

Patchogue Garden Club's

# Garden Gazette

"All the dirt you need to know . . . and a whole lot more!"

May 2010

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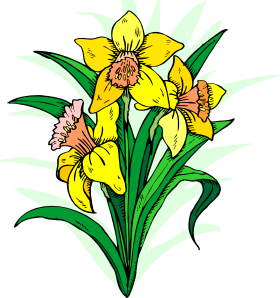
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Garden Gazette

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Submissions must be received two weeks before the general meeting in order to appear in that month's edition of the *Garden Gazette*.

## Guy's Greetings

As we dry out from the recent deluge, we are reminded how quickly things grow after a rain, especially fungus, mold and diseases. For those of you with a vegetable garden, I hope these will not be an issue this year. I did not have issues with tomato blight last year, perhaps because my garden is a mass of raised beds. Four simple boards arranged in a square and filled with good draining soil--never mind it is 20 x 20, it still is raised. Now that we are past May 15<sup>th</sup>, traditionally the last frost date on Long Island, we can plant our gardens. I hope your corn is sweet, your beans are crisp, and your tomatoes are plump. *Guy*

## Mark the Date

- ✓ **Tuesday, May 25, 2010, 6:30 PM, general meeting at Fantastic Gardens**, 67 Avery Avenue, Patchogue NY, (631) 475-7118. Avery Avenue is east of Rte. 112 and north of Montauk Highway. Take a tour of Dave and Joan Tifford's nursery with 10 greenhouses on 3 acres. Come prepared to marvel at the private cactus collection in bloom and the amazing unique succulent garden. **Special Notes: No hostesses required and no chairs available. You can purchase plants after the meeting and get a 15% discount.**
- ✓ **Saturday, June 12, 2010, 9:00 AM, Annual Breakfast in the Garden at South Ocean Avenue and Terry Street.** Bring a dish to share and your favorite beverage. The club provides bagels, coffee, tea, and fixin's.
- ✓ **Monday, June 21, 2010, group carpooling to Old Westbury Gardens** (tours on the hour and ½ hour), leaving from Terry Street at 9:45 AM. If you don't have a ride, call Jo Miller, and she will try to arrange it for you. There is an outdoor café that doesn't operate in inclement weather and a picnic area for brown baggers. Large bags and backpacks are not permitted. Admission is \$10, \$8 seniors, and \$5 children 7-12. Directions: Take the LIE (I-495) to Exit 39. Turn left onto Glen Cove Road (Garden City) at the end of the exit ramp, cross over the expressway and immediately turn left onto the service road. Follow the service road east for approximately 1.1 miles, turn right onto Old Westbury Road and continue 0.4 miles. The Gardens' gate is on the left. For more information, please visit <http://www.oldwestburygardens.org/>.
- ✓ **Saturday, July 10, 2010, Patchogue Garden Club's 10th annual garden tour featuring art in the gardens.** Pre-purchase tickets at \$13 (\$15 on the day of the tour). Gardens open at 10 AM and close at 3:00 PM. For more information, call Paula at 289-0234. **The post-tour dinner will be at 6:00 PM the following day, Sunday, July 11**, at the home of Paula Murphy, 6:00 PM, 125 Smith Street, Patchogue, NY.



## April Meeting in a Flash

We started the evening with a delightfully entertaining speaker, Mr. Ray Lackey "Master Bee Keeper". He spoke very knowledgeably for about 1 ½ hours and gladly answered all our questions. He brought different kinds of his excellent honey to sell. If you missed the meeting or if you want to buy more honey or other products, there is a self-serve sales stand on the porch at 1260 Walnut Avenue, Bohemia NY.

**Thank you** to Carol Tvelia and her crew for a great job putting on the Annual Plant and Yard Sale. The proceeds benefit our scholarship fund for a Patchogue-Medford High School senior planning to study horticulture, botany, or a related subject.

### Special Notes

Host(esses) for the a May meeting are not required. Please sign up again sometime. Thank you.

Please think about volunteering your garden for a summer meeting. Sign up in May.



"Beauty is not caused.  
It is."



## Road Trip: The New York Botanical Garden

Emily Dickinson's Garden: The Poetry of Flowers  
Co-presented with The Poetry Society of America  
Friday, April 30–Sunday, June 13, 2010

Discover the gardener who became the poet.  
Experience the life and works of one of America's most treasured poets as never before.

- Her Garden: Tour her Victorian Homestead re-created in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory with tulips, lilacs, lilies, and more.
- Her Poetry: Stroll along garden paths and read some of Dickinson's most famous works near the flowers that inspired them.
- Her Life: Be immersed in an interactive perspective through photographs, watercolors and books in a Gallery exhibition.

### Special Celebrations

Enjoy poetry readings, live theater, gardening demonstrations, and more.  
For more information, visit <http://www.nybg.org/>.

## Did you know?...

Excerpted from "The Poet as Gardener and Tiger Lily"  
By HOLLAND COTTER

Emily Dickinson once called herself a "a Lunatic on Bulbs," referring to her passion for daffodils, hyacinth and other spring perennials, which she raised indoors in winter in her family home in Amherst, Mass. And a lunatic she probably seemed to neighbors who spied her gardening by moonlight on summer evenings in the flower beds behind the house.

We now suspect that one reason Dickinson preferred night gardening was because of vision problems: for several years in her early middle age, sunlight stung her eyes. But no such explanations are needed to justify the indoor-outdoor format of "Emily Dickinson's Garden: The Poetry of Flowers," an ambitious, multipart show, opening Friday at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx, that considers Dickinson equally as a horticulturalist and a poet, and forges links between the two....

...Dickinson the recluse might have found its public location disconcertingly exposed, but the lunatic in her would have liked it just fine.

## Serious Dirt from Richard Waldman

### “As We Ache and Age”

April 29, 2010 by JESSICA DAMIANO / [jessica.damiano@newsday.com](mailto:jessica.damiano@newsday.com)

Anyone can plant a vegetable garden, lay out a perennial border and harvest herbs from the bed by the kitchen door, right? Not exactly. Enthusiasm, dedication and spare time notwithstanding, there are many among us who yearn to garden but simply can't. Or simply can't like we used to.

It starts with a sore back after hours of weeding, which can afflict even the most fit among us. But when arthritis, endurance and strength issues - common among our more experienced gardeners - devolve to the point where the once-enjoyable pastime becomes an insurmountable chore, many simply hang up their hoes for good. Before resorting to such drastic measures, it would serve you well to consider your options: There are plenty of specialized gardening methods, ergonomic tools and creative approaches that can help keep your inner gardener working.

Paint tool handles a bright color to make them easy to find if dropped among plants. Be sure to wear well-fitting clothing, comfortable shoes and a straw hat, and avoid gardening between noon and 4 p.m., when the sun is at its strongest. Wear sunscreen and gloves. Keep a water bottle with you and drink more frequently than you think necessary, avoiding alcoholic beverages.

Before doing any gardening, it's prudent to take a few minutes to stretch. Gardening is exercise, after all, and even minimal digging and lifting can strain muscles. Always keep your feet shoulder width apart to maximize balance, and check with your doctor before trying any new stretches or exercises.

The Arthritis Foundation recommends standing with your arms extended in front of you and reaching as far forward as you are able. Then, if you can, grab your right wrist with your left hand. Holding the position, slowly elevate your arms over your head and then gently pull your right arm over your head with your left hand. Hold for a few seconds. Repeat on the other side, stretching your left arm.

Depend on your strongest assets. For instance, instead of carrying a filled container in your hands, wrap your arms around it and hold it close to your body. Lift objects with the palms of your hands instead of your fingers, and keep your back straight whenever possible, always taking care to bend at the knees, not at the waist.

Planting and harvesting herbs and vegetables needn't require any bending if you use containers. Set window boxes or planters between waist and knee height, either on sawhorses, tables or makeshift stands. Be sure to drill drainage holes in the bottom of containers and set them into place while they're empty and lightweight. Then fill with potting mix and any amendments necessary for what you'll be growing. If you have room for such a setup outside your kitchen door, all the better. And if you have difficulty lifting a filled watering can, use a garden hose or, if logistics permit, a hose that attaches to your kitchen faucet. If neither is easily accessible, keep a filled water bucket nearby and use it to fill smaller containers that you can use to water plants. A chair or bench placed in a shady spot will be welcomed both as a timeout while working and as a place from which to admire your handiwork at the end of the day.

Herbs like basil, parsley and chives lend themselves very nicely to shallow, 8-inch deep containers, as do lettuces, spinach and chards. If you want to plant broccoli, tomatoes, carrots, peppers or eggplants, go with a container that's 12-14 inches deep. Beans, cucumbers, squashes and potatoes require a depth of about 18 inches. You can even plant cherry tomatoes in window boxes. Annuals and perennials can be grown in raised beds, too. But remember: Container-grown plants will need more frequent watering and fertilizing than their in-ground counterparts, so plan accordingly.

If you're going to plant in garden beds and borders, consider investing in perennials instead of annuals. They cost a bit more at the outset, but once they're in the ground, you won't have to replace them annually; they just keep coming back. Be sure to mulch all garden areas to retain soil moisture, which cuts down on watering, and to choke out weeds.

Above all, keep the pace leisurely; home wasn't built in a day.

## Special Request for the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Annual Garden Tour

The committee plans to hang lattice on the chain link construction fence in the Community Garden to display art work. Members, friends, relatives, and complete strangers are invited to submit work.

Call to Artists  
The Patchogue Garden Club  
10<sup>th</sup> Annual Garden Tour  
"Art in the Gardens"  
10 July 2010

We invite you to submit works of art to be displayed  
In the Community Garden at South Ocean Avenue  
And Terry Street, Patchogue Village

Submit any medium that can be hung, subjects  
to include flowers, trees, gardens, nature, etc.  
Work must be framed and wired ready to hang on lattice.

Drop off at Community Garden: 8:30 AM  
Pick up at Community Garden: 2:00 PM

Yes, there will be security for the day  
Yes, you can drop off early:  
Yes, we will have provisions to protect from rain  
No, there is no fee to submit work  
No, we will not sell your work  
No, there is no commission to us if you do

We will provide a list of work available for sale  
to patrons of the tour. To be included on the list,  
please provide us with your name and contact information  
and the title, medium, and price of the work by July 1, 2010

Other concerns, questions? Please RSVP your participation to  
Karen 758-2671 or Mary Ann 289-8122

GOD AND ST. FRANCIS DISCUSSING LAWNS [*Thanks, Mary Ann!*]

GOD: Francis, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

ST. FRANCIS: It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD: Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD: The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it-sometimes twice a week.

GOD: They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS: Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS: No Sir. Just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD: Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS: Yes, Sir.

GOD: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS: You aren't going to believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD: What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

ST. FRANCIS: You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD: No. What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS: After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD: And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS: They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD: Enough. I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have they scheduled for us tonight?"

ST. CATHERINE: "Dumb and Dumber", Lord. It's a really stupid movie about.....

GOD: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.



## Timely Tips for June

- Remove old flowers, but not foliage from spring-flowering bulbs.
- Prune shrubs that have just finished flowering, including weigela, philadelphus, and deutzia.
- Propagate many shrubs from softwood cutting taken mid-June through early July.
- Last chance to fertilize trees and shrubs.
- If tomato blossom-end rot was a problem last year, try watering on a regular schedule to avoid wet-dry fluctuations.
- Bring houseplants and most greenhouse plants outdoors and set in a shady area.



### Patchogue Garden Club

P.O. Box 3030

Patchogue, NY 11772-0887

“Come grow with us”

Founded 1996

Many gardeners will agree that hand-weeding is not the terrible drudgery that it is often made out to be. Some people find in it a kind of soothing monotony. It leaves their minds free to develop the plot for their next novel or to perfect the brilliant repartee with which they should have encountered a relative's latest example of unreasonableness. ~Christopher Lloyd, *The Well-Tempered Garden*, 1973