

TAKOMA HORTICULTURAL CLUB
Newsletter for January 2009

www.takomahort.org

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2009 and WELCOME to the Takoma Horticultural Club (THC) monthly newsletter, which we hope is a useful resource for you about Club news, events and garden-related items of interest.

2009 THC Leadership Board

President - Kit Gage

Vice-President: Karen Helfert

Secretary: Melanie Isis

Treasurer: Taffy Turner

Program Committee/Membership: Carole Galati

Meeting Refreshments Coordinator: Anne Hardman

Newsletter Editor: Madeline Caliendo

Please join us in welcoming our new Leadership Board for 2009 and thanking the Leadership Board for 2008. THC is an all-volunteer organization. There would be no THC without the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. Thanks to all who helped in 2008 in big ways and small. We all very much appreciate it!

Upcoming THC Events

THC Potluck Dinner and Indoor Plant Exchange—Wednesday, January 21st at 7pm

Please join your fellow Takoma Horticulture Club members for a Potluck and Indoor Plant Exchange on Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at Heffner Park at 7pm. If you joined us last year, you remember what a great time we had and what wonderful cooks we all are! Please start thinking now about what you'd like to bring, food-wise as well as a plant or any other garden related item to exchange (food is necessary – plants, etc. are not).

Taffy Turner will coordinate the food so we don't end up with 12 plates of brownies and no main dishes. Please contact Taffy at the below email address or phone number to let her know what you plan to bring food-wise (main dish, side dish, or dessert). THC will provide beverages.

Heffner has a kitchen with a sink, a microwave and a cook top but no oven, so if you need to heat up your dish, think about the pan being able to fit in the microwave or to be heated up on a burner.

For our after-dinner entertainment, we'll have the Indoor Plant Exchange. If you don't have an indoor plant you can part with, you can bring a garden book, garden magazines, a tool – or nothing at all is fine too. Be prepared to give the group a little description of your treasure. If you bring something, you'll go home with something! Remember to protect your plants from the cold while transporting them.

We hope all THC members join us for this MEMBERS ONLY event. You can renew your 2009 membership or join anew at the Potluck. Taffy Turner's Contact information: Home phone: 301-681-9133; Email: taffy.turner@earthlink.net

Field Trip to the National Agricultural Library in Beltsville on Saturday, January 24th at 10:00 am to Noon.

Please join us for a tour of the National Agricultural Library (NAL) in Beltsville, MD (aka the tall building across from IKEA). The event will be on Saturday, January 24, 2009 from 10AM-12NOON. It will include a tour of the facility and then there will be time for attendees to explore the collections.

Afterwards, those interested can band together and go out for lunch at a nearby restaurant.

The NAL is normally only open during regular business hours, and are opening special for our and other local garden groups who banded together to cover the costs necessary to pay the NAL security desk overtime. Thanks to the Silver Spring Garden Club for inviting THC to participate in this event.

Please mark your calendars for this special event. ID is required to enter the NAL, so make sure to have ID with you. An RSVP is required to attend. To RSVP please contact Kathy Jentz at (301) 588-6894 or Laserblast@aol.com with your full name by January 15th. We will provide NAL a list of attendees to help speed up entry that day. By the NAL security with our attendee list in advance to speed up entry that day.

Announcements

SAVE THOSE SEEDS!

Mark your calendar and save your seeds for the 4th Annual Washington Gardener Seed Exchange, hosted our own Kathy Jentz, who publishes the *Washington Gardener Magazine*. The exchange takes place the afternoon of Saturday, January 31st, 2009, at Brookside Gardens and all are welcome — even if you have no seeds to trade!

Registration is required and details can be found at www.WashingtonGardener.com or contact Kathy Jentz at Washington Gardener, 826 Philadelphia Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or call (301) 588-6894.

ATTENTION SHUTTERBUGS!

The *Washington Gardener Magazine* announces its third annual Garden Photo Contest. This contest offers an opportunity for all photographers to present their best shots of gardens in the greater Washington, DC area. Some THC members have been past winners, so don't be shy...enter! Entries must be submitted between January 1 through 21, 2009. All entry photos must have been taken in the 2008 calendar year. Start sorting through

your photos and picking out those winners! Submissions will be judged on technical quality, composition, originality, and artistic merit. More than \$500 in prizes will be awarded! For full details, go to the "Contests" page on www.washingtongardener.com; send an email to wgardenermag@aol.com to have a PDF version emailed to you; or call (301) 588-6894.

THC NEEDS YOU!

We Need a volunteer in 2009 to help convert past issues of the THC Newsletter that are in hard copy or on disc to a PDF format so we can upload them into the archives of our THC website for all to access. Can you help? If so, send an email to Madeline at vivaitaliana@gmail.com to discuss. Thanks!

Membership Update

It's Time to Renew Your Annual THC Membership for 2009!

THC membership runs from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Your 2009 THC Club dues in the amount of \$12 are due in full by January 31st. Renewing THC membership is easy. You can:

- Bring a check for \$12 to our Potluck/Indoor plant exchange on January 21st; or,
- Mail a \$12 check, made out to THC, to: Carole Galati; 106 Melbourne Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20901.

To join the THC as a new member, please go to our website at <http://www.takomahort.org/membership/index.html> to download the membership form. Please complete the form and mail it with your \$12 check made out to "THC" to Carole Galati at the above address. Or, if you are tired of writing that annual THC dues check become a Lifetime THC Member for only \$125.00. You will never have to fuss with dues again! Do you have questions about membership or want to check on your membership status? Contact Carole Galati at cagalati@rcn.com.

IN THE GARDEN: "Garden Resolutions for 2009" By Madeline Caliendo

At the start of the New Year many of us make New Year's resolutions. Since it is cold outside in January we may not look to our gardens for the inspiration for those resolutions. However, I think we should. After all, aren't many New Year's resolutions about eating more healthily and exercising more? Our gardens can easily help with that. Personally, I work up quite a sweat when I am out in the garden and I know a strategic garden workout can benefit me both aerobically and with strength training. As to eating more healthily, growing your own produce is as good as it gets. The fresh taste of fresh picked produce is incomparable. So is the satisfaction of knowing I grew it myself.

New Year's resolutions, however, don't have to be about us individually. We can resolve to do something to benefit our families, our community, and our world. While there are many ways our garden might help us do that, I suggest the most important garden resolution we can make in 2009 is to garden in a more environmentally sustainable way as this can help us make important inroads in combating global warming and its devastating effects on our world.

Here are some strategies or resolutions in this regard from the U.S. Wildlife Federation's April 2007 *"The Gardener's Guide to Global Warming: Challenges and Solutions."*

1. Resolve to explore ways to improve energy efficiency in your garden:

- Replace regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs;
- Install outdoor automatic light timers;
- Purchase solar-powered garden products.

2. Resolve to reduce the use of gasoline powered yard tools:

- Use human powered or electric powered tools;
- Consider reducing the amount of lawn area.

3. Resolve to reduce the threat of invasive species by planting native plants:

- Instead of planting English ivy (*Hedera helix*), consider planting plantain-leaved sedge (*Carex plantaginea*), marginal wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*), white woodland aster (*Eurybia divaricata*), Meehan's mint (*Meehania cordata*) or creeping phlox (*Phlox stolonifera*).
- Instead of planting purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), consider planting Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), gayfeather (*Liatris spicata*), or shaggy blazing star (*Liatris pilosa*).
- Instead of planting oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), consider planting American bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*), or Virginia rose (*Rosa virginiana*).
- Instead of planting porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*) consider planting Gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quiquefolia*), or swamp haw viburnum (*Viburnum nudum*).
- Instead of planting Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) consider planting American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*), leatherflower (*Clematis vitalba*), Carolina jasmine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*),

sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), purple passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*).

4. Resolve to reduce water consumption:

- Place mulch in your garden beds;
- Install rain barrels;
- Only water in the early morning or late afternoon;
- Use drip irrigation;
- Practice xeriscaping, an approach to landscaping that minimizes outdoor water use while maintaining soil integrity through the use of native and drought tolerant plants.

5. Resolve to develop a rain garden:

- To learn how to design a rain garden in your yard visit <http://www.raingarden-network.com>.
- Enhance your landscapes ability to absorb storm water by using pebbles and individual pavers instead of concrete for your driveway or patio.

6. Resolve to compost kitchen and garden waste:

- Use both "greens" (grass clippings, fruit and vegetable scraps) to add nitrogen and "browns" (dead leaves and black and white newspaper) to add carbon. _
- Add a handful of garden soil to inoculate your pile with microorganisms that breakdown material and create compost.
- Do not let the pile dry out. Keep it evenly moist but not wet). _
- Turn the pile with a pitchfork to aerate it, turning also speeds up the composting process.
- Compost is ready to be used when it is black and crumbly.

I hope you'll join me in resolving to garden in more environmentally sustainable ways in 2009. Together we can make a difference in making our world a safe and healthy place. Here's to wishing you a happy, safe and healthy 2009 both in the garden and beyond.

**Any budding garden writers among us? Would you like to do a little research or share your expertise/experience by writing a short article (500 words or so) for the newsletter? If so, send Madeline Caliendo, the Newsletter Editor, an email at vivaitaliana@gmail.com

Selected Upcoming Garden-Related Events in the Community

Windows to Wonderland Exhibit

Through January 4, 2009, 10:00am–5:00pm

U.S Botanic Garden, National Mall, Washington, DC This year the U.S. Botanic Garden's annual winter exhibit, Windows to Wonderland, celebrates the world of human imagination. Fee: \$0/Free. Registration is not required.

For more information: www.usbg.org or call 202.225.8333.

The Garden of Lights at Brookside Gardens

November 28th thru January 4th, 2009 (Open every night except Dec 24 and 25), "The Garden of Lights" Holiday Display," Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, MD. Hours 5:30pm to 9:00pm, last car admitted 8:30pm. For more information: (301) 962-1400.

Maryland Horticultural Society's Winter Workshop

Saturday Feb 28th from 9 to 3:30 and will be conducted by internationally acclaimed garden designer, Gordon Hayward. The cost for the day including lunch and refreshments at The Sheppard Pratt Conference Center in Baltimore, MD is \$129.

Registration is open to the public. Register early (in January) as registration closes when full. Hayward's latest book, Art and the Gardener is wonderful. Those interested in registering may visit www.mdhorticulture.org or call 410-821-5561.

Landscape Design for Homeowner's

Saturday, January 10, 17 and 24 from 9:30 am to 2:00 pm. Bring lunch. Cost \$160, includes lectures and workshop. Landscape Design for Homeowner's. This series helps the home gardener design a garden, develop its framework, produce a plan while using analysis style notebooks and drawing skills. It includes individual attention, lectures and workshop. Green Spring Gardens in Virginia. For more information:

www.greenspring.org or call 703.642.5173.

The How To's of Herb Gardening

Friday January 16 from 1:30 to 2:30pm. Herbs add fragrance and flavor to our lives, and practical beauty to the landscape. This basic herb overview teaches how to choose, plan, and prepare a site and care for it. \$12. Green Spring Gardens in Virginia. For more information: www.greenspring.org or call 703.642.5173.

Hardscaping in the Garden

Saturday January 17 from 9:30am to 11:00am A garden isn't just plants but also walkways, walls and other elements that create a pleasant space for entertaining and enjoyment. \$15. Green Spring Gardens in Virginia. For more information:

www.greenspring.org or call 703.642.5173.

Soil Preparation and Plant Selection

Saturday January 24 from 9:30am to 11:00am Soil preparation is critical to the overall design of a garden. Plant selection and installation will also be discussed in this

workshop. \$15. Green Spring Gardens in Virginia. For more information:
www.greenspring.org or call 703.642.5173.

Basic Pruning

Friday January 30 from 1:30pm to 2:30pm Overgrown shrubs are unsightly and can be a hazard both blocking views and providing hiding space for unwanted visitors. Flowering shrubs need to be pruned regularly. Learn when, where and how to prune to create healthy, shapely shrubs. \$15. Green Spring Gardens in Virginia. For more information:
www.greenspring.org or call 703.642.5173.

Winter Botany

Saturday January 31 from 12:30pm to 3:30pm. The winter forest may appear bleak, but careful observation is rewarded with many discoveries. Join Stanwyn Shetler, curator of Botany at the Smithsonian Museum of natural History for an exploration of Great Falls Park, VA. There will be discussions of winter ecology of plant communities, ID of evergreen trees and shrubs, and wildlife use of plants in winter. Inclement weather date is February 7th Registration required. Audubon Naturalist Society Info:
<http://www.audubonnaturalist.org>

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