

August 2011

GARDENSCAPE

Charles County Garden Club of Maryland



From My Desk to Yours



**“The brilliant poppy flaunts her head
Amidst the ripening grain,
And adds her voice to sell the song
That August’s here again.”
-Helen Winslow**

Dear Garden Club Sisters,

Hot, hot, hot that is what we've got. Oh what a treat it will be to be in the commercial building instead of the flower building for the August meeting. Our Artistic Design Chairman's have gathered the best of the best to bring designs in to represent the classes in the flower show and our own Mary Pat will tell you how to prepare and show your horticulture, also answer any questions. Please, if you know of any questions prior to the meeting you would like to ask regarding the Flower Show and classes just send them to me via e-mail or phone and we can be ready to answer them in a timely manner.

Remember participation in the Flower Show is important since it is a very big project and everyone is needed.

Any and all suggestions for the next year's programs can be put on paper and given to me at the August meeting, also you can e-mail or a phone call.

“Art Blooms At The Mattawoman” was an exceptional success. Our District Director, Marjorie Glennen, attended with her husband and made wonderful comments about the designs, the demonstrations and the entire event as a whole. Eighteen designs were created by Lisa Gillespie, Mollie Gieseman, Mary Lilly, Liz Shifflette, Jan Spatz and myself. Demonstrators were Lisa Gillespie, Bonnie Castleberry and JoAnn Chapman.

Stay Cool and Water Those Flowers,

Sybil

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CCGC Officers

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Musings on Fields of Lavender,

-Lisa Gillespie

Our trip to the Carousel Lavender Farm in Buck's County, PA this past July 10th & 11th was a smashing success! We had 34 participants who arrived on a beautiful warm morning heading out by bus to Lahaska Pennsylvania. We chatted and enjoyed delicious peach Bellini's prepared by Michelle Pence and a steady stream of wine and tasty snacks prepared by Bonnie Castleberry and Lisa Gillespie. We arrived at Peddler's Village in the afternoon with enough time to relax, shop and explore the quaint Colonial-inspired and beautifully-landscaped property that holds over 70 shops and restaurants. The accommodations were lovely and spacious and many gathered in large groups for dinner at the various restaurants and we enjoyed a fun and relaxing evening with friends old and new.

*The next morning after a delicious breakfast we headed out to our destination, Carousel Farm Lavender, which was every bit as breathtakingly gorgeous as the pictures promised. Upon arriving we were instantly hit with the heady fragrance of the *lavandula angustifolia* wafting through the air. Niko Christos, the owner, greeted us with a warm smile and was charming and hospitable. He led us on a tour of his astonishing property that was a sensory wonderland...not an ugly moment to be seen anywhere: perfectly manicured gardens around a pristinely restored historical home and outbuildings that have been returned to their original glory, but with the modern conveniences all blended into a harmonious layering of architectural grandeur and rustic charm.*

The fields of lavender were in the prime of their blooming and a riot of green and lilac, deep purple and white dancing with butterflies and honeybees. We were led through rows and rows of the four varieties of lavender, past the beeskeep from which they derive their own proprietary lavender honey and then through the various buildings where the harvests are processed. Among them, a splendid old drying house filled with hundreds of tied bundles of lavender hanging on the heavy beams. Niko educated us about the plants, their care as well as their processing answering all of our many questions. We walked through gravel-lined raised bed gardens filled with the bounty of summer and charming garden decor; past pastures of grazing livestock: cattle, horses, donkeys llamas and goats who add not only bucolic charm but are a practical source of organic fertilizer.

We encountered a massive and magnificent ancient chestnut tree, which somehow managed to survive the devastating blight that virtually wiped out the species in North America. All around were gorgeous buildings, such as original and working stables and barns whose stone walls and architectural details were painstakingly excavated from decades of unfortunate renovations and neglect. We stepped inside of a wine lover's fantasy of an old stone springhouse that has been converted into an impressive wine cellar and to the distillation shed, where the warm fragrance of lavender oil and hydrosol (or lavender water)

filled the room in the process of extracting the essences from the flowers in the distillation tank. It was a uniquely heady and intoxicating sensation.

After being invited to lunch in the gardens and around the property we were able to explore and shop in the beautiful little store that had a plethora of products made from their lavender: sachets and essential oils and soaps and creams and beautiful gifts and crafts, and of course we filled the bus with live lavender plants as well. On our way home, our attentive and accommodating bus driver Al made a happy detour at one of the areas most lush and bountiful garden centers and then a stop for ice cream! It was an extraordinary trip and a joy to spend this time with a fabulous group of ladies and of course our two token young men, Danielle Webber's sons. We arrived home not only laden with treasures from our journey but most importantly our memories of a wonderful trip together.

Thank you all for your enthusiasm and support and your lovely gestures of gratitude! It was a blast!!!

Lisa

HORTICULTURE HINTS BY MARY PAT BERRY

2011 has been designated International Year of Forests to celebrate the sustainable management of the world's forests by the United Nations General Assembly.

Maryland is currently celebrating International Year of Forests (IYOF) with an interactive GPS tour called the IYOF Big Tree Geocache. Currently underway, this is an opportunity for forest and geocaching enthusiasts to view some of the biggest trees in Maryland.

“The intent of the IYOF Big Tree Geocache is to get families outside and realize the important roles trees play in our everyday lives while having a great time,” said State Forester Steve Koehn. “Trees are very important. They protect water quality, clean our air, provide jobs and supply important wildlife habitat.”

Organizations throughout Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay watershed are using this opportunity to celebrate trees with citizens and offer awareness on the benefits of healthy forests.

Geocaching is a fun, high-tech, treasure hunting game where participants use a GPS unit or smart phone to locate containers, called geocaches, hidden by other people. Geocaching is for people of all ages and helps establish a strong sense of community and build support for the environment. Visit www.geocaching.com to learn more and view Geocaching experiences others have shared.

The IYOF Big Tree Geocache can be found on Geocaching.com listed under the username “ChesapeakeForester.” More caches will be added throughout the year. Visit ForestryForTheBay.org for more information on IYOF and more ways to celebrate IYOF in your area. Visit the Maryland Forest Service online at dnr.maryland.gov/forests/.

So I challenge you to get out your GPS and go find a BIG TREE!



LANDSCAPE DESIGN – Lavender Farm

The CCGC trip to Bucks County Pennsylvania was wonderful from beginning to end but I will only talk about what we were lucky enough to experience at the FARM. We went to see Lavender production, but that was only part of the story for me. The two types of Lavender that is grown on this farm are English and French. The English lavender is earlier to bloom, is shorter than the French Lavender and has bluer flowers. The English lavender is grown mainly for use in cooking. The flowers are striped off the stakes, dried or most likely dried and striped and then sold in bags. The English lavender is harvested twice a year. When we were there the English Lavender had already been harvested once and the French Lavender was starting to be harvested by hand and bundled to be dried and sold as is or to have the essential oil extracted from the flowers. The oils are extracted in a very labor intensive process of distilling. The French Lavender plants are a silvery color while the English variety is a little greener. The fields were full of beautiful Lavender blooms – row after perfect row. The smell was intoxicating and I will never forget it. Many flats of lavender were bought and carried home on the bus by our group. These plants were all propagated, by cuttings, by the owner of the farm.

The buildings dating back to the 1780's – guest house, stable, main house, and the spring house were all made of stone and all have been renovated by the current owners of this farm. The spring house is an elegant structure that now serves as a wine cellar. All the buildings, along with the beautiful gardens and trees were maintained so beautifully, that it was hard to understand how this could be accomplished. I saw no evidence of farm help.

The plantings, other than the lavender, were over the top. There was an American Chestnut tree that was probably 2 hundred years old and was the most beautiful tree I have ever seen and those that know me, know I am a big time tree lover. Most of the American Chestnut trees were extinct by the turn of the last (1900) century. In the 1800's the American Chestnut was the most important forest tree on the east coast. How this

tree managed to survive the blight is anyone's guess. The sycamore trees were old enough (maybe 75 years) that they were losing their bark (exfoliating) in huge pieces. The ladies (the artists and crafts people) took home 3-4 boxes of this bark. Can't wait to see what they do with their treasures.

Environmental practices were used on the farm. The Lavender was grown organically, the pathways and driveways were made from stone with no binder and the leftover plant material, from the distilling process, is composted. I am sure that there were many more eco friendly practices used on the farm.

The gardens were wonderful with unique plants. One plant, no one could identify including the owner of the property. I think it was Meadow Rue but have not verified it yet. There were Pee Gee Hydrangeas that were grown in French urns. The owners had used previous year's blooms to make a 4-5 foot dried swag that decorated the top of a hutch in the gift shop. The vegetable gardens were in a court yard. The veggies were grown in raised beds and there were fruit trees, of every description, espaliered along the walls of the court yard.

Wonderful!

Ann R. Draper



Photos by Sybil Alger

Be sure to check out our website: charlescountygardenclub.org Webmaster: Melissa Willett

Charles County Garden Club

Young Gardeners Program

Is looking for boys and girls who are interested in Horticulture, Gardening, Flower Design, Conservation

Our goals include promoting an interest and life-long learning in the areas of horticulture, environmental conservation, flower design, trees, shrubs, wildflowers and birds.

Those interested would be participating in fun activities throughout the year at no cost.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

August 8 Flower Arranging and Hostess Garden Club meeting at Fair Grounds & Painting a Rain Barrel

September 14 Young Gardeners enter Flower/Horticulture designs in the Charles County Fair

October 25 Pumpkin Harvest (planted in June)

December 10 Young Gardeners participate in the "Greens Workshop"

Please call Sandra Harrison 301-274-0171 for more information or if you know of someone interested in joining!



“KIDS DESIGN AT THE FAIR”

YOUNG GARDENERS WORKSHOP
SPONSORED BY
the CHARLES COUNTY GARDEN CLUB

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011 at 5:00

p.m.

at the

CHARLES COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS
FLOWER BUILDING

ARRANGMENT THEME
HUMPTY DUMPTY
TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE

Bring your own flowers and container
Design must be assembled by kids at the fair

All eligible entries will be judged for awards
Division and rules page 35 in Fair Handbook

For information contact Sandra Harrison at 301-274-0171 or sbh1mail@gmail.com

Art Blooms at the Mattawoman by Sybil Alger

A beautiful day of demonstrations by Bonnie Castleberry “Watercolor Painting”, JoAnn Chapman “Shell Art” and Lisa Gillespie “Cooking with Herbs”.

Paintings and Photographs done by the MCAC Artist were interpreted with Flower Arrangements by Flower Designing Diva’s Mary Lilly, Diane Kramer, Janice Spatz, Liz Shifflette, Mollie Gieseman and Sybil Alger.

Among the many visitors were Marjorie Glennan, our District II Director, and her husband, Steve Glennan. Both were impressed with the Designs and Demonstrations as well as the MCAC Art and setting. They enjoyed hearing about the history of Smallwood Park and the Art Center.

Lucy Richmond and Bonnie Castleberry made a success of “Art Blooms At The Mattawoman” with the hard work to develop the plans, fliers (that were given out at many venues) and keeping in contact with the participants. Lucy even entered three paintings in the exhibit. Both of these Garden Club Ladies are so multi talented. Thank you Lucy and Bonnie for also making the day a favorable outcome for the MCAC.



Photos by Sybil Alger: Clockwise from left... Lisa Gillespie & her cooking demo; JoAnn with her shell art; Liz Shifflette’s interpretation of an art piece; and Mary’s stretch design





Butterfly Counts are on the Wing!

*-Lisa Gillespie
Birds & Butterflies Committee Chair*

The 37th annual North American Butterfly Association (NABA) Butterfly Count is underway! These annual counts are a lot of fun but are also important ways to track the butterfly populations of North America. Tracking butterflies, and other wildlife, are great ways to help determine the impact of both good and bad landscaping practices. The NABA Butterfly Counts, a program for the North American Butterfly Association, is a compilation of all butterflies observed at sites within a 15-mile diameter count circle in a one-day period. The annually published reports provide a tremendous amount of information about the geographical distribution and relative population sizes of the species counted. Comparisons of the results across years can be used to monitor changes in butterfly populations and study the effects of weather and habitat change on North American butterflies.

During the Butterfly Count, volunteers conduct a one-day census of all butterflies that are sighted within a specified area. Local butterfly groups and other wildlife experts generally help facilitate the counts. The North American Butterfly Association (NABA) organizes the counts and publishes their annual reports. These reports provide important information about the geographical distributions and population sizes of the species counted. For more info:

<http://www.naba.org/counts.html>

Also, for a quick guide to identifying moths and butterflies you can go to the following website: <http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org>

Conservation: Compost and Pearls *by Rose Haft*

We do not see nature with our eyes, but with our understandings and our hearts. William Hazlitt "On Taste" (1859)

Our hearts grow best what they can watch over time. It's not always easy to see how a little care and attention here and there make a difference, but even in our 'smallest' relationships with the most infrequent meetings, we can inspire nourish and create memories to last a life time. It is most often what we do and how we shape the space between that allows us to present others with what brings us together every week, month, year or at random chance. It is how we conserve and direct our energy in those times that also keep us close in bonds, purpose for

Garden Club Trip in October

We are excited about our upcoming garden club trip (with tour, lunch and meeting) on October 11, 2011 to Cylburn Arboretum and Vollmer Center (home of our Maryland Federation Headquarters). We will depart at 8:30 AM from the old Safeway parking lot (in front of the Dollar Tree). We will proceed to Cylburn and have a guided tour of the mansion and some of the gardens by Glenda Weber, Cylburn's Naturalist, which will take approximately 1 1/2 hours, after which we will meet in the greenhouse classroom for a box lunch and meeting before returning home at 2:00 PM.

Classic Catering will provide our lunches which will include sandwich, whole fruit, chips and housemade dessert. Please indicate your menu choices and send along with your check. Turkey Breast or Baked Ham & Havarti or Curried Chicken Salad. The cost for bus transportation, tour, snacks and lunch will be \$35.00. Please send your check (which is your reservation) to our Treasurer, Michelle Pence, by Sept 23, 2011. For further information, please contact Doris White, trip coordinator, at 301-934-0999 or doris409@verizon.net

Conservation con't

one another and flourishing in beauty between meetings. Using natural processes to help take care of our gardens, waterways and other nature-scapes can be beneficial and protecting to all organisms involved. In preparing for each of each other's and our ecosystems' replenishment and nourishment we can be smart and take little steps to make a big difference in the long run.

Gardens that are home to many working as a system often produce the best and healthiest plants, taking long periods of time to reach their potential. Their 'home' can mean lots of things but is always shaped by those that reside in it. Creating space, taking long term effects and work into account and putting them into action and cultivating beneficial wildlife and natural processes can create self-sustaining ecosystems, reduce energy input needed and help a garden look like it cost 'a million bucks', but with much less funding or effort. Taking time to compost in off seasons, building healthier soils, using natural fertilizers, cover cropping to recycle nutrients, using natural landscaping patterns to maneuver and save water, planting early in green houses or saving shoots and seeds allows your garden, and landscape to grow over an extended period of time, without the harshness, effort or costs of new planting and establishing every year. This helps plants and organisms to become more acquainted with the grounds and helps soils to retain more water, nutrients, worms, bugs, birds and (hopefully good) pests in a long-term and sustained effect. More living things, well-tended, create natural soil and land care, and nutrient transfer that also helps to keep grounds safe for your family and neighboring ecosystems, protecting plants from harmful pests and organisms and giving gardens that well loved feel.

This effort will trickle down into our waterways, making easier for beneficial organisms to subsist. Algae, the main food source for oysters, are most directly affected by the choices we make at the soil level, making oysters most susceptible to algae damage or health. Often taken for granted while hiding in the depths (previously causing shipwrecks in the shallows during the times of Jamestown) of the Chesapeake Bay, Potomac, Port Tobacco Rivers and other rivers and tributaries of the like, each one filters up to 50 gallons a day per. With only 1% of the Bay's natural historical abundance remaining, it's become necessary to take action and begin cultivating the proposed *450 to tens of thousands of underwater acres* by 2032, working towards creating the reefs that will become homes for stripped bass and other fellow fish. The Maryland Grow Oysters Program is working to ensure greater success for spat growing them in hatcheries before being taken to attach to hard surface shells, even though not all of them will survive. Once established they grow to adulthood and start a mating ritual, changing sex one or more times before being picked or passing on. Because of the hard work and conservation effort of these oysters, many organisms that live in and around the ecosystem are able to maintain life. With help of the conservation programs of Maryland, local seafood restaurants, and conservation techniques of these organisms, the layer-by-layer carefully placed nacre coatings create many more pearls to discover, and water much easier to 'drink'.

Learning from oysters, small-perpetuated efforts used to save now and prepare for our future, and recycling nutrients and waste materials, other organisms (or the same organisms) can have greater health, abundance,

ITEMS OF INTEREST

LADIES—THERE ARE NUMEROUS EVENTS PLANNED WITH OUR CLUB AND OUR DISTRICT II AND STATE. PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO REVIEW ALL OF THE OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDED TO YOU – LOTS TO LEARN, GREAT SHOPPING, AND WONDERFUL FRIENDSHIPS AND GOOD FOOD. CHECK OUT THE WEBSITES.

Conservation con't.

beauty, homes, sustainability and cleanliness. Even those things that agitate in the smallest respects can turn out to create the most beauty in the long run. Little bits of natural effort over a longer period bring many organisms into beauty, and loving perfection in our gardens, waterways and lives and create something beyond what our imaginations, a moment, week or one-time effort could produce. By practicing 'natural' gardening and conservation techniques, we can turn our smallest burdens into pearls, and our 'smallest' friends into our homes, where our hearts are.

References:

Natural Yard Care 4th Edition, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, etc., 2008

http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/maryland_dc/newsroom/partnership-plants-five-million-oysters-in-harris-creek.xml

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/marylands-plan-to-boost-chesapeake-bay-oysters-will-require-a-lot-of-hanky-panky/2011/04/26/AFJcqXUF_story.html?hpid=z8

GARDEN THERAPY by Jan Spotz



Liz Shifflette and Jan Spotz visited the Richard Clark Senior Center to work with the Adult Day Class on June 28, 2011. We created gorgeous creations for the Fourth of July. We used red plastic cups for our vases, white daisies, red carnations, and babies breath for our flower arrangements. For our extra flare we added small flags, red, white and blue designed stickers, and red white and blue ribbons. We sang a couple of patriotic songs and had a good time talking with the participants about how we would all celebrate our Fourth of July holiday.



Fair schedules were inserted into the *Maryland Independent* last week. A copy of the schedule will be sent out via email under separate copy from this newsletter. If you need a copy to be mailed to you, please contact Rose Haft.

Complete Fair books will be available at the August 8th meeting.

The theme of this year's show is inspired by Alice in Wonderland - "Through the Looking Glass".

P. O. Box 1496
La Plata, MD 20646



August Meeting

August 8, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. - Luncheon
Charles County Fairgrounds Commercial Building

Coordinator: Betsy Parbuoni

Hostesses: Boone, H.; Chandler; Davis; Diachenko;
Pence; Raucheisen; Turner, A.

PROGRAM

Interpretative Artistic Designs: A program to learn new designs for the upcoming Fair Flower Show

Junior Gardeners will be participating in meeting and will have the opportunity to paint a rain barrel that will be placed outside of the Flower Building.

Guests Invited

September

September is Charles County Fair Time and there is much to do to prepare the Flower Building for the many visitors coming through to view all of the beautiful horticulture and fabulous designs!

Respond with great enthusiasm when contacted by a Class Consultant or volunteer even before asked! It truly is a great learning experience and lots of fun!