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President's Message

Dear Garden Club of New Jersey Members,

These last several months certainly have forced us to be more creative as it has upended plans we had in place as we were dealing with a new normal that the world has not experienced since the 1918 Spanish Flu. My President's Theme, "Paths to Discovery through Outdoor Living Centers," is metamorphosing yet again with much more to follow as we adapt. The good news for all who know me, is that when confronted with a roadblock, I am even more determined to go around it or over it until something better is afoot. Your Garden Club of New Jersey Board has been able to get so much more done as we stayed safe in our own homes and gardens. I will be briefly enumerating these amazing developments to you as we move into the autumn. We will continue to socially distance and follow all recommendations until a vaccine is developed that is readily available to everyone.

The cancelation of our June 4, 2020 Annual Meeting, "Pollinators on Parade", is a prime example of making lemonade out of lemons. We had been prepared to invite Senator Christopher "Kip" Bateman and Senator Linda R. Greenstein from the New Jersey State Legislature to be our special guests at the meeting. They are the Co-Sponsors of Senate Bill S92, which seeks to "Authorize issuance of Protect Pollinators license plates." The bill text reads in part that the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission shall issue Protect Pollinators license plates displaying "appropriate words or a slogan and an emblem representing one or more animal pollinators native to New Jersey." It is appropriate that the license plate should include all three of New Jersey's Official State Pollinators: the Goldfinch, the Honeybee and the Black Swallowtail Butterfly.

Please check out the directions of how to reach out to your local legislators under the “Environment in the Club Highlights” section of our new website and request your local legislators to be sponsors and to include the three Official State Pollinators on the license plate.

In June, it was my honor to award the Presidential Citation to ten deserving recipients from the GCNJ Board. The ceremony would have been part of our morning agenda at the June 4th Annual Meeting but it was accomplished at our first GCNJ Board Virtual Zoom meeting held on June 22, 2020, from the comfort of our own homes with forty-four members in attendance. The Presidential Citation is the highest accolade to be awarded to GCNJ members at the discretion of each GCNJ President. It was my honor to award this certificate to the following GCNJ Board members in alphabetical order: Onnolee Allieri, Jane Bianco, Diana Dove, Chris Endris, Teddie Falcone, Diana Kazazis, Ruth Korn, Bob Markey, Peggy Morrissey and Ellen Preissler. These outstanding garden club members have continually gone above and beyond their job descriptions and we are privileged to have their talents and devotion to the GCNJ. You will see examples of that dedication in our new website which is available at www.gardenclubofnewjersey.com. Please check it out as we have made the website a joy to view, with many new surprises.

Enjoy each and every day, while staying safe!

Onward and Upward!

Stay Strong!

Jeannie Geremia,
GCNJ President
jgeremia42@gmail.com



Upcoming Events



August 12, 19 and September 2, 2020: In cooperation with Rutgers, the Garden Club of New Jersey presents the Home Gardening School. We are offering a series of one-hour online workshops so you can learn new gardening skills from the comfort and safety of your own home. Growing herbs, flowers, vegetables, and fruit has become increasingly important in 2020 for both mental and physical health. Whether you are just starting or expanding your planting prowess, our [Home Gardeners School @Home Edition](#) is here to help.

September 1, 2020: Districts 1, 2, 3 Small Standard Flower Show entitled "Following in Her Footsteps" is **postponed to a future date TBD**. Contact Linda Westcott at lwescott6@gmail.com for more information.

September 11-12, 2020: Garden Club of Montclair's Design Specialty Standard Flower Show at Van Vleck House is **postponed to a future date in September 2021**. Contact Florence Leyssenne for further information at florenceleyssene@gmail.com.

September 14, 2020: GCNJ State Board Meeting will be held **virtually** 10-12 AM.

September 16-18, 2020: Flower Show School, Course IV is **postponed**. See more information on page 4.

September 23, 2020: NGC Board Meeting in Fargo, ND has been **cancelled**.

October 5, 2020: GCNJ State Board Meeting will be held **virtually** 10-12 AM.

October 6, 7 & 9 2020: Gardening Study School, Course III, Series IX will be held **virtually**. **Dates TBD**. Watch for updates on GCNJ website.

October 14-15, 2020: GCNJ Symposium at Holiday Inn/National Conference Center in East Windsor, NJ has been **cancelled**. Contact Cecelia Millea at cmillea@msn.com for further information.

October 26, 2020: Fall Conference and Presidents' Day at the Bridgewater Marriott has been **cancelled and a virtual conference will be held with date TBD**.

November 9, 2020: GCNJ State Board Meeting will be held **virtually** 10-12 AM.

January 25, 2021: GCNJ State Board Meeting will be held **virtually** 10-12 AM.

Flower Show School



In an effort to mitigate the COVID-19 risk to our members and to follow State, National and Rutgers Guidelines about group gatherings, we have decided to postpone the Flower Show School, Course IV, which was scheduled for September 16 and 17, 2020 (exam on the 18th). We will be monitoring this constantly changing environment and make every effort to reschedule Flower Show School Courses III and IV as soon as it is appropriate.

Please note that as of April 1, 2020, due to cancellations of Flower Show Schools/Flower Shows, NGC has extended many of the requirements and has implemented the following extensions:

- Student Judge requirements for judging NGC Flower Shows are the same as Accredited Judges: 6 classes including at least one class in horticulture, one class in design and four classes in any of the five divisions, except Photography.
- If in 2020 a Student Judge is approaching the seven-year time frame limit in which they must complete all the requirements to become an Accredited Judge, they will now receive an extension until Dec. 31, 2021.
- Accredited Judges whose "Good Standing" Date expires in 2020, will now be extended to Dec. 31, 2021.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing everyone in the future. In the meantime, stay safe and be well.

Gail Bassolino
GCNJ FSS Chair
cbassolino@aol.com

973-650-9783

Impact of GCNJ's Environmental Advocacy

.....and What it Means for You



**"We pledge to protect and conserve our natural resources of Planet Earth
and to promote education so that we may become
caretakers (stewards) of our air, water, forest, land and wildlife."
(Conservation Pledge of National Garden Club)**

The GCNJ's Environmental Committee's mission is to educate and keep our members informed about a variety of environmental issues. The committee relies on input from our Executive Board, suggestions from environmental experts and guidance from the conservation pledge of our "parent" club, The National Garden Club. With these excellent advisors, the committee feels confident sharing environmental updates with our local garden club members. For those of you who might be interested, there is additional information on the GCNJ's fabulous new website.

To date, the Garden Club of New Jersey has a long and illustrious history of civic activism and environmental advocacy ...

- 1925 - Fought the destructive pest, the Tent Caterpillar
- 1929 - Endorsed a Bill in the State Assembly to restrict billboards along highways
- 1935 - Advocated the designation of Goldfinch as New Jersey's State Bird
- 1948 - Helped establish Greenbrook Sanctuary overlooking the Palisades
- 1950 - Advocated the designation of Red Oak Tree as New Jersey's State Tree
- 1955 - Aided in the preservation of Mettler's Woods, a 136-acre tract
- 1960 - Fought a proposed jetport and preserved The Great Swamp for wildlife
- 1964 - Funded Scholarships to the New Jersey School of Conservation
- 1971 - Held first Environmental Conference at Rutgers University
- 1986 - Protested plans to commercially develop Rutgers Gardens
- 1992 - Protested expansion of Atlantic City Airport to protect Pine Barrens
- 2009 - Declared April as GCNJ Environmental Awareness Month
- 2016 - Advocated designation of Black Swallowtail as New Jersey's State Butterfly

With almost 100 years of GCNJ activism behind us, we too can make a difference going forward. It is your right to advocate for the environment and this right is protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution. That said, please remember to do a little research, know your facts and stress policy, not politics, when you reach out to your legislator.



GCNJ Green Crusade 1925-1965

If you would like, there are many ways to contact NJ Legislators directly ... send a letter by email, postal service, or fax. Even a phone call will get your opinion tallied. Interestingly, many legislators believe that a letter from a constituent represents not only the opinion of the writer but also that of additional voters who did not take the time to write their concern.

The Sierra Club reports that legislators consider each personal contact from a member of their constituency to represent as many as 8 to 10 likeminded voters.

Therefore, making the effort to have your voice heard through letters, emails, fax and phone calls really can make an impact and might be counted as much as 10-fold. Even the lowest estimate makes advocating for the environment worthwhile!

Meanwhile, the GCNJ will continue to share updates on environmental issues and pending legislation to keep our members informed.

Beverly Kazickas
Environmental Committee Chair
kazickas55@aol.com



Mrs. Schomp receives from Governor Alfred E. Driscoll a Citation to the Garden Club of New Jersey for Distinguished Public Service to the State, December 28, 1950—"Establishment of an Arboretum in Palisades Interstate Park; Creation of the Blue Star Drive; Underwriting Conservation Education Scholarships; Formation of a Green Thumb Corps; and especially noted for the Highway Beautification Survey."

Citation for Distinguished Public Service - 1950

Liberty State Park Alliance



Liberty State Park is owned by the State of NJ and maintained by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). This land was bought with taxpayers' dollars as a state and national treasure, a sacred public space behind Lady Liberty and Ellis Island. The park, which has over 5 million annual visitors, opened on June 14, 1976, Flag Day, as New Jersey's Bicentennial gift to our nation. It contains significant historic, natural, recreational and cultural resources.

The Garden Club of New Jersey, Inc. has joined the Coalition of 84 other organizations to pass the Liberty State Park Protection Act and Save the Park's Caven Point Natural Area. We are proud to join organizations like New Jersey Audubon Society, New York/New Jersey Baykeepers, Save Barnegat Bay, New Jersey Tree Foundation, Pinelands Preservation Alliance and The Great Swamp Watershed Association. Please support Senate Bill S1449 and Assembly Bill A2189 by reaching out to your local state legislators. If you need information, it can be found on the GCNJ website at www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org or www.gardenclubofnewjersey.com under "Environment."

We are also preparing to work with Liberty State Park and the NJDEP to establish a Blue Star Memorial Marker there. Hudson County is the last of our 21 counties without a Blue Star Memorial already erected. Carole Iuso is also working with Teddie Falcone, as part of our "Paths to Discovery Through Outdoor Learning Centers," to establish a "Freedom Trail of New Jersey Patriots."

Lastly, the GCNJ will be working to establish a "Pollinator Learning Center" at Liberty State Park and we will work to encourage other organizations to establish outdoor learning centers, too.

GCNJ realizes our garden clubs need a positive project to energize them in this difficult time and we believe that there could not be a more important project at this moment than doing all we can to preserve and enhance Liberty State Park, New Jersey's gift to the nation and the world.

Jeannie Geremia,
GCNJ President
jgeremia42@gmail.com

GCNJ's New Website!



Please congratulate Diana Kazazis and Ellen Preissler as well as our new website manager, Doug Guthrie, as they have spent countless hours to make this such a wonderful interactive tool. The site shows our proud history along with showcasing our clubs.

Special thanks to Jane Bianco for always coming to the rescue as well as Sandy Nielsen and Bryan Thomlison, our past website chair and website manager.

Take a few moments to click on one of the links below, enjoy and browse around!!
www.gardenclubofnewjersey.com or www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org will take you to the same place. All passwords have remained the same.



HOW TO NAVIGATE THE NEW WEBSITE

We would like to help you navigate the new GCNJ website and enjoy your explorations through all the features. It is very user friendly but if you see something you believe is incorrect and needs to be changed, please follow this procedure:

1. Click on “**Contact Us**” in the upper right corner of the Home Page.
2. Click on the link at “**Changes for the Website.**” That will bring up a form to fill out.
3. Determine what your change is and then fill in the correct box or boxes with the information.
4. Determine where on the website your change needs to occur and fill that in. If the change affects more than one place on the website, please note that as well.
5. In addition, there is a section where you can make corrections on the directories (change of addresses, emails, phone numbers, positions).
6. After you upload any photographs, documents or links that you need, please hit “**Send**”. When your information is sent, you will receive a “**Thank you**” response.
7. If you have any questions, you can write them on the form as well, and we will receive them by email.

***For those that may be making contributions to the website, please note that the 10th of each month is the deadline for acceptance of material to be published the beginning of the following month.

The Website Team has worked very hard to create this website and is hoping that you will really enjoy its use. Thank you to all who contributed to its creation.

Diana Kazazis

Ellen Preissler

diana.kazazis@gmail.com

ellepreissler@yahoo.com

2019-2020 YEARBOOK AWARDS



Kudos to each of the following clubs for publishing an excellent 2019-20 Yearbook. The projects, variations of meeting topics, community outreach, beautiful covers, easily accessible membership lists and general organization made for a functional yet exceptional overview of each club's yearly plan.

Certificate of Merit with Gold Seal for an Outstanding Yearbook



District I:

- The Pines Lake Garden Club, Inc.
- The Women's Garden Club of Ridgewood
- Ridgewood Garden Club
- River view Garden Club

District II:

- Garden Club of Montclair
- Maplewood Garden Club
- The Garden Club of Essex Fells
- Short Hills Home Garden Club
- Town & Country Garden Club of the Chathams

District III:

- Rockaway Valley Garden Club
- New Vernon Garden Club
- The Garden Club of Mountain Lakes

District IV:

- Belvidere Garden Club
- Bound Brook Garden Club
- Bridgewater Garden Club
- Country Garden Club
- Community Garden Club of Hunterdon Hills
- Garden Club of Hunterdon Hills
- The Garden Club of Long Valley
- Neshanic Garden Club
- Warren Garden Club
- Washington Garden Club

District V:

- Garden Club of Watchung
- Basking Ridge Garden Club
- The Garden Club of Cranford
- Green Thumb Garden Club
- The Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield
- Garden Club of Westfield

Certificate of Merit with Gold Seal for an Outstanding Yearbook (cont.)**District VI:**

- Garden Club of Metuchen
- Royal Garden Club by the Bay
- Terra Nova Garden Club
- Woodbridge Garden Club

District VII:

- West Trenton Garden Club
- Pinelands Garden Club
- Moorestown Garden Club
- Haddonfield Garden Club

District VIII:

- Fairways Garden Club
- Allenhurst Garden Club
- Garden Club of Long Beach Island
- Navesink Garden Club
- Ocean Port Garden Club
- Garden Club of R.F.D.
- Seaweeders Garden Club of Bay Head & Mantoloking
- Shrewsbury Garden Club
- Garden Club of Spring Lake
- The Garden Club of Toms River
- Little Silver Garden Club

Certificate of Merit for an Outstanding Yearbook**District I:**

- Ramsey Area Garden Club
- The Demarest Garden Club

District VII:

- Mount Laurel Garden Club
- Garden Gate Garden Club

District III:

- Garden Club of Mount Tabor
- Home Garden Club of Morristown

District VIII:

- Jumping Brook Garden Club
- Holly Club of Sea Girt
- Bayberry Garden Club
- Grow and Show Garden Club of Interlaken

District V:

- The Floraphile Garden Club
- Bernardsville Garden Club

Additionally, a super shout out to the Garden Club of Watchung, first place recipient of the National Award for an outstanding Yearbook, club size 20-29. A truly outstanding achievement!!! Congratulations!!!

Peggy Morrissey
Awards Chair
peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com
732-330-3636

NATURAL DISASTER FUND

Reclaim. Restore. Renew. These were the top priorities for the Seaweeder's Garden Club of Bay Head and Mantoloking to reclaim their cherished Patty Brand Garden (PBG). To provide part of the financial need to restore PBG as an award-winning educational/demonstration garden and wildlife habitat, the National Disaster Fund (NDF) was there to help.

Established in 1992, the garden had experienced many weather-related assaults since its location is at the southern shoreline of South Lagoon, Mantoloking. This area is highly susceptible to flooding by high tides, nor'easters and other storms. Nevertheless, its unique location provides community education opportunities through natural habitat support and study. It was after severe coastal conditions, in 2019, that the Seaweeder's realized it must again try to restore PBG from the debris that nearly destroyed all the hard work from previous years.



Pre-Storm October 2019



Post-Storm cut into mounded plantings and sidewalks

Through the NDF, the Garden Club of New Jersey provides money to assist local and state garden clubs in re-planting their parks, municipal gardens and garden-related sites that suffer from natural disasters. This funding is made available by those garden clubs throughout the state who donate on a regular basis; by clubs “Passing the Jar” at meetings or by clubs allocating special monthly/yearly monies, resulting in aid ready to distribute quickly and efficiently through NDF grants.

The Patty Brand Garden story does have a happy ending. The Seaweeders applied for a grant in late February, 2020 and was awarded the funds by early May. Those funds and thorough research allowed them to select new native plants that could better withstand coastal conditions. They also worked with the Rutgers’ “ReClaim the Bay” project and Tri-Cor Flexible Packaging, Inc. to create more durable coastline stabilizers at a lower cost.

The Patty Brand Garden’s status is an “ongoing experiment” and promises a “living coastline...encouraging and allowing all to become stewards of our environment.” (from grant proposal)

For more information or donations please feel free to contact me.

Margaret Esposito
Natural Disaster Fund Chair
mmesposito@yahoo.com

YOUTH NEWS

CELEBRATE YOUR WINNERS!!

SMOKEY BEAR/WOODSY OWL POSTER CONTEST (STATE WINNERS)

Grade 1 - Arianna Shetty	Terra Nova Garden Club
Grade 2 - Madison Patalano	Terra Nova Garden Club
Grade 3 - Emily White	Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden Garden Club
Grade 4 - Lucia Junkroft	Rahway Garden Club
Grade 5 - Aanika Shetty	Terra Nova Garden Club



NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC. GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST (STATE WINNER)

Rachel L. Dispoto	Fairways Garden Club at Lake Ridge
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NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC. GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY POETRY CONTEST (STATE WINNERS)

Grade 3 - Quinn Baumiller	Garden Club of Long Beach Island
Grade 4 - Angelina Colavital	Garden Club of Long Beach Island
Grade 5 - Addison Slaven	Garden Club of Long Beach Island
Grade 6 - Jonathan Hughes	Garden Club of Long Beach Island

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE AND REMINDER ABOUT OUR GCNJ YOUTH CONTESTS

All entries for GCNJ/NGC Youth Contests are due to this chairman NO LATER than JANUARY 6, 2021.

The contests include:

- High School Essay Contest
- Youth Poetry Contest
- Smokey Bear/Woodsey Owl Poster Contest
- Youth Sculpture Contest

You will find detailed contest information and applications on the GCNJ website under "YOUTH".

Entries are to be mailed to: Onnolee Allieri, Youth Chair
552 Powerville Road
Boonton, NJ 07005

If you have any questions, feel free to call me at 973-335-8249.



ONE MORE IMPORTANT REMINDER TO YOUTH LEADERS:

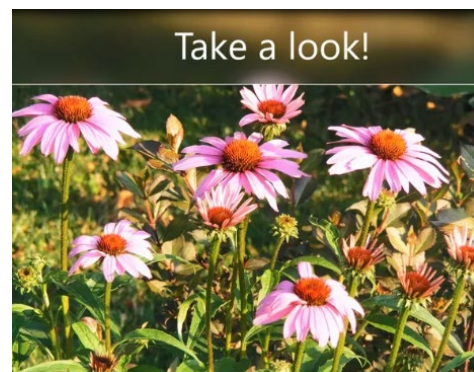
If you have not sent me your youth registration form and \$20.00 registration fee, please do so by **SEPTEMBER 30**. The form is found under "YOUTH" on the GCNJ website.

Onnolee Allieri
Bob Markey
Co-Youth Chairmen
callieri@aol.com
Bob@MrBobtheGardener.com

Virtual Keyport Garden Walk

Keyport Garden Club has a virtual tour of their gardens. It will be available via the website below all summer. Gardeners will welcome you via the web to tour perennial gardens, eclectic mixed gardens, historic gardens and more from the comfort of your home. The charming neighborhoods and gardens of Keyport are now accessible in a new way.

<https://keyportgardenclub.com/keyport-gardenwalk>



SCHOLARSHIP NEWS



Despite the Covid 19 Pandemic, the Scholarship Committee has selected ten financial scholarship recipients who will receive \$18,000 in awards. Each student received between \$1,500 and \$2,500 for the 2020-2021 academic year. Students' essays expressed their interest, passion and concern for the environment and the beautification and welfare of planet Earth. Their applications, consisting of high-grade point averages (GPAs), community service, clubs and organizations pertaining to their majors, amazing letters of recommendation and their financial need, greatly impressed committee members.

I diligently kept in touch with students from February through June, in lieu of the cancellation of the Garden Club of New Jersey's Annual Meeting, and have received several notes of appreciation from students for these generous scholarships. We are hoping that these wonderful and deserving students will be introduced to our membership at a future meeting.

Two of our scholarship recipients, Daniel Ilkow and Danielle Dyson, were sent on to National Garden Clubs, Inc. and CAR in hopes of winning additional scholarships.

Daniel was chosen and will receive a \$4,000 scholarship from NGC. I had forwarded Danielle's application to the CAR Scholarship Chair prior to the July 1 deadline, and we hope to hear "good news" soon about an additional scholarship for her as well.

This year, GCNJ President Jeannie Geremia sent each student a personal note along with their financial scholarship checks. I would like to congratulate the GCNJ Finance and Investment Committees for working with this Committee during these most unusual of times. My thanks go out to my Committee members: Barbara Teufel, Chris Guarino, Heidi Riley, Cathy Shalloo, Ellen Preissler, Treasurer- Alison Stellita and Assistant Treasurer-Jane Bianco.

Trish Polunas
Scholarship Chairman
scholarshipsgcnj@gmail.com

CRAWFORD'S CORNER

Nothing to Sneeze At

The start of autumn is upon us! It is a time when gardeners rejoice as the daytime temperatures become more tolerable and the evening temps become perfect for gardening activities. Everyone likes to garden in autumn, but I recently started to ponder what defines the true gardener, a person who enjoys tending their gardens through the heat of summer and the cold of winter. Is it a person that takes joy in weeding and developing order with plants? Is it a person who enjoys tending to the Garden during a gentle summer's rain or winter's light snow? Is a person that appreciates all plants, even those that many contend to be weeds, such as Goldenrod? My personal conviction would be yes to all of the above, although I have had many debates over the worthiness of Goldenrod, botanically known as *Solidago*! Why would anyone wish to plant a roadside weed that is the curse to those who suffer from hay fever! Truth be known, it is Ragweed, *Ambrosia artemisiifolia*, with its spires of tiny green flowers and wind-disseminated pollen that is the major cause for hay fever. The pollen from Goldenrod is heavy and sticky, requiring insects to carry it from flower to flower, and will never become airborne to trouble our sinuses. Unfortunately, Ragweed remains unnoticed by most, leading everyone to assume that our brassy, yellow flowered friend is the guilty culprit.

Solidago is a member of the Asteraceae or Sunflower Family with about 80 species native to North America into Mexico and 20-40 species native to South America and Eurasia. The genus name of *Solidago* was first published in 1753 by the Swedish botanist, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). He crafted the name from the Latin *solidus*, meaning whole or solid and *ago*, meaning to make. It refers to the plant's herbal reputation for making someone whole or healed. The Native American Indians and European Settlers used it as a wash or poultice to help heal cuts, sores and burns. Several species, such as *Solidago virgaurea* and *S. odora* were used in herbal remedies to improve kidney flow and remove kidney stones. Goldenrod even had economic potential as *Solidago rigida* was purportedly the species involved in a breeding project by Thomas Edison to develop a source of rubber. He developed a hybrid that yielded nearly 12% rubber, but the research ended upon Edison's death in 1931.



In spite of Goldenrods ill-fated reputation for hay fever, it is a great garden plant, requiring only sun and moderately fertile soils for success. The foliage of goldenrods is typically dark green, and lance

shaped. Plants spread by seed production and in some species through creeping rhizomes, creating relatively large colonies in very short periods of time. The flowers are arranged on a branched structure called a panicle, consisting of a central stem from which progressively shorter branches project outwards moving from bottom to top. The small flowers that densely grace the floral stems are 1/8" to 1/4" in diameter (as seen in the image above right). Initially, the small golden yellow dots appear to be little flowers, but upon closer inspection, you will notice that each flower resembles a miniature sunflower, with an outer wheel of 2 to 30+ ray florets and an inner cluster of disc florets. Each "flower" or collection of florets is called a capitulum with the ray florets resembling flower petals and the inner disc florets packed tightly together. Depending upon the species, each floret could offer only anthers, stigmas or both and based upon the tremendous number of 'flowers' per capitulum, a potential for tremendous seed production. As an interesting side note, the Sunflower family actually originated in the once tropical Antarctic around 80 Million Years Ago (MYA) and due to the very efficient nature of the flower structure and seed production, the size of the family exploded around 40 MYA to over 23,600 species! And you think you may have big family gatherings during the holidays!

One of the more common species to Eastern North America is *Solidago rugosa* or Wrinkle-leaved Goldenrod. It sports pubescent foliage to 4" long with depressed leaf veins that give the leaf a



wrinkled appearance. The plant was described and named in 1768 by the Scottish Botanist Phillip Miller (1691-1771). Although the species is not overly noteworthy, a recent introduction, *Solidago rugosa* "Fireworks" (pictured at left) has proven to be one of the showier selections of Goldenrods – a selection that nearly did not come to pass. During the mid-1970's, a repair shop near Wilson NC was about to undergo an addition. The area to be developed

was a moist upland swamp known as a pocosin and was replete with Pitcher Plants and other wetland natives. A plant rescue of the Pitcher Plants was conducted by the North Carolina Botanic Garden at Chapel Hill. Unknowingly, a small plant of *Solidago rugosa* was rescued with the Pitcher Plants. In the better-drained soils of the Nursery, the Goldenrod became much more robust, growing to 4' tall and its flower display proved to be very unique. It was named "Fireworks" and introduced in 1993 by NC Botanic Garden in association with the retail nursery Niche Gardens, which has since closed to business. "Fireworks" is unusual in that the flowers are produced along very long, attractively arching stems that literally resemble fireworks in the evening sky! It flowers from mid-August to early October, a far longer bloom time than other plants of this species. The seedlings do not resemble the selection, so all seedlings should be rogued out and only plants that

are reproduced asexually should be planted to ensure you receive the desired selection. Fortunately, “Fireworks” is widely available at nurseries permitting you to readily add this unique selection to your garden.

Another selection, *Solidago sphacelata* “Golden Fleece” is a great, low-growing groundcover selection, reaching 3’ in diameter with the heart-shaped foliage only stretching 4-6” tall. The species was described and named in 1820 by the self-taught French zoologist, botanist and geologist, Constantine Samuel Rafinesque (1783-1840), who ultimately settled and botanized in Ohio. The species name is derived from the Latin *Sphaceolos* for gangrene or mortification and *Atus* for likeness, meaning “appearing dead”, describing the flower stalks after they have shed their seed. Although late fall may not be the most attractive season for this species, I am hard pressed to think of any plant less cheery and furthest from the adjective of dead!

Native to calcareous, well-drained soils in woodlands and open meadows from Virginia south to Florida and west to Mississippi, it also grows well in the more acidic soils and is perfectly hardy throughout NJ. The flowers reach modest heights of 15-18” tall (as seen above and below), compared to 2-4’ of the species with blooms



from mid-August through September. An attractive aspect of this plant is its preference for light shade. When I initially used the plant in a garden design, it was planted in full sun adjacent to the blue flowered *Caryopteris* or Blue Mist Shrub. The combination looked great for the first season, but to my dismay, the plants of ‘Golden Fleece’ slowly withered in the years to follow as it was receiving too much sun! In morning sun or light shade, it is a great weed suppressing groundcover and provides the gardener with design options previously unconsidered. Adding to this selection’s appeal, little care is required as the new foliage simply grows through and over that of the previous year and in the 15+ years I have observed this selection, I have yet to see seedlings.

All the goldenrods are great plants for attracting pollinators, including a variety of bees, beetles and butterflies. In other words, it is a wonderful late season nectar source that

gardeners increasingly appreciate with the loss of various natural habitats and diminished food sources. Goldenrods also make great cut flowers and exciting additions to the perennial and mixed border, as well as to meadows. I would recommend cutting the plants to the ground before they go to seed in November, if the appearance of seedlings is unwanted. Also, be careful of those species that are aggressively rhizomatous if the plant is being grown in a more confined garden location with other late season beauties. With proper selection and use, Goldenrod is a true workhorse in

the garden and should command far more respect as a heavyweight in the world of gardening. Above all, it is certainly no plant to sneeze at!



Bruce Crawford
State Program Leader for Home and Public Horticulture, NJAES
Crawford@NJAES/Rutgers.edu

New Blue Star Markers Coming to NJ!!

Despite the pandemic, several New Jersey garden clubs continue to pursue their sponsorship of new Blue Star markers for the Garden State.

Haddonfield Garden Club – A marker is to be installed by the end of summer with a dedication ceremony on November 11, 2020.

Neshanic Garden Club – This club is planning to have another Blue Star near the famous Duke Farms estate. Plans are for a spring 2021 dedication.

Passaic County and Cape May County – Thanks to hard work by the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Lois Johann and the GCNJ Blue Star Committee, these areas should get their first markers by 2021.

Sussex County - We also hope to bring a marker to Sussex County, at the Sussex Fair site, by 2021.



Let us hope that we will be able to gather, even in a socially distant manner, for the wonderful dedication ceremonies for these new markers in the coming year!

Joan Cichalski,
GCNJ Blue Star Chair
jjcichalski@comcast.net

MY PATH TO NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

*****FIVE STAR STATUS*****

I have enjoyed being in a garden since I was a child, as my parents had a lovely one. There were four Rose beds, edged with Boxwood; an arbor of Roses in which every spring, a robin built its nest, a large Lilac shrub with pale purple blossoms and a Mock Orange (Philadelphus) in June. We eagerly awaited the Jack in the Pulpits and the blue Phlox. Bridal Wreath cascaded its blooms. On the upper terrace was a long bed overflowing with fragrant Lilies of the Valley. At the terrace, there were clusters of Pansies in early spring. Come June, bright orange Tiger Lilies appeared.



With a new home and yard, learning more about gardening and landscaping became important. The courses offered by NGC and GCNJ were a good source of this. So back in the 1970s, I started taking classes--first Gardening Study, then Landscape Design. Flower Show School complemented these courses, so I began the classes and ultimately became a Judge. Along the way, I made many gardening friends. With major concerns about the environment arising, attending Environmental School became my next endeavor.

In Gardening Schools, I learned about growing techniques for garden plants--vegetables, fruits, houseplants, trees, shrubs--how to obtain peak perfection, the effect of weather conditions and the importance of plant location. The role of plants in our lives became obvious and as well as the maintenance thereof.

In Landscape Design there is now a new Curriculum, in which redesigning a home landscape segment, is included in each course. The environmental burdens of a typical suburban lawn are discussed with suggested planting choices and cultural practices that can make significant impacts on the ecosystem. In this curriculum, I learned the Principles and Elements of Landscape Design, about Color in the Landscape and the Development of Landscape Design since Ancient Times. All have remained part of the curriculum. Xeriscaping has been added as well as Developing

Your Garden Plan. Course 3 must now be taken before Course 4 (not always the case before) as one creates a garden plan in Course 3 which is evaluated in Course 4.

Environmental School addresses the imperative goal of being aware of the need to properly manage and use our resources. The importance of community having a comprehensive Environmental Plan was stressed. We heard how important it was to be aware of air and water pollution problems and to work towards solutions of environmental problems. "Environmental education" is emphasized in this new approach and some "how to" suggestions were presented.

One does not have to be a member of a garden club to take these courses as they are all in keeping with NGC Bylaws Article II, Number 5: "to study and to advance the fine arts of gardening, landscape, floral design and horticulture." However, the benefits of being a member are many.

Do plan to attend some of these schools as they will enrich and inform your gardening as they have mine.

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NGC Five Star

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Information for the next issue:

October 1 is the deadline for articles for the Winter News Leaf as well as listings of upcoming club events and online ads.

Send articles and upcoming events to

Karen Eardley at k.eardley@live.com

Go to the GCNJ website at www.gardenclubofnewjersey.com or

www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org for more information.

Happy Fall, Stay Safe!

