



Recent and Upcoming Events

GCFP Annual Convention
April 7 to 9, 2024
Lancaster, PA

NGC General Meeting and Luncheon
April 10, 2024
Cedarbrook Country Club
Blue Bell, PA

Horticultural Therapy
April 18, 2024
Providence Place
Collegeville, PA

Flower Design Workshop
April 24, 2024
Wissahickon Valley Public Library, Blue Bell, PA

Horticulture Workshop
April 25, 2024
Scott Arboretum
Swarthmore, PA

NGC General Meeting
May 8, 2024
Fairview Village Church
Eagleville, PA

Plant Exchange and Covered Dish Social
May 16, 2024
Home of Amy Coughlin

Horticulture Workshop
May 23, 2024
Chanticleer Garden Tour
Wayne, PA

Garden Clippings

Norristown Garden Club
Newsletter



May 2024 – Volume 45, No. 2

Philadelphia Flower Show

Our club did it again! The Norristown Garden Club (NGC) had a very successful year at the 2024 Philadelphia Flower Show. It is no easy feat to enter the show, as each entry requires a lot of planning, organization, and talent. And it comes as no surprise that this year's NGC participants demonstrated all that and more! They did an outstanding job! Congratulations to all. We are very proud of you. And the winners were.....

- Gail Jurikson-Rhodes, Deb Webb, and team won first and second place ribbons on two judging days for their large "Community Garden Project." They also won a Special Award for "Maintenance."

In the design category,

- Cherie Nobil won a first and a second-place ribbon for her designs as well as A SPECIAL AWARD.
- Melissa Bullitt won a second and a third-place ribbon.
- The late Sue Irwin won a second-place ribbon.
- Barb Leiby and Jayne Price won a second-place ribbon.
- Maria Jacobs won a third-place ribbon.

In the horticulture category,

- Beth Bynon won one second-place ribbon, two third-place ribbons, and two honorable mentions.
- Meg Gaibiselis won two second-place ribbons.

The club also won the PHS Sweepstakes Margaret Buckley Zantzinger Award. This award is for the garden club accumulating the greatest number of points in all competitive sections (i.e., Design and Horticulture) at the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show. (Points are awarded for each entry made by a club member.) A minimum of three members must exhibit in Artistic classes in two or more Artistic categories and a minimum of three members must exhibit in Horticulture classes. Because NGC had so many entries, it accumulated more points than any other club and won the award!

We are so happy for all the winners and grateful to all those who entered or volunteered at the show. It is your continuing efforts and interests that help make the NGC so special. Thank you, and congratulations again!

Caren Puschak, President

Upcoming Events, Continued

Garden Tour
June 8, 2024
Various Locations

National Garden Clubs, Inc.
Convention
June 2 to 5, 2024
Denver, Colorado

Ronald McDonald House
Flowers
June 3, 2024

Horticulture Workshop
June 4, 2024
Wyck Historic House

NGC General Meeting
June 12, 2024
Central Community Center
Schwenkfelder Church
Lansdale, PA

Gardens on the Go
June 13, 2024
Chestnut Hill, PA

Note from the Editor

The 2Q2024 *Garden Clippings* Newsletter, which covers club events for January, February, and March, is being published a little late. Competing objectives limited my ability to complete it in a timely manner. The only advantage to this is that the upcoming 3Q2024 Newsletter will be published shortly after this one!

...Barbara Andon

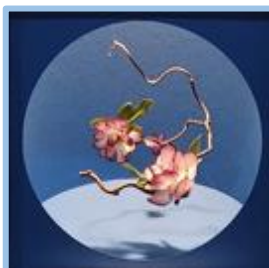
Photos of selected PHS Flower Show entries are provided below. All photos are by the entrants or NGC members.



Photos from Entries from Left to Right: Maria Jacobs for Design and Gail Jurikson-Rhodes, Deb Webb, and Team for their Community Sensory Garden.



Horticulture entries for Beth Bynon (left and center) and Meg Gaibiselis (right).



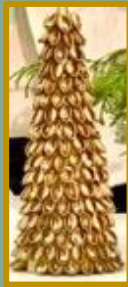
Designs from left to right are by Cherie Nobil, Barb Leiby and Jayne Price, and Melissa Bullitt

NGC General Meeting

January 10, 2024

The January meeting is always a very special and entertaining one because there is a slide show presentation of the December Holiday House designs. It is so wonderful to revisit them and to appreciate, yet again, just how creative and beautiful they were! This year was no exception. Anita Lehman did a great job in putting the slide show together. She specifically chose music to match the theme of each house. One song that she chose to match the Italian-themed house was the song, Mambo Italiano. The song and the slide show were a big hit amongst all attendees! Thank you, Anita!

Following the slide show, members who worked on various homes, demonstrated how some of their designs were made. They were all so



Chris Yanak, Patti O'Brien, and Melinda Bates from the "Tuscany House" demonstrated how to make ribbon poinsettias, a seasonal arrangement, and pasta tree.



Karen Nemeth and Barbara Andon from "Sachiyo's Christmas," the Japanese themed home, spoke about the experience and challenge of harvesting 120+ bamboo sticks and making flower arrangements with them!

clever. It was clear that a lot of imagination, talent and time went into making the decorative items. Thank you, ladies, for making this year's Holiday House a great success again! All pictures by B. Andon.



Sue Harbaugh and Carol Goldberg from the "O Holy Night" house showed how a light bulb was wrapped with yarn to make pears. They also showed how to fold book pages to form angel wings and cones.



Left: Elaine Smith, Deb Cascaden, and Gina O'Hara from the "Collectors Christmas" house made ornaments based upon the Andy Warhol and Wizard of Oz themes in the house. They made an Emerald City from toilet paper tubes! Right: Olivia Brady from the "Roaring Twenties" house showed how fabric squares were made into poinsettias and were subsequently embellished with crystals, pearls, and feathers to make them dazzle!

Following the craft demonstration, Caren Puschak announced this month's Show of the Month winners. The show's theme was "Signs of Winter". The Horticulture category required an evergreen branch with or without berries and the design category required a reflective design. The winners for a reflective design were:

- First Place – Beth Bynon; Second Place – Susan Pucci; Third Place – Rosemarie Hardy; Honorable Mention – Karen Nemeth.

The winners for the horticulture category were:

- Evergreen branch without berries: First Place – Claire Cubbin; Second Place – Beth Bynon; Third Place – Nancy Anderson; Honorable Mention – Gina O'Hara.
- Evergreen branch with berries: First Place – Karen Nemeth; Second Place – Gina O'Hara; Third Place – Jane Comroe; Honorable Mention – Karen Nemeth; Jane Comroe; Gina O'Hara; Ellen Raieta; Olga Mercurio; Maureen Von Stetina.



Selected show of the month entries. Photos by B. Andon.



Horticultural Therapy

January 17, February 15, and March 21, 2024

Multiple times per year, NGC members bring cheer and happiness to residents of several local adult day care centers and nursing homes by providing materials for residents to make their own flower arrangements. The effort is led by Sandy Davis and Sue Goldberg. They and the members who volunteer to assist in these workshops should all be commended for their efforts. It is truly a wonderful task that they do. Thank you, ladies, for all your charitable work and efforts! A selection of photos from the various therapy sessions is provided below and shown in the sidebar. All photos are by NGC members in attendance.



Horticulture Workshop

January 18, 2024

Members were treated to a lecture on building bird houses by Jack Jones, who is the owner of JJ's Woodcrafts. Jack designs and builds bird houses and feeders from repurposed barn wood from the 1800's. The lecture covered the proper design of a birdhouse and the important features to consider when buying a bird house. Jack has lectured at all of the garden clubs in District XI. And, if you have ever visited NGC member Lynn Whelan's garden, you have seen some of his bird houses as she has several of them! All 27 attendees enjoyed the workshop and had the opportunity to purchase one of Jack' birdhouses. Thank you, Jack, for keeping members so entertained! Photos by Beth Bynon.



Garden Quote

Portia Potts submitted the following quote to the *Clippings* and commented that it reminded her of garden club members. Thank you, Portia!



Cover picture from *Country Living*.



NGC General Meeting and Luncheon

February 14, 2024

The featured speaker at the February meeting was, Mary McKnight. Mary is a certified Pennsylvania State Master Gardener who owns her own garden design and horticultural services business named "Ideas in Bloom", located in Abington, PA. She is also the president of the Philadelphia Rose Society.



Mary entertained the NGC members with her delightful and witty slide show presentation on roses. She covered many topics concerning selecting and caring for them. She talked about which roses do well in shade and how to include companion plants in your rose bed. Mary covered the "how tos" of planting roses such as having your soil tested for ideal conditions and digging the proper-size hole. She also gave care instructions including spring clean-up, pruning, and feeding. Mary undoubtedly gave us much to think about!



New Dawn, Mary's favorite shade-tolerant rose.

The February theme for the Show of the Month was "My Valentine." The design category required a design in the Asian Manner using some red flowers. The horticulture category required one cut Hellebore stem in a container. Diane Powell, who has been doing an outstanding job in raising members' interest in the show of the month, announced the winners.

Winners in the design category were:

- First Place – Olga Mercurio; Second Place – Elaine White; Third Place – Rosemarie Hardy; Honorable Mention – Beth Bynon.

Winners in the horticulture category were:

- White Hellebore: First Place – Karen Nemeth; Second Place – Elaine White; Third Place – Nancy Threlfall; Honorable Mention – Arlene Reagan-Harris.
- Dark Hellebore: First Place – Nancy Threlfall; Second Place – Beth Bynon; Third Place – Priscilla Myers; Honorable Mention – Kathy Lozinak, Mary Catherine Lowery.

Norristown Blooms

February 15 and March 25, 2024

As many of you may know by now, the NGC's Norristown Beautification Committee has changed its name to Norristown Blooms! What a great new name for a great committee! This new name better reflects the committee's mission to beautify Norristown.

Members of the Norristown Blooms committee have been working on sprucing-up the Norristown Public Library located at Swede and Powell Streets. They have made wreaths for the door(s) using discarded books, refreshed the plants in the library's lobby, conducted a "plant and take"

March Show of the Month Winners

The winners of the March Show of the Month were announced by Diane Powell. The horticulture category required a houseplant grown for foliage, and the design category required a traditional line-mass design in shades of green. Congratulations to all of the winners and participants for their continued dedication to help educate and inspire others.

The winners for the design category were:

- First Place – Karen Nemeth; Second Place – Elaine Smith.

Houseplant grown for foliage, Succulents:

- First Place – Deb Webb; Second Place – Beth Bynon; Third Place – Nancy Anderson.

The winners for the horticulture category were:

- First Place – Elaine White; Second Place – Nancy Anderson; Third Place – Arlene Reagan-Harris.

Judges were Nancy Hannum, Anita Lehman, and Nancy Wismer.

workshop where they helped library members learn about and plant lettuce, and cleaned-up the memorial garden bed at the front entrance. Pictures of some of these activities are located in the sidebar on the previous page. Congratulations ladies for helping make Norristown bloom!

Horticulture Workshop

February 21, 2024

The February Horticulture Workshop was presented by George Hildenbrandt, the president of the Delaware Valley Iris Society.

Members learned about the different types, colors, and sizes of irises and the best methods for growing them. As Beth Bynon commented following the lecture, “Who knew there were so many?” Thank you, George, for coming to the workshop and teaching attendees about irises! And thank you, Beth and Rosemarie!



NGC General Meeting

March 13, 2024

During the March 13 General Meeting, one thing was evident. The Norristown Garden Club continues to thrive and grow. An expanding membership, exemplary programs, continued community involvement, educational outreach, and recognition for outstanding contributions at the recent Philadelphia Flower Show were a few of the many highlights shared during the meeting.

PHS Flower Show award recipients' received accolades, and their winning entries were shared through a special slide presentation. Diane Pratt also provided pictures and an update on the amazing work completed at the Norristown Library by Norristown Blooms program volunteers.

This month's featured topic was “Flower Gardening in Small Spaces” by Susan Doblmaier, Master Gardener, Penn State Extension. Susan provided tips and tricks on how to enhance small spaces. She covered topics ranging from container and square-foot gardens, to raised beds and vertical cultivation. Her slide show presentation depicted many interesting ideas for planting small gardens with companion plantings. For utilizing a smaller plant footprint, many attractive vertical gardens were shown on trellises and fences. Also, Susan showed a number of unique containers for planting such as mailboxes filled with herbs and cheerful pots on fences. Maybe the most unusual containers were croc shoes planted with colorful annuals affixed to a solid fence. It was an informative and enjoyable presentation, and we thank Susan for taking the time to share her knowledge with us!

Garden Club

The Norristown Garden Club is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc.; Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs, Inc.; and a Charter Member of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP), District XI. NGC is one of the largest federated garden clubs in the state of Pennsylvania. To learn more, visit the Club's website at www.norristowngardenclub.org, or visit the Club's Facebook Page.

Club Membership

Do you know someone who would like to join NGC? If you do, please consider inviting them to a meeting as your guest, being their sponsor, or referring them to the club's website at www.norristowngardenclub.org for more information. Contact the club's New Member Chairperson, Ginger Hunsicker, at ginger3131@verizon.net for further details.

Newsletter Contributions

If you would like to contribute news, photographs, or helpful hints for possible inclusion in the quarterly NGC *Garden Clippings* Newsletter, please contact the editor, Barbara Andon, via email at barbaraandon@verizon.net.

Flower Design Workshop

March 27, 2024

In celebration of everything green for springtime attendees of the March Floral Design Workshop created a freedom of choice design or linear design using all green flowers and foliage. The goal was first to educate members about the principles of the two design types and second to demonstrate how the same set of flowers could be used to make two completely different designs. The workshop was well attended, and all members made outstanding arrangements to take home and enjoy. Photo by B. Andon.



Letter to the Editor: A New Member's Perspective

March 2024

The following letter was submitted to the *Garden Clippings* Newsletter editor by Pamela McNulty. Because it was such a lovely letter, I thought other members would enjoy reading it. Thank you, Pam!

When a friend suggested I join the Norristown Area Garden Club, I was a bit uncertain that there would be a place for me. As a recent retiree, I was used to being busy, but I am a bit of an introvert. I also have very little gardening success even though I have deep love and respect for nature and design. Regardless of my trepidation, my friend assured me that I would not be disappointed in considering this as a new pursuit. She can be very convincing.

Attending the first meeting was akin to the feeling you get on that first day of a new school year; a little awkward and intimidating, yet exciting and promising. It did not take more than that first day for me to realize that I was among a very special group of gracious and talented individuals with experience and expertise in a myriad of interests that went far beyond "gardening." The Norristown Garden Club encompasses much more than its name evokes. It is far reaching, providing a wide array of diverse

Garden Poem

Friendship is a Garden

If friendship were a garden,
Then flowers 'd be the friends
How well our gardens cultivate
On each gardener that
depends.

Some flowers must remain in
light,
And some will need support
But all require love and care
Regardless of their sort.

We grow our gardens row by
row
One flower at a time
Helping each establish roots
Our efforts quite sublime.

Each flower that we've ever
touched
In truth will touch us back
Either with a soft caress
Or thorns that stab like tacks.

But every once and then again
A single bud may loom
More brilliant than the other
ones
It is a special bloom.

These are ones that should be
cherished
In hopes they will remain
To lose them from our gardens
would
Engulf our hearts with pain.

And so this blossom I bestow,
With thanks for all we share
For you, a special gardener
Have shown me love and care.

....sam furman

programming for people of all ages. It was eye opening. Maybe I would enjoy this new interest and could contribute in some meaningful way. I was willing to dig some more.

As a prospective member, I attended several meetings and participated in various programs ranging from the Annual Holiday House Tour and workshops to horticulture therapy. I learned that NGC sponsors youth gardening programs, scholarships, community partnerships, educational classes, special garden tours and visits, monthly floral design and horticultural shows, a plant exchange, and opportunities to be recognized at local, state, and national events. My friend, who became my treasured sponsor, answered my many questions, and encouraged me to try different things. Her sponsorship was invaluable.

As I reflect on my first year, I feel honored to have been welcomed so warmly into a club deeply steeped in history and tradition. The talent and integrity of the members, coupled with their desire to advance knowledge and interest in horticulture, conservation, civic improvement, and the aesthetic use of plant material, is a thing of beauty. What they accomplish each year collectively and as individuals, is astounding. Their willingness to volunteer their time to support, guide, instruct, and inspire others in a pursuit and lifestyle they love is what sets them apart from their peers.

Maybe there is a place for me and others here after all. The seeds have been gently planted and nurtured. Now it is time to grow.

Pam McAulity, NGC Member 2023



Gardening Friends. Photo by Getty Images.