

"Awareness Through Education...  
Responsibility Through Involvement"



**horticultural society**

## NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 37 ISSUE 2 APRIL/MAY 2010

bayard cutting arboretum

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*"In March much snow,  
To trees and plants much woe"*

I am writing on this March 1st with hopes of consistently warmer weather. It has been a rough January and February for people and gardens alike. Although the weather couldn't stop the beautiful blooms of my yellow witch hazel *Hamamelis mollis* 'Pallida', it has certainly uprooted and/or damaged some of the most common evergreens, such as *Pinus strobus* (white pine) and *Ilex glabra* (Common inkberry). I saw the first blooms of the hellebores and *Leucojum* last week but, alas, they are under snow once again.

But have no fear, spring is coming and the BCAHS calendar is already packed with good things to loosen up those gardening fingers and inspire you with new ideas to incorporate into your 2010 garden plan. If you haven't done so already, sign up for spring classes, volunteer for our plant sale or join the planning committee for the annual spring party. Of course, don't forget to attend our meetings, the second Wednesday of each month.

The Carolina wrens and robins are already singing their spring songs, so go out in your yard and join them; it is never too early to plan your first sowing.

Happy Spring,  
Diane Henry-Vanisko

### **EXTENSIVE STORM DAMAGE AT THE ARBORETUM**

On Saturday, March 13, a severe nor'easter hit our area causing heavy damage to our beloved Bayard Cutting Arboretum. Supersaturated soil and intense winds caused many trees in the collection to fall or to be damaged by falling trees. While damage throughout was extensive, fortunately no one was hurt. Between the heavy snows this winter and the ferocity of this storm, nearly 100 specimens have been lost.

While trails were closed, Director Joy Kaminsky was able to reopen the grounds and the Manor House on Sunday for the scheduled concert.

The staff is working extraordinarily hard so she hopes to have the cleanup done by this weekend (March 20-21), though care will have to be taken, as the ground is still unstable. The replanting and rebuilding of this magnificent collection will begin, but the process will be a long one.

If you wish to walk the trails, call the Manor House at 581-1002 for information on the status of the area you wish to visit.

### **PHOTOS - PHOTOS - PHOTOS**

There are moments of great satisfaction that we experience when we are in our gardens... a special grouping of plants that just works... a display of flowers that takes our breath away... the morning light across the lawn... a structure that anchors everything in place.

Let's share these treasures with each other! E-mail your favorite garden photos (jpg format) with a one line caption and we'll try to post a few on our website.

This is an on-going project so continue throughout the seasons to share your garden wealth with the rest of us.

E-mail: [bcahs@optonline.net](mailto:bcahs@optonline.net)

Website: [www.bcahs.net](http://www.bcahs.net)

Kate Phalen

## **MARCH GENERAL MEETING**

On March 10, we had our general meeting at which we had our annual election and installation of officers, postponed from February because of the snowstorm. Diane introduced **Joan Wiecks**, our newly appointed Treasurer,

The slate is as follows:

<i>President</i>	<b>Diane Henry-Vanisko</b>	<i>1st Vice-President</i>	<b>Anthony La Scala</b>
<i>2nd Vice-President</i>	<b>Christine Ayasse</b>	<i>Recording Secretary</i>	<b>Lois Weinstein</b>
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	<b>Marie Camenares</b>	<i>Historian</i>	<b>Lorraine Seus</b>
<i>Members-at-Large</i>	<b>Julia Arena, Anita Bischoff, Judy Buitenkant, Diane Haug, Bill Wolkoff,</b>		

During the second part of the meeting we were entertained and educated on the foibles of turf grass by the incomparable Tamson Yeh, turf and land management specialist at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County.

Thank you, Marie Camenares, for writing an overview of Tamson's turf discussion, which is located on Page 6 of this newsletter.  
Janice Mancini

## **ANOTHER... SOMETHING NEW - Our First E-Mail Blast!**

Many of you have given us your e-mail addresses. We're going to start using them to send out reminders about meetings, speakers and special events, including cancellations due to unforeseen reasons – like the February Blizzard.

Our e-mails will come from [bcahs@optonline.net](mailto:bcahs@optonline.net) and will be sent blind so your e-mail address is the only one you will see.

Some of you may have filters or security blocks in place, so you might have to look in your junk/spam folder and set your computer to allow our mail to appear in your inbox. If your provider insists on considering it junk/spam, an email from you to our address or putting our address on your contact list will tell your provider that you are willing to communicate with this address.

This will also be a test of our typing abilities to see how many returned e-mails we get due to typos or changed addresses. Your first e-mail from us will have been sent shortly before our March 10<sup>th</sup> General Meeting. If you didn't get it, please e-mail us at [bcahs@optonline.net](mailto:bcahs@optonline.net) and let us know to include you. Of course, if you don't want to receive these infrequent reminders let us know that too.

You can also get the latest announcements, meeting information, newsletters and education program information from our website at [www.bcahs.net](http://www.bcahs.net).

Janice Mancini, Kate Phalen

### **STILL TIME TO SIGN UP!**

Have a yen to take a walking tour or have your antique evaluated?

Spaces are still available in these programs:

- #4 Antique Evaluations ~ April 8
- #5 William Floyd Estate, Cultural Landscape Walking Tour ~ April 10

For information about registration only call 579-7551 or email us at [bcahs@optonline.net](mailto:bcahs@optonline.net).

### **HELP WANTED:**

Volunteers for charming gift shop in the Manor House at the Bayard Cutting Arboretum. Perfect outlet for those looking for a way to contribute to the Horticultural Society in a volunteer capacity. This position is ideal if you enjoy interacting with the many happy people who visit the park and love it as you do. We are looking for a commitment of Wednesdays and/or Sundays from 1pm to 5pm EDT. That commitment should be rather solid as in every Wednesday every month, every Sunday every month or a combination therein. Please contact me, Evelyn Bozler, at 631-589-0345 to get a copy of the job outline. Heather, at the office can also assist you. There is a very easy training procedure that is totally free of charge.

## **OUR EXPANDING EVENTS CALENDAR**

Several newsletters ago, we introduced a new column, *At the Arboretum*, a calendar of on-site events. In an effort to provide our members with more news of current horticultural events, that column has been expanded to a two-part **NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR**, which you will see on the next page. The first will still be *At the Arboretum*. The second will be *Around and About*, which will include horticulture-related events from throughout the region.

You can help. As a group, we have a wide range of interests and contacts to the other groups. Please share the knowledge of related events that you acquire through these networks with our membership. You can send us that information in care of the editor at [bcahs@optonline.net](mailto:bcahs@optonline.net). Together we can make this a success.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR**

#### **At the Arboretum**

##### **House and Grounds Tours**

Enjoy the Manor House and the grounds on tours designed to delight and educate you about the various areas of the arboretum. Space is limited so reservations are recommended for all tours. If fees are charged, reservations will be made at the time of payment. Mail payment to PO Box 466, Oakdale, NY 11769-0466. For information, call 581-1002 or check the website at [www.bayardcuttingarboretum.com](http://www.bayardcuttingarboretum.com).

#### **Around and About**

##### **The 28<sup>th</sup> Spring Gardening School--Cornell Cooperative Extension Of Suffolk County**

Choose one of three full days of workshops:

- April 10 – St. Joseph Academy, Brentwood
- April 17 – Bellport High School
- April 25 – Riverhead High School

For more registration information contact Mary Lou Menga at 631-727-7850 EXT. 345 or [mk252@cornell.edu](mailto:mk252@cornell.edu). The information and brochure are available on the Cornell website at [www.ccesuffolk.org](http://www.ccesuffolk.org) under see GARDENING.

##### **Suffolk County Victory Garden Task Force**

Two more public hearings will be held in March by the **Long Island Victory Garden Task Force** to gather input and a recommendations on this topic for the Suffolk County Legislature as follows:

- March 24 – 10:00am in Brookhaven Town Hall Auditorium, One Independence Hill, Farmingville
- March 31 – 3:00 pm at Farmingdale State University Little Theater, 2350 Broadhollow Road, Farmingdale.

For information call DPO Vivian Vilorio-Fisher's office at 854-1650.

##### **Long Island Native Grass Initiative (LINGI) Native Plant Sale [See page 7 for more info]**

- June 4 and 5, June 11 and 12 – Suffolk County Community College, Eastern Campus Greenhouse, Riverhead

For information, to volunteer or to reserve plant material contact LINGI Coordinator Polly Weigand at (631) 727-2315x3, email [Polly.Weigand@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:Polly.Weigand@suffolkcountyny.gov) or see their website at: [http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub\\_about/parks\\_divisions/gnpc/lingi.html](http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/gnpc/lingi.html).

##### **The Herb Society Of America 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Herb Symposium**

- April 8 – 9-2:30 at The Old Field Club, 86 West Meadow Rd, Setauket 11733. \$48pp. For information call Susan Perry at 631- 666-3674.

##### **American Rock Garden Society: LI Chapter Plant Sale**

- May 16 – 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM rain or shine. Planting Fields Arboretum (Annex), Oyster Bay. Contact: Isabel at 516-694-9682 for more information.

## **ANNUAL PLANT SALE**

*May 8-9 10:00am to 4:00pm*

Spring is in the air and planning for the **BCAHS ANNUAL MOTHER'S DAY PLANT SALE** is in full swing. We will have an excellent selection of locally grown plants, annuals, rare shrubs, trees, groundcovers, spring bulbs, grasses and more. There will be hanging baskets and flowering plants suitable for Mother's Day.

Our favorite Granny will be on duty in **Granny's Attic**.



## **SPRING PARTY**

*Wednesday, June 9 6:00 pm*

Join us for our **ANNUAL MEMBERS ONLY SPRING PARTY** and celebrate to the music of the Sunnyland Jazz Band. Sign ups for food, set up and clean up will take place at our next two general meetings on April 14 May 12. After May 12 you can call 581-1002 or email us at [\*bcahs@optonline.net\*](mailto:bcahs@optonline.net).

## **A DAY OF BASKET WEAVING – INTERMEDIATE CLASS**

As always, the class with Miriam Fink and Linda Heidenfelder was great. This time we learned to weave a sturdy tote that will be most useful. Everyone successfully turned out a beautiful basket. It was so interesting to see the variety in the bags as people artistically used the same reeds, sea grass rope and Shaker tape in different sizes, patterns and colors to create their own unique designs.

I can't wait till Miriam and Linda's next class.

Jacqueline Pausewang

## **PLANT PROPAGATION TECHNIQUES AT LIHREC**

On February 1, a nice winter day, we met at the Cornell University Long Island Horticultural Research and Extension Center in Riverhead. As usual, Director Dr. Mark Bridgen was very informative and interesting. He discussed the basics of plant propagation like root and leaf cutting, air layering, grafting, etc., while showing us some interesting examples. After the lecture, we were given the opportunity to apply what we learned by planting various types of leaf cuttings. I tried Streptocarpus and Iron Cross Begonia. We were given potting containers in which to plant our cuttings and bring home. All of us eagerly await the results of our efforts. Everyone learned and enjoyed the experience.

Bob Veit

## **PLANTING FIELDS CAMELLIA HOUSE AND COE HALL**

Six hearty souls ventured to Oyster Bay on Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, the rescheduled snow date for this self-drive trip. We had a very informative tour of the Camellia House and learned about the different varieties and when they were introduced to the USA. Our tour of historic Coe Hall was fascinating. We learned many things about the Tudor mansion and the Coe family. A fun morning was had by all.

Anita Bischoff and Bob Veit

## **By Our Members**

### **GONE WITH THE LAWN**

**by Marie Camenares**

Ahh, spring. (I'm dreaming here, but stay with me)...The air is warm, the sun is shining, and your lawn doesn't look too, too bad from its bout with winter. Life is good---or is it? In the guise of spring lawn care advice, your neighbors, the media and your own desire to have a spectacular landscape are pressuring you to do things that aren't good for your grass. The kindest action now is to sit down and do nothing until you have a plan that is going to work with grass physiology *throughout the year!* Concerns about pesticide exposure and ground water contamination on Long Island and elsewhere have led Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques to reduce the use of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides.

So, why are we so crazy about our lawns? Well, here are a few good reasons:

- ▶ Grass plants contribute oxygen to the air we breathe *and* provide cooling or "natural air conditioning".
- ▶ Lawns allow water to infiltrate soil readily compared to runoff from the rain on sidewalks, streets and driveways.
- ▶ Lawns help reduce noise levels *and* clean and filter out dust, dirt particles and allergens from the air which become trapped on the grass and later washed into the soil.
- ▶ Lawns define spaces in the garden landscape *and* provide a place for children to play and adults to relax.

Know the lifecycle of your grass. The first six weeks of spring is the time when 60% of the top growth is going to occur. Think about this in terms of water, fertilization, and mowing. Although we are encouraged to fertilize by every commercial product known to man, DO NOT! You will push top growth even more at the expense of establishing a strong root system. Additionally, succulent top growth combined with spring rain means thin skinned grass that will be more easily invaded by disease. Wait to fertilize until Memorial Day, well into spring.

Thoughts about mowing. One of the best things you can do for your turf is to maintain a three-inch mowing height; for every 1/8" blade is raised, you get 30% increase in leaf surface area. Return clippings after mowing: it's free food for your lawn. Never remove more than one-third of an inch of the grass blade at one time: short grass = short roots, weak grass, hot soil, weeds, and low soil moisture. Pick a mowing height for the year and stick with it.

- ▶ Avoid mowing low all spring then high at the end of June when roots will have lost mass, just about the time you give it more top growth to support. Also avoid cutting low in the fall again, knocking the grass back just about the time that the roots start to grow and need that top growth for support. Don't mow if temps are above 90° and soil is dry---you will damage crowns and roots. Wait until early morning or late afternoon to mow. Early morning mowing helps to reduce dollar spot disease, but you may have trouble with clumped clippings.
- ▶ Avoid mowing sporadically or not at all, then whacking way back. If you are going to change the mowing height, back down gradually, several weeks of 0.25"- 0.5" reductions. Once you have reached the desired height, mow three times a week to encourage lateral spread. Don't whack back the mowing height and then pump in nitrogen. The roots will die back and coupled with excess top growth, the lawn will look great but die back quickly.
- ▶ Keep grass at a three-inch height except for mowing low once or twice in the spring to encourage soil warming and reduce disease, before grass breaks dormancy to control wild onion or wild garlic or at the last mowing of season to reduce disease over winter.

Lime is a terrible thing to waste. Before you put down lime in the spring you need to know why, and how much. The only way to figure this out is to get a soil test. The level of acid in your soil can't be seen, tasted, smelled or "felt"--- the only way is better liming through chemistry and that means a soil test! The pH over a site may vary from place to place so the best way is to get a representative sample from several areas of your yard.

Spring is not the time for renovating. When you remove or disturb lawn areas in the spring, you are encouraging weeds to occupy the nice warm space at the soil's surface that you just opened up. At this time of the year, the growth of the weed is going to out compete the grass. Those weeds that mature will drop more seeds to replenish the bank as well. If you have existing bare spots at the end of winter you can dormant seed those, so that as late winter snow or heavy rain dries down, the seed will be pulled into contact with the soil. However, the best time for any of these operations is late summer and early fall when less weed competition and autumn rains will give a little push from Mother Nature.

Weeds, Weeds, Weeds...I hate them but...weeds are a symptom of a problem within the site that is leading to thin turf. Each weed has a message for those able and willing to speak "weed", e.g., plantain means compaction, red sorrel means acid and damp soil. Identify what weeds you have, learn what they mean and then take steps to change the site so they don't pay a return visit and the grass will be happy to grow there.

Educate yourself. There are many books to help you. "Can My Petunia Be Saved" by Dr. Tamson Yeh is an extremely helpful book for all you gardeners out there who want to know what to do, when to scout for problems and how to grow healthy gardens. She writes with humor, so you will laugh and learn at the same time. I can't think of a better way to approach my garden this spring. Happy Gardening!

## MAY ROUND TABLE

### ***Bring Your Questions - We've Got The Answers Bring Your Successes - And Tell Us How You Did It***

Once again we're having an open format meeting to share our problems and dilemmas, our success and inspirations, our knowledge and our dreams. Please be ready to share your experiences, ask or answer questions and contribute to the success of the evening.

Start off on the right foot by having your soil tested. Marie Camenares, a member from Suffolk County Cooperative Extension, has graciously offered to test your soil, so bring in a sample. For best results taking your sample, follow these directions from Cornell

- In gardens/new plantings where the soil will be turned under or rototilled, individual samples are taken from the upper 6 to 8 inches of soil.
- In established plantings or lawns where the soil will not be turned under, individual samples are taken from the upper 3" of soil at root level.
- Each soil sample is comprised about 10 individual samples randomly taken by walking back and forth diagonally across the area to be sampled.
- Dig a small hole at root level. Remove a slice of soil from the entire side of the hole and place this in a clean plastic container.
- Repeat this procedure at each of the 10 random spots and place the soil from these spots in the **same container**. Remove stones, grass, etc. and mix well.
- Next remove two 8-ounce cupfuls of the soil from the container and place this in a plastic bag. Secure the bag. **This is your soil sample for that area.**
- Mark the outside of the bag with an identification (i.e. #1, #2, or "A", "B", or "East", "West"). Keep identification simple.
- Be sure your sample is thoroughly dry when you bring it in to be tested.

## IF IT'S TOM STEMLER, THIS MUST BE SPRING

Join us at our April meeting as we celebrate the coming of spring with a warm welcome for Tom Stemler of Daisy Gardens. Tom will introduce us to what's up and coming in the world of plants, bringing a wonderful selection of these plants for us to see. Summer can't be far behind

## THE LONG ISLAND NATIVE GRASS INITIATIVE (LINGI)

The Long Island Native Grass Initiative (LINGI) is a cooperative effort of over 30 non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, and nursery professionals whose goal is to "bridge the gap" between supply and demand of native plant materials by providing initial sources to further commercial native plant propagation activities. Since 2005, LINGI's volunteers have conducted field collections, seed cleaning, and have applied standard plant propagation techniques towards the creation of founder seed for Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), and Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*). LINGI's efforts are intentionally focused on harvesting in a genetically and ecologically sensitive manner in order to capture as much genetic variability within these populations as possible, at the same time minimizing impact to ecological processes (seed bank, forage, predation, nesting, etc.).

With increasing interest and high demand for plant materials, LINGI's momentum is rapidly expanding. Through annual plant sales, diversification of targeted plant materials, contract growing and grant writing, LINGI will continue to successfully serve as the mechanism to identify and collect plant materials for commercial plant production from the wild lands of Long Island. As such, the preservation of the genetic heritage of Long Island's native plant populations and, thereby, biodiversity at a molecular level will continue to go to seed!

LINGI will be holding its second annual benefit, a **Native Plant Sale**, on June 4 and 5, and again on June 11 and 12 at Suffolk County Community College Eastern Campus Greenhouse in Riverhead to support their continued efforts which thrive solely on the concept of pooling resources and volunteer support. If you are interested becoming a volunteer, are interested in purchasing plants or would like further information, please contact Polly Weigand, LINGI Coordinator, at (631) 727-2315x3, email at [Polly.Weigand@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:Polly.Weigand@suffolkcountyny.gov) or check out the LINGI website at: [http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub\\_about/parks\\_divisions/gnpc/lingi.html](http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/gnpc/lingi.html).

LINGI via Jane Manning

## **SPRING SEED EXCHANGE**

Come and share your favorite seeds with others at the April meeting. The seed exchange will start at 7:00 PM, before the general meeting. Please label your seeds so that members know what they are getting. We will provide you with envelopes in which to take the seeds home. Diane Haug

## **FYI – GARDENING CONNECTIONS – IRENE VIRAG**

Irene Virag is now publishing her monthly gardening calendar on her website and will be moving her gardening column there. Check it out at [www.irenevirag.com](http://www.irenevirag.com).

## **GUIDES TO FLOWERS AND FOLIAGE PLANTS**

**DID YOU KNOW...**there is a page on the Cornell Cooperative Extension's extensive gardening website that profiles 269 flowers and foliage plants? Each profile contains a detailed description and growing instructions, site and soil requirements, varieties and special uses. You can find flowers listed in two ways: by botanical name or by common name. For this information - and much more – go to <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/>.



## **FEEDBACK WANTED**



We would appreciate feedback on the changes you see happening. You can email us that or mail your thoughts to BCAHS, PO Box 427, Oakdale, NY 11769-0427.

## **WELCOME NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS**

### **NEW**

Rosemary Craven  
Leah Green  
Joan C & Ken Courtney  
Ann & Gerald Kaler  
Caroline Lock  
Jeanette & Mike Long  
Rosemarie Schroeder

### **RENEW**

Julia Arena  
Dorothy Auer  
Muriel S. Bening  
Joan Cangro  
Ada Catalano  
William & Agnes Conboy  
Christine Conklin  
Gwyneth & Robert Cox  
Kathleen Dallin  
Barbara & Jim Gathard  
Ann Grunwald

Karen Headley  
Jurgen & Brigitte Jaenicke  
Sarah Kachel  
Ann Lauther  
Barbara Livant  
Maureen Malossi  
Jane Nowiczski  
Joan & George Rasmussen  
Judith Stratton  
Mary Ellen Walsh  
Rae C. Westerlund

## **THANK YOU**

The Horticultural Society would like to thank the following businesses for their generous support of our activities. Please keep them in mind when you are shopping.

- **BAYPORT FLOWER HOUSES** – 940 Montauk Highway, Bayport – 472-0014
- **DAISY GARDEN** – Gillette avenue, Bayport – 363-2708
- **JOSEPH'S GARDEN & GREENHOUSE** – 525 Smithtown Avenue, Bohemia – 567-0292
- **G. FONTANA & SONS** (Concrete Products) – 890 Montauk Highway, Bayport – 472-1600
- **SPRING GARDEN GREENHOUSES** – 45 Carlton Avenue, East Islip – 277-5986

We also need to thank the **New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation** for their continued support of the BCA Horticultural Society's activities.

*“Gardening is about enjoying the smell of things growing in the soil,  
getting dirty without feeling guilty, and generally taking the time to soak up a  
little peace and serenity.”*

*~Lindley Karstens, [noproblemgarden.com](http://noproblemgarden.com)*



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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

GENERAL MEETINGS

All meetings start with a social upstairs in the Carriage House at 7:30. Business meetings start at 7:45. The regular meeting starts at 8:00.

- 4/14 Tom Stemler: Up and Coming Plants
- 5/12 Roundtable: Bring soil samples

SPECIAL EVENTS

- 5/8-9 Plant Sale
- 6/9 Members only Spring Party
- 7/14 Summer Walk with Joy
- 8/11 Dahlia Walk

NEWSLETTER

- 5/12 Deadline for next newsletter

**BCAHS Membership**

Individual membership dues are \$20.00 per year. Family membership (two adults in the same household) dues are \$25.00 per year. Our membership year begins September 1st, but first-time members joining between February 1st and August 31st are given membership from the date of joining plus a full year's membership beginning the following September 1st.

Members receive a bimonthly Newsletter with a current calendar of events and a biannual Education Program Brochure listing classes and trips. Members receive a discounted rate for attending classes and trips as well as advanced registration privileges.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Check Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Interests or Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to OUR NEW ADDRESS: BCAHS  
PO Box 427  
Oakdale, NY 11769-0427