
GARDEN SCOOP

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WESTLAKE GARDEN CLUB

December 2013

Silk Flower Arranging at November Meeting

Member Robert Pearl brought a number of lovely silk flower arrangements that he had made to the meeting. Some of the arrangements are normally on display at his home. He distributed a handout with useful information on tools needed to make arrangements and where to purchase supplies. After talking about the construction of each finished arrangement, Robert demonstrated putting together a fall arrangement from start to finish. He talked about different types of containers that can be used for these arrangements and noted that he generally uses clear marbles in clear glass containers. He sometimes makes a grid from clear tape across the opening of the container to hold the flowers upright. If the container is an opaque material, he will use florist foam, securing it to the bottom of the container with glue and/or wire. An arrangement generally begins with the tallest item and is built around it, adding various types of greenery as filler. When leaves from flowers are not used, Robert saves them and will use them later as filler for another arrangement. He also saves the small pieces of florist foam cut from a block and uses them in small containers. Materials are expensive, so this is a money-saver. He talked about how to clean arrangements and the different products to spray on the flowers to keep dust off.

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President's Message

By Regina McCarthy

Our 50th anniversary year is almost over. We've had fun celebrating our golden year, starting with Club memorabilia on display at Porter Library, then our bus tour to the Cultural Gardens and Rockefeller Greenhouse, the first-class fundraiser luncheon, everything in between, to conclude with our celebratory holiday tree in the Library and our festive luncheon. It takes many members to accomplish all we have done and I sincerely thank those members that contributed to our success. *** Congratulations to Ruth Bertrand and Jean Smith, both of whom were profiled in *Westlake Magazine*. An honor well deserved. *** Have you signed up for the holiday luncheon? If not, please promptly contact Ruth for reservations. Your guests are most welcome. *** The Officer Installation Ceremony, which is particularly meaningful to those of us that serve, will include two members not previously on the Board: Marge Domitz and Brian Thompson. Two great examples of newer members stepping up to do their part. *** Members, please review the Standing Committees and the list of Civic Projects contained in your Year Book. Volunteers are needed to assist with most. Every member should serve on the Board and/or as a Committee Chair or member during your Club tenure. We cannot expect the same people year after year to do the work; they'll burn out and we want them to shine brightly. Excepting our Hilliard Road flower bed, the Watershed Group Delegate and the "maybe" Community Garden, take a look at our Projects and Committees and determine on which you would like to chair or serve. Most Projects occur only once a year and you will receive assistance on what to do. Also think about helping Jean with the Newsletter, assisting Alberta, our Historian, or representing the Club at Community Reps meetings. Choose one, or more, and let's discuss. *** I thank you all for your support and look forward to another great Club year. I remain very grateful to, and inspired by, the Board, the best of the best. *** I wish you all Joyous Holidays and a very happy and healthy New Year.

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We have met to start planning the programs for 2014. Our goal is to provide quality programs for your enjoyment and education. A variety of interesting subjects and speakers will highlight the monthly meetings at the Library. Several summer outings will be planned as separate events. We hope that you will all enjoy the programs and take part in the outings in 2014.

Sally Knurek, 1st V.P. and Jean Smith, 2nd V.P.

Getting to Know You...

By Pat Dailey

Cathi Peter



Cathi's first clear memory is walking in a circular garden on a path that got more narrow as you reached the center. It was a fairyland of color and smelled lovely. She was about three years old and ever since, she has had

gardening in her blood. During the war in Germany, a garden and fruit trees were a necessity of life. Her father always found a small plot of land for a garden. Seeds and plants were hard to come by, but he always managed. Cathi is always reminded of the time spent with her father in the garden when she smells fresh turned soil. When her family moved to Cleveland and settled in what is now Ohio City, Cathi attended St. Patrick School and Lourdes Academy. Most families in the neighborhood had flower and vegetable gardens and children would often take bouquets from the garden to their teacher. After graduating from St. John College, Cathi returned to her grade school to teach, and after getting married, she started teaching in Cleveland Public Schools. "Working with children is like gardening in many ways. You plant, cultivate and nurture." During her 32 years of teaching, many weekends were spent driving her class to basketball games, picnics and parks. Inner-city children seldom left their neighborhood so teachers would take them in small groups to see and experience the rest of the world. In the classroom, there were always geraniums, petunias and begonias blooming on the windowsills. The children would water, deadhead and make many plantings so that each child could take home a plant for Mother's Day. After moving to Lakewood, Cathi joined the Rivercrest Garden Club in Rocky River and discovered women who also valued time spent in a garden. After retiring from her beloved profession, she spent the next eight years in several small towns in Texas taking care of her newly born grandchildren and putting in gardens. In 2003, Cathi downsized and moved to a condo in Westlake. Planting a small square patch beside her front door has been the biggest challenge. Roses are drowned; soil is blown away; flowers are power washed. The recourse is working friends' yards and gardens in North Olmsted, Parma, Medina and Berea. Cathi stays busy teaching children ages 6-9 in her parish Good Shephard Program, driving/shopping for seniors, doing water exercise, reading, crocheting, cooking and baking. "Joining the Westlake Garden Club is the luxury I have allowed myself. What a pleasure to sit, listen and learn from the experts."

Garden Scoop, Published 11 times per year

Editor: Jean Smith

Contributing Writers: Pat Dailey, Marge Emblom, Regina McCarthy, Carolyn Steigman

Photographs: Alberta Ricciardi

Deadline: last Wednesday of the month for next month's issue

Happy Birthday

December

3rd Margaret Schulz
6th Pat Dailey



Membership News

By Carolyn Steigman

If you have already given me your check for membership renewal, thank you. If you haven't sent in your renewal, please try to do so by the end of the year. As stated in our By Laws, dues must be paid by Feb. 1 in order to have your name listed in the yearbook. As you may know, the fee for membership has gone up to \$25, but it's still a great bargain. I cannot be at the meeting in December so please mail your renewal to me. This year, in order to save money on paper and postage, dues statements will not be mailed. I have enjoyed the company of many of our members over the past year. We are indeed a talented group and I hope to see you all again in the New Year. Have a safe, happy and joyful holiday.

Officers for 2014 Elected

At the November meeting, new officers for 2014 were elected as follows:

President	Regina McCarthy
1st Vice President	Sally Knurek
2nd Vice President	Jean Smith
Treasurer	Marie McCarthy
Recording Secretary	Marge Domitz (Board Meetings) Brian Thompson (General Meetings)
Corresponding Secretary	Claire Evangelista

A proposed amendment to our By Laws, which will **increase annual dues to \$25**, was also unanimously accepted.

Article VII Membership Dues

Annual membership dues shall be \$25.00 payable by February 1 in order to be listed in the yearbook. New members who join after July 1 shall pay \$15.00 until the next dues are payable.

2013 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

WGC PROGRAMS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2 – WGC HOLIDAY TREE AT WESTLAKE PORTER LIBRARY

TREE WILL BE DECORATED AT 9:30 A.M. AND REMAIN THERE

DAILY THROUGH THE END OF THE YEAR

STOP BY TO ENJOY OUR TREE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2013 – HOLIDAY LUNCHEON AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS FOR 2014

PLACE: MAHLE'S RESTAURANT, 24945 DETROIT ROAD, WESTLAKE

TIME: 11 A.M., MEETING AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

PROGRAM: TBA

RESERVATIONS: CALL RUTH BERTRAND, 440-899-1565

WE WILL ORDER FROM THE MENU WITH INDIVIDUAL CHECKS

NOTE: WE DO NOT MEET IN JANUARY. THE FIRST MEETING OF 2014 IS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2014.

OTHER EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2013 – GLOW AFFILIATE NIGHT

PLACE: CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDENS, 11030 EAST BLVD.

TIME: 6-8 P.M.

CONTACT REGINA MCCARTHY BY DECEMBER 1 IF YOU WANT TO ATTEND AND CARPOOL TO THE CBG

******* *Calling all writers* *******

Members are invited to get involved with this newsletter by submitting articles and photos of interesting places you have visited, new plants you have discovered, an interesting book you have read or a speaker you have heard. It doesn't even have to be about gardening. Just email article and photos to me, or hand the hard copies to me at a meeting. Your input will be greatly appreciated.

Jean Smith, Editor



Robert Pearl presenting his program on silk flower arranging. See page 4 for more photos

Happy Stress-free Holidays

By Jean Smith

Thanksgiving was late this year which means there is even less time between making the big dinner for family and friends, and shopping, wrapping, baking, writing cards, entertaining, etc. – whew!, for Christmas. Sometimes we push ourselves to the limit trying to create that perfect Currier and Ives or Dickens Holiday. As many of you know, with age comes wisdom. At some point in time, we realize there is no such thing as the “perfect” holiday. Someone or something always seems to pop up to spoil it. So how do we avoid ruining our holidays and keeping peace in the family? Good planning and letting go of those ideas of a picture-perfect day – and, keeping things simple. Let your sister-in-law bring the green beans (even though you think yours are better). Buy a frozen pie if you do not have time to bake one from scratch. Try to hold on to the traditions that are really special to you – then create some new ones of your own. In the age of ultra-commercialism, we feel that we must buy, buy, buy, especially at Christmas. My husband has five siblings, who have spouses and children. Early in our marriage, I started dreading the holidays. What do we buy for everyone? Then it would take four hours to open all of the gifts. I have one brother and one sister so, to say the least, I was overwhelmed. After a few years, we started drawing names for the adults and buying gifts for all of the children, which was a little better. Even then, sometimes I felt like I had spent good money and time buying something that they did not like, or would never use. As the nieces and nephews grew up, they were included in the gift exchange and sometimes we would do a theme gift, but eventually, we stopped exchanging gifts. I like to receive a gift as much anyone, but at some point in your life, do you really need another sweater, scarf, robe, etc. Most of us buy those thing if and when needed. I most appreciate receiving and giving a gift that is hand-made, but understand that everyone is not creative in that way. I recently read an article about what to give someone who has everything. The writer suggested that these people still have to eat, so food is often a great gift. One year, my son made several different kinds of soup and gave everyone two containers of soup, a soup bowl and spoon – what a thoughtful and tasty gift, and every time I use my soup bowl, I think of him. For someone who likes to cook or bake, you can put together a basket or bag of products and utensils. As we learned at our fundraiser luncheon in September, wine is always a popular item. I, and many people I know, would love a basket with different wines, crackers, cheese and other accompaniments. I am running out of space, so I will wrap this up by saying, try to simplify your holidays and remember why we celebrate Christmas. Also, to help keep the stress level down, get some exercise, meet friends for lunch and laugh a lot, and don't feel that you have to buy that perfect gift or adhere to any “picture-perfect” idea of the holiday. Just enjoy spending time with those people you love. I wish peace, love and joy to you and yours this holiday season.

The Gift of Giving

By Marge Emblom

Do you have shopper's block in thinking about what to get your gardening friends or relatives? Don't worry unnecessarily because the ideas for finding just the right gift are endless. And shopping can be as easy as going on line, or for those brave souls willing to face crowds, there are a number of gift shops and garden center Christmas stores to explore. For small gifts consider Atlas nitrile gloves (excellent for everyday gardening) or for the rosearian, long leather gloves (excellent for keeping thorns at bay and you can't have too many pairs). Then there are Corona by-pass shears or even those little pins that hold the black plastic or architectural cloth in place. But then again, what's not to like about a small Christmas cactus, cyclamen or poinsettia? No gardener can ever turn away from the beauty of just one more plant. Is your gardener a reader? What about a subscription to a gardening magazine or to one of the wonderful illustrated encyclopedias of perennials, annuals, shrubs, wildflowers, or bulbs? For the historical fiction buff, the novelist Philippa Gregory has a fascinating book, *Earthly Joys* about one of the founding fathers of gardening in England, John Tradescant (for whom the plant tradescantia is named). Gregory's research is excellent, and in story form she describes how Tradescant's developing passion for exotic plants led him to travel from England in the 17th century all through Europe and even as far as Russia and Turkey to obtain plants for his gardens. Where he couldn't travel himself, he cajoled sea captains into bring back plants to England—even from the new world-- for truly amazing gardens. He had the revolutionary idea that gardens were not just for royalty and those people with huge incomes, but also were for common people, and he was the first person to open his personal garden for everyday folks to come and enjoy. I found the novel gripping. Still, there are lots of gifts for gardeners besides books and magazines. If your recipient is not a reader and is more of a party person or is a person who loves to entertain, consider those fun small cheese plates with botanic pictures on their surfaces. Little cheese knives with flowers on the handles are good conversational openers at parties also. Silicone wine or vinegar stoppers are now made with little flowers on top. Who can resist them at \$1.99? For those who are coffee or tea drinkers the choices for garden related ideas are huge. The Portmeirion botanical mugs are wonderful—and BIG. And for people with a penchant for blue dishes, there are thousands—yes hundreds--of butterfly and flower decorated pottery pieces at the Polish Pottery shop. For the big splurge gifts the choices are truly awesome. My favorites are the gorgeous rose bouquets offered in the David Austen catalogue and White Flower Farm's unique plant or flower of the month options. Get the idea?

Silk Flower Arranging at November Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

Robert is a very gifted artist and has a keen eye for color and shape. He has several clients for whom he provides silk flower arrangements year round, and decorates their homes for the holidays. It is obvious from the amount of materials Robert brought to the meeting that you need a lot of storage space if you plan to do silk flower arranging. But, if you have the storage space, even with the materials being somewhat costly, you can still make your own silk arrangement for less than if you purchased it ready-made. And, it is very satisfying to create something lovely for your home.



Pictured top and middle right: Robert Pearl and his silk flower arrangements.

Lower middle: A guest with arrangement Robert made as a demonstration.

Bottom: Hostess committee Pat Dailey, Sally Knurek, Claire Evangelista, Shirley Lutts and Margaret Schulz, with Robert Pearl.