



MIDDLETOWN
GARDEN CLUB
**CORNUS
CHRONICLE**

March 2025

REMINDER:

The March meeting will take place at 5 pm on Thursday, the 20th, at the deKoven House.

CALENDAR:

Thursday, March 20, 5 pm: Presentation on raised bed gardening, followed by our business meeting. Open to the Public!

Monday, March 3, 7 pm: Environmental Film Series, "The Eagle and the Condor", Goldsmith Family Cinema, Wesleyan. Free and open to the public.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Hopefully we will skip "the lion" and go directly to "the lamb", more daylight and SPRING!!

May you enjoy finally venturing out, learning about cukes in kiddie pools and celebrating peeks of green in the garden and your beer. I'll miss you this month

but hope your team wins!



Happy jigs!

XO -- Kim

PROGRAM:

The March late afternoon program will once again precede our business meeting. The topic is "Small Plastic Pool Container Production of Cucumbers"

Dr. Leigh Whittinghill Dr. Leigh Whittinghill is a horticulturalist with expertise in vegetable production and green roofs. Her research focuses on urban agriculture, novel production systems that could help increase production area and reduce costs, and the potential environmental impacts of urban agricultural practices.

Dr. Whittinghill's doctoral research at Michigan State University focused on the use of green roof systems for food production, examining both crop yields and the potential impact that crop

production could have on the known benefits of green roofs.

~ Lynne and Judy



MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 20TH MEETING:

The afternoon began at 1 pm with a presentation by Dr. Susanna Keriö of the CT Agricultural Experiment Station, discussing the science behind mycorrhizal fungi and their use as soil additives in the growth of urban trees.

She discussed in particular the ongoing research in eight CT cities, including Middletown, where she is comparing red maples, redbuds, and lindens grown with and without mycorrhizal additives.

Following a lengthy Q and A session, President Wuestefeld thanked Susanna and called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm. She also thanked Laney and Judy for their delicious array of treats and beverages, and the beautiful flower arrangement.

With no corrections or additions, the minutes of the November 2024 and February 2025 meetings were approved unanimously. On a motion by Kathie Green, with seconding by Jane Harris, the February Treasurer's report was also approved unanimously, with many thanks to Lynn for her hard work.

She again thanked Rhea for her wonderful presentation in January; Lynn said that the Durham librarian reported a strong favorable response to our meeting there, and we are invited to return, possibly with a joint program involving the Durham Garden Club.

Committee Reports:

Admissions: Kathy Meyering said that, in an effort to attract some younger members, the next two meetings will be held at 5 pm. Members are encouraged to bring one or more friends who might be interested in joining.

Archives: The scanning continues – Kathie reports she is up to the 1980s.

Civic Improvement/Founders Fund: Laney and Kim reminded members to read the descriptions of the Founders Fund finalists (in the Winter Bulletin and on page three of this month's Cornus) so that we can take our club's vote in March.

Communications: Debby read thank you notes from Mary Xenelis and from the Friends of Long Hill Estate, thanking the club for memorial contributions for Ted Xenelis and Maria Holzberg.

Conservation/NAL: Sally reminded members that they can attend several NAL events online this year March 23-26; a keynote address by Bill McKibben is one of the highlights. Tisha reminded us to follow two very important bills in the CT General Assembly: Raised Bill 6196 to ban Neonicotinoids (submitted by former Middletonian Linda Bowers) and Raised Bill 9615, to ban rodenticides

using blood thinners, which kill birds and cats as well as rodents.

Flower Arranging: Kate said that Fine Art & Flowers will be held at the Wadsworth Atheneum April 25 – 27.

Horticulture: Kathie reminded members who received seeds for the Gavel Challenge that sowing for the first batch will begin soon. More seeds can be ordered if anyone wants to join in.

Visiting Gardens: The club will visit the fabulous [orchid show at NYBG](#) on April 1. The exhibit is open from February 15 through April 27.

New Business: Arbor Day will be celebrated April 25 at 10 am at the Wadsworth Mansion. There will be no Earth Day event this year at Harbor Park, but individual businesses will hold events around town.

Kathie moved to adjourn at 3:05pm, seconded by Kate.

ATTENDANCE:

Present: S. Allison, L. Bank, J. Bell, K. Coley, S. Cornish, E. Dzialo, T. Ferguson, L. Garner, K. Green, J. Harris, L. Johnson, R. Kelley, O. McLaughlin, K. Meyering, S. Mylchreest, R. Rickenback, R. Schoonmaker, D. Shapiro, C. Wasch, K. Wuestefeld

Excused: E. Carella, N. D'Oench, M. Giamei, R. Higgins, M. Kalayjian, E. Ranganathan, M. Roberts, M. Xenelis

~ Jane Harris, Recording Secretary



ADMISSIONS:

Greetings from your membership chair!

We want to increase the visibility of our club, not only to attract other members but to also recognize all the good work we do. Please make an effort to invite someone to our March 20 meeting, when a scientist from the CT Agricultural Experiment Station will teach us about some creative options for container gardens. This meeting begins at 5:00 and is open to the public.

~ Kathy M.

FROM THE TREASURER:

The club has ordered a Square Terminal which will allow us to collect club dues at the May meeting. Dues are \$150.00 via check or cash and \$154.00 via credit card (\$150+4.00 fee).

~ Lynn



NATIONAL AFFAIRS & LEGISLATION:

The NAL conference in Washington is this month! I will be attending, and the Zone II reps have appointments with our Senators and Representatives to press our issues. The GCA environmental position papers can be found on this website:

<https://www.gcamerica.org/members/committees-conservation#Conservation-Priorities-for-Clubs>

All club members are invited to join virtually, via Zoom, on Education Day, Monday, March 24th. Members will hear about a host of legislative initiatives that reflect the GCA's mission, "to restore, improve and protect the quality of the environment". Look for the login on the GCA website.

~ Tisha Ferguson, co-chair,
NAL/Conservation

CHC ROOFTOP GARDEN

The Rooftop Gardeners are getting set to map out the plans for this Spring/Summer/Fall on the CHC rooftop. We'll be meeting for that purpose late in

this month and hope to have in place the plans for a very productive harvest for our friends at Amazing Grace Food Pantry. If interested in volunteering for the work on the rooftop, please reach out to me and we'll see if we can find a spot for you to join in on the rewards of helping our community and those who may not otherwise have means to local produce.

~ Stephan, Rooftop Garden chair

FOUNDERS FUND FINALISTS:

Marshlands Conservancy – Remediation of the Critical Meadow Habitat

Proposed by: Little Garden Club of Rye, Zone III

Seconded by: Rye Garden Club,
Zone III

Marshland Conservancy is designated as a critical habitat and bio-reserve for the preservation of species. It is a natural laboratory for ecology, botany, and conservation. To nurture more native, slower growing plants and repel invasives, the cataloging of these species is critical to the overall remediation. The planned trailside herbarium will require tools such as high resolution equipment and reference library storage files for vouchered reports to be published in the NY Floral Atlas to document re-established species as the meadow is remediated.

The Virginia War Memorial Green Space Project

Proposed by: The Tuckahoe Garden
Club of Westhampton, Zone VII

Seconded by: The James River
Garden Club, Zone VII

The Virginia War Memorial is located on five acres of property adjacent to downtown Richmond. The Memorial welcomes 100,000 visitors each year paying tribute to the nearly 12,000 Virginia veterans from WWII to present day who have died during their service in the military. The grounds have been barren of shade trees, native plantings and pollinators. The landscape plan developed for the Public Green Space Project includes more than 1,000 trees and shrubs.

Forsyth Park Educational Shade Garden

Proposed by: Trustees' Garden
Club, Zone VIII

Seconded by: Peachtree Garden
Club, Zone VIII

Savannah's historic Forsyth Park presents an exceptional opportunity to showcase a private/public partnership in urban planning focused on shade for a densely populated community. A Founders Fund grant will help establish an educational shade garden within the park to provide cooler temperatures, human health care and environmental benefits, and an extension of those benefits to millions of users - especially residents most affected by heat, stormwater and lack of green space.

Celebrating Juana Maria Flagg

The Connecticut Horticulture Society has honored Juanie Flagg with a certificate that reads:

"In recognition of your outstanding dedication, commitment and passion for the art and science of horticulture. As a valued member since 1977, your unprecedented long term commitment and involvement have enriched our community and inspired all who share in the beauty and joy of nature.

On the eve of your 102nd birthday, we celebrate your remarkable contributions and the enduring legacy you have helped cultivate within the Connecticut Horticultural Society. We honor you today with deepest gratitude and appreciation. February 4, 2025"

Our club's good friend and neighbor, Bonnie Penders, nominated Juanie for this award to usher in Juanie's 102nd birthday in May of 2025. In the photos below, Juanie's plaque and Bonnie and Nancy D'Oench presenting Juanie with her plaque:





Nancy, Juanie, and Bonnie