

Westchester Fairfield Horticultural Society

Founded 1910

An Educational and Community Service Organization

www.westfairhort.org

West Fair Hort News

May 2008

April Meeting

With spring temperatures right around the corner, an enthusiastic group of eager gardeners gathered at the Nathaniel Witherell Home in Greenwich to hear Ray Rogers speak on "Pots in the Garden." Ray is a lifelong gardener, horticulturist, freelance author and public speaker, with a special interest in the hybridizing of *Hippeastrum* (amaryllis). Most impressively, Ray is a competitive exhibitor at the Philadelphia Flower Show, having won 338 blue ribbons and the Sweepstakes for the most award points in 1993. He coauthored the book *The Philadelphia Flower Show: Celebrating 175 Years*, and is the author of *Pots in the Garden*, and *Coleus: Rainbow Foliage for Containers and Gardens*.

Within minutes of taking the microphone, Ray set the stage for what was to be a lively, very interactive presentation of his topic, "Lots of Pots." As slides of colorful container gardens appeared on the screen, he immediately began asking his audience to respond to what they were seeing. Guided by the responses he received, Ray explored all the elements of design - color, line, form, space, texture and pattern - as they applied to pots in the garden. We reviewed color theories and how jux-

taping color families can produce varying results when gardening. Continually asking for audience participation, he went on to talk about focal points and centers of interest with shapes leading your eye in and around the garden settings. "Container gardening is very flexible - change it, move it, add to it... It's fun to put a plant in a pot...and it's more fun to do variations on a theme."

The second part of his presentation was demonstrating how to compose a container arrangement, with the help of Kathrine Neville, from the audience, choosing the plant material to pot. Again, he engaged everyone in this process, asking for suggestions and visual feedback as this process evolved. He frequently referred back to the color and visual theories discussed in his slide lecture to elicit audience feedback. The evening concluded with Ray offering many plant specimens available for purchase along with signed copies of his books. Ray's affable demeanor and participatory approach was lively and engaging and kept his audience alert and interested throughout his informative presentation.

Thanks to Vivan Utiko for refreshments.

Westchester Fairfield Horticultural Society, Inc. www.westfairhort.org

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