



Gardeners' Guild of Braintree

November Newsletter 2015

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Gardeners' Guild of Braintree

<http://www.gardenersguildofbraintree.com/>

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WE NEED YOUR INFORMATION!

If you have events, news, stories or photos to share, please send them to rmzahran@yahoo.com.

**Deadline for the next e-newsletter is:
November 16, 2015.**

MEETING DETAILS

Program: "Harvest Swag Workshop"

Guest Presenters: Rob and Janet Lawatsch, Studio One Twenty Three West

We are thrilled to welcome back Janet and Rob Lawatsch of Studio One Twenty Three West. Janet and Rob will teach us the art of creating a beautiful and colorful harvest swag with naturally grown dried plant material such as seed pods, dried flowers and natural stems and branches for indoor or outdoor use. At Thanksgiving, embellish your harvest swag with live blooms for a spectacular display. All dried plant material will be provided. Please bring pruners, gloves and an apron. Please join us for this exciting workshop to make your very own harvest swag. Guest are welcome. The cost is \$25.00 per person. Mail checks to Joan Hutcheon by October 26, 2015.

Date: November 2, 2015

Time: 7:00 pm Gardener's Guild Business
7:30 pm Program

Place: Masonic Hall
403 Washington Street
Braintree, MA 02184

Membership and Remembrance Hostesses:

Mary Fitzgerald and Claire Mulligan

Hospitality

Hostesses: Judith Concannon and Margaret Kelly

Bakers: Karen Connelly, Mary Fitzgerald, Marcia Flaherty,
Suzanne Ghiloni

Invocation: Margaret Kelly

Hospitality Chair: Sarah Sciascia

GGB MEETING DATES

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

2015

- October 5** *Gardening is Murder*
- November 2** *Harvest Swag Workshop*
- November 30** *Christmas Greenery Workshop*
- December 6** *Boutique and Holiday House Tour*

Old Time Christmas Visits Contemporary Elegance and Charm

269 Peach Street



2016

- January 4** *Potluck and Brown Bag Grab Auction*
- February 1** *The Eyes See ... the Heart Anticipates*
- March 7** *High on Hydrangeas*
- April 4** *Native Plants, Wildflowers, and Pollinators*
- May 2** *Annual Spring Banquet*

Hi Everyone:

We have been very busy, with the second walkthrough of the house now complete, everyone gearing up for house and boutique activities. Our next meeting will be a workshop with Janet and Rob Lawatch where we will make a holiday swag to take us from Thanksgiving through Christmas - should be gorgeous! Janet and Rob have also agreed to come to our Christmas Greenery Workshop night (Monday, November 30) to provide instruction on how to properly construct a centerpiece and how to make a table top boxwood tree. I have heard from many of you that you want to learn how to make bundles, table arrangements, swags and bows; as I co-chair with Lynda Mitchell on Greens this year, it is our hope to provide this type of instruction to all interested members, so I am quite excited about having Janet and Rob with us for the Christmas Greenery Workshop night. Greens night is an important evening as it is one where a lot of work gets done, and, even more importantly, an evening where we all work together towards a common goal. It is such a great night!

Just a reminder that all members are expected to attend the November 30 Christmas Greenery Workshop, that everyone should bring between 1 to 2 bags of freshly cut greens for centerpieces and to make bundles for wreath embellishment. Remembers to bring your scissors, wire cutters, green wire and a hot glue gun if you have one.

On a different note, the first meeting of the By-laws Review Committee was held a couple of weeks ago. We will be holding bi-monthly meetings through December. It is the Committee's hope to present proposed amendments to the Executive Board in January, and then consistent with current bylaws, bring the suggested amendments to the general membership at the February and March meetings, for an April vote. Once the proposed amendments are brought to the general membership in February, all comments from the floor will be welcome. The Committee will then incorporate pertinent comments, revise the draft accordingly and present a final draft of the revisions at the March general meeting. Members will be asked to review the document and be prepared to vote at the April meeting.

Lots more will be coming your way about the upcoming Workshop, Greens Workshop night, the house tour and boutique so please do your best to watch your e-mails!

Hope you are all well and enjoying this very pretty fall weather! I look forward to seeing you on November 2! Take care, and happy Halloween!

Barbara

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Creative Potpourri

With both walk throughs behind us, budgets worked through and money distributed to room chairs, everyone is planning, preparing and shopping! Before you know it, the time to start gathering greens will be here! If anyone has questions or budget concerns, please contact Carole Wilson or Lauren Crook. We are looking forward to presenting with the theme this year: "Old Time Christmas Visits Contemporary Elegance and Charm".

We look forward to seeing you all at the 2015 Holiday House!

*Your Creative Potpourri Chairs,
Carole Wilson and Lauren Crook*

Ways & Means

The Gardeners' Guild of Braintree's Annual Holiday House Tour & Boutique will be celebrated on Sunday, December 6, 2015.

We have been busy over the summer months recruiting new vendors and securing many who have participated in the past. The hours of the event have been changed to 11:00 am - 4:00 pm to better line up with the house tour hours of 1 - 5 pm. Many of our favorite vendors will be returning!

We will also enjoy the musical performances by students from Arch Bishop Williams and Braintree High School. Please let me know if you have students, children or grandchildren who are in need of community service hours as the vendors could use the help unloading and loading their vehicles before and after the show. We open the hall to vendors on Sunday at 9:00 am and they should be out of the hall by 5:00 pm.

Also, please feel free to pass along the names of any interested vendors as we often have last minute spots available.

Kerri Eck, Karen Connelly, Diane Hanlon, Lisa Reid and Ginny Quinn

House Tour Tickets

House Tour tickets will be available at the November 2, 2015 meeting for those who wish to purchase or take tickets on consignment. As always, you may return unsold tickets. If you are unable to attend the Monday, November 2 meeting but would like tickets, you can reach me at 781-664-4153.

Tickets are \$16 in advance, \$20 at the door; entrance fee for the Boutique only is \$2.

REMINDER Garden Guild members: with regards to the "Old Time Christmas Visits Contemporary Elegance and Charm" entrance -- remember to pick up a membership card at the November 2nd meeting or the November 30th Greens Workshop for your complimentary admission. Please do your best to promote ticket sales for this major fundraising effort. As always, unsold tickets can be returned.

Sue Ghiloni, Ticket Chair

Publicity

We have been busy producing press releases about the Holiday House Tour and Boutique. These notices will appear in the Braintree Forum, Patriot Ledger, Braintree Advertiser, Braintree Patch, will appear on the GGB website and Facebook page.

*Steph McLaughlin and Tina O'Brien
Co-Chairs, Publicity*

Birthday Wishes

A very "Happy Birthday" to our members who have special days in November:



Gail Burns

Marcia Flaherty

Diane Hanlon

Karen Connelly

Suzanne Ghiloni

Margaret Kelley

Happy belated Birthday to Kathryn Graham who had a birthday in October!!

PLANT THERAPY

News from Plant Therapy

Carolyn Mahoney, Plant Therapy Chairperson, and Joan Hutcheon will feature famous gardens in our monthly member newsletters. Carolyn and Joan will write about gardens in and outside the USA. For November we have a brief overview of Botanical Gardens in Tropical Hawaii.

QUOTE

Talking to plants help them grow and thrive...and is good for your well-being. So why not give it a try?

Fran Sorin

FEATURED TOPIC: HAWAII TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

HAWAII TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

I had the opportunity to visit this garden in September 2014 and it was beautiful!



Unique Tropical Nature Preserve and Sanctuary

Aloha and welcome to Onomea Bay and the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden! This "Garden in a Valley on the Ocean" is on the lush Hamakua Coast's 4 Mile Scenic Drive, 8 1/2 miles north of Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii.

The Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden is a museum of living plants that attracts photographers, gardeners, botanists, scientists, and nature lovers from around the world. The Garden's collection of tropical plants is international in scope. Over 2,000 species, representing more than 125 families and 750 genera, are found in this one-of-a-kind garden.

The 40-acre valley is a natural greenhouse, protected from buffeting trade winds and blessed with fertile volcanic soil. Throughout this garden valley, nature trails meander through a true tropical rainforest, crossing bubbling streams, passing several beautiful waterfalls and the exciting ocean vistas along the rugged Pacific coast.

The Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden is a Scientific and Educational 501(c)(3) non-profit, whose mission is to serve as a nature preserve and

sanctuary, a living seed bank, and a study center for trees and plants of the tropical world. The Garden is dedicated to the collection and display of the world's tropical plants, and to the education of both children and adults about the plight of the world's rainforests. At a time when rainforest plants are disappearing at an alarming rate, the Garden is working to preserve as many species as possible for the benefit of future generations.

ASK A MASTER GARDENER

Growing bulbs in containers is easy. This is a great solution for gardeners with limited space or for decks, patios or front entryways. You can grow any bulb in a container and you can mix different types together to provide great spring colors.

Layering – planting more than one type of bulb in the same container that require different planting depths – layer the bulbs. It is important to select varieties that are timed to blossom simultaneously.

Plant in late October in deep containers with good drainage.

High quality container or houseplant potting mix. Mix in fertilizer – 5-10-10 or a bulb formula.

Large bulbs deeper and small bulbs closer to the surface. Space bulbs so they are not planted on top of each other. Just as in ground: soil depth of 2X diameter of the bulb. Daffodils and tulips 6-7” deep; crocus, squill, muscari – 4-5” deep. ¼ twist to sit it into the soil. Add more potting mix around the bulbs, firm into place with fingers.

Face the flat side of the tulip toward the wall of the pot. When leaves and stalks emerge they will grow up and outward instead of crowding toward the center.

Fill the container with potting mix to the right depth for the larger bulbs and then add more soil to the right depth for the smaller bulbs. 1 inch space between tip of bulb and rim of pot. Fill rest of container with potting mix to ½” from the rim, leaving room for water. Place tip of bulb up (smaller ones will turn upright). Allow room for roots to grow.

Water thoroughly, then water periodically throughout the winter. Bulbs prefer moist but not soggy potting mix.

The chilling period

Spring blooming bulbs need a chilling period of 8-14 weeks at temps between 35 – 40 degrees F. Place container in a cool, dark place: unheated frost-free basement, garage or porch. During the chilling period the bulbs are growing roots – important that roots do not dry out. Check for moisture 1” deep. If dry, fill pot to rim and allow to drain. Do not overwater. Bulbs do not like wet feet.

Emerging growth around 6-8 weeks of chilling. Keep containers in their cool place until you want to encourage growth. When ready, bring containers out where they will receive light shade which will provide the right balance of light and moderate temperatures.

Post bloom care: If storing for next fall: keep moist until the foliage has completely turned dry and brown, empty the pot, retrieve the bulbs and allow the soil that clings to them to dry. Remove the dead foliage, brush off dry soil and store the bulbs in a cool, dry place. Or, plant directly into your garden. All should come back except tulips which do not rebloom well.

Extend the blooming period and for maximum impact plant one type of bulb per container with staggered bloom times for a succession of flowers from early March to mid-May.

If planting in a large container is too cumbersome, you can plant bulbs in small 6 – 8: plastic pots and overwinter them under protection outdoors (cold frame) or garage. In the spring, as they start to bloom you can sink the pots into larger display containers.



From this



To this

TIPS FOR NOVEMBER

GENERAL GARDEN TIPS

- Mulching is one of the best lines of defense for plants against chilling temperatures. Mulching also can prevent the repeated freezing and thawing of soil that causes plants to "heave" out of the ground. But the trick is not to mulch too soon. Mulching needs to be done after the ground starts to freeze, but before the first significant snowfall of the year. If you mulch sooner, plants may not go completely dormant. In general, the end of November is a good time to apply mulch here in the Pittsburgh area. Apply a layer at least three to four inches thick around each plant. After you laid it down, gently pull it away from the trunks and stems to give plants room to breathe. This helps prevent disease problems.
- November is also a good time to have your soil tested, so you'll be all set to go next spring. Amendments such as lime can be slow acting and adding them now will make them available to the plants next spring.
- This is not a good time to add fertilizer to the garden, because nutrients would be lost through leaching or erosion before plants can use them next spring.
- Remove dead plants from containers and hanging baskets and replace them with evergreen boughs, branches with colorful berries and interesting seed heads from perennials and ornamental grasses.
- Every weed you pull now will be many less to have to pull in Spring. So weed, especially perennial weeds. I know, you thought you were done with weeding. But pulling those weeds now, when the conditions are good, will cut down on problems in the spring.
- Empty and sterilize, terra cotta and ceramic pots with a mixture of 1:9 parts bleach and water. Store them in a protected area, such as garage, shed, or basement to prevent cracking.
- Open sprinkler valves and drain water from sprinkler systems to prevent freezing.
- Drain and store hoses. Clean, oil and store tools.
- Drain gas from lawnmowers and other gas powered equipment prior to storage.
- Fall is for planting-trees, shrubs, bulbs, grass seed, mums, asters, pansies and the list goes on. The cooler temperatures, and more plentiful rainfall makes fall a wonderful time to plant. An added benefit to fall planting is that it gives you a head start for next spring. Plants that are planted in the fall will be all settled in and ready to grow when the ground thaws and temperatures warm up next spring.
- If you don't already have one, start a compost pile. You've got all the stuff you've pulled out of the beds, why not? One of the best ways to have a great garden and beautiful plants is to have plenty of homemade compost to use when transplanting new plants to your garden and to add to your veggie patch. Making great compost is all about layering and worms. Good stuff goes in, chopped leaves, peels, coffee grounds, old potting soil, grass clippings and soft plant trimming, and great stuff comes out.
- Dispose of diseased or pest-ridden plant material in the trash, although these materials can be composted, this should only be done if you're certain that your compost pile reaches hot enough temperatures to kill any pathogens

or over-wintering insects/eggs.

SHRUBS & TREES

- Remember that at this time of year the soil is still warm, there is abundant rainfall to water new plants or transplants. Planting a new plant or transplanting will yield long-lasting results and fall planting lessens the workload in spring. It is important to remember that the trees, shrubs and perennials we sell are more than hardy enough to survive our winters, so there should be little concern for winter kill of new plantings. We do recommend fall planting and transplanting for Pittsburgh gardeners.
- By mid-November, most ornamentals have entered into dormancy, and can be safely dug and replanted. The key to transplanting is to dig a large root ball (get as much of the root system as is possible). Equally important, is getting the plant back into the prepared soil as quickly as possible, to keep the roots from drying out.
- Protect your roses during the cold winter months. Place bark mulch or compost (Black Forest) around the base so that the lowest part of the stem is completely covered.
- Spray broad-leaf evergreens with **Wilt-Pruf** which reduces moisture loss from leaves during periods when roots are unable to take up water due to frozen ground. Water on warm days when it can be absorbed into the soil. This is extremely important for recently planted broadleaf evergreens.
- Remember to water any newly-planted trees and shrubs until the ground freezes. Evergreens continue to lose moisture from their leaves or needles all winter long. Without adequate water in the ground before a hard freeze, extra stress is put on evergreens through the winter.
- Act now to prevent damage to upright evergreen shrubs. Loosely tie the upright stems of Arborvitae, **Junipers** and **Yews** that are subject to splitting. Tie the multiple stems together. The secured stems won't split, bend and break under the weight of the snow.
- After November 15th you can begin pruning deciduous trees and shrubs. Begin by first removing all dead branches, stumps on scaffold limbs, and rubbing or wounded branches. After this step you can prune for plant form. The direction of new growth can be influenced by pruning off undesirable growth just above a bud that is placed on the stem in a direction you want the new growth to go.
- Cut down vines that have begun to climb tree trunks, like poison ivy, wisteria, wild grapes, and bittersweet.
- Prepare the hole if you plan to use a "live" Christmas tree (one that is balled-and-burlapped or growing in a container). Mulch the soil that has been removed to prevent freezing or put the fill in a warmer place until you are ready to plant.
- Delay all unnecessary pruning until late winter or early spring just before bud break, since wounds will heal most quickly when trees and shrubs are growing most vigorously. Elms, maples, birches and black walnut can be pruned later in the spring after the sap has stopped "rising." Sap running from wounds does not harm the tree, but it can stain the bark.
- Always make proper pruning cuts just beyond the branch collar but not leaving stubs.
- Prune rampant suckers from the base of lilacs which will take away from next years' bloom.

ANNUALS, VEGETABLES & BULBS

- Plant daffodil and other spring flowering bulbs until the ground freezes. They will provide welcome color early next spring. Drifts of a dozen or more bulbs of one variety make the most impact. Planting depth is normally 3 times the height of the bulb; space the bulbs according to the package directions. Espoma Bulb Tone should be incorporated in the soil below the bulbs. We here at Reilly's always add a bit of Bumper Crop organic soil amendment to the backfilled soil.
- It is especially important to mulch after planting if bulbs are planted very late in fall. Mulch insulates the soil, keeping it warmer longer so root growth can occur.
- Collect dried seedpods, grass stalks, seedheads, and other dried plant materials for use in making fall and winter arrangements.

- Try planting bulbs in containers, and when doing so it's worth placing them in two layers, one slightly staggered above the other. Plant small bulbs on the top layer and larger ones lower down. This will ensure a spectacular long lasting spring display. Consider planting hardy spring bedding plants, such as winter pansies, primroses, or violas on top.
- Pot up some spring flowering bulbs for indoor color during the winter. Store the pots in a cool, dark place, until new growth emerges from the soil, and then move them to a bright window.
- Prepare vegetable beds for plantings of peas and other early veggies. The soil is often too wet to work during the first weeks of March.
- Plant Amaryllis bulbs to bloom for Christmas. Choose a pot that is an inch or two larger than the diameter of the bulb and leave the top half of the bulb exposed above the soil line. Amaryllis bulbs that have rested for at least 10 weeks can be repotted, watered and brought into a bright room to produce flowers for the holidays.
- Lift tender bulbs like Dahlias and Cannas, gladiolus, and elephant ears, for winter storage after they are nipped by frost. Allow them to dry in a shaded location for a couple weeks, then store in a container with peat moss and place against a cool basement wall.

PERENNIALS

- Start fall clean-up in the flower beds, cutting back anything that has finished blooming and is looking tattered. Leave plants such as sedum, ornamental grass, and others that offer winter interest.
- Some woody perennials -- technically called sub-shrubs -- such as butterfly bush, lavender, thyme, and Russian Sage, can be damaged or killed if you prune in fall. Leave the stems as is, protect them with mulch over the winter, and prune in spring down to the first strong bud.
- After chrysanthemums have stopped blooming, cut stems back close to the ground. Apply a thick layer of straw or bark mulch in late November.

FRUITS

- For fruit trees, it is a good time to apply the first application of dormant spray (the first of three applications needed between now and about Valentine's Day). For most trees *Lime Sulfur Spray* is best. Use *Copper Fungicide* for preventing Peach Leaf Curl.
- Remove all mummified fruit from fruit trees. Also, rake and dispose of apple and cherry leaves. Good sanitation practices reduce re-infestation of insects and diseases the following season. You will help reduce rodent populations by removing all fruit remaining on the tree or on the ground. Applying mulch near fruit trees is not recommended as it increases the likelihood of rodent damage during winter.
- Like ornamental plants, strawberries benefit from mulch protection, especially when snow cover is shallow or non-existent during winter. Clean straw is superior to hay as mulch because it doesn't add weed seeds to the garden. Apply three to five inches around Thanksgiving time. The straw protects crowns and roots against cold injury and drying out.

HOUSEPLANTS

- A house needs living things, plants, to make it feel like a home. Tropical plants are the perfect solution, they look so good, softening the right angles of the rooms and adding a sculptural element to the décor. They are real, natural and they're alive. House plants create a sense of coziness and put people at ease. Properly used, they can make large spaces look intimate and magnify small spaces to create an impression of depth. It is hard to imagine a decor that doesn't call for at least a few house plants placed in just the right spots.
- Now that the garden has gone to bed for the winter, it's time to wake up the house with winter blooming plants. For a sunny room, try hibiscus, camellias or citrus. Or try small, easy care bloomers like African violets or cyclamen, to brighten the dingy days of winter.
- African violets do well when potted in rather small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one third the diameter of the plant. Encourage African violets to bloom by giving them plenty of light. They can be in a south window

during dark winter months. They bloom beautifully under fluorescent lights. In fact, they seem to prefer them.

- Grow herbs like rosemary, basil, mint, parsley, thyme and chives in sunny windows (6 hours sun a day).
- Cut back on watering and fertilization through the winter since houseplants will not be actively growing.
- Houseplants often shed leaves when they are moved inside as they adjust to lower light levels. This is normal and should only last for a few weeks. If your plants continue to shed leaves, you may be over-watering.
- Houseplants prefer water that isn't too hot or cold. You can easily de-chlorinate your water by simply filling the watering can the day before and the chlorine will evaporate overnight. They'll also thank you if use water that's not too hot or cold.

LAWN

- Mow lawn to 1.5 to 2 inches for the winter This keeps the lawn healthy and prevents the lawn from matting down.
- Don't allow leaves to accumulate on the lawn. Mow them and let them filter into the lawn to decompose naturally, till them into your vegetable garden, or put them in the compost pile. Don't throw them away; they are valuable organic matter that will help your soil!

PEST CONTROL

- Spray trees and shrubs with All Seasons Spray Oil to kill over-wintering eggs of mites, mealybugs, gypsy moths, tent caterpillars and scale. Temperature should remain above 40 degrees for 24 hours after the application.
- Shield plants animals might eat. Put fencing around shrubs. Use tree guards made of chicken wire to protect trees from deer rubbings.

NEXT MEETING SNEAK PEEK: CHRISTMAS GREENERY WORKSHOP

November 30, 2015 *“Christmas Greenery Workshop”*

Braintree Town Hall Auditorium: Creative Potpourri members create House Tour masterpieces while Boutique members create wonderful fresh greens arrangements, wreaths and handcrafted items for sale at the Boutique. All members are asked to bring a snack or