



November 2020

GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Jim Spannagel, President

A line from a favorite holiday song goes, "Christmas is that time to come together, a time to put all differences aside." I believe it is sung by my favorite troubadour, Kermit the Frog.

"Come together" is what we hope our club members will do on Monday evening, December 14th, at our *Zoom Holiday Party*. Please dig out your best ugly holiday sweater and wear it (or hold it up) for our "Ugly Sweater" contest complete with prize. We'll have games to play, also with prizes, and a toast or two with your favorite beverage. A member will lead us in a sing-a-long and you will be able to sit back and enjoy the Prospect High School Music Department performing a holiday program. And did I mention, BINGO!! We will play several games, again with holiday prizes. Marilyn and Joe Weber, your Hospitality Committee, have been working very hard to make this year's gathering, though different, the best ever! We do ask you for two things.

First, please send [Mona Frisbie](#) a picture of yourself or text your photo to Mona's cell (847) 571-0292. Any photo is fine. Something special is planned for the photos we collect from you.

Secondly, if you have never joined a Zoom meeting, or feel reluctant, please, please, please let me help you be part of our Holiday party. Just call me at (847) 322-8207. I will walk you into Zoomland. As they say, it is as easy as pie!

Jim

**November 23rd @ 7 PM
Zoom General Meeting**

Soaring with the Birds

See page 2 for more information on this meeting and program presentation.

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November Program

November 23 @ 7 PM

Val Solaski, Programs

Soaring with the Birds

Presented by Alyse Cohen Burman

Alyse Cohen Burman is the owner of The Wildbird Shack, an independent wild bird store, located in Mt. Prospect. She has been birding for over 20 years, traveling throughout the United States to pursue her passion of birding. She also had the opportunity to work with various senior care communities. Blending her experience with birds and healthcare, she introduced a program called Tranquil Feathers, combining outdoor birding with indoor activities to avert the effects of sun downing. Alyse has served in various community positions and as the director of the Prairie View Audubon Society.



The Soaring with the Birds program will introduce you to the birds you will see in your backyard all year round, plus some that stop at your feeder during migration. Alyse will talk about why birds are so important to our environment, their behaviors and why taking care of the bird population is so important.

A Zoom invite will be emailed out to all members prior to this meeting.

Holiday Party

December 14 @ 7 PM

Marilyn and Joe Weber, Hospitality

Our first **AHGC Virtual Holiday Party** will be held on December 14, 2020 at 7:00 PM

Mark your calendar for this “one-of-a-kind” ZOOM Holiday Party! We all need a short break between Turkey Day and December 25 to celebrate the Winter Solstice and more! Please join the evening’s festivities that will include games, contests and holiday cheer! All who attend will receive a “Party Packet” containing some special games and maybe a surprise or two.

More information to follow but start thinking about finding (or making) that very special “Ugly Christmas Sweater.” Did someone mention prizes???

The Zoom meeting link to join the party, packet pick-up locations and pick-up time to will be sent out in a separate email. If picking up a packet is a problem, we are happy to deliver.

We hope that everyone can join in this virtual event as we celebrate our friendship! In order to properly plan for the party, we are taking a quick survey to get an idea how many members plan on attending this event. If you have not already done so, please [click here](#) to let us know if you plan on attending the holiday party.

Book Review

Bev Krams, Horticulture

The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating

by Elisabeth Tova Bailey

Yes, that is what it says. Have you heard the sound? Well, Ms. Bailey has and you too may want to slow down and listen to the snail eating!! Ms. Bailey's book won the 2010 John Burroughs Medal, the Natural History Literature category of the 2010 National Outdoor Book Award, and the non-fiction category of the 2012 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing.

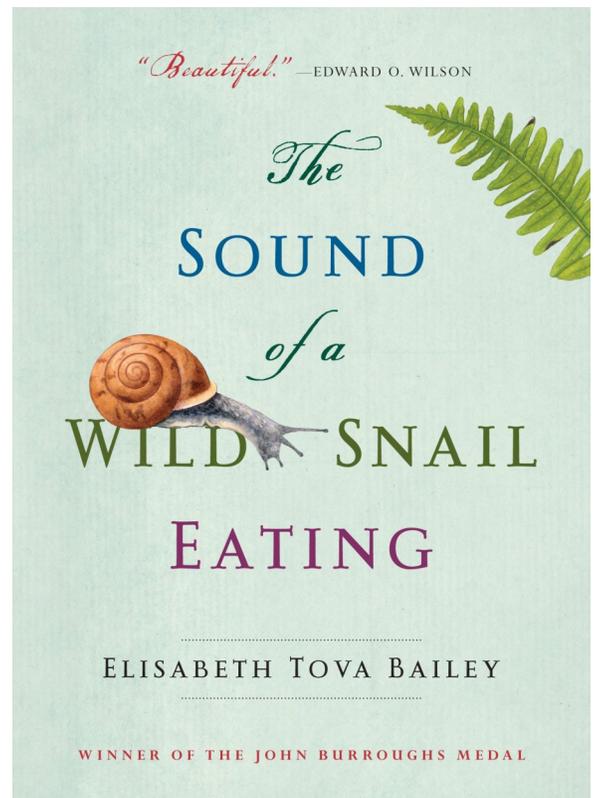
In less than 200 pages Ms. Bailey recounts her year-long observations of a wild Maine woodland snail after being inflicted with a neurological disorder that left her too weak even to sit up. A friend brings her a gift. It is a flower pot of violets from the woodlands. The pot becomes the 'home' to a wild snail the friend had plucked from the ground and added to the flower pot. The snail becomes Bailey's companion sharing her long days and endless motionless nights as she tries to recuperate from this debilitating disorder.

Ms. Bailey finds herself overwhelmed by this gift of a little creature when it first arrived. She felt like it was ONE more thing that she couldn't deal with. She was bedridden and had no understanding of its life or how she would be able to ever get it back to the woods where it came from.

It was difficult to watch television or read so the snail's minuscule movements were captivating and she found herself fascinated by the snail. She could hardly tend to her own needs, however, she could care for the snail, feeding it petals from wilted flowers and mushrooms from her lunch. It gave her a feeling of being useful again. She admired the pace at which the snail glided and she was sure it moved faster than her own speed. It really was peaceful to watch it moving so smoothly and gently and gracefully.

Having been a gardener, she appreciated the life cycle of nature. She shares this detailed lifecycle and intimate encounter with a *Neohelix albolabris*, the common snail. Enjoy the rewards of closely observing nature. It is a true story of a journey of survival, resilience and an appreciation of our own human existence and that of her munching snail!!

AHML Bailey 594.38



HELP WANTED: Publicity

Do you have a flair for Facebook and a way with words? Then please consider stepping into the publicity role for the club. The aim is to boost outside participation and attendance at the Plant Sale, Garden Walk and monthly meetings. Duties include submitting event information to the local papers via online portals and posting information about our programs to various local Facebook pages. It's a low time commitment (especially during a pandemic) and a fun creative outlet.

If you have any questions about the publicity position, or if you would like to be considered for this position, please contact [Leslie Meredith](#) or [Jim Spannagel](#).

Gardening Knowledge

Bev Krams, Horticulture

Who are YOU spending the winter with?

Now that the cold weather has set in and you have brought some of those plants from the garden into the house, which ones did you choose to spend the winter with? Did one of the begonias come in with you? An elephant ear tuber? How many coleus cuttings were you able to rescue before the frost? I know Shelley Plischke and Pete Landwehr have been out gathering clippings to root through the winter and have collected quite a variety!



I hope you brought the amaryllis bulbs indoors. In order to get them to bloom again, induce dormancy by placing the plant in cool, semi-dark location (basement /55 degrees) and withhold water. Cut off the foliage when the leaves turn brown and leave for at least 10-12 weeks. After the cool requirement has been met, start the growth cycle again by watering the bulb and placing it in a well-lighted, 70 to 75 degree F location. Keep the potting soil moist, until growth appears. By early spring you will be enjoying those beautiful large amaryllis blooms again.



Many of us spend the winter with a Snake Plant! The Sansevieria is a loyal, long lived plant and many of them have a family connection to our mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers! These plants can be neglected for weeks at a time. They survive low light levels, drought and have few insect problems. NASA research has shown snake plants are able to help keep the air inside your home clean, removing toxins such as formaldehyde and benzene. Sounds like a perfect houseplant to me. Pat Dennehey continues to care for her mother's Sansevieria in her sunroom!!

So you don't have any coleus cuttings, amaryllis bulbs or snake plants to nurture during the winter? How about going out and getting yourself an African violet to nurture it and YOU through the winter. African violets were tremendously popular with our grandmothers as they were the most popular houseplant in the early 1900's and even into the 1950's. They have since waned in popularity, but why? They are fantastic plants! They are colorful, easy to grow, do great in low light winter situations and they are so easy to propagate! Once you have one you can pass them along to your friends, your kids, your neighbors as easy as snipping a leaf. All you need is a small glass half filled with water. Cover it with aluminum foil and poke a hole in the top of the foil. Take the stem of the leaf (petiole) and insert it through the foil into the glass to touch the water and support the leaf and keep it out of the water. The leaf will start to grow roots at which time you can pot it up. It will take up to a year to create your own plant from that one leaf.



African Violet Greenhouse

Oh, not interested in waiting that long! How about heading over to Hawthorn Gardens, one of our great Garden Walk sponsors, or Pesche's Flowers to pick up one of those African violets. Breeders have managed to create new forms such as ruffled patterns, every color and a variety of unimaginable patterns from areas such as Eastern Europe and Russia where these plants are still popular. These are NOT your grandmothers African violets!! They are spectacular! Spend your winter with one!!



24481 N. Old McHenry Rd Hawthorn Woods, IL 60047 - 847-726-0627

Spruce Top & Container Greens

Spruce Tops and Container Greens are now available at Hawthorn Gardens. Use your Holiday Workshop container or pick up a new one to fill. Support our AHGC Vendor!

When you shop at [Hawthorn Gardens](#) be sure to tell them you are a AHGC member.

[Spruce tops and greenery photos](#)

Board of Directors

President	Jim Spannagel
Secretary	Nancy Asquini-Dean
Treasurer	Pete Landwehr

Committee Chairs

Artistic	Barb Franks
Civics	Kathy Wolan
	Mike Relaz
Conservation	Daniella Sents
	Christina Preston (co-chair)
Garden Walk	Kathy Hendricksen
	Aileen Koeppen (co-chair)
Horticulture	Bev Krams
Hospitality	Marilyn Weber
	Joe Weber
Membership	Renie Norkiewicz
	Shelley Plischke
Newsletter	Mona Frisbie
Plant Sale	Bob Bruett
Programs	Val Solaski
Publicity	Leslie Meredith
Scholarship	Mike Dennehey
Website	Mike Dennehey



Civics Update

Kathy Wolan and Mike Relaz | Civics

The gardens at the Arlington Heights Historical Museum have been cleaned up by the Public Works.

The Post Office gardens have been cleaned up by a committee gathered by Jim Spannagel. Thank you to Jim and our volunteers:

Marty Landwehr
Shelley Plischke
Mike Relaz
Pete Landwehr
Kathy Wolan

Kathy Wolan shared these beautiful photos of the four seasons at the Historical Museum Gardens. Enjoy!

"Showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other."

— Randy Pausch



WINGS Landscaping Project

Pete Landwehr, Treasurer

A few months back, the Garden Club was approached by WINGS, a not for profit organization dedicated to helping women in need. They requested our help in upgrading their landscaping around their administrative building in Rolling Meadows. We laid out a graphic representation of the various areas and agreed to help them plant perennial flower beds in four areas totaling almost 1,000 square feet. We have commitments for assistance from the Rolling Meadows Garden Club, the Kiwanis Club of Arlington Heights, and the Rotary Club of Arlington Heights. Also, a high school student has agreed to design and plant one of those areas as part of her Girl Scout Golden Award (similar to Eagle Scout). We developed a candidate list of sturdy - mostly native - plants to consider. Then we covered the areas with black plastic and wood chips for the winter to kill the lawn and prepare it for planting next spring. In phase II, we will acquire plants through various means and plant the perennial beds. Our hope is that we can acquire many of the desired plants in conjunction with our annual plant sale efforts. Funding sources include WINGS, Rotary, Kiwanis and the Girl Scout project.

Thank you to our Garden Club members that have participated in this project so far:

Jim Spannagel
Terri Passolt

Pete Landwehr
Leslie Meredith

Mike Relaz
Bob Bruett

Marty Landwehr
Renie Norkiewicz



The Rain Garden Project

The Village of Arlington Heights has received a grant from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago to help fund a rain garden and permeable pavement on the driveway at the downtown police station. The rain garden will be installed near the existing park at the northwest corner of the municipal complex and consist of native plants meant to naturally filter storm runoff before being released to the storm sewer.

Over the years, the Garden Club has worked closely with the Village on many different projects. The Village has helped the Garden Club maintain the Museum grounds for nearly 30 years. The Village also provides the Garden Club with annuals for the Museum complex, Post Office and the Senior Center. The Garden Club often does the planting on many Village projects which saves the Village labor and time. Our club volunteers have helped divide perennials for the Village in their various flower beds, and removed perennials in front of the old police station when they demolished it. The Village allows the Garden Club to dig up plants for our plant sale, where the Village plants need to be thinned out. Two years ago, the Garden Club made a \$3500 donation to the Village to help plant an area of native flowers along Northwest Highway and the Railroad near Arthur. This past year, our Garden Club made a \$1000 donation to the Village to help with a rain garden project that will be located north of the Village Hall and south of the RR near the gazebo. The project has been delayed due to COVID-19, but we are hoping to plant in the spring of 2021.

We recently received this letter from the Village thanking us for our donation towards the rain garden project.

