

RCCCG NEWS

Note from Garden Manager | Featured Gardeners | Recipe Corner | Poetry

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2025 Inspection Dates

Sunday, September 7

Sunday, September 21

Sunday, October 5th

Sunday, October 19th

****Last inspection; will be conducted by your executive Committee**

2025 Fall Clean Up Day

Saturday, October 18

Fall Picnic

Saturday, October 4



Note from Garden Manager

Keep on keeping on! Just cause the summer is running down, it's not time to neglect the garden. We'll have the official garden clean up and the hose-put-away on October 18th. As ever, we look forward to your participation in both the clean-up and the participation in a bit of a pot luck during clean-up. Thanks for bringing your favorite snack to the event. This year, for something new, the final inspection will be on the 19th, by the entire Executive Committee! It will be a preliminary assessment of who will get warning letters and who will be told that they are essentially being informed of eviction from the garden, and will enter the eviction process. Regards.

MANAGER
NOTE

ON WEEDS
Anita Albertson

FALL GARDEN
Camilla Gagliolo

FEATURED
GARDENER
Nancy Nickel &
Jeff Howard

POETRY
CORNER
Susan Galbraith

I wrote about these processes early in the gardening season. We're wishing everyone well, since I do not enjoy writing these letters. Wishing more of you well even so, as you plant your lettuce and spinach for a nice fall crop!

Regards, Rima

Important Fall Dates Coming up

October 18 - Official Garden Clean Up and Hose Put Away

October 19 - Final Inspection - This year, for something new, the final inspection will be done by the entire Executive Committee! It will serve as a preliminary assessment of who will get warning letters and who will be told that they are essentially being informed of eviction from the garden and will enter the eviction process. I wrote about these processes early in the gardening season, but I certainly do not enjoy writing these letters, so we are wishing everyone well and a good clean end to the season.

Community Garden Harvest Picnic Potluck

This year's gathering has been scheduled for Saturday, October 4 starting at 5 p.m. (Sunday, October 5 is the rain date)

Judith Reiter hosts this wonderful event where we connect with old friends, meet new gardeners from different quadrants, and share bounty of the season.

Bring a dish to share and, if you are able, bring your own chairs so we are sure to seat everybody comfortably.

On Weeds

by Anita Albertson

It is late summer and the weeds are happy! Remember timing is everything!

Enjoy your garlic chives - but once those flowers turn to seed - decapitate them! If you don't you will have a carpet of garlic chives the next year and so will your neighbors!

Tender purslane and lambs' quarter are worth adding to a salad or cooking like spinach - adding to a soup or sauté them. Still remove them once they start to flower or seed.

Every weed you remove is a gift towards your plot's future.

At this moment in the garden I am finding lots of wire, Bermuda, goose, sedge and green kyllinga - (all in the grass family), galinsoga, mugwort, yellow creeping cress, bind weed, morning glory, some dandelion and thistle, purslane, lambs quarter, pig weed, dichondra repens, creeping charlie, smartweed, lily weed (pinellia ternata), porcelain berry, as well as mulberry, tulip tree volunteers dropped by the birds. Garlic chives and other things are beginning to go to seed - we really want to encourage folks to dead head them before they scatter to the four corners of the garden. If you want more information about any of these - reach out to me. There is a lot I do not know, but I am always willing to learn and I have a fair amount of tenacious experience. Many of these weeds have tricky self-preserving ways of keeping alive and spreading.

Field trip to Longwood Gardens in Gardens Square, PA

Saturday, September 20th

Join me and my husband/co-gardener Barry on a visit to Longwood Gardens, one of the premier display gardens in the world. The gardens, founded by Pierre DuPont, now cover over 1,000 acres. We plan to stay overnight so we can enjoy some time in Philly, but Longwood is only two hours away making it a long but do-able day trip for those of Field Trip – Longwood Gardens you who would prefer that.

This field trip will take place on the weekend when the garden hosts The Greater Philadelphia Dalia Society Show, so this trip should be a hit for anyone who loves dahlias or wants to learn more about them. In addition to the dahlia show, the garden features a fabulous vegetable garden, an Italian style villa, two conservatories, an orchid house, a children's garden, and an array of fountain shows, as well as meadow and forest gardens.

Garden admission is between \$25-30 with discounts available for seniors. This includes visiting the dahlia show. ***Tickets should be purchased far in advance online to secure your entry time and avoid potential sell outs.***

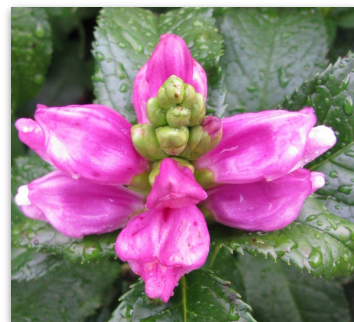
Get your tickets now for the 12:30 entry. We plan to meet at the entrance to Longwood Gardens at noon. Leave enough time in case of traffic or parking issues. Once inside the gardens, people will be free to explore whichever areas most interest them. If you are interested in the free garden tours, please visit that link in the Longwood Garden website to sign up for a particular time slot. If you plan to remain in the area overnight, you can also stay late to see the evening illuminated fountain performances.

Since we'll have plenty of lead time for you to save the date, I'm hopeful that we'll have a strong turnout. I'm also hoping we have enough interest from garden members so that those who want to make it a day trip can carpool.

Here are links in case you want to preview the events taking place on September 20th and purchase timed entry ticket at longwoodgardens.org

We hope to see you there! Please email me at paross@starpower.net if you plan to join us for this exciting trip!

Pam Ross



Featured Gardeners - Nancy Nickel & Jeff Howard

I knew Nancy before I knew anything about Rock Creek Community Garden. We were part of a small yoga group hosted by a mutual friend in her home who met weekly, and, as designated person leading the group, I learned more from these wonderful women and the friendships that developed. I sat down with her and her husband, Jeff Howard, at the picnic table recently.

How long have you and Jeff been part of Rock Creek Community Garden?

We have lived in DC since 1998, and it took a while for me to learn about the garden, -- maybe Bob Keith and Donna and we were on the waiting list two years, but maybe it's been twenty-two years. My, the time has gone by fast!

How did you get introduced to gardening?

My mother grew up on a beautiful farm in western Ohio, almost on the border of Indiana. They grew everything – corn, tomatoes – Grandpa Canfield's tomatoes were once on the cover of Life Magazine. But they grew all kinds of vegetables. And they had cows and chickens. We'd get fresh eggs when I'd visit. Grandpa Canfield would get up at four in the morning and go out to the chicken coop and gather the eggs. It was wonderful. So gardening was in my DNA. I was always around soil, and plants, and fresh food. And in the summers, my mother would take me to Farmers' Markets. We lived on tomatoes, corn on the cob and other fresh produce. Real food! So, I knew when I grew up, I would want to have a garden.



I also lived for some years next to my paternal grandfather, Grandpa Nickel, who was also a gardener, and what I remember best was he had a huge strawberry patch behind his big yard. And while he was mowing, I'd pick strawberries 'til I had strawberry juice running down my face and staining my clothes.

You were also a teacher, Nancy. Did you get your students involved turned onto gardening and 'real food?'

Indeed. I taught at Lafayette Elementary School for twenty years. Every year, during April, Earth Month, I would arrange a field trip for all the second graders at Lafayette. It was a unit on ecology. We'd bring them over to Site 13 in Rock Creek, across from Military Road. A ranger would come over and teach them about weeds. Each kid would get a big black bag and they would be sent out to find and pull up the non-native, invasive weed- I remember – garlic mustard. They'd gather bags of the stuff and loved it. And besides, I like to get kids outside the classroom. And part of the learning happened when I took the kids through our community garden. I'd stop and always tell them how important good soil

Nancy, what do you like to grow in your plot?

Nancy: Well from my girlhood love of strawberries, I always wanted to have a patch of those berries, and have tried, and by this year I had such a successful harvest of strawberries in June. Cups and cups. Tomatoes and several kinds of peppers. I roast my Italian peppers. (Recipe provided in this Newsletter) Bok choy, lettuces from seeds from Johnnys. And we make lots of pesto. I also like to have a few flowering pollinators. I consider gardening a work in progress.

And where did you grow up, Jeff, and what is your gardening role?

Jeff: I grew up in DC, and my mom was a typical Betty Crocker mom, and we lived on canned corn and succotash, and my mom sure didn't garden. But when we were up in Maine summers, that's when I got a taste for fresh produce. My dad was a government lawyer but who went into private practice to put us all through private school.

And how do you contribute, Jeff?

Jeff: Nancy does the 90 per cent of the gardening. My role is generally wearing a back brace and grabbing a wheelbarrow and a shovel or a rake, laying down mulch, amending the soil. I am the heavy lifter and help get things started; I built the planter boxes here and the big compost bin at our house.

Nancy: We both feel that composting and having good soil is so important. The Matter matters!

See Nancy's recipe for roasted Italian peppers in this issue.

And future plans?

Nancy: well both our children live in southern California, so we are thinking to relocate in the next year or two.

Recipe Corner

Zucchini Nachos

by Rima

- Cube enough zucchini to fill a 2 quart casserole dish.
- In sauce pan cook 1 medium onion in a little butter. When onions are clear, add chicken (equivalent to one tuna sized can of meat)--two small chicken breasts baked and cubed work well--and a can of Cream of Chicken soup.
- Pour over zucchini and stir in an 8 oz package of shredded cheddar cheese.
- Crumble nacho Doritos on top to cover.
- Bake at 350 for 1 hour covered and last 15 minutes uncover. If you bake for 45 covered and 15 uncovered, zucchini is a little firmer, but meal is done.

Recipe Corner Continued

Two recipes by Anita Albertson

Purslane, saute

Ingredients

- 1.5 lbs. purslane leaves and small stems, large and medium stems removed
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic minced
- 2 tbsp shallot minced
- salt and pepper to taste

Instruction

- Heat oil over medium high heat in a pan.
- Add everything to the pan and stir constantly until the greens are wilted and the moisture is evaporated.
- Serve immediately.

Lambs quarter Pesto

Ingredients

- 1 cup Lamb's Quarters, Leaves
- 1 cup Basil Leaves
- 1/2 cup Pine Nuts Toasted
- 1/4 cup Parmesan Grated
- 1/2-2/3 cup Olive Oil
- 1 Tbsp Lemon Juice
- 1 tsp each Salt & Pepper

Instructions

- Combine the lamb's quarters, basil, pine nuts, parmesan, lemon juice and 1/2 cup of Olive Oil in food processor. Blend until chunky.
- With the processor running slowly pour in more oil up to 2/3 cup until the texture is as smooth as you like it and everything is blended. Season with salt and pepper. Store in a sealed jar in the fridge for up to two weeks.

Poetry Corner

By Susan Galbraith

Poetry Corner this month is designed as more of a reflection on ‘The Three Sisters’ –corn, beans and squash –and the cooperation they model to benefit all. In this time of harvest, let us give thanks to the Three Sisters and the wisdom of indigenous farmers of North America. This form of ancient companion planting has been noted in archaeological records and is thought to have been practiced up to 5,000 years ago. Three plants – corn, beans and squash – each does a different job, like three sisters helping each other out:

The corn grows tall and straight and acts as a support up which the beans can grow.

The beans’ roots help trap beneficial nutrients in the soil which it feeds back.

The squash grows flat to the ground covering the soil quickly, suppressing weeds.

When harvested, each crop provides an array of nutrients and gives three harvests from one space.

This ancient practice of the Three Sisters teaches us beautiful lessons about planting, about using our natural resources well, being careful with space & scarce resources. It shows us how allowing a variety of planting in the same space naturally enriches the soil & reduces the need for pesticides.

