



Spring Flower Show

Thanks once again to the indefatigable **Carol Hurn**, this year's trip to the New England Spring Flower Show will be on **Tuesday, March 20th**. We will meet the bus behind the Town Offices Annex (where we have our regular meetings) at **3:00 pm** sharp, and will plan to return by **9:30 pm**. The cost for the round-trip bus ride, ticket to the show, and driver gratuity is **\$35**, about half of what most organizations pay for the same service. Reserve your seat by sending a check to Carol now.

The 2007 show is all about gardening in new and different ways, about

thinking outside the box. The theme is "Thrill-Seekers: Yes, You Can!" and exhibitors will bend the rules showing just exactly what happens when we take the road less traveled. This year, each garden landscape exhibit will feature an element that will make visitors walk away saying, "Wow! I didn't know you could do that!" to which our 2007 theme replies, "Yes, You Can!"

So join your friends and fellow members, take the afternoon off from work, and get a much-needed dose of spring!

March 1 Water Gardens

Bill Freitag of Country Gardens in Rowley is a water garden specialist, and this evening, he will share his extensive expertise on creating a "back yard paradise" water feature on your property. Not only does this bring you and your family hours of pleasure, but it also raises the value of your property. Bill will show slides on what can be done with some know-how and the right materials. Get set for your spring project, and have your questions ready!

chairs **Cyndy Bourquard** and **Gail DiNaro** with Barbara Berkenbush, Clover Nally, Liz Scheld, and Joan Tranfaglia.



Photo: Priscilla Styer

Think Spring!

Hospitality will be provided by

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A garden is a grand teacher.
It teaches patience and careful watchfulness;
industry and thrift;
above all, entire trust.

-Gertrude Jekyll 1843-1932



Ask Peony Got Chocolate?

Dear Gardening Friends,

Do you love chocolate? I found the following on HGTV.com and encourage you to look at their site for gardening ideas. This is a recent article:

Chocolate Garden

by Marie Hofer, Gardening editor, HGTV.com

There can be a world of chocolate in your garden. We're talking about *smelling* chocolate. A sniff of the plants below can be very satisfying. And, if aroma makes you hungry, you'll need to carry a chocolate bar with you. The only two of these that are edible (the geranium and the mint) have only the vaguest of chocolaty flavors.

Chocolate Flower (*Berlandiera lyrata*). The

chocolaty aroma that wafts from these dark-eyed daisies is best in the morning. A wildflower that's native to the Southwest, the chocolate flower thrives on minimal water. In moist, humid climates, try planting in containers; that will also allow you to place the plant where you can best appreciate its fragrance. This hardy perennial is short-lived but freely reseeds.



Chocolate-mint Geranium (*Pelargonium tomentosum* 'Chocolate Mint'). Scented geraniums come in apple, pineapple, orange and even pink champagne, so obviously a chocolate-mint was needed too. The

foliage, not the flowers, carry the fragrance. Enjoy as an annual during the growing season and then bring inside for the winter.



Chocolate Mint (*Mentha x piperita* 'Chocolate Mint') Call the fragrance on this mint nine parts mint to one part chocolate. Like others in its family, this mint spreads aggressively via rhizomes. If you want to keep it in bounds, plant in containers or install ground barriers. Mint is tolerant of almost any soil, but in moist, rich soil, growth will be rampant.



Chocolate Cosmos (*Cosmos atrosanguineus*). Velvety, black-maroon flowers give off a wonderful chocolate scent from midsummer to fall. This plant needs full sun and well-drained soil with even moisture. In spring, plant tubers three feet apart in full sun. In the fall, treat as you would a dahlia; lift and store for the winter. Enjoy the aroma but don't eat: this plant is toxic.



I think I'll ask for another kiss - chocolate, of course!

Peony

p.s. See page 4 for more ...

Horticulture Tips from the Old Gardeners



- ✿ Peas and beans do well in the company of carrots, leeks, and turnips
- ✿ Potatoes do well when planted close to peas and beans, because of the nitrates in beans
- ✿ Thyme is a good companion plant to the cabbage, but strawberries and cabbages are not friends
- ✿ Basil grown amongst tomatoes keeps whitefly away
- ✿ Parsley grown among roses increases their scent
- ✿ The rule in gardening, never forget, to sow dry and set wet

Members in the News **Plant Sale Signups**

Our Annual Plant Sale will be held on **Saturday, May 19th** this year, which is the weekend before Memorial Day weekend. It is a little earlier than last year, but the scheduling seems easier when it does not fall two days before the holiday, when the Training Field is used as part of the commemoration ceremony.

Under the fabulous direction of **Jane Jeffers, Kathy Krajeski, and Jan Vynorius**, the Sale planning is in full swing, with a full complement of Chairs for all the Committees. As always, **all our members need to participate in this major fund-raiser**, which makes our Scholarships possible, and augments our general operating expenses.

Sign-up sheets for each committee will be at the Welcoming Table at our March meeting, so please give some thought to which committee you would like to serve on, and what plants you can donate from your own garden. While May seems like a far cry with all this ice and snow, all our plants need to be dug up and potted by the first of May so they can settle into their pots, and that is less than 2 months from now. Hooray!

The Committees are:

Sun Plants for those with sunny gardens, and usually our busiest section of the Sale

Shade Plants for those who are essentially cool

Children's for the laughs and smiles

Choice Plants for our celebrities

Herbs which will be from the Herb Farmacy again, with all their lovely organic herbs and heirloom tomatoes

Donated Plants which gives you a chance to hit all the nurseries you like with no apologies or explanations needed

Knapp's specializing in gorgeous astilbes and much more

Digging, strong backs and flexible schedules needed, but this is really fun

Set-up and Break-down (not what you think)

Bake Sale, for those who need to feed the world

Publicity, to keep those gardeners coming!

There will be a meeting of all the Chairs in mid-March, with the details coming soon. A **mighty Thank You to all the wonderful people who have volunteered to Chair a Committee.**

Please support them, the Scholarship Fund, and the Club by signing up for at least one committee, and by donating as many plants as you can!

Thank you so much!

Club News **Art In Bloom Trip April 24th**

We are once again planning a trip to the Museum of Fine Arts in April for the Art in Bloom show. The cost of the trip includes the round-trip bus, driver gratuity, ticket to the show, and an Art in Bloom program book. The cost will be **approximately** as follows, depending on the charge for the bus:

MFA Members: \$23

Non-Members: \$38

Senior Citizens: \$36



You can also order a **box lunch** for \$15 with a selec-

tion of Chicken Salad on Rosemary Focaccia, a Roasted Spring Vegetable Wrap, or Shrimp Salad on a Croissant. Each lunch includes gourmet chips, chocolate chip cookies, seasonal fruit cup, and canned soda or bottled water.

Tuesday, April 24th is Garden Club Day, and was the popular choice last year, so we are planning for the same day this year. We will have a sign-up sheet at the March meeting, with all the information available. If you cannot make the meeting, ask a

friend to sign you up, or call Marsha at 979 388-2076.



WNGC

WEST NEWBURY GARDEN CLUB

30 Merrimac St
Amesbury MA, 01913-4009

Phone: 978 388-2076
E-mail: bpgroup@verizon.net
Website: www.WNGC.org

*Gardens for beauty,
learning, and sharing*

The West Newbury Garden Club was founded in 1936 to encourage and cultivate an interest in gardening, to aid in protecting and conserving our natural resources, to further the study of horticulture and flower arranging, and to promote civic beauty. For more information, please contact Marsha Cope at 978 388 2076, at bpgroup@verizon.net, or at 30 Merrimac St, Amesbury MA, 01913.

Next Board Meeting
March 8, 2007 7:00pm



Ask Peony (cont.) **More Chocolate Flowers**

If Peony has you panting for more (when does she not?) here are some other great additions to your garden, and a great web site for the surfers out there: www.chocolateflowerfarm.com



For the winter months try the only chocolate houseplant: an **Oncidium** orchid famous for its fragrance and prolific bloom called **Sharry Baby**. It is currently blooming on my dining room table, and threatens to out-perfume the oriental lilies in the next room. The plant is easy to grow, pest-free, and has a complex and sophisticated aroma. Highly recommended by this gardener.

The Chocolate Flower Farm describes **Dahlia Chocolate Sundae** as ideal for pots or the front of the border, with a compact form and a 12-16" height. With dark, velvety petals that look like melted chocolate, and a frothy honeycomb center, the breeder, Thompson & Morgan says it is the first ever near-black dahlia. Yes, it does look good enough to eat, but sorry, none of these are edible!



Arisaema Sikokianum: The best known and most exquisite of the Japanese arisaemas, or Jack-in-the-Pulpit, as they are known here. It has a dark maroon to black hooded spathe and a pestle-shaped, pure white spadix. Grow this 16-20 inch sweetheart in fertile, leafy, slightly acid soil in dappled shade.