



# Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society

✂ Volume XLV ✂ Winter 2021 ✂ Number 1 ✂

## Upcoming Programs

It remains uncertain when the Haggerty Center at Frelinghuysen Arboretum will reopen. Our spring lectures are scheduled for Saturday mornings at 10 a.m. via Zoom.

February 20, 2021, 10 a.m.

Marta McDowell will present 'Emily Dickinson's Gardening Life', and a brief update on her research on T.H. Everett, one of the founders of NARGS

March 13, 2021, 10 a.m.

Lesley Parness will present 'Drama Queens: Dark Beauties for Your Garden'

For more information on our speakers see page 4.

with Melissa Grossmann. Our thanks are also extended to Debi Graf, who has stepped down as Secretary; Debbie Zweig, from our Program Committee, will take her place. All other board members have agreed to remain in their positions for an additional term. In addition to serving as Treasurer, Don Grossmann has stepped up to be our Zoom meeting administrator.

## 2021 Dues are due 1/31/2021!

Dues are \$10 per person, or \$15 per mailing address. Since we won't be meeting in person, please make your check payable to Watnong Chapter NARGS, and mail it to Sid Jones, 123 Mountainside Drive, Randolph, NJ 07869.

## NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

Many thanks to Roxanne Hiltz, for her service to the Watnong chapter as Chair for the past two years. Roxanne has agreed to continue as a Co-Chair



Judy Glattstein's Methuselah Cyclamen.  
Details on page 9.

Our Annual Plant Sale at The Leonard J. Buck Garden has been cancelled for 2021. In spite of this, members are asked to please pot up and grow off extra plants or divisions, we are hopeful that we will be able to hold a member only sale or swap this summer.

## Membership Report, 11/21/2020

By Sid Jones, Membership

### 2020 Membership

80 Paid Memberships

27 Family

53 Individual

2 New Members

14 members were inactive/resigned, etc.

Dues received: \$ 980

### 2019 Membership

91 Paid Memberships

31 Family

60 Individual

12 New Members

9 members were inactive/ resigned, etc.

Dues received: \$1065

### 2018 Membership

88 Paid Memberships

33 Family

55 Individual

7 New Members

28 members were inactive/resigned, etc.

Dues received: \$1050

**2021 dues are due 1/31/20!**

## Watnong Chapter Year-End Financial Summary

By Don Grossmann, Treasurer

The Watnong Chapter ended 2020 with a checking account balance of \$11,261. The \$1,089 decrease over the prior year is primarily due to the lack of plant sale income. Expenses were minimized as much as possible, but the Chapter still had some program expenditures and certain fixed expenses. The chapter did not make any donations during 2020.

	2020
<b>Revenue</b>	
Membership Dues	\$635
April Plant Sale Profit - Net	-\$200
<b>Expenses</b>	
Administrative	-\$54
Hospitality	-\$60
Insurance	-\$327
Newsletter	-\$219
Program	-\$689
Rent	-\$175
<b>Net Cash Flow</b>	<b>-\$1,089</b>
<b>Checking Account Balance - Beginning of Year</b>	<b>\$12,350</b>
<b>Checking Account Balance - End of year</b>	<b>\$11,261</b>

For a five-year financial summary, please see page 11.

## Watnong Chapter Service Award By Frank Goodhart

Jim Avens, Somerset County Parks Commission Horticulture Department Manager, was presented a Watnong Chapter Service Award at our November meeting.

A New Jersey native, Jim graduated from Roselle Park High School and attended Kean College while working with his father's tree care company. Jim graduated from the Longwood Gardens Professional Gardener Training program in 1984 and worked in several Pennsylvania and New Jersey public gardens for over thirty-four years.

After his two years working and studying at Longwood Gardens, Jim worked as Grounds Manager for Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, which led to a strong appreciation of Piedmont native flora and fauna. Jim is a Founding Member and served on the Executive Board of Garden State Gardens Consortium, which publicized and increased awareness of the outstanding New Jersey public gardens. Jim also served as Horticulture Class Judge for the Rock Garden entries at the Philadelphia Flower Show, along with several other Watnong Chapter NARGS members, Mary Kent, Pam and Mike Wilson and Hilary and Michael Clayton. Jim also earned an American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta - North American Certificate in Horticulture.

Jim served on the Watnong Chapter NARGS program committee and was co-chairman of the chapter's plant sale committee for many years, working together with co-chairs Frank Goodhart, Karen Curry, and Melissa Grossmann in many exciting, successful plant sale events. These sales enabled both

Watnong members and the public to acquire rare and leading-edge plants that were not available in garden centers. Both he and his staff at The Leonard J. Buck Garden were highly dedicated to making the plant sale a success. Everyone admired Jim's strong work ethic; his kindness and patience, as well as his overall demeanor, which made him a joy to work with through the years.

The significant shared profits from the sale permitted The Leonard J. Buck Garden to improve their plantings and hardscape. Earnings helped the chapter to improve programming, give support to the Dr. Benjamin C. Blackburn Scholarship through Frelinghuysen Arboretum, and to renovate a rock garden at Laurelwood Arboretum.

For 23 years Jim and his husband Gary developed Wintergreen Knoll, a two-acre woodland garden in Lebanon Township near Califon, which opened occasionally for public tours for local fundraising events. They recently built their retirement home in 'lower and slower' Milton, Delaware on an acre of woodland about six miles inland from the ocean. Jim has already planted over one hundred mostly native trees and shrubs, and is greatly looking forward to developing their gardens and possibly volunteering at the newly opened Delaware Botanic Garden in Dagsboro, Delaware. Jim plans to continue his leisure activities of kayaking, hiking, canine companions, motorcycling, wildflower and nature study and

hopefully start up new hobbies of surf fishing and birding.

As of January 5, 2021, Jim's position will be filled by Shauna Moore. Shauna has served the Somerset County Park Commission since 2014, first as Rosarian of the Rudolf W. van der Goot Rose Garden at Colonial Park Gardens, and most recently as Horticulture Supervisor for Somerset County Park Commission. She is also a part-time faculty member at New York Botanical Garden.

### **Our Spring Speakers**

On February 20, Watnong member Marta McDowell will present "Emily Dickinson's Gardening Life", along with a brief update on her research on T. H. Everett, one of the founders of NARGS.

Marta teaches landscape history and horticulture at the New York Botanical Garden and consults for private clients and public gardens. Her latest book is *Emily Dickinson's Gardening Life*. Timber Press also published *The World of Laura Ingalls Wilder*, New York Times-bestselling *All the Presidents' Gardens*, and *Beatrix Potter's Gardening Life*, now in its seventh printing. Marta is working on a new book about *The Secret Garden* and its author, Frances Hodgson Burnett, due out from Timber Press in 2021. She is the 2019 recipient of the Garden Club of America's Sarah Chapman Francis Medal for outstanding literary achievement.

Lesley Parness, our March 13 speaker, recently retired as Superintendent of

Horticultural Education at the Morris County Park Commission, where she oversaw programming and interpretation at The Frelinghuysen Arboretum, Willowood Arboretum, and Bamboo Brook Education Center.

She is a member of the North Jersey Unit of the Herb Society of America, The Council on Horticultural and Botanical Libraries, and is a founding member and past President of Garden State Gardens, a consortium of New Jersey's public gardens. She writes *The Garden Historian*, featured bi-monthly in *Gardener News Magazine*.

Lesley lectures and leads hands-on workshops to garden clubs, plant and historic societies, Master Gardeners, libraries, and public garden professionals throughout the the mid-Atlantic region.

Please join us!

## **NEWS FROM NARGS**

### **NARGS or nargilé?**

**Which way North America?**  
**by Panayoti Kelaidis**

Those of us trying to publicize the North American Rock Garden Society experienced a bit of a shock a few months ago when we discovered that the tag #NARGS was already being used on Twitter and elsewhere for smoking on the hookah. I knew the word "nargilé"—since that word is used in Greek (ναργιλέ) for the hookah -I had a notorious uncle, born in Ottoman Crete,

who smoked a water pipe- but I had no idea it had been contracted to “nargs” thereby obfuscating our marketing efforts. We persisted with “NARGSrocks” and hopefully will eventually smash the water-pipers...so to speak.

This coincidence has nudged me into some philosophical speculation: are there REALLY that *many* hookah enthusiasts in America who are so enamored of their water pipes that they hashtag Twitter, Instagram, and their like with OUR Society initials? Would that many North Americans even really “get” what a “nargs” was? Most people must know “Hookah,” but “nargilé?” or its contraction “nargs”? This has presented a bit of a challenge for me.

I quit smoking cigarettes forty years ago—and I still recall a time with the smell of smoke actually sort of appealed to me, and I relished the seemingly pleasurable sensation of the smoke corroding my lungs. It took a long time to really get over the sweetness of the memory, but somewhere along the line I developed the response many of us have of surprise and slight repugnance at seeing a cigarette in someone’s hand—or worse—between their lips. I have to restrain myself when I watch people I like start to smoke: I really would like to grab the thing and stamp it out like Smokey the Bear...but I’m sufficiently wise to know that doesn’t work.

There are hobbies, there are pastimes, there are mildly irritating habits like smoking cigarettes (or hookahs) and....and then there is rock gardening.

I like to think that our “hobby” is different. Special. And here is a sort of summation of my philosophy: at its very best—at a great estate or a hoary botanic garden or especially in the small gardens of talented homeowners -a rock garden is a breathtaking work of art equal in my eyes to any painting or statue. To create a naturalistic slope, berm or corner that resembles a magical picture of an alpine scene or woodland dell is really a magical thing! Even those of us whose gardens are not quite there yet— “works in progress,” rock gardens are not “just” attempts at fine art, they are veritable scientific laboratories where we grapple with the mysteries of plant physiology and struggle to understand the ecology of plant interaction. We grow and come to know dozens, hundreds perhaps even thousands of plants from around the world and often go on sorties to see and appreciate them in nature. That’s something that I believe is noble and worthy.

In the Anthropocene, where humans are still destroying thousands of acres of wild habitat daily, I believe our “hobby” represents a sort of waking up and almost a bold act of protest! I, for one, see my rock gardens as an attempt to redeem, understand, and ultimately preserve that which we are inadvertently still so rapidly eroding. I don’t think of rock gardening as “just a pastime.” For me it’s an act of inquiry into the natural world and a profound effort to bring Civilization and Nature into harmony. What other endeavor encompasses the world of Art and that



of Science so elegantly? With the threat of climate change, I fear our gardens may become little arks of genetic resources to boot—something I hope we can avert.

Speaking for myself, my rock garden has been a solace and source of strength in this trying time of COVID. I pity those who don't have a garden. It's fun, good exercise, gets one out into the fresh air, and best of all, if you are active in a chapter or join N.A.R.G.S., you become part of an amazing community of diverse, engaging and, yes, sometimes eccentric gardeners! I have been an active participant in N.A.R.G.S. for fifty years - even when I smoked!. I have come to know and become dear friends with hundreds of rock gardeners in practically every state and province of North America, and far beyond: I have stayed in many of your homes and many of you have visited mine. Indirectly, because of N.A.R.G.S., I even pursued rock gardening as a profession—and have worked in a public garden forty years (yes, I quit smoking when I started at Denver Botanic Gardens). I can't imagine life without #NARGS- and I don't mean a hookah!.

I dream of a day when “nargs” will come to mean N.A.R.G.S. and not hookah. So please use #NARGSrocks in social media till then! Better yet, be sure to join <https://www.nargs.org/faq/how-do-i-join-nargs>. Unlike Herbert Hoover, we won't promise a “chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage”: rock gardening isn't necessarily for everyone.

But everyone really ought to at least have a trough or two, don't you think?

*Panayoti Kelaidis is the vice-president of the North American Rock Garden Society and co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Chapter. He is Senior Curator and Director of Outreach at Denver Botanic Gardens.*

## Our November Speaker

On November 21, 2020, speaker **Frank Goodhart** presented “**Trees, Shrubs, and Companion Plants for the Smaller Gardens**”. Frank has kindly provided us with a plant list from his talk.

### Shrubs

*Abelia x zanderi* 'Little Richard'  
*Acer shigagashira*  
*Buxus sempervirens* 'Unraveled'  
*Buxus sempervirens* 'Dee Runk'  
*Calycanthus floridus* 'Michael Lindsey'  
*Clethra alnifolia* 'Tom's Compact'  
*Cornus sanguinea* 'Compressa'  
*Daphne cneorum* f. *verlottii* x *Daphne arbuscula*  
*Enkianthus perulatus*  
*Enkianthus perulatus* 'Compacta'  
*Eleutherococcus sieboldianus* 'Variegatus'  
*Fothergilla gardenii* 'Blue Shadow'  
*Fothergilla gardenii* 'Epsteinii'  
*Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Angelly'  
*Hibiscus syriacus* 'Diana'  
*Hydrangea serrata* 'Blue Billow'  
*Ilex glabra* Gem Box®  
*Ilex x Meserve* 'Horstmann's Mini'  
*Ilex opaca* 'Maryland Dwarf'  
*Ilex verticillata* 'Red Sprite'

*Itea virginica* 'Shirley's Compact'  
*Lagerstroemia* x *Pink Velour*  
*Rhododendron* x *Weston's Innocense*  
*Rhododendron mucronulatum* 'Cornell  
 Pink'  
*Rhododendron* 'Blue Ridge'  
*Spiaea bullata* 'Crispa'  
*Syringa meyeri* 'Palabin'

### **Dwarf Conifers**

*Abies koreana* 'Icebreaker'  
*Cephalotaxus harringtonia* 'Duke  
 Gardens'  
*Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Ivan's Column'  
*Juniperus communis* 'Little Pygmy'  
*Picea abies* 'Mikulasovice'  
*Picea glauca* 'Cecelia'  
*Picea mariana* x *Picea omorika* 'Machala'  
*Pinus cembra* 'Pygmaea'  
*Pinus parviflora* 'Tani mano uki'  
*Pinus strobus* 'Angel Falls'  
*Pinus strobus* 'Mini Twists'  
*Sciadopitys verticillata* 'Grüne Kugel'  
*Tsuga canadensis* 'Jeddolah'

### **Small and Fastigate Trees**

*Acer palmatum* 'Red Filagree Lace'  
*Acer palmatum* 'Ryusen'  
*Acer palmatum* 'Twombly's Red  
 Sentinel'  
*Acer platanoides* 'Rezek'  
*Acer pseudosieboldianum* 'Sode no uchi'  
*Amelanchier alnifolia* 'Obelisk'  
*Betula nigra* 'Little King'  
*Carpinus betulus* 'Columnaris Nana'  
*Cercis chinensis* 'Don Egolf'  
*Cercis canadensis* 'Ruby Falls'  
*Chionanthus pygmaeus*  
*Chionanthus virginicus* 'White Knight'  
*Cornus florida* 'Red Pygmy'

*Cornus kousa* 'Lustgarten'  
*Cornus kousa* 'Weaver's Weeping'  
*Cornus kousa* 'Wolf Eyes'  
*Ginkgo biloba* 'Gnome'  
*Ginkgo biloba* 'Goldspire'  
*Gordlinia grandiflora* 'Sweet Tea'  
*Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Slender  
 Silhouette'  
*Metasequoia glytostroboides* 'Bonsai' and  
 'Miss Grace'  
*Prunus* x 'Snofozam'  
*Styrax japonicas* 'Fragrant Fountains'  
*Taxodium distichum* 'Cascade Falls'  
*Zelkova serrata* 'Goblin'

### **Conifers for Shade/Partial Shade**

*Cephalotaxus*, *Chamaecyparis*,  
*Cryptomeria*, *Metasequoia*, *Picea orientalis*  
*Sciadopitys*, *Taxus*, *Thuja*, *Tsuga*

### **Deer Resistant Conifers**

*Cephalotaxus*  
*Juniperus chinensis* and *rigida*  
*Picea abies*, *Picea pungens* and other  
 sharp needled *Picea*  
*Pinus*

### **Conifer Information**

American Conifer Society Website,  
 Conifer Database  
 Iseli Nursery - On line catalog with  
 pictures and descriptions

### **Local Sources for Conifers**

Condursos Garden Center & Farm  
 Market, Montville  
 Victoria's Nursery, Paramus  
 The Farm at Green Village  
 Plant Detectives, Chester  
 Hall's Garden Center, Berkley Heights

Great Swamp Greenhouses, Gillette

### **Sources for Unusual and Collectors' Plants**

Broken Arrow Nursery, Hamden CT  
Forestfarm Nursery, Williams, OR

### **Mail Order Sources for Conifers**

Stanley and Sons Nursery (Now Blue Mountain Nursery, LLC)  
Conifer Kingdom

### **In Memoriam**

Watnong member Laura Hooper passed on November 5, 2020. Laura assisted with our seed packing efforts and was a regular attendee to our meetings. All services were private. She was 73.

In December, Carole Stober shared other sad news that Martin Weinberg passed in June. He was 97 years old; no obituary was published. Martin was predeceased last year by his wife, Ruby; together they gardened at Frog Pond Farm in Califon. They were among the earliest members of the Watnong chapter, and contributed a great deal, hosting speakers, opening their home and garden for tours and lectures, and so much more. Carole was quick to point out that Martin was not a 'tag-along' with Ruby but involved in his own right. We Claytons always enjoyed their visits to The Hay, Honey Farm. Martin had a great sense of humor; when he and Ruby came to drop off a plant too large for their greenhouse, he introduced us to

'the gas principal'- the plant collection will quickly expand to fill the greenhouse, no matter how large. Another lasting piece of advice following a funny story: when you visit a country with a different form of writing- say, Japan- always bring a brochure from the front desk with you before getting in a taxi. As I recall it, his last visit to The Hay, Honey Farm was to the Watnong summer picnic in 2014. I had recruited my then 20-year-old daughter to help, and she somehow was seated with Martin and Ruby. I heard a lot of laughter from the table, and at the end of the day she smiled and said 'that Martin and Ruby are great! They are so much fun!' Whether we realize it or not, all Watnong members have been the beneficiaries of their generosity. Like my family, I hope that you are fortunate enough to have spent time with them and remember them with a smile.

-Hilary Clayton.



### **It Keeps Growing for Me!** **A Methuselah *Cyclamen persicum*** **By Judy Glattstein**



How long does a bulb live? I'm lumping together all geophytes, from true bulbs such as daffodils, corms such as crocus, and tubers such as *Cyclamen*. The true bulbs make offsets. Corms use up the plump fat structure that produced spring's flowers and foliage, and also make offsets. *Cyclamen* make no offsets. There seems to be a natural limit on the size of *Cyclamen hederifolium*, the end of summer flowering winter green foliage species we enjoy in our gardens. And then there is my methuselah *Cyclamen persicum*.

My parents brought the *Cyclamen* back from Israel in December 1973, having found it at the side of the road where it had apparently fallen out of the bank after some maintenance work. In those pre-CITES days there were no restrictions on importation of *Cyclamen*, and I did have a plant import permit. If memory serves, my father was sent to a restroom at Kennedy Airport to rinse the tuber off and clean it up a bit more.

At the time I lived in Norwalk, Connecticut. The well-traveled tuber was potted up and kept under fluorescent grow lights in the basement, where it resided for the next several years, until we moved to the next town over. The grow light set-up became more elaborate, with four-tube, four-foot long fluorescent units, each using two cool-white and two warm-white bulbs. The *Cyclamen* continued to grow and flower quite nicely.

In 1995 we moved 125 miles west, to New Jersey, accompanied by the *Cyclamen* and a number of other plants. Now it had a place in a spare bathroom, kept on the downright chilly side except when we had house guests, and in a west-facing window.

I had a lean-to greenhouse installed in late 1999. Primarily intended for geophytes, it is kept on the cool side with the thermostat set for 50 degrees Fahrenheit night temperature.

Care is rather basic. Along about late September I top dress the *Cyclamen* tuber in some years, repot it in other years, and some years I do neither. When I measured it in 2001 it was somewhat irregular in form, six inches long by five inches wide, with a very bumpy, irregular surface due to all the floral trunks that cover the upper surface.

Gardening is a steadfast constant in these peculiar times of covid-19. On October 7 I removed the gravel mulch that covered the Methuselah *Cyclamen's* pot and repotted it in fresh gritty, free-draining potting mix. I gave it one good drink of water and waited for signs of awakening growth.

Is there a limit to size, to longevity? I have had this particular cyclamen for 47 years and it was not an infant when I received it.

Time will tell. Meanwhile, I await the first new leaves pushing up through the gritty soil, and January's flowers.

## WATNONG CLASSIFIEDS



Free to a good home: a 3-gallon sprayer used years ago to spray evergreens with an antidesiccant. If you're interested, contact Pat Hilgendorff at [pathdorff@verizon.net](mailto:pathdorff@verizon.net).



## HYPERTUFA TROUGHS



**Coopers Hollow Farm** specializes in native plants with people-pleasing qualities; pollinator friendly and ecologically beneficial. We offer selections of flowering perennials and shrubs, understory trees, shade grasses for dry to wet areas, ferns, and ground covers. Smaller sizes are available for mass plantings. Coopers Hollow is a NJ registered nursery located in Bernardsville, using only organic practices (not certified).

We are open by appointment only. For requests and availability, contact [CoopersHollowFarm@yahoo.com](mailto:CoopersHollowFarm@yahoo.com)

If you would like to place an ad here, send copy to the Newsletter Editor, [hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com). The deadline for our Spring 2021 edition is March 21, 2021.

NARGS Watnong Chapter		Five Year Financial Summary				
		2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
<b>Revenue</b>						
	Membership Dues	\$635	\$1,160	\$1,100	\$2,355	\$1,185
	April Plant Sale Profit - Net	-\$200	\$5,235	\$3,891	\$3,053	\$4,752
	November Plant Sale Profit - Net		\$100			
<b>Expenses</b>						
	Administrative	-\$54	-\$46	-\$129	-\$264	-\$30
	Bus Trip - Net	\$0	-\$82	-\$400	-\$653	-\$390
	Hospitality	-\$60	-\$809	-\$823	-\$1,974	-\$1,961
	Insurance	-\$327	-\$327	-\$327	-\$327	-\$333
	Newsletter	-\$219	-\$298	-\$258	-\$325	-\$138
	Program	-\$689	-\$1,810	-\$3,023	-\$2,038	-\$1,931
	Rent	-\$175	-\$175	-\$175		-\$350
<b>Donations</b>						
	Blackburn Scholarship		-\$500	-\$500	-\$500	
	National NARGS		-\$500		-\$500	
	Laurelwood		-\$200		-\$1,475	
<b>Net Cash Flow</b>		-\$1,089	\$1,748	-\$645	-\$2,648	\$804
<b>Checking Account Balance - Beginning of Year</b>		\$12,350	\$10,601	\$11,246	\$13,894	\$13,090
<b>Checking Account Balance - End of year</b>		\$11,261	\$12,350	\$10,601	\$11,246	\$13,894

### 2021 WATNONG CHAPTER OFFICERS

Co-Chair	Roxanne Hiltz	973-361-6680	roxanne.hiltz@gmail.com
Co-Chair	Melissa Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
Vice Chair	Brian Coleman	973-325-3453	bell.coleman@verizon.net
Treasurer	Don Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
Secretary	Debby Zweig	201-230-7725	zweig@hotmail.com

### 2021 WATNONG COMMITTEES

Membership & Distribution	Sid Jones	973-366-7241	rsj40jr@icloud.com
Programs	Noel Schulz	201-445-6445	noelschulz@verizon.net
Program Committee	Debby Zweig	201-230-7725	zweig@hotmail.com
Digital Projector	Michael Wilson	862-397-9339	miwilson@ramapo.edu
Publicity	Martha Podilchuk	908-507-6487	marthapod@comcast.net
Plant Sale	Melissa Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
Newsletter	Hilary Clayton	908-781-2521	hilaryhclayton@gmail.com

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**THE WATNONG CHAPTER  
NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY  
c/o The Leonard J. Buck Garden  
11 Layton Road  
Far Hills, NJ 07931**

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