

# THE EARTHWORM

SUMMER 2020

**The Windsor Garden Club**



**Est. 1937**

*THE PERIODIC NEWSLETTER OF THE WINDSOR GARDEN CLUB. ONE OF CONNECTICUT'S OLDEST GARDEN CLUBS CELEBRATING 83 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS EXISTENCE.*

## WORDS FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

Windsor Garden Club is 83 years strong. The purpose of our club has always been to promote an interest in gardening, wild plant life, trees, civic beautification and environmental issues. That has not changed.

Since we last met, back in March all our lives have been turned upside down. We are all handling these unprecedented times of uncertainty and isolation differently. Gardening and working in our yards has been good for all of us.

The 2020-2021 club year format may change somewhat. We will follow the CDC's COVID-19 safety recommendations, all to be announced as they are released. The Garden Mart will be in the Fall this year, during the Fall craft show on the green. We will still have our monthly meetings with speakers and we are planning some outings, following safety guidelines and members comfort levels. This is all new territory for all of us.

Debbie and I have enjoyed our role as Co-Presidents over the past two years and look forward to staying involved. We are looking forward to seeing everyone soon, either at the July and August optional summer meetings or our first meeting in September with Tovah Martin.

*Co-Presidents - Debbie Baker and Patty Crowley*



## CURRENT EVENTS

### **WGC OFFICERS**

Officers for 2020-2021 were elected by email and paper ballot since state restrictions in response to the coronavirus pandemic did not allow for the Windsor Garden Club meetings to be held in April or May. Votes from 38 members were unanimous in electing the Slate as presented. The following will serve in their roles from July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021:

Co-Presidents	Diane Bernier and Maureen Vagnini
Co-Vice-Presidents	Flo Barlow and Patty Crowley
Treasurer	Lieba Bernstein
Secretary	Susan Narog

All committee chair positions will be finalized and available in the 2020-2021 WGC Membership booklet.

### **WGC BYLAWS**

New bylaws were approved by unanimous vote by all present at the March 9, 2020 meeting. This was the first update since 2013. The bylaws are now in alignment with current practice, complete with duties of the officers and committee chairs of the Windsor Garden Club. Bylaws are available on our website <http://windsorgardenclubct.org/abouttheclub/clubconstitution/>

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## MEETINGS

### **Windsor Garden Club March Speaker & Business Meeting**



The Federated Garden Clubs of CT were our March 9<sup>th</sup> speakers. They provided information about the benefits of membership; fee-based classes to gain new skills, participation on various FGCT committees, and the ability to send invitations to our events to other FGCT members. They also offer assistance with any 501(c)(3) applications (WGC was established with a 501(c)(7) status). FGCT requires member

clubs to have bylaws, active membership, insurance, 501-status, and annual 990 tax filings. They expressed concern that WGC may not have filed 990s. Membership fees would be prorated, depending on the time of joining the Federation.

Discussion about pros and cons included a possible need to increase WGC member dues going forward if it is determined to be in the best interest of the club as a whole. There was no consensus. Since the expense is in excess of \$500, the discussion will be brought forward at a future meeting.

The Executive Board subsequently checked and found no records going back seven years of any 990 tax filings. They will investigate filing a 990 for the current year.

### **WGC April & May Meetings**

These meetings were cancelled due to the current Connecticut COVID-19 lockdown as communicated to WGC members by email and phone and posted on Facebook.

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## **BRING TOVAH TO THE WGC**

The April 20<sup>th</sup> WGC meeting to host Tovah Martin was postpone due to the shutdown. A letter to the Garden Club members from the Committee to bring Tovah to WGC follows below.



Dear Garden Club Members,

Due to the sheer uncertainty we are facing, Tovah Martin's visit to the Windsor Garden Club previously planned for April 20, 2020 has been postponed until our first Windsor Garden Club meeting of the program year, September 14, 2020. We will continue to monitor the situation.

in our world and community in order to make the best decisions for our members and presenter concerning this event.

Sincere thanks to all of you who contacted committee members and have volunteered to oversee raffle ticket sales, welcome Tovah, bring food items, and have assembled amazing baskets for our raffle. The format of the program remains the same with a light supper, raffle tickets sale, Tovah's presentation, pulling of winning raffle tickets, book sale and signing of Tovah's books. All baskets donated have been carefully covered and are being stored at Laurie Durant's until September. We have the best club with amazing members. This event is a time to have fun and celebrate who we are, while welcoming an amazing presenter. Stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

Cindy Daniels

The Committee to bring Tovah to WGC

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## **GARDEN MART**

The Windsor Garden Mart, scheduled for May 9th was canceled due to coronavirus pandemic restrictions. Patty Crowley and Debbie Baker are co-chairing the committee. Patty has arranged with the town to hold the Garden Mart on Saturday, October 12, 2020 on the Windsor Town Green, in front of the Library. Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to volunteer at this important fundraising event.

Please think about plants that will look good and plant well in the fall, including small shrubs and bushes, herbs that can transition indoors, and of course bulbs and other plants. You may be able to take photos of spring and summer plants you intend to donate to help people see what they will look like when in bloom.

WGC members are asked to donate a minimum of six (6) 4" or larger potted plants to the event; a \$25 donation in lieu of plants are also acceptable. Checks should be made out to Windsor Garden Club.

## **SUMMER-OPTIONAL MEETINGS**

These meetings have also been impacted by coronavirus restrictions, and the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting has been canceled accordingly. As the state enters Phase II of reopening on June 20, we do plan to offer our summer social meetings for those who feel comfortable participating. We strongly suggest that rather than sharing food and beverage, everyone brings their own, or chooses to eat/drink before or after the gathering. We also request compliance with any applicable state restrictions, such as staying 6 feet apart during conversation, and bringing/wearing a face mask for use in case it is needed. Many thanks to our hosts for sharing their gardens with us:

July 13, 2020, 6:30 pm

Dave Stender, 224 Preston Street, Windsor, CT

August 10, 2020, 6 pm

Laurie and Jim Durant, 166 Sunnyfield Drive, Windsor, CT



### **WINDSOR GARDEN CLUB SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

For 2020, the Windsor Garden Club is offering a one year \$1,500 scholarship to a graduating high school senior, who is a Windsor resident. Following is an update from our WGC Scholarship Committee.

On behalf of your Scholarship Committee, Victor Bernstein, Laura Jary and myself, I would like to update our members on the unusual scholarship process this year. Due to schools being closed in March the process was done mostly online. Fortunately, I was able to stay in contact with the High School Guidance Department and to complete the process. We did have excellent applicants and have chosen a candidate to be our scholarship recipient.

At this time there are no complete plans for awarding scholarships. Previously, there was an Awards Night and our club followed up by inviting our award winner to a summer meeting to present the scholarship. The High School is planning a Virtual Award Night on June 11<sup>th</sup>. However, this is not certain. Our committee will continue to discuss how this will work for our club and keep members informed.

### **MEMBERS PAGES**

All WGC members are encouraged to submit pictures of their gardens or a picture of their favorite plant or any garden experiences they have had and would like to share. I would like to include them in future editions of the Earthworm.

#### **Laurie's Picks.**

My plant addiction has increased, like I don't have enough plants already!! What inspired my new addiction is a visit to the recent "Hartford Flower Show." Walking through the many vendors, and there are many, I came across the "The Violet Barn" booth.

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I always have had African violets, but that day I came across a gesneriads called “Streptocarpus” (strep-to-car-pus) also known as Cape primroses. This genus is native to Southern Eastern Africa including Madagascar and the Comoro Islands.

They look almost like miniature orchids and come in an infinite variety of colors. Unlike violets, each leaf sequentially produces 8 to 10 or more bloom stalks, so the plant remains in heavy bloom for a good length of time.

The care for these beauties is the same as for African Violets. I personally feel they are easier. Great for a seat at a window or grown under artificial lights. I give the Violet Barn 5 stars in varieties of plants. Plants are well packaged for shipping.



*Streptocarpus - Black Rubies*

Check out my photos and see what you think! If you are interested you can check out the “Violet Barn” on line, one of the few places you can purchase Streptocarpos other than Logee’s Greenhouses in Danielson, CT.



*Streptocarpus - Cat Dance*



*Streptocarpus - Laurzie*

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## WGC MEMBERS SPRING GARDENS

All WGC members can submit photos of their gardens for inclusion into the Earthworm. Please send or give your photos to the editor of Earthworm.

### Debbie Baker's Garden



### Laurie & Jim Durant's Spring Garden





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## Maureen Vagnini's May Garden



*Maureen's May Botanicals - Salad anyone?*

## Pat Crowley May Gardens



*Pat's lovely Hosta gardens,  
she has her eyes on you!*

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## GARDEN TIPS

If any WGC member would like to submit their garden tips, please do so. They can be submitted directly to the editor of the Earthworm or any WGC Executive Board member. These are from the UCONN Home & Garden Education Center for Annuals and Perennials.

## JUNE

- Scout for lace bugs and aphids. Spray with water or use a low-toxicity insecticide to control them.
- Check container plants daily during hot weather, they will need water often. • Cut back early-flowering perennials to tidy up and encourage more blooms.
- All plants, especially newly planted ones, need 1" of water per week. Water deeply and thoroughly as needed.
- Keep on top of weeds during the early summer when they are small and easy to pull. If you keep your garden plants well-watered and fertilized, they will quickly fill in bare spaces and give weeds fewer places to grow.
- To move spring-blooming bulbs to another spot, wait until the foliage has turned yellow, carefully dig them up and let them dry in a shady spot for a few days. Store the bulbs in a cool, dry place until it's time to plant them in fall.
- Clematis usually blooms only in spring but once it's finished blooming you can prune it to 12" and it may produce a second flush of growth and flowers. Or just lightly prune just to shape and to remove damaged and wayward stems. Leave the decorative seed heads.
- Sow seeds of fast-growing annuals like marigolds, zinnias, and cosmos directly in the garden.
- Plant summer-flowering bulbs such as cannas, gladiolas and dahlias.
- Plant caladium and tuberous begonias in shady spots.
- Lightly cultivate soil after a heavy rain to avoid compaction. A layer of mulch reduces the soil crusting and compaction caused by raindrops.

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## JULY

- Cut back mums, tall asters, Montauk daisies and helianthus by about one-quarter for bushy, more floriferous plants.
- If your cool season annuals have died off, pull them out and add them to your compost pile. Sometimes a severe shearing, water and fertilizer will bring them back to life.
- Water early in the morning to reduce the loss of water to evaporation during the hottest days.
- Container and hanging plants may need additional water later in the day if hot and windy conditions prevail. Check plants again at day's end to see if any additional water is necessary.
- Mulch garden beds to help conserve water.
- Hummingbirds are attracted to red salvia, coral bells and bee balm.

For August garden tips cut and paste this link; <http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu> into your browser

*Source: UConn Home & Garden Education Center;*

## MEMBERS' VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Windsor Historical Society Gardens.** The Windsor Historical Society (WHS) has a new executive director, Doug Shipman. In late March, Laurie Durant and Debbie Baker met with Doug and then-ED Christine Ermenc to discuss our garden collaboration. The Strong-Howard House herb garden is in good shape and will be maintained by WHS staff.

Two front garden beds, originally designed and installed through Barbara Kyer, will now be maintained by WGC members, as well as two new planters that WHS will purchase for the front entry to the non-historic office building. Laurie and Debbie tended the beds and selected plants, paid for by WHS, to install in the new planters when they arrive.

An additional bed, at the west side of the Strong Howard House, needs TLC. The WGC committee will monitor that garden this summer, and then review the 1810 plant guidelines,

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and select plants for 2021. Once small groups can again convene, Laurie will establish a schedule for weeding, watering, etc.



*Left Side Entry Garden Bed*



*Right Side Entry Garden Bed*

The Invasive Vines and Plants Committee hopes to have a table at Windsor's Farmers Market on Thursday afternoons beginning in late summer or early fall. In addition to providing information, this effort also serves as an opportunity for membership recruitment. Contact Maureen Vagnini if you are interested in volunteering to be a table host, and she will contact you once the committee begins its work.

## CLUB MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership renewals have begun. In addition, please think of friends, neighbors, and colleagues who enjoy flowers, plants, and gardening and encourage them to think about joining. The new form is available on the website and at meetings beginning in April. Contact Barbara Stavens for more information. Club membership is open to anyone who has an interest in plants, landscaping, and other related topics.

Renewal memberships are typically due August 1<sup>st</sup> while new memberships are accepted at any time. The current membership application form is available on the Club's website.

[www.windsorgardenclubct.org](http://www.windsorgardenclubct.org). Membership renewal forms are available on our website <http://windsorgardenclubct.org/> or contact Debbie Baker for a printed form.

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Business meetings are typically held at the Windsor Senior Center, 599 Matianuck Avenue in Windsor. Normally, meetings are held during September, October, November, March and April. Social hour begins at 6:30 PM and the guest speaker begins their presentation at 7:00 PM. The Club conducts its business portion of the meeting after the guest speaker has finished. These meetings are free to anyone attending.

## REQUESTING ASSISTANCE FROM THE CLUB

The members of the Windsor Garden Club are able and willing to provide both the design and installation of landscape beautification projects within Windsor. If you would like additional information about obtaining the Club's assistance, please download the information document and application form from the Club's website. (Word and PDF formats are available at [www.windsorgardenclubct.org](http://www.windsorgardenclubct.org).)

## WGC CONTACT INFORMATION for 2020-2021

### Co-Presidents:

Diane Bernier; [dmsbernier@gmail.com](mailto:dmsbernier@gmail.com) & Maureen Vagnini; [maureenvagnini@gmail.com](mailto:maureenvagnini@gmail.com)

**Co-Vice Presidents:** Florence Barlow; [flobar744@att.net](mailto:flobar744@att.net) & Patty Crowley; [prcrow4@aol.com](mailto:prcrow4@aol.com)

**Recording Secretary:** Susan Narog; [snarog@comcast.net](mailto:snarog@comcast.net)

**Treasurer:** Lieba Bernstein; [liebaberstein@sbcglobal.net](mailto:liebaberstein@sbcglobal.net)

**Corresponding Secretary:** Dave Stender; [davidfstender@gmail.com](mailto:davidfstender@gmail.com)

**Immediate Past President:** Debbie Baker; [deborah846@comcast.net](mailto:deborah846@comcast.net)

**The Earthworm Editor:** Jim Durant; [jhutan6@gmail.com](mailto:jhutan6@gmail.com)

**Facebook** – Allison Joanis; [allison.joanis@gmail.com](mailto:allison.joanis@gmail.com) & Debbie Baker; [deborah846@comcast.net](mailto:deborah846@comcast.net)

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## Message from the Editor

***Hello friends!***

***COVID-19 Lockdown, Murder Hornets, snow squalls in May somedays I hesitate to get out of bed and look outside! But, be that as it may, as I complete this Edition of the Earthworm, it is a beautiful Connecticut spring day. The sun is out, a bit windy and cool but never less a very Windsor spring day.***

***As I look out my window, I see that all is well with my wife's garden. Most of the perennials have survived the winter and are now popping out of the ground. Many will be blooming again soon. As always, we have added a few more (I like the perennials but Laurie likes the annuals) but we both like Dahlias & Clematis. The Robins are out in force and we even had a nest. I pity my poor namesakes. The woodchuck has appeared again checking out his salad bar is doing and then left. I hope he gets lost or worst. We have been spraying a woodchuck repellent on his favorites, I hope it spoils his dining experience.***

***If you have read down this far you will see I have added two sections to the Earthworm, one section on Garden Tips and one section on WGC Members Gardens. I thought it would be both nice and informative if the members provided their favorite garden tips or pictures of their favorite plants or gardening experiences to be include in the Earthworm. They don't have to be long and I will include them in upcoming editions of the Earthworm.***

***We have interesting events coming up and I hope all will enjoy them, but above all be safe. Again, please feel free to submit any comments, materials, photos that you would like to see in The Earthworm to myself or any other WGC Contacts listed above.***

***I always find peace in Laurie's garden; I trust you all find peace in yours as well. Please stay safe and be well because as we always know - better days are ahead.***

***Jim***

*No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth,  
and no culture comparable to that of the garden. – Thomas Jefferson*