



Summer 2015

Can You Dig It?

At long last we have summer...we have waited for the cool spring to leave, and the warm breath of summer to come and bring with it all that we enjoy for this fleeting time. But before we get into the articles we have written for your enjoyment, I thought I would share this short poem with you...It fits the season and hopefully leads us to enjoy our own gardens and those of friends and neighbors...

*“What wonderful colors surround us
As we enter the summer season
Tiny buds have opened up...*

*Yellow is perfect for Marigolds
Purple Dianthus smells ever so sweet
Lilies come in all colors
They're such a summertime treat*

*The smell in the air is delightful
Lifting up our spirits so nicely
Some have a honey sweet smell
And others are just a bit spicy*

*So enjoy Nature's perfection
This is the season that truly shines
For before you know it.....
We'll leave this weather behind”*

Marilyn Lott

IN THIS ISSUE:

Lilies – Beauties of the Mid-Summer Garden Chloe Pitard

The Joy of Just Foliage.....Christie Hamilton

Chance SeedlingsChloe Pitard

From the Garden ShedSherry Burke

Fun with Composting – Who Knew?.....Pam Keeton

Late Summer & Fall Blooming PlantsJoyce Rall

A Barn Swallow Tale.....Priscilla Thut

Designing with Bobbie..... Trish Reynolds

Locally Grown Flowers.....Samantha McCall

Travels with Mary – Newport Flower Show 2015 Mary Holston

Editor.....Trish Reynolds

Design & Layout.....Rebecca Gaffney



Lilies- Beauties of the Mid-Summer Garden

* Chloe Pitard



Lilies are a wonderful addition to the summer garden. In the words of a garden writer, "Lilies provide everything that the heart could desire in a garden plant, fine form, grace, elegance, an extraordinary range of colors, and sometimes, swoony scent as well." In addition, they come at a time when the first flowers of spring and early summer are past and there is a quiet time in the garden. There is a huge selection of various lily hybrids selected for size, color and hardiness. They

are not inexpensive, but they last and increase in the garden. Lilies can be planted in a perennial flower bed, but they are equally if not more successful planted among shrubs in a mixed border.

There are various Divisions of Lilies, not dissimilar to the way of daffodils. The earliest to bloom are Division 1, the Asiatic hybrids in late June. These have up-facing flowers and increase rapidly. They work very well in pots as well. The last to bloom are the Division 7, the Oriental hybrids which come in August. They almost all have a wonderful scent. In between there are a huge selection of types and colors, most of which also have great scent.



Lilies like well-drained soil. They are planted fairly deep, so a low spot is not a good place. This is one case where our fairly sandy, fast draining, Eastern Shore soil is a great asset. You can plant them spring or fall, but fall is considered best. They like to be in the sun, but not full sun. Dappled or afternoon shade is best. Except for the Asiatic hybrids, they do not increase rapidly by themselves, at least not for me.

Some species produce bulbils in the leaf axils. I have good results planting these out in a protected spot and caring for the babies for a few years. A dose of bulb fertilizer when planting and in the spring thereafter makes a noticeable difference.

The taller ones benefit from staking. Sad to say, deer love lilies; you might want to use one of the repellent sprays. If you pick



them, pull off the stamen. It will stain anything it touches. Lilies are great cut flowers. They are long lasting in the vase. If you can't bear to cut them from the flower bed, plant

out a few in the vegetable garden.



The absolute joy and beauty of lilies can be seen in Bobbie Brittingham's gardens...here are a few pictures for those of you that were not able to see this fabulous display.



And here are few from Jack Holland's collection of Day Lilies (President of Somerset CGC):



And two final lilies from Trish's garden:



The JOY of JUST FOLIAGE...in Your Garden and Your House!

* Christie Hamilton

Ahh...It's July and the gardens are teeming with dazzling summer color and brilliance. I'm hot and getting tired of washing vases and replacing the flowers in the few "regular" places where I must have them...always (kitchen counter, our desks, porch table)...and depending on the energy level...perhaps a few more.

As the thermometer climbs, I find that while I applaud the color show in the gardens, I actually am loving the verdant coolness and quietness of...greens...in the garden, and in the house! The recent visit to Nancy Thompson's garden illustrates the "serene of green." The hosta is simply "cooling," "refreshing." On that day, she brought a hosta leaf display into her kitchen, typifying how this can work inside...like it does outside! So it is that the hundreds of shades and textures of GREEN can hold their own in a landscape or in the house.



Can You Dig It?



I very often, year round, eschew the blossoms inside my own home and bring in the leafy, fresh exuberance of young leaves, flushed with greens and blues and chartreuse. In addition to finding this quieting, the efficiency is that almost ALWAYS those greens last much longer than the beautiful flower bouquets. And here I should mention, that in this vase, basket or cylinder of green, if I so choose to place THE MOST GORGEOUS BLOOM in the garden amid this “un-arrangement,” the blossom is easily discarded when it’s had its day...allowing the greens to take the stage for many more days.

Most of the greens to which I refer come from my garden. Several others come from house plants that I keep, sometimes just for flower arranging. AND, included here is some other foliage...that is remarkably...colored! A partial list would include:



The hosta—many shades and combinations of color in those leaves.



Firepower nandina: chartreuse...then yellow, then orange, then red for the holidays. It’s a smaller, non-berried shrub... not to be confused with *Nandina domestica*.
Nandina ‘Fire Power’

Solomon’s Seal: lovely green or green and white leaves.
Polygonatum multiflorum



The large summer grasses...and even Smoke Tree (*Cotinus*): purple foliage and smoky blooms.
Cotinus coggygria



Selloum philodendron



Caladiums: red AND the lovely white with green feathery veins.
Caladium hortulanum caladidum



All the needled evergreens ... especially the Arizona Cypress ‘Blue Ice.’
Cupressus arizonica



Rex cultorum – Rex Begonia
House plants: ivies, asparagus fern, rex begonia, and the tropicals (selloums).



Eastern Red Cedar greens: go look right now before the birds finish the beautiful blue berries.
Juniperus virginiana

Let’s have a Show and Tell of all "Serene Green Arrangements"!

Chance Seedlings

* Chloe Pitard

With all the rain we are having this year many things are acting differently. The weeds at my house are thriving, but so are many other things. One thing I am seeing is more chance seedlings. I don't mean of annuals and perennials, but of shrubs and trees. We all get many, many cedar trees, dogwoods, magnolias, hollies, Loblolly pines, etc. I can't pull them out fast enough.



What I am talking about are more select, precious chances. This has always happened. When we first moved into our house I discovered three *Viburnum rhytidophyllum*, Leatherleaf Viburnum, under a mature shrub of the same. I tended them in place for several years and they are now quite large. It never happened again, but I keep looking. I found a *Cedrus deodara* several years ago that is now six

feet tall. This only happened once as well.

This year I seem to have more. There is a seedling under the *Viburnum carlesii*, Korean Spice Viburnum. I thought that shrub was sterile, but this is definitely a seedling.

I found a seedling *Camellia japonica* which I have put in a pot. I usually let things stay in place for a few years, but I want to keep the camellia more protected at winter for a few years. There are also a couple of *Cercis canadensis*, Redbud, as well.

None of this is going to save me any money or keep me from the garden centers, but it



certainly is fun. Keep your eyes open and see what you find. And let me know. With all this wet on top of global warming, there is no telling what will show up.



From the Garden Shed...Seed Saving
* Sherry Burke

Seed saving was started thousands of years ago by the first gardeners. Seeds from favorite plants were considered priceless treasures to save, to share or to trade.

In modern times seeds are readily available for purchase, but the question still comes up about how to save leftover seed. Most gardeners who buy packets of seed will not use all of the seed in one season. After all, who needs 55 zucchini plants? Once the spring planting is complete, what is the best way to store seed? The key to successful seed saving is to keep seeds dry and cool.



A simple way to save seed is to keep the seed in the original package so you know what it is. Put

the packet in a baggie and label with date and plant name. Place all of the baggies in a larger plastic bag and put the bag in the freezer. The seeds will keep for one to three years using this method, as the freezer is low in humidity. To plant next year, remove the seeds you want to use and bring them up to room temperature. Place remaining seeds back in the freezer.

You have probably also heard of storing seed in the refrigerator. That, too, is better for seed than storing in the warm shed or garage. However, the humidity in the refrigerator is greater than in the freezer, so the shelf life is not as long.

If you do not want to take up freezer or refrigerator space, try this method. Place seed packets in a canning jar with lid and store in a cool dry place such as an unheated basement or the inside wall of the garage. The seeds will last about a year.



When you want to save seed from your own garden, the method is about the same. Just be sure the seed is DRY or else the moisture in the freezer will expand and destroy the seed. Perhaps you have an absolute favorite flower or vegetable.

This is the time to save your own seeds. Pick a healthy plant that



has shown vigor, no disease, good taste or beauty. Let the seed pod dry on the plant, if possible, or just before it is dry, harvest the pod and finish drying in a paper envelope to catch the seed. Most seed pods will automatically disperse the seeds, so timing is important to catch the seeds. Plants like tomatoes, peppers or squash have their seeds inside, so you will need to remove some of the

seeds and dry them on paper towels at room temperature. After harvesting the seeds, place in a paper envelope or baggie and proceed with one of the above seed saving methods. You, too, can have a "bank" of special seeds to share with other gardeners.

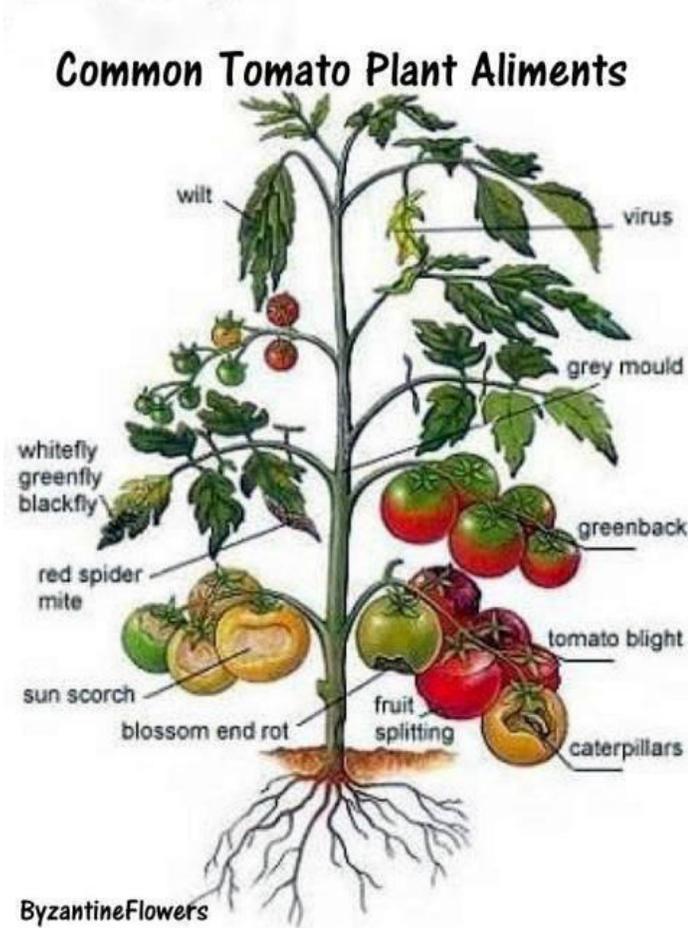


Another hint from the Garden Shed:

Having trouble with your tomatoes..... here a few things that can happen...

**Fun with Composting - Who Knew?
* Pam Keeton**

Many years ago, while living in Texas, I saw an announcement for a class on composting through the county extension. Participants would receive a free composting bin. I think the appeal for



me was to create something good out of waste, send less to the dump and accomplish that for free. My father used to comment that
Check out the internet for solutions!
Americans were sending way too much waste to the landfill and that we'd soon run out room. It left an impression on me and composting seemed the perfect alternative.

The class left me hooked on composting. There was something satisfying about "stirring" a bunch of waste and ending up with something so good for the garden. I put much less in the garbage or down the disposal, and much more into my bin. After a long day in the office, it was relaxing to turn the contents of my bin, while also watering my gardens.

But I discovered very quickly that the free bin was a disappointment. It was simply too flimsy and didn't give me a much-needed second bin for turning and cooking. My supportive husband built a three bin composting operation for me and the rest is history.

My composting takes place in the large square bins. One bin is usually full and the contents are breaking down, while the other is used to collect materials. Once the compost is ready, it is stored in the round bins if there is not an immediate use for it. The square wooden tray on top is used to screen the compost to remove sticks and other debris that has not been completely composted.



I've been composting since 1990 - at four different homes in two states. It's hard for me to throw away perfectly good eggs shells, coffee grounds, vegetable peels and fruit rinds. As well as grass clippings, leaves, sticks, newspapers and pine needles. And then there's dryer lint. I recently learned lint can be composted. Who knew?!!

Composting is like baking – a little green, a lot of brown, some water, stir once or twice a week for oxygen and, before long, you have heavenly compost! It's nothing short of a miracle how so much waste can break down into something so good for your garden. Why do we throw so much away when it can be reused for the benefit of our gardens? It's not that hard to do and isn't offensive when done properly. Just remember not to add meat, dairy or foods containing grease or oil. A salad with dressing on it will attract vermin long before it composts.

Here a few other tips I've learned along the way:

- 1) Be careful about trying to compost weeds. They usually contain seeds, which take a long time to break down. You are likely to end up spreading weed seeds.
- 2) Don't try to compost melon seeds. I once ended up with cantaloupe growing all over my yard when I used compost containing cantaloupe seeds to fill in between rolls of sod. While my kids found it funny, I did not. So I do not attempt to compost watermelon or cantaloupe seeds. Only the skins. Likewise, corn cobs take a long time to break down. The good thing is that you won't find corn plants growing out of your compost.
- 3) Expect tomato plants to spring up in your compost. Again, we are talking seeds, and seeds take a long time to break down. Inevitably I get tomato seedlings growing wherever I use my compost. I either pull the errant tomato plants, or transplant them to my tomato garden. Better yet, I donate some of my "volunteers" to neighbors and community gardens.
- 4) Don't throw whole plants into your compost bin -- cut them into pieces. One of the biggest problems I see when people complain their compost piles are not breaking down is that they are throwing whole plants and large cuttings into the bin. You need to chop the cuttings down into two-to-three inch sections.
- 5) Sticks are good. Traditional advice says not to add sticks to compost bins because they take too long to break down; but I find they help bring oxygen, a crucial ingredient to compost, to the mix by creating air pockets and keeping the compost loose. If the sticks don't break down by the time you are ready to use your compost, it's easy to sift them out. And please reuse those sticks in your next compost pile. They are already on their way to being a valuable soil amendment.

One last note – I've never had problems with ants or vermin, unless my bin got too dry (ants) or wasn't turned enough (voles). It's important to turn your compost once a week and keep it moist.

I do not recommend you locate your compost bin too close to your home because you are likely to end up with ants along your foundation. And keeping it turned helps ensure that weeds don't take hold and rodents don't build a home. It doesn't take a lot of work, but composting does require a small amount of attention.

Composting has always provided a relaxing, satisfying and creative outlet for me. I hope you will also consider composting. It's good for the environment and great for the soul.

Note from the editor: A few years ago as part of an Eagle Scout project, and with funds provided from our Pilgrimage Project, a young man built a three section compost bin for the Historical Society Garden. Chloe Pitard, one of our members, took charge and has watched over these bins to the point that this year we have been able to use the compost to enhance the perennial gardens at the Historical Society.



Chloe gathering compost from the bins



Chloe adding compost to the Historical Society Gardens

Late Summer and Fall Blooming Native Plants

* Joyce Rall

Gone are the days when I would randomly walk the aisles of the garden centers and purchase plants that I deemed as pretty and that might be beautiful in my garden. During the fall when the days become short and shorter, I start to think and plan what I might try the following spring.

Upon moving to Talbot County, I quickly realized that growing plants here in Talbot County is much different from the growing conditions in the rolling hills of southeastern Pennsylvania. So, off I went to take the Master Gardener Program. It was time well spent. I learned that in Talbot County we live in the Atlantic Coastal Plain and that planting native plants is beneficial for so many reasons. These plants are divided into three categories:

- 1) Plants for wet sites, wetlands, ponds, and wet edges with partial to full sun.
- 2) PLANTS for dry, sunny slopes, meadows, hedgerows or edges.
- 3) PLANTS for shade, woodlands, or woods edges with dry to moist soil.

Here are a few plants that fall into the above, as well as being very beautiful when planted in mass.



Verbena x 'Homestead Purple' This plant was discovered by Alan Armitage and Mike Dirr along a roadside in Georgia. It was also named perennial plant of the year. The verbena grows 3-foot wide and a foot tall and is topped with a mass of bright purple blooms that

start in the spring and continue until frost. Homestead Purple should be placed in full to partial sun in well-drained soil and is easy to grow. It is best used as a ground cover. Purple is a color that may be combined with most other colors. It is especially good for pastel-colored flowers when used at the front of the border or in a rock garden.

The most significant feature of the **Groundseltree** or sea myrtle is its silvery, plume-like aches which appear in the fall on female plants resembling silvery paintbrushes. This plant is the only native eastern species of the aster family reaching tree size.



Baccharis is the ancient Greek name (derived from the god Bacchus) of a plant with fragrant roots. It is tolerant of saltwater spray and can be planted near the ocean or along our riverbanks.



Aster cordifoliusa – Blue Wood Aster. This aster has blue flowers in early fall in shade. It is great naturalized under trees, at the edge of woods, or as a filler among Hostas and Astilbes which are pretty well

gone by fall. The Aster is best planted in woods and dry meadows. It stands 2-3 feet tall and 2-3 feet wide. These are used many times as fillers in flower arrangements and are deer resistant.

Coreopsis 'Tequila Sunrise' This plant blooms continually from late spring through October. It likes dry sunny borders with good drainage. The most significant characteristic is its olive green variegated leaves with cream and yellow markings combined with a hint of pinkish-red in spring and a darker mahogany in the fall. It grows 14-16 inches tall and spreads nicely by self-sowing.



Eupatorium or Hardy ageratum grows 2-3 feet tall and 2 feet spread. Has a beautiful blue flower in September and October.

Also makes a great cut flower. It can be found in moist woods, thickets and along stream banks. It should be planted in moist soil with sun to partial shade.

This **Gaura lindheimeri 'Crimson Butterflies'** is compact with hot pink flowers on racemes and crimson



red foliage. It



is best grown in sandy, loamy, well-drained soil in full sun. Good drainage is essential. This is a tap-rooted plant that tolerates heat, humidity, some drought and poor soils. It is a dense, spreading plant that forms a foliage mound to 12" tall. The flowers bloom over a very long late spring to autumn period. The flowers dance in the wind like butterflies, thus the cultivar name.

Helenium autumnale. A member of the Aster Family (Asteraceae) Helen's Flower thrives in wet meadows, thickets, and swamps. It flowers August

to November and grows to be 2-5 feet tall with heads 1 1/2 inches across. The yellow-green disk at the center of the flower is a distinguishing mark.

The opportunity to grow late blooming native plants is endless. These are just a few that I found particularly nice for an area of the garden that could be enjoyed into late fall and could be combined with pumpkins, gourds and Chrysanthemums and to bring into your home to enjoy on the dark fall evenings.

It is fun to experiment with the beautiful fall colors of our native plants and grasses combining them with some of our favorite non-native ones well into the first frost.

Barn Swallow Tale

* Priscilla Thut

Last summer, we noticed that a pair of Barn Swallows was



checking out our front porch, thinking it would be a safe place to build a nest and start a family. Our home is in the “country,” so there is ample farmland, meadows and water nearby. The male arrives first in the spring, returning from its South American wintering grounds. He searches out a suitable nesting site and then advertises his choice by circling in flight and singing to the female. Barn Swallows usually mate for life, but extra-pair copulation is common, making the species genetically polygamous but socially monogamous.

After the swallows decided that our porch was the perfect spot, nest building began. This was one of the most fascinating processes I have ever witnessed. Both parents work on the nest, but the female does most of the work (of course!). It is written that over 4,000 trips to and from the nest site will be made during nest construction. First comes the daubing of mud along a horizontal piece of trim, making a place for the non-nest-sitting adult to roost at night. Then the building project gets under way. Both birds bring small daubs of mud from a mud puddle near the driveway and place these pellets in a clump to form the bottom of the nest. They gather thin one or two inch pieces of grass or narrow straw from the driveway and carefully push the grass into the mud. The best part is when they move down the small reed about a half inch, grab the stalk, and push that into the mud. Then they begin to work on the sides. It takes almost a week to construct the nest. At first, it is dark brown and muddy, but as it dries and hardens, it becomes gray and very solid looking. The



nest is lined with feathers, algae and soft grasses. The nest cup is typically three inches across at the rim and two inches deep. Usually 3–7 eggs are laid and then the long sitting begins. Eggs are incubated for 12 – 17 days. During this time, the birds

will leave the nest to get food. We noticed that when the air temperature was in the high 90’s, the birds were away from the nest for long stretches of time. When the eggs hatch, naked birds, with closed eyes and open beaks, appear above the nest rim. The adults constantly bring insects to the nest and it is clear from the beginning that one or two nestlings are weaker than the others. The most aggressive baby gets the most food. Last year, one nestling died and eventually was pushed out of the nest. Often “helpers at the nest,” usually older siblings from previous clutches, or juveniles, help to feed the young. In our yard, there are always several swallows circling the area and bringing food.

We watched as the baby birds grew, gained feathers, and eventually sat on the edge of the nest. Barn Swallow young stay in the nest longer than most birds (three weeks) because they have to be able to fly and catch their food on the first trip out of the nest. Almost immediately after the young have fledged, the adults start on their second family. Most pairs have two families a year. This spring we waited anxiously to see if “our” Barn Swallows would return. Indeed they did. The nest had been home to several Carolina Wrens over the winter. We would see two or three

wrens at night, huddled together in the little swallow nest. It was probably a very safe spot and out of the wind and weather. When the swallows returned, they replaced the feathers with new ones and added another layer of mud to the rim. Four nestlings hatched, but only two fledged.

By now we had six or eight swallows swooping around the front porch area. We noticed one day that a new nest was being built, this time on an adjacent porch. The nest was constructed in the same manner and eggs were laid. It seemed strange that only one adult was in evidence most of the time. We wondered if the female was going it alone. Four birds hatched and one was thrown out of the nest almost immediately. The birds were about ten days old, just getting feathers, and one morning all three were gone! What could have happened? A snake climbing up the side of the house? A crow or other predator? Unlikely, given where the nest is located. Then I read that an unmated male Barn Swallow may kill the nestlings of a mating pair, and succeed in breaking up the pair and take up housekeeping with the female. Then... a new nest was begun about six feet away from the first one. A week of construction and now eggs have appeared in the nest. I wonder who the parents are? So now we anxiously await the arrival of our third and fourth families this summer. What proud parents we are!

These barn swallows are one of eight or ten species nesting in our yard this summer. We continue to feed the birds year round and notice young at the feeders every day. It is so fascinating to watch the world of nature in action. And within a few weeks, many nesting species will be flocking up to begin the long journey to their wintering grounds. Sure hope our little swallows return next summer.

Designing with Bobbie (Bobbie Brittingham) * Trish Reynolds

A few weeks ago our very own “floral designer extraordinaire” Bobbie Brittingham conducted a design class sharing her knowledge and assisting us with Parallel Designs, and then a fun design of our choice. Bobbie’s efforts are designed to break those fears so many of us have for entering a Flower Show, to show us how to design with flowers from our gardens, experimenting with new techniques...but most importantly how to have FUN with Flowers!!!



In our last issue, we introduced a section on Flower Design...one we hope you enjoy.

This issue is featuring three:

“Designing with Bobbie,”

“Sources for Locally Grown Flowers”

and **“Travels with Mary.”**

Designing with Bobbie (Bobbie Brittingham)

* Trish Reynolds



A few weeks ago our very own “floral designer extraordinaire” Bobbie Brittingham conducted a design class sharing her knowledge and assisting us with Parallel Designs, and then a fun design of our choice. Bobbie’s efforts are designed to break those fears so many of us have for entering a Flower Show, to show us how to design with flowers from our gardens, experimenting with new techniques....but most importantly how to have FUN with Flowers!!!

The “design of the day” was a Parallel Design – a form of Creative Design:

- A Creative Design in which three or more groupings of plant material and other components are placed in a strong parallel manner in a single container, on a base or both. Multiple containers/bases may be used if combined so as to appear as one unit.
 - ◆ Parallel direction may be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal, based on schedule or discretion of the exhibitor, within the allotted space.
 - ◆ Only the overall effect must appear parallel, for components within each grouping need not be precisely equidistant from components in adjacent groupings.
 - ◆ Open space (voids) between each grouping is vital to success.
- All grouping may be of same material, varied combinations of selected plant materials, or different plant materials, plus other components as desired.
- A connective/s may be used to unify the design.



Bobbie’s “students” at work on their Parallel Designs



Mary’s Boat



Boots’ Design



Rodanthe’s Design



Sara’s Design



Bring on the Flower Shows. We’re Ready!

Can You Dig It?

100

Locally Grown Flowers

* Samantha McCall

Listed below are three sources I know of for locally grown flowers. Everyone is “hip” to the “garden-to-table” movement for appreciating and supporting locally grown foods. Well here is the scoop on the growing scene for “flowers-to-vase” or as some might say, “seed-to-centerpiece”!

- **Carrie Jennings of Honeybee Farm**.....10 minutes from Easton in Cordova, Honeybee Flower Farm opened during the Spring of 2012, specializing in long lasting, colorful, and unusual field grown fresh cut flowers. The flowers are grown insecticide free. Currently she has pollen-less Sunflowers, mountain mint, Zinnias, Cosmos, Hydrangea and Gladioli. Website – www.honeybeefarm.com.
- **Karon Simmons at Bay Hundred Botanicals** in McDan-

iel.....Karon grows so many of her plants and she does it all with love and deep caring for her plants. While she focuses mostly on greenhouse plants, she also grows fresh sunflowers, gladioli and zinnias (\$5 a bunch), and has them available ‘til late fall. 9400 New Road, McDaniel...410-745-5039.

- **Wenfei Uva of Seaberry Farm, Federalsburg**.....Owned and operated by Drs. Richard and Wenfei Uva since 2006, specializing in speciality horticultural products for wholesale and retail. On their 26 acre farm, they grow a large selection of woody shrubs for cut branches as well as a variety of perennial and annual cut flowers and other speciality fruits and vegetables, most notably the beach plum. Web site – www.seaberryfarm.com.

Travels with Mary...News from the Newport Flower Show 2015

* Mary Holston

“It is the time you have wasted for your rose that makes your rose so important.”
Antoine De Saint-Exupery’s “The Little Prince.”

In May, my husband and I, on our beloved sailboat, *Fierce Pride*, set sail for Wickford, Rhode Island, where we keep our boat in the summer. We had a beautiful week of sunshine, warm weather, fair winds and great sailing. One of the highlights of



our trip was visiting the Newport Flower Show where I got to be both a guest and a volunteer.

The show is held at one of the Gilded Age mansions of Newport, *Rosecliff*. It is constructed of white marble. I will share a little background about Rose-

cliff and you can expand this knowledge if you wish by going to any number of web sites on Rosecliff.

Rosecliff was commissioned by Nevada silver heiress Theresa Fair Oelrichs. It is modeled after the Grand Trianon of Versailles but smaller and reduced to a basic “H” shape. It was to be a summer home suitable for entertaining on a grand scale. Its cost in 1898 was 2.5 million dollars. Mrs. Oelrichs “threw herself into the social scene with tremendous gusto” becoming, along with Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish and Mrs. O.H.P. Belmont (of nearby *Belcourt*), one of the 3 great hostesses of Newport.

Mrs. Oelrichs, known by “Tessie” was born to James Graham Fair, an Irish immigrant who, with three other partners, invested in Nevada’s Comstock silver lode, one of the richest silver finds in history. During a summer in Newport, Theresa met Hermann Oelrichs playing tennis at the Newport Casino. They were married in 1890 and a year later they purchased the property known

as *Rosecliff* from the estate of historian and diplomat George Bancroft. Bancroft, an amateur horticulturist, developed the American Beauty Rose. Scenes from many movies such as *The Great Gatsby*, *True Lies* and *Amisted* have been filmed there. A plaque at the home states that “This 21-acre estate with all the furnishing and a maintenance trust fund was donated to The Preservation Society of Newport County by Mr. and Mrs. J. Edgar Monroe, 1971.” The Monroes were the last owners.



Upon entering the grounds of *Rosecliff* for the flower show one of the first things people viewed was a “garden club challenge” which was an *American crazy quilt*, combining the concepts of American crazy quilting with Victorian carpet bedding. Ten garden clubs were invited to decorate a 3-ft by 3-ft shallow planter in a graphic design to look like a quilt using Victorian bedding techniques. Ten blank green blocks, the same size were added to complete the “quilt.” It was beautiful and a very popular public exhibit.



This year’s five front lawn garden exhibitors carried the white theme through their neoclassical, classical or contemporary classical displays. The exhibits incorporated red roses, but everything else was white to carry out the show’s theme.

The main speakers at the show this year were Jane Godshalk, flower designer, Peter Hatch, horticulturist and writer as well as P. Allen Smith who was a very popular speaker last year.

I attended Jane Godshalk's luncheon and lecture. She is on the faculty at Longwood Gardens and has been teaching floral design for more than a decade to students ranging from beginners to experts in the trade. Her lecture, entitled, "Flower Arranging Secrets – Natural Design for Everyday Living," was very inter-

esting. Unlike many speakers on flower design, Jane did not arrange flowers as if you were entering a flower show. Her style is uniquely American: fresh, charming and uncomplicated. She completed approximately 8 arrangements with practical and usable advice. She stressed use of flowers from many sources, especially your yard, the roadside and the grocery store. Her new book, *Flower Arranging Secrets – Natural Designs for Everyday Living* (same title as her lecture) is all about demystifying the art of floral design. I did purchase a copy and although it is very basic in its principles, I found it to be very helpful in learning about new (to me) design techniques such as parallel vs. radial stem placement and the use of chicken wire, sand and twigs for mechanics other than floral foam (Oasis).

There were one hundred twenty-five classes represented in the Horticulture Division. Topiary, Bonsai, Bulbs, Begonias, Ferns, Miniature/ Dwarf Plants, Orchids, Succulents, etc., and were all filled. The show provides containers for cut Horticulture entries which were loaned to each entrant. I especially liked the wooden pedestal with a fitted test tube for small horticulture entries such as a small Hosta leaf or flowers with short stems. I believe these would be easily constructed for our shows and would have many uses.

We all had a good time, many new friends were made and we all plan to be back together at Rosecliff next year. Am definitely looking forward to it!



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Exceptional Floral Designs from the Show



Musical Interpretive



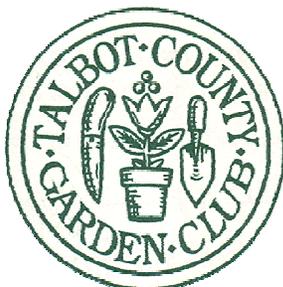
Wedding Cakes



American Beauty

The most "fun" part of the show for me was participating in the registration, passing and placement of horticultural entries. I was most honored to work directly with Patricia Fernandez, Chairman of the Show, as well as Patricia Bailey, Co-chair of the Horticulture Division. Pat Fernandez made an especially cute comment to me which I could really relate to: She said, "Other people play bridge, I do the Newport Flower Show. It is my passion."

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