

Thursday, August 6, 2009

Check It Out: Greenest Block in Brooklyn



The winning blocks for the 15th annual Greenest Block in Brooklyn Contest were heralded yesterday at a press conference on the first-place residential block: Lincoln Road between Bedford and Rogers Avenues. Also present were representatives of the winning commercial block: Atlantic Avenue (south side) between Bond and Nevins Streets. The annual **Greenest Block in Brooklyn Contest** is a lively competition among thousands of borough residents committed to beautifying their neighborhoods and making Brooklyn greener.

The contest is managed by GreenBridge, the community environmental horticulture program of Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG), in cooperation with Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz.

This year's winning residential block, Lincoln Road between Bedford and Rogers Avenues in Lefferts Gardens, has been selected not only for its gorgeous horticulture but also for its citizens' cooperation and conservation work. The block is very large, with approximately 80 homes, and achieved over 80 percent participation by residents. The block association formed a "green team" to help identify needs, organize gardening work, and most importantly, model good gardening practices at their own homes. According to Tolonda Tolbert, president of the block association, the example set by a few residents inspired others to inquire about greening their property and was supported by cooperative efforts like a seed exchange, neighbor-to-neighbor gifting of window boxes, and more. Many residents who have lived on the block for 30 or 40 years trained newer neighbors—like Ms. Tolbert—on good gardening practices, and they in turn recruited their children. This multigenerational effort has resulted in a beautiful, vibrant block for all to enjoy.

Lincoln Road also distinguished itself with its abundance of curbside gardens. These narrow gardens replace the pavement between the sidewalk and the street with colorful, rainwater-absorbing planted beds. It is an excellent model of environmental sustainability for other Brooklyn blocks dominated by concrete and asphalt.

Posted by GD Editor at 11:59 AM



Sarah Kinbar, editor of Garden Design, posts news, musings and information for true garden enthusiasts.

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Coming Soon from Suzanne Biaggi



Suzanne Biaggi is designing a garden for **The Late Show Gardens** at Cornerstone in September. Here's what she has in store for us:

"The concept of Flow (the cycles of nature) and Accumulation (mans' interruption of those cycles) is beautifully presented through the use of sculptural symbols. Permaculture plantings and innovative use of watering systems offer solutions to the results of accumulation. In the center of the garden is the symbol of hope in the form of the Future Feast table using the technology of green roofs for its' living surface and inspired by a mannerist garden in Italy."

Posted by GD Editor at 11:49 AM

Tuesday, August 4, 2009

Coming Soon from Shirley Watts



Designer Shirley Alexandra Watts is creating a garden vignette called A Garden of Mouthings for **The Late Show Gardens** at Cornerstone in September. Here's a window into her mind's eye: "In response to the impending threats to our bee populations, Shirley Watts' 'A Garden of Mouthings' seeks to inform, delight and inspire its viewers by celebrating not only honey bees, but also our often overlooked native bees. Working with bee expert Jaime Pawelek, architect Andrew Kudless and builder Ross Craig, Shirley is putting together a garden that combines a beautiful honeycomb structure, a sound piece based on a poem by Sylvia Plath and bee friendly plantings to inspire every home gardener. Experts will be on hand to offer advice on native bees and honey tastings."

Posted by GD Editor at 10:52 AM

Green Scene: the River Center

Located at the heart of the Roaring Fork watershed and in Basalt, Colorado, the Roaring Fork Conservancy's **River Center** is designed to house the program's administration, a water quality laboratory, an exhibit hall and classrooms. Bluegreen, whose work Garden Design has covered this year, teams with the Conservancy to reclaim a former brownfield site and integrate with Basalt's first riverfront park. Riverine environments, key wildlife habitat and open space are scheduled for rehabilitation as part of this project and including plans for future phases of rehabilitation and educational outreach. A few of the site's "green" program elements include bioswales and runnels to collect storm water, wetlands and enhanced pond edges, rain and roof gardens and native plantings. In collaboration with the Conservancy, Bluegreen provides land use planning, site master planning and landscape architectural services for the River Center.

Posted by GD Editor at 10:43 AM

Check It Out: Haven Sofa



Isn't she pretty? This new outdoor sofa from Paola Lenti was designed by Claesson, Koivisto & Rune. It has a steel structure treated with Cataphoresis and covered with polyester Rete. The piece is available through Karkula in New York.

Posted by GD Editor at 10:37 AM

Friday, July 31, 2009

Check It Out: Dakroub Garden



The Dakroubs of Dearborn, MI, have been recognized for their garden by the Detroit News as winners of the Garden Photo Contest. This picture was taken by a City Photographer and will be in Dearborn's calendar next year. They live in a historic Edsel Ford colonial community near Ford World Headquarters. Their house, across from The TPC Golfcourse has an English Cottage garden with a pond, bridge, pergola and a flagstone path. Nadia and Hassan take pride in gardening and love to share the garden with friends and family.

Posted by GD Editor at 4:22 AM

Thursday, July 30, 2009

Check It Out: Winning Tomato



TOMATOMANIA, the world's largest tomato seedling sale, hosted its second annual Tomato Derby.

In the running were **Scorospelka**, a red Russian heirloom, a stout plant loaded with small to medium-sized fruit; **Champion**, the largest fruit of the group; **Early**, a never hybrid with an oval shape like Roma; **4th of July** with lots of perfect small red orbs; **Jenny**, a hybrid orange cherry that is tall and full of fruit; **Matina**, a red potato-leaved heirloom variety with small ping pong-sized fruit; **Stupice**, a smaller red heirloom (from Czechoslovakia) that produces in clusters all season long, **Golden**

Mama, a yellow Roma-style hybrid; **Sprite**, a teardrop-shaped red cherry borne on a small wispy plant; and **Gardener's Delight**, a large red cherry carried on a large, beefy and very healthy looking plant.

This year's group of ten gathered at the starting line in Ojai, CA (Zone 10, elevation 1550 ft.), and were put in the dirt in mid-April. All were planted in 18-gallon pulp pots in a blend of planting mix and potting soil, and all watering, feeding and care were provided as consistently as possible.

"After months of bland-tasting, store-bought tomatoes, everyone's eager for the first home-grown crop of the season," says Scott Daigre, producer of TOMATOMANIA. "And if you love tomatoes, you want to know which ones are fast growing and great tasting, which is what the annual derby is all about."

The winner of the Tomato Derby? Stupice (shown in front in the yellow bowl). This Czech variety, which was a top-three finisher in TOMATOMANIA's 2008 East Coast Derby, is always mentioned in lists of early varieties. Beyond its speed, this heirloom favorite is as reliable in high heat areas as it is in more temperate northern or coastal microclimates. Bearing its fruit in clusters, these round red tomatoes taste great and continue to produce throughout the season on sturdy potato-leaved plants.

Posted by GD Editor at 9:30 AM

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