



FOOTPRINTS

Piedmont District
Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc.
VOLUME 31 NUMBER 4 SUMMER 2020

A Message from JoAnn McNabb, Piedmont District President

I've started and stopped writing this column at least a dozen times because it's hard to find the right words. As we all know, the COVID-19 outbreak has changed the course of our daily lives. The present day requires us to adapt to new guidelines of how we live and work at home. Physical distancing has become our normal way of living.

It was very disappointing, I know, to have cancelled our spring district meeting. But as it turned out, it was the right thing to do. So many wonderful events were also cancelled...the 2020 VFGC Convention in Roanoke, Richmond Council's Fashion with Flowers, Ikebana's annual luncheon, and the list goes on.

One of the things I know for certain is that spending more time in nature and the garden is incredibly grounding right now. Recently the president of one of my garden clubs, Nancy Penick of River Road, e-mailed all members to send in pictures of their gardens as a way to keep us connected. She collected them and sent them out for all members to enjoy.

I thought that was a wonderful idea, and I would like to do the same for Piedmont District. So, let's all share pictures of our gardens and what's blooming! Do share! I'll start...look for photos of my own garden in this newsletter. Here is a late-April scene from my garden:



If you will please send your photos to the *Footprints* Editor, we can celebrate National Garden Week (June 7-13) by sharing and appreciating our wonderful Piedmont District Virginia gardens.

In time, I know, we will return to more joyful times when we can once again socialize with each other as we have in the past. Hopefully, that will be at our fall district meeting, which is scheduled for October 19th. HOWEVER, please be aware that at this juncture it is unclear as to when large meetings can reconvene...that will be up to our Governor. The best that we can do is to be flexible and understanding of the circumstances that we are living in today.

A friend of mine sent me this quote the other day, and I thought how appropriate it would be to share...

And once the storm is over, you won't remember how you made it through,

How you managed to survive.

You won't even be sure, in fact, that the storm is over.

But one thing is certain.

When you come out of the storm, you won't be the same person who walked in.

That's what this storm is all about.

Haruki Murakami
poem from his novel [Kafka on the Shore](#)

Until we get together again, I send all of you my best wishes for an abundance of strength and good health. And by all means, keep your distance and be safe!

A Time for Perseverance...

Message from Pam Mann, Piedmont District Chaplain

As we begin to tentatively emerge from the onslaught of Covid-19, we look forward to peace and healing. The prayers of our Piedmont District members rise in unison for those families affected in any way. We have sheltered in place, all the while watching, wondering and waiting. We have learned about sorrow and how to pray again. With spring waning and summer rising, Nature provides bounteous opportunity for meditation.

THE PERSEVERING DANDELION

Exodus ranks as one of my favorite books of the Bible. It presents many exciting accounts about the history of our beginnings—laws, customs, religions and family life. It's packed with epic adventures, revelations, love, customs, curses, blessings, murder and mayhem.

I enjoy traveling through Exodus by examining the ways God uses nature to speak to mortal man-- then and today. Forget the mayhem, let's check out some customs.

Consider the much maligned dandelion. (*Taraxacum officinale*) Most summers, I manage to maintain a mellow, yellow yard. Here, there (and everywhere) golden capped dandelions play hide and seek in the grass. The French call the adventurous yellow sprites "dent de lion" or "Lion's teeth," in reference to the basal rosette with tooth-like lobed leaves. But, the poor dandelion. Most people consider it a despicable, and spread tons of weed killer to hopefully remove it. Of course, most feel that lawns are meant to be manicured dreams. But, let's give the dandelion the respect it deserves. Centuries ago, dandelion blooms represented good health and renewed vigor. In eighteenth-century Europe, it offered the official remedy for disorders. Roots and greens were used in spring tonics as far back as 1000 A.D.

Truly, a plant of ancient recognition, it was considered one of the bitter herbs. "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it." (Exodus 12:8)

The Israelites celebrated liberation from Egypt with a seven-day Passover—even in the Sinai wilderness. (Num.9 :11) Every family served 5 bitter herbs along with roast lamb, and bread made without yeast. The salad was thought to consist of dandelion, chicory, endive, lettuce and sorrel.

Although our forefathers (and mothers) instinctively used dandelion flowers and foliage, scientists have proved the merit. The herb contains more food value than lettuce or spinach. Roots offered people early medicine ingredients for diuretic, tonic, stimulant, and liver disorder remedies. And then there is dandelion wine, made from the flowers.

A commendable list of attributes, indeed. But, let's consider the character of this plant. Persistency! A long, tenacious taproot dives deeply into the soil. Holding fast with conviction, the dandelion resists the tug and twist of gardeners who would oust them. After the battle, the "lion's" green leaves hang tattered, its yellow caps stolen. "...be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord..."(Corinthians 15:58)

The little lions never give up. And the remnants slowly lifted ragged leaves to absorb their Maker's healing mercies of sun and rain. Renewed, they offered fresh golden flowers of gratitude. "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."(Matthew 10:22)

As dandelions mature, globe shaped clusters of fluffy seeds develop—mini replicas of the earth. And holding nothing back, they freely give of themselves. Silent free spirits disperse in the winds as epistles of perseverance. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit." (Psalms 51:12)

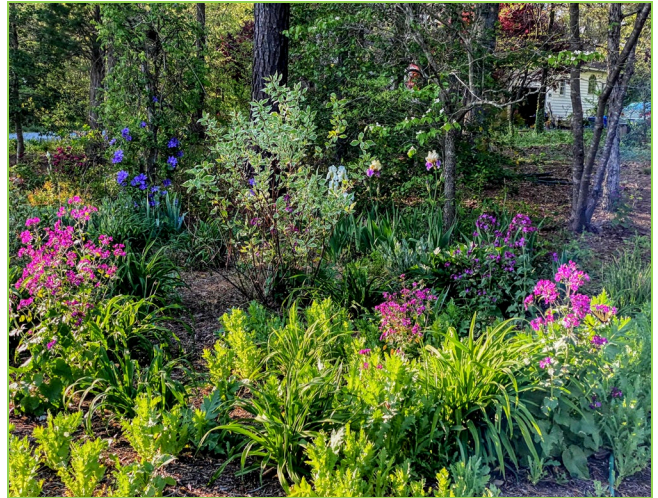
THE MIRACLE by Fenton Johnson

Though I was dwelling in a prison house,
My soul was wandering by the carefree stream
Through fields of green with gold eyed daisies strewn,
And daffodils and sunflower cavaliers.

And near me played a little brown eyed child,
"A winsome creature God alone conceived,
"Oh, little friend," I begged. "Give me a flower
That I might bear it to my lonely cell."

He plucked a **dandelion**, an ugly bloom,
But tenderly he placed it in my hand,
And in his eyes I saw the sigh of love.
"T'was then the **dandelion** became a rose."

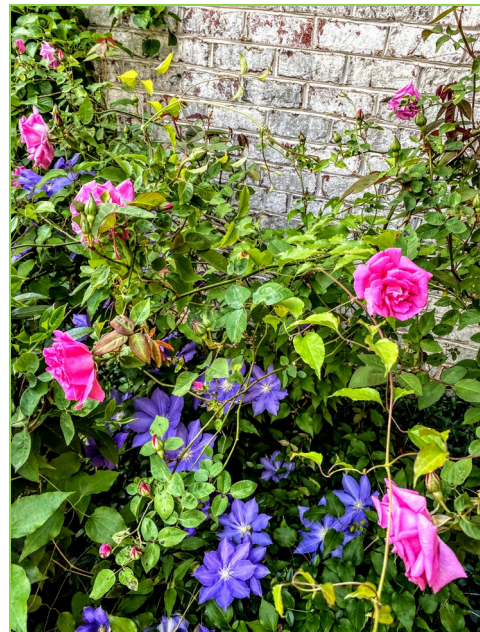
More Views of JoAnn's Garden...



What's Blooming in *Your* Garden?

To celebrate National Garden Week, we will publish a Special Edition of *Footprints* the week of June 7-13.

Send your photos via email by June 5th:
Footprints@PiedmontDistrictVFGC.org



CALENDAR SAVE NOTICE

**Monday, October 19
Piedmont District Fall 2020 Meeting**

**Our Traditional Memorial Moment
will be part of the October meeting**

**Richmond Designers' Guild
NGC Standard Flower Show**

**“It’s Summertime...
And the Living Is Easy”**

**August 10
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
Education & Library Complex**

See full page ad at end of this issue



Hosta © ggh

REMINDER
**Piedmont District dues deadline
is May 31**

*See dues form included at the end of this newsletter
or download from the website*

**VMFA Fine Arts and Flowers
Postponed**

Event co-chairs have notified designers that after much careful deliberation, the decision has been made to re-schedule the 2020 event to October 2021.



2018 exhibit, Fine Arts and Flowers

**“Study nature, love
nature, stay close to
nature. It will never fail
you.”**

Frank Lloyd Wright

Featuring the Glorious Genus *Hosta*

by Jane Earle-Horticulture Chair

Emerging, bursting, unfurling leaves of vibrant perennials excite and intrigue both amateur and professional gardeners and landscapers. Responding to warming temperatures, longer days, seasonal rains, and sunny skies, gardeners and plants bond in another phase of their long-life cycles.

A new planting season is a gratifying experience, especially for the innovative gardener who sees a way for improvement. For all the right reasons, stewards of the land strive to maintain good ecological balance and consider native plants combined with purposeful non-native plants. When looking to plant in areas of shade to deep shade, a great non-native plant (to Virginia) is the foliage of *Hosta*, common names funkia, plantain lily, and *hosta* of the Plant Family :Asparagusate. Hostas were introduced by botanists and nurserymen in the mid-1800's and grew in popularity with imports from Europe and Japan. With origins from Japan, China and Korea, *Hosta* species number more than 40, with thousands of cultivars.

Hosta hybridizers and growers have developed cultivars that offer low-maintenance and diversity in colors and sizes for high design impact. A wonderful non-profit reference for the *Hosta* enthusiast is the American *Hosta* Society(AHS) website:

<https://www.americanhostasociety.org/>

Hosta of the Year 2020 is 'Dancing Queen':



Source: nhhosta.com

Success with the first plants that inspire the gardener to grow *Hostas* can lead to rewarding years of experiences. Even though low-maintenance, *Hostas* do have certain vulnerabilities. To prevent damage and destruction of the beautiful leaves of many shapes, colors and textures, and for years of enjoyment, follow these recommendations:

- Use well-draining soil and site
- Water one inch of rain in weeks Mother Nature did not
- Scatter ground eggshells or coffee grounds to slow down the slugs and snails
- Remove flowering stalks before turning to seed to conserve nutrients for foliage
- Always use clean gardening tools, gloves, and protective mask especially when working soil
- Depending on location and proximity to the local deer population, a deer-resistant fence may be needed
- Be ready for action to resolve the problem of irregular cuts and holes in a prized *Hosta* leaf left by slugs or leafcutter bees
- In a full effort to "Go Green", avoid chemicals whenever possible

Valued for its foliage, the *Hosta* is exhibited as a single cut leaf, as a cut flowering scape, or as container-grown plants with only emerging scapes. (**Horticulture Exhibiting and Judging** p.101) National Garden Clubs, Inc. Horticulture Classifications may also be determined by color: Greens, Blues, Yellows and White, Blue, Green, Cream or Yellow leaf margins, or streaked or mottled. Blue foliage has a glaucous coating that may be damaged while cleaning and is not to be removed. Maturity is mostly determined by size and may be determined by vein count as well as intensity of color. Knowing the species/cultivar's characteristics will facilitate what is considered peak of perfection.

As we compost, capture rainwater, go native with Virginia native plants.... repurpose, reuse and recycle, share knowledge especially with the young, grow our own vegetables, plant a tree, plant for birds and pollinators, we can also reduce our lawn size and use *Hosta* plants, mindful of right place, right plant.

Source: *Garden Gate Magazine Early Spring 2020* Edition

A Gift to Celebrate

Give the gift of a VFGC Life Membership or Book of Honor to celebrate those who have gone above and beyond the expectations of membership in your garden clubs. For only \$50, a tax-deductible donation, as well as a donation to the VFGC scholarship fund, your gift will be treasured by each recipient. You may choose to present a VFGC Life Membership or Book of Honor as a surprise, or not, at a club meeting or at a district meeting.



Go to http://www.viriniagardenclubs.org/VFGC/Life_Memberships.html for the applicable form/s and call or email Jane Denton, Life Membership Chairman at 804-435-6877. denton@va.metrocast.net.

Surry Garden Club Project: Gray's Creek Designation as a State Scenic River

by Barbara Eger, President Surry Garden Club



Gray's Creek Boat Launch
Source: Surry County FB page

In the legislative session recently concluded, House Bill 1612 passed the House and the Senate, granting Gray's Creek in Surry County designation as a State Scenic River. This project was initiated in 2019 by the Surry Garden Club. The offices of Delegate Emily Brewer and Senator Louise Lucas sponsored the legislation.

For more about this project, see the full article in the May issue of *Old Dominion Gardener*.

"Upcycling" for Sustainability

by Sharon Lemke, Recycling Chair

In a sustainable world we need to think beyond recycling. An ideal world would be where everything we use is renewed, not thrown away, and made into something else of use. In nature, waste doesn't exist, as everything is returned to the soil.

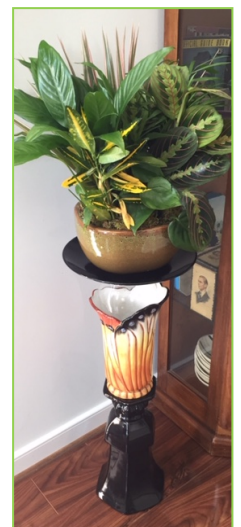
This may sound like pie in the sky, but a movement called **upcycling** is taking hold. What is the difference between recycling and upcycling?

Recycling continues to be important, as it takes materials and breaks them down to create a new material. *Upcycling* is taking material and transforming it into something of higher quality or value than the original.

The benefits of upcycling are that it helps to conserve our limited natural resources, eliminates the need to use fresh raw materials, reduces the cost of production for companies, and spurs creativity and innovation by encouraging us to think outside the box on how we can transform something that is old and dated or that has lost its usefulness into something unique and useful.

Many businesses are using this format in producing their products. Examples of such companies include repurposing clothing, accessories, home furnishings and more. Some mail-order companies have several upcycling products online for purchase.

What can we do to encourage this trend? I guess my grandmother did a form of upcycling when she made beautiful rugs from scraps of old clothing. Before you toss anything out, take another look at it and visualize its uses in creative ways. Encourage children to be creative in upcycling products. In the future it will become more important as we confront a trash crisis. Who knows? In the future there may be an end to trash as we know it.



Cindy Butler, Sleepy Hollow Garden Club, upcycles discarded glass bowls, vases, and pottery to create plant stands and bird baths. Photo: G Harwood

Know Your Natives...

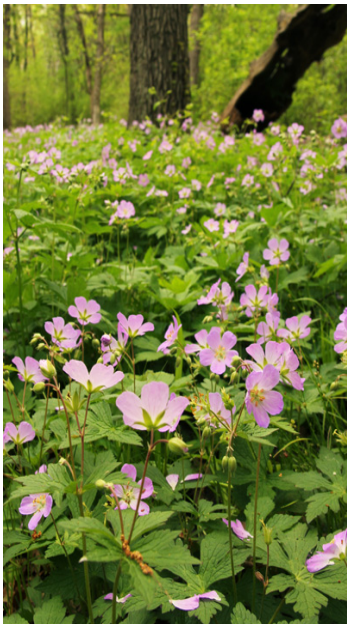
by Carolyn Shiflett

What a beautiful spring we are having! Although we are in the midst of unusual circumstances, it certainly is a wonderful time to explore our natural surroundings in search of new native plants. This can be accomplished with social distancing!

I suggest you look for Dutchman's Breeches, *Dicentra cucularia*. It blooms from March to April with white flowers that resemble a pair of pantaloons hanging upside down. It can be found along the ground of hardwood forests. The leaves are compound and fern-like. It resembles our Bleeding Heart.



'Dutchman's Breeches'
Source: :TN Nursery
alamy.com



Geranium maculatum is the Wildflower of the year for 2020. This native woodland perennial herb can be found in the mountains and the piedmont region of Virginia. It prefers moist, shady locations and blooms from April to June. It makes an excellent garden plant and is very similar to our cranesbill geranium. Its seeds attract mourning doves and bobwhite quail. Look for it on your walks through the woods!

Geranium maculatum
Source::
wimastergardener.org

This might help some folks !! Pass along



Violet Bank Garden Club

(circumstances permitting)

Hosts a

Design Show and Luncheon

Featuring Designers

Lisa Kochuba and Katie Bowman

from Over the Top Flower Shop

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

at the Country Club of Petersburg

1250 Flank Road, Petersburg, VA

Doors open at 9:00 AM

Design Show at 10:00 AM

followed by a luncheon

Ticket donation: \$35.00

Available from Jan Pingel

804-526-8979

“Bird Watching While Quarantined”

by Phillipa Smith

Here we are right in the middle of the Coronavirus. Although the world looks the same, it certainly isn't. We've had to succumb to social distancing, and more recently, to wearing masks when we go into stores. But the world moves on.

This Spring we have already had a little of family of sparrows nest in our gutter and we have watched as the parents labored hard to keep their little ones fed. Then one day we noticed about seven of them in the bird bath having a ball. Even though they constantly watch for predators while they bathe, they do it joyfully, the water flying everywhere! And we haven't seen any more activity around the place where the parents went in and out, so I guess the family has grown, fledged and are off to other places.

We have had fun watching these crows which have adopted us. We went out and bought some scratch corn mixed with other feed and have been putting out some for them every once and a while. Then, Boulevard Flowers offered some suet cakes for sale. We have attached two to some trees in the backyard. The crows have learned how to grab hold of the bark and get to the suet. They vie with the squirrels and the birds to get some of the cake. Their interactions with the birds and squirrels are fascinating. One day a mockingbird landed not too far away from a crow. The crow would hop a few feet towards the mockingbird and the bird would run a little bit away. I watched until they disappeared behind one of the cars. I never did see the ending to this play.



Because we have stayed at home during the virus, I've had more time to watch the birds and have seen some I haven't seen in a long time. One of my favorites has always been the Rufous-sided Tohee. The is a bird about the size of a cardinal with a black back and rusty sides and grey breast. He is a beautiful bird and was one of the first I learned to identify when I started watching birds. Another favorite is the Tufted Titmouse, a smaller grey bird with pale, pale orange colored breast and a crested head.

And finally, the squirrels. Those acrobats and clowns of the backyard. They chase each other around and around. They clean up the feed we put out for the crows.

They hang on the bird feeder and hold it at an angle so the feed falls from the feeder tube, and they can eat the sunflower seeds and other morsels they desire. They are clever animals and are part of the whole system. We did go through some years where Guy would trap them and haul them off to one place and another, but shortly after they were taken away, others came to fill the territory. So, we just tolerate them.

You know, this staying in place has not really been bad at all. We've had a chance to do things at home that we have been putting off. We have ridden out in the car and been to places that we really like and haven't been to in a long time. Guy and I have gotten to know each other again. I hope that each of you who read this have also had a pleasant time to do whatever it is that turns you on. But I also hope that you have kept yourself safe and healthy and that your family is the same. I do miss seeing all of my garden club friends and I hope that when this has passed, we will be seeing each other at one of those wonderful meetings we so love.



Send articles to:

Gail Goodrich Harwood, Editor
email: Footprints@PiedmontDistrictVFGC.org
PHONE: 804-317-8091

Articles are due before the following deadlines:
AUGUST 1, 2020- FALL
NOVEMBER 1, 2020 – WINTER
FEBRUARY 1, 2021- SPRING
MAY 1, 2021- SUMMER

Please mark your calendars to allow time to meet the due dates. Electronic transmission preferred, photos and graphics encouraged. Please submit photos in jpeg format. Submit text in Word format, preferably non-pdf. All articles welcome: club projects, special events, announcements about upcoming events or fundraisers.

Old Dominion Gardener

Club News Gardener is also submitted to the *Footprints* editor. To allow time for review and editing to meet the ODG due dates, please submit ODG articles two weeks prior to the above due dates please submit two weeks in advance of the deadlines above and indicate in the email subject line: 'ODG submission'. Ideally we would not duplicate feature articles in both *Footprints* and *ODG*, although some announcements may be specified for both publications.

"IT'S SUMMERTIME AND THE LIVING IS EASY"



AN NGC STANDARD FLOWER SHOW

PRESENTED BY
RICHMOND DESIGNERS' GUILD
SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 2020
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens Education and Library Complex
1800 Lakeside Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23228
804-262-9887

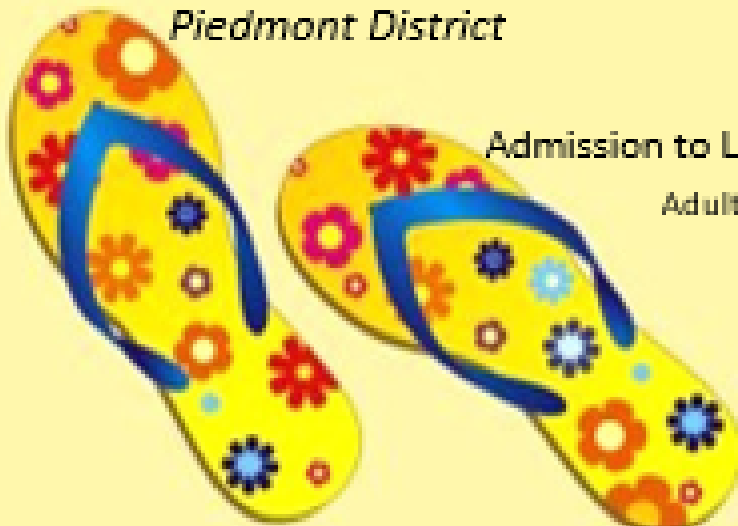
Member of
National Garden Clubs, Inc.
South Atlantic Region
Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
Piedmont District

Admission to Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens

Adults \$14 Seniors \$11 Military \$10

Children 3-12 \$8

Children under 3 Free



PIEDMONT DISTRICT DUES

2020-2021

Club Treasurer,

It's time to renew your 2020-2021 Piedmont District membership. **The annual dues fee is \$20 per club.** Thank you for using this form which is also provided on the Piedmont District Website, www.PiedmontDistrictVFGC.org.

Please mail this completed form and your \$20 check payable to **Piedmont District VFGC** to:

Linda Nau, Treasurer

804-514-0095

1810 Ethelred Court
VA 23113-3400

naule@aol.com Midlothian,

Payment is due no later than **May 31, 2020**, so please mail it today so it is not forgotten. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming year. Thank you!

Club Name: _____

Club President 2020-2021: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number with Area Code: _____

Email Address: _____

Club Treasurer 2020-2021: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number with Area Code: _____

Email Address: _____

Club's Piedmont District Representative 2020-2021. (This is NOT the president. This is to be a 2nd person in your club to also receive email notifications from the Piedmont District.)

Name: _____

Phone Number with Area Code: _____

Email Address: _____