants, if regrown, would not be the same as the parent plant. So, if you want to grow an heirloom, you can pick the scientific reason or the romantic, "this is what was in my grandmother's garden" reason. To see if that flower has survived, go to the Internet. I found the best sources to be Burpee's, Heritage Flower Farm, Eden Brothers, and our own local company, Terroir Seeds/Underwood Gardens.



Burpee's has a whole section on heirloom flowers. There you can see beautiful photographs of moonflowers, mammoth Russian Sunflowers, Zinnias, Queen Anne's Lace- not the wild kind, but a beautiful cousin, Ammi majus; amaranthus, Love Lies Bleeding, and the rare green zinnia, Envy. Heritage Flower Farm features several species of Agastache, yarrow, poppies, numerous sedums, and the most beautiful peony called "Sara Bernhardt," worthy of the name with dramatic and lavish pink petals. This catalog is also a treasure of history, herbal cures and Greek and Latin language insights. Eden Brothers, (the name of this company is not lost on us!) with a tag line of "The seediest place on earth," has more of the same, including Love-in-a-mist. Our own Terroir Seeds has 23 varieties of heirloom flowers from A to Z (including Asclepias, Aqualegia, Cosmos, Linaria, Monarda, nasturtium, Salvia, Zinnia) and several collections to encourage beneficial insects, hummingbirds and wildflower stands.



After doing my homework online, I started poking around at the big box stores and the Native Plant Store. I saw that they also have seeds marked "heirloom" and several collection packets.

Maybe you will find that one special flower- literally, at your fingertips on the Internet, or closer to home.

Here is my wish for you: May you find a refuge in your garden, comforting memories, and knowledge that there are still good and beautiful things in this world..



SPOTLIGHT ON Mary Ann Mira

Contributed by Deb Kaukol & Vicki Hughes

Mary Ann is a 9 year Alta Vista Garden Club member and exemplifies the community spirit and volunteerism of Prescott and Prescott Valley. Born and raised in W. Lafayette, Indiana, she grew up learning the love of gardening from her grandmother, who was a homesteader in northern Indiana. She inherited the garden gene and love of nature from her grandparents and her father, who was an Environmental Ed teacher.

As a Purdue University graduate, her hard work paid off in the education field, as she became an elementary school teacher for 37 years.

Mary Ann and her husband, Bob, moved to Prescott Valley, Arizona in 2006. Mary Ann dove right into the community, learning everything she could about the diverse plant habitat that was to be her new



Mary Ann's Backyard Garden

home, including the use and operation of water irrigation systems (they do not need this in the Midwest). Her garden is now bursting with color against the backdrop of whimsical garden art. She has a raised vegetable bed, where she grows Heirloom tomatoes, and beautiful mounded flower beds. Mary Ann uses a convenient pop-up greenhouse to store her diverse collection of cacti throughout the winter months.

This energetic gal became a docent at Sharlot Hall Museum and she completed the Community Naturalist training to be a docent at the Highlands Center for Natural History. She became the coordinator for all the schools in the community

through the Highlands Center where she taught the younger generations about the value of school yard habitat gardens. To our benefit, she discovered Alta Vista Garden Club through Sharlot Hall and the Highlands Center.

Specializing in Nature Education and a patron of nature, birds are another love of Mary Ann's. She writes a monthly column for Alta Vista's newsletter on Birding.

She has also chaired the Beautification Committee, leading the clean-up at the intersection of Iron Springs and Willow Creek Roads, making the "4 corners area" a credit to the club. The hard work she has put in as a leader in the biennial Prescott Garden Tour cannot be measured.

A true nature lover at heart, who is open to and excited to share her bountiful knowledge with people of all ages, Mary Ann is a great benefit not only to our club but to our town.

Her favorite plants/trees are the Red Maple, Aspen and Trumpet vine.

Her favorite garden tools are the garden trowel and garden scissors.

Her challenge for gardening in the Southwest is the intensity of the sun.



Butterfly in Mary Ann's Garden

NEWS FROM HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Contributed by Renie Collier



Loretta Bresof, Ruth Lysak, Pat Moomey and Renie Collier attended the Habitat for Humanity dedication home #81 for the Mata family. (Jose, Anna, Andrian 17, Jose, Jr 13, Sophia 4 and Michael 3)

Jose is a painter at Superior Industries and Anna is a social worker at Mountain View Manor.

This lovely family is hard working, gracious and sincerely thankful for their new home! This charming house has 4 bedrooms and solar panels.

Andrian and Jose are quite exciting about having their own bedrooms for the first time in their lives.

Anna always wanted her very own flower garden. She certainly has one now. Anna and Jose, with the help of AVGC Club Members, chose roses for their front garden (Double Delight, Passionate Kisses, Secrets Out, Gold Medal). Pat made the ID rose labels.

Our very own Club Members, Ruth and Pat, are very involved with Habitat for Humanity. Ruth is their S/A/F (mentor) and continues for a least another year. Pat was their teacher teaching life skills for character building. The course is called Global Priorities (8 weeks).

The Home Dedications for Habitat for Humanity are very enlightening and I hope more members in the future will attend.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER . . .

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