

# 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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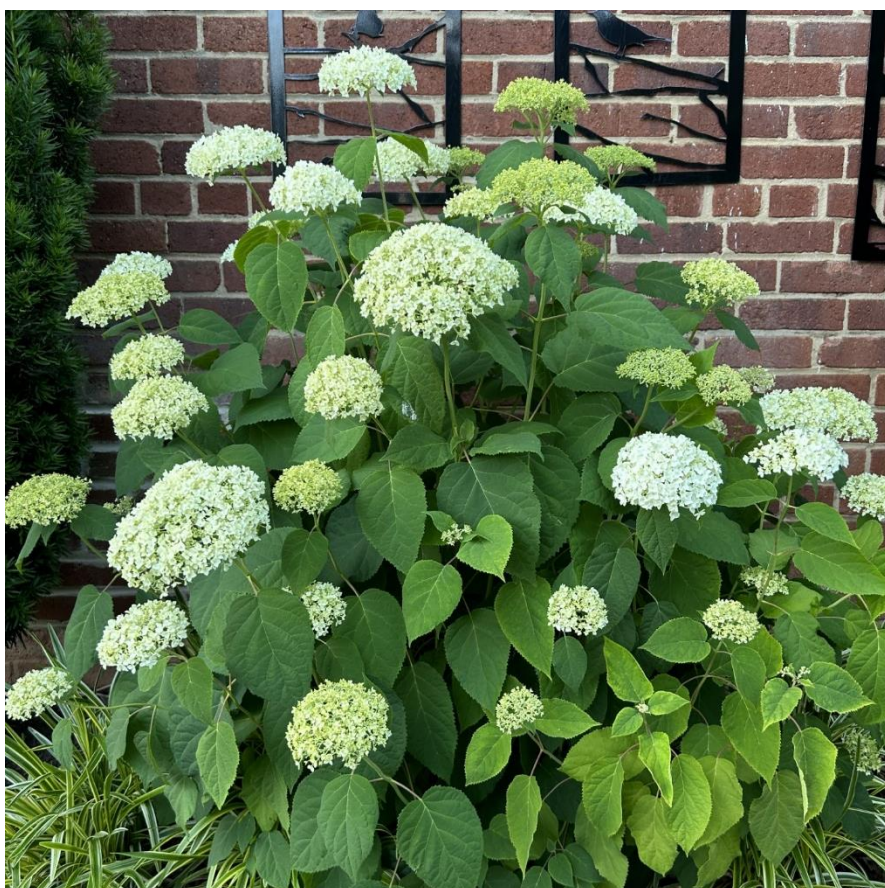
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## President's Message



To each and every one of you: thank you all for giving me the privilege of serving as President of our awesome club. It has been a delight working with all of you and seeing so many so engaged in our mission. I know you will give Maryam the same support during her tenure. See you this Thursday.

*Dianne*



## 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon

By Maryam Zolecki

On May 18, 2023, Rock Spring Garden Club members enjoyed a lovely luncheon at Washington Golf and Country Club to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our wonderful club. As members entered the cozy and beautifully set dining room, they were greeted by warm and smiling faces of member friends and stunning views of the golf course and sites of Washington, DC. The room was adorned with designs by club members celebrating the theme of Garden Tales Through the Years. The highlight of the day was the program featuring the members' presentations of their designs, and the presentations were heartwarming, witty, thoughtful, and informative. Quite frankly, there are not enough adjectives to truly describe how wonderfully our members did in highlighting the creativity and brilliance of their designs and the stories attached to them. The event was a wonderful way reminder that each and every one of us contribute so much in little and big ways to the success and joy of our delightful club.

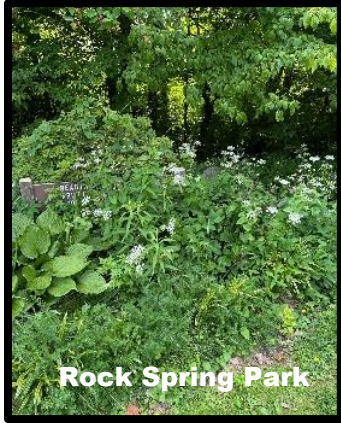


## Committee Reports

### Program

## Officer Installation and Member Garden Tour

By Thea McGinnis and Renée Bayes



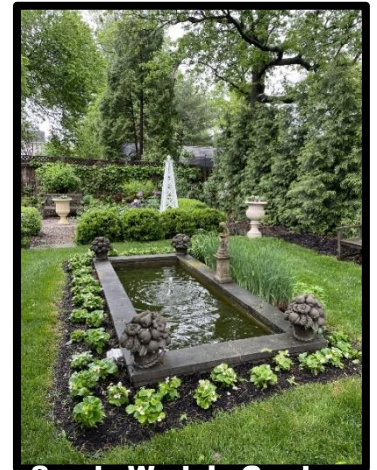
We thank all of our members for their appreciation of this year's garden club monthly programs. We approach our garden programs as a solid investment in every member of this club. We appreciated all your ideas and suggestions. We love our club!

For our final program of the year, we will meet at **Rock Spring Park, 5012 Little Falls Road, Arlington, VA 22207** at 10:00 am. We will take a few minutes to walk around the gardens before closing the year with gratitude to our 2021-2023 officers; and then we will welcome our new slate of officers. Outgoing NCAGC District Director, Nancy Moats, will join us and perform our Installation of Officers. Then we will depart for our member garden tours.

We recommend hats and sturdy footwear. The gardens are not too rugged, but let's stay on the safe side. Feel free to bring a lightweight chair if you feel you might need to rest while we are at the park for our short meeting.



Our first garden will start at **AnnMarie Fay's home in Arlington, VA**. From there we will go to **Sandy Wade's home in Arlington, VA**. Plan to stay at Sandy's a bit to visit, and enjoy refreshments provided by our Host Committee.



Many, many thanks to AnnMarie and Sandy for welcoming us to their gardens. Have a wonderful gardening summer!

## Horticulture

## Hostas I Love

By Christine Wegman

I imagine that most of us grow hostas. What is there not to like about these plants? They fill up a shady area with subtle color that lasts for six or seven months (spring through fall), they are hardly troubled by disease, and they come in a range of sizes from 6 inches to 6 feet. Nearly everybody loves hostas, including deer, rabbits, snails, slugs, grubs, etc.



There are many products that will deter deer and its worth trying some if you want to grow hostas. Subtle almost invisible fencing can keep them away, and there are various sprays and granules that will give your favorite plants an unattractive taste or smell. Deer are attracted to hostas with fragrant flowers, so you might want to snip off the flower scapes before they bloom if you want to dissuade the deer. Slug bait sprinkled around your hostas periodically will keep these critters at bay. Although there is not much that hosta breeders can do about deer-proofing their plants, many of the new introductions are considerably less attractive to snails and slugs. This is because most of the new hosta introductions in the last 20 years or so have much thicker leaves than the old varieties. Slugs and grubs find them more of a challenge.



Many of the old hosta varieties are beautiful. *Hosta plantaginea*, for example, has subtle, yellowish-green leaves with fragrant white blooms. It blends with any plant near it, and there's just something polished and graceful about its appearance. It is, unfortunately, highly susceptible to cold temperatures, both in spring, as it emerges, and in the fall as the temperatures drop. Because its leaves are relatively thin, it is one of the first hostas to die back in autumn. So, breeders have been developing hostas with thick leaves that not only last longer, but deter many of the critters that like to eat them.

It is well worth looking for hostas with heavy leaf substance.

An all-time favorite of mine is *H.* 'Sagae' (pictured above left). Introduced in 1996, it has very heavy leaf substance, and good snail and slug resistance. You need a bit of room, or a big pot for this one as it grows 2 ft. high by 3 ft. wide. It has subtle gray-green leaves with a cream margin. It takes a couple of seasons to establish itself, but it's worth the wait. One of my husband's favorite hostas is *H.* 'Great Expectations.' It is a beautiful plant, but it is constantly beset by pests. The more recent introduction (1991), *H.* 'June' (pictured right), is very similar in appearance, but with much heavier leaf substance.



We recently purchased *H.* 'Dancing with Dragons' (pictured at beginning of article). A medium size hosta, it grows to 18 inches high and has a wide, 43-inch spread. It has thick, distinctively wavy, heart-shaped leaves, and a striking presence.



At the small end of the spectrum is *H.* 'Blue Mouse Ears', introduced in 2000. Growing less than a foot high and wide, it has heavy leaf substance and beautiful blue-green foliage. We recently purchased a variegated sport, *H.* 'Mighty Mouse' (pictured left), which has the same heavy substance as its parent. There are at least 60 sports of 'Blue Mouse Ears'; perhaps this is an indication of its excellence.

Over the years, I have come to think that the single most important indicator of garden worthiness in a hosta is the thickness of its leaves. I never buy a hosta that doesn't have good leaf substance and have found it to be a good predictor of vitality and long lasting good looks in this beautiful perennial.

## Senior Outreach

### Growing From Seeds

By Mary Kudless



Several members of the Senior Outreach Committee participated in Jo Ella Samp's beautifully designed May 2023 program on the magic of seeds. Many know that Jo Ella is not only an avid gardener, but also a member of the Master Gardeners. In this capacity, she has access to many seeds and grows many plants for her own garden from seed and under a well-positioned grow light in her basement.



The residents were very pleased to learn that they were going to grow lentils to sprout and also plant parsley, basil, petunias and marigold seeds. Janice Haines, Mary Garnett, Carol Froehlich, Renée Bayes and Liddy Schwartz followed Jo Ella's lead and assisted the residents to manipulate and place the seeds in tiny soil pods. The lentils were placed in small containers of water to sprout and to illustrate a different approach than the use of soil. The residents were fascinated with the process and learned to manipulate the tiniest of seeds into the planting medium where they would be most likely to thrive.



Next, the seed pods and lentil containers were moved to a warm and sunny location in the room where the conditions would be most favorable for the incubation and sprouting process.

Renée Bayes and AnnMarie Fay prepared healthy snacks that were illustrative of the program. Renée offered each participant an individual container of freshly cut raw vegetables with hummus and AnnMarie provided a lentil and rice dish. These snacks were a big hit and drove home the learning content even further, that many of our foods are plants that start as a tiny seed and with the combination of light and moisture, become tasty and nourishing foods.

Before heading home, our members did an assessment of the front and back garden areas of the residence to get ready for some summer planting in late June. Our thanks to Jo Ella for designing this creative program and to all the members who came out to assist the residents with it.



## Youth Activities

### Mother's Day Arrangements

By Susan Scotti

May 12, 2023 was the day for the committee's annual program for all second graders at Tuckahoe Elementary School to make Mother's Day arrangements. Always an exciting day! We were happily greeted in the office and welcomed by the teachers as it had been three years since we were able to have this program because of a pause during the pandemic restrictions.

The day began at the school with the final stage of preparation, trimming the greens that were generously clipped and donated by committee members and other RSGC members. The carnations had been ordered weeks before and were trimmed, conditioned and counted a few days prior to the day along with trimming Oasis floral foam to fit the containers.



This year there were three second grade classes with a total of 71 students. We were able to have three people assist in each classroom because the members of the Garden Therapy Committee graciously volunteered to help because they are registered with Arlington County Public Schools volunteers program, which is a recent requirement. They had presented their Mother's Day program at Glebe Elementary School the previous day.

After the children returned from their lunch period, the three teams of volunteers brought the supplies to the classrooms. They were greeted with excitement when the children saw the buckets of colorful flowers. They were prepared by having their desks pushed together and covered with newspaper, and the scissors were out and ready. First, the volunteers spoke about Mother's Day, and then gave instructions about making an arrangement. Each child originally received three carnations and a small piece of baby's breath. The greens were dispersed on the desktops. More carnations were added as a couple of children were absent and there were extras available. The children quickly began, some putting more time into the design than others, but all ended with a gift they were proud to take home.

Many thanks to all the volunteers! Youth Activities Committee members include Lynda Martin, Carolyn Barone, Nancy Linehan, Pat Getz, and Carol Froehlich, and Garden Therapy Committee members are Pat Getz, Carol Froehlich, Margi Melnick, Kate Abrahams, Mary Sliwa, and Mary Kudless. Special thanks to those outside the committees that took time to clip and donate greens, which included Connie Richards, AnneMarie Fay, Sheila Moore and Becky Salzinger.



## Garden Therapy

### Happy to Be Little

By Susan Scotti



Mother's Day arrangements and butterflies were the topics of this month's activity at the preschool program at Glebe Elementary School. Margi Melnick prepared the program that began with Pat Getz reading "Waiting for Wings" by Lois Ehlert; a colorful book about butterflies that uses a simple rhyming text to answer questions of where butterflies come from, how they are born, what they eat, and how they eat. Margi talked about butterflies and how they "sit and flit," never staying in one spot for very long. She led the children in a butterfly song, assisted by Pat, as the children used their arms for butterfly wings.



Then she showed them her sample flower arrangement, and after a brief instruction, the children quickly moved to their tables where Kate Abrahams, Carol Froehlich, and Mary Sliwa had placed an assortment of trimmed flowers, greens and oasis filled containers. Taking a little guidance from the volunteers, the children had fun arranging their own creation and adding a beautiful butterfly for a strong finish. They were proud of the results and anxious to take them home.

This was our last program for the school year. We look forward to next year with new students and a new teacher. Jeannie Terrell, the preschool program teacher, will be transferring to a new school closer to her home. We have always enjoyed her support and enthusiasm and we will miss her.

## Liaison

Christmas at the Biltmore House! There will be an NCAGC sponsored bus trip on November 12-15, 2023. \$850 per person double occupancy. Featuring a candlelight Christmas tour. Four days and three nights. For information contact Barb Kiker at [kiker01@verizon.net](mailto:kiker01@verizon.net) or 703-451-5922.

District III's Presidents' Coffee will be held Thursday, June 15, 2023 at Meadowlark Botanic Garden's Administrative Building's lower-level meeting space, "The Gardens" (9750 Meadowlark Garden Court, Vienna, Virginia). The meeting begins at 9:30am with social time until 10am. All District III club members are welcome to attend.

NGC Flower Show School Course I will be offered August 21-24, 2023 in Henrico, Virginia. Instructors will be Jan Griffin in Horticulture and Judy Binns in Floral Design. Jan will focus on acuba and ferns and Judy will focus on Traditional Design. To register or for more information contact Brenda McManaway at [brendamc@shentel.net](mailto:brendamc@shentel.net)

Gardening School Course 3 will occur on September 6-7, 2023 in Baltimore, MD. Contact Linda Harris at 443-695-2071 or [lindaharris355@aol.com](mailto:lindaharris355@aol.com).

Landscape Design School will be in Richmond, Virginia on October 2-3, 2023. Registration coming soon at <https://www.gardenclub.org/landscape-design-school>.

Check out various symposiums being offered: <https://www.piedmontdistrictvfgc.org/education.html> and <https://www.gardenclub.org/school/symposium-courses>

Visit NCAGC's website for up to date information for calendar items, courses within the metro area for NGC Flower Show, Gardening, Environmental and Landscape Design schools, events, directories and meetings. Visit <https://ncagardenclubs.org> and click on "Member Resources" at the top of the page.

## Ikebana Designs

By Kate Abrahams

I attended an Ikebana International meeting and members displayed arrangements. The schools represented were Sogetsu, Ohara, Soga Koryu, and Ikenobo. From best I gathered, the tall airy weeping willow is Ikenobo, the tree root with peonies is Sogetsu, the yellow chrysanthemum one is Soga Koryu, and the dark pink peonies and hosta in a blue dish is Ohara.



The funeral of Joan Asboth's husband, Lt. Col. Julius Asboth who passed away December 21, 2022, will be held at the Old Post Chapel at Fort Myer, Arlington, Virginia on Wednesday, June 28, 2023 at 11:00 am.

He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. A reception will be held at the Officers' Club at Fort Myer. For those of you who plan to attend the service, an RSVP is needed for entry to the base.

# Chelsea Flower Show

By Julie Williams



At long last, the opportunity to see the Chelsea Flower Show arrived and I became a member of the Royal Horticultural Society in order to have the first day visit timing. It really was easy to book online and I thought the availability was excellent when done months in advance.



Upon arrival, we met greeters in royal red costumes sweetly holding stuffed bears marked RH. This is for Royal Hospital, the grounds on which the Chelsea Flower Show is held. It's an easy place to get to. From central London, you just get to the Sloan Square tube stop and then follow along about ten minutes to the grounds.

I'll let the photos do the talking, but the scale is 5 to 6 times the size of the Philadelphia Flower Show and I believe you see more of a focus on individual varieties or specimen plants and flowers than in Philadelphia.



I was really blown away by the Chelsea Flower Show on so many levels. By the vendors, the exhibits, the competitions that were juried, the layout, and the marvelous garden things and plants you could purchase, if inclined. The quality was outstanding. In all, it was a rich tapestry of everything floral.



Also impressive was the array of different lunch venues including everything from fine dining, high teas, picnics on the lawn to many upscale food trucks. There was something for everyone there.

We loved hearing attendees ask their questions to growers and exhibitors throughout the day. It was a true gardener's heyday! People were smart-looking in their country gardening attire. Monte Don made many live presentation broadcasts on the BBC! I highly recommend this event to everyone as it exceeded all my expectations.

## May Surprise

By Mary Kudless



I had "summered over" two amaryllis bulbs, one of a flaming, red/orange color, and the other, a deep pink and white. I moved the plant to the garage in October and had intended to take it out and get it into the light for the holidays, but I forgot. When I got home from Florida in April, I saw the amaryllis in the dark of the garage, sending out its stalks, but looking very bleached out and pathetic. I moved it out to the garden with little hope that it would bloom. However, in the way of so many plants, the wish to thrive took over and I am enjoying its beauty in May.

## Photo Gallery



Back patio and traffic circle in the front of my house that I have taken care of for over twenty years.

~ George Ruppert



I was surprised to see this deer dozing on my back lawn this morning! They drink out of the birdbath so I guess I'm running a deer B&B now.

~ Kate Abrahams