



The Spade & The Hoe

Volume 5 Issue 10

October 2007

October Meeting

The October meeting will be held at the Police Station at 7:00 p.m. Diane Smith of Northbrook's Perennial Professional, Inc. will address the group on Giving Your Garden a Professional Look. This is an exciting program and one that can impact on our own gardens. Plan to attend. Judy Oppgaard will be the hostess.

Nominations Report

The nominations committee, consisting of Nancy Spears, Gloria Tralmer and Esther Behnke, are pleased to report on the following slate of officers for 2008-2010.
President—Pam Frank
Vice President—Gloria Tralmer
Editor—Esther Behnke
Treasurer—Shelly Kimel
Programming—Marlene Bothfeld
Hospitality—Bonnie Kimoto
Garden Walk—Holly Jansen
Publicity—Nancy Spears
Circulation—Jane Prentis

The nominations will be read at the October meeting and nominations from the floor will be accepted, followed by a voice vote.



The September meeting was great with Carolyn Ulrich of Chicagoland Gardening Magazine showing her slides of European Garden Shows. Carolyn brought extra copies of the magazine for those of us who don't subscribe to it. John Martin was the host.

Things Rabbits Don't Eat

Gloria has on her list the following: boxwood, cotoneaster, yews, yucca, columbine, daylily, daffodils, Solomon's seal and sedum. Knupper's had a list which she took and there are others on that list.

You can drive out nature with a pitchfork, but she keeps on coming back.

- Horace

Thanks to Brigitte for showing two vases of her dahlias, to Nancy O. for her Annabelle hydrangea and to Nancy S. for her asters and wild grasses.

Did you know... that you can take cuttings from some shrubs and make more for your garden? Try cuttings of weigelia, spirea, buddleia, and roses. Cut a piece 5-6 " long near a new tip, remove all but the top pair of leaves, dip the bottom edge in water and then in rooting hormone and gently set in light potting soil. Cover with a plastic bag until roots are set.

Through the Garden Gate
All that rain has brought
about zillions of mosquitoes,
including the kind that carries
West Nile Virus. It is impossible
to distinguish between the two,
so be sure to douse yourselves
with bug spray before you go
outside! A woman in town is the
latest victim of WNV. I have
been busy cleaning out my
garden beds of overgrown
plants, and giving them away
to friends. I just have the
north bed to do in the back,
then the beds in the front.
Have you noticed that, with
all that rain last month, the
ground is so dry? We have
tapped into the ground water
from the sump pump for the
back but that still leaves the
front to turn the hose on. It's
made a big difference in the
water bill. Though some areas
to the west of us had a hard
frost already, it is just so
nice to see our flowers still
blooming. What a treat it is!
But fall is coming, and some
burning bushes and trees are
already turning colors. We
have enjoyed the summer,
now let us enjoy the autumn.



A Challenge to Garden Design

This article ran last month, and I have received several responses. Apparently not a few of us feel that there are more ways than just one to have a grand and glorious garden. Good for you! No cookie cutter garden for you! Plant what you like, for the only one you have to please is yourself!

Ancient Gardening

Dill was both a culinary and a medicinal herb and was taxed under Talmudic law indicating that it was grown commercially. In the New Testament it was called 'anise'. The wandering Israelites said "We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt, the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic." Garlic cloves were a form of currency in Egypt. Mint, rue and herbs of all kinds are mentioned frequently. Biblical scholars believe it was the horse mint (*menthe longifolia*) that was used. The leaves were brewed for tea and the plant used medicinally. Mint also was taxed. The mustard seed was grown for its oil and was probably the black mustard (*brassica nigra*). Flax, from which we get linen, was one of the earliest known textile fibers and was cultivated in Egypt and Palestine. The fig tree was one of the most important plants of scriptural times and was extensively cultivated for its fruit. Since apples don't grow in the Near East, some scholars believe that the fig is the "apple" of the biblical Garden of Eden.

Raking in the Benefits

Autumn is a beautiful season with the trees and shrubs turning such lovely colors. Then they fall down. Now what? Start a compost pile if you haven't already done so! Trees in nature grow in decomposing leaves that enrich the soil. What better fertilizer is there? Shredded leaves improve soil fertility, pH balance, prevent soil erosion, provide aeration and nutrient content. Layer the two types of materials: 'brown' and 'green'. Brown matter consists of leaves, shredded paper, woody materials and provides carbon. Green matter contains grass clippings, garden debris, food preparation scraps (but not meat, bones, dairy). Layer 4-6" of brown, then the same of green. Then lightly water the pile. Finally add a little soil (from your pots is great). Water it occasionally so it doesn't dry out. Stir the pile every week or so, and, as the pile 'cooks' you can feel the heat which will destroy weed seeds and insect larvae. By springtime you should have nice black, crumbly compost. Sifted, you can spread it on the lawn as top dressing. Or just dig it in the soil around your plants, or add it to your pots. Your plants will surely respond with better growth.

Kitchen waste can include fruit and vegetable scraps and peels, coffee grounds and tea leaves, bread scraps, and egg shells. Garden waste can include leaves and twigs, grass clippings, spent flowers, bark and other material but not thick branches, diseased or treated plants. Other materials can include wood ashes from fireplaces, vacuum cleaner dust, hair, wool scraps, shredded newspapers and shredded cotton rags.

A melon and a woman are hard to know.

- French Proverb

"All I really need is love, but a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.

- Lucy (in *Peanuts*, by Charles M. Schulz)

History Lesson 106

It is said that marigolds, especially the Mexican variety, will control ground ivy. Bothered by aphids on the roses? Bury a clove of garlic beside each rose is guaranteed to keep these pests at bay. A little beer in a jam jar laid on its side will eliminate slugs. All flowers will last longer in water if foxgloves are part of the arrangement. Do not mix daffodils with other flowers in a vase as they will poison them. Rinse out milk cartons or bottles with water, shake well, then pour the contents on houseplants as a mild liquid manure.

- Gardener's Lore

Dues

It's that time of year, when the leaves fall, acorns are gathered, and dues are due. Please bring your checks to the October meeting or mail them to Joan at 2745 Karen Lane. The dues for 2008 will remain the same as this year: single \$30, couples \$35.

Fine words butter no parsnips.

- Danish Proverb

Starting to plan ahead to next year? Try starting seeds from reneesgarden.com, formerly Shepherd's Garden Seeds. Also search out Seedsavers.com for some wonderful old-fashioned, sweet-smelling, yummy-tasting varieties of fruits, vegetables, and flowers from around the world.

Every flower has its perfume.

- Turkish Proverb



'Heirlooms', anyone?

Gloria writes that her parents lived in Lincolnwood for 49 years and they bought iris and peonies from Techny Gardens. She has them now in her garden along with her mother's forget-me-nots that reseed themselves every year. They always remind Gloria of her mom.

The rose has thorns only for those who would gather it.
- Chinese Proverb

Deer Repellent

A new repellent on the market, for those of you who have this problem, is called Deer Stopper. It is advertised to be a pleasant-smelling organic repellent that can deter deer for 45-60 days, is biodegradable and free of harmful chemicals or toxins that would hurt pets or people. It sprays on and dries clear. A 35.2 oz. bottle with a spray pump will cover 1100 sq. ft. and sells for \$15. Ask at your favorite nursery or go online at www.deerstopper.com.

This is not an endorsement, as we do not have that particular problem. Ours are confined to squirrels, rabbits, chipmunks, opossum and the occasional skunk and/or raccoon.

To be overcome by the fragrance of flowers is a delectable form of defeat.
- Beverley Nichols

In October, remember to:

- plant spring bulbs until the ground is frozen;
- before nighttime temperatures drop below 50°, clean and bring houseplants indoors;
- don't worry if your evergreens are dropping their needles—it's natural in the fall;
- after a hard frost, remove all dead plants and discard if diseased;
- after a hard frost, dig up tender bulbs, cut off the stems, wash off the soil, and store them in a container layered with peat moss, shredded newspaper or sawdust and store them at 40-45°;
- if black spot was a problem, cut out and discard those rose canes and leaves;
- water trees and shrubs well before the ground freezes;
- continue to mow the lawn until the grass goes dormant;
- apply post-emergent broad-leaf weed control if weeds are actively growing;
- core aerate if you didn't get it done last month;
- remove fallen leaves and debris off the lawn to prevent snow mold.

Chicagoland Gardening, Sept./Oct. 2007

The lotus springs from the mud.
- Chinese Proverb

Holiday Dinner Party

Stay tuned for more information about our annual Holiday Dinner which will be held on December 13th, our regular meeting night. Arrangements are being made and reservations will be accepted starting in November. Mark your calendars now for an enjoyable meal shared with friends!

What's Blooming Table

Everyone likes to see what their friends are growing. Remember to bring something to the October meeting.

Questions, comments, payment of dues?

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The Spade and The Hoe is the official publication of the Glenview Gardeners.

