

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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General Meeting

Thursday November 21, 2024 – 10:00 am

Little Falls Presbyterian Church

Lower Level Friendship Hall

6025 Little Falls Road

Arlington, VA 22207

Pumpkin Floral Design Demonstration

Club member designers Renee Bayes and Charlotte Benjamin will do a design demonstration using pumpkins, including tips and suggestions, for members in preparation of our pumpkin floral design fundraiser.



By Maryam Zolecki

I can imagine that the freaky weather we are experiencing has been the topic of many conversations with others as of late. The warm weather coupled with the dry streak of going on close to a month and a half days in a row without significant rain has had me do things a little bit differently in the garden as of late. My gardening philosophy follows the rule of “not my job to water”, yet I find myself having to let go of this, and this past month, I have been out there watering the more vulnerable plants. The raspberries really suffered in the spring from lack of rain, and currently, my hydrangeas have me particularly worried as I fear at least two of them will not be coming back to me next year. The timing of planting my newly acquired daffodils and other spring blooming bulbs have me flummoxed as well, given that the soil may not be cold enough come December in order for them to get their needed twelve weeks of exposure to cold temperatures for spring blooming (and perhaps I need to water them as well over the winter). It’s no surprise that the plants I worry about most are non-native plants, which in turn has given me a new gardening philosophy of “75 % native, 25% not”. Hopefully that is a good balance to keep the watering and weeding to a minimum and as self sufficient as possible. Here is hoping for a more *autumnous* fall gardening next year and beyond!

October 2024 Budget Report

Beginning Balance \$17,913.76

Revenue: \$195.00

Expenses: (\$601.31)

Net: (\$406.31)

Ending Balance: \$17,507.45

Next Board Meeting

Thursday, January 2, 2025

At 4:30 pm

Attendance options are:

in person at Carol Froehlich’s home

or

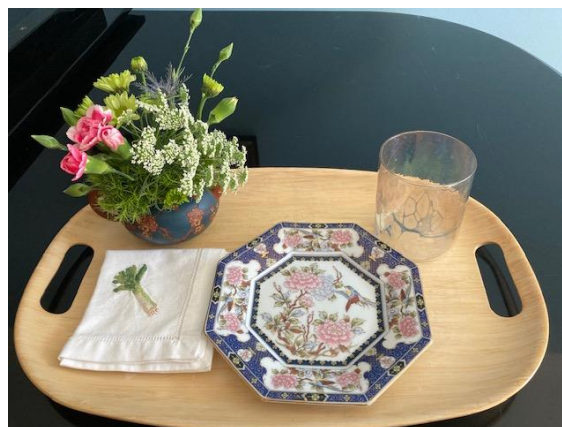
remote via Zoom



George Rupert’s Christmas Cactus that never fails is ready for the holidays!

Design of the Month:
Functional Tray for One
By Kate Abrahams

November's design challenge is a type of table design, a functional tray for one. It should be a functional design ready for actual use with one place setting on a tray. The components on the tray must be stable when carried and should include a decorative unit (floral design), beverage service, dish(es), and napkin. No cutlery is needed. Dishes may be stacked as in a cup and saucer, or a bowl on a plate. The components should be in scale to one another and in proportion to the space on the tray and allotted space overall on the display table. (NGC Handbook, p. 76). The tray appointments should be coordinated by theme, color, design, or formality to create a harmonious whole. Plant materials used in the decorative unit should be on a 3x5 card placed next to the tray. Napkins are to be placed to the side of dishes, not on top. Optional materials are candles, placemats, or underlays. Avoid crowding components on the tray. The allotted space on the table is 20 inches wide by 15 inches deep so your tray should fit within this space. No height limitation but keep in mind that stability when carried is very important.



Youth Activities

By Joyce Fall

Another wonderful day was spent with the second graders at Tuckahoe Elementary School. The project this month was flower arranging in small pumpkins. "The Pumpkin Seed" was read and we learned the different ways the seeds can be used (planting and eating). Afterwards our enthusiastic students decorated their pumpkins with mums, leaves, greens, stickers, and then topped with a scarecrow pick. The talents these students show are always amazing. Mary Garnett, Pat Getz, Lynda Martin and I assisted our twelve gardeners. Our scheduled December project will be a holiday tree arrangement. Each time we visit the school we work with a new group from the second grade classrooms, so throughout the year there is an opportunity for each second grader to participate in a gardening experience.



Pumpkin Fundraiser 2024 - Timeline and Final Reminders

We're in the final stretch leading up to our November 26th fundraiser. Our participation signups are looking great with all operational roles filled and 68 pumpkin commitments made. Our goal is 80 pumpkins, so if you have not reached out to us yet or signed up, please call or email me.

A large sign will be placed near the corner of Dinwiddie and Glebe, in front of Memorial Baptist Church at least the day before the fundraiser, to attract drive by interest. We also have at least 15 signs on order that will be made available at the November 21st meeting - you can place them in your yards or neighborhoods.



You've all received multiple flyers for the fundraiser from Maryam via email on Saturday, November 9th. You can also access them in the [Library](#). We will be posting these items on the various channels (Facebook, Instagram, ARLNow, Patch, Nextdoor, Community Guidelines, and Gazette Leader). Our request to you is, please, send these flyers out to your neighborhoods, friends, families, colleagues, and social groups. And, feel free to reach out to Tina or Janis Gunel with any requests or questions about the flyers or publicity.

I also found wholesale prices on two Longwood amaryllis bulbs, [Red Lion](#) and [Apple Blossom](#), so we will be offering those on the day of the fundraiser also.

Now, let's talk about design preparation - please remember to clean your pumpkins at least a day or two before you will design, if you intend to hollow and build your design that way. The instructions and care reminders previously emailed are [HERE](#). And, don't forget to pick up your supplies at the November 21st meeting Ways & Means!! We're expecting about a dozen people at Kate Abraham's house for the Pumpkin Prep Party on November 24th between 1 and 4PM. We will also have flowers and supplies. All are welcome!

The day of the fundraiser will look like this:

<i>Design intake</i>	Cheryl Atkinson Mary Kudless	1PM to 3PM	receive designs the day of the fundraiser and keep list of members and number of designs – to track “credit” for designs
<i>Setup</i>	Cheryl Atkinson Joan Hession Tina Foutz	1PM to 3:30PM	set up and cover tables, place designs on tables

	Kate Abrahams		
<i>Supplements and Pricing</i>	Charlotte Benjamin Renee Bayes Janice Haines	2PM to 3:30PM	supplement arrangements, price arrangements
<i>Table attendant</i>	Cheryl Atkinson Anita Brown Maryam Zolecki JoElla Samp Imelda Rowe	3:30PM to 6:30PM	greet donors, help with design selection and answer questions, consolidate tables during the fundraiser, and assistance with loading designs in donor's vehicle, if needed
<i>Breakdown</i>	Kate Abrahams Tina Foutz Maryam Zolecki JoElla Samp Imelda Rowe	6:30PM to 7PM	removal of trash and tables

Don't forget we also have pre-order available for those friends, neighbors, or family that can't make the Memorial Baptist Church setup on Tuesday. We can get items into donors' hands between 11/22 and 11/26. Have them go to the [FUNDRAISER WEBSITE](#).

Thanks for your support and participation!



Garden Therapy

By Kate Abrahams

The Garden Therapy Committee kicked off a new program year in Ms. Donna's pre-K classroom at Glebe Elementary School. Committee members Mary Sliwa, Mary Garnett, and Kate Abrahams taught the thirteen children all about pumpkins through a picture book, song, and hands-on activities. First, the children were given fresh pumpkin tops with stems to handle and the option to feel sticky and wet pumpkin seeds and innards. Mary Sliwa read a book titled **Seed, Sprout, Pumpkin, Pie** that describes how pumpkins grow from seeds and may end up as jack o'lanterns for Halloween. Kate led the kids and adults in a finger play about 5 pumpkins on a gate and a song called "Do You Know How Pumpkins Grow?" sung to the tune of "Do You Know the Muffin Man?". The Garden Ladies (as we are called), Ms. Donna the teacher and the two teacher's aides used printed out

song sheets to sing along through many verses describing the pumpkin's growth from sprout to flower to green pumpkin that turns to orange when ripe. Mary Garnett set the stage on the two tables for a pumpkin sticker activity, distributing sheets of pumpkin stickers with printouts of a colored pumpkin patch of green vines and yellow flowers in front of each chair. Then, when the stickers were all put in the pumpkin patches, tablecloths were put on the tables and pumpkins and flowers were distributed. This was the finale of our 45-minute visit, using small oasis filled pie pumpkins, yellow and red alstroemeria, boxwood and red mums. The children happily used up all the flowers and put their arrangements in handled paper bags to take home. We all had a good time learning about pumpkins and celebrating this wonderful squash with the children before Halloween.



HORTICULTURE

By Christine Wegman

Small Bulbs for Spring

It's not too late. You can still plant small bulbs (and corms) here in the DMV until the end of November, even into the first week of December. It may be too late for mail order bulbs to reach you, but local nurseries will all have a selection of bulbs that can still be planted for late winter and spring bloom.



Adonis. *Adonis amurensis* is perhaps my favorite small bulb, because of its beautiful blossom and its very early bloom. About 6 inches high, blooming in late January or February, it is not really a spring bulb, but I include it here because of its beauty and its ability to touch the heart in mid-winter. It is not difficult to grow and deserves a place next to a walk for visibility. One caution, it is a SLOW grower, so don't be discouraged. Not easy to find, but worth the hunt. Pine Knot Farms used to offer them, but I can't confirm that, since at this writing the website is down.



Dwarf Iris. *Iris reticulata* (pictured at top) is a bulb, unlike its larger relatives, which are rhizomes. Blooming about the same time as snowdrops, chionodoxa, and early crocuses, it is easy to grow and hardy. It will do well at the base of a deciduous tree, and comes in shades of blue, purple, white, and light yellow.

Cyclamen. *Cyclamen* is a late winter/early spring blooming corm. It has beautiful pink, lavender, or white flowers above beautiful, variegated, heart-shaped leaves. I never had any luck with cyclamen until Judith Tyler of Pine Knot Farms told me to plant them near the base of a deciduous tree. It worked.





Snowdrops. Blooming in late February or early March, *Galanthus* is one of the first harbingers of spring. It can be planted here and there in clusters, and its charming green and white flower will be sure to lighten any late winter day. There are a number of varieties of *Galanthus*. The most common variety is *G. nivalis*, but there is a taller, larger-flowered variety, *G. elwesii* or giant snowdrop, that grows 8-10 inches high and is worth the trouble to find, most likely online. Snow drops are particularly attractive paired with cyclamen and hellebores, but work in any combination, and will draw the eye toward other, more subtly colored, early bulbs.

Crocus. These popular bulbs have both spring-blooming and fall-blooming types. They are readily available in almost any garden center and are a lovely contrast to the reds, yellows and pinks of the species tulips.

Glory of the Snow. *Chionodoxa* (pictured at right) has pretty star-shaped flower in shades of blue, lavender and white. It is a tough little plant, growing about 6 inches high and blooming in early spring. It can be grown in most areas of the garden that will get winter sun, and adapts to the base of deciduous trees and shrubs. It can even be naturalized in a lawn.



Grape Hyacinth. Early-blooming *Muscari armeniacum* is a pretty little bulb for naturalization. Grape hyacinths come in light and dark blue, white, and even light lavender. The dark blue will combine well with the brighter colored bulbs or early blooming bushes. Like crocus, it is readily available in this area.



Species Tulips. Some of my favorite small bulbs are species tulips. These are not the big – knock your socks off – showy tulips that are so impressive in display gardens, but their much smaller cousins that bloom in mid-spring and come back year after year. Species tulips planted along a walkway, in a rock garden, or near the front or back door, are a charming and fairly carefree addition to any garden.

My favorites of the species are the *Tulipa clusianas*. (*Tulipa clusiana* ‘Lady Jane’ is pictured at left.) Their combination of red, yellow and white will catch the eye, despite their diminutive

size. *Tulipa batalinii* ‘Bright Gem’, pictured at right, is another pretty, eye-catching dwarf growing about six inches high. Because of their small size, the decaying foliage will not become an eyesore.

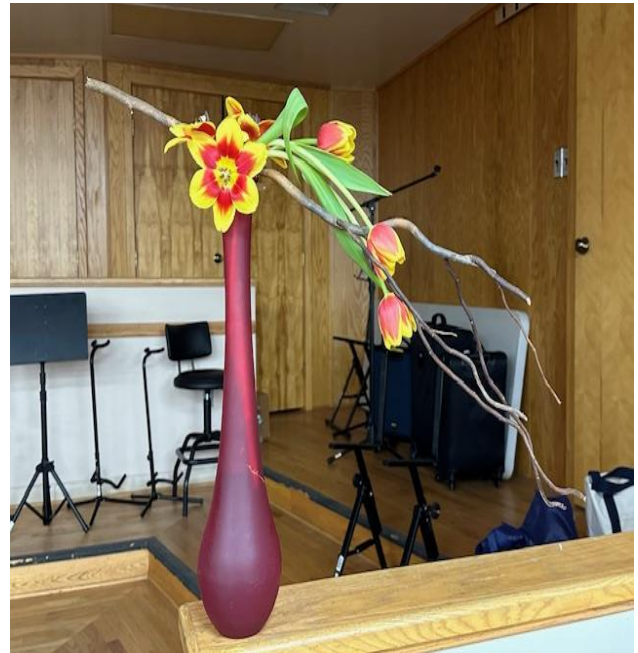


tulips

Small bulbs are easy to grow, but three things they must have. First, they need winter sun, so can be planted under deciduous trees and shrubs. Second, they need good drainage to prevent the bulbs or corms from rotting. And third, they appreciate a little bulb food after they have finished blooming or in the autumn. If your spring bulbs don't bloom in their second or third year, the most likely culprits are poor drainage or lack of bulb fertilizer.

PHOTO GALLERY

From the October general meeting:
Designer Kathy Ward helped members
make creative line and line mass designs.





Local nature shots from Arlington Forest
neighbor Christos Liacouris



Autumn in Western US National Parks
From Pat Getz



