

February 2025 Newsletter

Welcome to February and Happy Valentine's Day!

The change has come at last, and from the west
Drives on the wind, and gives the clouds no rest,
And ruffles up the water thin that lies
Over the surface of the thawing ice:
Sunrise and sunset with no glorious show
Are seen, as late they were across the snow;
The wet-lipped west wind chilleth to the bone
More than the light and flickering east hath done.
Full soberly the earth's fresh hope begins,
Nor stays to think of what each new day wins:
And still it seems to bid us turn away
From this chill thaw to dream of blossomed May:

William Morris (1834-1896)

FEBRUARY MEETING:

Date: February 12, 2025

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: Brynn Tavasci will demonstrate the art of "Indoor and Outdoor Crafts with an Emphasis on Recycling".

Horticultural Corner: The plants are Primrose and Iris but no one has been assigned so we may hear from Lois talking about Plume Poppy since this was deferred at the last meeting

February Snack Committee:

Hostess: Jean P.

Crew: Karen B.

Joy J.

Maura E.

Deb M.

March Snack Committee:

Hostess: Sandra R.

Crew: Lois H.

Gale B.

Joan F.

Dianne T.

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)

ISSAQUAH FOOD BANK DONATION:

** The Food Bank now has a list on their website of items that are needed and they only accept donations on designated days

** Some suggested items are canned tuna, canned chicken, pasta sauce, Hamburger Helper and 2 pound bags of rice.

OTHER EVENTS TO KEEP ON YOUR CALENDAR:

General Membership Meeting (GMM):

Date: Monday, February 24, 2025

Where: St. Andrews Lutheran Church in Bellevue

Time: Registration begins at 9:30AM and program starts at 10:00AM

Cost: \$10.00 (covers 2 speakers and lunch)

Agenda: Two groups of speakers:

Morning - Geinevere Unterbring from the National Wildlife Federation will speak about gardening to support habitat for wildlife.

Afternoon speakers will be a collection of WSFGC Designers who will discuss and demonstrate principles and elements of floral design.

Lunch will be provided

Lunch: Provided by Gale B. with help from the Woodinville Garden club

**If you plan to attend you must RSVP to Joyce Voldal
at javoldal@hotmail.com**

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.

January - Thanks to Georgann for checking on the trough

February - Sandra R.

March - Maura E.

April - Lois

THINGS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED:

BOARD MEETING (JANUARY 27, 2025):

Some highlights from the recent Board Meeting:

** Currently 236 members in the district and we should note that members joining now are not required to pay dues to either ELWD or the state but clubs can still collect their portion of the dues.

** Arbor Day will be celebrated at the April 28th Board Meeting and everyone is welcome to attend.

** Tree planting will be acknowledged (although will happen earlier than the Arbor Day celebration for the health of the tree) and will probably be in the parking area to replace canopy lost during the recent wind storms.

** Clubs need to consider making a donation towards the purchase of the tree(s) as this is one of a number of ways we support activities at BBG.

** Grant Applications - These grants are a result of the sale of property owned in Seattle and are renewed annually. It is fine to submit grant requests again for the same projects. \$10,000 that has been set aside. Application forms can be found on the website.

** District Flower Show "Songs of Summer" will be held at Bellevue Botanical Garden July 18 - 20. Volunteers are needed and there are many different tasks from helping with set-up and take-down, greeters, judge's scribes (a good learning opportunity) etc. Everyone is welcome to come and to help!

JANUARY MEETING:

** Jim Olson spoke about orchids. Jim is a Master Gardener that has many garden interests and is passionate about Orchids.

** He refers to his Dendrobium Yoon Orchid as his "Lazarus Phoenix" as it has been a great learning tool and has survived many trials and tribulations during the learning process

** Some factoids about orchids:

** Began as an understory plant and moved higher seeking light

** Second most common plant found on all continents except Antarctica

** Washington has 33 native varieties

** Bloom April through August

** Vanilla actually comes from orchids

** Terrestrial varieties can be treated as perennial and kept outside

** Epiphytic varieties are houseplants

** Orchid roots start with green tip and velamen (white fuzz) follows root tip. The velamen moves water - absorbs and diffuses it slowly, stabilizes the plant by holding it in place and protects it from ultraviolet

** Pollinators are bees/wasps, flies, moths/butterflies, fungus gnats and birds

** Hybrids have been developed for beauty and length of bloom

** Orchid care:

**** Watering:**

- ** need good drainage
- ** water once a week
- ** no hard water - salt is bad!
- ** water should be room temperature - NO ICE!
- ** you can mist, dunk or drench the plant and you can water the entire plant (except the flowers)
- ** Some orchids have a dormant season and should be allowed to dry out

**** Require air movement - use of a fan or open window is beneficial**

**** Light - when light is right the leaves are light yellow/green and the plant blooms. Too much light causes yellow foliage. Prefer some sun in AM and PM but during mid-day dappled light is best.**

**** Can be placed outside from May through September**

**** Fertilizing:**

**** use 20-20-20 (no urea). Fertilize weekly with a weak solution (3/4 teaspoon in a gallon of water)**

**** Too little is better than too much**

**** First wet the leaves and roots and then fertilize**

**** Repotting:**

**** should be done regularly every 1 to 3 years and be done after flowering.**

Keep a calendar!

**** Media options found in mixes:**

**** bark chips**

**** sphagnum moss**

**** perlite**

**** coconut coir**

**** lava rock**

**** Remove plant from the container**

**** Untangle roots and remove old media**

**** Cut off dead roots**

**** Place plant in pot and loosely pack media around the plant**

**** Pests:**

**** scale insects**

**** mealy bugs**

**** slugs/snails**

After a thank you note was sent we got this response from Jim:

You're welcome :-)

It was a delight spending time with your Club yesterday, as they were very much engaged.

Sincerely, Jim

ATTENTION: Debbie D has a new email - debbied@technostic.org. At the February meeting we'll try and have stickers at the hospitality table so you can easily add this to your yearbook.

Horticultural Corner: Postponed

SAVE THE DATES:

February 19 - 23 - Flower and Garden Festival in Seattle at the Convention Center

February 24, 2025 - General Membership Meeting

May 19, 2025 - General Membership Meeting

April 28, 2025 - ELWD Board Meeting and Arbor Day Planting - Bellevue Botanical Garden

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:

12 Perennials You Should Always Divide
to Keep Them Healthy and Blooming for
Years

Divide these perennials to prevent overcrowding.

Perennials offer so much in the garden. Most varieties bloom for more than one season, they come back every year with little maintenance, and they're often [desirable to pollinators](#). While there are many reasons to love perennials, some species can become overcrowded over time, resulting in reduced flowering and an increased risk of diseases and pest infestations. To prevent these issues, experts recommend dividing your perennials every few years. As the name implies, division is the process of dividing a larger plant into smaller plants. Ahead, gardening experts share the perennials you should always divide to keep them healthy and abundant for years to come.

Meet the Expert

Adrienne Roethling, plant expert and former garden director for [Paul J. Ciener Botanical Garden](#)

Kelly Funk, president & CEO of [Jackson & Perkins](#)

RELATED: [15 Perennial Flowers That Produce Long-Lasting Blooms Year After Year](#)

Iris

Certain members of the iris family (*Iridaceae*), like iris '[Albo Variegata](#),' need to be divided to maintain vigor and prevent overcrowding, says Kelly Funk, president & CEO Jackson & Perkins. Overcrowding could cause the plant to stop flowering and makes it more susceptible to [root rot](#).

Zones: 3 to 10

Size: 34 inches tall x 18 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun to partial shade; well-drained, normal soil

Coneflowers

[Coneflower varieties](#) (*Echinacea*) should be divided every four to five years to promote healthy growth and create new plants, says Funk. If you don't divide coneflowers, they can become too dense, reducing flowering and attracting pests.

Zones: 4 to 9

Size: 22 to 24 inches tall x 18 to 20 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun; withstands a range of soil conditions

Lamb's Ear

Lamb's ear (*Stachys byzantina*) is a [beautiful ground cover](#) with thick grey-green leaves and clusters of lavender flowers. Over time, the dense mat can lead to rot due to the leaves desiccating. This can cause the center of the plant to become hollowed out, says plant expert Adrienne Roethling. Dividing this plant every two to three years can prevent this from happening and ensure the plant stays healthy.

Zones: 4 to 8

Size: 5 to 6 inches tall x 12 to 24 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun; loamy, well-drained soil

Black-Eyed Susan

[Black-eyed Susans](#) (*Rudbeckia*) should be divided in order to control spreading and encourage healthier blooms. "Limited spacing leads to [powdery mildew](#) and reduced flowering," says Funk. "Divide every three to four years for the best appearance."

Zones: 4 to 10

Size: 14 to 16 inches tall x 14 to 16 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun; withstands a range of soil conditions

Bee Balm

Aim to divide [bee balm](#) (*Monarda*) every two to three years. Doing so helps control mildew, prevents spreading, and rejuvenates the plant, says Funk.

Zones: 4 to 9

Size: 12 inches tall x 12 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun to partial shade; well-drained, normal or loamy soil

Yarrow

Varieties of yarrow (*Achillea*), such as '[Little Moonshine](#),' should be divided every two to three years to prevent overcrowding and for plant propagation, says Funk. Compacted clumps of yarrow inhibit airflow and cause weaker stems that are prone to flopping.

Zones: 4 to 9

Size: 9 to 12 inches tall x 10 to 12 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun to partial shade; well-drained, normal, loamy, or poor soil

Astilbe

Varieties of astilbe (*Astilbe* spp.), like '[Washington](#),' need to be divided every two to three years to prevent overcrowding and rejuvenate growth, says Funk. Dense crowns restrict new growth, which can limit flowering and increase the chances of root rot.

Zones: 3 to 8

Size: 13 inches tall x 19 inches wide

Care requirements: Partial shade to full shade; normal or loamy soil

Hosta

Hostas (*Hosta* spp.) are popular [foliage plants](#) that produce a tall flower stalk in late spring through summer. While hostas are resilient plants that can thrive just about anywhere, they benefit from being divided now and then, says Roethling. Over time, these plants may experience loss in size and vigor, which division can help counteract.

Zones: 3 to 9

Size: 12 to 24 inches tall x 12 to 24 inches wide, though some varieties may be larger

Care requirements: Full to partial shade; moist, well-drained soil

Peonies

[Peonies](#) (*Paeonia* ssp.) come in many forms, but herbaceous peony will benefit from being divided every few years during fall. "Over time, the stems and roots grow all gnarly and eventually choke out the buds and center of the plant," says Roethling. "This will often lead to root rot." In addition to root rot, the blooms will look lackluster and the leaves become prone to leaf or stem blight.

Zones: 3 to 8

Mature size: 1 to 3 feet tall x 1 to 3 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun; well-draining soil; water moderately

Aster

Aster (*Symphyotrichum* ssp.) is [native throughout North America](#) and often grown for its ability to withstand hot, dry conditions. Its lavender-blue [daisy-like flowers](#) are prolific throughout summer and into fall. One downside is that these plants can quickly take over your garden. To keep aster in check, consider dividing it every few years.

Zones: 4 to 9

Size: 1 to 6 feet tall x 1 to 2 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun to part shade; moist, well-drained soil

Carnations

The most common form of dianthus (*Dianthus* ssp.) that gardeners grow is 'Cheddar Pink,' a ground cover with [fragrant blooms](#). Flowers come in shades of red, pink, purple, and white, says Roethling. Sometimes, cheddar pink hollows out in the center from poor drainage, lack of shade, or nutrient deprivation. Dividing this plant in the fall can help avoid these issues.

Zones: 3 to 9

Size: 1 to 6 feet tall x 1 to 2 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun to part shade; moist, well-drained soil

Daylily

Daylily (*Hemerocallis* ssp.) can take a beating and still maintain its beauty. "They are one of those landscape plants you see along highways or in parking lots," says Roethling. "The foliage emerges in spring, with thick green blades giving way to stalks of tubular flowers in summer."

Although they're resilient plants, daylilies may become leggy and produce smaller flowers over time. "They always respond well to dividing," says Roethling. "Dig the plants and sever the roots until you have as many divisions as you want."

Zones: 3 to 9

Size: 1 to 6 feet tall x 1 to 2 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun to part shade; moist, well-drained soil