



Potomac Valley Chapter
North American ROCK GARDEN Society

December 2025 Bulletin

Dryas octopetala near Beartooth Hwy, northwest Wyoming, June 2025. Photo: S. Strickler

PVC—NARGS Winter/Spring 2026 Calendar of Events



Saturday, January 17 @10am via Zoom: New Member Tim Calkins—“A Love of Amaryllids”

From Tim: I’m fascinated with plants of all kinds and have a fairly eclectic assortment in my third-of- an-acre garden in Northern Virginia, but it became clear to me some years ago that I have developed a particular interest in *Amaryllids*. There may be a line between love and obsession, but my journey from *Acis* to *Zephyranthes* wanders freely between the two, attempting a balance between having collections of plants and having a garden. Four principal genera are integral contributors to my goal of having an interesting garden with something in bloom year-round. My discussion will focus primarily on *Zephyranthes/Habranthus*, *Lycoris*, *Galanthus*, and *Narcissus*, with some forays into related bulbs and companion plants. My hope is that the inspiration these bulbs have given me might offer you something too.

Left: *Zephyranthes*, rock garden at Green Spring Gardens. Photo: S. Strickler

Saturday, February 28 @10am via Zoom: Tim Alderton, Horticultural Technician, JC Raulston Arboretum (JCRA), Raleigh, North Carolina.

“Rocks, Crevices, and Scree – The Rooftop Gardens at the JC Raulston Arboretum”



The rooftop gardens at the JCRA include a diversity of environments, providing habitats for an equally diverse collection of plants. The beds offer both sun and shade, but they are all limited by the relatively low water availability and heat of the southeast. The planting media is typically quick draining and shallow--mostly sand bed like plantings. Tim's presentation will show us what we might grow in our own gardens in similar conditions.

Bio: Tim is a native of Brookville, Pennsylvania. He has loved plants since he was a child helping in his family's small greenhouse and exploring the woods near his home. A graduate of Penn State with a BS in horticulture, Tim moved to Raleigh in March of 2005 to accept a position at Plant Delights Nursery. In January 2006, he started at the JCRA as their horticulture technician. He has taken care of the gardens for almost 20 years, growing countless different types of plants throughout the arboretum, including those in the rooftop scree and xeric gardens.

Saturday, March 21 @10am via Zoom: Lori Chips, Horticulturist and author of *Hypertufa Containers: Creating and Planting an Alpine Trough Garden*. ***"Propagating Alpines & other Trough-worthy Plants"*** Lori will share ways to create more plants. She will touch on propagating by seed and division, but the emphasis will be on demystifying the process of propagating by cuttings. Suitable medium for cuttings, using hormones, mist, when to take cuttings, and when to lift plants or leave them alone, are all topics she will discuss. We will learn from Lori's 30 years of experience so we, too, can experience the joy of having plants strike roots for the first time. From the easy to root to the more recalcitrant species, Lori will offer tips and tricks for success with cuttings, showing us dozens of visual examples.



Bio: Lori has been exploring alpine plants since her student days at The New York Botanical Garden, where she also worked as the propagator for the Rock Garden and the Native Plant Garden. The alpine manager at Oliver Nurseries in Fairfield, Connecticut, for more than 25 years, she continues to push the boundaries in the art and science of creating and planting troughs. An accomplished botanical illustrator, Lori's work has appeared on numerous covers of the NARGS Quarterly. She lectures frequently on troughs and alpine plants, including at the 2022 NARGS winter webinar "Succulents on the Rocks." You can follow her on Instagram @lorichips

DTBD: Tour of the US National Arboretum Herbarium with Dr. Harlan Svoboda Details to come.

DTBD: Tour of Tim Calkins's Reston Garden. At our recent Members' Meeting, new member, Tim Calkins, wowed us with images of some of the hundreds of Galanthus, Cyclamen and other choice plants of winter-interest that he grows in his garden. He agreed we could visit when plants are looking good. This may be an impromptu visit.

Saturday, May 9 @ 10am: Tour of Carole and Mike Bordelon's Greenbelt Garden. 3 Greentree Place, Greenbelt, MD 20770

Both retired from major horticultural institutions in Washington, DC – Carole from the US National Arboretum and Mike from the Smithsonian (he is also a former PVC Chair) – the Bordelons have a

garden chock full of horticultural treasures, from an extensive moss lawn to unusual Asian species. Not to be missed!

Saturday May 16, 9am to 3pm, Green Spring Plant Sale. PVC sells plants from members' gardens. Volunteers needed for set-up and take-down of tent and plants.

Saturday May 23 @ 10am PVC Plant Exchange at Carolyn & Paul Beck's home: 2963 Fort Lee St, Oak Hill, VA 20171. In addition to swapping plants, we'll get to see the Beck's wonderful garden full of Azaleas and other choice shade plants.

Saturday June 13 @ 10am Workshop led by Jim Hughes's home, 6909 Pineway, University Park, MD 20782, "**Growing Pyrossia lingua on Collected Dead Logs and Rocks**"
Learn how to attach these epiphytic ferns to trees, dead wood and rocks, where they will happily grow.

From PVC Chair Barbara Rose

Season's Greetings Everyone,

It's hard to believe another year has slipped by. Our annual membership meeting was lots of fun with several presentations from members, including one of our newest members, Tim Calkins, an experienced gardener who will be hosting an open garden for us soon as well as giving a talk. We also elected officers and all remain the same except Jim Hughes has moved to membership (thank you Gay and Sharon Washburn for your service) and Ed Aldrich is now our Secretary. Welcome Ed!

Long overdue NARGS service awards were given to several of our members. If you missed the meeting, you may read the commendations below.

It looks like we're in for a colder winter than in recent years so those of us who didn't quite get all our bulbs in the ground might be in trouble! Wishing you all Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! ***Barbara***

Recap of Awards Given at our November 22nd Members' Meeting

Barbara Rose

The Potomac Valley Chapter of NARGS is celebrating its sixtieth anniversary this year. At present the club has 95 members who range in age from their twenties to their nineties. That the club has managed to survive the pitfalls of other volunteer clubs is a testament to the many people dedicated to making our chapter a huge success. It's not possible at this time to mention all the great members we have but this year we would like to recognize four members as recipients of the NARGS award for their service in 2025 and years past.

Margot Ellis has been a PVC member since 2003 and our treasurer since 2003. For 22 years she's tirelessly managed the club's finances. She's an enthusiastic participant in all our activities. Margot consistently comes to every plant sale and plant exchange, keeping track of the money we bring in at sales and collecting membership dues. She manages to be our treasurer while continuing to work at a tax firm, traveling the world with her husband, and being the best grandmother.

James Hughes has served as our recording secretary for over ten years. He became a member of PVC in 2011. At that time his interests were primarily Bonsai and fine gardening. He is a former curator of the

US National Arboretum's Bonsai Museum. When he had his front steps and sidewalk redesigned, he was inspired to reuse the remaining pile of concrete rubble to install his first rock garden. Since then, he has created several rock gardens at his home and recently presented a talk to PVC titled "The Progression of a Rock Garden." This year Jim will be the lead organizer for the chapter's seed sorting endeavor. He will also lead a spring workshop on planting and growing *Pyrossia lingua* ferns on dead wood or rocks. He frequently opens his garden to PVC, friends and neighbors, even getting his neighbors to join PVC and open their amazing gardens too!

Kevin McIntosh joined PVC in 1979. As one of our longest serving members, Kevin has been involved in all the activities and programs through the years. As past president, he continues to lead PVC through most of our major undertakings. He's especially fond of seeds and for the past two years has headed the enormous task of managing the NARGS surplus seed exchange. In years past, he (and Jim Hughes) have managed our chapter's NARGS seed sorting. An experienced rock gardener, Kevin kindly advises new members on installation of new rock gardens along with the plants to put in them. He frequently holds an open garden for our chapter and generously shares his plants at the exchanges.

Sarah Strickler joined PVC in 2008. Sarah served as program chair from 2009 to 2013. Although this task is now performed as a group effort by the board, Sarah continues to connect us with great speakers as well as special gardens. Additionally, Sarah edits the PVC newsletter, always including great articles and photographs. She multi-tasks as a horticulturist at Green Spring, photographer and writer. She recently served a four-year term as recording secretary for NARGS. You can follow her on Instagram @gardenandbook.

John Willis wears many hats in PVC. He has consistently managed the PVC website at PVC-NARGS.ORG for many years, keeping our calendar of events up to date, posting recorded programs and garden photos, helping to find speakers, as well as hosting an open garden at his beautiful Frederick property. John's expertise and opinions are valued at our board meetings.

Appreciation

The editor



Barbara Rose has been our intrepid chair now since 2020. We elected her whole heartedly again to another term at our recent membership meeting in November. A botany major at the University of North Carolina, Barbara is one of the few PVC chairs who studied horticulture in college. Known for her enthusiasm and good cheer, Barbara keeps the PVC board on track with regular quarterly meetings, runs our Zoom speaker presentations, keeps the membership abreast of activities and speakers, represents the chapter at NARGS Chapter Chair meetings, and now as a member of the NARGS membership committee. She has helped organize trough workshops, planted beautiful troughs for our plant sale, and helped organize speakers. Barbara has attended several NARGS annual conferences and is quick to welcome new members. I am sure there are other tasks she fulfills that I'm forgetting or that we are not even aware of. As some of you know, Barbara experienced a recent personal loss when her husband Gene died of ALS this past October. She showed amazing grace and strength during his illness, and we are grateful that she continues to want to lead our chapter. On behalf of all of us, thank you, Barbara!! We would not be here without you.



PVC Members Sort Seeds

Do you order seed from the NARGS seed exchange? It is considered one of the best benefits of membership in our parent organization. Once a NARGS member (\$45 annual membership <https://nargs.org/membership-benefits>) you can order from the NARGS seed exchange starting December 15th. For \$20 you can order up to 25 seed packets from almost 2,000 taxa. What a deal!

Making the seed exchange possible is an extraordinary effort by many NARGS chapters. PVC members helped complete just one component of this herculean task. Two groups--10 in Virginia and 6 in Maryland --sorted donated seed in early December. (Some of us only do one genus as there are so many, say, *Allium* species donated.) Other chapters around the country do the same task for different genus. And some will help fill orders of donated seed. It takes many hands to make the NARGS seed exchange work! Please consider helping if we do this again. It is fun sitting around a table gossiping as we separate seed and fill glassine envelopes.



Remembering Audrey Faden (1941-2025)

<https://mgvnv.org/community-gardens/audrey-faden-master-gardener-emerita/>

As some of you know, Audrey Faden, wife of Bob Faden, died, sadly, this past summer. She was a long-time member of our chapter and an inveterate gardener. I could not find an obituary online, but I did find the article at [the link above](#) on the website of Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia. It is a good overview of Audrey's life story and interests.



Remembering Dick Hammerschlag

Dick Hammerschlag was a long-time member of PVC until he passed in December 2023. He was also a long-time member of Friends of Brookside Gardens (FOBG) and wrote a gardening column entitled "Garden Guardian" for The Brookside for about 8 years. In his honor and memory, his wife Freddi made a donation to FOBG to set up the [FOBG The Dick Hammerschlag Fund](#). Donations to this fund will be used to plant trees and rock garden plants at Brookside Gardens. Donations can be sent to FOBG, 1800 Glenallan Ave. Wheaton, MD 20902. **You will need to specify that your donation is to go to FOBG The Dick Hammerschlag Fund.**

Officers, Committee Chairs and Board of Directors

President: Barbara Rose: roserose@verizon.net

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Secretary: Ed Aldrich, ed_aldrich@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Margot Ellis, 4pvctreas@gmail.com

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Membership Chair: Jim Hughes, jim6909@msn.com

Program Committee: The Board

Newsletter Editor: Sarah Strickler, sa.strickler@verizon.net

Board member-at-large: John Willis, willis@fred.net

Board of Directors: all current officers, the immediate past president and committee chairs

www.pvc-nargs.org