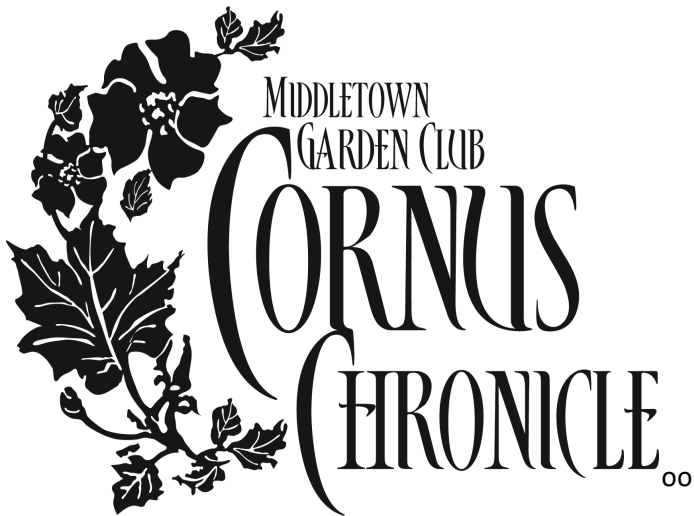


September, 2023



REMINDER:

The September meeting will take place on the rooftop of the Community Health Center at 1pm on the 21st.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Hello All,

What a great summer it was, I did not have to water my gardens once, how about you? Now weeding was another matter.

Your executive Board has spent a lot of time trying to fine-tune our program for this year. We are still waiting on some details but hope to have it available by our first meeting.

I want to thank Kim for taking over the job as Chair and to Laney Bank, Jane Harris, Rhea Higgins, Ed Dzialo and Kathy Meyering for pitching in. If we have a theme this year, I would say it is "the Modern Farm" followed by "Flowers and Art".

I'd like to thank Stephan Allison for agreeing to be Visiting Gardens Chair. He has scheduled a tour of two locations in Cromwell (yes Cromwell) for 9/25/23 where we will meet with farmers making their businesses thrive. Please talk to Stephan for any ideas about gardens you would like to visit.

We are also anticipating with joy the Pollinator Pathway Garden Tour. No excuse for missing this one as you can do portions of the tour as a "drive by" from your car! The Event is September 16 from 10 am -- sign up online.

The reports from the rooftop garden have been inspiring. Our members continue to work with MARC and harvest much fresh produce for the food pantry! Well done!

I will be in Ireland for the next several weeks, but I am looking forward to seeing you all on September 21, 2023, at 1pm. We have a **new location** for our first meeting:

The rooftop boardroom and garden at the Community Health Center, 675 Main Street. Please plan to carpool, as parking is limited.

See you soon!

Maria



VISITING GARDENS:

I have scheduled the September 25 field trip (garden visit) for the club. It is a Cromwell exclusive trip comprised of the Dreamland Flower Farm at 9:30am, Cromwell Growers at 11am and lunch at Café Luna at 12:30pm. All members are invited and I'm looking for RSVPs (via email: stephan.allison@gmail.com) no later than September 15 so that I can provide a count to both growers and the restaurant.

~ Stephan



HORTICULTURE:

Details for the Gavel Challenge (to be entered at the Zone II Meeting in Greenwich on September 14):

1) The pot size is whatever is appropriate to the size of the plant. Remember your 2/3 & 1/3 rule. We have given 10" diameter as a maximum size, but smaller sizes (ex. 8") might be fine. Containers are measured at the diameter of the widest point on the inside of the rim at the soil line.

2) Plants must be exhibited in terra cotta containers that are clean, unobtrusive and compatible with the exhibit. Terra cotta saucers required. Disguised double potting and top dressing are permitted. Top dressing must not float when watered.

3) If an individual club grower is a novice, that should be indicated on the Entry card.

Definition:

A novice is an individual exhibitor who has not won a first-place ribbon or a

GCA Special Award in Horticulture at a GCA Flower Show, GCA Major Flower Show, or a Sanctioned Non- GCA Major Flower Show.

4) We request organic methods of growing:

GCA Definition of Organic Gardening

Organic: the system of growing plants without the use of herbicides, chemical pesticides or fertilizers in order to create a healthy, self-sustaining environment in natural balance, rich in biodiversity.

Please let me know if you have a worthy entry for this event!

There are two GCA Flower Shows being held in September!

[South County, Narragansett, September 21](#)

[Hortulus Flower Show, Greenwich, September 29-30](#)

The Middletown Pollinator Pathway is holding "A Different Kind of Garden Tour" on September 16 from 10-2 (rain date September 17). Please check out the information and [interactive map](#) and put it on your calendar!



PHOTOGRAPHY:

Good news: The schedule for Photography Division III, 2024 GCA Annual Meeting, "Beyond the Green: Explore, Dream, Discover" has been approved and is now offered to all GCA members so that we can be ready to register. This is a juried show and registration will open at 12:01 am on October 1, 2023.

So, sharpen your focus, line up your lenses, polish up your iPhone screen and click away. Many of you are constant photographers and already have the perfect shots in your files and folders. Dig deep and come up with your favorites for this interesting and lively schedule. The actual full schedule with graphics, etc., has not yet been published due to a death in the family of our graphic artist. We have this heads-up so we can be all ready when October 1 comes to go through the formal registration process.

~ Lynn



FROM THE TREASURER:

The Middletown Garden Club dues for the 2023/2024 year are \$150.00 and are now past due. If you have not paid, please bring your check to the September meeting; if you are unable to attend the meeting, please send me your check post haste.

Thank you ~ Mary



MEMBERSHIP:

In July, The Membership Committee received a letter of resignation from Dan Ryan, a member since 2002. We thank Dan for his many years of service. Our club has also welcomed three new members in the past few months. If you have not met Lynne Garner, Tisha Ferguson, and Stephan Allison, please

introduce yourself to them when next we meet.

As we shift our focus to prospective new members, this is an opportunity to remind veteran members and let new members know, for the first time, our guidelines. We encourage you to share these guidelines with friends who express an interest in learning the process of becoming a member.

The Middletown Garden Club (MGC) has been a club with members throughout Middlesex County since 1915. Since 1920, we have been a Garden Club of America member club. Members are expected to:

- attend all regular meetings (monthly from September through May)
- support our fundraising events
- participate in gardening, flower arranging, and educational activities throughout the year

Because of our memberships in both the Garden Club of America and the Federated Garden Clubs of CT, we have opportunities to participate in statewide and sometimes national activities that can take us to otherwise private gardens and hear A-list speakers on various garden-related topics.

Our dues are \$150 per year, payable at the time of being voted into the club. All members are expected to be a host or hostess at one meeting per year, to serve on at least two committees, and to chair a committee or serve as an officer if asked. Members receive a monthly newsletter from the club, informative

online magazines and newsletters from our GCA and Federated organizations, and a print edition of the quarterly GCA *Bulletin*.

~ Amy Albert



CORRESPONDENCE:

Good morning,

It is with great pleasure that I inform you that I am Troop 16 of Middletown's newest Eagle Scout!! I completed my board of review on August 2nd. It would not have been possible without you, and I am so endlessly grateful for all the help you gave me with my project. As you saw in my workbook, I pledged to donate the rest of my unused fundraising money to the Middletown Garden Club, so let me know how I can address it there! Thank you again for everything!!!

Xander Fignar
Troop 16
Eagle Scout



ENVIRONMENTAL FILMS:

A documentary about the American Chestnut Foundation and their decades-long work on rescuing the species will be shown at the Rockfall Foundation's headquarters, deKoven House, on Thursday, September 21, at 7 pm. The event is open to all, but seating is limited.

Our club is once again co-sponsoring a series of environmental films with Rockfall, Wesleyan, Russell Library, and the Coastal

Conservation District. The first film will be shown at the Goldsmith Family Cinema at Wesleyan on Monday, October 16. More information to follow.

~ Jane



Minutes of the Middletown Garden Club Business Meeting, May 18, 2023

President Holzberg called the meeting to order at 11:10 am at the home of Anne McCloskey. A motion to approve the minutes of March 16, 2023, was made, with a correction to show that Deb Patrician is no longer an active member of the club. The corrected minutes were approved unanimously. Membership Chair Amy Albert read a letter of nomination for Stephan Allison, and Maria read her seconding letter.

The nomination was voted upon and approved unanimously.

President Holzberg requested committee reports to be either brief or submitted in writing.

Archives: Kathie reported she is looking for a summer intern to help organize and scan archival material.

Communications: Debbie reported that the Middletown Press had an article about the club's trip to the High Line with Mayor Florsheim and Directors Holden and Kozikowski.

Flower Arranging: Ona announced that the 2024 WAFA flower show will be held in Oman, and all are welcome to attend. Maria is planning to

enter the Litchfield GC flower show in June.

Horticulture: Kathy asked for volunteers to grow sunflowers for the Gavel Challenge at the Zone II meeting in September.

Awards: Co-chair Judy announced the club's award for exemplary commitment to youth education to the Steward Outdoor Day School at Bushy Hill Nature Center, which was accepted by Jen Malaguti. Judy reported that our club donated pollinator plants to the Day School, and the students will be planting them shortly. Jen Malaguti said that the students are "learning on the land" and will be tracking the dragonflies' first appearance at the camp; she thanked Judy and the club for the support of her program.

Rockfall Symposium: Jane reported that the Tree Symposium was a great success, with over 110 attendees, and thanked Lynne and Kim for helping with the luncheon.

At 11:35, on a motion by Elaine, seconded by Kathie, the May business meeting was adjourned.

At 11:40, Maria called the Annual Meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous annual meeting in May of 2022. With a correction to show that Kathy Meyering was in attendance, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Maria then delivered her report on the events of the past year, and listed her goals for the first year of her presidency.

All her goals were met or exceeded, including:

1. Progress on the pedestrian bridge over Route 9
2. A successful year of Pollinator Pathway advocacy
3. Preparations for the 2024 GCA Annual Meeting in Hartford
4. The club's entry of a tablescape for the CT Flower Show in February, 2023 at the CT Convention Center. The entry received THREE blue ribbons.

Other highlights of the year included visits to the Farmer's Daughter in Rhode Island, to the CT Flower Collective in Meriden, the High Libe and Little Island gardens in NYC. In May, club members filled the thirteen outdoor flower pots at the Middletown Housing Authority center.

Maria then turned the meeting over to Judy for presentation of club awards to the following:

1. Lynn Johnson, the Club Photography Award, "with appreciation for her skillful and talented organization of the flower show photography division and for generously sharing her expertise with club members."
2. Kathy Meyering, the Club Conservation Award, "In recognition of her exemplary leadership in the field of conservation and sharing this

- knowledge to inspire others in the garden club and beyond.”
3. Deborah Shapiro, Club Communications Award, “with appreciation for her tireless efforts to promote the activities and projects of the club and for her dogged perseverance of the big story.”
 4. Patsy Mylchreest, Club Civic Improvement Award, “in appreciation for her enthusiastic commitment and diligence in maintaining civic beauty and sustainability by creating inspirational gardens throughout the community.”
 5. Anne McCloskey, Club Appreciation Award, “with appreciation for her dedicated leadership, mentoring and sharing of her horticultural knowledge and with deep appreciation for her enthusiastic service to our club.”
 6. Jane Harris, Medal of Merit, “with thanks for her exemplary leadership and generosity in sharing her impressive botanical knowledge with club members and the entire community.”

Following the awards ceremony, Rob requested that the club entertain a motion to raise membership dues from \$125 a year to \$150. Kim seconded the motion, and the club voted unanimously in favor. Rob then moved to adopt the 2023-2024 budget, and with a second

from Elaine, the motion was approved unanimously.

Attendance: A. Albert, J. Bell, E. Carella, K. Coley, S. Cornish, T. Ferguson, K. Green, J. Harris, R. Higgins, L. Johnson, M. Kalayjian, R. Kelley, M. Holzberg, A. McCloskey, O. McLaughlin, K. Meyering, P. Murawski, P. Mylchreest, E. Ranganathan, R. Rickenback, M. Roberts, J. Schoonmaker, D. Shapiro, K. Wuestefeld

Excused: L. Bank, J. Flagg, L. Garner, M. Giamei, M. Xenelis



AN OBSERVATION:

While recovering from recent knee surgery, I was given the option of PT or doing it on my own. I loathe the gym in the summer but needed to get my range of motion back in that knee. My gym, Core Club in Durham has the standard concrete business entrance - except for two large gardens that I usually don't pay attention to flanking the entrance. While sitting on the bike, there is a large window that looks over these gardens and Main Street, which helps break the monotony of those miles on the bike! Being a birder, I am always looking for my feathered friends and was happy to notice a hummingbird on the butterfly bush in the garden. Looking more closely, I observed a flock of goldfinch on the cone flowers, bees on the black-eyed susans and other pollinators flying from flower to flower to bush! Every day that I drag myself there, I know that I have something to look forward to

now. Even a small pollinator garden can bring joy and awareness to those who take the time to look. So rather than an overgrown-looking patch of butterfly bush, lilies, cone flowers and rudbeckia, it is a garden benefiting bees, butterflies

and birds and other observers in its own small space.

~ Lynn Johnson



Normality is a paved road: it's comfortable to walk, but no flowers grow. ~ Vincent Van Gogh



Photo credit: Stephan Allison