

Connecticut Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

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October 2011

Great Plants for the Fall Shade Garden

by Cathy Zbuska

Allan Armitage, who runs the research gardens at the University of Georgia, once wrote that “Shade is to gardening as Oreos are to cookies: too many can give you a stomachache but having none is cruel and unusual punishment.”

I’ve always moaned and groaned about my shade. Being an avid organic gardener, however, I was reluctant to cut down trees just to allow some sun in for a garden. After taking garden classes, touring and photographing gardens and experimenting, my husband and I learned which plants work well in shade.

I try to use perennials, shrubs and trees that have more than one season of interest. Most of the plants I recommend



Hamamelis virginiana blossom

Photo: Steve Silk

here have foliage whose texture and color can carry the garden along once blooming has finished. Come with me as I describe a few fall plants that work well in the shady garden.

***Actaea pachyoda*, syn. *Actaea alba* (doll’s eye, white baneberry).**

This native plant for moist shade and acidic soil grows in a clump 1 to 3 feet

tall by 2 feet wide. White, astilbe-like fragrant blooms appear in late May and continue into June. The compound, finely-cut leaves are blue-green. In the fall, white berries with a black dot appear, supported on a stalk of deep crimson red. A word of caution: A possible allergic reaction to the plant can occur and its berries are considered toxic.

Special CHS Event *An evening of vines & wines (see page 11)*



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***Aster novae-angliae* ‘Alma Potschke’.**

The rose pink flowers of this aster bloom in mid-September through early October. The plant performs well in full sun but will also grow in part shade if it gets two to three hours of sun each day. Soil that is too rich will cause this aster to flop. Consistently moist soil is best, but the plant will tolerate drier soils. To prevent this aster from reaching its full height of 2 to 4 feet, cut it back in early June. I cut the front portion of my stand and leave the back alone. Doing this extends the bloom time and elimi-

(continued on page 8)



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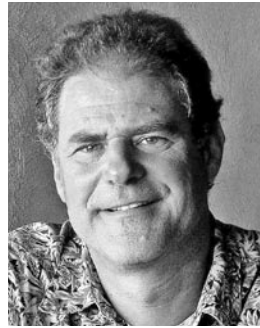
SEND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
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Membership Dues:

Individual.....	\$40
Individual Senior (65+)	\$35
Family.....	\$50
Senior Family (65+).....	\$45
Sustaining	\$100
Business & Organization	\$60

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Letter from the President



Dear Gardeners,

Must be the time of year. This is when the CHS Board of Directors crunches the numbers to develop its annual budget. You might remember Congress doing this (or trying to) just a couple months back. While we are a lot less rancorous than our elected representatives, we do have a lot of the same problems. Chief among them: not enough money.

It would be great if, as is the case with many non-profit groups similar to ours, our operating expenses were covered wholly or largely by dues. But our dues pay for only about one third of CHS' overall annual expenses. The rest comes from our endowment, contributions from Travel Chairman Lois Isaacson's travel endeavors and, of late, proceeds from garden tours. This year we hope to get extra income from our spring symposium (see page 7).

For every dollar you spend for membership, you get \$3 of value. In fact, our total dues are just enough to pay for maintaining and staffing an office and renting a meeting location, so to members, everything else is essentially free. That's a good deal—but untenable in the long run. We've taken some bites from our endowment in the last few years in order to improve our newsletter and redesign our website, which, in my view, have been great investments. My hope was that after we got past a lot of one-time expenses for these needed upgrades we'd be back into the black, or at least a lot less red.

But we're not. And as Finance Committee Chairman Herb Isaacson is fond of reminding me, we can't afford to continue indefinitely by drawing more from our endowment than the amount permitted by a long-standing formula that authorizes an amount equal to the average of the last 20 quarters of profit (or loss) from the performance of our investment. I agree with Herb. So we need to think about new sources of revenue, which is why I proposed the CHS garden tours and why I'd like to offer a most sincere thank you to all those who offered to be garden hosts (see page 5). But we're going to need to do more. We're discussing a dues increase (don't worry, not this year) and perhaps an annual symposium. If you have thoughts or ideas, I'd love to hear from you. Please email me at silk.steve@yahoo.com.

Last, but by no means least, our office administrator, Bonnie McLachlan, has decided to resign. It's our loss. We will miss her organizational flair, her vast knowledge of past and current CHS practices, her attention to detail and her timely completion of every task we throw at her. Bonnie will be with us at least through December. Though we cannot replace her, we will need another office administrator. It's a part-time job (10 hours a week) requiring computer skills (including, ideally, knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Access), flexibility, ability to meet deadlines and a desire to become an integral part of CHS' future. If you know someone who might be interested, please let me know.

Horticordially yours,
Steve Silk

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.

Changing Connecticut's State Flower?

Oct. 27 – Speaker Richard Jaynes,
Broken Arrow Nursery, Hamden, Conn.

There are countless variations in Connecticut's state flower, mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), and Richard (Dick) Jaynes has been at the vanguard of most of them. For half a century he has selected, bred and grown the genus to become its top breeder in the United States. More than 30 cultivars reflect the work of his hand.

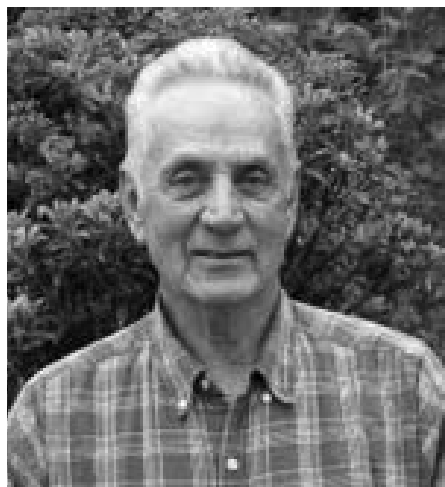
To him, mountain laurel is the most beautiful evergreen shrub of North America. "What else has better foliage and flowers?" he says, adding that the foliage does not droop in winter and that the plant is native to the Nutmeg State.

His passion might have been magnolias instead, had his father not returned to the Northeast after completing his studies at Louisiana State University. Dick was born in Louisiana but has lived in Hamden, Conn., for most of his life. As a boy active in 4-H, he raised chickens, grew pumpkins and strawberries and helped his parents with blueberries and a small commercial apple orchard. He started growing Christmas trees at age 11 and is still doing it 65 years later.

Dick enjoyed a long career at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), which started with summer employment with the farm crew while he was in high school. Then he worked as a summer assistant in the genetics department.

Meanwhile, he earned his bachelor's degree in biology from Wesleyan University and his Ph.D. in botany from Yale University. He was hired full time at CAES in 1961 and continued his focus on the chestnut, which he had begun researching at Yale. He also started working with laurel.

He published many popular and scientific articles, edited what was for many years the standard reference on hardy



North American nut trees ("Nut Tree Culture in North America") and wrote a book on *Kalmia*. The latest edition of "Kalmia, Mountain Laurel and Related Species" was published by Timber Press in 1997.

Dick has received many awards, including the Gold Medal Award of the American Rhododendron Society (1999); the Connecticut Christmas Tree Growers Association Award of Merit (1998); the Linnaeus Award of the Chicago Horticultural Society (1989); CHS' Gustav A.L. Mehlquist Award (1988); the Connecticut Nurseryman's Association Award of Merit (1980); and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's Jackson Dawson Medal for Horticultural Achievement (1976).

He left the agricultural station in 1984 to continue growing Christmas trees and start Broken Arrow Nursery. His initial focus was on *Kalmia*, but the plant offerings expanded as the nursery grew. He relies on 14 employees to keep up with all the plants and credits them with being the nursery's truly valuable assets: Plants are easier to replace than his staff, he says.

Dick also acknowledges his wife Sally in the success of the nursery. It wouldn't

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, Oct. 27*

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

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.

exist, he says, if she hadn't been willing to keep the books and bake chocolate cookies for employees' birthdays.

Two of the couple's three children work at Broken Arrow. All nine of Dick and Sally's grandchildren are boys, which leads Dick to wonder if that outcome had anything to do with his skills as a plant breeder.

Come hear Dick talk about the effort to domesticate mountain laurel, and through his slides take in the beauty of the countless variations in Connecticut's state flower. 🍷

To learn more about Dick and the nursery visit www.brokenarrownursery.com.

*The Oct. 27 meeting is being held on the *fourth* Thursday of the month instead of the usual third.

Editor's note: This article begins an occasional series of articles that will appear this year in celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Connecticut Horticultural Society, 1887-2012.

Celebrating 125 Years

Looking Back at CHS: The Ties to UConn

by Ginny Gingras

As part of its educational mission, the Connecticut Horticultural Society has been awarding scholarships to students at the University of Connecticut's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources since 1959.

The first scholarship was in the amount of \$100, given to a single student. Last year CHS awarded a total of \$10,000: \$3,000 to each of three UConn students and a new, \$1,000 scholarship to a horticulture student at Naugatuck Valley Community College. NVCC is the only two-year college in the state to offer a degree in horticulture.

The money to fund the scholarships comes mainly from CHS spring and fall plant auctions (see the Winter newsletter for results of the Sept. 23 auction). The plants come from CHS members' gardens, from nursery owners who donate plants and formerly from UConn's Burr Nursery.

Edward Corbett, a professor in the plant science department, ran the teaching nursery until his retirement in 2007. He taught students how to propagate superior varieties of perennials, trees and shrubs and then made extensive donations of these plants to the CHS plant auctions. They constituted the body of plants auctioned off each year and included many specimens not readily available in the trade. The Burr Nursery has undergone changes in its mission, and the donation of plants to the CHS auction has ceased.

Many UConn staff have been active members of CHS, and the society has recognized them in many ways. In

1991, CHS designated a \$2,000 scholarship as the Dr. Edwin (Pat) Carpenter Scholarship. Carpenter, a professor of ornamental horticulture, began teaching at UConn in the 1970s. He was a past president of CHS.

(In 1998, a second scholarship was designated in memory of nurseryman Ludwig Hoffman, whose projects included designing and supervising the plantings at Hartford's Constitution Plaza. Hoffman, too, was a past CHS president, and he began the plant forum in which he brought woody plants of superior old and new varieties to CHS meetings and described them. This monthly feature was revived at the Sept. 22 meeting.

(In 2008, CHS named a third UConn scholarship the **David J.A. Smith** Scholarship, in honor of the society's emeritus board member and a past president. Smith is the retired director of horticulture at White Flower Farm in Morris.)

Of the many CHS scholarship recipients, two UConn graduates have been especially noteworthy in their accomplishments:

- **Nancy DuBrule-Clemente** of Northford, who received a \$300 CHS scholarship in 1974. CHS recognizes people and their contributions through two annual awards, and she has received both: the CHS Service Award in 2005 and the Gustav A.L. Mehlquist award in June.
- **Barbara Torino** of Branford, who received a \$2,000 CHS scholarship in

1994-95. For 10 years she has chosen plants at UConn for the CHS plant sale and auction. As a student, she worked in the Burr Nursery under Corbett's direction.

The society's Mehlquist award, which recognizes Connecticut plantsmen and -women who have made extraordinary contributions to horticulture, bears the name of a UConn professor of plant breeding and biology systematics and evolutionary biology. Gustav Mehlquist began a hybridizing program in 1957 in his backyard in Storrs. His work with rhododendrons earned him the American Rhododendron Society's Gold Medal in 1975. Recipients of the CHS Mehlquist award have included Hoffman in 1989, Carpenter in 1992, Smith in 1995 and Corbett in 1998.

CHS began in 1887 as the Hartford County Horticultural Society, started by gardeners who worked on the estates of wealthy people in Hartford. The group held plant shows and conducted plant forums. The society changed its name in 1891 to the one currently in use. Lectures on horticulture are now the focus of meetings. 🌿

Fall Plant Auction

The CHS fall plant auction held Sept. 23 raised \$3,200 for the scholarship fund. Read more at www.cthort.org and in the Winter CHS Newsletter.

The 2011 CHS Garden Tour

The 2nd annual Connecticut Horticultural Society Garden Tour wraps up with one final garden open for viewing in October. Admission costs \$5 per person, and is free for children 12 and under. Buy tickets at the garden (cash or check only). No pets please. Open gardens are held rain or shine.

Sunday, Oct. 9, noon-4 p.m.
Garden of Lee May
25 Beebe Rd., East Haddam

Lee's gardens cover about 1 acre, with the largest at the front of the house. That garden, with a dry-bed stream flowing through it, is Asian inspired and displays weeping tree forms, mosses, ferns, cairn-lanterns and stone. Other spaces include an herb garden, sedum garden and a space Southerners call a "Big Momma's garden." Britons know it as a folly garden; to many, it's a garden of ornaments or doodads that grow among the pass-along plants. Behind the garage (never leave a space unplanted) is a moss garden. Bonsai, one of Lee's gardening loves for 35 years, are displayed throughout.

Directions from Route 2: Take Exit 18 (Rt. 16- Middletown/Colchester). Follow Route 16 west to the traffic light at Route 149. Turn left onto Route 149 south, and follow to just past the "Welcome to East Haddam" sign. Make a slight left onto Eli Chapman. At stop sign, turn left (Mott Lane) and follow the road until it ends at a farm. Turn left, and take your first right (Beebe Road). (*) After about 1 mile, the pavement ends. When it begins again, look for the 5th house on the right, # 25, a small, charcoal-colored, with a separate garage. **From Route 9:** Take



Photo: Lee May

Exit 7 (East Haddam/Goodspeed Opera House/Gillette Castle). Follow the exit road about 3 miles to the flashing light/dead end. Turn left, go to the traffic light, then turn right. Cross the river, go through the village, take the left fork up the hill. Follow this road (Main Street) until you come to a stop sign. The river is on the left. Take the right fork up a steep hill (Landing Hill Road). At a flashing light with a big white church on your right, cross Town Street and continue straight. Follow this road (East Haddam-Colchester Turnpike), continuing across the small causeway over the reservoir. After you pass a farm on the right, watch for Beebe Road. Turn right onto Beebe, follow from (*) above. Lost? Call Lee at 860-304-0007. 🗺️

Thanks for a Successful 2011 CHS Garden Tour

CHS would like to thank the following CHS members and friends for opening their beautiful gardens to the public as part of the second annual CHS Garden Tour.

Bernie and Susan Apter, Manchester; **Lynn Beaulieu and Gerry Lupacchino**, Manchester; **Karen Bouley**, Colchester; **Anita Brucker**, Granby and East Otis, Mass.; **Sandra Daigle**, Colchester; **Elizabeth Fitzpatrick**, West Hartford; **Bob and Linda Hodge**, Colchester.

Also, **Richard Howard**, Wallingford; **John and Bonnie Lindland**, Manchester; **Donna and Andrew Masters**, East Windsor; **Nancy and Ron Masters**, East Windsor; **Lee May**, East Haddam; **Mary Ann McGourty**, Norfolk; **Joe McGrattan**, Avon; **Karen and Tim McNamara**, Manchester.

Also, **Paula Mooney**, West Hartford; **Colleen Plimpton**, Bethel; **Arija Retsema**, Stonington; **Steve Silk**, Farmington; **Kathy Sisson**, Avon; **Kathy Streit**, Redding; **Joan and Ken Stubenrauch**, Glastonbury; **Joyce and David Trainer**, Manchester; **George Trecina**, Meriden.

Keys to the Future

CHS Memorial Fund

Building a strong endowment requires a flow of funds from people who care about the Connecticut Horticultural Society's future and wish to help ensure its well-being. Planned gifts during life or bequests upon death will help continue the work of the society.



The purple asters bloom in crowds,
 In every shady nook,
 And ladies' eardrops deck the banks,
 Of many a babbling brook.

*Elaine Goodale Eastman,
 American writer, 1863-1945*

The following report was presented to the CHS Board at the September board meeting and is respectfully submitted by CHS Treasurer Juris Zars.

CHS TREASURER'S REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010-2011

(Sept. 1, 2010, through Aug. 31, 2011)

STARTING BALANCE \$1,000.63

INCOME

ADVERTISEMENTS\$ 425.00
 AUCTION/RAFFLE 11,486.25
 DONATIONS 20.50
 DUES 30,763.00
 EDUCATION 1,628.00
 FLOWER SHOW 9,853.00
 FUND 40,000.00
 GARDEN TOURS 7,060.80
 SALE OF SPEAKER BOOKS 2,010.00
 TOURS 6,100.00
 MISCELLANEOUS 40.15
TOTAL INCOME **\$109,386.70**

EXPENSES

AUCTION/RAFFLE\$ 732.72
 AWARDS 771.80
 DONATIONS 275.00
 EDUCATION 663.34
 FINANCIAL SERVICES 2,750.00
 FLOWER SHOW 9,212.48
 GARDEN TOURS 958.05
 INSURANCE 1,884.00
 LECTURES 8,159.01
 NEWSLETTER – EDITORIAL 16,462.50
 NEWSLETTER – PRODUCTION 14,232.30
 OFFICE 4,857.01
 POT LUCK 726.34
 RENT 12,090.28
 SALARY 17,626.29
 SALE OF SPEAKER BOOKS 1,377.76
 SCHOLARSHIPS 7,000.00
 SYMPOSIUM 310.00
 WEB SERVICES 5,925.00
 MISCELLANEOUS 376.45
TOTAL EXPENSES **\$106,390.37**
NET TOTAL **\$2,996.37**

The market value of the fund increased from \$613,977.13 on Aug. 31, 2010, to \$718,355.99 on July 31, 2011.

Email Alert

CHS plans to begin including email addresses along with members' names, addresses and telephone numbers in the Membership Directory published annually and made available to members. If you would prefer that your email address not be published in the directory, please contact Office Administrator Bonnie McLachlan with your request (connhort@aol.com). As always, CHS does not sell or disclose membership information to outside parties or make the directory available in venues other than in the CHS office and at the CHS monthly meeting.

While we're on the subject of email: If you'd like to receive the monthly CHS Newsletter by email instead of or in addition to traditional post, please let Bonnie know by sending her an email with the specified changes. Regardless of how you receive your newsletter, please remember to notify the CHS office of any changes of address to ensure that your subscription is not interrupted. This is especially true for email address changes.



Bulb Sale! **October 27**

Once again, thanks to David Smith and White Flower Farm, we will be selling an assortment of wonderful bulbs at our Oct. 27 meeting.

**Come early for
the best selection.**



Spring into the Garden



Tony Avent



Kerry Ann Mendez



Nan Sinton

It's not too early to make plans to attend CHS' biennial symposium, which promises to be an exciting day of practical gardening ideas and inspiration. Speakers are

- Keynoter Tony Avent, plant explorer, plant breeder and owner of Plant Delights Nursery in Raleigh, N.C. (two talks), "Landscaping in Drifts of One—Residential Design for Plant Collectors" and "Perennials—What's New and Exciting, Overlooked"
- Kerry Ann Mendez, owner of Perennially Yours in Saratoga, N.Y., "Shade Gardening with an Emphasis on Cool and Outrageous Foliage"
- Nan Sinton of South Dartmouth, Mass., renowned horticulturalist, educator and world traveler, "Romancing the Site (finding the hidden gardens in your own backyard)"



Date: Saturday, Feb. 4, 2012

Location: Portland High/Middle School, 95 High St., Portland, CT 06480

Time: 8:15 a.m.– 4:00 p.m.

Fee: \$65 for CHS members, \$75 for nonmembers until Dec. 15 (add \$5 after that date). Fee includes bistro lunch, coffee breaks and access to vendors and Master Gardeners.

Registration: Download the form from www.cthort.org or call 860-529-8713.

Cuttings...short takes from the hort world

Roses from China ... Local ties with China are growing thornier even as they are being strengthened, thanks to a rose exchange program between Hartford and Beijing. Last spring 20 rose bushes from the Beijing Botanical Garden made the 7,000-mile journey to Connecticut. After being held in quarantine for two years, they will be planted in Elizabeth Park. Meanwhile, The Friends of Elizabeth Park plans to send to Beijing some limited edition Elizabeth Park Centennial Roses, hybridized by John Mattia of Orange for the 100th anniversary of the Hartford park's renowned rose garden in 2004. The purpose of the rose exchange is "to acquire a variety of different and unique roses to supplement the existing Elizabeth Park rose garden collection, as well as to add an international aspect to the garden," according to www.elizabethpark.org.

Easing hunger with herbs ... The Connecticut Unit of the Herb Society

of America is donating herbs it grows in the former cold-frame beds at Elizabeth Park to Freshplace, a food pantry in Hartford where clients not only get fresh food but also learn how to prepare it. Clients are taught that herbs are low in calories, high in nutrition and a good substitute for salt as a flavor enhancer. Freshplace, which also helps people enroll in job training and get connected to social services, formed in September 2010 as a collaboration of the Junior League of Hartford, Foodshare and Chrysalis Center.

Disposing of Invasive Plants ...

Guidelines for disposing of terrestrial invasive plants, including trees, shrubs, woody vines, herbaceous plants, grasses and sedges, is available from the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group. Visit www.hort.uconn.edu/CIPWG/pdfs/Invasive_plant_disposal_guide_8-2011.pdf.



Len Comeau and Edd Russo, Hartford

Connecticut Orchid Society

Patricia and Robert Crouse, East Hartford

Moira Eick, Fairfield

Cyndie and Richard Holden, Southbury

Sandy Jerbert, Willington

Denise and Kevin Lynch, West Hartford

Brenda A. Malack, Bloomfield

Mary Ellen O'Donnell, West Hartford

Sylvia R. O'Reilly, Kensington

Christine R. Pane, Rocky Hill

Marie and Armand Pelletier, Southington

Debora Reynolds, Suffield

Janice M. Smith, Ellington

Jennifer R. Villa, Farmington

Memberships: 890

Shade Garden, from page 1

nates the need for staking, as the shorter front portion supports the taller stems in back. Combine this aster with *Eupatorium rugosum* 'Chocolate', which has chocolate leaves, purple stems and white blooms in September and October.

***Tricyrtis* 'Tojen' (toad lily).** The name may be horrible, but the lovely orchid-like flowers make up for it. The small, 1-inch-round, light lavender blooms with yellow throats grow along arching stems amid dark green leaves. This variety blooms even in deep shade, and its flowers are a sight to behold in



Tricyrtis 'Tojen'

Plant Delights Nursery

mid-September to early October. Plant it in moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil. Reaching heights of 2 to 3 feet and with a weeping habit, this toad lily makes a pretty sight over a bed of ferns. It is a late arrival in spring.

***Hakonechloa macra* 'Beni Kaze' (Japanese forest grass).** I don't have this variety but I do have the variegated and all-gold versions of this grass and they tolerate quite a bit of shade. 'Beni Kaze', which is fairly new to the market, turns a deep red as the days get cooler. It tolerates light shade; the shadier the location is, the less apparent the red color. It starts the year as a flowing mound of brilliant chartreuse leaves. Plant it in moist, well-drained, fertile soil. It grows about 2 feet tall and 2 to 3 feet wide. For striking contrast, pair it with the big-leafed hostas or heucheras.

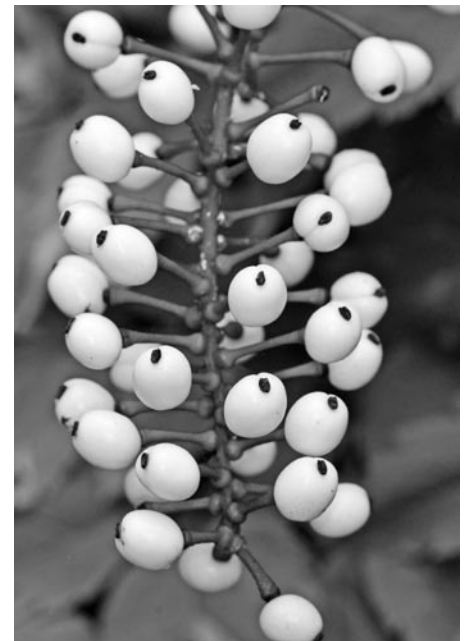
***Kirengeshoma palmata* (yellow wax bells).** This plant does well in damp areas in part or full shade. It begins to bloom when the flowers of many other shade plants have faded, in mid-August. I use this plant for its attractive foliage; its glossy 4- to 8-inch-long leaves resemble big maple leaves. The yellow flowers are bell-shaped and pendulous and last until mid-September. Eventually the plant forms a clump about 2 to 3 feet tall and wide. Consistent moisture causes taller growth. The soil should be slightly acidic. Try combining the plant with Japanese forest grass.

***Kerria japonica* 'Pleniflora' (Japanese rose).** This suckering shrub grows 6 to 10 feet tall and 10 feet wide. It flowers from late April through May and even longer with a cool spring. The bright yellow pompon flowers fade rapidly in full sun. The double form is more readily available and popular because the flowers last longer. The single-flower, variegated-foliage version doesn't get as big, but, wow, does it brighten the shade. The sharply serrated, bright green leaves turn yellow in the fall and last for a long time. Once the leaves drop, the vivid chartreuse stems take center stage.

***Spiraea thunbergii* 'Ogon'.** This is one of the earliest flowering spireas in spring. The branches are covered with small white flowers from late April through May. After flowering, feathery leaves emerge golden and gradually change to bright green. 'Ogon' is a mounding shrub with arching branches and a twiggy habit and can grow 5 feet tall and wide. It does best in full sun and moist, well-drained soil, but it adjusts to part shade and most soils. My plants get two to three hours of morning sun and do fine. The leaves turn brilliant orange in fall and last well into December. Combine this spirea with golden hostas or the darker-colored heucheras.

***Hamamelis virginiana* (common witch hazel).** This native small un-

derstory tree or shrub grows 10 to 15 feet tall, and sometimes taller, and 15 feet wide. The leaves emerge reddish bronze and turn dark green. Fall foliage is a clear, bright yellow. The last woody plant of the year to bloom, its yellow spider-like, crinkled flowers appear after the foliage has dropped, starting in mid-October. The blooms have a spicy fragrance. This witch hazel performs best in part shade but it tolerates full sun. Plant it in moist, slightly acidic soil.



Actaea pachypoda berries

William Cullina

***Aronia arbutifolia* 'Brilliantissima' (red chokeberry).** This native suckering shrub offers fabulous fall color—an intense raspberry-crimson red with purplish red highlights—and is an excellent alternative to the invasive burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*). This aronia grows 6 to 10 feet tall by 3 to 5 feet wide. It does best in full sun but tolerates part shade and a wide range of soil conditions, from dry hillsides to wet swampy areas. In shadier areas the reds aren't as intense and more orange creeps in. After the leaves drop, bright red berries become visible and last from September to December. Small white flowers appear in early May and remain for up to two weeks.

(continued on page 9)

Shade Garden, from page 8

Heuchera ‘Caramel’ (coral bells). This is my all-time favorite heuchera. Grow it for its yellow, orange, peach and olive green foliage; the color varies by the amount of light the plant receives and the time of year. The result is an ever-changing palette. New foliage begins orangey yellow, with the undersides purplish red. Gradually, leaves turn olive green with an orange overcast. More sun means more orange. The creamy white flower stalks in late August and September are an afterthought. This heuchera is hardy in Connecticut and tolerates dry shade, heat and humidity, and sun, although hot afternoon sun will turn it into a crispy critter. ‘Caramel’ is evergreen in my garden. In late winter to early spring, it offers a blast of peachy-yellow orange. The plant has a mounding habit and reaches 12 to 15 inches tall and 18 inches wide. Give it average moisture and slightly acidic soil.

Hosta ‘Red October’. What’s a shade garden without hosta? The name ‘Red October’ surely fits this cultivar. The red of the stems extends into the lower veins of the leaves, and the plant blooms lavender-blue in October. This hosta has narrow blue-green leaves with white undersides, and an upright, vase-shaped habit. It grows 12 to 18 inches high and up to 2 feet wide. It tolerates dry shade but does best in soil that is consistently moist. I’ve planted it on one side of my driveway, and on the other side is an aster whose flower color matches that of the hosta: *Aster oblongifolius* ‘October skies’. Also try pairing this hosta with Japanese painted fern or ‘Lady in Red’ lady fern. It is late to come up in spring.

I hope this mini-tour through my shade gardens has helped you to see that gardening in the fall can be just as fun as spring and summer gardening. Perhaps you’ll try some of the plants I’ve suggested and ideas I’ve shared in your own garden. 🌿

Cathy Zbuska is a CHS member and the owner of Cathy in the Garden, a garden design and maintenance business in Harwinton. She holds a certificate in landscape design from the New York Botanical Garden and has been certified by the Northeast Organic Farming Association as an organic land care professional. She lectures to local garden clubs, libraries and church groups.

Meeting Moment

Do great gardening minds think alike? September program speaker Margaret Roach sang the praises in her own Columbia County, N.Y., garden of three of the plants Cathy Zbuska writes about here: *Spirea thunbergii* ‘Ogon’, *Hakonechloa* ‘All Gold’ and *Kerria japonica* ‘Picta’ (although in the latter two cases, the cultivars are different). Margaret launched the CHS year by describing to a full house the pleasures of appreciating the gifts of the garden no matter the season.



Learn With CHS

As the mercury drops, the CHS Education Committee is offering two great indoor programs this fall. Download a registration form and find directions to all programs at www.cthort.org. And while you’re there, why not register for the 2012 symposium?

Flower Arranging, Fall/Thanksgiving Take-home Table Centerpiece

Monday, Nov. 21, 6:30 p.m.

TK & Brown’s Flowers, 1761 Silas Deane Highway, Rocky Hill

Learn from the experts how to create a perfect table centerpiece in time for your own Thanksgiving celebration. Under the guidance of expert instructor Terri Krisavage, owner of TK & Brown’s Flowers, you will create a beautiful flower arrangement with a holiday or fall motif to take home with you. Terri will also share tricks of the trade gleaned from 40 years in the wedding, parade and daily flower business. The \$25 workshop fee includes all materials. Limit: 20 participants

Movie Night: Organic Lawn Care

Tuesday, Dec. 6, 7-9 p.m.

Portland Library, 20 Freestone Ave., Portland

The Education Committee is teaming up with the Portland Library to show “Making the Organic Lawn Care Transition,” the DVD companion to Paul Tukey’s “The Organic Lawn Care Manual” (Storey Books, 2007). Tukey narrates the film. He is the former editor of the now-defunct People, Places and Plants magazine who advocates for educating society about the benefits of environmentally responsible lawn care and gardening. A question-and-answer session will follow the screening. Refreshments will be served. Updated details will be posted to www.cthort.org as soon as they become available.



Philadelphia Flower Show

March 4-5, 2012

Join us on our annual visit to the Philadelphia Flower Show and take two trips in one. The theme of the 2012 flower show is “Hawaii: Islands of Aloha.” From towering waterfalls and waves of orchids to glowing volcanoes and serene sunsets, the 2012 flower show promises to be an immersion in the dramatic landscapes and tranquil spirit of Hawaii. Save the dates of Sunday, March 4 – Monday, March 5, 2012. Fliers are being prepared. Visit www.cthort.org and www.friendshiptours.net.



White Mountain Christmas

* Mountain View Grand Resort & Spa * Currier Museum of Art
 * Annual Holiday Dinner * Sunday Brunch
 Saturday, Dec. 3 – Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011

Day 1: Depart for our annual CHS holiday weekend to the charming village of Whitefield, N.H. We stop for lunch before arriving at the Mountain View Grand Resort & Spa, New Hampshire's most historic resort.

We enjoy a tour of this 1865 resort that has been a retreat for celebrities, presidents and dignitaries, and whose scenery and architecture are stunning. Spend the afternoon enjoying all the resort has to offer: indoor pool, carriage rides, full spa and more.

Savor a holiday dinner at the hotel.

Menu: minestrone soup; entrée choice of prime rib, grilled swordfish with garlic herb butter or stuffed chicken with apple brie and cranberry; and a dessert of fresh berry trifle.

Day 2: We visit Littleton, home to author Eleanor H. Porter, best known as the creator of the world's most optimistic character, Pollyanna. Take time to view the welcoming statue in the historic downtown, visit the shops on Main Street, including Chutters, which bills itself as the world's largest candy counter.

We head to Manchester for our docent-led tour of the Currier Museum of Art, which features European and American paintings, decorative arts, photographs and sculpture, including works by Wyeth, Picasso and Monet.

The Yard Restaurant hosts our holiday buffet brunch. Sample menu: eggs Benedict, French toast, pancakes, fresh fruit, scrambled eggs; roast sirloin and



turkey, baked Virginia ham, filet of sole, lasagna; assorted breads; beverages; and a lavish display of desserts.

Enjoy our traditional CHS holiday party on our way home as we celebrate a wonderful White Mountain Christmas.

Cost: \$339 per twin CHS member based on 40-50 passengers; \$409 per single member; nonmembers add \$40.

Includes: deluxe motorcoach, one night hotel, one dinner, one brunch, sightseeing, driver gratuity, \$25 per person donation to CHS, holiday gift. Escorted by Lois Isaacson.

Deposit: \$100 with reservation by Sept. 15; final payment due by Oct. 19.



Holiday Mansions of the Hudson Valley

* Staatsburgh Mansion * Locust Grove Estate
 Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2011

It is holiday time in the beautiful Hudson River Valley and we've been invited to help celebrate the season with two famous families at the following mansions:

• Staatsburgh Mansion. Our guided tour of this gorgeous mansion highlights life with the Ogden-Livingston Mills family from 1890 to 1920. Preparing the home for Christmas was a great tradition, and fabulous decorations and elegant art will

be on display. Our guided tour takes us through 20 rooms.

• Locust Grove Estate, the original home of Samuel Morse. The mansion was acquired by the prominent Young family in 1895 and has remained in fine condition. Our guides will show us through the home, decked out for Christmas and filled with extensive collections of European furniture and art, including paintings by Morse.

Our holiday lunch will be hosted at Shadows on the Hudson restaurant.

Menu: salad; bread basket; chicken marsala OR filet of sole francaise OR spinach lasagna; vegetable; holiday dessert; beverage.

Departs: 7:30 a.m., Emanuel Synagogue, West Hartford; 8 a.m. Sheraton, East Hartford. **Returns:** 6:30 p.m. East Hartford. **Cost:** \$82 per member, \$84 per nonmember, based on 40-52 travelers.

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.

Connecticut Vines and Wines

Lecture and wine-tasting
Tuesday, Nov. 15, 7 p.m.
The Noah Webster House
227 South Main St., West Hartford

Connecticut may not be one of the world's top wine producers, but it does offer an abundance of grapes and local wineries. Discover some of these Nov. 15 at Connecticut Vines and Wines, a cozy evening of conversation and wine-tasting co-sponsored by CHS and the Noah Webster House & West Hartford Historical Society.

This special program will feature CHS President **Steve Silk**, who will give an overview of fermentation, and Charles (Charlie) Stephenson, the founding winemaker at Rosedale Farms & Vineyards in Simsbury. Charlie laid out the vineyards and irrigation system 10 years ago and oversees the planting and cultivation of the vines. He is the past chairman of the Hartford chapter of the



American Wine Society and has maintained a home vineyard since 1990. He will describe Rosedale's varietals and how wine is made.

Registration through the Noah Webster House is required. The cost

is \$20 for members of CHS or the Noah Webster House & West Hartford Historical Society and \$25 for nonmembers. To buy tickets, visit www.noahwebsterhouse.org/shop/wine.htm or call 860-521-5362, ext. 21. Seating is limited. 🚗

Photos: Rosedale Farms & Vineyards (above); Hopkins Vineyards (cover)

Horticultural Happenings & Announcements

Note: Happenings are listed on a space-available basis. Please remember when submitting material to include relevant information, a contact person's name and phone number. Please send emails to news@chhort.org. Deadline for the Winter issue is Oct. 19.

Herb Luncheon

The Simsbury Garden Club invites people to share their favorite herb dish, recipe and garden ideas at a free luncheon Monday, Oct. 17, 11:30 a.m., at the Apple Barn, 80 Old Farms Rd., West Simsbury. Visit www.simsburygardenclub.org or call Kendra Dahlquist, 860-658-4265.

Orchid Show & Sale

The Connecticut Orchid Society hosts its 2nd annual orchid show and sale Friday, Oct. 21 (2-5 p.m.), Saturday, Oct. 22 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.), and Sunday, Oct. 23, (9 a.m.-4 p.m.), Van Wilgen's Garden Center, 51 Valley Rd. (off Route 139), North Branford. Offerings include an AOS-judged bench show, vendors, raffles, speakers and food. Daily admission \$5. Visit www.ctorchids.org. Contact Judy Arth, 860-633-2876 or judar@cox.net.

Controlling Plant Diseases

Sharon Douglas, head of the Department of Plant Pathology and Ecology at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, discusses non-chemical methods for controlling plant diseases, including culture, sanitation, resistance, biological and biorational or biocompatible chemical methods. Her talk Wednesday, Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m., is sponsored by the Hardy Plant Society. Location: Solomon Welles House, 220 Hartford Ave., Wethersfield. Suggested \$5 donation. Socializing begins at 7 p.m. Contact Leslie Shields, selchie1@comcast.net, or visit www.cthardyplantsociety.org.

UConn Master Gardener Course

Friday, Oct. 28, is the deadline for applying to the 2012 Master Gardener program offered through the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension

System. The 16-week certificate course meets once a week, January to April, and combines formal classroom training with hands-on experience. Cost is \$415; partial scholarships are available. Visit www.ladybug.uconn.edu. While you're there, check out the 2011 fall catalog of garden master classes. Classes are fee-based and open to the public.

Iris Garden Cleanup

Help clean up the iris garden in Hartford's Elizabeth Park Sunday, Nov. 13, 10-11 a.m. All who are willing to help are welcome. Bring tools and dress appropriately. Visit www.elizabethpark.org.



CHS Calendar at a Glance

- Oct. 6** – Board meeting
- Oct. 9** – Garden Tour, East Haddam
(see page 5)
- Oct. 19** – Winter CHS Newsletter
deadline
- Oct. 27** – Program meeting, Richard
Jaynes, *Changing Connecticut's State
Flower?* (see page 3)
- Nov. 3** – Board meeting
- Nov. 15** – Special event: Connecticut
Vines & Wines, West Hartford
(see page 11)

Dated Material ❁ *Please Rush*

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



CHS Focal Point: The Raffle

CHS appreciates the donated items that members and friends contribute to the raffle held before each program meeting. Please remember to label all donated plants with important information, such as plant name and cultivation requirements. If you don't know the plant name, simply say so on the marker.

Leslie Shields has stepped down from her duties as rafflemeister, and CHS is looking for a couple of volunteers to take over the task. The job involves arriving at the synagogue by 7 p.m. on meeting nights, selling tickets, answering questions (which is why it's important to label those plants) and calling out ticket numbers. If you'd like to help on an ongoing or one-time basis, please contact **Nancy Brennick**, nbrennick@aol.com, or **Elaine Widmer**, eywidmer@sbcglobal.net.

Remember, volunteers are the heart and soul of CHS; they keep the society alive. Helping with the raffle is a great way to meet other members. CHS thanks Leslie for her longstanding work with the raffle and **Joanne Luppi** and **Fran Schoell** for filling in for September. Raffle proceeds go to the CHS scholarship fund. 🗳️

Holiday Planning

Start hunting for your horticulture-related photos and favorite recipe to share with CHS members at the annual holiday potluck dinner Friday, Dec. 9, at Keeney Memorial Center in Old Wethersfield. Members who want to show slides or digital presentations at the dinner should bring them to the November program meeting to be checked using CHS equipment. The goal is to avoid technical difficulties that would prevent the presentation from being seen at the holiday dinner.

As usual, volunteers are needed at the annual dinner to help set up the room and meal and to clean up afterward. Members and friends willing to help should leave their names with Bonnie McLachlan at the CHS office by calling 860-529-8713. A sign-up sheet will be available at the November meeting.

—*Fran Schoell, holiday potluck chair*