UWCHLAN GARDEN CLUB

LIONVILLE, PA

MEETINGHOUSE MOMENTS

SPRING 2023

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OFFICERS 2022-2024

President: Pam Walsh

Vice-President: Terry Miller

Treasurer: Carolyn Schreffler

Recording Secretary: Linda Donnon

Corresponding Secretary: Dolores Knight

A Message from Your President

Since our last newsletter, we have certainly been busy. The Christmas Fair was a huge success and netted close to \$10,000 again this year, with the Trust raffle clearing \$1485. Big thanks to Mary Whitesel for chairing this huge undertaking and to everyone who contributed in some way! It was another rainy event, but the weather didn't seem to deter our customers! The snowmen sold out quickly, so we plan to make even more for next year. The Kid's Corner started slowly but ended up with lots of happy young visitors. The baked goods were delicious, and the arrangements, as always, were amazing! The sleigh sold again and was seen on display on an island in the front yard pond of the person who purchased it.

Pam Walsh



Our Holiday luncheon at Whitford Country Club was lovely with 50 of our members attending. The food was great, and the company was even better! Thanks to Peggy LaRosa for making the arrangements!



What is the GCFP Governor's Trophy? Pc

Several of our members had a very busy few weeks after Christmas. We wrote articles, compiled, organized, proofread, and arranged our 25 page, 50 surface Book of Evidence for the 2022 Governor's Trophy. I can't thank our committee enough for making this happen. Thanks to our Awards Chair, Becky Zeeger, for coordinating everything with the help of Sharon Richardson, Thea Mahard, Terry Miller, Carol McConnell, Helene Reid, Wendy Fox, Kathy Deutsch, Mary Jo Schlomann, all the members who contributed in some way and some much-



contributed in some way, and some muchappreciated guidance and assistance from members of another District 1 garden club.

> For those who aren't sure what this award is about, I'll share some of the details. We wrote articles about everything we were involved with for the year

2022 and included pictures of each event. Sounds easy, but it was a bit overwhelming, especially since we hadn't considered entering until about June. The following is from the Awards Manual for GCFP. "The

Pam Walsh

Governor's Trophy may be awarded to a Federated Garden Club, which has distinguished itself by providing a year of well-balanced club programs,



exceptional civic activity, club projects in all areas of conservation, and activity in State projects as defined in the Scoring Rubric. The winner shall receive a crystal engraved vase, which becomes the property of the winning club. The historic

Governor's Trophy Silver Bowl is also presented for the winning club's use for the year; it shall be returned at the next convention. The club also receives a certificate of recognition for being the

most outstanding garden club in its size category in the state." This award will be presented at the State convention in April. Win or lose, it was a worthwhile experience. We can be very proud of our club and our members!!



2023 GCFP Convention "Thyme to Garden" April 21-23, Monroeville, PA

Fun Stop on the Way to the Convention! Sharon Richardson

IF you're interested in turning the Convention into a road trip, aka mini-vacation, why not stop at Fallingwater or Kentuck Knob? Fallingwater is one of Frank Lloyd Wright's most famous buildings. It is an iconic building, and tours are available daily.

https://fallingwater.org/



Close by is Kentuck Knob, another Frank Lloyd Wright home. While this one is not as famous as Fallingwater, it has the bonus of a Sculpture Park behind the home. Kentuck Knob is currently closed, but there is a phone number listed that may be able to give more information for the spring: (724) 329-1901 For more information, check out this article:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kentuck_Knob



Both properties require advanced reservations. If you plan to visit both, consider leaving on Thursday morning in time for a tour of one of the homes Thursday afternoon and the other on Friday morning before continuing on to the convention.

For those of you not attending the Convention, you might enjoy an armchair tour of these two historical homes:

https://takebackroads.com/2018/10/11/frank-lloydwright-house-tour-pennsylvania/#Duncan

A Neater Nepeta Thea Mahard

One of the first perennials that I planted in my garden when I moved here to Pennsylvania was Nepeta 'Walker's Low'. I had planted this lovely catmint in my previous garden in Connecticut, and in my first garden before that. I knew that this very deer resistant plant had tiny, greenish-gray foliage beneath an abundance of bluish-purple flowers. The flowers bloomed over a long period of time, and as they faded, new ones would shoot up to take their place. Once the flowering finished, the aged calyces hung on with faded gray-purple color, giving the impression that flowering was still continuing. After a few initial waterings upon planting, no additional water was ever needed. No fertilizer was needed, either. I grew it in different soils without a problem. The only requirement was that it should have at least 6 hours of sunlight. I surrounded it with contrasting yellow flowers, and it (almost always) made me smile.

There was one shortcoming, however. 'Walker's Low' was said to be tall, about 3' tall and wide. (It was named after some garden, hence the 'Low'). Yet I never saw it stand more than a foot tall. Instead, it would sprawl and sprawl all over the place. I controlled its spread by digging divisions out from around its perimeter and donating them every year to our plant sale. Despite these yearly divisions, it seemed to increase in size more each year.

Then one day this past summer, I looked down in horror. The Nepeta had obliterated any sign of the

neighboring Aquilegia, trounced the Coreopsis verticillate, smothered the yellow Achillea, was encroaching upon the mouseeared Coreopsis, and nipping like a mad dog at the heels of the yellow Gladioli. The Nepeta was at least six feet wide. In one angry motion, I ripped the plant out and stuck it in a leaf bag for transportation to the yard waste



site. Two minutes later, I was regretting the action and wondered if I should try cramming it back into the soil.

Then I had a moment of clarity. What I need is a neater Nepeta.

Thus began my quest for the perfect catmint. I started by looking on the Bluestone Perennials website. There were 8 beautiful purple Nepetas and one white one. They all looked so pretty in the pictures. 'Cat's Pajamas' was said to start blooming earlier than most others. 'Cat's Meow' and 'Picture Purrfect' were described as 'tidy'. (Aren't these names so cute?) I felt that I needed more information before making a decision.

I looked on the Chicago Botanic Gardens website Nepeta plant trials where they compared 30 varieties. They rated four Nepetas as better than all the rest, but these trials were completed in 2007 and many new plants have been hybridized since. The four best were 'Walker's Low' (yes, that is right, I killed one of the best), 'Six Hills Giant' (said to be wider than 'Walker's Low'), 'Select Blue' with a slightly shorter bloom duration, and 'Joanna Reed,' described as wider but shorter and neater than most of the others and with a flowering time into late October (longer than 'Walker's Low'.)

I kept looking. Next I found the Penn State Trials done in 2022. They compared just 5 different varieties. The best was 'Whispurr Blue'; its flowers

were described as pink, and the photo showed pink flowers, not what I was looking for. To make things more confusing, they also trialed 'Whispurr Pink' which looked identical in the photos to 'Whispurr Blue' but had a lower rating. The lowest rating was for



'Cat's Pajamas' which looked variable in the photos, some beautiful, and some wimpy. It is the one that Bluestone Perennials described as a longer blooming Nepeta.

I then found an internet forum on Houzz from last year. This consisted of a number of gardeners talking about their catmint. Many praised 'Walker's Low', but many of those gardeners only grew that one kind of Nepeta. A number of gardeners grew 'Cat's Pajamas', some of them saying it grew sparsely and others raving about the dense, long blooming flowers. Perhaps it is seed grown and variable? Those who grew 'Whispurr Blue' (you know, the pink one from Penn State), raved about its fuller, denser BLUE flowers, and two of the gardeners included photos of the blue flowers. One person said that 'Joanna Reed' was the neatest in her garden and did not seed around or spread too much.

So at this point I am completely confused. I continue my quest. I found two You-Tube videos taken at Walter's Gardens highlighting five types of catmints that they sell. The first, taken at the end of May, was put online by Garden Crossings. In that video I can clearly see that 'Cat's Pajamas' is blooming earlier than the others, and all of the plants look healthy, none of them are sparse. I can also see that the plant with the neatest mounding habit is 'Purrsian Blue', although this plant is larger than the 'Cat's Pajamas' and not yet in full bloom. There is a second video put online by Walter's Gardens which shows the same garden a little later in June and all of the plants are in bloom.

My conclusion? I'm not sure. 'Cat's Pajamas' might either be a winner or a sparse looking loser. 'Purrsian Blue' looks tidy. 'Whispurr Blue' seems to have very lovely dense flowers, but they might turn out to be pink. And two sources describe 'Joanna Reed' as neat and tidy with a longer bloom time. I have to think about this a bit longer, but in the end, I hope to end up with a neater Nepeta.

Was Punxsutawney Phil correct in his prediction this year? Pam Walsh

Punxsutawney Phil has been predicting the start of spring since 1886. The Christian religious holiday of Candlemas Day, held on February 2nd, is thought to be the reason for the current Groundhog Day. On that day, the early Christians would take their candles to the church to have them blessed. They believed that blessings for the remaining winter would be brought to the household. This early folk song highlights the transition to weather prognostication.

"If Candlemas be fair and bright, Come, Winter, have another flight.

If Candlemas brings clouds and rain, Go Winter, and come not again."



Although this interpretation became the norm in most of Europe, there was no mention of an animal until German lore introduced one. If the hedgehog saw his shadow on Candlemas Day, there would be a "Second Winter" or six more weeks of bad weather. When the German

settlers came to the United States they exchanged the hedgehog with the groundhog, a similar hibernating animal, and the legend continued. In Punxsutawney, 1886 was the first year that Groundhog Day was

reported in the local paper. His predictions began that year and continue to present day. On February 2, 2023, Phil left his burrow and saw his shadow and as legend has it, there will be six more weeks of winter. However, his predictions have not been very accurate. According to Stormfax Almanac, he only has a 39% accuracy rate over the 108 forecasts of more winter and 20 early springs. There were nine years without any records. In another study done from 1969 on, Phil's overall accuracy rate is about 36%. If one asks a member of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club how many groundhogs there have been since 1886, they will tell you one, Phil. And that he has been sustained by drinks of "groundhog punch or elixir of life" administered at the annual Groundhog Picnic in the fall, and it magically gives him seven more years of life. However, the lifespan of a groundhog in the wild is roughly six years. No matter what Phil determined this

year, I'm ready to get back to work in my gardens!!



UGC Flower Show "MAGIC"

Pam Walsh

We are excited to announce that the UGC Flower Show, "MAGIC", will be held on Thursday, June 8th.

Please think about your houseplants, bulbs, perennials, annuals, and what usually looks good in June. Since it is an early date, once we have distributed the Flower Show schedule, please decide which of the horticulture classes you would like to enter. Keep in mind that you need to have possession of these horticulture entries for at least 90 days!! Two of our future meetings are focused on flower show entries. We also have three judges and seven future judges (soon to be student judges) in our club, so we have lots of people to help you.

We would love to have as many of our members as possible enter either horticulture, design, and/or botanical arts and be a part of this fun experience.

More to come!!



Petite Design

A Correct Color for the Honey Bee

Thea Mahard

Our bees here in the United States are imported from Europe. Until recently it was believed that the European honey bee was descended from the African honey bee, but in recent years with genomic testing, scientists have determined that both types of bees are descended from Asian honey bees. The European honey bee is slightly larger, more able to withstand cold weather, and more docile than the African bees. To the naked eye there is not much difference. They all look the same. There is even less of a difference from one European bee to another European bee. Of course, there are very minor differences as one travels through Europe, because the bees have been raised by beekeepers for generations. This is true of any farmed animal. Many of our cows came from England where there is the Jersey cow, a tan animal, and the Guernsey cow, a tan and white animal. But a cow is a cow.

However, in a state in Austria called Carinthia, there is an effort to litigate a bee's color. I recently read an article in the New York Times, by journalist Denise Hruby, which was picked up from the European newspaper, the Austria Journal. Here in the US, large farmed bee colonies are inspected for signs of bee diseases and bee parasites. In Corinthia (where the local bees are even more docile than other European bees), inspectors take it one step further. They check a bee's color. Honey bees with light gray, almost white, abdominal rings rather than gold are considered racially pure Carniolan (the name for the local honey bee). Other bees are considered to be mixed breeds. This might be amusing, except that it directly impacts bee colonies and beekeepers.

Denise Hruby tells the story of Mr. Sandro Huter, an Austrian beekeeper whose bees, upon inspection, were described as "leather-brown, orange". Mr. Huter was ordered to destroy his queen bees and replace them with more racially pure bees. Mr. Huter, who describes his bees as being so docile that no hat and veil are needed, argued that true Carniolan bees come in all colors. Denise Hruby quotes the head of a neighboring bee association, Gerhard Klinger, as saying of the law's creators: "It's a racist dictatorship, just like under the Nazis". She quotes a bee expert from Germany, Kirsten Traynor, who said that in other countries there is more of a "let's try to combine all of the best characteristics in one bee, regardless of where those genetics come from. Race purity among human populations has been problematic, and I don't know why we are trying to do the same thing for a managed piece of livestock."

Mr. Huter was able to successfully appeal to the Austrian federal authorities in Vienna, who inspected wing shapes and measured abdominal rings and bee hairs to determine that these bees were indeed Carniolan. His queens were spared.

That did not sit well with some other beekeepers in Carinthia. Kurt Strmljian worried that diluting the Carniolan's genetic purity would "make them aggressive, just like any mixed breed," and he worried that they might attack his granddaughter.

Denise Hruby reports that some apiarists in the area worry that the swarthy bees might interbreed with their whiter bees. They chase after bees from fellow beekeepers and photograph the wrong colored culprits so that they can report them to the state. As a result, the local Carinthian state inspectors want to strengthen their law. They now want to be able to order the extermination of an entire colony if more than two bees of 50 collected from a colony are determined to be non-Carniolan. Colonies typically have 40,000 to 80,000 bees! The beekeeper would also be fined 7500 euros (\$8,160 US dollars).

Mr. Huter and his docile bees might not be out of the woods yet.





Where is GCFP Going Next?

The Garden Gems of Germany Sharon Richardson

SAVE THE DATES: September 26 — October 7, 2023

I'm excited to share that our next GCFP trip will be held next fall in Germany! Germany has a long legacy of creating beautiful gardens all over their country for over 300 years. When you look at the map, the green dots depict their rich history of creating gardens.

In the last decade, I have visited many of those gardens when I attended an international horticultural event held every two years in Germany. Very few Americans are aware of The Bundesgartenschau. Think of it as a World's Fair of Horticulture!

BUGA is the popularized name for this festival that began in the 1951 to restore war-damaged areas. It evolved into a biennial event assigned to a different city each time. The locations are planned well in advance to give each city approximately seven to nine growing seasons to create this large multifaceted horticultural event. Each 'host' city selects an under-utilized or dilapidated area and turns it into an amazing garden park where the festival lasts for 180 days! When the festival ends, the exhibitors, pop-up restaurants, vendors, and entertainers go away, and a beautiful new park is born.

This year the BUGA will be held in Mannheim.

https://www.buga23.de/englisch/

Our tour will start in Berlin and end in Bavaria. We will depart on September 25 and return on October 7. Our route will take us from Berlin to Potsdam, to Dresden/Leipzig, and then to the Heidelberg/ Mannheim area. Upon leaving the BUGA, we will travel the Romantic Road to Munich and Bavaria.



The brochure from Horizon Club Tours with all the details is attached to the email. This trip has been custom designed for GCFP to specifically visit garden gems throughout Germany. I chose the route for the itinerary, and Horizon Club Tours is arranging the transportation, hotels, and meals. Stay tuned and SAVE THE DATES!

Germany is so beautiful - join me as we visit the BUGA and the gorgeous gardens!





Groundwork for the Plant Sale—May 13, 2023 Terry Miller

Yes, it is that time of year again where our thoughts turn to preparation for our big Spring fundraising event! The committee co-chairs, Pam Halitsky and Terry Miller, are already making plans for a soil purchase outing and a full committee meeting on March 16th at 11:30am after the UGC Board meeting. You are encouraged to look for containers to accentuate our wonderful creations, and please start thinking about the plants that you can contribute from the overabundance in your gardens that needs thinning.

You may want to start some annual seeds, such as tomatoes, lettuce, and nasturtiums, that can be sold individually or used in containers. We will also need volunteers to wash the black plastic pots for transplants.

Should you wish to purchase plants for the sale, please check with Pam or Terry first to prevent duplicate purchases. You may also consider cash contributions toward purchases if you are unable to shop yourself.





A reminder of the work dates:

Beginning April 11th, weather permitting, potting will start at 11 am on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of each week leading up to the Sale.

April 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27 May 2, 3, 4, and every day of sale week

Bring your gloves and potting tools.

This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know other members that you may not connect with at the regular meetings. Please watch for email reminders.

There will be sign-up sheets at the meetings; please note your availability, as this allows the chairs to contact others if they are shorthanded.



The week of the sale:

Monday, May 8th- Begin setting up Meetinghouse and continue potting plants [10am to 1 pm]

Tuesday, May 9th-Finish potting, organize plants into categories, and purchase additional plants if needed [10am start]

Wednesday, May 10th-Clean, price, and arrange pots according to categories. Erect tent. [10am start]

Thursday, May 11th-Water, price, clean, and arrange plants inside and outside. [10 am start]

Friday, May 12th-Finish any pricing and arranging. Stage outside. [10am start]

THE BIG DAY, Saturday, May 13th

7:30 am-Members arrive and check in.

All workers should park in the upper lot in the complex on the other side of Village Avenue.

8:00am to 2:00pm Plant Sale

Noon to 1:30pm - Move unsold plants to tables indoors and consolidate outdoor items

1:30pm- Clean up



Bondsville Mill Park

If you copy and paste this address (<u>https://</u> <u>www.dnr.state.mn.us/</u> <u>mcvmagazine/</u> <u>bird_songs_interactive</u> <u>/index.html</u>) into your 'search bar' on the internet, it will open this lovely bird poster—illustration by Bill Reynolds. When you click on a bird, you can listen to it's song! All the birds are in our area, but our Jay is Blue, not Grey.

MJ Schlomann



Wanted:

- Shepherd hooks to hang feeders
- a White Board dry erase to list birds recently seen
- bird seed (there's a black can by the Spinning Room where seed can be left - safe from squirrels)
- feeder cages and squirrel baffles





Looking for a free, fun-filled afternoon event where you can relax and be pampered after all that work you did for the plant sale? Guaranteed there will be a few edible flowers!

You are cordially invited to a

Community Tea for Women, hosted by the Bethel United Methodist Women Saturday, May 20, 2023, at 1:00

Bethel United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall 952 Bethel Church Road Spring City, PA 19475



Please contact Terry Miller at 610-506-8455 after April 8th if you would like to attend. This no-cost event is open to all women. Invite a friend or two. Seating is limited, so you <u>must</u> reserve in advance.

[If you would like to be a hostess for a table, let Terry know. You would be responsible for setting your table and providing a dessert. Sandwiches and beverages will be provided by UMW.]

Hats are encouraged, but not required!!!!

Narwhal Nature Trail Terry Miller

The UGC began a cooperative effort with the Downingtown School District's Sixth Grade Center on their "Narwhal Nature Trail" which broke ground in September 2022. The UGC Board met with the project's liaison and passionate science teacher, Jo Ellen Cain, to discuss member's involvement as consultants and working with the students. The trail includes 8-12 stations with activities which revolve around the curriculum. Some of the stations are raised bed gardens, a tree nursery, butterfly gardens, wetlands, stream study, and a nature sensory area.

Terry Miller met with the committee via Zoom last month. Members were introduced and multiple ideas were discussed. They are looking for direction on where and what to plant. The committee will meet again in March to begin planning for the year.

UGC made a large donation of plants to the project at the end of last year's plant sale and will be coordinating horticultural contributions from individuals for the trail. You may be receiving an email "calling all members" for a specific plant that you may have available to contribute from your garden. We will keep you informed about the possibilities for volunteering in the future.

The Narwhal (a whale that has a tusk protruding from a canine tooth) is the mascot for the Sixth Grade Center.



NGC School Information

Environmental School

- Course 1—April 11-12, 2023, Tampa FL (Hybrid)
- Course 2—May 19-20, 2023, Manistee, MI
- September 21-22, 2023, Derby, CT (Zoom)
- Course 3— November 16-17, 2023, Ft. Myers, FL (Zoom) Course 4—March 20-24, 2023, St. Louis, MO (Zoom, PM only)
- March 31-April 1, 2023, Cushing, OK (Zoom)

Landscape Design School

- Course 1—March 30-31, 2023, Louisville, OH (Zoom) September 13-15, 2023, Falmouth, ME (Hybrid)
- Course 2—May 22-23, 2023, Alexandria, VA November 7-8, 2023, Charleston, SC
- Course 3—September 20-22, 2023, New Smyrna Beach, FL (Zoom)
- Course 4—March 27-28, 2023, Richmond, VA March 28-29, 2023, Connecticut (Zoom) April 5-6, 2023, Lancaster, PA

Flower Show School

Course 1—March 14-15, 2023, Pearl, MS Course 2—March 7-9, 2023, Takoma, WA April 18-20, 2023, Glenview, IL April 23-26, 2023, Marietta, GA Course 3—March 22-25, 2023, Paris, KY April 13-16, 2023, Plymouth Meeting, PA Course 4—March 6-9, 2023, Little Rock, AR March 24, 29 30. Columbia, SC April 15-20, 2023 East Brunswick, NJ (Zoom 4/15); (In-Person 4/19-20) April 25-27, 2023, Milford, MA October 12-15, 2023, Plymouth Meeting, PA

Gardening School

Course 1—April 13-15, 2023, Chelmsford, MA (Zoom) Course 2—April 12-13, 2023, Baltimore, MD Course 3—September 6-7, 2023, Baltimore, MD Course 4—March 8-9, 2023, Ohio (Zoom) March 20-21, 2023, NGC (Zoom)

SCHOOLS MAY BE TAKEN IN ANY ORDER; IN ANY STATE; IN-PERSON; VIA ZOOM ; OR HYBRID (COMBINATION OF IN-PERSON AND ON-LINE.)







Become a Four & Five Star Member

Members completing all four NGC Courses may apply to become Four Star Members. Those Mastering each course may apply for Five Star Membership.





Meetinghouse Moments, UGC Website & Facebook

Meetinghouse Moments Editor—MJ Schlomann

mrsrags11@gmail.com, 610-246-0061 Published quarterly: Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

Deadlines: November 15, February 15, May 15, September 15.

Please send articles in Word, with a title, author name and credits (if copied from another source). Photos should be attached to the email.

UGC Website—uwchlangardenclub.org Webmaster—MJ Schlomann

Facebook—Uwchlan Garden Club Moderators: MJ Schlomann, Valerie Burgess, Mary Smith

Upcoming UGC Meetings & Programs

Thursday, March 23, 11:00am

 Gina Khalifa from Urned Elegance will present "A Pretty Pot for All Seasons."

Thursday, April 27, 11:00am

• Wendy Fox will share her photographs and judge's comments from the Longwood Gardens Flower Show. Discussion of meaning of the comments.

Thursday, May 25, 11:00am

 Audrey Angelella, NGC Accredited Flower Show Judge, will present "How to Win Horticulture."

Thursday, June 22, 11:00am

• Sue Mrugal, Temple, Ambler Campus, Professor, will share her wisdom about Rain Gardens.



Our Affiliations



National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC) President: Mary Warshauer https://gardenclub.org/



Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs (CAR-SGC) Director: Betty Cookendorfer https://www.car-sgc.org/



Garden Club Federation of PA (GCFP) President: Sheila Croushore https://pagardenclubs.org/



GCFP District 1 Director: Nancy Cuttic no website

GCFP District 1 Meetings

- Friday, June 2, 2023 11:00 AM Business Meeting and President's Luncheon. Location TBD.
- Wednesday, September 13, 2023 GCFP District I Luncheon Kennett Square Country Club 100 E. Locust Lane Kennett Square, PA 19348

