

THE GARDENZETTE



The newsletter of the Rock Spring Garden Club, Arlington, VA 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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Maryam Zolecki

VICE PRESIDENT

Tina Foutz

SECRETARY

Cheryl Atkinson

TREASURER

Jo Ella Samp

GARDENZETTE EDITOR

Pat Getz

General Meeting

Thursday February 15, 2024 – 10:00 am

Little Falls Presbyterian Church

Lower Level Friendship Hall

6025 Little Falls Road

Arlington, VA 22207

**Beyond Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme: Learn to Grow
and Use a Dozen Unusual Culinary Herbs**



We are thrilled to have **Peg Riccio** as our guest speaker this month. Peg is a horticulturist and garden communicator in Northern Virginia. She is a member of District III's Camelot Garden Club and Herb Society of America. Her website, pegplant.com, is a wonderful on-line resource for gardeners in the DC metro area. Peg also served as the content creator for the National Capital Area Garden Clubs blog. This program is free and open to the public – and a good day to **BRING A FRIEND** to see what **Rock Spring Garden Club** is all about.

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President's Message

By Maryam Zolecki

I wanted to take this month's president's message and primarily devote it to spreading the word about the recycling program we have undertaken for this club year. As many of you are aware, one of our new projects is the NextTrex Recycling Challenge Program where we ask club members to collect their soft film plastics and packaging for recycling. As a general rule, acceptable items include plastic bags labeled with the #2 or #4 recycling symbol (polyethylene films), ice bags, plastic shipping envelopes, Ziploc bags, bubble wrap, wood pellet bags, salt bags, and cereal box liners (see below for recyclable items). Items not included in the program are frozen food bags, candy bar wrappers, chip bags, net or mesh produce bags, pre-washed salad mix bags, pet food bags, hot dog or meat wrap packaging, six-pack rings, plastic/vinyl gloves and masks, lamination film, mulch, dirt, or bird food bags, vinyl shower curtains or tablecloths, bedding or linen packaging, and shiny, crinkly films like floral wrap (check out this link for more information: <https://nextrex.com/view/educate#materials1>). Our goal for the 12-month period of the recycling period challenge that began in September 2023 is 1,000 pounds, and so far we have collected approximately 100 pounds. While I would love for us to meet the goal, I want to encourage folks to participate in this program because it is just good for the environment. There are two ways to recycle your plastic bags: 1) bring to our monthly meetings for collection, or 2) weigh your collection on a kitchen scale, take your bags to a local grocery store (e.g., Giant, Harris Teeter, Safeway), take a picture of your recycling in the recycling bin available at the store, and email/text the picture to Maryam Zolecki with the weight and location (name and city of store). I do hope this information is useful and encourages folks to participate in this project. Any and all submissions are much appreciated!

Trex Bench

What can be recycled?

All plastic must be clean, dry and free of food residue.



Grocery bags



Bread bags



Bubble wrap



Dry cleaning bags



Newspaper sleeves



Ice bags



Plastic shipping envelopes



Ziploc & other reclosable food storage bags



Cereal bags



Case overwrap



Salt bags



Pallet wrap & stretch film



Wood pellet bags



Produce bags

January 2023 Budget Report

Beginning Balance: \$20,357.86

Revenue: \$0

Expenses: (\$252.10)

Net: (\$252.10)

Ending Balance: \$20,105.76

Next Board Meeting

Thursday March 7, 2024 4:30 pm

Attendance options are via Zoom or
in-person at Kate Abrahams' house

**Birthday Greetings**

**Happy 103rd birthday on February 9 to RSGC member Alice Conrad.
Wishing you joy, friendship, and happiness on your special day!**



Ways and Means

By Margi Melnick

The Ways and Means Committee is up and running for our February general meeting! You'll find Tools of the Trade to give you a head start for Spring gardening. Plus, there will be items that we had hoped to display

in January that celebrate Valentine's Day and patriotic birthdays. Please bring donations that you think would appeal to our members. We're looking forward to a full table that will help you – and our Club!

Design of the Month

By Connie Richards

A **Creative Line Design** is where the line is dominant with a *minimum* of plant material and other optional components. There may be one or more points of emergence and focal areas. The relationship between form and space is important. This design will be included in the May flower show so this is a good opportunity to practice and get feedback. This is a great opportunity to use one of your more unusual containers or pieces of driftwood/etc. There is no height restriction even though we will be using the standard club backboards. Feel free to contact me or anyone else on the Show committee if you need more information. I recommend this website <https://www.gcvirginia.org> for an excellent definition of Creative Line Design and some great pictures. Have fun with this one!



Flower Show News

By Connie Richards

The schedule is being finalized for our flower show in May –*Here Comes the Sun, The Beatles in the Garden*. It will be a fun experience with a chance for our club members to show off our talents in the garden and floral design. This is an “All Hands-on Deck” event. I’m providing the list of Chairpersons now and there will be sign-up sheets at the next meetings for others to join these committees. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Club President	Maryam Zolecki
General Chair	Connie Richards
Schedule Chair	Thea McGinnis
Awards Chair	Kate Abrahams
Horticulture Chairs	Christine Wegman Jo Ella Samp
Horticultural Placement	
Chairs	Imelda Rowe Cheryl Atkinson
Design Chairs	Charlotte Benjamin Kate Abrahams
Special Exhibits Chair	Connie Richards
Judges Chair	Anita Brown
Clerks Chair	Carolyn Barone
Recorder/Tabulation	Joan Hession
Design & Graphics	Maryam Zolecki
Publicity Chair	Tina Foutz
Photographer	Katherine Skiba
Staging/Properties	Julie Wadsworth
Dismantling Chair	Carol Froelich
Hospitality Chair	Renee Bayes

Youth Activities

By Carol Froehlich

RSGC and the students at Tuckahoe Elementary explored the challenges of winter bird survival in January. After the reading of a book identifying different types of birds that can be found in the Northern Virginia area, the students took part in a discussion learning about how birds protect themselves during the cold and barren months. Following the discussion, the committee members assisted the students in making bird feeders out of pinecones, Crisco, and bird seed. The students enthusiastically participated in this activity and surely the birds will delight in the double bird feeders each child brought home. A special thank you to Susan Scotti for all her guidance in preparing for this program, and to Deborah Madden from 4H for sharing the pinecones with us. The committee members as always were a tremendous support in assisting the students in completing the project and enjoying the experience.



District III News

By Kate Abrahams

District III's Spring Meeting will be held March 28th with social time starting at 9:30 am. District/state awards will be presented to clubs and there will be a program on the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' "Fine Arts and Flowers" exhibition in October in

Richmond. RSGC members Thea McGinnis and Sheila Moore will participate in the exhibition by creating an arrangement inspired by an artwork in the museum's collection. District III will have a small standard flower show on Sunday April 28th at Green Hedges School in Vienna, VA.

Garden Therapy

By Susan Scotti

January 11 was our first program of 2024 for the 13 pre-K students at Glebe Elementary School. The topic was winter birds we commonly see in our yards, led by Susan Scotti. Kate Abrahams began with a picture book, "About Birds: A Guide for Children" by Kathryn Still, that introduces simple facts about what they are, what they do and how they live. Three birds' nests were passed around for a closeup look to see how they were constructed with dried grasses and mud. Susan read "Feathers for Lunch" by Lois Ehlert, a story about a cat that slipped out of the house and tried to catch birds. Fortunately, for the birds, its collar had a bell that jingled and alerted the birds, so they flew away just in time, leaving the cat with only a feather or two. The book has pictures of a robin, bluejay, cardinal, woodpecker, and others. Then, to think about food for birds, Susan led them in a song about feeding the birds in wintertime, when the days are dark and cold and food is hard to find. Ready for an activity, the children moved to their tables where Mary Garnett, Mary Sliwa, and Ann Stevens Kelly passed out paper, bird stickers, two snowmen, a tree, and feathers to make a winter scene. The only direction was to begin by gluing the three big pieces. The children had fun creating their pictures, all being unique. Lastly, we set up two stations where the children made bird feeders by rolling Crisco covered pinecones

in birdseed. They were slipped into a newspaper sleeve to take home, and hopefully, feed the birds in their yards.



HORTICULTURE

Camellias

Christine Wegman

Camellias have been a favorite of Southern gardeners for generations. These beautiful shrubs bloom in the cooler months when most flowers either have not bloomed yet or are finished for the season. The most widely-grown camellias are the winter/spring blooming hybrids of *Camellia japonica*, followed by the hybrids of *Camellia sasanqua* in the fall. And these are only a couple of the over 200 species of camellia. They are native to Asia, where their range extends from China and Korea through Japan to Vietnam and Malaysia. Camellias are among the most widely hybridized plants and, according to the American Camellia Society, there are over 20,000 named varieties. In Japan their name means “tree of shining leaves” and, like chrysanthemums and cherry blossoms, they have a special place in Japanese culture.



The most common, although usually unrecognized, camellia is *Camellia sinensis*, or the tea plant. The tender young leaves of this plant are harvested and dried in sheds, not unlike tobacco sheds. They are then processed into the varieties of tea that we drink. As such, the camellia has a key place in our history, as one of the proximate causes of the American Revolution, via the Boston Tea Party.

Camellias are evergreen shade-lovers. Their glossy green foliage looks beautiful all year and their blooms rival roses for beauty. Most varieties of Camellia grow to be tall bushes: 6-15 feet tall and about 4-7 feet wide. A few, however, are low spreaders, growing only 2-4 ft. tall. The smaller varieties take well to container growing and are ideal for a sheltered balcony or patio.



Camellias were brought to America through the port of Charleston by French botanist, Andre Michaux, who established the South's first botanical garden there in 1786. They rapidly became a staple of the Southern Garden. In modern times, the National Arboretum has a central place in the development of the cold hardy varieties that are suitable for our Washington area winters. A series of particularly cold winters from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s destroyed nearly all of the Arboretum's mature collection of *C. japonica* and *C. sasanqua*, while leaving *C. oleifera* plants undamaged. A staff botanist, Dr. William Ackerman, made a series of crosses between *C. oleifera* and other more tender species, including *C. japonica* and *C. sasanqua*. Of

these crosses, six were selected for naming and introduction. They were 'Polar Ice', 'Snow Flurry', 'Winter's Hope', 'Winter's Rose', 'Winter's Star', and 'Winter's Charm' (pictured above). Ackerman began his career introducing fragrance into Camellias and is responsible for the early varieties of fragrant camellias; however, the winter freezes changed the focus of his career and the rest of his work was devoted to introducing cold hardy varieties. The Winter and Ashton series are Ackerman introductions and are available in local nurseries.



Camellias need acidic soil and light shade or filtered sun, especially when young. As they get older, they can take a little more sun because their leaves protect their sensitive roots, but afternoon sun may cause the leaves to scorch. In our area, protect the plants from strong winter winds. Water young plants regularly, but once they are established, they need very little supplemental water. Make sure the soil is well-drained; waterlogged plants may drop their buds before they open. Camellias are easily pruned in late winter (for fall bloomers) or after blooming (for winter and early spring bloomers). Fertilize lightly with an acidic fertilizer like Holly Tone.



For those looking for something unusual in camellias, I recommend Camellia Forest Nursery in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. This is a retail and mail order nursery with an incredible variety of Asian plants, although they specialize in camellias and owner, David Parks, is himself a well-known camellia breeder. They have dozens of varieties, with colors ranging from red, white and pink to yellow. They have bicolors, candy stripes, singles and doubles. If you want a small variety to grow in a container, this is the place to go. We have grown at least eight camellias from this nursery and all of them thrived.

Grateful Gardeners Plant Sale By Tina Foutz

Our friends, Sarah and Tom, reached out to let us know about their new, exciting endeavor, offering a stunning array of perennial and annual plants, both native and cut flower varieties. Peruse and select from all of the options and find the ones that speak to you! They will be happy to bring orders to the Falls Church Farmers Market.

Shop at

<https://www.gratefulgardeners.co/shop-1/plant-sale>



PHOTO GALLERY

Never Give Up!

Margi Melnick with her “rescue” amaryllis. Margi wasn’t sure it would survive, but she nursed it all summer, then brought it inside for the winter, kept it watered, and it produced these huge, beautiful blossoms!



Botanical Arts designs made for the January meeting



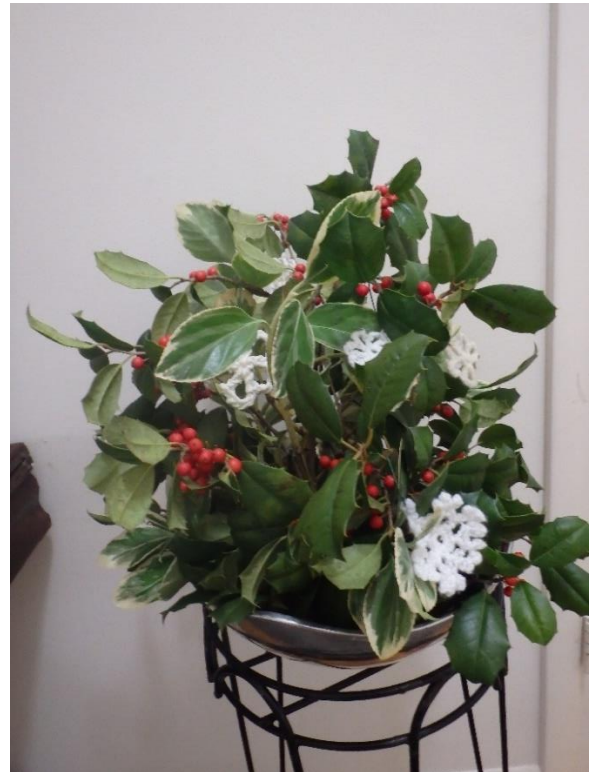
Maryam Zolecki



**Candleholder design
Carolyn Barone**



Made with carnations, hypericum berries,
wax flowers, pussy willow, eucalyptus
leaves
Renee Bayes



Made for the hostess table
Joan Hession



Made with: Nandina, allium, Leyland
cypress, Foster holly, dried pod
Sheila Moore

Horticulture Specimens



Holly
Joan Hession



Variegated boxwood
Joan Hession



Hippeastrum Picasso
Tina Foutz

Liaison Report
By Tina Foutz

Special Note: NGC Flower Show Course 3 is being offered at Little Falls Presbyterian Church on February 29 and March 6-7. Click the links below for more information and the registration form.

Calendar of Events February 4 - March 9, 2024

Hyperlinks in blue will take you to the Event Link

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 <i>La Chandeleur - Happy midway point between Winter and Spring!</i>	5	6	7 NGC Landscape Design School 4 (Zoom)	8 NGC Landscape Design School 4 (Zoom)	9 NGC Landscape Design School 4 (Zoom)	10
11	12	13 <i>Mardi Gras</i>	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i> ----- 8:00am-5:00pm National Capital Area Garden Clubs Landscape Design Council Meeting ----- <i>Postmark date register for SAR Convention</i> Registration on Page 19	15 Deadline: Application for VFGC Piedmont District Grants Info on Page 4	16 Greenscapes symposium Brookside Gardens. ----- Last day to make hotel reservation for SAR Conference (3/18-19) Info and link on Page 18	17
18 Registration Deadline NGC Flower Show School, 3 - Zoom and Arlington.	19 <i>President's Day</i>	20	21 Climate Change is Already Here: The Problem, Its Impacts and How We Solve It ZOOM 4 - 5 pm Sponsored by the Climate Action Group and the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland	22 CFAA The Power of Possibilities! , Marriott Orlando Airport Lakeside. Francine Thomas, Betty Ann Galway, Gina Jogan, the Virginia Flower Lovers and the Members' Design Challenge.	23 CFAA The Power of Possibilities! ----- Registration deadline for Tri- Refreshers Lancaster, PA	24 CFAA The Power of Possibilities! , ----- Mardi Gras Madness - Laissez les bon temps rouler!" Workshop 9:30am - 2:30pm Presenters: Mary Lilly,

						Liz Williams and Paula Winkler
25 Flower Show School Course 4-Marietta, GA ; FSP & Horticulture: Sue Kirkman, Topics: Conifers, Collections and Displays Design: Lynn Fronk Topics: Creative, Abstract	26 Flower Show School Course 4-Marietta, GA ; ----- VFGC Board of Directors • Zoo ----- Registration Deadline NGC Environmental School Course 2 Series ZOOM	27 Flower Show School Course 4-Marietta, GA	28 Flower Show School Course 4-Marietta, GA	29 NGC Flower Show School, 3 - Zoom and Arlington , Day 1 Flower Show Procedure Zoom 2PM - 5:30 PM	1	2 Tudor Place Dirt Diggers, Garden Volunteering 10AM-12PM
3	4	5	6 NGC Flower Show School, 3 - Zoom and Arlington , Day 2 Horticulture: Catherine Felton Design: Frances Thrash 3/6-7 8AM-7PM	7 NGC Flower Show School, 3 - Zoom and Arlington , Day 3 Horticulture: Catherine Felton Design: Frances Thrash 3/6-7 8AM-7PM	8	9

Upcoming Events - Time to Register

Hyperlinks in blue will take you to Registration Form or Link

3/11 - 12/2024 [NGC Environmental School Course 2](#) Series Z-001 (Registration Deadline: 2/26/2024)

3/13 - 14, 2024 [NGC Landscape Design School Course 1](#), Athens, GA (Virtual via Zoom)

3/18 - 19/2024 [SAR Convention](#), Embassy Suites Greenville, 670 Verdae Boulevard, Greenville, South Carolina, 29607 (Registration on [Page 19](#))

3/18/2024 Piedmont District Meeting, Hilton Tapestry Hotel, Virginia Crossings, Glen Allen

3/25 - 28/2024 [Flower Show School Course #2 • Norfolk](#)

3/26 - 27/2024 [NGC Landscape Design School Course 1](#), Clinton, CT (Virtual via Zoom)

4/7 - 9/2024 [Multiple Refresher](#) - Lancaster, PA - Environmental, Gardening, & Landscape Design Schools; Registration due by 2/23/2024
Reservations by 3/7/2024 PHONE RESERVATIONS: 717-464-2711 GROUP CODE: PETALS

4/10 - 13/2024 [The American Daffodil Society National Convention](#) and [Flower Show](#) at the Hyatt Regency Dulles
Early Bird Registration – Paid (or mailed check postmarked) on or before March 1.
Regular Registration – Paid (or mailed check postmarked) by cut-off on March 26.

4/20 - 27/2024 [Historic Garden Week](#)

4/21/2024 Appomattox Garden Club Spring Tea, 3pm to 5pm, Weston Manor Hopewell, VA - Tickets \$15, Contact: Marilyn Brown (804)678-9040

5/1/2024 VFGC Piedmont Deadline: Summer Issue Footprints

5/5/2024 VFGC Board Meeting

5/6 - 7/2024 VFGC Annual Convention • Boar's Head Inn, Charlottesville

5/8 - 9/2024 [Gardening School Course 4](#), DoubleTree by Hilton, 5485 Twin Knolls Road, Columbia, MD 21045