

# THE GARDENZETTE



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



Rock Spring Garden Club is a member of the National Garden Clubs Inc., Central Atlantic Region, National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc., District III; and Southern Atlantic Region, Virginia Federated Garden Clubs, Inc., Piedmont District

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## OFFICERS

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Charlotte Benjamin

### VICE PRESIDENT

Sharon DeAngelis

### SECRETARY

Carolyn Barone

### TREASURER

Nancy Snell

### GARDENZETTE EDITOR

Kate Abrahams (Sept-Jan)

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## RSGC'S DECEMBER HOLIDAY TEA

Thursday December 12<sup>th</sup> 2-4 p.m.

**"CHRISTMAS EAST: NEAR - MIDDLE - FAR"**





## President's Message

December – my favorite month of the year! The month of great expectations...winter arrives, excitement abounds and the air is full of wonderful scents that stir our memories. As our gardens hibernate, our activity moves indoors with family, friends and traditions.

Next week Rock Spring Garden Club members will share a very special tradition, our annual Holiday Tea. This year we will gather in a lovely home to experience “Christmas East: Near-Middle-Far.” I can hardly wait to see the floral arrangements some of you will do in her amazing and unique containers!

Last month's Holiday Design Event was such a success! Kudos and thanks to Dianne Simmons and her hard-working committee for an outstanding event. We had excellent attendance and I personally have received many favorable comments.

As we prepare to leave 2019 behind and look forward to 2020, I want to thank each of you for all you do to make RSGC so special. We are a healthy and productive Club with a membership that is growing, not shrinking! This is a remarkable achievement that many garden clubs cannot claim ...it is a goal to be proud of.

Enjoy the gift of each day – make more memories and especially take time to relax a bit! Warmest wishes for a very, very special holiday season!!!

**Charlotte**

## ***The Snow Man***

*Poem by Wallace Stevens*

***One must have a mind of winter  
To regard the frost and the boughs  
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;***

***And have been cold a long time  
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,  
The spruces rough in the distant glitter***

***Of the January sun; and not to think  
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,  
In the sound of a few leaves,***

***Which is the sound of the land  
Full of the same wind  
That is blowing in the same bare place***

***For the listener, who listens in the snow,  
And, nothing himself, beholds  
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.***

### **Treasurer's Report Nov. 1 – 30, 2019**

Nancy Snell, Treasurer

Beginning Balance:

Revenue: (HDE \$ reported in Dec report)

Expenses:

Ending Balance:

### **Next Board Meeting on Thursday, Jan. 2 at 10 a.m**

Hosted by

## Reminder for Holiday Tea Floral Designers

Julie Williams, Invitational Committee Chair

Members making floral designs for the Holiday Tea should deliver their arrangements on Wednesday afternoon Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>. Please follow this guideline for delivery:

Last names A- L should arrive at 1 p.m.

Last names M- Z should arrive at 2 p.m.

If you are interested in going to Potomac Floral Wholesalers on Tuesday morning with Julie and Toby, please email them. Car pools can be arranged if needed for a large group visiting the wholesaler.

## Floral Design Workshop Series for Beginners: Registration Now Open!

NCAGC Judges' Council is offering its popular floral design 3- workshop series for a second time in February and March. Betty Ann Galway will lead the workshops as before. All 3 workshops will be at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 2589 Chain Bridge Rd., Vienna, VA on Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. The series is limited to 20 participants so be sure to sign up quickly. The cost is \$175.00 and registrants must commit to taking all three workshops (Feb 19, March 4 and 11). The previous workshops sold out and received rave reviews. The registration form can be found on the last page of this newsletter. For more information, contact Arlene Stewart at [amstewart4@aol.com](mailto:amstewart4@aol.com) or 703 791-4356.



Sharon DeAngelis, Nicola Farris and Marisol Aldahondo

## Membership

### Sharon DeAngelis

Returning member Marisol Aldahondo and new member Nicola Farris were formally introduced to the club membership at the November 21<sup>st</sup> general meeting.

## HOLIDAY FLORAL DESIGN EVENT (HDE)

### Dianne Simmons





Our club outdid itself this year at our 8<sup>th</sup> Holiday Design Event. We welcomed almost a full house of friends to watch Ami Wilber, chief floral designer at Hillwood Estates and Museum, create a beautiful arrangement and this, along with the two she had made, were auctioned off in the Silent Auction. But, equally impressive was the creativity of so many members who made pumpkin arrangements, Holiday baskets for the Silent Auction, and floral arrangements for our new table this year, The Market. The Tools of the Trade table also sold a considerable amount of garden and floral arranging equipment. And, the food made by so many members offered a myriad of varieties of cookies, bars and tea sandwiches, complimented by our popular wine spritzers. We sold almost everything, and we estimate we made about \$7,500 in profit.

So many of you gave so much to this fund-raising event. I think that is what we should reflect on. I cannot adequately express my gratitude for the energy, the creativity, and problem-solving acumen that went into organizing the making of pumpkin arrangements, non-pumpkin arrangements, the tasty food and drink and, on the afternoon of the event, the quick thinking as we rushed to organize the set up of tables and chairs beginning at 3:00 (because there was an event in the morning that precluded an earlier arrival time).



It is in giving of ourselves – and as a team – that we should feel such satisfaction. And for a good cause: sending children to the Outdoor Lab camp each summer. I can think of no better way to usher in the Holiday Season than offering a beautiful, artistic event to share with the community our love of flower-arranging, gardening and hospitality. You all may not realize this, but the Holiday Design Event involved contributions of the majority of our 60-some active members. Thank you, thank you all, for giving me the pleasure of being part of such an august group of women and men. And, Happy Holidays to everyone.



**Sharon DeAngelis and Margi Melnick at Registration**



**Ann Lunson, Ann Kelly, Mildred Grant and Ann Duffey listen attentively to the presentation**



**Mary Lunger and AnnMarie Fay**



**Dorinda Burroughs, HDE Emcee**

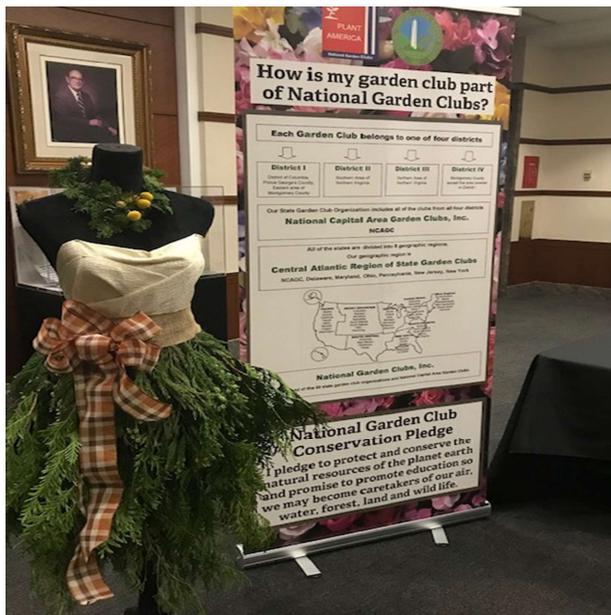


**Sherry Foster and Thea McGinnis**

NGC Flower Show School Course 3, March 23-25<sup>th</sup>,  
Cambria Hotel, Baltimore, MD



Ami Wilber and Ann Kelly



Renee Bayes created a spectacular arrangement for the HDE entrance



Joan Asboth and Julie Williams offering hospitality



NCAGC Flower Show, U.S. National Arboretum, April 3-5<sup>th</sup>. Washington D.C.

NCAGC District III Spring Meeting, March 20<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m.  
Meadowlark Gardens, Vienna, VA

Tree I.D. Hikes at Long Branch Nature Center. Sat. Jan. 11 and Sat. Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> 10 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. 625 South Carlin Spring Road, Arlington. \$5 Fee. Visit [registration@arlingtonva.us](http://registration@arlingtonva.us) or call 703 228-4747.

## LIAISON REPORT

“Seasons Greenings: America’s Gardens” U.S. Botanical Garden display of plant based recreations of famous gardens from Hawaii to Maine. Open daily 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> – Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> 100 Maryland Ave. S.W. Washington, D.C. Free. Visit [www.usbg.gov](http://www.usbg.gov) for info.

## Garden Therapy

By Mary Kudless

### Garden Therapy at Glebe Elementary – Dec. 5, 2019 The Beauty and Value of Evergreens (Conifers)

I had the pleasure of serving as the leader for our program on Evergreens. Our goals were to offer the 12 students an understanding of how evergreens differ from trees that drop their leaves and the beauty they offer us all year long.

Seven of our wonderful RSGC members contributed their talents, to include AnnMarie's preparation of the containers for an evergreen floral design, to Pat Getz's healthy snacks, to music from Margi on her autoharp and puppetry from Mary Cottrell.

Our storybook, read by me, was beautifully illustrated and gave us a chance to talk about both birds and the range of evergreens that exist in nature. Dianne Simmons provided a hands-on experience, as the children circulated examples of cut greens and got to inhale the fragrances and touch the range of needles and greenery. Susan, our Chair, shared beautiful pressed and highly colorful autumn leaves from oak and maple trees to illustrate the differences between conifers and deciduous trees. She also shared 2 beautiful birds' nests – one large and one small to emphasize the importance of all trees for sheltering birds.

After the story and music, the children jumped right in to creating winter holiday designs with a range of

beautiful evergreen cuttings and red and white carnations. The results were amazing and we trust that their families will be happy to have this little piece of homemade holiday spirit in their homes.

My thanks to all of the members who made this visit such fun and so successful for the children. They were very excited about what they created.



## HORTICULTURE

Christine Wegman

### The Bones of a Garden: Broadleaf Evergreens

Winter is a perfect time to look at one's garden with a critical eye for its basic structure, that is, its bones. If your garden has good bones it will look good throughout every season. This is the second article of a group devoted to garden structure. Winter is the best time to make this assessment because that's what is left after all the annuals die, the perennials go dormant and the leaves fall.

Look around the neighborhood and you will see lots of broadleaf evergreens. Azaleas are not as popular as they once were, but there are other broadleaf evergreens that are very popular. Boxwood, camellias, mountain laurel, *pieris japonica*, evergreen viburnum, and nandina are a few of the best.

**Boxwood** is beautiful and versatile. One of the



great advantages of boxwood is that they mix well with perennials, since they like alkaline to neutral soil, unlike most broadleaf evergreens. Boxwood come in many sizes, and there are many dwarf varieties that will fit into spots as small as 2-3 feet. There are also a number of variegated varieties of boxwood (pictured) that have the effect of a lighter color. For our area there is one important thing to keep in mind:

boxwood don't like a lot of heat, so they will be happiest in some shade and some types of boxwood are more heat tolerant than others: English boxwood less, Japanese boxwood more. Boxwood blight, unfortunately, is a real problem, so if it has come into your immediate neighborhood, best to avoid planting this shrub.

**Camellias** flourish in our area, thanks to



decades of breeding for cold hardiness. Glossy evergreen leaves and spectacular blooms in late fall or early spring are the qualities that make these shrubs so attractive. They like well drained, acidic soil and shade from afternoon sun. Most varieties grow to about 6-8 feet, but they can be pruned and shaped to fit into a small garden.

**Mountain laurel** (*Kalmia latifolia*) is a beautiful



shrub that is native to our area. White blossoms with pink flecks appear on trusses in late spring. Breeders, over many years, have focused on flower color and there are a number

of strikingly beautiful varieties in different shades from pink to red. Most grow to about 6-8 feet, but there is a dwarf variety, 'Elf' (pictured) with pink and white blooms that tops out at about 3 feet. They like the same conditions as camellias.

***Pieris japonica*** is sometimes called a lily of the



valley shrub because of its beautiful sprays of white, bell-shaped flowers. Newer varieties have been bred for compactness, heat tolerance, and pink to red colored foliage. Older varieties grow 8-10 feet high and wide, but newer varieties are more compact. There are a number of varieties that have beautiful pink to red blossoms, but *Pieris japonica* are not very heat tolerant, and the best variety for our area is 'Mountain Snow' (pictured), which grows 3-4 feet high and about 3 feet wide. It has lovely sprays of white flowers in early spring and looks beautiful with nandina.

**Viburnum** is prized for its beautiful white spring



flowers, and some varieties are evergreen. Viburnum does not require acidic soil, like many broadleaf evergreens, and can combine well with most plants. Most of these are large shrubs or small trees, but there is one dwarf evergreen: *Viburnum davidii* (pictured) that grows to about 3 feet high and wide. I have not grown this variety, but it deserves to be on any short list of versatile and beautiful plants.

**Nandina** is often criticized as an over-used



plant, but it is over-used because it is so lovely, so versatile, and so easy to grow. There are dozens of varieties and I mention it here because it is a perfect companion for most other broadleaf evergreens, although its berries may clash with the delicate pinks of camellias and mountain laurels. Newer varieties, such as the 3-foot 'Obsession' (pictured), which rarely sets berries, have rosier pink foliage that will blend with most pink flowers. Another good variety is 'Plum Passion', growing about 4-5 feet with foliage that ages to a purple-red. Although the berries will clash with camellia pinks, they can always be snipped off where they offend.

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

### Our Autumn Program at Tuckahoe

by Ann Kelly

Photos by Joyce Fall

The fall colors of orange pumpkins and bronze, purple and yellow chrysanthemums came together in the floral arrangements made by 12 second grade students at Tuckahoe Elementary School in our Youth Activities Program there in October.

Our Committee's hour with the students, who sit around a long rectangular table, started with Lynda Martin reading a book about a seed developing into a pumpkin while the students ate their lunch. Next, I did a demo on how they were going to make a flower arrangement with greens and mums and a small pumpkin. Their pumpkins would be miniature versions of the pumpkin arrangements we do for our Holiday Design Event.

We all felt afterwards that the children really seemed to enjoy the program, with uniformly happy chatter. Susan Scotti, who provided the pumpkin book, shared two comments she heard from the students: "My grandmother is coming Friday, and she will really like this" and "I don't want to stop doing this! I want to do another pumpkin." As two children left, they gave me a quick hug in passing. That made my day and the prep all worthwhile!

Many thanks to our other committee members who helped the children and Lynda and me: Joyce Fall, Helen McMahon, Victoria Schoenberger, Susan Scotti, and Ann Duffey.



## CONSERVATION

### ROCK SPRING PARK UPDATE

#### Kate Abrahams

Thanks to native plant donations from Arlington County's own native plant nursery for use in county parks, delivered personally by Arlington County's Greenhouse Manager and horticulturist Scott Graham, the pollinator garden now has more diverse plantings in the beds and along the streambank slope. The beds now have deertongue, monkey flower, additional common milkweed, blazing star, boneset and ironweed . The slope to the stream facing Little Falls Road now has river oats, Frank's sedge, rose mallow, and squarrose sedge. These will fight erosion and complement the azaleas and day lilies planted previously. Conservation committee members and Chair Jo Ella Samp devoted two days to digging, planting and labeling the new plants. Many thanks to Jo Ella, Connie Richards, Julie Wadsworth, Sandi Hodges and Kate Abrahams. Special thanks to Dianne Simmons and Scott Graham for coordinating the donation to the club.



Connie Richards and Jo Ella Samp



Julie Wadsworth and Sandi Hodges



## MORE ON BOTANICAL ARTS DESIGNS

### Thea McGinnis.

Here's some information on Botanical Arts from the NGC Handbook for Flower Shows (2017) pages 94-95.

Artistic Crafts must contain some fresh and/or dried plant material. Only dried plant material may be treated. No artificial, endangered or locally invasive plant material may be used. Schedule may determine type of craft, staging and number of entries. A card listing plant material must be included with all artistic craft entries. Jewelry and ornamental accessories – must be ready to wear with fasteners, clasps, etc. as needed. – non-plant material may be used for construction, must not show unless allowed by schedule. – Plant material may not be carved into figural forms, but such forms may be assembled from plant material. Clipping, cutting or shaping material is allowed. Jewelry might include necklaces, rings, bracelets, hairpieces, or, anklet. Wearable apparel might include corsages, hats, boutonnieres, gloves, or dresses.

I spoke to the instructor about coming to our club for either a demonstration or a hands-on workshop. What do you say? Let me know if you're interested. I'll coordinate with our Program Committee to get the instructor on our calendar for next fall. Thanks!

Photos from "Piedmont Presents" VFGC Flower Show's Botanical Arts Division October 2018



**PHOTO GALLERY**  
**2019 Holiday Floral Design Event**

**Floral Arrangements for Sale**



Jan Baltrym and Sheila Moore



Janice Haines assists Alice Conrad



**Tools of the Trade Sale  
Julie Wadsworth, Chair**





**Hospitality Tables**



**Silent Auction**





NCAGC Judges' Council presents: A Floral Design Workshop Series for Beginners

By popular demand, the workshops you've been waiting for are now available. The NCAGC Judges' Council will present a hands-on floral design workshop series for members of NCAGC garden clubs. Each day there will be a demonstration of two different design types followed by time to create designs of your own. Judges will be there to work with you and to review each design with the class.

- This series is open to **beginner** floral designers **only**.
- The workshop series will be held at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church 2589 Chain Bridge Rd., Vienna, VA 22181
- Students must register and pay to **attend all three days** of workshops. (**February 19, March 4 and March 11, 2020** from **9:30am to 2:30pm**)
- Registration is **non-transferable**. One student signs up to attend all three days because each day is a continuation of the last.
- The \$175 fee for the three day series is to be included with the registration. Fee covers: container, plant material, supplies, handouts and lunch

On each of the three days the workshops will be led by a NCAGC Accredited Judge and assisted by other members of the NCAGC Judges' Council.

Topics are "*Basics and Beyond*", "*Traditional and More*" and "*Moving on to Creative*"

Each day will include

- Instruction and Design Demonstrations by a NCAGC Accredited Judge
- Time for each student to create a design on their own (assisting judges will be available to work with students)
- Friendly critique of each design to the benefit of the entire class

**Registration is open to 20 students. Registration must be postmarked no later than January 29.**

If more than 20 registration forms are received, students will be selected at random. Everyone who submits a form will be notified by January 31. **Questions:** Contact Arlene Stewart

*amstewart4@aol.com* 703-791-4356 **Remember This workshop series has been developed for BEGINNER Floral Designers**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

NCAGC Garden Club \_\_\_\_\_

*Mark your Calendar:* February 19, March 4, and March 11, 2020. Each day 9:30am to 2:30pm *Mail this form to:* Arlene Stewart 12200 Ashley Ct. Manassas, VA 20112 *Include your check for \$175 made out to:* NCAGC Judges' Council

