



# From the Potting Shed March 2020

Master Gardeners of Bergen County

## SAVE THE DATE

### MG meeting – Tuesday, March 24

1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack  
1<sup>st</sup>-floor meeting room

Refreshments at 7 pm; announcements  
at 7:20 pm; program to follow

### Carrie Buchman presents: *An introduction to orchids*

Carrie Buchman has been growing orchids for more than 30 years and has almost 300 orchids spanning the alphabet from Aerangis to Zygopetalum in a converted sunroom that she describes as somewhere between a windowsill and a greenhouse attached to her home. Her orchids have won ribbons in many shows, including the Philadelphia Flower Show, and she's earned flower, cultural, and botanical awards from the American Orchid Society.



Carrie Buchman

Her presentation will cover taxonomy, what makes an orchid an orchid, and what orchids grow well in New Jersey.

Carrie will bring in orchids in bloom to show their biodiversity and will raffle off some orchids for free. She welcomes you to bring in any of your orchids to display.

She is the president of the North Jersey Orchid Society, co-chair of orchids at the Philadelphia Flower Show, and will become an associate judge in the American Orchid Society Judging Program in April after three years of being a student judge.

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Links are clickable and are noted in blue.

### From the President's Desk

*By Melody Corcoran*

March is the time to prepare our gardens for spring and the return of all things green and growing. Late winter-early spring chores include removing matted leaves, twigs, and branches from the garden beds; cutting down plant stems that provided winter interest and a home for certain overwintering insects; pruning winter damage and dead wood from shrubs and trees; repairing trellises, fences, and walkways, etc., as needed; and cleaning water features and scrubbing birdbaths. The list goes on.



Ornamental grasses looked lovely in the winter, especially when decorated with snow or ice. Now these grasses need to be cut down before spring growth begins. Depending on the size of the grass clumps, this can be a formidable task. Here are a few ideas that I found to make this task easier, thanks to the Johnson County, KS, extension agents.

- Dry grass blades can be razor sharp, itchy, and can flake off small, sharp pieces so wear long sleeves and gloves and protect your eyes.
- Before cutting back, tie up the clumps using a bungee cord or compostable twine; this keeps the stems in one place and makes cleanup easier.
- Choose the proper tool: Hand pruners for small clumps, hand pruning saw or electric hedge trimmer for large clumps.
- Divide overgrown clumps. OK, no easy way to do this; it's just plain hard work but a little easier when the clumps have been cut back.

Get out there, get to work, and enjoy the return of gardening season.

## MG OF BC NEWS

### Meet Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016

#### By Miriam Taub

On the morning of her interview, Melody Corcoran mentioned that she'd seen a herd of deer (she estimated about 20) from the sunroom of her Ridgewood home. Her backyard borders both Saddle River County Park and Ridgewood's Grove Park. She has the pleasure of a "four-season view," she noted, filled with fox, coyote, hawks, the occasional turkey, and, of course, the deer.

Melody's yard, now mostly shade, has been designated as a Certified Wildlife Garden by the Bergen County Audubon Society. "Hence the leaves and plant stems won't be cleaned up until the spring," she pointed out. "We need to keep the critters and insects protected for the winter."

Melody, the new MG of BC president, grew up in Ramsey. Next door to her home was a farm where guinea hens and goats roamed. The goats chased Melody and her brother and chewed on the laundry clipped to her mother's clothesline.



Melody Corcoran

Another childhood memory: When contractors began building ranch homes on teeny-tiny lots in Ramsey, she remembered thinking "I'll never get a house in a development." Yet, her home in Ridgewood is in a development. "The timing and price were right," she said, when she and husband Chuck bought their home 40 years ago. Her current project is replacing her grass with sedges.

Melody said she's been interested in science and medicine "forever." As a first-grader at Ramsey's School Street School (since renamed the John Y. Dater School), Melody recalled the day her teacher announced that she would show the class the location of the "laboratory." Melody's excitement turned to disappointment when the destination turned out to be the "lavatory."

After Ramsey High, Melody, who is 72, earned a BS degree in science from Douglass College. While in New Brunswick, she also met husband Chuck, who went to Rutgers. They have been married for 50 years.

Melody's career was science all the way: 42 years as a medical technologist, beginning with the University of Chicago Hospitals and Clinics and ending with Valley Hospital where she spent 37 years. Yes, she can draw blood and perform routine chemistries, such as cholesterol and hepatitis testing. ("You want me to do WHAT?" she recalled saying when she learned that blood-drawing would be one of her responsibilities.)

Prior to retirement, Melody managed Valley's electrophoresis lab. In the lab, technologists use an electric current to separate and identify serum proteins. They are used in the diagnosis of diseases such as multiple myeloma and sickle cell disease. She also taught in the hospital's Medical Laboratory Science Program, a 12-month clinical rotation program that trains college science majors to sit for the national certifying exam as medical laboratory scientists.

Along the way, Melody obtained a master's degree in biology from Fairleigh Dickinson University — four years of evenings by taking one or two classes a semester, she explained. She received her MS degree in the same year that their son, Nicholas, graduated from high school. The Corcorans also have two grandsons, Andrew, 10, and Ben, 8.

Melody said she was interested in enrolling in the MG program after reading a story in the Record. Since she figured it was unrealistic to ask for time off from work every Friday, she waited until she retired and then enrolled in the Class of 2016. Her favorite volunteer site is Garretson because it offers a variety of things to do and it's an organic farm. (She's a trustee of Garretson Forge and Farm Restoration, Inc.) She also volunteers at McFaul Environmental Center and the Hermitage.

Melody's other interests include knitting, quilting, and counted cross stitch. She's also done weaving, which she described as a craft that "takes a lot of work" and "strains your brain." She said she's a voracious reader of mysteries and likes fantasy and historical novels. And, she's a member and recording secretary of the Ridgewood Shade Tree Commission.

Melody became involved in the MG board when she was asked to be the site coordinator liaison (2017) and then to be vice president (2018).

Among her goals for her two-year term as president, Melody said she'd like to see more participation by members and an "ask the board" session prior to the MG of BC public meeting. "I'm looking forward to working with people and getting their ideas and to rejuvenate the organization," she said

## SPOTLIGHT ON ....

### Master Gardeners of Bergen County volunteer sites – 2020 information

*Spring is just around the corner. Now's the time to plan where you'll be gardening this year. Try out a new volunteer site or two, but don't forget your old favorites; they all need your help and expertise. Visit the websites (for the sites that have them) for information about the organization and its activities.*

#### **Bergen New Bridge Medical Center**

230 E. Ridgewood Ave., Paramus

Various days and times

**Contact:** Lynette Stewart, 201-310-2498

[lynettestewart35@aol.com](mailto:lynettestewart35@aol.com)

Ilona Toth Robinson, 732-307-4091

[irobinson@newbridgehealth.org](mailto:irobinson@newbridgehealth.org) or

[heddyharvests@gmail.com](mailto:heddyharvests@gmail.com)

#### **Butterfly and Native Garden at Overpeck Park**

40 Fort Lee Road, Leonia

Tuesday 9:30 am-1:30 pm

**Contact:** Pat Knight, 201-848-0069

[gspmk@hotmail.com](mailto:gspmk@hotmail.com)

Don Torino, president, Bergen County Audubon Society

[greatauk4@gmail.com](mailto:greatauk4@gmail.com)

#### **Davies Arboretum and Wildlife Preserve**

49 Anderson Road, Demarest

Monday 9:30 am

**Contact:** Jessica Wang, 201-600-8495

[jessica007wang@gmail.com](mailto:jessica007wang@gmail.com)

Joanne Holmberg

[joalholmberg@hotmail.com](mailto:joalholmberg@hotmail.com)

#### **Garretson Forge and Farm**

4-02 River Road, Fair Lawn

Thursday 10 am-2 pm

Sunday (second and fourth of the month) 1-4 pm

**Contact:** Lida Gellman, 201-461-4204

[lb922@aol.com](mailto:lb922@aol.com)

#### **Hackensack River Greenway**

Various locations along River Road, Teaneck

Various days and times

**Contact:** Gideon Karlick, 917-670-1078

[gideonk1@aol.com](mailto:gideonk1@aol.com)

#### **The Hermitage**

335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus

Tuesday and Wednesday 9:30 am-noon

**Contact:** Kathleen Sullivan, 201-934-7595

[kmsrhc@verizon.net](mailto:kmsrhc@verizon.net)

Lynn Curtin, [lacurtin1@gmail.com](mailto:lacurtin1@gmail.com)

#### **Master Gardener Helpline, RCE Office**

1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack

Monday-Thursday (April-September) 10 am-noon

**Contact:** Karen A. Riede, 201-336-6788

[karen.riede@rutgers.edu](mailto:karen.riede@rutgers.edu)

#### **McFaul Environmental Center**

150 Crescent Ave., Wyckoff

Wednesday 8:30 am-noon

**Contact:** Joseph Cooper, 201-666-5111

[joseph@MGofBC.org](mailto:joseph@MGofBC.org)

Email to confirm seasonal start and stop dates.

#### **New Jersey Botanical Garden**

(GPS) 2 Morris Road, Ringwood, 973-962-9534

Wednesday 9 am-noon

**Contact:** Dania Cheddie, 201-699-0803

[dania.cheddie@gmail.com](mailto:dania.cheddie@gmail.com)

#### **NY/NJ Trail Conference headquarters**

600 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah

Various days and times. **Note:** You can earn volunteer hours for work done only at the Trail Conference headquarters.

**Contact:** Diane Van Kempen, 760-519-4959

[dvankemp@gmail.com](mailto:dvankemp@gmail.com)

#### **Teaneck Creek Conservancy**

20 Puffin Way, Teaneck

Wednesday 9-11 am year-round

**Contact:** Denise Slusarev, 917-975-1400

[fionaalex@optonline.net](mailto:fionaalex@optonline.net)

#### **Thielke Arboretum**

460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock

Tuesday and Saturday 9 am-noon, year-round, weather permitting

**Contact:** Herb Arbeiter, 646-373-7328

[arbeiter@optonline.net](mailto:arbeiter@optonline.net)

Jean Epiphan, stewardship director and forest ecologist

[stewardship@thielkearboretum.org](mailto:stewardship@thielkearboretum.org)

[jnepiphan@thielkearboretum.org](mailto:jnepiphan@thielkearboretum.org)

#### **Van Saun County Park**

216 Forest Ave., Paramus

Monday 9 am-noon; meet inside the zoo

**Contact:** Jeffrey Chan, 201-723-7422

[jchan11918@msn.com](mailto:jchan11918@msn.com)

#### **Washington Spring Garden in Van Saun Park**

216 Forest Ave., Paramus

Thursday 9 am-noon

**Contact:** Suzanne Danzig, 201-218-4093

[suzannedanzig@gmail.com](mailto:suzannedanzig@gmail.com)

Pat Vellas, [patvellas@aol.com](mailto:patvellas@aol.com)

Updated 2/25/2020



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Share your questions/opinions!

Do you have any thoughts you'd like to share about the MG of BC? Any questions for the MG Executive Board?

If so, come to the March 24 board meeting at 6:45 pm (prior to the start of the public meeting). You can speak or ask questions about our organization. Melody Corcoran, president, or the appropriate board member will reply. [Read the interview with Melody on page 2 in which she mentions one of her goals is to see more member participation in the organization.]

### *If you missed our February meeting . . .*

*Michael Wilson narrated a slide show on the ABC's of rock gardening. He explained how he created his Denville rock garden and a rock garden at Frelinghuysen Arboretum (where he formerly worked). He also showed slides of alpine plants in their native habitats. Alpine plants need good drainage, not too much moisture, and midday shade (generally supplied by the rocks). However, he warned, alpine plants aren't deer resistant.*



Michael Wilson

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### Garretson Forge and Farm

Garretson will kick off the volunteer season with its annual Pea Day planting from 1-4 pm Sunday, March 22. Regular volunteer hours will begin Thursday, March 26 from 10 am-2 pm and every Thursday thereafter. Volunteers also meet on the second and fourth Sundays from 1-4 pm.

The group meets rain or shine to work outdoors or indoors in the greenhouse. Bring gloves, small hand tools, pruners, and trowels. Garretson supplies the rest.

Garretson is located at 4-02 River Road, Fair Lawn. Contact [Lida Gellman](#), site coordinator, for more information. Visit the [website](#).

### NY/NJ Trail Conference

Volunteers are needed at the Trail Conference headquarters for Habitat Helper workdays from 9 am-noon on the following Sundays: March 22; April 19; May 3 and 17; June 14 and 28; and July 12 and 26; and on the last Monday of each month from 4-6 pm.

Volunteers will maintain the plantings, plant new plants, and remove weeds and invasive plants. The crew will be led by members of the Bergen-Passaic chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Jersey.

In case of possible inclement weather, check your email before leaving for the event. To sign up for a work crew, click [here](#).

The Trail Conference headquarters is located at 600 Ramapo Valley Road (Route 202), Mahwah. Onsite parking is limited. You can park next door at the Ramapo County Reservation, a short walk through the woods. The path from the reservation parking lot to the Trail Conference building begins just to the left of the "do not enter" sign. You also can park in the Ramapo College south lot. A sidewalk leads from the lot to the Trail Conference building.

**Note:** This is a new MG volunteer site. You earn volunteer hours for work done only at the Trail Conference headquarters.

### Teaneck Creek Conservancy

Teaneck Creek Conservancy will host an invasive species pull and tree planting along the edge of Teaneck Creek from 9 am-1 pm Wednesday, April 22. MGs are needed to help with the removal of invasives and supervise and assist with new plantings for a group of about 65 corporate volunteers.

You're asked to go person-to-person to ensure that no one leaves air gaps under the roots, the soil isn't overly compacted, and deer cages are properly installed, etc. You can come for the four-hour event or from 11 am-1 pm for the planting only.

The organization will provide some gloves, clippers, spades, and shovels. You can bring your own tools and a kneeling pad. Register by sending an email to [Allie Fellema](#), conservancy associate, with your name and she'll send a volunteer form to you. You also can call Allie at 973-670-2753 for additional information.

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Meet at the Fycke Lane entrance to the park (across from Thomas Jefferson Middle School), Teaneck. You can park on Fycke Lane. Visit the [website](#).

### Thielke Arboretum

Thielke Arboretum needs volunteers to help with its Arbor Day weekend celebration Saturday, April 25 and Sunday, April 26 from 9 am-3:30 pm. The event itself runs from 10 am-3 pm both days. You can do a morning or afternoon shift or both.

Jobs include helping with the native plant sale and tree giveaway and staffing a table for children's activities like leaf rubbing and more. Some help is also needed Friday, April 24 with set-up and decorating. Other ways to help are to post notices on social media and in public spaces like libraries.

Contact [Jean Epiphan](#) or [Herb Arbeiter](#) for more information. The arboretum is located at 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock. Visit the [website](#).

## THIS AND THAT

*Joseph Cooper, Class of 2008, has posted three videos on YouTube featuring the Denver Zoo, Downtown Aquarium (Denver), and the Loveland Aquarium (Draper, UT). Enjoy wildlife from the comfort of your couch.*

### Downtown Aquarium on [YouTube](#)

The Downtown Aquarium is a 107,000-square-foot aquarium covering 17 acres with approximately 1 million gallons of water and 500 species. Exhibits include Under the Sea, At the Wharf, North America, the Desert, the Rainforest, Coral Lagoon, and Shipwreck. Visit the [website](#).

### Loveland Aquarium on [YouTube](#)

The Loveland Living Planet Aquarium, outside Salt Lake City, houses 4,500 animals in a 90,000-square-foot facility with tanks holding 600,000 gallons of water. Visit the [website](#).

### Denver Zoo on [YouTube](#)

The Denver Zoo features more than 3,000 animals on more than 84 acres in Denver's City Park. With the opening of its Bear Mountain exhibit in 1918, the Denver Zoo became the first American institution to benefit from Carl Hagenbeck's revolutionary zoo concept — that people should see animals at eye level in natural habitats without bars or fences. This ground-breaking

exhibit features artificial rock formations produced using plaster casts from natural cliffs near Morrison, CO, and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Visit the [website](#).



Photo by Joseph Cooper

Reticulated giraffes at the Denver Zoo. Their zoo diet consists of alfalfa and grain plus vitamin and mineral supplements.

## OUT AND ABOUT

### Frelinghuysen Arboretum

#### Macramé hanging planter workshop: March 14, 10 am-noon

Samantha Matthews, who operates a mobile art studio out of a VW bus, will teach a few basic knots so participants can create a handmade wall hanging planter in this beginner macramé class. You'll leave with a finished wall hanging planter and the knowledge to design future pieces.

**Cost:** \$40 members/\$50 non-members; includes all materials. Click [here](#) to register. Then scroll down to March 14 in the left column.

The workshop will be held in the arboretum's Haggerty Center, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. Visit the [website](#).

### The Hermitage

**Afternoon 3-course tea: March 28 or 29, 1-3 pm**  
Relive history during this event within the Gothic Revival home where Bess Rosencrantz and her niece, Mary Elizabeth, operated a tearoom from 1917-1930. They entertained guests from around the world with local legends, folktales, and ghost stories about the historic home and its inhabitants.

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The menu will include specialty teas, scones, tea sandwiches, and desserts. Proceeds will benefit the Hermitage Museum, a National Historic Landmark. Fashionable hats are welcomed.

**Cost:** \$50 each; reservations required; tickets are limited and non-refundable. Click [here](#) to register. The Hermitage is located at 335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus.

#### **Bergen County Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office**

**Joel Flagler** Agricultural/Resources Management Agent & County Extension Dept. Head 201-336-6780  
**Karen Riede** Horticulture Consultant 201-336-6788  
Cooperating agencies: Rutgers, the State University of NJ, US Department of Agriculture, and Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension educational programs are offered to all without regard to race, religion, color, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

#### **Useful links**

Many local garden centers give discounts to MGs. See the list on our [website](#). Bring your membership card when shopping.

## HORTICULTURE



### **Knock knock - spring is calling**

*By Janet Schulz*

Adonis is one of the first plants to bloom in my garden that's not a bulb — it's a spring ephemeral. Adonis's yellow star-like flowers appear before the ferny foliage, sometimes peeking through the snow. Adonis is a wonderful plant for the woodland garden.

## HORTICULTURE GRAPEVINE

***Deadline for the Horticulture Grapevine is the 24<sup>th</sup> of the prior month. Submit information about garden club and other garden-related meetings that are open to the public to [Miriam Taub](#).***

- March 2**      **11:30 am, Tenafly Garden Club**, Davis Johnson Park and Gardens, Tenafly. Speaker: Dr. Linda Rohleder, coordinator, Lower Hudson Partnership Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM). Topic: Invasive plants. Suggested donation \$10. Donations fund scholarships for student interns in the Rutgers Gardens Summer Program. Reservations 201-568-8254.
- March 5**      **7:30 pm, Garden Club of Harrington Park**, upstairs in the Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: Bruce Crawford, director, [Rutgers Gardens](#). Topic: The wonder of plants. Q&A and refreshments to follow program. Visit the club's [website](#).
- March 6**      **2 pm, Demarest Garden Club**, United Methodist Church, 109 Hardenburgh Ave., Demarest. Speaker: Deb Ellis, co-leader, Essex Chapter, Native Plant Society of New Jersey. Topic: Using deer-resistant native plants that add beauty to your garden. Business meeting at 1 pm. Refreshments and social hour to follow program.



- March 9**      **7:30 pm, Garden Club of Bergenfield**, Cooper's Pond, 133-153 W. Church St., Bergenfield. Speaker: Jim Wright, author of the Bird Watcher column and new book *The Real James Bond: A True Story of Identity Theft, Avian Intrigue, and Ian Fleming*. Topic: Illustrated talk about James Bond, the ornithologist and explorer. Books will be available for signing; proceeds from the talk will benefit the Nature Conservancy's Caribbean Initiative.
- March 10**      **7 pm, Ramsey Area Garden Club**, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave., corner of Woodland Avenue, Ramsey. Speaker: Jim Wright, author of the Bird Watcher column. Topic: Local backyard birds in Bergen County.
- March 11**      **10 am, Garden Club of Oakland**, joint meeting with the Wyckoff Area Garden Club, Wyckoff Public Library, 20 Woodland Ave., Wyckoff. Speaker: Marc Zukovich, owner, Sterling Horticultural Services. Topic: Hydrangeas for every garden.
- March 11**      **7:30 pm, Bergen-Passaic chapter, Native Plant Society of New Jersey**, NY-NJ Trail Conference headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road (Route 202), Mahwah. Speaker: Nancy Slowik, naturalist and head of the Urban Naturalist program at the NY Botanical Garden. Topic: Vine identification - unraveling their identity, natural history, and importance.
- March 17**      **7 pm, Backyard Garden Club**, sponsored by the Friends of the River Vale Library, River Vale Library, 412 Rivervale Road, River Vale. Speaker: Lourdes Osorio, Passaic County MG and creator of the [Native Plant Channel](#) on YouTube. Topic: Growing plants without feeding Bambi.
- March 17**      **7:45 pm, Glen Rock Garden Club**, Municipal Annex, 678 S. Maple Ave., Glen Rock. Speakers: Walter and Dan Perry, Perry's Florist and Gardens. Topic: Are invasive insects lurking in your garden? Light refreshments served. Visit the club's [website](#).
- March 17**      **7 pm, Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club**, joint meeting with the Saddle River Garden Club, Bishop House, 176 E. Saddle River Road (across from the post office), Saddle River. Speaker: Bruce Crawford, director, Rutgers Gardens. Topic: Coping with your garden's trouble spots. Meeting is open to MGs (not the general public). Headcount is a must, so notify [Sue Robertson](#) if you plan to attend.
- March 18**      **7 pm, Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club**, 2nd floor, library meeting room, 320 Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights. Speaker: Chris Rubino, Monrovia. Topic: New plants for 2020. Greetings and refreshments at 6:30 pm.
- March 24**      **7 pm, Bogota Public Library**, 375 Larch Ave., Bogota. Speaker: MG Janet Schulz. Topic: Tips for a successful garden.

The Master Gardeners of Bergen County doesn't share or sell its email/ mailing list/ membership directory to non-members or to other organizations. Our membership information is confidential and for official MG use only. Please don't share our list with non-members or use it for any unauthorized or commercial purposes.