



Happy Holidays!

This certainly is a busy month for everyone, and it's an extra busy month for members of the Bristol Garden Club. On top of our own celebrations, holiday shopping and the decking of halls, we have also managed to create and sell tabletop trees, hold an annual holiday luncheon, and ventured into having a club cookie exchange. It's not going to be a white Christmas, but we are certainly doing our best to make it a merry one.

Here's our big news: we have a new web site! Search Bristolrigc.org. The password remains the same. We are still tweaking a few areas, but I think you'll all be impressed with the vast improvements that have been made. I want to thank Kathy Thomas, Rick Anderson, Diana Campbell, and Mary Fran Snow for the many hours that they collectively put into this endeavor. We met with obstacles along the way, but we ultimately pulled it off!

Back-tracking to late November: we made 25 pumpkin centerpieces and sold them at the MHF Farmers Market the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Making them was, as always, a lot of fun. Seeing them sell "like hotcakes" was gratifying! We were initially concerned that the pricing might be too high, but the customers didn't even blink. This year, we bravely decided to make a number of pumpkins featuring succulents. They were fabulous, we all loved them, but we learned that for a thanksgiving centerpiece, the public wants flowers on their pumpkins. So, next year, we will concentrate on flowers. We also learned that interesting greenery and dried flowers, grasses and seed pods mixed in with fresh flowers are very popular! Keep this in mind in the early fall when you start prepping your gardens for winter. A big thank you goes to Maggie Rezendes for organizing the pumpkins and to everyone who made and sold them.

We certainly have done our part to help decorate within our town. Once again, a team of garden club members took on decorating the primary bedroom upstairs at Blithewold. Hats off to Vera B, Pam D, Margie M, Carol G, Vicki I, Linda S, Laurel C and Robyn B. The room is stunning. A member overheard a visitor say "this is the best room of all".

Over at Linden Place, Linda S, Marie C, Mary M, Margie M, Karen A and Celeste B decorated the grounds with festive greenery...and rumor has it a lot of hilarity! Check out photos from both Blithewold and Linden Place on our web's photo page.

A special thank you goes to Carol Glanville for making a beautiful boxwood tree donation for The East Bay Food Pantry fundraising raffle. It was our club's privilege to participate in this worthy cause.

This month, once again, we made tabletop trees. In the past, we have made Boxwood Trees; boxwood has become very expensive and difficult to acquire, so this year the boxwood trees became "tabletop trees" made with a variety of evergreens. And they were fabulous! We still used boxwood, but we supplemented it with pine, fir, cedar...anything we could find in our yards. We were able to reduce the cost of making the trees and to increase the number of trees made. And, as always, we had fun doing it. The trees were sold at the MHF Farmers Market held at Pivotal. It was a beautiful day with a huge attendance. Our sale was a grand success. Many thanks to Linda Sheehan for overseeing the project, and to the many members who made and or sold the trees.

I'd like to give a shout out of appreciation to the BHIA for so generously allowing us to use their clubhouse for the pumpkin and trees workshops.



This year, our annual Holiday Luncheon was held at Jan Archibald's beautiful home in Warren. The view of the bay from her family room was spectacular, and as the weather was both sunny and mild, we were even able to go out on her deck and enjoy it! As always, the "pot luck" fare was excellent, surpassed only by the jovial camaraderie.



Finally, this December I held a first ever club cookie exchange. It was not a huge turnout (under a dozen attendees) but I picked a busy night at a busy time of the year, and the usual viruses blindsided a few members. I'm pretty sure, though, that the members who made it all had a delightful time. I think we will try it again next year!



Meanwhile, a few people asked for the world's easiest holiday recipe, which makes a great treat for breakfast or teatime, and if you add a scoop of ice cream to each slice it's a yummy dessert:

Crustless Cranberry "Pie"

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9" pie pan
2. In a large bowl, combine: 1 cup flour, 1 cup sugar, and 1/4 teaspoon salt.
3. Add: 2 Cups cranberries, 1/2 cup chopped walnuts. Toss to coat.
4. Stir in (with a spoon) 1/2 cup melted butter, 2 large eggs (beaten), and 1 teaspoon almond extract.
5. Spread the batter into the prepared pan. Bake about 40 minutes (until toothpick comes out clean)
6. Serve warm or room temperature.

Best wishes to all of you for wonderful holidays and for happiness and health in the coming year. We do not meet during January, but I have no doubts that many of us will be seeing one another in the coming weeks and I'm looking forward to seeing most...if not all...of you in February.

Gail