



Takoma Horticultural Club

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August 2013

Upcoming August Event: "Herbs to Enrich Our Food, Health, and Environment" – a Talk by Master Gardener, Pat Kenny

While working as a medical illustrator for over 30 years for a "modern medicine research factory" in Bethesda MD, Pat Kenny simultaneously followed her heart and mind in the path of nature and studies about herbal plants. She began to join with like-minded others, through county community programs, The Herb Society of America, the Prince George's Herb Society, the Michigan Herb Associates, and the North Carolina Herb Association.

Pat's talk will take place on Wednesday, August 21, 2013 from 7:30 to 9:00 pm at Historic Takoma at 7328 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park.

July Talk: Mike Welsh, Takoma Park's City Gardener

Mike Welsh spoke to the club on July 17, at the headquarters of Historic Takoma on Carroll Avenue. He has been the City Gardener for Takoma Park in the Public Works Division, for about seventeen years where his job is to "design, implement, preserve and maintain" the parks and garden sites of the city. Mike works with another city employee and two contractors and makes good use of volunteers from various groups and businesses.

Mike shared a list and map of 61 park and garden sites in the city, with designations of their functions such as "display", "historic", "recreational park." They range from large historic sites like the Thomas-Siegler House

(the city's first house and garden), to street-side beds and planters, with bike trails, neighborhood oases and everything in between. Mike said that a current emphasis for his unit is creating bio-retention and filtration sites—for example at the Community Center—in which beds and plantings are designed to capture, filter and redirect storm water, slowing and cleaning it before it reaches streets, woods and waterways. A number of such projects are in the works.



Photo by Carole Galati

Officers

Coordinators: Carole Galati
Diane Svenonius
Secretary: Becky Lavash
Treasurer: Taffy Turner

Committee Chairs and Contacts

Membership: Carole Galati
Listserv: Anne Hardman
Newsletter: Becky Lavash
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Plants for the parks are chosen for needed qualities - charm, historic relevance, tolerance of wet or dry conditions, and so on - but always with an eye to the maintenance they will require. He works with the City Arborist, Todd Bolton, for example in parks such as Upper Portal where the tree canopy is poor and replacements must be chosen.

The older parks in the city are managed and restored as time and funds permit. Mike would like to appropriately restore the azalea gardens in parks like Belle Ziegler, Upper Portal, and Hodges Field. Some of these date from the thirties when B.Y. Morrison developed the Glenn Dale hybrids at the National Arboretum and shared them with his neighbors. Others may date from the heyday of the Azalea Committee, formed in 1962 to make the city “Azalea City of the Nation.” But he noted that to recreate a “monoculture” of just one kind of plant needs to give way to the latest planting strategy: one of diversification of plant materials.

The Takoma Horticultural Club recently donated a number of Glenn Dale azaleas and other plants to the city, which will be planted in the spring. The club leadership invited Mike to submit another “wish list”, so the club can continue its support of Mike and his endeavors as City Gardener. This invitation made Mike smile!

July 12 Open Native Garden with Barbara Schubert

On July 12, Barbara Schubert hosted the club’s fourth Open Garden this season. Her woodland garden is a tantalizing “work in progress”, with plantings that surround the house and slope down to a stream bed at the back of the property.

Soon after Barbara moved into this “green cathedral” setting, she added a wraparound deck and started terracing the sprawling

property, allowing wide views of the woods in all directions from the house. In the ten years since she and her husband, Steve Rosen, bought the house, they have cleared away truckloads of trash, removed most of the invasive plants, built curving paths and steps in the back, and created a series of ever-expanding gardens. We stood on the steps on the back hill as Barbara described her plantings so far and visions of what is to come. The battle of the invasives continues!



Barbara Schubert in her garden

Photo by Kathy Jentz

Barbara’s plantings are predominantly native to Maryland, reflecting her enthusiasm for the Doug Tallamy way of gardening. As many of us do, she makes exceptions for favorite non-natives like begonias. She is experimenting with a variety of shade groundcovers, including mazus, ferns and chrysogonum, and a

neatly edged “lawn” of dwarf mondo grass. Here, on the edge of the woods, deer are a fact of life and the interesting spiky hosta stems (that look like celery) reflect their visits.

Some of us followed a dirt trail that took us into the woods and eventually to the Forest Glen army annex not far away. But wherever you stand: on the deck, inside the house looking out, on the rattan swings, or on one of the paths or trails, the views are delicious. Barbara arranged for a native plant sale by Chesapeake Natives at her garden during the visit.

Many thanks to Barbara and Steve for inviting us to their magical woodland retreat and for their kind hospitality.

Membership and Dues

As we zoom through summer – on our way to our next meeting on August 21, featuring Pat Kenny’s herb talk, we want to welcome some new and returning members to the club: Melissa Smith, Gresham Lowe, Jeanne Ha, Julie McGinn, Jay Stricks and Liana Sayer. Hope to see you at a THC event soon. All you wonderful members who have paid your 2013 dues, will be able to put our September 15 Summer Potluck on your calendars. We also have a great bulb talk on September 18, which is open to the public. ~Carole Galati

Takoma Park Street Festival-Come Purchase Fall Blooming Bulbs from Takkoma Hort

Every year Takoma Hort offers top quality fall-blooming bulbs for sale at the Takoma Park Street Festival. This year the festival is

Sunday October 6. Look for our booth at the fair and buy your bulbs for fall planting, and pay your dues too.

September 15 is the Fall Takoma Hort Potluck

If you are a club member, in good standing (your THC 2013 dues are paid), you will want to save Sunday, September 15 for our delicious, fun-filled social event in Jeff Trunzo & Herman Goodyear’s heavenly, multi-leveled, garden!! Join us for delicious food, excellent gardens, garden gossip and another Garden Exchange for those who dared to clean out their sheds and garages this summer!

This 4 to 7:00 potluck is one of our most popular club event, along with our Plant Exchanges and our Winter Potluck, of course. Check our website for details as we get closer to September 15th. ~ Carole Galati

Save the Date

Saturday, August 24, Tomato Tasting.at the Silver Spring FreshFarm Market, 10:00am to 12:00 pm, Sponsored by Washington Gardener Magazine

Saturday, August 24, 6th Annual Washington Gardener Magazine Tomato Tasting, 10:00am-12:00noon, FreshFarm Market in downtown Silver Spring, MD. Sample the multitude of tomatoes at market and vote on your favorites. Stop by for tomato recipes, growing tips, and much more. The event is FREE and open to the public. Be sure to wear a bib! Details at <http://washingtongardener.blogspot.com/>.