

“Flowers in January”

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Flowers in January? Who thinks of flowers at this time of year with snow on the ground and freezing temperatures? If you do think of them you would think of just the house plants that flower, like the Poinsettias.

But here at Glen Oak C.C. I start thinking of what flowers will be planted around the clubhouse flower beds this coming May. I do it now for if there is a certain type of flower or color combination I want, the greenhouse has time to order the seeds I need and the lead time to plant them for me. The greenhouse then can schedule all my plant selections to be ready by the third week in May. It is extremely risky to plant any earlier than the third week in May due to late frosts that can and do occur. The safest planting date is really May 30th.

Here at Glen Oak we have eighteen flower beds ranging from 75 to 800 square feet, plus about 15 flower pots/planters. We rarely repeat or plant the same thing two years in a row in any of these beds, but there are exceptions which I'll mention later. Another thing we do is keep a log on what flowers are planted in each bed for every year, and a picture log is kept up on these beds. I usually take color pictures of all beds in early August when they are at their peak. The records state the following: type of plant, color, size when full grown, spacing when planted (both in row and between the rows), total number of each plant in the bed, and comments on that bed. Comments being if the bed was good, bad, needed more plants, or the colors really didn't go together like you thought they would. A person may wonder why I need all that information. Well, when it comes time for me to start planning my next year's flower beds, I can go back a couple of years, find a very successful flower bed, and repeat it. I have all the information that I need for ordering and planting of that bed. It also guarantees that I won't be making the same mistake twice with flowers that didn't work out before.

We employ a full time gardener during the season, and I usually have a woman to handle this position. She would usually start the first of May and work thru August. By late August the flower beds need only a few hours a week of care. During the growing and flowering season the gardener is kept busy weeding, watering, cultivating, pinching back, and removing dead flowers. She also handles all the edging and trimming around the clubhouse area. All mowing is done by the grounds crew.

We try to roto-till the flower beds a week or two before planting. In most of our beds we have added substantial quantities of spent mushroom soil which we have a ready supply of a nearby mushroom farm. A granular fertilizer is added when the beds are roto-tilled at about one pound per 100 square feet of a 1-2-2 ratio.

The flowers are then fertilized with a liquid fertilizer which is sprayed on about once a month. Insects are watched for and handled as they come up with the proper chemical used for control.

The following are some of my favorite flowers which we use around Glen Oak:

Petunia — One of the showest and longest continual bloomer of any plant and comes in any color.

Marigolds — Great bloomer which comes in various sizes

and shades of gold or yellow or mixed.

Purple Salvia — If you need a blue or purple, this is the plant, reaches about two feet and is a constant bloomer.

Snapdragons — good bloomer, comes in all sizes. My favorite is Floral Carpet about 10-12" high which just blooms and blooms. Snaps need attention to be the spectacular bloomers so be prepared to pinch them back and constantly pick off all dead flowers.

Impatiens — Great plant for a shady area. Comes in various sizes and colors.

Dusty Miller — A good edging plant with different leaves to choose from. Rabbits like them too.

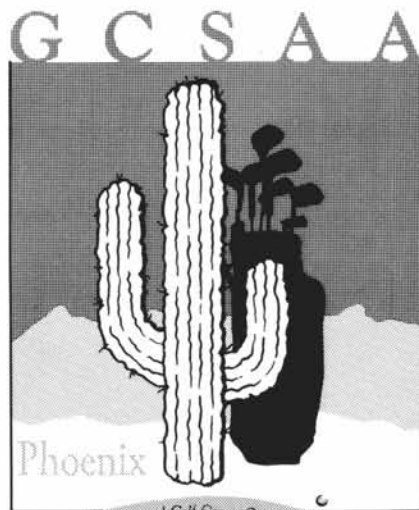
Celosia — You have two colors to choose from and two forms: the cockscomb or feather type.

Cleome (Spider plant) — Here is a different plant for you if you have the space for large flowering plants. It will reach 4 to 5 feet and will have continuous blooms up to frost. This plant will re-ssed itself every year. This is one of the flowre beds I don't change every year due to them re-seeding and the area where they are located.

Portulaca (Moss Rose) — Is a very excellent plant in a hot dry full sun area. This plant also re-seeds itself.

Geranium — Blooms well, very good in pots, needs to have old blooms and leaves picked regularly.


I don't use bulbs in any formal beds around the clubhouse. But do use them where they can be "naturalized" in shrub beds, under trees, etc. I use only a few tulips for to me they seem so formal. Instead we use a lot of daffodils and narcissia for our spring blooms and color.



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