

THE GARDENER

Newsletter of the Bowie-Crofton Garden Club



<http://www.bcgardenclub.org>

<http://www.meetup.com/Bowie-Crofton-Garden-Club/>

The aims of the Bowie-Crofton Garden Club shall be to promote interest in and develop skills in gardening through cooperation, joint efforts, and good fellowship.

April 2010

Next Monthly Meeting

By *Neil Potash*

The next Garden Club meeting will take place in the multi-purpose room of the Bowie City Hall, 2614 Kenhill Drive, Bowie, MD 20715 on Tuesday, April 27, 2010 at 7:30 PM.

The speaker will be Joy Thorpe & Company from the Bowie Florist in the Whitehall shopping center, which has reopened after a devastating fire. She will do a beautiful workshop demonstrating "*Some Basic Rules for Flower Arrangement*". We are glad the Bowie Florist shop has reopened and the Bowie-Crofton Garden Club looks forward to Joy's introduction to her great shop. Some of her flower arrangements will be given away as door prizes.

Presidents Comments

by *Jesse Terres*



Last year I submitted the table below recommending the number of vegetable plants to grow and their spacing. This year I've added the longevity of seeds. Knowing these items will help keep your seed waste to a minimum, save on



gardening space, and be easier on your pocket book. This modified chart will give you a guideline for growing vegetables your first year based on feeding an average person. For example, if you find you eat more turnips than the average person, plant more next year. With the economy the way it is, it's time to plan ahead to grow some veggies.

Seed Longevity

<u>Vegetable</u>	<u>Plants per person</u>	<u>Spacing (inches)</u>	<u>in years</u>
Bean, lima	5-10	Bush 3-6	3-6
		Pole 8-10	
Bean, snap	5-10	Bush 2-4	
		Pole 6	
Beet	10-20	3	3-4
Broccoli	5-10	15	4-5
Brussels sprouts	15	15	4-5
Cabbage	2-5	12-14	4-5
Carrot	30	1-2	3-5
Cauliflower	3-5	15	4-5
Celery	3-5	6	3-5
Collards	5-10	12	4-5
Cucumber	1 or 2	6	5-7
Eggplant	1	16	3-5
Garlic	3	1-3	
Kale	5-10	8	4-5
Kohlrabi	5 or 6	3-6	4-5
Leeks	6-10	2-6	2-4
Lettuce	7	Leaf 6	3-4
		Head 10	
Muskmelon (Cantaloupe)	2	12	6-10
Onion	20-30	1-4	2-4
Parsnip	15	2-4	1-3
Pea (edible-podded)	3 or 4	1-3	4-6
Pepper	2 or 3	12-24	3-5
Potato	6 or 8	4-10 (seed)	5-7
Radish	30-60	½-1	3-5
Rutabaga	5-10	5-8	3-5
Shallot	4-10	2	2-4
Spinach	10	2-6	3-5
Squash	1 or 2	Summer 12	3-5
		Winter 12-24	
Sweet potato	2 or 3	2 or 3	
Swiss Chard	3-5	6	3-4
Tomato	1 or 2	12-24	4-7
Turnip	8-15	2-6	5-8

One year I planted two tomato seeds that according to the seed packet were 9 years old. Probably more like 10 years old since they were a year old when packaged. Only one of the seeds sprouted and grew into a vigorous plant. Then there was the story I heard about wheat seeds found with a 2000-year-old Egyptian mummy that sprouted and grew. Although, I haven't followed all the rules, if you want to save seed with a good degree of reliability, it's important that they be stored properly. From what I've read, it's most important that once properly dried, that the seeds be kept in sealed, airtight containers like glass jars or doubled Ziploc bags (plastic is porous, that's why the double bags) to keep the seeds from losing any more moisture. Temperature is most critical and should be constant in the range of 40 to 45 degrees F. I keep mine in the garage, and although it isn't recommended, the seeds probably would do better in the refrigerator crisper. Surprisingly though, I seem to have fairly good success.

Meeting Minutes, March 30, 2010

The Tuesday, March 30th meeting of the Bowie Crofton Garden Club was held at the Bowie City Hall.

Jesse Terres, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

The February Minutes were unanimously approved.

Program

Neil Potash introduced the speaker, our very own BCGC longtime member, Jessie Smith. She presented us with a wonderful pruning demonstration and guidelines and tips on pruning just about any tree or shrub in our yard. Jessie brought shrubs from Patuxent Nursery and treated us to a hands-on pruning clinic. Jessie provided several hand outs and her presentation was very helpful and informative. She explained the reasons for pruning as well as tools for pruning and suggested books on pruning.

After Jessie's presentation, Neil presented her with a flower and Jesse presented Jessie with a special certificate of appreciation for all her numerous gardening projects in Bowie and as a devoted and dedicated BCGC member.

Committee Reports:

Nominating Committee – Rich Dodson led the nominating committee effort and examined the offices that were coming up for renewal. The new slate of officers include:

1st VP/Programs – Neil Potash

3rd VP/Plant Exchange – Gaye Williams

Secretary – Janelle Dietrich with Paula Mitchell serving as her back up

Garden Tours – our BCGC member, Carolyn Murphy is a tour guide in Annapolis.

Since she is a docent at the William Paca House and Garden, she offered to give the BCGC members a tour that is available at \$7.00 a person. It's about a 2 hour tour allowing for an hour tour of the Paca House and about 45 minutes to an hour for the garden. Jesse Terres suggested that Carolyn contact Karen Anadol, our Field Trips Chair.

Membership – Brian Swetnam reported that we have 110 members. He introduced Suzanne Sweet, our newest member. Welcome Suzanne.

Hospitality – Barb Eberstein was absent since she is still under the weather!

Treasurer – Joan Walker reported that we have a checkbook balance of \$1295.40.

Programs: Neil Potash reported that on April 27th, Joy Thorpe of the Bowie Florist in the Whitehall shopping center will give us a presentation and demonstration on some of the basic rules of flower arranging.

Garden tours: Kent Winterson informed us that Peggy Huddleston had two crape myrtles to give away and to either contact him or Peggy directly.

Sunshine – Barb Eberstein needs some Sunshine greeting herself since she is still recovering from her illness. Since Gloria Kingsley's daughter passed away, Barb sent her a sympathy card.

Old Business: - None

New Business:

Brava gift – Jessie Smith inquired about the status of the gift sent to Brava that was earmarked for horticulture and landscaping. However, since there is no area available for landscaping, Jessie suggested that the \$10,000 gift be used for statuary, perhaps of a horse in the lobby since Bowie has a unique horse racing heritage.

Plant Sale: Gaye Williams will provide the newsletter with a long list of tasks for members to volunteer for on the day of the Plant Sale.

Highlights of the Plant Sale include several vendors from Cardinal Creek, Riva Gardens and hostas grown by Gaye and Barb ordered from the Shady Oaks catalog. A rain barrel will be raffled off since it is being donated by the Lions Club. There will be a Master Gardeners table offering advice. If a club member has something to sell, they can be a vendor, too as long as they contribute 20% of their profits to the Garden Club.

Since Gaye has resigned as co-Hospitality Chair and Barb Eberstein may not be recovered and well enough to be at the Plant Sale, it is suggested that you bring your coffee/beverage and bake cookies to share for the workers.

Kent Winterson provided flyers again in two sizes to be placed in the windows of local establishments.

Gaye is representing Bowie CLAW at the plant sale and petitions will be available to sign.

Public Relations – Dorothy Bice contacted the Editor of the Bowie Blade News who offered to print back to back articles on the BCGC plant sale that will be held on Saturday, April 24 from 8am to Noon on route 450 in front of the Bowie Library.

Door Prizes – two shrubs contributed from the Patuxent Nursery were awarded and plants, garden magazines and gardening items were available for the taking.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted, *Kathleen Beres*, Secretary

Sunshine Committee Report

By *Barbara Eberstein*

We are saddened to learn of the death of Gloria Kinsley's daughter on March 28. Our hearts go out to Gloria and her family. Gloria's address is 12616 Brunswick Lane, Bowie 20715, if club members care to send a letter of condolences.

On a happier note, we're glad to share the news that Bev Hodges and George Cornwall will not be leaving the area and will continue to be members of the Garden Club.

Yours truly is happy to report that after 8 weeks she is on the road to recovery from a terrific case of shingles.

Treasurer Report

By *Joan Walker*

March, 2010

Starting Balance/Checkbook	\$1,387.57
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Expenses	
Crofton Printing	\$36.97
Gaye Williams/snacks/Philly	\$20.00
Brian Swetnam/Stamps	\$35.20
TOTAL	\$92.17

Deposits	\$0.00
Membership	
Philly Trip	
TOTAL	\$0.00
Checkbook Balance	\$1,295.40
AVAILABLE FUNDS	\$1,295.40

Repairing Winter Damage to Shrubs

By *Rich Dodson*, Master Gardener

I'm sure that the Garden Club is beginning to think that I have a total fixation on pruning. However, I continue to be approached by friends and neighbors with questions about what to do to save their damaged trees and shrubs, following the extensive damage done by the "Super Storm of 2010."

The immediate answer is that, in most cases, ALL IS NOT LOST! Yes, there may be a lot of visible damage, but much of this damage falls into the category of a natural, self-pruning process that will ultimately end up creating a healthy improvement to your shrubs. In particular, I'm thinking of our mature boxwood hedges that experienced some major breakdown, as a result of the three feet of snow that settled on top of them.

The snow-induced breakdown dictated that the crown of many of our boxwoods had to be pruned away, removing branches that were crushed and broken. The good news is this opened up the bush to allow sunlight to penetrate into the center of the shrub, encouraging a rebirth of the bush that will only contribute to the overall long-term health of the shrub; in reality, this is something that should be done periodically anyway, so the snow damage merely, forced the issue.

Azaleas

Another question I frequently receive is, "What should I do for my azaleas that were decimated by the storm again. All is not lost, particularly with azaleas as they are among the most forgiving of all shrubs. Yes, you'll want to remove badly damaged and dead branches. You will need to decide how much pruning needs to be done to restore the appearance and shape of the bush, but azaleas are one of the few shrubs that will allow

you to leave a stub, rather than cutting a stem back to a point where it branches.

Evergreen azaleas have a big advantage over other garden shrubs when it comes to pruning, i.e., lop off the end of most any branch or twig not heavily shaded and a healthy plant will soon activate new buds (called adventitious buds) below the cut end. For good results, however, it's best to prune with a plan taking other factors into account.

Why prune? First of all, prune to remove dead wood. Branches may have been killed by cold over the winter or perhaps die in mid-summer after girdling by a hard frost in the spring. They may also die back as a result of a fungus attack, shading, borers, lack of water or improper fertilizing. Cut out the dead wood back to sound wood, i.e., where a nick with your pruners reveals a layer of green cambium under the outer bark.

NOTE: Pruning shears should be frequently sterilized by dipping them in a fairly strong (20%) solution of sodium hypochlorite (Clorox) in water to discourage contamination by fungus.

A cardinal rule when dealing with azaleas is: "All azaleas are rhododendrons, but all rhododendrons are not azaleas. So, the forgiving nature of azaleas in the pruning process does not extend to rhododendrons; i.e., you should not leave stubs when pruning rhododendrons, as they do not have the advantage of the adventitious buds along each branch enjoyed by azaleas.



One of the most common reasons for pruning evergreen azaleas is to scale back an overly exuberant bush that is beginning to cover a window or crowd a walkway. Pruning would be unnecessary if a smaller-growing variety in the first place and positioned properly when planted. However, it is possible, to keep ambitious plants in bounds by regular judicious pruning. The secret is to reach deep into the bush, follow unwanted branches back into the bush and cut them off flush. In this case don't leave stubs, which would probably die from lack of light and could invite fungus invasion. The overall effect is to reduce the size of the plant without destroying its symmetry. The surface of the shrub will not be as dense at the outset, but will fill in quickly.

Another common reason for pruning is to improve the appearance of tall leggy plants with ugly bare shanks and knobby knees. In these cases major surgery is often needed. Judgment is called for, but in serious cases I usually cut the offending stalks back to within a foot or so of the ground in spring. Cutting so early will destroy the current year's flowers, of course, but new shoots will start earlier and recovery will be quicker. Strong-growing new shoots should be pinched once or twice up to early August to encourage branching.

Sources:

The Bay Gardener, by Dr. Frank Gouin. You can ask Dr. Gouin your questions by e-mailing him at FRGouin@Erols.com. All questions will appear in the **Bay Weekly**. Please include your name and address.

American Rhododendron Society, *Tips for Beginners: How To Prune Evergreen Azaleas*, by Tom Hughes.

The Washington Post: *Green Scene* by Joel M. Lerner, Saturday, April 3, 2010.

Annual Plant Sale

By *Gaye Williams*

The BCGC 2010 plant sale date is fast approaching! Please stop reading this newsletter right now (unless it's dark or snowing outside) and go divide, pot up, clean, label, price and do anything else to those plants that are destined for our SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 2010 event. Yes, it is less than a month away! Tell your friends, family and co-workers about the sale.

The plant sale will be held from 8 AM to 12 Noon. Kent Winterson has designed the flyer that you can download from the Calendar page on our web site at <http://www.bcgardenclub.org> . Please plan to help at the sale for at least an hour or so. The more people we have helping, the easier on all of us. Cardinal Creek Nursery and Riva Gardens from Annapolis will be joining us this year. We also have several members who will have tables at the sale. If you have something garden-related to sell and are willing to donate 20% of your sales to the club, contact Gaye at WilliaGL@MDA.state.md.us or call her at 301-464-0273.

All those working at the sale should plan to be there by 7:15A.M. We want all merchandise unloaded and cars parked by 7:30.

Before the sale: Pot plants ASAP so they have time to settle. Collect plants from members who do not drive. Save cardboard boxes to put purchased plants in.

Important: Make sure your plants are marked and priced!!

The morning of the sale: Bring plants by 7:15. Bring wagon if you have one. Bring your folding table. Bring a folding chair to sit on. Bring tent. Bring water, use sunscreen and wear a hat.

At the sale we need volunteers for: Cashier; Traffic control; Master Gardener questions; Membership; Hospitality; Set up tents, tables, etc.

After the sale we need volunteers for: Load unsold plants for donation or for transport; Gather and dispose of trash and recyclables; Take down tents, tables and traffic control tapes/cones; Help load member-owned tables and wagons

Dividing Perennials



Perennials will continue to expand each year often losing vigor as they become overcrowded. Consequently, most will benefit from being dug up and divided periodically. Once the center of a clump has begun to wither and die out leaving new growth at the edges, the plant should be divided. Dividing also helps prevent mildew growth. Lift the plant in either spring or fall (fall is best) with a spading fork or shovel. Carefully, break the clump into new, fairly substantial plantlets with your hands or a sharp knife. Some plants can be easily divided by hand whereas others receive less root damage by being cut with a knife. Do as little damage to the overall root mass as possible. Resettle the new plants into the ground. If you have too many plants, friends and neighbors are usually happy to get freebies from you, or better yet, bring to the BCGC plant sale.

Executive Committee			From the Editor Donald Sminkey All members of the Garden Club are welcome to write an article on a gardening-related subject. Please send via e-mail to: gardener@bcgardenclub.org. Include "B-CGC" or "Garden Club" in the subject heading; or mail to: Donald Sminkey, 508 Otway Road, Wake Forest, NC 27587 Deadline, May issue: May 8, 2010
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