



The Perennial - September 2020

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Website: <ArlingtonGarden.org>

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And Now It's September

~ by Barbara Crooker

(with thanks to member Joan Robbio)Mess

and the garden diminishes; cucumber leaves rumpled
and rusty, zucchini felled by borers, tomatoes sparse
on the vines. But out in the perennial beds, there's one last
blast of color; ignitions of goldenrod, flamboyant
asters, spiraling mums, all those flashy spikes waving
in the wind, conducting summer's final notes.
The ornamental grasses have gone to seed, haloed
in the last light. Nights grow chilly, but the days
are still warm; I wear the sun like a shawl on my neck
and arms. Hundreds of blackbirds ribbon, settle
in the trees, so many black leaves, then, just as suddenly,
they're gone. This is autumn's great Departure Gate,
and everyone, boarding pass

Civic Development – Patsy Kraemer, Chair

**While the Club's programs may be in hiatus,
the Civic Development Committee is focusing on what we can
enjoy and do enjoy as gardeners....**

The Civic Development Committee is an "umbrella entity" organizing 5 different community projects that the Arlington Garden Club participates in.

All the projects welcome new members.

If you have interest in joining one, please contact the project leader(s).
We will be continuing our civic development work through the late fall. so don't
hesitate to be in touch!

Here are the community projects:

The Whittemore Robbins House/Town Hall Gardens

- Several Garden Club members, some Friends of Robbins Garden members and some community volunteers meet every other Tuesday to do gardening work in these beautiful gardens. The Town Hall Garden was originally designed in 1938 by the Olmsted. Work includes pruning, weeding, deadheading, laying of mulch and some minimal planting.



**Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)
in Town Hall Gardens**

Project Organizers:

Emily Snyder
Patsy Kraemer

The historical Kitchen/Herb Garden at the Jason Russell House - A team of Garden Club members oversees the herb/kitchen/flower garden at the historical Jason Russell House at the corner of Jason Street and Mass. Ave. The herb and flower garden was established in the 1970's by the Garden Club, then fell into disrepair for a few years before being re-established a few years ago by the Garden Club. Members meet periodically to prune, plant, weed, lay mulch/compost, and water these gardens. Last year the group planted two vintage, historically appropriate apple trees.

Project Organizers:

Juliette Avots
Carol Nahigian

Ridge Street Circle - The circle, at the intersection of Ridge Street, Oak Hill Drive and Cutter Hill, is one of the larger planting areas in the Arlington Beautification Program. Adopted by the Garden Club two years ago, this circle is an officially sponsored program of the club. Club members meet periodically to prune, weed, plant, deadhead, and lay mulch. When the club took responsibility for the Circle, the garden had become severely overgrown, filled with weeds, and classified as an eyesore! Now the garden has definition, shows off an array of beautiful of perennials, and is now a special feature of the neighborhood. It is a tribute to the work of the garden members.

Project Organizer:

Stephan Miller

Prime Planter - This planter, located in Arlington Heights outside the former 'Prime Butcher' shop, was officially adopted by the Garden Club in 2016. Some club members (especially those living in the Heights area) redesigned the planting of the planter and continue to do caretaking of it. It adds to the floral beauty of the business district there. The work involved includes weeding, pruning, deadheading, watering, and planting.

Project Organizer:

Nancie Richard

Arlington Beautification Project - Several Garden Club members organize the adoption and caretaking of some 60 planters and islands in the Town of Arlington. The project is coordinated with Arlington's Department of Public Works. The group meets regularly to find new 'adoptees' when an island or planter needs a new assignment and communicates with all adopters to coordinate good caretaking of their garden areas. The group has also sponsored photo displays of the beautiful community gardening sites.

Project Leader for the Beautification Program:

Marilyn Sullivan



Heights Planter

Protect yourself from the SARS COV-2 (COVID-19) virus

Stephan Miller, Environment Chair

This is the first of my, I hope, many contributions to *The Perennial*. For this piece I am taking the extraordinary liberty of leaving the realm of environmentally sound gardening practices and writing, for a moment, on another environmental issue, reducing the spread of the SARS COV-2 virus and how you can best protect yourself and others from being infected.

Public health has always been an interest of mine which led to doing research at the Harvard School of Public Health for six years. I am not a virologist or epidemiologist, but I have been reading the research literature in both fields for a long time. Reading and understanding the tsunami of papers about the epidemiology and treatment of this virus has been, to say the least, a bit challenging and confusing.

My understanding of the current research boils down to two simple things: (1) Keep your distance from others and (2) wear a mask.

The bad news is that it is very difficult to practice and enforce social distancing and, in my experience walking around town and on the Bikeway, most people are not doing it. It is also not clear how far you have to be from someone who is not wearing a mask to be reasonably safe from infection. It depends on a lot of factors.

What most people don't realize is that when you talk or otherwise exert yourself or just breathe, your breath is atomized and forms very small droplets which can remain in the air for tens of minutes. When running, that droplet trail can stretch out behind you for as much as 25' or 60' behind someone on a bicycle. For this reason, it does little good to wear the mask round your neck until you see someone approaching. The greatest danger is to the person behind you. Can you be infected by walking with or through that cloud of virus containing droplets? The chances are probably low but not zero. Passing or standing near another person less than 6' away increases the chances that the virus will be transmitted especially if that person is talking, shouting or, worst of all, singing.

The good news is that masks alone can be a moderately effective barrier against the spread of the virus. If both people approaching each other are wearing masks, the current estimate from World Health Organization is that transmission rates are reduced by 85%. If 80% of us were to wear masks when in public, the rate of infection would drop precipitously overnight. My survey this morning in Arlington Center revealed that about 50% of the people I saw were correctly wearing a mask.

So if you want to protect your own life and thwart the course of the pandemic stay at home as much as possible. If you do go out, wear a mask at all times covering both your mouth and nose, not around your neck.

Request from an aspiring Eagle Scout

My name is Colin. I am a Life scout working on my Eagle project. I am building floating wetlands in Hills Pond and McClennan Pond.

My plan is to use some basic gardening supplies. If you have any ~4 inch diameter plastic corrugated pipe, plastic garden netting with ~1 inch holes, or Zip Ties, that are going unused in your home, it would be helpful for my project to use them, and give these supplies another use.

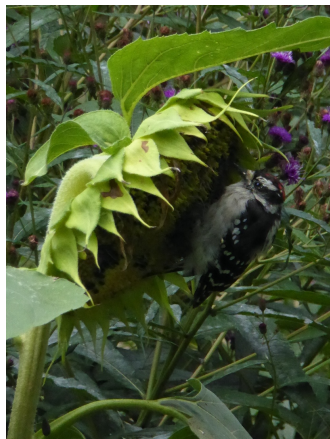
There are also a number of plants that I will need for my project. If you have any Spotted Joe Pye Weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*), Swamp Rosemallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*), Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), or Northern Blue Flag Iris (*Iris versicolor*), in your yard that you are willing to contribute, that would be a big help. Especially Joe Pye Weed.

Thanks!

Please contact me at colamander42@gmail.com if you are willing to contribute.



Glorious
goldfinches in
Karen
MacKinnon's
garden



A woodpecker
also visits....



A great sweet fall anemone
just starting to bloom in
Patsy Kraemer's garden



Crocosmia Lucifer blooming in Stefan
Miller's garden

Regarded as one of the hardiest cultivars, '**Lucifer**' adds a tropical flair to northern gardens. Beginning in midsummer and continuing into early fall in some climates, brilliant flame red flowers stand in rows on wiry, gracefully arched stems that are perfect for cutting.



A crate of
tomatoes from
Nancy Pike's
autumn garden