



'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
January 2016



**Englehart and
District Horticultural
Society was formed in
1956.**

General meetings:
3rd Wednesday of most
months at 7:00 p.m. in the
Presbyterian Church
basement

- *Speakers, workshops,
demonstrations
- *Civic Improvement
- *Youth Involvement
- *Displays and Competitions
- *Environmental Stewardship

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A Word From The Editor

It's that time of the year where we rejuvenate and strengthen our Society by holding elections. We hope, that if you are asked, you will strongly consider becoming a Director or take on an Executive position. It certainly is not necessary to wait to be asked. If you are interested in becoming involved with the Society in a fuller way, please let us know. All local organizations are looking for interested people to assume these positions. "Fresh blood" is necessary to keep any organization interesting and productive. We are always looking for new ideas and suggestions on ways we can improve our club. If you can attend one extra meeting a month (Directors meet on the first Wednesday of most months) and help us make plans for the Society, perhaps sit on a committee, we'd love to have you join us. We really are a nice group of ordinary people! Horticultural knowledge is not even necessary... many of us have learned most of what we know through experiences enjoyed within the club.

*If I had two loaves of bread, I would sell one and buy
hyacinths, for they would feed my soul. (The Koran)*

Mark It On Your Calendar:

January 20: Annual Meeting
February 17: Regular Monthly Meeting

Looking Back:

The Christmas Workshop was held in the Presbyterian Church on November 18. Convenor Rosemary Campbell and her committee had put together the material for the craft and had the hall set up to receive the participants. Those in attendance enjoyed making a lovely Christmas centerpiece using fresh red and white pine, cedar, osier dogwood twigs, and assorted decorative accents. Everybody's was different and all were lovely. A delicious luncheon was enjoyed by all, thanks to social convenor, Mary Schippers, and all who contributed to the snack. Thanks to Len Fisher for his donation of a birdhouse, won by Ginny Montminy, and a crèche, donated by Amber, which was won by Sandra McDonald's granddaughter. A special thank you Rosemary and her committee for a great evening.



Jennifer Hong works on her lovely centerpiece.

Looking Ahead:

We are now in our 60th year as a society. It's time to celebrate! Do you have any ideas to help us make this a memorable year? Would you be willing to help us make plans for 2016? Please call/contact us with your ideas.

Looking Back:

In 1991, the Englehart and District Horticultural Society helped EHS celebrate its 65th anniversary. Chaperoning this young couple in love (Twyla and Bruce Wilson) are hula hooping Bonnie Warner and Shannon Wilson, while bubble blowing, poodle skirt wearing Eileen Fisher dances on.



OHA/District 12 News:

This April, our Society will once again be hosting the District 12 Annual Meeting, as part of our 60th Anniversary celebrations. We plan to hold it in the basement of the Catholic Church again and have formed a committee to help plan the day. If you can help us in any ways, please let Eileen Fisher or Bonnie Warner know.

Reports from Your Directors:

Programme: Convenor Carrie Anne Field reminds everyone that the January meeting is our Annual Meeting, where convenors report on the work and successes of their committees during the past year. The Nominating Committee has contacted members, and elections will take place. Remember, any paid-up member can stand for election for any of the Executive or Directors' positions. We will also enjoy looking back at 2015 with a slide show of the Society's events. We hope you will show your support for the Society by attending. The meeting will begin at 6:00 with our potluck supper.

Social: Convenor Mary Schippers reminds Jen Holmes that she is responsible for supplying the gift for the free draw at the Annual Meeting. Mary will be the hostess. As it is a potluck supper, you are asked to bring food for sharing. If you can help us set up the hall for this meal, please meet at the **Presbyterian** Church at 5:30. Supper will begin at 6:00 pm, followed by the meeting and slideshow.

Nominating: The nominating committee, headed by Bruce Wilson, met at the end of 2015 and presented their report at the Directors' Meeting this month. We are grateful to the members who have agreed to let their names stand for election, and who are willing to take on an important role in our Society.

Website/Facebook: Rick Heaslip reminds all members to use the website for important and interesting information about our Society. He does a great job of keeping things current and asks members to please contact him with information/photos that could be used on the site. I try to keep the Facebook page up-to-date as much as possible. It is also a good spot to find interesting gardening tips, environmental information, and to learn what's happening in our Society.

Membership: Convenor Ginny Montminy reports that we have 35 paid-up members for 2016 and reminds members that you can renew your membership by contacting her or by attending our next meeting. For those who have yet to renew, remember, for the low cost of \$10.00 per year, you are eligible to attend all of our meetings, to vote on matters affecting the Society, to enjoy interesting speakers, workshops, and presentations, as well as enjoying the companionship of like-minded people. You also receive 11 newsletters a year, which can be received by mail or by email. Don't forget, a membership in our Society also makes a nice little gift for a friend or family member.

****** Director Deb Murray is asking members to save the tops of liquid laundry detergent bottles for a surprise project we will be undertaking. Just bring them along to any meeting, please.******

Crop Rotation Part I (with help from the 'Gardening Channel')

January may seem like a strange time to be thinking about crop rotation, but it really is a great time. It may take a while for you to remember what you grew where last year, and to plan your garden for 2016 using some suggestions on crop rotation which will appear over the next few months. So, what is crop rotation? Crop rotation is a method of improving your soil, increasing your crops' resistance to pests and increasing your yields, all by choosing the location of your crops with care. Now, most people who are reading as a home gardener will not have a vast expanse of land to deal with. If you're an urban or suburban gardener, you're looking at a number of garden plots, not acres of land. Even if you are starting small or maintaining a current food garden for your family, it's important to think about where you plant from year to year. Changing the places where you plant your crops is what crop rotation is really about.

So...what are the benefits of rotating your crops?

Just like people, your crops like to eat different things and each crop can also add something different to the soil. For example, plants in the nightshade family tend to be heavy feeders. Eggplants and tomatoes are part of this family. If you grow them every year in the same location, your soil will get tired and your crops will not produce as well over time. Grow them in different locations and replenish the soil with other crops, and your yield will be good. Many people use soil-improving crops like legumes to restore tired soil. Legumes are very beneficial to the soil and are often used as cover crops or crops to restore soil that has been depleted of nitrogen. (to be continued next month)

Gardening with Children

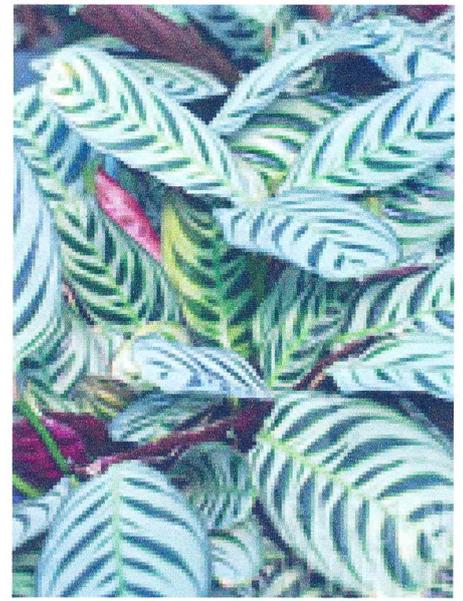
I know it's only January, but this could be a fun-filled activity to plan during the cold winter months. Many of you have children or grandchildren who would love to garden but don't know how to start or don't have the room for a garden. Enter the Fairy Garden concept. Fairy gardens are contained gardens which can grab a young boy or girl's imagination and help them build their gardening skills and develop a love of plants. They are almost like a dish garden but are actually planted with growing material...small plants which do well in a container or patio pot: alpines and dwarf succulents, Johnny-jump-ups, juga, creeping thyme, baby tears, small ivies, dwarf marigolds, etc. Tiny furniture, vehicles, and figures help add fun to the project as well.



Plant of the Month

Prayer Plant or Maranta

This plant from South and Central America is grown for its attractive foliage. There are many varieties, such as M. tricolor and M. leuconeura, but all have the ability to raise and lower their leaves. The raised leaves look somewhat like praying hands, hence this plant's common name. They dislike direct light and will lose their bright colour and go blotchy if they receive too much direct light. In the winter they may go almost dormant but still require light and less water. During the growing season, water frequently and never allow potting soil to dry out. They are very susceptible to drought. Maranta like a peat rich soil with good drainage. Fertilize with a weak liquid fertilizer twice a month, cutting back to once a month or so in the winter. Watch carefully for spider mite and treat with insecticidal soap. High humidity is required, so daily misting is encouraged, as is setting the pot on a bed of small stones with water just below the top of the stones.



Poetry and Prose

*In the bleak midwinter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone,
Snow had fallen, snow on
snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
Long ago.*

Christina Rossetti

Our 10th President, Marilyn Lett

Marilyn was a hard working horticulturalist. In the summer months when she wasn't at work as secretary at Holy Family School, Marilyn could be found in her lovely gardens.

She was a well-organized President, and very thorough. With her quiet sense of humour and her dedication to the Society, Marilyn was an asset to our club.



*Marilyn Lett
1979-1980*

"There are two seasonal diversions that can ease the bite of any winter. One is the January thaw. The other is the seed catalogues."

- Hal Borland

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