

# 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

## OFFICERS

President  
Dianne Simmons

Vice President  
Carolyn Barone

Secretary  
Jane Robinson

Treasurer  
Sherry Foster

Newsletter Editor  
Maryam Zolecki



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On Thursday, October 20, 2022, Rock Spring Garden Club members will be visiting **Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens**. We will meet at 9:15am, and depart no later than 9:30am via carpool from Little Falls Presbyterian Church, 6025 Little Falls Road, Arlington, VA to **Hillwood in Washington, DC**. Since we are a group of more than thirty, we can split our group and take a garden docent tour, or begin with a docent led tour of Mrs. Post's home. Then we can head over to the **Grace of Monaco: Princess in Dior exhibition**.



Our group tour tickets are provided by Rock Spring Garden Club. After the tour, lunch is on your own at Hillwood Café and/or depart with your carpool companions at your leisure. Let's hope for beautiful fall weather, but should the weather be iffy,

please dress appropriately and bring an umbrella. The walk around is relatively easy EXCEPT for the Japanese Garden. Do be cautious

If you haven't RSVP'd, please email Renee Bayes.



## President's Message



Autumn is here, and as I've said before, this is my favorite season of the year. Fall revives me after the long hot summer. My husband and I, joined by our son and his girlfriend, just returned from what has become a family tradition

to spend some time on Cape Cod. By the time we returned Saturday, the trees were beginning to change their leaves, the ocean was too cold to swim in, and the fall asters and seaside goldenrod were in their glory. Walking many beaches on the bay side and the Atlantic side gave me plenty of time to commune with the gulls, look for shells and beach glass and rejuvenate.

One recurring thread of thought that accompanied me on my walks was how we continue to thrive during a sea of change. Our Board met last Thursday, and a major issue was how to grow our club after many members changed their status from active to sustaining or emeritus. We worry about the smaller number of active voting members, but we are welcoming new members despite the effect of the pandemic on our personal lives, which naturally caused many to redirect personal priorities to travel, rest, and new adventures. And, the Board – all of us, actually - will be seeking new members this year by personal appeal to friends and neighbors and by membership drive efforts that will involve us all. Our first effort at “recruitment” will be at our pumpkin sale scheduled for November 22, 2022.

A new season changes the life of our beloved plants with which we create arrangements and augment our gardens. We adapt by

incorporating the flora of the season – pumpkins, dried thistles, cattails evergreens, etc. We witness this in the monthly floral design challenges offered us by the Show committee during the fall and winter months. And this season, perhaps the first one in which we feel we are safe to be together after the pandemic, offers opportunities to us all in directing our activities and as an organization seeking new members. Life is one long, necessary process of adaptation and fulfilment. Would we want it any other way?

*Dianne*

Next Board Meeting – November 3, 2022 at 10 am  
Next General Meeting – November 17, 2022 at 10 am

### Budget Report

Beginning Balance: \$  
Receipts: \$  
Expenses: \$  
Ending Balance: \$



Joan Asboth has a new address:



## Committee Reports

### Horticulture

## Notes for a Fall Garden – Part 2: Flowers

By Christine Wegman

Last month I wrote about my favorite shrubs and small trees that have good fall color. This month I will write about flowers that bloom in October. It's October 3, 2022 as I write, and there are actually quite a lot of flowers still blooming. One thing that all autumn blooming flowers have in common is a need for sun, except cyclamen, which is happiest under trees, and anemone, which like part shade.

**Late summer bloomers** that can last into fall include dahlias, grasses and sunflowers. Dahlias (pictured at right with grasses and asters) will bloom both in late summer and in fall, depending on how they are pruned. If they are held back by pinching they can provide a beautiful display this late in the year, but their blooms are highly susceptible to a snap frost and can be attractive to deer. Grass blooms will usually last into October and are very attractive paired with nandina, whose leaves redden with the cool weather. Perennial sunflowers, or *helianthus*, come in many varieties and sizes and can last into the middle of October. Their bright yellow flowers are very welcome as other flowers fade away, and many varieties are native.



There are four **autumn blooming bulbs** that are available in nurseries or from mail-order suppliers. All are small at 4-6 inches high, and they are all often called autumn crocus, but only one is actually a crocus. These are *colchicum*, looking very much like crocus with lavender tips and white centers; *sternbergia lutea*, (pictured) with bright yellow little flowers, also called autumn daffodil, and liking alkaline soil; saffron crocus with its lavender flowers and red saffron bearing stigma; and autumn blooming cyclamen. Crocus and cyclamen are actually corms, or bulb like growths on roots, but are usually classified with bulbs.

**Pansies** planted in fall will give a beautiful show of color until a hard frost, when they will disappear and re-emerge in late winter to bloom until it gets hot. They come in a great variety of colors and are actually perennials, but do not usually survive our hot summers. Alas, they are somewhat attractive to deer.

**Japanese anemone** (*A. hupehensis*, *A. hybrida*, *A. tomentosa*, and *A. vitifolia*) (pictured right) are native to China, and these flowers have been in cultivation for centuries and have a long, 6-8 week bloom time. Fall blooming anemones can be white or pink, single or double. They grow to about 3 feet and like moist soil and light shade. They have pretty foliage and make a charming display. In good conditions they will multiply once established to form drifts.



**Asters** come in almost any shade of pink and purple, as well as white. They range in size from 6 inches to 6 feet. Some of the taller ones can look a bit weedy, but breeders have introduced many compact varieties with larger flowers that make a beautiful show. One variety of aster, *Aster novae angliae* or New England aster, is native to this area. An old-fashioned and easy way of pruning asters is to let them sprawl until just after July 4<sup>th</sup> and then cut them back to about 6 inches. They will come back bushy and set buds for a nice fall show. They are deer resistant, but the rabbits like them.



**Nippon or Montauk daisies** (*Nipponanthemum nipponicum*) used to be classified as chrysanthemums, and are culturally similar to them. They have single white daisy like flowers with yellow centers and their foliage is quite attractive even without the flowers. They can grow to 3 feet and get leggy, but if you cut them back they will become very attractive and bushy.

The real floral backbone of the fall blooming garden are **chrysanthemums**. These hardy perennials are often treated like annuals, and it is easy to find large, well-grown plants in any nursery or grocery store and pop them into an available space in the garden for a splash of color. Unlike asters they come in in burgundy, orange, yellow and light green, as well as pinks, purples and white. My favorite chrysanthemum is the 'Sheffield Pink', or Sheffield daisy. Although not as splashy as most garden mums, I love its single apricot pink flowers with yellow centers and its slightly grey-green foliage that looks pretty even without the flowers. But there is more to chrysanthemums than what we like to call garden mums. Native to Asia, the chrysanthemum has been cultivated for centuries and is an iconic flower in Japanese culture.

Many large and unusual varieties are especially prized and take much skill to grow.

## Senior Outreach

### Good Thymes

By Carol Froehlich



Our committee met with the residents at Mary Marshall Assisted Living for an immersive sensory experience about herbs. The herbs explored were basil, parsley, oregano, and thyme. Each resident was given a sample of the herb to taste, smell and feel. While providing feedback about their experience, they were introduced to how the herb is used in cooking common meals today and how their chef is probably using these very herbs in preparing their meals. We also talked about medicinal uses of these herbs and some historical facts, including that oregano is in the mint family, thyme is full of Vitamin C and the Romans used it to treat shyness, and basil use in treating skin infections. The residents were engaged and enjoyed exploring the herbs.

Once the four herbs were fully explored, Mary Kudless then began to make pesto using two of the herbs that were highlighted today: basil and parsley. She taught the residents about the ingredients of pesto, the steps for making it, and how and when it is traditionally eaten. Once completed, the residents were served the pesto on a baguette slice, which they seemed to enjoy.



The program concluded with the residents observing the construction of their very own herb garden to be kept on their windowsill. They learned the steps in preparing the container by making sure there is proper drainage holes, and that gravel is put down. They then saw how the dirt is placed down to create a welcome layer for the plants to rest upon. Next, we talked about giving the plants a gentle squeeze in their containers to help gently coax them out. They saw how they should be placed with room between them to allow for growth. The residents were encouraged to visit their herbs and check up on them. We hope they will ask their chef which herbs are being used in their meals, and perhaps will even pull off a sprig or two to enjoy as they pass by.

## Membership

### Membership Forms

By Carolyn Barone, Membership Chair

Membership forms are now accessible through our Rock Spring Garden Club Library. The forms will also be available at each of the general meetings for those who would like a physical copy. I am anticipating a banner year for new members. So, pick up a form to have on hand and spread the word!

## Liaison

Old Dominion Chrysanthemum Society is hosting a Chrysanthemum Show, Ikebana Exhibition and Flower Show at James Lee Community Center (2855 Annandale Road Falls Church, Virginia 22042). The event will be held October 29-30, 2022, Saturday from 1:00pm to 5:00pm and Sunday from 10:00am-2:00. Several members of Rock Spring Garden Club will be doing designs! So, stop by and enjoy the show!

## Show

### Judge Notes

By Thea McGinnis

I had the privilege of judging September's monthly design and horticulture exhibits. Well done, exhibitors! We do these monthly challenges for educational purposes and make them so that they, in many ways, simulate an NGC standard flower show. For Horticulture, on your cards **please remember to underline your botanical nomenclature** - the genus and species of your exhibit. And include the cultivar if that information is available to you. In our Club's yearbook, there are a few pages devoted to how we fill out our Horticulture entry card, so be sure to check the yearbook for how to do this if you aren't sure. For Design, be sure to use a 3x5 index card to list all your fresh plant material. Common names are acceptable. For example, Hosta or Geranium is fine if you don't have the Latin name or cultivar available.

# Floral Pumpkin Sale

By Maryam Zolecki



With the first days of autumn underway and reminders of cooler weather harvests all around, it is again that wonderful time of the year to begin planning for our annual floral pumpkin sale! Please mark your calendars for November 22, 2022, and as the date indicates, the sale will be held on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving at the home of club member Mary Lunger (4629 N 32<sup>nd</sup> Road, Arlington, VA 22207). The hours of the sale will be from 4:00pm to 7:00pm, and as with last year, we will make our own pumpkins at home and then deliver them on the day of the sale to Mary Lunger's garage. We hope to have around sixty (60) floral pumpkin arrangements, and I have been told that in the past, the best sellers are the medium-sized and groups of small pumpkins/gourds, and while some people prefer the traditional orange pumpkins, the white, green and variegated colors are very popular. A few people may make an arrangement in an

alternative container, and please let me know if you would like to take on this option. We would ask participating members to make two pumpkins, or perhaps three minis for a different centerpiece option. Remember, your contributions will count as one credit toward the floral design requirement for the year. Included below are tips from club member Renee Bayes on pumpkin preparation and care, as well as suggestions for conditioning flowers and greens. There will be a pumpkin floral arrangement workshop on Sunday, November 20, 2022 at the home of club president Dianne Simmons (details to be shared at a later date).

Please consider helping out with this fun, creative fundraiser! There will be a signup sheet at the October field trip (for both the field trip and workshop), and alternatively, you may send me an email to sign up to participate. Your help is also needed to spread the word about this event, and there will be a flyer emailed shortly to members for distribution to friends, family, neighbors, and their community. I will be serving as the chair for this event this year, and please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or suggestions. Many thanks, in advance!

## PUMPKIN CARE AND PREPARATION

By Renee Bayes

Purchase your pumpkins prior to Halloween since after Halloween, pumpkins are scarce.

Purchase medium to small size pumpkins in various colors – not just orange. There are many varieties that make interesting floral designs. Large pumpkins tend to be too heavy.

Keep your pumpkins in a dry, cool, and dark area, such as a basement or garage. Some pumpkins also do well in a refrigerator.

Cut and clean your pumpkin the day before you plan to design. This timeframe will give your pumpkin time to dry out, which will cut down on bacterial growth.

Soak your cut Oasis no longer than 10-15 minutes since prolonged soaking will cause the Oasis to disintegrate when flower stems are inserted. If you choose to use chicken wire as part of your mechanics, you will still need to use a waterproof receptacle for your flowers & greens.

**DO NOT PLACE SOAKED OASIS INSIDE THE PUMPKIN WITHOUT A CONTAINER!!!!!!**  
Any moisture inside the pumpkin will lead to growth of bacteria.

Choose any waterproof container (i.e., plastic) that will fit inside your pumpkin and place Oasis or chicken wire inside the container. Placing the mechanics into a container will eliminate a water source inside the pumpkin, preventing the buildup of bacteria and early pumpkin rot.

Flowers to consider for longevity include carnations, chrysanthemums, alstroemeria, cockscomb, succulents, dried pods, zinnias, Asiatic lilies, solidago, orchids, thistles, lisianthus, Queen Anne's lace, sedums, billy balls, dusty miller, proteas and other tropicals-just to name a few. Hydrangeas tend to wilt and roses do not last long.

Flowers may be purchased at florists, farmers markets, and grocery stores, or your own backyard.

## CONDITIONING FLOWERS AND GREENS

By Renee Bayes

When purchasing flowers, do not buy flowers or greens with drooping heads or yellow leaves.

After purchase, strip all leaves from the bottom of stems (any foliage that will be below the water line in design). Foliage below the waterline may cause bacteria to form, which will lead to shortening the life of your flowers.

Recut stems with a sharp angle cut, using a knife or floral scissors so as to not leave jagged edges that could lead to stem decay. An angled cut will allow a larger surface area for water absorption and prevent the stems of flowers and greens from sitting flat in the container blocking water absorption.

Place flowers and greens into a clean bucket of approximately 4 inches of tepid water. Mix 1 package of floral food into the bucket. Floral food packages can be found at stores where flowers are sold and are usually included with flower bunches. The floral food helps prevent bacterial growth and gives added nutrients to the flowers for longevity. Place the bucket in a cool, dry area. Give flowers at least 4-6 hours or ideally overnight to rehydrate.

After designing your arrangement, do not place the design in your refrigerator. A household refrigerator is kept much colder than a florist cooler. In a regular refrigerator, most flowers are sensitive to ethylene gas, a gas that fruits and vegetables emit. Place your design in a cool area of your home or garage until final placement.

## September Meeting Recap

The first meeting of the 2022-2023 garden club year set the tone for what is sure to be a fresh, inspired, and exceptional next few months. At the general meeting, updates on committee activities were shared, and if you notice a committee short on hands, please consider contacting the chair(s) to see how you can be of help. And, two new members were welcomed to the club!

For the program, VFGC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and NGC Accredited Life Judge Kathy Ward showcased botanical works of art to inspire our creativity and craftiness with fresh and dried plant material. Her designs were magnificent!

The horticulture and show tables were filled with beautiful specimens and designs, respectively. And, a delicious lunch capped off the meeting. It was nice to see the garden club year start off with so much enthusiasm and participation.



Before 2007, there were four divisions - Horticulture, Design, Education, and Youth/Sponsored. The 2007 edition of the handbook introduced a new division - Botanical Arts. Botanical Arts was added to allow additional opportunities for exhibiting and creativity.

There are four categories of Botanical Arts: Horticulture, Design, Artistic Craft (jewelry/ornamental accessories, wearable apparel, decorations, etc.), and Photography.



Vice President Carolyn Barone with new member Cheryl Atkinson



Vice President Carolyn Barone with new member Mary Sliwa

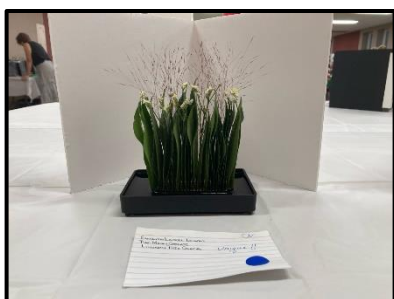
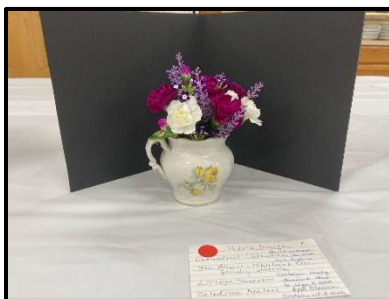
A big welcome to our two new members as we kick off the 2022-2023 Membership Year!!

Cheryl Atkinson has lived and gardened in Northern Virginia for almost 50 years, from her small patio in Fairlington to their home now in McLean. She enjoys landscape design as well as gardening and floral arranging. She has pursued these interests through Northern Virginia Community College and looks forward to expanding her knowledge through our Club, learning from the expertise of our members. Her interest in the Club came from the internet.

A recent transplant to the area from Pittsburgh last year, Mary Sliwa and her husband enjoyed tending to their property filled with perennials, shrubs and even deer. They moved to the area to be near their daughter and family in Arlington. After her husband's unexpected passing this year, Mary is looking forward to expanding her gardening and floral arranging skills through our Club as well as meeting new friends and members. She was introduced to our Club through Jane Robinson, a neighbor of Mary's daughter.

I know everyone will take Cheryl and Mary under their wings and help them flourish as Club members. Welcome, Cheryl and Mary!

Carolyn Barone, Membership Chair



**Petite Design**

A traditional or creative design, no more than eight inches in height, using a ten inch staging panel provided by the Show Committee.



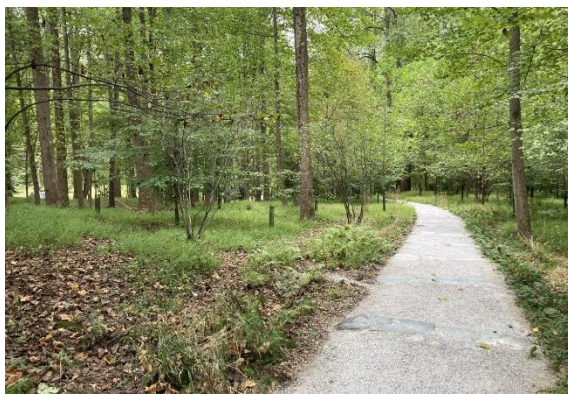


# Photo Gallery

While in San Francisco visiting my daughter, I came across this magnificent dahlia garden in Golden Gate Park in California. ~ Sharon Siems



Glenstone Museum in Potomac, Maryland where nearly 300 acres of landscape is fully integrated with the architecture and art. The landscape includes paths, trails, streams, meadows, forests and outdoor sculptures throughout the grounds. ~ Maryam Zolecki



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National Capital Dahlia Society (NCDS) hosted the 2022 National Dahlia Show in Reston, Virginia on September 22-25, 2022.



George Ruppert's garden with blooming purple cleome (spider flowers) standing tall



To celebrate Mental Health Awareness Week in Montgomery County Public Schools, students at Herbert Hoover Middle School (where Maryam Zolecki works) participated in a flower arrangement activity held during their lunch periods. According to recent studies, keeping flowers around improves people's moods and reduces stress-related depression, and flowers also increase positive energy levels and help people feel secure and relaxed.

