



# Gardenline

FALL

2013

## The Gardeners' Bag of Tricks

### What do you carry in your garden tool bag?

I BECAME INTRIGUED by this question while working with Program Assistant Jean Hersey in the Green Spring Family Garden. We were doing some direct seed sowing in the garden, when Jean turned to me and said, "Here, take my fondue fork. I never go to any garden job without a fondue fork." I was puzzled. I had never heard of anyone using a fondue fork in the garden. "Oh yes. I use it to make holes to sow seeds and use it to mark where a plant should go. It has all kinds of uses. Oh yeah. And duct tape." Fondue forks? Duct tape?

So I started asking gardeners: What do you carry in your garden tool bag? The unanimous tool favorites among Green Spring staff were the Japanese Hori Hori soil knife for digging into tough clay soil and cutting through root balls (hori is Japanese for "dig"), the Japanese angle-necked weeder for working up shallow-rooted weeds, Felco pruners for keeping plants trimmed up, the Wilcox pointed trowel, and a tip bag or trug to collect weeds.

I agree. These are tools every gardener should have and the reason why the Green Spring Garden gift shop keeps them in stock. I started giving angled weeders away as gifts because people were loath to return mine once they tried it. I also love the Hori Hori knife except for

one design flaw: The natural wood handle blends in with the garden surroundings and I have all too often misplaced it. I lose it in the fall and find it in the garden sometime in early spring, somewhat the worse for wear. Needless to say, I own lots of replacement Hori Hori knives. Gardener James Van Meter says he sticks his Hori Hori knife straight into the ground instead of laying it down flat so chances are better for finding it again. Another solution would be to wrap the handle in bright tennis racket grip tape (or Jean's colored duct tape) so the knife is easier to spot. As I relocate them, I'll be sure to do that.

Propagation specialists Judy Zatsick and Mary Frogale both named the root knife as a multi-purpose tool of choice. This knife has a serrated edge and curved tip and is designed to cut through root systems to divide plants. It is also great for opening containers. Along the same line as the fondue fork, gardener Carol Miranda carries chop sticks to sow seeds, mark plant locations and to stake small plants that flop over. A little twine or a twist tie, and your plant is once again standing proud. My sister-in-law gave me a spool of cut-to-length twist tie that she purchased at a hardware store for just this sort of purpose. Very useful.

Local horticulturalist Karen Rexrode carries an inexpensive camera in her tool bag so she can document changes in the garden. Great idea. This is especially handy in noting where your flowering bulbs are buried. Heaven knows we have all mistakenly unearthed a few bulbs.

Green Spring manager Mary Olien says she always has flower scissors in her bag to help with deadheading annuals and perennials. The scissors make for quick, precise cuts with little damage to the plant. But sometimes you want the flowers to set seed, and horticulturist Nancy Olney is prepared. She always carries coin envelopes and a pencil in her tool bucket to collect seed from prized plants to sow for the next gardening season. She even offers envelopes of seed to her garden volunteers.

So what do *I* carry in my tool bag?

In addition to the must-haves (Hori Hori knife, angled weeder, Felco pruners, Wilcox trowel, and trug), I carry a small spray bottle of rubbing alcohol to immediately disinfect my tools before putting them away. A light spray on my pruners and I can reduce the spread of plant viruses and fungus. The alcohol doesn't promote rust and

*Continued on page 3*

## Manager's Message



### *To Enjoy the Garden Is to Interact with the Garden*

AS A PUBLIC GARDEN with education and creativity a strong part of our mission, we love it when our displays inspire you to interact with the garden. This year three new exhibits entice you to do just that. All three are close to the Horticulture Center, giving you a chance to visit each, even if you only have a few minutes.

Engage children in the garden as kids, and they will be engaged in the garden as adults. Step through the eastern red cedar arch into the Family Garden behind the Horticulture Center. Kids and adults alike are immediately drawn to the brightly colored planting bags hanging from the house-shaped arbor. Wondering what's growing there brings them to take a look. Small children immediately note the trowels and watering cans and help themselves to some impromptu gardening.

Over the past six months Susan Eggerton and her education team of Jean Hersey, Ann DiFiore, Mary McLean, Christine Braswell and Valerie Thibeault have brought new life to the Family Garden. The design and the plants beckon as you stroll the gravel drive from the central path. Take a moment to sit on the bench while the antics of children and wildlife engage you in this garden.

Perhaps you yearn to be more physically engaged, but sweating in the sunshine is not what you had in mind. Step across the drive from the Family Garden to the Children's Garden, just outside the multipurpose room, where time moves with the sunshine. A human sundial has been installed in the center of the garden.\* This collaborative project involved creative thinking and planning by the Green Spring Master Gardeners who help maintain this garden. They handcrafted the markers for the dial and enlisted Boy Scouts from Troop 1128 in Vienna to do the installation. Giving a child a time limit has never been as much fun.

Step outside the Atrium in the Horticulture Center and step into another world, an undersea world. Who knew you could find an ersatz coral reef in Northern Virginia? How did this Coral Reef Garden come about? Leslie Garcia, Assistant Gardener under Nancy Olney, tells us:

It was winter, quiet and cold, when horticulturist Nancy Olney said, "Let's make a Coral Reef Garden!" My response was "A what?" She said she'd been thinking about creating one for a couple of years. We came up with a plan and sent out the word—collect aluminum cans! Many, many volunteer hours later we cut out 1,000 "fish" then wired each with one glass bead onto a fishing line swivel. The panels were painted, stucco mesh was cut, painted, and screwed on, undulating across the flat panels. We studded the mesh with 500 rebar ties, each producing two prongs for holding two fish. May was coming to a close when we began hanging the fish and planting the tropical succulents.

Thank you, wonderful volunteers, for your patience, detailed work and especially, sharing your exquisite joy as it all came together!

*Continued on page 3*

## Gardenline

MANAGER:

Mary Olien

EDITORS:

Sunny Greene, Susan Voss

DESIGN AND LAYOUT:

Don Christian

Contributions? Comments?  
The editorial staff would like to hear from you.

Please contact us through

Gardenline  
Green Spring Gardens  
4603 Green Spring Rd.  
Alexandria, VA 22312

703.642.5173

TTY: 703.803.3351

**Gardenline** is a newsletter published jointly by Green Spring Gardens and Friends of Green Spring (FROGS). Green Spring Gardens is administered by the Fairfax County Park Authority's Resource Management Division. For more information, call the park at

703-642-5173

or write:

Green Spring Gardens  
4603 Green Spring Road  
Alexandria, VA 22312  
TTY: 703-803-3351

A publication of  
Fairfax County, VA



If accommodations or alternative formats are needed, please call 703-324-8563 at least 10 working days before the event.

## MANAGER'S MESSAGE

*Continued from page 2*

We know our activities are not just observed but also re-interpreted in our visitors' home landscapes. At least two people have told me they are examining parts of the Coral Reef Garden, collecting some cans, assembling a group of succulents and planning how to implement a similar idea at home. One, a self-proclaimed beach bum, thought this would be a way she and her husband could have the beach at home year around.

Each time you visit take time to not only enjoy the garden but to interact with it, too. And if you need a bit of advice, don't hesitate to interact with our staff which is here to help you engage successfully in your own garden.

\* We had to uninstall the human sundial to accommodate trenching for fiber optic cable. The sundial will be reinstalled when the project is complete. 🌱

*Mary Olien  
Park Manager*

## BAG OF TRICKS

*Continued from page 1*

evaporates quickly. I also carry tongue depressors and a sharpie in case I need to label something, like the location of my hostas before they go dormant for the winter.

So what have I learned? Gardeners should and do think outside of the traditional tool bag and we should always keep our minds open to new uses for nontraditional tools. One thing that I already knew: Gardeners are happy to share their ideas and knowledge if you just ask. Thanks to everyone for sharing their favorite tools with me. 🌱

*Susan Eggerton  
Program Coordinator*



## Talk

*Susan Voss, FROGS President*

**S**PRING BROUGHT ANOTHER successful Garden Day plant sale. Despite showers, FROGS netted over \$15,000 from this, our biggest fund raising event. Over 40 vendors offered a wide variety of plants, our own Garden Gate plant shop excelled, and the bake sale was the best ever.

The rain held off for the combined summer concert and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on June 26 which was attended by over 250 people. The Fairfax Symphony Brass Quintet entertained; there were party hats and birthday cake, and a raffle of 20 plants from the Garden Gate plant shop. To commemorate our anniversary, FROGS donated a tree to Green Spring Gardens which will be planted in the fall. A lovely nyssa salivatica (black gum) will replace the big black walnut, which must unfortunately be removed in back of the Historic House.

As announced in our last issue, two parking lot donation boxes are now installed. The suggested donation of \$2.00 or \$20.00 a year, which is entirely voluntary, will be used to enable unprivileged children to attend field trips to Green Spring.

Recently the board held a contest for a "tagline" or motto that best summarizes our mission. There were a number of excellent ideas, but the unanimous choice was "Keeping Green Spring Growing." We think that says it all. Watch for it in the future.

Fall is the best time for planting, and the Fall Garden Day on Satur-

day, October 5<sup>th</sup> will feature many regional plant vendors as well as garden related crafts. We will again hold a silent auction with many exciting items. A special feature this year will be a display of Ikebana flower arrangements. There will be live music, children's activities, a Victorian-era exhibit at the Historic House, as well as homemade baked goods for sale. We hope you will join us for this annual event which supports FROGS.

Two other dates to put on your calendar: our Annual Meeting on Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup> (see below) and Gardeners' Holiday on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to seeing you at all our events and, as always, thank you for your continued support. 🌱

## FROGS First Annual Meeting

Although our day to day business and election of officers is conducted by the board, we have determined that, as a Virginia corporation, FROGS is required to hold an annual meeting each year. Our first annual meeting will be held on Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Horticulture Center. All FROGS members are invited to attend. Board members will report on their activities and we will share our plans for the future. We look forward to seeing you there.

*Susan Voss  
President*

# Summer Intern Experience

**Green Spring Gardens** is a garden close to my heart. It reminds me of my mother's magnificent garden full of fragrant flowers, blooming trees, tasty raspberries and healthy veggies.

I am enrolled in the Landscape Design program at the George Washington University. Included in the University curriculum is an intense year-long study of plants. We learn about plants in their natural environment. The National Arboretum and local public gardens are our classroom. When we visited Green Spring Gardens during our first class I immediately felt at home.

I am excited to be an intern at this great garden. Working in the garden allows me to deepen my understanding of the plants I am studying. It also broadens my knowledge about care of plants and the stewardship of a public garden. During my internship I have worked with wonderful staff and volunteers who have shared their gardening experience with me. I look forward to including my new knowledge about edible plants in my upcoming fall design classes at the University. Thank you Nancy Olney for sharing your expertise, and thank you Green Spring Frogs for this great internship opportunity!

*Lydia Fravel*  
*Horticulture Intern*



**As a resident of Annandale, Virginia** since 1999 I have always loved to visit local and state parks and gardens. I recently graduated cum laude from the College of William and Mary with a B.A. in Women's Studies and Environmental Policy and hope to apply my knowledge from both of these fields to my work and daily life. In the past I have worked with Wolf Trap National Park as a Natural Resource intern. With the National Park Service I helped envision and create a Natural Resource Management plan for Wolf Trap, which entailed installing a native plant meadow, creating a deer management plan, and planting an organic vegetable garden.

As a Green Spring Intern it has been exciting to work with the Children's Education Program. In the past my environmental focus has been more concentrated in field work and data collection. The shift to children's education has changed how I talk about environmental processes and issues. It has helped me translate environmental messages and education to younger children, their parents and guardians. Through this internship I have learned the importance of flexibility and the fluidity that comes along with interacting with children. Making science entertaining and understandable keeps me on my toes, and has added a whole new dimension

to my ideas about environmental and natural issues! The rigor of science and the playfulness of children creates a wonderful space for learning about the world around us.

*Valerie Thibeault*  
*Children's Education Intern*

**After a successful career** in higher education, I knew I was ready for a big change. On what at first seemed like a whim, I enrolled in horticulture courses at Northern Virginia Community College, and shortly afterwards began volunteering with Judy Zatsick in plant propagation at Green Spring. I quickly realized that I was on the right path toward a new career, and was thrilled when an opportunity for a summer internship emerged.



I was attracted to Green Spring for the opportunity to engage in work related to my course of study and because of its public mission. I grew up in Washington, DC, adjacent to a public park and playground. At a time when resources for upkeep were waning, my mother and some of our neighbors began taking care of the park's gardens. Naturally I was drafted to assist, and I helped plant, rake and weed. This not only instilled a love of the outdoors, but also an appreciation for the value of community gardens

as a recreational and educational resource for the public good.

Because my internship is co-sponsored by Green Spring Gardens and the local chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, I have the unique opportunity for a dual focus on plant propagation and the care and maintenance of a growth environment supporting alpine, saxatile and low-growing perennials. I am also creating public education materials to help Green Spring's visitors develop a deeper understanding of rock garden plants, design and care. I am grateful to Green Spring and NARGS for creating this opportunity.

*Heather Hare  
Propagation Intern*

**Working at Historic Green Spring** has been a true pleasure. This summer my research focus is the history of alcohol and drinking trends in America and how they intersect with Green Spring history. I have also worked on digitizing some of our archives, and I have helped lay the groundwork for the symposium on Victorian America happening in March. My research has taken me from the local library to the National Archives and it has been an adventure the whole time. The best part,



Photos by Kathy Trichel; all rights reserved

besides having a great view out of the window in my office, has been uncovering the unknown stories of history. For instance, one of my favorite stories that made it into my paper discussed George Washington's victory in a colonial election with the aid of 144 gallons of spirits. As a government and history major at George Mason University, I was delighted with the opportunity to do primary source research and continue to expand the scope of scholarship already available at the Historic House.

*E. Grant Haver  
Historic Resources Intern*



**I am originally from Roanoke,** Virginia and just moved to the area last year. I just finished my first semester this spring at Northern Virginia Community College in the Horticulture Program. I am still exploring and trying to decide what direction I would like to take my career with horticulture. I am most interested in landscape design because I enjoy drawing, but I am also very interested in medicinal uses of plants. I am learning a lot every day with this internship and really enjoy working outside. I was very excited to get the native plant internship and learn about natives and their ecological importance.

*Maggie Herrick  
Virginia Native Plant Intern*



**I didn't really know** what to expect coming in to my role as marketing intern for Fairfax County Farmers Markets. I had different visions of the position being a tedious desk job versus a fun creative outlet for me to flaunt my design expertise. Fortunately this internship has shown to be more of the latter. While most people wouldn't really expect something as universal as a farmers market to be a marketable entity, I've found that the markets operate much in the same way businesses do in their need to ensure a good turnout. Part of that effort includes a campaign to push aspects of each market that can attract certain audiences, like SNAP benefits to cater to lower-income areas. My job has required me to integrate my graphic design experience with these myriad marketing platforms in order to reach people in the most effective way. I've also picked up important skills in program planning and formal communications as Mae Carroll and I worked to put on our brand-new Chef at Market series and Farmers Market Week. But above all, I'm happy to say I made an impact as an assistant to the only full-time coordinator of Fairfax County's eleven farmers markets, a role that has kept me busy and satisfied every day I've been here.

*Kylie Donohoe  
Marketing Intern for Fairfax  
County Farmers Markets*



## FALL IN THE GARDEN GATE PLANT SHOP

With the flush of summer color gone, fall is a time to take stock in the garden. Some plants may have worked well in the border, others less so. There is an opportunity to reassess plant choices, perhaps finding a new home for plants that needed a bit more sun or got too much. Fall is an excellent time to plant most shrubs and many perennials. The soil is still very warm, which most plants appreciate. However, with cooler air temperatures, plants are much less stressed when installed in the garden, and roots have ample time to develop slowly over the fall before winter arrives. Frequently rains arrive, so the gardener is not stressed making sure the plants are irrigated regularly.

We have a nice selection of plants in the Garden Gate Plant Shop available for purchase.

For fall color, we have a range of asters, including 'Purple Dome' and 'Raydon's Favorite'. For those tight spots, we offer the diminutive 'Snow Flurry', which only gets about 10" tall and is covered with little white stars. We also have chrysanthemum divisions from our gardens, including 'Virginia Sunshine', a sunny yellow favorite.

We have a wide range of native plants that like to be planted in the fall. If you are looking for a shrub, consider *Cephalanthus occidentalis*, 'Sputnik' and 'Keystone'; *Vi-*

*burnum dentatum* 'Blue Muffin', *Ceanotus x pallidus* 'Marie Blue' with its lovely lavender flowers, *Clethra alnifolia* 'Ruby Spice', or *Ilex verticallata* 'Maryland Beauty.' Try *Itea virginica* 'Little Henry' for a great spring and fall display.

Consider *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks' for a burst of color, *Lobelia cardinalis* and *silphitica*, and the wonderfully fragrant *Pycnanthemum muticum*. *Sedum ternatum* is a lovely native for a dry spot or rock garden. And don't forget *Phlox stolonifera* 'Sherwood Purple' for gorgeous spring color.

We still have a great selection of ever-popular hydrangeas including 'Limelight', 'Little Lime', 'Little Lamb', and the charming 'Blue Bunny' for those shady spots.

The volunteers and staff in the propagation garage will be busy preparing all sorts of items for holiday gifts including special tillandsia creations using wood, our favorite glass globes with tiny choice plants, and troughs featuring dwarf conifers.

Come and visit us, and Happy Shopping! 🌿

Judy Zatsick  
Propagation Horticulturist



**Thank you** for being a FROGS member. As you know, your membership supports Green Spring Gardens' education programs, plant and shrub purchases, salaries for interns and seasonal staff, and more.

Consider "spreading the word" of FROGS by giving a membership as a gift to friends and relatives. It's easy. Just call 703-642-5173 to sign up. 🌿



A big thanks to all of you who baked for the Spring Garden Day bake sale. I appreciate the effort you made to support the bake sale which was a great success thanks to you. Numerous comments were heard throughout the day on the selection and quality of our baked goods. Thanks again for your support.

Camille Reilly  
Volunteer



## Fall Shows Feature Returning Favorites

Don't miss the return of these wonderful artists to Green Springs:

### AUGUST 26-OCTOBER 27:

Springfield Art Guild will once again be displaying their talents throughout the Horticulture Center and Historic House. Reception: Sept. 8.

### OCTOBER 28-DECEMBER 30:

The glorious photography of Paul Tanedo will be displayed throughout the Horticulture Center. Reception: November 3.

Fabulous paintings from Caroline and Erik Hottenstein will be highlights in the Historic House. Reception: November 3.

## DAR Unveils New Marker at Historic House

ON SATURDAY, JUNE 5<sup>th</sup> the Freedom Hill Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution held a rededication ceremony for a marker at the Historic House. The text of the original 1977 marker was revised to show the correct construction period (1784-86) for the Historic House, determined by a dendrochronological study in 2008. Green Spring staff worked with DAR to ensure that the text of the replacement marker would comply with the organization's strict standards of accuracy and significance for all commemorative markers bearing its insignia. The application process spanned two years that culminated in the approval of the text by the Office of the Historian General.



Photo by Eileen Rollyson; all rights reserved

The attractive mounting and installation of the new marker in the garden bed at the rear of the house was completed by Green Spring's Frank Jankauskas and Dan Shea. Over 50 guests attended the rededication ceremony and a reception afterwards. The marker celebrates the Historic House as a symbol of the "diligence and ingenuity of the Virginia freeholder-farmer." So it was fitting that among our guests were DAR member Kim Berkey

## Gardeners' Holiday to Feature Gingerbread House Contest



**FROG** elves are already at work on plans for our annual Gardeners' Holiday that will take place on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> from noon till 4 p.m. This year's event promises to have a number of surprises in store for holiday visitors. Topping the list is a gingerbread house contest that will be open to individual children twelve and under, individual teens, adults, and family teams.

Rules and a sign-up form can be obtained at [greenspring.org](http://greenspring.org) under Special Events or at the Horticulture Center. Entry forms must be submitted by November 16. Don't wait until the deadline because only 40 entries will be accepted. Size will be limited to a house that will fit onto an 18" square board. So all of you budding culinary architects start drawing your plans and checking out recipes. Ribbons will be awarded to the winners and runners-up in each division.

Another special treat will be a performance by the renowned Bob Brown Puppets, scheduled at present for 2 p.m. in the Horticulture Center. Bob Brown Puppets have been delighting local and national audiences for over 50 years! Tickets are already available online for \$3.00 each. We fully anticipate this show to sell out early, so get your

and her family, direct descendants of John Moss, the very freeholder-farmer who built the house at Green Spring! ❁

*Debbie Waugh  
Historic House Coordinator*

tickets now and prepare to see a truly entertaining show.

As usual we will have exciting displays in the Historic House as well as the Horticulture Center. Don't forget the wonderful array of free refreshments for all comers. To make your holidays even more special there will be beautiful fresh greens for sale, delightful handmade ornaments, and delectable fresh breads that are just the ingredient to ensure a memorable meal.

Mark your calendars now for our exciting, fun-filled holiday event—Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at beautiful Green Spring Gardens. ❁

*Kathy Trichel  
Board Member*



## Bloomin' Bucks with Brent and Becky's Bulbs Continues

Brent and Becky's Bulbs in Gloucester, Virginia, is continuing the FROGS fundraising program. Order bulbs, or anything else from Brent and Becky's Bulbs, and they will donate 25% of the payment to FROGS.

Simply log on to [bloominbucks.com](http://bloominbucks.com), click on the drop-down box, scroll down to select Friends of Green Spring Gardens and then enter the online catalog. You'll get a superb selection of garden items and help support Green Spring Gardens at the same time. ❁



# Gardenline

Green Spring Gardens • 4603 Green Spring Road • Alexandria, VA 22312



## NOTICE

### **FRIENDS OF GREEN SPRING ANNUAL MEETING**

**Monday, October 21, 2013 7:00 p.m.  
Green Spring Gardens Horticulture Center**

**All Members Invited**