



# *The Gardenzette*

*the newsletter of the Rock Spring Garden Club, Arlington, Virginia*  
[www.rockspringgardenclub.com](http://www.rockspringgardenclub.com)

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## OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Margi Melnick

### VICE-PRESIDENT

Anne Collins

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Sherry Foster

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Carol Cochran

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**March 19, 2015**

**10:00am**

**Our program this month will feature Sheila Advani who teaches and practices the Sogetsu School of Ikebana which is one of the modern schools of Ikebana. She will demonstrate both the basic, beginning lessons in the Sogetsu School as well as free style arrangements.**

**This presentation will focus on the beginning of spring utilizing blossoms and bulbs. We are fortunate to have such a knowledgeable person showing us techniques in this area of floral design. Ms. Advani teaches four classes per week from September to May and demonstrates and exhibits in the area as well as the East Coast and beyond.**

*Connie Richards*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Margi Melnick

Dear Friends,

I am sitting in my kitchen, looking out of the window and marveling at the loveliness of the snow. I think It is the prettiest snowfall of the season, and it may be the last one until next year.

Winter is a special time. It give gardeners a time of rest and and a time for planning the next season. That season, spring, will be here within days and our times of looking out the window and admiring the view will be over, at least the relaxing time with no “to do” list of things to accomplish in the garden. We need to enjoy these last few days, then we will be prepared to jump into gardening boots and gloves and go to work, preparing for a beautiful spring and summer garden.

We also have many special meetings coming up this month—I hope many of you will make one at least. Our agenda includes the Virginia Federation meeting for the Piedmont District on Monday, March 16, in Richmond, and the NCA District meeting on Friday, March 20, at Meadowlark. Both meetings are at 10 AM. Call me or Thea for more information.

We have a great program at our general meeting, March 19. I hope to see you then!



## DESIGN CHALLENGE OF THE MONTH

Charlotte Benjamin

### Mono-Botanic Design

*"A Creative Design using multiple parts of a plant or plants of one family or genus. Parts may be stems, bloom/s, foliage, roots, fruit, etc."* For example, if a pine is used in the design, the needles, bark, and cones can be used to complete the design.

Additionally, if you prefer, multiple plants within a plant family can also be used to create a Mono-Botanic design. For example, the Liliaceae family includes Solomon's seal, toad lilies, tulips and Lily-of-the Valley, so you could use some or all of these plants for your design. The internet can provide additional information on plant families.

My suggestion is for arrangers to choose a flower, fruit or vegetable and Google its genus and family and exhibit an attractive arrangement using multiple parts.

Examples:

Asteraceae: sunflowers, daisies, dandelions, etc.

Rosaceae: rose family which includes strawberries, etc.

Fagaceae: oak and beech family

Apiaceae: parsley, carrot family

Lauraceae: avocado and cinnamon family

Magnoliaceae: magnolia family

Liliaceae: lily family

*"Non-plant material may be included in your design, but if so, there must be a greater emphasis on the plant material in volume and area than on the non-plant material".*

Please make sure to provide the scientific name of your plant or plant family on the card you submit with your design.



## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

*Renee Bayes*

The proposed slate of officers for RSGC 2015-2016 Executive Board is:

President: Connie Richards  
 Vice-President: Anne Collins  
 Secretary: Kate Abrahams  
 Treasurer: Ann Lunson

Voting for officers will be at the RSGC March general meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor by members, if nominee has been informed before meeting. Thank you to the members of my committee, Ann Duffey, Janice Haines, Susan Scotti and Dianne Simmons, for their suggestions, recommendations, and wise counsel.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

*Sherry Foster*

Balances as of February

1,2015                      \$19,320.37

Income                    +1,736.00

Expenses-                399.42

Balance as of February 28,  
 2015                      \$20,656.95

## **DID YOU? -**

*Thea McGinnis*

Did you sign up with me for Flower Show School Course I, April 17-19? Have you send in your registration form? Do you have the books and reading material you need? Have you started reviewing your required reading? Don't wait until the last minute! Do you have any questions? Let me know. Email or call me! Thanks!

## **CONSERVATION**

*Jane Bartlett*

### **Conservation ideas from Arlington County Website:**

Storm-water management is a serious problem in our urban county. Here are some suggestions for reducing foul contributions to runoff that can be implemented by homeowners:

The County points out that there are numerous choices that we make that can reduce our contributions to runoff. For example, you can:

1.Reduce the amount of water that runs off of your property. If your soil is compacted, loosen and amend the soil with leaf mulch or compost.Create areas where water can soak into the ground, like conservation landscapes or rain gardens.Direct your downspouts to vegetated areas of your yard instead of allowing the water to run down your driveway or another hard surface into the street.Install a rain barrel and use the collected water for watering your landscape.

2. If there are there areas on your property that are eroding, there is a variety of natives plants that you can use to hold the soil and cover the ground.Restrict (or eliminate) the use of fertilizer.

3. Pick up after your dog. Dog poop contributes nitrogen, phosphorus and bacteria to storm-water runoff.

4. Take your car to a car wash. The soap, oil, and grime from the car will be sent to the wastewater treatment plant instead of our local streams.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

*Anne Collins*

Please get your renewal forms and checks in before March 31, 2015.



## YOU NEED THIS!

*Thea McGinnis*

Whether you plan to go to Flower Show School or not, I highly recommend all RSGC members invest in a copy of THE HANDBOOK FOR FLOWER SHOWS. Why? Because so many of you are submitting designs and horticulture specimens each month. Our Horticulture and Show Committee members have given us so many opportunities to learn and grow in floral design skills and exhibiting our horticulture. This is wonderful! Last month, when we were tasked with creating a floral design using the 'pave' technique, I went straight to my HANDBOOK to read through the description so I could visualize how the components would come together. The HANDBOOK is a very handy reference guide, one you will refer to for years to come as you experiment with different floral designs. It's only \$15 plus shipping. Here's the link to order this book. For those of you going to Flower Show School Course I, you can also access other books that are required reading for this fascinating and rigorous course. <http://www.shopgardenclub.org/shop/category.aspx?catid=11>

## GARDEN TOUREVENT

*Mary Cottrell*

Garden Club of Fairfax  
82nd House and Garden Tour  
April 18-25, 2015

The house and garden tour hosted by the Garden Club of Fairfax will take place on Tuesday April 21, 2015 from 10 am to 4 pm and will feature four homes with gardens and two stables in the Clifton/Fairfax Station area.

Known as "America's Largest Open House", Historic Garden Week in Virginia is the oldest and largest statewide event of its kind in the nation. With the coordinated effort of 47 member clubs, 3,400 volunteers statewide, 32 house and garden tours

featuring 200 private home and gardens and 50 historic landmarks take place over 8 consecutive days. All proceeds fund the restoration and preservation of Virginia's historic public gardens such as Mr. Vernon, Kenmore and Monticello.

Other details:

On April 21, 2015, as part of Historic Garden Week, the Garden Club of Fairfax is hosting a self-drive tour of an exciting array of houses, gardens and stables in the Historic Clifton/Fairfax Station area. Highlights on this year's tour include a world-class, 5 acre, 18th-century style garden, designed by landscape architect Parker Jennings, and owned by a 7th generation Virginian. Visitors will also see a spa-like California style property with a meditation deck and outdoor shower, a classic Georgian revival house, and a stunning 10,000 square foot contemporary designed by a young family with entertaining in mind, which features a dramatic infinity-edge swimming pool.

Local restaurants and shops in historic Clifton will offer promotions on tour day for ticket holders. Specials will be listed in the ticket brochure, and on our website at: [www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com](http://www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com).

Advance sale tickets may be purchased for \$30 per person until April 1, 2015 by mailing a personal check payable to The Garden Club of Fairfax, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to 11508 Yates Ford Rd., Fairfax Station, VA 22039. Advance sale tickets may also be easily purchased by credit card on-line at [www.vagardenweek.org](http://www.vagardenweek.org)



Maps and tickets are available the day of the tour at the Tour Information Center located at Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton, and at each of the tour houses. Tickets are \$40 per person the day of the tour, or \$30 per person advance sale.

Carpooling is encouraged. Parking is available in Clifton at the Clifton Presbyterian Church, the Clifton Wine Shop parking lot, or the parking lot by the Clifton Post Office on Chapel Rd. Homes may be visited in any order. For complete information, please visit [www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com](http://www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com)

For information:

Sue Wickwire, Marketing



## DISTRICT III SPRING MEETING

*Thea McGinnis, District III Director*

Friday, March 20, 2015, 10:00am,  
Meadowlark Gardens.

I strongly encourage all of you to come to this meeting. Not only will district awards be presented, we will have a **FLORAL DESIGN DEMONSTRATION** to help prepare us for the June 13 small standard Flower Show that is part of our all-day event in Vienna to celebrate NGC's

National Garden Week. The flower show 'schedule' theme includes two of my favorite things - gardens and books! I can't wait to see how our guest designer/judge will interpret the schedule and inspire us, too. Also, we will discuss how to prepare horticulture specimens so they are identified properly and in tip top condition. Need I remind you that 6 RSGC members entered the NCA state flower show last October and the top Horticulture award and several blue, red, yellow and white ribbons came home with them. As the Lotto folks say, you gotta be in it to win it!! So please come to our District meeting on March 20. Refreshments will also be served.

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

*Susan Scotti*

Our February program was planned and presented by Ann Duffey. Lynda Martin assisted by reading the Dr. Seuss book, Oh Say Can You Seed?, while the students ate their lunches. The catchy rhymes and story were an engaging introduction to Ann's lesson about seeds. Ann asked questions as she talked about many types of seeds, their method of dispersal, and what is necessary for them to grow. The children enjoy the opportunity to answer questions, even if they have to guess, and we are always surprised at how much they know. Ann had samples of several seeds for them to identify and pictures of others. After talking about planting seeds, they were given peat pots filled with dampened seed starter, and a few marigold seeds to plant. They planted them using a pencil to make the holes, then placed the pots in a plastic

beverage cup to take home. Ann had also prepared an activity sheet with a theme of seeds for the children to take with them.

Our next program is on March 24 and is being planned by Ann Kelly and Lynda Martin.

Friday, May 8 is our annual program to work with all 5 classes of second graders in making Mother's Day arrangements. Be sure to put a reminder on your calendar if you are able to join us that morning or to contribute greens for the arrangements.

## LENTIL SOUP

*Helen McMahon*

Makes six servings

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 medium celery stalk; diced
- 3 medium carrot, peeled, diced
- 4 medium onion, diced
- 5 medium garlic clove, minced

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

- 1 quart low sodium vegetable broth
- 2 15-oz can diced tomatoes with their juices

1-1/4 cup lentils (except red), rinsed in strainer or colander

- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tsp finely chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 3 tsp red wine vinegar or sherry vinegar

Heat oil in large saucepan over medium heat until simmering, about 3 minutes. Add celery, carrot, onion and cook, stirring

occasionally, until vegetables have softened, about 10 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant about 1 minute. Season with several generous pinches of salt and pepper.

Add vegetable broth, tomatoes (with juices), lentils, bay leaf, and thyme; stir to combine. Cover and bring to a simmer, about 15 minutes. Once simmering, reduce heat to low and continue simmering. Simmer until lentils and vegetables are soft. Taste and season with more salt and pepper as needed, then stir in vinegar. When cooked, remove bay leaf.

## HORTICULTURE

*Christine Wegman*

### Hydrangeas— Native and Asian

Hydrangeas are wonderful summer-flowering shrubs that extend the spring flowering season for months. They come in red, pink, purple, and blue, so there is almost certainly a hydrangea that will go with your garden color scheme. They are beautiful in flower arrangements and easy to dry. We think of them as shade-loving plants, but some varieties do quite well in full sun – even in our climate. All hydrangeas like rich soil and plenty of water. Hydrangeas are a favorite of hybridizers and there are many new dwarf varieties available for the smaller garden. Two hydrangea varieties are native and the rest are East Asian.

***Hydrangea macrophylla*** are probably the most common hydrangeas in our gardens. Although native to Japan, they are commonly known as French hydrangeas, with varieties in all the colors and either lace-cap or mop-head flowers. French hydrangeas need light shade, rich soil and lots of water. They will survive full sun in our area, but to me they look exhausted and a bit out of place. Given the right conditions they are graceful and lush, with their dark green foliage and eye-catching blooms. The flowers can last a month, and they are



often seen near the seashore because they are very salt tolerant. Flower color is usually variable, turning pink in alkaline soil, blue in acidic soil, and purple to lavender in neutral soil. Colors will be richer and deeper if the plant is fertilized with a high phosphorus fertilizer in spring. They bloom on last year's growth, so prune them as soon as the flowers fade. *Pictured here is a summer garden with French hydrangeas.*



***Hydrangea paniculata*** from China and Japan is another very popular hydrangea, with the 'Pee Gee' variety probably the most common. Many Pee Gees will grow into small trees and bloom in late June and July. Smaller varieties are now available, too. Panicle hydrangeas have white panicle-shaped blooms and most turn beautiful shades of pink and red as they fade. They are quite happy in shade, but will show their best flowers in full sun. They bloom on new growth, so late winter or early spring is a good time to prune. *Pictured here is a mature Pee Gee hydrangea.*



***Hydrangea aborescens*** or smooth hydrangea is one of our native hydrangeas and probably my favorite. Most of you will recognize the most popular variety, 'Annabelle', with its large round. Smooth hydrangeas bloom in early June

with their flowers gradually turning from white to lime green; if their soil is kept moist, the color will last the whole summer long, gradually fading to a light brown. Nothing makes such a cool and serene statement in the heat of June and July. In recent years, hybridizers have developed a pink variety of 'Annabelle'. They bloom on new growth and can be pruned back to within 8 inches of the ground anytime from late fall to early spring. *Pictured here is an Annabelle hydrangea.*



***Hydrangea quercifolia*** or oak leaf hydrangea is a beautiful native variety with panicle shaped blooms in mid-summer. The blooms begin white and age to pink, like the panicle hydrangeas. Unlike other hydrangeas, the oak leaf variety has gray-green leaves with a shape reminiscent of an oak leaf and reddish-brown exfoliating bark that gives it winter interest. In fall the leaves turn beautiful shades of red. Of all the hydrangeas this one is the most attractive when not in bloom. New dwarf varieties with great color are on the market, especially 'Ruby Slippers' and 'Munchkin'. Oak leaf hydrangeas will give their best flower and leaf color in plenty of sun. They bloom on last year's growth, so prune them as soon as the flowers fade. *Pictured here is an oak leaf hydrangea in its fall color.*



## LIAISON REPORT

*Felicia Schwenk*

### ***Arbor House Gift Shop***

As you complete your RSGC membership renewal form, please consider signing up to volunteer at the U.S. National Arboretum's Arbor House Gift Shop the first Friday of March, April, May, or June, 2016. Volunteer hours are from around 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. You can sign up with a member friend.

### ***NCAGC Meetings/Courses***

#### **Monday March 16 & Tuesday March 17 Gardening Study School, Course II, Series IX**

For details, visit [http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/gss\\_school.html](http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/gss_school.html). Before registering, contact Joyce Skoglund at [jeskog612@gmail.com](mailto:jeskog612@gmail.com) to make sure it's not too late.

#### **Monday, March 24 & Tuesday March 24**

##### **Environmental Studies School, Course 4, Topic: Water**

Agricultural History Farm Park, Derwood, MD

Agenda and registration forms are available at <http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/envstudyschool.html>.

For questions, contact Lydia Barbour at [lydiabarbour@hotmail.com](mailto:lydiabarbour@hotmail.com).

#### **Friday, March 20, 10:00 a.m. NCA District III Awards Meeting, Meadowlark Gardens, Vienna . VA**

The program is a design demonstration and discussion of the upcoming June 13 small standard flower show. Learn how an experienced judge goes about interpreting the design classes, and talks about preparing entries for the show. Coffee and refreshments will begin at 10:00 a.m.

followed by the exciting and informative awards meeting and program. Free.

#### **April 11, 10 a.m.**

##### **NCA State Annual Meeting**

U.S. National Arboretum Auditorium, Washington, D.C.

The meeting will include an election of officers, presentation of awards, and a Gloria Houser Landscape Design Program. Award winning garden designer, writer, and lecturer Kirk Brown will impersonate colonial botanist John Bartram. Lunch will also be provided. Free.

#### **Friday-Sunday, April 17-19, Flower Show School Course 1**

Westwood Baptist Church, 8200 Old Keene Mill Road- Springfield, VA  
Topics include Design and Flower Show Procedure, and Daffodils as a Foliage Container Plant. For additional information, visit <http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/flowershowschool.html>.

#### **Friday, April 24**

##### **NCA Installation Luncheon of 2015 officers, Springfield Golf and Country Club**

RSVP by April 8. For details , see home page of [www.ncagardenclubs.org](http://www.ncagardenclubs.org).

### ***VFGC/SAR Meetings***

#### **Monday, March 16, 10:00 a.m. Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs (VFGC) Piedmont District Meeting**

Double Tree by Hilton, Midlothian, VA  
Tickets for lunch and speaker had to be purchased by February 27, but the meeting from 10:00 am to 11:30 a.m. is free. See details in the e-mail message sent by Joan on February 25.



**Sunday-Tuesday, March 22-24  
South Atlantic Region (NGC/SAR)  
Convention, Hilton Head, S.C.**

Choose from lots of creative workshops and recreational activities. Group rate and lowest fee deadlines have passed. For details visit [www.southatlanticregiongardenclubs.org](http://www.southatlanticregiongardenclubs.org).

**Sunday-Tuesday, April 26-28  
VFGC convention, Doubletree by  
Hilton, Williamsburg, VA**

For details on speakers, events, and registration visit [http://www.viriniagardenclubs.org/VFGC/VFGC\\_Convention.html](http://www.viriniagardenclubs.org/VFGC/VFGC_Convention.html).

***U.S. National Arboretum (U.S.N.A),  
Washington, D.C.,***

Visit [www.usna.usda.gov](http://www.usna.usda.gov) to check out numerous U.S.N.A. programs, including the following:

**March & April Workshops: Bonsai Basics for Beginners  
National Arboretum's Bonsai & Penjing Museum, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. on: Saturday, March 21; Sunday, March 29; Saturday, April 18; Sunday, April 19.**

Fee \$129 (\$103 FONA/NBF). Registration required. For additional information, visit [www.usna.usda.gov](http://www.usna.usda.gov) or call 202-245-4521.

**Saturday, March 28, 8:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m.**

**Lahr Native Plant Symposium:  
Making Connections, National  
Arboretum**

Learn to put together well-designed landscapes that actively connect with nature. Fee: \$95 (\$76 FONA). Registration required. For more information and to register, visit [www.usna.usda.org](http://www.usna.usda.org).

**Saturday, March 28, 9:30 a.m.—2:00 p.m.**

**Annual Native Plant Sale, National Arboretum**

Local nurseries will offer an extensive collection of high quality, locally grown native plants.. *Labr Native Plant Symposium* attendees get early-bird admission to the sale at 8:30 a.m. Free admission.



**April 3 –April 13, 10:00a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Fridays--Mondays only  
Ikebana International Annual  
Exhibition, National Arboretum**

View traditional and modern Ikebana arrangements. Demonstrations are at 1:00 p.m., April 4, 5, 11, and 12. For more information, call 202-245-4523 or log onto [www.ikebanainternational.org](http://www.ikebanainternational.org).

***Other Activities***

**Sunday March 15, 1:30--3:00p.m.  
Winter Lecture: Plants I haven't  
killed, Green Springs Gardens,  
Alexandria, VA**

Horticulturist Sandy McDougale has been testing perennial plants for years, and will share which perennials thrive. Cost: \$10.00 for Fairfax County residents, \$12.00 non-residents. Meet the speaker afterward. To register, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/events.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/events.htm) and click on Winter Lecture Series.

**Now thru April 10  
Native Plant Sale – Pre-order your favorites.**

Long Branch Nature Center, Arlington  
A great selection of natives are available for pre-order. They will have a wider selection to choose from on the day. **Pick up Friday., April 24 from 3-6 p.m. and Saturday. April 25 from 10 a.m.** To order, call 703-228-6535.

**Saturday, April 11 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
House Tour with Standard Flower Show by the Midlothian Garden Club.**  
Tour 5 unique homes displaying the Flower Show designs, view horticulture and educational exhibits, and enjoy beautiful surroundings. See the separate attachment

for more information.

**Friday, April 17, 2:00 7:00 p.m. & Saturday, April 18, 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Washington Daffodil Society Flower Show, American legion Fairfax Post #177, 3939 Oak Str., Fairfax city, VA.** Open to the public. Free.

**Tuesday, April 21, 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.**

**Garden Club of Fairfax House and Garden Tour, Clifton/Fairfax Station area.**

Tickets are \$30 per person until April 1. Details are provided at [www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com](http://www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com).