



Beltsville Garden Club Newsletter

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Gardening Enhances Quality of Life

Researchers at Texas A&M and Texas State universities surveyed five components related to quality of life issues. In addition to questions about how optimistic people felt, respondents were asked "Do you garden?" Those adults over age 50 who said "yes" felt more youthful and energetic, and were generally more active than non-gardeners. In addition, they ate more fruits and vegetables than non-gardeners and were mentally and physically healthier.

Speaking of healthy living, do we really need to drink 8 glasses of water a day? According to *Consumer Reports* magazine called *ShopSmart*, "you get most of your daily hydration...by eating foods and drinking liquids. That's why downing eight glasses of water is probably excessive. Juice, milk, soda, fruit, vegetables, yogurt, soup, and ice cream are all mostly water, so they count toward your daily intake of liquids," the magazine stated.

Save the Date—Wednesday, December 7

The BGC Executive Committee is planning a totally new look for the annual holiday dinner this year. The Festive Pot Luck Dinner will feature candlelight, music, centerpiece door prizes (a traditional favorite), a white elephant gift exchange and a new venue. This year's event will take place at the Good Shepherd Methodist Church on New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring. More details will be forthcoming in the November newsletter.

Persimmons, Pomegranates, Polygonatums & Other Perennial Food Plants

BGC will hold its general meeting on **Wednesday, October 26, at 7:30 pm** in the cafeteria of the James E. Duckworth School, 11201 Evans Trail, Beltsville.

The guest speaker will be **Matt Cohen**. He will discuss **Persimmons, Pomegranates, Polygonatums and Other Perennial Food Plants**, and easy ways to grow edible perennials in the landscape for sunny and shady areas in your garden. He will include plants you might not know you could eat and some which you may already be growing in your garden.

Matt is owner of "Matt's Habitats," and is a professional landscaper based in Takoma Park, MD. He leads nature walks in the DC area with an emphasis on wild edibles. More information is available on his website, www.mattshabitats.com

Please remember to bring a plant or garden-related item for the door prize table.

October Refreshments

Thanks to all the people who brought the delicious refreshments for the September meeting. For our October 26 Halloween meeting the club will provide cider; Judy Shanefelter will bring a non-sweet item and Mary Washington, Dorothy Cichra and Maggie Schmidt will bring sweet items. Other Halloween-themed refreshments will also be welcome.

BELTSVILLE GARDEN CLUB

The Beltsville Garden Club is a not-for-profit organization designed to promote gardening interests of its members, increase their knowledge of horticulture, add to their enjoyment of gardening, and to encourage ornamental planting by individuals, community and business groups. Club dues is \$10 per family per year. The dues year begins in September. Send checks to: BGC, P.O. Box 1953, Beltsville, MD 20704-1953.

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Gardening Tips by Sandy Lange

Now is the time to divide perennials, especially daylilies, iris and peonies. Strip the leaves on your peonies, including tree peonies, and throw them in the trash to prevent fungus from overwintering around the plants.

To promote flowering of Xmas cactus, place the plant in complete darkness for 12 hours each night. Allow soil to dry out between watering. In 6 to 8 weeks, buds should begin to form. Night-time temperatures of 50 to 55 degrees will also promote blooms by Xmas.

After the first frost, you can sow seeds that germinate in cool weather. Good candidates are fox-glove, money plant, stock, larkspur, calendula and sweet alyssum. Discontinue deadheading rose bushes; allow them to form rose hips.

If you brought tropical plants indoors for winter, look for whiteflies and spider mites. Apply an insecticidal soap to control pests.

Cut off tops of cannas, dahlias and caladiums after first frost. Leave bulbs in the ground for a few days. Then, dig, dry and store in peat moss in a frost-free area.

Save the Date: Saturday, January 28, 1-4 pm, the Sixth Annual Seed Exchange sponsored by *Washington Gardener Magazine* and Brookside Gardens. Gather your annual and perennial seeds now in order to participate in this fun event at the Brookside Gardens Visitors Center.

Tips on harvesting seeds: On a dry day, gather dried seeds from the plant. Separate the seeds from the plant by running them through a screen or shaking them into a paper bag. Impatiens seeds may be gathered by placing a bag over the stems. After a couple of weeks, snip the stems and place the bags with the stems in a warm place to dry. If seeds are encased in pulp i.e. tomatoes, separate the seeds by pulling them off. Seeds are viable once the fleshy fruit turns soft or changes color. Place seeds in a clean container, store in a cool, dry, dark place and label.

September Speaker on Growing Lilies

Jim McKenney took "**A Modern Look at Lilies**" at the BGC September meeting. McKenney stated that new lily bulbs grow from the tiny sliver at the bottom of the bulb—not from the previous year's bulb. Most like sun and well-drained soil. He suggested planting them in the fall so they have time to develop a root system. If planted in the spring, they may survive but probably won't flower, he said.

There are several types of hybrid lilies. These include Asiatic, Martagon, Trumpet and Oriental. He noted that tiger lilies were grown in ancient times, and the Japanese cultivated lilies in the 18th century.

Not all lilies grow well in Maryland. Some that do include *Lilium canadense* and *Lilium superbum*. McKenney commented that he rarely feeds his large collection of lilies. Most lilies will not live long in Maryland's wet soil and weather conditions, he observed.

If anyone is seriously interested in growing lilies, McKenney recommended reading the book on *Lily Growers* by Richardson Wright. McKenney's own garden can be viewed on his website: <http://jimckenney.com>.

News from the U.S. National Arboretum

Funding cuts last year (2011 budget) resulted in continued austerity. It is presumed that more cuts will be realized in 2012 so the Arboretum is still seeking donations to preserve its boxwood and azalea collections. Renovations on the Administration Building are underway and should be completed by spring.

The latest new Arboretum release is the Japanese snowbell (*Styrax japonica*) 'Spring Showers'. It is a small deciduous tree with fragrant white or pink flowers appearing in mid-spring. It is "heavy-flowering with a tight, upright growth habit and lustrous dark green foliage" and should be in nurseries in 2013 or 2014.

BGC Membership Renewal

Annual dues is \$10 per household per year. The membership year runs from September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012. Renew NOW so you continue to receive monthly newsletters and invitations to special events such as the Holiday Gala.

**Make your check payable to:
Beltsville Garden Club.**

**Mail to: P. O. Box 1953
Beltsville, MD 20704-1953.**

Name _____

Partner's Name: _____

Address: _____

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I am interested in serving on a committee:

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Check only one:

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BGC Scholarship Fund

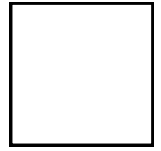
Consider donating to the BGC Scholarship Fund 2011/2012 for the benefit of a University of Maryland student enrolled in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Scholarship Donation Enclosed: _____

Dues Amount Enclosed: _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Beltsville Garden Club
P. O. Box 1953
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Garden Events

Sat., Oct. 15 & Sat., Oct. 29, 9 am-1 pm, Manure Days for Gardeners. Visit Stargazing Farm, 16760 Whites Store RD. Boyds, MD. or www.stargazingfarm.org. for directions. Bring a bag, bucket or truck to haul manure. Tax-deductible donations are requested.

Sat., Oct. 22, 1-5 pm, & Sun., Oct. 23, 10 am-3 pm, Chrysanthemum Show, Brookside Gardens Visitors Center. Wheaton, MD. Also at Brookside's Conservatory now thru Nov. 20, Chrysanthemum Display: Autumn Harvest.

Sat., Oct. 22, 9 am-5 pm. Conservation Landscaping Training & Demonstration Garden Installation. Free. At IWLA headquarters, 1707 Conservation Lane, Gaithersburg. Register at www.muddybranch.org/event/conservation-landscaping-training-and-demonstration-garden-installation.

BGC Calendar of Events

Wed., Oct. 26, 7:30 pm. Persimmons, Pomegranates, Polygonatums and Other Edible Perennials, Matt Cohen, Speaker, Duckworth School cafeteria.

Wed., Nov. 2, 7:30 pm. BGC Executive Committee Meeting. Home of Sandy & David Lange.

No General Meeting in November.

Wed., Dec. 7, BGC Festive Holiday Pot Luck Dinner, Good Shepherd Methodist Church, New Hampshire Avenue and Oakview Drive, Silver Spring.

Wed., Jan. 4, Executive Committee Mtg.

Wed., Jan. 25, Dunbarton Oaks Historic Garden, David Keil, speaker.