

An impressionistic painting of a vase of flowers. The vase is a light blue color with a textured, brush-painted appearance. It is filled with large, light green and yellow flowers, possibly hydrangeas, with dark green leaves. The background is a mix of soft, pastel colors like lavender, pink, and light blue, with some darker green leaves and small purple flowers scattered throughout. The overall style is soft and painterly.

GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA
JOURNAL

Late Spring 2022 | Volume LXVII | No. 2

INSIDE

Annual Meeting | Common Wealth Award Nominees | Presidential Perspectives

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THE MISSION OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA

The Garden Club of Virginia exists to celebrate the beauty of the land, to conserve the gifts of nature and to challenge future generations to build on this heritage.

THE GCV JOURNAL

The Garden Club of Virginia *Journal* is published quarterly and is designed to address the interests and promote the activities of the Garden Club of Virginia and its member clubs. Organized to enhance and strengthen communication within the GCV, the *Journal* focuses on the mission of the organization: conservation and beautification, horticulture, restoration and education. Approximately 3,600 copies of each issue are mailed to members and subscribers.

A PDF version is available online at gcvirginia.org.

SUBMISSIONS

The *Journal* welcomes submissions by GCV committees, clubs and club members, as well as article ideas related to the GCV's mission and its initiatives and events. As a matter of editorial policy, all submissions will be edited for clarity of expression, space, style compliance, grammar, syntax, structure and messaging. Unsolicited material will be considered, but submission does not guarantee publication. For questions, please contact journal@gcvirginia.org.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE & DEADLINES

ISSUES — 2022-2023	PUBLISHES IN	SUBMISSION DEADLINE
Summer 2022	August 2022	June 1, 2022
Fall 2022	November 2022	September 1, 2022
Winter 2023	February 2023	December 1, 2022
Spring 2023	May 2023	March 1, 2023

ADVERTISING

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For a rate sheet or more information, visit the GCV website at gcvirginia.org or contact *Journal* Ad Sales Manager at journalads@gcvirginia.org.

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TOP: Beetle from David Rogers' Big Bug exhibit at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden; photo courtesy of LGBC

ABOVE: Botanical headdress by Françoise Weeks, photo by Ted Mishima

COVER ART: *Hydrangea: Still Life*, 16" x 20," oil, by Missy Goode, The Boxwood Garden Club

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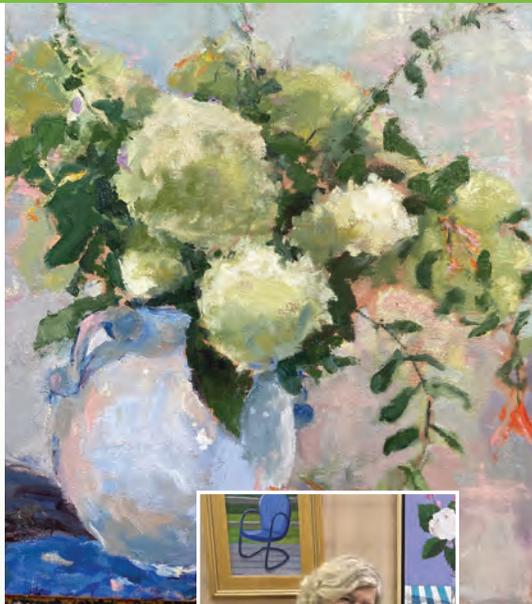
ON THE COVER: ARTIST SPOTLIGHT
MISSY GOODE

“Painting a still life excites me,” says Richmond-based artist Missy Goode. “I love using brush strokes to paint different textures and colors.” Her preferred medium is oil, which she uses to paint the people, places and objects around her. Missy is a seasoned observer; she meticulously studies each of her subjects to draw out underlying harmonies of color and form with each composition she creates. *Still Life, Hydrangeas*, on our spring cover, were “flowers fresh from the garden,” Missy explains. “It’s so exciting to put my brush to the canvas and paint.”

A graduate of St. Catherine’s in Richmond, Missy developed her artistic talent under members of its art faculty, including Mary Easterly, Becky Jessie and Phyllis Biddle, all of whom served as early mentors. She then went on to Mary Baldwin College where she continued to hone her skills. Upon returning to Richmond, she married, and while raising a family, she continued to take classes at the VMFA, all the while gaining confidence in her craft. She became a member of the Boxwood Garden Club in 2015.

Much of Missy’s work evokes hints of impressionist masters like Renoir and Van Gogh. But upon closer look, another impressionist artist’s influence is clear: Paul Cezanne. “I looked at his paintings over and over,” says Missy. “Cezanne has been a huge influence.” Still life was a genre for which he was especially known, and Missy’s oils of fruit and fabric and flowers are strongly reminiscent of his work, while still retaining her very own signature style. Through the years, her experience and interest in the texture and pigments of the paints she uses has intensified, evident in her use of thick, energetic brush strokes. “I hope my paintings leave viewers with a new perspective in the intensity of arrangements of shapes and form,” she says.

—Madeline Mayhood, *The James River Garden Club*



ABOVE: *Still Life, Hydrangeas*, 16" x 20," oil by Missy Goode



BELOW & RIGHT: Missy Goode; *Photos courtesy of Missy Goode*




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Missy Buckingham,
President 2020-2022

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A LOOK BACK: REFLECTIONS FROM GCV'S 51ST PRESIDENT



These past two years have been an honor and privilege that I never expected. It's been an experience I will always treasure. Reflecting on the early days of my presidency has reminded me of the challenges we were all about to face. I immediately realized nothing would be the same—at least for a time. We, as an organization and a dynamic membership, would no longer be able to conduct “business as usual.” It became clear that if we were going to move

forward, it would have to be on a completely uncharted path. But “uncharted” means there are no directions. How were we to find the compass for that path?

The Garden Club of Virginia was poised to celebrate its Centennial in May of 2020. But instead, we were forced to pause, be patient and necessarily be respectful of every pandemic-induced concern. We had to pick ourselves up and make the best of our situation. We wouldn't push too hard, but we also were not content unless we continued to move forward.

Setbacks? Yes, there were plenty, and those generally converted to either “pivots” or “punts.” But there were many successes, as well. Opportunities presented themselves, and new skills were learned. We found certainty in what began as uncertainty.

During this time, the resolve and spirit of the GCV membership did not waver. We made the best of the cards we were dealt. And that strength, perseverance and resilience has led us to better times. Our founders would be proud: through it all we stayed true to our mission and worked together to create a new vision for the path forward.

I am confident that we have made positive strides over the past two years. Above all, I look forward to seeing and sharing in what the future for the Garden Club of Virginia will bring.

Missy Buckingham
GCV President, 2020-2022



*“If I look at the masses, I will never act.
If I look at the one, I will.”*

— MOTHER THERESA



From climate change to immigration to war, it's easy to get swallowed up in the news of the day, especially in the face of these giant, overwhelming issues. They are complex, far-reaching and mammoth, and inaction comes with the territory. It's almost predictable.

But then I think of a conversation I had with Doug Tallamy, bug professor at the University of Delaware and everybody's favorite native plant guy. I remember telling

him that I wanted to be a native plant champion, but I didn't know what that meant for me personally. It's not a realistic plan for me to rip out everything nefarious in my garden and replant my whole landscape with pollinator-friendly natives. What do I do?

“Take it one step at a time,” Doug kindly suggested, and focus on the small, manageable stuff first, like reducing grass. Now that was the kind of advice I could digest. Begin investing in native plants with a goal of planting a certain amount each year. It made perfect sense. Without Doug's wise counsel—to take small steps in my quest to become a native plant gardener—I'd probably still be a deer in the headlights, my mind swirling and no clear path of what to do first.

Doug's way is reminiscent of Mother Theresa's outlook on the world. And it's a lot like why the GCV just celebrated 100 years. Our founders started small, slow and steady with a love of flowers and a commitment to their communities. In 1929, restoring Kenmore was on their radar. Now, more than 90 years later, what began as a flower show to preserve George Washington's sister's home has contributed nearly a half a billion dollars to the state's economy. Historic Garden Week has grown from that one idea into one of Virginia's most successful and celebrated traditions.

We cover Historic Garden Week in this issue of the *Journal*, along with other GCV milestones, including the Annual Meeting and Paula Pryke's long-awaited visit to Richmond. We introduce you to Françoise Weeks, who is sure to wow audiences at the GCV Symposium in September; we present the four Common Wealth Award proposals; and club news makes a splash in our Snips section. And don't miss our Q&As with Missy Buckingham and Debbie Lewis—as one GCV president completes her term and the other steps into her new role.

Mother Theresa's keen observation—and Doug Tallamy's—can serve us all well. The big stuff can overwhelm. Just like the Garden Club of Virginia has proven, starting small—with focus and determination—can net big results.

See you in the garden,

Madeline Mayhood

Madeline Mayhood, *GCV Journal* Editor
journal@gcvirginia.org
The James River Garden Club

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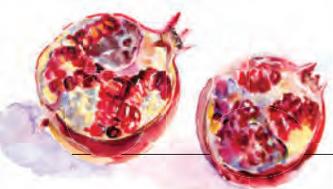
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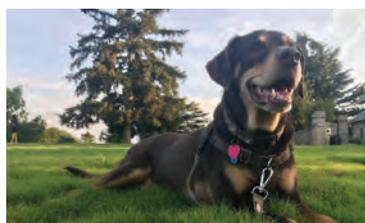




From bugs to butterflies and dogs on parade, check out these events at public gardens throughout the state. There's something for everyone!

Tunes are tops this summer at **Boxerwood** in Lexington. Rockbridge Bluegrass All-Stars and the rockin' sounds of Fatty Lumpkin & The Love Hogs are on deck in June, with more music events scheduled in July and August. Boxerwood's 15-acre, plant-rich site includes five distinct ecosystems with art throughout the landscape, abundant wildlife and, surprise, plenty of plants. Boxerwood.org

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond offers a plethora of summer programs and workshops. Of interest to those who love all things creepy-crawly, check out **Big Bugs**, a summer celebration of bees, butterflies and bugs on display from May 27-August 28. Throughout the garden, you'll see nine gigantic pollinator sculptures by artist David Rogers all crafted from combinations of found or fallen whole trees, willow limbs, twigs, branches and other forest material. What to look for? Massive ladybugs on a branch, a 17-foot-tall daddy longlegs, an



Canines can join the fun during **Mutts at Maymont** on June 18. Photo courtesy of Maymont

enormous dragonfly and a beautiful hummingbird. LewisGinter.org

Also in Richmond is **Mutts at Maymont** on June 18. This historic estate's dog-centric summer event is one of the rare days when canine guests are allowed on the property. (They tend to rile up the animal residents otherwise.) Look for a "Pup Path" where you and Fido can take a leisurely stroll, or chill out on the Carriage House Lawn, listen to live music and enjoy food from food trucks—with dog treats, too. Pet photographer Brittany Rose Petography will be on hand, along with adoptable dogs from Richmond Animal Care & Control. Barketplace, new this year, will feature a variety of dog merchandise and services. Admission is free for humans, and \$10/\$12 per dog. Maymont.org

Hop on **Norfolk Botanical Garden's** events page on its website and your head might explode. From sunset kayak paddles to plant walks and botanical drawing classes, NBG's summer schedule is packed. Every other Friday evening, the garden hosts a Family Twilight Trek starting at 7:30 p.m.; for lepidopterists among you, don't miss "Butterfly Garden Walk & Talk" on July 12; and for anyone who's stressed out, "Plants for Plucked Nerves" on July 21 will explore plants that calm frayed nerves. NorfolkBotanicalGarden.org

If you're a composting wanna-be but haven't quite mastered the art, join passionate composters from the Headwaters Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists for their workshop at the **Edith J. Carrier Arboretum** at James Madison University in Harrisonburg. Demystify composting and find a way that works for you. **Composting Your Way** on Wednesday, June 29, is part of the Brown Bag Lunch Series which runs through the summer. JMU.edu/Arboretum



Norfolk Botanical Garden offers a **Butterfly Walk & Talk** on July 21. Photo from Pexels



2022 Massie Medal Presented to Vicky Alexander

The 2022 Massie Medal Award for Distinguished Achievement, the GCV's most prestigious award, was presented at our Annual Meeting Awards Banquet to Victoria Burrell Alexander from Hunting Creek Garden Club. Her medal was inscribed: "For generously sharing your knowledge and expertise for the betterment of the Club".

The Covid pandemic brought disruptions and new situations for the GCV to face. Our Centennial celebration was halted in March 2020, and the 2020 Massie Medal could not be presented until the 2021 Board of Governors' meeting. The Massie Medal Committee did not meet in 2021 to make an award selection. So, it is fitting that this year's 2022 Massie Medal recipient was serving in a key Board position as Treasurer when the pandemic began. Vicky was instrumental in helping to make many of the

decisions that kept the Garden Club of Virginia on an even financial keel and able to face the many challenges.

Vicky has been an active member of Hunting Creek Garden Club since she joined in 2001. Her technical knowledge has been helpful to her own club, as she first served as the Communications and Database Chair. She went on to develop the HCGC website and has set up an electronic archive catalogue. She served her club as treasurer, vice president, and president from 2013-2015. In 2018, she welcomed GCV members to Alexandria as co-chair for the Board of Governors Meeting. In addition, Vicky is an avid gardener and arranger. She happily shares her knowledge with fellow club members on arranging teams for Historic Garden Week and GCV flower shows. Since completing the GCV judging program, Vicky

also serves as a judge for the GCV and other clubs.

The Flower Shows Committee brought Vicky into involvement with the GCV. Once again, her technical expertise was called on to rewrite and edit the Flower Shows Handbook. She helped to implement many positive improvements as the Flower Shows Committee Judges Chair. Vicky also began serving on the Finance Committee and served as chair from 2016-2018. She then moved on to serve as Treasurer from 2018-2020. Vicky is a current member of the Restoration Committee and began serving as Treasurer for this committee in 2018. She has shared her financial expertise with all these committees and spent countless hours working on strategic financial planning for the GCV.

Vicky has served with unusual dedication and distinction. The GCV is fortunate that she was in a key position during the pandemic and able to share her knowledge and expertise for the betterment of our Club.

INSET, L-R: Anne Baldwin, Massie Medal Chairman, 2020-2022, The Garden Club of Alexandria, and Massie Medal recipient Vicky Alexander, Hunting Creek Garden Club; TOP: Massie Medal recipient Vicky Alexander (center, in yellow) surrounded by her family. Photos by Edie Hessberg



Photo courtesy of Edie Hasberg



Daffodil Day: A Huge Success

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond was abuzz in March for Daffodil Day thanks to daffodil fans from all over the state. With over-the-top exuberance, fellowship and gratitude for an opportunity to finally get together after two years of pandemic restrictions, excitement was in the air as GCV club members and visitors clamored to admire the artistic arrangements, photography and horticulture exhibits in this much anticipated event.

Deadline for 2022 GCV Medals and Awards

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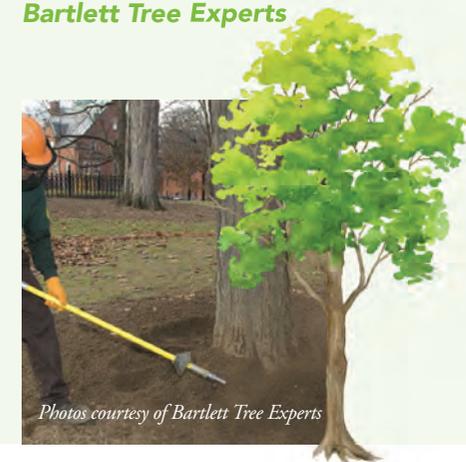
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—Thomas Smiley, PhD,
Bartlett Tree Experts



Photos courtesy of Bartlett Tree Experts

Lilies in Bloom

The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club invites you to *Lilies in Bloom* in memory of Helen Turner Murphy

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In memory of Barbara Catlett



The Garden Club of Virginia mourns the loss of Barbara L'Orange Catlett, a former president of The Boxwood Garden Club (1981-1983) and member of the GCV (1971- 2022).

Barbara was the 2003 recipient of the Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement, the GCV's most prestigious award, for her leadership and commitment to the successful renovation of the Kent-Valentine House.

In the early 2000s, Barbara chaired the GCV's Kent-Valentine House Committee, which oversaw the mansion that serves as the GCV's headquarters and is on the National Registry of Historic Places. During her tenure, the Kent-Valentine House underwent a significant expansion, renovation and interior update to make it more accessible for individuals with mobility challenges and more attractive for special gatherings. Barbara made sure the house was represented in a historically accurate way, including analysis on the paint to determine original colors.

She is remembered as a wonderful, dedicated conservator who updated the house while maintaining its antebellum authenticity.



Kent-Valentine House

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The Kent-Valentine House is not only the GCV's headquarters, but it's also your house. From baby showers to wedding receptions and cocktail parties, the KVH is available to Garden Club of Virginia members. "It's such a beautiful setting," notes Executive Director Andrea Butler, adding, "GCV members are so lucky to have access to the KVH. Private events can become extra special. Our staff look forward to working with you to make your event as turnkey as possible."



For more information on renting the Kent-Valentine House for your next event, contact Quan McGough at 804-643-4137 or QuanM@gcvirginia.org

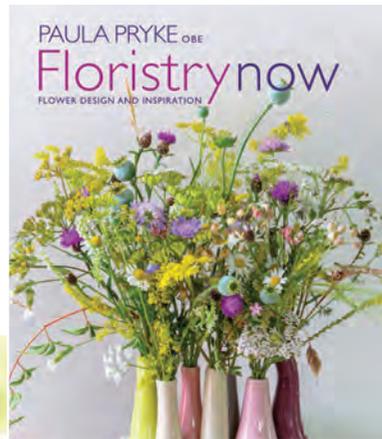


Flower Power in River City

Paula Pryke

came to Richmond

From artfully arranging hand-tied bouquets to layering elaborate flowers and foliage in designs fit for royalty, Paula Pryke entertained a packed audience at the Virginia Museum of History & Culture on May 12. This long-delayed presentation was a perfect bookend to the GCV's Annual Meeting earlier in the week. Loaded with wit and charm — and her signature style, legendary talent and flowers galore — Paula made quite the splash, sharing tips and tricks for seasoned arrangers and those just beginning to learn about floral design. The author of nearly 20 books, Paula is one of the world's leading style makers and floral designers. 🌿



Paula Pryke



photos courtesy of Paula Pryke



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- **Be inspired by Shaun Spencer-Hester**, granddaughter of Harlem Renaissance poet Anne Spencer, and Shaun's commitment to restoring her grandparents' house and garden—the only Black-owned restored garden in the United States
- **Sample botanical-inspired cocktails** at "Mix It Up!" surrounded by blooms of a late-season garden

Registration and more information will be available this summer at Symposium.GCVirginia.org



The four impressive proposals competing for the 2022 Common Wealth Award represent the best of GCV clubs. A total of four projects will be voted on in September, and the entire membership will chose the winning proposal. One supports victims of domestic violence; a second rejuvenates a once-blighted downtown; a third envisions transforming waterfront trails in celebration of Frederick Law Olmsted’s centennial; and a fourth looks to create a horticulture therapy program to benefit children facing mental health challenges.

The announcement detailing each project was made at the Annual Meeting in Richmond. Each has the potential to profoundly impact communities throughout the state. “These projects truly represent what the GCV is about and what the Common Wealth Award embodies,” notes Carol Carter, Common Wealth Award Committee Chairman (Albemarle GC). “Each one can make a significant difference. They can be real game changers.”

Carol explains that it is the Common Wealth Award Committee’s hope that each GCV club president will take each of the nominees to her membership and emphasize how important they are with regard to their potential impacts across the Commonwealth. “We want presidents, club leadership and members to really review the projects, so they can not only understand the award, but also meaningfully engage in the voting process,” she adds. Some projects have broad impacts on communities with tourism benefits, while others benefit underserved populations. “The diversity of the projects is impressive,” notes Carol.

This year the voting process shifts from snail mail and email to electronic votes that each club president will cast on behalf of a club. It’s a huge step forward, notes Carol, who says that each president is required to cast her club vote by September 30. The votes will go directly to the GCV, where records will be kept, making the process cleaner and more streamlined.

CLUBS VOTE BY SEPTEMBER 30

2022 Common Wealth Award Nominees

- 1. The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore: Beautification & Conservation of the Eastern Shore Coalition Against Domestic Violence Campus
2. Gabriella Garden Club: HOME Pocket Park
3. The Garden Club of Norfolk: GCN’s Tribute to Frederick Law Olmsted—Greenways along Norfolk’s Elizabeth River Trail
4. Three Chopt Garden Club: Horticulture Therapy for Pediatric Patients at Virginia Treatment Center for Children (VTCC)



1. The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore

BEAUTIFICATION & CONSERVATION OF EASTERN SHORE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAMPUS | ONANCOCK

For more than a decade, Eastern Shore Coalition Against Domestic Violence has sheltered clients and operated from inadequate facilities. Recently, thanks to a generous donation, ESCADV purchased a former assisted living facility in Onancock, Virginia, to be repurposed as the Shore’s domestic violence shelter, administrative offices and classrooms. This five-acre, three-building campus had been abandoned and neglected for years. Three Eastern Shore garden clubs—Chincoteague Garden Club, Debedeavon Garden Club and Ye Accawmacke Garden Club—as well as the Eastern Shore Master Gardeners, have joined with the Garden Club of the Eastern Shore to support this project by organizing and providing landscaping and a children’s play area. The clubs are providing funding through their outreach committees.

We are requesting assistance from local businesses that deal

with plant and/or landscaping materials to help us with in-kind donations or discounted pricing. Our plan will transform this blighted property, improve its neighborhood, and will include trees, low-maintenance plantings and a kitchen garden —easily maintained by the residents, staff and volunteers under GCVS guidance. The Common Wealth Award would allow for accessible raised kitchen garden beds, an irrigation well, supplies and tools to ensure this project’s success. Our goal is to enhance ESCADV’s massive effort by providing a welcoming and attractive “soft landing” for families in crisis.

2. Gabriella Garden Club

HOME POCKET PARK | DANVILLE

During the 20th century, Danville was one of Virginia’s leading industrial cities and the home of one of the largest textile mills in the South. By the new millennium, those industries had all but disappeared in Danville, leaving high unemployment and dilapidated buildings. For over a decade, Danville has strived to rebuild itself, adopting the moniker “The Comeback City.”

HOME Pocket Park is in a rapidly growing area of Danville’s

downtown district. The space currently houses the HOME sign, which was part of a larger sign for Dan River Fabrics. In addition to its historical significance, the sign has become a symbol of Danville, frequently photographed and used for marketing material. The land, however, is underutilized.

Gabriella Garden Club envisions this to be an interactive, multifunctional space of natural beauty within its urban location. A plan has been developed utilizing hard and softscape materials with perennials throughout the year. It also includes places to gather for outdoor dining, individual reflection and community events.

Funds from the Common Wealth Award would be used to transform the space into a welcoming and beautiful respite, hopefully making all its visitors feel at HOME.

3. The Garden Club of Norfolk

GC NORFOLK’S TRIBUTE TO FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED GREENWAYS ALONG NORFOLK’S ELIZABETH RIVER TRAIL | NORFOLK

The Garden Club of Norfolk is paying tribute to Frederick Law Olmsted and his 200th birthday by transforming and enhancing blighted areas along the Elizabeth River Trail. The Trail offers 10.5 miles of free public access and enjoyment of natural green and waterfront paths for walking, running and biking. Adherence to ADA standards makes it easy for people of all abilities and ages (and their pets!) to enjoy the trail. There were an estimated 469,000 visitors last year. GCN is proud to lend a hand to enhance this important public space that provides much needed urban respite in a city with few remaining public waterfront green spaces.



In 2021 GCN created an 8,000-square-foot native tree grove and pollinator area along a major trailhead; just one of the specially chosen trees is known to host 46 caterpillar species! In 2022, our work moved directly to revitalize the Trail with a 6,750-square-foot barren swale to be transformed into a rain garden, bird sanctuary and wildlife habitat with over 2,500 native trees, plants, shrubs and perennials planted to both beautify and protect. And all the while these new, attractive viewsheds will serve as living classrooms to teach Trail visitors how they too can plant to protect and, in so doing, help mitigate our city’s challenges of climate change.

4. Three Chopt Garden Club

HORTICULTURE THERAPY FOR PEDIATRIC PATIENTS AT VIRGINIA TREATMENT CENTER FOR CHILDREN (VTCC) | RICHMOND

Unmet mental health needs have a devastating impact on families. Demand for care outpaces resources. As the effect of the pandemic takes its toll, the need is drastically rising. Located in Richmond, Virginia Treatment Center for Children (VTCC) is home to

VCU’s division of child psychology and psychiatry. VTCC provides clinical care and resources that help families navigate the complex needs of mental and behavioral health.

Three Chopt Garden Club helped create and continues to maintain two gardens at VTCC. Membership seeks to partner with experts to create a horticulture therapy program. This would become one of the few acute, child psychiatric gardening programs in the Commonwealth. Horticultural therapy would give patients access to something they crave: the outside world. Programming will serve as an anchor for children and aid in efforts to stabilize their mental health. In addition to improving patient outcomes, the program would also directly benefit frontline providers and patient families.

Funds provided through the Common Wealth Award will underwrite the purchase of equipment to launch and sustain this program, pay for first-year plant costs and support GCV’s mission to challenge future generations to celebrate the beauty of the land and understand the gifts of nature.

Presidential with Missy Buckingham

PLAN, PREPARE, PIVOT, PUNT OR PROCEED

A Conversation with Missy Buckingham

The Garden Club of Virginia's 51st President, Missy Buckingham, concluded her term earlier in May. When she passed the proverbial gavel to incoming President Debbie Lewis, it marked the end of a presidency like no other in the history of the organization. Missy's leadership guided the GCV through a global pandemic, significant staff changes, and the introduction to Zoom and the very way the Garden Club of Virginia operates. The Journal sat down with Missy for a glimpse into the past two years.

Journal: This was a most challenging tenure as GCV President, probably like no other. Tell us a little about the challenges and some highlights.

Missy Buckingham: With the 2020 Annual Meeting held virtually and the GCV Centennial Founders Day events cancelled, I began my term as president working from home, with the Kent-Valentine House closed, no opportunity to meet in person with the new GCV leadership or committees, and soon to be faced with the resignation of our executive director and landscape architect. It was most definitely a challenging start.

But it quickly turned around. The Centennial Exhibition and Time Capsule dedication were made available virtually, and the special events and sponsor recognition were successfully rescheduled to be held post-pandemic in 2022.

Zoom and "Hootie," our Kent-Valentine House meeting owl, were discovered to be effective ways to keep the work of our committees moving forward for planning, meetings, workshops and programs. Ninety-five Zoom meetings were held in the first year alone. Had anyone even heard of "Zoom?"

The Board of Directors hired Andrea Butler as GCV executive director after an extensive five-month search process. The Restoration Committee adopted a strategic plan for moving forward.

Another significant challenge was hosting Historic Garden Week tours in 2021, while adhering to CDC standards and providing adequate recognition to our sponsors and advertisers of the 2020 canceled tour. But ultimately the outcome



was positive. There was a true collaborative effort between the member clubs, the HGW Committee, staff and GCV leadership to be able to safely host tours across the state. We received high marks for an impeccable safety record and appreciation from our 2020 sponsors and advertisers for recognition in HGW *The Magazine* and the *Guidebook*. Our members viewed it as their "coming out party!"

J: What do you regard as your three top accomplishments as GCV president?

MB: Number 1: Keeping the organizational structure of the GCV fully operational and on sound financial footing while navigating the uncertain times that

we faced. With strong Board support, not only did our GCV treasurer, Finance Committee and financial advisors handle this successfully, our membership also showed their support with increased giving to the Annual Fund and other designated funds of the GCV.

Number 2: Maintaining constant, positive and strong communication between leadership and the GCV membership while helping clubs keep their members informed and engaged, particularly during a pandemic shutdown. We accomplished this by means of a redesigned, fresh and informative *Journal*, direct member communications, *Membership News* and revitalized programs and special events

Number 3: Being willing to adapt to virtual forums or webinars when necessary. For example, the Conservation Forum 2021 and 2022 and Daffodil Day 2021, but always guiding committees to plan ahead to be able to hold successful in-person member events at Oak Spring and Rokeby Farm, a HGW Marketing meeting, Restoration Maintenance Workshop, Daffodil Day, four major presentations of restoration projects, Horticulture Field Day and a 2022 GCV Symposium.

J: Other than leading the GCV through a pandemic, a Herculean feat in and of itself, were there other unexpected twists and turns along the way? Any silver linings?

MB: The pandemic gave us the opportunity to pause, reflect and consider how, as an organization, we could face unforeseen obstacles and be willing to adapt and change

Continued on page 18

Perspectives & Debbie Lewis

HARDWORKING, PERCEPTIVE, COMPASSIONATE:

Debbie Lewis, GCV's Newly Elected President

With much excitement and fanfare, Debbie Lewis became the GCV's 52nd President at the 2022 Annual Meeting earlier this month. Debbie is a longtime member of the Garden Study Club in Martinsville and brings a wealth of real-life and GCV experience to this important role. Multitalented and hardworking, she is well poised to lead the Garden Club of Virginia for the next two years. The Journal sat down with Debbie to learn more about her background, her goals and her priorities.

Journal: Tell us a little about yourself, your history with your club and in Martinsville.

Debbie Lewis: My husband, Ben, and I moved to Martinsville, his hometown, in July of 1983. We had spent several years in Charlottesville. I was working as a Laboratory Specialist in a UVA pharmacology research lab and he was completing his residency in internal medicine at UVA. I was delighted, just two months after moving to town, to be invited to join the Garden Study Club Auxiliary. Auxiliary club members were groomed to eventually "fly up" to the "Mother Club." The meetings were entertaining, educational, inspiring and fun and, indeed, we "flew up" to join The Garden Study Club as members of the Garden Club of Virginia. Our horizons were broadened, our skills sharpened, and it wasn't long before we were all taking our turns in club leadership positions and community conservation and beautification projects. I even graduated from arranging flowers for a basement bathroom during HGW to being assigned the dining room table arrangement in a silver epergne! I'm proud of the work that we have accomplished together to make an impact in our community in Southside Virginia and the strong bonds and friendships we've built along the way.

J: What drew you to become involved in the GCV, beyond involvement with your club?

DL: I was impressed with the bright, talented and passionate women whom I met at GCV meetings and events. Their enthusiasm and commitment



was inspiring and, while making a tremendous impact across Virginia, they were also having fun! Once involved, I immediately wanted to devote my time, energy and professional skills to support and help to grow the work of the Garden Club of Virginia.

J: What leadership roles have you held within the GCV?

DL: I have had the honor and privilege of serving GCV as a member of the Board of Directors for the past six years. I was appointed as the chairman of the Development Committee in 2016 and elected as the Director at Large for District 4 and the DAL representative to the Executive Committee in 2018. In my subsequent term as GCV First Vice-President, my role included being a member of the Executive,

Finance, Development and Restoration committees. Additionally, I chaired the Executive Director Search Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee.

J: As incoming GCV president, what sort of leadership style do you bring to the "job?"

DL: I would define my leadership style as collaborative, a consensus builder. I believe it's part of my "job" to guide the organization and bring out the best in my fellow board members, committees, members and our staff. It takes the expertise and energies of many people working together to make GCV what it is.

J: What are your top priorities as GCV president?

DL: I am truly honored and humbled to have the opportunity to serve as the 52nd President of the Garden Club of Virginia as we pave our path forward. With 48 unique and dynamic GCV member clubs, the opportunities before us are exciting and inspiring. My top priorities are to work together to provide value and new opportunities to the GCV membership, to increase member engagement and recruitment, and to update our technology to serve as a valuable resource for our members.

J: If you were to describe yourself in three words, what would they be?

DL: Hardworking. Perceptive. Compassionate.

J: What's your favorite GCV restoration site?

DL: It's impossible to select a favorite, but there is one that holds a special place in my heart. As a freshman at Mary Washington College in 1973, I loved exploring

Continued on page 19



A conversation with Missy Buckingham *Continued from page 16*

long-standing practices, many times for the better. We had to navigate how to do things differently, which often resulted in more efficient and effective ways to accomplish our goals and support our GCV mission.

As far as silver linings, there were several: The Conservation Forum, that typically reached between 150 and 200 people when it was held in person, but when it was held virtually, it reached more than 2,000. Another silver lining was scaling back HGW while still having overall club and member engagement—one way or another—while following CDC guidelines and by KISS: *keep it simple, sisters.*

J: *What advice do you have for new members who are just joining their clubs?*

MB: Identify your interests, cultivate your passions and find enjoyment learning from and being with your fellow club members. Remember that you are also part of a statewide organization. Engage and participate—to learn, grow and have fun as a garden club member.

J: *What advice do you have for incoming president Debbie Lewis?*

MB: First: Expect the unexpected. Second: Trust the leadership of the GCV to help you to guide the important decisions affecting the future of our organization.

Third: Keep member engagement and enthusiasm challenging, educational and exciting.

J: *How many clubs were you able to visit in spite of the pandemic?*

MB: Because clubs were not meeting during my first year, I visited whenever and wherever I

was invited from September 2021-April 2022. This was the most fun part of my “job,” and I was delighted to show off the new GCV video. During this time, I made 16 in-person president’s presentations to 38 member clubs and also held a couple of multi-club Zooms. The tightest week of my schedule was a road trip: Tuesday-Alexandria, Wednesday-Lynchburg and Thursday-Roanoke.

J: *Did you coin any mottos or mantras throughout these past few years?*

MB: Plan, Prepare, Pivot, Punt or Proceed!

J: *What is the biggest misconception people have about GCV?*

MB: I am not sure that all are aware of the tremendous impact that the GCV has had and continues to have on the beautification, preservation and conservation of our Commonwealth. True to the theme of our Centennial, it is thanks to the GCV that Virginia is *A Landscape Saved.*

J: *What’s your favorite part of the organization?*

MB: Being able to work side-by-side with smart, civic-minded, creative individuals committed to the GCV’s mission *to celebrate the beauty of the land, conserve the gifts of nature and challenge future generations to build on this heritage.* 🌿



Debbie Lewis is GCV’s newly elected president *Continued from page 17*

Fredericksburg on my bike. Having grown up in Maryland, I was in awe of the 18th-century Georgian and Colonial architecture and lovely formal gardens that dotted my college town. The fond memory of the beautiful lawn and gardens of Kenmore has remained with me, and I am proud to be part of an organization that helped to preserve this historic gem.

J: *What’s your favorite GCV event?*

DL: With nearly two years of canceled or modified in-person GCV events, it was a long-awaited reunion as masses of passionate horticulturists and flower show enthusiasts arrived at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden for Daffodil Day 2022 at the end of March! It was a sight to behold with spectacular stems, amazing artistic designs, and phenomenal photographs. But my favorite GCV event is probably the Symposium, because it incorporates all elements of our mission packed into a two-day

extravaganza. The one in particular that stands out to me is the 2012 Symposium, *Take the Leap... To Timeless Trends*, at the Homestead. The lineup of speakers included world renowned floral arrangers, gardeners and entertaining experts. There were lovely lunches, lectures, cocktails, a concert, vendors and yoga...but it was building camaraderie across the Commonwealth that was the best!

J: *Most recently you chaired the Executive Director Search Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee. What were the outcomes?*

DL: The Search Committee planned and executed a five-month search, resulting in the successful placement of our excellent new Executive Director Andrea Butler. Andrea joined the team of dedicated GCV staff in February 2021 and hit the ground running. She brings 18 years of nonprofit leadership experience, strong communication skills, effective team management and

extensive fundraising experience to GCV.

For the past 20 months the Strategic Planning Committee has worked to create the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. We began with five areas of focus: Education, Engagement and Outreach; Fund Development; Member Services; Administration; and Governance, and we identified the goals and objectives of each. With gathered input from stakeholder think tanks, the committee developed the strategies for each area of focus. By mid-summer, with Board approval, GCV will have a new strategic plan to implement.

J: *What’s the biggest misconception people have about GCV?*

DL: Ladies in white gloves hosting tea parties. . .

J: *What advice do you have for new club members/those just getting acquainted with their clubs and GCV?*

DL: You are part of an incredible organization with nearly 3,400 other individuals across the Commonwealth. I encourage you to find a passion within your club and the Garden Club of Virginia and engage in the many opportunities available to you. Travel with your fellow club members to the Kent-Valentine House, Horticulture Field Day and the Symposium. Sign up for the Conservation Forum and Photography webinars and field trips. Visit GCV Restoration sites around the state with your family and friends to see, firsthand, the incredible impact of your hard work and commitment to Historic Garden Week. There is something for everyone. Dig in and dig deep! I promise you will experience the many exceptional rewards of being a member of the Garden Club of Virginia. I’ll see you there! 🌿



A MOST EXTRAORDINARY ANNUAL MEETING



The excitement was palpable. After two years of pandemic-related restrictions and mandates, of social distancing and masks, Three Chopt Garden Club pulled out all the stops for a most memorable Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet. Members of the Garden Club of Virginia were finally—and safely—able to celebrate. The Jefferson Hotel in Richmond was buzzing with the energy of GCV's leadership, its 48 club presidents and delegates, and committee chairs who gathered in this iconic landmark for two days of business meetings, information sharing, award presentations and, above all, fellowship. The meeting marked the end of President Missy Buckingham's two-year term as she passed the gavel to incoming President Debbie Lewis. Congratulations to GCV's 2022 medal and award recipients: Vicky Alexander (Hunting Creek GC), Massie Medal; Carol Carter (Albemarle GC), de Lacy Gray Medal; The Spotswood GC, Bessie Bocock Carter Award; and the eight recipients of the Horticulture Award of Merit. 🌿



TOP: Luncheon in the Jefferson's Rotunda.

ABOVE: Debbie Lewis, Missy Buckingham, Paula Pryke and Sybil Sylvester

FACING PAGE: A photo collage from festivities during the 102nd Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet

TOP ROW, PHOTOS L-R: Debbie Lewis, The Spotswood GC President Donna Harper, Missy Buckingham. Center: Vicky Alexander, Hunting Creek GC, Massie Medal recipient. Right: Annual Meeting Co-chairs Jakie Bowles and Ashley Wallace, Three Chopt GC

SECOND ROW, LEFT: The 2021-2022 Board of Directors. Right: Missy Buckingham; de Lacy Gray Medal recipient, Carol Carter (Albemarle GC), Debbie Lewis; Jane Edwards, Conservation Awards Chairman (The GC of Norfolk)

THIRD AND FOURTH ROWS: Club members celebrating at the Dutch treat dinner at Rockett's Landing

AT LEFT: 2021 Conservation Fellow Jordan Martin

All photos by Edie Hessberg





WITH GLAD HEARTS AND GOOD HUMOR, THREE CHOPT GARDEN CLUB, HOST OF THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING, SHARES ITS DYNAMIC 83-YEAR HISTORY.

Three Chopt Garden Club was organized by Mrs. Roger Mann and Mrs. Robert Parrish to maintain "small herbaceous borders at a relatively small cost." When these founders sought to expand the circle, they hoped each new member would "be a gardener," "like flowers," and be willing to "give and receive gardening information." Personality was valued over ability. This is still true today, though we now contribute more ambitiously to our community and work harder to preserve our environment.

Soon after the club's inception, we changed our name to commemorate the old trail blazed by Native Americans and which terminates at the

falls of the James River. The change in name also signaled a new maturity and perhaps greater ambition as the club soon accepted, from the Road Beautifying Group of Virginia, a roadside cleanup on Three Chopt Road from Patterson Avenue to Short Pump. "We would undertake to have our road namesake a fit place for the traveler who followed the trail built by the Indians," said Sudie Mann.

When we hosted the Garden Club of Virginia's annual meeting in 2010, we determined that Three Chopt Garden Club would once again improve a part of Three Chopt Road, notably where it intersected with Cary Street Road. This site, which has seen both Revolutionary and Civil War history, in recent times had become an eyesore, with a large, neglected median of weeds and wire grass, temporary yard sale notices, broken sidewalks and teetering light poles.

PHOTOS, above clockwise: Chair "cushions" created for Historic Garden Week by a Three Chopt Garden Club flower team led by Jeanette McKittrick. This garden was on the 2021 HGW Richmond tour.

L-R: Becky Anthony, current Three Chopt GC president and Veronika Walmsley, immediate past president.

Quite possibly one of the greatest moments in Historic Garden Week history, Three Chopt Garden Club member Becky White donned a bathing suit in 40-degree weather before the 2018 Richmond tour and gingerly plunged into a frigid swimming pool to make sure the arrangement was perfectly anchored and positioned.

Three Chopt Garden Club's sign at The Triangle Garden illustrating the early stages of planting. Before a recent traffic dust up, the garden, at the triangular intersection of Cary Street, Three Chopt, and River Road, proved that even the smallest landscape improvements can make big differences. Repairs are currently underway.

Working with the City of Richmond, we decided to commemorate our 70th birthday with the installation of new curbing, sidewalks, decorative lighting, handicap ramps, and a garden of crape myrtles and perennials, transforming that eyesore into a proper tribute to our Native American forebears. Now our namesake road is a fit place for travelers, carpool parents and commuters alike. Despite a drive-by "crape murder" from Virginia Power a few years ago and, very recently, a car accident toppling a telephone pole and bulldozing a tree, the triangle garden thrives after repair by our club members.

Most importantly, the success of the Historic Three Chopt Trail Garden ignited a much larger and more ambitious project to green and enhance other shameful, neglected sites in Richmond. Finding this garden so impactful, the three other Richmond GCV clubs joined forces with us to found the award-winning Capital Trees, an organization with the ambitious project to restore the urban tree canopy in our Commonwealth's capital city. The Low Line, the Low Line Green and Great Shiplock Park are among the magnificent new spaces imagined and realized by Capital Trees.

In recent years, Three Chopt Garden Club has partnered with the Virginia Treatment Center for Children (VTCC) on Richmond's Northside by creating a green healing space for pediatric patients who are being treated for a variety of mental health issues. Our volunteers helped design, choose plants and install the Arts and Crafts Garden, a therapeutic space we continue to maintain.

Three Chopt Garden Club now boasts 70 active members and 53 associates, all women who value good humor over ability. We still support our projects with funds from sales of holiday greens and wreaths, cocktail napkins, gardening aprons, anti-bottled-water tumblers, and raffle tickets for holiday house decorations. We have auctioned vacations at members' properties where we might otherwise hope to be invited anyway, held game dinners,



Three Chopt Garden Club associate members Betty Wright, Mabel Baldwin, Tina Millner, Barbara Davenport and Peggy Bice at the club's annual luncheon at the Country Club of Virginia, May, 2021.

sold art and anything else we could think of to fund our efforts.

Finally, as this history is written, we are a few days away from putting our shoulder to the wheel to get Historic Garden Week underway, as we have done happily since 1948. Armed with snips in the consoles of our SUVs, we'll cut any unclaimed plant material from deserted homesteads and vacant lots where lilacs, old roses and daffodils still bloom, from our own gardens and those of friends, and carry our own vessels to the homes of those generous souls who have

opened their homes for tours. When summer temperatures in mid-April leave us with no dogwood or daffodils, we use Scotch broom, viburnum, hellebores and peonies, and take road trips to the north for lilacs and flowering cherry, soldiering on with dirty cars, chapped hands and glad hearts.

—Louise Gilbert Freeman

Three other Richmond GCV clubs joined forces with us to found the award-winning Capital Trees, an organization with the ambitious project to restore the urban tree canopy in our Commonwealth's capital city.



Three Chopt Garden Club active members Kirsten Boyd, Brooke Wick, Kristin Mullins, Farar Wentworth, Cary Williams and Lane Sanderson at the club's annual luncheon at the Country Club of Virginia in May, 2021.



Many thanks to Tricia Garner for three years of service as HGW Chairman



THE NATION'S ONLY STATE-WIDE HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR CONTINUES TO KEEP VIRGINIA BEAUTIFUL

Historic Garden Week has three goals. As a fundraiser, it underwrites the ongoing restoration and preservation of historic public gardens in Virginia, as well as a research fellowship program in landscape architecture. As a public relations event, it promotes tourism, showcasing communities both large and small across the commonwealth.

Finally, it is the only activity shared by every member of the Garden Club of Virginia annually. Even clubs that don't host a tour each spring partner with their sister clubs to help in some meaningful way. Camaraderie and friendship happen when smart women come together to make a difference—and what a difference you make!

Tricia Garner, HGW Chair 2019-2022 🌱

Historic Garden Week would not be possible without the hard work of 3,400 GCV members, countless friends and sponsors, and this April, 128 private homeowners. For 89 years you have welcomed visitors to our beautiful state with gracious hospitality, maintaining a beloved springtime tradition. Here is a snapshot collage of the stunning floral arrangements that were created, and the fun times that members had during Historic Garden Week 2022.

Photos courtesy of Diane Ginsberg, Donna Moulton, Sandy Geiger and Terri Lowman

Thank you





On Not a Natural Wonder:

The Magic of Françoise Weeks

By Jeanette McKittrick, Three Chopt Garden Club

Photos by Theresa Bear and Ted Mishima; courtesy of Françoise Weeks



It's fair to say that I've been stalking Françoise Weeks for over a decade.

Scrolling through a floral design blog in 2011, I was intrigued by her work. My imagination was piqued when *Flower* magazine featured her woodland arrangements in a 2014 issue. From a kitchen counter laptop, one enters Françoise's fairyland: There are centerpieces fit for bacchanals in the hall of the mountain king, headdresses suitable for a garden goddess, stilettos made of lamb's ear, begonia leaves and orchids, and capes of blossoms seemingly spun from spider webs. I was smitten.

Sometime later, when arranging flowers for Historic Garden Week, the portrait of Pocahontas at the Governor's Mansion presented an opportunity to try her style. Using driftwood, columbine, hellebores, fiddleheads, mushrooms, moss and succulents, I honored the Native American princess with elements from the natural world. Imitation is the sincerest form of fan girl.

I haunted the Belgian-born designer's website, her press clippings and, eventually, her workshop offerings, which are held internationally. Finally, last fall, I had the chance to attend one. Now, you do, too.

Françoise, who has lived in Portland, Oregon, since 1977, is as delightful as her work. Sparkling with energy, a relentless curiosity, and what she calls a "stubborn" drive to devise her ingenious mechanics, she might be intimidating if she weren't so nice. A born teacher, she started off instructing middle schoolers in math and science, transferred her skills to a medical lab, then finally gave up her day job and focused entirely on botanical work for the past 25 years.

Her stunning work has opened eyes worldwide. It's been featured in publications internationally, and she's presented all over the world—in Australia, China, Sweden, England, France, Mexico and Canada—and here in the U.S.—from her studio in Portland, to Hawaii and Massachusetts, including at the American



Botanical Couture Presentation

Tuesday, September 20, 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Main Stage, Dewey Gottwald Center at the Science Museum of Virginia

Institute of Floral Designers Symposium.

"I am super, super curious," Françoise said in a recent interview as she prepared for a botanical couture fashion show at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. She takes her inspiration from European designers and her own roots. The young Françoise would find little treasures in the woods, pieces of bark and lichen, and embellish them with wildflowers as gifts for her mother. "Flowers are a very big deal in Belgium." She credits her mother with her love of gardens and the natural world. Her parents "were avid nature-lovers, and when I was a kid, we spent many summer vacations in Switzerland, hiking in the alps ... I learned by osmosis. It's a different flower culture over there."

Years later, she's back to her childhood love, albeit on a grander scale. Focusing on nature's myriad textures, including a broad range of seed pods, mosses, herbs, berries, leaves, burl, root balls, bark, succulents, mushrooms,

lichen, vegetables, grasses, branches, house plants, flowers—anything that catches her sharp eye—she creates works of woodland art. And, not content simply to assemble her finds as is, Françoise discovers worlds within worlds as she deconstructs flowers, acorns and evergreen cones, revealing unseen beauty. A carnation truly is a thing of wonder when its sepal is unfurled.

Françoise Weeks teaches us to look closely at the natural world around us and, as she does, she opens our eyes and our hearts to the garden of delights we live in—if we'll only take the time to notice. "What I love about the woodland textures arrangements is that you can make beautiful things for very little money," and far, far, less impact on the earth. She carries us back to the days of childhood wonder, when we, too, found worlds within worlds outside, and, with innocent eyes, revered those finds as much as any earthly treasure. 🌿

FRANÇOISE IN RICHMOND: 2022 GCV SEPTEMBER SYMPOSIUM

This fall, GCV members will have the opportunity to learn from Françoise on three separate occasions at the 2022 Symposium, one of which is a hands-on workshop that includes foraging with her for materials in local woodlands and will be limited to 20 lucky participants. Two presentations are scheduled at the Dewey Gottwald Center at the Science Museum of Virginia. Advance registration is required and plenty of seating is available. As Symposium details are formalized, watch for updates on the GCV website and in *Membership News*.

BOTANICAL COUTURE WORKSHOP

Sunday, Sept. 18, 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. In this specialized workshop, natural materials take their inspiration from haute couture. The first hour includes foraging in Richmond-area woodlands with Françoise, followed by three hours devoted to creating wearable botanical art with her guidance. Participants are asked to donate some of their creations for display at the Mix-it-Up cocktail party on Tuesday night. Françoise will show participants how to store and maintain their creations. Limited to 20 participants, \$200 entry fee.

Woodland Design Presentation

Tuesday, September 20, 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Main Stage, Dewey Gottwald Center at the Science Museum of Virginia



snips

NEWS FROM CLUBS & COMMITTEES

GCV DISTRICT 1

The James River Garden Club

RICHMOND

We knew that we were in for a special time when we passed the rolling hillsides filled with grazing horses on the road to Middleburg ... and the weather hit 80 degrees.

The Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club arranged a garden tour for lucky members of the James River Garden Club. The four gardens ranged from a shady woodland property on a hill to a gently manicured garden designed to bloom throughout the spring, summer and fall. It featured one of the most elaborate vegetable (and fruit) gardens some of us had ever seen, protected from all the critters by an elaborate fence and netting.

The highlight of our first day was a tour of Oak Spring Farm near Upperville, Bunny and Paul Mellon's estate which is now part of Oak Spring Garden Foundation. The property is a mecca for native plants and trees and showcases an elaborate formal garden designed by Mrs. Mellon, which she outlined with espaliered, step-over fencing. The elegant white brick main residence has an adjacent guest house where breakfast in bed was the treat for any of the Mellon's visitors. Espaliered fruit trees could be found in many areas, including the formal allée that leads to an elaborate greenhouse. All of us marveled over the pruning expertise of Oak Spring's gardeners.

A reception at Slater Run Vineyards in Upperville for our hosts introduced



The stables at Oak Spring are three rectangular wings with an open courtyard where JRGC members relaxed and enjoyed views of the property's rolling vistas. Photo by Margaret Reynolds



TOP: A luncheon table setting gets a nod of approval from a Gum Tree Farm barn resident.

ABOVE: Club members Kathryn West, Carrie Dorsey, and Mary Anne Burke enjoyed JRGC's trip to gardens in Middleburg. Photo by Margaret Reynolds

us to some delicious Virginia wines and local cheeses. The next day brought more inspiring gardens with the highlight being a tour of Gum Tree Farm, a sheep farm in Middleburg. Owner Franny Kansteiner started with three sheep and now breeds 300 for wool and lamb. Our visit couldn't have been orchestrated any better as the birth of a lamb was taking place in the field as we arrived, while other newborns were testing out their legs in the maternity ward of the barn. A delicious farm-to-table lunch was served under the eaves of their horse barn, complete with curious horses poking out of their stalls. It was a special experience in every way!

"This was a truly wonderful experience" says club member Carroll Andrews. "Not only did the trip run like clockwork, but we were all so genuinely grateful to be together again after the last several years."

We hope we may have started a trend and look forward to planning more garden visits soon.

—Carrie Dorsey

The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton

RICHMOND

The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton's annual Plant Sale was a smashing success on what turned out to be a beautiful April day. Held outside in the lovely garden of member Liz Carden, an abundance of plants were for sale, including annuals, perennials, ferns, shrubs and assorted vines. To expand shopping opportunities, several vendors were invited to participate in this important club fundraiser. Sunny Goode's "Love" line was on display, as well as Anne Poarch's Basket & Bike; Laura Stewart's handsome lifestyle brand, Porch & Hound; the charming watercolors of Megan Pratt, and the rustic birdhouses, garden tuteurs and vases from Tuckahoe Plantation. "Supply chain challenges made scouting for plants a little more difficult this year," says club member Patricia Hunter, one of the event's co-chairs, "but it all worked out, and we were lucky our plants were healthy and available." Proceeds from the sale benefit the club's community projects and help grow its endowment.

—Martha Moore



TOP: *Phlox divaricata* 'Blue Moon' was a top seller at TGCW's annual Plant Sale in April. 'Blue Moon' is the 2022 Garden Club of America Freeman Medal winner, the GCA's only medal it awards to a plant. Photo by David Stang from Wikimedia Commons

BOTTOM: TGCW's annual Plant Sale included the charming watercolors of local artist Megan Pratt. Photo courtesy of Megan Pratt Art

GCV DISTRICT 2

The Blue Ridge Garden Club

LEXINGTON

Blue Ridge Garden Club members volunteer their time at the Veterans Memorial Garden. Located on Main Street in the heart of historic Lexington, this garden is a focal point for the downtown area. In 2003, the Blue Ridge Garden Club became responsible for the garden's planting and maintenance. This garden serves the community in individual and personal ways—as a reminder of fallen patriots and loved ones and as a place of beauty, peace and quiet. Particularly during the pandemic, it was a spot for thought and reflection.

—Margaret Samdahl



BRGC member Alyson Ross planting pansies in Lexington's Veterans Memorial Garden. Photo by Margaret Samdahl

GCV DISTRICT 4

Gabriella Garden Club

DANVILLE

Gabriella Garden Club is formulating plans to beautify an area in downtown Danville in hopes of making it a welcoming community gathering place. Known as the HOME Space Plaza, as it currently houses the letters that spell out the word HOME, this downtown green space is nestled in an area of Danville's rapidly emerging River District.

These four letters were part of a larger sign, "Home of Dan River Fabrics," spelling out the name of a company which once employed over 12,000 people and has a rich history in this community. Dan River Mills was one of the largest textile mills in the South that was forced to shut down in 2004. That same year, a tornado gnarled the "D" of the iconic



Danville's HOME sign. Photo courtesy Wendy Hermann

sign, symbolizing the demise of the company and the jobs lost.

Danville residents were thrilled to see the HOME sign reemerge from storage and displayed downtown. The HOME sign has now become a symbol of Danville's efforts to rebuild itself. Currently, the HOME Space Plaza is underutilized. It is a grassy area with little landscaping and is sandwiched in between a parking lot and other buildings within the heart of Danville's downtown.

Our club envisions this to be an interactive and multifunctional space of natural beauty within its urban location. Our hope is to enlist the services of a landscape architect and develop a cohesive plan to enhance the beauty, functionality and desirability of this space. Gabriella Garden Club is confident the space can be transformed into a beautiful respite for all visitors and those who call Danville HOME to enjoy. Stay tuned as our plans unfold.

—Wendy Hermann

Roanoke Valley Garden Club

ROANOKE

Members of Roanoke Valley Garden Club are planting trees in city parks these days. This spring, six redbuds and six willow oaks replace 12 diseased sycamores that city crews removed. Club members planted eight lacebark elms in Elmwood Park to replace many of the park's large oaks; we continued our work plantings fruit trees in a northwest park and on Third Street downtown in an area full of asphalt and concrete. Roanoke City loses over 300 trees a year to disease and accidents, so our garden club saw an immediate need. Our community focus these days is to raise funds and dedicate them to planting trees.

Our spring fundraiser, *Set the Table with Janie Molster*, was a wonderful event. Janie, a highly regarded and much sought-after interior designer based in Richmond, was delightful and full

of fun. She reflected on TV shows of the 1960s, such as *I Dream of Jeannie*. That plush velvet room where Jeannie lived in her bottle and flirted with Major Nelson was a favorite and a nod to Janie's love of color and velvet.

With Janie as inspiration, more than 20 Roanoke Valley Garden Club gals decorated tables with a variety of creative themes—from miniature books to picnics, and dinner alfresco to a cookbook book club; even the artist known as Prince got his own themed table. Everyone toured the tablescapes set with flowers, linens, memorabilia, and special china as they enjoyed wine and delicious food. It was a lovely evening that brought us together to learn from one another with the added benefit of raising money. With these additional funds, Roanoke Valley is poised to continue to make significant impacts in our city.

—Katherine Knopf



Interior designer and style-maker Janie Molster presented *Set the Table* with Janie Molster, a fundraiser for Roanoke Valley Garden Club. Proceeds are earmarked for tree planting efforts in Roanoke. Photo courtesy of Janie Molster Designs

GCV DISTRICT 6

The Garden Club of Norfolk

NORFOLK

The Garden Club of Norfolk has approved \$25,000 towards its Olmsted Native Garden along the Elizabeth River Trail. Working with Norfolk Master Gardeners, Bartlett Trees, U.S. Navy, Virginia Tech extension, and City of Norfolk, all project partners, Phase 1 has been completed with the planting of a native grove next to the retention pond. Phase 2, incorporating plants to attract birds, butterflies, and other wildlife, will begin in September. Meeting programs have included the importance of native bees in the



GCV DISTRICT 6 CONTINUED



L-R: GCN members Jen Erving, Gilly Cady, Connie Kellam, Katie Van Buren, and Pam Combs visiting poolside after two years of a pandemic-induced hiatus. *Photo courtesy of The Garden Club of Norfolk.*

environment, the protection of the ocean environment in the face of offshore wind renewable energy, and a trip to Bacon's Castle and Fort Smith Plantation, GCV restoration sites.

At our May meeting we will have our annual photography show, installation of new officers, and introduction of new members.

We've enjoyed finally being able to get together after a long two years of COVID.

—Connie Kellam

The Princess Anne Garden Club

VIRGINIA BEACH
It may have been a chilly February day outside, but the frolicking and

merriment inside could not have been warmer as we celebrated the 90th anniversary of the founding of The Princess Anne Garden Club by the Hill sisters. Members dressed in 1930's attire, with feathered hats, pearls, gloves and mink stoles, all of which were popular in the day. Three of our members played the Hill sisters, who founded the club on February 5, 1932. They were "interviewed," sharing their knowledge of early club happenings and activities in a skit and speaking about their accomplishments in Princess Anne County through planting trees, gardens and wildflowers. And they expounded on their efforts to clean up roadsides by



The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore

EASTERN SHORE

The Garden Club of the Eastern Shore was a standout at the recent GCV Daffodil Show at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond. *Photo by Coni Chandler*



PAGC members (left to right) Helen Junkin, Jan Fine, and Carrie Goodman dressed up as The Hill Sisters. *Photo by Katie Hand*

hosting contests with elementary schools and county officials. Scrapbooks, archived at the Central Library, were checked out for our members to view and learn more about the Hill sisters' many beautification efforts.

The Hill family, originally from Portsmouth, bought Sea Breeze Farm on the Lynnhaven River, which was a 208-acre potato farm. Their city home in Portsmouth had a very small garden, so the Hills' summer and weekend home afforded them the opportunity not only to expand their garden but also to sharpen their gardening skills. The Hills grew many native plants, which became so prolific that they were able to share cuttings with neighbors and friends throughout the area. For several years, as their gardens flourished, they rented a Pullman Car from the railroad and loaded it with specimens to proudly exhibit in New York City flower shows. In the early days of World War II, because of successful fundraising efforts, the Princess Anne Garden Club was given a special citation from the U.S. Treasury Department for raising over \$60,000 to support the War Bond effort.

The Hill sisters were ahead of their time, so it was only fitting that we celebrate their hard work and dedication to the Virginia Beach area, a tradition the Princess Anne Garden Club proudly continues today. Thank you to the Hill sisters who paved the way for all of us! And Happy 90th Anniversary!

—Katie Hand



OLIVIA SMITH:

GCV's 2022 Conservation & Environmental Fellow

Olivia Smith, a master's degree candidate in biology at William & Mary, has been selected as the 2022 GCV Conservation & Environmental Studies Fellow. Her project, "Towards an Understanding of Restoring Eastern Coastal Plain Forests," will include research using the 960-acre Eastern Coastal Plain Research Forest on the William & Mary campus as her laboratory—first, for studying damage to the forest from deer and other ecological elements and, second, to study what can be learned from this site about forest regeneration.

Growing up in Maplewood, New Jersey, Smith found that science was always her favorite subject in school. She attended Oberlin College in Ohio, originally to pursue a medical career. But, she says, "once I took a biology course in genetics, evolution, and ecology, I knew it was the area I wanted to focus on." At Oberlin she was awarded a research fellowship—her first experience in undergraduate research. "I have always had an interest in participating in field work within biology," she says. "I focused on the threat of invasive species since they are the second largest threat to forest environments after habitat destruction." Smith won highest honors for her senior thesis and also had time to be a two-sport varsity athlete in soccer and track and field.

Her research project for the GCV Fellowship comes at a time of significant global threats to biodiversity through climate

change, habitat loss, and invasive species. As "an example of the problem sweeping natural areas and gardens across Virginia and other regions of the U.S., the [William & Mary] lost 196 native plant species (16.9 percent) in its 960-acre Eastern Coastal Plain Research Forest, largely within the last 10-20 years," Smith noted in her fellowship proposal. "Moreover, most of the populations of remaining species are vastly reduced such that historically frequent and common plants are now rare. This includes both herbaceous plants as well as woody vegetation contributing to the understory. In addition, dominant tree species are not regenerating."

One of the causes of local plant population extinctions is thought to be the overabundance of deer. To address this part of the problem, in 2014 William & Mary erected deer exclosures and paired controls in a long-term experiment in the College Woods to understand the impact of deer. The data from that experiment suggests that vegetation is struggling to return and, if it does, it's not reaching normal size. While many deer exclosure studies have been conducted, the literature does not sufficiently address the factors by which the vegetation can return.

Among the questions Olivia will explore are: What are the fates of newly recruited seeds? Will there be enough light for germination? Has the loss of vegetation affected critical soil parameters needed for germination and continued growth? Can a return of native species occur in a new landscape of invasive species? Olivia will build on the longitudinal work done at William & Mary, add two more years of data collection, synthesize the six-year exclosure experiment, and begin to determine the abiotic and biotic factors affecting the return of vegetation. Presumably the College Woods situation is occurring in similar forest systems elsewhere which may mean her findings will have broad application.

Smith's objective is to work with public agencies on land



Photos of Olivia Smith in the field courtesy of Olivia Smith

management in the Mid-Atlantic region, and she believes a graduate degree in biology will help her enter the field, specifically in forest management.

One of the goals of Conservation & Environmental Fellowship program is to further the mission of the GCV by encouraging young people to choose careers in the fields of conservation and environmental protection. Since 2015, the Garden Club of Virginia has supported eight fellows. Smith, the newest member of this distinguished group, demonstrates the effectiveness of the Conservation & Environmental Fellowship program.

—Anne Marshall, Garden Club of Gloucester, Co-Chair, Conservation & Environmental Fellowship Subcommittee of the Conservation and Beautification Committee



STAY TUNED for an update in an upcoming issue of the *Journal* on the work of Olivia Smith as well as Jordan Martin, the GCV's 2021 Conservation & Environmental Fellow, whose work concluded this spring.



IN MEMORIAM

The Garden Club of Virginia mourns the passing of the following members who died in 2021 through April 1, 2022:

ALBEMARLE GARDEN CLUB

Linda Knickerbocker Ford
Sarah Morton Swindell Rinehart (Sally)

THE AUGUSTA GARDEN CLUB

Linda Roller Livick

THE BLUE RIDGE GARDEN CLUB

Margery Beemer Couper
Susan Duff Van Leer (Sue)

THE BOXWOOD GARDEN CLUB

Dorothy Edwards Crenshaw Cronk (Dotty)
Barbara L'Orange Catlett (former Massie Medal award recipient)

THE CHARLOTTESVILLE GARDEN CLUB

Achsah Easter Henderson
Zan Sloan Short

THE GARDEN CLUB OF DANVILLE

Paula Reeves Lea (Sue)

THE GARDEN CLUB OF THE EASTERN SHORE

Anne M. Mason
Evelyn Henderson Nock
Mary Hamilton Stuart

GABRIELLA GARDEN CLUB

Kathryn Elizabeth Benton Wyatt (Nappy)

THE GARDEN STUDY CLUB

Carol Arey Deaton

THE GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Wanda Ann Buckner Garrett
Cornelia Chalkley Kittler (Connie)
Reba Robinson McVey
Elizabeth Stribling White (Betty)

THE HAMPTON ROADS GARDEN CLUB

Janice Pender Mattern (Jan)
Mary Randolph Waddill (Ranny)

THE HUNTING CREEK GARDEN CLUB

Elizabeth Porter Sibold (Lib)

THE HUNTINGTON GARDEN CLUB

Mary Sherwood Holt

THE LITTLE GARDEN CLUB OF WINCHESTER

Anne Covell O'Donnell

THE MARTINSVILLE GARDEN CLUB

Cynthia Moore Frith (Cindy)

THE GARDEN CLUB OF THE NORTHERN NECK

Patricia Rodman King (Tish)
William Tayloe Murphy, Jr. (honorary member and husband of former GCV president Helen Murphy)
Dianne Nunnally Thorn

THE PRINCESS ANNE GARDEN CLUB

Geraldine Frances Osborne Molloy (Jerrie)

THE RAPPAHANNOCK VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Barbara Brooks Forbush (Jinxie)
Barbara Pratt Willis

RIVANNA GARDEN CLUB

Mary Ann Miller
Patricia Ballou Trevillian (Patsy)

ROANOKE VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Colleen Carroll Hamlin
Lilian Gorham Brown Hagan (Lil)

THE SPOTSWOOD GARDEN CLUB

Barbara Tucker Wheatley

THREE CHOPT GARDEN CLUB

Jennifer Ryan Ball

THE TUCKAHOE GARDEN CLUB OF WESTHAMPTON

Irene Rose Owen
Laura Saunders Spratley (Laurie)

THE VIRGINIA BEACH GARDEN CLUB

Margaret Sears Mordecai (Peggy)

In Memoriams lists the names of Garden Club of Virginia members who died in 2021 through April 1, 2022. The list is compiled from names submitted by club presidents. To ensure deceased members are acknowledged in the *Journal*, please forward their full name (first name, nickname, maiden name, last name) and club name to journal@gcvirginia.org.

GCV CALENDAR

ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CHECK THE GCV CALENDAR ONLINE FOR CURRENT INFORMATION AND UPDATES.



SAVE THE DATES

2022

June 8 | President's Day, Kent Valentine House, Richmond

June 14 | Lilies in Bloom, Fredericksburg

June 22-23 | HGW Boot Camp, Kent Valentine House, Richmond

Sept 20-21 | Symposium 2022, Science Museum of Virginia, Richmond

Oct 18-20 | GCV Board of Governors, Roanoke

Nov 3 | Conservation Forum

2023

April 15-22, 2023 | Historic Garden Week

May 16-18 | GCV Annual Meeting, Winchester

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

Featuring the work of GCV artists on the cover of the *Journal* is a long-standing and much anticipated tradition. Our issues mirror the seasons—spring, summer, fall, winter—and cover art corresponds to those seasons accordingly. If you'd like your artwork to be considered, please email high-resolution jpg files to journal@gcvirginia.org.



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