



# GARDEN

# DIRT



Issue 4 ● April 2018

## Anne Blackwell Thompson presented great program in March



**RGC** members were treated to a wonderful program in March. Anne Blackwell Thompson of Blackwell Botanicals of Richmond presented the program. Vibrant blooms and foliage collected from

the nooks and crannies of the Southern landscape are what define Blackwell Botanicals. Their meticulous preservation and artistic presentation are what elevate these found treasures into sophisticated, unique and highly stylized works of art. Harvesting from the swamps of South Carolina, the gardens of Virginia's countryside, the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, and the mountains of the Shenandoah Valley, artist and plantswoman Anne Blackwell Thompson preserves foliage and flowers using centuries-old traditions and turns her bounty into beautiful, artistic compositions. Her work is a culmination of her years of study, her significant training in studio art and art history and her love of the natural world. Her skills were further honed while studying as an apprentice to world-renowned botanical artist Stuart Thornton in Turin, Italy.



## Donna Cottingham returns by popular demand



**Donna** Cottingham will speak to RGC members on April 12<sup>th</sup> on habitat gardening. Donna will discuss the benefits of biodiversity and examine

landscape techniques to make yards attractive to birds pollinators and other beneficial creatures. Donna is a member of Salisbury Garden Club and is a James River Master Naturalist. She has been gardening for nature for many years and even created her own butterfly meadow. She enjoys photography, blogging and sharing her passion for nature with others.

## April Assignments

**Hostesses:** Debbie Burgess (head hostess), Muffin Fitzpatrick, Carol Clark, Carol Shear

**Judges:** Jane Denton (NGC Accredited), Marty Wilson, Judy Burlbaugh

**Clerks:** Mary Hutya, Nancy Peterson

**Guides:** Sharon Rowe, Cathie Elliott

**Artistic Design Theme:** Waiting  
Song is "Please Mister Postman" by The Beatles

### Class I

#### Creative Construction Design

Flower Show Handbook page 74

Designing by Types page 37-40

### Class II

**Designer's Choice** of style, size and components.

Design must interpret class theme. Flower Show Handbook –Pages 69 – 83. Entry card must specify design type.

Designing by Types

## ***The Beatles - Please Mister Postman***

*Wait, oh yes wait a minute mister postman  
Wait, wait mister postman  
Mister postman look and see  
Is there a letter in your bag for me  
I been waiting a long long time  
Since I heard from that girl of mine  
There must be some word today  
From my girlfriend so far away  
Please Mister postman look and  
If there's a letter, a letter for me  
I been standing here waiting Mister postman  
So patiently  
For just a card or just a letter  
Saying she's returning home to me  
Mister postman look and see  
Is there a letter in your bag for me  
I been waiting a long long time  
Since I heard from that girl of mine  
So many days you passed me by  
See the tear standing in my eye  
You didn't stop to make me feel better  
By leaving me a card or a letter  
So Mister postman look and see  
Is there a letter in your bag for me  
I been waiting a long long time  
Since I heard from that girlfriend of mine  
You gotta wait a minute, wait a minute  
You gotta wait a minute, wait a minute*

## **Horticulture Classes for April 2018**

I	Flowering Deciduous Shrubs
IV	Camellias
V	Daffodils - Divisions (1,2,3,4, other)
VI	Tulips
VII	Other Flowering Bulbs
VIII	Azaleas
X	Flowering Trees
XI	Perennials
XXXII	Unclassified
XXXIII	Collections
XXXVII	Food Gardens – All Sections (see Page H16)
XXXVIII	Ivy and Vines
XXXXI	Container Grown Plants Display Only

## **March Best In Show**



**D**espite the cold temperatures, RGC members brought in many horticulture and food garden exhibits. Debbie Burgess won best in show for her Aucuba japonica.



Cathie Elliott won best in show for her horizontal traditional mass. Several ladies created traditional mass designs and they were all terrific. Way to go ladies!!

## **Thank You to our March Hostesses**



**M**arch hostesses provided a nice offering of sandwiches and salad and a big array of desserts. Check out the St. Patrick's Day theme the ladies put together. Hostesses included Cathie Ward, Sara Ford, Pam Lazorchek and Sharon Timm. Thank you ladies!!



## **Lancaster Middle School Smokey Bear Contest Winners**



**T**he Rappahannock Garden Club worked with Art teacher, Marilyn Sprouse and the fourth and fifth graders at Lancaster Middle School to create posters for the National Smokey Bear Contest. Members; Margie Redlin,

Pam Lazorchak, Muffin Fitzpatrick, Mary Ann McKay, Bonnie Schaschek and Mary Hutya went to each classroom to read the story of Smokey Bear and talk about the importance of wildfire safety. The children learned Smokey's five rules to prevent wildfires. All the students worked on creating posters with Mrs Sprouse.

Finished posters were submitted to RGC's Youth Committee to be judged. The fourth grade winner was Jayden Coates and fifth grade winner was Riley Jackson. Each was presented a Smokey Bear plaque by the garden club. The posters were then entered into the Piedmont District contest and both Jayden Coates and Riley Jackson won first prize for their grade. The posters have now been submitted to the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs and entered into the State Contest.

## RGC members travel to Richmond for Piedmont District meeting



Several members ventured out one snowy, wintry day on March 11<sup>th</sup> to attend the Spring Piedmont District meeting in Richmond. Judy Binns demonstrated

all of the new designs in the 2017 Flower Show Handbook. Awards were also handed out to all of the clubs that submitted applications back in December. RGC was awarded Blue ribbons for the Smokey Bear 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade contest winners, Club Brochure, Youth Education and Butterfly; Red ribbons for the club Newsletter and Website. Congratulations to all RGC members who contributed to the success of our club winning so many awards!



## Deborah Brooks wins BIG at the Gloucester Daffodil Festival



Our own, Deborah Brooks, exhibited and won BIG at the recent Gloucester Daffodil Festival. Deborah took home six blue and six red, eight yellow and four honorable mention. Congratulations Deborah! You go girl!

## Voting takes place in April for Most Valuable Gardener Award



Members will be voting on their choice for the Most Valuable Gardener award at the April club meeting. You must be present to vote. Nominees this year include: Debbie Burgess, Cathie Elliott and Margie Redlin. Votes will be tallied following this meeting (but will be kept a surprise) and an award plaque will be presented to the winner at the conclusion of our "new" club year in June 2017.

## Plant America initiative with P. Allen Smith

*The special NGC plant sale continues through June 15. National Garden Clubs, Inc. will be selling plants especially selected by P. Allen Smith. This promotion, entitled **Inspiring Gardens Across America**, includes three different collections of plants. Each item was chosen because of a special feature in its hybridization for performance or beauty or for its limited availability in the general marketplace.*

1. **Peony Flowering Daylily Collection.** This collection includes three of the most prolific reblooming double-flowering daylilies. 2. **Sunpatiens® 'Razzle Dazzle' Collection.** This is not your grandmother's impatiens! SunPatiens® is a hybrid impatiens bred by Sakata. These remarkable plants represent a breakthrough in flower breeding: they are **sun-loving** and bloom from spring through frost. P. Allen Smith has grown these in containers and on the grounds of Moss Mountain Farm where they survive the hot summers of Arkansas with no wilting. Each of the four cultivars was picked as the one that is the most vigorous in the series.



## Plan to build a monarch waystation this spring



*This is an excerpt from monarchwatch.org website. This is an excellent read on the plight of our monarch butterfly.*

“Each fall, hundreds of millions of monarch butterflies migrate from the United States and Canada to overwintering areas in Mexico and California where they wait out the winter until conditions favor a return flight in the spring. The monarch migration is truly one of the world's greatest natural wonders, yet it is threatened by habitat loss in North America - at the overwintering sites and throughout the spring and summer breeding range as well.

### Monarch Waystation Habitats

Monarch Waystations are places that provide resources necessary for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. Without milkweeds throughout their spring and summer breeding areas in North America, monarchs would not be able to produce the successive generations that culminate in the migration each fall. Similarly, without nectar from flowers these fall migratory monarch butterflies would be unable to make their long journey to overwintering grounds in Mexico. The need for host plants for larvae and energy sources for adults applies to all monarch and butterfly populations around the world.

### Why We Are Concerned

Milkweeds and nectar sources are declining due to development and the widespread use of herbicides in croplands, pastures and roadsides. Because 90% of all milkweed/monarch habitats occur within the agricultural landscape, farm practices have the potential to strongly influence monarch populations.

**Development.** Development (subdivisions, factories, shopping centers, etc.) in the U.S. is consuming habitats for monarchs and other wildlife at a rate of 6,000 acres per day - that's 2.2 million acres each year, the area of Delaware and Rhode Island combined!

**Genetically Modified Crops.** Widespread adoption of herbicide-resistant corn and soybeans has

3. **Whitewashed Wooden Stand with Succulents.** This selection is for succulent lovers and those who no longer have a garden! The whitewashed wooden stand of reclaimed wood holds three pots of succulents. It's also a great gift item for Mother's Day, Father's Day and other spring occasions.

More detailed descriptions of these plants are included in the brochure/order form (attached under separate cover).

Orders can be placed in two ways:

1. NGC Website Online Shopping - [www.shopgardenclub.org/shop](http://www.shopgardenclub.org/shop)
2. Mail a check with the order form to NGC headquarters, 4401 Magnolia Ave, St. Louis, MO 63110. The order form in the brochure can be used, or the order form can be downloaded from the NGC website on the PLANT AMERICA page: [www.gardenclub.org/projects/plant-america](http://www.gardenclub.org/projects/plant-america)

Orders will be accepted **starting March 1.** **Please note:** some items will be shipped when it is appropriate for your growing zone. Order early while supplies last.

This promotion is not meant to be “We’ve got a bargain for you.” These are quality items chosen by P. Allen Smith that he knows will perform well in your home and garden or as a gift for someone. Allen and NGC share the goal of “Inspiring Gardens Across America” by contributing to the PLANT AMERICA Grant Fund so that we may give as much help as possible to NGC-member garden clubs in their projects all across America.

Our purchases will help grow the NGC PLANT AMERICA Grant Program. Thank you for your support, as all of us working together can benefit so many of our garden clubs throughout the country.

Above is an excerpt from our NGC President, Nancy Hargroves

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resulted in the loss of more than 80 million acres of monarch habitat i

### **What You Can Do**

To offset the loss of milkweeds and nectar sources we need to create, conserve, and protect milkweed/monarch habitats. We need you to help us and help monarchs by creating "Monarch Waystations" (monarch habitats) in home gardens, at schools, businesses, parks, zoos, nature centers, along roadsides, and on other unused plots of land. Without a major effort to restore milkweeds to as many locations as possible, the monarch population is certain to decline to extremely low levels.

### **The Value of Monarch Waystations**

By creating and maintaining a Monarch Waystation you are contributing to monarch conservation, an effort that will help assure the preservation of the species and the continuation of the spectacular monarch migration phenomenon.”

Start planning your own monarch habitat this spring. Register your garden at monarchwatch.org. When you do, please send your monarch waystation certified number to Cathie Elliott.

## **Invite a Friend or Neighbor**

**T**he April meeting is an excellent opportunity to invite a friend, a neighbor, or someone you have met through your other clubs and organizations. There will be no admission fee for guests.

### ***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**.*

## **HOW TO DESIGN WHAT'S NEW IN THE 2017 FSS HANDBOOK (prepared by Artistic Design Chair Deborah Brooks)**

### **DESIGN DIVISION**

**All plant material** used in a design **MUST** be **listed on a card**. When **design techniques are required**, they must be **listed on a card**. HB p 80

Painting, flocking, glittering or dyeing of fresh plant material is NOT permitted (EXCEPT in the Exploration-Freedom of Style design class in the NEW Botanical Arts Division). **All other physical embellishments of fresh plant material are permitted**. HB p 80

### **NEW DESIGNS**

**Cascade Design** – A design with an emphasis in downward rhythmic movement. HB p 73

- The downward lines may be curved, straight, zigzag interrupted or may be a combination
- The design is supported by a container or other device
- A minimum of components may extend upward



**Cascade**



**Cascade**

**Featured Plant Material Design** – a design with emphasis on one plant species. HB p 74

- Any part/s of the plant may be used
- Other components are subordinate and may be used to enhance the featured plant material
- The focus is on the chosen species
- The schedule may specify the design style and/or plant material to be used



**Featured Plant Material**



**Featured Plant Material (white flower is oriental rosely Lily)**

**Grouped Mass Design** – a mass design of **only plant material** with **radial placement** HB p 78

- Like material is grouped and placed next to other different grouped like material
- Additional plant material may be included, but the proportion of groupings dominate the design
- Plant material emanates from one point of emergence
- **Groupings** consist of **three or more like material**



**Low-Profile** – a three-dimensional design incorporating three or more design techniques HB p 78

- Completed design must be at least four times long and/or wide as it is high (example: if container plus plant material is 6 inches tall, design length has to be at least 4 times, in this case 24 inches or more.  $6 \times 4 = 24$ ,  $8 \times 4 = 32$  and so on).
- Design to be viewed and judged from above
- Design techniques – HB p 81-83.



**BOTANICAL ARTS DIVISION (this is a brand new division within a flower show) HB p 91-96**

- Bonded Designs – Collage, Plaque
- Hanging Designs – Wreath, Swags, Garland, Mobiles
- Pot-et-fleur
- Topiary
- Exploration-Freedom of Style – this is the **ONLY** class permitting treatment of **FRESH** plant material such as painting, flocking or dyeing. This is the **ONLY** design type within the Botanical Arts Division that is not eligible for an exhibiting credit.



Exploration-Freedom of Style Design Example

## The Promise of Spring

There was a painting  
Of trees with bare branches,  
Snow on the ground,  
In those trees I found life!  
Braving the winter winds  
It could surely be said  
Those gaunt limbs were not dead!  
Only waiting they were  
For spring to occur.  
Life, so evident  
Its atmosphere lent  
The promise of Spring!



## Also Coming Up...

- April 14 - 16, 2018 -- 72nd annual Colonial Williamsburg Symposium "Ordinary to Extraordinary: Creating Landscape Design that Reflects Beauty and Awe"
- April 28, 2018 "Herbs Galore & More" sale at Maymont