



A member of
California Garden Clubs, Inc.

Atherton Garden Guild
Since 1966

Garden Gate
December 2025

AGG
Holiday Luncheon

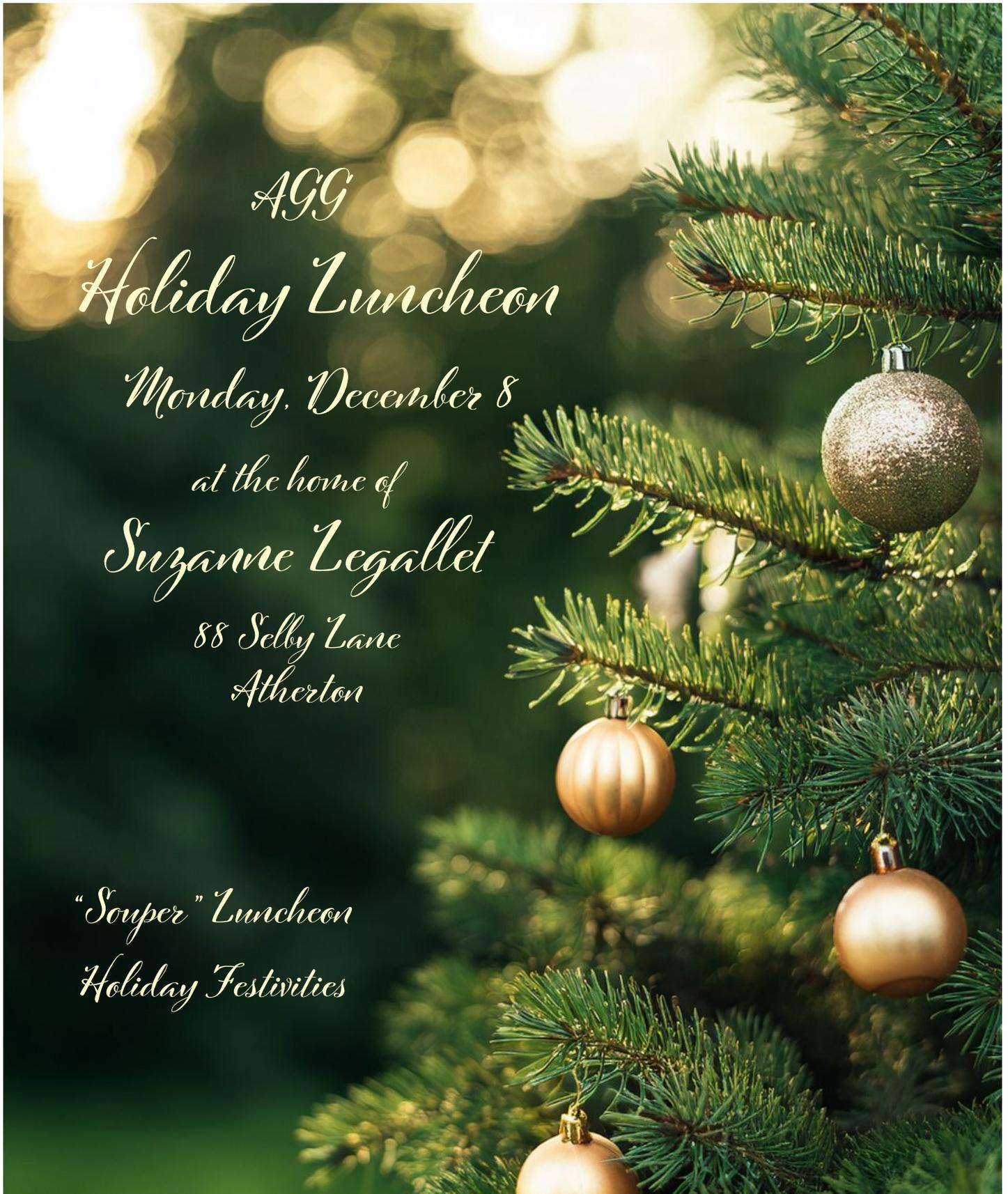
Monday, December 8

at the home of

Suzanne Legallet

*88 Selby Lane
Atherton*

*"Souper" Luncheon
Holiday Festivities*



Calendar

Calendar

Meetings

Board Meetings: 9:00 am

Social: 9:30 am

Meetings: 10:00 am

Meetings are on Mondays
unless otherwise noted

December

Monday, December 8

Holiday Luncheon

Suzanne Legallet's home

88 Selby Lane, Atherton

Tuesday, December 9

Floral Demonstration

Atherton Library

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

January

Monday, January 5

Atherton Town Center

History Room

February

Monday, February 2

Atherton Town Center

History Room

Wednesday, February 4

Floral Demonstration

Atherton Library

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

March

Monday, March 2

Atherton Town Center

History Room

Tuesday, March 10

Floral Demonstration

Atherton Library

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

April

Monday, April 6

Jennings Pavilion

Holbrook Palmer Park

May

Monday, May 4

Suzanne Legallet

88 Selby Lane, Atherton

Wednesday, May 13

Garden Tour

June

Monday, June 1

Patti Spezzaferro's home

130 Selby Lane, Atherton

Dress up~it's a party!

Get ready to celebrate the season

Monday, December 8

11:30 am

88 Selby Lane, Atherton



Get ready to celebrate the season with your fellow garden guild members. This year, we're gathering at the beautiful home of Suzanne Legallet on December 8th. You'll be greeted by Santa Claus himself on the front porch before stepping inside to enjoy the spectacular holiday atmosphere. Be sure to admire the stunning floral arrangements designed by at least seven of our talented guild members, and don't miss Suzanne's

extraordinary collection of Santa dolls adorning her mantles. You'll find inspiration everywhere, especially in the window decoration gracing the family room and kitchen. Every room, even the bathrooms, is decked out with festive flair! Come hungry. A selection of delicious, favorite soups will be provided by Suzanne, Mimi, and Dana. We can't wait to share some holiday cheer with you! *Kasey Hansen*

December Library Flowers

Deliver flowers early Monday and pick up late Sunday.

Holidays and closed dates are listed each month.

Library closures are November 11, Veterans Day, November 26-27 Thanksgiving

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 Carrie Drake | 15 Patty Leugers |
| 8 Erika Enos | 22 Bing Hai |
| 29 Karen Handal | |

December Hospitality

Chair Kasey Hansen

Dana Bonham, Julie Douglass, Carrie Drake,
Karen Handal, Mimi Hillyard, Suzanne Legallet, Patty Leugers,
Katy McCormick, Suellen Rottiers, Carol Selig



In Memoriam



Nan Ray

*Past AGG President
and loyal member since
1987. Lover of plants,
flowers, especially
Rhododendrons*



Nancy Faisant

*Past AGG member.
Artist, lover of
gardens and
California landscapes*



Mike Matthews

*Beloved husband of
Sue Matthews*

President's Letter



BUGS!! Good or Bad? What an informative presentation! I'm not ready to eat bugs for more protein, or serve them to my guests at Thanksgiving, but it was interesting to learn all the beneficial uses for insects!

I did some traveling this fall to Charleston, South Carolina. Gratefully I didn't see too many bugs while there! I had been there once before, but this time made more of an impression on me. The culture and history felt so different than the Bay Area, I felt like I was in another country! But, the gardens and plantings were quite familiar and lovely. We visited the Magnolia Plantation which is known for its collection of camellias. My dad and grandfather were avid camellia gardeners, so the plants made me feel right at home. The sasanquas were in full bloom and were amazing. Taller than my head! So old! Likely survived the Civil War! The rice fields and the plantation houses did not

survive the war, but the gardens did! One emancipated slave loved the gardens there so much he stayed on at the plantation as the head gardener despite living with his 18 children in a 3-room former slave cabin with just one electrical outlet! He was devoted to that garden!! And it shows! I was impressed. Several of the plants had deep magenta blooms that were much larger and more ruffled than the ones I know. Such fun to see.

Do you have a favorite flower or plant that reminds you of home? Do you have them planted in your garden? What plant or flower would your family say reminds them most of your home? Maybe you can ask them during your holiday gatherings!

It's holiday time already! How time flies! This newsletter will get to you around Thanksgiving. Hope you have a delicious gathering with family and friends and take time to reflect on all that you are grateful for. We are so abundantly blessed here in the Bay Area! So much to be thankful for!

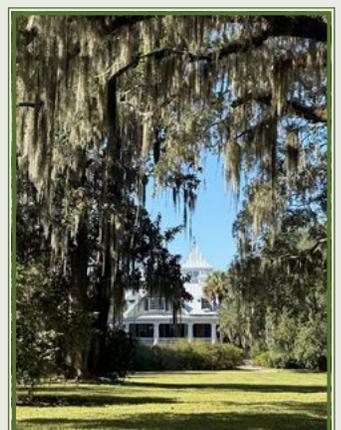
And then Christmas! So much beauty! So much magical fun! During my years at Filoli I had the privilege of working on the entry dried flower tree. It was beautiful. What is your favorite type of Christmas decoration? Don't you think it's funny that as our gardens go to sleep, we work so hard to bring some of the garden into our homes as we decorate for Christmas? I know I bring more botanical material into my house during the holidays than at any other time of the year!

Looking forward to celebrating with you at Suzanne Legallet's for our "Souper" Holiday Luncheon.

There will be no meeting, just fun!

Nyna

Camellias at Magnolia Plantation in Charleston, South Carolina



November Meeting/Program



Member Photos



FILOLI dried flower Christmas Tree from Nyna Dolby



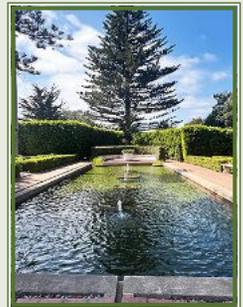
Flowers in Honai from Di Bryan

*Christmas Tree & wreath
Karen Handal*

Terri Bailard's Visit to a Santa Barbara Estate/Garden



A few weeks ago, I visited a large estate in Santa Barbara called Bellesguardo. It was owned by Huguette Clark, the eccentric daughter of a copper baron from the early 1900s. The estate was maintained in pristine condition, even though Huguette didn't visit it for the last 50 years of her life. I learned about it reading a book about Huguette's life in the book "Empty Mansions." Sadly, during the drought, they pulled out the massive rose garden to conserve water for the trees.



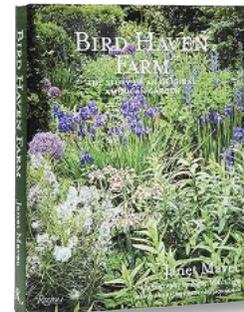
Horticulture Page

December Horticulture Report

by Patti Spezzaferro

Master Gardener Check List

- Indoors, keep holiday greens well-watered or mist them daily to maintain their freshness. Keep trees and greens away from hot sunny windows and heat sources. Poinsettias should be kept away from heat sources. If you're using poinsettias to decorate outdoors, bring them in at night to protect them from the cold.
- Take advantage of the rain we get this month. December is still a great time to plant perennials, shrubs, and trees, allowing roots to establish themselves and promoting lush spring growth.
- Plant some cool-season annuals, like violas, primroses, and pansies.
- Be aware of frost warnings. Be prepared to cover with a frost Blanket for protection. Note: Remove frost blankets during the daytime hours. Keep plants watered during this time.
- Feed the birds: keep those feeders full.
- Select bare-root roses for a summer rose garden.
- You CAN plant vegetables in winter! See our Year-round Vegetable Planting Calendars for San Mateo and San Francisco Counties for what can be grown now in your area.
- Now is an ideal time to plant tulip bulbs. Chilled bulbs may grow taller with larger flowers than non-chilled bulbs.
- Clean up the garden – remove excessive leaf litter, etc. – to avoid over-wintering diseases.
- Sow wildflower seeds now for instant spring color.
- Start planning your spring garden now!



Book of the Month

Bird Haven Farm

The Story of an Original American Garden

Bird Haven Farm tells the story of Janet Mavec's transformation of a 100-acre historic property in New Jersey into a vibrant and evolving garden paradise. The book chronicles her journey from city dweller to passionate gardener, detailing the challenges and triumphs of blending the old with the new, honoring the land's history (including its connection to Nancy Drew author/publisher Harriet Stratemeyer Adams), and creating a space for community, celebration, and connection with nature. It explores the thoughtful design principles implemented by Spanish landscape architect Fernando Caruncho, renowned for creating serene gardens.

Buy it on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Happy Holidays



This & That

Suggested AGG Mission Statement Change

To be discussed at the January Board Meeting



Current Mission Statement

The Atherton Garden Guild meets to educate members in all matters related to horticulture, conservation, and Floral Design

Proposed Mission Statement

The Atherton Garden Guild meets to educate members **and the greater community** in all matters related to horticulture, conservation, and floral design.

Reasons for the Suggested Mission Statement Change

The Atherton Garden Guild has been engaged with the greater community for some time and it has been suggested that the Mission Statement should reflect the AGG involvement.

Current Community Involvement

Civic Donations • The Rose Garden • Library Floral Demonstrations
Atherton Library Flowers • Bouquets to Books • The Spring Garden Tour

If the AGG Board approves the change, it will be brought to the Membership for a vote.

BOUQUETS TO ART 2026

A Floral Affair

March 3 - 8

deYoung & Legion of Honor Museums

Opening Night Gala

deYoung Museum

March 2

5:30 pm - 10:00 pm

advance tickets required

6:00 pm

San Francisco City College

Floral Fashions

parade down the central staircase

moderated by Steven Brown!

Programs

deYoung Museum at 2:00 pm

advance tickets required

March 3

Kiana Underwood: *Tulipina*

March 6

Gina Lett Shrewsbury: *Celebrating Nature
with Sustainable Floral Designs
for a Greener Tomorrow*

City College of San Francisco
Environmental Horticulture/Floristry Department



Holiday Sale

Scholarship Benefit

Thursday, December 11, 2025

11:00 AM-2:00 PM

Student Projects

Poinsettias

Orchids

Holiday Decorations

Indoor and Outdoor Plants

Horticulture Center

Ocean Campus

371-375 Judson Ave.

between

Genessee and Foerster

San Francisco, CA, 94112

For more information: 415-239-3140
Cash or Check please
for spring schedule of classes visit www.ccsf.edu



Holiday Flower

The Poinsettia

Did you know



Poinsettia plants are native to Central America, especially an area of southern Mexico known as ‘Taxco del Alarcon’ where they flower during the winter. The ancient Aztecs called them ‘cuetlaxochitl’. The Aztecs had many uses for them including using the flowers (they’re really special types of leaves known as bracts rather than being flowers) to make a purple dye for clothes and cosmetics and the milky white sap was made into a medicine to treat fevers. (Today we call the sap latex!)

The poinsettia was made widely known because of a man called Joel Roberts Poinsett (that’s why we call them Poinsettia!). He was the first Ambassador from the USA to Mexico in 1825. Poinsett had some greenhouses on his plantations in South Carolina, and while visiting the Taxco area in 1828, he became very interested in the plants. He immediately sent some of the plants back to South Carolina, where he began growing the plants and sending them to friends and botanical gardens.

One of the friends he sent plants to was John Bartram of Philadelphia. At the first Philadelphia flower show, Robert Buist, a plants-man from Pennsylvania saw the flower and he was probably the first person to have sold the poinsettias under their botanical, or latin name, name ‘Euphorbia pulcherrima’ (it means, ‘the most beautiful Euphorbia’). They were first sold as cut flowers. It was only in the early 1900s that they were sold as whole plants for landscaping and pot plants. The Ecke family from Southern California were one of, if not, the first to sell them as whole plants and they’re still the main producer of the plants in the USA. It is thought that they became known as Poinsettia in the mid 1830s when people found out who had first brought them to America from Mexico.



Poinsettias at Longwood photos by Suzanne Legallet



Atherton Arts Foundation Presents

*All classes will be held at the Atherton Arts Foundation
Holbrook Palmer Park, basement of the main house*

SOGETSU IKEBANA WEAVING

Saturday, January 17, 2026, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Instructor: Katsuko Thielke

\$50 (supplies included)

Enroll and pre-pay: contact: Pam McGraw, pammcgraw222@gmail.com

Note: Space is limited and confirmations will be made on a first come, first serve basis

Sogetsu ikebana weaving involves manipulating plant materials like leaves and branches to create new forms, textures, and structures by cutting, bending, and intertwining them. This allows for more sculptural and avant-garde arrangements that go beyond traditional flower arranging. This method allows for the creation of different textures and structures within a floral arrangement, adding depth and visual interest.

Join us for an amazing and inspirational demonstration by Katsuko Thielke and then practice weaving flax leaves into amazing shapes to use in floral arrangements.

Katsuko Thielke is a very popular artist who always brings refreshing inventiveness to her demonstrations. Born in Tokyo, she developed her love of flowers as a small child, hiking in the mountains with her father who encouraged her in interest in nature. She began Sogetsu lessons in 1962 and now holds the rank of Soomu, 1st grade. Katsuko is in great demand as a demonstrator and exhibitor. Her work has appeared in San Francisco’s De Young Museum’s Bouquets to Arts for fifteen years. She is the author of several beautifully illustrated books on the “Art of Sogetsu”.

New Exhibition

Through January

at the

Atherton City Hall

The paintings of Mary Lipian

Daughter of Martha Woollomes



Exhibition not to miss

Berthe Morisot & Edouard Manet

Beautiful New Exhibition at the Legion of Honor Until March 1, 2026



Berthe Morisot by Edouard Manet

Berthe Morisot (1841–1895) came from an eminent family, the daughter of a senior government official and the great-niece of Rococo artist Jean-Honoré Fragonard. A fellow artist, introduced Morisot to Edouard Manet in 1868. She became his longtime friend and colleague, and she married his brother, Eugène Manet, in 1874. Correspondence between Morisot and Édouard Manet shows warm affection, and Manet gave her an easel as a Christmas present. Morisot often posed for Manet and there are several portrait paintings of Morisot such as *Repose Portrait of Berthe Morisot* and *Berthe Morisot with a Bouquet of Violets*.

Morisot created a sense of space and depth through the use of color. Although her color palette was somewhat limited, her fellow impressionists regarded her as a “virtuoso colorist.” She typically made expansive use of white to create a sense of transparency, whether used as a pure white or mixed with other colors. In her large painting *The Cherry Tree*, the colors are more vivid but still emphasize the form.

Inspired by Manet’s drawings, she kept the use of color to a minimum when constructing a motif. Responding to the experiments conducted by Manet and Edgar Degas, Morisot used barely tinted whites to harmonize the paintings. Like Degas, she played with three media simultaneously in one painting: watercolor, pastel, and oil paints. In the second half of her career, she learned from Renoir by mimicking his motifs. She also shared an interest in keeping a balance between the density of figures and the atmospheric traits of light with Renoir in her later works.



Edouard Manet (1832–1883) was born in Paris to a wealthy family. He showed promise in drawing and caricature from an early age. After twice being denied admission to France’s prestigious Naval College, he enrolled in 1850 at the studio of academic artist Thomas Couture. While copying paintings at the Louvre, Manet became attracted to the bold brushwork of Spanish painter Diego Velázquez. He soon adopted a free manner of painting that opposed the polished surfaces revered by academic artists.

Manet was the elder statesman of the Impressionists, although he never participated in their exhibitions but continued to compete in the Salons. His unconventional subject matter drawn from modern life, and his concern for the artist’s freedom in handling paint made him an important precursor of Impressionism. While he had gained a reputation as an influential innovator, only posthumously would he be recognized as a father of modern art.



Manet self portrait

In Paris he associated with avant-garde writers, notably Baudelaire, who appears in ‘*The Music in the Tuileries Gardens*’. Manet’s work became famous at the *Salon des Refusés*, the exhibition of paintings rejected by the official Salon. In 1863 and 1867 he held one-man exhibitions. In the 1870s, under the influence of Monet and Renoir, he produced landscapes and street scenes directly inspired by Impressionism. He remained reluctant to exhibit with the Impressionists, and sought the approval of the Salon all his life.

Floral Paintings by Edouard Manet and Berthe Morisot



Edouard Manet



Berthe Morisot





The Atherton Garden Guild
PO Box 685
Menlo Park, CA 94025

AGG Newsletter

December 2025

OFFICERS 2025 - 2026

President: Nyna Dolby
1st Vice President: Mimi Hillyard
Programs Katy McCormick
2nd Vice President: Dana Bonham
Membership
Treasurer: Katie Blommer
Recording Secretary: Bing Hai
Corresponding Secretary: Karen Handal
Historian: Pam Smith
Photography Di Bryan
Parliamentarian: Patti Spezzaferro
Newsletter: Martha Woollomes
Website/Technology: Carrie Drake

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Karen Handal, Suzanne Legallet,
Pam McGraw, Patti Spezzaferro,
Martha Woollomes

PROOFREADERS

Nyna Dolby, Kasey Hansen,
Pam Smith, Patti Spezzaferro

COMMITTEE CHAIRS 2025/2026

Atherton Library Flowers: Nancy Hardesty
Bouquets to Books: Chair Patty Leugers • Co-Chair Julie Gosler
Committee: Mimi Hillyard, Suzanne Legallet, Carol Selig, Patti Spezzaferro
Donations: Chair Carrie Drake
Committee: Sue Matthews, Mary Tan
Flower Demonstrations: Suellen Rottiers
Garden Tour: Chair Carrie Drake • Co-Chair Suzanne Legallet
Committee: Julie Douglass, Julie Gosler, Carol Selig, Suellen Rottiers, Martha Woollomes
Holbrook Palmer Rose Garden: Chair Patty Leugers • Co-Chair Pam McGraw
Holiday Luncheon: Chair Kasey Hansen
Committee: Dana Boham, Julie Douglass, Carri Drake, Karen Handal, Mimi Hillyard, Suzanne Legallet, Patty Leugers, Katy McCormick, Suellen Rottiers, Carol Seleg
Horticulture: Patti Spezzaferro
Hospitality/Refreshments: Chair Carol Selig
June Luncheon: Chair Patti Spezzaferro
Committee: Terri Bailard, Julie Douglass, Nancy Hardesty, Mimi Hillyard, Suellen Rottiers, Joan Sanders
Nominating: Chair Nan Ray
Committee: Kasey Hansen, Suzanne Legallet
Yearbook/Roster: Chair Terri Bailard



Birthdays

December Birthday Flower

Holly and Narcissus

Holly: Protection, Love
Narcissus: Renewal, Purity

- 1 Sue Matthews
- 6 Patricia Rodley
- 9 Karen Handal
- 20 Dianne Schilling
- 23 Jean Gee