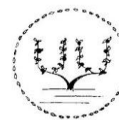


THE GARDENZETTE



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

Dianne Simmons

TREASURER

Joan Hession

GARDENZETTE EDITOR

Pat Getz

General Meeting

September 17, 2026 – 10:00 am

Little Falls Presbyterian Church

Lower Level

6025 Little Falls Road

Arlington, VA 22207

Creating A Wreath

Longtime club member Sheila Moore will demonstrate the art of wreath making for any occasion. Sheila brings years of professional experience as a floral design business owner, and wreaths are one of her passions. Sheila's wreaths sell like hotcakes at our annual Holiday Fundraiser. You too will be able to create wreaths using, as she does, items procured from your own home. You can also shop at the Ways and Means table to obtain supplies for your wreath making. Sheila's demonstration will inspire us to create wreaths for the Holiday Fundraiser!

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President's Message

By Cheryl Atkinson

Can you believe it's September? Although it still feels like summer, leaves are starting to fall and Trick or Treat candies are on the grocery shelves. So, fall can't be far away! I look forward to welcoming you all back to another year of gardening, floral design, community service, and fellowship at our September meeting. I always learn something new from our programs, and I'm especially eager to learn techniques for styling everlasting wreaths from our very talented member Sheila Moore at the September meeting.

Even though we didn't meet in July and August, our committees have been busy planning for the coming year. Be sure to pick up your 2026-2027 Yearbook at the September meeting; it's your guide for all the upcoming programs, monthly designs, meetings and events as well as an easy reference to our Bylaws, Standing Rules and Membership Directory. I'm looking forward to the coming year and to catching up with everyone at the September meeting.

Year to Date Budget Report

Beginning Balance: \$20,987.94

Revenue: \$69.59

Expenses: (\$2,181.23)

Net: (\$2,111.64)

Ending Balance: \$18,876.30

Next Board Meeting

October 1, 2026

4:30 pm

Hosted by Joan Hession

Budget

By Joan Hession

Congratulations to all of you!

We had a balanced budget last fiscal year due to all the hard work of our officers and committee chairs. The expenses were controlled and our fundraiser was very successful. The fundraiser was led by Janet Nuzum, and all of you provided the excellent products. Great job to all of you!

This year's budget is at the end of the Gardenzette. Please check it out as it will be presented for approval at the September meeting.

Show: Design of the Month

By Kate Abrahams

Welcome back to another year of exploring National Garden Club (NGC) floral designs! I hope you will enjoy learning about these different design types and giving them a try. This month's design assignment is a "an alfresco, functional tray for one person". Your total allotted space is 25 inches wide and 20 inches deep so your tray should fit within this space. In the words of the NGC *Handbook for Flower Shows*, (Chapter 7) a functional tray is:

- Planned and set for actual service of food
- Convenience and sense of order must prevail
- A decorative unit (floral design) must be included. A container grown plant is not a design. Coordination of all components must be balanced in the allotted space.
- The decorative unit must be in scale to the one place setting. The tray requires an appropriately sized decorative unit with the stability of the decorative unit given importance.
- For this assignment, the components you will need are dish(es), a napkin, beverage service (something to hold a drink), a decorative unit and a tray. You can add other things if you wish, like a place setting or fabric under the dishes on the tray. Napkins are placed to the side of the dish(es) not on top since you assume there will be food on the tray and a beverage already poured into the container. The components should be stable on the tray so if you carried it nothing would fall over. Alfresco refers to eating outdoors so take that as a guide to choosing components.

Aim for harmony in color, a variety of textures and heights of the components, and a dominant component that the other components will complement. One tip is to visually divide the tray into quarters and make sure the decorative unit doesn't exceed one quarter of the space on the tray. Good luck in your first assignment! Check out the photos below and feel free to email me with questions.



Senior Outreach

By Joan Hession and Mary Kudless

August 27th was a party at Mary Marshall Assisted Living Residences. Joan and Mary joined the staff as they celebrated Candyland. The residents and staff really got into the theme and seemed to be having a fabulous time with games, balloons, prizes, a balloon artist and a talented caricaturist. Many residents took advantage of having their portraits done.



We had a chance to visit with residents and also check the gardens and water.

Kay Halverson, the first Executive Director at Mary Marshall, was present to celebrate with all the staff and residents. She has been retired for 6 years and yet comes all the way from Minnesota every year to attend. Kay is the Director that RSGC initially worked with to conceptualize and implement the Senior Outreach Project.



Mary Kudless, Davina Alston, Executive Director, Kay Halverson, past Director

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 in the new year.

- District III General Meeting is being held on **Thursday, September 24, 2026** at the US National Arboretum in Washington, DC.
- The NCAGC flower show is being held on **September 25-27, 2026** at the US National Arboretum. It should be a beautiful show!
- The NCAGC Fall General Meeting will be on Tuesday, September 29, 2026 at US National Arboretum in Washington, DC.
- Piedmont District Fall Meeting is being held on **Monday, October 19, 2026** at Virginia Crossings Hotel in Glen Allen, VA
- The Haymarket Town & Country Garden Club is holding a Fall Plant Sale fundraiser. They will be offering a selection of mums and pansies with the proceeds benefiting the projects of the Club. Orders may be placed [electronically here](#). You will receive a confirmation email with payment instructions. Plant pick-up will be on **Saturday, October 3, 2026** from 8:30am to 11am. in the lower level of the Evergreen Fire Station parking lot.
- NCAGC will host the CAR-SGC Conference in 2027. CAR-SGC stands for Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs. NCAGC hopes you would consider helping create a wonderful experience for **October 2027** that also involves members from Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. NCAGC is looking for connections to fabulous speakers or secret gardens that would be a special treat for this conference. Please reach out to volunteer with our committee (CAR2027chair@ncagardenclubs.org). There will also be many opportunities to volunteer closer to October 2027.
- **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.
- On **Sunday, December 6, 2026**, Renee Bayes granddaughter will be performing in her very first solo performance in The Nutcracker at Capital One Hall. There will be two performances that day at 1pm and then again at 6pm. Click here for ticket information: <https://www.ticketmaster.com/centre-company-presents-the-nutcracker-tickets/artist/3837739>

Membership

By Maryam Zolecki

We begin the club year with 62 members, and we are always looking to add to our membership list. To that end, the Membership Committee of Maryam Zolecki, Janis Gunel, and Connie Richards are organizing and participating in various events to get the word out there. Over the summer, Renee Bayes and Charlotte Benjamin provided a wonderful presentation on floral design at Westover Library. We have also been setting up a table at farmer's markets, and earlier in September, our table at City of Falls Church Farmer's Market was a big hit. Over the last couple of years, we have gained wonderful members through word of mouth, and please continue to do what you can to encourage your friends and neighbors to check out a meeting.



Holiday Fundraiser

By Janet Nuzum

Our annual fundraiser public event will once again take place on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. We are calling it a “Holiday Fundraiser”, however, to reflect the broader scope of this year’s event. In addition to our well-known pumpkin floral designs, we will be expanding the offerings of fresh flowers in all sorts of containers, and also including non-perishable holiday-themed items to purchase. Sheila Moore has agreed to teach us how to make beautiful wreaths out of dried, natural, and artificial materials, which will also be a part of the Holiday Fundraiser offerings. So, even if you plan to be out of town and not available on November 24, please help make the fundraiser a success by contributing before you leave town. The organizing committee met on August 31 and has already started the planning process. We will have a sign-up sheet at the September general meeting, so please sign up to help or contact Janet Nuzum to discuss options.

Charitable Donations

By Joan Hession

In fiscal year 2025-2026, we made donations to three organizations. Please see the notes of thanks (shown below) that we received from each group.

NCAGC: “Thank you to Rock Spring Garden Club for your donation of \$200 to NCAGC Projects. The donation will be evenly divided between Fern Valley, Friendship Garden, the President’s Project, Scholarship and Washington Youth Garden.”

VFGC: “The Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. wishes to thank you for your recent generous contribution of \$200.00 to our four Virginia funds: Blue Star Memorial, Youth Project Grants, Scholarship, and Grants to Beautify and Restore.

It is my pleasure to inform you that your club has achieved membership in the Dogwood Society for 2025-2026.”

4-H: “On behalf of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Arlington County 4-H, I am writing to express our deepest gratitude for your generous gift of \$1600 to support the 4-H Camp this year. Your support will make a significant difference in our efforts to fund campers whose families cannot afford 4-H overnight camp. Thank you again for your extraordinary generosity and dedication to support 4-H Extension-Arlington County.”

PHOTO GALLERY



Thea McGinnis won Best in Show at the Judges Council Flower Show on June 17th. The class is an Exhibition Table.



Kate Abrahams won first place for Underwater Design at the Potomac Lily Show on June 27th.

**From Dianne Simmons
Insects hard at work in Dianne's yard**



From Maryam Zolecki
Reykjavik, Iceland Botanic Garden



From Pat Getz
Queen's Garden
Stirling Castle, Scotland



Budget Proposal					
June 1, 2026- May 31, 2027					
Funds June 1, 2026					Proposed
	\$ 20,941.46		Budget	Actual	Budget
Revenue			2025-26	2025-26	2026-27
Donations			\$ 700.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 700.00
Fundraisers			\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,890.00	\$ 3,000.00
Interest			\$ 350.00	355.99	\$ 350.00
Membership dues			\$ 3,315.00	\$ 3,445.00	\$ 3,315.00
Other			\$ 200.00	\$ 690.00	\$ 200.00
Ways & Means			\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,365.50	\$ 1,000.00
Total			\$ 8,565.00	\$ 10,371.49	\$ 8,565.00
Expenses					
Officers expenses					
Pres			\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ 150.00
V Pres			\$ 50.00	\$ 146.13	\$ 150.00
Sec			\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Trea			\$ 300.00	\$ 396.06	\$ 150.00
Committees					
Awards			\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ -
Community Outreach			\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00
Floral Outreach			\$ 400.00	\$ 157.05	\$ 400.00
Fundraiser			\$ 100.00	\$ 611.62	\$ 850.00
Garden Therapy			\$ 400.00	\$ 401.58	\$ 500.00
Horticulture			\$ 50.00		\$ 50.00
Hospitality			\$ 100.00	\$ 172.63	\$ 250.00
Membership			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150.00
Program					
Speakers			\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,120.00	\$ 1,500.00
Publications					
Gardenzette			\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ -
Yearbook			\$ 400.00	\$ 404.39	\$ 400.00
Publicity			\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 1,257.04
Senior Outreach			\$ 400.00	\$ 385.24	\$ 500.00
Show			\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Ways and Means			\$ 400.00	\$ 176.31	\$ 375.00
Youth activities			\$ 400.00	\$ 472.56	\$ 500.00
Meeting expense					
Rent			\$ 1,750.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 2,100.00
Custodian			\$ 525.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 525.00
Dues NCAGC			\$ 520.00	\$ 544.00	\$ 520.00
VFGC			\$ 325.00	\$ 340.00	\$ 325.00
Piedmont			\$ 65.00	\$ 68.00	\$ 65.00
SUBTOTAL			\$ 8,035.00	\$ 7,095.57	\$ 10,917.04
Other					
Charitable contributions			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Flower Show			\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,229.44	\$ -
4-H campers			\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,600.00
Total			\$ 11,285.00	\$ 10,325.01	\$ 13,017.04
Net			\$ (2,720.00)	\$ 46.48	\$ (4,452.04)
Ending balance	5/31/2026		\$18,267.94	\$20,987.94	\$16,535.90