



Bethesda Community

GARDEN CLUB

"Ninety-five Years of Brightening Lives and Landscapes"

www.bethesdacommunitygardenclub.org

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Member of
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One of the special
plants offered at the
May 2018 Plant Sale.

*All photos by Vickie Baily
unless otherwise noted.*

Autumn arrives on Saturday, September 22 at 9:54pm EDT, according to the Old Farmer's Almanac, and our 2018-2019 meeting year begins Wednesday, September 26, 10:30AM in the Education Building of St. Mark Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Road in North Bethesda. Following our tradition, the chairs are arranged in a circle, the Euonymus 8 serenade us, the microphone is passed around and we share our gardening triumphs and woes from the past summer—what new techniques we've learned, what new tools we've discovered—and we renew old friendships and greet old acquaintances, ending our meeting with a delicious (I promise) salad lunch prepared for us by the club officers and committee members. Please join us on our first meeting of the new calendar year.

Jane Malish

We're 95 so We're Celebrating!

Candy Kessel

Charleston Garden Club claims to be one of the country's oldest clubs, per a Google search, yet it's just a year older than ours. Alabama boasts the Chunnenugee Public Garden Club that's been operating since 1847. Bethesda Community Garden Club doesn't have a history that lengthy, but 95 years of encouraging gardening passion, knowledge, and outreach is impressive in our frenzied world.

Join us on Wednesday, October 3, 2-4 pm at Brookside Gardens, to toast and savor 95 years of gardening fun, learning, beautification and friendship. Share recollections and memories.

To ensure our guarantee with the caterer, please send your check **now** (made out to BCGC) for \$25 to Carolyn Kulik, 5100 Moorland Lane, Bethesda, MD 20814. And email her (martin.carolyn.kulik@verizon.net) that your check is on the way.

For our 90th anniversary tea party, many members dressed in proper hats and gloves. We enjoyed hearing stories about some of the costumes, including vintage attire from mothers' and grandmothers' wardrobes. If flapper, tie-dyed, or other retro dress-up appeals to you, please wear it. But do come in whatever is comfy so you can enjoy Brookside's lovely gardens and our celebration.

Welcome Back BCGC Luncheon Committee Volunteers

Yvonne Orkin, Lisa Dobbs, Kathy Benjamin, and Barbara Marin

I listen to the change of seasons being heralded by the call of the cicadas in the trees where I live and I know that soon the streets will be littered with the golden glow of the leaves falling from the trees confirming the end of another gardening season. This is the time of year many of us will be inside with our plant books and catalogs and dream of next year's gardens. What could be better than sharing this with our friends at BCGC?

We on the luncheon committee are delighted to extend our welcome to all of you. People who grow vegetables usually enjoy experimenting with new ways to prepare them. Thank you all so much for sharing your favorite foods and the recipes; the food has been outstanding. Every month the menu is a little different, sometimes salads, sandwiches, soups, and hot entrees. If you'd like to contribute often or even only once, please watch for our Luncheon Committee clipboard that will be circulating at the meeting. We hope you will join us in continuing to make our luncheon the special treat it has always been.

Working with the Luncheon Committee is easy and a fun way to get to know the members of our garden club. We arrive at 10:00, retrieve the BCGC supplies from the basement, set the tables, have the drinks ready, and assist with any preparation of the food that is necessary. This is easily accomplished by 10:30 in time to watch the morning's program. There is always a Volunteer Coordinator on hand to guide the process and the 10 people who have provided the food to help. After lunch, the tables need to be cleared, the kitchen cleaned up and the supplies returned to the basement. We would like another member or two on our committee and we would welcome you to join us.

Thank you for all of your contributions, you are the reason BCGC is so special. —*Yvonne Orkin*

Welcome new member Maya Hyman

I've lived in the DC area since 1994 — I originally came here to go to college at American University. We recently moved to Chevy Chase (Town of Somerset) into our "dream home" — just a short walk to the town pool. It's new construction — so lots of planting needed!

My husband, Rob, and I have two children — Elizabeth who will be in second grade and Marcus who will be in first grade in the fall.

I love flowers (Sunflowers are my favorite) but am still VERY new at gardening. I went to the Bethesda Woman's Market Sale — and everyone was so helpful there that I decided to join. Looking forward to getting involved and learning!

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS: To Clean or Not to Clean?

Barbara Collier

Yes, it is a question—when it comes to the garden. How much cleanup do you want to do in the fall? Ok, it's still a bit early; we have all that fall planting and transplanting to do—bulbs, shrubs, perennials—but it's worth having a think about what to do when the time comes.

Obviously your approach will differ depending on where your garden falls on the spectrum from public garden to nature preserve, as well as your own tolerance for appearances. But many of us are relieved to learn that there are good reasons to go lightly on the cleanup. More and more garden advice out there explains that too much cleanup is not good for garden life—plant, animal, and insect (not to mention the gardener). For instance, leaving the leaves where they fall preserves all the critters that overwinter on the leaves, as well as feeding the soil. For those of us who still have lawns, this is apparently the case even for turf: the claim that fallen leaves will "kill the lawn" is an exaggeration: unless the leaves are very deep and matted, they can just be left to dry and crumble. A little raking off the lawn and into borders and shrubbery can take care of an excess of leaves, and of course they can be crumbled up with a lawnmower (although that may also destroy any caterpillars that might be overwintering). Or piling up the excess to compost will produce nice leaf mulch come spring.

Similarly, leaving some dead perennial stalks and seed heads in place is good for providing habitat for overwintering bees and other insects, as well as food and shelter for birds and other wildlife. In addition, leaving stalks in place can help protect the plants; if we get snow, for instance, snow gathering on the stalks can help insulate them. So if you like to be lazy about your fall cleanup, you have many justifications.

The part of cleanup that you should still try for (you saw this coming) is the good old weeding and mulching. It's amazing how the weeds insidiously hide in the fall until they can go to seed. So while you're pointedly avoiding cutting down your perennial stalks, cast a beady eye on all those places in between where the weeds are hiding. You can pull them out by the roots, of course; however, cutting the tops minimizes soil disturbance. In any case,

mulching generously (wood chips are excellent) will make life easier in the spring. This is also a good time to cut some of your dried cardinal flower or blue lobelia stalks, scratch up the soil to disturb it, and lay the stalks down to drop their seeds for next year's plants.

If you still have energy, you know you should be cleaning and oiling your tools and putting them

away. I know I should; I've known it for years. Yet somehow it always seems very difficult to decide when I really won't need them one more time...

Committee news: I'm happy to announce that Kathy Benjamin is now co-chair of the Environmental Concerns committee. If anyone has suggestions for us about possible committee activities, please let us know!

HORTICULTURAL NOTES

The Right Tool for the Job

Carole Ottesen

Carpenters know there is a right tool for every job and, as a result, they tend to acquire one tool for every job (if there is a carpenter in your household you know just how many tools it is possible for one man to accumulate).

Gardeners tend to accumulate fewer tools and employ them to perform a wider variety of jobs. The big three—spade, trowel, and clippers—are the workhorses of every gardener's collection.

There are some other nifty tools out there that can lighten a gardener's workload and enhance the gardening experience. First among these is the Japanese hoe, a small sickle. The very sharp blade will cut off weeds below the surface of the soil while the small size of the sickle allows for working very close to established plants. The price is right: under \$20.



Another small tool that does a big job is a curved harvest knife. Its compact size allows you to dig down close to big, ropery roots like those of bamboo and swiftly make clean cuts. Sears has a similar one for \$5.

This last gizmo is more for enhancing and entertaining: A butterfly hatching cage (\$15 Amazon). Fitted with butterflyweed plants (or milkweed if you still have some), it will provide sustenance as it protects caterpillars and pupae. These stages of the monarch butterfly may become prey to predatory wasps and birds (before the cage arrived, eleven caterpillars on a milkweed plant disappeared—probably due to birds). When not in use, the butterfly cage folds flat.



Photos by Carole Ottesen

