



Garden Club of Darien

Gardenclubofdarien.org



Monthly Newsletter

March 2014

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From the President

KUDOS TO CONSERVATION

A recent chance encounter with the Connecticut State motto “Qui Transtulit Sustinet” piqued my curiosity. Adopted back in 1788 when Connecticut gained statehood, it translates “He Who Transplants Still Sustains”.

???? Not knowing quite what the motto meant, I was reminded of my weather-beaten foundation plantings and thought perhaps I should be encouraged that if I transplanted rather than discarded them they would somehow be revived (sustained?). I also wondered if the use of the word “Sustains” back in the 1700s related to environmental sustainability issues as it does today (a stretch I know). Could there have been such sensitivity back then?

Well, research revealed that the motto probably derived from Psalm 79 and refers to the migration of the colonists to the U.S. and their belief that “He who transplanted (us) still sustains (us)”. The early settlers were apparently grateful for safe passage and banking on continued blessings. But I would bet there were some wise souls back then who did monitor the environmental issues of their day and make their point of view known.

On that score, I applaud our Club, Zone, GCA, and Federated Conservation groups for their clarity and focus on the basic sustainability issues of our world— and there are many. While the climate change debate is ongoing, there is no doubt there is much individuals can do to sustain and improve our environment.

Specific kudos to our Club Conservation committee for their clever and amusing “conservation minutes” at recent membership meetings; they remind us to incorporate good habits into our everyday lives to preserve and improve environmental integrity. Hear! Hear!

We should be grateful also for the many initiatives and studies around the Zone and elsewhere that afford an opportunity to learn. Though sometimes long and technical, many contain bullet points that are enlightening and instructive. GCA publications on our website are rich with information about the environment and conservation, and I encourage visits.

Janet

February Program

Debbie Murray

Please join us on **Tuesday March 11th** at the DCA when we will welcome Cynthia Brown, Education Specialist and Manager of Collections and Education at The Smithsonian Gardens.

Ms. Brown has been at The Smithsonian Garden since 2010. She was formerly the Assistant Director at Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria, VA. In addition to contributing to *Horticulture*, she writes for the *Washington Gardener Magazine* and the *Washington Post* blog, *All we can Eat and Groundworks*. She has served as a garden advisor and spokesperson in many capacities. She is working on the development of the Community Gardens initiative, a website and mobile app for sharing stories about gardens and green spaces as well as cultivating an understanding and appreciation of the role gardens play in keeping communities healthy, happy and connected.

Cynthia will give us “A Visual Journey Through the Smithsonian’s Archives of American Gardens”. This lecture will highlight the collections at the Archives of American Gardens (AAG), which capture the stories of a wide variety of historic and contemporary gardens throughout the U.S., and celebrate the quarter-

GCD Calendar

Monday, March 3rd

Board meeting at the home of Joan Barksdale, 27 Tokeneke Trail, 8:45 coffee, 9:00 meeting.

Tuesday, March 11th

Membership meeting, 9:30 coffee, 10:00 meeting at DCA. This is a joint meeting with the New Canaan Garden Club.

Monday, April 1st

Board meeting at the home of Margaret Smith, 147 Long Neck Point Road, 8:45 coffee, 9:00 meeting.

Tuesday, April 8th

Membership meeting, 9:30 coffee, 10:00 meeting at DCA.

Web Site

Please send anything you wish posted to the website to Susie Brewer at sudsbrew@gmail.com. It should be either a PDF file or Word and let her know where you want it to go.

April Newsletter Deadline

Monday, March 24

gcdnewsletter@gmail.com



Program (cont'd.)

century collaboration between the AAG and the GCA's Garden History and Design Committee. To date, over 7,000 gardens are documented in the Archives. This number grows each year thanks to GCA volunteers who document gardens for the Garden Club of America Collection at AAG. Descriptive records and images ranging from historic glass lantern slides from the 1920s to digital TIFFs taken last month help 'preserve' these gardens for researchers today and for the future. AAG is a division of Smithsonian Gardens, which is responsible for the enchanting gardens surrounding the Smithsonian museums on the National Mall. We have asked Cynthia to incorporate some local gardens that are in the Smithsonian for interest to both of our clubs.

Floral Design

Holly Friend and Joanne Parr



We would like to thank Beth Crump, Betsy Becker and Marissa Bright for the lovely tea table arrangement at our February meeting. It was beautiful and coordinated perfectly with our romantic "Be my Valentine" theme.



We had six beautiful entries in our Valentine competition. The judges were impressed with the overall sophistication of the entries as well as the quality of plant material. The first award went to Betsy Hester, the second award went to Emily D'Andrea and third was awarded to Diane Schlinkert. Congratulations!



First: Betsy Hester



Second: Emily D'Andrea



Third: Diane Schlinkert

A beautiful table of "Be my Valentine" entries



For our March meeting we will have a small "Challenge Competition" with the New Canaan Garden Club. This will be a fun and relaxed way to get to know members from the New Canaan Club. We are looking for two volunteers to participate. Each participant will be paired up with a New Canaan member to create an arrangement. This competition will not be judged; it will be for exhibition only. We will supply the container and all the flowers, just bring your clippers. If you are interested please respond to Holly Friend at Friendwh@aol.com.

Horticulture

Carol Caulfield and Bridget Rudner



We are dreaming of Spring and know it must be coming. We are hopeful that you will be inspired by the melting snow and warmer weather to force some branches and, by doing so, bring a bit of Spring from your own garden into your home and also participate in our Forced Branch competition at our March membership meeting. You can find the timeline and judging criteria for forcing branches on the horticulture page of the GCD website: www.gardenclubofdarien.org/hort.html. There are many species of trees and shrubs that only take two weeks to force so you still have time. Entry cards can be printed from the web page also. While you are visiting the website you might also look at the Daffodil section. We are confident for a strong April showing of *Narcissus* by the club.

Horticulture (cont'd.)

Bulb Grooming Workshop with Pat van den Broek on Friday, March 7th at 1 pm.

In preparation for the March forced bulbs competition, please join us at Carol Caulfield's house at 10 Wildcat Road for a bulb grooming workshop. Pat will explain the standards expected at a GCA show for a winning presentation. She will demonstrate how to stake and tie our Hyacinths and Daffodils as well as share other winning tips.

Tuesday, March 11th: Joint Club Meeting with New Canaan - DCA - Forced branch and bulb competitions

We have invited the Garden Club of New Canaan to join us for the forced branch competition. Each club's entries will be judged separately. You may enter as many different types of branches as you wish, but each entry can consist of only one single branch, i.e., one stem of Forsythia, one stem of a cherry tree, etc. Containers and wedging material will be provided. Entries will be accepted at the DCA from 8:30 a.m. and must be in place for judging by 9 a.m.

We have two classes for the forced bulb competition; *Narcissus* 'Thalia' and *Hyacinthus orientalis* 'Blue Jacket'. They must be presented in a bulb pot and have been grown by the exhibitor. They too must be in place for judging by 9 a.m.

On Tuesday, April 8th, at the members' meeting, there will be an in-club cut Daffodil competition. Details of the competition will be forthcoming.

Zone II Meeting on May 20th

The original Gavel Challenge (to grow Azaleas from seed) proved to be too much of a challenge and there was no successful germination in any club in our Zone. Therefore, a replacement has been made and several members are growing *Lobelia cardinalis* (pictured below). These seeds were hand-gathered from the wild by a seed specialist from the Finger Lakes region of New York State and are a truly wild species. Thank you to those who are growing the seeds and good luck!



Photography

Tracy Drippe and Sandy Drimal



Our next photography competition will be held at the April 8th meeting and is entitled "Hope Springs Eternal," a time of year we are all looking forward to after the Winter we have had! The class is divided in two; one group will present photos taken by smart phones and the other by digital cameras. There are only a few spots available and if you would like an easel, please email Tracy (tracycd@optonline.net) to reserve one.

We hope you all had a chance to see the magnificent photos by Amy Cholnoky and Susie Brewer that Janet kindly forwarded to the club. Both of our talented club members participated in a GCA seminar in Arizona earlier this year and then submitted their photos in a competition where they each garnered a first place! They are a wonderful representation of the true talents of our two prospective judges and an inspiration to all of us! Congratulations to them both!

Amy Cholnoky's First in "Macro" class



Susie Brewer's First in "Shutter Priority" class



Conservation



Gigi Garnett and Margaret Smith

Are You an Apiarist? More on Honeybees because we can't get enough...

This month, we follow up on the wonderful bee lecture we were treated to by Howland Blackiston at our last meeting. For those who would like to know more, we provide the following resources. We hope you might become interested enough to keep some bees of your own. For help you can join the Backyard Beekeepers of Connecticut. Check out the website below for information, events and classes on bee keeping, including a month by month guide on what to do... <http://www.backyardbeekeepers.com/calendar.html>



Better Yet: register for **Penn State's Online Beekeeping Course**. Take this course anytime, anywhere at your own pace, learning from nationally recognized experts. Just go online and register using the link below (\$129 winter special)

<http://beekeeping101.psu.edu>

Documentaries: (available from Amazon or streaming online)

PBS Nature - Silence of the Bees 2007

The full presentation of the documentary bits that were cited by Howland in his talk is here to watch on YouTube. Much beautiful information on bees and also addresses the Colony Collapse Disorder.

Vanishing of the Bees

This documentary takes a piercing investigative look at the economic, political and ecological implications of the worldwide disappearance of the honeybee.

More Than Honey

An in-depth look at honeybee colonies in California, Switzerland, China and Australia.

Ted Talks: (Google "Ted Talks" and enter the below titles)

Marla Spivak : Why bees are disappearing
Noah Wilson-Rich : Every city needs healthy honey bees
Dennis van Engelsdorp: A plea for bees

Books:

Beekeeping For Dummies – Howland Blackiston
The Beekeeper's Handbook - Diana Sammataro and Alphonse Avitabile#

Pleasure Through Plants

Joanne Shakley and Danielle Granath

Mother Nature derailed a February 5th excursion to Elder House, planned by Debbie Murray, Margaret Smith and Janice Shand. Snow and ice and sleet and hail did not deter the ladies from hastily regrouping on February 6th, to deliver Valentine boxes to the senior participants, who then filled them with artfully arranged red, white and pink flowers, and hearts and garlands, along with baby's breath and greens. Two gentlemen joined the merry group and composed outstanding creations, as they contributed to the lively conversation. Everyone agreed it was a lovely way to get inspired for Valentine's Day!



Herb Garden

Kathy Haire and Charly Armstrong



A Bright Winter's Day
at the Herb Garden.

All is well...

