



ARLINGTON GARDEN CLUB

The Perennial

October 2025

Issue 2

ArlingtonGarden.org

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President's Message

Greetings My Fellow Gardeners,

Welcome! We started off our program year with Kathie Skinner's informative presentation on groundcovers, which, if you didn't hear it, includes trees! If you are thinking of replacing grass with groundcovers, her **handout** is an excellent starting point. It's also available on our website under Member Resources.

Speaking of Kathie, thanks to a loan of the Town Hall audio equipment, we could hear her! Over the summer, the Board researched suitable PA systems for our meetings, and several members commented on how well the Town Hall system worked. The Board plans to purchase a similar system.

I have become a big fan of The Garden Lady, otherwise known as C. L. Fornari. C.L. is based in Sandwich, MA. She has had a call-in radio program on the Cape for several years, and recently, her program started broadcasting on WGBH (89.7 FM) on Saturdays at 1 pm. I find



her to be very knowledgeable about plants and non-judgmental with callers, no matter what their horticultural maladies or missteps are. Her website is <https://gardenlady.com/>. And, she has a magnificent garden (shown here), which she kindly opened for the Cape's Hydrangea Festival. I visited on a gorgeous Sunday in July, reveled in its beauty and found her out lopping an overhanging branch. Other attendees started asking her gardening questions, to which she kindly replied.

Emily, your President

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2025

Supercharging Landscapes for Watershed Health

Jennifer Fraulo Strassfeld, educator with the Mystic River Watershed Association



Jennifer will speak about how engineers in Arlington and neighboring towns use plants and soils in “green infrastructure” projects to ease flooding and reduce discharge to waterways. Jennifer will discuss simple ways you, as a gardener, can reduce pollutants from getting into our water supply.

The meeting begins at 10:30 am at St. John’s Church, corner of Pleasant St. and Lombard Rd., Arlington

Reminder: Lunch along with coffee, tea and desserts will be provided by our fellow members.

Program for November

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2025

Women Floral Painters Through the Centuries

Martha Chiarchiaro

Martha is an art history educator with more than 30 years of experience studying the life and times of people through their art. Martha will explore the floral and fauna illustrations of the following woman artists: Maria Sibylla Merian, Rachel Ruysch, Mary Moser, Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt and Georgia O’Keeffe. and how their work reveals different truths about the times in which they lived.



Illustration by Maria Sibylla Merian

REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES

Garden Outreach

Jackie Keshian and Carol Nahigian, co-chairs

On September 25, 2025, members of Garden Outreach resumed visits with residents of the BrightView Senior Center after their summer hiatus.

Carol Nahigian, Charleen Donahue, Donna McGowan, Barbara Neenan, Janet Pagliuca, and Robin Watkins brought seasonal flowers, containers, and decorative ribbon used by the residents to create lovely flower arrangements for their rooms or common areas. It was great to see familiar faces and meet new residents, too. Everyone enjoyed socializing. The next visit will be on Thursday, October 30th.



Civic Development

Patsy Kraemer, Chair

Bet you didn't know... but many years ago the Arlington Garden Club did not have a Civic Development Committee and did not do any community development volunteerism for the Arlington community.

Then two previous Club members, Fritz Galley and Trish Webb, approached the Garden Club Board with their lament: Arlington was not taking care of town property, specifically traffic islands and planters. They ranted that the town basically looked terrible, trashy, and unkempt. They were on a tirade!

Also, at that time, another previous Club member, Ruth Yannetti, worked for the Arlington Department of Public Works. She was in charge of those traffic islands and planters and their upkeep.

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REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES

Civic Development, *continued from previous page*

So we (the Board) put them together. We suggested that Fritz and Trish form a Civic Development Committee for the Club and we suggested that Ruth form an alliance between DPW and the Garden Club to enhance these public spaces. And they all agreed!

And over the years the civic development work has grown dramatically. There are now 63 islands and planters beautifying Arlington. There is a system of sponsorship wherein the islands and planters are maintained by various individual volunteers, various Arlington businesses, and several landscaping companies. The DPW department underwrites the cost of the signage for the locations, which is a key inducement for the businesses and landscapers in doing this program.



Ridge Street Circle island

Now, as you drive around Arlington and walk Mass Ave., pay attention to the beautification that has taken place because of this Civic Development work! The plantings in the islands and planters are beautiful sights to see! We have much to be proud of, thanks to the “lament” that Fritz and Trish had!

Any of you remember Trish and Fritz? Trish moved back to Seattle when her husband’s work took them back there and Fritz has moved to a retirement community in Reading.

We have much to be thankful to them!

Environment

Lolly Bennett, chair

What Do You Value about Nature In Arlington? Arlington is taking a significant step toward a sustainable future by supporting work on the Nature Futures Framework (NFF), a global initiative led by the United Nations affiliate Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). This groundbreaking research project, in collaboration with Tufts University, aims to develop a blueprint for cities and towns to harmonize the needs of nature and people, setting a precedent for local efforts worldwide.

As a first step, the Town invites us to **take and share this survey**, which asks about your preferences for outdoor activities and why nature is (or is not) important. Results from the survey and other components of the NFF will be used in Town planning efforts and to inform the implementation of the Framework globally. Further events and outreach efforts are planned. For updates, visit the Arlington Nature Futures website **here**.

And also from the Environment Committee...

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22ND AT 10:30 AM

Tour of Wright-Locke Farm

The environment is all around us, and there's lots going on in our backyard. As of 2015, the 12 acres that make up Wright-Locke Farm are now protected from development thanks to the hard work of many in Winchester and beyond. The organization that now runs the Farm, the Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy, has created a hub for sustainable agriculture and active learning, and an appreciation of this historic New England farm.

This 90-minute tour will be led by staff at Wright-Locke Farm. The tour is limited to 15 people with a suggested \$10 donation to the farm. Depending on interest, additional tours may be offered in the future. Please let Andrea Golden andgold@comcast.net know if you plan to attend. Details at the October 15 meeting.

Wright-Locke Farm in Winchester



And here's a friendly reminder for our birds and pollinators



MORE EVENTS OF INTEREST

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 7 PM

Stories from the Stacks

Friends of the Robbins Library

Robbins Library Community Room

Retired Library Director Maryellen Remmert-Loud shares her perspective on the history of the Arlington libraries and how library services adapted to the needs of the community from the 1800's to the present day. Significant developments in collections and programs will be highlighted. The presentation will include photographs of the exterior and interior of the majestic Robbins Library through the years from 1892 and pictures of residents enjoying library programs and services. The audience will learn about the four women who led the library for 128 years of its 190-year history and will hear anecdotes from the past including several humorous stories about the 1990 renovation and expansion project at the Robbins Library.



Historic postcard of Robbins Library

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 6:30 PM VIA ZOOM, FREE

Pollinator Pathway | Fall Webinar with Uli Lorimer

Uli Lorimer is the Director of Horticulture for the Native Plant Trust

Do straight native species provide more for insects than cultivars? Is genetic diversity crucially important in ecological horticulture? Uli will explore both the promise and complexity of gardening for ecological health—examining the assumptions, challenges, and opportunities that shape this field.



The central message is clear: by welcoming more native plants into our gardens, we can strengthen local connectivity and foster thriving wildlife habitats, even as the science continues to evolve. Uli will use examples from the Northeast, but much of the message will translate to other parts of the country. **Here's the link**

MORE EVENTS OF INTEREST

FRIDAY OCTOBER 17, 10 AM-12 NOON

Visit to Radcliffe's Schlesinger Library

Arlington Garden Club

There's still room to participate in this unique opportunity to explore the Schlesinger Library. Radcliffe educated many women in landscape design. The group will meet with a librarian to learn about the library's collections and explore the library. Please let Emily Snyder ells.ells0306@gmail.com know by Friday October 10th if you're interested in attending.



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1-2:30 PM

OR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1 - 2:30 PM

Awash in Color

Mt. Auburn Cemetery

During peak color at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Jim Gorman, the knowledgeable Visitors Services Assistant, will take us to some of the more colorful trees, and look for plants and shrubs putting out their fall fruits and nuts. He's good.

\$7/\$14 member/non-member. [Register here](#)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1-3 PM

West Roxbury: The Residential Fall Landscape

Native Plant Trust

What does "leave the leaves" look like in practice? Daphne Minner cares for her urban yard entirely by hand—no power tools—and has 227 plant species (60% native to Massachusetts). She welcomes us to her home to see and discuss best practices for overwintering a pollinator garden. She will also point out birds, mammals, and insect species that utilize the leaves and stems typically removed in conventional gardens.

\$40, address when you register. [Register here](#)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 5:30-6:30 PM

Leave the Leaves, Save the Stems

Native Plant Trust

Learn why changes to fall cleanup can benefit our ecosystem and how to manage the practical and aesthetic concerns that arise when we keep autumn materials on home or community properties. The instructor, Kathy Connolly, is a landscape designer, writer, and speaker who emphasizes earth-friendly designs, native plants, and low-impact land care techniques. \$25. [Register here](#)



MEMBERS' CORNER October 2025

We welcome the following new and returning members to the Arlington Garden Club.

Aurora Sanfeliz

Maria P. Russo

Marie LaCour

And the Award Goes to...*The Perennial*

At the spring meeting of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts (GCFM), the Arlington Garden Club won an award for its newsletter, *The Perennial*, for the best newsletter serving a large garden club. Emily Snyder submitted the nomination.

The current editor, Peggy Bliss, and designers, Andrea Golden and Annie Grear, worked together in publishing before retiring and joining the AGC. Emily, the previous editor, saw a golden opportunity when they joined. Since Fall 2023, this new team has been producing the newsletter.

The Perennial has a long history. We think it started as a print publication in the 1960s. Since then its editorship has been handed down to willing and able—or, more appropriately, willing and able to learn—members; Jan Ford and Emily Snyder to name two.



If you miss an issue, or want to see an older one, the newsletters are posted on the AGC website.