

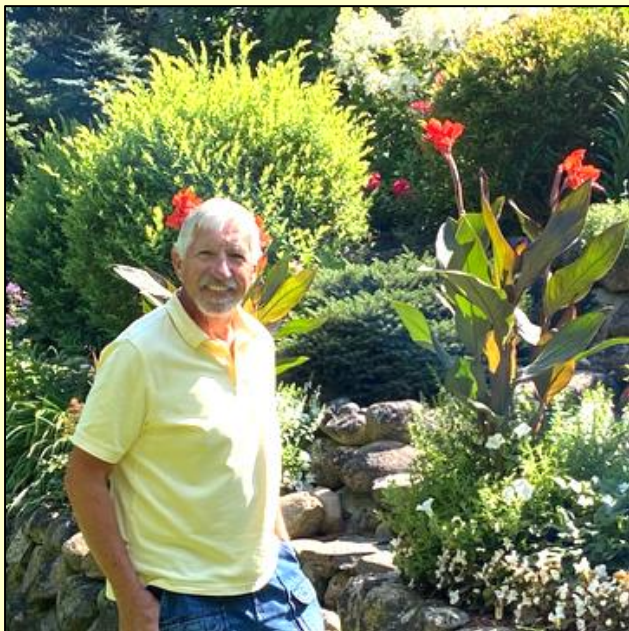
# From the Potting Shed

July 1, 2024

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



## Visit Paul Sisko's garden July 13



Photos by Paul Sisko

Paul Sisko, Class of 2021, will open his garden to Master Gardeners and interns July 13 from 10 am-4 pm. The address is 113 Fardale Ave., Mahwah. Park on the street. That's one of Paul's sculptures at the upper left of the photo below.



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Links are clickable and are noted in [blue](#).

## From the President's Desk

### By Theresa Schneider, Class of 2016

I had a fun time at the summer picnic June 26 — good food, good conversation, and a little networking, plus I had the chance to meet folks from the Class of 2024 and celebrate a member of the Class of 1988. [See photos on page 6.]



Despite the hot and humid day, we had a great turnout, and luckily the overhead protection of the pavilion. At one point a Van Saun grounds crew came by and cautioned us to stay safe in the heat. We thanked the crew for their support and gave them some of our leftover desserts and cold water.

After the fun of the picnic, I was not looking forward to slugging through the yard work on my "to do" list. Having noticed how hot and tired the crew appeared, their warning to stay safe in the heat made me question how well I listen to my body when working outside. Per the [National Weather Service](#), heat is the No. 1 cause of weather-related fatalities across the United States.

This motivated me to do a little research on various cooperative extension websites to see if there were actions I could take to better protect myself during the hot and humid summers in New Jersey.

*(Continued on page 3)*

# GARDEN JOURNAL

## A weed-filled double lot meant more space for gardening

**Editor's note:** This is the third of three "garden journal" stories from MG of BC members who show their gardens through the Garden Conservancy [Open Days](#) program. The garden of Janet Schulz, Class of 1988, was featured in the May Potting Shed. The garden of Paul Sisko, Class of 2021, was featured in the June 15 Potting Shed.

Both Janet and Paul are "ambassadors" for the Garden Conservancy, that is, they look for exceptional gardens in Bergen County to recommend to the organization for public viewing.

Janet explained, "Before I recommend a garden to the Conservancy, I first ask the owner if they want to be put on the list. If the answer is 'yes,' I call the Conservancy and let them know." She follows up with forms asking for details and a description of the garden, which are then returned to the Conservancy. All of this takes place the fall before the Open Days to allow enough time for the Conservancy's directory to be printed and distributed the following spring.

Janet said of Noel's garden: "I recommended Noel's garden because I thought it a perfect example of what can be done on a suburban lot: Rock garden, woodland garden, crevice garden, and vegetable garden, none of which interferes or steals the show from the other. Perfect balance. Absolutely charming."

Click [here](#) to contact Noel directly.

### **By Noel Schulz, Class of 2016**

My interest in gardening started when I was about 5 years old. My mom enjoyed gardening and gave a small plot for a garden — about 3 feet by 10 feet — to be divided and shared by my brother, sister, and me. We each grew vegetables, including this amazing lima bean vine, which grew up a string along the side of the house to the top of the second floor.

Every summer, I enjoyed our family visits to my grandparents' farm in Allamuchy. We always took home plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition to vegetables, my grandmother maintained flower beds along the driveway and around the house and had plenty of house plants. So, I guess you can say gardening is in my blood.



Photo by Noel Schulz

Noel's crevice garden, one of several garden "rooms" on his property.

Fast forward to when I bought my house in Waldwick in 1982. I had been searching for the right home for some time. One day, my mom called me at my office to tell me about a listing in Waldwick that she thought I might like. It had a double lot, which meant more room for gardening. The property was overgrown with trees, shrubs, and weeds as the house had been empty and not maintained for several years since the passing of the owner. I could not even get my car in the driveway!

Mom came to the rescue and cleared the front and rear yard and left the large side yard in its wild state. We worked together to restore the existing hidden (within the weeds and brush) gardens that included desirable plants and shrubs such as phlox, peonies, winter aconite, rhododendron, and Carolina allspice. I quickly added a vegetable garden — mostly tomatoes. I tended these gardens for many years but left the side yard of the property in its wild state.

*(Continued on page 3)*



# A weed-filled double lot in Waldwick became a garden of rooms

*(Garden journal, continued from page 2)*

In 2008, when I semi-retired, I had more time on my hands to work on my favorite activity: Gardening. Ideas and improvements came slowly at first. I learned about landscaping styles and about new and interesting plants by visiting gardens opened with the Garden Conservancy. One of those gardens was Janet Schulz's. Janet became my second mentor (after mom)!

The year 2016 brought major changes to my property when I decided to clear the side yard and remove the hemlocks planted along the back property in 1983 but were now looking terrible from the woolly adelgid infestation. I had two Norway maples cut down and hired a backhoe to remove the stumps.

I cleared away the shrubs, spread a truckload of soil, and used several truckloads of rocks to build a rock garden, stone walls, garden paths, and a patio. I had the property fenced in and added a new, larger vegetable garden. The fence and shrubs keep the deer out of the back. I spray deer repellent in the front garden, which does keep the animals from eating. My favorite part of this project was designing and placing the rocks and plants in the new landscape.

I took the Master Gardener course that year, at the suggestion of Janet Schulz. The Master Gardener course increased my knowledge and introduced me to many people with similar interests. I joined several local gardening clubs around this time.

My property now consists of several "garden rooms." I have a rock garden at the front of the property, followed by a shade garden, native plant garden, crevice garden, and vegetable garden. I love all types of gardening but especially love eating the fresh vegetables from my garden, which I start from seed.



Noel Schulz in his vegetable garden. Can you tell he loves tomatoes?

I first started opening my garden with the Garden Conservancy in 2022 at the urging of Janet Schulz. I also opened my garden with the Wyckoff Area Garden Club's "Step into our Gardens" tours in 2017 and 2022.

This year I am taking a break from the large group tours, as I make changes and improvements to some of the gardens. In preparation for these tours, I mow and trim the yard, trim shrubs, clean off the hosta and other large-leaf plants, pull weeds from the gardens (since my lawn is also organic, the weeds stay here!), and mulch the gardens.

I also clean the garden pool and change the water in the birdbaths. I am looking forward to showing my gardens next year with the Garden Conservancy.

I really do enjoy showing off my gardens. Feel free to ask for a tour!

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*(President's desk, continued from page 1)*

Here are some summer garden safety topics and links you might find helpful. When outside gardening, remember to have a phone nearby and make sure someone knows where you are and when to expect you back. Have a safe and wonderful summer!

## Sun safety and protection

- [Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences](#)
- [Skin Cancer Foundation](#)

- [Iowa State University Extension and Outreach publications](#)

## Heat exposure and heat illness

- [Penn State Extension heat illness and agriculture](#)
- [OSHA: Working in heat environments](#)
- [OSHA heat illness prevention](#)
- Download the NIOSH/OSHA Heat App [[iOS](#) | [Android](#)] to access a simple heat calculator on your device.

## HORTICULTURE

### ***Does dead interior wood need to go?***

**By Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004**

*Should I prune the dead wood within the center of my shrub, which will result in a gaping hole? Or do I leave the dead wood?*



**Yes, remove the dead wood!**

The short answer is yes, you should prune out dead or diseased wood. That can be done at any time. Dead wood should always be removed both for esthetics and to remove any lingering pathogens or insects that might be attracted to the rotting matter.

Further down where the wood is alive the plant will seal itself. Pruning back to that point actually stimulates the plant cells to create a “seal” to prevent pathogens from entering. If you mean a visual gaping hole in the plant, that is unavoidable. But it is better to live with the gap until the plant can regrow than have diseased or rotting wood.

In the case of hydrangea standards, like this example, this plant tolerates hard pruning well. The best time to hard prune hydrangea paniculatum is early spring. This plant flowers on new growth so when you cut it back you stimulate new branching, which then grows a flower bud on each new branch. In fact, if you look at the dormant branches in winter you will see evenly spaced nodes (little bumps ) running down the stem. Each of these is a potential branch.

When you prune back to just one of these nodes you will cause this one to trigger growth. Often you will actually get two branches growing from this point and each will have a flower in spring. So careful, hard pruning can produce many more flowers.

I often shorten each branch to leave only the first two nodes from the bottom of each branch. This produces a shorter rounder plant that is lovely shaped come summer. However, these flowers can be a bit small. If you want fewer flowers but bigger blooms don't prune back and the tip of that branch will flower again like last summer with a big flower head.

The issue with this strategy is that the tree will continue growing very tall and somewhat unruly. These long branches tend to droop a lot by summer's end. Tree hydrangea can put on 1-2 feet in new growth in one season.

*Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004, will answer your gardening-related questions. Click [here](#) to ask your question.*

## WEBINARS

***All times are Eastern.***

**July 11, 2-3 pm:** The Garden Conservancy sponsors The Secret World of Philadelphia's Private Gardens. Fee: \$5 members; \$15 non-members. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**July 11, 6:30 pm:** Laurelwood Arboretum sponsors We Grew It Here: 100 Years of New Jersey's Horticultural History. Fee: \$10 members; \$20 non-members. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**July 16, 7-9 pm:** Penn State Extension sponsors Tiny Forest. Fee: \$5. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

*Few live webinars are available during the summer so here are links to some recorded webinars from Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County and Ohio State University. All webinars are free.*

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County

- [Growing Organically: Five Keys to a Bountiful Home Garden](#)
- [Why Garden Off the Ground?](#)
- [Root Crops](#)
- [Virtual Jersey Fresh Farm Tour: Importance of Local Agriculture](#)

Ohio State University

- [Weird and Unusual Plants](#)
- [Fall Foliage: The Science Behind Changing Colors](#)

## MG OF BC NEWS

### *The MG of BC board needs you!*

Would you like to become more active in the MG of BC? Would you like to do something in addition to or in place of gardening? There's plenty that goes on behind the scenes of the MG of BC.

Many roles are available that keep the organization running, and they don't require wearing garden gloves. If you have executive and administrative experience, one of these roles may be for you. You earn volunteer hours in these positions.

Below is a list of the open positions and the contact person to learn more about the role. You must be a certified Master Gardener to take on a position.

[Theresa Schneider](#) is the contact for the following three positions:

- **Trips and tours:** Many of our members would enjoy visiting area botanical gardens. We need one or two members to research and arrange these tours. (You do not need to manage money.)
- **Site coordinator liaison:** The liaison keeps in touch with the coordinators of our 13 volunteer

sites and works with each coordinator to arrange one-day volunteer "blast" events as they arise.

- **Rutgers Master Gardener Association of NJ alternate delegate:** The alternate delegate attends monthly meetings of the RMGANJ in person or virtually. In the absence of the delegate, the alternate reports on activities of the MG of BC to the association and reports to the MG of BC board on the RMGANJ's activities.

[Arnie Friedman](#) is the contact for the following three positions.

- **Community/school gardens chair.** The chair manages and finds volunteers for these projects as they arise.
- **One-day events chair:** The chair manages and finds volunteers for one-day events, such as Earth Day and environmental fairs, as they arise.
- **Fall Festival chair:** The chair finds volunteers and coordinates their participation for this annual event.

[Miriam Taub](#) is the contact for the following position.

- **Garden club liaison:** The liaison maintains a relationship (primarily by email) with contacts at about 20 Bergen County garden clubs and associations, sends them the Potting Shed, notifies them of Potting Shed deadlines, and collects their organization's meeting and event information for the Potting Shed.

## FARMERS MARKETS

**Fair Lawn Farmers Market**, Fair Lawn Arboretum, Fair Lawn Avenue and Well Drive. Wednesday, 11 am-3:30 pm.

**Ramsey Farmers Market**, Main Street train station. Sunday, 9 am-2 pm through November. Click [here](#) for a list of vendors and other information.

**Ridgewood Farmers Market**, train station, 6 Garber Square. Sunday, 8:30 am-2 pm through Oct. 27.

**River Edge Farmers Market**, Continental Avenue and Memorial Park. Thursday, 3-7 pm through Oct. 24.

**River Vale Farmers Market**, lot next to Town Hall, 406 Rivervale Road. Thursday, 1-6 pm beginning July 11.

**Rutherford Farmers Market**, Lincoln Park, 115 Highland Cross. Wednesday, 11 am-5 pm; Saturday, 8 am-2 pm starting July 6 through Oct. 30.

**Teaneck Farmers Market**, municipal parking lot, Garrison Avenue and Beverly Road. Thursday, noon-6 pm through Nov. 7. Click [here](#) for Facebook page.

## THIS AND THAT

### Watch the NJBG documentary

If you missed the NJ PBS documentary Treasures of New Jersey: The New Jersey Botanical Garden recently, you can watch at your leisure by clicking [here](#). Joseph Cooper, Class of 2008, provided numerous ground and aerial photographs, along with video footage, for the documentary. The images included a diverse range of subject matter within Skylands Manor and the NJBG.



## 2024 MG OF BC PICNIC

Theresa Schneider, MG of BC president, noted that this year we're marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NJ Master Gardener program, which began in Bergen County in 1984. Theresa noted that Janet Schulz, Class of 1988 (at right), was one of the early MG students and credited Janet with the impact she's had on the state and county through her teaching and mentorship of home gardeners and MGs alike. Janet recently retired from the MG of BC Speakers Bureau and as garden club liaison. Theresa thanked her for her dedication and service.



Photo by Cesar Coy

Janet Schulz and Theresa Schneider.



Photos by Anita Pazcoquin

From left to right around the table: Jean Friedman, Paul Sisko, Barbara Pisacane, Chris Kozar, Liz Gil, Arnie Friedman, Keith Mazanac, Joseph Cooper, and Janet Schulz.



From left to right around the table: Melody Corcoran, Bernadette White, Marie Scotti-Bosworth, Marylou Moravec, Dan Coviello, and Jennifer Ermoian.



From left to right around the table: Herb Arbeiter, Theresa Schneider, Terry Cohn, Janet Schulz, and Karen Riede.



Janet Stofkoper and Pauline Dubois.