

Feb. 2016

The Mt. Airy Clay Breakers Garden Club met at 6:30 p.m., February 11, 2016, at the home of Gilda Allen. Present were 16 members: Gilda Allen, Elaine Arnold, Marilyn Berkut, Iona Black, Connie Dalpra, Deborah Determan, Patricia Hall, Lorraine Leonard, Dot Lower, Joyce Meyer, Linda Millette, Esther Neckere, Carol Ober, and Jessica Sherlock. Gilda introduced her guest, Nina. Gilda led the meeting, as the president, Lenay was sick. Gilda asked Lorraine to take the minutes in absence of the recording secretary, Mary Jane.

Program: Jerry Tasker, an ISA certified arborist with *Calvert County Tree Experts* company gave a presentation on common problems with trees. He started off with volcano mulching (having the mulch piled up too high on the tree trunks), and talked about dangerous tree situations. Especially noteworthy information was that Tulip Trees do not compartmentalize due to insect damage, so a small area of insect damage can weaken the tree fast. He talked about tap roots, fertilization, deadheading, dry crotch pruning, and emerald ash borer. He showed how the path of the emerald ash borer (serpentine) (under the damaged bark) differed from the path of a regular beetle (smoother path). He left some promotional materials and business cards for club members and said to call him if we ever had questions.

Happy birthday plants (bromeliads) were presented to Linda and Lorraine both having birthdays during the month of February.

Treasurer Report: Pat reported a total of \$1,748.24 in the treasury. She also reported that the checking account was changed from a personal account to an account for a small organization, after coordination with our club president. Being an organizational account would lead to better management of signatures, as the personal account had many past treasurer's names on it.

Conservation: Jessica gave a description of the interesting food chains in her yard including how her flowering quince had a scale problem, but the birds came up and took residence in her bush and started to eat the scale. Voles were eaten by cats who occasionally were bothered by foxes. In the warmer months, frogs do a good job eating mosquitoes. Her advice was to let the food chain do its thing and be thoughtful regarding your input or changes to it.

Horticulture: Lorraine reminded the group of the average frost date for our area (April 15) and pointed out the excellent seed planting chart and it's details in the Washington Post Living section today.

Design: Elaine brought a sample of an asymmetrical arrangement, very suitable for a mantel. She used red and pink tulips and explained the triangle shapes in the design. A "friendship ball," a gift from some Japanese friends, was an accessory to the arrangement. She also led a discussion on containers, formal vs natural and the different materials a container can be made of. As an aside to the design portion of the meeting, Gilda described her table arrangements. On her dining room table was a design of primarily light shades: pale green mini cabbages, white snap dragons, and white baby's breath. The arrangement on the buffet was made with darker shades of eucalyptus and red thistle-like spherical flowers.

The group discussed the upcoming the District I meeting and is anxious to help with refreshments but had questions. The group decided to finalize details at the next meeting when Julie is present.

Gilda suggested a group session for doing "Shield the Innocent" program for child protection for Gilda's project at the school downtown. The group agreed that Thursday, 18 February, at 2PM would be a good time to get together at Gilda's home. She will send out a message before the event with a reminder and to find out exactly who will come.

The group congratulated Deborah for the excellent job on the newsletter and spoke about the trip Homestead Gardens was planning to the Philadelphia Flower Show. Lucille Gwynn wasn't aware of either topic so we'll check to make sure she is on the e-mail distribution list.

Carol Ober won the 50/50 and received \$4.50 with the club getting \$5.00.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorraine Leonard
(for Mary Jane Bishop, Recording Secretary)