



## TAKOMA HORTICULTURAL CLUB NEWS

November, 2009 Edition

[www.takomahort.org](http://www.takomahort.org)

### **Bulb Sale Raises Money for Takoma Horticultural Club and Blooms for the City**

The 2009 THC bulb sale at the Takoma Street Festival was a grand success. Many thanks to our salespeople extraordinaire: Anne Hardman, Carole Galati, Wendy Bell, Pat Hanrahan, Maurice, Jeff Trunzo, Martha Feldman, Melanie Isis, Kathy Jentz, Iris Rothman, Diane Svenonius, Mary Lane Renninger, Patricia Peter, Nancy Newton and Paul Crumrine. And extra special thanks to Wendy for the use of her garage.

There were 81 bags of mostly tulips left over. About 40 bags were sold at the Plant Swap and 18 bags were sold in the week following. The remainder (\$150.00 our cost) was donated to the Old Takoma Business Association. They were planted in planters and tree boxes in Old Takoma during the Cleanup Day on October 24.

After paying the tax, etc. our net profit was about \$950. This is a fun event for the club. Even if we don't sell all the bulbs at the Street Festival, it's good to be able to donate the rest to organizations that will use them to beautify Takoma Park.

\_\_\_Taffy Turner

**Comments and Contributions** to the Newsletter are welcome at any time. Send to the editor at [dbsvonius@msn.com](mailto:dbsvonius@msn.com) or call 301 585-1566.

### **Next Club Event: Garden Roundtable**

**Wednesday, November 18,  
7:30 to 9:00 pm**



This meeting will have two parts. First, a Master Gardener panel will answer your gardening questions, so come prepared! You are welcome to bring pictures and/or specimens for identification. If we can't answer your questions, we'll do some research and get back to you. The panel will include Fran McClure, a Master Gardener and Landscape Designer, who spoke to our club earlier this year about planting in dry shade areas.

After the panel there will be an Open Forum. During this time participants will be invited to share gardening tips and local garden-related resources that have been helpful.

Please RSVP to [cagalati@rcn.com](mailto:cagalati@rcn.com) Our meeting space is quite limited and we need to plan our time carefully. We will meet in the Hydrangea Room of the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. We recommend parking in the back parking lot, behind the Community Center, which is accessible from East West Highway (410), near Maple Ave. Go in the last door, near the far end of the building. We encourage you to wear your recycled name tag. Refreshment contributions are welcome. This event is free and open to the public.

\_\_\_Carole Galati

## Membership News and Dues

Please welcome the following people as new members of the Takoma Horticultural Club:

*Susan Page, Carole Falvo, LaTonya Abram, Valerie Tonat, Melanie Fosnught, Kristin Staroba, Felicia Widmann, Nancy Withbroe, Sandhya Mehta, Marcelle Fozard, Joseph, Klockner, Carolyne Pion, and Ron Terchek.*

Most of these people joined during the Street Festival at our Bulb Booth. Welcome to you all. Please enjoy all the benefits of our wonderful club and think about volunteering to help us with our many activities.

### Pay Your Dues!

We will be updating our membership list within the next week. This means those who did not pay their 2009 dues will be removed from the membership list. This includes 65 people who last paid dues in 2008.

If you are not sure if you paid your 2009 dues, please get in touch with me. Our dues cover the calendar year and are due each January 1. In order to attend the January Pot Luck and house plant exchange, you must pay your 2010 dues ~ still only \$12. Check our website for details:

[www.takomahort.org](http://www.takomahort.org)

*Carole Galati* [cagalati@rcn.com](mailto:cagalati@rcn.com)

## THC Fall Plant Exchange

Cool breeze, gray skies, a few sprinkles, then clearing = a perfect Plant Exchange, complete with refreshments, bulbs for sale and lots of great plants. Oh, yes, and all those smiling faces! It was such good fun ~ at least 27 of us thought so. We had everything from ground covers to trees and pond plants to perennials. Thanks to all the wonderful helpers, setting up and cleaning up were painless. Because our club has a Fall and a Spring Plant Exchange, we have lots of opportunities to trade and experiment with new plants.

\_\_\_*Carole Galati*

## BZZZZZ Can you Help the Bees?

*By Madeline Caliendo*

My garden was abuzz with bees this past summer. Not being an apiarist, or even remotely science-focused, I couldn't tell you what kind of bees they were. However, whatever kind they were they seemed to thoroughly enjoy the nectar of the many blooming flowers that call my Takoma, DC garden home. It was therefore with much surprise that I came to learn about Colony Collapse Disorder--otherwise known as "CCD"--a mysterious phenomenon that is killing off 1 in 3 honeybees in the United States. I learned about it from a very well-made documentary film called, "*American Colonies: Collapse of the Bee*", a 78 minute film that tells the story about the decimation of the world's honey bee population and its effect on humans. According to Steve Antel, a Florida bee-keeper featured in the film, CCD is a serious phenomenon that impacts the entire world. He predicts about 6 billion people world-wide will likely die if the foods that rely on bees for pollination were no longer to exist.

Contrary to what some may think, the honey bee is responsible for making a lot more than just honey. In fact, some call honey bees the “unsung heroes” of food production. According to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), about one third of the human diet comes from insect pollinated plants and the honeybee is responsible for 80% of that pollination. What are some of the crops that honey bees are responsible for pollinating? They include apples, nuts, avocados, soybeans, asparagus, broccoli, celery, squash and cucumbers, peaches, kiwi, cherries, blueberries, cranberries, strawberries, cantaloupe and other melons. Even cattle, which feed on alfalfa, depend on bees. Kevin Hackett, of USDA's bee and pollination program calls the current dilemma the biggest general threat to our food supply. Not all scientists agree, but most see CCD as very troubling.

No one really knows what is causing CCD though many theories are swirling about. Some of the top ones are Varroa Mites (parasitic relatives of ticks that feed exclusively on honey bees); viruses; chemical exposure (pollen in affected hives indicates levels of 45 different insecticides, fungicides and herbicides); lack of good bee

nutrition (limited supply of good pollen and nectar); or a combination of these. As scientists and others work to solve the problem of CCD, there are things we can do: Make a conscious effort to learn about the issue and share that information with others. Information is power! Support your local bee keepers. At a minimum buy their honey. Better yet, consider becoming a bee keeper. The Montgomery County Beekeepers Association offers beginner beekeeping classes. For information go to: As an avid gardener, make an effort to create a bee-friendly garden. Select flowering plants with long growing seasons. Some of the flowers that bees especially liked in my garden were goldenrod, bee balm, assorted daisies, asters, salvias, roses-- just to name a few. For more information [www.themelissagarden.com/plants](http://www.themelissagarden.com/plants). Avoid using insecticides in your garden. Instead promote beneficial insects by using good, organic gardening practices. The University of Maryland's Cooperative Extension Program is a great resource: <http://mdipm.umd.edu>. CCD is a very troubling phenomenon. However, as gardeners we can help by being part of the solution. Will you help the bees?

## **GARDENING EVENTS OF INTEREST IN THE COMMUNITY** *(Confirm availability and venue before starting out)*

***United States Botanic Garden and National Garden, 100 Maryland Avenue, SW***

**Opens Nov. 26      *Holiday Magic***  
USBG's fanciful garden-train exhibits have become a beloved Washington tradition; this year there will be larger and more amazing displays made of plant-based natural materials. Trains will pop in and out of a landscape that includes Snow White's cottage and the beautiful pea green boat. National landmarks added this year will include the National Museum of the American Indian and-- the Obamas' swing set.

***Washington Cathedral***  
**November 5 at 10:00 a.m.**  
**All Hallows' Guild Woods Walk: Brilliant Fall Color with Native Plants.**  
This walk will feature native plants such as American Serviceberry, American Yellowwood, Virginia Sweetpire, Spicebush, Fragrant Sumac and native ferns and grasses. Come stroll with staff horticulturist Maureen Alonso through the All Hallows Guild Amphitheater and the Olmsted Woods, and admire the brilliant borders. Plants' ornamental value, folklore and landscape uses will be discussed.

*Events, continued*

**Brookside Gardens 1800 Glenallen Avenue, Wheaton**

**November 5, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Fall Conservatory Tour with Kathy Stevens** includes the Chrysanthemum Display.

**November 13 Plant Exploration with Barry Yinger 10:00-11:30 a.m. Visitor's Center Auditorium**

Barry Yinger, owner of Asiatica Nursery in Pennsylvania, talks about the discoveries he has made in 34 years of plant exploration and introduction. Many of ornamental species are still in nurseries and in our gardens thanks to his Brookside-supported travels. He will give an overview of his travels to East, South and Southeast Asia and central Africa, showing many fascinating plants. Free, registration required.

**Opening November 27 Garden of Lights and Train Display**

The Washington, Virginia, Maryland Garden Railway Society will construct their model "G" scale train exhibit inside the Conservatory. Trains weave around flowering plants and town and country-side scenes.

**Urban Gardening Talks at the Historical Society of Washington**

**November 7 at 1:00-2:30 p.m.**

**How to Winterize your Garden**

Putting your garden to bed for winter can save you dollars and hours of future maintenance and problem prevention. Kathy Jentz, *Washington Gardener Magazine* editor and publisher, will cover sowing a cover crop, turning off water sources, saving seeds, cleaning and storing garden tools and getting a jump on the growing season by starting new planting beds using the "lasagna" or layering method.

**Hillwood Estate, Museum and Garden, 4155 Linnean Avenue NW, Washington, D.C.**

**November 8**

**Hillwood Celebrates Veterans**

Military personnel, caregivers and their families are invited to enjoy a relaxing day exploring the museum, gardens and putting green. The suggested donation is waived for them



**Common Good City Farm, 2025 Elm Street NW, D.C.**

**RiverSmart Volunteer Maintenance Program**

Common Good City Farm and the RiverSmart Schools Program are recruiting interested and committed volunteers and teachers to join the RiverSmart Volunteer Maintenance Program. If you're interested in improving your urban greening skills or in hands-on gardening opportunities in your community, this is the perfect program for you.

Sign-up to be a RiverSmart Volunteer, get matched with a RiverSmart school and teacher, and receive a free 16-hour hands-on training in urban greening and gardening skills. Volunteers are asked to contribute three-four hours a month, for a year, at a RiverSmart School, helping with establishing gardens and other schoolyard greening projects. The training, Urban Schoolyard Greening, will be held November 12th 4-8pm, 14th, 9-5pm and 17th 4-8pm.