



Bethesda Community

GARDEN CLUB

"Ninety-three Years of Brightening Lives and Landscapes"

www.bethesdacommunitygardenclub.org

Vol. 43, No. 7 ■ March 2017

Member of
The National Capital Area
Garden Clubs and
The National Council of State
Garden Clubs, Inc.

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Yvonne Orkin created the table arrangements for the February meeting, including this lovely, cheerful pairing of daffodils and daisies.

Dues Are Due!

Officially our garden club year is July 1 to June 30. However, we collect dues beginning in March with a May 1 deadline so that we can send an official membership list with dues payment to the NCAGC by then.

Regina Fitzgerald will collect dues, which are \$40, at the March and April meetings or you can mail her a check made out to BCGC.

Regina Fitzgerald
4413 Windom Place NW
Washington DC 20016

(ENGLISH) COUNTRY GARDENS

Greetings everyone. Spring will have been here for two days when we meet on March 22, 10:30am, St. Mark Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Rd., Bethesda. Time to fantasize about what our gardens will look like when they're at their very best. And to help us achieve our wildest dreams **Carolyn Mullet**, the March speaker, will share information on how to incorporate design ideas from English gardens so we, too, can have flowery bowers and blossoms everywhere in our borders.

Carolyn has almost three decades of landscape design experience. She currently operates her own company **Carex: Garden Design by Carolyn Mullet**, based in Takoma Park. She also leads garden tours abroad. You can find more information about her endeavours at www.carexdesign.com or at www.facebook.com/gdbycm. Carolyn was engaged to deliver this talk last year but had to cancel at the last moment because her computer was stolen the night before the meeting.

So please join us for Carolyn's talk on "**What We Can Learn from English Gardens**" and please reserve your questions for Carolyn until she's finished her presentation. We want to preserve that nice flow of inspiring ideas that Carolyn is sure to voice.

The March meeting will also include a silent auction of desirable garden-related *objets* organized by Debbie Shakelton and Candy Kessler. If you've fallen out of love with your absolutely charming *objet* please consider letting it absolutely charm one of your fellow gardeners at the silent auction. The proceeds of the auction will be donated to the 11th Street Bridge Park project.

The luncheon committee headed by Kathy Benjamin is providing us with a hot lunch to enjoy and Kasia Massie and her team will be adorning the luncheon tables with her ever-so-pretty bouquets. The kitchen crew includes Bebe McMeekin, Sylvia Diss, Candy Kessel, Jane Boynton, Barbara Roberts, Kathy Benjamin, Suzanne Grefsheim, Karin Kelleher, Victoria Porter, Marty Fears, and Nancy Davidian.

Annual Picnic

Now for a few words about our annual picnic. We've organized it for Wednesday June 14. We'll be meeting at the River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 6301 River Road, Bethesda, at 7:30AM. The church is actually located on Whittier where it intersects with River.

We'll ride to Richmond, VA on an Eyre motorcoach, hopefully arriving there at about 9:30am. We are aiming for that arrival time but DC-Richmond traffic is notorious. We hope to be at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens at 9:30am for a tour of the garden, followed by an 11:30am box lunch at their café.

After lunch we will go from Lewis Ginter to the Maymont estate, hopefully arriving by 1pm. There we'll tour the mansion and the gardens.

At about 3:30pm we will go from Maymont to Sandy's Plants, a perennials (and other sorts) nursery. Sandy McDougle hopes to greet us and chat us up about her enterprise. She especially wants to show us her landscaped area, which she touts as a refuge for those who aren't interested in shopping. As it's a 35 acre site, she strongly recommends visiting her website (www.sandysplants.com) and loading the "shopping cart" with plants you want to purchase. That will ensure you can find your choices and eliminate aimless wandering around in search of that perfect specimen. I've tried out her suggestion about shopping on her website and it's fun fun. We'll spend approximately 2 hours at Sandy's and then we'll return to the River Road Unitarian church. Suzanne, our redoubtable president, is promising wine and cheese on the trip home because she's aware we'll all need a restorative.

The per person charge for this delightful outing is \$65.00 and it's nonrefundable. (The club is additionally subsidizing the trip at approximately \$25 per person.) We'll need your check made out to Bethesda Community Garden Club by our last "formal" meeting, April 26 (Remember there's no meeting in May—it's the PLANT SALE month). Or you can mail the check to our luncheon coordinator Kathy Benjamin by that same date:

K. Benjamin, P.O. Box 486, Garrett Park, MD 20896

We'll send out more reminders as the deadline draws nearer. Get your check to Kathy Benjamin by the April 26 meeting and look forward to a wonderful day in pretty surroundings.

-Jane Malish

Donations to 11th St. Bridge Project

After hearing all about the good work being done by the folks managing the 11th Street Bridge Project at our January meeting, members asked the Board to consider ways our club could support them. The Board considered both financial and physical support during its discussion.

First, we will make members aware of opportunities to volunteer their time and labor. Individuals can then decide for themselves if they want to organize a working party or just help out themselves. Second, when we review our annual Club donations in September, we will add the 11th Street Bridge Project to the list of possible supported initiatives. In the meantime, as you will read below, we will give all the proceeds from the Silent Auction at the March meeting to them.

For many of us, helping out on workdays in Anacostia may not be an option, nor do we have good pots or other auction-worthy garden paraphernalia to give to the Silent Auction. So what can you do, if you are eager to help make this worthwhile endeavor a success? Write a check, of course! Make it out to the 11th Street Bridge Project and give it to Regina Fitzgerald, our Treasurer, at the March Meeting. She will send it along with the proceeds from the Auction and you will get a tax deduction.

-Suzanne Grefsheim

Auction to Benefit 11th Street Bridge Project

Candy Kessel

The popularity of last year's silent auction and members' desire to make a nice donation to the 11th Street Bridge Project mean that BCGC will hold a silent auction at the March 22 meeting. Please bring garden-themed items such as plant stands, lovely containers for indoor or outdoor use, nice unwanted tools, garden artifacts, etc. Please, no garden books or flimsy plastic or traditional terra cotta pots.

When you decide what items you have to donate (check all those spaces you're trying to clean out!) please email Debbie Shakelton (jshakelton@aol.com, 301-229-7255) so we can prepare bid sheets. Bring your donations to the March meeting in clean condition ready to set on the auction table. The silent bidding will start as soon as set-up is completed, so the earlier the better. And bring your checkbook and/or

plenty of cash so you can bid generously for this good cause.

If you have any questions contact Debbie or Candy (candykessel36@gmail.com; 202-415-7828).

Edgewood Garden Trip Set for April 12

The club's spring field trip is headed to Edgewood, a notable private garden in Exton, PA, created by John Lonsdale of Sheffield, England. The 1.5+ acre garden includes a steep hillside habitat that is a wonderful climate for growing bulbs and rhizomes so we will see the cyclamen he hybridizes plus trillium, buttercups, lady's slipper and other hardy orchids, trout lilies, Jack-in-the-pulpit, hepatica, epimedium, gingers, etc., as well as daphnes and magnolias.

John will be with us to explain the environment of the garden, the plants, and some of the featured groupings. Two greenhouses and cold frames are used for propagating plants from seed for introduction into the garden and for growing a few species that will not succeed outdoors in winter, including Deep South trillium species. Check his website for photos and more information: www.edgewoodgardens.net/index.html.

The April 12 tour is set for 2:00 p.m. so you can go as a day trip or do an overnight and visit other gardens in the area. Not far away are some well-stocked Amish-owned garden centers where selection and prices are worth a trip themselves.

To cover our trip fee we have invited other area gardeners through Sharon Southerland's connections with Four Seasons and the Potomac Valley Chapter of the Rock Garden Society. If you want to go please pay Candy \$10 at the March 22 meeting or mail her a check (3626 Veazey St., NW, DC 20008; candykessel36@gmail.com). You're welcome to invite garden friends as well. Checks are preferred for payment, made out to BCGC with Edgewood in the memo line. **Deadline for RSVP and payment is Friday March 24.**

If you plan to go, Candy is managing the carpools so please be sure to tell her if you:

Will drive and take riders, arrange your own transportation or prefer to ride with others, and

Will go for the day or overnight 4/11.



The club now has 109 members! And our new members are pitching right in, signing up for plant sale jobs!

DIY Pest Killers

Suzanne Grefsheim

First, let's define "pest." It is either a plant or a bug you don't want in your garden. We heard a talk about bees and other pollinators at the last meeting, which we all *want* to see in the garden, but we also know there are things like hairy bittercress and lesser celandine or cottony camellia scale and mealybugs we don't want on our plants and shrubs. Carrie Dike, a local landscaper who attended our last meeting as a guest, offers the following as pesticides you can use with minimal harm to your own health or that of the planet.

DIY Weed Killer

- 1 gallon white vinegar
- 1 tbsp Dawn liquid dish soap
- 1 cup (could try less) salt

Mix the ingredients together and pour into sprayer. Apply directly and only to weeds. For thick-skinned weeds like ivy, you will need to spray two or more times.

DIY Bug Killer

- 1 gallon water
- 1 tsp ground cayenne pepper
- 2 tsp peppermint liquid soap (like Dr. Bonner's)

Mix ingredients and pour into sprayer (probably best if not the same one you use for killing weeds). Spray plants or shrubs where you see evidence of undesirable bugs.

TIME TO DIG!!

Carol Meyers

Despite the uncertain spring it is time to prepare for the Plant Sale (May 11). Start digging and potting now and try to be finished by mid-April. This will give the plants time to adjust to the pots and look beautiful. If you need help digging, please contact Carol Meyers (carol.s.meyers@starpower.net or 301-803-0540).

As plants are dug and potted, we will need sites where they can be stored and cared for. The plants will be transported to your site. They will already be labeled with their name and need for sun or shade. Storage volunteers just need to do three things:

- 1) make a list of the plants you are storing—name, count, and shade vs. sun and send list to Carol
- 2) water the plants as needed
- 3) clean out leaves, etc. before the plants are transported to our staging sites the first weekend in May for prepping and pricing.



Marie Rojas, a master gardener and proprietor of Borders and Butterflies, spoke at the February meeting on “Bees, Beneficials and Blooms.”

Mark Your Calendar

Potomac Hosta Club’s 2017 Annual Spring Meeting will feature Bob Solberg, an international hosta expert, as speaker. The topic is “Turning your Hosta garden into a Shade Garden and Hostas in Pots.”

Sun, Mar 26, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Merrifield Garden Center, Fair Oaks.

12101 LEE HWY, Fairfax, VA 2203.

There will be a short business meeting and plant sale after the speaker. Open to the public—Seating limited to 100.

RSVP to hostaclub@gmail.com or Potomac Hosta Club facebook page.



For the March meeting, the sandwiches were divided into those that were vegetarian and those that were not—a very thoughtful idea.

Bees

Honey Bees: brought here by European settlers in colonial times to pollinate their crops.

- Over \$26 million dollars of agricultural produce are attributed to honey bee pollination in Maryland.
- More than 100,000 pounds of honey are produced by Maryland beekeepers.
- Social, live in a colony with a queen, workers, and drones. Colonies overwinter and live for years.
- Responsible for about 80% of the pollination of fruits, nuts, grains and vegetables in the U.S.



HORTICULTURAL NOTES

Plants of the Shoulder Season

Carole Ottesen

Plants that flower in the shoulder season between winter and full spring are what food is to a starving woman. Just when she thinks she cannot make it through one more gray day in a cold and dreary garden, overnight a carpet of winter aconites appears.

Aconites are the weather scouts. Rather than an all-clear, they signal that we're over the biggest hump. Insidious March can still thrash out, but the worst of the worst is behind us.

Every garden needs as many shoulder season plants as it will hold. Besides winter aconites, another early bulb to consider (carefully) is *Crocus tomasinianus*. Just don't ever, ever plant it in a short ground cover such as dwarf mondo grass. It will bloom nicely for about five or six days and then will send up long, grass-like foliage for five or six weeks.

You will be altogether much happier with hellebores. Actually, they are an absolute necessity. Both *H. x hybridus* (orientalis) and *H. foetidus* are great ground covers in semi-shady places. Deer won't touch them and they look good all year.

Among the early shrubs is an early forsythia that, with management, won't take over—unless you let it. *Forsythia x intermedia* 'Courdijau' or Golden Peep stays under two feet, but suckers *ad infinitum*. Let it



Winter aconite and *Crocus tomasinianus*.

go and it's a ground cover. Prune it and it will remain a nice, prostrate mound, suitable for edging a path.

When forsythia achieves full bloom, another yellow-flowered shrub, winter hazel (*Corylopsis pauciflora*) starts to open its dangling blooms, the coral bark maple blazes its deepest coral red, and, by some underground signal, dozens of daffodils open.

At this point, we are safely out of winter and into spring. (Or is that statement a gauntlet thrown down to the weather fairy?)



New member, Christina Emmerman, delighted us by wearing this flower pin, which had been her mother's. (At left)

Speakers table flowers were from the Glen Echo garden of Phyllis Daen. Such wonderful camellias! (At right)

