

The Rhode Island Federation Insider

RIFGC NEWSLETTER



CLUB PRESIDENTS' SUBMISSION EDITION

The Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs has invited its club presidents to share a bit about their best programs of the last year, Club presidents submitted pictures and blurbs about some of the lovely things they've been up to while navigating lockdowns and mask mandates, check it out! *Page 6*

FLOODING ON THE RISE RI FACING IMMINENT FLOODING ISSUES

The recent wet weather brings to mind the challenges Rhode Island Communities are having with flooding and sea level rise. *Page 15*



TOWER HILL FLOWER SHOW BLOOMS

Flower show at the Tower Hill Botanical Gardens featuring beautiful designs from members of the Rehoboth, Portsmouth, Bayberry, Bristol, Gentian, Newport, & Tiverton Garden Clubs. *Page 9*

THE ULTIMATE SEED SAVER IS THE SVALBARD GLOBAL SEED VAULT THE NEXT NOAH'S ARC?

Some call it the Doomsday Vault, others the Noah's Ark of food crops, The ultimate Insurance Policy for the world's food supply. *Page 14*

WET YOUR WHISTLE WEDNESDAYS WITH JUDY GRAY

Join us on zoom to discuss this week's topic; *Insurance & Nonprofit status* with guest speakers Paul Nunes and Eileen Moser from the RIFGC Finance Committee! *Page 3*

FRIENDLY FLYING FISHERMEN SUE REDDEN'S BELTED KING FISHER *Page 4*





PANDEMIC PERSEVERANCE

RI GARDEN CLUBS STAY ROOTED

RIFGC PRESIDENT SHERYL
HANSON MCGOOKIN

January! Where does the time go! I hope everyone is healthy and well as we make our way through the 'Covid Ballet' once again. I hope you enjoy the fun change in format of our winter newsletter, a newspaper to go with that hot cup of tea/coffee/cocoa.

Some of you may recall that the winter newsletter is the Presidents Issue; many of the club presidents have submitted an article and photos of their favorite 2021 program. It was wonderful to see what Rhode Island Garden clubs were up to despite covid restrictions & concerns. I hope you enjoy reading about their events as much as I did.

Dive further in the newspaper for articles on The King Fisher, The Svalbard Global Seed Vault, Earth on Her Hands - the American Woman in Her Garden by Starr Ockenga, and three upcoming Spring Flower Shows; Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs, Barrington Garden Club, and Judges Counsel.

As you peruse the remainder of the news pieces and photos in our very first RIFGC Newspaper please make note of the RIFGC Calendar of events; this calendar also accompanies the January Newsletter as a separate pdf that can be printed out for posting on your kitchen bulletin board.

I am enjoying working with you all as we continue to make the world a better place through all aspects of gardening and design.

RIFGC CARING & CONNECTING

2022 CALENDAR

JANUARY 27	RIFGC Board Meeting
FEBRUARY 09	Wet Your Whistle Wednesdays
FEBRUARY 14	Membership Monday Meeting
MARCH 09	Wet Your Whistle Wednesdays
MARCH 04	WAM Trip
APRIL 07-10	RIFGC State Flower Show
APRIL 13	Wet Your Whistle Wednesdays
APRIL 28	RIFGC Spring Luncheon & Awards
MAY 01-07	Environmental Day - Event TBD
MAY 11	Wet Your Whistle Wednesdays
JUNE 02	Judges Council Hort Show
JUNE 08	Wet Your Whistle Wednesdays
JUNE 22	BGC Garden Tour & Flower Show
JULY 13	Wet Your Whistle Wednesdays
SEPT 10	LMG Fundraiser at Bernie Larivee's

WET YOUR WHISTLE WEDNESDAY

This is an open invitation to all club representatives to join RIFGC Vice President Judy Gray in an Open Discussion Forum. These monthly Zoom meeting will provide clubs with an opportunity to exchange ideas on a variety of topics.

The next WYWW is Wednesday, **January 12th at 6PM** via Zoom. The topic this month is **insurance and nonprofit status** with guest speaker & RIFGC Treasurer Paul Nunes and Eileen Moser, RIFGC Finance Committee. Judy will be sending more information soon. Please put this date on your calendar and bring your questions. We know there are many clubs who have questions on these issues!

judy.gray123@gmail.com - (603) 707-7785
This month's Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/5792954352?pwd=TjRMcDljdzRpdDBBRGc4N3FNaVFiT09>
Meeting ID: 579 295 4352 - Passcode: Af0GJL

RIFGC Board Meeting

Meeting will be held over Zoom at 10am, details and zoom link fourthcoming

Membership Mondays

Are your meetings boring?
Is your membership aging out? Time for a reboot?
Join us as we explore the keys to revitalizing your club through rediscovery and renovation strategies.
[Click here to register in advance for this meeting!](#)
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

RIFGC State Show

Theme: "Our World" is taking place April 7-10, 2022 at the RI Home Show in the Convention Center. Linda Alves requested members to save their 28 oz. cans for the Juniors Design Arrangements. The cans need to be clean with the label intact and can be brought to the RIFGC board meeting in Feb & March or dropped off at her home.

Judges' Council Show

Horticultural show in coordination with RIFGC board meeting

BGC Tour & Show

Garden tour and Flower show on June 22nd, details to follow.

THE BELTED KINGFISHER

FRIENDLY FLYING FISHERMEN

SUE REDDEN, BIRD CHAIR

The Belted Kingfisher is often first noticed by its wild rattling call as it flies over rivers or lakes. It may be seen perched on a high snag, or hovering on rapidly beating wings, then plunging headfirst into the water to grab a fish. Found almost throughout North America at one season or another, it is the only member of its family to be seen in most areas north of Mexico.

HABITAT

Belted Kingfishers need access to bodies of water for feeding, and vertical earthen banks for nesting. They hunt in unclouded water that allows them to see prey below the surface, with perches nearby but minimal vegetation obstructing the water. Some of their most common habitats are streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, estuaries, and calm marine waters. During the breeding season Belted Kingfishers breed throughout most of North America at elevations up to 9,000 feet. They winter in similar habitats, as well as in mangroves, swamps, and brackish lagoons in the Central American parts of their wintering range.

DIET

Belted Kingfishers live mostly on a diet of fish including sticklebacks, mummichogs, trout, and stonerollers. They also eat crayfish and may eat other crustaceans, mollusks, insects,

amphibians, reptiles, young birds, small mammals, and even berries. A kingfisher looks for prey from a perch that overhangs water, such as a bare branch, telephone wire, or pier piling. When it spots a fish or crayfish near the surface, it takes flight, dives with closed eyes, and grabs the prey in its bill with a pincer motion. Returning with its prize, it pounds the prey against the perch before swallowing it head first. It may also hover above the water instead of searching from a perch. As nestlings, Belted Kingfishers digest the bones and scales they consume, but by the time they leave the nest they begin disgorging pellets of fish skeletons and invertebrate shells.

NEST PLACEMENT

Belted Kingfishers excavate burrows in earthen banks, usually avoiding ones with vegetation (especially trees, whose roots get in the way of digging). They generally choose a bank near water, but may use a ditch, road cut, landfill, sand pit, or gravel pit far from water. A pair may select a nest site during courtship, usually high in the bank where floodwaters are unlikely to reach. The male probes the bank with his bill, flying back and forth to the female, who calls continuously from a nearby perch.

NEST DESCRIPTION

The male and the female take turns digging the burrow, with males spending about twice as much time digging as females. They usually take 3–7 days to finish it, but may sometimes take up to 3 weeks. The completed burrow





extends 3–6 feet into the bank, sloping upward so that rainwater won’t collect inside, and ends in an unlined chamber 8–12 inches in diameter and 6–7 inches high. Throughout the breeding season a layer of undigested fish bones, fish scales, and arthropod exoskeletons may accumulate and provide some insulation.

BEHAVIOR

Belted Kingfishers spend most of the year alone until they pair up during the breeding season. Males (and occasionally females) establish territories, which usually conform to the shape of the stream or shoreline. Belted Kingfishers are monogamous within each breeding season but form new pairs every year. The male feeds the female while courting her. Both members of the pair vigorously defend their territory by chasing away intruders while giving loud rattle calls. Kingfishers sometimes nest among Bank Swallows, especially in human-made habitats. Rough-winged Swallows may try to nest in kingfisher burrow entrances, but the kingfishers go in and out so frequently that they drive the swallows away. Predators of kingfishers include hawks, mammals, and snakes. When a Belted Kingfisher suspects an intruder in its territory, it may land on a perch and heave its body up and down with its crest elevated, or fly back and forth along the water, rattling noisily until the intruder leaves.

CONSERVATION

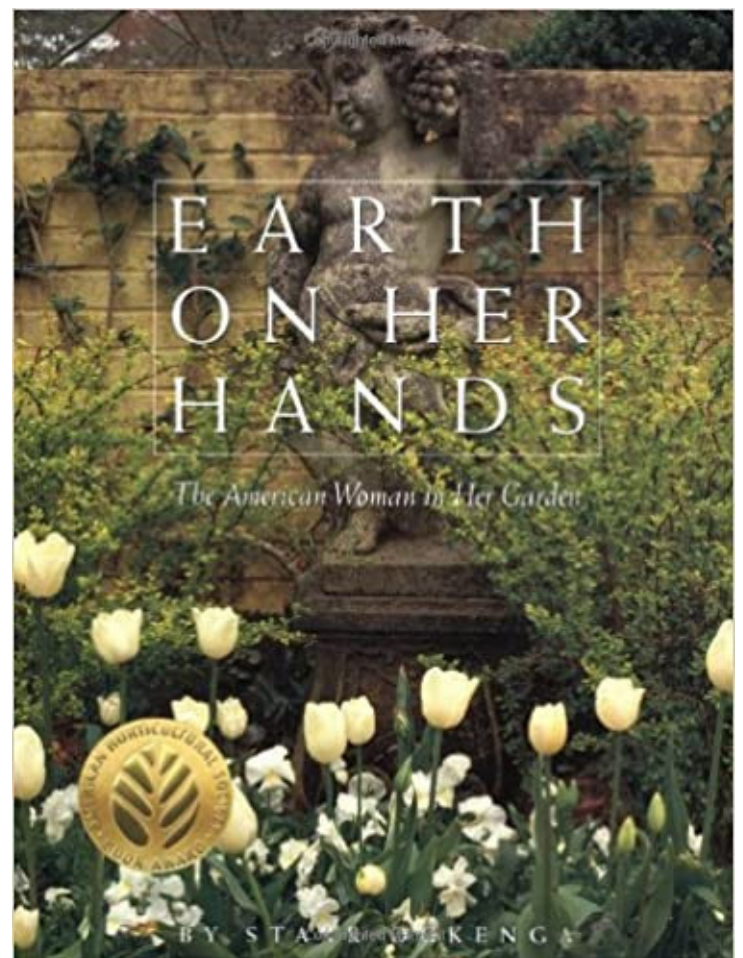
Belted Kingfishers are common and widespread. People used to shoot and trap kingfishers, especially near fish hatcheries and along trout

streams, to prevent them from killing fish. But hunting apparently did no long-term harm to the population, and has since been outlawed through migratory bird laws. Compared to other fish-eating birds, Belted Kingfishers seem to be relatively unaffected by environmental contaminants., possibly because their small prey accumulates only low levels of toxins. Kingfisher populations are limited by the number of earthen banks available for nesting, and some populations have grown and spread thanks to human-made sand and gravel pits. They are sensitive to disturbance, and may abandon territories if people begin frequenting the area.

EARTH ON HER HANDS

BARBARA'S BOOK REVIEW

Photographs and interviews lead readers into eighteen outstanding American backyard gardens and introduce them to the women who created them



BARRINGTON GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION

BGC PRESIDENT NINA KURTZ

Charlie Nardoizzi, a resident of Vermont, is an award winning, nationally recognized garden writer, speaker, radio and television personality. He has worked for more than 30 years bringing expert gardening information to home gardeners through radio, television, talks, tours, on-line, and the printed page. He also leads tours through gardens in Europe and England.



Many gardeners enjoy the sights and sounds of birds. Many birds are struggling due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. Charlie addressed these issues and offered many solutions in his talk "Gardening for the Birds".

Additionally, he discussed the best flowers, shrubs, and trees to grow in your landscape to enhance bird life and still have a beautiful yard. Charlie is warm, funny, informative, and contagiously serious about these issues.

For more on Charlie Nardoizzi go to his website, gardeningwithcharlie.com

ANGLE TREE GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION

ATGC SECRETARY KATHY BESSETTE

The Angle Tree Garden Club had not met in more than 1 year during the pandemic. Our September meeting was a luncheon held

at the Colonel Blackinton Inn in Attleboro, Massachusetts. We had 14 members in attendance and thanks to Program Chairs Kelly Fox and Sheryle DeGirolamo the event was very successful. The conversation was lively and the food was delicious as it always is at the Colonel Blackinton Inn. A short meeting was held. Before the luncheon, members were invited to sign up to create centerpieces for the tables which were then brought to our homes for our enjoyment. 6 members made original arrangements with the same floral bouquets from Amy's Flower Studio in North Attleboro. The arrangements were all different and delightful!



WESTERN CRANSTON GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION

WCGC COPRESIDENTS SARA WORTHINGTON & CHERYL CELESTE

In November 2021 our club had a workshop entitled "Fruitful Designs". It was a program led by members Linda Alves and Karen Cipriano.



This was one of our favorite programs because it showed off the talent of our members, both the leaders of the workshop and the participants. The arrangements were suitable for a Thanksgiving table using an array of flowers, fruits and or vegetables. The club supplied the oasis and containers. Members brought in their choice of materials which made the end result very interesting and unique. There were so many different creative designs to feast our eyes on! We feel that this kind of program brings together the membership by sharing ideas and materials! It was a great success and all who participated had a beautiful arrangement for their Thanksgiving table.



WANTAKNOHOW GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION

WGC VICE PRESIDENT NANCY MENDE

On a brisk, sunny November afternoon members of the Wantaknow Garden Club planted a tulip tree at the Coventry Recreation Field at Provident Place in memory of Sandi Fisher.



Sandi was a lifetime member of RIFGC and twice president of our Garden Club. As a beloved teacher, this spot was chosen where children will play and grow with Sandi's tulip tree.

CINDY WOOD GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION

CWGC PRESIDENT SUZANNE WIND

The members of the Cindy-Wood Garden Club were very excited to finally get outside on a



glorious day of sunshine and visit the gardens at Blithewold last April. It had been a long time since we were able to see each other and to share our appreciation of exquisite gardens. We had a tour of the property with so many beautiful plantings and were given the history behind the landscape and the issues they have in keeping everything looking its best. There were daffodils as far as the eye could see with many varieties mixed in together. The members were delighted to see so many unique and familiar flowers as well as the bamboo maze. The grounds rolled down to the bay with well manicured lawns and views we all enjoyed. We all planned to

return to see the gardens at different times of the year to see what surprises we might find.

HAMEHO GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION

HGC PRESIDENT ALETA JOHNSON

“November Designs for the Holidays”
Sue Redden, Master Flower Show Judge,
demonstrated how to make easy, festive
designs for home and tabletop.



Sue made six designs within the hour, from cornucopia to topiaries, with berries, twigs, and candlesticks, Brussels sprouts, and tiny white lights- there was no end to her creativity! Using readily available flowers and greenery from member's own backyards Sue showed how accessible design can be for everyone, even a novice. The designs were raffled to the delight of the audience, which was full of guests eager to learn Sue's simple floral design strategies.

EDGEWOOD GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION

EGC COPRESIDENTS PAUL
NUNES & MARY JO HINES

Edgewood Garden Club learned a bit about a different kind of farming last spring. On May 12, 2021, Edgewood Garden Club took part in a tour of the Matunuck Oyster Farm.



Club members headed into Potter's Pond on a beautiful, clear day aboard a boat while the boat's captain provided an introduction on aquaculture and fisheries on both a global and local scale. He outlined Matunuck's role in sustainable aquaculture and the environment—including the fact that oysters remove nitrogen-containing particles from the water increasing the oxygen available for other living organisms.

EGC Members toured the operation and got an in-depth look at how oysters are farmed, including the specially designed bags they grow in. The captain opened some of the bags to show oysters in various stages of growth and explained how they morph from fingernail size to plate-ready delicacies.

Following the tour, the club held its annual meeting over a delicious seafood lunch at the Matunuck Oyster Bar.



TOWER HILL FLOWER SHOW BLOOMS

TOWER HILL BOTANICAL GARDENS

1 Candace Morgenstern Newport and Tiverton GC "Harvest Moon" 1st, Designers Choice Award and Design of Excellence Award

2 Ann Huntoon, Gentian GC
Harvest Moon 2nd 90+

3 Judy Gray, Bayberry GC
Trick or Treat 3rd

4 Marjorie DeAngelis, Rehoboth GC
Bewitched 3rd

5 Linda Kirkpatrick, Portsmouth GC
Aucuba Japonica 1st & Arboreal Award

6 Barbara Blossom, Bristol GC
All Spirits Night-Gateway to Winter 3rd 90+

7 Marjorie DeAngelis, Rehoboth GC
Tsuga Canadensis 1st, Arboreal Award, and Horticultural Excellence

8 Linda Kirkpatrick, Portsmouth GC
Changing Patterns 3rd





NEW CLUB OFFICERS

PLUM BEACH GARDEN CLUB



Left to Right

Andrea Sarrasin, Marsha King, Elaine Lemieux ,
Darlene Vincent, Sheryl Hanson, Kathy Romeo,
Donna Lee Fronce, Judy Bitting, Barbara
Dawson, Jane Brockway, Martha Parks



QUONONQUOTT GARDEN CLUB



Left to Right

Molly Chamberlain, Patricia Orvis,
Natalie Haggerty, Sheryl Hanson,
Jackie Lampasona, Sarah Taranto

Not Pictured

Rose Natale - treasurer
Susan Parsons - secretary

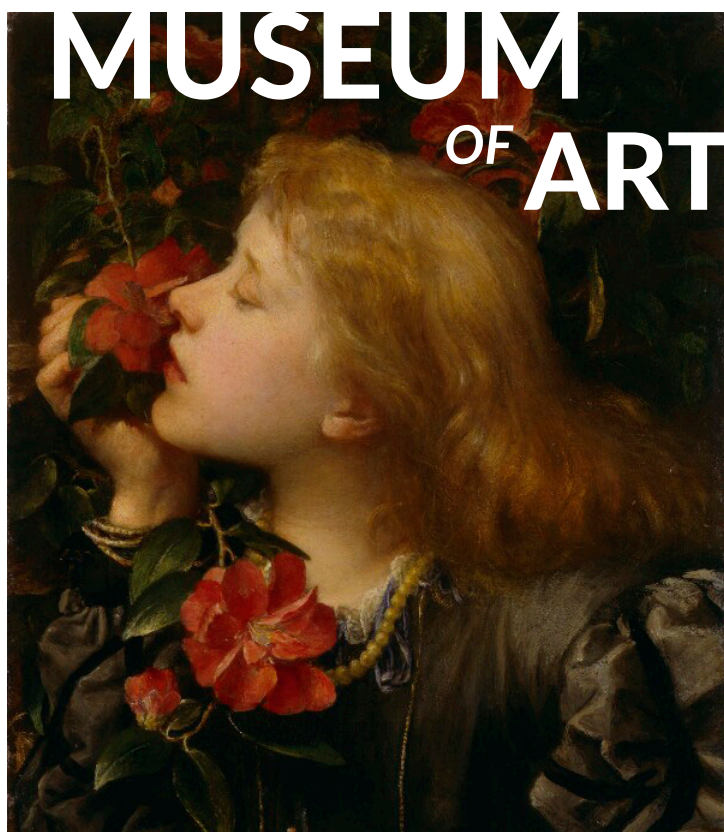
FLORA IN WINTER AND LOVE STORIES FROM THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY IN LONDON

WORCESTER ART MUSEUM TRIP



Join your fellow garden club friends on and get an early start to Spring with this annual floral extravaganza at the Worcester Art Museum. The museum will bloom with floral designs inspired by works of art as some of the region's top floral designers (including our own Judy Gray) interpret works from the special exhibition, *Love Stories*. Love's role in the creation of some of the greatest masterpieces in Western art is explored in this examination of how love and desire have been critical to the development of portraiture.

A guided tour on arrival introduces us to the museum and these special displays. Following our museum visit, we will enjoy a 2-course lunch at Sole Proprietor in Worcester (included), before heading home. Attendees will select an entrée upon arrival at the restaurant.



When: Friday, March 4th 2022

Departure: At 8:30 from Barrington Shopping Center, followed by a Providence pickup from the Stop & Shop lot, 333 W. River St. at 9AM (park on left side of the store)

Return: Approximately 4:00pm

Register Deadline: February 18th

Fee: \$92 per person, this includes museum admission, guided tour, lunch, motorcoach transportation, and driver tip.

Checks: Payable to RI Federation of Garden Clubs, to Paul Nunes, Treasurer, 920 county St., Seekonk, MA 02771.

Please indicate your name, garden club, phone number, email, your pickup stop, and how many people you're paying for either on/with your check, or via email to Paul.

ACTON GARDEN CLUB DIGS INTO DESIGN

RUTH ANDERSON FUNDS
EDUCATIONAL FLORAL
DESIGN WORKSHOP

Lead by floral designer Maureen Christmas, members of the Acton Garden Club design the day away in preparation for a flower show.





These photos are from the RIFGC Design Study Group; participants are guided by instruction from Ann Huntoon, Candace Morgenstern, and Cathy Moore.

FLOODING ON THE RISE RI FACING IMMINENT FLOODING ISSUES, WHAT CAN WE DO?

SARAH LEE, EGC

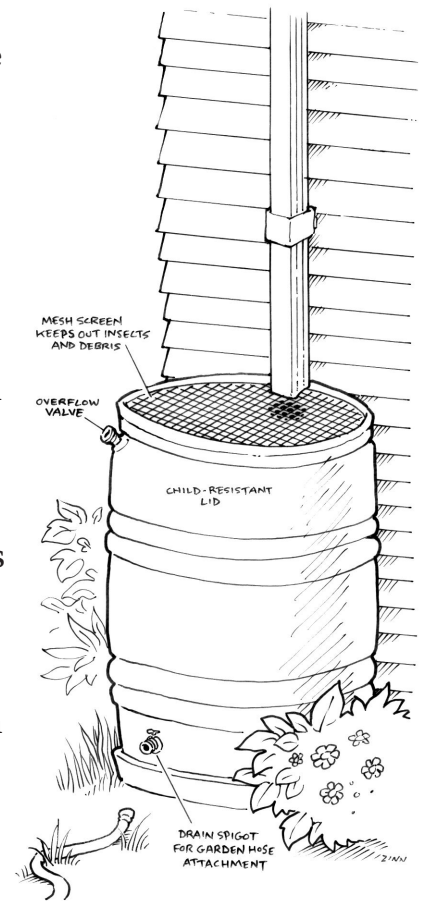
The recent wet weather brings to mind the challenges Rhode Island Communities are having with flooding and sea level rise. Even Cranston, which has less than 2 miles of coastline has already tapped city and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds to buy out several continually flooded properties. And many Rhode Island municipalities like Warren and Newport currently need millions of dollars to relocate utilities and waste water treatment plants. Warren will eventually buy back and turn a good amount of formally filled in land back into the wetlands they were prior to development.

These flooding issues seem bigger than the individual homeowner however one can help. For example, it is easy to clear the fall leaves from the storm drains in the streets by our homes and to not run dishwashers and laundry when it is raining. With a bit more effort we can help slow water running off our properties by incorporating rain gardens and bioswales in our landscape design. These are water catching depressions in yards or along roadways that can be planted with plants and trees that drink up water and filter the pollutants. If you live along the coast you can help restore the marshes by planting grasses which help prevent erosion and even build the dunes and banks. Every small effort adds up to a bigger change.

On a larger scale we can make a difference by advocating more responsible building and development practices. An October 22ndeco-RI article sites that flood insurance is heavily subsidized by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and that this FEMA program is insolvent to the tune of \$20 billion. Until the developers and builders foot

their share of the insurance risk, there is little incentive to change risky building practices. Carefully choose environmentally minded long range planning representatives then show up and speak up at planning meetings to help local representatives remember the bigger picture.

We live in the Ocean State and love our close proximity to the water. With sound daily practices and careful planning and design we will successfully deal with flooding and continue to enjoy living here.



THE ULTIMATE SEED SAVER

VERA BOWEN

Some call it the Doomsday Vault, others the Noah's Ark of food crops but I prefer The Most Important Room in the World. The ultimate Insurance Policy for the world's food supply.

Deep in the permafrost of a mountain on an island above the Arctic Circle between Norway and the North Pole lies a resource of vital importance for the future of humankind. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault was designed to hold seeds from all over the world. It is essentially a huge safety deposit box, holding the world's largest collection of agricultural biodiversity. "Inside this building

is 13,000 years of agricultural history,” says Brian Lainoff, lead partnerships coordinator of the Crop Trust, which manages the vault.

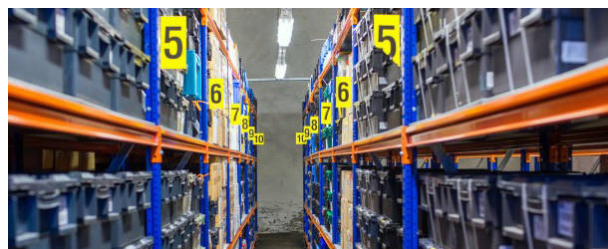
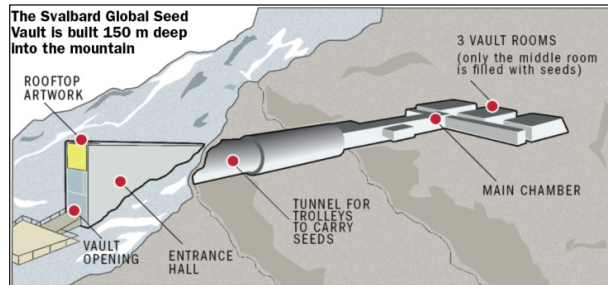
Although housed in Norway, the seeds belong to the donor countries and institutions and they can withdraw them at their convenience. As a matter of fact the Syrian government withdrew some of their seeds from Svalbard to replace those that were lost in their local repository during the bombings of Aleppo. There are some 1,700 seed banks around the world that safeguard collections of food crops and many of these are exposed to natural disasters and wars. The Svalbard Vault holds their backup supplies and currently has over a million varieties of seeds and grains. Opened on February 26, 2008 with the aim of providing a fail-safe seed storage facility, built to stand the test of time and the challenge of natural or man-made disasters.

There are three vaults leading off from the entrance chamber, but only one is currently in use, and its door is covered in a thick layer of ice, hinting at the subzero temperatures inside. Here, the seeds are stored in vacuum-packed silver packets and test tubes in large boxes that are neatly stacked on floor to ceiling shelves. None of these reasons for locating the facility in Norway would have sufficed had it not been for the fact that Svalbard offers almost perfect

conditions: it is remote and thus safer than other possible locations and it is naturally cold. We wanted to have a facility that would stay naturally frozen without the aid of mechanical freezing equipment. Inside the mountain in the permafrost, we get steady below-freezing temperatures. They mechanically lower the

temperature further to about minus 18 C [0 F], but this is much easier to accomplish when you start at -5 C [23 F] rather than above freezing. The site is also located in an area that is high up to prevent flooding; it is geologically stable and the area has low humidity. It is also the farthest north that scheduled airline flights go, making it very remote. If the electricity goes out or the refrigeration fails, the seeds will also still stay cold due to their location. The vault, and other vaults around the world, can be a way of preserving historical species of plants, as well. According to National Geographic, an estimated 90 percent of historic fruit and vegetable varieties in the United States have disappeared in the last 100 years. The seed vault can protect these seeds for future generations. The Global Seed Vault can hold massive amounts of seeds. It is built to store a whopping

4.5 million varieties of crops, with each variety containing around 500 seeds. This facility is indeed a reassuring hope for ongoing food security for generations to come!





Want to recognize a dedicated committee that's gone over the top? Need a gift for an environmentally-minded special someone?

HONOR AN INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP WITH A DONATION TO THE LIFE MEMBER GROUP'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND.

Since 1957, RIFGC's Life Member Group has been awarding scholarships for studies in horticulture, landscape design, environmental science, and related fields. Donations in any amount can be sent to RIFGC Life Member Group, c/o Paul Nunes, 920 County Street, Seekonk, MA 02771



WE'RE HAVING A PARTY!

BARRINGTON GARDEN CLUB PRESENTS

A small standard flower show on **Wednesday June 22**, Open to All RIFGC members.

Horticulture Division I

Section A; Planter

Theme: "Hold Me Tight"

Design Division II

Class 4; Creative Line Design

Theme: "Party Time!"

For Horticulture entries please email Sandi Tinyk sandi.tinyk7@gmail.com

For Design entries please email Kathy LaRiviere knlariv@outlook.com