



# GARDEN DIRT



Issue 3 ● June 2016

## John Lundsford Presents Program on Raised Beds to RGC Members

Master Gardener John Lundsford presented a very informative and educational program on raised beds and square foot gardening at the May meeting. John graciously shared his many trials and errors over the years as well as his many years of experience with raised bed gardening. Debbie Burgess, Horticulture and Food



Garden Chair (pictured here with John), and an extremely accomplished master gardener in her own right, displays a beautiful romaine lettuce plant she harvested from her own raised beds.

## June Meeting to Feature Barbara Dillard



Barbara Dillard, VFGC Master Accredited Judge and award winning Floral Designer will present our program at the June garden club meeting.

Barbara will prepare several designs using very unusual, hard to design in, containers, some of which were selected at the May garden club meeting. **Invite a neighbor or friend to come to this exciting design program.**

## May Hostesses Knock It Out of the Ballpark!



The wonderful May luncheon was prepared by Sara Ford, Sandra Harris, Barbara Touchette, Pam Lazorchak, Gail Feddeman, Deborah Brooks, Mary Jacobs, and Joan Eremenko (not pictured above). These ladies put together a delicious menu of sides, salads and desserts. Recipes are being compiled and will be distributed to the membership.

## Plus One Membership Campaign

Hello again to Glo Romaine and Julia Brandt, two visitors who attended the May meeting. This was the second meeting for each and we are hoping that they will join RGC very soon!



***Don't Forget the Plus One Membership Campaign! RGC Can Make a Difference!***

*Garden Clubs and members are challenged to promote and increase our membership. It's up to each one of us to invite prospects to join our organization to add more talent, ideas, and **helping hands.***

## Scholarship Awards Given to Two Worthy LHS Students by Jo Manson



**RGC** awarded two \$1,000 scholarships to Lancaster High School students at

the awards ceremony on May 16. Scholarships were awarded to Nicole Saunders and Dylan Rose. Due to the generosity of the finance committee and board approval, the club added additional monies to the scholarship fund to allow us to award two significant scholarships.

Nicole has a 3.982 GPA, has completed a year of community college and wants to major in Marine Biology. After she completes her degree at Rappahannock Community College (RCC), she wants to transfer to William and Mary and ultimately work at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

Dylan has a 4.263 GPA and has been pre-selected to attend Virginia Tech majoring in Biology. He will complete his RCC degree prior to his high school graduation.

Special thanks to the scholarship committee members Betty Ottley, Anne Skerrett, Anita Shawver and Marty Wilson.

revive the health of bees, butterflies, birds, bats and other pollinators across the country.

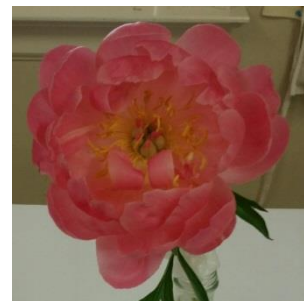
Be a part of the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge by registering your garden at <http://millionpollinatorgardens.org>. There is no charge. For more information on this project, visit the National Garden Club's website: [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org) and click on 2015 President's Project. **Sidebar: If you need any help with registering, please contact Cathie Elliott.**

## May Best in Show Results

**D**espite the dreary, rainy "Noah's Ark" conditions



in May, RGC Members dazzled us with magnificent horticulture. Judges had a difficult task of picking Best in Show which resulted in a tie.



Accredited Judge, Carol Medlin, from Chesapeake Garden Club commented on how beautiful our specimens were. Pictured above is a Nigella damascena, Love in a Mist, submitted by Carol Clark and below, an exquisite coral peony submitted by Deborah Brooks.

submitted by Deborah Brooks.



## Register Your Garden Today

**P**ollinators are responsible for 1 out of 3 bites of food we take each day, and yet pollinators are at a critical point in their own survival. Many reasons contribute to their recent decline. We know for certain, however, that more nectar and pollen sources provided by more flowering plants and trees will help improve their health and numbers. Increasing the number of pollinator-friendly gardens and landscapes will help

## JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup> -- SAVE THE DATE



**P**lans are underway for a road trip to Lisa Ziegler's gardens on June 18<sup>th</sup>. She opens her gardens to the public for one day only during the year. More

information will follow but mark your calendars now for a fun day!

## Update on Mason Bees NGC President's Project

Native honey bees are in peril, their populations experiencing significant declines in the last few decades. In turn, their decline threatens our food supply. The NGC program, BeeGAP (Gardeners Adding Pollinators) is a partnership with Crown Bees, a gentle bee provider of mason bees. Mason bees are native to North America and are an excellent supplement to the troubled honey bee. When teamed with mason bees, honey bees are more efficient pollinators.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture: "Honey bees, which are a critical link in U.S. agriculture, have been under serious pressure from a mystery problem: Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), which is a syndrome defined as a dead colony with no adult bees or dead bee bodies but with a live queen and usually honey and immature bees still present. No scientific cause for CCD has been proven.

But CCD is far from the only risk to the health of honey bees and the economic stability of commercial beekeeping and pollination operations in the United States. Since the 1980s, honey bees and beekeepers have had to deal with a host of new pathogens from deformed wing virus to noseema fungi, new parasites such as Varroa mites, pests like small hive beetles, nutrition problems from lack of diversity or availability in pollen and nectar sources, and possible sublethal effects of pesticides. These problems, many of which honey bees might be able to survive if each were the only one, are often hitting in a wide variety of combinations, and weakening and killing honey bee colonies. CCD may even be a result of a combination of two or more of these factors and not necessarily the same factors in the same order in every instance."



The BeeGAP program therefore plays a critical role in the NCG's efforts to protect pollinators and their habitat, help to increase the populations of mason bees and healthy native bees, bring more colonies into

communities to contribute their gifts to agriculture, and create healthy, thriving eco-systems where we live. For those of you that have been participating in the Mason Bee Project's BeeGAP Program, we encourage you to continue with the program! For those that haven't yet given BeeGAP a try, we suggest you give it a try! How-to videos and instructions can be found at <http://www.crownbees.com>.

The mason bee is a very productive pollinator for spring flowers, fruits, and nuts. The female carries pollen on the underside of her hairy abdomen, and then scrapes the pollen off within her nesting hole. Because the pollen is carried dry on her hair, it falls off easily as she moves among flowers.



This results in significantly more pollinated flowers than her cousin, the honey bee, who wets the pollen and sticks it to her legs during transport to the hive.

The mason bee, who efficiently gathers pollen and nectar on the same visit, is also an awesome cross-pollinator. She busily flits back and forth between branches or trees, instead of focusing on stripping pollen and nectar from one source. A little variety makes any job more interesting! Checkout [crownbees.com](http://crownbees.com) for more information on the mason bee. Learn about kits you can purchase to help in this very important cause. YOU/RGC can make a difference.

## NNK Burger FUNdraising Event

On May 18, the club conducted its second annual Northern Neck Fundraiser event. The club received 10% of all sales from 3-10 PM that evening. As a result of the event, the club received \$275 from this fundraiser to support our 2017 scholarship fund.



## Christmas Luncheon, Mark Your Calendars

**A**t the recent RGC meeting, members voted to conduct their holiday luncheon at the Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club on Thursday, December 8. Mark your calendars and more details will be provided in the future. Special thanks to the Christmas Luncheon team for their hard work with site visits. The team included Mary Hutya, Cheryl Brown Davis, Pam Lazorchak and Jo Manson.



## Please Support Cathi's Gardens in Irvington



**C**athi Carr has opened a new floral shop in Irvington. Former owner of Rappahannock Florist, Cathi has always been a faithful supporter of RGC members and their events. Please support Cathi as she embarks on this new

business venture. Cathi's hours are: Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5:30 pm; Saturday 9 am to 1 pm. Her business is located in the old yarn shop, 4265 Irvington Road, 804.577.0450.

[cathigardens4u@gmail.com](mailto:cathigardens4u@gmail.com) and [facebook.com/cathigardens4u](https://www.facebook.com/cathigardens4u).

## Don't Forget to Sign-Up

**S**ign-up sheets for Hostess, Clerk/Guide/Judge and the Free Health Clinic are all on the RGC website. Click on the Members tab, then type in password.



## Storage Room at Grace Has Been Organized



**P**resident Bonnie Schaschek reported that RGC has been given the entire storage area upstairs at Grace. Prior to this, RGC shared half of the room with Grace. As such, the contents of the room were bursting at the seams! With the help of Anne Warner and Margie Redlin, Jo Manson coordinated the storage room facelift. Armed with gloves and trashbags, these ladies dug through the entire room, organizing, pitching and donating. *Note to RGC Members: please help us keep this storage room organized. If you are unsure where to put something, please ask Jo or Bonnie.*

## Coming in Next Month's Newsletter...

## Exciting Butterfly Project



**RGC** Club Member and Webmaster, Carol Clark, has embarked on a very exciting project. She has collected over 33+ monarch butterfly caterpillars from tropical<sup>1</sup> milkweed plants she purchased at River Birch Nursery. They were in various stages of growth; 15 have emerged and have been released and 18 are still in the chrysalis stage (at time of newsletter distribution). They are being raised inside her house. The next newsletter will go into greater detail about this wonderful project to help save our monarch population. If you have a project you are working on that you would like to

share with other club members, please let Cathie Elliott know. Exciting things are happening in RGC!

Footnote<sup>1</sup>: tropical milkweed is not native and butterflies may not want to migrate south to Mexico. If you plant tropical milkweed, it is suggested that you cut back the plant in the fall to encourage the monarchs to go south.

