



# REFLECTIONS

## ON THE DVWGS 20TH POND TOUR



Marshall Hatfield, Pond Tour Director

### WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR SELECTING HOSTS FOR THE POND TOUR?

There are many considerations to putting together a pond tour.

DVWGS tries to have a selection of water features on our tours, including small, medium and large ponds, pondless water features and occasionally a property that has a unique feature (extensive landscaping, rainwater harvesting, solar or geo-thermal heating, fire pits/outdoor conversational areas, etc). The idea is to provide anyone that is thinking about putting in (or

enhancing) a water feature with as many viewable options as possible.

We also try to keep the tour driving time to less than 90 minutes (this year was 80 minutes) and total driving distance to less than 50 miles (this year's distance was 30 miles). We allow 30 minutes to visit every property, feeling that you can balance your time as

you see fit, and we also allow 30 minutes for a lunch break sometime during the day.

If you start the pond tour on time, you should have plenty of time to visit all ponds. If you start the tour late for any reason (registration volunteers can't start until 12:30 pm), you obviously have to spend less time at each property, or skip a few.

# WHAT CRITERIA ARE WE LOOKING FOR?



The first decision is the actual geography (County), and then to identify members within our target geography willing to display their water features. Then our professional members are requested to fill in the geographic tour gaps with their clients that have a water feature we are missing. Due to safety concerns, we then take a serious look at the parking capacities at or near to the property. Due to cooperation from the hosts and pros, you get to see some spectacular properties and water features that you might normally not get a chance to visit. To paraphrase a quote by Abraham Lincoln: "You can please some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time."



## CRITERIA: CONTINUED



This year's pond tour focused on water features in portions of Delaware and Montgomery Counties. Attendance was good, with 60 of our 100 family memberships represented, totalling 115 tour attendees. Five memberships were renewed and five new members joined the club. The feedback received was mostly positive, particularly in the areas of organization, directional signage, the gracious cooperation of our hosts and the end-of-day BBQ and fellowship at John & Mitch's.

**(Note that signage placement and retrieval takes a considerable amount of time "behind the scenes" and would have been very difficult this year without the stewardship of Chas and Michael Pierro, and Bill Fogle).**

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### WHERE DO WE START?

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Also, as a result of the pond tour, we sold 21 Koi and DVWGS shirts! Remaining 2011 inventory consists of: Sport Polo (S-2, M-1, L-1, XL-1), Henley (S-1, L-1, XL-2, XXL-1), Ladies Scoop Neck (S-1, M-2, L-1), and DVWGS tees (M-4). **Contact [mhatfield01@comcast.net](mailto:mhatfield01@comcast.net) or 609-502-2653 if you are interested.**



# FEEDBACK QUOTES

## Feedback quotes:

Sheila & Herb Dusingberre shared that “We can't say enough about the day...it's such an adventure driving around all the streets that you've never been on. We also appreciate all the work it takes to get a property ready, small or large. Having been on the tour twice ourselves, we know how hard we worked. Thanks to the group who works very hard to organize the tour...we can imagine how hard that is as well. We thought the directions from house to house were good and had no problem following them along with our GPS. I always enjoy seeing all types and sizes of ponds and yards...of course the large, professionally done, out of sight expensive houses with several gardeners and designers to help are always great for ideas and enjoyment but the "normal" smaller homes are wonderful also...they show what someone can do with a small property when you know all the "sweat" comes from the owner himself. It's amazing to me how you can drive down a street, see very little color and then



come to the one house where the gardener lives...what a joy to find that one house.

Lois Janney & Bill Rose confirmed that “The party at the end of the tour was a first class hit. Everyone was tuckered out and welcomed a respite to kick back, dine and enjoy each other's company. Our hosts outdid themselves. Great end to a wonderful day. I do think that this year's pond tour was over the moon. “



# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. End every pond tour with food and fellowship.
2. Restructure how host subsidies are handled, so that the final property expenses can be minimized.
3. Volunteers for the various functions of the pond tour need to commit early on in the process.
4. All Board members should have an active pond tour role.
5. Pond owners are encouraged to be more educational and informative in the pond tour booklet, and in their "presentations" to visitors. Information to consider providing includes the year of construction, capacity, purpose of pond, style, fish and plants, equipment and construction materials, cost(?), maintenance requirements, problems (algae, herons etc.) and their solutions, etc. Since the aim of DVWGS is to inspire pond owners and encourage the creation of new water features, this sort of information might help. This info needn't necessarily be in the brochure but could be in a handout or placard at each pond.
6. Consider advance registration online and providing attendees with a PDF of the booklet, or mailing the booklet.
7. Provide POI information for GPS. This might release people from having to follow the route rigorously and spread the visitor load -- especially for the first few ponds on the tour.

# ONE GOOD IDEA RESPONSES

Dick and Betty Eastwick said "It is the faucet posts we saw at one of the gardens. We went out the next day and bought several at Home Depot -- a metal post with its own faucet handle which you attach to an existing garden hose, then run another length of hose from it so you can have a water supply where you need one. Sure saves time and energy trying to drag a huge length of hose all around the property or coupling together multiple lengths of drip line hose, when you only have one outside faucet like we do."

WE ASKED, WHAT WERE YOUR FAVORITE THINGS?

Connie and Craig Snyder replied that "One of our good ideas, since we are building a new pond and deck and we are looking for shade ideas, was the shade sail at the Barnett's. We have already put them in our plans, using them above our new pond and deck. Such a simple idea, why didn't I think of that? Well that's what pond tours are great for...ideas!!"

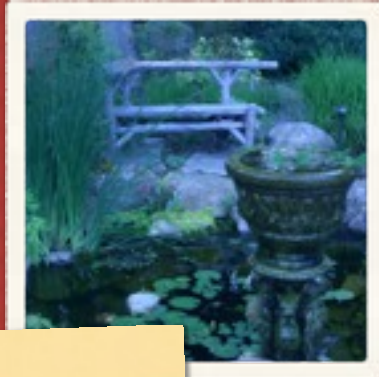
Lillian Kreider and Marshall Hatfield liked the mini-Composting lecture provided by Sam Barnett, Master Gardener from Delaware County. (Use brown: green ratio of 4-5:1, mix it occasionally and the resulting compost can be utilized on-site. Defined space with wire fencing provides a clean look to the composting areas). We can do that.

Patti Rahi said "I guess the one thing I learned was that I do not have to feed my fish all those pellets that I give them. They are perfectly happy with their natural food in the pond."

Marshall also noted that Reserved Handicap Parking signage at John and Mitch's was an excellent idea for pond tour or event attendees that may have physical challenges. And John highly recommended Deer-Off to train deer to avoid your property. John also suggested trying the new coolers (Igloo MaxCold) that hold the cold for up to five days. We got one for a future garden party but used it to store our refrigerated food during several days of power outage from Hurricane Irene.

# POND TOUR PLANNING DISCUSSION REQUESTED

IDEAS FOR 2012 POND TOUR PLANS.



1. Return to New Jersey (Burlington and Camden or possibly Mercer Counties)
2. Identify Hosts willing to have their property water features on the tour
3. Four volunteers needed for registration tent.
4. Two volunteer teams of two; one team to place pre-identified directional signage on Saturday afternoon or Sunday (very early am), and the second team to retrieve the signs at the end of tour on Sunday.



The background of the slide is a photograph of a pond. In the foreground, there are several bright yellow flowers with dark brown centers, likely Black-eyed Susans, growing in a cluster. Behind them, tall, slender green grasses rise up, some with reddish-brown tints. The water of the pond is visible in the background, reflecting the sky and the surrounding vegetation. The entire image is framed by a thin, reddish-brown border.

EMAIL MARSHALL HATFIELD AT:

[MHATFIELD01@COMCAST.NET](mailto:MHATFIELD01@COMCAST.NET)

1. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO POSSIBLY BE ON NEXT YEARS POND TOUR
2. IF YOU MAY WANT TO HELP WITH NEXT YEARS POND TOUR
3. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS REGARDING THE POND TOUR

# 50/50 AND RAFFLE

WHEN: January 29th, 2012

WHERE: LUNCHEON AT SPRINGFIELD COUNTRY CLUB

Donated Items  
needed for  
January kickoff  
Luncheon

DVWGS is requesting your  
donated items to be offered as  
raffle items at our luncheon

These items will  
be raffled off at  
the January 29th  
Luncheon as a  
club fundraiser.

PLEASE DONATE

NEW OR GENTLY USED  
ITEMS

#### DVWGS MEMBERS:

We are requesting new and or gently used donated items, including but not limited to, garden and pond related things, books, jewelry, handmade items, pottery, baked goods, etc. Bring them to the luncheon on January 29, 2012. These items will be donated to the club for a fundraiser where all participating members will have a chance of winning the item at the final drawing.

#### COMMERCIAL MEMBERS:

In past years we have had commercial business members donate some wonderful items such as fountains, garden ornaments, etc. Please feel free to donate similar items this year, or your services.

We appreciate all your help and contributions!

#### NOTE:

Kickoff Luncheon details will be coming in the next December Newsletter.

Notify Connie Snyder of items you will be bringing to the banquet, or any items you would like to deliver early if you are not attending the luncheon.

[ccsnyder123@verizon.net](mailto:ccsnyder123@verizon.net)

610-399-1654



Hint: Save time and bring return address labels to affix to your raffle tickets!

We will also have 50/50 tickets for sale. Winning ticket, drawn at the luncheon, splits the pot with DVWGS. You need not be present to win. If you are not attending and want to participate, you can mail a check to DVWGS \*1255 Buck Lane \* West Chester Pa \*19382.



Both the 50/50 tickets  
and the Raffle tickets  
are 6/\$5 or \$1 each.