



Upcoming Events

NGC General Meeting
Spring Luncheon
April 13, 2022

Cedarbrook Country Club
Blue Bell, PA
*(Note Change in Location from
Yearbook listing)*

Horticulture Workshop
April 20, 2022
Zoom Meeting

Flower Design Workshop
April 27, 2022
Wissahickon Valley Public
Library, Blue Bell, PA
(Note Change of Date to the 27th)

Horticultural Therapy
April 21, 2022
Providence Place
Collegeville, PA

NGC General Meeting
May 11, 2022
Fairview Village Church
Eagleville, PA

Plant Exchange and Covered
Dish Social
May 19, 2022
Coughlin Residence
Collegeville, PA

Horticultural Therapy
Date TBD
Senior Adult Activities Center
Norristown, PA

Garden Clippings



Norristown Garden Club
Newsletter

April 2022 – Volume 43, No. 2

Message from Our President

Happy Spring! I am guessing that you are all really happy now that spring is at our doorstep and that everything is turning green! With the warmer weather coming, you are all, no doubt, eager to spend time outside to care for your gardens and to meet with fellow Norristown Garden Club (NGC)



members. To that end, I am happy to say that we have a full schedule of activities and events lined up for the next several months. First, if you are comfortable joining others for lunch, I look forward to seeing you at our annual spring luncheon to be held at Cedarbrook Country Club on April 13th. We also have a flower design workshop in April and horticulture workshops lined up for April and May. Our general meeting and our Plant Exchange and Covered Dish Social will be held in May. I am also excited that we will be holding our June general meeting outside at the East Norriton Township Pavilion and that we will be proceeding with our Garden Tour on June 25th. And, if that is not enough to keep you busy, consider volunteering to be a judge for our annual Norristown Garden Contest that will be held in July. I hope you are as excited about all of these events as I am, and I look forward to seeing you at each of them!

NGC President,
Anita Lehman

NGC General Meeting

January 12, 2022

In January, we held our general meeting virtually, using Zoom, due to the increase in the number of Covid-19 cases over the holiday season. Members were, nonetheless, pleased to be able to get together and be entertained by the lovely slide presentation of the Historic Holiday House Tour. Anita Lehman created the presentation with accompanying music, and what a marvelous job she did! It was so good to be able to take a “second look” at all the arrangements that members created at each location and to remember just how beautiful they were! The quantity, quality, and variety of designs were truly amazing! Congratulations and

Upcoming Events, Cont.

Horticulture Workshop
When The Peonies Bloom - TBD
Goodly Gardens
Worcester, PA

NGC General Meeting
June 8, 2022
East Norriton Township
Pavilion,
East Norriton, PA

Garden Tour
Blooming in the Country
June 25, 2022

Norristown Garden Contest
Judging
July 13, 2022
Meeting Place - TBD



Lucinda Lea and Nancy Adelman presented painting flowers and birds on wood ornaments.



Melinda Bates presented making the wreath at Hope Lodge.

thank you to all those members who expressed such creativity and interest in making the historic holiday house tour a success!

Following the slide show, several members demonstrated how some of the designs were created so that those interested could recreate them for themselves at home. The presentations were very interesting indeed. Just a few of the presenters and their creations are highlighted in the pictures below. All photos by B. Andon.



Barbara Grula described making the gilded leaf wreath.



Karen Nemeth presented making corn husk flowers.



Rosemarie Hardy talked about creating Miss Pennypacker.

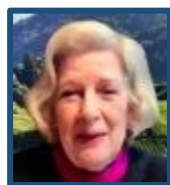


Diane Powell presented the history of the Chrismon symbols used at the Bethel Hill United Methodist Church.

Horticulture Workshop

January 18, 2022

Sowing Seeds in Winter



Jane Irvin-Klotz gave a wonderful lecture via Zoom on how to start seeds outdoors in plastic milk jugs during the winter. She noted that the method is inexpensive and so much easier than trying to manage seedlings with trays and lights indoors. Additionally, the method avoids damping-off disease, which can occur often with seedlings started indoors, and avoids having to "harden off" the seedlings prior to planting outside.

Jane noted that all you need is a translucent jug (e.g., gallon milk or water jug), seeds, standard potting soil, tape, an ultraviolet resistant marker for labeling the jug, and a record book to record what was planted. Briefly, the jug is cut ~90% around the middle, leaving it hinged to the jug just below



Filling the jugs with dirt and seeding.



Setting jugs outside for seed germination and plant growth.



Enjoy the fruits of your labors with healthy, already hardened off, seedlings!

the handle (see photo to left), is filled with soil, planted with seeds, taped shut at the cut, labeled, and set outside in a sheltered location (hopefully with southern exposure). Jane provided additional guidance and several helpful tips:

- Follow the instructions on the seed packet for the time to start seeds.
- Do not overseed the jugs.
- Do not plug the opening at the top of the jug. The opening allows water and rain to enter the jug and keeps the soil moist.
- Number the jugs and then record the number in a log along with a detailed record of what was planted in the jug. This tip is important because if the labels/markings on the jug fade and the contents of the jug become a mystery, you will likely still be able to see the jug number and refer to your records!

If you are interested in trying this method in the future, please contact Jane at janeirvin@msn.com. She also noted that there are many YouTube videos on this topic. But if you watch a video, be sure to watch one that is suited for Zone 6. Thank you, Jane, for a very informative lecture! All photos by B. Andon.

NGC General Meeting

February 9, 2022

Members had the opportunity to meet in February via Zoom and to host our guest speaker Suzanne Smith-Oscilowski. Suzanne presented a lecture entitled, "Where have all the Bees, Birds & Butterflies Gone?" Suzanne is a NGC member, is an educator at the Wissahickon Trails, and is an active member of the Advisory Board of Ambler Arboretum at Temple University.

During her lecture, Suzanne noted that 25% of the native bees are at risk of extinction, that we have lost 2.9 million birds in the last 50 years, and that the world has lost over 17,500 species of butterflies! Suzanne then spoke about what, we as gardeners, can do to help prevent further losses. She had many excellent suggestions for the gardener that



included, in part: embracing sloppy gardens that contain native flowers for bees and butterflies (e.g., dandelions) and nesting materials for birds; planting native plants and not hybrids, since bees and butterflies have difficulty accessing the petaled flowers; planting and make berries for birds; herbicides and pesticides; indoors. Suzanne's many lovely photographs of



Thank you, Suzanne, for prevent further decline of

nectar/pollen from double trees and shrubs that flower avoiding the use of and keeping your cat presentation also included teaching us how to help these valued creatures!



Garden Poem

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils.
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
and twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

....William Wordsworth



Garden Quote

When I see a daffodil, it's so hard
not to smile.

....From Zazzle

Video

Below is a link to an interesting
three-minute, time-lapse video of
a sprouting bean plant. Enjoy!
<https://youtu.be/w77zPAatVTul>



Also, at the meeting, Diane Powell explained how she created her trash-to-treasure design that embraced the spirit of Vincent van Gogh's painting, "Two Cut Sunflowers." Can you tell which one Diane did?



(Hint: it is to the right.) Diane, your artistry is to be commended!

Horticulture Workshop

February 16, 2022

The Japanese Garden in Buenos Aires

We get to thank Jane Irvin-Klotz again for hosting the February horticulture workshop via Zoom. This month, Jane gave a presentation on "The Japanese Garden in Buenos Aires."

Jane began her lecture with an overview of Argentina, its flag, and some history, along with pictures. She noted that the Buenos Aires six-acre Japanese Garden is located in the heart of the city and was established in 1967. Jane pointed out the fundamental elements that make up a Japanese garden using various scenes from the garden. She noted that the requirements for laying out a Japanese garden are listed in an 11th century book entitled "The Sakuteiki." Some of the elements that are required are a Torii arch, a waterfall facing the moon, an arch bridge whose reflection makes a circle, large stones placed in specific order, and an Isidoro lantern. Jane presented photos of each of these elements. Jane also noted that this garden is one of her favorite gardens to visit and that she has visited it many times since her daughter lives just outside of Buenos Aires! Thank you again, Jane, for sharing with us your visits to and photos of this beautiful garden!



NGC General Meeting

March 9, 2022

It was so pleasant to hold the third General Meeting of the year in person at the Fairview Village Church. Attendees were happy to see one another and to attend the lecture given by Ted Johnson, owner of the Cut Flower Exchange, LLC, in Conshohocken, PA. Ted has worked in the floral industry for over 30 years and specializes in the floral logistics from farm to end location and in the procurement of roses and spray roses directly from the farm sources. The title of Ted's talk was "Cut Flowers: Evolution of the Floral Industry."



Ted talked about the evolution of the European flower industry and how improved technology over the years has impacted it. New plants were introduced into Europe as early explorers found and brought back new foods and flower varieties from their travels. Subsequent scientific advancements allowed for the development of improved breeding and hybridization of existing flower strains. This was followed by the industrial revolution that provided improved steel and glass for greenhouse construction as well as easier methods for heating the greenhouses. Better transportation methods permitted a wider distribution of flowers, and the advent of planes and trucks with controlled environments further allowed for the transportation and distribution of flowers worldwide. As world travel became easier, there was expansion of the industry to locations best suited for floral horticulture. In general, it became easier to "follow the sun" and find locations that were optimal for flower growth. Flowers could be shipped from remote locations and arrive in good condition. Advances in tissue culture methods also greatly improved the industry by facilitating propagation and breeding techniques. The advent of LED lighting with its low cost, low heat emissions, and controllable light spectrum emissions has made greenhouse operations more precise and less expensive. And lastly, the robots are coming! Automation in tissue culture, plant propagation, and harvesting will further enhance the industry. Ted's talk provided an excellent overview of the industry's history. Thank you, Ted; we learned a lot from your talk!



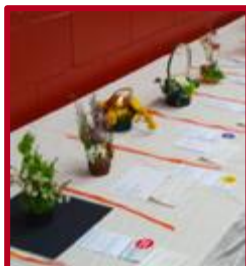
Victorian greenhouse to modern greenhouse with lighting. Former photo from Architectural Digest and latter from TotalGrow website.



Petite designs from Show of the Month.



Favorite house plants entered into Show of the Month.



At the March meeting, there was also a marvelous "Show of the Month" organized by Diane Powell. The theme of the show was "A Wee Bit Irish." There were many beautiful entries in both the horticulture and design categories for members to enjoy and learn from the judges' comments after the meeting. Congratulations to those who won awards and thank you for taking the time to participate in the show! And thank you, Diane, for the photos!



Garden club members making their Biedermeier flower designs!



*Pam Woodside presenting her beautiful Biedermeier flower design!
Photo by A. Lehman.*



New member Lunch 'n' Learn attendees. Photo by A. M. Hartman.

Horticultural Therapy Workshop

March 23, 2022



NGC members were pleased to be able to return to the Abington Adult Day Care facility to host its horticultural therapy workshop. The NGC was the first group allowed into the facility following the easing of Covid-19 winter-related safety restrictions. Thanks to all the NGC members who helped brighten the day for the facility's attendees!

Flower Design Workshop

March 23, 2022

Flowers in Sand

This month's flower design workshop was hosted by Ginger Hunsicker (pictured to the right) and assisted by Barbara Andon. Ginger and Barbara instructed workshop attendees on how to make a Biedermeier flower design in sand. A Biedermeier styled floral design is generally round or conical in form with a concentric pattern using circles or spirals. The flowers radiate from the center of the container, typically facing up for emphasis, and are placed close together to avoid having negative space. Members created their Biedermeier design in a shallow dish filled with moist sand, which acted as the armature. Thank you, Ginger, for teaching such a fun and interesting workshop! Pictures of the Biedermeier flower design workshop are courtesy of A. Lehman and B. Andon.



New Members Lunch 'n' Learn

March 30, 2022

This year's Lunch 'n' Learn for new members took place on March 30 at the Variety Club in Worcester, PA. Ten new members attended the event that was chaired by Ana Marie Hartman, vice chaired by JoAnne Tornambe, and assisted by Barbara Stobenau, Jill Evans, Karin Young, Lynn O'Dowd, Beth Bynon, Olivia Brady, Ginger Hunsicker, and Nancy Sliner.

Lunch 'n' Learn is an educational conference designed to increase new members' knowledge of the club's committees, the club's expectations regarding their participation in club projects, their awareness of the district, state, and national garden club levels, and to encourage their involvement.

Following the presentations and lunch, new members were asked questions regarding what had been presented, and prizes were awarded



Photo by B. Andon from Suzanne Smith-Oscilowski's presentation.



Marge Eberz offers tips (to the right) for the spring months to help make your gardens more beautiful. Thank you, Marge.



Virginia blue bells blooming in April.
Photo courtesy of M. Eberz.



The May-blooming Pagoda dogwood tree is elegant and small, which makes it a great tree for a small garden space.
Photo courtesy of M. Eberz.

for correct answers! A survey was given to the attendees to let the committee know what was beneficial to them. And, at the completion of the event, a certificate of attendance was given to the attendees.

Adopt a Plant

May to October via Email

The "Adopt a Plant" program, coordinated by Barbara Andon, is gearing up for the 2022 growing season! How does the program work? Well, Barbara solicits a list of plants that members want to adopt and those that members would like to have adopted from their gardens or homes. The list is circulated from May to October in table format to all NGC members via email. Members contact the person listed in the table for the plants, and the members arrange to finalize their adoption(s). Watch for the Adopt a Plant notice around late April and follow the instructions for submitting your items to Barbara to construct the list for each month.



Butterfly Garden to Certified Pollinator Garden

Summer 2002

Marge Eberz is again working on the butterfly garden at the Fairview Village Church in Eagleville. Last fall, she and additional NGC members cut down the butterfly garden because it was overgrown. But now that spring is here, she is ready to begin planting a new garden according to the current requirements for a Penn State Master Gardeners certified pollinator garden. Marge is looking for volunteers to help her plant and maintain the garden during the 2022 gardening season. The first workday is scheduled for Monday, April 25, from 10:00 A.M. to Noon. The rain date is April 26. If you are interested in assisting Marge with this project, please contact her at mte54@verizon.net. Help her grow more of the many varieties of plants needed by all types of pollinators throughout the seasons! She would really appreciate more helping hands in the dirt along with her own!

Horticulture Tips from Marge

April, May, and June

APRIL

BE CAREFUL planning your outside chores for this month. April's weather can be tricky and unpredictable. Start with the chores listed below:

- Clean out your flower beds; cut back your perennials.
- Pruning: Do not prune anything that blooms before June or you will be removing this year's flowers. Prune only summer bloomers at this time.
- Make sure your pots are clean and your garden tools are clean and sharpened.
- Warm weather brings the urge to start planting. However, remember that a frost is still possible through April. There is a limitation to what can be planted safely. Here are a few suggestions:
 - Lettuce and other leafy vegetables can be started now. If frost is predicted, cover the seeded area with a cloth.

Norristown 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 the largest federated garden club in the state of Pennsylvania.

Club Membership

Do you know someone who would like to join the NGC? If you do, please consider being their sponsor and contact the club's New Member Chairperson, Ginger Hunsicker, by email at ginger3131@verizon.net or invite them to visit the club's website at www.norristowngardenclub.org.

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.

- Pansies can be set outside in beds also.
- All of these can be planted in pots with potting soil. If you want to plant in a vegetable or flower bed, test the soil for planting by picking up a clump of soil. If it sticks together, the soil is too wet for planting. If it crumbles in your hand, it has dried out enough to begin planting.
- In mid-April, start putting out the humming bird feeders. This is when they start coming into our area from the South and they are hungry!

MAY

May is one of the prettiest months of the year; the trees and bulbs are blooming. May 10 is also the "frost free" date for our zone and when annuals and vegetables can be planted.

- Plant annual flowers and vegetable plants: tomatoes, peppers, and herbs, etc.
- Sow seeds of cucumbers, beans, beets, carrots.
- When setting out annual flowers, incorporate fertilizer in the soil.
- House plants also enjoy the summer weather. Start hardening them off by bringing them out in the daytime and taking them in at night for about a week before putting them outside for the summer.

JUNE

- After spring-blooming trees and shrubs have finished blooming, cut back their blooms and shape them to keep them from getting too big and unmanageable.
- Do not cut back the leaves of daffodils and other spring bulbs until they are yellow and dying. The green leaves are the plant's "solar collectors," and they provide energy to the bulbs for the next year's blooms. Once the leaves are yellow and dying, they can be cut back.
- Keep beds weeded and mulched. Do not put more than three inches of mulch on flower beds or around trees and shrubs.
- Water beds when necessary. Watering should be done in the morning.
- Using a soaker hose in flower and vegetable beds will eliminate getting the leaves wet, thus reducing the potential of disease.
- Planters and hanging baskets need frequent watering depending on the temperature. A weekly liquid fertilizer helps them keep blooming throughout the season. If possible, incorporate a slow-release fertilizer into the soil when potting up the plants.