



Bethesda Community

GARDEN CLUB

"Ninety-three Years of Brightening Lives and Landscapes"

www.bethesdacommunitygardenclub.org

Vol. 43, No. 6 ■ February 2017

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

President:
Suzanne Grefsheim
(301-946-5529)

Vice President:
Judy Termini

Secretary:
Nancy Davidian

Treasurer:
Regina Fitzgerald

Bulletin Editor:
Lois Brown
301-365-7419

Photographer:
Vickie Baily

Send news to:
dnleb@aol.com

February is not too soon to think about the upcoming growing season...or maybe it's here already: I have a couple of fall-planted lettuces thriving in a pot that's located in the wind tunnel area of my backyard. But I digress. **Marie Rojas**, a master gardener and proprietor of **Borders and Butterflies** for the last 18 years, is our speaker at the next meeting on February 22. Borders and Butterflies specializes in integrated pest management and serves homeowners and nursery growers. Marie's topic is **Bees, Beneficials and Blooms** and she'll teach us about what we should plant to attract these wonderful insects. In addition to running her business, Marie is a beekeeper so we'll be hearing the voice of experience for she will surely know what plants are the best bee attractors. And she might just inspire some of us to become beekeepers...beekeepers are in short supply and maybe one hive wouldn't be too hard to manage. Marie serves on the board of the Montgomery County Beekeepers Association and on the Environmental Program Advisory Committee for Montgomery County Public Schools. So we should leave the meeting having learned from a truly master gardener what to plant to manage garden pests while at the same time welcoming bees and other beneficial insects to our gardens.

—Jane Malish

The meeting will be held at St. Mark Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Road, North Bethesda. The meeting will begin promptly at 10:30. This will be a sandwich lunch; bring a sandwich to share. Assisting in the kitchen and providing salads and sweets will be Marilyn Mitchell, Suzanne Grefsheim, Margaret Edison, Cathy Wolf, Barbara Collier, Lou Olin, Yvonne Orkin, Janet Fernandez, and Amy Prywes.

Silent Auction at the March Meeting

Debbie Shakelton

This year we are planning a silent auction for the March meeting. We will include garden-themed items such as plant stands or lovely containers for indoor or outdoor use. If you have something to donate please let me know what you plan to bring (301-229-7255 or jshakelton@aol.com). Please bring your donation to the March meeting in clean condition ready to set on the auction table. Please no plastic or traditional terra cotta pots. Proceeds will go to the 11th Street Bridge Project. If you have any questions just ask.

Two Special Birthdays!

Longtime member (since 1954) Jane Read observed her 100th birthday on December 20. Elizabeth Allen (1949) will be 100 on March 6. We wish you all the best!



This charming arrangement, which graced the Speaker's Table at the January meeting, cheered everyone with the promise of spring ahead.

Return Trip to Special Private Garden in Pennsylvania

by *Candy Kessel*

BCGC members have an opportunity to see Edgewood, a notable private garden, in Exton, PA, April 12. The 1.5+ acre garden was created by John Lonsdale of Sheffield, England, who relocated to the U.S. in 1995. He calls his steep hillside habitat “a wonderful climate for growing in-character hardy plants, especially bulbs and rhizomes” so we can look forward to another bulb extravaganza plus trillium, which puts on a show from late March to late June. We’re also likely to see a variety of buttercups, slipper orchids, trout lilies, and other companions as well as flowering shrubs including daphnes and magnolias.

In addition, John will explain the environment of the garden, the plants and some of the featured areas and plant groupings. Unfortunately that didn’t occur for our October trip because a rush for the bathroom divided our group and many attendees were eager to see the cyclamen so we scattered before we had a proper introduction.

The April 12 tour is scheduled for early afternoon, so you can make it a day trip or do an overnight and visit other gardens in the area. There are also some fabulous Amish-owned garden centers in Lancaster County, which isn’t far, where selection and prices are unbelievable.

Vickie Baily is adding to the collection of member photos printed in the 2016-2017 Yearbook. She took these shots of new members Christina Emmerman and Debby Rosenman. Please clip out and add their photos to your Yearbook:



Christina Emmerman



Debby Rosenman

We can take up to 70 members and friends. If you want to go please pay Candy \$10 at the February 22 meeting or mail her a check (3626 Veazey St., NW, DC 20008; candykessel36@gmail.com). If all the slots aren’t taken by the March 22 meeting, we’ll open it to other garden organizations, as we did in October, to cover our costs.

Checks are preferred for payment, made out to BCGC with Edgewood in the memo line. **Deadline for RSVP and payment is Wednesday March 22.**

Whether you pay Candy 2/22 or mail her your check, for carpooling purposes please tell her if you:

1. Will drive and take riders, arrange your own transportation or prefer to ride with others, and
2. Will go for the day or overnight 4/11.

For additional information go to <http://www.edgewoodgardens.net/index.html>.



Before the January lunch, a question was asked from the front of the room: “If we add pecans to the salad, is anyone allergic?” Fortunately, no one was, because it turned out Deb Peck had already added them!



The members were so excited by Scott Kratz's presentation on the 11th Street Bridge Park Project at the January meeting that they wouldn't let him leave!



Barbara Roberts provided the lovely table arrangements.



Our web-site manager, Pam Gates explained how we've been getting requests for information in Russian.

HORTICULTURAL NOTES

A Little History: The Flowering Cherries

Carole Ottesen

Along with the Washington Monument and the Capitol, the fringe of flowering cherry trees around the Tidal Basin is a Washington icon. Yet, there was a time when flowering cherry trees were wildly exotic and the Tidal Basin was bereft of trees. It took the efforts of prominent Washingtonians and the grace of generous Japanese to make the Cherry Blossom Festival a national rite of spring.

In 1855, a year after Commodore Matthew Perry “opened” Japan, travel writer and photographer Eliza Skidmore visited there. She returned to Washington brimming with enthusiasm for the Japanese national flower, the cherry blossom. She began a long and unsuccessful crusade to install flowering cherries in Potomac Park. Not until 1902, when she joined forces with plant explorer and the first Director of Plant Introduction in the US David Fairchild, did her efforts begin to pay off.

After visiting Japan, Fairchild was equally smitten by flowering cherries. He and his wife Marian Bell Fairchild, daughter of Alexander Graham Bell, planted a *sakura-no* (*field of cherries*) at In the Woods, their home in Chevy Chase (now the Outdoor Nursery School). He also imported trees to donate: “a boy from each school in the District of Columbia (received) a tree for his school yard.”

Skidmore wrote First Lady Helen Heron Taft, who suggested making “an avenue” rather than planting a *sakura-no*. This notion inspired Dr. Jokichi Takamine, the discoverer of adrenaline, to donate 2000 trees.

In 1910, the trees arrived in Seattle and were shipped cross country to arrive “with every sort of pest imaginable,” wrote Fairchild. “Ghastly as it seems, the trees were all burned.”

What might have been diplomatic disaster was addressed with grace by the Japanese. In February, 1912, Dr. Takamine donated another 3020 trees, described by the Chief of the Bureau of Entomology:



Photo courtesy of USDA

“No shipment could have been cleaner and freer from insect pests.”

A month later First Lady Taft and Viscountess Chinda, wife of the Japanese Ambassador, planted two Yoshino cherry trees on the north bank of the Tidal Basin. Today, bronze plates commemorate that occasion.