

## March 2025 Newsletter

Happy March and Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Why is the shamrock associated with St. Patrick's Day? The symbol of St. Patrick is the three-leaf shamrock, not the four-leaf clover. However, long before the shamrock became associated with St. Patrick's Day, the four-leaf clover was regarded by ancient Celts as a charm against evil spirits. In the early 1900's O.H. Benson, an Iowa school superintendent came up with the idea of using a clover as the emblem for a newly founded agricultural club for children in his area. In 1911, the four-leaf clover was chosen as the emblem for the national club program, later named 4-H.

More St. Patrick's Day facts, fun, and folklore:

\*\* Blue was the color originally associated with St. Patrick, but green is now favored.

\*\* The first St. Patrick's Day parade in the American colonies was held in New York City on March 17, 1762.

\*\* St. Patrick's Day is the traditional day for planting peas, even in the snow!

\*\* Cabbage seeds are often planted on St. Patrick's Day, too, and old-time farmers believed that to make them grow well, you needed to plant them while wearing your nightclothes!

Joke of the Month:

Q: Why should you never iron a four-leaf clover?

A: You don't want to press your luck!

### ***MARCH MEETING:***

**Date:** March 12, 2025

**\*\* PINE LAKE GARDEN CLUB WILL BE JOINING US!**

**Make them feel welcome!!**

**Time:** 9:30 AM - Set-up

10:00 AM - Business Meeting starts

10:30 - 11:00 - Social and Snack time

11:00AM - Program

12:30 - Clean-up

**Location:** Our Savior Lutheran Church

745 Front Street South

Issaquah, WA

**Program:** Cleo Raulerson will be talking about "Perennials for year-Round Color". She focuses on 'tried and true,' 'new or unusual' or self-seeders including creepers. Through experience she knows plants which bloom well in our climate ... she actually has more that 750 varieties of plants in her garden!

**Horticultural Corner:** No presenter this month but take a minute and look up the flowers of the month - Daffodil or Jonquil

***March*** Snack Committee:

Hostess: Sandra R.

Crew: Lois H.

Gale B.

Joan F.

Dianne T.

Deb M.

***April*** Snack Committee:

Hostess: Georgann L.

Crew: Janet W.

Shadi W.

Lexie D.

Karen M.

**LETS SAVE ON KITCHEN SUPPLIES:**

Please remember to bring your own plate, napkin and silverware so we don't deplete the club's supplies and reduces our garbage footprint! And, attention coffee and tea drinkers - remember to bring your own cup (THANKS)

**SALE TABLE:** *since we have another garden club visiting and more wallets, let's all try and bring some items for the sale table. Even bring plants if you have them!*

**POST OFFICE TROUGH:**

A sign-up sheet was passed around for volunteers to check on the trough and surrounding area to make sure it is tidy and to water during the summer months.

February - Thanks to Sandra R. for checking on the trough

March - Maura E.

April - Lois H.

May - Lexie D.

***THINGS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED:***

***GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (FEBRUARY 24, 2025):***

The morning speaker was Guinevere Unterbrink from the Seattle office of the National Wildlife Federation. She explained the NWF programs: Certified Wildlife Habitats at homes and Community Wildlife Habitats in neighborhoods, towns and cities. City of Sammamish is a certified Community Wildlife Habitat. In fact, Washington state has the largest percentage participation in the program of all the states.

Visit [NWF.org](http://NWF.org)

She encouraged us to sign up our own properties as Certified Habitats, an online, self-reported process. You can get a sign for your yard and impress your neighbors! No property is too small; even a balcony can be big enough!

Visit [NWF.org/garden](http://NWF.org/garden) to learn how.

NWF also offers Habitat Steward Training via zoom classes, with the next four week session on March 6, 13, 20 and 27. Registration is at at <https://march2025habitatstewardtraining.bpt.me> or contact Guinevere at [WAEducation@nwf.org](mailto:WAEducation@nwf.org).

Colin Wick, volunteer program co-ordinator at Bellevue Botanic Garden, spoke about volunteering there. He encouraged us to go through the Bellevue required annual security check process, which hundreds of volunteers have done without any issues. There are several types of volunteer jobs, indoors and outdoors: Education, Events, Garden Maintenance, Organization Support and Visitor Experience. Volunteering 9 hours per year earns you an invitation to the annual appreciation party, and other volunteer events.

ELWD work day is May 16 from 9-11 and security check is required.

Contact Colin at [cwick@BellevueWA.gov](mailto:cwick@BellevueWA.gov) or visit [BellevueWA.gov/bbg-volunteer](http://BellevueWA.gov/bbg-volunteer)

After lunch, five designers demonstrated and explained floral design by creating arrangements as we watched. There was a design handout.

## **FEBRUARY *MEETING*:**

The February meeting was a presentation by Brynn Tavasci who shared a number of items she has made from items that are no longer needed or items that can be recycled. She described the process for creating each item and answered a number of questions as she went along. It was both an inspirational presentation and good fun!

## ***February Horticultural Corner:***

Lois presented about Plume Poppy. The plant has been described as either “A great idea or garden lunacy” and is a plant that can be recommended with caution. It’s named after a Scottish entomologist (Alexander Macleay who lived 1767-1848).

Here are some factoids:

- \*\* Native to Japan and China
- \*\* Large rhizomatous herbaceous perennial
- \*\* Palmately lobed, frilly leaves of olive green or grey color which can be 10 inches in length (dinner plate size)

- \*\* Grows tall with stem 4 - 6 feet tall
- \*\* Flowers are airy plumes of petal-less, tubular, off white or cream flowers - blooms during the summer (July/August)
- \*\* Cultivated as an ornamental plant providing striking architectural effect (good in back of borders)
- \*\* Unsuitable in small gardens
- \*\* Spread both by underground suckers and by seeds - strays are easy to pull up but wear gloves as the insides of the stems contains a bright yellow fluid that will stain hands and clothing
- \*\* Grow in full sun or part shade. Need average well drained soil. Drought tolerant
- \*\* Can be used in floral arrangements or dried and use the hollow stem as a playable instrument referred to as "the big horn"
- \*\* There are reports of the plant being used in a number of traditional medicines but this is suspect since the plant is considered poisonous to humans and dogs and contains alkaloids and glycosides that can cause upset stomach and skin irritations if eaten or touched (hence the advise to wear gloves when working with the plants)

### ***GARDEN THERAPY:***

Eight members participated to make spring flower arrangements for the Avamere Rehab Center. Fourteen table arrangements were done by individual members. One joy of the project is that you get to be your own designer. The arrangements were lovely and finished with big beautiful Valentine ribbons. Each of the arrangements was sporting a special Valentine balloon provided by the facility. Joan reports that it's amazing what can be done in a hour with the right people and supplies. Thanks to Gale for a great selection of flowers!

### ***SAVE THE DATES:***

**May 16, 2025** - Work Day at Bellevue Botanical Garden from 9:00 to 11:00. Security clearance required to participate.

**May 19, 2025** - General Membership Meeting

**April 28, 2025** - ELWD Board Meeting and Arbor Day Planting - Bellevue Botanical Garden ... everyone is invited!

**June 3 - 5, 2025** - WSFGC Convention "Wonderful World of Color" at Little Creek Casino in Shelton

**July 18 - 20, 2025** - District Flower Show - "Songs of Summer" at Bellevue Botanical Garden. **Volunteers needed!**

**September 29, 2025** - General Membership Meeting

## EDUCATIONAL CORNER:

# 7 Gardening Tasks You Should Start Now to Prep for Spring, According to Garden Pros

If you're itching to get outside and start preparing your backyard and gardens for warmer weather, we have good news: There are a few tasks you can do now to make it even easier when the weather finally turns.

With the help of some of our favorite gardening experts, we rounded up a few suggestions.

## Meet the Expert

[Megan Foster](#) is a perennial and bulb expert for American Meadows online gardening store and information resource.

[Lauren Carvalho](#) is a horticulturist for High Country Gardens online gardening store.

## Source and Organize Your Inspo

Even if you're eager to get outside, the [weather might not agree](#). If that's the case, you can plan from indoors by

using these months to organize garden work-in-progress photos and envision what you want for the coming year.

“If you’re like me, you have a ton of phone pics scattered throughout the growing season,” Megan Foster, perennial and bulb expert for American Meadows, says. “It can be a good exercise to comb through the seasons and make an album of the past year’s gardens, making notes about what you loved and what was maybe worth a rethink.”

Once you’ve done this, Foster suggests then taking a look at any holes that you can fill this year in [your bloom sequence](#), ways you can change or update your color palette, or options for adding new heights and textures this year.

“Bonus, when you are at the garden center or feeling inspired online, you have a quick reference in the palm of your hand when you ask, ‘Would that fit?’” she says.

## Shop the Pre-Season Sales

Now is the perfect time to [shop for your plant-must haves](#)—most gardening retailers offer early bird sales to get consumers excited for the season ahead.

“This is the perfect time to hone in on those specialty items that may be hard to find or in short supply,” says Lauren Carvalho, a High Country Gardens horticulturist.

“Start the hunt early to make sure you don’t miss out on [those rare plants](#), because they will sell out fast.”

## Get Pruning

As Carvalho points out, now is also an [excellent time to assess your trees and shrubs](#) and get them back into shape. That’s because, without their leaves, it’s easier to see their form and figure out [which sections need a trim](#).

“Winter is the perfect time to remove branches you may have been reluctant to edit during the growing season,” she says.

## Clean Your Empty Planters and Containers

If you’re a big fan of [gardening in containers](#), use this time to prepare your planters. Give them a good clean and sanitization so you can plan your new designs with a blank slate.

Along with cleaning your planters and containers, Carvalho also recommends doing the same service check [on your gardening tools](#).

“Now is a great time to clean, sharpen, and oil your tools,” she says. “Having a well-maintained set of implements at the ready makes digging into yard work easy.”

## Stock Up On Your Must-Haves

Once you’ve repaired and assessed your tools, Carvalho says now is also a great time to replace any of your must-haves—whether you’re shopping the sales or not.

“I would be lost without a small pick axe and a [great pair of work gloves](#),” she says. “A lightweight hose equipped with a quality brass shutoff valve is also a must for controlling and saving water.”

Foster agrees, adding a comfortable spade for expanding and re-edging garden beds to the list.

## Leave the Leaves

While some items are great to tick off your to-do list now, Carvalho warns there are a few things you should absolutely wait to do. She suggests people [leave any fallen leaves](#) and avoid cutting back grasses for now.

“This is natural mulch, which will protect your plants in case of late frosts,” she explains, while also noting they’re



often areas used as shelter for wildlife until the weather turns.

Foster agrees and says a good rule of thumb is to wait until you see a diverse mix of local bees and other flying insects. This is your cue that it's okay to start cleaning up.

“Don't hesitate to designate some parts of your landscape to stay unraked,” Foster says. “A lot of our native bees are ground nesters.”