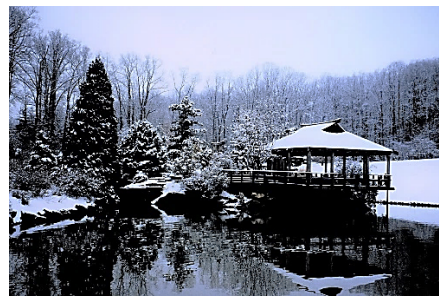


The Brooksider

Published by Friends of Brookside Gardens, Inc.



Winter, 2021

President's Letter

By Kathy Kircher, President

First, I would like to wish all of you a happy and healthy year ahead! I hope you are enjoying the beauty of winter and are looking forward to spring!

It has been beautiful at **Brookside** this winter. For me, the highlights of the winter garden are the details, forms, and structures that stand out when the competition from flowers is gone. It's a chance to appreciate the design of the garden spaces. The garden has been bright with both rich green nooks and open vistas to enjoy. In January, I saw a gray heron near the Japanese Teahouse and was able to watch it wading calmly around the teahouse supports. What a surprise! It was a moment when I was fully aware of beauty and peace surrounding me. If you haven't yet had a chance to see the new patio just outside the visitor center auditorium, make sure to check it out on your next visit. There is also a stunning new stone-work fire pit that will be a great place for gatherings.

Many thanks to all of you for your contributions last year. **FOBG** had a challenging, yet successful, fundraising year highlighted by our very successful, online plant sale. Look for the article, later in the newsletter, with more information.

The **FOBG** Board also thanks you for renewing your memberships or for joining as a new member this year. Your dues go directly to support the gardens you love. Brookside has thousands of visitors each year.

But you are special; you have made the commitment to financially support Brookside by joining **FOBG**. Membership dues are the major portion of our contribution to Brookside Gardens. If you forgot to renew, now is an excellent time. **Brookside Gardens'** spring and summer **Cultivate Magazine** will be out shortly and registration for classes will be starting. See class information in this newsletter.

As I look forward to the upcoming activities and classes, I especially want to thank the Brookside staff for the wonderful holiday workshops. The workshops were rescheduled to include multiple sessions with fewer participants in each and were moved to the auditorium. I heard from attendees that the classes were perfectly planned and executed. Participants felt very comfortable and safe. I would also like to thank the gardening and greenhouse staff for keeping Brookside blooming under adverse circumstances.

This year, we are celebrating **FOBG's** 25th Anniversary. Thank you, **Joan O'Rourke**, and everyone who was a charter member in 1996! We will start our Anniversary year with an online member meeting in April.

One final reminder - Valentine's day. Bring your special person to Brookside Gardens for a stroll and start a new tradition. Thank you again for all your contributions!



Please note that the “News from Brookside” column will return in the Spring 2021 issue of **The Brooksider**.

2020 - Not Business as Usual!

By Anne Roland, Vice President

Well, 2020 was certainly the year of doing things differently for **FOBG**. While many **Brookside** and **FOBG** activities were cancelled due to COVID-19, we found new ways to support **Brookside Gardens** and meet social distancing requirements.

In June, **FOBG** partnered with Athletic House, a local printing company, to sell a limited-edition t-shirt to raise funds. The logo on the shirt (see photo), “Friends Apart but Always Together,” will remind us that while the COVID-19 crisis kept us apart in 2020, we were together in spirit as we supported one another.

We held our first-ever virtual plant sale in September. Folks ordered their plants from the amazing online

store on our website and picked them up curbside at a pre-scheduled time (see photo). Even though many of us doubted that we could pull it off in such a short time, this turned out to be one of our best plant sales ever.

We also supported two new online **Brookside Gardens** activities targeted to students, the Art in the Garden art show and the Hip Hop Architecture camp (a program to introduce underrepresented youth to architecture, urban planning, and design).

We e-mailed a year-end fundraising appeal postcard and many **FOBG** members responded. Thank you!

So, despite 2020’s challenges, we had a great year. We are grateful to:

- **Montgomery Parks** and **Brookside Gardens** for providing a safe and peaceful place to visit.
- **Brookside Gardens’** staff for maintaining the gardens beautifully despite closures, budget cuts and increased attendance.
- The many visitors who share their positive experiences in the gardens.

But most importantly, we are grateful to our **FOBG** members for your patience, support, and your volunteer time. With budget cuts and revenue reductions, **Brookside** will need **FOBG** support more than ever in 2021. But no matter what this year brings, we know that **FOBG** will be up to the challenge.



Virtual FOBG Member Appreciation Event
Save This Date: April 18

We are preparing to celebrate you – our *Friends of Brookside Gardens* members! Mark your calendars now for our annual appreciation event. It will be held as a webinar on **Sunday, April 18 at 3:00 pm**. There will be a few short introductory speeches, several surprise guest appearances, a special demonstration, and more! Look for your Eventbrite invitation in March. It's not too late to join or renew your membership on our website – www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org.

We are looking forward to celebrating each other. Plan to join the fun while supporting Brookside Gardens at the same time!



25th ANNIVERSARY FOBG PLANT SALE

By Nithya Raghavan & Joan O' Rourke

HAPPY NEW YEAR! It is the 25th Anniversary for **Friends of Brookside Gardens!**

While we start another year with uncertainty, we can still hope for world peace and plants that bring joy to our lives! While we do not know if it will be a virtual plant sale with curbside pickup like the one last year OR an in-person sale that we have all loved, we can assure you that there **will be** a plant sale. It is indeed **FOBG's PERENNIAL** plant sale in every way – we not only sell perennials at this sale, but we have had this sale every year since the inception of **FOBG** 25 years ago. This is a sale that not only benefits the community but all the proceeds of this sale go to support **Brookside Gardens**. We will post the details of this year's plant sale on our website at www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org as the months roll by.

We have the information on the plants you bought in 2020 on our website in case you lost the plant tags and want to know the plant that is growing in spring in your garden. This information will be

up on the website till May. Unlike the past, for the first time we are purchasing almost fully grown plants for the sale this year due to heightened COVID restrictions during the continuing pandemic. So there may be some changes to our plant sale. We hope that you will understand the effort that goes into putting together a plant sale. While many area organizers have cancelled their plant sales both last year and this year, we are trying our level best to have this sale again this year so that we can bring you quality perennials for your garden. Also, to commemorate **FOBG's** 25th Anniversary, we will be designating a mystery plant (an outstanding plant) as the **FOBG Anniversary keepsake plant**. We are contacting various growers to bring you, our wonderful **FOBG** members and general public, an exceptional plant that you will love to grow in your garden. We will be posting all the plant sale info and plans in the coming months. **See you in September 2021!**



My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece. –Claude Monet

WHAT MONTH IS IT?!

By Joan Ann Stenstrom, The Brookside Editorial Staff

A few weeks into January, judging by the weather, one wasn't sure if it was January or April! Now toward the end of this first month of the new year, it is still a wonder. On my walk around the neighborhood, I was startled to see snowdrops in full bloom. Though most websites indicate that the early varieties bloom in late winter, as in January, and are harbingers of spring, this does not seem to be "late winter" or "early spring" by the calendar, only the weather! However, it gives one hope (albeit, not the snow lovers) that we might once again escape a real winter in our area. That being said, these walks have also awakened me to the work that can be done now before everything really does begin to come back to life in the garden. Some parts of the garden never died back as in a more normal weather situation. I normally cut my roses back in February, but seeing several cut back already, I came home and took advantage of the spring-like day and cut mine with many stems looking like they are ready to burst forth with new leaves already. Other plants seem to be confused, as well.

The hydrangeas are putting forth buds, as is the rhododendron. Stems of some plants that normally don't "green up" this early are bright green. Little tufts of ornamental grasses are seen along the walk throughout the neighborhood.

Garden articles in various periodicals, note that with the pandemic, home gardening became of more interest during the year, thus, seeds will be in short supply this spring. Early ordering should probably be considered, if not done already. In addition to cleaning up beds and cutting back such plants as roses, planning for this year's garden is a project for the remaining weeks of late "winter", such as it is. Balcony/deck self-watering garden containers are a solution for combating the animals that make in-ground gardening problematic. Several types are available through garden supply sites and look promising. Another thing to dream about in planning.

Happy gardening and dreaming!



Garden Guardian

By Dr. Dick Hammerschlag, Master Gardener, Howard County

Back to Nature

A theme that has received much attention as of late is that of our enhanced looking inward to our home landscapes and local areas out of doors. COVID 19 has forced us to remain close to home and as a result we have taken a much more macroscopic analysis of the green milieu around us. And many of us have thought “why don’t we upgrade our surroundings” and “we can do better than this”. As a result, the world of landscape architecture, garden centers and mail order nurseries has seen a dramatic rise in activity. What honestly has been a frustration is to go online in January to find that many desired plants are SOLD OUT!!! And not only that, the catalogue people are charging substantial prices! And why not? When demand is high, prices will correspondingly increase. But this is really great – a sort of homegrown green revolution – a renewed move back to our roots so to speak. Hopefully, this revived respect for our local environment will endure and continue to expand to our vision of the whole world! Sort of an awakening of sorts that the ‘natural’ world around us does have a lot of redeeming values. In the first place, at a time when what we can do is limited, we may find it’s not sooo bad to go outside and ‘putter around’ the yard...maybe sprucing things up and then upgrading = gardening therapy. Almost better than the treadmill. Besides, you’re actually accomplishing something visual. There will be others who may not be so energetic but will appreciate the surroundings as is, just as a place of solace.

Just relax, take stock of what is going on around us and take in what our environment has to offer. There have been ever so many folks just going out into the garden such as it is and just getting away from the ongoing life stresses = garden therapy, also. Even in the dead of winter, it is fun to walk around and check for the very first of spring awakenings – maybe some daffodil greens, or possible hellebores pushing (some even flowering!!!), look for buds beginning to swell on maples and elms – even these incipient things remind us that nature is alive and moving on. The life cycles inevitably keep ‘pedaling’. Maybe global warming does have some positive values – winters don’t seem to be as harsh. It is easier for us to remain outside for a while longer and many of the plants seem to be a bit greenerearlier. So spring gets extended.

Anyway, that’s an upside of our Covid days and well beyond. It is hopeful to see light at the end of the Covid tunnel and to renew as well as reinforce our appreciation of the ‘natural’ world. Maybe we are back..

For those of you who have ‘ties’ to the natural world you might give ‘The Overstory’ by Richard Powers a read if you haven’t already. In a semi ‘poetic’, evocative STORY, he touches OVER some of the critical relationships between man and trees (symbol of the environment). It’s a challenging read – but mostly worth it. Enjoy!

In this and future issues of *The Brooksider*, we will provide a listing of upcoming FOBG sponsored events and Brookside Gardens adult programs. The list will be updated as information becomes available. We hope this will be helpful in planning how you can take advantage of all that Brookside Gardens has to offer. Additional offerings, such as children's programs, art exhibits and excursions can be found at:

[Cultivate](#) magazine (you can also go to www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org OR the online version of the [Brooksider](#) to access the latest version of Cultivate).

Date	Brookside Gardens Adult and Children's Programs	Course #
3/6/2021	Rainscape Your Yard: Session I	107033
3/8/2021	Flower Buds Preschool Classes: Spring is in The Air	105220
3/13/2021	Landscape Design I	107029
3/27/2021	Landscape Design II	107030
4/3/2021	How to Get Your Orchid to Rebloom	107031
4/10/2021	Small Trees (and Large Shrubs) for Urban and Small Gardens	107037
4/10/2021	Spring Yoga Sprouts!*	105246
4/12/2021	Flower Buds Preschool Classes: Earth Day is Everyday	105221
4/15/2021	St. Patrick's Day...Week! Green and Growing Scavenger Hunt	105348
4/17/2021	Rainscape Your Yard: Session II	107034
4/20/2021	America's Diverse Garden Climates... from Seattle to St. Augustine and Mt. Desert Island to the Mojave Desert	107022
4/20/2021	Spring Ephemerals with Colored Pencil & Watercolor*	107020
4/21/2020	Shinrin-yoku: The Art of Forest Bathing	107043
4/24/2021	Shinrin-yoku: The Art of Forest Bathing	107044
4/24/2021	Montgomery County GreenFest	107019
4/26/2021	Full Moon Walk	107047
4/28/2021	Behind-the-Scenes Greenhouse Tour	107025
5/1/2021	Introduction to Plant Propagation: Houseplants & Summer Annuals	107042
5/1/2021	Behind-the-Scenes Greenhouse Tour	107026
5/1/2021	Yoga at Brookside Gardens*	107063
5/4/2021	Azalea & Rhododendron Tour	107027
5/5/2021	Tai Chi at Brookside Gardens	107079
5/8/2021	Designing with Native Plants	107038
5/10/2021	Flower Buds Preschool Classes: Seeds and Flowers	105222
5/15/2021	Growing & Designing with Tropical Plants to Energize Your Garden	107039
5/22/2021	Rainscape Your Yard: Session III	107036
5/26/2021	Full Moon Walk	107048
5/29/2021	Ground Covers: Great Alternatives to Turf Grass	107040

* - Program Meets Multiple Days

** - Program Meets Multiple Times Per Day

Donors 2020

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Behrmann, Joseph & Barbara
Bertera, Robert
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Patron Level \$250-\$499

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Williamson, Mary Louise
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Benefactor Level-\$500-\$999

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Benefactor Level 1 \$1,000-\$2,500

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Benefactor Level 2 \$5,000-40,000

Newcomb, Dr & Mrs Robert
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Williamson, Mary Louise

NOTE: Past issues of Brooksider can be accessed online via www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org/newsletters

Suggestions? Ideas? Let us know!

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