

MT. AIRY CLAY BREAKERS GARDEN CLUB
MINUTES - January 12, 2006

The Meeting began at about 7:45 PM by President, Mary Jane Bishop.

We were given an informative talk about "Ornamental Grasses" by Joyce Meyer. She told us that Grasses come in all sizes, hues and colors. We were given photo copies of various grasses and their versatile uses. However, there are problems in growing Ornamental Grasses such as keeping the roots in check and their ability of the plant to self-seed. She therefore encourages us to think carefully before planting. Nonetheless, they are low maintenance and do not enjoy over-rich soil. They can be grown in shade, sun, on slopes, dry areas and it is recommended that we combine them with other plants to provide color and contrast. We were also shown pictures of many Grasses including a colorful annual called New Zealand Flax. She pointed out that Spring is an ideal time to divide or plant Ornamental Grasses. Early Spring is the best time recommended to prune Ornamental Grasses to six inches above the ground. She informed us that nurseries tend to not carry a wide selection of Ornamental Grasses and they are more readily available for acquisition thru a catalog.

Following the talk on Grasses, Pam Smart introduced us to Baskets made of various kinds of natural materials such as pine needles, English Ivy among others. We were shown a Garden Ball made from the dried blades of Ornamental Grasses.

Following refreshments provided by Julie Harrison, the 17 members present proceeded to do business.

The MINUTES of the previous Meeting were read and approved with no corrections or additions.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Mary Beth reported the existence of outstanding bills from the purchase of Pecans from the holidays. However, she said she had written a Check for \$350.00 as payment. She also mentioned an outstanding bill from the Church. She brought ^{to} our attention the fact that the Club has not donated to the Save the Bay Project. The Balance as of January 12, 2006 was \$960.30. She suggested that the Club may need to have an additional fund-raising project to enhance this balance.

CIVIC DEVELOPMENT - Anne observed that the Club needs to

be involved in another Community project to which Lorraine remarked that a number of projects are being considered by the National Capital Area Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. These projects will address the needs of the areas devastated by the hurricanes last year.

HORTICULTURE - Arminta shared with us the desirability of Columbine. She noted that Columbines grow wild in North America and Europe. She said they were versatile, pretty and fit in well with Hostas and Trilliums. We were shown pictures of these flowers.

CONSERVATION - Gilda encouraged the Club members to consider putting Ponds in their gardens. She mentioned that Ponds provide water for birds, habitats for fishes and amphibians like frogs. She said that the relevant body concerned with environmental issues would be willing to conduct a session on the installation of this garden feature, if the group so desires. She informed us that material such as PVC which is free of harmful materials can be used as a liner for garden ponds. She pointed out that it may be necessary to check if there are any safety laws in Maryland regarding backyard ponds. She reminded us that most of the information she was sharing is contained in a tip sheet on Backyard Conservation printed by the National Association of Conservation Districts. This sheet was given to us at a previous meeting.

NEW BUSINESS - Marian suggested The Royal Tea Room in LaPlata, MD as a place for our Tea Social. This was scheduled for February 17, 2006 at 1:30 - 3:30 PM. Interested members indicated their intention to attend.

Pam passed around a picture of a plant loaded with berries which Marian identified as Calicarpa. Our visitor Dorothy Ann Shaffer was introduced to us. She shared a little information about herself.

The Meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonia Johnson, Recording Secretary