**Hardy Garden Club**

**Meeting Summary**

**Irvine Nature Center**

**October 13, 2020**

* “Share Your Garden” display. Thanks to all those who brought something special from their garden to share with other members. It was fun and inspiring to see what members are growing!
* Damon Smith Clivia Presentation

Damon gave a very informative and interesting presentation about his history with clivias and tips for growing them. He also demonstrated how to divide clivias and showed the group a number of clivias he grows. Damon raffled 4 plants to lucky winners and gave away some of his smaller “hospital” clivias. Members also bought all the clivias he brought to sell. Looks like we will need to add clivias to our hort. Show!

* Many thanks to Debbie Kurz for organizing the wonderful trip to John Lalley’s Garden on 9/15/20. In addition to giving us a tour of his beautiful garden, John also shared many gardening tips and new ideas with Hardy GC members.
* Videos and handouts for the 2020 Shirley Meneice Virtual Conference are available online at the GCA Landing Page.
* 2020 Virtual Zone VI Meeting (Oct. 20-21)
* Katherine Kozelski’s wedding flowers created by Hardy Garden Club members for her

September 26th wedding were beautiful! Both Katherine and her mother, club member Maureen Flynn, were very please and thankful for the floral displays.

Many thanks to Mariana Bacon, Jane Love, Bliss McCord, Debbie Kurz, Joan Moore, Sherry

Jordan, Carol Warner, Beth Purvis, Pat Ghingher, and Fran Flanigan for their hard work. A special thanks to Jane Love for organizing all of us, Bliss McCord for letting us use her garage and for feeding us, and Mariana Bacon for her knowledge of the flower industry, creative talent, and her patience with all the worker bees.

* The third weeding by HGC members of Meadowood Rain Garden took place on September 30, 2020. A large group of iris were removed and native perennials planted to encourage diversity and resources for pollinators. Many thanks to Jane Love, Ann Boyce, Joan Moore, Fran Flanigan, Mary Sue Arnold, Pat Ghingher, and Rick Uhlig. A special thanks to Jane Love for organizing the Hardy gardeners

* Horticulture Committee:

-Daff. Bulb Give-Away: The Hort. Committee gave each member two mystery daffodil bulbs to plant this fall. Hopefully, members will share their blossoms at the April/May 2021 meeting and will take the opportunity to practice using daffseek.org to correctly identify their daffodils.

Many thanks to Bliss McCord for orchestrating the Daff. Bulb Give-Away.

-Ann Donnell and Carol Warner brought daffodil bulbs to sell at the meeting.

* Conservation Minute: Joan Moore gave an explanation about the history of plastic and the impact it has on our environment. She also showed examples of plastic alternatives ideas that can help us become “plastic free”. Please see below for her notes and an explanation of the plastic recycling triangle codes.
* Photography Committee:

The GCA is compiling a COVID-19 Photo Collection book to be released in summer 2021. The hope is that every club will be represented with 5 photos each. Sherry and her committee will make plans to facilitate collecting and selecting photos by club members.

* Reminder about ordering from Brent and Becky’s: Please go to **bloominbucks.com** to place your order. HGC will receive 25% of your order!
* Next Meeting: November 10, 2020 Virtual Presentation – Stay tuned for details

**Joan Moore’s Conservation Notes**

What is Plastic?

Polymers are the building blocks of life; molecules of carbon and hydrogen that form organic compounds such as starches, proteins, DNA. More examples shells, fingernails, hair, cellulose which is a component in cell walls of green plants, natural rubber, resins such as shellac which is secreted by the lacebug and used as furniture finish, amber is fossilized tree resin.

Remember that all of these are natural polymers. They have evolved over millions of years with all of earth’s living systems. The bacteria and organisms that are capable of breaking down these natural polymers can do so because they have co-evolved with the organic compounds.

These polymers are natural, biodegradable and return to the earth.

In 1855, an inventor by the name of Alexander Parkes manipulated the qualities of natural polymers and created plastic. As long as he used natural polymers, these plastics were biodegradable.

In 1909, Alexander Baekeland invented the first purely synthetic polymer, bakelite. It is made from phenol and formaldehyde, both derived from coal. Because this is a synthetic polymer which has never existed in nature before and hasn’t evolved over millions of years, there is no organism in the natural world capable of breaking it down.

All plastics are derived from hydrocarbons; the majority are found in fossil fuels such as crude oil, coal, and natural gas. Petroleum derived hydrocarbons such as methane, ethylene, propylene, butylene, and benzene are most useful for making plastics as well as making soap, detergent, fertilizers, pesticides, and cosmetics.

All plastics contain additives that effect strength, texture, flexibility, color, and resistance to microbes. All of these can leach out into our food and drinks, off gas into the air we breathe, rub off on objects that we handle. They are known to be endocrine disrupters.

In addition to our plastic bottles, bags, utensils, cups and plates, etc, one of the most disturbing and troubling items is plastic “nurdles”. These are the tiny pre-production plastic pellets that look like fish eggs. After being produced, the nurdles are shipped to the companies that manufacture the plastic products. They are found on the ground around the manufacturing plant, around RR tracks, they are spilled in transit. They are a huge component of plastic litter on beaches. They blend in with the sand and then end up in the ocean as litter or food for marine life.

Finding ways to stop using plastic:

1. Say no to single use disposable plastic bags- if you have some, use them until they die. The cost of production is very low. They are made of ethylene. They are cheap and flimsy, escape from trash bins, clog storm drains, get stuck in trees, make their way to the ocean where animals eat them and then die. Sea turtles eat the plastic bags and their glucose levels drop. They have less energy to migrate and reproduce. The females don’t lay as many eggs so fewer sea turtles are born.
2. Are paper bags any better? Not really. Transforming trees into paper ian energy and water intensive process. It requires 3x more energy to produce and ship paper bags vs plastic bags. It takes an entire gallon of water per paper bag compared to .008 gallons of water per plastic bag. However, it is biodegradable; it can be recycled or composted. If you have to choose between plastic and paper, use paper and continue to use it until the bottom drops out.
3. What should we use?
4. Cheapest and greenest are bags that you already have.
5. If you have plastic bags, use them until they wear out, but do not replace them with more plastic.
6. Make your own.
7. If you buy new, use natural, organic, plastic free materials.
8. 99 cent grocery store bags are plastic. They aren’t recyclable, not washable, they fall apart quickly, and they are mostly made in China. In January 2011, the USA reported that 1/3 of these bags handed out at 44 major retailers contained high levels of lead.

The biggest obstacle is remembering to bring your bags into the store.

Create a new habit. Don’t let yourself off the hook. If you forget to bring your bags into the store with you, get some exercise and walk back out to your car and get them.

You can carry items out in your hands, hold them in your shirt tail.

What about the plastic bags for your produce?

Carry out food- bring your own container and ask server to put your meal in it.

if you go out to dinner, bring your own container to take home leftovers.

Problem with pre-packaged foods in plastic trays which are not recyclable. The solution to that is not to buy them and do more home cooking. However, that doesn’t work for everyone. More on this problem later.



