

# THE GARDENZETTE



Rock Spring Garden Club  
Arlington, Virginia  
[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, South Atlantic Region, Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc., Piedmont District

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## GENERAL MEETING

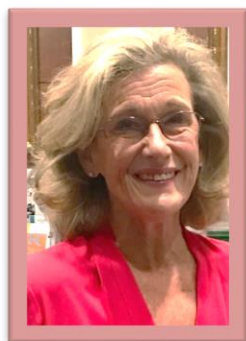
Thursday, September 16, 2021 at 10:00 am  
Little Falls Presbyterian Church, Arlington, VA

**While our meetings are normally open to the public, our September general meeting is restricted to members who are vaccinated and one guest and/or potential new member who is also vaccinated. All attendees are required to wear masks and to physically distance during our meeting and program. No refreshments will be served. All guests and potential new members must RSVP to [rockspringgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:rockspringgardenclub@gmail.com) in order to attend.**

Our program following the first club meeting of the 2021-2022 year will be a "Welcome Back" floral design presentation by May Bernhardt. May, floral designer and owner of Mayflowers Floral Studio in Reston and McLean, Virginia, is an expert in the language of flowers. She will create two fabulous designs, and provide valuable advice and suggestions on visualizing your designs. Think about balance, contrast, dominance, proportion, rhythm, and scale as you observe May work. Two lucky club members will go home with May's designs.



## President's Message



Welcome, everyone, to a new year with the garden club. I hope everyone enjoyed the downtime of the summer months to relax and perhaps travel some. Though we are starting a new year, with a beautiful yellow Yearbook created by Joan Hession with the help of several others, we must continue to be adaptable

to the continuing dynamics of COVID-19 and its variants. Thus, my note here largely addresses how we will move forward.

The board met this morning in person and via Zoom, and after considerable discussion, voted to hold our general meetings in person for the remainder of the year. We made this decision based on several factors that will be in place – masks will be worn, chairs will be properly spaced and we will not provide refreshments. Central to this decision was also the RSVP results from the invitation: Forty-nine of the sixty-eight members (active and sustaining) responded, and of those, twenty-nine said they would come in person, fourteen said they would not come, and nine said they would attend if Zoom is offered. Frankly, I was pleased to see so many “in person” answers. The board also decided that we will revisit this same issue at next month’s board meeting to take into account any changes in the pandemic dynamics.

While transmitting the general meeting may be possible via Zoom at a later time, we will not be able to offer this for the September meeting because there are too many variables regarding the church’s Wi-Fi capabilities, as well as the need for microphones and other logistical issues that we hope to resolve satisfactorily soon. However, I have already run into a club member this afternoon who said she may come now that food will not be provided (breakthrough cases in Virginia are largely attributable to exposure in dining venues).

Our general meeting next week will be a simpler version of what we customarily do. We will start at 10:00 am for socializing and a business meeting followed by May Bernhardt’s presentation. We will not have Ways and Means and Tools of the Trade tables. But, we will have our usual Design of the Month and horticultural offerings from our gardens.

Please note that our Show Committee has given us an easy assignment! And, please also note that we are now using the white/green printed cards to submit horticultural specimens and you can review this card on page 22 of the Yearbook. Horticulture Committee members will be there with these cards and to help anyone who needs guidance on how to fill them out.

I am excited to begin this year’s activities. Most exciting is that we will be able to meet in person as a community of friends and garden club enthusiasts, and I believe we will be energized and nurtured by being together – even with masks on.

*Dianne*

## Design of the Month

September’s design of the month is a traditional design with the use of an ornate vase with the plant material to be radiating from one point (Handbook for Flower Shows, 2017 Edition, pages 70-71).

For October, the design of the month will be a creative vertical line design, and this inspired design shows restraint in the amount of plant material and/or number of components used. Rather with this design, the emphasis is on the vertical rhythm or movement through the design.

Next Board Meeting-October 7, 2021 at 10 am

Next General Meeting-October 21, 2021 at 10 am

## Budget Report

Beginning Balance (June-August):

Receipts:

Expenses:

Ending Balance:



Joan Asboth invites RSGC members to a private “Table Top” sale on Saturday, October 2, 2021 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. There will be floral and gardening books, vases, glassware, bric-a-brac and other related items.



## In Remembrance



Our wonderful and talented club member, Matilda 'Tillie' Smithers, passed away on July 16, 2021.

In addition to being a keen gardener, as well as president of Rock Spring Garden Club from 1995-1996, Tillie was very dedicated to the Wounded Warriors Project, and active in Freedom Alliance and the hosting of Friday night dinners for military personnel and their families through that organization.

Club member Susan Scotti remembers one such dinner with Tillie: In May 2018, Tillie invited me to attend a dinner that she was sponsoring at Washington Golf & Country Club. Earlier in the week, she had said I could clip greens from her yard for the Mother's Day arrangements for the elementary school, which were planned for the same day as the dinner, and when I arrived to take the clippings, she invited me inside her home to chat and apologized for not being able to help me because of her back pain. During the course of our chat, Tillie learned that my husband had a military career and she thought I should be her guest at the dinner she was hosting. When I picked her up the evening of the dinner, I watched her move carefully because of her back pain, but with a smile, humor, and upbeat conversation throughout the entire evening. At the dinner, she spoke from a podium to the group, and it was obvious she had rapport and a bond with them from previous dinners. Her generosity of interest and sponsorship was much appreciated, and she will be missed by many in both the community and our garden club.



On March 3, 2021, Georga Shaw, a beloved Rock Spring Garden Club member, passed away. Georga was an avid and talented gardener, and as a member of the club, she enjoyed teaching elementary school students all about horticulture and the art of flower arranging. In memory of Georga, her family gifted a donation to the garden club, and the ad hoc committee of Sherry Foster and Susan Scotti have so far identified three ways to honor Georga through the generous gift to the club. In June 2021, two trees were planted and a small bench with a plaque with Georga's name was installed at the corner of Old Glebe & Military Roads.

Additionally, a scholarship will be set up through the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs for students in the commonwealth interested in horticulture and gardening. And, funds will be provided to the Mary Marshall Assisted Living community through the Senior Outreach Committee

which is collaborating with the staff and residents of the facility to identify

projects that best benefit the organization. The Rock Spring Garden Club is so pleased and honored to be able to do good work in honor of Georga's memory, and the ad hoc committee continues to identify additional organizations and activities that will be enriched in so many ways because of Georga Shaw.



Sweet Bay Magnolia



Rising Sun Redbud

# Committee Reports

## Horticulture

### Why We Use Botanical Nomenclature

By Christine Wegman

The reason we use botanical nomenclature to identify a plant is that it eliminates a lot of confusion.

I love to tell this story about my mother. She was a wonderful gardener, that enviable person who could make anything grow. She made beautiful gardens in such diverse climates as southeastern and western Australia, and the U.S. mid-Atlantic and Pacific coast. Mother was aware of the existence of botanical nomenclature, but she had no interest in it. The closest she came to applying it to a plant was the word “japonica” which she used rather indiscriminately for three different plants: camelia, pieris, and flowering quince. We weren’t always sure which one she meant. And that, of course, is precisely the reason why botanical nomenclature has become important. If we use it correctly we don’t have to wonder about which “japonica” we are referring to.



*Camellia japonica*

I still love the traditional common names for plants and I continue to use them along with the Latin names. I remember my Mother holding a snapdragon flower horizontally and pinching it to illustrate its resemblance to a snapping dragon. This charming analogy is utterly lost in its botanical name, *Antirrhinum majus*. But things were simpler in the good old days because they really were simpler.

The 19th century was a time when legendary European plant explorers discovered many new species of plants in Asia and introduced them into cultivation in Europe and America. Many new Asian discoveries were relatives of plants in the west. Native American azaleas, witch hazels, dogwoods and hibiscus – to name a few – all have East Asian counterparts. Specific nomenclature is needed to distinguish these different forms of the same plant.

In our own time, the amazing biological research that has led to new life saving pharmaceuticals also led to new and faster ways for breeders to develop and introduce new plants into the market. Hundreds (probably thousands) of new plant varieties, and even crosses between different plant species, have made their appearance. A good case in point is the wonderful Itoh hybrid peony, which produces the beautiful leaves and flowers of a tree peony on a perennial plant that is not subject to the vicissitudes of late spring frosts. The traditional common names are just not specific enough to properly identify the vast numbers of new plants and hybrids that exist. Hence the need for a more organized way to deal with the situation.



*Pieris japonica*

The system we use today was invented by Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist who lived in the 18th century. He used Latin names because Latin was the universal language of science and learning in Europe at the time, thus a plant name would be the same in any country. This was a tremendous advantage to the relatively small group of botanists and plant enthusiasts because everybody knew exactly what plant they were talking about, even though they lived in different countries and spoke different languages. That same advantage applies today. When you use the correct botanical name for plant identification, everybody knows exactly what plant you mean.

Plants are grouped into divisions that describe their characteristics. The system is hierarchical comprising three groups: family, genus and species. Family is the largest group, species the smallest and most specific. When we identify plants we generally only use the last two: genus and species. Hence, the term, binomial (or two names). So, my mother's "japonicas" become *Camellia japonica*, *Pieris japonica*, and *Chaenomeles japonica* (quince). The names are written in italics, or when handwritten they are underlined. Capitalize the name of the genus (*Camellia*) but not the species (*japonica*).

If you don't know the botanical name for a plant, it is easy to find on the internet. Just enter the phrase "botanical name for snapdragon" and it will give you the answer, *Antirrhinum majus*. This binomial name is the first part of a plant's proper identification. When you are entering a plant in a horticultural flower show 5 points are awarded for a "plant completely identified with genus, species, cultivar, as appropriate." It may only be 5 points, but it may well be the difference between a ribbon and not. And, plants that are not correctly identified are not eligible for an NGC Top Exhibitor award.

Next month I will write about hybrids and cultivars, and how they are noted in a plant's proper name.



***Chaenomeles japonica***

## Liaison

NGC Flower Show School Course I has been rescheduled from October 2021 to April 3-5, 2022 at Kenwood Country Club in Bethesda, MD.

The National Capital Dahlia Society will have their fall show on September 24-26, 2021 at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, MD. Connie Richards reports that usually at the closing of the show, which is at about 3pm on Sunday, there is a sale of blooms for \$1 each, so if you want some fabulous flowers to take home, time your attendance accordingly!

NCAGC District III meeting scheduled for Friday, September 17, 2021 is slated to begin at 9:00 am at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens' Atrium Building in Vienna, Virginia. The program begins at 10:00 am and will feature Bonnie McDaniel who is a chef, gardener, urban landscape designer and television and podcast host. Please bring your own snack/light lunch. Coffee and water will be provided. Masks and vaccination are required for attendance. It will be a wonderful program for club members!

Green Spring Gardens' Family Fall Festival will be on September 25, 2021, and activities include outdoor classes, silent auction, bake sale and a book sale. The Green Spring Extension Master Gardeners will offer demonstrations on composting and pruning as well as outdoor tours of gardens. Vendors will be selling a large variety of plants and other items. Grab a meal at the food truck and enjoy some musical entertainment. Admission is free.

The state level NCAGC fall meeting on Wednesday, September 29, 2021 will be held via Zoom. Sign-in details will be sent closer to the date.

Ayr Hill Garden Club is having a spring bulb sale, and orders can be placed online for pick up on a designated weekend date in October 2021 at the Vienna Farmers Market (see brochure below for details). If you have questions, contact Nancy Moats at [smoats5555@aol.com](mailto:smoats5555@aol.com)



**AYR HILL GARDEN CLUB 2021  
ONLINE  
SPRING BULB SALE**



(Click on the link below or scan the QR code)

<https://ahgcbulbsale.square.site/>

ORDER YOUR BULBS IN ADVANCE FOR THE BEST SELECTION!!

Bulbs may be picked up at our booth at the  
Vienna Farmers Market  
on Saturday October 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, or 30<sup>th</sup> from 8am-12pm

Please choose your pick-up day when ordering.

Other garden related items will also be available for purchase at our booth.

Vienna Farmers Market  
 120 Cherry Street SE  
 Vienna, VA 22180





## Senior Outreach

# The Senior Outreach Committee Kicks Off Its First Full On-Site Project at the Mary Marshall Assisted Living Residence on June 9, 2021

By Mary Kudless

After a long wait, the entire 2021 Senior Outreach Committee was able to engage with the residents and staff of Mary Marshall Assisted Living and plant a summer garden. Our goal was to work with the residents to plant herbs and cherry tomatoes, shrubs and a few planters with annuals. In addition to accomplishing this, we met with the chef to engage his cooperation with keeping the gardens watered, and he was excited about using the tomato and herb harvest in the culinary program.

A few residents came out to work with us and we hope to grow their participation in the coming year as we carry out monthly projects and field trips. Our approach will be a team of Rock Spring Garden Club members working under the tutelage of one leader member from this original committee group. We will cover that schedule and the opportunities that are available in the October issue of the newsletter.

Of more immediate interest, we will have a field trip with the necessary COVID-19 precautions to Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna, Virginia on the morning of Wednesday, September 29, 2021. All committee members are invited to participate. If you are interested, please give a call or send an email to Mary Kudless and AnnMarie Fay.

Committee Members for the 2021-2022 year include co-chairs AnnMarie Fay and Mary Kudless, as well as monthly leaders and the original members of Renee Bayes, Sheila Moore, Julie Wadsworth, Janice Haines, Dianne Simmons (our President, when time permits), and Jo Ella Samp (to assist with planting projects and apply Master Gardener knowledge and resources). New members include Joan Asboth, Pat Getz, Jody Goulden, Ann Kelly, Sharon Siems, Helen McMahon, and Terry Holmes.

Below are some photos from the June 9, 2021 visit culminating with a photo of the tomato and herb harvest from this past August.





## Women's Voting Rights Celebrated in District III Flower Show

By Kate Abrahams



The National Capital Area Garden Clubs' (NCAGC) District III presented a small standard NGC Flower Show in Vienna, VA on July 10-11, 2021. The Show was staged in downtown Vienna's historic Freeman Store and Museum on Church Street. The theme was "Votes for Women!" celebrating the

100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ratification of the nineteenth amendment.

The interesting staging at the venue included antique furniture and tables in a room filled with 1960s memorabilia. Colorful 1900 era political posters inspired the designs of the creative floral arrangements. The horticulture specimen exhibits featured native plants of different types.



The thirteen garden clubs within District III came together to complete various flower show tasks. Many thanks to all who contributed time, energy, knowledge and hospitality to the effort. Thea McGinnis represented RSGC by serving as Judges Chair. A pollinator garden outside Freeman Store and Museum contributed to the festivities with historical information via posters in front of the vibrant summer flowers.

## Dahlia Summer Show

By Kate Abrahams

The National Capital Dahlia Society (NCDS) held its Mid-Summer Show at the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood, Maryland on August 22, 2021. Club members Jo Ella Samp and Kate Abrahams visited the show and happily took home some dahlia blooms given away by the exhibitors. Connie Richards, as an active member of the NCDS, helped with the show, and often volunteers in the dahlia garden.



## Summer Time and County Fairs

By Thea McGinnis

Photos by Kate Abrahams

This summer was busy for our club's Flower Show (FS) judges! For the first time, Rock Spring Garden Club was invited to judge the Arlington County Fair's Horticultural Show that was held this past August. Charlotte Benjamin, who is a FS judge with Garden Club of Virginia, and Kate Abrahams, an NGC FS student judge, along with

Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, Molly Newling and Scarlett Swan, judged over

one hundred competitive horticulture, house plants and floral designs exhibited by members of the Arlington County community. Molly contacted us after the show to tell us how much THEY learned from judging with Charlotte and Kate, and they were very appreciative of the comments provided to the exhibitors.



Other club members also judged and exhibited in the NGC flower shows that were part of the Fredericksburg County Fair and the County Fair in

Manassas that were held in July and August 2021. NGC Accredited FS Judges Thea McGinnis, Connie Richards and Anita Brown all enjoyed judging and exhibiting in the fairs' shows. Each fair held two flower shows during each week of the fair. Flower shows in our area are just beginning again after a pandemic year, so the county fair flower shows were a real plus. And the communities really love to come to the shows. Bottom line – county fairs are just fun!





## Garden To Do This Month

By Maryam Zolecki

With the end of the month marking the official start of autumn, and with the lazy, hazy days of July and August behind us, September is a great month to get back into the hustle and bustle of garden maintenance by engaging in activities that signal a goodbye to summer.

- \* Near the end of the month, plant pansies and violas.
- \* Buy any bulbs you have your heart set on, but wait until cooler weather to plant them.
- \* Start a salad garden by sowing seeds to grow lettuce, spinach, arugula and radishes.
- \* Add mulch by replenishing areas where it has broken down and looks ugly.
- \* If you have an edible garden, clean it up by pulling out the spent plants. Pick the last of your vegetables and herbs, and then freeze, pickle, jam, or dry them. If you have an abundance of tomatoes, make tomato paste (see my recipe)!
- \* Gather up the fallen twigs and branches and store for those cooler weather fires.
- \* Consider reseeding any bare patches in the lawn.
- \* Even if you use the grill all year long, it's great time to clean the grill and give it a tune-up after the heavy summer use.
- \* Get outside, go for a walk and check out all the beautiful gardens in your neighborhood!

## Recipe: Tomato Paste

12 pounds tomatoes & 2 tablespoons salt

Prep time is about 45 minutes, and cooking time is about 1.5 to 2 hours.

Bring a large pot of water to a soft boil.

In the meantime, make cross slashes on the bottom of the tomatoes with a paring knife (to make them easier to peel) and drop the tomatoes in the pot for about ten seconds once the water is up to temperature (you may need to do this in batches). Remove the tomatoes from the water and "shock" them in an ice-bath. Using a paring knife, peel the skin off tomatoes, and with a food mill, seed and puree your batch (or squeeze and push through a sieve).

Place the pureed tomatoes in a large heavy bottomed pot, add 1 tablespoon salt, and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to low and cook for about one hour, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon.

Add another tablespoon of salt and continue cooking over medium low heat until a paste consistency is achieved.

Divide in clean, airtight containers, and store in a cool and dark place for use throughout the next months.

## Autumn Equinox

By Maryam Zolecki

In the northern hemisphere, the fall equinox, which this year falls on September 22, 2021, marks the first day of fall (autumn). On the first day of fall, the sun is directly above the equator and the hours of day and night are nearly equal. Fall blooming perennials, such as asters, mums, and sedums, are showing their colors, and garden chores mostly include cleaning in preparation for the colder months and prepping for the spring and summer blooms. This time of year is known for many harvest celebrations, and it is no surprise that the full moon closest to the autumn equinox is called the Harvest Moon. While opulent shades of red and orange are popular in fall flower designs, subtler colors of yellows, greens, and pale pinks make great choices for fall arrangements. It is also the time when the Rock Spring Garden Club begins anew with a full year of programs and activities. How will you celebrate the arrival of the new season?





## Summer Trips Photo Gallery

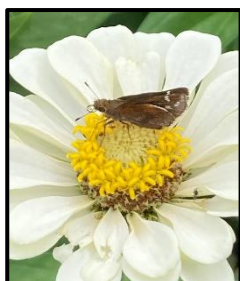


Kate Abrahams – Japanese Friendship Garden in San Diego celebrating San Diego's friendship with sister city Yokohama, Japan.



Kate Abrahams – Dahlia and pollinator gardens of the National Capital Dahlia Society at Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood, MD.

**A DAHLIA GARDEN**  
FURNISHED BY THE  
NATIONAL CAPITAL DAHLIA SOCIETY



*Epilobium angustifolia* - California fuschia



*Machaeranthera canescens* - Hoary aster



*Pinus longaeva* - Bristlecone pine



*Solidago canadensis* - Canadian goldenrod



*Cirsium undulatum* - Wavyleaf thistle

Dianne Simmons – Adventures in southwestern USA and flowers found in the arid climate of that region with the exception of the thistle below found in eastern Kansas.



## Photo Gallery



Thanks to her fellow garden club member Connie Richards, Susan Scotti's first experience with a tuber was a success as exhibited by this Rock Star dahlia.



Connie Richards has been spending much time this summer raising her own dahlias as well as working in the National Capital Dahlia Society's demonstration garden in Derwood, MD & helping friends who purchased tubers in the spring. Dahlias have the largest genome of any flower which may be why there are so many different kinds. The large dinner plate types are undoubtedly the showiest but sometimes it is the smaller ones that win multiple prizes in a show.



Monarch butterfly enjoying the Black Adder hummingbird mint (*Agastache 'Black Adder'*) in Maryam Zolecki's garden.



Two beauties, a Blushing or Red-leaf philodendron (left) and Rex begonia (above) on George Ruppert's deck.

Dahlias showing off their range at the National Capital Dahlia Society's summer show submitted by Kate Abrahams.

