Greetings!

Happy Valentine's Day! It's time to start falling back in love with your garden and there is no better way to do it than to plan a trip to the CT Flower and Garden Show that starts next Thursday, February 22nd. Actually, for all of us at Natureworks, it starts this weekend when we begin loading in the plants for the educational garden we are putting together to teach everyone about Plants with a Purpose: pollinators, butterflies, and birds. We are getting help from volunteer members of the CT Horticultural Society. My landscape crew is also happily helping as they are so anxious to get their fingers back into the dirt once again. It is quite the transformation to go from empty convention center to garden paradise in a few short days. The excitement is palpable, kind of like the feeling on Seedy Sunday last weekend as hundreds of folks jammed into our shop and greenhouse to celebrate our first event of the year. Well, the flower show is next, and it marks a passage from winter to March when we gear up and re-open.
I will be giving two talks at the flower show. The first is called **Food and Flowers Belong Together**. Look at the photo above of this garden in England. What you see in the foreground are brushy twigs used to support a new crop of beans. Notice the flowers? All of the edible gardens I visited there blended flowers into the mix. Why? Lots of reasons, but pollination is a big one.

Now look at the photo of my garden. Yes, that is an edible garden. You can look closely and see the sugar snap peas climbing the fence. But what your eye focuses on is the bee balm and yarrow. They weave up through a sea of mountain mint (Pycnanthemum muticum) that surrounds the vegetables. It’s pretty and practical. I will be repeating my Food and Flowers class at our all day seminar **Growing a Healthy Yard** on March 10th. [Click Here](#) to go directly to our website and read about this class. It’s a bargain for a day packed with tons of information. Sign up today to reserve a space.

I will also be speaking on **The Healing Power of Plants and Gardens** at the flower show. This popular talk will move you to think about the real reason you garden. It’s not just for food, or herbs or beauty. This week I have been reading a lovely book slipped into my hopper at work by Diane. It is called The Roots of My Obsession and it is a series of essays by noted gardeners, many of whom I have read or seen speak. Here is a quote that says it all:
"Today I see my own garden as a refuge, a sanctuary, an enclosure, and an escape from ordinary life."  
- Penelope Hobhouse

Here's another:
"...you plant the seed, you nurture it, it nurtures you. That's it. That's everything...The deepest mystery, the most irresistible thrill, just there, outside your door..."  
- Susan Haeger

Why do YOU garden? Think about it during the winter months when you have the peace and quiet to contemplate. One of the speakers at the flower show will be Jan Johnson, author of the wonderful book *Heaven is a Garden*. That was one of my main inspirations for my talk on the healing power of plants. She will be speaking on her new book *The Spirit of Stone*.

Why does Diane St. John garden? Well, one BIG reason is to support the monarch butterflies. Diane, also called "the crazy butterfly lady" at Natureworks, will be speaking on Sunday at the flower show. Her talk is called *How I Raised 1000 Monarch Butterflies at my Job*. Wait until you see the photos Diane has compiled on our butterfly adventures at Natureworks. Our goal this year is to teach YOU how to do this.

There will be SO many great speakers at the 4 day flower show that one of my customers told me she would be driving 1 1/4 hours to attend every single day! What a bargain, your admission ticket is also your ticket in to all the seminars that day. I love being there the entire time, and try to steal away from our busy retail booth to hear as many speakers as I can. But I will tell you one thing: DON'T MISS Doug Tallamy! If you have never seen him speak, you truly have to attend one of his two talks. If you have seen him speak before, you will want to see him again. He changed the way most of us gardeners..."
and landscape types think about the natural world. A game changer. A sea change. A total shift. And he is so enjoyable, his photos are just gorgeous. His first book, Bringing Nature Home, and the book that he co-authored with Rick Darke, The Living Landscape, are my bibles.

Yes, there will be tulips and spring bulbs galore in the gardens at the flower show that starts on February 22nd. Get your spring fever on!

Lorraine Ballato, the CT author of Success with Hydrangeas, is also speaking twice on, of course, Hydrangeas. But, she is teaching Hydrangea PRUNING for Natureworks on Saturday, April 7th. Two full hours focused just on pruning the various species of Hydrangeas. The instant the class brochure came out, registrations for this class started coming in. Sign up today. Click Here to go directly to this class on our website. You can register online.

The Natureworks booth at the flower show will be overflowing with seeds (we are restocking this week after Seedy Sunday!), pollinator supplies, books, tender bulbs, Gardening with the Moon calendars, and all kinds of other fun items. We are always right across from the Federated Garden Clubs so we are easy to find. My staff will also be found at the Plants with a Purpose garden, sharing their knowledge and answering questions. And yes, there will be Hellebores, and creeping phloxes, and Pulmonarias, and witch hazels, and pansies, and hyacinths, and houseplants... It will smell like earth and mulch and plants. No matter what the weather outside, you will be transported to the magical world of plants and flowers. You NEED this. We all need this.
Soon the Pulmonarias will be in bloom. Perhaps you might even see some in the gardens at the flower show next week! On the next nice day, go outside with your mud boots on and stroll around your yard. I have noticed bulbs like species crocus, snowdrops, and Iris reticulate poking their noses through the soil. My Helleborus niger buds are now above the leaves I covered them with before the last deep freeze. My witch hazel branches opened in 3 days in a vase on my desk and now my home office smells so heavenly. It stays light later, the sun comes up earlier. We still have 5 weeks until the official first day of spring (and the day the Natureworks retail store opens for the year) so until then, you need to do everything you can to feed your garden-starved soul.

Force branches, tend your houseplants, read some inspirational garden books, and mark your calendars for the CT Flower and Garden show next week.

See you very soon...

P.S. There are still spots available for my July Garden Tour in England. Email me at nancyd@naturework.com and I will send you the information.
It’s Valentine's Day week, and love is in the air. As a garden designer, I have had an ongoing love affair with leaves for decades. Yes, of COURSE I adore flowers. But leaves are the glue that hold my gardens together. Look at the picture above, taken in early April. On the left, your eye is immediately drawn to the miniature Narcissus. Those will bloom for a few weeks and then they will go dormant, leaving a hole in this garden. Next to it is Euphorbia myrsinites, called donkeytail spurge. This is about to flower, and after it does, the blue succulent leaves will thrive for the entire growing season, filling up the space left by the dormant daffies and drawing a lot of attention to this area of the rock garden. This composition is SAVED by a good foliage plant selection. Do you see what I mean?
Now check out this container garden I photographed while on vacation in Vermont last fall. You see dragon wing begonias, blue Scaevola, and brilliant yellow Sedum 'Angelina'. The sedum anchors this composition, looking gorgeous from the minute it was installed. At the end of the season, it will be planted into a garden as it is a hardy perennial. The leaves turn a fun shade of peachy-salmon in the winter.

When you are at the flower show, stop by our booth and pick up a copy of this inspirational book *Gardening with Foliage First*. It is a primer on how to combine plants together- flowers AND foliage plants, annuals AND perennials, bulbs, grasses, herbs... you name it. When spring finally does arrive, you will be inspired to try the technique that professional garden designers have been using forever. You will notice a big difference in the way your garden looks and it will make your work a lot less urgent as the flowers come and go.

**Natureworks is Hiring!**

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the details.
Great Gardening Events
Happening this Winter

Below is a list of some of the fantastic garden related events happening over the next few months. Please check the specific garden club or host of each event for details and to be sure the public is invited.

**Thursday through Sunday, Feb. 22-25th**
[Connecticut Flower and Garden Show](#)
Stop by the Natureworks booth, visit the gardens, and attend lectures by our own Nancy DuBrule-Clemente and Diane St. John.

**Saturday, March 3rd**
**Soup Symposium**
Hardy Plant Society of New England - Connecticut Chapter
Theme: "March into Spring"

**Saturday, March 3rd**
**Mad Gardeners, Inc. Symposium**
(open to the public)
Theme: Gardening with Wildlife: The Balancing Act
Housatonic Valley Regional HS in Falls Village, CT
[Click Here](#) for the flyer, print it in landscape mode.

**Saturday, March 10th**
Natureworks all day seminar held at Zion Episcopal Church
Grow a Healthy Yard. See [class brochure](#) for details. [Click Here](#) for online registration.

**Tuesday, March 13th**
[Cheshire Public Library](#)
lecture by Nancy DuBrule-Clemente
Topic: "Native Pollinators to Know and Love."

**Saturday, March 17th**
[CT Master Gardeners Symposium](#)
Theme: "Gardening Gone Native"
Saturday, March 24th  Seed Starting Workshops
in the Natureworks greenhouse. See class brochure for information. Click Here for online registration.

Saturday April 7th  Pruning Classes
held at Zion Episcopal Church. See class brochure for information

- Overcoming your Fear of Pruning - Basic Principles and Practices (Click Here for online registration.)

- Pruning Hydrangeas with Lorraine Ballato (Click Here for online registration.)

Click a Quick Link for more Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Website</th>
<th>Buy a Gift Certificate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment Opportunities</td>
<td>Gardening Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handouts</td>
<td>Landscaping Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Lawn Care Info.</td>
<td>Natureworks App Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The DuBrule Diaries Blog</td>
<td>Veggies-Incredible Edibles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RETAIL HOURS

Closed for the winter, then we reopen on the first day of Spring.
Click the Update Profile link shown below and then SUBMIT
to see the special email groups you can join!