

Connecticut Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

Volume 60, Number 7

Serving Horticulturists Since 1887

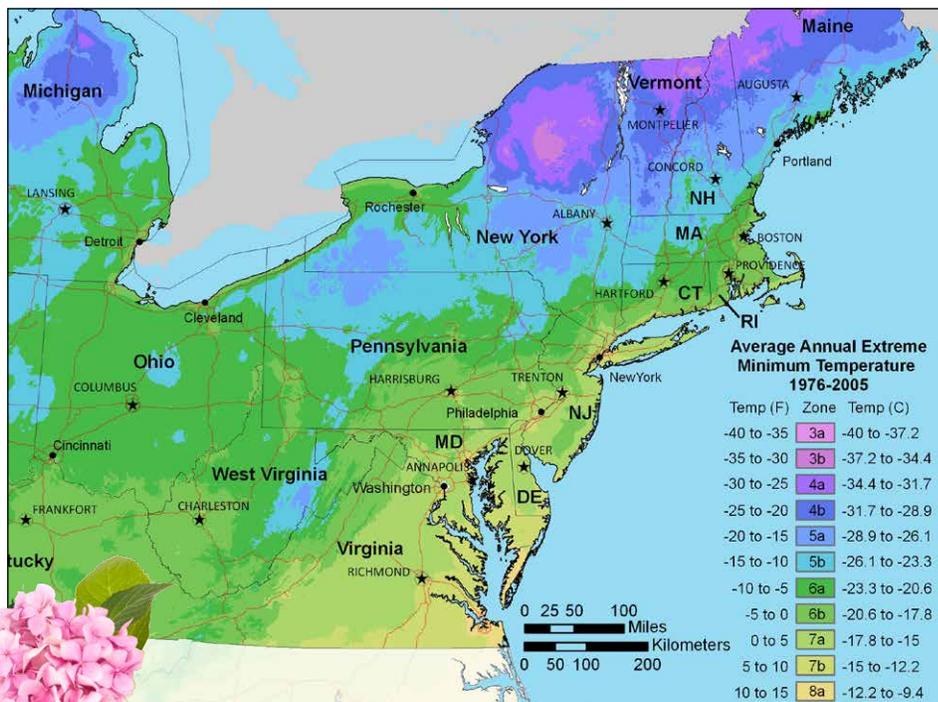
April 2018

Hydrangea Hardiness: A Tricky Business

By Lorraine Ballato

The 2012 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map is the standard by which gardeners and growers can determine which plants are most likely to thrive at a given U.S. location. The map is based on the average annual minimum winter temperature, divided into 10-degree F zones. But—and this is a big but—it is not an absolute. You should consider it a guide since we all have microclimates in our growing zone.

For example, when I enter my zip code into the interactive USDA map at <http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/phzweb/interactivemap.aspx>, that database comes back to tell me that I am in growing zone 6. However, I can tell you with certainty that many zone 6 plants perform as annuals in my garden. The exception to that is where my property faces south. There, and only there, do I have zone 6 growing conditions and, in some cases, zone 7. Why is that? For one, I live on a hill and that elevation change affects temperature. My property is also in a cold pocket, which has another effect. Last, in the areas where I have damp soil, those gardens hold the cold longer because of the moisture. That soil moisture causes a later spring thaw and earlier fall chill, all factors affecting my growing zone. That means my zone 6 hardy plant better be ready to take zone 5 temperatures or be prepared to become compost.



USDA map at <http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/phzweb/interactivemap.aspx>

So what does this mean for hydrangeas? Hardiness becomes a fine point of distinction when it comes to *Hydrangea macrophylla*. Yes, there are cultivars rated hardy to zones 4, 5, and 6, and yes, you can expect those plants to survive at those zone-specific temperatures but it is only the roots that will surely survive at those zone-specific temperatures. Stem hardiness, on the other hand, in this case, the flower buds, may not

enjoy the same level of hardiness. That's why, after a "bad winter," you'll get a nice green bush but no flowers. The roots were hardy as promised, but the stems that produce the flowers were not. Sad, but true.

Sometimes *Hydrangea serrata* (mountain hydrangea) gets caught in this web but not always. It originates from the mountains of Japan and as such, has better cold tolerance.

(continued on page 4)

See you at the
CT Hort Spring Plant Sale & Auction
May 4 at 6:30 pm (details on page 10)

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All announcements, advertising news and articles for publication should be sent to: news@cthorth.org.

Send Membership Information & Direct General Questions To:
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LAST CALL: 2018 Mehlquist Award Nominations

By Fairlee Latawic, Awards Committee

Do you know a Connecticut resident who deserves to be honored and recognized for their significant and extraordinary contributions in horticulture or the art of gardening? If you do, please submit a nomination letter describing the background and qualifications of your nominee for the Connecticut Horticultural Society Mehlquist Award.

In 1987, on its 100th anniversary, CT Hort established the Gustav Mehlquist Award to honor Dr. Mehlquist for his extraordinary contribution to horticulture in our state. Dr. Mehlquist, who had been long recognized as one of the leading horticulturists in the United States, was a longstanding member. Every year since 1987, nominations are sought for this prestigious award named in his honor.

Send your nomination to Mary Anna Martell:

Email: office@cthorth.org, Subject line: **Mehlquist Award**

OR CHS Office
2433 Main Street
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Anniversaries will be Celebrated in April!!!



Invitations were recently sent to those members who will reach a significant milestone in their membership with CHS. During our April 19 meeting we will recognize members with 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and up to 65 years of belonging to CHS. Don't miss this fun event!

Check your mail. Are you one of our milestone members?

If so, please RSVP at office@cthorth.org or call Mary Anna at (860) 529-8713.

Thank you to our generous business members and supporters!

Visit cthorth.org for the latest listings and links.



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The Mycobiome of the Garden

Thursday, April 19

with Eugenia Bone, Food journalist, Writer, Blogger



Eugenia Bone

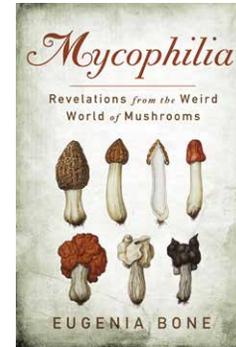
As the daughter of accomplished Italian cook and cookbook author Ed Giobbi, Eugenia Bone grew up in a food environment. Her parents socialized with a group of chefs who were influential in their day and Eugenia learned a lot through observation that remains with her to this day: use everything, taste constantly, and be grateful for every mouthful.

These days, Eugenia spends her time as a food writer, author, Italian cook, mushroom hunter and master canner. On Thursday, April 19, she will present her talk on *The Mycobiome of the Garden*.



Her presentation will provide an overview of fungal biology and illustrate how a little mycology can make you a better mushroom cook.

Most of a gardener's experience with fungi is negative. Few realize that although fungi are the primary antagonists of plants, they are also key to their health. Eugenia will explain the evolutionary relationship of fungi and plants, the tasks fungi do to support plant survival, and the problems plants have when fungi are damaged or eradicated by certain gardening practices. 🍄



Microbia



A JOURNEY INTO
THE UNSEEN WORLD
AROUND YOU
Eugenia Bone

Two of Ms. Bone's books will be available for cash purchase at the meeting – her just-released, *Microbia: A Journey Into the Unseen World Around You*, a study of life from the microbial point of view (Rodale, 2018) and *Mycophilia: Revelations From the Weird World of Mushrooms*, nominated for a Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries award.



CHS Program Meeting

Meetings are open to everyone, with a drop-in fee of \$10 collected at the door from non-members. For more information, visit www.chort.org.

Date: Thursday, April 19

Time: Program starts at 7:30 p.m. but come early – 7 p.m. – to socialize, browse CHS library books, participate in raffle items, look at travel fliers or get your plant questions answered by our resident horticulturalist, Kevin Wilcox.

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

Speaker Feedback



After you attend a speaker meeting, please take a moment to tell us what you thought of the presenter. Your candid feedback helps us to arrange for speakers that will hold your interest. Take the five-question survey on our website – chort.org. Click on the survey icon found on any page then chose the speaker you want to rate. Thank you for your feedback.

“Hydrangea Hardiness”, from page 1

Be heartened: in either case, those roots will produce new stems and your Hydrangea macrophylla or serrata plant will live to see another day. Green wood will tell you that the stem is still alive which is important for a reblooming plant. Scratch the stem to test it.



© Lorraine Ballato

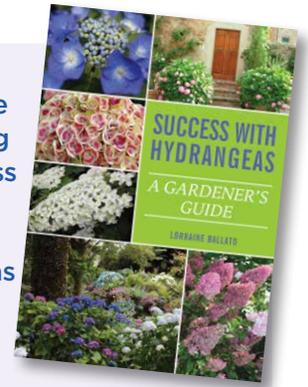
Gently scratch a hydrangea stem to test if it is alive and should flower

But your old-wood plants might not produce flowers. The new-wood cultivars, however, will give you flowers if you treat them right. Just as soon as that stem can get its mojo working, it may not have the typical early season flush, but certainly before the summer ends you should see flowers.

The other two old-wood bloomers, Hydrangea quercifolia (oak leaf), and Hydrangea petiolaris (climbing), have better stem hardiness and cold tolerance and, like Hydrangea serrata, usually pull through when Hydrangea macrophylla doesn't.

The low hardiness ratings and new-wood bloom habit of Hydrangea arborescens (woodland) and Hydrangea paniculata (PG) preclude any winter dieback issues. You'll be giving them an annual spring haircut for tidying, shaping, and rejuvenation while you take the opportunity at the same time to freely cut away any winterkill without affecting your current season's bloom. 🌿

To learn more about dealing with hardiness issues for your big leaf hydrangeas as well as other hydrangea species, you can find more information in *Success With Hydrangeas, A Gardener's Guide*. The book provides an overview of the science of rebloomers and details about winter protection, plant selection, pruning, etc. If you've been asking, "Why doesn't my hydrangea bloom?" this book surely answers that question, and many more!



From left to right: CHS Past President Nancy Brennick, presenter Eric Hsu from Chanticleer, Nancy and Bob Shipman, CHS President Ken Stubenrauch

CHS Members Bob and Nancy Shipman receive honorary lifetime membership



The March 15 monthly speaker meeting included special recognition for longtime CHS members, Bob and Nancy Shipman. That evening, Nancy recalled how warmly she and Bob were welcomed by fellow members when they joined. They were a young couple and most of the older members found them somewhat novel!

The Shipmans joined CHS in 1965 and have remained devoted to the Society ever since. In recognition of their many decades of dedication, fellow members voted unanimously to present them with a lifetime membership.

Congratulations and thank you, Nancy and Bob!



Cheryl Marino, Membership Committee Chair (far right) joins Ken to present Bob and Nancy with a lifetime membership.

Horticultural Happenings & Announcements

Note: Happenings are listed on a space-available basis. To submit an event, send details to news@cthort.org. Please format the announcement to resemble the entries below. Deadline for May issue is April 16.

*Weds, April 4, 2-4 p.m. – Connecticut Master Gardener Association (CGMA) hosts a film screening of **Hometown Habitat, Stories of Bringing Nature Home**, directed by Catherine Zimmerman and featuring Doug Tallamy. Open to the public, free and taking place at the Litchfield County Extension Center in Torrington. Advance Registration is requested at: <https://uconnmastergardeners.gosignmeup.com/Public/Course/Browse> (If you have not used this UConn system before, please create a profile and sign up for this free event)*

*Thurs., April 5, noon – West Hartford Garden Club welcomes Chrissie D'Esopo who will discuss how she created her evergreen garden. Chrissie's Avon home is known to all who pass by for its magnificent garden displays. **Location:** St. John's Episcopal Church, 679 Farmington Ave., West Hartford. **Fee:** Guest donation: \$10 for light lunch and speaker. Reservations required. Call (860) 561-0724 or visit www.westhartfordgardenclub.org for more info.*

Sat., April 7, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. – Windsor African Violet Society Show & Sale This year's theme is "Violets Under the Big Top". Design displays include cut flower arrangements, under-water arrangements, terrariums, and dish gardens, all using African violets. An education table will provide free information on cultivating and propagating African violets. A wide variety of other gesneriads will be on display. Plants from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses will be for sale, as well as cut and rooted leaves. The show will be held at Grace Episcopal Church, 311 Broad St., Windsor. Public invited, FREE ADMISSION. For more information visit: Windsor African Violet Society or call (860) 242-0162.

Weds., April 11, noon to 2 p.m. – Girl Scouts of Connecticut present A Conversation With Martha Hall Kelly, author of the New York Times

Bestseller, "Lilac Girls." Ms. Hall Kelly will be interviewed by Diane Smith, Emmy award-winning TV and radio personality. **Location:** New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven. To purchase tickets or for more info visit: gsofct.org.

*Thurs., April 12, 2-4 p.m. – Connecticut Master Gardener Association (CGMA) hosts a film screening of **Hometown Habitat, Stories of Bringing Nature Home**, directed by Catherine Zimmerman and featuring Doug Tallamy. Open to the public, free and taking place at the Carriage House in Edgerton Park, 75 Cliff Street, New Haven. Advance Registration is requested at: <https://uconnmastergardeners.gosignmeup.com/Public/Course/Browse> (If you have not used this UConn system before, please create a profile and sign up for this free event)*

*Sat., April 14, 9:30-11 a.m. – Barn Talks Workshop at Hollister House Garden – "New England Orchard Revival: Resurrecting the Heirloom Apple" – This informative and entertaining presentation will touch on New England's tradition of apple production, practical lessons in heirloom revival, new disease resistant and low impact varieties and some tastings of recently developed varieties to help you consider if apples will be included in your garden design. Presenter Peter Jentsch has been planting, studying and tasting apples for the past 30 years. His passion for pomology and the animals that fertilize fruit trees as host plants has guided his career as Director of the HudsonValley Research Laboratory and faculty entomologist at the College of Ag and Life Sciences at Cornell University. **Location:** Hollister House Garden, Washington. HHG Members \$30|Non-Members \$35. Visit www.hollisterhousegarden.org/events for more information.*

*Sat., April 14, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. & Sun. April 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. – Connecticut Cactus and Succulent Society 35th Annual Show & Sale. **Location:** Bristol Senior Center, 240 Stafford Ave, Bristol. Admission is FREE with a FREE plant to the first 50 families each day! Largest cactus show in New England. Includes educational lectures. Visit the CCSS website for more details or contact President Chris Allen – callen6164@att.net*

Mon., April 16, noon – Garden Club of Avon presents "Artists in the Garden" by Rita Bond, Artist and Landscape Designer. Vivid slides accompany Bond's exploration of how gardens have inspired artists and artists have inspired the creation of amazing gardens. \$5 guest fee includes lunch. Reservations: Jody Morgan:860-673-3887. Church of St. Ann, 289 Arch Road, Avon.

*Sat., April 21, 9:30-11 a.m. – Barn Talks Workshop at Hollister House Garden – "The Living Lawn: Simple Steps to Organic Lawn Care" – This presentation presents many compelling reasons why you should consider a natural approach to lawn care. The presenter, Chip Osborne, is a professional horticulturalist with over forty-five years in the green industry. He is the founder of Osborne Organics, a company providing natural turf consulting services. Chip will offer a detailed and systematic approach to natural lawn care, including basic soil biology and testing, proper use of organic products and sound cultural practices. These steps will be outlined and explained in a common sense way. This talk is suitable for the homeowner as well as for landscape professionals. **Location:** Hollister House Garden, Washington. HHG Members \$30|Non-Members \$35. Visit www.hollisterhousegarden.org/events for more information.*

*Sat., April 28, 9:30-11 a.m. – Barn Talks Workshop at Hollister House Garden – "Creating a Landscape for Your Table" – Learn how to create a landscape for your table that goes far beyond the usual cut flower arrangement. Well-know designer and artist Chris Zaima will demonstrate the art of using miniature potted plants and succulents to make unique, sophisticated centerpieces. Following his talk and demonstration Chris will work with participants to create table landscapes to take home. Please bring your own container, suitable for a table centerpiece. All other materials will be provided. **Location:** Hollister House Garden, Washington. HHG Members \$75 | Non-Members. \$85. Visit www.hollisterhousegarden.org/events for more information. 📍*

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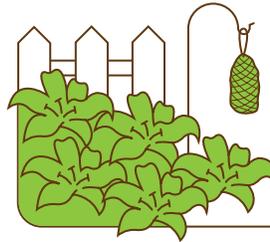


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(Updated March 2018)

Get Garden Design's Spring Issue Free When You Subscribe

If you don't get *Garden Design* yet, the Spring 2018 issue is a great one to start off with!

Garden Design has no advertisements. So if you love gardens, plants, and design, we know you'll love *Garden Design* magazine since each issue contains stories that unfold over 6 to 20 pages, showcasing luscious photography and in-depth stories and plant info. Each issue is like a book.

There are four issues per year: spring, summer, fall, and winter. Each magazine is collectible and coffee table worthy. They

are filled with large, bold photography so you can appreciate the details that make gardens great.

Famous plantsman Dan Hinkley says:

"Finally! A superb U.S. publication that celebrates the genius of American landscape design and opulent history of garden-making in our country. Bravo to the publishers of Garden Design!"



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CHS members receive a discount on membership with the American Horticultural Society (AHS). A new or gift 'single membership' costs only \$25 for a year, rather than the going rate of \$35. But even at \$35, membership with AHS is a STEAL! It includes a year of the American Gardener magazine and FREE entry to 320 gardens across the country through their Reciprocal Admissions Program (RAP). Visit cthort.org to take advantage of this new benefit of CHS membership!



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Mushrooms are full of antioxidants that may have antiaging potential

Story Source: Penn State

Mushrooms may contain unusually high amounts of two antioxidants that some scientists suggest could help fight aging and bolster health, according to a team of Penn State researchers.

In a study, researchers found that mushrooms have high amounts of the ergothioneine and glutathione, both important antioxidants, said Robert Beelman, professor emeritus of food science and director of the Penn State Center for Plant and Mushroom Products for Health. He added that the researchers also found that the amounts the two compounds varied greatly between mushroom species.

“What we found is that, without a doubt, mushrooms are highest dietary source of these two antioxidants taken together, and that some types are really packed with both of them,” said Beelman.

Beelman said that when the body uses food to produce energy, it also causes oxidative stress because some free radicals are produced. Free radicals are oxygen atoms with unpaired electrons that cause damage to cells, proteins and even DNA as these highly reactive atoms travel through the body seeking to pair up with other electrons.

Replenishing antioxidants in the body, then, may help protect against this oxidative stress.

“There’s a theory -- the free radical theory of aging -- that’s been around for a long time that says when we oxidize our food to produce energy there’s a number of free radicals that are produced that are side products of that action and many of these are quite toxic,” said Beelman. “The body has mechanisms to control most of

them, including ergothioneine and glutathione, but eventually enough accrue to cause damage, which has been associated with many of the diseases of aging, like cancer, coronary heart disease and Alzheimer’s.”

According to the researchers, who report their findings in a recent issue of *Food Chemistry*, the amounts of ergothioneine and glutathione in mushrooms vary by species with the porcini species, a wild variety, containing the highest

amount of the two compounds among the 13 species tested.

“We found that the porcini has the highest, by far, of any we tested,” said Beelman. “This species is really popular in Italy where searching for it has become a national pastime.”

The more common mushroom types, like the white button, had less of the antioxidants, but had higher amounts than most other foods, Beelman said.



Robert Beelman is Professor Emeritus of Food Science at Penn State and Director of the Center for Plant and Mushroom Foods for Health.

Photo Credit: Patrick Mansell

Friday, May 4 – Come to the CHS Spring Plant Sale & Auction

by Trish Lyons, Plant Sale & Auction Committee Chairperson

Be a part of this worthwhile and fun tradition that marks the start of spring. Admission is FREE! **NOTE:** The spring sale traditionally falls on the last Friday in April but Bethany Covenant Church had an event scheduled that evening.

You'll find trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, assorted garden treasures and books. The evening's proceeds fund scholarships for deserving horticulture students at UConn and Naugatuck Valley Community College.

The **Plant Sale** offers interesting plants from member gardens. The **Silent Auction** includes gift options for Mother's Day. During the **LIVE auction**, bid on collectible new introductions from our nursery supporters and rare plant divisions from our members' gardens.

AUCTION SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MAY 4:

- 4:30 p.m. Volunteers arrive for setup
- 5:00 p.m. Doors open for donations
- 6:30 p.m. Preview & Silent Auction
- 7:00 p.m. Plant Sale
- 7:15 p.m. Plant Auction



How you can help: Volunteers are needed for all sorts of things from donations and pricing, to set up and break down. Send a note to cthortauction@gmail.com if you're willing to lend a hand. Or, hang a few flyers where you work or shop. Printable flyer is available on our website – chhort.org – or printed copies can be picked up at the Rocky Hill office.

Location:

Bethany Covenant Church
785 Mill Street (Route 372)
Berlin

PLANT DONATION DETAILS:

(donor letter and tax receipt form available on website)

- » **Pot donations early** to allow them to recover and adjust to potted life. Please use pots so that your plant displays well and holds its soil (no paper cups, plastic bags, etc.). Resist making several small divisions; larger plants sell better.
- » **Label plants** with common and botanical names (if possible) and cultural preferences. A picture really helps sell your donation.
- » **Deliver donations – along with your name, address and list of items donated** – on auction day from 5 to 6 p.m. *Plant list and donor info is required to receive a record of donation.*
- » **Ask nurseries and garden centers for donations.** Most nurseries are receptive to the request. Donations are tax deductible for nurseries and a good way to advertise to CT Hort members. Please bring a list of the plants donated and the name and address of the nursery when you deliver so that CT Hort can properly acknowledge the donation.
- » **Donations accepted from 5 to 6 p.m. on the day of the auction.**

**And, of course, we are ALWAYS in need
of enthusiastic plant buyers!
Please come join the fun!**

CHS Travel

Save
the Date!

Longwood Gardens and Mt Cuba Center Wednesday through Friday, August 22-24

This impressive 2-night summer tour is taking shape and will include visits to two spectacular gardens!

An entire day will be devoted to Longwood, including a return in the evening for one of their breathtaking Illuminated Fountain Performances.

Another day will be spent at Mt. Cuba Center where beauty and purpose intersect. The Center was founded on an



understanding of the importance of native plants, natural lands and conservation. The Mt. Cuba mission is to inspire an appreciation for the beauty and value of native plants and a commitment to support the habitats that sustain them.

A visit to a private garden is also in the works. Dinner reservations have been made at Buca di Beppo and both nights will be spent at the boutique Hotel Warner in

West Chester Penn. Once a grand movie house, built in 1930, the Hotel Warner is listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Call Barbara at Friendship Tours to be placed on the list to receive the flyer once all details have been ironed out.

New Date
and Exhibits

The Cloisters & Metropolitan Museum of Art Wednesday, May 16

This day trip by deluxe motorcoach to two of the premier museums in the country has been rescheduled to Wednesday, May 16 to be able to view The Costume Institute's spring 2018 exhibition that will be taking place at both museum locations. The exhibition will feature a dialogue between fashion and medieval art as well as examine fashion's ongoing engagement with the devotional practices and traditions of Catholicism. Serving as the cornerstone of the exhibition, papal robes and accessories from the Sistine Chapel sacristy, many of which have never been seen outside The Vatican, will be on view.

The Cloisters Museum and Gardens is located in Fort Tryon Park overlooking the Hudson River. It is a branch of the Met devoted to the art, architecture and gardens of medieval Europe. The Cloisters provide an evocative setting for more than 2,000 exceptional artworks from the 12th through the 15th century.

The Cloisters is also known for its three unique gardens whose design and plantings are based on documents and works of art from the Middle Ages. Enjoy a guided tour of the Cloisters museum with special focus on the gardens.



The Metropolitan Museum of Art on Fifth Avenue in New York City is one of the world's largest and most important art museums. Housing an enormous permanent collection "The Met" with its tall columns and windows, immense stairways and fountains, looks like it could be an emperor's palace. Your time at the museum will be on our own with time for lunch at the café. Psssssst! Be sure to visit the Cantor Roof Garden for a drink and a view of Central Park.

Cost: \$99 per member or \$105 if not a CHS member.



**To reserve your spot or for more information, please call
Friendship Tours at (860) 243-1630 / toll-free (800) 243-1630
or visit www.friendshiptours.net and select CHS Tours.**

Dated Material 🌿 *Please Rush*

CHS Calendar at a Glance

Thurs., April 5 – CHS Board of Directors meeting, 7:00 p.m., Rocky Hill office

Thurs, April 19 – CHS Program meeting, 7:30 p.m., Eugenia Bone presents *The Mycobiome of the Garden*

Fri., May 4 – CHS Spring Plant Sale & Auction, 6:30 p.m., Bethany Covenant Church, Berlin



HELP!!! A collective plea from Committee heads

Please, please consider lending a hand with some aspect of our wonderful organization. We truly can use help and CHS is made more lively, interesting and stronger with fresh ideas supplied by more members. You can get involved as little or as much as you like. Some activities happen once a year... others need a hand on a regular basis.

Not sure what you can do to help?

CHS has dozens of ways your talents can be used:

- Spend a ½-day at a public event encouraging the greater gardening community to give CHS a try
- Volunteer to pick up plant donations from a couple donors near you for the Spring and Fall auctions that raise money for our scholarship fund
- Introduce speakers at next year's CT Flower & Garden Show (and get in for free!)
- Help put out snacks before one of our Speaker Meetings
- Help to plan workshops

With your talent and ideas, you can surely make an impact on some aspect of our organization. Just let us know you're willing to participate and we'll match your strengths with a task. As you get more involved, you will make new friends, enrich your experience with CHS and help shape its future.

Thank you for giving this some consideration. If you'd like to find out more or have questions, please email membership@cthort.org.

