

# From the Potting Shed

Nov. 1, 2024

[www.mgofbc.org](http://www.mgofbc.org)



**Meeting news: Tuesday, Nov. 19, 7:20 pm**

## Thomas Cawley: Floral design for the holidays

Get ready to be inspired to create some holiday decorations!

Thomas Cawley is a certified Master Designer with four decades of diverse experience in retail and high-end event production. He has created lush, large-scale projects for royalty, political figures, and society clients in France, Monte Carlo, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.



**Thomas Cawley**

For our meeting, Tom plans to create a holiday floral arrangement, such as a magnolia and holiday greenery wreath using a metal wreath form, and “perhaps a short demo on garland making,” he explained in an email. “The whole demonstration is tips and tricks.”

Tom started his career working in a neighbor’s flower shop at age 12. “I liked the work and the environment,” he wrote. “I worked there through college. I partnered with them on a shop in Hackensack for six years.” He later worked for a large event firm in New York City and, over time, became the head florist. Over the years, he worked for various firms traveling around the world doing events.

Years ago, he said, he produced a wedding for a princess in Saudi Arabia where he spent a month completing the project. “I had 30 floral designers and six tractor-trailer loads of flowers,” he said. “They built

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Links are clickable and are noted in **blue**.

## **From the President’s Desk**

***By Theresa Schneider, Class of 2016***

Calling all subject matter experts! As we come to the end of 2024, it’s time to plan our continuing education programs for 2025.

Do you have expertise in a gardening or horticulture-related topic, and if you do, would you consider sharing that expertise with your fellow MGs? Please contact [me](#) if you have expertise to share or have suggestions for continuing education topics for our 2025 programs.



Here are some topics MG of BC members have expressed interest in so far: Invasive plant species and mitigation strategies; people-plant relationships; plant pests and pathogens and treatment techniques; garden tool maintenance; floral arrangements; and wreath-making.

### ***MG of BC meetings are free!***

*MG of BC meetings are free and open to the public in the fourth-floor meeting room, 1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack. Park in the garage or on the plaza. Refreshments at 7 pm; announcements at 7:20 pm. Thomas Cawley will follow at about 7:30 pm.*

## WEBINARS

*All times are Eastern.*

**Nov. 4, 6:30 pm:** Rutgers Earth Day Every Day sponsors Invasive Insects Update: Spotted Lanternfly, Emerald Ash Borer, and Hornets. Free. Click [here](#) and scroll down to Nov. 4 for more information and the registration link.

**Nov. 5, 1 pm:** University of Wisconsin, Madison, sponsors You Can Grow Citrus. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Nov. 9, 9-10:30 am:** Penn State Extension sponsors Key Garden Tools and Tips. Fee: \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Nov. 13, 2:30-3:30 pm:** Penn State Extension sponsors The Art of Planning Before Planting. Fee: \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Nov. 13, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Penn State Extension sponsors Indoor Plant Basics. Fee: \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Nov. 14, 11 am-noon:** AARP Virtual Community Center sponsors The Foundation of Your Garden: Soil, Compost, and Mulch. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. AARP membership not required.

**Nov. 14, 2 pm:** The Garden Conservancy sponsors Gardening, a Love Story: Creating Brush Hill. Fee: \$5 members; \$15 non-members. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Nov. 16, 9:30-11 am:** Penn State Extension sponsors Made for the Shade: Choosing the Best Plants. Fee: \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Nov. 20, 7-8:30 pm:** Native Plant Society of New Jersey sponsors Designing at the Forest Edge: Naturalistic Approaches with Native Plants. Speaker: Kazys Varnelis, president of the NPSNJ. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Nov. 21, 7-8:30 pm:** New Jersey Forestry Association, the NJ State Forest Service, and Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsor How to Love a Forest with Ethan Tapper, forester and author. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

## *Rollin' on the river*



*Photo by Kathleen Sullivan, Class of 2010*

Back to front to back: Janet Stofkoper, Class of 2023, Suzy Basu (2023), and Smadar Shemmesh (2017) during last month's eco cruise on the Hackensack River. Suzy is the MG of BC Trips and Tours chair. "Join us for upcoming trips to Plant-O-Rama at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden (Jan. 28) and the Philadelphia Flower Show (March 1)," she said. For details and to register, contact [Suzy](#).

### *(Thomas Cawley, continued from page 1)*

out an airplane hangar into an event space to accommodate 200 female guests and 200 ladies in waiting chaperoning. The groom and father of the bride were the only males present."

Tom began teaching at the New York Botanical Garden 15 years ago. He's now the program coordinator of Floral Design in the Continuing Education program. He instructs Fundamentals of Form; Fundamentals of Style; Wedding Design 1 and 2; Grand-Scale Design; Modern Sympathy Designs; and Event Planning for the Floral Designer.

He also freelances as a production manager and floral designer for various firms.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

*Need/want more volunteer hours to reach the required 25 for MG certification this year? We have three for you: Two “blasts” are scheduled — at the Mary S. Topolsky Garden Nov. 7 and at the Teaneck Creek Conservancy Nov. 20 — where many hands get lots of work accomplished at once. The third opportunity is indoors at the Holiday Open House at Skylands Manor where docents are needed Dec. 5-8. Read on for details and how to sign up.*

### **It's MGs vs. invasive plants**

**Mary S. Topolsky Garden and Trail, 640 River Road, Teaneck; Nov. 7 from 10 am-1 pm**

At the Mary S. Topolsky Garden in Teaneck, blast volunteers will prune perennials, wildflowers, and shrubs, some of which are up to 7 feet tall. However, be prepared to work hard as you'll be squaring off against invasive plants.

Harriet Steiner, Class of 2019 and site coordinator, said of the site: “It really is a very pretty park. It goes right down to the Hackensack River. You can take a walk and sit on a bench.”

Bring water; gloves; bug spray (there are ticks on the property); and loppers and pruners. There's a portable toilet a few doors south in Terhune Park. Look for a tan Toyota parked in front of 640 River Road as your marker. However, you must park on Kipp Street or another side street.

Register by calling Harriet Steiner at 201-741-6765. That way she can notify you if inclement weather results in a change of plans, etc.



Topolsky volunteers, from left, Harriet Steiner, Class of 2019, and Karen Shaner and Peter Cammarano (both 2023) starting the fall cleanup. Join them Nov. 7 for the blast!

### **Teaneck Creek: Prepping for winter**

*[Editor's note: Dave Chalek, of Sprout Farms and Gardens, is the resident designer for the Teaneck Creek Conservancy's Eco-Art Committee and leads the volunteer groups that help with the plantings and some of the maintenance.]*

#### **By Dave Chalek**

The end of the season is upon us and now is the time to plan! We're always on watch as the seasons begin to change at Teaneck Creek. We want to give plants their best opportunity to store supplies before the dark

winter. The time to put gardens to sleep for the long haul is right after the first *real* frost.

We're looking for volunteers to help us get things ready keeping in mind that we're setting up our bird and insect communities as well for the cold winter months to come.

We'll be cutting some things back, trimming others down to appropriate heights, and cleaning up the Peace Labyrinth to ensure it's just as beautiful in January as it is in July.

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### ***Docents needed for Holiday Open House at Skylands Manor Dec. 5-8***

Become a docent for a few hours one day or for several days during the Holiday Open House at Skylands Manor Dec. 5-8.

The MG of BC team will transform the manor's Withdrawing Room and Octagonal Hall into a gilded botanica based on this year's HOH theme of "A Gilded Age Holiday."

Volunteer docents are needed each day during the event from 10 am-5 pm. Docents are assigned to a room where they'll monitor the décor, answer questions, and take family photos of guests. Volunteer shifts run a minimum of two hours but can be extended to accommodate volunteers who'd like to stay longer.

Maria Bushman, Class of 2019, noted that the manor will be decorated "floor to ceiling. It will feature a sparkling display of imagination and delight." The HOH, she added, "is a warm and welcoming start to the holiday season."

Click [here](#) to send an email to Maria or call her at 201-981-8012 for more information. Skylands Manor is located within the New Jersey Botanical Garden. The GPS address is Morris Road, Ringwood.

**Note about volunteer hours:** You can add up to one hour of travel time to your volunteer shift if it's at least two hours long.



*Photo by Maria Bushman*

The HOH decorating team crafted these displays to place around Skylands Manor.

### **Got trees?????**

The HOH decorating team is looking for donations of new or used Christmas trees. If you're looking to dispose of an artificial tree that's at least 4 feet tall (the team would love a 9-foot tree), send an email to [Maria Bushman](#) so she can arrange a pickup.

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### ***(Teaneck Creek, continued from page 3)***

The main focus will be on the new native gardens in and around the Peace Labyrinth, but we'll also be working with the Weed Warriors, some of whom helped create the original park in 2004 and have been keepers of the park since 2007.

Volunteers will learn what plants to cut back, where to prune, when to do it, and why. There are more than 30 genus of plants in our native garden with multiple species for some. We'll be happy to help you ramp up your fall/winter ID skills. We truly appreciate your support and look forward to working with you!

Click [here](#) to register.

Bring hand tools (pruner, hand trowel, or soil knife, etc.); gloves; refillable water bottle; and snacks if you want them. Teaneck Creek Conservancy will supply large tools as needed and water for your refillable water bottle.

Dress in layers with closed-toe shoes and a sunhat as the area is fully exposed to the sun.

## MG OF BC NEWS

### MG holiday party and 'swap' Dec. 10

Master Gardeners, interns, and alums are invited to the MG of BC holiday party Tuesday, Dec. 10 from noon-2 pm in the Bergen County Zoo Education



Remember when? This seasonal arrangement was one of 27 created by a team of MGs and offered for sale at our holiday party in 2019. Has it been that long? Yes!

Center, Van Saun Park. The MG of BC will supply hot food, dessert, and beverages.

**New and different for 2025:** Let's swap books, tools, and seeds. Bring a book or tool that you no longer need or use. The tool should be in good shape, clean, and, if appropriate,

sharpened. Bring seeds that are labeled to exchange with other MGs.

**RSVP:** We need to plan the catering, so click [here](#) to RSVP by Nov. 25 to Chris Kozar, hospitality chair, with your name and class year. "We hope that this party will prove to be as successful as our summer picnic," Chris said. "Please join us."

### Got volunteer hours???? Did you record them into Better Impact?

**By Suzanne Danzig, Class of 2008 and Volunteer Records chair**

Hello folks, how about this extended summer weather? My fear is that our vegetation and wildlife are just as confused as we are.

While Mother Nature may not realize year end is approaching I am here to remind you that it is time to log your volunteer and continuing education hours into [Better Impact](#) if you have not been doing it as you go.

### The layered look

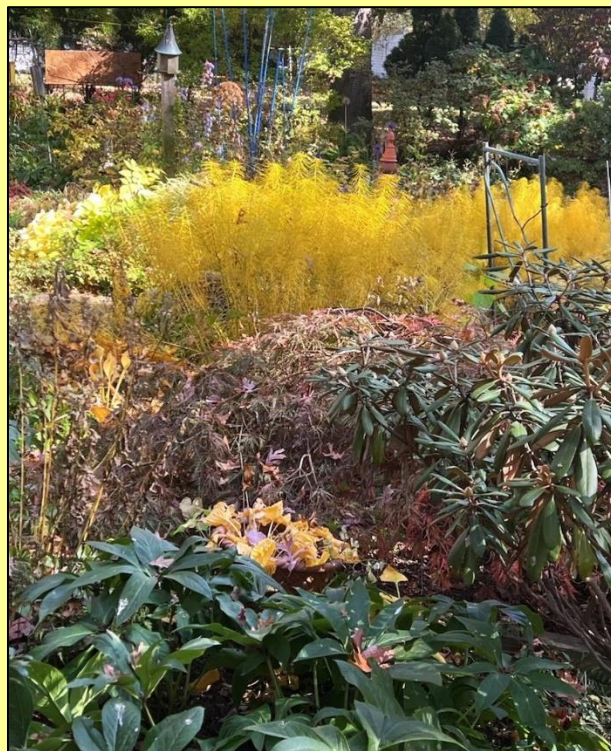


Photo by Janet Schulz

Janet Schulz, Class of 1988, reports that her garden begins and ends the growing season in yellows. First to bloom in the spring is the forsythia and the last yellow of the season are the Norway maple leaves. Bottom to top: Hellebores, at left; a patch of hostas "shutting down," center behind the hellebores; rhodies, at right. Rear left, *Auralia* 'Sun King,' next to *Amsonia hubrichtii*. Janet pointed out the transition of color during the season. "In the spring the garden is soft pastels; in the fall everything is hard, with yellow, red, and maroon."

Another reminder is that to *maintain* your MG certification, you are required to volunteer for a minimum of 25 hours and participate in a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education lectures, webinars, and/or qualified tours.

MG interns are *not* required to log CE hours; logging your volunteer hours is critical to *obtain* your certification. Please do not hesitate to reach out to [me](#) should you have any questions about Better Impact.

I am thinking that you are all comfortable with Better Impact by now.

## GARDEN CLUB MEETINGS

**Nov. 4, 4:30 pm: Sundial Garden Club,** Hillsdale Library, 509 Hillsdale Ave., Hillsdale. Speaker: Lisa Skoglund, owner of [Jersey Girl Apiary](#). Topic: Beekeeping - What Would You Like to Know?

**Nov. 7, 7:30 pm: Garden Club of Harrington Park,** upstairs in the Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: Robyn Lowenthal, Class of 2011. Topic: All About Coleus.



**Nov. 12, 7 pm: Ramsey Area Garden Club,** Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave. (corner of Woodland Avenue), Ramsey. Speaker: Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004. Topic: Gardens on Tour in the United States.

**Nov. 13, 7 pm: Wyckoff Area Garden Club,** Wyckoff Public Library, 200 Woodland Ave., Wyckoff. Speaker: Deb Ellis, leader, Essex County chapter, Native Plant Society of New Jersey. Topic: Fall and Winter in the Native Garden. Refreshments at 6:30 pm.

**Nov. 14, 7 pm: Teaneck Garden Club,** Room MP1, Rodda Center, 250 Colonial Court, Teaneck. Speaker: Nisha Khanna, landscape designer and garden coach. Topic: Deer-Resistant Gardening with Native Plants. Refreshments at 6:30 pm. Click [here](#) for more information.

**Nov. 20, 6:20 pm:** Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club, second-floor meeting room, Hasbrouck Heights Library, 320 Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights. Speaker: Bud Cuttito, retired landscape designer. Topic: Garden Tips and Floral Screen Presentation. Refreshments at 5:30 pm; meeting at 6 pm.

## VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

*Two of our volunteer sites have officially closed for the season. Here's a season wrap-up from the site coordinators.*

### **Washington Spring Garden**

Washington Spring Garden has been put to bed for the winter. Thank you to all who participated in the upkeep of this beautiful sanctuary. The garden looks beautiful, and our patrons are always expressing their gratitude for the work we do. All of our hard work in the spring and summer will pay off next spring when the azaleas, rhododendron, mountain laurel, and dogwood once again put on a spectacular display of color.

We look forward to seeing our dedicated volunteers and welcoming new friends of the garden next spring.

*- Suzanne Danzig, Class of 2008,  
and Janet Stofkoper (2023), site coordinators*

### **McFaul Environmental Center**

Oct. 16 marked the conclusion of our volunteering efforts at McFaul. I extend a special thank you to our dedicated corps — Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016, Paul Sisko (2021), and Ben Weiner (2020) — for their invaluable efforts throughout the year.

Projects included removing invasive shrubs; cutting and pruning trees; planting beds and containers; resetting garden path stones; removing plants to be stored for next year; and, of course, plucking a weed or two. The parks director appreciates the impact we have on the community, as our Environmental Center welcomes thousands of students and adults for field trips and events throughout the year.

*- Joseph Cooper, Class of 2008  
and site coordinator*

## EVENTS

### Native Plant Society of New Jersey Virtual fall conference

**Nov. 2, 8:45 am-1:30 pm**

**Rooted in New Jersey: The Science,  
Challenges, and Future of Our Native Trees**

Click [here](#) for more information and to register; conference is free

### ***'Crazy composting' Nov. 9***

**Nov. 9, 2-3 pm: Closter Nature Center, 154 Ruckman Road, Closter.** Lynne Proskow, Class of 2022, gives a talk titled Crazy Composting Year-round: Ins and Outs. Lynne will discuss the Bokashi method she uses indoors during the winter employing a 5-gallon bucket with a lid and effective microorganisms. She will demonstrate how easy and effective this is for producing "black gold," a gardener's best friend.

### ***Native Plant Society seed swap***

**Nov. 9, 2-4 pm:** Bergen-Passaic chapter, Native Plant Society of New Jersey seed swap. Send an email to [Tanya Zimmerman](#) to register. You'll receive an email with the address of the event the day before. *You don't have to bring seeds to take seeds.*

All seeds donated should be from native plants and pure species. Don't bring seeds from non-native plants or cultivars. If you're not sure, label the seeds carefully with as much information as you have. Don't collect seeds in the wild or from private property without permission.

You may also bring flats or plastic produce containers or other types of containers to trade or give away. A brief talk on sowing native seeds and caring for the seedlings will accompany the seed swap.

### ***A tree talk at Thielke Arboretum***

**Nov. 11, 7-9 pm:** Thielke Thursday Talks presents Know Your Trees - A Guide to Choosing the Right Tree for Your Landscape. The speaker is Jason Grabosky, a professor at Rutgers. Jason spoke at our January 2023 MG of BC meeting. Thielke Arboretum, 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock. Fee: \$10; seating is limited. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

### ***Thielke's walk in the woods***

**Nov. 17, 10-11:30 am:** Join Thielke Arboretum's nature guide for an informal walk around the arboretum to explore the arboretum and all it has to offer. Meet on the back porch of the Environmental Education Building. The address is 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock. A \$10 donation is suggested.

### ***Visit us on social media***

- [Facebook](#): Visit Master Gardeners of Bergen County | Hackensack NJ | Facebook. A pop-up box will appear requesting that you log in or create an account. If you don't have a Facebook account, click on the "x" in the upper right corner of the pop-up box to close it, and you'll have access to the MG of BC Facebook page.
- [Instagram](#)

