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March 2016

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Connie Richards

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Anne Collins

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Kate Abrahams

TREASURER

Ann Lunson

GARDENZETTE

EDITOR

Joan Hession

RSGC MEETING

MARCH 17, 2016 10:00 AM

LITTLE FALLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PROGRAM: SMALL SPACE GARDEN DESIGN

KATHY JENZ

Using examples from area gardens, Kathy Jenz will illustrate basic design principles for maximizing garden space. She will address common small-space challenges such as creating privacy and adding light to shady areas. She'll offer low-or-no-budget solutions as well.



Kathy Jenz is Editor, Publisher and Founder of *Washington Gardener* Magazine. Kathy is a life-long gardener from a family of farmers and dedicated gardeners. Currently, she is President of the Silver Spring Garden Club and on the board of several other clubs and organizations.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Connie Richards

Somebody at the board meeting today delightedly exclaimed that the first crocus appeared in her yard. I've been enjoying my neighbor's snowdrops and my own winter aconite. We are garden club members; we need flowers . . . or at least something attractive growing. We did have a terrific speaker on houseplants last month, and members brought in some great specimens of their own for horticulture. But for some of us, there's nothing like getting out and working in your yard!

I'm even more motivated after attending the Montgomery County Master Gardener's Spring Conference two weeks ago. Many different instructional sessions were offered: identifying healing herbs, pruning, starting seeds. The lunchtime lecturer presented the "lasagna method" of gardening. I learned a lot, and it was fun to be with fellow gardeners. I think that is why we are all in a garden club.

There was a good discussion today about having more time for club members to interact at meetings so we can better get to know each other and share our knowledge. I encourage you to take the time as you fill out your renewal forms to let me know what you would like to have the club do next year. If you have already turned in your form, don't hesitate to email me if you have new ideas or feedback on what has been done this past year.

TREASURER'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 1–29, 2016

Ann Lunson

BEG BAL FEB. 1, 2016	\$22,932.80
Total Receipts	1,112.50
Total Disbursements	<u>(727.39)</u>
CLOS BAL FEB. 29, 2016	\$23,317.91

BOARD MEETING

APRIL 7, 2016

Jan Baltrym, Host

Please call Jan if you will not be coming.

Directions: from Little Falls Church, turn right. At intersection, turn left onto Sycamore. Left on 29th, and house is on the left side.

2016 SHOWCASE OF MEMBER GARDENS

Jenny Sullivan

This year our Rock Spring Garden Club will present the gardens of eight of our members on a June Garden Walk. The eight gardens will be selected at random in a blind drawing from the entry forms submitted. *The Showcase* replaces the *Garden of the Year* competition for this year only since we have the major event of our *Flower Show* in April. There will be *no judging*, just everyone's sheer enjoyment of the work and artistry of some of our fellow club members in their gardens. We will have a beautiful brochure as usual and a photo presentation at the June meeting.

Entries must be submitted by April 1, 2016.

Names will be drawn at random the following day and announced. You may submit the entry form on page 12 to any GOTY committee member: Paul Gibert, Jenny Sullivan, Mary Cottrell, Mary Kudless, Mary Lunger, Georga Shaw, and Ashley Tessmer.

MARCH DESIGN

Anita Brown

This month's design can be of any type so you have no excuse for not submitting your favorite one – all we have to do is to add at least two design techniques to make the design more exciting.

As our yearbook notes, various design techniques are listed on page 158 of our Handbook for Flower shows. They are fun to do, and after all how difficult is it, for example, to bind some stems together and reflex a leaf! So let's show our judge this month that RSGC is eager to learn and explore new ways of expressing our interest and delight in new design methods.

RSGC STANDARD FLOWER SHOW

THAT'S LIFE - CELEBRATING SINATRA, HIS SONGBOOK and MOVIES

Charlotte Benjamin

April 21st is just around the corner! Preparations have been made and are being made for an outstanding and successful Show. The theme of the Show celebrates *SINATRA, HIS SONGBOOK and MOVIES*. You will hear details from various Show Chairmen at our March 17th meeting.

We are expecting almost all of our membership to participate and possibly some non-member exhibitors as well, so our exhibition tables should be full and beautiful. Please be thinking about registering for at least one Artistic Class. As soon as the Schedule is confirmed by the Judges' Council it will be emailed to you! Each class offers only four (4) entry slots. They will fill up quickly so be sure to have a second and third choice in mind when you register. Horticulture classes will offer unlimited opportunities for exhibitors.

Thank you, in advance, for your participation and for helping to make our RSGC Standard Flower Show an outstanding show!

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Ann Kelly

At our February garden program for 12 second graders at Tuckahoe Elementary School, Lynda Martin and Ann Kelly did a program on making pine cone bird feeders. While the students ate lunch, Lynda showed them a poster of birds commonly seen in our area, and the students helped identify them.



She talked about the different beaks birds have, and how they are specialized for their particular diet. Large color photos of individual birds were shown, and the children asked questions and commented on them.

Ann showed them a darling bird's nest that Ann Duffey brought in, with it placed in the Y junction of two branches of an azalea where it was built. She then explained that they would each make a pine cone bird feeder. Lynda did a demo while the children were given pine cones tied with twine for hanging, Crisco mixed with corn meal to slather on the cones, and a mix of black sunflower and safflower seeds to roll the cone in.



In their take-home bag, they received a bird bookmark and a recipe to make another feeder at home.



Committee members shown- Carolyn Barone, Ann Kelly, Lynda Martin, and Ann Duffey – along with Catherine Abrahams and Susan Scotti helped the children make their feeders.

The next program will be given on April 5 by Ann Duffey and Vicky Schoenberger.

MOTHER'S DAY ARRANGEMENTS

Carolyn Barone and Susan Scotti

Our annual Mother's Day Flower Arranging event this year will be **FRIDAY morning on MAY 6th.**

All 100+ 2nd grade students get to make a flower arrangement for their mothers. We ask that RSGC members donate greens to use with the purchased carnations in the arrangements. We also welcome member volunteers to assist at school in trimming the donated greens from 11am - 12noon and/or join us in the classrooms from noon - 1pm. It is a fast-paced but fun morning. Mark your calendar now so you don't miss the comradery of working with garden club members, and the opportunity to guide the children in making a surprise gift for their mothers.

PIEDMONT DISTRICT SPRING GENERAL MEETING

"A CELEBRATION OF SPRING"

Connie Richards

WHERE:	Doubletree by Hilton 1021 Koger Center Blvd. Richmond, VA 23235
WHEN:	Monday, April 4, 2016
PROGRAM:	"The Colors of Spring"

The Piedmont District of the VFGC is hosting a conference on April 4 in Richmond. They will be presenting awards, and Thea McGinnis has applied for several on behalf of our club and is hoping for good things to happen. The main speaker will be Marion Zimmerman who is a floral designer who was born and trained in England. Charlotte Benjamin is familiar with her and says this is an opportunity that should not be missed. There will be many vendors there too who offer a wide range of unique products including plants, containers, and flower/garden paraphernalia that you never thought you needed but realize that you can't live without. Read the newsletter on piedmontdistrictvfgc.org for more details especially on Marion Zimmerman.

They prefer that we submit one check for our club. If you are interested in going, **let me know by March 18.** I will fill out one application for all members attending. You will need to write a check for \$30 (which includes lunch) made out to RSGC and submit it to Ann Lunson. If you have any allergies or dietary restrictions, I will be including that on the application. We will be organizing carpools. It is a fairly easy drive of just under two hours.

CONSERVATION

Linda Martin - RAIN BARRELS

Rain barrels are containers connected to your downspouts to collect runoff from your roof. They range in size from 30 to 100 gallons, and can be made of plastic or wood. Rainwater collected in

a rain barrel can be used for many activities, including watering plants (gardens, lawn) and washing your car.

Here are some benefits:

- Savings on your water bill
- Reduced flooding in your yard or basement
- Reduction in storm water runoff from your property
- Groundwater recharge

Please check with your county for information on where to attend workshops or for sales of the rain barrels. My personal experience with them is that I have two attached to the front and back downspouts of my home and I use them for watering my plants. If you have questions please let me know.

HORTICULTURE

Louise Rhoads - Wildflower Favorites

I have always loved wildflowers so thought I would share some facts on some of my favorites for the last four Gardenzettes this year. Many of you, I am sure, must nurture in your garden beds this month's selection, *Mertensia virginica*, better known as Virginia Bluebells.

For some time I had heard of Virginia bluebells, but really didn't know what they were and what they looked like. One day four years ago, my husband and I ventured to Bull Run Regional Park in Centerville, VA, to see the advertised acres of Virginia Bluebells in peak bloom growing along the Bull Run. What a magnificent sight! I decided then and there that I would plant bluebells somewhere in my garden. I put in just a few plants and have enjoyed how they have spread and have given me such pleasure with their lovely blue blooms.



MERTENSIA VIRGINICA - Virginia Bluebells

Since this is a horticultural column, I need to continue with the following: The American bluebell, of which I am writing about, is named after Franz Karl Mertens, a German botanist, even though he didn't have much to do with the damp Virginia woodlands where the *Mertensia* flourishes. There is more to this story, but the Gardenzette can only handle so much horticulture.

According to one of my sources, "Virginia Bluebells is a quite large, erect plant, with long, toothed basal leaves and smaller smooth-edged elliptical ones higher up the stem. Both types of leaf are smooth-surfaced but strongly veined and with a grayish bloom. The showy trumpet shaped flowers are borne in loose, drooping cyme clusters. They start off a delicate pale pink when in bud, becoming a very light blue as they open into flower. Virginia Bluebells tend to grow in massed clumps, forming great beds that can look spectacular when in full bloom. It is also sometimes cultivated in gardens, but needs very damp soil to thrive. They usually bloom March - May." If you think your Bluebell patch has become monotonous, try adding bright yellow daffodils or scarlet fire pinks (*Silene virginica*) to give it a zip.

CIVIC DEVELOPMENT

Barry Wood

Rock Spring Park is waking up after a winter's snooze. Already the miniature daffodils and Siberian crocus that we planted there last year are in bloom on the east border of the Park, while

hundreds of snowdrops donated by Susan Foulke now grace the quondam bramble patch above the entrance to the culvert. Nevertheless, the beds desperately need dressing up. March 18 and 19, starting at 9 am, we will be cleaning up, planting *Rudbeckia hirta*, ferns and other attractive plants, and spreading mulch.

It's important to uphold the Club's tradition of contributing to the beauty of this space. The operation will last until 12:30 each day, but you are free to come and go as you need. If you can't dig, you could provide refreshment, instruction and/or encouragement for the more able-bodied workers. Email Barry Wood (woodlegal@comcast.net) with contributions.

RSGC LUNCHEON RECIPE

Kate Abrahams

Italian Style Turkey Meatloaf

Ingredients:

Cooking Spray

2 pounds ground turkey (breast meat preferred)

3/4 tsp ground black pepper

2 eggs

1/2 cup Italian seasoned bread crumbs

2 tsp Italian seasoning or

1 tsp. each dried basil and oregano

1 clove garlic, minced or 1 tsp. garlic powder

1/2 tsp salt

4 cups spaghetti sauce

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prepare a baking dish with cooking spray.

Mix turkey meat, eggs, bread crumbs, Italian seasoning (or basil and oregano), garlic, pepper and salt in a big bowl. Shape into a loaf in the baking dish.

Bake for 40 minutes then spoon about half of the spaghetti sauce on top to cover. Continue baking another 20 minutes until loaf is firm to the touch on top, no longer pink in the middle.

An instant read thermometer should read at least 160 degrees.

Rest meatloaf 5-10 minutes before slicing to serve.

While the meatloaf rests, warm the remaining sauce to serve with or on top of the meatloaf slices. Serves 8-10 people.

LIAISON REPORT

Felicia Schwenk

Arbor House Gift Shop

If you get a chance to visit the U.S. National Arboretum, be sure to stop by the Arbor House Gift Shop. The Arbor House is owned and operated by the National Capital Area Garden Clubs. Members of all affiliated garden clubs, including RSGC get a 10% discount on all purchases. If you volunteer at the Arbor House, you get a 20% discount on the day you volunteer. For more information on volunteering, contact me at felica.schwenk@gmail.com.

NCA and VFGC Meetings

Sunday-Tuesday, March 13-15
South Atlantic Region (NGC SAR) Convention,
"North Carolina Beauty," Raleigh, North Carolina.
Choose from lots of creative workshops and recreational activities. Group rate and lowest fee deadlines have passed. For details visit www.southatlanticregiongardenclubs.org.

Friday, March 18, 10:00 a.m. (starting with breakfast treats)
District III Meeting, Meadowlark Gardens, Vienna, VA. The general business meeting will include the District III Awards presentation. Guest speaker is Thomas Rainer, Landscape Architect, who will bring copies of his new book, *Planting in a Post Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes* (co-authored with Claudia West) for sale and autographing.

Monday, March 21, 10:00 a.m.

NCA State General Meeting, U.S. National Arboretum. Washington, D.C. District 1 will host. State Awards will be presented followed by the Victorian Ladies Society who will present the program "Gardening Facts and Fashions."

Monday, April 4, 10:00 a.m. (Registration starts at 8:30 a.m.)

Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs (VFGC) Piedmont District Meeting, *A Celebration of Spring*, Doubletree by Hilton, 1021 Koger Center Blvd, Richmond, VA. Cost \$30. Registration deadline: Monday, March 21. For registration and other details, see page 4 of the newsletter FOOTPRINTS, which can be retrieved by visiting <http://www.piedmontdistrictvfgc.org> and clicking on *newsletter*.

Monday-Wednesday, April 25-27

VFGC convention "Connect-Create-Soar," Kirkley Hotel & Conference Center, Lynchburg, VA. For special rate, make hotel reservations by March 24.

For

More details and to register, visit

http://www.viriniagardenclubs.org/VFGC/VFGC_Convention.html.

Courses

Tuesday & Wednesday, April 26-27 (optional test Thursday, April 28)

Landscape Design School, Course 3, Crown Plaza Hotel, Annapolis, MD. For details, see page 21 of the *Capital Gardener*:

<http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/CapGardenerSpring2016.pdf>.

Wednesday & Thursday, June 1 & 2

Gardening Study School, Course IV, Series IX, Merrifield Garden Center, (Fair Oaks location, Fairfax, Virginia. The curriculum covers outdoor identification of plants, specialized styles of gardening, growing fruit, and home irrigation techniques. For questions, contact Joyce Skoglund at jeskog612@gmail.com or 703-591-4017, or 703-371-5343.

Wednesday & Thursday, November 2 & 3
Environmental Studies School, Course 1, Series 7, Agriculture History Farm Park, Derwood, MD. More details are provided on page 22 of the *Capital Gardener*:

<http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/CapGardenerSpring2016.pdf>.

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

Visit www.usna.usda.gov to check out numerous U.S.N.A. programs, including the following:

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

30th Annual Lahr Native Plant Symposium: *Good Design*, National Arboretum Visitor Center. Learn to integrate the beautiful with ecologically beneficial. Fee: \$95 (\$76 FONA). Registration required. For more information and to register, visit www.usna.usda.org.

Saturday, April 2, 8:30 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Annual Native Plant Sale, National Arboretum, adjacent to Administration Building. See an extensive collection of high quality, locally grown native plants. Growers will be on hand to provide expert gardening information. Free admission.

Other Events

Wednesday, March 16, open to the public 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

NCAGC Judges Council Flower Show, Plymouth Baptist Church, 8600 Plymouth Rd., Alexandria, VA. Free admission. Entries are open only members of the Judges Council. For more information, contact Arlene Stewart at amstewart4@aol.com.

Sunday March 15, 1:30--3:00p.m.

Winter Lecture: Epic Tomatoes, Green Springs Gardens, Alexandria, VA.

Garden writer and tomato aficionado, Craig LeHoullier shares tips and tricks gleaned from his

35 years of gardening with tomatoes, from seed starting to harvest.

Meet the speaker and enjoy refreshments afterward. Cost: \$10.00 for Fairfax County residents, \$12.00 non-residents. To register and to check out the other lectures, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/events.htm and click on Winter Lecture Series on the left menu.

Wednesday, March 16, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Potomac Unit of the Herb Society of America presents *Bees, Beneficials & Blooms*, Meadowlark Gardens, Vienna, VA. For more information, visit <http://www.potomacunithsa.org/>

Saturday, March 19, 10:00 a.m.
Free Spring Seminars, Merrifield Garden Center, three locations:
Merrifield – *Fragrant Gardens*; Fair Oaks – *Get to Know Perennials*; and Gainesville – *Drainage*

Solutions. For more details and to check out seminars for other weeks, click on <http://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com/whats-happening/2016-winter-spring-seminar-schedule/>

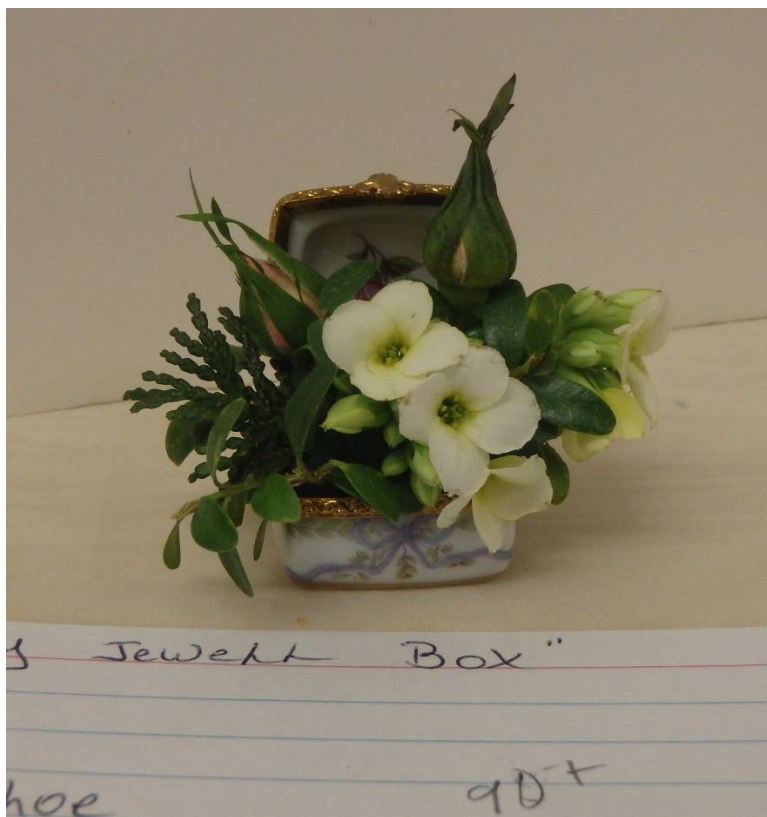
Tuesday, April 26, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Garden Club of Fairfax House and Garden Tour, Clifton/Fairfax Station area.
Advance tickets are \$30 per person until April 24. To purchase tickets and for more details, visit <http://www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com>.

Saturday April 30, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Native Plant Sale, Long Branch Nature Center, Arlington. Choose from a great selection of plants accustomed to the local climate and wildlife. Forms for pre-ordering a great selection of plants will be available on-line by mid-March. For more information, call 703-228-6535.

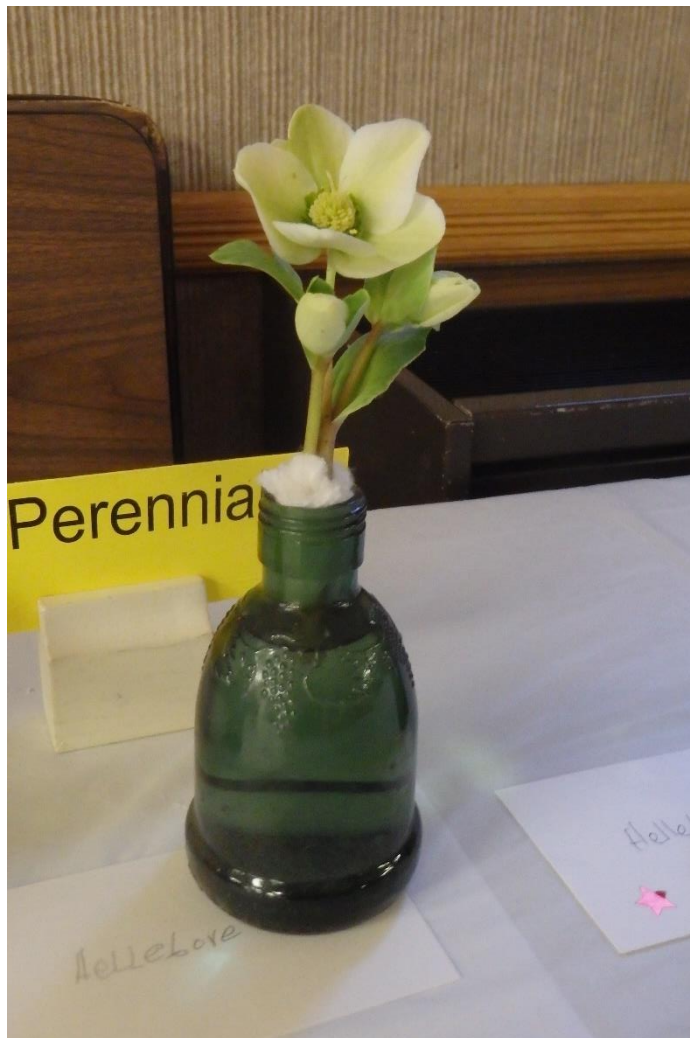
PHOTO GALLERY

Last month's floral design, Miniature Design, had many appealing entries. The following designs won top honors.





The judge was complementary about the horticultural entries and many items received high marks. Here are a few examples.



Rock Spring Garden Club is a member of the National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc., the National Garden Clubs, Inc. and Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

SHOWCASE OF MEMBER HOMES ENTRY FORM

NAME:

ADDRESS:

DIRECTIONS FROM GLEBE ROAD AND LEE HWY.:

PRIMARY PHONE:

EMAIL:

Please provide a brief description of your garden perhaps your garden philosophy or the garden's design, history or outstanding features.

Here is a sample paragraph from last year's brochure—changed to the first person pronoun—which we ask you to use.

"My most cherished specimen is an ancient white oak, so large two adults cannot entwine their arms around it. Each quadrant of this garden is characterized by a different micro climate, from extreme shade to full sun. There are over a hundred varieties of plants and many edibles including herbs, potted citrus, and fruit trees. Trailing squash and cantaloupe grow among sunny perennials. I use no insecticides or herbicides; I divert rain water to a cistern and incorporate native and drought tolerant plants. This garden is a Monarch Way Station, and I am dedicated to treasuring and protecting nature's gifts."

Mary Kudless will help anyone who needs assistance in composing or editing.

YOUR DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH: