

Garden Dirt

The Official Newsletter of the Rappahannock Garden Club

July 2015



Jon Quigley (center) from the Chesapeake Bay Oyster Company presented a very interesting program on oyster farming at RGC's June meeting. He was very warmly welcomed by RGC members Jo Crichton (left) and Aleta Hoffman (right). Several members were joined by their husbands for the presentation and lunch at the lovely Piankatank Golf Course. In addition to information on current oyster farming techniques and equipment, Mr. Quigley described the history of oyster production in the Chesapeake Bay.

Workshop Scheduled for July 9 Meeting

Don't forget that Jenny Boyenga will be leading a design workshop at the July meeting (in preparation for the September Small/Standard Flower Show).

Members are asked to consult their Yearbooks for additional information regarding Themes. Bring a container for your design, as well as plant materials, floral snips, floral tape and wire; in addition, please bring a large plastic trash bag for debris removal.

Members are also reminded to bring a "brown bag lunch." Beverages and light desserts will be provided.

Note that Horticulture Exhibits are limited to one entry/person. There will be no Artistic Design entries.

President's Corner from RGC President Cathie Elliott

I promised myself that after this particularly cold, nasty winter that I would never complain about our hot, humid, hazy days in the Northern Neck. But, that said...it's unseasonably hot, humid and hazy! I'd like to officially add "steamy" to that description as well. I guess it's just human nature to complain about something (in this case, the weather). I wouldn't change anything about it though. I love living in (on) the Northern Neck.

Soon we will be celebrating the 4th of July, a federal holiday in the U.S. commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from Great Britain. Independence Day is commonly associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, picnics and family reunions. Kilmarnock's Main Street will soon be decorated with flags and abuzz with visitors to the Northern Neck. Celebrations will occur more frequently. It's simply a wonderful time of the year.

On June 16, I attended the Kilmarnock Garden Club's fundraiser featuring floral designer Virgil Winslow. The room was packed with ladies from all over the area. I sat with a group of women from a garden club in Gloucester. Virgil Winslow, the featured designer, was terrific.

RGC is busy as well. In July, we will have a workshop to practice the designs that have been selected for our Small/Standard Flower Show in September. Look at your Yearbook and come prepared to

participate. Jenny Boyenga will lead the workshop. We should have a lot of fun. Also, at the July meeting, bring your one favorite "Best in Show" horticulture or food specimen. Showcase the best of the best from your gardens.

Flower Show School, Course II, is being held on August 24 through 27 at The Kirkley Hotel and Conference Center in Lynchburg. Sue Kirkman will teach the one-day horticulture section showcasing Heirloom Tomatoes, Peppers and Echinacea. Frances Thrash will teach the Flower Show Procedure and Design section of the course in which she will introduce American Creative Design having minor to moderate abstraction. Both ladies are well credentialed and come highly recommended. You can come for all or part of the course. Even if you take the entire course, you do not have to take the exam if you choose not to. Come for one day, two days or the whole course. Details about Course II are in your Old Dominion Gardener, Summer 2015 issue, pages 11 to 13. I have signed up for the full course. I hope you will join me!! Course I was extremely informative.

So many fun things going on this time of the year. I just love it. I hope to see you at the July workshop.

— Cathie



2015 Calendar of Events

July 9	Rappahannock Garden Club meeting
August 13	Rappahannock Garden Club meeting
August 22	Rain Barrel Workshop, Belle Isle
Aug. 24-27	Flower Show School II, Lynchburg
August 31	Piedmont District Fall Board Meeting, Richmond
Sept. 10	RGC Small/Standard Flower Show & Country Store fundraiser
Oct. 8	Rappahannock Garden Club meeting
Nov. 12	RGC meeting
Dec. 11	RGC Christmas luncheon, awards, induction ceremony; Tides Inn, Irvington.

2016 Calendar of Events

February 8	Piedmont District Winter Board Meeting
March 13-15	South Atlantic Region Convention, Raleigh, NC
April 4	Piedmont District Spring Meeting, Richmond
April 26-27	VA Federal of Garden Clubs Convention

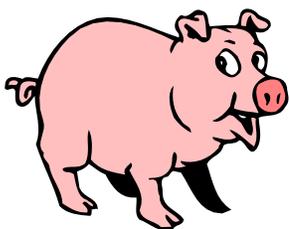
See You in September — at RGC's Country Fair Small/Standard Flower Show And Barbeque Luncheon

RGC's Small/Standard Flower Show, scheduled for Thursday, September 10 at Grace House, is FREE and is open to the public. Please see the Flower Show Schedule that was e-mailed on June 22.

Horticulture entries are limited to three/member. Design entries are limited to one entry per member per class on a first-come basis.

A Barbeque Luncheon will also be available for those who purchase a ticket for lunch, featuring a pulled pork barbeque sandwich, freshly made coleslaw, mouth-watering baked beans and a brownie!

The cost is \$10/ticket; ticket sales will be limited to 100.



There will be sign-up sheets at the July meeting for members who are willing to provide shredded cabbage and/or brownies.

Support your club so that your club may support your community!

Minutes from RGC's June 11 Meeting

President Cathie Elliott welcomed everyone to the Piankatank Golf Club for the luncheon and meeting. Cheryl Brown Davis blessed the food. The fourth meeting of 2015 of the Rappahannock Garden Club was called to order.

Judy Ripley introduced our speaker, Jon Quigley, of the Chesapeake Bay Oyster Company. He presented a wonderful and informative program on oysters and oyster farming.

President Elliott welcomed the following members' husbands to the meeting: Dick Wilson, Matt Wood, Al Burgess and Jim Simpson.

The May minutes were reviewed. Margaret Curtis motioned to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Judy Ripley. All approved.

Judy Ripley announced that the July Meeting will be a workshop presented by Jenny Boyenga. Members can create a design in preparation for the upcoming September Small/Standard Flower Show or any design they choose. Members are requested to bring plant material, trash bag and a brown bag lunch. Hostesses will provide desserts and beverages.

Cathie Elliott reminded members that tickets (\$10) for the BBQ Plate will be available at the July meeting. The BBQ Plate includes Famous John's barbecue, coleslaw, baked beans, brownie and beverage.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jacobs
Recording Secretary

Rappahannock Garden Club 2014-2015 Officers

President:	Cathie Elliott
First Vice President:	Judy Ripley
Second Vice President:	Margie Redlin
Recording Secretary:	Mary Jacobs
Treasurer:	Bonnie Schaschek
Corresponding Secretary:	Jan Litsinger
Historian:	Ann Gray Wood
Chaplain:	Cheryl Brown Davis
Parliamentarian:	Anne Skerrett

Executive Board Meeting Minutes of June 3

The meeting was brought to order at 1:35 p.m. by Cathie Elliott, President. The meeting attendees were: Cathie Elliott, Mary Jacobs, Anne Skerrett, Anne O'Bryant, Bonnie Schaschek, Deborah Brooks, Ann Gray Wood, Margie Redlin, Anne Warner, Marty Wilson and Cathie Ward. For a complete list of attendees and non-attendees, as well as their respective positions, see the lists below.

Minutes of the January 2015 RGC Executive Board were reviewed. Anne Skerrett made a motion to approve the minutes and Marty Wilson seconded the motion. All approved.

Treasurer Bonnie Schaschek reviewed the budget proposed by the Finance Committee. A motion was made by Deborah Brooks and seconded by Anne Skerrett to add \$50 for the Reedville Museum as a Special Community Event. Everyone approved with the exception of two members. The budget for the Special Community Events was changed to \$670 from \$620 to reflect the addition of the Reedville project.

A second motion was made to reduce the amount for maintenance of the Blue Star Memorial from \$100 to \$50. The motion was seconded; all members approved with the exception of one member.

President Elliott presented a request from the Northern Neck Boys and Girls Club to fund one of two field trips to either the Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond or the Norfolk Zoo/Botanical Garden. The members recommended that non-profit requests must be submitted to the Board for review as a grant proposal. The budget was fixed at \$50 for 2015/2016 for the Boys and Girls Club.

Other Business: Marty Wilson requested that we recycle the plastic plates used for luncheons. Members and hostesses will be reminded to save plastic plates for Marty.

The next board meeting will be in October, with the date of the meeting to be determined.

Bonnie motioned to approve the budget with the changes that were voted on. The motion was seconded; all approved.

Cathie called the meeting to a close. Bonnie Schaschek made a motion to conclude the meeting; Cathie Elliott seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jacobs
Recording Secretary

Present – June 3, 2015

Cathie Elliott – President
Deborah Brooks – Awards Chair and Artistic Design Committee
Mary Jacobs – Recording Secretary and Conservation Committee
Anne O'Bryant – Youth Chair – Nature Camp; Artistic Design Chair
Bonnie Schaschek – Horticulture & Food Chair; Treasurer;
Conservation Committee
Margie Redlin – 2nd VP and Yearbook; Publicity Chair
Anne Skerrett – Parliamentarian and Artistic Design Committee
Cathie Ward – NN Free Health Clinic Chair; Conservation Committee
Anne Warner – Newsletter Chair; Publicity Committee
Ann Gray Wood – Historian, Membership Co-Chair
Marty Wilson – Hostess Chair

Not Present

Judy Ripley – 1st VP and Program Chair; Publicity Committee
Jenny Boyenga – Judges Chair
Ann Burgess – Past President
Cheryl Brown Davis – Chaplain
Susan Edmonds – Membership Co-Chair
Jan Litsinger – Corresponding Secretary
Karen Rosenfeld – Flower Power Chair

Committee Reports

Blue Star Memorial: The Blue Star Memorial is weeded, edged and planted with 32 gold marigolds. With temperatures in the 90's, the Blue Star Memorial Committee requests that members driving through Lancaster Courthouse take a gallon or two of rain water for the garden.

— submitted by Judy Ripley

Membership:

Members as of June 16, 2015:

43 Active
9 Associate
14 Emeritus
66 Total (52 dues paying)

Change in membership status: Jenny Boyenga is returning to Active status.

New Member Orientation: Orientation for new(er) members was held June 16 at the home of Ann Gray Wood. Attending were Ann Gray Wood and Susan Edmonds (Membership Committee Co-Chairs), Cathie Elliott (President), Bonnie Schaschek (Horticulture Committee Chair) and new members Cheryl Brown Davis, Tami McCauley, Jo Manson, Kaye Simpson and Carol Clark. Each member spoke briefly about her gardening background and move to the area. Prior to the meeting, members completed an open book quiz focused on navigating the yearbook. Committees were discussed. Bonnie presented a mini-lesson in displaying horticulture and Susan spoke briefly about design. Various reference materials were on display to assist the new members. Orientation provides a time for the newer members to bond and ask questions about horticulture and design and other matters pertaining to Rappahannock Garden Club — but mainly horticulture and design! Thanks to all involved and welcome to a group of very accomplished and enthusiastic ladies!

— submitted by Susan Edmonds



Ann Gray Wood was the gracious hostess for a "New Member Orientation" gathering in June. Pictured on the front row (from left) are Membership Committee Co-chair Susan Edmonds; Horticulture Chair Bonnie Schaschek; and, new member Cheryl Brown Davis. Pictured on the back row (from left) are new members Carol Clark and Kaye Simpson; Membership Committee Co-chair (and hostess) Ann Gray Wood; and, new members Jo Manson and Tami McCauley. Thank you, Ann Gray, Susan and Bonnie, for presenting an informative introduction to these members. And thank you, new members, for your active participation in RGC activities!

Water Conservation (submitted by Mary Jacobs)

Water is not a limitless resource. Water has become a critical concern for many communities. Summer is an especially important time to save water. Outdoor water use increases residential consumption in June, July, August and September. These tips will show you ways to use water more efficiently outdoors, save money -- and help lower garden maintenance, too!

WATERING YOUR LAWN

TIMING IS CRITICAL! Watering your lawn mid-day will result in a high rate of evaporation and sunburned grass. Roots can maintain plenty of moisture even after several days without rain. Before watering, look for signs that it's needed, such as patchy areas, a general change in color or footprints that remain in the grass long after being made.

Frequent light watering can actually weaken your lawn by encouraging shallow roots that are less tolerant of dry periods and more susceptible to insect damage. Wet grass can also burn in the hot sun and is vulnerable to disease from mildew and fungus. Test your soil for dryness by digging your finger below the surface of the soil. Water only when the soil is dry to a depth of 1 1/2 inches. When watering, check to see that water soaks down 3-4 inches. This encourages deep root growth.

GIVE YOUR LAWN A REST

If your lawn "fades" in the summer, don't panic. Grass becomes naturally dormant during hot, dry periods. It will revive quickly after a good rainfall or when the weather turns cooler.

- One inch of water a week (rain plus supplemental watering) should be plenty. After heavy rains, you may not need to water for 10-14 days.

- Water very early in the morning.
- Never water when it's windy, rainy or very hot.
- Raise the blade level of your mower to 2 - 3 inches or more. Longer grass retains more moisture because it shades the roots. It encourages deeper rooting, requires less fertilizer and competes better against weeds.
- Never water faster than the soil can absorb it. Avoid puddling and run-off.
- Be sure your hose has a shut-off nozzle. Hoses without a nozzle can spout 10 gallons or more per minute.
- If you have an automatic sprinkler system, make sure the timer or "controller" is set to water each landscape zone efficiently. Program the controller to operate according to the watering needs of your lawn or garden. Better still, install a rain sensor or soil moisture sensor that turns the system off if it's raining or if moisture is present in the soil.
- Do not apply fertilizer in the summer. New growth requires more water. Apply in early spring and/or fall.
- Aerate your soil in April, September or October to aid water absorption and retention.

Hope these are helpful tips to use water more efficiently outdoors. Look for more tips on conserving water in next month's [Garden Dirt!](#)



Hard to believe that this picture was actually taken at an RGC meeting! Several men joined their wives for the June RGC oyster farming program at Piankatank Golf Club. Pictured (front row) are Dick and Marty Wilson. In the back row are Matt Wood (Ann Gray's husband) and Al Burgess (Debbie's husband). Marty was included in the photo to lend some credibility to the claim that this photo was, in fact, snapped at an RGC meeting.

Memorable Gardening Quotes

Flowers are not made by sighing "Oh, how beautiful," and sitting in the shade. ~ Rudyard Kipling

Gardening is cheaper than therapy and you get tomatoes. ~ Author Unknown

Gardening is a matter of your enthusiasm holding up until your back gets used to it. ~ Author Unknown

In order to live off a garden, you have to practically live in it. ~ Frank McKinney Hubbard

I have never had so many good ideas day after day as when I worked in the garden. ~ John Erskine

When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant. ~ Author Unknown

My Partner and Inspiration in Gardening, My Husband (submitted by Cheryl Brown Davis)

My husband, Bill, has been my inspiration and guide through the gardening journey since we married in 2002. All I know about any type of gardening has been through his patience and strength and wisdom and experience that he has gained throughout his lifetime.

We both grew up in Richmond, and my mother was NOT a gardener, but Bill's maternal grandparents owned a farm in Prince Edward County so his summers were spent helping his family with plowing land, tobacco and vegetable gardening, and chickens. From his early twenties, he grew his own vegetables and flowers and was a coach and athletic director at the same time.

Since our marriage, we have planted gardens together, me the rototilling, he the planting, the weeding and harvesting together, and he does all of the canning. Even in 2004, six weeks after Bill suffered a major stroke, we planted potatoes together at Woodberry Forest School, where we were living.

In that same year, we bought 7 acres of land on the water in Northumberland County, built our home in 2005 and started our first garden in 2006. We maintain an herb garden, a 50' x 50' vegetable garden, two potato fields and a root vegetable garden, all in our Northern Neck soil! I started a 50' x 75' "all white" garden over our drain fields, just to improve a VERY ugly area, and we also maintain our 20' x 100' peony and iris garden.

Our gardens produce everything from winter and summer squash, cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes to eggplant, cabbage, broccoli, beans, kale, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts.

Needless to say, we are lucky to have chosen to plant mostly perennials. We don't have to do all of this work, but my partner has taught me so much about working hard and being responsible to the land we love. And he is my hero.



Cheryl and Bill's garden represents a joint effort.



The produce generated is abundant — and colorful!



The fruit of their labor is enjoyed year-round.

Horticulture (submitted by Bonnie Schaschek)

"When the world wearies and society fails to satisfy, there is always the garden." - Minnie Aumonier

To Do's:

- The transition into summer brings a change in gardening chores. Activities usually slow down as the temperature continues to climb. July is often very hot and humid, so don't start a lot of new garden projects. There are always maintenance chores to do!
- The best time to do any kind of gardening or maintenance is in early morning (when it is not so hot) or late in the day. Watch the heat, dress coolly, take frequent breaks, have plenty of water on hand and drink frequently.
- Proper watering is essential to keep plants healthy. The main rule of thumb is to water deeply and as infrequently as possible, as opposed to frequent, light sprinklings.
- July and August is the best time to treat for white grubs, if there is a problem.
- Mulch to conserve soil moisture with paper, plastic, sawdust or other recommended materials.
- Stake tall-growing flowering plants.
- Midsummer plantings of beets, bush beans, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, lettuce, kale, and peas will provide fall and winter crops.
- Dig spring bulbs when tops have died down; divide and store or replant.
- Begin to monitor for early and late blight on tomatoes.
- Perennial and biennial plants can be started from seed sown directly into the garden this month or next.
- If your annuals have died off, pull them out and add them to the compost pile.
- To produce the largest Dahlia flowers (especially 'Dinner plate' Dahlias), the main stems should be kept free of side shoots, allowing only the main terminal bud to develop. Be sure to provide adequate support to prevent wind damage.
- Bearded Iris can be divided and replanted. Discard all shriveled and diseased parts.
- Aerate and moisten compost pile to speed decomposition.

Winners in the Unauthorized, Unofficial Photo Contest Are ...



Anne Hecht won a Blue Ribbon for her SENSATIONAL Oak Leaf Hydrangea (above). Note the oak-like leaves!



Combining her impressive horticulture and photography skills, Deborah Brooks was awarded a Blue Ribbon for the Night Blooming Cereus pictured above.



You won't believe it! Another Blue Ribbon winner! This time, it's Judy Ripley's lovely Euphorbia entry (above).



Your humble editor, Anne Warner (who also happened to be the only judge for this unauthorized, unofficial photo contest) awarded herself a Blue Ribbon for this Asiatic Lily (left).



Jo Manson's healthy hydrangeas, Blue Ribbon winners for sure, benefit from the attention of bumblebee visitors to her gardens.



Oh, my goodness! Yet another Blue Ribbon winner! Kaye Simpson's immaculate Plumeria (above) shows stunning color and unblemished leaves.

Design Entries in the Unauthorized, Unofficial Photo Contest Display Creativity



Judy Ripley's Blue Ribbon winner in Design is this lovely lady sporting a decorative hat. Judy didn't actually create this design. It was an entry in the Philadelphia Flower Show. But Judy DID take the picture, so we're giving her a Blue Ribbon!

"Paula's Garden" is the title of this entry submitted by Jan Litsinger. We don't know who Paula is, or where her garden is located, but it is, nevertheless, a Blue Ribbon winner.



"Best in Show" in the First (and, likely, ONLY) Unauthorized, Unofficial Photo Contest is (drum roll please) Deborah Brooks, for this very humorous, colorful, creative entry. Best wishes to all for a GLORIOUS Fourth of July!

