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## ***The Perennial***

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***November/December 2020***

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Website: <[ArlingtonGarden.org](http://ArlingtonGarden.org)>

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### ***GREETINGS, MY FELLOW GARDENERS*** ***Lolly Bennett, President***

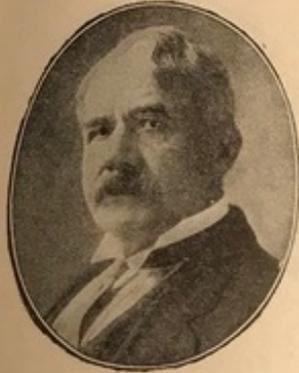
Things certainly have not changed much for the better since last month. Clearly, nothing about today resembles circumstances any of us have ever experienced in our entire life. I hope everyone has been able to maintain their sanity!

Jimmy and I have joined Cornell's Feeder Watch! So looking forward to feeding our feathered friends and enjoying their beautiful addition to the winter landscape throughout the coming season.

At our November AGC board meeting, the decision whether to have a December general membership meeting was discussed.

In the past, our December meeting has always been a fun-filled, festive event in keeping with the holidays. The unanimous vote was not to have a meeting at this remarkable and unusual time. A virtual January membership meeting will be held and shall be informative and enjoyable for all! Nancy Pike will keep all informed

I very much wanted to be able to impart some words of wisdom or encouragement to you all. However, not being the "wordsmith" I wish I were.... I will share a favorite poem of mine that I first learned when in the 5th grade!...



## Keep a-Goin'

FRANK L. STANTON

(Born February 22, 1857; died  
January 7, 1927)

If you strike a thorn or rose,  
Keep a-goin'!  
If it hails or if it snows,  
Keep a-goin'!  
'Taint no use to sit an' whine  
When the fish ain't on your line;  
Bait your hook an' keep a-tryin'—  
Keep a-goin'!

When the weather kills your crop,  
Keep a-goin'!  
Though 'tis work to reach the top,  
Keep a-goin'!  
S'pose you're out o' ev'ry dime,  
Gittin' broke ain't any crime;  
Tell the world you're feelin' *prime*—  
Keep a-goin'!

When it looks like all is up,  
Keep a-goin'!  
Drain the sweetness from the cup,  
Keep a-goin'!  
See the wild birds on the wing,  
Hear the bells that sweetly ring,  
When you feel like sighin', sing—  
Keep a-goin'!

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**November Program “Writing The Garden”**  
***Nancy Pike, Vice President-Programs***

November 18<sup>th</sup> saw us celebrating our first general meeting of the season. Cathie Desjardins, former Town of Arlington Poet Laureate and avid gardener, presented “Across a Year in the Garden” through the magic, or rather the technology, of Zoom. It was an enchanting presentation, with photos and poems and information about planting and caring for many of our Massachusetts favorites. Much of the information can be found and added to by reading Cathie’s latest book collection, *Buddha in the Garden*. In addition, some of her work is on display by the first-floor elevators at Boston City Hall.

Because more speakers on the garden club circuit are now presenting through Zoom, we hope to have news of some coming in the depth of winter since we won’t have to worry about computers having a snow day!

**Happy holidays to all !**



***Global Warming***  
***Stephan Miller, Environment Chair***

First, let me say that the opinions expressed in these articles are mine alone and don’t necessarily reflect those of the Arlington Garden Club.

Human activities are responsible for the warming of the atmosphere and oceans of the earth through a physical mechanism called the greenhouse effect. As gardeners, we are all familiar with the feeling of stepping into a warm, moist greenhouse when the temperature outside is cold or freezing. The physics at work here is that incoming visible light, a relatively high energy radiation, is absorbed by surfaces in the greenhouse and re-emitted as infrared light or heat which is a lower energy form of radiation. The incoming light has

sufficient energy to penetrate the glass of the greenhouse (or the atmosphere), but the heat reflected by the surface has less energy and is trapped inside by the glass. There are certain gases in our atmosphere that act like the greenhouse glass and reflect or absorb the heat radiated from the surface of the earth. These gases include water vapor, carbon dioxide and methane.

The problem is that we produce carbon dioxide every time we burn something like coal, oil, gasoline, or natural gas, and the increasing amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is locking in more heat than it has in the history of human existence. This process has caused a worldwide average temperature increase of between 1.4 and 2.2 degrees in the last 300 years with most of that increase coming since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Projecting forward, if we don't change our habits, the average temperature will increase 5-7 degrees by the year 2100.

This temperature increase doesn't sound like much, but the consequences for the climate and ecology of the earth are potentially catastrophic as we are beginning to see. The warming temperatures are causing the extinction of many plant and animal species, shifts in patterns of agriculture and rising sea levels. Many areas of the earth currently inhabited by millions of people will become uninhabitable. We have known about this effect for decades but have done very little to lessen it. We are now in a position where we must do something drastic within the next decade.

A big part of the solution is to use less energy and use renewable sources for the energy that we do use. The irony here is that, although we are reluctant to do so, converting to renewable energy will be cheaper in the long run and create a lot of jobs. Electricity generated directly from sunlight or wind is now cheaper than using coal, oil or natural gas. A byproduct of making this conversion will be a cleaner and healthier environment.

By far the most important thing we, as individuals, can do is to elect leaders who are serious about reducing the number of carbon-rich fuels we burn, lobby all levels of our government to formulate policies that favor the creation of sources of renewable electricity and encourage the overall reduction of our use of energy. Stalling atmospheric warming will take nothing less than a restructuring of the global economy.

Aside from political action, what can each of us do about this problem? First, we can reduce our use of energy. This reduction will not necessitate lowering our standard of living. The average amount of energy consumed by someone who lives in western Europe is about half as much as the average American uses, and yet their standard of living is, if anything, slightly higher than ours.

Thirty-percent of the energy we consume is used in transportation . Our devotion to our fuel inefficient automobiles is killing us. We can reduce the amount of energy we use to get around by walking or biking short distances and utilizing public transport for longer trips. Of course, this will necessitate a

quantum improvement in the quality of our public transportation system. Even if this transformation occurs, our cars and small trucks are not going away. Ultimately, we should electrify our transportation system so that we can drive it primarily with renewably generated energy. This electrification has already begun and will accelerate. Electric cars and trucks are just now becoming price competitive with fossil fuel powered vehicles and are cheaper to run and maintain.

Converting our homes to run totally on renewable electricity is not as easy as buying a new vehicle. We can, however, install solar panels. The drastic decrease in the cost of solar cells has reduced the pay-back time for this investment to less than 10 years, sometimes much less. Once the cost of a solar system is returned, the savings in your electric bill will be great. I have noticed that many homes in Arlington have installed solar hot water systems. This directly reduces the amount of oil or natural gas used. These two improvements can reduce your household energy use by more than half.

If these major investments are not feasible for you, or you do not own your home, you can sign up to get 100% of your electricity produced from renewable sources. The Town of Arlington currently has a program that allows you to take advantage of buying electricity cheaply in large volumes by joining together with your neighbors to purchase renewably generated electricity. You can choose whether to purchase 100% of your electricity from renewable sources or some fixed percentage to fit your budget ([ace.arlingtonma.gov](http://ace.arlingtonma.gov)).

In closing, I recommend that you do your own research on the topic of converting your consumption of energy to renewable sources and school yourselves on the consequences of doing little or nothing. The warming of the atmosphere is no longer something with consequences projected into the nebulous future but is affecting us now as exemplified by the increasing number of wildfires in the West, more powerful hurricanes in the Southeast, much larger tornadoes in the Midwest and extremes of temperature everywhere.

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### ***Searching for tech-savvy members...***

#### ***Emily Snyder, Editor, The Perennial***

The Board is assembling names of members with expertise in various technical areas. You do not have to be a super-nerd, just someone who feels comfortable using any of these forms of technology / software and might be able to help with Club tech needs at some time:

**Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint  
Apple's Pages & other Apple software  
Quicken**

## **Web design using WordPress**

### **Zoom**

If this applies to you, and you are willing, please email me.

**Thank you!**

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### **Jason Russell House door – swag created by Club members**

