



Garden Club of Darien

Gardenclubofdarien.org



Monthly Newsletter

November 2012

Volume 4, Issue 3

From the President

Dear Garden Club Friends,



The recent Zone II Annual and Club Representative meetings were impressive. The **Zone Annual Meeting** was brimming with interesting events and informative speakers against the backdrop of a slightly rainy but ever charming Newport. The attendant Flower Show – “Walk on the Fall Side” – was beautiful, and generous GCD members who entered did us proud with their entries and ribbons. Special congratulations to Emily, who snagged the Catherine Beattie Medal for her Hare’s Foot hort entry, and high praise for Emily’s and Gwynne’s breathtaking and vibrant floral design.

The **Zone Representatives meeting** at the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme was a beehive of activity. This once-a-year meeting brings together Zone II club chairmen to discuss issues relevant to their area. I attended the Founders’ Fund and Bulletin/Communications/PR meetings and learned a lot, particularly about Communications, a fast-changing and challenging arena for GCA.

Reflecting on these two events, I am struck by the vitality, commitment, and knowledge of participating GCA members and also the friendliness and bonding opportunities for people of many mutual interests. I encourage those who are in a position to attend next year to seize the opportunity. These are memorable events.

Speaking of memory, in chatting with members who have moved to sustainer status in our club, I sometimes detect a hint of melancholy for their more active days. One former leader expressed delight in being asked to attend a policy meeting and

the chance to “reconnect”. There’s a lot of talent and wisdom in our sustainer ranks and many are happy to share their ideas, time, and institutional memory. In a busy club like ours, that wealth of talent and help should be treasured and cultivated.

Lastly, many thanks to our Herb Garden volunteers for a fun and festive Ladies Night Out for “Stepping Out in the Jazz Age” at the Historical Society. Particular thanks to Curator Babs White, Charky, Cyndy, Cindy, and Susan M. for all their creative culinary and floral arrangement efforts!

Oops – I think Sandy just made off with a shutter!

Best to all,

Janet

November Membership Meeting

Our November meeting will be a joint meeting with the Tree Conservancy and will be held at the DCA on Tuesday, November 13th, coffee at 9:30 am, 10:00 am meeting. Michael S. Dosmann, the Curator of Living Collections at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, will present his lecture, “A Tale of Twenty Trees”. His primary role is to guide the development of the collection’s historic and dynamic collections of temperate woody species.

Hollis Bauer, who made an inspiring presentation at the October meeting on Botanical Art Jewelry



GCD Calendar

Monday, November 12th

Board meeting at the home of Gwynne Tibbetts, 18 Sherry Lane, 8:45 coffee, 9:00 meeting

Tuesday, November 13th

Membership meeting, DCA, 9:30 coffee, 10:00 meeting. Joint meeting with Tree Conservancy.

Monday, December 3rd

Board meeting at the home of Audrey Cadwallader, 84 Five Mile River Road, 8:45 coffee, 9:00 meeting

Tuesday, December 11th

Christmas Tea at the home of Janet Sargent, 1 Dorchester Road, 12:00-2:30

Monday, January 7th, 2013

Board meeting at the home of Janet Sargent, 1 Dorchester Road, 8:45 coffee, 9:00 meeting

Tuesday, January 8th, 2013

Membership meeting, DCA, 9:30 coffee, 10:00 meeting. Joint meeting with DCA.

Wednesday-Friday, October 2nd-4th, 2013-Bird Song

GCD Flower Show at the DCA



Flower Arranging

Gwynne Tibbetts and Kate Kane



On **November 13th** we will be having our first in-club Flower Arranging competition to help us prepare for our 2013 flower show, **Birdsong**. The Class is called "**Birds of a Feather**". Do enter this competition as it is a great, non stressful way to practice for this fun Floral Design Class!

This arrangement should use predominantly fall grasses and fresh plant material and can include fruits and vegetables. Remember our Flower Show schedule says no feathers! And no artificial materials. It will be viewed from three sides and is not to exceed 25" wide. Have fun with this, we are looking forward to your beautiful and exciting entries!

A big **thank you** to Angela Lineberger and Sandy Nobel (2 new provisionals!) for their beautiful October Tea Table arrangement at the Scout Cabin.



Emily D'Andrea and Gwynne Tibbetts represented Darien's Club in the Zone II Newport Flower Show "Walk on the Fall Side". Their bountiful and beautiful entry for the Floral Design Class "Autumn Glory" received a ribbon for Third.

Thank you all for volunteering for signing up for Tea Tables. The assignments are posted on the Garden Club of Darien website under Flower Arranging in case you need a reminder for the date you've signed up for.

Thank you to Kate Kane for attending the Zone II Flower Arranging Workshops. The Griswold Museum was the perfect backdrop for the very informative meetings, where club chairs could exchange new and exciting ideas!

Horticulture

Carol Caulfield and Bridget Rudner



Zone II Horticulture Results for "Walk on the Fall Side" (Newport)

There was a great showing with 11 entries by Darien. Everyone who entered received at least one award. Thank you all for entering!

Class 14 Par

1st and Catherine Beatty Award for excellence in

Horticulture distinguished by vibrancy, prime condition and perfection in grooming, Emily D'Andrea, Davallia fejeensis, Rabbit's Foot Fern
A special congratulations to Emily!



Class 2 Anemone

2a : 2nd Tibby Rosenberry, A. x hybrid 'Geante des Blanches'

2b: 1st Debbie Bussey, A. tomentosa 'Robustissima'

Class 5 Evergreen Branches grown for Berries

2nd Joan Barksdale, Chamaecyparis obtusa, Japanese Cypress

Class 9 Deciduous Branches grown for Berries

Callicarpa dichotoma, Purple Beautyberry

2nd Debbie Bussey

HM Joan Barksdale

HM Irene Miltmore

Class 11 Grown for Foliage

2nd Debby McLean, Begonia rex

Thank you for all the wonderful entries in the Rusticus Flower Show "Shall We Dance". Our club had wonderful results with every entrant winning an award:

Class 1 Zinnia

1st Debbie Bussey

HM Lois Baylis

Class 7 Other

3rd Carol Caulfield, Dahlia 'Hot Rod'

HM Carol Caulfield, Dahlia 'Gonzo Grape'

Class 9 Sedum

2nd Debbie Bussey, 'October Daphne'

3rd Carol Caulfield, 'Autumn Joy'

Class 10 Aster

2nd Lois Baylis, 'Jindai'

Class 11 Montauk Daisy

1st Lois Baylis

Class 12 Chrysanthemum

1st Lois Baylis

Horticulture (cont'd)

Class 13 Rose

3rd Tibby Rosenberry

Class 14 Other

1st Irene Miltmore, Toad Lily

Class 16 Berried Branches

2nd Irene Miltmore, Purple Beautyberry

Class 18 Evergreen

2nd Debbie Bussey, Cryptomeria

3rd Debbie Bussey, Weeping Alaskan Cedar

Class 23 3 Stems of Same Dahlia

2nd Lois Baylis, Dahlia 'Coral Gypsy'

HM Debby McLean, Dahlia 'Lauren Michelle'

HM Debbie Bussey, Dahlia 'Crichton Honey'

Par 36

1st Lois Baylis, Coleus 'Tiny Toes' (pictured below)

2nd Carol Caulfield, Mistletoe Ficus

HM Bridget Rudner, Begonia Raspberry Swirl



Par 37

1st Debbie Bussey, Mistletoe Ficus

Horticulture for Birdsong

After much research, the dahlia for Birdsong has been changed to Red Pigmy. An early bloomer established in 1987, it has 4" bright cardinal red blooms. Classified as a semi cactus, Red Pigmy is a prolific bloomer that will reward you with multiple blooms and stems to fill out the pots. The cost of the tuber is \$5.95. If you ordered Japanese Bishop, you don't have to do anything, we converted your order to Red Pigmy.



Red Pigmy Dahlia

Gourds

There are many methods to drying gourds. However, most important: if you have begun drying your gourds **be sure they are stored where there is good air circulation.** For more information check the horticulture section of our garden club website, or check out [www. Amishgourds.com](http://www.Amishgourds.com) under *How to Dry Gourds*.

Upcoming workshop:

Wednesday, November 28 Terrarium Workshop at the Darien Historical Society with Debbie Bussey. **Provisionals only Friday, November 30th.** \$40 cost includes 7" diameter x 10.25" high bell jar with terracotta saucer, three plants, planting material, and moss. Bring your own decorative accessories. Create a wonderful indoor garden for yourself or for a gift! Workshops begin at 9:30 am. **These workshops are sold out and there is a wait list. Please send your check for \$40 to either Carol or Bridget to hold your spot. Thanks!**

Herb Garden

Charly Armstrong and Susan Massamillo



What a beautiful fall evening for the Ladies Night Out on October 18th! Babs White gave a wonderful presentation at the Historical Society on the evening dresses of the Jazz Age. Below she describes an original Lanvin from Paris which was donated by Judy Rodriguez. Delicious herb appetizers were made by the members and the winning recipe will be published next month!



Recipe: Having just returned from the region, I can confirm this is the authentic way the recipe on the next page is made! Always best to use good quality olive oil. If you are lucky enough to have covered your basil from the frost, then make this recipe and freeze the extra. Otherwise, file it for next year when basil is plentiful! Susan Massamillo

Herb Garden (con't)

Ligurian Pesto with Spaghetti--compliments of Debbie Bussey-Bon Appetite May '12

Liguria is on the northwestern coast of Italy. This is the region where pesto was invented. The article stated that the chefs there did three things that most of us don't when making pesto:

- 1) **They blanched the basil**, ever so quickly, which heightens the color and mellows its flavor
- 2) **They pureed all the ingredients except the olive oil** (I added the oil in the food processor and it still came out fab!) producing something akin to a sparkling salsa verde
- 3) Just before serving, they **loosened the sauce with a splash of starchy pasta water**, so that it coated each piece of pasta

I used the same pot I boiled for the pasta to blanch the basil (removed with a slotted spoon), then cooked the pasta in the basil water, which gave the pasta added flavor.

Ingredients

- Kosher salt
- 10 cups (loosely packed) fresh basil leaves (about 2 bunches)
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan plus more
- 1 1/2 tablespoons pine nuts
- 1 garlic clove, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup mild extra-virgin olive oil plus more for drizzling
- 1 pound spaghetti

Preparation

- Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Set a colander in a large bowl of ice water (this will make it easier to strain the basil later). Working in batches, blanch basil for 10 seconds. Using a large slotted spoon, transfer basil to colander in ice water; let cool completely. Set aside 1/2 cup blanching water. Reserve pot with blanching water.
- Drain basil by lifting colander from ice water. Using your hands, squeeze excess water from basil; transfer basil to paper towels. (You should have about 1/2 cup.)
- Place blanched basil, 1/2 cup Parmesan, pine nuts, and garlic in a food processor. Pulse until well combined, adding blanching water by tablespoonfuls to thin if needed, and stopping occasionally to scrape down sides. Process until a smooth, thick purée forms, about 1 minute.
- Transfer basil mixture to a medium bowl. Stir in 1/2 cup oil. Season to taste with salt.

Return water in pot to a boil; add more salt. Cook spaghetti, stirring occasionally, until al dente. Spoon 1/2 cup pesto and 1/4 cup pasta cooking liquid into a large bowl. Using tongs, transfer spaghetti to bowl and toss vigorously, drizzling with oil and adding more pesto and cheese as you continue to toss, until spaghetti is glossy and well coated with sauce. Season with salt. Divide among bowls; sprinkle with additional cheese.

Photography



Danielle Granath and Tracy Drippé

Our November competition is "Tree Tales". Color photographs should be single matted and not exceed 11"x14". The size, shape, color and surface finish of the overmat and the photograph are to be decided by the exhibitor. Photographs should be delivered to Danielle no later than the night before the November meeting or they will not be accepted for the competition.

We will have another Photography outing on **Friday, November 30 in the morning** at the Metropolitan Museum of Art for their presentation of "The First major exhibition Devoted to History of Manipulated Photography Before the Digital Age" Please email Danielle at danielle515@gmail.com for more information and to sign up. We hope you can join us to see this exciting show. <http://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-museum/press-room/exhibitions/2012/faking-it>

Congratulations to Amy Cholnoky for her blue ribbon win in the Rusticus Garden Club's "Shall We Dance" show! Her photo, shown here, was shot in Big Sur, California and entered in the Line Dance class.



Conservation



Gigi Garnett and Margaret Smith

Continuing on our theme of highlighting native plants, this month Switchgrass, or *Panicum virgatum*, is in the limelight.

This 4-6 foot tall perennial grass can be viewed in the planting bed of the sign in the entranceway to Weed Beach, where we chose to plant it as a portion of the Garden Club of Darien's contribution to the town's renovation of Weed Beach. You can recognize it by its 2' long, 2/3" leaf blades, usually medium green, but sometimes blue. The leaves turn yellow in the fall.

In addition to being an attractive ornamental grass, hardy and adaptable, Switchgrass is drought-tolerant, as well as tolerant of wet areas. It will grow in almost any kind of soil and is salt tolerant and highly deer resistant. Also known as tall panic grass,



Conservation (cont'd)

blackbent, thatchgrass, Virginia switchgrass, wand panic grass and Wobesqua grass, this prairie grass once covered great expanses of our country, but it was crowded out by European settlers who replaced it with crops of corn, wheat and oats.

Now, Switchgrass lends itself to use for soil conservation, forage production, and game cover, in addition to landscaping ornamentation. Because of its deep roots, which can be the same size as the plant, Switchgrass can hold soil in place and help prevent erosion from flooding and run off. Its height helps it form a good wind erosion barrier, while providing nest sites and nesting material for wildlife and allowing free movement for food searching. Switchgrass attracts ground feeding songbirds and gamebirds, which eat its seeds. Switchgrass also can serve as a larval host and nectar source for butterflies and moths, including the Delaware Skipper and the Dotter Skipper. When Switchgrass grows near marshes, it serves as food for muskrats.

Versatile Switchgrass can be used for cattle pastures and hay. It is even being studied as a potential source of alcohol, for use as an alternative fuel, as it can produce more alcohol per acre than corn and as a self-seeding perennial, doesn't require re-planting each spring.

GCD Flower Show - "Birdsong"

October 2-4, 2013

Debbie Bussey and Lisa Brickman

Work continues on the final draft of our Birdsong show schedule, which was reviewed with all schedule writers on October 29th. Next we will submit it to our Zone II Flower Show Rep for final review prior to submitting it to the GCA.

Our next "All Committee" meeting will be held at the St. Luke's Church Youth & Community Building on Tuesday November 27th at 9:30am.

The next step will be to meet with our staging committee to determine the location of all classes in our schedule throughout the DCA space. We are thrilled with our committee's progress to date, and believe our show Schedule is very creative, challenging and fun.

Bird Song Preview Party Invitation List

We are developing a mailing list for the Preview party. **Every member is required to submit at least 5 names** (Mr. and Mrs.) and addresses for the mailing list. These should be non-GCD members who you believe would support the flower show by attending the event and/or making a financial contribution. Please either mail or email your names to

Debbie Murray, 100 Stephen Mather Road or gcdbirdsong@gmail.com as soon as possible. Please include your name and email address with your list.

Pleasure Through Plants

Susan Doelp and Audrey Cadwallader

The Darien Senior Center was the setting for our first Pleasure Thru Plants event. Thirteen enthusiastic women spent a beautiful fall morning enjoying each other's company while creating attractive autumnal arrangements. Each left with a smile on their face eager to share their creation with family and friends.



Membership

Tink Neubert and Pat Van den Broek

PLEASE NOTE!!!

DECEMBER 1st IS THE DEADLINE

for

PROPOSAL LETTERS

for

NEW MEMBER CANDIDATES

Proposers please send a letter to Pat van den Broek, 15 Linda Lane.

Also, include the names of a seconder and two other supporting members who will write letters due March 1st.

December Newsletter Deadline

Monday, November 26

Email to NEW address

gcdnewsletter@gmail.com

