



TALBOT COUNTY GARDEN CLUB

2020 IN REVIEW

Gardening Helps Us Meet the Challenges of a Pandemic

TALBOT COUNTY GARDEN CLUB 2020 IN REVIEW
(THE CLUB'S 103RD YEAR)

2020 was a year like no other. Still, while challenged by the threat of the COVID-19 virus, with mask wearing and social distancing mandatory, we managed to maintain our ties to friends in the Club and persevered to get things done. Our four community gardens continued to be well maintained. Our programs continued to be well attended, albeit virtually. And our joyous annual holiday fest went off on schedule, with some novel twists. I am grateful to our members for their universal flexibility, creativity and willingness to try new approaches to traditional activities. When everything else around us shut down, we made gardening the centerpiece of our lives and shared what we could, when we could. As this global pandemic continues, the Talbot County Garden Club remains strong and carries on to make us proud!

Chloe Pitard, 2019-2021 President



OFFICERS, 2019-2021

President	Chloe Pitard
Vice President	Carolyn Rugg
Treasurer	Judy Madole
Recording Secretary	Maribeth Lane
Corresponding Secretary	Rebecca Gaffney
Member-at-Large	Rita Osgood
Parliamentarian	Boots Michalak

SPEAKERS' EVENTS

CLUB MEETINGS FOLLOWED BY SPEAKERS' EVENTS

Talbot County Free Library, free events and open to the public

JANUARY 28



PETER HATCH shared insights as historian and Director of Gardens and Grounds for 35 years at Jefferson's Monticello. His program drew a full audience who appreciated hearing about Jefferson's personal involvement in plant experimentation in his vast gardens and his adventures of discovery and delight growing everything from giant cukes to salsify, apples to grapes. Summer heat and drought were his scourge. For more information, read Hatch's book, *A Rich Spot of Earth: Thomas Jefferson's Revolutionary Garden at Monticello*.



The TCGC Board met with guests from the Garden Club of America, including Incoming GCA President Debbie Oliver.

FEBRUARY 25



Speaker LOUIS RAYMOND entertained with "Potted!," his 20-year experience planting containers throughout his property in Rhode Island. He used pots for the long-term to meet specific moisture requirements and circumvent Zone 6 hardiness issues. He required some pots to keep exotic species in check and from becoming invasive. He admitted that in the end, the requisite seasonal movement into and out of the greenhouse became a burden. Still, he was ecstatic to share (and we were delighted to hear) the story of his "action-packed annual cycle!"

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES & VIRTUAL MEETINGS

COVID-19 BROUGHT CHALLENGE & CHANGE A Casual Walking Tour of Neighborhood Gardens

MAY 30

With meetings on hold because of COVID-19, our president created a more acceptable event – an impromptu walk-through tour of six neighboring gardens in Cooke’s Hope where a number of members live. Scores of women enjoyed the opportunity to be out and about in the fresh air, to see flowers in full bloom and to visit with friends!



The First Virtual Annual Meeting via Zoom

SEPTEMBER 22

Challenged to find tantalizing ways to keep members engaged, TCGC learned to maximize the capabilities of the online meeting application Zoom by holding its first Annual Meeting virtually, with pre-taped treasurer and committee reports and a TCGC custom-made video looped before and after the event – all via Zoom’s “Screen Share” function. Most of the 60 attendees – more than half the Club’s membership – stayed on beyond the hour-long meeting to “socialize.” Member Julia Miller commented: “Seeing friends after such a long absence was a shot of spiritual B₁₂! We are all better for the time spent together this morning!” The meeting and video productions – efforts by members Rita Mhley, Janet Mackey and Sara Robins – are posted to our website and have been shared with the Garden Club of America. The video animated a montage of private garden photos submitted by more than 35 members who shared their devotion to gardening in a summer when no one could visit. In just 8 minutes, it gives testimony to the incredible beauty of Maryland’s Eastern Shore and our members’ gardens!



Select frames from the TCGC private gardens' video:

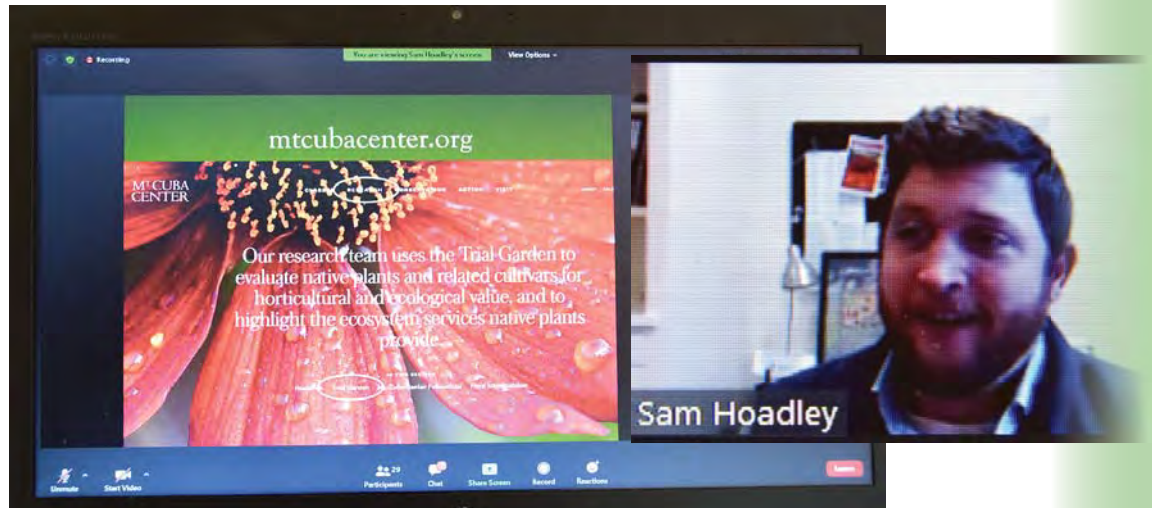


CREATIVE ACTIVITIES & VIRTUAL MEETINGS

October Meeting via Zoom

OCTOBER 13

TCGCs October meeting was again virtual, with Sam Hoadley, Manager of Horticultural Research at Hockessin, Delaware's Mt. Cuba Center, presenting "Knockout Natives." With great detail and enthusiasm, he delivered on Mt. Cuba's pledge to



"...inspire an appreciation for the beauty and value of native plants and a commitment to the habitats that sustain them." Here are some top performers, identified by his research for their growth characteristics and ability to draw pollinators: *Baptisia* 'Blueberry Sundae', *Coreopsis tripteris* 'Gold Standard', *Helenium* 'Kanaria', *Hydrangea arborescence* 'Hass' Halo', *Monarda fistulosa* 'Claire Grace', and *Phlox paniculata* 'Jeana'.

Floral Workshop via Zoom

NOVEMBER 17

From her kitchen counter, Nicki Schwab – Master Floral Arranger, National Garden Club Master Flower Show Judge, and new TCGC member – smiled for the camera à la Martha Stewart and showcased "Holiday Designs for Thanksgiving." Her tips gave fellow members inspiration to get creative and design their own singular and deliciously festive floral centerpieces.



CLUB EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

HOLIDAY WREATH DECORATING

DECEMBER I

Sixty-five members participated in our annual Wreath Decorating Day to create holiday decorations for the Town of Easton and 125 tabletop arrangements for Meals on Wheels clients. Working in small COVID-conscious teams in airy private garages around the county, the women – all masked – enjoyed visiting with nine or fewer friends per group while creating beautiful greenery designs that added sparkle to the town's public buildings and brought joy to many.



COURTHOUSE TEAM:
Boots Michalak,
Camille Massie

LUNCH:
Eleanor Denegre,
Hospitality Committee



EASTON UTILITIES TEAM: Jan Cullen



MEALS ON WHEELS TEAM: Christie Hamilton,
Chloe Pitard



SHORE BANK TEAM: Maggie Jarboe, Debra Principi, Niki Schwab, Julia Miller, Lucy Spiegel, Rebecca Gaffney, Janet Mackey, Susie Middleton



WREATH PICK-UP: Ann White

CLUB EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

EASTON PUBLIC GARDEN MAINTENANCE

MARCH TO NOVEMBER

Public Garden Maintenance continued unabated in small groups and outdoors, so that Covid restrictions were not an issue.

Women Power turned the TALBOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY GARDEN AND ALICE D. HUXLEY HERB GARDEN from winter doldrums to spring reveille in just one day in May! That's when TCGC's hard-working, socially-distanced gardeners planted 300+ annuals to enliven the Garden's well-established beds and to groom the Herb Garden's picturesque and productive beds.



Trish Reynolds



Peggy Hegwood

TCGC members are dedicated to keeping Easton beautiful, one public garden at a time... here at the FIVE CORNERS FOUNTAIN GARDEN in Idlewild Park.



Maxine Millar

The FRANCES PLATE MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S GARDEN in Idlewild Park was newly replanted by TCGC's dedicated gardeners and made ready for the kiddos to come and romp!



Jody Shaner

Poof... and like magic the flower beds at the TALBOT COUNTY FREE LIBRARY in Easton turned from ho-hum to how-wonderful! Of course, it actually took more than magic. It took Library Committee members to come out of isolation and address the weeds and bare spots and create a place where folks would want to sit and read or meditate.



In December, Library Committee members added to the tulips they plant each year at the Library in Easton, courtesy of annual donations by The Peoples Bank Easton Branch. Caught tucking in the tulip bulbs: Maggie Jarboe, Cordy Tucker (Committee Chair) assisted by Luther Tucker, Nancy Laplante assisted by Phil Laplante.

CLUB EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

TALBOT HOSPICE Floral Donations & More FEBRUARY TO DECEMBER

There was stepped-up interest in creating bouquets more regularly for Talbot Hospice! Our members found joy in this creative venture that proved a break from the pandemic. For Hospice, it meant joyous bouquets that brightened the facility when visitors dared not enter.

In November, representatives of the Garden Club planted 350 spring-blooming bulbs in the Healing Garden, located off Oxford Road near Easton Club's Entrance. The Garden is overseen by the Talbot Hospice Foundation for the Child Loss Support Group. We trust that next spring, our daffodils, grape hyacinths, crocuses, and allium will cheer visitors to this meditation garden.



FEBRUARY: Valentines for Talbot Hospice residents, Committee Co-Chairs Carol Harrison, Maribeth Lane



MAY: Mothers Day
Caroline Benson



APRIL: Easter



OCTOBER: Autumn



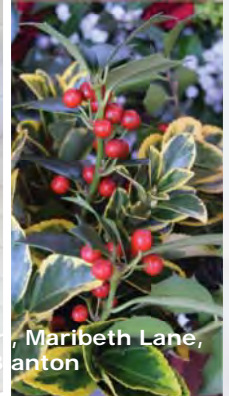
JUNE: Father's Day



NOVEMBER: Thanksgiving
Alice Carr



DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS, Carol Harrison, Maribeth Lane, Bobbie Brittingham, Ingrid Blanton



MEMBERSHIP

WELCOMING & ORIENTING NEW MEMBERS

JANUARY



Alice Carr



Diana Sable

FEBRUARY

Nicki Schwab was introduced to the TCGC membership by Bobbie Brittingham at the February meeting.



JUNE

New and prospective members joined a small circle of TCGC members at a get-to-know-you tea in the verdant Talbot Historical Society Garden, socially distanced, of course, and shared wonderful gardening stories.



AUGUST



Nancy Laplante



Susie Middleton



Sara Robins

RECOGNIZING HONORARIES

APRIL



Elizabeth Fleming



Joan Kittredge



AWARDS & COMMUNITY YOUTH PROGRAMS

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

MARCH

FEDERATED GARDEN CLUB OF MARYLAND presented the following awards to TCGC and TCGC members:

- **1st Place - Garden Therapy Award -**
Planting Ice Cream Cones Activity with Residents at Bayleigh Chase
- **1st Place - Community Service Award -** Christmas Meals on Wheels
- **1st Place - Historical Preservation Award -**
Historical Society of Talbot County Restoration Project
- **2nd Place - Dessie Moxley Youth Involvement Certificate -**
Six Youth Garden Projects
- **1st Place - District Director's Photography Award -**
Pam Keeton for her photo of *Zinnia elegans*
- **1st Place - Mary F. Fitzpatrick Award -**
Ingrid Blanton for her photo of a floral design in which the applicant is both designer and photographer
- **3rd Place - Harry C. Reynolds Photography Award -**
Bobbie Brittingham for her photo of *Betula papyrifera* 'White Birch'

AUGUST



NATIONAL GARDEN CLUB awarded TCGC:

- **1st Place National Certificate of Commendation**
Historic Preservation including extensive plant replacement efforts in the Talbot Historical Society Garden
- **District Appreciation Award**
Therapy Gardens project with The Gardens at Bayleigh Chase
- **District Appreciation Award**
Triannual "Can You Dig It?" newsletter, edited by Trish Reynolds

YOUNG GARDENERS

MARCH 8



Twenty-two children (grades 1-4) wove pencil holders at our February Young Gardeners Club event at the Talbot County Free Library in Easton. Heidi Wetzel of Woven Sculptures & Baskets brought the tools and materials. After soaking their reeds, weaving and cutting/prying with tools, each student proudly took home a handsome personal creation!

OCTOBER

The Garden Club of America recognized TCGC Member Peg Keller with a prestigious award during a GCA Zone VI virtual meeting. Peg received the Zone VI Appreciation Award as a talented leader who promotes the knowledge and love of gardening and restoration, improvement and protection of the environment. The award came as a surprise to Peg on a day that by coincidence was her birthday!



COMMUNICATION & COMMISERATION

PUBLICITY

STAR DEMOCRAT
JULY 20



'Frances P.' gets a facelift

Girls from Boy Scouts of America Troop 1091 gave the "Frances P" in the Frances Plate Memorial Garden a new coat of paint as part of a troop project. The boat is a replica of a Chesapeake Bay work boat and is a favorite among children who play in the garden. The Frances Plate Memorial Garden is located in Idlewild Park in Easton and was established by the Talbot County Garden Club in 2001. A committee of Club members maintain the garden, which also includes sculptures, a fountain, and a covered seating area nestled among native plants. The all-girl troop, led by Scoutmaster Lori Stepp and Assistant Scoutmaster Kelly Tuttle, spent 2 days sanding, priming and painting the boat while adhering to safety guidelines regarding COVID-19. The Talbot County Garden Club was established in 1917 to enrich the natural beauty of the environment by sharing knowledge of gardening, fostering the art of flower arranging, maintaining civic projects, supporting projects that benefit Talbot County and encouraging the conservation of natural resources. Noteworthy projects include maintaining the grounds of the Talbot Historical Society, Talbot Courthouse, Talbot Library, the fountain and children's gardens at Idlewild Park and numerous other gardens and activities. There are currently more than 100 active, associate and honorary members.

GCA BULLETIN SPRING & FALL

Talbot County Garden Club Easton, MD

At sunrise on December 3, several Talbot County Garden Club members traveled to Washington, D.C. at the invitation of Representative Andy Harris to see Christmas at the White House. The First Family's "Spirit of America" holiday theme featured greens, sparkly lights, and jewel-toned ornaments and were "Fabulous," according to TCGC member Lauren Little. The crowd then headed back

to Easton to participate with 60 others in *Deck the Halls*. TCGC's merrier holiday event. The festivities include decorating scores of locally made wreaths and garlands, which were then installed by town personnel at public sites around Easton. Parades, caroling, and horse-drawn carriage rides, which were enjoyed by locals and visitors alike, added to the holiday cheer. Additionally, over 100 small arrangements were created and delivered throughout the county by Meals on Wheels bringing joy to

—Rita Milroy



A garden featured on Talbot County GC's pop-up walking tour. Photo by Marilee Hawkins

Talbot County Garden Club Easton, MD

For Talbot County Garden Club, COVID-19 canceled spring meetings, luncheons, and a major fundraiser, the biennial Talbot County Tour of the Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage. By June 23 members who had isolated at home and devoted attention to their own landscapes for months were oh-so ready for a little change of scenery. This inspired TCGC President Chloe Pirard to conjure up an informal walking tour of gardens around her Cooke's Hope neighborhood in Easton. More than 50 members from various neighborhoods welcomed her invitation to tour six very different gardens in full bloom and to chat with long-unseen friends all while in compliance with the governor's advisories.

Throughout spring, small committees tended the five public gardens that the club maintains in Easton and regularly presented artful floral arrangements to Talbot Hospice, where flowers brought joy when visitors were not permitted. Observes Chloe, "Members felt blessed to have these outlets of engagement."

—Rita Milroy



Talbot County GC members at the White House. Photo by Laura Carney

PUBLICATIONS

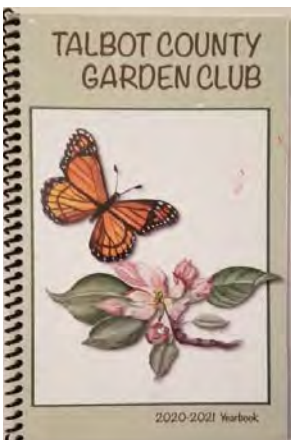
HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER:
"Can You Dig It?"

NEW WEEKLY NEWSLETTER:
"Tid Bits"

Early in the shutdown, we instituted this weekly email message of 100 to 150 words as a replacement for the horticulture and conservation minutes that were part of our monthly meetings. Over the weeks, it grew to cover various topics beyond its original intention and grew in popularity.



2020-2021 YEARBOOK



COULD HAVE BEEN...

These Club events and activities were meticulously planned then sadly canceled, because of COVID restrictions:

- MARCH 25: "Great Native Plants for the Home Landscape" Speaker's Event (rescheduled in October)
- APRIL 27: Meeting at the Friends Meeting House
- MAY 9: Talbot County Tour of the Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage (Julia Miller & Sara Walker, Co-Chairs)
- OCTOBER 27: Jane Godshalk, "I Inspired by Nature: Eco-Friendly Floral Design," TCGC Joint Meeting with Oxford Garden Club
- DECEMBER 15: TCGC Flower Show
- APRIL 13, 2021: TCGC Spring Symposium "Savannah: Uptown Down South" (Carol Harrison & Lucy Spiegel, Co-Chairs)





TALBOT COUNTY GARDEN CLUB, INC.

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TALBOTCOUNTYGC.ORG

FACEBOOK.COM/TALBOTCOUNTYGARDENCLUB

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