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## President's Message

Dear Garden Club of New Jersey Members,

Thank you for electing me as the 51st President of the Garden Club of New Jersey (GCNJ). It is my honor to accept the task that lies ahead. I would also like to congratulate former President Cecelia Millea on her outstanding leadership during some difficult times.

It has certainly been a busy start to my presidency -- I attended one Annual Meeting, one Board Meeting, two Club Events, several Zoom meetings, had numerous calls and countless emails. There was a worrisome health issue of a beloved board member and other trouble shooting delays. Not to mention, updates to the website and this newsletter. These all took place during my first 3 weeks as your GCNJ President. What a start!



*Newly installed GCNJ President at June's GCNJ Annual Meeting with the beautiful Floral Arrangement created in her honor by Gail Bassolino.*

Many thanks to Gail Bassolino of Pines Lake Garden Club for creating a SPECTACULAR arrangement in my honor at the GCNJ Annual Meeting. Also, thank you to everyone who pitched in to help and for your patience during the transition from one administration to the next. My apologies that the website was not updated with the new dates and info in a timely manner. The delays were my responsibility. Thankfully, I'm pleased to report that the updates have been made.



As mentioned above, I attended two club events. The first was the Navesink Garden Club's Annual Luncheon, held on June 13, 2023, at the historic Deal Golf and Country Club in Deal, NJ. I was warmly welcomed by the garden club members to their lovely event ...the flowers were beautiful, luncheon delicious and meeting flawlessly run by outgoing president Marina Kerber. It was such a pleasure to perform their Installation of Officers.



*Installation of Officers at the Navesink Garden Club Annual Luncheon, June 13, 2023.*

I also attended the Snufftown Garden Club's dedication ceremony of a Blue Star Memorial Marker at the Northern New Jersey Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Sparta, NJ on June 24, 2023. Congratulations to club president Rose Wolverton and her members on a wonderful job fundraising and dedicating this latest marker. Also, congrats to GCNJ Blue Star Committee Chair Joan Cichalski for the addition of another location in the state. It was my honor to represent the GCNJ and say a few words in tribute of the Blue Star Memorial. It was a rainy day but nonetheless, very well attended by garden club members, local dignitaries, veterans, and families. The Blue Star marker was beautifully landscaped and installed by the NJ Dept of Transportation under the guidance of Lois Johann. The GCNJ is honored to partner with these groups and individuals.



Snufftown Garden Club's newly dedicated Blue Star Memorial Marker in Sparta.



Presentation of Colors by the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1002



L to R - Representatives from NJ Dept of Transportation / Lois Johann, Joan Cichalski GCNJ Blue Star Committee Chair, John Harrigan VVA Chapter 1002 President, Rose Wolverton Snufftown Garden Club President, Beverly Kazickas GCNJ President and Representative from Northern NJ Veterans.

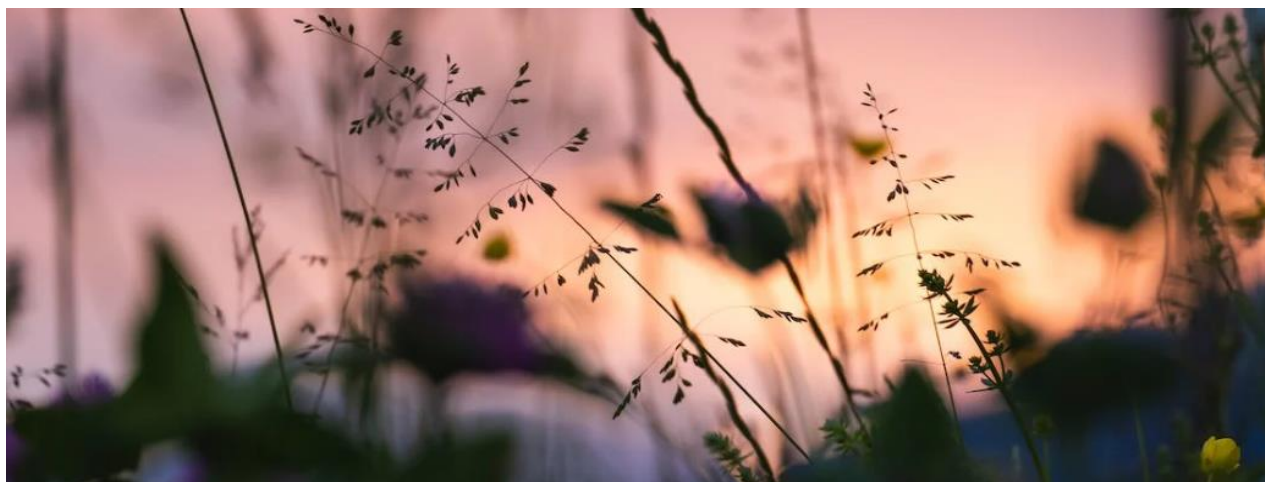
Lastly, please consider applying for my President's Project ... Plant America: Gardening for a Healthy Mind, Body, and Soul. Over the next 2 years, \$6,000 will be awarded to clubs affiliated with the GCNJ. Additional information is included in this Newsletter and on the GCNJ Website. Let's promote healthy living through a project or garden that will benefit the community. I look forward to attending club events. Please extend an invitation during my 2-year term.

Cheers,  
Beverly Kazickas  
GCNJ President  
[Kazickas55@aol.com](mailto:Kazickas55@aol.com)



## Meet Your GCNJ Board Member

**Beverly Kazickas: GCNJ President, Demarest Garden Club, District I**



Beverly's first foray into gardening was at 8 years old when she grew a small patch of carrots for her pony. That successful harvest, combined with her father's influence as an amateur orchid grower in his backyard greenhouse, spurred her interest in gardening. Beverly's curiosity in horticulture led to a love of nature that resulted in her joining the Demarest Garden Club 20 years ago.

As newlyweds in the 80's, Beverly and her husband Michael lived in New York City where she graduated from Columbia University with a degree in Anthropology. Beverly's early career was working first in Human Resources and then Finance until she "retired", and they moved to New Jersey to start a family.

Coming from a farming background, Beverly's family has lived in New Jersey for many generations. Originally, as farmers in South Jersey, to eventually, Beverly and Mike moving to Bergen County where they've resided for the past 40 years. They have two grown children -- A son Jack moved to Austin after college as has their married daughter Kiki with husband Daniel.

The return to Beverly's NJ roots led to her becoming involved in local conservation efforts. In her late 20s, she joined the Board of Trustees of a small nature preserve. Now, 30 years later, she's on The Nature Conservancy's State Board combining her interest in the environment, horticulture, and community preservation.

While splitting time between winters in Bergen County, NJ, and summers on Long Island, NY, Beverly joined garden clubs in both location -- her NJ club is the Demarest Garden Club a member of GCNJ and National Garden Club (NGC) -- the NY club belongs to Garden Club of America (GCA) where Beverly is a Photography Judge.

Beverly, a former president of the Demarest Garden Club, has expanded her interest in horticulture by becoming a certified Consultant of the NGC's Gardening School. As a member of the GCNJ's Board, she has previously served as District 1 Director, the Gardening School NJ State Chair (for 6 years), the Environmental Committee Chair, and the 1st Vice President. Beverly has also served on the NGC Board as an Accrediting Chair for Gardening Schools.

Beverly looks forward to the next two years as GCNJ President and volunteering with her fellow Board members as they work with the 100+ garden clubs in New Jersey.

Good times are ahead with GCNJ!



## Garden Club of New Jersey Executive Board 2023-2024

A new segment of "Meet Your GCNJ Board Member" will be in each News Leaf. The next issue will be 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Susan Berdahl.



**Garden Club of New Jersey  
Executive Board 2023-2024**

President – Beverly Kazickas	District 1 Director Pat Vellas
1st Vice President – Susan Berdahl	District 2 Director – Julie Morgan
2nd Vice President – Ruth Korn	District 3 Director – Caron Menger
3rd Vice President – Vivian Morrison	District 4 Director – Margaret Esposito
Recording Secretary – Gail Harren	District 5 Director – Margaret Allen
Corresponding Secretary – Linda Williams	District 6 Director – Dorothy Bukowski
Parliamentarian – Cecelia Millea	District 7 Director – Helga Fontus
Interim Treasurer – Carole Wehn	District 8 Director – Peggy Morrissey
Assistant Treasurer – Jane Bianco	

### Shirley French Retirement and Office Manager Position Available



Congratulations to Garden Club of New Jersey's Office Manager, Shirley French (pictured) upon her retirement after 23 years of service to GCNJ. Shirley, who is a member of the Royal Garden Club by the Bay, has tended our Holly House office with care and is always willing to help when needed. Shirley was a recipient of a Presidential Citation at the 97th Annual Meeting for her commitment and dedicated service to GCNJ.

We will miss her but wish Shirley a happy, healthy, and well-deserved retirement.

The Garden Club of New Jersey must now find a replacement for Shirley. The position of GCNJ Office Manager is available. Those interested in applying, please contact Cecelia Millea, Headquarters and Endowment Chairman, at [cmillea@msn.com](mailto:cmillea@msn.com). Excellent bookkeeping and computer skills are required.

## PRESIDENT'S PROJECT

### 2023-2025 President Beverly Kazickas



**President's Theme:** Plant America - Gardening for a Healthy Mind, Body, and Soul

**Description:** Establish a program (or garden) that promotes and encourages the benefits of gardening to support physical and mental health.

GCNJ Affiliated Clubs in good standing will apply for a \$1,000 Grant in order to enact the aforementioned program (or garden). Three clubs will be selected per year for two years during 2024 and 2025. Total Grants will be \$6,000.

Gardening can act as a magic elixir for your Mind, Body, and Soul. Some of the benefits of establishing a President's Project in your community are:

**MIND:**

Gardening can be a stress reliever. Being out in nature is proven to improve your mood and create a feeling of peace. Research shows that the microorganisms in soil can help counteract depression and anxiety.

**BODY:**

The act of digging, planting, weeding, and watering is good for your body. Physical exertion can reduce health risks such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and osteoporosis. Gardening builds your strength and stamina while improving flexibility, coordination, and balance.

**SOUL:**

Gardening provides a sense of accomplishment and creates beauty to enjoy both as the gardener and for those in the community who view the results.

If you are interested in applying for a grant, an application is posted on our website at [www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org](http://www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org) under the Awards section. Applications are due by February 15, 2024. Please email 3 copies to Peggy Morrissey, Awards Chair, at [peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com](mailto:peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com).

Awards will be announced and presented at the 2024 and 2025 GCNJ Annual Meetings. If you have any questions, please contact your District Director for additional information.

We hope your club will consider applying for a project!

Jessica Wang  
President's Project Chair  
[jessica007wang@gmail.com](mailto:jessica007wang@gmail.com)

## GCNJ 97th Annual Meeting

The 97th Annual Meeting of the Garden Club of New Jersey, held on June 6, 2023, at the Bridgewater Marriott, was a successful event with almost 200 garden club members and guests in attendance. The theme of the event was “The Garden: A Living Masterpiece”.

The morning program was comprised of the presentation of scholarships totaling \$24,100. The presentation of awards to local garden clubs for outstanding projects, including President’s Project Grants of \$1000, was awarded to three garden clubs for projects that focused on planting native trees. Presidential Citations were also given by GCNJ 2021-2023 President, Cecelia Millea, to 8 GCNJ Board Members for their outstanding service.

In the halls outside the conference room were an array of boutiques for shopping, beautiful tribute floral designs, informative educational exhibits, and district baskets filled to the brim with various items that were raffled at the end of the day.

The afternoon session included the presentation of the Medal of the Garden Club of New Jersey, its highest honor, to the Garden Conservancy for its mission to preserve, share, and celebrate America’s gardens. This was followed by the election and installation of new officers including 2023-2025 GCNJ President Beverly Kazickas by honored guest and NGC Immediate Past President, Mary Warshauer.

The program was presented by Dr. Horatio Joyce, the Garden Conservancy’s Director of Public Programs and Education. Dr. Joyce spoke of the Conservancy’s Open Days Program with photos of gardens throughout our nation that is made available to visitors thanks to the Garden Conservancy’s commitment to preserving exceptional gardens for future generations.

Special thanks are extended to Annual Meeting Co-Chairs, Jane Bianco and Ellen Preissler and their entire committee without whose hard work this event would not be possible.



Medal of the Garden Club of New Jersey given to Dr. Horatio Joyce on behalf of the Garden Conservancy and President Millea.



Scholarship recipients with GCNJ President Cecelia Millea





Awards Chairman Peggy Morrissey presenting awards.



President's Project Grant winner and \$1000 recipient the Garden Club of Long Valley



President's Project Grant winner and \$1000 recipient of the Garden Club of Marlton



President's Project Grant winner and \$1000 recipient of the Maplewood Garden Club



GCNJ 2021-2023 President Cecelia Millea  
with newly installed 2023-2025  
President, Beverly Kazickas



## Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs

[HOME](#)[CONFERENCE - 2023](#)[WHO WE ARE](#)[WHAT WE DO](#)[RESOURCES](#)[MEMBERS](#)[CONTACT](#)

### CAR-SGC Conference Corning, NY October 23-26, 2023 “Seven Strong on a Fall Adventure”

The Federated Garden Clubs of New York invite all GCNJ Members to attend the 2023 Central Atlantic Region Conference in Corning, NY this October. All of the information and registration forms are available on the CAR-SGC website at <https://www.car-sgc.org/conference-2023>.

The conference combines workshops, tours, a tri-refresher for Schools, and much more so that attendees have the opportunity to refresh their school credentials while having a great time with fellow members. Not everyone will take the tri-refresher but those who do must attend the lectures/events, bus trip, glassblowing and ghost tour, and bus tour that require advance registration and a fee. The leaf manipulation workshop also requires advance registration.

GCNJ members attending the conference can enjoy the general conference meeting, vendors, downtown, or other optional activities. There are nice venues such as golf and museums for spouses to enjoy in the Corning area. We plan to have a fun costume event at the Tuesday night dinner featuring, NGC President Brenda Moore. Brenda will speak on Youth and Leadership and will showcase her NGC Children's book series. We want to show our playful side at the dinner and foster participation in Youth Gardening/Environmental activities.

October is a great time of year to visit Corning, NY and we look forward to seeing you at our "Seven Strong on a Fall Adventure".

Victoria Bellias,  
CAR-SGC Alternate Director  
2023 Conference Chairman



# Upcoming Events



**September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023** -The Neshanic Garden Club will be holding a Flower Pounding class at 11am following our Garden Club meeting at Neshanic Station House, 412 Olive St. Neshanic Station, NJ. The speaker will be Carol Feinstein. She teaches the Ancient Art of Flower Pounding {a native American Cherokee Indian art}. You are welcome to attend both our meeting and class, but an **RSVP is required to:** Teri Halvorson – 908-874-4659 or [thalvo@aol.com](mailto:thalvo@aol.com). The last day to RSVP is Friday, September 15th.

**October 10, 2023** - GCNJ Leadership Conference for Club Presidents via Zoom (Registration Required) at 10:00 AM.

**October 23-26, 2023** - CAR-SGC Conference, Corning, NY. Theme - “Seven Strong on a Fall Adventure” (See page 8 for more information).

## Available School Courses

- **Environmental School**
  - Course 2: **Sep 21 - Sep 22, 2023**, Derby, CT (Zoom)
    - Register: Virginia Casanova 203-710-0133
  - Course 3: **Nov 16 - Nov 17, 2023**, Fort Myers, FL (Zoom)
    - Register: Bernadette Hamera 239-233-1166
- **Gardening School**
  - Course 1: **Nov 04 - Nov 11, 2023**, Cushing, OK (Zoom)
    - Register: Judy Grotts 918-630-1979
  - Course 4: **Sep 13 - Sep 14, 2023**, New Haven, CT (Zoom)
    - Register: Cheryl Cappiali 203-314-3559
- **Landscape Design**
  - Course 1: **Oct 25 - Oct 27, 2023**, Waltham, MA (Zoom)
    - Register: Judy Karlin 781-784-1958
  - Course 3: **Sep 20 - Sep 22, 2023**, New Smyrna Beach, FL (Zoom)
    - Register: Sally Flanagan 416-229-4763

**October 26, 2023** - The Garden Club of Westfield is offering a bus trip to the Longwood Gardens Chrysanthemum Festival. Bus leaves from the Memorial Park and Pool parking lot in Westfield. Arrive 8:30 am – 7:00 pm. For more information, see the trip flyer on Facebook at The Garden Club of Westfield, or contact Margaret Allen at 908-358-4847 or [gardenclubofwestfield@gmail.com](mailto:gardenclubofwestfield@gmail.com).

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL



For information regarding what's new with the Landscape Design School, please read the Spring Issue of Newscape ([NGC LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOLS AND COUNCILS Spring 2023 \(gardenclub.org\)](https://www.gardenclub.org/newscape)). I am very interested in any photos and/or projects that you could send me for future articles your districts have been working on in your counties. Since I reside in Monmouth County, it is easy for me to write about an entry with our projects. But I am hoping to receive input so that I am able to represent the entire State!

Landscape Design School Course 4 is targeted for Fall 2023 but the date is still TBD.

Required Readings from "Stewards of the Land: A Survey of Landscape Architecture and Design in America"

Chapter 20: Redesign of Areas

Chapter 21: Contemporary Landscape Design

Chapter 26: Development of Landscape Architecture from World War II to the Present

Chapter 31: Evaluating the Landscape Designs of Residential, Public, and Business Property

Chapter 33: Community Participation

Chapter 36: Designs for the Future

History of Development of Community Gardens - Special Topic

Respectfully submitted,  
Terese Blake  
Landscape Design School Chair  
[Terese.blake@gmail.com](mailto:Terese.blake@gmail.com)

## FROM THE AWARDS DESK

### 2022-2023 Yearbook Overview

#### KUDOS TO THE GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY

#### AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR THE YEAR 2022-23!!

Each award recognizes the dedication, creativity and commitment of each club to its members and communities. The National, Regional and State Garden Clubs are pleased and honored to recognize the following clubs and their projects:



#### NATIONAL GARDEN CLUB AWARD RECIPIENTS:

National Garden Club awards The Garden Club of Long Beach Island the award for an Outstanding Flower Show, membership of 100 plus members, "It's a Musical World".

National Garden Club awards The Garden Club of Montclair the award for outstanding Design Specialty Show, "Arts and Flowers".

The National Garden Club awards the following clubs A National Award of Participation:

- The Garden Club of Essex Fells
- The Garden Club of Long Valley  
Belvidere Garden Club
- Seaweeders Garden Club of Bay Head & Mantoloking

#### CENTRAL ATLANTIC REGION/STATE GARDEN CLUB AWARD RECIPIENTS:

The Membership Increase Award to The Garden Club of New Jersey  
The NGC Small Standard Flower Show Award to the New Jersey Judges' Council for "A Million Dreams"

The Golden Perennial Bloom Award to Diane Nelson, Rockaway Valley Garden Club

The Environmental Concern Award (Large Club) to the Garden Club of Mountain Lakes



The Civic Development and Improvement Award (Small Club) to Belvidere Garden Club

The Civic Development and Improvement Award (Large Club) to Moorestown Garden Club

The Yearbook Award (30-44 members) to Navesink Garden Club

**GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY AWARD RECIPIENTS:**

**District One:**

Upper Saddle River Garden Club:

Increase in Membership Award (over 50 members)

**District Two:**

Maplewood Garden Club:

Pines Lake Garden Club Trophy

Ringwood Garden Club Trophy

**District Three:**

Snufftown Garden Club:

Increase in Membership Award (under 50 members)

Garden Club of Mountain Lakes:

The Myra Brooks Garden Therapy Trophy

**District Four:**

Bridgewater Garden Club:

Bernardsville Garden Club Trophy

Neshanic Garden Club:

The Garden Club of Westfield Trophy

Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden Club GC:

2023 Smokey Bear Poster Contest:

Zoe Voris, First Place Winner, Grade 1

2023 CAR/ SGC High School Essay Contest:

Samantha Murzenski

Garden Club of Long Valley:

Hanover Garden Club Trophy

The Holly Club of Sea Girt Trophy

GCNJ Special Award (\$200)

**Belvidere Garden Club**

Demarest Garden Club Yearbook Award  
The Community Garden Club of Hunterdon County Silver Trophy  
Pinelands Garden Club Civic Beautification Trophy  
Smoke Rise Garden Club Garden Therapy Trophy  
Panther Valley Garden Club Trophy

**Warren Garden Club:**

The Marguerite & Vincent T. Mulligan Garden Therapy Trophy  
Basking Ridge Club Trophy  
The Woodbridge Garden Club Trophy  
GCNJ Special Award (\$200)

**District Five:****Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield, NJ**

Green Thumb Garden Club of Cranford Publication Trophy

**District Six:****Terra Nova Garden Club Wyckoff Garden Club Trophy**

2023 Smokey Bear Poster Contest:

Lorelei Wittek, Second Place Winner, Grade 1

2023 Smokey Bear Poster Contest:

Lara Fernandez, First Place Winner, Grade 4

2023 Smokey Bear Poster Contest:

Navath Mandala First Place Winner, Grade 5

**District Seven:****West Trenton Garden Club**

Demarest Garden Club Yearbook Award, Large Club

**Pinelands Garden Club**

Garden Club of New Jersey Continuing Project Award  
GCNJ Special Award, Large Club (\$200)

**Moorestown Garden Club**

The Garden Club of Toms River Trophy  
East Orange Silver Trophy  
The Ruth B. Somerville Silver Trophy

**District Eight:****Shrewsbury Garden Club**

Demarest Garden Club Yearbook Award (Medium Club)

**The Garden Club of Spring Lake**

The Jane S. R. Bersch Trophy

Seaweeders Garden Club of Bay Head & Mantoloking  
Clara Hunter Garden Therapy Perpetual Trophy  
Lillian C. Koelsch Trophy  
Garden Club of New Jersey Award  
Garden Club of Mountain Lakes Silver Trophy

**THE GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY FLOWER SHOW AWARDS:**

**District Two:**

The Garden Club of Montclair  
The Garden Club of RFD Trophy  
The Dorothy M. Schick Trophy  
Mrs. Reginald Wilson Memorial Award: Michele Tomasik  
The Myra Brooks Memorial Trophy for Creativity in Flower Arranging: Tova Narrett  
Patricia Grosse Petite Award Trophy: Celia Radik  
Mrs. David L. George Silver Cup

**District Eight:**

The Garden Club of Long Beach Island Helen  
Hull Silver Bowl  
The Amelia Stewart Perpetual Trophy: Julie Eller  
Glenn Ferrari Memorial Trophy: Judy Lipman  
Doris Bryan Educational Exhibit Trophy: Dorian Madreperla

**GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY PERENNIAL BLOOM AWARD:**

- Vivian Morrison, Basking Ridge Garden Club, District Five

**GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY 2021-23 PRESIDENT'S PROJECT:**  
**"PLANT TREES: NATURE'S UNSUNG HEROES":**

- Maplewood Garden Club, District Two
- The Garden Club of Long Valley, District Four
- The Garden Club of Marlton, District Seven

**GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY PRESIDENTIAL CITATIONS:**

- Carole Wehn, Moorestown Garden Club
- Diana Dove, Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden
- Karen Eardley, Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield



- Teddie Falcone, The Garden Club of Long Valley
- Ellen Preissler, Shrewsbury Garden Club
- Bob Markey, Rahway Garden Club
- Gail Bassolino, Pines Lake Garden Club
- Shirley French, GCNJ Office Manager

**GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY PRESIDENT'S CITATION:**

- Cecelia Millea, President, 2021-23

**GARDEN CLUB OF NEW JERSEY 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS:**

- Autumn Carmona, Ruth Paul Memorial Scholarship
- Benjamin Bratter, Garden Club of New Jersey Scholarship
- Benjamin Casella, Basking Ridge 100th Anniversary Scholarship
- Elaina Lomery, Garden Club of New Jersey Scholarship
- Jordan Upadhyay, Garden Club of New Jersey Scholarship
- Stephen Myer, Garden Club of New Jersey Scholarship
- Ryan Schiller, Garden Club of New Jersey Scholarship
- Georgia Louisa Silver, Ruth Paul Memorial Scholarship
- Jordan Upadhyay, Dr. Charles H. Connors Scholarship
- William Hendershot, Elizabeth S. Merriam-Webster-Webster Scholarship
- Alrick Rodriguez-Perez, Florence S. McNeill Scholarship

Peggy Morrissey

Awards Chair

[peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com](mailto:peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com)

# CRAWFORD'S CORNER

## A Doll of a Plant

I am certain there comes a point in every gardener's life when we spot a plant and quickly deduce it simply cannot be native. It simply looks too exotic to be native! Several years back I was hiking in Warren County and came across a planting of *Actaea pachypoda* or Doll's Eyes growing adjacent to a path. I initially thought this was a garden escapee, with its native home most likely in the distant hills of Asia or the Caucasus. Much to my great surprise, the plant was indeed native! Why, as so often I have wondered about various plants, was this intriguing and beautiful plant not more commonly seen in NJ gardens?



*Actaea pachypoda* was first described by Stephen Elliott (1771-1833) in 1824 who, aside from serving as a Legislator and a Banker, was a botanist focusing on the flora of Georgia and South Carolina. Doll's Eyes is typically found in moist, shady woodlands throughout not only Georgia and South Carolina, but the Eastern half of the United States stretching up into Canada. Hardy in zones 3-8, it is without question a far-reaching native plant! The deep green leaves are compound and resemble those of Elderberry as seen above in plants photographed at Franconia Notch, NH. In fact, the genus name of *Actaea* comes from the Greek *Aktaea*, for Elderberry, and was penned in 1753 by the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). Currently, the genus contains upwards of 30 species following the addition of 12-18 species during the late 1990s that were previously identified under the genus *Cimicifuga*.



The individual plants of *Actaea pachypoda* mature to a height and width of 2' and can develop into ever larger colonies with time. The white flowers appear in May along a 1½" long stem and give the appearance of a small bottlebrush as seen at left. This structure of the flower is called a raceme. The individual flowers are slightly larger than ¼" in diameter with narrow, greatly reduced petals and large prominent anthers. Although the display is attractive on close inspection, their relatively small size can

cause them to be easily overlooked by the casual observer. The flowers do have an attractive citrus-like fragrance and are effective in attracting numerous pollinators. However, it was the fruit that inspired Elliot to pen the species epithet, not the flowers! The word *pachypoda* once again comes from the Greek, with *Pachy* meaning dense or thick and *Poda* meaning foot or stem. With the passing of summer, the central stem of the raceme, along with the stalks of the



developing fruits both lengthen and thicken, hence the species epithet *pachypoda* translates into 'thick stems.' As the fruit ripens, they gradually change from green to porcelain white, while the stem ages to a showy bright red as seen above from a group of plants found growing at Franconia Notch, NH at the end of August. The tip of the berry has a prominent dark black spot, marking the remnant of the stigma. The fruit typically enlarges to ¼" in diameter or larger and resembles the porcelain orbs that were once used in toy dolls, hence the common name of Doll's Eyes. Up close the fruit can appear rather scary if you have spent too many evenings watching horror movies featuring evil-intentioned dolls, but from a distance and in mass it is extremely attractive!

Another welcome trait is its resistance to deer browse! Like many other members of the Ranunculaceae or Buttercup Family, Doll's Eyes are poisonous. They contain a strong cardiac glycoside that relaxes the heart muscles, leading to cardiac arrest and death. The chemical is most concentrated in the fruit yet oddly, it does not affect birds who relish the fruits in late autumn.

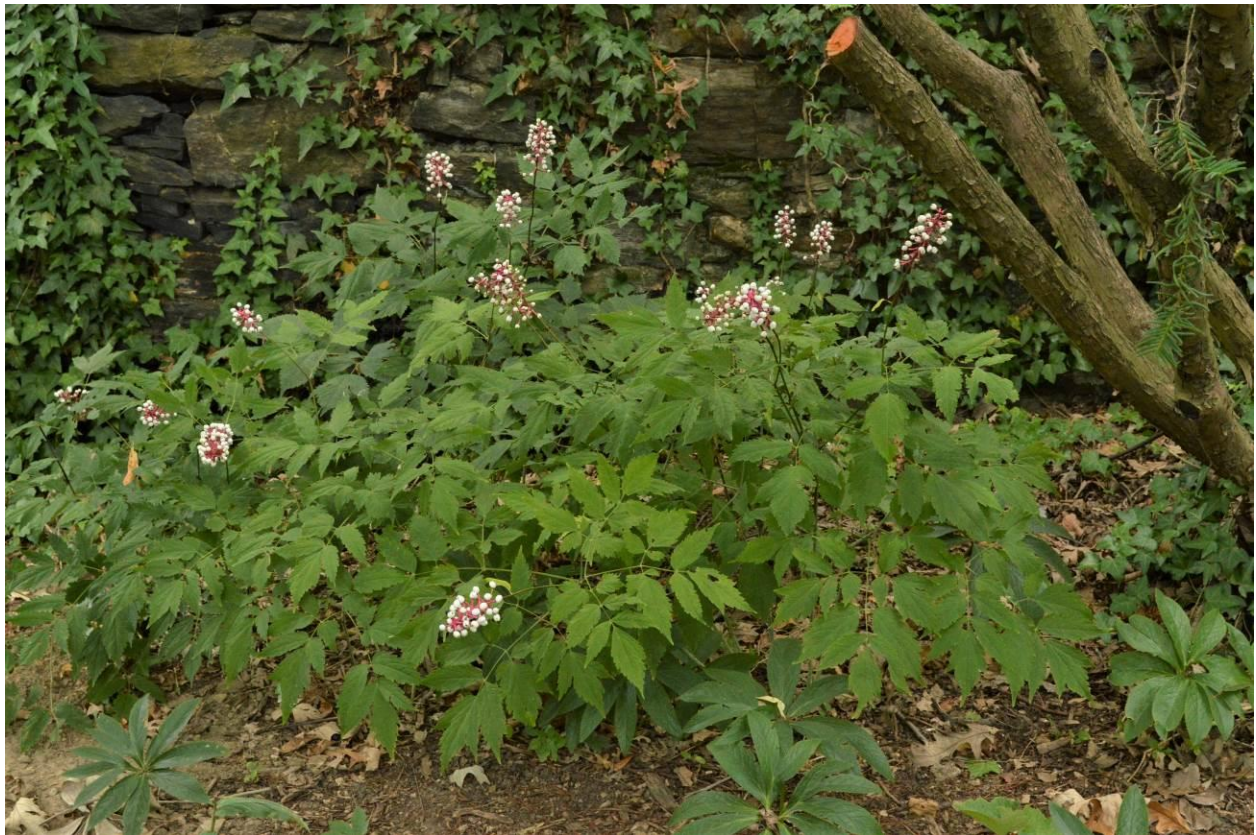


The selection 'Misty Blue' was introduced in 2009 from the Mt. Cuba Center in Delaware. The flowers and fruits are similar to the species, but the foliage has a very pronounced, deep blue coloration, making it an interesting plant to mix with similar foliaged plants like the Blue Mist Dwarf Fothergilla (*Fothergilla gardenii* 'Blue Mist'). For a change in the color of the fruit, consider the red fruited Red Baneberry or *Actaea rubra*. Also native to the East Coast and often growing with *Actaea pachypoda*, the fruits are bright red instead of white with the customary black dot at the tip of the fruit. The size of *Actaea rubra* is often somewhat smaller growing than its cousin, reaching 12-18" tall and wide, while the culture of the plants is similar. The image above was photographed in Montana at Glacier National Park in August.



In the garden, plant *Actaea* in deep, rich soil that is well amended with organic matter and mulched with shredded leaves, reducing the risk of drought injury. Plants are noted for growing in acidic soils, although it is adaptable, and I have seen it growing happily in more alkaline conditions. Ideally, provide a location receiving high filtered or early morning sun. Pair *Actaea pachypoda* with Foam Flower (*Tiarella* species), Autumn Blooming Crocus (*Crocus speciosus*) or the lacy texture of Maiden Hair Fern (*Adiantum pedatum*) and your shade garden will truly come alive for the fall.

I continue to enjoy and be amazed by this beautiful plant, much as I was when I first saw it along a hiking trail in NJ. Since then, I have seen it growing happily at Franconia Notch NH, Cornell



University in Ithaca (as seen above) and other North American parklands, although it is conspicuously absent in gardens. Hopefully, this ‘Doll of a Plant’ will provide an exotic touch this autumn for your shade garden!

Bruce Crawford  
Manager of Horticulture, Morris County Park Commission  
[bcrawford@morrisparks.net](mailto:bcrawford@morrisparks.net)

## Club News

### Moorestown Garden Club



On June 2 and 3, we held our biennial fundraiser; a Garden Walk featuring five private gardens, as well as the township's recently revitalized (courtesy of the MGC) Community Gardens, comprised of 20 plots, vegetable and/or floral, administered by the club. As the title, "Song of the Garden" implied, pollinator-positive plants were highlighted in each, as part of a variety of spectacular specimens --for instance-- a white "Glacial" azalea and water lilies floating among magnificent koi. As an additional attraction, MGC members created a floral design for each site, reflecting the unique vibe of the gardenscape. For nearly 70 years, the club has been instrumental in beautifying and educating the community; our fundraisers help keep this mission vital! Thankfully, Mother Nature graced us with beautiful weather and the turnout was impressive, with ticket sales far exceeding expectations! Check out our website and Facebook page for photos - [www.moorestowngardenclub.com](http://www.moorestowngardenclub.com).

Submitted by Stacy Schaffer

### Neshanic Garden Club



Left to right, back row; Jeannie Geremia (Past GCNJ President), Anthony Lund (Speaker from Bartlett Tree Experts), Barbara Devitt (Recording Secretary), Teri Halvorson (Coordinator of Spring Luncheon)  
Front Row: Cecelia Millea (Past President of GCNJ), Margaret Esposito (State Director for District 4), Marilyn Hulme (Current President of Neshanic Garden Club)

The Neshanic Garden Club held its annual Spring Luncheon and Basket Auction fundraiser April 27<sup>th</sup> at the Somerville Elks.

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, a memorial celebration was held for Barbara Majewski. Several Hillsborough officials, friends, and garden club members honored long-term member Barbara Majewski who died on September 2, 2022. Barbara assisted through the summer months of 2022 with the 4 gardens we maintain in Hillsborough



and Neshanic while holding many Neshanic Board positions over the years. (See picture below to the right).

The Neshanic Garden Club was invited and participated in the Green Living and Wellness Fair in Hillsborough at the borough hall on June 3<sup>rd</sup> where we shared, with those who attended, who we are, and what services we provide. We also held a raffle drawing for plants, solicited new members, and gave out information that we developed on container planting.



Several members attended the NJ Garden Club Convention. We were thrilled to be acknowledged for our publicity award from the Westfield Chapter {thank you}.

On June 15<sup>th</sup> we had a guided tour of the Rose Garden at Colonial Park in Somerset conducted by Christopher Gordon followed by our annual installation of new offices.



We continue to provide monthly crafting and flower arranging services to participants at Brookdale Senior Living and offer courses once a month to our Youth Group ages K-4 where we combine science with planting and gardening through fun projects all in Hillsborough.

Submitted by Robin Shaw



## NEWS LEAF "KIDS' CORNER"



**YOUTH CLUB REGISTRATON** - September is the time to be sure all youth clubs are registered for 2023. Print the Youth Club Registration form found on the YOUTH LINK of the GCNJ website. Mail the completed form with the \$20 Youth Club Registration fee to Sue Berdahl as indicated on the form ([sue.berdahl@gmail.com](mailto:sue.berdahl@gmail.com)). Youth Clubs that register, please provide contacts for their Youth Chair and Youth Leaders who are added to the GCNJ Youth Email Announcement list and the GCNJ Youth Directory/Youth Leaders' Roundtable list on the password-protected link of the GCNJ website.

**SHARING YOUR YOUTH ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS:** Youth Leaders are invited to email a description of their Youth Club Activities (including grade range) to your sponsoring Garden Club Presidents who will then forward the info to the District Directors. Youth activities may be included in monthly reports at the GCNJ Executive Board Meetings.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the Rake and Hoe Junior Garden Club - the winner of the Youth People's Choice Award. Thank you to the following additional Youth Garden Clubs who submitted photos of Youth Gardeners engaged in garden-related activities for the Youth Exhibit: Girl Scouts Youth Group of the Bridgewater GC, Junior Nature Club of the GC of Mountain Lakes, Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden Youth Gardeners of Memorial School of the KNMBG GC, Youth Group of the GC of Long Beach Island, and Sprouts GC of the GC of Long Valley.

### **GARDEN CLUB YOUTH CONTESTS!**

#### **CONGRATULATIONS TO 2023 WINNERS!**

**GCNJ SMOKEY BEAR/WOODSY OWL POSTER YOUTH CONTEST WINNERS:**

**KAREN NASH MEMORIAL BUTTERFLY GARDEN GC:**

Zoe Voris Grade 1 First Place Winner

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**TERRA NOVA GARDEN CLUB:**

Lorelei Wittek Grade 1 Second Place Winner

Lara Fernandez Grade 4 First Place Winner

Navath Mandala Grade 5 First Place Winner

The CAR/SGC HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY YOUTH CONTEST WINNER is Samantha Murzenski sponsored by the Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden GC (Washington Borough, Warren County). Her winning essay about water conservation entitled, "Don't Let Water Go," won First Place at the state level and was submitted to CAR/SGC for judging.

THANK YOU to all those participating in Youth Contests and for representing the Garden Club of New Jersey.

By October, we will have the 2024 YOUTH CONTESTS information on the GCNJ website. In New Jersey, most contests will have a January entry deadline with instructions to mail the entries to the GCNJ Awards Chair.

Diana Dove  
GCNJ Interim Youth Chair  
[dianadove13@gmail.com](mailto:dianadove13@gmail.com)  
(908) 763-9648.

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***Information for the next issue:***

***November 1st is the deadline for articles for the Winter 2023 News Leaf as well as listings of upcoming club events and online ads.***

Send articles and upcoming events to Karen Eardley at [k.eardley@live.com](mailto:k.eardley@live.com)

Go to GCNJ website at [www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org](http://www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org) for more information or check out Facebook for some informative posts: [\(4\) Garden Club of New Jersey | Facebook](#)

**Happy Fall!**

