

The Mt. Airy Claybreakers Garden Club met at 6:30 pm on 9 April 2015 at the home of Esther Neckere with 20 members present. Gilda Allen, Lenay O'Quinn, and Jessica Sherlock were given birthday bags, celebrations created by Lenay.

PROGAM: Club member Deborah Determan gave a talk accompanied by PowerPoint slides on *Weed Identification and Control*. Important points included the following information:

- If you pull on it and it comes up easily...it is probably not a weed, was the tongue-in-cheek introduction
- Weeds are opportunists; they compete for light, water, nutrients, and space. They can indicate unsuitable growing conditions for a desired plant. Weeds can harbor pests and can cause harm (poison ivy; allergies)
- Annual weeds comprise two groups: summer (crabgrass, ragweed) and winter (chickweed, henbit). Both groups die during the winter.
- Biennial weeds germinate and develop a strong root system during their first year; in the second year they grow vigorously, become upright and may "bolt" (garlic mustard and Queen Anne's Lace).
- Perennials may increase in size each year (Canada Thistle, Bermudagrass, Dandelion, Nutsedge) Destroying the root systems is essential for control
- Weed seeds may be dispersed by wind, water, birds, and animals.
- Hand weeding is best for small, annual weeds, best done after rain
- Other methods of weed control are mulching, edging, cultivating healthy, dense turf.
- Chemicals should be used judiciously: apply when air temperatures are 65-85 degrees; Do not apply when rain is expected within 24 hours; do not mow for a few days. Spray when there is no wind.
- When to spray: In summer, when weed is mature, systemic herbicides will move to the roots.

BUSINESS MEETING:

- Esther Neckere Recording Secretary: Corrected minutes were approved as read.
- Treasurer Carol Ober: Balance in bank account: \$2,058.41. The White Elephant sale netted \$78.50. The next sale will be during the summer picnic.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Conservation: Deborah Determan emphasized pesticide safety by wearing protective clothing, proper storage (most pesticides are effective 2-3 years), putting powdered pesticide in a plastic bag, keep from getting cold.
- Design: Julie Harrison created a small spring arrangement with daffodils and tulips.
- Publicity: Lorraine Leonard reported that a club article in the Marlton newspaper will appear in May. She will also submit an article to the *Capitol Gardener*.
- Sunshine: Arminta Donovan sent out three birthday cards. Please contact her if there is a need for a "thinking of you" or sympathy card.
- Ways and Means: It was decided not to sponsor a bulb sale as a fund raising project this year
- Membership: Elaine Arnold read a condolence card from Susan Baily, a past president who now lives in Hancock, Md. She enclosed a memorial donation of \$50.

OLD BUSINESS.

- Surratts-Clinton Spring Gardening Workshops: Esther Neckere and Marilyn Berkut attended the PG County Master Gardeners session on Companion Planting. The gardening book/plant display sponsored by the garden club will remain until the end of April. A possible September display will be coordinated with the library management.

- **Memorial Project:** Deborah Determan, Julie Harrison, Gilda Allen, Linda Milette, and Carol Ober met to create a proposal for a standardized memorial process for club members who have passed away. Some recommendations were as follows:
 - Dedicate next year's yearbook to the memory of Marian Moreland*
 - Create a memorial page for the yearbook (for members of three years or more in the club)*
 - Create a memorial scholarship
 - Create a memorial brick path at Holloway Park

*approved by club members.

- **School Project:** The principal at Mattaponi Elementary School is looking for help/sponsorship of two gardening projects: a rain garden and a native plant garden. He is submitting proposals for grants for these projects, but would like to partner with the garden club to help make Mattaponi a "green" school. A proposal to contribute \$100 to the school for this ecology project was seconded. Gilda Allen, Pat Hall, Iona Black, and Elaine Arnold volunteered to help out at the school's "Earth Day" neighborhood cleanup of the school grounds on 25 April.
- **Annual Plant Sale** will be held on Saturday, 2 May, at Julie Harrison's home starting at 8:00 am. Donated plants should be labeled and priced, and if possible, brought over to Julie's on the Friday before the sale. Additional volunteers are needed. Elaine Arnold will organize tours of members' gardens some of which may take place after the plant sale, but definitely before the May meeting.
- Club dues of \$25 are due **NOW**. Please send them to Carol Ober.
- Deborah Determan asked for contributions for the club newsletter, *Claybreaking News*. Please submit pictures if possible.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Officers and job surveys were submitted during the April meeting. The nominations committee of Joyce Myer, Iona Black, Dot Lower, and Mary Jane Bishop will review them at Joyce Meyer's home and will present a slate of officers at the May meeting.
- The District 1 tour of the Maryland Lavender farm will be held on 9 June. The cost is \$90. If you are interested, please see Iona Black
- The club voted to discontinue its library of gardening books. The books will be available at the summer picnic white elephant sale

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Awards Meeting will be held on 11 April at the US Arboretum, The Presidents Luncheon will be held 24 April.
- Next month's meeting will be held on 14 May at the home of Elaine Arnold. Members will participate in a plant exchange. Everyone is asked to bring a floral arrangement in an unusual container.
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm. A 50/50 drawing was won by Joyce Meyer.

Respectfully submitted,

Esther Neckere

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Recording Secretary