



## ***The Perennial - October 2020***

2020-21: Issue 2

Website: <[ArlingtonGarden.org](http://ArlingtonGarden.org)>

Facebook: [m.facebook.com/arlingtongardenclubma](https://m.facebook.com/arlingtongardenclubma)

### ***GREETING, MY FELLOW GARDENERS***

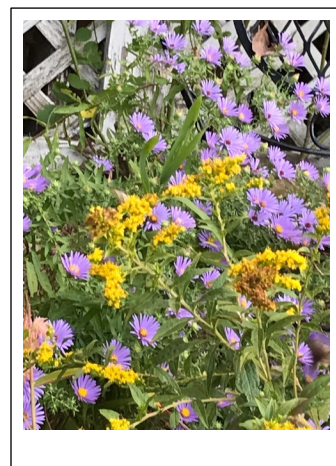
Gardens can be a place of solace and serenity. Nature has a way of healing. Take a walk in a nearby forest, stroll along a stream, or spot a colorful bird in your backyard garden (like Karen McKinnon recently did), and you can actually feel the tonic of “wildness” Thoreau wrote about. (*Walking* 1862). Nature is the ultimate attitude adjuster.

The year 2020 has certainly been a challenge. Most of us have been isolated in our homes; humankind has experienced vast divides and new reckonings, and many lives have been lost. All this suggests to me, that we need nature more than ever...

When COVID-19 struck, it became evident that my garden and nearby nature trails and sanctuaries offer a peaceful respite from stress and anxiety. I think we all have an inherent need to be connected to the natural world.

How are you creatively adapting to the changes brought on by the pandemic and developing new and innovative ways of connecting with people and nature?

Hopefully we will have beautiful Autumn weather to get out and enjoy wherever and whenever we can! A “rain dance” may be necessary to get some much needed beneficial rain as well.



Stay Safe and don't forget to VOTE!

Lolly Bennett, President

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*As we become (somewhat) adjusted to virtual meetings – while still hoping we'll be able to meet in person again – **VP-Programs Nancy Pike** is happy to announce the November program*

**Wednesday** (yes, the club's former, longtime meeting day)

**November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 – 10:30 am**

*via Zoom*

“Writing The Garden”

*Cathie Desjardins*



You've all heard about Zoom (wasn't it once a children's TV program?), and you now have an opportunity to join other members of the Arlington Garden Club via computer.

Cathie, former Poet Laureate of Arlington and longtime resident, enjoys gardening as much as she does writing. She has published a wonderful book of poetry, *Buddha in the Garden*, from which her November program is drawn.

You will receive further notification of the presentation and how to access it as the date draws closer.

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## HONORING FORMER PRESIDENT, JANET PAGLIUCA

At the Club's June end-of-year dinner program, members who've served on the Board for the previous year are formally thanked and honored. Sadly, there was no 2020 end-of-the year dinner, but the Board still wanted to honor Janet who had completed her 3-year term as President at the end of May.

Patsy Kraemer heard about *Kudoboard*, a web-based site which allowed members who'd worked closely with Janet to post thanks, memories, photos and "kudos" for her. At a recent small gathering the *Kudoboard* was "presented" to Janet along with something more tangible, a gift certificate to her nursery-of-choice, Stonegate Gardens. Below is a static, admittedly hard to read, version of the completed [Kudoboard](#). Thank you, Janet!





***Autumn in Poetry & Prose***  
***Contributed by Joan Robbio & Jan Ford***

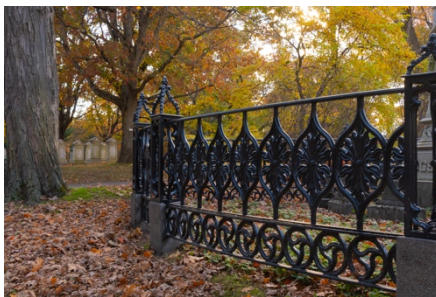
***Autumn Musings***

Swish, crunch, swish, crunch  
Why does the sound of walking  
    through  
autumn leaves move me so  
    deeply?  
It is visceral,  
coursing through my blood,  
    deep in my bones.  
Memories of raking leaves into  
    piles  
and jumping with delight,  
then raking, jumping, raking  
    and jumping again.  
Did my mom enjoy this autumn  
    delight  
growing up in Bridgeport,  
    Connecticut?  
Did my dad, in Malden, Mass?  
Did their parents, before them,  
    in Odessa or Vilnius?  
Swish, crunch, swish, crunch.  
~ Susan Bauchner



*Autumn Maple watercolor by Jan Ford*

Have you ever wondered how the leaves change their colors? Those beautiful reds, oranges and yellows are produced as the leaves bud out in the spring. However, they remain hidden while the tree photosynthesizes and produces the chlorophyll that keeps them green throughout the summer. When temperatures become cooler and days are shorter, the leaves are signaled to stop the production of chlorophyll and the other colors become visible. A quick read with more details is available from the [State University of New York College of Environmental Studies and Forestry](http://www.sunysccc.edu/EnvironmentalStudiesandForestry/)



*Mt. Auburn Cemetery  
photograph by Joan Robbio*

## ***Is It Safe To Use Roundup In Your Garden?***

**Stephan Miller, Environment Chair**

Monsanto's Roundup's primary ingredient, the one that kills the plants, is a chemical called glyphosate, an organophosphate compound which is a broad spectrum herbicide. It also contains other chemicals that enhance its activity. Most toxicity studies have been done on glyphosate alone because all the other ingredients in Roundup are thought to be biologically inert. This may not be the case as some studies have shown that the detergents used in the formulation of herbicides, that facilitate the entry of the glyphosate into plant cells (and, incidentally, animal cells) can disrupt the metabolism of the cell enough to kill it.



Roundup is more efficient at inducing birth defects in frogs than is pure glyphosate. For this reason, it is important to distinguish between toxicity studies using glyphosate and those using Roundup. Currently, there is some indication that glyphosate itself causes lymphoma in animals when administered at high levels such as lifetime feeding experiments.

Toxicity studies done 40 years ago, upon the introduction of glyphosate, indicated that it is generally safe for humans and other animals if used in the amounts that were tested. Unfortunately, the amount of glyphosate based herbicides used on crops has increased more than 100-fold since that time because of the increasing resistance of weeds that grow in agricultural fields.

More recent studies in animals show that glyphosate may increase the incidence of lymphoma. Such studies cannot be done in humans, but recent epidemiological looks at farm and industrial workers exposed to glyphosate show a weak link to increased cancer at very high levels of exposure. These levels of exposure are far in excess of what a careful home gardener would encounter.

The current consensus among the world's pesticide regulatory agencies is that herbicides containing glyphosate, used as directed, show very low toxicity and no association with increased incidence of cancer. That being said, this is an active area of research because of the exponentially increasing levels used on agricultural crops. Also, the widespread long term use of glyphosate based herbicides would have uncovered any acute toxicity or carcinogenicity but more subtle effects need to be investigated.

What we are left with is a possible weak association of high levels of glyphosate with increased incidence of lymphoma in humans. What, then, is the fate of glyphosate once it is sprayed into the environment? It appears that the chemical breaks down, under most conditions, in less than a few days, into environmentally benign breakdown products. Of course, at the levels currently being used in agriculture, even a short half-life means that the chemical could persist in soil and water for some time, but in the home garden, it is probably mostly gone within in a few days.

Personally, I do not use chemically synthesized insecticides in my garden, choosing instead to use vegetable oils, soaps and alcohol and then only for bad infestations of insects or outbreaks of plant diseases. I do use Roundup occasionally for poison ivy and persistent invasive weeds such as Oriental bittersweet. If you choose to use synthetic chemicals in your garden, you should use them as sparingly as possible, wear long sleeves, long pants, long rubber gloves, don't apply pesticides or herbicides of any kind on windy days and, now that we all have them around, wear a face mask for extra added protection. Be careful out there.

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### ***Little kitchen garden “hack” I recently picked up...***

#### ***Juliette Avots***

I'm now growing scallions on my kitchen windowsill. I am sharing it with my Garden Club friends via the newsletter. Include it if you see fit.

**How to regrow green onions from scraps:** Just snip off the very bottom root end of your scallions and place them in water or potting soil.

[Grow onions](#)



**A New Favorite Native Plant: *Monarda Punctata*  
(aka Spotted Beebalm, Horsemint)**

*Karen MacKinnon*

When we decided to redo our backyard with an emphasis on native plants, we included 5 small plugs of *Monarda punctata*. That was 2 years ago. It has re-seeded generously resulting in a whimsical look - I call it "Dr. Seussical."

It is very happy in dry, sunny conditions and tolerates poor soils and drought once established. Loved by many pollinators, it has a long bloom time with the dried flower heads providing extended interest. It grows to 1.5' to 2.5' in height with about a 1' spread. Also, rabbits are not interested in this plant!!



**UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL**





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## **Free Topsoil**

In 50-lb. sandbags in driveway.  
You can bring smaller bags to split up the large bags.

### **Contact:**

David Dobrin - 1707 Cambridge Street - Cambridge

Email: [david@b2banalysts.com](mailto:david@b2banalysts.com)

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## ***Members' Corner***

Please update your *Yearbook*

Mary Lynch (who recently rejoined)

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Anyone interested in Morning  
Glory seeds, please email *Nancy  
Pike*, she'll save some for you.



*Ipomoea purpurea*