

Tuesday Thoughts for February 23, 2021

My Dear Garden Club Friends!



Can you stand a few more winter stories? Remember the picture of skaters in Amsterdam, Holland last week? The Dutch so love to skate! Darby Walker sent me an article from the Wall Street Journal about how the Dutch were hoping to be able to do their famous 11 city skating tour . “Elfstedentocht” . Well it didn’t happen again. It was cold and the ice was perfect, but it started to thaw too soon. And even if it had been cold long enough the organizers had not planned for a tour this year because of Covid.

So what is the “Elfstedentocht”? It is a 200 km skating tour through 11 cities in the province of Friesland in the North of the Netherlands. When I was in sixth grade in 1963 I remember that our teacher had a transistor radio in the classroom and we were able to follow along all day long. It was the toughest race ever. Almost 10,000 skaters started the race very early in the morning when the temperature was 0 degrees Fahrenheit, but only 69 finished. The winner in 10 hours and 59 minutes was Reinier Paping. The announcers kept mentioning frozen toes and noses. In those days they kept warm by putting newspapers under their clothes. There wasn’t another race until 1985 . By then they had invented special sports clothing that kept the skaters warm. That year the now King of Holland, King Willem Alexander, participated under a false name and he did finish. There was another race in 1986, then one in 1997 and the Dutch are still waiting for the next one.



Speed skating races are as popular in Holland as the Super Bowl is here. The best weekends were when our guys and girls competed in the European and World championships. On Saturday the 500 and the 5000 meters and on Sunday the 1500 and 10000 meters. When I moved to the US it was one of the things I missed . In 1980 for the Winter Olympics we finally got a little black and white TV, so I could watch speed skating. All they showed was ice-hockey.....

But in 1988 they did show a lot of skating during the Winter Olympics in Calgary. And there was one Dutch girl : Yvonne van Gennip who won three gold medals!! Of course I was excited and Mirjam, my daughter, who was 9 at the time was equally enthralled. So much so that the next years that was all she could talk about. We didn't have a skating rink where we lived so she raced around the neighborhood on her bike. She already was a good writer and this inspired her to become a sports writer. She was the first ever woman to be the sport editor for the Emerald. (The U of O newspaper.) Now she is the beat writer for the Los Angeles Clippers. Sadly for 30 newspapers in southern California. Sad because in the old days each of those papers would have had their own sports writer... But the nice part about Yvonne van Gennip was that she opened a restaurant in a town close to my Mom's. Of course we went there and Yvonne was so happy to meet Mirjam! "Oh you are my American Fan!"



I am sorry so many had to struggle this past week without electricity, and with ice, snow and cold.

Here is Nita's story

I've seen many ice storms in Oregon and what we call a silver thaw which is usually beautiful but the damage of falling trees and limbs can cause much damage and my did they cause a lot here in Salem.

My electricity went off in Salem last Friday, the 12th and was off until Tuesday, the 16th. Because I had no heat or lights, I stayed at a friends house in South Keizer Saturday, Sunday and Monday and was grateful for heat, lights, TV and especially friendship and offer of a warm place. I came home on Sunday for about an hour and a half and when I left, my hands were like ice and they stayed that way most of the day, but on my street, we had no damage as very few of our trees broke or fell including those in my back yard - five 50 foot cedars. However nearly 3,000 people and businesses were without lights, internet or heat for those days. Many were cooking on grills and camp stoves in the cold. And I waited in a gas line for 45 minutes to get gas. McDonalds was doing a bang up job!

I am now home and feel blessed that no damage was done to my home unlike many others in Salem. Being the City of Trees, trees were strewn across roads, power lines, cars, and yes, on houses and businesses. It was truly a mess. PGE called in power companies from other states to help because of the tremendous damage to our power poles and sub-stations. Most of Salem's power has been restored.

And I am sure most of you in the Salem /Portland area have horror stories to tell. Perhaps not as bad as in Texas but still. I know our own Jane Sercombe was without power for 11 days and still counting.... I wonder how she was able to deal with it?

Hopefully pretty soon everything will be back in order and all these cold and dark days a distant memory!

Some more winter adventures, this one is from Karen Brown:

We had ice like that in 2004, the day after our son's wedding. Hearing the trees breaking was like being in a war zone and of course, our generator didn't work. Luckily it didn't last too long. I guess we just put on more clothes, although I don't really remember.

I do think of Holland being snowy. I suppose because I read Hans Brinker over and over when I was a kid. When my mother was a child living in The Dalles, the Columbia River froze up and her older brother skated across. I've seen a picture of a car driving across at the same time.



January 26, 1847

From Bev Nevins:

We were living in Puyallup, Washington....just east of Tacoma. Tree branches were snapping and breaking...sounded like a firecracker or bullet...scary but all the limbs missed our home....this was in 1998. Back in 1962 or so southern Oregon experienced quite a snow/ice storm too. All of the farm animal's water dishes and troughs were frozen over...we had to be careful, break the ice, and put in warm water so they could get some water...nature. gotta love her.

We all have stories that we won't forget the rest of our lives. This one is from Carolyn Elsten:

We had an adventurous ice and snow storm story from years ago when my now 61 year old son was just a baby. My late husband, Bill, and I and 9 month old baby Bruce were returning to Portland from Maryland where we had spent 6 months at a nuclear arms facility while my husband was getting training for his EOD (explosive ordinance disposal) badge. We lived in Government Quarters which were 3 story apartment buildings near a town named Stump Neck. It was also a Navy Seal training base. Interesting place to live, very near Washington DC which I had to drive to every week to shop at Ft Meyers. We were all packed up in a little VW bug convertible. We had gotten as far as just west of Chicago when the weather went gunnny bag and a huge ice and snow storm hit. We discussed going back to Chicago where my Aunt and Uncle lived to ride out the storm. But, our little car was wonderful in the snow so we kept on going until we came upon a road block. They had closed the entire hwy and we had to spend the night in a motel on the side of the

road. Fortunately they had a restaurant. We spent 2 nights there along with a whole lot of other folks who were also stranded. We visited and played cards with random people to keep ourselves entertained. They finally opened the road and we went on our way. We drove on packed ice and snow the rest of the way across the USA until we got to Eugene. Quite the trip. Thank heaven for Volkswagen bugs. They go like crazy in the ice and snow. Although on our long trips we usually shared the driving, on this trip Bill drove the whole way. Didn't trust me on the ice and snow. He was from Kansas and it didn't faze him. He thought it was fun. HMMM. Ice and snow storms in Portland usually meant a snow day and closed schools. Almost as much fun for the teacher as it was for the kids. A day to enjoy being home with my kiddos and just doing mommy things.

We got dug out today as my step daughter and her hubby came over and cleared the walk and driveway. Yippee. My Alpenrose delivery man could even get to the box. Thank heaven. And tomorrow another step daughter and her hubby come over with our groceries from New Seasons. I think we are pretty spoiled by them. Thank God for children, be they 6 or 60.

What would we do without our kids....

Here is a reminder about the new Design Contest

"Spring is Right Around the Corner"

Design Type: a Featured Design

A Featured Plant Material Design - a design with an emphasis on **one plant species**.

1. Any part/s of the plant may be used.
2. Other components are subordinate and may be used to enhance the featured plant material.
3. The focus is on the chosen species.
4. The schedule may specify the Design Style and/or plant material to be used.
5. Must use fresh or dried plant material.
6. Plant material to be used is **spring bulbs**.

In a featured design you can use any part of the plant, yes the bulb can be used. Tulips, daffodils, crocus, etc. as long as its grown from a bulb.

Send me one (1) picture of a design:

Deadline: February March 12th

Picture has to have your name, Club, District.

Material used and any other comment. Email to tanjandy@gmail.com

I will forward the pictures to Linda Shamp, president of the Portland Judges Council without names and she and her council will judge the designs and think of a new title and appoint another Judges Council to judge the next design. I will publish the winner in the February 9th "Tuesday Thoughts".

Anyone can enter!

Stay Happy
and Healthy
and hopeful!
Love from
Tanja!