

Hydrangeas among high points of trip

I traveled to the East Coast (Nantucket) and to the West Coast (Seattle) this year and am still awed by the gorgeous flowers we saw.

The trip to Nantucket was near the end of July, and the bright blue hydrangeas, rows and rows of them, used in many ways — such as

hedges, specimen shrubs and the like — were spectacular. They were mostly mop-heads and lacecaps, generally various shades of blue running from light to dark. At times the colors were pink to deep purple.

There were the usual summer plantings, but the other flowers that are used extensively are climbing pink roses, meandering up the sides of buildings and on the roofs.

Trellising was often used to hold these prolific bloomers; on one house the trellis was designed like a spider web just waiting to catch the flowers in its design.

We also saw junipers, butterfly bush, ivy, daylilies, and privet hedges that are grown tall to resist the strong winds. Also, very tall hollyhocks grew in many gardens.

ATTRACTIONS

When the English people came to Nantucket in the 17th century, Indians — who helped them in many ways — met them. The new arrivals tried to farm the land, but that wasn't successful. Then in the 18th and 19th centuries it became the capital of the American whaling industry.

We visited the whaling museum, a not-to-be-missed attraction. We attended a lecture about that industry the same day.

There are other interesting places such as an old mill (still in operation, which grinds corn daily in season), the Nantucket Life-Saving Museum, the African Meeting House, and the lighthouses.

The harbor is a great attraction and we spent many hours looking at the boats, shopping, eating, and just enjoying the ambience.

A daffodil festival, begun in 1974, takes place each year. Now a million daffodils delight visitors during April. Daffodils rather than tulips are chosen because the large deer and rabbit population doesn't like to eat daffodil bulbs, but loves tulip bulbs.

SEATTLE

Seattle was the location of the Garden Writers of America annual meeting, and again, we saw loads and loads of beautiful hydrangeas. We had the pleasure of visiting several nurseries and private and public gardens, and enjoyed each one.

Heronwood Nursery in Kingston is not to be believed. Plants and plants everywhere. If you visit Seattle, do try to spend some time in this 3-acre woodland garden and meet new plants of all types.

Another winner is the Bellevue Botanical Garden, a

peaceful place where you can spend much time enjoying it at the different gardens and walking the trail.

We enjoyed dinner at Frog Rock Lavender Farm in Bainbridge, a lavender lover's paradise, with fields of many varieties of blooming lavender that glowed in twilight. A sloping path is bordered with lavender as you descend toward the fields. An exquisite perennial garden is filled with texture plants, grasses and dahlias.

HYDRANGEA NEWS

Now back to the hydrangeas and exciting news. A new macrophylla, Endless Summer, will be offered to the public in spring 2004. Make a note of this as you walk through.

Its special characteristic is its ability to bloom on new wood, providing the spent blooms are removed.

This mophead type has clear pink blooms in alkaline soils, and blue flowers in acidic soils with sufficient aluminum. Flower sizes can reach 6 inches and up to 8 inches across in



Spectacular hydrangeas profusely on Nantucket island and on the West Coast. This is a lacecap.

containers. It is hardy to zone 4. Mature size is 3 to 5 feet in width and height.

For more information, visit www.EndlessSummerBlooms.com.

Most hydrangeas are natural woodland plants and like a cover of tall woodland trees that give dappled shade. Early morning and late afternoon sun do no harm, but hours of mid-day sun can bleach the flowers and eventually scorch them, so choose the site carefully.

A more detailed description of the care of these flowers is in

the book *Hydrangeas: A Gardeners' Guide*, Toni Lawson-Hall and Brian Rothman, published by Timber Press.

GOODGARDEN TIP Continue to mow the lawn as required and taper off lawn irrigation. Apply fertilizer, and reseed damaged lawn areas.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (34) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. Her fax number is (248) 644-1314.

GARDEN CALENDAR

Dahlia show

The Southeastern Michigan Dahlia Society will have its 50th annual dahlia show Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 7-8, at Orchard Mall, Orchard Lake Road and Maple in West Bloomfield. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, and noon to 3 p.m. Sunday. Between 600 and 800 blooms will be on display and several new cultivars will be introduced. A section of all yellow flowers will be featured to celebrate the 50th anniversary. SMDS members will be present to answer questions and welcome new members. For more information, call (248) 478-2484.

Farmington Garden Club
The Farmington Garden Club will meet noon Monday, Sept. 9, at the Longacre House, on the west side of Farmington Road between 10 Mile and 11 Mile. Kay Blakeney's side presentation from trips to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and India will be featured. Visitors may attend. Call (248) 615-3616 for information.

Troy Garden Club
The Troy Garden Club will have its first

meeting of the fall season noon to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 11, at Big Beaver United Methodist Church, 3753 John R. just south of Wattles Road in Troy.

Refreshments will be served at the start of the meeting. Guest donation, \$3. Reservations aren't required. This month's program will have a "fall" theme. For more information, call Barb at (248) 952-5938.

Herb Study Group
The Evening Herb Study Group of Matthaei Botanical Gardens will meet Monday, Sept. 9, Group members will give a presentation on preserving the harvest. Each board member will demonstrate a method of preservation. Various methods will be shown for drying herbs, flavored oil, vinegar, butter and sugar. Visitors are welcome.

The group's meetings take place 7-9 p.m. the first Monday of the month, February through November, in Room 125 of the University of Michigan Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 Dixboro Road in Ann Arbor.

For more information, contact H. Ieland by phone - (734) 459-8454 - or e-mail - hileland@gcservice.com.

Metropolitan Rose Society
The Metropolitan Rose Society will meet 7:15 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 5, at the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center at 3500 Marais, east of Crooks and north of 13 Mile. Two members will present the program, *The Many Uses for Roses*.

Admission is free. The public may attend. Call (248) 689-9529 for more information.

School of Gardening
The Michigan School of Gardening offers a variety of classes. Advance registration is requested. Many classes are limited in size and some have pre-requisites. Call (248) 4-GARDEN for information. The schedule includes the five-session Garden Design, Tuesdays, Sept. 10 to Oct. 8, at Goldner Walsh Nursery, 559 Orchard Lake Road in Pontiac (562); and the two-session Ornamental Grasses and Alternative Lawns, Wednesdays, Sept. 11-18, at Goldner Walsh Nursery (562).

Show to benefit programs about hunger

Forgotten Harvest, metro Detroit's only mobile food rescue operation, and Kids Coalition to Prevent Hunger, a group made up of area youths, will present Skating to Stop Starvation, an ice show benefit.

The event will take place 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 8, at the Birmingham Ice Sports Arena, 2300 E. Lincoln in Birmingham.

The show will feature solos and pairs of world and national skating competitors (including world champion Yuko Sato), surprise performers, and a special performance by the Detroit Skating Club's world-renowned Team Elin. A silent auction will also be featured.

Tickets for the ice show can be bought at the door (suggested donation, \$10). For more information, call Ree Taylor at Forgotten Harvest, (248) 350-3663.

The fundraiser is part of the Forgotten Harvest Make It Real campaign, to help educate students about the impact of hunger on children in local communities

and about the importance of proper nutrition.

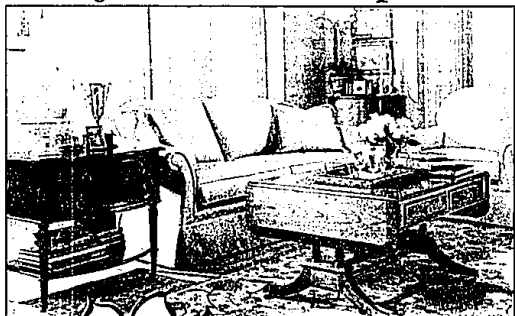
Funds raised will be used in conjunction with the \$25,000 challenge grant awarded last October to Forgotten Harvest by the Carl's Foundation.

Kids Coalition to Prevent Hunger was organized in response to the challenge grant, and is made up of young people from area figure skating clubs, including Detroit, Birmingham, North Suburban, St. Clair Shores and Onyx Skating Academy.

Under the direction of Birmingham Groves High School students Courtney Healy and Stefanie Horowitz, the group has worked on every element of the ice show, including designing and mailing invitations and flyers, coordinating the program, and hosting attendees at the event.

For more information about Forgotten Harvest, call (248) 350-FOOD or visit www.forgottenharvest.org.

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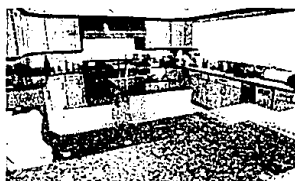
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