

The Memphis Horticultural Society  
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# Clippings

September 2011

## Diane Meucci: A Career of Blessings... The People, Gardens and Plants of the Mid-South That Shaped my Career and Provided my Living

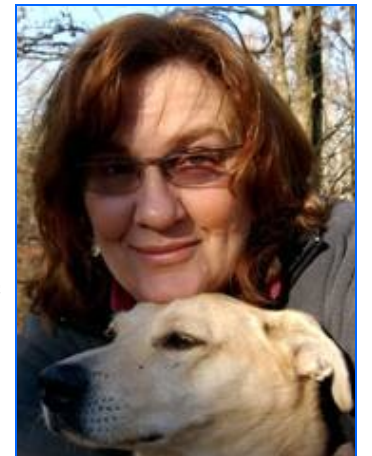
Diane Meucci and Wolfgang Marquardt have been gardening and “green” for over 25 years while designing, building and maintaining their five acre garden and hundreds of other gardens in the Mid-South. Nine years ago they opened their nursery inside a garden to the public.

Recently, Diane has received wide spread recognition as the native plant consultant for the Mirimichi Golf Course, widely considered one of the country’s most beautiful courses.

Diane and Wolfgang have gleaned their expertise from the surprising wealth of local horticultural experts they have encountered in Memphis. The local people and regional ecosystems continue to influence their gardens.

Diane and Wolfgang’s passions include: native plants, hydrangeas “that work like mules but look like prom queens,” and regional edibles included in the garden palette. They mix all with Eco Forward design.

We look forward to welcoming Diane Tuesday evening, September 6 as she shares her Career of Blessings with MHS.



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### Mundane Magic

For me driving to work is almost a non-conscious task. Oh, I watch out for the traffic, but thoughts are ping-pong around in my head as I make my way to the office. Fortunately the office is located on Goodlett Farms Parkway and the scenery is beautiful. Old trees and lush landscapes line the road. Rarely do I give them more than a fleeting admiring glance, having grown used to taking them for granted as part of my mundane journey to my job.

Recently I was privileged to see a bit of mundane magic. The first day, one of the beautiful rolling lawns glistening from the sprinkler systems had an unusual path running through it. I looked a bit closer and there was a turtle slowly but surely making his way through the misted grass. What caught my eye that day when so many days before I hadn’t even considered looking at that particular spot? It made me wonder what else I might have missed in what I considered a boring, but necessary trip.

A few days later the same lawn gifted me with yet another bit of magic. This time there was one large path and then about six smaller ones. A mother duck and her babies had their heads buried in the watery grass. It was such a beautiful treat. Those little babies were zipping around in that grass like miniature weed eaters. I smiled all the way to work and still do when I think about that day.

So, as you go about those mundane chores in life, stay alert for a bit of mundane magic to pop up and surprise you.



Still Smiling,  
Kay Little

### 6:00 Start Time for September’s MHS Picnic

Come One! Come All! September’s MHS picnic will be the event of the month!

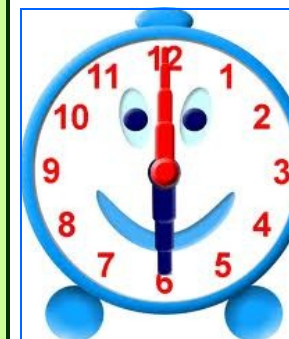
Come enjoy your MHS friends and share stories of this summer’s heat and insects. Come with pictures of your biggest gardening successes of the year to show.

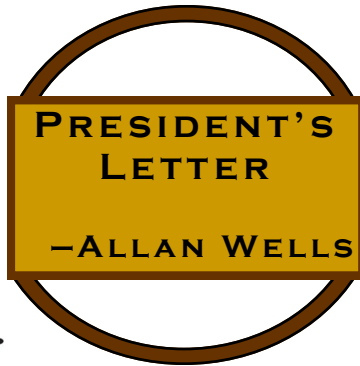
And Come to Enjoy gardening while beating the heat. We will be having our picnic INSIDE.

MHS will provide Bar-b-que, fried chicken and drinks. Please bring a picnic entrée to share: salad, vegetable or dessert.

Don’t forget a plant to share at the plant exchange.

After we eat, we will enjoy Diane Meucci and vote on 2012 officers.





cold tolerant varieties and recommendations of plants which grow well in those different zones.

Buddy discussed parts of his life and how he spent years trying to develop azaleas with an extended blooming period. He also shared the selection process he used.

Further he discussed his journey into the plant development field and how the PDSI team works to perfect and develop plants with the characteristics that gardeners would prefer for their landscaping.

It was an enjoyable presentation and program with great information on the planting and care of azaleas.

Next month, September 6, Diane Meucci will present, "A Career of Blessings...The People, Gardens, and Plants of the Mid South That Shaped my Career and Provided My Living" At 7:00 pm.

**The indoor picnic for the members will begin a 6:00 pm, bring a dish, a plant and enjoy yourselves.**

On our last meeting date, Robert "Buddy" Lee, the man who created Encore azaleas, presented two programs:

- For the Memphis Botanical Garden Buddy talked about plants and shrubs that fit into smaller spaces, require less pruning and are tolerant of heat and humidity and
- for MHS, Buddy presented "Along the Azalea Trail" (See details on facing page.)

Buddy is director of plant innovations for PDSI (Plant Development Services Inc.)

His presentation included vistas of beautiful azaleas throughout the different gardening zones. He offered his views on different types of heat and

## 2012 Slate of Officers Proposed for September Election



One more great reason to come to September's picnic:

The Nominating Committee has completed their task of selecting a slate of officers for the upcoming 2012 year.

Proposed Board Members for 2012 include:

President: Ginny Fletcher  
 Vice-President: Barry McCalla  
 Treasurer: Don Wear  
 Secretary: Paula Ragland  
 Membership: Donna Stringer & Betty Griffith  
 Program Chair: Sherri McCalla  
 Ways and Means: Vicki Duggins

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor prior to the election.

The election will be held during the business portion of the September "Annual Indoor Picnic" Meeting. Please come and take part in your club's most important process.

## Along the Azalea Trail, An Immersion Into Azaleas, Both Old and New —by Ginny Fletcher

Our August speaker, Robert (Buddy) Lee inventor of the Encore® Azalea, gave a stellar presentation on azaleas, with a few other plants thrown in. He explained the pain-staking process of breeding plants and his enthusiasm regarding plant breeding and growth was most evident. Some of the main points to remember are:

- Encore azaleas perform best in full sun to light, filtered shade. They need a minimum of 4 to 6 hours of direct sunlight per day to produce the proper blooms.
- Azaleas should be planted the same width apart as the mature dimensions specify in well-drained soil or raised beds.
- Azaleas are acid-loving plants so optimum soil pH should be 5.5 to 6.5
- Encore Azaleas require very little pruning and do not need "deadheading." If you must prune, do so immediately after the spring flowering for maximum bud set. Light pruning of more established plants will stimulate growth and flowering.

If you are looking for a "show stopper" burst of blooms in spring, don't discount the old style deciduous Azaleas. The new Southgate™ Rhododendron Series are more heat tolerant and disease resistant and thrive very well in the South.



**"Southgate Breezy"**

## Thanks To Our Members, MHS Meetings Are Events!

Thanks to all our members who brought food to the August meeting:

Pat Allen, Genie Ashworth, Bill Colvard, Karen Damrell, Carolyn Evans, Ann Frogge, Heather Goodwin, Virginia Goodwin-Gray, Betty Griffith, Marylane Johnson, Juanita Kendrick, Paul Little, Jeannine Melkent, Linda Pittman, Marie Ricossa, Kathy Sammons, Cornelia Swain, Teresa Williams, and Rosa Wooddy

The book winner was Heather Goodman.

The flower arrangement winner was Dick Johnson

MHS member Donna Olswing designed the floral centerpiece

with plant materials provided by Dixon Gallery & Gardens.

The plant materials included:

- Thalia Dealbata-powdery thalia
- Limelight Hydrangea,
- Eucalyptus gunnii 'Silver Dollar'
- Ornamental Millet 'Purple Majesty'
- Zinnia
- Oak Leaf Hydrangea
- Trachelium caer ulem 'Devotion Blue' (Throat flower)

