

THE GARDENZETTE



Rock Spring Garden Club
Arlington, Virginia
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

OFFICERS

President
Dianne Simmons

Vice President
Carolyn Barone

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Newsletter Editor
Maryam Zolecki



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GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 10:00 am
Little Falls Presbyterian Church, Arlington, VA

Guests and potential new members with an interest in gardening, floral design, horticulture and community service activities are always welcome and are asked to RSVP to rockspringgardenclub@gmail.com in order to attend.



The program for this month is all about "Urban Beekeeping and Sustainable Agriculture" with a focus on creating a social enterprise aimed at developing honeybee habitats in both rural and urban settings. The speaker, Brad Garmon, is the owner and chief apiarist of Commonwealth Bee Company in Arlington, Virginia. Brad is an adjunct professor of biology at Marymount

University teaching bee biology and research electives. His company provides locally raised honeybees, honey and wax products, and they conduct beekeeper support services and colony extraction in the Washington, D.C. area.



President's Message



The birds are gathering at my feeders, the fringe tree is a popular roost as it begins to flower and my adjacent garden is showing a lot of promise. Spring has arrived. Everything is waking up from winter and inviting us to go outside and nurture the new life sprouting from the ground

and the limbs above. This is what I love about living on the East Coast – four distinct seasons. And the green!

Last month, Rod and I took a road trip with friends to southwest Texas to visit their daughter, Annie, who is a Park Service Ranger at Big Bend National Park. After four hard days of driving (two of them just in Texas), we arrived at the 810,000-acre park very ready to get out of the car and hike some of the 150 miles of trails over relatively flat terrain and a few trails leading us through the mountains. This is a hardscrabble part of our country – dry, underpopulated, and poor. Once an area offering riches from quicksilver mining, the area is now dusted with ghost towns – remnants of an adobe/rock existence eked out by intrepid pioneers longing for adventure with some economic security. In fact, we stayed in “casitas” in one such town – Terlingua Ghost Town – which now is a thriving little hub of campers, BBQ trucks and one real restaurant where the variety of margaritas seemed limitless. People living there get by on very little. In fact, we experienced one such hardship when the area – 1,000 square miles – lost electricity for twelve hours one night. This is a frequent occurrence, and usually the outage has occurred somewhere along the power line going through the park.

There is such beauty in this dusty dry region: large avian raptors, roadrunners, javelinas, and a colorful terrain of beiges, reds, and browns. The spring brings miles of wildflowers – many of rare native species – that we were too early to witness. And, the night sky is indescribable. We here on the East Coast have no idea what shines down from above.

But, there is very little green, or rather what I mean, the brilliant hues of greens we have here. Greens inspire me, as do the seasons. Spring brings hope and reminds us that nothing is constant. Every season brings change, and this season we can celebrate the freedom to enjoy each other again as

we come out of two years of pandemic isolation. We will come out of this hardship changed in ways we cannot yet fathom. As we adjust, however, I believe it is important that we celebrate our time in our club in person for the April meeting. And, I invite everyone to turn in your membership forms and volunteer for committee assignments. We've lost a few members for various and understandable reasons. But, in community we can delight in creating and nurturing and reaching others in need.

Dianne

Design of the Month

By Anita Brown

The design for this month is an Angular Design, which is a type of Creative Design emphasizing strong angles that may be acute, obtuse, reflex, or right angles, or a combination of angles. This design can be petite or larger in size. Just a reminder that Creative Designs are eclectic in approach, borrowing from different styles and/or periods to create new concepts and forms. They show restraint in the amount of plant materials and/or number of components used, and use plant materials, non-traditional container(s) with multiple openings, and unconventional, man-made objects not normally associated with floral design.



Budget Report

Beginning Balance:

Receipts:

Expenses:

Ending Balance:

Next Board Meeting – May 5, 2022 at 10 am

No General Meeting Next Month

Committee Reports

Horticulture

Redbuds (*Cercis canadensis*)

By Christine Wegman

As I write this article, our native eastern redbuds, *Cercis canadensis*, are at their peak of bloom. It is easy to spot their bright magenta blooms as one drives along Virginia highways. They make a glorious spring statement, especially when seen with yellow daffodils or forsythia. This beautiful tree is native to eastern North America, as far west as Oklahoma (where it is the official state tree), as far north as Ontario, and as far south as Mexico. Although there are other species of redbud, the eastern redbud is arguably the most



beautiful. It is what I like to call a four-season tree, that is one that looks good in every season. While its form is not as naturally graceful as the native dogwood, with careful pruning it develops a shape that looks beautiful even during winter.



Eastern redbuds grow to about 20 feet high and 15 feet wide, a useful size for suburban lots. The blooms emerge all along the stems of the trees before the tree leaves out. As the blooms fade, pretty heart-shaped leaves emerge in colors of reddish purple, green or yellow, fading by summer to green. Fall

color is light yellow, occasionally orange. Redbud is a short-lived tree, and it is rare to find one more than 20 years old. It is susceptible to tree canker, which can develop if the tree is injured. Redbud has a tap root, and so does not take to transplantation. Bloom color varies from light pink to deep magenta, and there are even a few white varieties.



Breeders have focused a great deal of effort on leaf color, and there are a number of varieties that sport emergent red or yellow leaves. There are dozens of named varieties, but only a fraction of these are readily available in nurseries. 'Forest Pansy' and 'Burgundy Hearts' are two popular red-leaved varieties. They have dark reddish-purple leaves that fade to green as the weather gets hot. 'Hearts of Gold', pictured above, is an attractive cultivar whose leaves emerge yellow, then fade to chartreuse, and finally to green.



There are a few varieties of weeping redbud. These trees are smaller than the standard, growing to about 8 feet. They are beautiful in and out of bloom and make a good focal point for a small garden. 'Lavender Twist' and 'Ruby Falls', with red emergent foliage (both pictured), are two popular weeping varieties.

Cercis canadensis is a good choice for gardeners in this area, both for its beauty and its diminutive size. Because its longevity depends on its health, it is important to provide a good site in full sun or part shade, with well-drained soil and sufficient water in times of drought. If those basic needs are met, this beautiful native tree can add beauty to every season in the garden.

Liaison

National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc. will be hosting an NGC Standard Flower Show at the US National Arboretum. The event is free and open to the public on Friday, April 22, 2022 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, and on Saturday, April 23, 2022 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The flower show coincides with Earth Day, and is aptly titled, Nurturing Earth.

Green Spring's annual Spring Garden Day—The Big Plant Sale, will take place from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on Saturday, May 14, 2022. Local garden vendors descend on Green Spring Gardens with beautiful and unusual plants to fill your spring gardening needs. Master Gardeners will be on hand to help with plant selection and offer gardening advice and the always popular FROGS Bake Sale will tempt you with treats. Proceeds help to support Green Spring Gardens.

Save-the-Date: The Great Falls Garden Club will host a tour of eight gardens in Great Falls, Virginia on Saturday, June 4, 2022 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Gardens will include a large cutting garden, a five acre professionally landscaped home, and a significant Bonsai collection. Tickets will be \$30.00 per person and registration will be coming soon.

Ways and Means

By Sheila Moore

Ways and Means will have its last sale of the year at our April 2022 general meeting. If you have things to donate, please bring them to this meeting and price them to sell. Just a reminder that any items that do not sell will be donated to the Hospice Thrift Store (or you may reclaim them).

Check out this article shared by Julie Williams: The Grumpy Gardener's Guide to Backyard Birds - <https://bit.ly/3qRUkeK>

The Grumpy Gardener is a blog by Southern Living magazine editor Steve Bender. Check out their website for regular humorous postings.



Garden To Do This Month

By Maryam Zolecki

Depending on the year, spring can be a short season in our region. Sometimes the cold weather sticks around until the end of March delaying the warmth for the season, or it can turn hot too fast in May prematurely transitioning us into summer. April on the other hand can typically be relied upon to bring us the best of spring weather with those just right warm days, and not too cold nights.

- * Plant new perennials, and divide old perennials as needed.
- * This is your last chance to plant trees and shrubs without risking the chance that they will have to deal with hot weather before they become established.
- * Once nighttime temperatures consistently stay above 55 degrees Fahrenheit, plant and/or transplant annuals. If you've not sown seeds yet, start them now: Petunias, zinnias, marigolds, purple coneflowers and any other seasonal flowers you fancy in your flowerbeds.
- * After cleaning up your garden and doing your first lawn maintenance, you need to do some edging. This allows you to clearly divide the flower beds, the lawn, and the garden. Beyond aesthetics, edging also separates the soil, mulch, and rocks.
- * Clean up those winter remnants, continue to mulch, and pull out weeds continuously throughout the month before these spreaders to go seed.

May the Road Rise up to Meet You Small Standard Flower Show

By Anita Brown, Chair of Flower Show



Using the words of one of our judges, Rock Spring Garden Club really “strutted our Irish” on Saint Patrick’s Day and showed everyone how our club continues to put on very successful flower shows! Many thanks go to Thea McGinnis who wrote a very clever Irish-inspired Schedule, and to Renee Bayes and Janice Haines for making sure our theme was explicitly carried out to the hilt!

While a lot of work goes into preparing for a flower show, those whose work on the day of the show to make sure every specimen or design is in its proper place are to be commended. Special recognition goes to Christine Wegman and Jo Ella Samp for handling over 90 horticultural specimens in a very efficient and timely manner. Certainly you merit a special thank you for your expertise and hard work. Thanks to our efficient tabulators, Joan Hession, Mary Garnett and Pat Getz. I am glad to say our show had 31 exhibitors for horticulture and design (which was about 62% of our active membership) and 110 exhibits! Kudos go to Charlotte Benjamin for winning the Tricolor Award for her outstanding creative teacup design, and to George Ruppert for winning the highest award in horticulture – the Award of Horticultural Excellence. I think perhaps George is the first male member of our club to receive such an honor in a flower show. And, how about our members who had never before won a blue ribbon. Congratulations to Maryam Zolecki who won the blue ribbon and Novice award for her abstracted creative design, and to Joan Asboth who won both awards for her elegant traditional design.

As you know, having a flower show, whether small or large, requires a lot of work of club members. Certainly the judges appreciate this, and every one of them gave our club a number of accolades with almost all of them saying our flower show was “outstanding.”

I want to thank all of you – the placement and hospitality members, the clerks Ann Lunson (an Emeritus member) and Kate Abrahams, and others I might have overlooked – for all your time and hard work. Of course, not everything in the show was perfect, however, small things happen in every endeavor of this kind, and we learn from these mistakes. Please feel free to let me have your comments if you have any feedback over anything you think should be corrected in a future show.



March Meeting Recap

The program for March 2022 was an informative and beneficial presentation about the care of orchids with Carol Allen. Carol encouraged us to hold on to our purchased orchids after they lose that first bloom as they are not difficult to grow and easy to rebloom. The most important factors are light (2-3 hours of direct light in the window sill), proper watering, and repotting.

Just a reminder to send in your membership renewal application to Carolyn Barone, reimbursement forms to Sherry Foster, and any committee chair interest to Dianne Simmons.

Running in conjunction with the March 2022 meeting was Rock Spring Garden Club's Small Standard Flower Show. The general chair, Anita Brown, and all members who helped with classification, tabulation, placement, clerking, staging, signage, set up, and breakdown deserve absolute praise, commendation, and applause for a successful and fun flower show. And, thank you to all club members who provided design entries and horticulture specimens.

May the Road Rise Up to Meet You An NGC Small Standard Flower Show Presented by Rock Spring Garden Club

Division I. Horticulture





Division II. Design
Section A. Class 1. Irish Stew – A Traditional Mass Design using
all fresh plant material.



Division II. Design
Section A. Class 2. The Wee Folk – A Petite
Design staged in a tea cup and saucer.



Division II. Design
Section A. Class 3. Irish Coffee – A
breakfast tray for one.



Division II. Design
Section A. Class 4. Wearing of the Green – A
Creative Design using all fresh green plant material.



Photo Gallery



DUKE GARDENS, DURHAM, NC

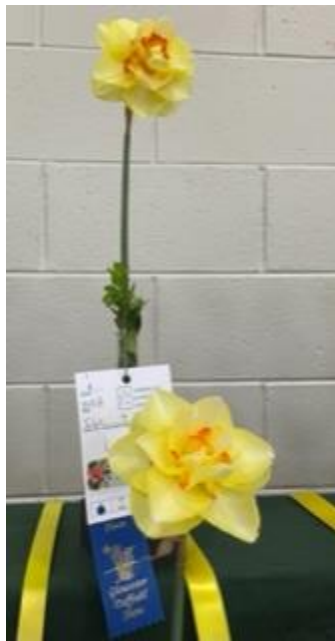


Kate Abrahams was recently in NC taking a Flower Show School course and visited this garden full of camellias, helleborus and magnolia.

Connie Richards and Thea McGinnis participated in the Daffodil Festival held April 2-3, 2022 in Gloucester, Virginia. Both Connie and Thea won blue ribbons, and shared pictures of the lovely design entries at the show that featured an emphasis on daffodils as plant material.



Thea's
blue ribbon winner



Connie's
blue ribbon winner



Connie's Novice Collection of 5



George Ruppert's amaryllis and a geranium that just bloomed after growing on his porch all winter.

Maryam Zolecki hiking amongst the Virginia bluebells carpeting the early spring forest at Riverbend Park in Great Falls, Virginia.





Dianne Simmons' trip to Big Bend National Park, TX. Encompassing the entire Chisos mountain range and a large swath of the Chihuahuan Desert, the park protects more than 1,200 species of plants, more than 450 species of birds, 56 species of reptiles, and 75 species of mammals.





Picture shared by AnnMarie Fay after a fascinating discussion during the March 2022 program about growing orchids in trees!



George Ruppert with his display of flower show awards. Included is his magnificent horticulture specimen which was the winner of the Award of Horticultural Excellence - the highest award in horticulture at RSGC's Small Standard Flower Show held in March 2022.



Julie Williams recently created designs for the engagement party of a friend: It was so much fun to plan and do! I made 12 designs for the entire house.



Virginia bluebell, woodland phlox, and camellia blooming in Renee Bayes' garden.

