



# Arlington Heights garden club

November/December 2019

Growing Together

Carol Elliott, Editor

**November 25, 2019,  
Village Hall  
The History of Winter  
Decorating: Who Started  
Your Holiday Traditions?  
Bev Krams and Holly Petersen**



## Greetings from Our President

Wow! Suddenly, winter arrived, and it isn't even Thanksgiving yet! Whether ready or not, it is time to pause and give thanks for the blessings of this past year-as strange as it has been, weather wise. My thanks go out to each member of our Garden Club for all their hard work and committed efforts in making calendar year 2019, a wonderful experience. In so many ways, it was an outstanding year-Garden Walk and Unique Boutique, wonderful gardens, Plant Sale, great programs, terrific civic projects and involvement, generous donations to various students and organizations, etc.

To wrap up this year of achievements, let us get together one more time for our annual Holiday Gathering on Monday, December 9th at 6 PM, to share good food, laughter, holiday spirit and each other's company. Our Club provides the main course and drinks for you and your spouse/significant other. Come join us!

My wife, Patty and I recently visited the Biltmore Estate in North Carolina, the largest house in the United States. It was decorated for the Holidays and it was a beautiful evening with music and soft candle light throughout the magnificent structure. It made me feel that there are things in life that I am very thankful for, such as NOT having to vacuum and dust 250 rooms at home, and NOT having to clean 43 bathrooms on a regular basis! Happy Thanksgiving, everyone!

Bev Krams has been a Master Gardener with the No. Cook County District for over 10 years. She's received the State's Outstanding Master Gardener of the Year award and has presented programs for garden clubs, community groups and Master Gardeners. Her garden has been Conservation@Home certified for native habitat. Holly Petersen is a life-long gardener and became a No. Cook County Master Gardener 7 years ago. She has presented programs for garden clubs, community groups, Master Gardeners and the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association Convention this year. Since 2012 she has led the historic and native garden restoration at the Palatine Historical Society's Clayson House Museum. Her garden in Palatine has the Conservation@Home designation.

This presentation will look at winter traditions originating from the Romans, Greeks, Germans and "Brits". Explore how the traditions were brought to American and then influenced out traditional wreaths, trees and flowers. You will be nudged into the holiday spirit with beautiful decorating ideas and will leave with a bountiful list of holiday trivia to share at your family's holiday table!

*Jim Spannagel, President*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President  
Jim Spannagel

Secretary  
Nancy Asquini-Dean

Treasurer  
Pete Landwehr

## COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Artistic  
Barb Franks

Civics  
Kathy Wolan and Mike Relaz

Conservation  
Diane Culhane

Horticulture  
Bev Krams

Membership  
Renie Norkiewicz and  
Shelley Plischke

Program  
Val Solaski

Publicity  
Clara Stone

Social  
Marilyn and Joe Weber

Ways and Means  
Kathy Hendricksen

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Newsletter  
Carol Elliott

Scholarship and Website  
Mike Dennehey

[www.ahgardenclub.com](http://www.ahgardenclub.com)

## November Hostesses

A reminder and thank you from Marilyn and Joe Weber, our Social Chairs, to those bringing treats to the November meeting.

*Renie Norkiewicz  
and Sue Taflinger*

---

## It's Holiday Party Time!

Arlington Heights Garden Club  
Monday, December 9, 6:00 PM  
Arlington Heights Historical Museum

This is a Catered Affair!  
Come dine with us and celebrate the holiday season! Sign up to bring an appetizer or dessert at the November meeting.

If you wish to attend the holiday party but you won't be at the meetings PLEASE email Joe Weber at [jweber\\_mphotogr@yahoo.com](mailto:jweber_mphotogr@yahoo.com) by Sunday, December 1 if you are coming to the party.

---

## Garden Club members at the 2019 AH Park District Presentation



# Annual Holiday Tree Trimming

It is a tradition for our garden club to decorate the holiday tree at the Village Hall, Library and Senior Center. Come spread the magic of the season by helping us decorate the holiday trees at the following locations:

SENIOR CENTER - Tuesday, November 26th at 9:00 AM (Theme - "Giving Tree")

LIBRARY - Saturday, November 30th at 10:00 AM (Theme - "Fine Feathered Friends")

VILLAGE HALL - Wednesday, December 4th at 9:00 AM (Theme - "Joyful Noise")

It will take an hour or two to decorate and many hands will make it faster and festive. Please leave a message at 847-394-5145 or email Renie at laren4@att.net if you are able to participate in this fun activity bringing joy and beauty of the holiday to our community.



## Welcome New Members

We are pleased to welcome new members!!!!

Looking forward to sharing their ideas and knowledge as we work together toward another successful year.

Aileen Koeppen

Emma Visee

## Our October Program "Going Green in Arlington Hts"



# AHGC Gaining Garden Knowledge November 2019

November 21 Thursday 7-8:30p Prospect Heights Library Easy Floral Arrangements for Fall and Winter Holidays Register 847-259-3500

Friendship Park Conservatory: 847-298-3500, 395 W. Algonquin Road, Des Plaines  
Register @ [mppd.org](http://mppd.org)  
Check out the website for MANY nature Programs for you, your kids or Grandkids!!

Chicago Botanical Garden (See website for extensive list!)  
[www.chicagobotanic.org/education/adulted/registration\\_methods](http://www.chicagobotanic.org/education/adulted/registration_methods)  
November 19, Tuesday 6 - 8 p.m. Reindeer Staghorn Fern Workshop

## D214 Community Education

register online: [ce.d214.org](http://ce.d214.org) Check out Home/Garden  
for MORE CLASSES Ask for the Gold Card Price!

Morton Arboretum (see additional listings)  
<https://www.mortonarb.org/learn-experience/adult-programs/interest/Gardening-and-Horticulture>

November 23 Sat. 1-3p Thanksgiving Table Arrangement \$45/54  
November 26 Tues. 1-3p Thanksgiving Table Arrangement \$45/54  
December 7 Sat.1-3pm Cocoa in the Conifers \$16/20  
December 14 Sat.1-3pm Cocoa in the Conifers \$16/20



# Forcing Bulbs Indoors

A do it yourself way to have flowers on your holiday table by a specific date, or to gift flowers to someone by a specific date, is to force bulbs inside. Sure you can now buy forced bulbs in stores, but to gardeners, it provides the gardening bug that we miss so much during winter.

Bulbs that can be forced to bloom indoors are divided into two groups:

1) Bulbs that do not require chilling.

These tropical bulbs-paperwhites (Narcissus) and amaryllises-can be planted right away.

2) Bulbs that require a chilling or cold period before forcing.

The easiest ones to force are: crocus, hyacinth, muscari (Grape Hyacinth), and mini daffodils. Unless you purchase them 'pre-chilled', these bulbs will require a chilling period.



For Paperwhites, fill the bottom of a glass jar, vase or bowl with about two to four inches of stones, marbles or sea glass. Place your bulbs close together on top of the stones and nestle them into the stones for stability. Add just enough water, so the level is below the paperwhite narcissus bulbs, but is wetting the roots, which at this point are usually just dry strings. Keep the bulbs above the water to keep from rotting, while allowing the roots to stay wet. For optimal growing, keep bulbs in a cool (50-60°F) spot, out of direct sunlight, for a couple of weeks until the white roots have grown. After this rooting period, put them in a bright, warm spot, optionally under "grow lights," or fluorescent lights. After planting, paperwhites bloom in 4 to 6 weeks.

For Amaryllis, bulbs generally take 6-8 weeks to start blooming after planting indoors, although this can vary quite a bit by cultivar. Check the tag on the ones you purchase for specific planting instructions and timing. To prepare an amaryllis (a 6-8 week one) for Valentine's Day, get it planted by mid December. It should be in bloom in early February.

For bulbs that require chilling, they can be forced in potting soil, in gravel or pebbles, or using water in special bulb forcing vases

To pot the bulbs, add moistened soil mix to a container until the pot is about three-quarters full. You can use any pot you like to hold bulbs you want to force, as long as it allows room for root growth - about 3-4" of space below the bulbs. Set the bulbs root-side down on top of the mix, spacing the bulbs much more closely than you would in the garden - they should almost touch. Then cover small bulbs completely with a ½" layer of mix; cover larger bulbs up to their necks, leaving the tips of the bulbs exposed. Water thoroughly after potting.

(continued on next page)

(Forcing Bulbs continued)

To force cold-hardy bulbs into bloom, you must first encourage them to produce new roots by keeping them cool and moist for a period of time that varies by type of bulb (see listing below). The ideal rooting temperature also varies, but most bulbs flower best if stored at 40-60°F for the first 3-4 weeks after potting, then at 32-40° for the balance of the cooling period - a shift that mimics the drop in soil temperature outdoors as fall turns to winter. You can chill bulbs in a cold frame, a cold basement, or an unheated garage (provided the temperature doesn't fall below freezing). If you choose to chill bulbs in the refrigerator, be certain there is no fresh fruit stored inside. Fruit releases ethylene gas, which will interfere with flower development. Bulbs will root if the temperature does not stray too far above or below 40°F during the rooting time. Using an old refrigerator in a basement can deliver great results without ever touching the temperature controls.

Note that moisture is as important as temperature in the successful chilling of bulbs. Check the potting mix in the pots every few weeks and water thoroughly when the surface is dry to the touch. Toward the end of the recommended rooting time, if you see fleshy white roots poking through the drainage holes in the bottom of the pots, the bulbs are usually ready to bloom. If you don't see roots, give the bulbs more time in cold storage or longer than the recommended cooling period. Don't judge readiness by the appearance of shoots from the tops of the bulbs; without roots, the bulbs won't flower properly.

When the bulbs have rooted, bring the pots out of cold storage and set them in a bright window in a cool room (one where the temperature stays below 65°F). Bright light will help keep the leaves and flower stems compact; in weak light, they tend to flop. Sunlight quickly turns white shoots from cold storage into green shoots. Initially, the bulbs probably won't need to be watered more frequently than once a week, but by the time they bloom, you may need to water them every day or two.

Most bulbs will bloom 2-5 weeks after they come out of the cold. Duration of bloom varies with the type of bulb and the variety but is generally shorter than you'd expect of bulbs in the garden. Warm temperatures and low humidity indoors speed the decline of the flowers. Shifting the pots out of direct sunlight and moving them to a cool room at night helps prolong bloom. If you keep them in a sunny window and continue to water them, forced bulbs can be planted in the garden after the threat of hard frost has passed, but they won't bloom well again for at least two years. Tulips rarely bloom again, but Daffodils, Crocus, and Grape Hyacinth are more likely to be worth the effort of planting. Hyacinths can also be forced in pebbles and water, or in glass jars. Special forcing glasses, in use since Victorian days, are shaped like an hourglass and keep the bottom of the bulb dry-only the bulb's roots reach down into the water. If you are using pebbles in another type of container, place a 2-3" layer of pebbles, such as pea stone, marble chips, or river rocks, in the bottom of the bowl or pot. Set the bulbs on top of the pebbles then fill with more pebbles, leaving the top 1/3 of the bulbs exposed. Add enough water to create a reservoir for the roots, but be sure the bases of the bulbs stay above water level, to prevent bulb rot. Then place the container in a dark, cool area (40-50°F). Add more water as necessary, keeping the water level below the bottom of the bulb. When roots have developed and leaves begin to grow, move the bulb into a bright window in a cool room (one where the temperatures stay below 65°F).

(continued on next page)

(Forcing Bulbs continued)

Bulbs are not always going to perform right on schedule. It all depends on the cultivar and growing conditions.

Recommended Rooting Times for Cold-Hardy Bulbs

- " Anemone (Windflower), 8-10 weeks
- " Crocus (Spring-blooming Crocus), 8-10 weeks
- " Hyacinthus (Hyacinth), 12-14 weeks
- " Muscari (Grape Hyacinth, to keep the leaves shorter, store cool and dry for 6-8 weeks, then give 2 weeks of cool rooting time)
- " Trumpet Daffodils, Split-Corona Daffodils, 14-16 weeks
- " Large-Cupped Daffodils, 15-17 weeks
- " Small-Cupped Daffodils, Double-Flowered Daffodils, 16-18 weeks
- " Tulipa (Tulip), 14-16 weeks

References: <https://www.whiteflowerfarm.com/blog/index.php/2017/11/21/forcing-bulbs-its-easier-than-you-think/> ; <https://www.thespruce.com/forcing-paperwhite-narcissus-to-bloom-847893>; <https://empressofdirt.net/timing-forced-bulbs-indoors/> ; <https://www.southernliving.com/garden/flowers/how-to-force-bulbs-indoors-video>

## Stamp Savers Alert

After shipping all the stamps and postcards that have been collected by our club over this past year to Vern Kleen in Springfield, he informed me that "after forty years of service he has elected to discontinue the project and devote his time to areas that have been neglected. He is unaware of a replacement at this time, but thanked the AHGC for their years of contribution.

Until there is more information about the future of this project we will discontinue the stamp collection at the monthly meetings.

## Club Member Wins Cook of the Week!

One of our members, Leslie Meredith, has won the Daily Herald Cook of the Week Finale! Congratulations, Leslie!

