



NEWSLETTER



*Brrrrr, it's cold outside.
Ice fountain at Mohonk House, NY by Chris Dole*

PLANT SALE 2015



Photo missed the Summer 2015 Newsletter, but here we all are now for posterity.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I can't help thinking back to how awful last winter was and dreading every flake that hits the ground this year. But in the interest of looking at the glass half full, rather than half empty, look around your garden and absorb the variety of textures and colors in every bed. Winter gardens can be just as inspiring as summer ones, as the grasses (or what's left of them) blow in the wind and the brave rosemary emerges from the latest snowfall (will it make it to spring?).

Winter too is the time to scour those catalogs for new ideas and new plants or just to anticipate the next growing season. Sometimes the planning is more fun than the execution.

GCBB members, I have noticed, do some of their best work on inclement days, winter or summer. As president I know I can expect a flurry of emails on projects, committee updates, etc. whenever it rains or snows. It seems a good time to spend the day at the computer rather than brave the elements.

We are a busy group for sure and will have a full winter and spring with greenhouse, organizing the Backyard Botany week, the plant sale, annual meeting with horticulture, floral design and a photographic retrospective. Conservation is working in a demonstration garden in Hazelwood Park in New Bedford. Trunk Show planners are lining up vendors, have picked a new location and are mapping out a marketing strategy.

I hope you enjoy this Newsletter, so expertly assembled and edited by Ruth Jolliffe.

Carolyn Willard

GRANTS: A BRIEF HISTORY

by Mary Schubert & Ruth Furman

Since 2003, The Garden Club of Buzzards Bay's Grants Program has disbursed approximately \$40,000 to community projects along the South Coast region with amounts ranging from \$125 to \$3,000. The community groups soliciting the club for these awards have supported civic beautification, conservation, sustainable agriculture and scholarships for conservation, horticulture or landscape design. Organizations awarded the funds have been schools (public, private and charter,) land trusts, museums, libraries, the zoological society and the YMCA, to name a few, with the average amount distributed in the \$250-500 range.



Funding for these grants has historically come from the club's annual plant sale in May and more recently a summer trunk show sponsored by the club proved to be very successful as another source of money to enhance the grants program.

Historically, GCBB has always reached out to the community since its founding in 1930, planting cherry trees at Buttonwood Park, elm trees in South Dartmouth and New Bedford, and creating a Wild Flower Walk at the Rotch Jones Duff Historical House which is used each spring for botany classes presented to New Bedford 4th graders and is part of their curriculum.



In 2003, it was decided to formalize this outreach to the community and make it a yearly process. In the fall members are asked to suggest organizations to which applications might be mailed or e-mailed. Ads and press releases in local publications and newspapers also promote the grants program. While the monies given out are usually small amounts they make a significant difference to the recipients and provide funding for many civic projects that might otherwise be

shelved for lack of funding. As the mission of the GCBB is to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening through education in various formats, the grants program is our club's way of giving back to our local community and support their good efforts.



Features

LIFE IN OUR GREENHOUSE

By Linda Cornell

As I write this we are experiencing our first snow of the winter. Up until this point, which we knew was inevitable, we have been blessed with warmer than normal temperatures. That puts the cost of heating our GH in the good range! As many of you know Margaret has taken the helm this year. She is a whiz at organization and dedication so needless to say we are in very good hands.



So how do we manage to have such a wide variety of healthy plants to sell in May? It all starts with cuttings that many of the committee members bring to the GH in October. To me it seems like a miracle that these three inch rootless, virtually leafless pieces of vegetation become our salable plants. We trim them, dust them with root tone (which promotes rooting and discourages disease), stick them gently into our cutting bench and bathe them in mist periodically throughout the day. After three weeks they are usually rooted. It's quite astounding and wonderful what nature accomplishes. After rooting they are potted and tended to. Eventually these plants are moved into their final, larger pot size to fill out and bloom.

Along with the cuttings, which we continue to take into January, seed selection takes place after the New Year. That committee relies heavily on successes of our past, but being plant enthusiasts we always try to introduce fun and curious new plants. It's not exactly a free-for-all but that meeting is lively and fun. When it comes to starting seeds there is an inherent challenge as to timing it "just right". Since we want our plants to be of manageable size by the Plant Sale for the gardeners who will take them home – May 14th this year – we take on a mathematical problem that requires a basic knowledge of weather and the specific plants we are attempting to grow. To determine the date to start these seeds we count the days until germination and days needed to grow to a flowering or fruiting size. We also have to take into consideration the last frost date for our area and hope the weather gods cooperate. When it works we are ecstatic, and if we "miss" we have three-foot tomatoes for sale . . . trust me it has happened – much to our dismay. Timing is crucial to our plant sale success. This committee is courageous!



Our little greenhouse produces thousands of dollars worth of plants, but this can't happen without the members' tender care. We check in daily regardless of weather conditions to monitor watering or make certain the heating system is working or the mist system hasn't broken and flooded our cuttings. There are perilous potentials in maintaining a greenhouse, and that doesn't even take into account the weather variability. Too many

cloudy days . . . over-watering can be problematic. Too hot and sunny . . . plants can dry out to the point where they are incapable of coming back to life. The electric vents decide not to work on those sunny hot days? Oh my – we have a disaster on our hands. We have been known to have pest problems as well. But enlisting our "Bug Man" Andrew has taken some of the angst out of THAT issue. Our members are always on the watch for these unwanted invaders.



Along with the obvious challenges of maintaining the GH there are many behind-the-scene details. An old glass house is fraught with upkeep. Luckily we have Jim Forbush,

Allan Schubert, and David Cornell who sneak in and help to keep the structure sound, running efficiently and beautified. Thanks to our handy men and their areas of expertise.

Finally after rooting, seeding, transplanting, repotting, staking, fertilizing, repotting AGAIN, trimming, labeling, and pricing, the greenhouse contents are ready to be moved to St Mary's for their big debut. We display each one to show off its best features and watch as their new owners take them home. Our reward is hearing the final tally of the day . . . the year . . . and think about the wonderful causes that this money goes towards.

Our members dedication stems from a genuine love of plants and gardening. This is obvious to me each week as we come in, put on our gloves, and tend to the task at hand. Life inside this glass house is enriched by the relationships among friends working and learning together. We gladly embrace the common goal of producing healthy, interesting, pest free plants to sell.



PHOTO SHOW AT THE HOLIDAY PARTY AT THE RJD

Larger Photos are Blue Ribbons

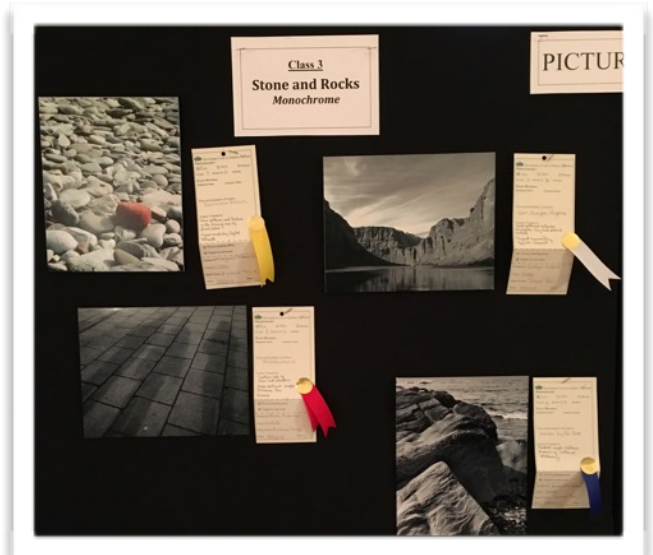
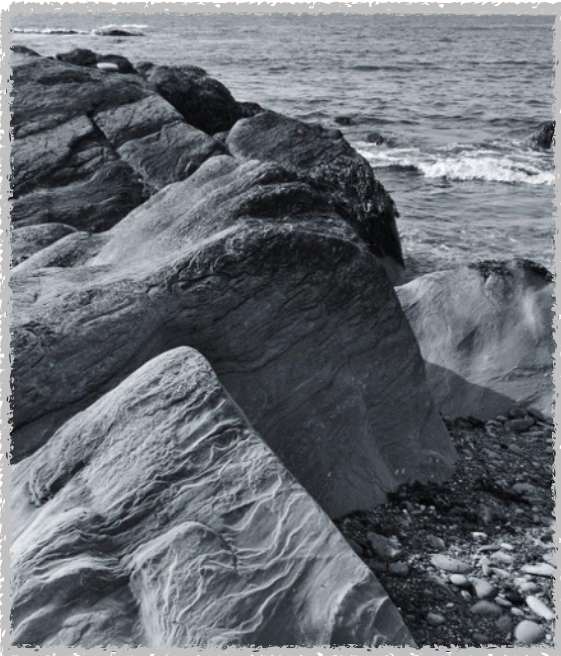
Class 1: Fruits, Vegetables or Berries: Susan McLaren



Class 2: First Light, Last Light, Moonlight: Sally Lutz, Novice Award



Class 3: Stone and Rocks Monochrome: Susan McLaren



Class 4: Small Animals: Ruth Jolliffe, Best in Show



Class 5: Windows and Doors: Beth Ladd



Class 6: Anything Goes: Lisa Mellgard



GREENS WORKSHOP



FIELD TRIP TO ROGER WILLIAM BOTANICAL GARDEN

