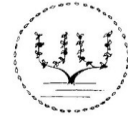


THE GARDENZETTE



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 Club, Inc., District III; and Southern Atlantic Region, Virginia Federated Garden Clubs, Inc., Piedmont District



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OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Cheryl Atkinson

VICE PRESIDENT

Maryam Zolecki

SECRETARY

Chris Day

TREASURER

Joan Hession

GARDENZETTE EDITOR

Pat Getz

General Meeting

October 16, 2025 – 10:00 am

Little Falls Presbyterian Church

Lower Level Friendship Hall

6025 Little Falls Road

Arlington, VA 22207

Mechanics of Creative Design

We are fortunate to have Arlene Stewart share her expertise in floral design for our program in October. This is a wonderful opportunity as she will demonstrate three designs that will be in our upcoming flower show in May: Reflective, Illuminating, and Multi Rhythmic. She will also be explaining principles that are applicable to all floral designs with an emphasis on Petite designs. Try not to miss this!



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President's Message

By Cheryl Atkinson

October is one of my favorite months; the mornings are cool and crisp, and the afternoons still warm enough to enjoy being outside in the garden. This time of year feels like a turning point. We're saying goodbye to summer, but we're also looking ahead, planting bulbs, and planning what we'll do differently next spring. October is also a good time to divide many perennials—take a look around your garden and see if you have some that you can bring for the **plant sale** at the Ways and Means table at the October meeting. Of course, that sale also is an opportunity to take something new home for your garden.

You don't want to miss the October meeting program. Arlene Stewart, a renowned floral designer and Master Judge, will be demonstrating "**Mechanics of Creative Design.**" When I see creative designs at flower shows or in photos, I always wonder "how did they do that?" How did they get that stem to bend just so (and stay that way) or how can that bloom just sort of float in a design? I'm hoping those secrets will be revealed! The designs Ms. Stewart will demonstrate are especially relevant because they represent types of designs that will be included in our flower show in May.

Also, mark your calendars for the District III and Judges Council's "**Morning of Design Event**" on November 6 at 10:00 AM-12:30 PM. The event is being held at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fairfax and features creative design demos by local floral design experts along with refreshments, shopping, and door prizes.

Year to Date Budget Report

Beginning Balance: \$19,545.43

Revenue: \$447.00

Expenses: (\$1,148.00)

Net: (\$701.00)

Ending Balance: \$18,844.43

Next Board Meeting

Thursday November 6, 2025

at 4:30 pm

Hosted by Connie Richards

Membership

By Maryam Zolecki

Our club is very pleased to welcome back Sallie McHugh. Many of you will know Sallie as a previous member of Rock Spring Garden Club with an original membership date of 1999 and a leadership role as President in 2009-2010. We are very happy to have Sallie rejoining!

Show: Design of the Month

By Kate Abrahams

This month's floral design challenge is a creative, parallel design. The National Garden Club (NGC) *Handbook for Flower Shows* (2017 edition) page 75 describes the design type as follows:

A design consisting of three (3) or more groupings of plant material and optional components with a strong parallel placement in a single container and/or base.

1. Multiple containers/bases may be used if combined to appear as one unit
2. Parallel direction may be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal within the allotted space.
3. The overall effect must appear parallel. Groupings need not be equidistant from each other.
4. A connective/s may be used at the base of the design.

One important judging consideration is the space between the parallel components. In a standard size design, you should have enough space between the parallels to be able to pretend slice through it with your hand without touching the material. You may use fresh and/or dried plant materials in your design, and you should connect the materials at the bottom of the parallels to create the feeling of a unified "base". The photos below show some standard size parallel designs and one petite size parallel with pink flowers. Clearly, the petite size is exempt from the hand slice test but illustrates placement with more than three parallel components. The parallels don't have to use identical plant materials but should have unifying features of shape, color, texture and height. Creating depth with placement other than one straight row is desirable. The important floral design principles of rhythm, balance, contrast, dominance, proportion and scale apply to this and all other design types you will encounter. The dominant feature should be the parallel lines in the design so beware of overstuffing the base with too much distracting material that may compete with the parallels visually. So, step back, take a look at your design and see whether what your eye notices first and foremost the parallel lines. Taking a photo of your design and seeing it in two dimensions can also help you see what dominates in the design. Thank you for trying this design and educating our members about another creative design type!



As a side note, in getting ready for the Spring flower show, Horticulture Chair Jo Ella Samp and I are recommending your monthly horticulture specimens be staged in clear, colorless glass bottles rather than green glass bottles. This is the new standard for flower shows so let's get onboard early and collect a variety of clear, colorless bottles. If you don't have colorless glass bottles for your hort right now, that's fine for the monthly meetings but the Flower Show will require them. Clean colorless clear bottles with an imprint in the glass such as the Fever-Tree ginger ale or tonic water bottles are fine but labels and glue should be removed completely. Remember to fill the bottle with clean water to the top when displaying your specimen.

Ways & Means

By Maryam Zolecki

The September meeting was a busy and fun day for the Ways & Means Committee. Thanks to two generous and thoughtful donations, we were able to share some unique offerings. Fred, Cathy Jamieson's husband, shared with us his prodigious orchid collection, some in his custom handmade orchid pots. Also, Pam Stratton, a friend of the club, shared a wonderful array of vases that proved popular. Our sincerest thanks to both who made the day a very successful one, and I personally cannot wait for my chocolate scented orchid to bloom! Our plan is to continue having the luncheon centerpieces available for sale, so please consider picking one of those up by informing the W&M table at any point during the meetings. For October, we plan to hold a plant sale. Please consider setting aside a few of your fall divisions to bring to our next meeting to share with other club members. The member plant sale was very popular last year, and this is a great way to share the joy of gardening with other members. If you have any spring blooming bulbs, please bring those along as well. See you at the table!

Annual Harvest Fundraiser is Coming in November!

Save these dates for the Harvest Fundraiser (formerly known as the Pumpkin Fundraiser):

Tuesday November 25, 3:30-6:30, for public sales at Little Falls Presbyterian Church. Beautiful pumpkin and fall-inspired floral designs, amaryllis bulbs and more!

Sunday November 23, hours TBD, members floral design prep gathering at the home of Kate Abrahams.

Contact Janet Nuzum to volunteer or if you have questions. More details to be shared at the October 16th General Meeting.



Youth Activities

By Lynda Martin

The Youth Activities volunteers met at Tuckahoe School on September 30. We had the second graders decorate a pot to put their pansies in and helped them fill the pot with fresh potting soil. We then instructed the students on how to plant it in their garden when they got home. The students were very enthusiastic and enjoyed coloring on the paper-covered pots. The volunteers who participated in this project were Ginger Ackerman, Debbie Czarniecki, Joyce Fall, Lea Alice Parker, Lynda Parker, and Lynda Martin.



Liaison Report

By Maryam Zolecki

Every month, the liaison section of the newsletter will keep you informed about dates and events happening related to garden club activities, as well as some other events related to gardening, floral design, and horticulture. Please email Maryam Zolecki to share events for publication. Here is what's happening from mid-October into early December.

Additionally, our monthly programs are a great way to learn and feel connected to the club, and if you are not able to join in person, please use the following link to join virtually - Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84183578234>

- **October 13-14, 2025** - Landscape Design School, Course 1, in Richmond, VA.
- **October 10-19, 2025** - Ikebana Exhibition in the Asian Collection Pavilion Buildings, US National Arboretum.
- **October 19-22, 2025** - Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs (CAR- SGC) Conference, Hyatt Regency Hotel Chesapeake Bay, Cambridge, MD (www.car-sgc.org).
- **October 25-26, 2025** - Old Dominion Chrysanthemum Society (ODCS) Annual Show at the James Lee Community Center in Falls Church, VA.
- **October 27-28, 2025** - Landscape Design School, Course 3, in Fairfax, VA (hybrid). Brochure and registration coming soon, and email the chair, Sylvia Sloan, at lds@ncagardenclubs.org.
- **November 1, 2025** - Washington Daffodil Society (WDS) Fall Meeting - Bulb Exchange, Bulb Auction, & Bulb Order Pickup at 10:00 am-12:30 pm at Trinity Methodist Church, 1205

Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean, VA 22101. Come and join to participate in the bulb auction, bulb sale, bulb exchange, and to pick up your bulbs from the bulb order.

- **November 17-18, 2025** - Gardening School, Course 1, in Fairfax, VA (hybrid). Brochure and registration coming soon, and email the chair, Connie Richards, at gs@ncagardenclubs.org.
- **Ayr Hill Garden Club 2025 Bulb Sale** - Order online now through October 24, 2025 (<https://ahgcbulbsale.square.site/>). Pick up will be at the Freeman Store and Museum from 10am to 4pm on Saturdays, October 11, 18, and 25, 2025.
- **November 18-19, 2025** - The Dominion Guild Merry Market with tickets available here: <https://www.thedominionguild.org/merry-market/>
- **Tuesday, November 25, 2025** - Rock Spring Garden Club Harvest Fundraiser at Little Falls Presbyterian Church.
- **Floret Flower Workshops** - Floret Flower Farm has a number of workshops, including a free three-part video series (at top of page when you click on the link) available through end of October where they show you some important garden techniques, including how to double the number of blooms your plants produce (pinching), how to get the longest vase life from your cut flowers, and how to create a beautiful hand-tied bouquet (<https://www.floretflowers.com/workshops/online-workshop/>).
- **NGC Schools** - Visit the link (<https://gardenclub.org/our-schools>) and click on “learn more” and then “find a course” for each of the respective schools: Flower Show, Gardening, Landscape Design, and Environmental. There are a number of virtual options that are convenient and cost effective.
- **Fern Valley Workdays at US Arboretum** - Chair Dawn Reynolds-Olson is working on establishing workdays at the US Arboretum starting in September. Here are the dates on the books so far: Tuesday, September 16, 10am-12:30pm, Tuesday, October 14, 10am-12:30pm, Friday, October 17, 10am-12:30pm, and Friday, November 7, 10am-12:30pm. Please let her know if you are interested in helping (fernvalley@ncagardenclubs.org)! Tools supplied and the task will range from pulling ivy, weeding and planting.
- **December 4, 2025** - Centennial Garden Club’s Wreath-tastic Fundraiser at Brittany’s Restaurant in Woodbridge, VA at 11am. Join them for a holly jolly time creating a beautiful fresh holiday wreath and enjoying a delicious buffet lunch with wonderful camaraderie. \$40 per person and registration and payment at www.zeffy.com/en-us/ticketing/make-n-take-cgc-fundraiser
- **December 5-6, 2025** - Haymarket Town & Country Garden Club’s Holiday Shoppe at the Community Center at the Evergreen Fire and Rescue Station 15, Haymarket, VA.
- There are a number of fall festivals happening in and around our region if you want to check them out: <https://mommypoppins.com/fall-festivals-near-washington-dc-families>.
- Save-the-Date: June 2, 2026 - NCAGC 75th Anniversary Conference at Congressional Country Club, Potomac, MD with more information coming January 2026

TREX Recycling Challenge**By Maryam Zolecki**

As shared at the September meeting, we are 250 pounds away from reaching our goal of 1,000 pounds by November 23, 2025. As many of you are aware, we have been participating in the NexTrex 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 most plastic bags from the grocery store used to store food and package food, ice bags, plastic shipping envelopes, Ziploc bags, bubble wrap, wood pellet bags, salt bags, and cereal box liners (link for more information: <https://nextrex.com/view/educate#materials1>). 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. Submitting your bag donations is easy: take your bags to a local grocery store (e.g., Giant, Harris Teeter, Safeway), take a picture of your recycling in/on/next to the recycling bin available at the store, and email/text the picture to Maryam Zolecki. I do hope this information is useful and encourages folks to participate in this project. Any and all submissions are much appreciated, and if every person sends along two to three submissions between now and the deadline, we will meet the goal!

PHOTO GALLERY

From the September Meeting

Grouped Mass Designs



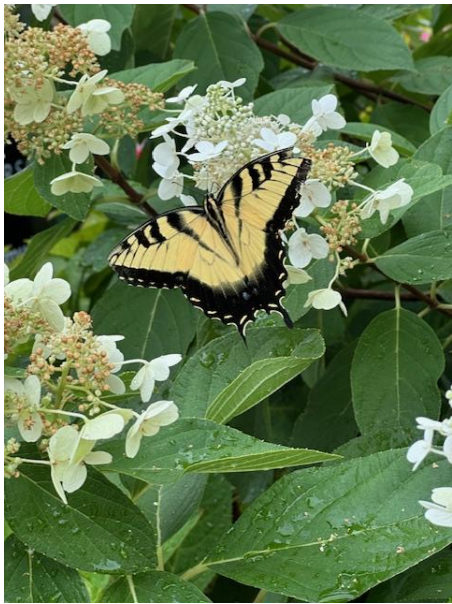


Tina Foutz gave a demonstration on the Botanical Arts at the September meeting.



Thea McGinnis and Anita Brown with internationally known Ikebana Sogetsu artist Ilse Beunen at Sugetsu DC event on October 3 in McLean, VA

**From George Ruppert:
Pollinators at Work**



From Joan Hession: Mushrooms around the neighborhood



From Renee Bayes:



Giant Puffball Mushrooms



and Giant Pumpkins