



Greenfield Garden Club Newsletter

December 2017

Vol. 25, No. 9

Time for a little Holiday Cheer (hip, hip hooray!)

It's that time of year when we feel the need for an end of the year celebration - to toast a year well spent and a garden now put to sleep. We will gather at 6:00 pm at the lovely home of Jean Wall, treasurer, at 40 High Street in Greenfield. There is on-street parking all around the block. The club will supply liquid refreshments, and you, the revelers, are invited to bring a sweet or savory snack to share. Holiday attire is optional but would be fun!

Interested in the Yankee Swap again this year? Please bring a wrapped gift in the \$15 - \$20 range and let the fun begin. Some years we are all very happy with our gifts and there is no swapping. Hopefully there will be some swapping this year as it adds to the merriment. Ground rules will be agreed upon before we start!

We understand that there is quite a bit of competition this year with events that same night in Greenfield. We do plan our schedule a year in advance, and hope that you will be able to find the

time to join us, even if it's only for an hour or so. We would love to see you and wish you happy holidays in person! Please email the club or call a steering committee member if you have any questions about this event— or even suggestions for the following year. Enjoy the last few weeks of the year!



December President's Report

December is such a busy month, and it slips by so quickly. If you are not prepared with your holiday cards before the first of the month, there is a chance that they will become New Year's cards! If you have not been squirreling away small gifts throughout the year, there's a chance you will be out and about among the other last minute shoppers! My plan as I get older (and I don't seem to be able to get others completely on board) is to forego the blind buying of gifts and instead aim for quality family time. I would rather spend money on special foods and play games together. I have resisted the Black Friday and Cyber Monday "deals." I am poking about at local shops and looking for meaningful gifts. Have you been to Turners Falls lately? There are several stores downtown that offer quality and/or unusual gifts. Do you have a favorite store, or a great idea for a Christmas gift? Let us know at the Holiday Party! I hope you are able to enjoy a more relaxed holiday season this year. Enjoy every cookie, wreath and your neighbor's decorations! Cheers! *(teapot for sale at "Stuff")*



UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, December 8: 6:00 pm Holiday Party – 40 High St, Greenfield

Sunday, January 28, 2018 – Brunch – hold the date for the Annual Meeting!

Steering committee will reconvene in January

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ONE AND ALL!

Annual Meeting

Hold the date of **Sunday, January 28th** for the Annual Meeting. We are still finalizing the exact location and time (we want a brunch), but our speaker will be the inimitable Bill Benner. Here is his curriculum vitae from the pages of the VCA South Hadley Animal Hospital:

Dr. Benner is a 1995 graduate of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, where he was valedictorian. He enjoys and is very proficient at small animal medicine and surgery. In addition to his dog and cat patients, he has a special interest in avian and exotic animal medicine, and has extensive training and experience treating birds, reptiles, ferrets, rabbits, and rodents. He serves on the Advisory Board of the Veterinary Technician degree program at Holyoke Community College, and many technician students have been mentored through our practice as part of their educational rotations. He spends most of his time with animals outside of work as well. He is a long-time birdwatcher and a member of the Hampshire Bird Club. He is the editor of *Massachusetts Butterflies*, the journal for the MA chapter of the North American Butterfly Association. He is involved in several on-going research projects, ranging from monitoring breeding birds in western MA, to radio-tagging endangered Timber Rattlesnakes and Black Ratsnakes. He is also a watercolor botanical illustrator, an avid gardener, and finds time to cater to his cats and herps and fish at home.

Bill will be bringing a slideshow, which will help us get through the 'winter whites' and chilly doldrums! Although he has many talents, his talk will focus on his gardens and the birds and butterflies that are attracted to them. I understand that his talk last year at the Senior Symposium was well-received, (<http://www.commonweeder.com/bill-benner-butterfly-gardens/>) so I know we are in for a lovely afternoon. Here is a photo of Bill, as well as one of his gardens. Maybe we can wrangle an invite to visit in person next summer!



A SOLSTICE SALUTATION

I salute you!

There is nothing I can give you which

You have not.

But there is much, that while I cannot give,

You can take.

No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find

Rest in it today.

Take heaven!

No peace lies in the future which is not

Hidden in this present instant.

Take peace!

The gloom of the world is but a shadow.

Behind it, yet within our reach, is joy.

Take joy!

And so at this time, I greet you,

With the prayer that for you, now and forever,

The day breaks, and the shadows flee away!

(Take Joy! The Tasha Tudor Christmas Book)

Officers 2017:

President:

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Time to Feed Your Backyard Birds

It's getting cold outside! It's time to clean up the birdfeeders for winter use. A scrub brush and some mild soapy water will do wonders. Some sources say to use bleach, others, to skip the bleach. Just make sure they are super-clean. Rinse everything thoroughly and allow to dry completely. Poorly maintained feeding stations can do more harm than good by spreading disease. Tube-type feeders are the best since you avoid the accumulation of droppings that can also spread disease. Keep your feeders close enough to escape marauding hawks, but no place for a cat to wait in ambush. If your feeders are near windows, remember to apply decals to avoid window strikes. Birds also need sources of water. You might want to think about getting a birdbath heater to keep your feathered friends happy. If you don't deadhead everything in the garden, you will be leaving a food source for finches and other small birds. A small brush pile tucked somewhere out of site, made up of clippings, branches and yard debris, will be much appreciated by birds who will forage and hide in it. One of our favorite pastimes in the winter is watching the birds, so why not make your landscape more friendly to them? Most birds do not depend solely on your feeder for their food. In fact, many obtain less than 1/5 of their nutrition at feeders. Too many House Sparrows at your feeder? This non-native bird can discourage native birds from visiting, but there are some things you can do to keep them at bay. Stop using millet, and keep the area under your feeder clear from seed debris. You might want to research feeder halos – a new device that appears to have some success in keeping this species away. Your local bird seed supplier may have other new bird-feeding items in stock. Those that deter squirrels can make watching them try to eat the seed a family event! You can also try the Slinky method: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSGer1mi1Aw> Guaranteed to make you smile! Enjoy the birds this winter!

PEARS CARAMEL

A lovely winter treat when firm, crisp pears are readily available from your favorite market, and you are looking for an easy yet elegant desert.

6 to 8 medium ripe pears (Anjou or Bartlett)
1 TB sugar
1 cup cream
butter

Peel pears, split lengthwise, and core. Put each half face down in a buttered pan. Sprinkle the pears the with sugar.

Cook at 425 degrees Fahrenheit for 35 minutes, or until tender.

Add the cream and return to oven. Cook 10 more minutes, basting frequently.

Serve plain or with whipped cream. A nice ginger ice cream would be a good accompaniment too!



Treasurer's Report

Balance as of Nov 30, 2017\$6, 270.37
Income\$0.21
Interest
Expenses \$50.00
Grant check finally cashed

All financial matters and membership dues should be directed to the club Treasurer:

Jean Wall
413-773-9069
40 High Street
Greenfield MA 01301



Greenfield Garden Club

PO Box 309

Greenfield MA 01302-0309

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

These vendors have agreed to provide the listed discounts for members who show their membership card when making a purchase. We appreciate their support! Please respect their offers by remembering these generous discounts are for club members only and only when your card is presented.

Backyard Birds – 15 Strong Ave., Northampton
10% off regularly prices items except thistle birdseed

Baystate Perennial Farm
36 State Road (Route 5/10), Whately
10% off regular priced plants

Chapley Gardens
397 Greenfield Road (Route 5/10), Deerfield
10% off regular priced plants and pond supplies

Five Acre Farm – 110 Hinsdale Rd., Northfield
10% off regular priced plants

Glenbrook Gardens
56 Glenbrook Drive, Greenfield
10% off regular priced plants and products

Greenfield Farmers' Cooperative (Agway)
269 High Street, Greenfield
10% anything garden related

LaSalle Florists
23 LaSalle Drive (Route 5/10), Whately
10% off regular priced plants

O'Brien Nurserymen – 40 Wells Road, Granby, CT
10% off plants

Silver Garden Daylilies – 23 Picket Lane, Greenfield
10% off daylilies

Sugarloaf Nursery – 25 Amherst Road, Sunderland
10% off regular priced plants

Warm Colors Apiary
2 South Mill River Road, South Deerfield
10% off

Wilder Hill Gardens
351 South Shirkshire Road, Conway
10% off plants and consultations

Any vendors interested in offering our gardeners a discount, please contact the Steering Committee.