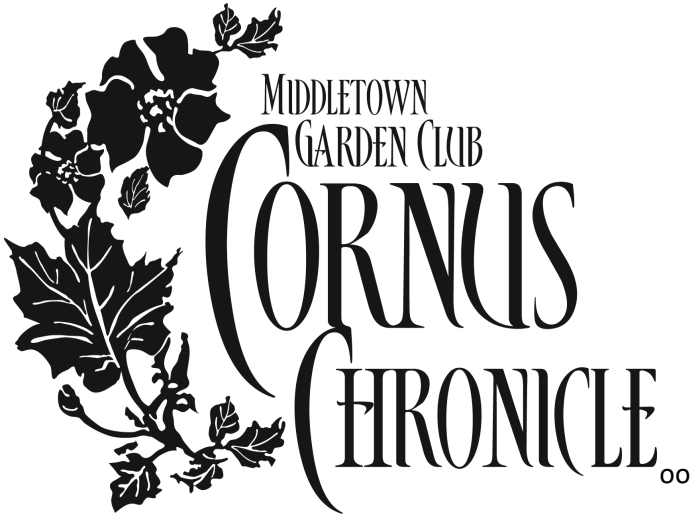


October, 2023



**REMINDER:**

The October meeting will take place at the Hubbard Room, Russell Library, at 1 pm on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

Hello all -

Sorry for the late message: I was hoping to be able to present a completed program schedule to you all but we still have some TBAs. I have included a draft schedule.

This October looks to be fun --first on October 11 at 9:30 am we will be going to Dreamland (Dahlia) Flower Farm and then to Cromwell Growers and then lunch. Please carpool if you can. Thank you, Stephan and Ed, for arranging this outing for the Club.

On October 11 at 7 pm, the Middletown Planning and Zoning Commission will be considering the application of the Middletown Housing Authority to subdivide Spear Park from Sbona Towers. The plan is to construct a housing unit which will encompass the entire footprint of the park, and which will be 3-6 stories tall. Needless to say, this will have a significant impact on the Middlesex County Historical Society's property, Main Street and open space. Please come to the meeting in the

Council Chambers at City Hall and learn more about the proposal.

At our regularly scheduled meeting, on October 19 at 1 pm at the Hubbard Room at Russell Library, we will hear from our own Rhea Higgins, on Flowers in Western European Art. Rhea is a great lecturer and this program will be a real treat! Attached to this mailing is the Program Schedule for 2023-2024.

Please also review the attached committee membership list and let me know if your name is missing!

Thanks to all the hosts and hostesses for your time and yummy efforts, and thanks to all for your commitment to the Middletown Garden Club.

~ Maria



**Minutes of the Middletown Garden Club Business Meeting, September 21, 2023**

In the absence of President Holzberg, Vice-President Kim Wuestefeld called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm at the rooftop of the Community Health

Center. She thanked hostesses Elaine and Melissa for providing a beautiful array of treats, including mini-cupcakes from NORA's. A motion to approve the minutes of May 18, 2023, was made by Jane Harris, seconded by Kathie Green. The minutes were approved unanimously. On a motion by Kathie, seconded by Elaine, the Treasurer's Report was also unanimously approved. In the absence of Membership Chair Amy Albert, Jane reported that Spencer Cunningham has submitted his letter of resignation. On a motion Jane, seconded by Rob, the club unanimously voted to accept his resignation with regret.

Rob mentioned that the club needed to vote to transfer Deb Patrician's membership to the Garden Club of Denver, and moved to do so; with a second from Jane, the club voted unanimously to facilitate her transfer.

Because several committee chairmanships have changed in the past year, Jane passed around a list of committee chairs and committees, so members could sign up to serve on two or more committees.

Vice-President Wuestefeld requested committee reports as follows:

**Archives:** Kathie reported she is in need of assistance to organize and scan archival material.

**Civic Improvement:** Edwina reminded the club that Founders Fund has been merged into the Civic Improvement and Grants Committee, and the club should be thinking about grant opportunities.

**Communications:** Debby reported that the club has been very successful in getting coverage from the Middletown Press for several club endeavors.

**Conservation:** Sally reminded club members to think about attending NAL in person, as it is a hugely educational experience. Christina displayed a container of corks she has been collecting for recycling at City Hall.

**Horticulture:** Jane reported that the club's entry in the Gavel Challenge at the Zone Meeting was not a winner, and further reminded the club members to register for the virtual Shirley Meneice, which features the Hawaiian Islands.

**Hospitality:** Elaine and Melissa distributed a sign-up sheet to fill in the remaining slots for the year's meetings. Melissa also mentioned that the club has an opportunity to hold our holiday party at the Wadsworth Mansion this year. More details to follow.

**Program:** Kim reported that the program list for the year is complete, and she is just waiting to fill in the hosts and hostesses.

**Rooftop:** Jane asked for a volunteer to co-chair the committee with Pat Murawski, and Stephan Allison, already a rooftop worker, offered to co-chair.

**Treasurer:** Mary reminded members that dues should have been paid by the end of May, and asked that checks be provided as soon as possible.

**Visiting Gardens:** Stephan announced that the previously-scheduled

trip to three locations in Cromwell needs to be postponed for Dan Ryan's funeral. On a voice vote, the decision was made to move the date to Wednesday, October 11.

### **New/Old Business:**

Discussion of a memorial contribution in memory of member Daniel B. Ryan led to a unanimous vote to donate \$200 to the Katchen Coley Environmental Fund at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County.

Jane reminded committee chairs that some committees will meet in New Haven with their Zone II Reps to discuss policies and procedures for the coming year within GCA. Carpooling is recommended.

Patsy told the group that our club has been asked to participate again in the Atheneum's Festival of Trees and Traditions by supplying a decorated artificial wreath. She will take care of it, unless there is a volunteer.

Patsy also spoke about the need for all club members to participate in the GCA Annual Meeting in Hartford, April 25-26. Kate noted that the Wadsworth Atheneum has decided to defer "Fine Art and Flowers" to the first weekend in May to avoid conflicts, since the Atheneum will be the site of a Zone dinner during the Annual Meeting.

**Special Guest:** Mark Masselli, President and CEO of the Community Health Center, dropped in to congratulate and thank the club for our ten years of work on the rooftop garden. He spoke

of the need for both bonding and bridging within communities, two areas where the club provides opportunities for members to connect with one another and the community.

At 2:35, on a motion by Elaine, seconded by Kathie, the September meeting was adjourned, followed by a tour of the rooftop gardens.

Attendees: S. Allison, L. Bank, J. Bell, E. Carella, K. Coley, S. Cornish, L. Garner, K. Green, J. Harris, R. Higgins, L. Johnson, R. Kelley, P. Murawski, P. Mylchreest, E. Ranganathan, R. Rickenback, M. Roberts, J. Schoonmaker, D. Shapiro, C. Wasch, K. Wuestefeld, M. Xenelis

Excused: E. Dzialo, T. Ferguson, M. Giamei, Maria Holzberg

Absent: A. Albert, B. Glista, M. Kalayjian, O. McLaughlin



### **VISITING GARDENS:**

The Visiting Gardens Committee presently has 10 attendees for the October 11 visit to Dreamland Flower Farm and Cromwell Growers with a lunch at Café Luna to complete the tour.

The program begins with a 9:30 am visit to Dreamland followed by an 11 am visit to Cromwell Growers and ends at Café Luna at 12:30 pm.

I will send directions to those who have signed up. If you haven't already, please

do so before Oct. 5 by contacting me at [stephan.allison@gmail.com](mailto:stephan.allison@gmail.com)

Thanks, and looking forward to a great day!

~ Stephan



### HORTICULTURE:

We are trying to plan a helpful horticulture program for the winter. Please take a half minute to check some boxes on this questionnaire.

Thank you!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9LC6QX7>

~ Kathy



### ENVIRONMENTAL FILMS:

“The Seeds of Vandana Shiva” will be the first film in the environmental film series which our club co-sponsors with Rockfall, Wesleyan, Russell Library, and the Coastal Conservation District. The film will be shown at the Goldsmith Family Cinema at Wesleyan on Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

~ Jane



### HOLIDAY SALE:

The Middletown Garden Club Holiday Sale is fast approaching and needs the involvement of many members to be successful. This is our only fundraiser. It is also a chance to exercise our creativity in decorating one-of-a-kind wreaths and centerpieces. Please consider asking friends and neighbors to purchase a wreath or one of Lynn Johnson’s popular almond cakes. The timeline for wreath and almond cake orders is as follows:

October 31 - all wreath orders due. Order forms with prices (decorated wreaths \$40, undecorated \$18) attached. Bow colors are red, red plaid, and burlap. Contact Ona with orders.

November 20 - all almond cake orders due. Price \$12 each. Contact Lynn with orders.

November 27 or December 14 (or by special arrangement) almond cake deliveries/pickup. Contact Lynn.

November 27, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, Connecticut Forest & Park, Holiday sale workshop. Wreaths & centerpieces will be decorated in this order:

community wreaths; 12 sale wreaths; sale centerpieces; personal wreaths.

December 3 - Wadsworth Mansion Holiday Sale 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, set-up at 8:00 am.

Please gather the following for the workshop:

greens from various conifers, laurel, andromeda, holly, etc.

pinecones, acorns, dried seed heads, etc.  
bling - artificial fruits, birds, small ornaments - we recycle.

Ona McLaughlin    Marcia Kalayjian  
Renee Kelley      Patsy Mylchreest  
Lynn Johnson      Pat Murawski  
Kim Wuestefeld



“Autumn leaves don't fall, they fly. They take their time and wander on  
this, their only chance to soar.”

~ Delia Owens



## **In Memoriam, Daniel Brophy Ryan, 1941 – 2023**

Long-time club member Daniel Brophy "Dan" Ryan, native son and lifelong resident of Middletown, died Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023. A graduate of The College of the Holy Cross and the University of Connecticut Law School, Dan was also an officer in the U.S. Navy, serving for three years as an ensign on active duty and then as a Naval Reserve officer for another 12 years.

Dan and his wife, Helen, were partners in the law firm of Ryan and Ryan, P.C., in Middletown for many years before their retirement.

According to Helen, Dan was extremely proud of his membership in the Middletown Garden Club, in which he served as Nominating Committee Chair for twenty years. He and Helen were extremely gracious in hosting members at their homes in Middletown and Vermont.

Dan's commitment to the city of Middletown was well-known; the list of organizations who benefitted from his wisdom and enthusiasm is lengthy: among them are the Rockfall Foundation, the Diocese of Norwich, St. Pius X Roman Catholic Church, the United Way, the Forest City Council # 3 Knights of Columbus, the Independent Day School, the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce, as well as the city of Middletown, for which he served as Corporation Counsel for decades.

Dan's Irish wit, courtly manner, and unfailing good humor, not to mention his tartan trousers, will remain part of his legend. The club offers condolences to Helen, his son, Daniel Jr., daughters, Meghan and Maeve, and their respective spouses.



