

Gardeners of the Crooked Billet Newsletter

Member of District XI of the GCFP of NGC

April 2012

Barb Rosenzweig, Editor

April Maintenance:

- Be sure that all dead foliage from last fall is cleared away.
- As young perennials continue their spring "rebirth," take advantage of their wonderful ability to be divided. For added punch, masses of a single color can be created and/or brought to new areas of your garden. This way, too, bare spots can be filled, preventing weed growth. Don't forget to share your bounty with gardening buddies!
- Some of the plants that may be divided now are primrose, bleeding hearts, asters, primrose, iris, daylilies, and chrysogonum. This is best done before they get too large, avoiding excessive wilting or death.
- To make plants bushier, cut back beautyberry, roses, St. John's Wort, buddleia, and caryopteris in late March, early April.
- Remove "weeds" (any plants that you do not want growing where they appear) as soon as you see them. One man's weeds are another's valued garden addition.
- Remember to start potting up "stray" and extra plants for our plant sale on May 6.
- **Worth repeating:** The Royal National Rose Society gardens in England conducted a rose trial that seems to prove that rose deadheading radically effects its rebloom. "If it is clipped off at the neck, rather than to the first leaf bearing five leaflets, as rose wisdom once dictated, the bush re-blooms sooner, with 50% more flowers over the season."



Photos by Barbara Rosenzweig

Mark Your Calendars: Visitors are welcome to the following events. Except where noted, club meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Social Hall of the Church of the Advent, 12 Byberry Road, Hatboro, PA (Use the Rorer Avenue entrance, parking behind Hatboro Federal Savings Bank.)

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| Apr. 12 | MEMBERS SHARE: "What I've Learned From My Garden"
HOSTESSES: Lori Rice and Florence Steinbach |
| April 22-24 | Convention GCF of PA at Penn's Landing, Philadelphia. Hyatt Regency Hotel |
| May 10 | PLANT EXCHANGE: For every three plants you bring, you take one home.
6:30 p.m. Hatboro Library
7:00 p.m. "4 Season Plants, 4 Seasons of Interest", Peggy Rastiello
HOSTESSES: Julie Bird and Carol Brunner |
| May 12 | HATBORO LIBRARY BOOK & PLANT SALE: 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Perennials and Herbs |
| June 14 | COVERED DISH MEETING, 6:00 p.m. Graeme Park Barn. Bring a covered dish, place setting, and an arrangement of your own flowers. |
| June 23 | GCB ANNUAL GARDEN TOUR 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. |



Photos by Barbara Rosenzweig

Williamsburg, VA December Door Decorating Contest

Carol Brunner: The designers may not use any artificial plant materials. There are two sets of awards given for the professional and amateur designers. Here are a few outstanding doors for you to enjoy!

Photos by Carol Brunner





Winter Wonderland by Photographer Greg Tucker



Yosemite Falls, Wyoming



Moraine Lake, Banff, BC Canada





Bison in Yellowstone National Park

Some Unusual Plant Behavior for January and February 2012

Irene Borgogno: My winter-blooming jasmine came into bloom at the end of November and has been blooming ever since. I have 3 plantings, each supported and turned into a sort-of weeping small tree, and each has been a cascade of blossoms. Many visitors do a double-take and ask how I got the "forsythia" to bloom that way and so early. Next, my pussy willows started to show their furry catkin-color at the end of December - much too early. Fortunately, they just peeped out and stopped, so I think they will be okay. Also, and most worrisome, is that the magnolia blossoms have swelled. They have not broken the protective casings, so they are still safe, but a few days like yesterday (into the 60s) and they may pop open, which would be a disaster for this year's flowering. Finally, the variegated vincas have been blooming, very sparsely. This is very unusual for this time of year and not obvious. You have to hunt for the flowers. Photos below by Irene Borgogno



Winter Flowering Jasmine



Variegated Vinca

Judi Swanson: Here are some pix (below) I took in my yard on February 5. The hellebore bloom is a very welcome sight. I bought it about 7 years ago and it took 3 yrs to mature enough to blossom. Now, in its very forbidding site (dry, shady, competition with tree roots, generally neglected) it has bloomed yearly, early in February. It is a beautiful pale

yellow. I read that Hellebores are thought to have been present at the time of the dinosaurs, certainly they have been a cultivated plant since prior to Ancient Greece. I read also that they have some toxic qualities that have been put to use over the centuries. Well, I just enjoy the thought that my garden might host a plant that has a prehistoric connection.

As you see in the other photos, the mini Daffodils are jumping up, the Hyacinths are crowning, and the Butterfly Bush, as usual, doesn't seem to care what time of year it is.

Photos below by Judi Swanson



Nancy Esposito: Daffodil leaves emerging in mid January!



Barbara Rosenzweig: When I went home to Southampton, PA, for a quick visit mid-February, I was shocked to see so much growing! Daffodils, crocus, and Hellebores in full bloom, my camellia bud about to open, and a beautifully glossy nandina! A feast for the eyes so early in winter!





Editor's Note: Since I was away this winter, I missed the **BIG SHOW** of spring flowers in mid-March. I hope that you all enjoyed this great display, took some photos, and will send me some of your best shots to be included in the May newsletter!

When I said, "Scat," to chase the deer from my garden, this is NOT what I had in mind!!
(*"Discovered"* by Barb Rosenzweig)



Craft Day, Saturday, February 11

Judi Swanson: During our first meeting of 2012, we gathered and shared simple craft ideas and projects.

This year Gerry had rock painting for the garden, Lois shared ideas about decorating clay pots, and I provided instruction and materials on how to make small paper baskets which can be easily adapted as spring or Valentine decorations/greetings. I also had some supplies which we used to make-your-own Valentines cards!

Pat W., Judi S., Janet F., Margie P., Gerry F., Cynthia F., Mae S., Kathy W., Donna G., Doris S., and Lois K. attended. We shared fun and fellowship!

Photos by Judi Swanson



Monarch Butterfly Way Station: Kathy Leaycraft reported that the garden was approved by Hatboro Council and that she has met with Fred Zoellers, who approved the location laid out in Millers Meadow. Kathy's husband is building the wood frame; free mulch will be obtained from Terwood Road (will be delivered) and she will be contacting the Boy Scouts to help with preparing the soil. Two members ordered milkweed seeds, some will be donated from a local Monarch enthusiast, and Kathy has obtained several varieties which are sprouting. Reimbursements for wood, top soil and more seeds if necessary were approved. Expense to date: \$104.39 for the wood.

Plant Database

Nancy Putt: Here's a site that you might find of interest, if you want to find out more about your plants or plants that you might consider for your garden. Dave's Garden has the world's biggest plant database (189, 000 plants) with photos, ratings, and descriptions contributed by 50,000 gardeners. <http://davesgarden.com/guides/pdf>

Sign Garden Project, Saturday, March 10

Our wonderful volunteers for the Sign Garden Project are Judi S., Margie P., Janet F., Nancy H., Gerry F., Mae S., Kathie W., Donna G., Rosie B., Margie S, Carol B., and Natalie F.

Carol Brunner: The Sign Garden was pampered by a great group of 12 Gardeners today! The rose bushes, yew bushes, butterfly bush, and the sedum were trimmed, some weeding was done, and Natalie walked us back to see the future site of the Monarch Butterfly Way Station. Thanks so much to all who braved the cold!!!

Margie Syzmanski: This was our first garden clean-up day of the season, and boy was it cold! But we hung in there, kept busy, and got the job done! We all must have had cabin fever, because there were a lot of us. We got the job done in a little over an hour. I want to say "Thank you," to Natalie Forbes for coming and helping us, and also for showing us where our Butterfly Garden is going to be. We are all looking forward to helping out with that!

Judi Swanson: Janet Ford has planted red poppies and larkspur at the Sign Garden and also has ideas for plantings a little later on in the season, including sunflowers. Please don't do anymore weeding, mulching or walking around in the bed, so that these seeds can get a good start.

Thanks to Janet and Mae for additional weeding and planting, to make the sign garden a pretty and welcoming site.





Photos are courtesy of Margie Szymanski and Donna Greenbarg.

French Fantasy!

Carol Brunner enjoyed a fabulous trip to Paris and is sharing her wonderful garden photos with us!



Jardin des Tuileries, near the Louvre



Garden at Palace of Versailles



Largest flower market in Paris, near Notre Dame Cathedral



Jardin des Tuileries, near the Louvre



Vertical garden on the front of Branly Museum



Montmartre terraced rose garden. You must use your imagination!

Happy Gardening!
Barb