



The Spade & The Hoe

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September 2007

September Meeting

The September meeting will be held at the Police Station at 7:00 p.m. Carolyn Ulrich of Chicagoland Gardening Magazine will speak to us on the great flower shows of Europe. Grove. This promises to be a very interesting program. Plan to attend.

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



The August Field Trip

was so much fun. We first went to Knupper's for an excellent talk by the owner about wasting money on chemicals that don't really work, and then a time to purchase things we just couldn't live without. Following that, some of us went to Culver's for lunch before setting out for Spring Grove to see our members' (Diane and Wayne) garden and house. Then a quick pop-over to see my daughter Laura's garden. She and the Meyers live about a 1/2 mile apart. Finally, we drove home amid lots of conversation.

Things Rabbits Don't Eat

Brigitte has on her list the following: hibiscus (Rose of Sharon), sedum (Autumn Joy), feverfew, lavender, coneflower, daylily, oxeye daisy, Siberian iris, iris, astilbe, lychnis. The rabbits I have do chew on coneflower, oxeye daisy, astilbe and lychnis but just until other things grow. Have you additions to the list?

*The breath of flowers
is far sweeter in the air...
than in the hand.*

. - Francis Bacon

Through the Garden Gate

With all the rain we've had in August, the garden has grown lush (and overgrown!). It is difficult to work outside because of either the humidity or the rain or the heat. It's gotten so I don't know what's normal weather anymore. However, it is nice to see the corydalis blooming so well, and its seedlings growing so large. The roses like the moisture, but not so much of it, I think. The monarda are past their prime but their seed heads are really attractive.

Tradescantia needs cutting back, so do the geraniums. Coneflowers are still blooming and visited regularly by the birds to get some of their luscious seeds. Sedums are almost ready to pop open but the birds already perch on their flower heads and peck away. And the oaks! The two young oaks never had acorns before, but this year they have produced scads and scads of nuts! All over the grass, all over the driveway, all over the sidewalks! It seems to me that something could be done with the acorns, but what?



A Challenge to Garden Design

We've all read about the 'proper' way to build a garden, i.e., buy plants in multiples, say, 3 or 5 or 7 of a particular cultivar. But that only works if that is the kind of garden you want. Planned gardens of this type narrow the plant palette that can be used and, some people believe, stifles the imagination and, in the long run, the fun of seeing seedlings grow. Some people believe in buying 1 or 2 of something that strikes their fancy, and in that way, building a garden of many different plants that delight their senses. As a result, their gardens are unpredictable, surprising in their diversity, and totally interesting. One gets a sense of adventure and experimentation. They enjoy how a garden changes from season to season and don't fret about timing blooming sequence or moving plants that pop up in the 'wrong' place. Gardening should be a source of recreation and satisfaction. There is no 'right way' or 'wrong way' to garden. Just do what feels right to you and your garden will do just fine. So relax, enjoy and have fun!

Statistics

Since we have our new website, it has been very active. The total to date visits were 134 and the total pages read were 409.

Bee Gardens

Is your garden bee-friendly? Are bees somewhat scarce in your garden? There is a nationwide decline in the honeybee population, an alarming trend as one-third of our entire food crop depends on the little critters. No honeybees, no fruits, no nuts, no vegetables, no seeds. What you can do to help the situation improve is to stop using pesticides and to plant flowers that bees love. You can create a bee garden that will attract and nourish them and other bee species. Plant native plants that have more nectar and pollen such as milkweed, penstemon, goldenrod, lavender, echinacea, buddleia, monarda, hardy gloxinia, and sunflowers, plus roses, honeysuckle, cucumbers, roses, tomatoes, strawberries, dill, beans, and rosemary.

- The Wall Street Journal, July 13, 2007

Handle your tools without mittens.

- Benjamin Franklin

Anise (*pimpinella anisum*)

A native of Egypt, anise was grown in herb gardens in Europe as early as the 14th century. It's aromatic penetrating sweetness makes it an important ingredient in alcoholic beverages such as Pernod. It also provides the distinctive taste in cough lozenges, cordials and tea blends, plus it's used in perfumes, cosmetics, toothpastes and insect repellents. Romans used to chew the seeds after rich meals, and its oil and seeds are still used in preparations to sweeten the breath and alleviate indigestion. The oil is a strong antiseptic and possesses other medicinal properties that help to soothe coughs and headaches. Finally, it is used in muscle relaxants. An all-around great culinary herb!

-The Art of Aromatherapy

History Lesson 105

Did you know that planting borage around strawberries is very beneficial to them? And that sage, mint, thyme and rosemary are good for cabbages? And that parsley not only is so decorative that if you plant it all over your garden, it will encourage bees? It is often used as an edging plant alternating with sweet alyssum around lobelia, and in particular parsley is valuable grown around roses where it will increase their scent as it repels greenfly. It's also good for tomatoes and asparagus.

- Gardener's Lore

Knot Gardens

It's a geometric garden design that originated during the Tudor period in England. The pattern—a square, diamond, or circle—is outlined with a low border of dense, slow-growing plants such as clipped boxwood, dwarf barberry, lavender or santolina. The shapes can be filled in with a variety of plants such as violets, marigolds, sage, rue, pinks, thymes or daisies. This kind of garden is suited to a flat, open space and is both formal and intimate at the same time.

A bad workman quarrels with his tools.

Prov-

English
erb



As you plan your garden, consider the element of time. The flowers that bloom in May will not be blooming in August. - B.



‘Heirlooms’, anyone?

Have you an ‘heirloom’ growing in your garden? I’m talking about a plant, cutting or seeds from a grandparent or other relative (not friends, as we all have lots of those plants) that evokes loving memories of family or home. I have—peonies that my father gave me from his garden about 50 years ago, and that I brought with me from our first house in Skokie to our Glenview home. Divisions are now gracing the gardens of our daughters in DeKalb and in Spring Grove. The connection continues on... Send your stories via email to me.

Gardens are our link with the divine.

- William Howard Adams

Leaf Blowers

Not only do leaf blowers make a dangerous level of noise to the operator (and anyone nearby), but they spew harmful particulates (such as dog, cat, and bird feces, bacteria and oil residues) into the air, according to the American Lung Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. These are especially threatening to children and the elderly. As if that were not enough, a gas-powered blower’s exhaust is equal to a single unfiltered car gas pipe running for eight hours.

One plant in a tin can may be a more helpful and inspiring garden to some mind than a whole acre of lawn and flowers may be to another...

- Liberty Hyde Bailey

In September, remember to:

- peonies can be divided now, also any other perennials you haven’t done in the spring;
- order or buy spring bulbs and plant them;
- before nighttime temperatures drop below 50’, clean and bring houseplants indoors;
- plant trees, shrubs and evergreens through mid-September;
- do not trim shrubs or roses now otherwise the new growth will not have enough time to harden off before frost;
- take cuttings of coleus, geraniums, and other annuals for planting in the spring;
- reseed lawns and water newly seeded areas to keep moist;
- harvest herbs and dry some for winter use;
- core aerate the lawn for best results in fall
- apply slow-release fertilizer to the lawn.

Chicagoland Gardening, Sept./Oct. 2007

The more furrows, the more corn.

- English Proverb

Fungal Gnats on Houseplants

Plagued by those tiny gnats in your kitchen? Here is a simple but highly effective remedy that was developed at Longwood Gardens.

Cover the pots of your houseplants with 1/4” to 1/2” of sand. The larvae are unable to crawl up through the sand to emerge as winged adults. When the existing generation of adults died, new ones could not continue on.

What’s Blooming Table

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

Questions, comments, payment of dues?

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