

Page Dickey: Bringing Meadows into the Garden



Have you considered a meadow for your garden?



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by Shobha Vanchiswar

On Wednesday, November 4, 2009, at 7:30 p.m., the renowned gardener and author Page Dickey will be speaking at the Chappaqua Library. This is part of the Rocky Hills Lecture Series that is held twice a year. Page will be speaking about "Bringing meadows into the garden."

Those of you who know me or read my "In the Garden" column in NCNOW.org,

are no doubt aware of my own views on the wastefulness of keeping large swathes of pristine lawns. So I'm terrifically happy that none less than Page herself will be speaking on the subject. She is one of the finest gardeners in the country. Her knowledge and experience is very impressive and her passion is positively contagious. The Open Days Program of The Garden Conservancy would not be in existence had it not been for Page Dickey and Penelope Maynard. She is that convincing, influential and tireless. Don't let her easy-going manner fool you. The lady is a dynamo.

Now this might make for an intimidating character but to the contrary, Page is warm and so approachable. Whenever I'm in her company, I feel smart and qualified. She offers advice as an equal and never from the pulpit. Invariably, I come away empowered, laden with plants from her garden and at least a dozen fresh eggs from her chickens.

I'm waxing eloquent only because Page Dickey is a genuine treasure. She is a gardener's gardener as well as every person's gardener. She has published favorite garden books of mine, *Gardens in the Spirit of Place* and *aBreaking Ground: Portraits of Ten Garden Designers*. So, cancel everything else and show up for the talk. Come with all your questions. Be they about pets in the garden, certain plants or growing practices, Page is the perfect person to answer them without ever letting you feel ignorant. You won't be disappointed. Admission is free so you really don't have an excuse.

Shobha Vanchiswar has been gardening all her life, the last 21 years in Chappaqua. She received the Golden Trowel Award for garden design in 2007 from Garden Design magazine. Her jewel-of-a-garden here in New Castle was on view in this year's Garden Conservancy Open Day program. She has a garden design business, Seeds of Design. Write her at seedsofdesign@verizon.net. Frontpage painting and paintings in slide show are Shobha's works.