



# The Garden Path

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*Recording Secretary*

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*Corresponding Secretary*

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Jeff Tryon  
*Newsletter Editor*

Lynn Grillo  
*Newsletter Design*





# President's Letter

Anne Skalka | October 2025



## *Dear Garden Club Members,*

October is a month of both sadness and anticipation. We watch some of our favorite plants droop and yellow, yet we also know this is the perfect time to plant bulbs and other spring-blooming treasures. Autumn is a season of foundation building in our gardens — even as we begin to put them to bed. With the fading of summer flowers, the structure and “bones” of our gardens are revealed. We see more clearly what has endured through the hot, dry months and what did not prove worth the time or expense.

For non-vegetable gardeners, the harvest begins as soon as the first spring bulbs bloom and continues right through late fall. Now, bush clover (*Lespedeza*) brightens the landscape with delicate pink and white flowers until frost. Oakleaf hydrangeas still hold their heavy heads of rosy blooms. The American beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) drapes its branches with cascades of brilliant purple berries, while fig trees offer fruit as sweet as candy. Perennials cut back six to eight weeks ago return with vigor—some, like *Persicaria*, even reward us with fresh blooms that last until frost. This “pre-winter season” has its own quiet loveliness—one worth savoring.

I hope you all enjoyed our recent program, where Helga Fontus and Anne Chmielewski shared their expertise on the horticultural division of next year's flower show. I'm already imagining which plants I might prepare for exhibition — it's a gift to have the time to nurture them.

As we tend our fall gardens, we are reminded that — like preparing for a flower show — cultivating beauty requires planning, perseverance, and hope. Let's plant that hope together and see what blooms.

*Warmly,*

*Anne Skalka*

*President, West Trenton Garden Club*



# September 2025 Meeting Minutes

Karen Lewandowski, Recording Secretary



Flowers for the Library, by Rick Lazarick

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## President's Report

The West Trenton Garden Club meeting of September 8, 2025, was called to order at 6:33 by President [Anne Skalka](#).

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## Secretary's Report

The minutes of the August meeting were printed in the monthly Newsletter. Hearing no additions or corrections, the minutes were filed as reported.

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## Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, [Rick Lazarick](#), reported a current balance of \$9,329.06. This balance includes an income since August 4 of \$831.00 and expenses of \$445.16 incurred from the August program. Our membership stands at 62.

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## Correspondence

[Iliana Okum](#) reported for [Victoria Rivera-Cruz](#) that a card was sent to Sue Fair and her husband.

# September 2025 Meeting Minutes

Karen Lewandowski, Recording Secretary

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## Announcements

[Anne Skalka](#) announced all September birthdays.

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## Committee Reports

- **Fall Bulb Sale** - [Rick Lazarick](#) provided order forms for our Annual Bulb Sale. Orders and money are due on Friday, September 26. So far we've raised over \$330.00. Bulbs can be picked up at the October meeting, with the exception of amaryllis bulbs, which won't be in until the end of October. **Program Committee** - [Iliana Okum](#) presented a Program Certificate to Ingrid Fair, which was accepted by her mother, Anne Chmielewski, in appreciation for the lovely flower arranging presentation she and her husband hosted at our August meeting.
- **Yearbook** - [Helga Fontus](#) brought the new 2025/2026 Yearbooks to the meeting and handed them out to all the members who were present to receive them. Everything a member needs to know about our club can be found in this publication.
- **Flower Show** - Our Flower Show, scheduled for mid-September 2026, still doesn't have a venue. [Helga Fontus](#) requested that everyone to start now to find the perfect place. We need a lot of space, a kitchen, ample parking, security, etc.
- **Birmingham Park** - [Matt Kowalski](#) reported that the park is in good shape, but the committee will be reaching out to members in a few weeks to ask for volunteers for the Fall Clean-up.
- [Lynn Grillo](#) reported that the new website is up and running and there have been many visits to it. She was contacted by Meals on Wheels, who asked her to appeal to our membership for volunteers to deliver meals to the homebound. Please contact [Lisa Kasabach](#) at [lkasabach@mealsonwheelsmercer.org](mailto:lkasabach@mealsonwheelsmercer.org) if interested in helping out. Lynn also heard from [Bernie Miller](#) of the American Peony Society who welcomed our members to attend the free Peony Exhibition and Convention that will be open to the public on May 3, 2026 in Clayton, DE at the Brandywine Plaza Hotel. Contact [brmiller@yahoo.com](mailto:brmiller@yahoo.com) if interested.
- [Anne Skalka](#) thanked the members of this month's Hospitality Committee for providing the evening's refreshments and had them stand up to be recognized.
- A Q & A session was held, and questions about dahlias and roses were answered by our resident experts on those subjects.
- \$26.00 went to the winner of the 50/50, and an additional drawing was held to raffle beautiful dahlias from [Rick Lazarick's](#) garden.

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## Meeting Adjourns

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:01. After refreshments were served, a very informative program was organized and presented by our own members, [Iliana Okum](#) and [Terry Palise](#), with [Anne Chmielewski](#) and [Helga Fontus](#) moderating, called "Division 1 Horticulture Sections and Classes", as our regularly scheduled program by [Alice Dickson](#), "Grow to Show - Horticulture Know-How" had to be canceled.

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## Additional Business

- [Anne Skalka](#) introduced a new WTGC member, [David Manis](#).



# Happy Birthday | Don't Forget! | Calendar

October 2025

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## Happy Birthday!

- Dolores Brezak – October 9
  - Ingrid Fair – October 27
  - Monique Bonnier – October 30
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## Don't Forget!

### Flowers for Ewing Library

Lorraine Persiani

### Hospitality Committee

Helga Fontus (Chair), Dolores Brezak, Anne Cheslock, George McElrath, June Miller, and Sandi Mullaney.

### Newsletter Deadline

Submit all info to Jeff Tryon by the 15th of the month via email at:  
[wtgcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wtgcnewsletter@gmail.com)

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## Mark Your Calendar

### October 1, 10:00 AM, Holly House

GCNJ Judges Council

### October 6, 6:30 PM, Hollowbrook CC

WTGC Monthly Meeting

Program: "Grow to Show: Horticulture Know-How!" Presenter: Linda Williams

### October 15

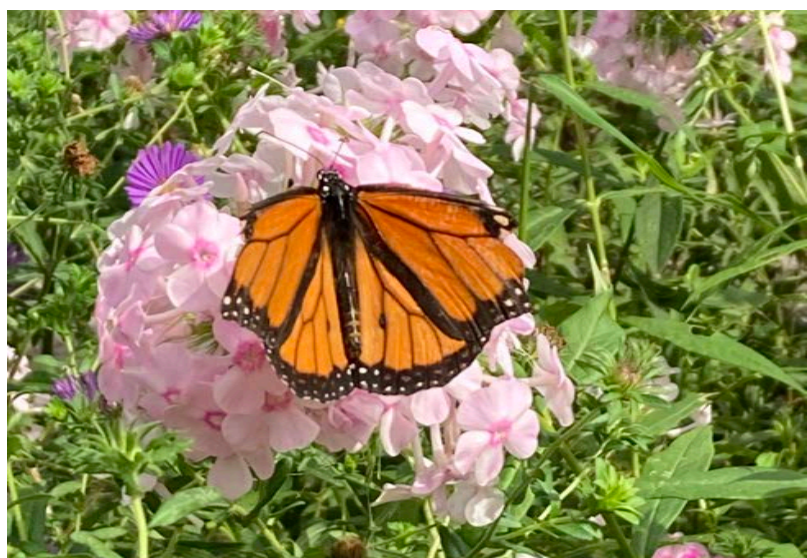
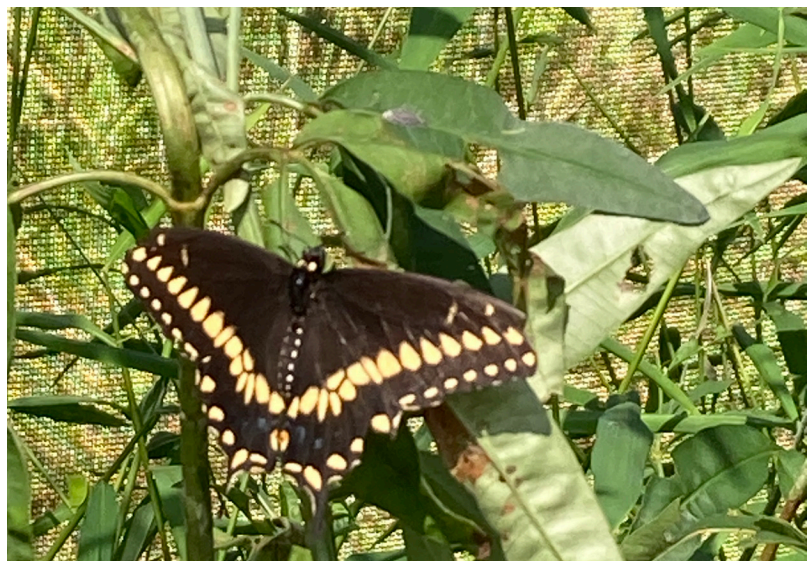
Deadline for Plant America Grant Applications

### October 19–22

2025 CAR-SGC Conference, Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay, Cambridge, MD. Register by September 20th at: <https://www.car-sgc.org>.

### October 20, 6:30 PM, Home of Anne Skalka

WTGC Board Meeting



Photos by Linda Reasoner



## *Petals to Pearls, Crafting Floral Jewelry and Designing a Fall Mask for the Flower Show*

Presented by [Linda Williams](#) | October 6, 6:30 PM

**B**otanical Arts is a relatively new division within National Garden Clubs (NGC) flower shows. It focuses on creative exhibits using plant material and other natural components. It encompasses four categories, namely, Botanical Horticulture, Botanical Design, Artistic Crafts, and Photography. There will be 3 Classes each featuring Artistic Crafts and Photography in the schedule. This program will teach us NGC Artistic Crafts rules with an emphasis on methods and materials. In addition, there will be a small demonstration on how to craft a masquerade mask which is one of the Classes in the Artistic Crafts Section of the show. Tips for the other Classes will be offered.

Our presenter, [Linda Williams](#), has been a member of the Community Garden Club of Hunterdon County for over twenty years where she currently serves as their treasurer. She is an NGC Accredited Master Flower Show Judge with countless NGC blue ribbons and top exhibitor awards. An NGC Accredited Master Judge is an individual who has achieved the highest level of accreditation in the NGC Flower Show Schools program. In addition to working full-time, Linda spends her spare time as a landscape design and garden study consultant. Yet, her favorite pastime is creating jewelry and ornamental accessories using plant and other types of materials.



# WTGC Flower Show Prep | “Color Me Autumn!”

*Anticipated Show Dates – Sept 18–19, 2026*

As we look ahead to our Color Me Autumn Flower Show in 2026, this series will share small pieces of the schedule during months when we have a related program. It’s a great way to build your confidence with the show’s classes—one step at a time. Many thanks to WTGC member, Pat Bowker, the creator of this wonderful flower show schedule!

## **DIVISION V – BOTANICAL ARTS ARTISTIC CRAFTS SECTION AND CLASSES - DRAFT**

### **SECTION A. “Old Hallows Eve” (Competitive)**

*Eligible for Botanical Arts Artistic Crafts Award and WTGC Special Award*

**Consultant:**

**Class 1 “Be-witched”** (4 entries)

*Beware of the witches and wizards.*

**A Witch’s or Wizard’s Hat** – Artistically decorated with designer’s choice of fresh and/or dried plant material and other components. Hat may not exceed 18” in height, hat brim may not exceed 18” in diameter. Viewed from the front. STAGING TBD.

**Class 2 “Hocus Pocus”** (4 entries)

*Dust ‘em off ladies...riding season is here!*

**A Witch’s Broom** – Create a witch’s broom enhanced with fresh and/or dried plant material and other components. Broom must 42” to 50” in length (top to bottom) and no wider than 18” at any point. STAGING TBD.

**Class 3 “Welcome to Bran Castle”** (4 entries)

*You are cordially invited to the masquerade party of the year in Transylvania!*

**Decorative Mask** – Create a functional eye or total face mask using fresh and/or dried plant material and other components. Will be staged on a mannequin head, placed by committee. Exhibitor is responsible for attaching mask to mannequin head.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY SECTION AND CLASSES**

### **SECTION B. “Fall Breezes and Autumn Leaves” (Competitive)**

*Eligible for Botanical Arts Photography Award and WTGC Special Award*

**Consultant:** Linda Reasoner | [lindar75@verizon.net](mailto:lindar75@verizon.net) | (609) 851-7520

**Class 4 “Reflections of Autumn”** (maximum 10 entries)

A landscape scene including a water feature.

**Class 5 “Into the Woods - Step Inside Nature”** (maximum 10 entries)

Landscape scene with wildlife.

**Class 6 “A Burst of Autumn Colors”** (maximum 10 entries)

A close-up photograph of any insect, bird, flower and/or leaf.

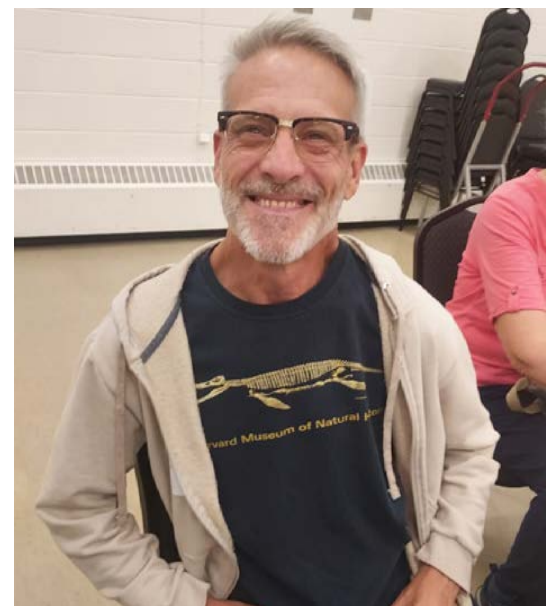
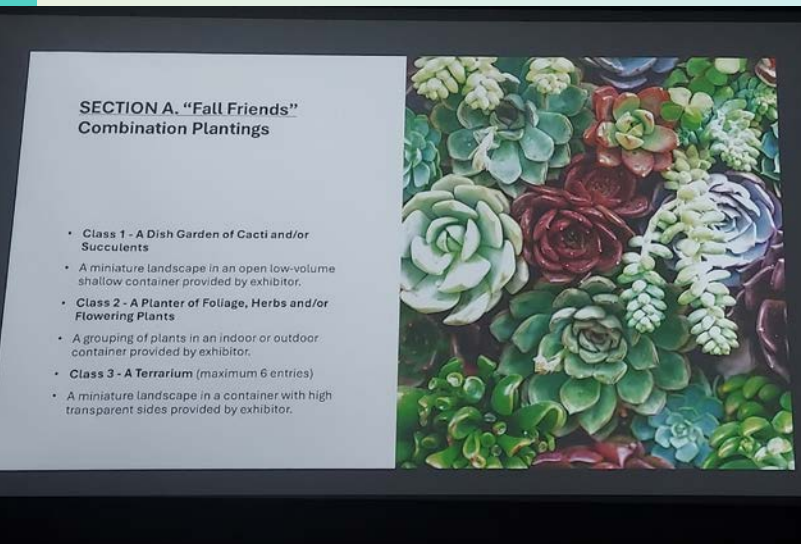
**Class 7 “Autumn Joy”** (maximum 10 entries)

A still life photograph incorporating fruits, vegetables, plants and/or flowers.



# Gallery | September Meeting

Photos by Jeff Tryon





# Gallery | September Meeting

Photos by Jeff Tryon





# Gallery | Flowers for the Library

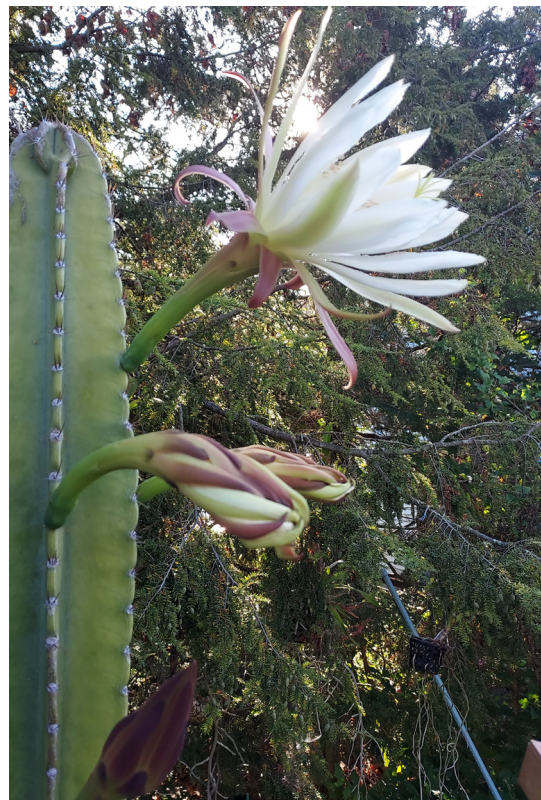
Photos, flowers and arrangements by Rick Lazarick





# Gallery | *Cactus Blooms*

Photos and plants by Jeff Tryon





# Gallery | Garden Pics

Photos and garden by Lynn Grillo

- ♦ *A September Jersey tomato tastes like the whole summer finally keeping its promise* ♦

