

The **Brooksider**

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December, 2011

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

As this year comes to a close, there is so much for which to be thankful. First and foremost, I am thankful for Brookside Gardens and the four seasons of beauty and interest that it gives us.

Next, I want to congratulate Karen Leete and Judy Sturtz, the co-chairs of the holiday greens sale. Rather than ordering pre-made greens wreaths from a supplier, they organized FOBG members to pluck boxwood at another M-NCPPC site. Next, members constructed boxwood wreaths, greens centerpieces and a new item for the sale, boxwood trees. Finally on December 3, they had a great day selling the items at the Brookside Visitors' Center. Later in this newsletter, you will find details and photographs of the construction and the beautiful finished products. Mark your calendar for next year's sale! The next time you see Judy and Karen, let them know that you, as do I, appreciate their vision, execution and hard work in making this sale the outstanding success that it was.

Another hardworking director, Gloria Sherman, has begun the process leading to the FOBG Orchid Show and Sale. It is scheduled for March 17 and 18 at the Visitors' Center, just in time for you to put some color in your life after the long gray winter. Please contact Gloria if you would like to participate in the set-up of this show or in sales.

Surely you have noticed the new and improved versions of The Brooksider that you have been receiving since the new editors, Coriolana Simon and Gene Horman, took the helm of the publication. Coriolana has, month after month, produced great content. She also is a gifted photographer, as you can see from the photographs of the poinsettias, light show and gift shop items in this issue. Gene has taken the lead in formatting the newsletter and finding the best way to distribute it to you. Thank you, Coriolana and Gene.

In this newsletter, you will find a list of contributors beyond the basic membership categories for the last fiscal year (April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011). If you have contributed after the March 31, 2011 date, you will be listed next year.

Finally and most importantly, thank you all, FOBG Members, for your continued support for our treasured Brookside Gardens. Please enjoy the holidays and may the New Year be a happy and healthy one.

Barbara

Holiday Blooms in the North Conservatory



FINDING GIFTS FOR EVERYONE

A Holiday Shopping Tour of Brookside's Gift Shops

Would you like to consolidate your holiday shopping? For the garden-loving men, women, and children in your life, explore Brookside's two gift shops – the one in the Visitors' Center and the one, mostly for kids, by the North Conservatory. For an extra shopping bonus, bring your FOBG member's card, and you'll benefit from a 10% discount.

Let's start with gifts for women. Marylandica, in the Visitors' Center, has quite an array of jewelry to appeal to traditional as well as adventurous tastes. And much of it is hand-crafted by local artists or craftspeople spread across the US.



For an unusual variation on necklaces, try the “fibrations,” woven by women artists using Italian and Turkish synthetic fibers in pastel or bold palettes (\$22.95). The dichroic glass triple-stone necklaces (\$29.95) and earrings by Jan Wilcox sparkle with opal, blue, orange, red, and a poison green. Jolly, contemporary glass pins (\$22.95) by Suz! in South Carolina look like small abstract Christmas trees, and she scales them up as tree ornaments – which might double as pins on a winter coat's lapels (\$22.95).

The delicate earrings of Michael Michaud, with small clusters of cranberry beads (\$65.95) or even tinier barberries with leaves (\$84.95), are available in clip or pierced versions and would pair beautifully with the necklace of long, overlapping flowering myrtle leaves (\$165.00).

Even more dramatic is his necklace of large, deep burgundy beads with one larger-than-life-size silver ginkgo leaf (\$120.00) for someone very special. A practical choice for any woman is the flower printed umbrella – a



single huge flower, a gerbera for example, that fills the entire canopy or an all-over mass of purple and white orchids (\$24.95). Matching large totes can be found with flowers or complementary birds (\$26.95). Medium-sized shoulder bags (\$31.95), smaller bags (\$11.95), and zip purses



also carry the same brilliant floral graphics and would make useful gifts for a friend or relative.

For men, the shop has boldly carved and stained wood walking sticks (\$50-\$70) by Brazos that make quite a statement. The wood ball-point pens, in a variety of grains and shades (\$28.95), are fashioned by Jim Oliver of Ellicott City from wood collected at Brookside, McCrillis Gardens, and other local gardens. The same artist also produces hand-turned bowls and serving platters in many sizes and shapes. For men who enjoy specialty gardening, Orchids by Michael Tibbs (\$29.95) is a practical guide to the care and cultivation of these exotic plants.





To bring a reminder of nature to a home office, consider a piece by John Wayne Jackson of Scottsdale, Arizona, sculpted from real leaves. Especially handsome are the Northern Sycamore leaf plaque for the wall (\$39.99) in reds and greens, the brown and gold Maryland Hydrangea (\$64.95), or the palm-sized plate based on the leaf of a grape vine (\$21.00).

Thoughtful little gifts for a colleague or friend might include one of the miniature glass bud vases, only about three and a half inches high. Clear glass comes in a variety of shapes, and the red or cobalt with narrow swirling lines of color (\$6.95) is particularly pretty if you add a silk flower or spray of berries. A small doll-sized tea service (\$13.95) comes in several floral patterns, but you may want to add a package of Brookside's fair trade organic Sumatra coffee (\$2.95). Just for fun, the tall stems of hyacinth lights – in white, pink, green, orange, or purple – can make your front porch look like Brookside's Garden of Lights (\$14.95).



For a dig-in-the-dirt gardener, Marylandica offers amaryllis bulbs in two sizes – the gigantic red lion (\$23.98) and the white, pink, or red nymph (\$13.95). Boxes near the shop's entrance are also filled with paperwhite bulbs (\$1.35) as well as hyacinths (\$1.98). For those of you who have seen Joan O'Rourke's containers planted with miniature hostas, you might try your hand at such an endeavor, consulting [The Book of Little Hostas](#), by Kathy Guest Shadrack and Michael Shadrack (\$27.95). The volume covers 200 small, very small, and mini varieties of this garden favorite.

Gifts for the home fill the shelves at Marylandica. For the holidays or all year long, a brass wreath hanger (\$18.95) shows off a welcoming pineapple decoration or an elegant fleur de lys. Your Christmas tree would illustrate a gardening predilection with a five-inch sparkly



silver dragonfly (\$4.95), a cloisonné praying mantis (\$14.95), or even a cloisonné lady bug almost two inches long (\$12.95). A brass ornament of Brookside's wedding gazebo (\$14.95) would hang happily on any FOBG



member's tree. Tiny white or dark green ceramic trees with lights that actually light up (\$19.95) fit perfectly on an end table or a bookcase shelf. Slightly larger versions about eight inches tall (\$27.95) could be grouped with their six-inch cousins.

Small treasures that would be welcome at an office gift exchange include a key fob with a little inlaid wood box (\$19.95). Slightly larger inlaid wood boxes with a secret sliding panel on the top (\$20.95) would hide a flash drive while the smaller size (\$12.95) would organize stamps. A selection of note cards (varying prices) by local artists with photographs or illustrations of Brookside scenes could be sent as a gift out of town with no worry of breakage.

Pure magic, the 3-D snow globe cards (\$5.95 and \$6.95) recreate the delight of those old-fashioned glass globes with chunks of snow falling on winter scenes.



Glass plates – rectangular, round, or square – by artist Peggy Karr come with red poinsettia and amaryllis designs or cardinals on white birches against a blue sky. Prices vary with size. In the same designs, the artist also makes shallow serving bowls, matching coasters (\$9.95 each), and glass ornaments with cardinals that can double as sun-catchers (\$14.95). Botanical stoneware by



Evening Star Studio in New Jersey portrays a variety of life-size ferns delicately set on square or rectangular platters with a neutral background (from \$18.00 to \$62.00 depending on size). In a unique take on recycling, a Burtonsville artist creates glass cheese boards made from former wine bottles (\$29.95 for the small size). They are available in a variety of colors, some with an etched design, and all with spreaders.



For a stunning centerpiece on a holiday table, arrange several fusion glass trumpet-shaped blooms (\$24.95). Differing slightly in size, shape, and length of their curving “tails,” the trumpets come in clear glass with yellow, orange, turquoise, or multi-colored flecks. Crafted by the Siyeh Studio in Atlanta, each trumpet measures about four inches across its opening. Thinking ahead to New Year’s Eve, a pair of opal-colored glass champagne flutes with a swirling design (\$135.00) would toast 2012 in great style.



To find presents for children from toddlers to young readers, visit the shop off the lobby of the North Conservatory. Stretchy wiggly worms (\$2.95) in green, blue, orange, or purple would amuse small hands. Wood puzzles with large pieces (\$6.95) teach young ones about grasshoppers, ducks, tropical fish, or turtles. Sparkly beanbags (\$3.95) in the shape of a seahorse, ladybug, frog, or lizard would be fun to throw at a sibling or playmate. And a handful of tiny slinky toys (\$1.25), round or heart-shaped, would delight slightly older children. T-shirts in many designs and sizes will fit children of any age, and “magic socks” (\$6.50) show off little toes



in a rainbow of colors with sparkle highlights. Best of all, a selection of books can introduce young people to the study and enjoyment of nature. One favorite is I Love Dirt (\$14.95) by Jennifer Ward, which contains 52 activities “to help your kids discover the wonders of nature.” Equally interesting are the Peterson Field Guides for Young Naturalists (\$5.95) on such

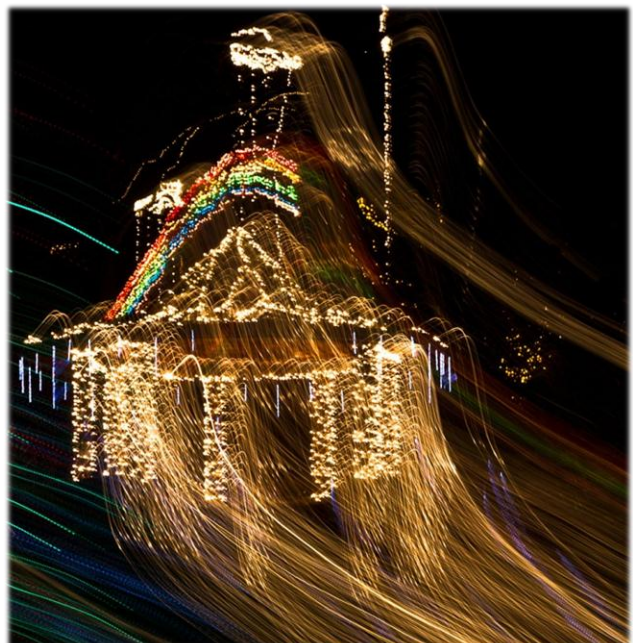
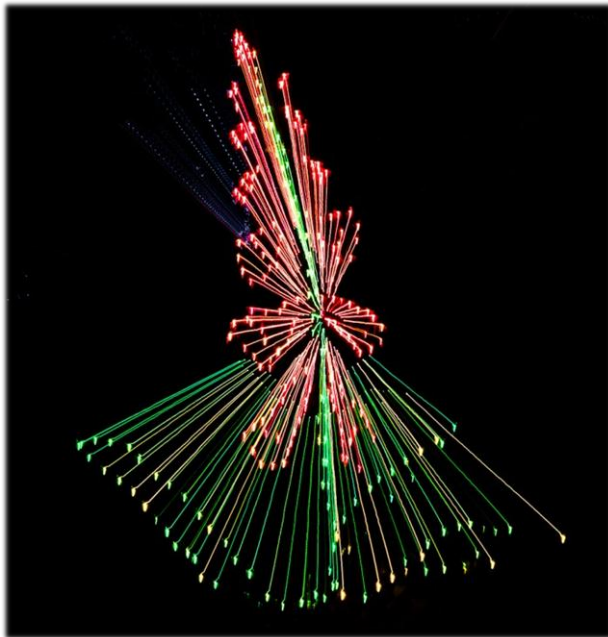
topics as birds of prey and caterpillars, as well as the Peterson First Guides (\$5.95) such as the one on trees. Secret Lives of Backyard Bugs (\$14.95) is also sure to be a hit.

Whoever's on your list – including yourself – you'll certainly find a wealth of choices at Brookside's gift shops. And remember, you get a 10% discount as a Friend of Brookside Gardens.



LIGHT PLAY

Can you identify where these photos were taken in the Garden of Lights?



2011 HOLIDAY GREENS SALE: BIG SUCCESS

At our holiday greens sale, held on Saturday, December 3, everything looked so beautiful and professional that it's hard to imagine how much work went into the event. Energetic volunteers spent many hours collecting materials, plucking boxwood, collecting evergreens, creating boxwood wreaths and trees as well as making the festive evergreen centerpieces. The final profit of over \$2,200 exceeded our expectations. These funds will be added to the support we give Brookside for plantings and programs. Many, many thanks to all those special people who worked with us: Dolly Perkins, Betsy Thomas, Diana Sullivan, Margaret Schmidt, Sue Taylor, Linnea Simons, Glee Prahinski, Jean Reichelt, Barb Meiselman, Audrey Katz, Taffy Turner, Kathy Kircher, Carol Sanders, Betty Olson, May Nakamura, Elaine Dynes, Suzanne Carbone, Joan O'Rourke, Gene Horman, and Gloria Sherman.

Judy Sturtz and Karen Leete



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National Capital Dahlia Society
Potomac Valley Chapter
NARGS
Bethesda Comm. Garden Club



Suggestions? Ideas? Let us know!



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