

The

DIGEST

FEBRUARY
2015



Director's Message

It does seem odd that I am writing this to you when Halloween is just over and we are looking forward to Thanksgiving and the rest of the holidays. You will be reading this in mid-winter when all of us are looking forward to spring.

Speaking of Spring I must tell you about the garden I keep in my small apartment. Before the first frost hits in the fall I bring in two or three geraniums, which I know from previous experience will bloom for me most of the winter. I also bring in any other plant which looks like it is doing well and I want to know if they will bloom for me in the house. I have the regular houseplants, which include a number of African violets, a coffee tree and two very large peace lilies which stay indoors all year round. I bring in a coleus which does very well in the house and adds so much color. The one I have inside this winter has a leaf which is red but edged with yellow. On one of my gardening trips this past summer I saw where the gardener had used coleus all around the entire house as a foundation planting. I looked great! I have a very large philodendron which began life as a tiny plant in a dish garden. My Christmas cactus is lovely. It summers outside. I have a lovely Moses in the cradle, and an assortment of trailing plants such as Swedish ivy, hoyo, and various marked spider plants. I have just two windows in my apartment but, luckily, they both face east so all the plants are happy. I have a jasmine which I received too late in the fall to make any progress outside so it is happily ensconced in the window putting out leaves.

I must tell you about a bird I saw right here in North Greenbush. I was parked in the middle of a parking lot waiting for a friend. It was drizzling at the time but I noticed that in a large tree at the edge of the parking lot there was some kind of a bundle which I thought at first might be a squirrel nest but on closer inspection I knew it was a bird. It was facing me and the thing must have stood 30 inches tall. The front was either all white or white with brown. It stood up and turned around and the back was brown with either dark brown markings or black markings. It was above my eye level so I couldn't see as well as I wanted but I decided it must be an owl. It was too fluffy and too big around to be anything else. When I checked it out at home I decided that it had to be a great gray owl or a great horned owl. I have never carried my binoculars in the car but I will from now on.

Have a great rest of the winter.

Olive Felio,
Director

Save the Date

Thursday, April 16

at Anthony's

Spring District Meeting

Presenter: Carl Lemanski

Details will be sent out in mid-February

Down Memory Lane

For many years Helen Nelson, as Third District Board Landscape Design Chair, wrote interesting articles for the Digest. After she retired I gathered some of them into a booklet for her. Here is one from February, 1994.

Maryann

Lighting for Your Garden

Lighting in your garden can create beauty and provide year-round pleasure for you. Any garden feature, such as a special tree, a planted area, a statue or pool, whatever it is, assumes a totally different character, dramatic and beautiful, when it is illumined by carefully placed lighting.

Lighting extends your garden enjoyment to the entire year, not just May to October. In our climate that is a great plus. The spotlighted moving shadows of a birch tree against a snowy lawn or field will make the long winter more endurable, and much more beautiful. Outdoor lighting now is not expensive, as it used to be, but is within the means of most gardeners and usually can be installed by homeowners.

Lighting kits with six or more units come in different shapes and styles. They are very effective along a walk. Two small spotlights, one on each side of whatever you choose to highlight, are more effective than one light. They should be hidden by plantings. Trees that are loosely branched make more striking patterns than do densely branched one. One, even two garden features that you choose to spotlight will create a special enchantment for your garden and for your pleasure.

Helen Nelson

Yearbooks.....Sharing Your Best!

The Garden Club of Kinderhook has hosted quite a few "Sharing Your Best" social evenings over the years the first week in January. A member hosts the event in her home, all are invited to bring their best culinary dish to share, spouses and friends attend to enjoy many laughs, spirited conversation, and a good time.

Yearbooks are another example of Sharing Your Best. A committee of members meet to compile important club information for the upcoming year. This is very important not only for the club members but for other clubs, County GC Chairs, District Directors, Awards Committees, and to maintain a record of the club's activities which will be preserved.

Imagine the time taken to produce a yearbookmany, many hours of collaboration with members, prospective speakers, the public, business and family. Sharing ideas for meetings, fundraisers, events, membership, club history, types of committees, officers duties, dues, benefits for members, outings, partnering with community agencies, teaching our youth, designing and proofreading a yearbook and finally distributing to the members—it's finished!! We've shared our best with you, please enjoy!

Share Your Best with me by mailing yearbooks to:
Camille McComb, Director-Elect
89 Albany Ave
Kinderhook, NY 12106

Many thanks in advance, *Camille*

Elizabeth Hain, a member of the Third District Board for over 30 years, passed away in December, 2014.

Betty was a NYS Horticulture Judge, NGC Environmental Consultant and NGC Gardening Study Consultant, Landscape Design Critic and, last but not least, a NGC Flower Show Judge.

Betty will be greatly missed, not only for her wonderful talents and knowledge but because of her lovely, sharing nature.

Patricia Blundell
Judges Council Chairman

Contemplate having a flower show? In addition to judging, the people listed below can answer or help you find answers to whatever questions may arise. The chairman of our Judges Council is Patricia Blundell (contact information below).

Third District Flower Show Judges

Arnold, Lynn, 60 Merritt Lane, Newburgh 12550; (845) 821-4079

Babb, Antoinette, 124 West Bridge, St., Saugerties 12477; (845) 246-4445
aplantlady1011@hotmail.com

Blundell, Patricia, 45 Lafayette St. Saugerties; 12477-1012; (845) 246-361;
floralartistry01@hvc.rr.com

Campbell, Barbara, 14 Deerpath Drive, New Paltz 12561-2811; (845) 255-7446
bcdeerpath@aol.com

Edson, Gail, 14 Hemlock Lane, Hyde Park 12538-2108; (845) 229-9857;

Gundlach, Erna, 15 River Park Drive, New Paltz 12561-28007 (845) 255-1035
ERNAG200@aol.com

Petro, Jackie, 9 Lainey Lane, Kingston 12401-6109; (845) 331-9133

Stahl, Nancy, 6018 Veeder Rd, Slingerlands 12159; (518) 456-8998

Tree Sap – Yum, Yum

Most woodpeckers chip away into tree bark, searching for insect larvae and ants. Not the yellow-bellied sapsucker, which can be called the hummingbird woodpecker. It searches for sweet treats of tree sap, drilling shallow holes called sapwells from the outer layer of a tree. The sapsucker uses its brushlike tongue to lap up the sweet tree nectar. If the sap is sweet, these birds will chip out vertical rows of sapwells, of which they are very protective and will return to frequently.

Besides sap their diet consists of insects, berries and fruit. For a special treat they will gather a mouthful of ants, dip them into tree sap and swallow. Yuck - but I'm not a yellow-bellied sapsucker. This all happens during spring and early summer, when tree sap is flowing freely. Sapsucker drilling is usually not harmful unless many holes are drilled in a tree, impairing the movement of water and nutrients.



Male

The food supply made available by the yellow-bellied sapsucker allows ruby-throated hummingbirds to travel north into Canada, where they usually breed. These tiny nectar eaters arrive here in early May when enough flowers have not yet bloomed to provide a source of food in nectar. They rely on sapwells, along with insects attracted to them, or they wouldn't have traveled this far north from their winter homes so early.

Sapsuckers can also be attracted to feeders with suet, peanut butter and to hummingbird feeders. They return to the same tree to excavate a new cavity. They have one brood yearly, and both sexes participate in their nesting period. In addition to hummingbirds, their sapwells are frequented by butterflies, flying insects, squirrels, chipmunks, bats, porcupines, warblers, nuthatches, other woodpeckers and Baltimore orioles.



Female

If you hear the sound of five rapid taps, followed by gradual slowing, with occasional double taps, you are listening to two yellow-bellied sapsuckers communicating. Stop and listen to their drumming.

Diana Buchan,
Birds, Bats, Bugs and Butterflies

In Our Clubs

Clematis

Kerry Mendez will speak at Clematis Garden Club's Spring Tea held on April 10 at 1:00pm in the Greenville-Norton Hill Methodist Church's Large Community Room. This Spring Tea is open to all who have an interest in gardening.

Kerry's topic will be "The Right-Size Flower Garden: Exceptional Plants and Design Solutions for Aging and Time-Pressed Gardeners." Change happens. Many still dream of Better Homes and Gardens landscapes, but reality has muddied the picture. Job demands, kids, money, hectic schedules, aging bodies and changing interests have led to nightmare gardens. Time for some 'editing.' With the help of a power point program this inspiring lecture provides easy-to-follow right-sizing strategies, recommends no-fuss plant material and offers design tips for stunning year-round gardens that will be as close to "autopilot" as you can get.



A book signing will follow the lecture, and refreshments will be served. There is no charge for this wonderful presentation by Kerry Mendez. Please join us. For more info, call Jean Horn (518) 966-4260 or email jhorn38@aol.com.

Jean Horn

Germantown

As part of the Germantown Garden Club's garden therapy project and holiday activities, an annual "Adorn A Door" holiday decorating competition was held at Palatine Manor, a senior residence in Germantown. This year 35 apartment doors were judged, a new record. Chairman Nancy Balasz, members Joyce Vale and Elke Crane judged each door based on its creative choice of decorations, creative use of decorations and creative use of space. The first place winners were Kenneth Chase and Jay D'Andrea (door pictured at right). Second place went to Edith Ritter, and third place was given to Sharon Sheridan.



At a recent meeting Columbia County Chair Sue Chaifullo (at right) installed Germantown Garden Club's 2015 officers, and presented each with a different color carnation representing their office. They are, left to right Marilyn Rein, Recording Secretary (pink flower), Joyce Vale, Treasurer (yellow flower), Mattie Gifford, Vice President (red flower), and Fran Bufi, returning President (white flower).

Fran Bufi

Greenbush

Last November Greenbush Garden Club offered an interesting and informative program "The Hudson Valley in the Ice Age" at the East Greenbush Library. Professors Robert and Johanna Titus discussed the effect of the glaciers that reached from northern Canada to the mouth of the Hudson River and how they shaped the scenic landscape we see today. Robert Titus, PHD, teaches geology at Hartwick College and his wife Johanna teaches at SUNY Dutchess. Both are authors and write regular columns for *Katskill Life* magazine, the *Register-Star* newspaper and the *Woodstock Times*.



On Friday, December 5, the club held its annual holiday dinner at Moscatiello's Restaurant in North Greenbush. The food was delicious, and the members and their significant others all had a great time. The next day the club held a membership drive at Beckers' Holiday Fair. A beautiful holiday basket of goodies was raffled off. Everyone who stopped by the table left with a membership brochure in their hands.

On January 6 at the regular monthly meeting, Denise Mauer, Rensselaer County Master Gardener, did a power point presentation on "Edibles in your Garden Bed." She explained the benefits of incorporating vegetables, fruits and herbs into your flower garden, creating an esthetically pleasing and tasty result.

Club members are looking forward to upcoming events to beat the winter doldrums: NY in Bloom at the museum in Albany, Cornell Cooperative Extension's Spring Garden Day at Tamarac High School, and The Capital Region Garden and Flower Show at Hudson Valley Community College.

Diane Madden

Guilderland

The Guilderland Garden Club held its annual open house and greens show on December 5-7 at the historic Mynderse-Frederick House in Guilderland Center. The house, built in 1802, is listed on the New York State and the National Registers of Historic Places for its historical and architectural significance. It is used as a museum and the headquarters of the Guilderland Historical Society who has been co-sponsoring this free community event since 1975.



In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the garden club, the open house theme was "Memories of Christmas Past." Members selected five themes from past years to decorate throughout the house. This year over 200 people visited. They were able to tour the house to see the floral designs that were developed to enhance the antique furnishings. Children participated in a scavenger hunt to find symbols used in the decorations, and all enjoyed the musical and vocal entertainment provided by members of the community as well as the wonderful refreshments. This year "Sinterklaas" portrayed by Karl Felsen visited with guests, explaining the evolution of the slender, regal Saint Nicholas to the jolly plump Santa Claus. He also had a story time for the children. Donna Crego, a member of the Historical Society wore a century-old wedding dress throughout the event, and other members provided information about the house and its furnishings. Donations of non-perishable food items were given to a local food pantry and a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the ornaments, wreaths and arrangements, all made by members of the garden club, and donations from guests were given to the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center for children's programs. The Discovery Center, located in Guilderland, has been designated as a National Natural



Landmark.

Merril-Lee Lenigar

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Every year, with help and advice from the site staff, the Garden Club of Kinderhook decorates Lindenwald National Historic Site, the home of President Martin Van Buren, for a holiday tour. The theme for 2014 centered on the children of family members and friends who visited the estate

Maryann Weber

Hugh Plat

Every year members of the Hugh Plat Garden Club decorate the Schenectady County Historical Building twice - first in September for the Stockade Walkabout, and then again in November for their Festival of Trees. At the lower right is a picture from the club's Christmas luncheon at the Van Dyke Restaurant in Schenectady.

Mary Ann De Fonce



New Paltz celebrated the holidays with a casual party.



Pine Plains

Pine Plains Garden Club and the Pine Plains Free Library held their annual Festival of Trees silent auction last November. Members of the club and the Pine Plains community were invited to submit trees, wreaths and swags. Proceeds from the auction were divided between the two groups.

Victoria LoBrutto



Shawangunk



Members of the Shawangunk Garden Club made holiday dinner centerpieces for the Noonday Club, a seniors' group.

Helene Morris



Town and Country



Our club does not meet in the winter months. On the Sunday after Thanksgiving we got together at our town of Colonie main center and park and decorated the indoor tree. We have made this a tradition for 19 years. The tree enables many groups to enjoy the main room fully decorated by our club members. A couple of weeks later we meet at a local country club and enjoy a lovely evening for our Christmas party.

Kathleen Kearney

Two former Third District Directors passed away in 2014 - Mary Mabee (who was also State President) and Rowena Bresse.

From the Editor

This will be my last turn at editing the Digest, a job I took on back in 1995. I've had the privilege of working with so many interesting women—and the occasional interesting male. It's been educational and challenging and, most of all, fun.

Like most organizations which have newsletters, we've gone from black and white snail-mailed versions with a few black and white pictures to an online mode of publication. Now we can work with the element of color and include as many pictures as we want without adding to the cost, and the dollar savings are tremendous.

Your next Digest will be edited by Karin Janson, who is a professional designer. Karin is a member of our Germantown club and does lovely publication work. I've promised myself to reorganize the Digest files for her, so they make sense to somebody besides me.

Back in November I concluded that there is no longer anything to like about cold northern winters, a view my husband does not share—what would he do with his skis and snowshoes in Florida? We try to go somewhere warmer for a month or so to break up the season, and upon reconsideration, I have to admit that snow is lovely when you can watch from a nice warm room as covers the ground and decorates the bare tree limbs. Then, this winter, came the woodpeckers. We usually only see downys and maybe the occasional hairy woodpecker at our feeders. Now a good-sized red-bellied woodpecker I've named Big Red has become a regular visitor, along with a considerably larger woodpecker, a pileated, who remains un-named for the time being. Pileateds have been seen occasionally in the neighborhood, but never this close to the house—the distance from that suet feeder to my kitchen window is eight feet.



I wish you a happy and healthy rest of winter and the joy that comes with the first signs of spring. As I said, it's been fun.

Maryann

The Digest Online is published quarterly in February, May, August and November. Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of the month before each issue (January, April, July and October).

Please send news of your club's activities, events and plans - it's a great way to share with other clubs. Unlike in print newsletters, there is no prohibitive cost factor for using color. Pictures don't cost extra either, and they can be saved, downloaded and printed whenever you wish. Articles on various gardening and flower arranging topics are also welcome.

Material for The Digest should be sent to Karin Janson at kjanson@aol.com.

Some District III members seem to have trouble accessing the Digest online. Perhaps they don't have an Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download from Adobe) on their computers, or some other program that can open PDF files. With PDF access capability, you simply go to the State website - fgcnys.com - select District III on the home page and then select Digest Online.