



THE EARTHWORM



SUMMER 2024



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WINDSOR GARDEN CLUB.
ONE OF CONNECTICUT'S OLDEST GARDEN CLUBS -
CELEBRATING 87 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS EXISTENCE.

Happy Summer! We've Been Busy Bees!

Co-Presidents' Message

Jim Govoni & Allison Joanis

Happy Summer to you all! And what a magnificent summer it has been thus far. Sure, we have had a few hot days and a few powerful storms, but we have had more near-perfect days—days with mild temperatures, low humidity, breezy, and not a lot of mosquitoes!

It's been a joy to get out to the garden and enjoy the season, and we hope you have been doing just that. In addition to gardening and summer relaxing, our club has been buzzing with activity.

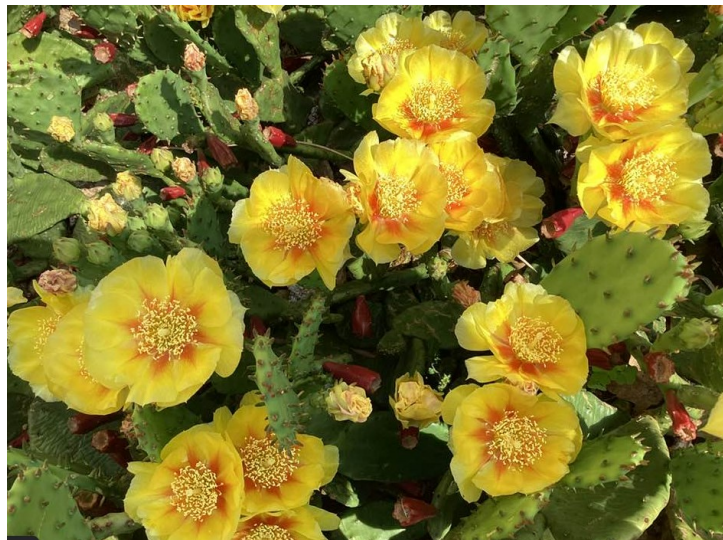
In early May and June, we kicked off the season with an incredibly successful Spring Garden Mart, a small team taught a local Cub Scouts how to plant seeds, we replanted and fixed up the 9/11 Memorial Garden at Windsor High School, we continued to manage two elementary school gardens at JFK and Poquonock, we maintained the garden and pots at the Historical Society, we worked on a garden at Wilson Library, we awarded our annual scholarship to a lovely young

lady, contributed to the Art Center Art in Bloom event and kicked off the First Town Downtown Farmers Market season.

Now let us catch our breath.

That's quite a bit in a few months, and if you ask us, it's quite impressive. Community outreach is at the heart of the Windsor Garden Club's mission and if that previous list doesn't scream community, then we don't know what does!

We would like to thank all of the individuals who have made and continue to make that list of endeavors possible for our club. It's because of your ideas, your effort and your time away from your homes and gardens that we are able to excel and continue our longstand-



President Jim's native Eastern Prickly Pear (Opuntia humifusa). The blooms are lovely and he recommends a Prickly Pear Margarita. Recipe on page 2.

ing tradition of sharing gardening with the community.

We are also growing our reputation! As a result of our efforts, we have also gained a few new members! We send them a warm welcome!

We hope that you thoroughly enjoy the rest of your summer. Be sure to find some time to rest and enjoy all of your hard work, you deserve it!

Allison & Jim

Prickly Pear Margarita

From the Food Network

Recommended by Co-President Jim Govoni

Yields One Drink

Ingredients:

3 ounces tequila blanco

1/2-ounce Cointreau

1 1/2 ounces lime juice

2 ounces prickly pear syrup

Kosher salt and turbinado sugar, for garnishing the glass

Kumquats and lime peels, for garnish

Directions

Combine the tequila, Cointreau, lime juice and pear syrup in a cocktail shaker. Shake vigorously to incorporate. Wet the rim of a margarita glass and dip into salt and sugar mixture. Pour margarita into glass over ice. Garnish with a lime wedge.



If you do not drink alcohol, simply leave out the tequila and Cointreau and substitute orange juice and club soda.

Got Prickly Pear? Here's how to make Prickly Pear syrup

Harvest your Prickly Pear fruits and remove the thorns. (There are several recommended methods to ease this process—try a quick Google search.)

Cut in half and scoop out the flesh, then mash them so you have about 1 1/2 cups. You will want to strain or push through a food mill to strain out the seeds and pulp. Put the liquid into a pot and simmer with 1/4 cup of sugar and 1 tablespoon of lemon juice. Simmer for about 30 minutes on low heat until it thickens. Let is cool, put it in the fridge for up to 5 days, or can it, or freeze it to store for longer.



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April & May Meeting Recaps

April—Tool Time with Tom

Our member, Tom Graywacz, is filled with helpful gardening tips and information as if we hadn't known it before. During our April meeting, Tom went above and beyond with his presentation about the gardening and landscaping tools he finds the most useful and, more importantly, how he cares for them to serve his gardening needs for years. A huge thank you to Tom for his efforts. Not only was this a well-thought-out presentation of tools, but it was also quite the show and tell.

Now we know where to borrow all our tools from—but you better return them clean and sharpened!



May—Garden Mart Prep and Plant Swap

Our May meeting is traditionally allocated for final preparation for the Spring Garden Mart, and this year's meeting was no exception. By the end of the meeting, we were ready to go. You can read more about the results of this preparation on page 6.

In addition to the plants we dig to sell, we do a little digging for each other, too. Our annual plant swap is a fantastic way to get us to talk about our plants and gardening. We had a lovely selection that more than 20 members had to choose from and take home.



2024 Scholarship Recipient: Sirena Skye Raymond

Cindy Daniels, Co-Vice President & Scholarship Committee Chair

It is my pleasure, as the Windsor Garden Club Scholarship Chair, to announce that Sirena Skye Raymond has been chosen as the winner of the Windsor Garden Club's 2024 \$1,500.00 scholarship award.

Garden Club members appreciate Sirena's hard work through her academic career and wish her the very best. We are certain that Sirena will continue to take opportunities as she heads off to college.

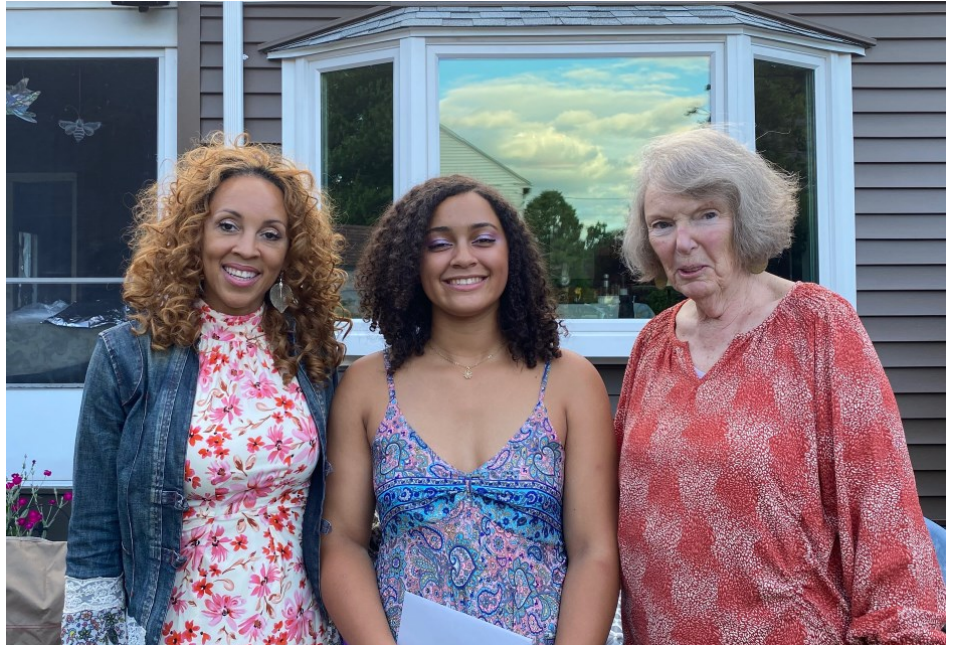
The Windsor Garden Club is committed to issues concerning environmental conservation. Sirena's interest in the areas of environmental studies, ecological shifts and advocating for a clean environment for all, are the things that helped the Scholarship Committee select her from our many qualified applicants.

One of the Windsor Garden Club's resolutions is to award a scholarship each year to a deserving Windsor student. The scholarship is funded through the Club's sale of plants at our Garden Marts and by our club Garden Tour, held every other year.

Thanks to the many dedicated and hardworking club members, and to all the enthusiastic townspeople who attend our fundraisers and make this scholarship possible.

Once again, heartfelt congratulations to Sirena.

Read a note from Sirena Sky on Page 5



Sirena Skye (center) with her mother, Di (left) and WGC Scholarship Chair, Cindy Daniels.



Sirena Skye (left) with WGC Scholarship Chair, Cindy Daniels (center) and the WGC Scholarship Committee, Lois Kelly and Laurie Durant

Thank You From Sirena Sky

Sirena Skye Raymond, the 2024 WGC Scholarship recipient wrote in a handwritten thank you note to the Windsor Garden Club, dated June 11, 2024

Dear Windsor Garden Club,

Words cannot express the gratitude I felt as my name was called to receive this sizeable scholarship. Your support will help me as I plan to make a change in the government for our environment. Thank you for inviting me to your warm home to further celebrate your generosity.

*With much appreciation,
Sirena Skye Raymond*

*Windsor High School Class of 2024
Macalester College Class of 2028*



June Meeting Recap

In addition to presenting the 2024 Scholarship in June, we had a lovely meeting hosted at the home of member, Helen Davenport. Not only does Helen's garden feature a beautiful variety of plants, there are lots of additional charming feasts for the eyes.

Special thanks to Helen and her husband, Tom, for opening their lovely home and gardens to us.

A few additional announcements that were made included the scheduled vote to be held at the July 8 meeting for the Garden Club to pay a portion of the catering fee for a proposed Membership Appreciation Luncheon to be held at 1 pm on September 14 at L.P. Wilson.



2024 Spring Garden Mart Results Are In!

*Allison Joanis, Co-President
and Communications
Co-Chair*

It was a close call on the weather for this year's Spring Garden Mart that was held on the town green behind the Eagle on May 11, 2024.

We watched the weather diligently and eventually watched the chance of rain diminish with lots of joy.

We had a beautiful day on the green and boy, did we have some beautiful plants!

Not only did we have an incredible selection of shade and sun perennials, all donated from our members' and our friends' gardens, we had pumpkin and sunflower seedlings, pansy pots and vegetable starters and a wide variety of hanging annual baskets, sourced through the Farmer's Market at the Connecticut Regional Market.

With all of those items, it was no surprise that our results hit record highs. Drumroll please, our 2024 Spring Garden Mart net profit was \$2,678.19.



A fun note on the above is that the Spring Garden Mart was our first event that accepted card payments, which accounted for nearly half of the overall profits.

Last but not least, we were joined on the green by our friends at Levo International, who demonstrated and sold their hydroponic garden bins.

All of the above could not be possible without the devoted Garden Mart Committee and all of the volunteers.

Thank you and great job to Dave Stender, Garden Mart Chair, on putting together a fantastic event and for ordering the good weather.

Thank you to the committee of helpers who picked up planters and plants, delivered plants to the green, helped to set up tents, tables, and break them down! Thank you to the crew at the cash registers who kept the lines moving. Thank you to all of the volunteers who donated plants and for your plant knowledge and sparkling customer service that helped us connect with our community and sell our plants.

As our 80th year hosting the Spring Garden Mart in the center of town, it's an added bonus that it worked out well for us in so many ways. And we shouldn't be surprised, because we know that we have many legendary Windsor gardeners watching over us.



Civic Endeavors

*Debbie Baker, WHS Gardens Committee Chair
and Communications Co-Chair*

Windsor Historical Society

Since our last issue, committee members met twice—May 18 and July 6—spending about two hours each session maintaining the historic (1810) garden at the Windsor Historical Society. Thanks to all of our dedicated members who participate, even in light rain, to get the job done.

If you are interested in joining the committee, there are three sessions remaining in our schedule:

- * **August 10, 8:30 am**
- * **September 28, 9 am**
- * **November 9, 9:30 am**

Each session ranges from 1.5-2 hours, depending on the number of participating members. All sessions require weeding, with trimming, planting, and some work “outside” our area to prevent invasives or simply conduct general clean-up to make our area look great. If you’d like to join this committee, contact Debbie Baker at 860-280-7277 or dbaker.windsor@gmail.com

Wilson Library

Two chances to make a difference in our community at the Wilson Library this year. We were asked to host another flower-arranging session as the previous one was popular and has been requested by patrons.

As preparation for that day, Debbie Baker and Joanne Miller spent some time May 13



Beyond the historic garden, the front entry planters are also kept fresh through the seasons.



clearing out some old garden beds to prepare for dahlia, cosmos, and other fall-blooming plant to cut to use as focus and filler for September 14. Two assistants would be great to have; if interested, contact Debbie.



Civic Endeavors

Allison Joanis, Co-President and Communications Co-Chair

Art Center Event—Art in Bloom

Members of the Windsor Garden Club were presented with the opportunity to build a partnership with the Windsor Art Center at the beginning of the year. With their upcoming fundraiser, Art in Bloom, themed like the Mad Hatter's Garden, it seemed like a logical first place to start.

Additionally, their honorees of the year were longtime Windsor Garden Club member Florence Barlow, as well as friends of the Windsor Garden Club, Lon and Jane Pelton, and Betty Hellerman.

In support of the event, members of the Windsor Garden Club assisted with the setup in the days leading up to it. Our members supported the event by purchasing tickets to the event held on June 8 at 25 Central Street in Windsor. We also donated three planters and two memberships to the Art in Bloom auction, with all

proceeds going towards the Art Center's programming, visual art exhibitions, and performances. (The total money raised by our items will be shared at a later date.)

We are excited to have built this relationship and hope to co-host or support each other's events in the future. Especially because it was a lovely event, attended by many members of the Windsor Garden Club!

Special thanks to the volunteers who put in sweat equity for this event, creating planters, sweeping floors, setting up tables and chairs,



Annual flower planter and fairy garden created by Patty Crowley.

hanging paper flowers, and breaking it all down: Lea Chayes, Judy Cooke, Patty Crowley, Suzanne Urban, and Allison Joanis.

And a huge congratulations to Flo Barlow for her well-deserved recognition.



Herb planter created by Allison Joanis.



Succulent planter created by Patty Crowley.

Civic Endeavors

9/11 Memorial Garden—Windsor High School

On May 21, Auralee Eckman and Tom Graywacz tested their strength to get the Windsor High School 9/11 Garden up to snuff.

They initially thought this would be a run-of-the-mill gardening task, but as it turns out, a larger tree was blocking a drain in the large ceramic planter and they had to improvise. They cleaned out the planter and were able to mount it up on pavers. They filled it up and Tom worked his magic with the annuals. They also did some general cleanup around the garden, and the school maintenance department cleaned up the rest of the courtyard. It looks lovely, and coincidentally, May 21, 2004, was the day that the memorial was dedicated initially, making the day of its Windsor Garden Club facelift also the twentieth anniversary.

If you are in the area, we recommend checking it out. It is located in the courtyard next to the main office entrance of Windsor High School at 50 Sage Park Road. Pull some weeds if you drop in!



History of the 9/11 Memorial

The 9/11 Memorial at Windsor High School is a testament to the power of community. It all began when a Special Education teacher at WHS gave her social skills class an assignment to enhance the school and the community. The class, inspired by the spirit of unity and remembrance, decided to create a simple tribute to the victims of September 11.

In true form, when Mr. Lon Pelton learned of this effort, he joined the project collaborated with the students and created two metal sculptures from discarded oil drums. He then cut out the images of the Twin Towers.

Once the sculpture was complete, the students drilled a hole for each person who died in the attack, reading the name of each victim as they drilled. These holes appear above the towers like stars. The memorial is entitled “To Those Who Were,” and beneath the sculpture is a plaque designed by WHS student Patrick Daly (Class of 2004).

During the day, sunlight streams through to cast a shadow of the towers in the ground, and at night, thanks to lights installed by Pelton, light glows through



the holes as if the WTC were surrounded by stars.

The large ceramic planter and garden were part of the memorial, but with changes to WHS staff, there was no longer anyone to maintain the garden—that is, until now. The WCG will see to its maintenance for the foreseeable future so that this meaningful fixture of our community remains in its glory.

Thank you to Auralee and Tom for their hard work!

If you want to help maintain this garden in the future, contact Auralee.



Farmers Market at the Connecticut Regional Market

*Patty Crowley
WGC Historian*

Looking for a new experience? The Farmers' Market at the Connecticut Regional Market should be on your list. An expansive and unique farmers market has operated for decades on the grounds of the Regional Market, and it continues to offer a shopping experience unlike any other available in the area today.

Operated by the Department of Agriculture, the purpose of the seasonal market is to provide a central location for farmers and wholesalers to sell and distribute food and other agricultural products.

From trees and hanging baskets to shrubs, perennials, and bedding plants, the Farmers' Market at the Connecticut Regional Market is a one-stop shop for all your gardening needs. And that's not all—depending on the season, you'll also find a diverse range of fruits and vegetables, along with other local products like cut flowers, honey, eggs, and maple syrup.

If you are going to shop, keep in mind that many of the farmers only accept cash. Their hours are between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on Saturday or Sunday, May through October and it is rain or shine. **The address is 101 Reserve Road, Hartford, CT 06114**



Hydrangeas Are Having a Extra-Stunning Season—Here's Why

Better Homes & Gardens article by Sophia Beams July 13, 2024

All across the Northeast, hydrangeas are in full bloom. In fact, this year they're having one of the most beautiful seasons we've seen in recent years—a phenomenon that's drawing tourists, gardeners, and plant-lovers alike to visit the Northeast and New England in the hopes of seeing the photo-worthy landscapes firsthand.

This year's flowers are bigger, fuller, and all around better than they've looked in previous years—and there are several reasons for that. There's a particular recipe that makes the perfect hydrangea, and it involves a winter with a lot of rain and not much snow.

Though this year's El Niño year with less snow and warmer-than-average temperatures was disappointing for many, it was the perfect environment to help hydrangeas flourish. Not only do the flowers need a lot of water throughout the year to produce beautiful blooms, they also struggle to thrive in harsh temperatures.

Throughout the year, winter chills can harm hydrangea buds, which makes their blooms sparse and dull come summertime. While they can survive low temperatures, they begin to lose their buds when it drops below 26 degrees.

This year's warm winter meant the buds didn't need to drop as they usually would. Along with the massive amount of rainfall the Northeast received, these circumstances led to hydrangeas

being more beautiful than ever this year. Though hydrangeas are a favorite (and therefore everywhere) in New England, you might've noticed that they appear healthier than usual in other areas across the U.S., too.



Many hydrangea varieties are native to New England—the soil there contains the natural acidity that gives these plants their vibrant blue color, while the climate helps to produce healthy, full flowers. Over the past few years, though, New England hasn't seen the same results it achieved this season. After a few disappointing summers with blooms that fell, died out quickly, or were simply underwhelming, this year's weather hit the mark.

If you're not in New England, you don't have to miss out on the hydrangea hype—planting zones 3 through 9 typically see the best results.

Even Trader Joe's was showing some love for hydrangeas earlier this year with its potted varieties, and you can certainly expect nurseries and retailers to capitalize on the hydrangea trend in the future. Outside of being a gorgeous addition to your yard, some hydrangea lovers are more inclined to keep one or two in pots for their porches, patios, and gardens, while others will even sit small hydrangeas inside for springtime.

Hydrangea colors can change depending on your soil acidity, from the classic New England vibrant blue to delicate pink petals.

You'll find all kinds of hydrangea varieties available to grow—and you can even choose the best kind of hydrangea for your yard based on your planting zone.

Even if you don't have a backyard, you can try keeping potted hydrangeas at home if you want to join in on the trend. If you're not the most seasoned gardener, why not try using the cuttings to decorate your space? The cuttings can last over a week when properly cared for.

With a little love (and maybe some shade), your hydrangea plants can last into the fall before they start to lose their blooms. This is also the ideal time to prune and propagate your plants to get them ready for another season of vibrant summer florals.

Photo Contest Winners

Congratulations to the below winners of the photo contest in March, April and May. And thank you to all of the additional photo submissions—the competition is tough! Beautiful job to everyone capturing their lovely plants!



March: Diane Bernier for her Hellebore/
Lenten Rose.



April: Ayse Adams for her
Bleeding Heart.



May: Lea Chayes for capturing
a bumble bee on a Lupine.

Deadlines to submit to WindsorCTGardenClub@gmail.com

July 30

October 31

[Read the contest rules and
deadlines on our website.](#)

August 31

November 30

September 30

December 31



Dick Rozman Memorial Tree Update

Jim Govoni visited the Dick Rozman Memorial Tree at Washington Park in May to spruce things up a bit.

He mounted and secured a plaque, added mulch and trimmed down some of the damaged branches. It's looking beautiful. If you are in the area, stop by to see it!

Dick Rozman was a longtime garden club member and a skilled gardener. He was our resident Hosta and Daylily man with a garden filled with varieties. We lost Dick in 2021 and planted this Turkish Filbert Tree (*Corylus colurna*) in his honor at Washington Park in 2022.

Stay tuned for more about remembering Dick and his impact on the Windsor Garden Club.



Announcements

No Fall Garden Mart

There will be no Fall Garden Mart in 2024. We will hold a small plant/seeds/bulbs sale at the October 5 Northwest Park Country Fair. Contribution is not mandatory, but welcome. If you are splitting plants this fall and would like to donate, please speak with Jim Govoni or Allison Joanis.

Garden Tour 2025

The 2025 Garden Tour will be held on June 28, 2025 and the planning is well underway. There are a few house spots left. If you know someone who is interested in being a Garden Tour host, speak with Tom Graywacz.

Wilson Library Flower Arranging Workshop

The Windsor Garden Club will host a Floral Arranging Workshop on September 14 at the Wilson Library. If anyone would like to assist, please see Debbie Baker. Please note, this does conflict with the Sept. 14 field trip.

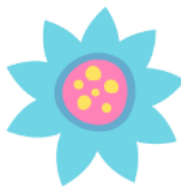
Do you have an announcement you would like to include? We want to hear it! Please share with Debbie and Allison—your friendly Earthworm editors!



Welcome New Members!

We would like to welcome a few new (and returning) members to the club! Be on the lookout for these folks at meetings and around town to say hello and extend your warm WGC welcome!

**Victoria A.
Sallie H.
Mary M.
Di V.**



The Windsor Garden Club will accept new members all year! If you have a friend who is interested, bring them to a meeting or send them to our website to join!



What's Coming Up

Thursdays—First Town Downtown Farmers Markets
3—6 pm—240 Broad Street, Windsor

August 12—WGC Summer Meeting
6:30 pm—Garden of Linda Dowe

September 9—WGC Monthly Meeting
6:30 pm—Windsor Senior Center Speaker TBD

September 14—Oakridge Dairy trip and
Membership Appreciation Luncheon
Times vary—see Cindy Daniels

September 21—Windsor Sustainability Fair &
Eco Monarch Fest
Windsor Town Green—Time TBD

October 5—Northwest Park Country Fair
Time TBD

October 14—WGC Monthly Meeting
6:30 pm—Windsor Senior Center Speaker TBD

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Earthworm Content Submission Deadlines 2024

The Publicity Committee is always looking for submissions for the Earthworm, the website and social media. If you have material you would like to see published, please contact Debbie Baker and Allison Joanis **until further notice**.

Deadlines for Earthworm material 2024:

Fall (October) issue deadline: September 26

Winter (January) issue deadline: December 9

Not a WGC member yet?

Join us!

Visit <https://windsorgardenclubct.org/membership/>

- Join electronically
- Print a form and join by mail
- Come to a meeting and join in person!

