

Sow and Tell

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Member of the National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Central Atlantic Region, District III

President: Noreen Linnemann, 703-281-1770, noreenlinnemann@gmail.com

Editor: Brigitte Hartke, 703-585-5504, BrigitteHartke@gmail.com
fivehillsgardenclub@gmail.com



President's Message

It's a new year, new month and new day. Whether we want them or not, the new year will bring new challenges but also new opportunities. Let's look on the positive side and resolve to make 2017 the best year possible for Five Hills Garden Club.

We have fabulous programs planned and exciting field trips to look forward to. There are many opportunities to learn more about gardening and design at seminars and classes. Hopefully you will be able to take advantage of these offerings. Most of all, we have developed special friendships with one another, so let's just enjoy our fellowship together.

As our outdoor gardens sleep during the cold winter months, we can still keep our green thumbs busy with our indoor plants. This is a great time of year to repot your house plants. My resolve this year is to try not to kill off as many indoor plants and maybe even to coax some of my orchids into blooming again. House plants keep our homes healthy and beautiful. So, enjoy January gardening.

One final thought ... Just as a new bloom spreads fragrance and freshness around ... may the new year add new beauty and freshness to your life.

Fondly,
Noreen

JANUARY CALENDAR

January 10, Board Meeting
January 17, General Meeting

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Upcoming Events

January 17 Program: Alonso Abugattas ~ Ethnobotany

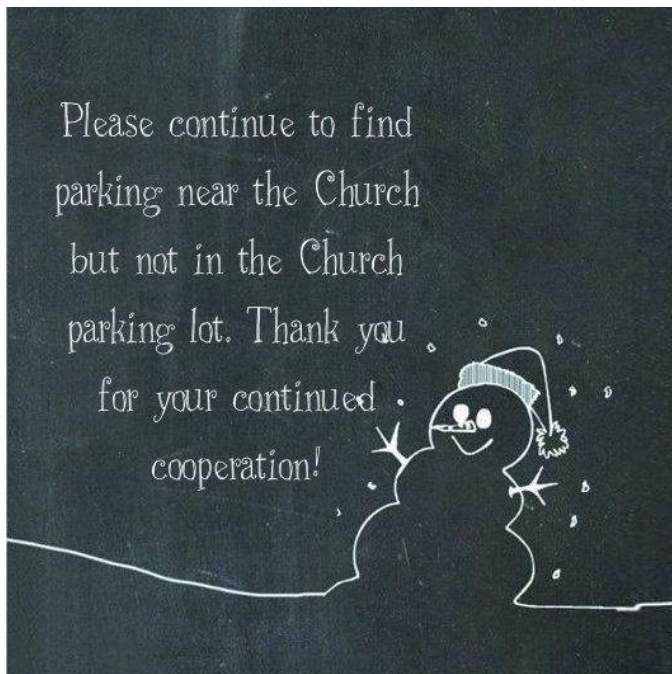
Alonso Abugattas' program will focus on plant folklore as it relates to our species. He will cover plant edibility, medicinal properties and the various tools we have used throughout history.

Mr. Abugattas is a well-known local naturalist, environmental educator and storyteller in the Washington, D.C. area. He is the natural resources manager for the Department of Parks and Recreation and the co-chair for the Beltway Chapter of Region 2 of the National Association for Interpretation. He has been trained as a master gardener, was made an honorary Virginia Master Naturalist for his role in starting two chapters and serves as an instructor for both. He is a co-founder of the Washington Area Butterfly Club and has held several offices, including president, for the Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society.



Not to be missed is his personal blog, "[Capital Naturalist](#)" and [Facebook group](#) where he posts regular nature notes using his own photography.

Communications



Calendars for Military

Please remember to bring in your 2017 calendars. They are collected each month for the military members in appreciation of their services. Janet Kremer will deliver them to the Army's Fairfax Family Health Center. Thank you!



Horticulture

For the January Hort Table: What's hiding in your home? Bring in a leaf (in a green bottle) from your house plant(s). Please note on a card its name, where it resides in your home, and from which direction it receives sun. OR bring in a design featuring house plant foliage or blooms. Looking Ahead: Remember, small dish gardens will be the main attraction at the February meeting. If you haven't started on one, now is the time! Create a dreamland! Rewards!



Plant Sales' Aftermath — or — Death in the Summer Sun

Spring is full of hope and promise for gardeners. Show me one of these kindred souls who can resist a spring "Plant Sale". Several Councils, garden clubs, and plant societies hold these events in the spring. We get carried away and buy charming specimens, having no idea just where we are going to plant them in our garden. We bid and buy, on and on, and end up with several (or, I confess, many) of these new and unusual gems. Over the next few days or weeks we find empty spaces and tuck them in here and there with little or no thought, or worse, we keep them in their tiny pots for weeks.

Then comes the Washington summer sun. Have you ever forgotten where you planted or even that you bought a new acquisition? Has the lack of water done them in? Have weeds overwhelmed them? Yes? I have some suggestions to prevent their death in the summer sun.

Early in the spring create a nursery (ICU) for you purchases at these auctions or sales. Large and small, plants need tender loving care. Most of these plants are newly divided and have injured or almost nonexistent root systems and would, therefore, benefit from a season in a rehab center.

Pick a small spot (4x4 will do) in partial shade. Try and place it where you travel by often so you won't forget to tend to it, and by all means place it near a water source. A raised bed is ideal. Use your imagination to build up the sides (boards, ties, blocks, rocks, logs, etc.) Loosen the ground and add rich amended soil with masses of organic matter or use such products as Pro Mix. A depth of about 12 inches of fertile, friable well-drained soil is all you need.

After a summer of TLC your perennials will be ready to be gently placed in their new thought-out and planned home and will thank you for years to come.

Karen Lucas, Horticulture



2016 Native Plant Sale at Morven Park, Leesburg, held by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. Participating nurseries were Nature By Design, Hill House Farm and Nursery, and Watermark Woods.

Civic

I would like to thank all our members who made our December Greens Workshop a success. Our wreaths and sprays were beautiful.

Many thanks, Maurine Thomas, Civic Chairman



*Photographer's note:
regrettably, I lost 37
photos of the Workshop
during the download
process. The problem
seems to be resolved, but
I am saddened to have
lost what would have
been great photos of all
of you with your wreaths.*



TREES

As I was contemplating this month's conservation article I received the Virginia Tree Survey from the Arbor Day Foundation, and they wanted me to select **one** single most important function of trees. As I read the list I thought, "All of these are important; how can I choose one?" Then I went to look at what the Virginia Department of Forestry: Urban Forestry had to say.

Urban tree canopy (UTC) is the layer of leaves, branches, and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above. Urban tree canopy provides many benefits to communities including improving water quality, conserving energy, lowering city temperatures, reducing air pollution, enhancing property values, providing wildlife habitat, facilitating social and educational opportunities, and providing aesthetic benefits.

Another reason for looking into this - I have noticed a number of large areas designated for building new structures where the lots have been clear cut, taking down many trees that look to have been 30-80 years old. They will be hard to replace. This led me to look at Fairfax County's plans for an adequate tree canopy to mitigate these losses.

30-Year Tree Canopy Goal



The Board of Supervisors formally adopted a 30-year tree canopy goal based on recommendations in the [Tree Action Plan](#), funded by the [Environmental Improvement Program](#).

The goal is to increase Fairfax County's tree cover to 45 percent by the year 2037.

The County is doing what it can to plant trees to improve our environment by planting trees at county facilities, but planting space is limited on county-owned properties. There are only 4,200 acres available for tree planting on County-owned properties and commonly-owned open spaces. Therefore, the majority of tree planting required to meet the 30-year tree canopy goal will have to occur on privately-owned residential lots!

The Facts: 40 percent of Fairfax County is presently covered by the canopies of trees. If tree-planting efforts are not increased, by 2037, we could lose approximately 4 percent of our tree canopy cover. The loss of environmental services that will result if our tree cover continues to decline will be significant! Reaching the tree canopy goal requires planting an additional 2 million trees. An average of 83,740 trees will have to be planted annually. The community already plants an average of 21,000 trees per year. Residential lots have the most space for planting new trees in Fairfax County. Commonly-owned open spaces have some space for planting trees.

Who Can Help Fairfax County Reach the Tree Canopy Goal?

- Residential property owners. Non-profit tree planting groups: Three groups have been funded by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to help in this effort (Fairfax ReLeaf, Earth Sangha and the Center for Chesapeake Communities). Scouts. Regional and state agencies ([Virginia Department of Forestry](#), [Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District](#), [Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority](#) and Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable). Teachers and students. Homeowners and civic associations. Business owners. Property managers. Real estate agents. Land developers. Utility companies. Other jurisdictions.
- **What Can You Do?** Plant trees on your property. Plant about 20 feet away from your home on the western exposures for optimum energy conservation. Plant at least one tree per car in your household to reduce your carbon footprint. Get involved with community tree planting groups such as Fairfax ReLeaf and Earth Sangha. For more information, visit www.fairfaxreleaf.org or www.earthsangha.org. Advocate for tree planting on commonly-owned open spaces in your community. Remember that all trees need to be maintained after they are planted. Visit the [Virginia Department of Extension](#) for more information about tree planting and maintenance. **Be sure to plant the right tree in the right place.** Use the Fairfax County [Public Facilities Manual](#) as a guide. Preserve trees during construction. **If every resident in Fairfax County plants two trees for every member of their household over the next 30 years, we will exceed our tree canopy goal!**

How is Fairfax County Helping Reach the Tree Canopy Goal?

You may have noticed that trees are being planted throughout the County. The Urban Forestry Division has helped plant trees in various Fairfax County properties. These trees are planted to help contribute to the 30 Year Tree Canopy Goal. So far hundreds of trees have been planted across the County.

- In 2007, 214 trees were planted on 17 sites
- In 2008, 123 trees were planted on 10 sites

One wonders what has happened in this arena since 2008.



I know that the Great Falls Citizens' Association has asked the Fairfax County Planning Board to address this when developers come to them with zoning requests to modify present zoning restrictions. We will have to see how the urge to increase tax revenue from new and larger buildings might be mitigated in favor of greater tree canopy. Each of us can urge our county supervisors to give this serious consideration. Did you know that now, in the United States, there are only 12 sites where one can encounter genuine silence for a total of 15 minutes without any noise caused by human kind? I was recently startled and saddened to learn this. On that note, Happy New Year and lets plant trees!

Elizabeth Huebner, Conservation

January Reminders

Sow seeds of warm-season annuals
Set out summer-flowering bulbs
Plant fall-blooming bulbs
Plant balled-and-burlapped, container, and bare-root fruit trees
Apply dormant spray to fruit trees before buds swell
Spray apples, peaches, and pears that have been affected with canker problems
Plant bare-root perennial vegetables
Plant seedlings of cool-weather vegetables
Sow fast-growing warm-season vegetables
Sow seeds for frost-tolerant perennials
Sow seeds for tender perennials
Plant container and bare-root roses

Plant balled-and-burlapped, container, and bare-root trees, shrubs, and vines
Plant summer-blooming shrubs and vines
Plant frost-tolerant trees (plant trees!)
Plant conifers and broad-leaf evergreens

February Garden Plans

Order seeds
Sow seeds of warm-season annuals indoors
Plant ornamental trees (see Horticulture!)
Prune flowering fruit trees while in bloom
Prune winter-flowering shrubs and vines after bloom
Sow seeds of warm-season vegetables indoors
Sow seeds for hardy spring-blooming annuals
Plant or transplant cool-season vegetable seedlings

**Kerry Ann Mendez Presents at
MERRIFIELD GARDEN CENTER
in March - 3 hr 'Garden Design and
Remarkable Plants' Class**

Event--Open to the Public, \$49 fee

Overview

Speaker: Kerry Ann Mendez

Date: 03/05/2017

Time: 01:00 pm - 04:00 pm

Location: Fairfax, VA

Fairfax, Virginia

[Get driving directions »](#)

Contact Information

Website: <http://www.pyours.com>

E-mail: pyours@roadrunner.com

Contact Name: Kerry Ann Mendez

Phone: 207-502-7228



**Kerry Ann Mendez
WEBINAR
January 26, 2 pm**

Join Kerry Ann Mendez on Thursday, January 26 at 2 pm EST for a webinar on inspired design. "Inspired Design Lessons Learned from Magnificent Gardens in England, Canada and the United States" is sure to kick off the year full of ideas. Kerry will show you how to plan an extraordinary makeover of your landscape for the spring, ways to elevate your garden, gardens that inspire (like Chanticleer, pictured) and more. Even if you aren't available on the 26th, you can watch the webinar any time and still get all the material.

Announcements



Cares and Concerns

Maurine Thomas has recently had knee surgery, and we all wish her well as she recovers and returns to her usual activities.

Ronnie Levay has asked for prayers for both her husband and daughter as they recover from their surgeries.



January opens the box of the year and
brings out days that are bright and clear.
~Leland B. Jacobs

From Merrifield Garden Center, with much more information here:

[https://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com/advice/#1696prettyPhoto\[gallery\]/4/](https://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com/advice/#1696prettyPhoto[gallery]/4/)

Winter Weather Prep
Pick up your ice melt and snow shovels!

We recommend using an ice melting product, such as Mag (magnesium chloride), to prevent ice from forming on sidewalks and driveways. Do not use salt or rock salt as they may damage concrete or plant material.

[See more winter weather prep tips](#)

The graphic features a background of snow-covered evergreen trees. The text is presented in a white box with a black border. A small button at the bottom contains a link to more tips.

December 2016 Overnight Field Trip to Colonial Williamsburg



Can you spot our new garden club member?



Colonial justice for wicked villagers



Recent Events with Photographs

Joy of the Season

Thanks to our President, Noreen Linnemann, for opening her beautifully decorated home to us during Christmas week so that we might get together one last time before the end of the year — to enjoy the lights, friendship, food and libations. It was a special way to end another productive Five Hills year of fellowship.

