

Garden Scoop Newsletter – February 2024

As we look back on different aspects of the club's history, it is a little amusing that the Arlington Garden Club and its members have an enthusiasm for a bit of friendly competition. The Club has sponsored various competitions over the years amongst its members as well as community wide events. Previous articles have already touched upon some of these events including a community wide Holiday Decoration contest and the Junior Garden Club Contest.



Mary Roberts, First Place winner, shown in her Smokey Point area garden.

The Arlington Garden Club has sponsored some friendly competitions within its own members. At its third meeting as a new garden club in 1934, the club established a Trophy Committee. Members submitted flowers and arrangements and awards were given for various categories. Last year our club revived this tradition and held a bloom contest. What a talented group of gardeners we have in this club! Things are a little more relaxed these days. Typically several members will bring a special flower or arrangement and simply talk about this during the sharing time at the monthly meetings. It is always a treat to see what members bring to a meeting!

Along these same lines of fun and friendly competition, the Club sponsored a Victory Garden Contest in 1983. The first place winner, Mary Roberts (left), received \$100 in gift certificates. She claimed that the key to her success was to keep costs down and labor to a minimum. She raised all vegetables and flowers from seeds, used raised beds for ease of access, and fertilized exclusively with chicken manure which she purchased by dump truck loads!

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In addition to contests, the Arlington Garden Club has used other methods to recognize accomplishments. In the 1970's the Club worked jointly with the district garden club to award Certificates of Merit to recognize businesses for their landscaping efforts. In 2001 the club established the Myrtle Ruckert Award (seated at left). That year the award recognized two individuals from the community who contributed to maintain the city's greenspace. The new award recognized another separate accomplishment. Myrtle was surprised at the presentation to learn that the award was named in her honor. Myrtle Ruckert had been a member for 55 years, a bookkeeper by trade, and had served as club

treasurer for a good share of those years! Also pictured is Karen Ricketts (center) one of our present members!

Five years later, 2005, Myrtle attended another presentation. This same award was given to John Evans. At that time, Myrtle was 95 years old and still a garden club member. The award was given to John in recognition of his time, talent and advice for the beautification of Arlington. He believed deeply in planting trees and shrubs to better the environment. He supplied the club with *Cornus kousa* "Sartomi" dogwood trees which the club selected as a special tree to represent themselves. They offered a set of dogwoods to the city for planting along the Centennial Trail in honor of all the club's past presidents. In upcoming editions of the Scoop, we will continue to look back at the club's rich history which can be a guiding influence as we turn toward the club's future.