



GREEN TIMES

January 2010

Volume 10 Issue 1

Master Gardener Meeting

Tuesday, January 26, 2009 at 7 pm

Totowa Business Center
930 Riverview Drive, Suite 250
Totowa, NJ

Meet us for dinner at 5pm

Miranda's Café
Route 23 North, Wayne NJ
Allow 15 minutes to get to the meeting

“THEN AND NOW: A HUNT FOR HISTORIC GARDENS” with MARTA MCDOWELL

What did the gardens look like then? Have they survived? Join an entertaining, informative hunt for the treasures of gardens past.

Marta McDowell lives, writes and gardens in Chatham. Her garden writing has appeared in publications such as *Woman's Day*, *Fine Gardening* and *The New York Times*. Marta teaches landscape history and preservation at the New York Botanical Garden and Drew University. She has interned at Wave Hill, Frelinghuysen Arboretum, the Royal Horticultural Society's Rosemoor in Devon, England and at the Chelsea Physic Garden in London. She worked as a horticulturist for five years at Reeves-Reed Arboretum in Summit. Her current projects include the restoration of a 1920s garden in Morristown and the history of Willowood Arboretum in Chester. Marta is on the Board of the NJ Historical Garden Foundation at the Cross Estate.



GIVING OUR WARMEST REGARDS

At our January meeting, we will be collecting new or gently used hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for the less fortunate.

So, instead of re-gifting this holiday season, please think about donating. Thank you.

— Ray Edel



ELAINE'S CORNER



To do in January

- ◆ Try to stay off the frozen lawn with cars, walking, etc. The crown of the plant may be crushed.
- ◆ Broadleaved evergreens may need a second application of an anti-desiccant in mid January. The air temperature must be above 40 degrees.
- ◆ Allow tap water to warm to room temperature before watering indoor houseplants.
- ◆ Inspect houseplants for insect pests. Insecticidal soaps are safe indoors. **DON'T OVERWATER HOUSEPLANTS AND DO NOT FERTILIZE.** They are slow-growing in winter.
- ◆ Push perennials that have heaved out of the soil gently back into the ground.
- ◆ Cat litter makes an acceptable de-icer. Some cat litter has charcoal and may stain light-colored carpets. Use a floor mat both inside and outside the entrance door.
- ◆ Try spraying the snow shovel with vegetable oil cooking spray. The snow slides right off!
- ◆ Plant paper-white narcissus indoors in low containers for blooms in 3-4 weeks.
- ◆ Continue feeding the birds. They love the black-oiled sunflower seeds that I set out.

Learning and Volunteer Opportunities

Please take advantage of flower shows during the winter months, either as a volunteer or participating in a guided tour. It is a truly uplifting experience during the stormy winter months.

Time sheets and Audience Contact forms

Your awards and certificates depend on you completing the volunteer time sheets. I'm proud of what you do and would like to include it in my annual report. Please remember to fill out the time sheets and send them back. If you have given a lecture to any group, youth or adult, that is called "outreach" and I would like to know about that also. The audience contact form is what needs to be completed (and the time sheet for your efforts).

Annual Awards Dinner

Congratulations to all hourly and state award winners. A great turn-out of volunteers and spouses resulted in a lovely dinner and ceremony.

Thanks

The outpouring of support, kindness and sympathy on the passing of my mother, Emily Fogerty, was very touching and much needed. Thank you for your compassion. The food basket was especially nice during the busy holiday season. Also, I was deeply touched by the MGAPC's generous gift for my "ten years of service." The Vera Bradley bag is gorgeous and will be a beautiful reminder of the wonderful Rutgers Master Gardeners that I have been with during this time. The pleasure has been all mine.

Garden Magazines and Catalogs

January is "National Mail Order Gardening Month" and why not? With cold, blustery weather, there is no better way to anticipate spring and summer than drooling over photos and news of colorful garden plants. Select wisely with pest resistant seeds and plants. Enjoy!

"I am still devoted to the garden. But although I am an old man, I am still a young gardener."
— Thomas Jefferson

Elaine Barbour

County Agricultural Assistant

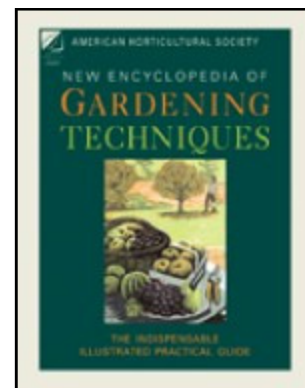


BOOKWORMS

The American Horticultural Society has produced a new, illustrated volume that offers a guide to modern, best-practice gardening techniques for a new generation of green-thumbers.

Compiled by a team of experts, the book is titled *American Horticultural Society New Encyclopedia of Gardening Techniques* (Nov. 2009; Mitchell Beazley/Octopus Books USA; Hardcover; \$45).

Using more than 2,000 easy-to-follow, step-by-step color illustrations and 200 full-color photographs, this 480-page hardcover book outlines the key skills and concepts that every gardener needs to be successful, no matter where in North America they live.



From vegetable and herb gardens and flower beds to wildlife, greenhouse, and container gardening, this book shows gardeners at all levels how to accomplish their goals using earth-friendly techniques in great detail.

Discover how to plant, prune, propagate, and nurture plants of all kinds, from fruits and vegetables to annuals, bulbs, ornamental grasses, shrubs, trees, and vines. Mixing equal parts inspiration and information, this book is the perfect guide to creating a beautiful and successful garden — and having fun at the same time.

The encyclopedia leads off with gardening basics, such as selecting the best garden tools and equipment, digging techniques, a primer on soil, mulching and composting, pest problems, and weed control.

From there the book explores numerous topics such as choosing the right plants for various types of gardens, alternatives to lawns, landscaping, the technology and design of water gardens, garden lighting, organic gardening, everyday garden maintenance, and ways to extend your gardening season.

For more information, visit <http://www.ahs.org>.

— Ray Edel

PLANT OF THE MONTH: POLKA DOT PLANT

Polka dot plant, grown for its spotted leaves, is known botanically as *Hypoestes phyllostachya*. It is one of the interesting plants from Madagascar. This island has so many plants that are unusual to us that some botanical gardens have sections devoted entirely to plants from Madagascar. Polka dot plant is a member of the Acanthaceae family that has many representatives with red pigment showing in the leaves.



As a house plant polka dot plant should be kept in direct sun. If it is too shady the leaves will be green. Aphids and scale are the most common problems. Like many house plants, it responds well to frequent misting of the leaves. Tips of branches should be pinched to keep the plant short and bushy. In March or April it may develop insignificant lavender flowers that should be pinched out to stimulate branch growth.

Outside it should be kept in part shade. It is easy to propagate from tip cuttings. It is considered easy to grow inside or outside and is so inexpensive that it can readily be replaced.

— Edith Wallace

HOLIDAY AND VACATION SCHEDULES

The Passaic County Extension Office will be closed on Monday, January 18th for Martin Luther King, Jr. day, as well as in February on Friday, the 12th for Lincoln's Birthday and Monday the 15th for Presidents' Birthday.

I will be on vacation Friday February 12th and returning Monday February 22nd.

— Jo-Ann Pituch

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Reminder: Our general meetings are held every 4th Tuesday of the month at 7 pm at the Totowa Business Center, 930 Riverview Drive in Totowa.

Here are our scheduled dates for 2010: Jan. 26, Feb. 23, March 23, April 27, May 25, June 22, Sept. 28, Oct. 26, and Nov. 23.

Our contingency meeting site this year will be the Hamilton House Museum, Valley Road, Clifton.

— Ray Edel

SKYLANDS HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE 2009

A record number of people attended the Holiday Open House in November. The Breakfast Room looked elegant and beautiful. What a wonderful way for our Passaic County Master Gardeners to be showcased. A great big **THANK YOU** to all the volunteers who graciously gave their time and talent to make this so much fun. Your problem-solving abilities are really amazing. This could not have been accomplished without all of you.

We will be needing a chair person for 2010. Please let our Board know as soon as possible if you are available. Thanks again.

— 2009 Co-Chairs: Helene Christie and Sunny Brennan



Photos courtesy of Edith Wallace

T-SHIRTS AND SWEATSHIRTS AVAILABLE

Bring your funds to the January meeting as Master Gardener t-shirts and sweatshirts will be for sale.

MG CLASS AGENDA - SPRING 2010

January 21	Wildlife in the Garden - Elaine Barbour, Passaic County Ag Assistant
January 28	Small Fruit in the Home Garden - Pete Nitzsche, Morris County Ag Agent
Feb 4	Tree Fruit in the Home Garden - Bill Tietjen, Warren County Ag Agent (retired)
Feb 11	Vegetable Gardening - Dr. Tom Orton, RCE Vegetable Specialist
Feb 18	Water Gardening @ Fairfield Garden Center, Route 46, Fairfield, NJ (travel on your own)
Feb 25	Organic Gardening and Composting (NEW) - Elaine Barbour, Passaic County Ag Assistant
March 4	Integrated Pest Management - Steve Rettke, Camden County Program Associate
March 9	Tuesday Plant Propagation @ SEBS, New Brunswick (BUS TRIP)
March 18	Broadleaved and Needled Evergreens - Rich Obal, Monmouth County Ag Agent
March 25	Earthwise Lawn Care - Bill Hlubik, Middlesex County Ag Agent
April 1	Pruning @NJBG (travel on your own)
April 8	SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS
April 15	Small Trees in the Home Landscape - Joel Flagler, Bergen County Ag Agent
April 22	Houseplant Care - Madeline Flahive-DiNardo, Union County Ag Agent
April 28	WEDNESDAY, Flower Gardening - Barbara Bromley, Mercer County Horticulturist (BUS TRIP)
May 6	Ticks and Mosquitoes - Elaine Barbour and Eric Green, Passaic County Mosquito Control Commission
May 13	MG PLANT SALE PREP AND EXAM DISTRIBUTED
May 20	ROAD TRIP (TBA) AND RETURN EXAMS - (BUS PROVIDED)
May 27	End of class year CELEBRATION

All classes are at the Totowa Business Center, 930 Riverview Drive, Suite 250, Totowa, NJ.

All classes are from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Please register two weeks ahead by calling 973-305-5740. Continuing education credits apply.

All road trips are on a first come-first served basis. A donation may be requested.

PHOTO GALLERY

The five photos below were taken by Bob Shine at Laurelwood Arboretum. As you can see the arboretum can also be enjoyed during this beautiful Winter season.



The three photos below were taken by Jack Systma at the 2009 Holiday Party.



The following photo was taken by Edith Wallace. This busy squirrel enjoyed rollicking in (and destroying) Edith's container garden all summer.



DAFFODIL PLANTING IN PATERSON

On November 6, 2009, a brave and hardy group of Rutgers Master Gardeners, along with 22 enthusiastic Paterson youngsters, worked in the blustery weather to plant daffodil bulbs. Some photos of our Master Gardeners appear below. I Can't wait until Spring!



John Crowell, Jack Sytsma, Sonny Brennan, Sarah McHugh, Elaine Barbour, Joe Becker, and Jack Kuepfer (Ray Edel not pictured)



Sarah McHugh distributes daffodil bulbs while John Crowell and Ray Edel help dig up the soil for planting



Elaine Barbour handing out protective gloves.



Ray Edel (red jacket) and Sonny Brennan plant daffodils while Joe Becker (standing) supervises



A satisfied Ray Edel admires the work

— Elaine Barbour

GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE ... SOLD!

Our holiday party tricky tray and silent auction netted us \$325.

Thanks go out to donors: ESPN's Laurel Daggett; WEPN's Greg Brodsky; Sirius' Andrew Fitzpatrick; Glen Wild Garden's Jodie Bross; and master gardeners Edith Wallace, Jill Hanifan and Kathryn Edel.

— Ray Edel

PRESIDENTS' END OF YEAR ADDRESS: 2009 WAS A GOOD YEAR

2009 was a good year for the Master Gardener Association of Passaic County. The season began with a successful plant sale chaired by Mari Striegel, Sharon Grady, Jo-Ann Pituch and Jill Hanifan giving us funds to run our programs. We thank everyone who participated by donating plants, selling, carrying, arranging or shopping.

The class of 2010, led by Elaine Barbour, is most enthusiastic, participating in Laurelwood Arboretum, Holiday Open House, Horticultural Therapy, Helpline and elsewhere.

We have added books to the Helpline Library and begun organizing so books will be easier to find. We hope we have found people to keep it in order.

The Lilac Garden at Skylands is holding its own with approximately 500 visitors on Mother's Day. Master Gardeners of Passaic County truly made this a spectacular site. Edith Wallace and Frank Dyer co-ordinate the lilac garden restoration project. Frank also does a grand job in the Moraine Garden. Maintaining the woodland setting of the Skylands' Wildflower Garden is an ongoing challenge, but we as master gardeners meet this challenge with guidance from Darlene Nowak and Nancy Bristow who have much plant knowledge. The breakfast room in the Skylands Manor was beautifully decorated and the Holiday Open House was a success despite the change in date.

This year over 40 master gardeners volunteered over 4,000 hours in Laurelwood Arboretum learning and working alongside the horticultural manager Joan Scott-Miller. Bonnie Joachim is volunteer coordinator of Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum. Many thanks to these two and all the master gardeners who volunteer there.

Our Horticultural Therapy program is going strong serving Van Dyk in West Milford, Lakeland Health Care in Wanaque and Oak Ridge in Wayne with Barbara Sanford as key organizer.

Sadly the Clifton Boys and Girls Club did not have input from Master Gardeners. We cannot help people who do not want to be helped, so the great project with Strengthen Our Sisters has come to an end. And to our regret Jo-Ann Pituch fell to Rutgers' rules and regulations and is no longer on our executive committee.

Mari Striegel, thank you for opening your home and garden to us for our summer picnic. Regina Imperato, you keep us informed via *Green Times*. We are appreciative of your accuracy and efficiency.

We, as Master Gardeners, have plenty to be proud of and have accomplished much in 2009. We thank Mary Ann Sytsma and the entire committee that organized our Holiday Awards dinner. It has been a pleasure working with all of you, and as immediate past-presidents we are delighted with the strong executive board elected for 2010, and we plan to complete some of the tasks we left undone in 2009.

Wishing all a happy and healthy 2010!!

— Barbara Sanford and Edith Wallace

Contributors: Elaine Barbour, Sunny Brennan, Helene Christie, Ray Edel, Jo-Ann Pituch, Barbara Sanford, Jack Systema, and Edith Wallace
 Editor: Regina Imperato

Master Gardener Association of Passaic County Officers

Ray Edel, President
 Janet Rekesius & Mary Ann Sytsma, co-1st Vice-Presidents
 Howard Aschoff, 2nd Vice-President

Joan Kaynak, Treasurer
 Patricia Engrissei, Recording Secretary
 Regina Imperato, Corresponding Secretary

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