



Bethesda Community

GARDEN CLUB

"One Hundred and Two Years of Brightening Lives and Landscapes"

www.bethesdacommunitygardenclub.org

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Member of
The National Capital Area
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January 28, 2026 – Happy New Year!

Winter seems to be a good time to learn about gardens with a medicinal theme. You may remember the Scots gardener who told us, from Glasgow on ZOOM, about the lady gardener who was into medicinal plants. That was in 2023. Now, three years later, we will hear from **Dr. Greg Susla**, retired ICU pharmacist at NIH at our meeting on Wednesday, January 28 at 10:30 am. Dr. Susla will talk about how plant-based medicines were used through history and how plant-based meds may be used in modern medicine. He will also discuss the restoration of the Pry House Medicinal Garden located on the Antietam National Battlefield in Keedysville, MD. This will be our soup luncheon, featuring a variety of soups, salads, and desserts!

BCGC Members Spread Holiday Joy Throughout the Community

On December 10th over 50 stalwart BCGC members descended on St. Mark's loaded with bags of "conditioned" greens, newspapers, decorative bows, "doo-dads," clippers, aprons, and other supplies to create over 145 inspired holiday creations.

Members and their invited guests dug into the work and created masterful arrangements. It was a great demonstration of teamwork, talent and commitment to our community.

Teams delivered these arrangements to over 12 local charities, as well as some individual members. The recipients of our efforts were beyond grateful, as many delivery people reported back to us.

Many thanks to all who made an exceptional effort to pull this workshop off once again. You succeeded in spreading cheer and hope to groups in our community who work tirelessly to help those most forgotten and neglected.

Special thanks to committee members Dawn Landsman, Joyce Mulcahy, Lizzie Glidden-Boyle, Karen Eppinger, Diane Beverly, and Carole Gelfeld.

REMINDER:

NEXT HOLIDAY GREENS
WORKSHOP -DECEMBER 9, 2026

NOTE IT ON YOUR
2026 CALENDARS!



One of the beautiful holiday arrangements created at the Greens Workshop in December. See more photos from this event on page 2.

Photo by Dawn Landsman



Holiday Greens Workshop 2025



Environmental Concerns

The Color Brown

Barbara Collier

This January I have been doing most of my gardening by looking out the windows. Not only has the weather often been uncooperative, but I got a cold at the end of December, so vicarious gardening was pretty much it. This turned my attention to appreciating the aesthetic that develops when we try to garden for wildlife and ecological reasons, rather than for a visual design.

One thing that pleases me is my leaf-covered front "lawn." I like the carpet of leaves with sedges, iris leaves, ferns, and other low growers poking out, and around the edges the dried stalks of bonesets, coneflowers, white snakeroot, and other flowering plants. I have managed to sweep the leaves off the steppingstones occasionally, which punctuate the view. Perhaps the dog walkers passing by will absorb the aesthetic of leaving the leaves? You never know.

The grasses, perennials, and shrubs in the beds also please me, presenting an arrangement of browns, beiges, and buffs when I stare out the window and watch the squirrels and birds romping about. (Ok, it doesn't take much to entertain me.) It's reassuring that the remains of last year's growth actually provide interest in the variety of their forms and colors, even without evergreens.

Elsewhere in the garden, the witch hazel blooms continue the brown color palette, edging it toward yellow and orange. And in our backyard, the sea of wood oats, the apple trees, and the unkempt meadow provide more examples.

It may not be a riot of all colors, but it's some kind of riot!



Leaves left



Shades of brown



Orchard

Photos by Barbara Collier

Grasses and asters



Wild Oats



Witch Hazel



Meadow edge

Plant Sale News

Mark your calendar for our annual Plant Sale.

When: Thursday, May 14, 2026

Time: 9 a.m. to noon

Where: Farm Women's Market,
7155 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda MD 20814

The Plant Sale is our club's biggest event of the year, a chance to share our love of gardening with the public. We depend on your help to make it a success.

How can you help in January & February?

If you are overwintering plants at home.

Water the overwintering plants if it has not rained or the plants seem very dry.

We do garden rescues!

Starting this winter please keep an eye and ear out for homes with gardens in your area that are going to be torn down. We may be able to rescue plants for the Plant Sale. Provide the seller's contact information to one of the committee members.

Donate plants from your garden. Please plan for this spring, when you can dig, divide and pot perennials from your garden to donate to the sale. *Your help is particularly critical this year, as we've overwintered fewer potted perennials than we usually do.* Look for more information in upcoming emails and newsletter articles.

If you would like help choosing or digging perennials this spring, please let us know *soon*. As you might guess, April is very busy and we want to get you on our schedule now!

Plan to volunteer before or during the Plant Sale. It takes a village to put on a sale like ours, and there's something for everyone. Watch for opportunities in upcoming emails and newsletter articles.

What is the Plant Sale?

Every May, the garden club holds a public plant sale that features a mix of beautiful and reliable plants. Our mainstay is hardy perennials that thrive in the metro area. What makes this sale unique is that club members dig, divide, and pot these plants from their own gardens. We also

offer a smaller selection of member-grown herbs, vegetable seedlings, annuals, and tender perennials.

Proceeds from the plant sale help pay for our general meeting space and continue the club's historic tradition of community service. We donate thousands of dollars to support local public gardens, horticultural and conservation organizations, our Holiday Greens Workshop, and our gardening projects at the Connie Morella and Davis Libraries in Bethesda.

Plant Sale committee

Elaine Hope, co-chair
Mary Horan, co-chair
Joan Black
Elizabeth Bonardi
Barbara Collier
Janice Fischer
Karin Kelleher
Susan Lass
Carolea Logun
Janis Long
Judy Termini
Janine Trudeau

Ecological Gardening News Flash!

On January 15, 2026, a significant change to Maryland's invasive plant law came into effect. The updated law, passed on June 1, 2024, added a number of plants to the state invasive plant list. As reported by the nonprofit Chesapeake Mermaid, Inc., "Several invasive plants are now prohibited from sale or acquisition, including Japanese barberry, burning bush, Bradford pear, nandina, Scotch broom, multiple bamboo species, privet, bee-bee tree, and all Japanese/Chinese/hybrid wisteria, with a phase-out period of 1 year for potted plants and 2 years for in-ground plants." For full details, including plants being considered for assessment in 2026, see mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/pages/maryland_invasive_plants_prevention_and_control.aspx

COURTESY COMMITTEE—WHAT IS THAT???

Does this committee advise members on the proper gloves and hats to wear at certain functions? How to curtsy to foreign royalty?

No. It is much more practical than that.

The “courtesy committee” (actually one person) sends out notes of congratulations for special accomplishments of members (think maybe a Pulitzer Prize for a gardening book), get well notes and condolence notes.

If you know of a member who could benefit from such outreach, please notify one of the co-presidents, Carolea Logun or Barbara Collier, and/or the Courtesy Committee Chair, Carole Gelfeld.

Who knows? You could make someone’s day brighter by letting a member know the garden club community cares about them.

A requested recipe from Sharon Washburn...**Buttercup Squash Muffin with Grated Apple**

12 muffins 240 cal. per muffin

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground allspice
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ cup sunflower (or other light vegetable oil)
- 2 large eggs
- 1 med. sweet-tart apple, peeled, cored and grated (large holes on grater)
- ½ cup golden raisins (soak in water and drain before mixing in batter)
- ½ cup pecans, chopped (may use other nuts)
- ¾ cup pureed cooked buttercup squash (may substitute butternut squash or canned pumpkin)

Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray muffin tins with non-stick spray or grease tins. Can also make as a loaf or thin brownie depth bar.

Whisk together all dry ingredients.

In another bowl mix oil, eggs, apple and squash.

Gently fold in dry ingredients, do not over mix.

Add raisins and nuts to the batter.

Divide batter evenly into tins. Bake for 25 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Transfer tins to a wire rack and cool for 10 minutes before removing from tins and leaving on wire rack to cool. Serve warm or room temperature. Can be served with butter or apple butter.

Optional additions: you can add orange zest, coconut, pineapple (well drained), currants, cherries or other dried fruits. I also mix 1/2 brown sugar, ½ granulated sugar. Finally chopped candied ginger, 1 teaspoon or to taste, makes for a tasty addition.

To cook buttercup squash, cut squash in half. Scoop out the seeds. Rub the flesh with oil and place cut side down on a baking sheet. Bake at 375 F for 30 to 60 minutes until soft and easily pierced with a fork. The time varies due to the thickness of the squash flesh. Cool and scoop out flesh and puree in food processor.