

Connecticut Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

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Serving Horticulturists Since 1887

January 2013

The World's Gardener, the Honeybee

by Mark H. Creighton

Of the 20,000 species of bees that are known to exist, why do we care most about the honeybee (*Apis mellifera*)? Is it not merely an insect, like any other fly, mosquito or beetle that needs to be sprayed, swatted or squished? Why would the U.S. government spend millions of dollars to understand the plight of this little old bee?

The truth is that the honeybee has become what the canary once was to our coal mining industry. The honeybee is the sentinel to a healthy environment. Would the coal miner ignore the dead canary in the cage? Our environment is changing. Much of the land has been paved or otherwise disturbed, the atmosphere has been polluted, the ground water contaminated.

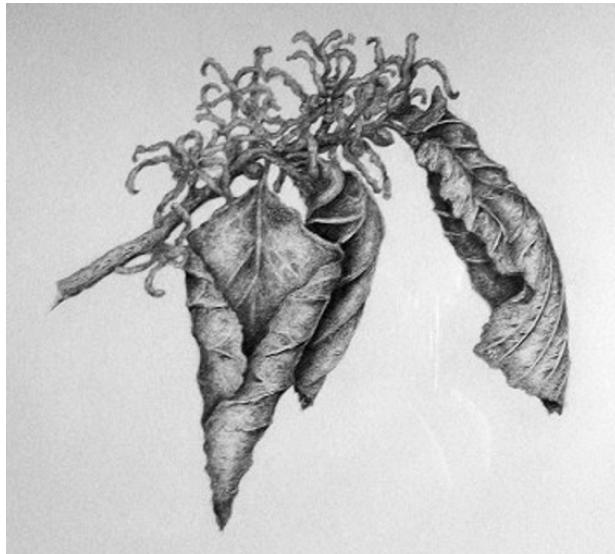
And honeybees are dying. We have lost billions of them worldwide in the past several years. Who is listening, watching or acting out of concern? A great thinker is said to have remarked, "Three years after the extinction of the honeybee, mankind will perish."

Can we take a different path and change our future, protect our environment and become more in balance with nature?

The Honeybee Takes Flight

When I first read about the dying bees several years ago, I became concerned about this insect that has inhabited Earth for more than 100 million years. During the late Jurassic period, plants began to change and the earliest flowers appeared. Honeybees started doing their thing, moving pollination from flower to flower, while the flowers rewarded the bees with their sweet nectar. It was perfect symbiosis.

The relationship between flowers and the honeybee (one of many pollinators) and pollination and honey production has



Witch hazel, original pencil drawing by CHS member John Turnier of Burlington

Turnier, a former beekeeper, writes, "Although those pastoral days of lying in the warm grass watching the constant traffic in and out of the hives are gone, I still always seem to notice the honeybees in my yard. Each year, during a brief warm spell in late winter-early spring, the bees leave the warmth and security of the neighbor's hives to purge and forage. The witch hazels (*Hamamelis x intermedia* cvs.) in my garden are one early nectar source."

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been exploited by humans since the beginning of our existence, and the exploitation continues today.

Human practices have evolved from killing bees with sulfur and extracting the honey to a more managed system of beekeeping in the late 1800s, thanks to L.L. Langstroth. A Philadelphia-born teacher, clergyman and apiarist, Langstroth designed a beehive that carries his name and is the standard used in many parts of the world. Managing bees in support of agriculture and

(continued on page 6)



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Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Gardeners,

For 2013, I wish you the health and inspiration to accomplish what you need to in your life and, of course, your garden. And as you view that *tabula rasa*, the empty slate of a 2013 calendar, allow me this gentle plea: Take out your CHS program card and mark our meetings as a date you're making for yourself, your fellow gardeners and your garden. This year must be the one I get to see you each month through June. You won't regret it. You know, the kind of regret you feel when your fellow gardener exclaims, "You missed the best speaker last night!" Bring a friend, too. The odds are good that he or she will become a member, and more members are good for us. Increased membership means that we further lower the cost basis for our programs, which further seals our bid as "the best gardening bargain in Connecticut."

Don't forget to mark Feb. 21-24 as the Connecticut Flower and Garden Show. The theme is "Love in Bloom," and we'll be there encouraging all to "Break Up with Your Lawn" (see page 7). Offering 80 hours of seminars, the show is a perfect way to find hope for spring amid the frigid days of winter. See the full schedule of seminar speakers at www.ctflowershow.com.

The November symposium with P. Allen Smith, Tomasz Anisko and Ruth Loiseau was a superb, well-spent day in a culturally rich venue (see page 5). The event is another feather in the cap of the Education Committee. We owe tremendous gratitude to event facilitators Elaine Widmer and Joan Stubenrauch. They and the staff of the Mark Twain House garnered world-class talent for an incredibly reasonable rate. Most organizations would have charged our entry fee to hear only one of the three speakers. The silent auction was a home run, thanks to Joan and CHS supporters who contributed enough goods to inspire \$2,200 in donations. The program had a balance of appeal, from do-able floral design to pondering how we come to have the plants we love to solid garden design delivered in charming Southern style. It is regrettable that attendance was under capacity. Attendees totaled around 140, with 190 seats available. In the end, through our extraordinary volunteer effort, we met our budget projections. Proceeds shared with the Mark Twain House will fund the preservation of the house and gardens, including supplies for the master gardeners who maintain the grounds. Many thanks to all of you who supported us by attending, donating and, most of all, by doing.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy B.

P.S. Just because it's winter, don't forget your sunscreen!

Directions to the Connecticut Horticultural Society Office & Library

From the south: take I-91 North to Exit 23 West Street, Rocky Hill. Take a right at the end of the exit. At the fourth traffic light, take a left onto Route 99 (Main Street). The office is located at 2433 Main Street in the Prestige Office building, a short distance on your left.

From the north: take I-91 South, take Exit 23. At the end of the ramp, go left onto West Street. Follow the previous directions.

From I-84: take Route 9 to Exit 20 and I-91 North. Follow the directions above.

The Rise and Fall of Two Great Trees

Jan. 17—Speaker Eric Rutkow, New Haven

The American elm and the American chestnut: two magnificent trees whose twin histories are marked by a rise to prominence and a tragic demise due to fungal disease.

Eric Rutkow, a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Law School who is pursuing his doctorate in American history at Yale, addresses these and other trees of the North American forest in his book “American Canopy: Trees, Forests, and the Making of a Nation” (Scribner, 2012). The book explores Rutkow’s belief that trees “are the loudest silent figures in America’s complicated history,” their influence partly stemming from the once limitless bounty of the forests.

The idea for the book derived from his desire “to rethink the broad narrative of American history to try to privilege trees in this country,” he says. Given that so much of the continent was forested when the Europeans arrived, “I wondered, what if I asked in a broad way how much of America’s history was shaped by the relationship to trees?”

The undertaking combined his love of narrative history – he’s a fan of author David McCullough – and of nature. Rutkow grew up in Marlboro, N.J., and attended The Lawrenceville School, whose campus was designed by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, among others. Rutkow enjoyed backpacking trips to the Catskills, Adirondacks, White Mountains and the Delaware Water Gap.

He is focusing his CHS talk on the American elm (*Ulmus americana*) and American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) because of their historical parallels and because the trees claimed opposite ends of the functional spectrum in society. The elm is a spectacularly beautiful tree



whose magical form – winding limbs and arched, vase-like canopy – lined countless streets and sidewalks by the 20th century, defining the look of the American city. The tree’s purpose then was almost entirely aesthetic.

The chestnut, on the other hand, was the workhorse tree of the eastern United States and integral to the national economy. “Wood fencing, rail ties, telegraph poles, furniture – there was nothing this tree couldn’t do when it came to American needs,” Rutkow says.

What fascinates him about both trees is the length to which people will go to protect or preserve them. In New Haven, a.k.a. Elm City, arborists with giant syringes can be seen inoculating elms, while enormous effort has been dedicated to breeding blight-resistant American chestnut trees. Such undertakings offer hope that the two trees will persist on American terrain. 

CHS Program Meeting

Our meetings are open to members and nonmembers alike, with a \$10 donation requested from nonmembers. We look forward to seeing you!

Date: Thursday, Jan. 17

Time: 7:30 p.m. (6:45 p.m. for socializing, browsing CHS library books, raffle items and travel fliers, and asking plant questions)

Location: Emanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Dr., West Hartford

Directions: From I-84, take exit 43 (West Hartford Center, Park Road). Turn right at exit and go half a block to the next light. Turn left at light onto Trout Brook Drive. Proceed for six lights to Albany Avenue. Turn right on Albany Avenue and continue to the next light, Mohegan Drive. Turn left on Mohegan Drive. Pass two stop signs. Synagogue is on the right.

Bad weather: Visit www.cthort.org, call the CHS office at 860-529-8713 for a recorded message, or tune in to WTIC radio, 1080 AM, or WFSB TV, Channel 3, to check the status of the meeting.

The wonder is that
we can see these trees
and not wonder more.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Acknowledgement: Michael J. Polasko

Betsy Fackler walked into Brick Yard Books and Fine Art in West Hartford not too long ago and introduced herself to owner Kevin Rita, saying, "I'm a friend of Mike Polasko's."

Rita replied, "Everyone who knows Mike is a friend of his."

To Fackler, a CHS member from Bloomfield, that exchange summed up the essence of Polasko. "He was just a kind, intelligent man," she said. "There was very little, when you asked him about things, that he didn't know. He was passionate about his family, his books and his plants."

Polasko, a society member since 1989 and president from 2004-2006, died Oct. 26, following a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. He is survived by his wife Judith of West Hartford; sons Craig, who plays bass for crooner Michael Buble, and Keith of Brooklyn, N.Y., who in his free time helped his father sell books on the Internet; and daughter-in-law Sonal.

Polasko owned West Hartford Book Shop, formerly on Park Road in the space now occupied by Rita's gallery. Most recently, Polasko's business was located in a warehouse on New Park Avenue. His inventory at one time included about 100,000 used books for sale on the shelves and about 19,000 for sale on the Internet.

John Casner, also a past president of CHS, recalled spending occasional lunch breaks with Polasko at the warehouse. The two friends would sit in the stacks, talking about books and enjoying sandwiches made by Casner's wife Vicky.

"He was very proud of his book collection. He had some old, beautiful books," Casner said.

Polasko's love of books tied in with his love of learning. He earned three bachelor's degrees from the University of Connecticut, one each in psychology, sociology and marketing. He worked in the quality-control department of an engineering company and then signed

on with American Airlines for 11 years before retiring in 1985.

He joined the society four years later. In addition to serving as president, Polasko was assistant librarian, librarian and vice president, and he volunteered with the CHS flower-show exhibit. He also spearheaded

long-range planning and planned-giving efforts. At the ice-cream social that precedes the June program meeting, he could be found passing out scoops and a smile to members and guests.

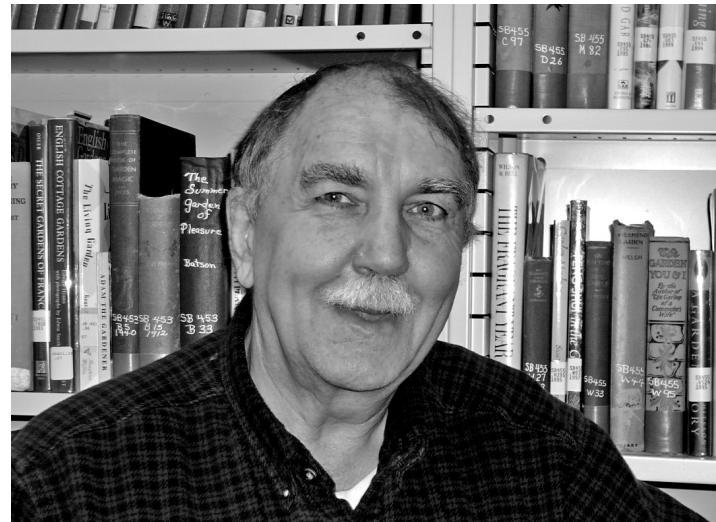
"Mike's charm was that he was effective in a low-key way," Casner said. "He loved the society, plants, participating in meetings."

Immediate past president Steve Silk agreed, saying, "Mike was a stalwart member who contributed a lot of time and effort to CHS. His commitment to CHS continued long after his presidency.

"I can trace my own presidency directly to Mike, who recruited me back in the day and gave me lots of advice and guidance along the way," Silk continued. "He was also one heck of a nice guy, and when the beautiful night-blooming cereus he gave me blooms, I'll especially be reminded of all he did for others."

Polasko and his wife Judy enjoyed gardening together. Their yard had a small patch of sun, which Judy claimed. Mike contended with the dry shade and fierce tangle of maple tree roots (until the tree came down in a storm a couple of years ago).

"I like trying to see what I can have success with, what new plants will thrive under the maple trees," he once said. "I'm very much into ferns, trying new ferns. And I like hostas." Among his



favorites were *Hosta sieboldiana* 'Frances Williams' and 'Elegans'.

His horticultural interests – and the proximity of his bookstore's former Park Road location to the Quaker Diner – helped to solidify friendships with Fackler and her husband, George Bassilakis, whose father built the diner and whose son now owns it. Over the years, they and other friends gathered most Sunday evenings at the Fackler-Bassilakis home, with Fackler preparing sturdy dinners of spaghetti and meatballs or sausage and sauerkraut.

Rita, too, was a longtime friend. He recalled how Polasko helped him through a difficult period that included a divorce. Polasko was "a great listener," Rita said, and his counsel, though closely kept, reflected understanding and "humor that comes from wisdom. ..."

"Mike always knew more than he told," Rita said. "He was not demonstrative. He understood that just to be there was a great way to be a friend."

Fackler echoed that sentiment. "He was a dear, dear friend, almost like a brother," she said. "Mike was a nice guy, easy to be around, and we will miss him."

If you would like to honor the memory of Mike Polasko, his family requests that you read a book to a child.

Thanks to our Sponsors

Proceeds from the symposium will support CHS educational programs and the master gardeners who maintain the plants and gardens at the Mark Twain House.



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Connecticut Flower & Garden Show 2013
Feb. 21-24, 2013
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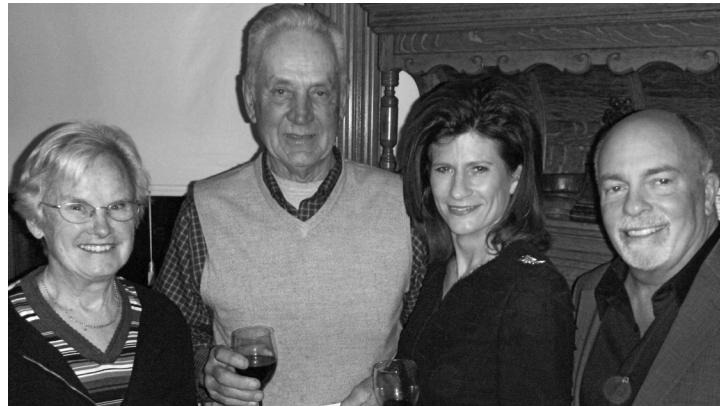
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A Festive Event: 'The Garden Home in All Seasons'

The November symposium sponsored by CHS and The Mark Twain House & Museum was, as CHS President Nancy Brennick writes in her letter on page 2 "a superb, well-spent day." The Friday evening reception was mighty fine, too. Read the recap and view more photos at www.cthort.org.



At the Friday reception with keynote speaker P. Allen Smith are Elizabeth Morin, left, and CHS President Nancy Brennick.



From left, Sally and Richard Jaynes, whose Broken Arrow Nursery was a symposium sponsor, chat with speaker Ruth Loiseau and Don Drellich.



Symposium organizers Joan Stabenrauch (left) and Elaine Widmer admire bouquets created by Loiseau during her talk Saturday.



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The Mark Twain House & Museum



Connecticut Horticultural Society

World's Gardener, from page 1

honey production became an honorable profession for a while.

In Connecticut, from colonial times to the 1960s, most farmers understood the value of having honeybees on the farm. Increased agricultural production and a readily available source of sweetener justified keeping a hive or two. Farmers who successfully raised bees could earn additional income by selling surplus honey.

As the world's population exploded, the need to feed more people became enormous. The development of monoculture changed rural farming and beekeeping dramatically, and the effect on our nation's primary pollinator, the honeybee, has been devastating. Without pollination by honeybees, up to one-third of the items in the average American's diet would simply disappear, E. Readicker-Henderson asserts in "A Short History of the Honey Bee: Humans, Flowers, and Bees in the Eternal Chase for Honey" (Timber Press, 2009).

Stated another way, the monetary value of insects as commercial pollinators in the United States is estimated at \$29 billion annually, with honeybees accounting for two thirds of that value, or \$20 million, according to a recent study by Nicholas W. Calderone, associate professor of entomology at Cornell University.

Colony collapse disorder

In 2006, commercial beekeepers began reporting large declines in their honeybee colonies. Because of the severity and unusual circumstances of these declines, scientists named this phenomenon colony collapse disorder (CCD). The precise reasons for the losses are still unknown.

"After several years of research it now seems clear that no single factor alone is responsible for the malady," according to 2010 Congressional Research Service Report. "The new hypothesis is that CCD may be a syndrome caused by many different factors, working in combination or synergistically," the report states.

The factors being studied today include pesticides and their sub-lethal effect, viruses, poor nutrition, pollination of crops with low nutritional value, environmental stress, contaminated water supplies and migratory stress. A combination of these stressors may compromise the immune system of bees and disrupt their social system, making colonies more susceptible to disease and collapse.

The role of home gardeners

What can we do to help protect the honeybee? We can reduce the chemical footprint in our yards and encourage the planting of diverse landscapes that support our pollinator world.

We can keep a honeybee hive in our yard. It's a great educational experience for children and it provides unlimited access to the sweet stuff that the world craves. In Connecticut, our beekeeping numbers are growing; more than 1,000 beekeepers are registered with the state. Beekeeping classes are well-attended as people become aware of the honeybee's role as the world's gardener. Many other people are discovering the health benefits derived from the hive, which include honey for the treatment of allergies and skin ulcers, bee-sting-venom therapy for arthritis, and propolis, a sticky gum bees gather from trees and buds and use to seal cracks in the hive, for sore throats.

We can plant vegetable and flower gardens to support our pollinators, provide food for our tables and help clean the environment. Let's plant gardens everywhere: on the roofs and in flower pots, in community gardens and our own yards.

We can get back to the basics of respecting our environment and living in harmony with our insect world. If we don't, Mother Nature will make the change for us. 

Mark H. Creighton is an apiculturist with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station and is assigned as the state's apiary inspector. He established his first beehive in Brookline, N.H., when he was 17. He has

Pollinator Pleasers

Flowers

Anise hyssop

Aster

Genovese basil

Japanese buckwheat

Catnip

Celosia, spiky or feathery

Chives

Cilantro

Cosmos

Goldenrod

Joe Pye weed

Queen Anne's lace

Salvia, white

Sunflower 'Soraya'

White clover

Zinnia

Crop plants

Apple

Blackberry

Blueberry

Basil

Cantaloupe

Cranberry

Cucumber

Fennel

Mustard

Okra

Pear

Rose hips

Squash

Turnip

Watermelon

—compiled by Mark H. Creighton

five hives in Portland, where he lives, and has or tends about 20 hives elsewhere in Connecticut. Reach him at MCreig9716@aol.com.

CHS Flower Show Exhibit: Taking Leave of Lawn

by Nancy Brennick

CHS volunteers once again are using some "down time" in the garden to keep the green spirit alive by producing a display for the 2013 Connecticut Flower and Garden Show in February.

The theme for this year's show is "Love in Bloom." Putting a captivating spin on the theme is nothing new for our creative group, and this year is no exception as we ask show visitors to "Break Up with Your Lawn." We suggest that such a break-up might occur in the form of a Dear John – er, Dear Lawn – letter, where the lost infatuation is explained and replaced by a more practical, ecological awareness of the cost of the ended relationship. Our display guides the healing process!

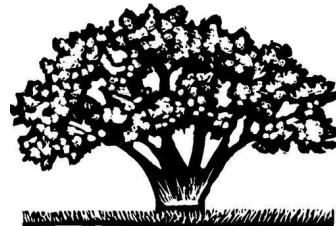
We will also continue in our lauded role as speaker facilitators, introducing the horticultural experts who lead 80 hours of seminars over four days. CHS volunteers have added a professional touch to the logistics in the meeting rooms by introducing speakers and the society to attendees. The role is the big-

gest opportunity at the show for CHS to meet potential new members.

People who attend the seminars are learners who want to hear speakers, and hey, that's exactly what we're about. We're asking for volunteers to introduce one or more of the seminar speakers. The bonus is that these volunteers get into the show for free on their assignment day, as do volunteers who host the CHS booth and help prepare the exhibit.

The sign-up list for speaker facilitators and CHS booth hosts will be available at our meetings and by calling the CHS office, 860-529-8713. Calling during office hours, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., means we can confirm that the time slot you're requesting is open. Let us hear from you, please.

For updates on show preparation and work meetings please see our Facebook page, or email CHS.Flowershows@gmail.com to get on the distribution list. 



FROM THE FIELD

We love hearing what our talented members are up to. Please share recent or upcoming gardening-related activities or accolades by emailing a note to Colleen Fitzpatrick at news@cthort.org.

Several CHS members will be sharing their expertise at the 2013 Connecticut Flower and Garden Show in Hartford February 21-24. Among those scheduled as of newsletter press time were **Karen Bussolini** of South Kent ("naturescaping" the garden); Rich Cowles of the **Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station** (invasive pests); **Sydney Eddison** of Newtown (the passage of time in the garden); **Ellen Hoverkamp** of West Haven (floral scanner photography); Dawn Pettinelli of **University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension** (compostology); **Colleen Plimpton** of Bethel (gardening with the birds). For the full schedule, visit www.ctflower-show.com.

Karen Bussolini of South Kent spoke at the Prosser Public Library in Bloomfield on Nov. 13 about her book "The Naturescaping Workbook: A Step-by-Step Guide for Bringing Nature to Your Backyard."

Hartford landscape designer **Lelancia Dubay** was featured in an Oct. 28 article in The Hartford Courant's Home & Real Estate section for the work she did for a neighbor, Denise Merrill, Connecticut's secretary of the state. Merrill asked Dubay, of Dubay Design, to help solve the problem of a wet basement. Dubay created a rain garden whose elements included a rock- and gravel-lined ditch that channels water away from the house, native plants that can absorb a lot of water in a short time and two small granite bridges. She also adjusted the composition and level of the soil.

Flower Show Details

2013 Connecticut Flower and Garden Show

Thursday, Feb. 21-Sunday, Feb. 24

10 a.m.-8 p.m., except Thursday (7 p.m. close) and Sunday (5 p.m. close)

Connecticut Convention Center

100 Columbus Blvd., Hartford

www.ctflowershow.com

Discounted Tickets for CHS Members

CHS member: \$11 (general price, \$16; savings of more than 30 percent)

Buy discounted tickets at the January program meeting and any CHS work meeting. Cash and checks will be accepted. Tickets will not be mailed from the CHS office; you must buy your discounted tickets in person. Don't miss taking advantage of this CHS benefit.



2013 Philadelphia Flower Show

- * Theme: 'Brilliant! – British Invasion'
- * Tour highlighting the British Revolutionary War experience

For a wonderful getaway, join the annual CHS trip to the Philadelphia International Flower Show. This is the largest indoor show of its kind, and it bursts with luxurious gardens, floral arrangements, speaker programs and a marketplace of more than 200 vendors.

Day 1: Depart aboard a motor coach bound for Philadelphia with stops for food along the way. Upon arriving, we hear the British occupation story as we tour the most historic square mile of the nation. Hear about the mansion that was home to the treasonous Benedict Arnold, then to British Gen. William Howe, then to two of the most famous individuals to shape U.S. history. Do you know which signers of the Declaration of Independence were born in England? Enjoy the story.

Gracious accommodations await us at the Warwick Radisson in historic Rittenhouse Square. We'll check in, have time to unpack and relax before a tea and scone reception. Our "taste of Britain"

welcome dinner includes an asparagus, cucumber and rice salad, entrée of bangers and mash with onion gravy, and a British dessert.

Day 2: We're off to the flower show and its "British invasion" theme. The Britons have a word for something that's inventive, dazzling, extraordinary: "Brilliant!" The show will glow with the majestic beauty and creative genius of Great Britain and pay tribute to centuries of inspiring and influential culture, culminating in the urbane design of 21st-century London. Receive the royal treatment as you explore acres of great gardens and learn from the world's most celebrated growers and designers.

Then it's homeward bound, with breaks for stretching and refreshment.

Cost: \$339 per twin CHS member based on 30-45 passengers; \$399 per single member; nonmembers add \$50. **Includes:** deluxe motorcoach, one night hotel, one dinner, flower show admission, sightseeing, driver gratuity, \$25 per person donation to CHS. Escorted by Brett Isaacson. **Final payment:** due by Jan. 9, 2013.

For complete information on any CHS trip, including meal choice, contact CHS Travel Chairman Lois Isaacson at Friendship Tours, (860) 243-1630 or (860) 236-1143. There are no refunds on the day trips, so please provide a substitute. Make checks payable to CHS, but mail them to: Friendship Tours, 533 Cottage Grove Road, Bloomfield, CT 06002. Friendship Tours arranges the components of the tours and does not own or operate the independent suppliers of services including motorcoaches. Trips cancelled because of weather conditions are handled on a per-trip basis. Friendship Tours will negotiate with all suppliers of the trip components to secure the best refund. However, it is possible that there would be no refund depending on timing of the cancellation and nature of the components. Friendship Tours reserves the right to adjust cost based on fuel surcharges. Tickets to theaters/events are nonrefundable. Trip Protection Insurance through the National Tour Association Protection Plan is strongly recommended for overnight trips and is handled by the individual passenger. As per the application, preexisting conditions and default are covered only if the application is received by the NTA Protection Plan, postmarked within 14 days of initial deposit. Please review the NTA Protection Plan brochure carefully for details of coverage and call them at (800) 388-1470 if you have any questions.



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Helen Savage, West Hartford

Nancy Schoeffler, Glastonbury

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John Turnier, Burlington

Memberships: 949

Attention Advertisers: A "Spring Marketplace" advertising section is planned for the April issue of CHS Newsletter. Horticulture-related businesses may advertise their products and services, as space permits and with preference given to businesses that are Connecticut Horticultural Society members. About 900 garden-loving homes and businesses statewide receive the newsletter. Ad prices range from \$25 to \$100. Deadline for receiving digital copy is March 1. Please email Colleen Fitzpatrick, news@cthort.org.



Learn With CHS

The CHS Education Committee kicks off 2013 with workshops and programs that we hope will capture your horticultural fancy. Visit www.cthort.org for additional programs (flower arranging, apple-tree grafting, a peony tour are possibilities) and to download a registration form for all educational programs. Enroll with a friend!

Hydrangea Heaven

Tuesday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m.

CHS office, 2433 Main St.

Rocky Hill

Kevin Wilcox, owner of Silver Spring Nursery in Bloomfield, explains the different species of hydrangeas and available cultivars for Connecticut gardens, with an emphasis on cultural requirements and how to prune for better flowers. Fee: CHS members, \$5; nonmembers, \$10. Limit: 20

Spring Pruning, Part I

Wednesday, March 6, 7 p.m.

CHS office, 2433 Main St.

Rocky Hill

In this first session, Kevin Wilcox of Silver Spring Nursery in Bloomfield demonstrates proper pruning methods, discusses correct time of the year for

pruning various shrubs and shows participants the right tools to use for specific pruning problems. Bring questions. Fee: CHS members, \$5; nonmembers, \$10. Limit: 20

Spring Pruning, Part II

Saturday, March 30

10 a.m.-noon.

(Rain date Saturday, April 6)

Location: TBA

In this follow-up to the March 6 pruning session, participants will be on-site with Kevin Wilcox as he demonstrates the correct methods of pruning various shrubs—overgrown lilacs, buddleia, caryopteris, abelia, rhododendrons that are threatening to engulf the house, trees and shrubs that suffered winter damage and plants that simply need to be shaped. Fee: CHS members, \$5; nonmembers, \$10. Limit: 20

Waxman Collection Tour

Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m.-noon

University of Connecticut, Storrs

Many gardeners know of the legendary University of Connecticut plantsman Sid Waxman, who introduced some of the best dwarf conifers that now grace American landscapes. Most of these plants found their origin in genetic mutations known as “witches’ brooms.” UConn is assembling a collection of Waxman’s introductions on the Storrs campus, and CHS board member Sarah Bailey, of the UConn Master Gardeners program, leads our tour. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy on the grounds afterward. Find details, including location and cost, at www.cthort.org and in future newsletters.



Horticultural Happenings & Announcements

Note: Happenings are listed on a space-available basis with priority given to CHS notices. Please include a contact person's name and phone number or email address. Email your submission to news@cthort.org. Deadline for the February issue is Jan. 9.

‘Greener Living’

Gary Ginsberg, a public health toxicologist who evaluates risks and sets standards for contaminants in soil, drinking water, food, air and consumer products, will discuss “Greener Living” with the Cherry Brook Garden Club of Canton on Tuesday, Jan. 8, 11 a.m., at the Canton Community Center, 40 Dyer Ave. Free. Contact Linda Lareau, lslareau@comcast.net.

Landscaping with Native Plants

On Thursday, Jan. 10, at noon, CHS member Sarah Bailey, a pesticide safety educator at the University of Connecticut, suggests ways to incorporate more

native plants into the landscape. The West Hartford Garden Club hosts the talk. Location: Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2080 Boulevard. Guest fee, \$10. Reservations required: 860-521-2439.

Invasive Plants

Donna Ellis of the University of Connecticut Extension Center, provides an update on invasive plants that threaten the landscape and lists alternatives for the garden. Her talk to the Simsbury Garden Club is Monday, Jan. 14, at 11:30 a.m., at the Apple Barn, 60 Old Farms Rd., West Simsbury. Free. Visit www.simsburygardenclub.org.

Preparing for Spring

On Wednesday, Jan. 23, 7:30 p.m., Bruce McCue, owner of McCue Gardens in Wethersfield, talks about preparing the garden for the spring growing season after a long winter. The Hardy Plant Society sponsors the talk. Location: Solomon Welles House, 220 Hartford Ave., Wethersfield. Suggested \$5 donation for nonmembers. Socializing begins at 7 p.m. Contact Leslie Shields, selchie1@comcast.net, or visit www.cthardyplantsociety.org.



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CHS Calendar at a Glance

- Jan. 3** – Board meeting, CHS office,
Rocky Hill
- Jan. 9** – February CHS Newsletter
deadline
- Jan. 15** – Education program,
hydrangea care and cultivation,
CHS office, Rocky Hill
(see page 9)
- Jan. 17** – Program meeting, Eric
Rutkow, “The Rise and Fall of Two
Great Trees,” West Hartford
(see page 3)

Dated Material Please Rush

The CHS Newsletter is printed
on recycled paper with soya ink.



At the Holiday Potluck: A Gift from the Isaacson Family

With the annual holiday dinner came news of a generous gift to CHS: Lois and Herbert Isaacson have created a \$20,000 endowment that is intended to finance one CHS meeting speaker each year.

CHS President Nancy Brennick announced the endowment at the Dec. 14 dinner at the Keeney Memorial Center in Wethersfield as the newsletter was going to press. A full article will be published in the February issue of CHS Newsletter and at www.cthort.org.

Fran Schoell, holiday potluck chairwoman, thanked several people for helping to make the dinner a success: Nancy Brennick for providing the ham, Joan and Ken Stubenrauch for stirring up the punch, Vicki and John Casner for creating the beautiful table decorations and, for their behind-the-scenes work, Karen Ellsworth, Anita Ellsworth, Fairlee

Latawic, Nancy and Bob Shipman, Pat Jurovaty, Elizabeth Morin, Debby Goodrich, Elaine Payne, Christine Pane and Cheryl Tuttle.

Entertainers included pianist John Bergeron, while Steve Silk, Nancy and Bob Shipman, and Kim and Dave Malley shared slide shows of recent horticultural adventures. Brett Isaacson showed photos of CHS trips organized by Friendship Tours, the family company founded by his mother Lois, who is the CHS travel chairwoman.

A somber note was struck when the group observed a moment of silence for the residents of Newtown, where 20 schoolchildren and seven adults were slain earlier in the day. 

