



# The GRAPEVINE

June 2017

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## From the President's Desk - Pat Jessup

Thank you! for a great and successful "Secret Gardens of Oxford" tour and "Shed Sale". I'm grateful for everyone's support from ticket takers to docents, homeowners and donors, shed sales support and most especially to the husbands that helped. The weather was amazing (thank goodness) and we sold a LOT of tickets the day of the event. I don't know exactly how many people took the tour but I've heard nothing but positive comments. The gross total from all sources was a little over \$10,000! (Net will be reported after all expenses are in). We can now rest on our laurels and get ready for a fun time at Dorothy Williams' house on July 6 at the summer garden party. Don't forget to don your hat!

If you are like me, you've briefly glanced through the new Flower Show and Horticulture handbooks. The coming hot days of July & August will be good for staying in air conditioned spaces and getting caught up on reading, including the handbooks. We can also get a jumpstart on understanding the new design classes at the demonstration on July 12 in Cambridge. I encourage all of you to attend. If you've misplaced the email with information on how to register for this preparation for the District I Flower Show in September, let me know and I'll get it to you asap. You can also find it on the FGCMD website. Also, don't forget to plant those zinnia seeds for the District I horticulture challenge. There's still time to plant, so if you haven't purchased seeds, please contact Terry Holman.

Phyllis Gaiti is off on a Mediterranean cruise (lucky lady) but when she returns we'll be analyzing award opportunities for our club. Planned submissions include the museum garden redesign. Speaking of awards, Terry Holman, who attended the National Convention in Richmond, learned that we won national recognition for the flower show, "A Bloomin' Wedding". How great is that--a national award for a club that's just over 10 years old. I'm impressed! The actual certificate will be awarded later at a District I meeting.

## Programs - Ingrid Blanton & Marybeth Guerrieri

**July 6, 2017**—Garden Party at the home of Club member Dorothy Williams, noon-3:00 p.m.

**August**—NO MEETING. Enjoy your garden.

**September 7, 2017**—"Embracing Diversity with Native and Non-Native Plants". This is a joint Meeting with Dorchester Garden Club. Barbara Ellis will help us increase the variety of beneficial plants and planting practices.

**October 5, 2017**—"Delaware Botanic Gardens, A Coastal Plain Public Garden coming to the Delmarva Peninsula". Ruth Rogers Clausen will present a lecture and slide show describing how the new coastal gardens in Dagsboro, DE focus on the bridge between horticulture and ecology. **NOTE change of venue St. Paul's Church.**

## Horticulture Tidbits - Sue Betz

A product that is new to me for those that have a deer problem. These are battery operated wands that can be moved about that eliminate constant spraying. [www.wirelessdeerfence.com](http://www.wirelessdeerfence.com).

If anyone is going touring in D.C. stop by the new exhibit in the American History Museum. The show is in a small gallery on the museum's ground floor, it's named "Cultivating America's Gardens".

At the Garden Tour Party there was a good size onion growing in the planter on the food table. It is called Egyptian Walking Onion. They have top setting bulbs that are dry and can be planted the following year. I have found a source for the bulb or seed in a 2014 Richters Herb and Vegetable Catalog. A great source from a Canadian Company. Email, [OrderDesk@Richters.com](mailto:OrderDesk@Richters.com) or call 1 800-668-4372. Also available from them is the little vining plant that was on the small trellis. It is known as American Passion Flower. This is an Herb (Maypop) an important sedative used to treat insomnia, anxiety, and restlessness. Very safe. The herb is taken as a tea or a tablet. It also produces lovely purple and white sweet scented flowers and an edible fruit. I bought my plant at the little grocery store in St. Michael's on Talbot and Chestnut Streets.

*"To Plant a Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow"*  
Audrey Hepburn

## FGCMD, Inc. - District I Standard Flower Show “A Blast from the Past”

We invite all members of District I Garden Clubs to participate in our first District Horticultural Challenge! We wanted this challenge to be educational, fun and easy. Zinnias are perhaps one of the easiest and beautiful flowering annuals that you can grow. Purchase Special Zinnia Seed packets from your Garden Club for \$2 per packet \*Proceeds benefit flower show. The Flower Show Schedule will offer two classes for each of the Zinnia cultivar varieties; container grown AND ground grown. (Experiment with both options). Suggest planting half of your seeds mid to late June and the other half in early to mid July.. Read attached Zinnia Growing and Exhibiting Tips and note that zinnia challenge specimens will be exhibited in the flower show as CUT flowering specimens.

### Zinnia Growing Tips—Terry Holman

Zinnias are a warm-season annual that prefers full sun or at least 5-6 hours of full sun daily. Place zinnia seed in soil spacing 9-12” apart, covering seed with ¼” of soil. Water well. Typically zinnias will germinate in 2-7 days. \*Note that when I lived in Florida, I planted zinnia seed in the morning in 92-degree heat with 100 percent humidity and they germinated by lunch! To speed germination, soak seeds in water the night before you plant them.

Zinnias are a Composite type of flower having both disk and ray flowers.

**Zinnias may take 75-90 days to bloom.**

**Harvest/Condition: 9/19/17**

**Date to enter Horticulture Specimens: 9/20/17 Date of Flower Show: 9/21/17**

Zinnias grow well in purchased container soil growing medium with the addition of slow release fertilizers. They benefit from a 2” mulch layer and regular watering.

Zinnias grow well in ground soils that are augmented with compost/well composted manures and a slow release fertilizer addition with a 2” mulch layer and regular watering.

The better the soil, the healthier and stronger colored the flowers will be and the plants tend to be more robust, able to fight off powdery mildew, plant diseases and insect damage.

**MOST DIFFICULT TASK FOR MOST GARDENERS:** \*This truly is the challenge!

When zinnia plants are 8” tall, using clean, by-pass cutters, cut at base of plant just above two sets of leaves. This practice encourages side branching which will yield more flowering branches. Better to wait for plant to branch and grow more blooms later than to see a single first bloom!

KEEP THE BLOOMS COMING by harvesting flowers at least EVERY week. Always cut the blooms at the base of the stem, just above a set of leaves. New flowering stems will grow from this junction. Harvesting every week will encourage the plant to keep trying to make seed and keeps the plant growing robustly. This method also is an excuse to enjoy your cut flowers in vases inside or to share with neighbors. Throw old/past prime zinnias into the compost heap and always cut spent flowers to encourage the zinnia plant to continue to create blooms.

**HARVESTING – the best time to cut the zinnia for indoor vase enjoyment is early in the morning or late in the afternoon, AFTER WATERING 8-12 hours before harvesting. Cut the flowering stem just as the little yellow flowers (stamens) begin to develop in the center. This is the PRIME, MATURE state that will give your cut zinnias long vase life. Note: For non-Flower show enjoyment, cut the zinnias before the yellow ray florets are formed. These last longer in the vase.**



***Zinnia elegans* ‘Dahlia’**  
(Dahlia Zinnia)  
HT: 38-40”  
4-5” Blooms  
Mix of Colors



***Zinnia elegans* ‘Pumilla’**  
(Pompon Zinnia)  
HT: 18-24”  
Round 2” Blooms  
Mix of Colors



***Zinnia elegans* ‘Scabiosa’**  
(Crested Zinnia)  
HT: 28-30”  
3-4” crested blooms  
Mix of Colors



## Secret Garden Tour of Oxford

On a perfect Saturday, June 3, 2017, the Club hosted their bi-annual “Secret Garden of Oxford” tour. With such a perfect day and setting, over 200 visitors and members enjoyed the walk and drive to visit the eight gardens on the Tour and the many interesting items for sale at the Garden Shed. The Club is most grateful for the support and encouragement of garden owners who graciously agree to help with this fundraising event. The funds help “The objective of the Club shall be to promote the knowledge of gardening and flower design, to participate in civic projects in order to conserve and beautify the community and to actively support all forms of conservation” Here are some photos from the Tour courtesy of Susie Middleton.



The “after the Tour party”. Tour garden owners, volunteers, guests, and members enjoyed a much needed relaxing time to enjoy the success of the day. Photos courtesy of Dodi Sutton.





## Oxford Museum Garden update - Ingrid Blanton

You may have noticed that there have been changes to the Oxford Museum Garden this spring. When the museum bought the building in 2000 from the Bringman estate there was just grass with the Nellie Stevens Holly in the side yard where the garden is now.

The Museum added 2 benches, an Oxford fence with an opening on the front, a side fence, and a path using landscaping stones. In 2008 the Oxford Garden Club asked the museum board if we could create a garden for that space and they agreed. A garden club committee met and came up with a design, the museum board approved it, and we proceeded with building the garden. The original garden committee consisted of Marie Davis, Ingrid Blanton, Phyllis Rambo, Nancy Richards, Phyllis Gaiti, and Judy Schuler. We installed an oyster path in a cross pattern ending before the Nellie Stevens Holly. On either side of the path we amended the soil and we all brought plant material from our gardens to plant there. The crepe myrtle tree was donated by Fabulous Flowers and we purchased 2 hydrangeas, a beauty berry and several other plants. Phyllis Rambo and Gordon Graves built and installed a trellis on the side of the building for a Carolina jasmine a beautiful compass rose was painted and donated by an Oxford artist on the box covering the entrance to the crawl space on the side of the building. We have weeded, added plants, and generally tended the garden since.

Last year the Museum board, under the tutelage of president Pat Jessup, asked us if we would make some changes to the garden. A new volunteer committee was formed consisting of Pat Jessup, Phyllis Rambo, Ingrid Blanton, Nancy Richards and Linda Wilson. We received permission to take out the holly because it was too big for the space and Bartlett Tree removed it and the stump at no cost. We paid someone to dig out all the holly roots and we amended the soil where the holly had been. Oyster shells were removed from the path because they were too big, grass and weeds kept growing in the path and it was uncomfortable to walk on. They were replaced with stones donated by the town. In place of the holly we planted a crabapple 'sargentii'. It blooms pink in the spring, the flowers turn white and in the fall the leaves turn red and the berries are there for winter interest and for the birds. The garden path was continued around the tree and out to an opening in the Oxford fence which we added along the back of the garden. Tony Passerarella and Claude Maechling donated their time and materials to make the fence. With funds provided by the museum and the garden club we were able to purchase some new plant material. We planted holly hocks in front of the back fence and iris from the garden on the back of the fence, a knockout rose, a new hydrangea, lots of thyme, dianthus, and geranium for edging the path, two spireas, some baptisia and an obelisk with a clematis. There is an oak-leaf climbing hydrangea on the trellis now. We thinned out some of the plants that were already there and donated them to the shed sale and also brought in plants from our own gardens. We are installing a rain barrel which was donated by Phyllis Rambo and Gordon Graves.

The garden looked beautiful this spring with flowering bulbs, followed by iris, peonies, nepeta, Russian sage and now day lilies. We will apply mulch now and then wait until the fall to see what else we need to do, although as we all know a garden is never finished. A trash enclosure and irrigation system will go in next year.

Please come by and sit and enjoy the garden if you haven't already done so. There will soon be a new bench donated by the museum in memory of Chuck Macintosh. We will continue to take care of the garden so thank you to all our members who work there on their gardening day.

*"Everything that slows us down and forces patience, everything that sets us back into the slow circles of nature, is a help. Gardening is an instrument of grace Ox*



## Oxford Garden Club Installation—March 2, 2017

Susie Middleton, former FGCMMD, Inc. District I Director installed OGC officers for the 2017-2019 term.



Left to right— Luann Madary, Treasurer, Susie Middleton, Dorothy Williams, Vice President, Sandy Wrightson, Secretary, and Pat Jessup. President



Pictured from left to right are former OGC Presidents.

2005-2007—Bonnie Stevens

2007-2009-Phyllis Rambo

2009-2011—missing from photo Marie Davis

2011-2013 Phyllis Gaiti

2013-2015—Carole Abruzzese

2015-2017—Marybeth Guerrieri

## FGCMD, Inc. District I Semi-Annual Meeting

Oxford Garden Club hosted the Federated Garden Clubs, MD District I semi-annual meeting held at the Oxford Community Center. On March 1, 2017.

Approximately 200 members were in attendance to celebrate the installation of District I officers for the 2017-2019 term. Awards were presented during the morning session followed by luncheon and speaker Anna O'Kelly who demonstrated flower arranging in the ikebana style.



Janet Doehler "pinning" Anne Foss  
as Nicki Schwab looks on

Newly installed District I Director Anne Foss, Nicki Schwab  
newly installed Board members Carole Abruzzese, Beryl Kemp, Diane Freestate  
and Frances Follmer

Table setting



Breakfast goodies



Award winners and certificate awardees  
(a complete list of all award winners is available  
on the FGCMD, Inc. website)



Ikebana flower arrangements



## Oxford Conservation Park—Marie Davis

The Oxford Conservation Park was established in 2016 as a Talbot County Recreational Facility in cooperation with Maryland and DNR Open Space County Council of Talbot County. This 90 plus acre park has been designed to encourage wildlife of all kinds with ponds, shrubs, trees, and nesting areas. Walking trails have been created and are being used by residents and visitors to enjoy the freedom of the open spaces.

Environmental Concern, a St. Michael's MD based company, prepared the plans for the pollinator gardens and suggested plants suitable for the area and Talbot County Council funded the purchase of the plants. Along with high school students from Easton High School, MD, members of Oxford Garden Club joined in planting the pollinator gardens.

Much work remains to be done to complete the gardens including mulching in which Oxford Garden Club members are participating.

Pollinator plantings includes: *Aquilegia* (red columbine); *Aster novae-angliae* (New England Aster); *Andropogon virginicus* (Broomsedge); *Baptisia tinctoria* (wild indigo); *Casmanthium taxum* (slender wood oats); *Coreopsis verticillata* (threadleaf Coresopsis); *Eupatorium caelestinum* (mistflower); *Monarda fistulosa* (wild bergemont); *Penstemon digitalis* (Beardstongue); *Panicum virgatum* (switchgrass); *Rudbeckia fulgida* (black-eyed Susan); *Solidago adora* (sweet-scented goldenrod).

Here are some of the sites we saw while mulching:

Here are some of the sites we were lucky to see while mulching:



Turtles trying NOT to get too friendly



Lovely spot for a picnic



Male bluebird wondering where the family went



Two Mallard drakes and one hen , mmmmm which one will win!!!!

## Oxford Garden Club Salutes Veterans

On Memorial Day 2017, members of the Oxford community, family, friends, and visitors were invited to join members of the Oxford Garden Club to honor veterans, past, president and future at the site of the Blue Star Memorial in Oxford Park. Members of the U.S. Coast Guard, Captain William, S/ Dial, MSC, USN (Ret.), Reverend Joan Wolff, Oxford United Methodist Church, Sandy Wrightson Lt. Colonel Pam Keeton, U.S. Army Reserve (Ret.), Maryland Senator Addie Eckhardt, Tom H. Reynolds, Jr. Lieutenant USCG (Re.t) all took part in the ceremony. FGCMMD, Inc. District I Director Anne Foss and Oxford Garden Club President Pat Jessup laid a wreath and Tom Hehman played Taps.



USCG Oxford

William S. Dial



Rev. Joan Wolff



Sandy Wrightson



Pam Keeton



Sen. Addie Eckhardt



Pat Jessup and Anne Foss



Tom H. Reynolds, Jr.



## NorthBay Education—excerpted from NorthBay website

Dianna Bonner, FGCMMD, Inc. President for the term 2017-2019 has chosen this program as her project for her two-year term.

NorthBay is Maryland's premier environmental education and character development program, providing residential and in-school environmental education and character development programs to **over 15,000 public school students each school year**. The NorthBay mission is to challenge middle school students to realize that their attitudes and actions have a lasting impact on their future, the environment and the people around them by using approved and relevant curriculum, character development, and the outdoors as an integrating context. NorthBay celebrated 10 years of providing life-changing outdoor education experiences in 2015. In these past twelve years we **served over 160 Maryland schools from 15 of the 24 MD school districts**. Most impressively we have provided world class outdoor education and leadership training to **207,468 students in 659,829 days of instruction**.

### NorthBay is:

- The largest education program of its kind in the country providing innovative environmental and character education to public school students in the mid-Atlantic.
- Authentic, hands-on, & student directed issues investigation
- 100% Character Education
- 100% Environmental Education

### Our Goals:

- Academic achievement
- Environmental responsibility
- Character development
- Leadership
- To provide transformative experiences

NorthBay is a great opportunity for the students, not just educationally and personally, but also to build as a team, as a group. They will carry that bond all the way through middle school and into high school building initiatives. The dynamic and intentional day-time activities culminate each evening with an original multi-media theater production during which students are led to understand the connection between their decisions, the environment and their future.

To make a contribution to NorthBay please send checks to FGCMMD Office, P.O Box 65172, Baltimore, MD 21209-0172 and note NorthBay on the memo line.

## OGC welcomes new members:

Alice Collins  
4340 Bachelor's Point Road  
Oxford, MD 21654  
410 226-5255  
alicemisc@yahoo.com      j

June Middleton (Master Gardner)  
27855 Bent Farm Lane  
Oxford, MD 21601  
410 226-7655  
June.middleton@gmail.com

Ellen Schiller (Tom)  
101 Fist Street  
Oxford, MD 21654  
301 518-4856  
ellenschiller51@gmail.com

Susan Fitzgerald (Reid)  
7861 Woodlawn Circle  
Easton, MD 21601  
301 602-9398  
rsfitzgeralds1@gmail.com

Danuta Olson-Schussler (James)  
903 South Morris Street  
Oxford, MD 21654  
815 236-5465  
doschuessler@msn.com

## Holy Trinity Lunch Bunch

The preparation of 4th of July flower arrangements this time was aided by the grandchildren of Dorothy Williams. Ella and Leuck who added notes for the lunch bunch recipients to let them know how special they are.



## My First National Gardening Club Annual Convention - Terry Holman

If you would have asked me if I would be attending a NGC Annual Convention meeting 10 years ago I would have laughed at you! This spring I found myself not only attending this convention and was an official delegate for FGCM, Inc. as well as a Committee Member of the NGC Board as a member of the new Sponsorship and Partnership Committee. This year's NGC Convention was held in Richmond, VA. They have special hotel rates for attendees and you can always double up with a buddy to cut costs. Registration must be done way in advance which includes optional tours, lunches, special breakfasts and dinners.

For the record, I quickly discovered that most of the attendees had never attended the convention before so I was not alone as a first-timer. As each convention is held in states all over the nation. These conventions tend to be attended well by those who live in proximity to the venue. If you are part of the NGC Board, you need to arrive by Monday of Convention Week and likely you will be attending scads of meetings on Monday-Wednesday. If you are coming to enjoy, they do an incredible job of planning interesting garden tours and take care of everything including the transportation, drinks, lunch and special tour guides. They have scads of tours to take and the neat ones fill up fast. The lobby is filled with incredible floral designs and vignettes created by host State Floral Designers. There are tons of vendors for shopping, lots of workshops and fabulous speakers covering subjects such as their new Flower Show Handbook, Floral Design Techniques from top National Designers and extraordinary Horticulturalists. There are NGC meetings where you can view the smooth and professional handling of NGC Board meetings tending to necessary business meetings, the changing of bylaws and my favorite, the two minute reports from each State Garden Club President. Each President often had a unique presentation sharing their state achievements. The funniest President was the Alaskan Garden Club President in charge of 4 garden clubs (yes, there are only 4 garden clubs in Alaska) where they had to fly to visit each other for meetings and functions as there are no roads between them. She was so nervous that she started out telling the crowd that they were all naked and that while she was from Alaska, damn this room was cold! The Southern Region State Presidents joked that they needed more time on account of their slow, endearing, Southern Drawls. Their request was respectfully denied. A time monitor kept each speaker to their allotted time.

Formal Luncheon and Dinner dining does not begin until Wednesday evening during Convention week. We headed to a local restaurant on Tuesday evening called, "Juleps", a small place where I sampled one of the best mint juleps of my life from an icy silver cup from their bourbon bar. My companions included the Current Presidents of CT and NJ, the NJ President Elect, the new CAR Director, and a couple of nice women from NJ on my NGC Committee. We feasted on fried green tomatoes, shrimp and grits, fried oysters and pecan pie. Yum!

Every Day from Thursday on, they featured a brief bit of business and featured a top-notch speaker or awards presentations. EVERY meal had unique centerpieces and one lucky attendee at the table would get to take it home. They have a Flower Show room where a staff of women from VA would create floral designs for lunch and dinner every day during the convention! Usually they had to prepare 50 centerpieces for every lunch and dinner offered (7x50=350 designs in total!). They don't let you sit with your buddies for the most part. Every dining meal you had to pick a table number and got the opportunity to meet and chat with fabulous gardeners from all over. One of my table lunches I sat next to the Maria

who was the South American person in charge of Flower Show Judge Credentials. Her English wasn't great and my Spanish was rusty but we spoke Latin as in Binomial Nomenclature. She had never seen spaghetti squash before as it was served with turkey meatballs for our lunch. We discussed how to grow it and how to serve it. I used my smartphone to help her understand how to cook and shred it into ribbons finding a short Youtube video demonstrating how to prepare this interesting squash. She was amazed and I hooked her up later with seeds to grow it from a vendor.

I should note that there were typically 50 tables or more seating 500 diners for each lunch and dinner. The food was really terrific and the desserts were divine. They had amazing audio-visual equipment and you could always see and hear the speaker on any one of three large screens. One of the speakers was P. Allen Smith and he was most enjoyable with his "Huckleberry" cartoon drawl, as he spoke of Moss Garden Farms, his place in Arkansas. It was during the Awards night that I learned that the Oxford Garden Club won a National Standard Flower Show Achievement Award! For some reason, the presenter announced our specific flower show, "Bloomin' Wedding" as they presented NGC awards and ribbons to Dianna Bonner, our FGCM President. I got to see the award later!

Everyone always dresses for dinner. You really need to pack smart to have enough nice outfits for meetings during the day, outfits for touring and special dining outfits and don't forget about all the shoes. My roommate, Jeannie actually broke her zipper on her big bag upon arrival as it literally exploded! I was able to repair it using a drapery hook and some luck. I discovered that the Saturday night dinner was the most special night of the week. It was at this function that they performed the installations of the newly elected officers into their positions with lots of formal pomp and circumstance. I saw women wearing tiaras and ball gowns! I learned that in the days gone by that ballgowns, tiaras and white gloves were usually donned during this prominent occasion. We got to sit with our friends from FGCM at this last Installation banquet, they celebrated afterwards with champagne, and special treats in the halls where they had fabulous mannequins dressed in botanical finery. So fun! The South American Affiliates wore traditional costumes and danced around grabbing attendees to join them.

My week ended after attending a meeting on Sunday morning where my Committee was ratified.

Such a cool week and I never met a stranger! I connected with dozens and dozens of women and was extremely proud of this organization and prouder to be an active participant of it. This is truly what I love about NGC, we can be happy being an active



## My First National Convention (cont'd.)

Such a cool week and I never met a stranger! I connected with dozens and dozens of women and was extremely proud of this organization and prouder to be an active participant of it. This is truly what I love about NGC, we can be happy being an active member of our local garden club and if we want to get more involved with a specific topic or board position, we can easily work up to being active in District, State, Region or our NGC Board. This organization is strong from the head down to the toes. We garden together, we strive to be environmentally supportive, we assist our pollinators, we beautify our towns and we grow friendships.

Next spring, the NGC National Convention will be in Philadelphia! This convention is very close to us and they already planned for a stunner of a convention with incredible tours and an incredible hotel venue. We should get a bunch together and attend as it is close by and so interesting. Check on the NGC website for details about this amazing convention. I hope to see y'all there!

MD attendees Carolyn Braverman, Sylvia Deck, Diana Bonner, Anna O'Kelly, Nicki Schwab, Terry Holman



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Contributors to this issue: Ingrid Blanton, Marie Davis, Marybeth Guerrieri, Terry Holman, Pat Jessup, Susie Middleton, and Dodi Sutton

The Grapevine is produced by Marie Davis edited this time by Phyllis Rambo