



# Bethesda Community

GARDEN CLUB

"Ninety-five Years of Brightening Lives and Landscapes"

[www.bethesdacommunitygardenclub.org](http://www.bethesdacommunitygardenclub.org)

Vol. 45, No. 2 ■ October 2018

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

President:  
Susan Lass  
(301-656-1893)

Vice President:  
Judy Termini

Co-Secretaries:  
Judith Graef  
Carol Meyers

Treasurer:  
Lise Ringland

Bulletin Editor:  
Lois Brown  
301-365-7419

Photographer:  
Vickie Baily

Send news to:  
[dnleb@aol.com](mailto:dnleb@aol.com)

If you've seen dandelions in your yard you may have remembered you can harvest (or forage) young leaves for salads. **Marianne Willburn**, an author and award-winning garden blogger and columnist, knows all about foraging and will share foraging methods from A to Z. We'll learn what to look for, what to avoid and some foraged foods to enjoy...even mushrooms. Please join Marianne at our **October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting**, 10:30am at St. Mark Presbyterian church, 10701 Old Georgetown Rd., Bethesda. Lunch will be served...please bring a sandwich to share, daintily divided into fourths. And by the way, Marianne has a new book out—*Big Dreams, Small Gardens*. She's bringing some copies with her to sell. They are \$20 each, should you be interested. Looking forward to seeing everyone on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October.

Jane Malish

## Directory Corrections

Please make these corrections in your 2018 directory:

**Amy Prywes:** the phone number listed in the directory is no longer in service. Her contact number should be **301-509-0458**.

**Judy Termini** also has only a cell phone. Please delete her home phone and use her cell **240-461-3187**.



The 95th Anniversary Celebration featured fun and creative outfits, like this muumuu worn by Phyllis Daen. See more photos on pp. 4-5.

All photos by Vickie Baily unless otherwise noted.



## FROM OUR 2018 ROUND ROBIN

Judith Graef

The annual September members' Round Robin of garden-related wisdom was not a disappointment. A sampling of information is listed below. Enjoy.

### To Try in the Garden

- Fabric softener dryer sheets in your gardening hat to repel mosquitoes and other pesky insects;
- 'Campfire' coleus in sun or shade for a brilliant pop of rusty red/orange color;
- Easy to grow *Ruellia*, Mexican Petunia, for a dramatic splash of purple/blue;
- Waterproof strings of lights year round on your arbor;
- Clay/Tile Flue Liners as herb pots by your kitchen door;
- Chelated iron to green up your lawn—check with Dee Lertora for details;

- A shiny, sharp, and durable Wilcox All-Pro trowel;
- Caroline Turner swears by her long-handled weeder to avoid bending; it also provides her with support while walking through her garden.

Defensive Measures:

- “Raid Ant Gel” to prevent ant “chain migration”;
- “Plantskydd”— deer and rabbit repellent;
- Small wire baskets (World Market) used as ready-made cages to protect plants from rabbits, etc.—trim off handles and remove bottom if necessary;
- Remove trees damaged by Emerald Ash Borers before the tree is dead to avoid the need of a crane to take it down. Once it’s dead the tree is too dangerous to climb.
- “No-Zone” is an excellent squirrel repellent.

Pure Pleasure:

- Suzanne Grefsheim recommends HF Holidays for walking holidays and garden tours in Lisbon, Provence, Cornwall, Wales, etc.
- Barbara Collier recommends the “iNaturalist” app that works on all devices to help identify plants, insects, etc. It allows you to explore nature, share and learn information from naturalists. Also check the website – inaturalist.com.
- “GWA Grows” is the official blog of the Garden Writers’ Association. “Gardenwriters.blog”
- Specifics for various products can be found with an online search.



Directories were distributed at the September meeting. Contact Holly Joseph if you have not yet received one. Contact Barbara Shaw to update information in the directory.



From left: Lou Olin, Lois, Brown, Irene Sinclair, Carolyn Kulik, Holly Joseph, and Betty Bartkey

**Long-time Members Honored at 95th Anniversary Celebration, October 3, 2018**

We honor and appreciate our long-time members who have helped our club – and our gardens – thrive for so many years:

	<i>Year Joined BCGC</i>
<u>Members for 30+ Years</u>	
Elizabeth Allen	1949
Jane Read	1954
Irene Sinclair	1969
Betty Bartky	1973
Holly Joseph	1984
Carolyn Kulik	1986
Sue Ray	1988
<u>Members for 25+ Years</u>	
Lois Brown	1990
Zena McCallum	1992
Barbara Shaw	1992
Lou Olin	1993

**BCGC Receives Award**

Also at the anniversary party the Club was presented with the National Garden Club’s Distinguished Service Award “for having made a significant contribution toward the advancement of the goals and purposes of the NGC and their community.” Robin Hammer, president of NGC, presented the award.



Robin Hammer presenting the Distinguished Service Award at the anniversary celebration

## Environmental Concerns

Barbara Collier

### An American Conqueror

Those of us who become interested in native plant gardening are often taken aback at the number of extremely familiar garden plants that hail from exotic climes—not just all those *sinensises* and *japonicum*s, but homey-seeming plants like honeysuckles, wisterias, and crape myrtles. (Yes, ok, there are native honeysuckle and wisteria. You know what I mean.)

Having got past that stage, I now find myself struck by the number of familiar North American plants that are returning the favor overseas. Lately most of my overseas travel has been within Europe, and there are numerous American plants that have clearly been picked up by European plantspeople (my inclusive neologism for “plantsmen”). One famous example is *Rudbeckia* ‘Goldsturm’ developed in (you guessed it) Germany. But many other American species (including phloxes, goldenrods, and heucheras, to name only a few) have been adopted whole-heartedly in Europe, to the extent that they have been subject to much breeding and hybridizing. So the European gardener may also be surprised to discover that so many common garden plants have American provenance.

Over the last several years—perhaps as long as I have been familiar with the plant—I keep being surprised at how many specimens of *Gaura lindheimeri* I see in European gardens. This popularity is probably because gaura is such a very useful plant, with its basal clump and airy blooms, both for filling in and for making more sculptural statements.

Maybe they are all over American public gardens, too, but I haven’t noticed them so much. I did notice them, however, and decided forthwith to try to grow them. The first few times, I bought potted cultivars and was disappointed when they did not reliably come back the following years. Exploring further, I found that gaura is considered a short-lived perennial. Buying large numbers of the showy cultivars like ‘Whirling Butterflies’ and the like risked being an expensive proposition, so I turned to seeds. This seemed like a good bet, since like other short-lived perennials, gaura is a self-seeder. Acquiring seed of the straight species, I followed the explicit instructions: plant seeds about 15 inches apart, with

three seeds in each hole. Success! I ended up with a large number of plants, and some volunteers came up the following year.

I also learned that gaura has a woody tap root, which makes it drought resistant once established. I have not observed it to be damaged by deer. It prefers sun, and it can get leggy if it does not get enough. It is another of those natives that prefers poor soil: rich soils can also make it leggy. I read that it prefers light soils, but since it grows in my clay, I imagine drainage is key. Still, this may explain my lack of success with the cultivars: perhaps if I had been careful to put them on a sunny hillside, with good drainage and unimproved soil, they would have lasted longer.

In the area where my gaura was established, many other things have now filled in, so I am most likely to find volunteers (where else?) in my paths. (A lot of volunteers seem to like to take advantage of the unobstructed space in paths.) If you don’t wait too long and are careful to dig up most of the tap root, you should be able to transplant these. Since one method of propagation is by division, you may even be lucky and end up with more than one.

One of my pathside volunteers ended up being a relatively short specimen, whether because of the extra sun and space it got, or whether it was a natural variation, I don’t know. But that is another way in which letting native species go to seed can lead to interesting results, as long as you are not heavily invested in uniformity and discipline. Of course, if you’re growing gaura in the first place, that is probably not a major goal.



**Kasia Massie puts the finishing touches on the arrangements for the luncheon tables at the September meeting.**

## 95th Anniversary Celebration, October 3, 2018



BCGC has been contributing to Brookside Gardens for many years, hence it seemed appropriate to celebrate the special day on their new terrace.



Karen Fricke trimmed her own hat. She has taken over the role of milliner from our beloved Virginia Moore who turned 100 at our 90th Anniversary.



Archivist Debbie Shakelton, who is wearing her mother's brooch, President Susan Lass, and Event Organizer Candy Kessel.



Judith Hackett prepares to write her name, but what is she supposed to do with the Felco pruners?



Maureen Valcour



Tiki girl, Arlene Howard



Nancy Davidian, wearing her favorite fashion from the last 95 years—the jean jacket!



Holly Joseph, Sharon Washburn Southerland and Carolyn Randall



The Euonymus 8 entertained us. At left, Barbara Collier gives them the pitch. At first it was the Euonymus Seven...But then Deborah Peck arrived and it was back to 8! Other members, in addition to Barbara and Deborah, were Belva Finlay, Janet Fernandez, Holly Joseph, Judy Termini, Marjorie Pray, and the ring-leader—Carol Meyers.



These ladies dressed as hippies: Dee Lertora, Susan Lass (remembering the summer of love), Marilyn Tenenbaum, and Carol Meyers, who dyed the fabric of her outfit herself.



The ladies of Garrett Park (photo by Carolyn Randall).



A toast to 95 years of brightening lives and landscapes in the community!

## HORTICULTURAL NOTES

# *Autumn Tasks*

*Carole Ottesen*

**A**t last. It's over. The weeds have finally stopped growing, giving us the much-needed break to catch up—and possibly even get ahead. You can use the period between too hot and too cold to take on chores you were too busy to attack when the garden was leaping full speed ahead. Now there is time to organize the shed or the garage, to clean/sharpen tools, and to generally spruce up the garden, including the furniture.

Clean, sharp pruners and loppers will be a source of joy come spring. To clean small tools, if possible, take them apart to reach all remaining bits of soil. Organic residue not only holds moisture encouraging rust, it may spread disease. Steel wool works well for this task.

After cleaning tools, use a whetstone to sharpen the beveled edges. Sometimes—and this is iffy—there is a sharpening booth at local markets. Failing that, there is Strosnidars in Bethesda.

To sharpen larger tools—spades, shovels, and hoes—use a file. To be on the safe side, wear protective glasses. Aim for even strokes and always stroke away from yourself.

Finally, lubricate clean, sharp tools with machine oil. You may also wish to recondition the wooden handles of larger tools with sandpaper followed by linseed oil.

Garden furniture takes a beating. If you are lucky you may own some of the sturdiest pieces. The good old, 50s era, American made wrought iron furniture can last for more than a lifetime. However, even these sturdy chairs and tables may lose some of their luster over a long time. Removing rust and



**Before and after powder coating lawn furniture**

*Photo by Carole Ottesen*

repainting are chores handily done on an autumn afternoon. An even better fix—though more expensive—can be achieved by taking the furniture to be powder coated at an automotive shop. You can choose just about any color. And it will last longer than you do.