

**GARDEN CLUB OF WILMINGTON
MEMBERSHIP MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2024**

Date: January 8, 2024
Location: Delaware Center for Horticulture
Hostesses: Horticulture Committee
Program: "Shrubs for Four Seasons of Interest"
Presenter: Eva Monheim, Longwood Gardens

Attending: A. Ashley; P. Barton; Ann Biggs; Anna Biggs; A. Bray; G. Butters; B. Cairns; L. Carbonell; B. Cooch; E. Deitrick; B. Denham; S. DeWees; N. Draper; B. Draper; J. Dugan; E. duPont; L. duPont; C. Eaton; L. Eirhart; K. Ellsworth; E. Fiechter; D. Fisher; M. Grant; E. Gregory; C. Hewitt; J. Isken; C. Jenney; K. Kristol; M. Laird; I. Laird; K. Maroney; B. McCoy; P. Miller; S. Parker; M. Patterson; N. Reese; C. Rice; A. Rose; B. Rowland; W. Russell; H. Scott; E. Scott; A. Silliman; Z. Simonds; J. Spruance; P. Stabler; L. Swartz; C. Taylor; C. van Eps; M. Waldron; C. Wissing; L. Barton.

President Sally DeWees called the meeting to order at 11:15 am.

Laura du Pont made a motion to accept the December minutes. Beverly Rowland seconded the motion. Members voted to accept the minutes.

BUSINESS MEETING

Announcements:

- As Sally announced at the November meeting, Vikrum Krishmanthury has resigned his position as DCH Executive Director. GCW Member Carrie Wiles will assume the position as Interim Executive Director while a search is being conducted.
- The *Ilex opaca* (American Holly) has been submitted by a club member for the GCA Freeman Medal. The Freeman Medal was established to highlight under utilized but highly worthy North American native plants Northern native plants, trees, shrubs, ground covers, vines and perennials. The goal is to encourage their use in the landscape and make them familiar to gardeners and more available in nurseries. The awardees will be announced in late May. Coincidentally, the American Holly is Delaware's State Tree.

Horticulture:

- Chair Cynthia Rice reminded everyone that now (Winter) is the time to sow seeds. No additional watering or care is required...just spread the seeds and let Nature do the rest.
- Seed Share is an initiative of the GCA Horticulture Committee. You can search the database and request free seeds from other GCA members or add a listing and share seeds you have collected. A number of other organizations sponsor seed exchanges including the Mid Atlantic Hardy Plant Society.
- Cynthia has packaged and labelled *Digitalis purpurea* seeds and has made them available for GCW members.

Philadelphia Flower Show:

- Co-Chair Carol Taylor asked for volunteers to help with maintenance of our club's exhibit during the Show, March 1-9. Maintenance requirements will not be time consuming...so more time for volunteers to roam and enjoy the show before the crowds arrive. Plus volunteers receive a free show ticket! Volunteers' names are needed now as Co-Chair Joan Isken and Carol must submit the names soon

- Pre-register now for Horticultural Court entries. Visit the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show website to reserve a spot and receive a free Show ticket. Hort exhibits can range from forced bulbs or a variety of container plants.

Membership:

- Co-Chair Laura du Pont asked that the names for candidates for GCVW membership be sent to her by February 14th.

Visiting Gardens:

- Chair Nancy Reese reported that GCA is planning an exciting trip to Morocco, May7-17, 2025. More details to follow.
- Registration is now open for the February 11-17, 2024 trip to Oahu, Hawaii. Please see GCA's Visiting Gardens landing page for more details.
- Two GCA garden clubs (Richmond, VA and Knoxville, TN) will be visiting our area in May, 2024. Leslie Porter will be hosting a party for our visitors. It has been requested to see our members' gardens. Please contact Nancy if you would be willing to share your garden!
- More details about the Newport, RI Flower Show & Tour are on the GCW Visiting Gardens landing page.

Andalusia Garden Symposium:

- Wendy Russell reported that this year's 2nd Annual Garden Symposium at the Andalusia Museum, Gardens & Arboretum. Following last year's very successful event, this year's symposium will be held May 3, 2024 and will feature fabulous speakers, including Troy Smith (Head Gardener at Sissinghurst Castle), Lucy Hunter (renown author and naturalistic floral designer from Wales) and Dan Hinkley (distinguished plantsman and garden writer from Seattle).
- It will be a full day of activities in the beautiful setting of the Andalusia historic house, gardens and arboretum. A coffee reception, lunch and afternoon tea are included.
- If you are interested in attending, please let Wendy and/or Sally know for putting a table together and for car-pooling. See the GCW website (May calendar) for more information.
- All proceeds from the ticket sales will support the Bensalem Scholarship Fund for high school students.

Conservation:

- Chair Katherine Maroney reminded everyone of the "DCH Christmas Tree Recycling Event".
- Use less plastic!!! See the current Consumers' Report publication for truly startling facts about why we need to reduce plastic. One way is to use laundry sheets...not big, plastic jugs of liquid detergents. Combined with Anna's dryer balls, we have made a start!

Floral Design:

- Chair Barbara Cairns thanked the Program Committee for arranging December's festive holiday program presented by Heidi Militana and assisted by Carroll Eaton.
- As a result of our members' requests, Floral Design has arranged 3 upcoming workshops :
 - 1).Feb 6 - GCA Floral Design Symposium Watch Party/Lunch at Lynne Swartz's home.
 - 2).Feb 8 - Betsy Scott demonstrates Mechanics of Floral Design at Joan Isken's home.
 - 3).Apr 10 - Naturalistic Table Arrangements led by Connie Wissing & Carroll Eaton at the home of Lisa Giacco.
- For more information, times and to register for these workshops, go to the Floral Design landing page.

PROGRAM:

- Program Chair Mary Patterson announced that instead of the announced program “Shrubs for All Seasons,” there would be an open discussion about Hellebores and other interesting winter tidbits.
- Some highlights of the discussion included:
 - To cut or not to cut back old Hellebore foliage.
 - “Instant Death Syndrome” affecting Daphne shrubs.
 - The cultivar Ilex opaca ‘Maryland Dwarf’ is a beautiful, low mounding shrub and can be seen at Mt. Cuba.
 - How to use Hellebore stems and flowers in floral arrangements.
 - Leave winter-cut foliage for animals/birds.
 - David Culp recommends not composting cut foliage because of spreading diseases.
 - When to prune Spring blooming shrubs and Summer bloomers.
 - “A Way to Garden” is shown weekly on the web and offers good advice about all aspects of gardening. It includes a seasonal blooming schedule.

Sally adjourned the round table discussion at 11:57.

A delicious lunch complete with wonderful lace cookies and chocolates were enjoyed by all. We thank “Catering by Wendy” for the delivery and creation of our bountiful meal!!

The next GCW Members’ Meeting will be held on Monday, February 5th, 11:00 at Vicmead Hunt Club. Don’t forget to RSVP!!!

Respectively submitted,
Connie Wissing
Recording Secretary