

Sow and Tell

Volume 57, Issue 2, October 2016

A Publication of The Five Hills Garden Club
Member of the National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Central Atlantic Region, District III

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President's Message

Dear Garden Friends:

I love fall. The cool refreshing air is exhilarating. Different colors are appearing in the garden. Some flowers are ready for their winter nap and others are painting the landscape. The best part about this time of year is that we are together again.

Once more I want to thank everyone who helped make our yard sale a tremendous success. Besides benefiting the garden club finances and providing money to purchase a new PA system we had fun.

We have an exciting year ahead with wonderful programs and field trips. I want to encourage all of you to consider participating in our civic projects, especially our monthly work days at Meadowlark. It is a great time to get to know each other better.

Please support our horticulture programs. Some of you faithfully bring in exhibits, and we thank you. They are fun and give us an opportunity to practice for the flower shows. It is a learning experience for all.

Bravo to those of you who have already enrolled in some of the schools that are available. Knowledge makes gardening much more fun.

Enjoy your fall garden!

Best,
Noreen

October Calendar

Oct. 4	Meadowlark Gardens Volunteers, 9:30 AM
Oct. 17	NCAGC Gen. Meeting, National Arboretum
Oct. 18	Five Hills General Meeting
Oct. 19	Environmental & Gardening Consultants Gen. Meeting
Oct. 20	VA Museum of Fine Arts Richmond Field Trip
Oct. 23-24	CAR Conference, Sarasota Springs, NY
Nov. 1	Meadowlark Gardens Volunteers 9:30 AM
Nov. 10	Dist. 4 Morning of Design 10 AM - 12:30 PM

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Upcoming Events

October Program:

Make and Take a Fall Floral Design



This will be a fun program for all to make a flower design of their own choosing. Members are to bring their own container, and Five Hills will provide flowers. Our judges will be on hand to help if asked. When finished, we can enjoy all the different arrangements made with the same flowers... it should be fun, and you get to take your creation home!

What to Bring for the Floral Design Workshop

Hoping that all of you are planning to participate in making an arrangement this month. It should be fun! Five Hills will provide flowers and greenery.

Here is a list of things for you to bring:

Container - I would suggest you not make it too big (takes more time and too many flowers);

Line material - bare branches or man-made materials to add height and interest

Mechanics - pre-soaked oasis or pin holder or tape to hold your plant material in place

Accessories - fun things you might want to add to enhance your design

Other - plants, leaves or other items you'd like to use in your arrangement.

Lisa Adelman

Editorial note: a few more ideas to add interest to your arrangements ~ feathers, catkins, decorative cabbages, artichokes, tiny gourds, seed pods and wheat fronds, acorns, cinnamon sticks, pine cones, bittersweet vine, candles, greenery. Don't forget to pre-soak your oasis, and bring your clippers with you!



Upcoming Events

Fall Cleanup Friday, November 4

Bring your clippers, rake and broom to the Oakton Library,
West End Cemetery and Glyndon Park



Fall has come very quickly. We are planning fall cleanup for November 4. We will meet at 9:30 am at the Oakton Library, proceed to West End Cemetery, and then to Glydon Park. We are planning to plant some bulbs at Glyndon Park, and put in our Five Hills Garden Club sign.

"All hands make light work." Cleanup Day is fun and good fellowship. Please join us on November 4 with your clippers, rake, broom or whatever you think you will need.

Remember, November 1 is **Volunteer Day at Meadowlark Park**. If you are available, please let Nancy Walker know. dan.walker3@verizon.net

Maurine Thomas and Nancy Walker

District IV to Host a Morning of Design

Thursday, November 10

District IV will host this year's Morning of Design November 10, from 10 AM to 12:30 PM, at the Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road, Potomac, Maryland 20854. This is always a great event for those who love floral design. There will be easy-access parking, and a \$5 donation at the door.

Directions: <https://www.yelp.com/map/potomac-community-recreation-center-potomac>

psithurism

(n.) the sound of the wind through trees

"WHENEVER YOU ARE
CREATING BEAUTY AROUND
YOU, YOU ARE RESTORING
YOUR OWN SOUL."



ALICE WALKER

Upcoming Events

October 20 Field Trip Plans: Our first field trip of the year will be on Thursday, October 20, to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond. There will be a presentation by Shane Connolly who has done arrangements for the Royals in London at weddings and other events. Ticket numbers are limited; please contact Karen Fleming by phone or email. 703-244-9487; karen.S.Fleming@gmail.com



Historic Vienna

HVI Fall Membership Meeting – “A Celebration of Collecting” Tuesday, October 18, 7:30 PM



The Fall Membership meeting of Historic Vienna, Inc. will be held on *October 18 at 7:30 PM in the Patriot Hall at the American Legion Dyer-Gunnell Post 180, 330 Center Street, North*. There will be a brief business meeting, during which we will present the 2016 Volunteer Award. Instead of a speaker, the Fall Membership meeting will be “A Celebration of Collecting”. HVI invites you to come and show off your favorite collection of anything that you can carry and display on a 6-foot table.

Contact Anne Stuntz at 703 994-9054 or stuntzag@aol.com to make a reservation to display your collection. Every collector/exhibitor will have a chance to give a short, 5-minute talk about their collection as part of the program. There will also be time for people to visit each collection and chat informally.

Tea & Parlor Talk – Sunday, October 16, 3 PM

Have tea with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1815-1902, the famed abolitionist and suffragist. She will share stories of the women’s rights movement prior to the civil war. After her short presentation there will be plenty of time for relaxing and visiting with your friends in the beautiful parlor and dining room of the Freeman Store and Museum. The traditional English tea will include sandwiches, assorted sweets, warm scones and a bottomless cup of tea. The \$30 fee includes a tour of the new exhibit at the Freeman Store, *The Road to Women’s Rights: The Origins of the Women’s Rights Movement*. Space is very limited so make your reservation by contacting *Patti Bentley or Susan Fay at the store 703-938-5187 or email fs@historicviennainc.org*.



British Holiday Tea & Parlor Talk – Saturday, December 3, 3 PM

Enjoy learning about English and Scottish Holiday Traditions while you enjoy some of the treats described. After the short presentation there will be plenty of time for relaxing and visiting with your friends in the beautiful parlor and dining room of the Freeman Store and Museum. The traditional English Holiday tea will include scones, sausage rolls, sandwiches, assorted sweets – including mince pies, and a bottomless cup of tea. The tea costs \$35, space is very limited so make your reservation by contacting *Patti Bentley or Susan Fay at the store 703-938-5187 or email fs@historicviennainc.org* .

Ann Carter

Communications

Our September Yard Sale

On Saturday the 17th Five Hills held a yard sale at Noreen Linnemann's home.

With short notice, two thirds of our membership contributed in some way to make this event a successful fundraiser. We wanted to earn money for the purchase of a convenient and easily transportable sound system. Our efforts paid off. With only a few expenses to hold the sale, our net profit was just about \$1,900! Noreen, Ann Carter and Lisa Adelman are working together to choose the most appropriate system to meet our needs. Thanks to all who pitched in so cheerfully!

Kathy Nebhut



*We did it.
Our mighty
team effort
netted us
the funds
for our new
sound
system.*



Communications

School Supplies Continue to be Needed and Collected

A note from Kathy Nebhut's daughter, Hillary, who teaches English as a Second Language at JEB Stuart High School:

"It's time for the start of another school year! My students have all recently arrived from other countries and are eager to get learning! Since they often have little in terms of school supplies or resources, I try to keep my classroom stocked. Gently used or new donations are welcome all through the year. Thanks so much for your generosity in years past. It truly makes a difference." Items to bring in for Hillary:

Potted plants for low light
Narcissus or amaryllis bulbs to force indoors
Pencils
Erasers
Small hand-held pencil sharpeners
Pens

Pencil pouches
Glue sticks
Scissors
Colored pencils
Markers
Highlighters
Dry erase markers and erasers
Looseleaf paper

Binders (1-2 inches)
Sticky notes
Manila folders
Construction paper
Tape — masking, packing, scotch, duct
Stapler and staples
Binder clips
Index cards

3-hole puncher
Disinfectant wipes
Hand sanitizer

Stamps for Raptors Program

Please bring in your cancelled stamps to Elizabeth Huebner for the Florida Audubon Bald Eagle Stamp Program. One hundred percent of the profits from the sale of the stamps go to help the birds, offsetting the cost of caring for injured and non-releasable raptors at the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey in Maitland, Florida. Please, no current single-letter rate stamps, including Christmas stamps. Look for more details at the collection box at the general meeting on Tuesday.



Calendars

Please remember to bring in your 2016 and 2017 calendars which are collected each month for military members in appreciation for their services. Janet Kremer will deliver them to the Army's Fairfax Family Health Center. Thank you!

“My Favorite Plants”

Part of District III’s Spring 2017 meeting program will be a slide show entitled “My Favorite Plants” – an informative and interesting presentation where all clubs’ members in

District III submit a photo (a copy or a jpg sent electronically). We will create the slide presentation. Please include the information below with your submission. Deadline January 15, 2017 (but the sooner the better to get the project completed.) Our limit is 50 photos with descriptions.



Please send your photo jpg with descriptive details via email to NCAGCDistIIIgardenclubs@gmail.com or by USPS mail to Leigh Kitcher, 720 Center St., Vienna, VA 22180

Member Name:

Garden Club:

Plant Name:

Light requirements:

Special Features (i.e., drought tolerant, deer resistant)

Explain why you love this plant:

Insert or attach a photo of the plant

Horticulture



For the October Hort Table, **Mum's the Word** – The last rose of summer has not bloomed yet! Bring a mum or flower(s) from your garden in a green bottle for display. Identify the class that you might enter it in a Flower Show **OR** Create a design using found natural objects and mums or other late bloomers. Informal judging.

The Delights of Indoor Gardens

As colder weather approaches, please consider planting an indoor garden for your pleasure and/or the delight of others. These tiny little gems containing plants, natural objects and miniature figures will be perfect gifts for most any occasion. Count how many of your friends or relatives are now in smaller spaces with very small, if any, gardens. Think how you miss your garden in the winter. Think “EASY TO MAKE” gifts of terrariums, dish and water gardens. Start now and show off your work in 2017!

Terrariums

A terrarium is a transparent glass or plastic container with soil and is used for displaying growing plants as a miniature landscape. When a terrarium is properly planted and located, it can be a source of enjoyment for years, providing an interesting way to grow and display many plants with relatively little care.

Almost any type of clear glass or plastic container can be used for a terrarium: fish bowl, fish tank, glass jar, jug or bottle. The container must be clear, however, as tinted or cloudy glass reduces light and interferes with plant growth. Containers can be closed or open. Plants in closed containers must be tolerant of high humidity. Containers with large openings without covers may be used but will require more frequent watering to maintain humidity. Open terrariums are drier and less subject to diseases.



The containers must be large enough to hold a minimum of three inches of soil and should be roomy enough to hold three to five plants without excessive crowding. Drainage may be provided through the use of a 1 to 1 1/2 inch layer of coarse sand or pebbles, which are placed in the container bottom. Lay a screen over the gravel (weed cloth, synthetic fabric, window screen, or coffee filter) to keep the soil from settling into the gravel and destroying the drainage ability. The addition of charcoal will help to keep the soil from developing an unpleasant odor.

Dish Gardens

Dish gardens are plantings held in a shallow, open container. If creating drainage holes in the bottom of the container is not possible, add a layer of gravel to the bottom. Make sure to lay a screen over the gravel (weed cloth, synthetic fabric, window screen, coffee filter) to keep soil from settling into the gravel and destroying the drainage ability. Fill the dish with potting soil and then place plants at the same level in the soil they were in their original containers. Find a location that provides suitable light for the plants and water according to the plants' needs. Prune plants if they grow too tall. A common mistake is crowding.

Horticulture, continued

Cleanliness is most important for both types of gardens. Be sure to choose a sterilized potting mix recommended for the type of plants you plan to use. Also be sure to clean containers with bleach and or wash in dishwasher before you begin.

Water Gardens

You can make a “water garden” with aquatic plants or foliage plants—many can be grown without soil. Rinse any soil off the roots of the plants you want to use and trim off any dead or damaged roots and leaves. Fill the containers with gravel or decorative stones and place the plants, or cuttings, in the container so that the roots are just below the top of the container.

Mix water and a soluble fertilizer at $\frac{1}{4}$ of the recommended rate. Use this solution to fill the dish and water as needed. Change the solution in the dish every six weeks.

Design

Select a theme for your garden: woodland, tropical, desert. Determine the location for the terrarium. Note the light conditions and temperature of this area.

Plants

The plants selected should thrive in the same growing conditions of light, moisture, temperature and rooting medium. Growth habits can vary and variety of textures and colors add interest. Choose small and odd numbers of plants. Do not crowd plants; use accents such as driftwood, stones, or figurines to fill in voids in container. Choose the smallest plants available. A common mistake is to crowd plants. Use only a few—they will grow to fill the container.

Light

Avoid placing the terrarium in direct sun, since it will heat up the terrarium and burn the plants. Place it in bright, indirect light. Open containers, planted with succulents, need some sun and only light misting.

Water

Only water enough to moisten the soil, and only water when the soil is almost dry, since too much water will rot and kill the plant roots. Closed system terrariums will only need to be watered about once or twice a year. If too much condensation builds up in the container, remove the lid until it evaporates, then replace the lid. Adjust water amounts for open containers and dish plantings.

If you want more detail there are several excellent web sites. I recommend the *South Carolina Master Gardener Training Manual*, EC 678.

Karen Lucas, Horticulture

“Ten Best Plants to Improve Indoor Air” Quality website
(based on a NASA Clean Air Study for the Space Station)

<http://www.thehealthyhomeeconomist.com/house-plants-for-clean-indoor-air/>

Buffel Grass

I had planned to write about fracking this month, but this morning as I walked my dog, I saw a field of buffel grass and was horrified. I am not fond of deer in my yard, but this grass seed can weave itself into the fur, then into the skin, and then into the body of animals that walk through this grass. The animals, without any way of removing the seeds of this grass, can develop abscesses. Researchers in Arizona have found these seeds in wild animal livers and other body parts causing infections and painful deaths.

If you see grasses such as these – there are several varieties – please encourage your neighbors, friends and communities to try to eradicate them. They are enormously invasive and damaging to our environment. They are inedible and super-invasive; they are even dangerous to birds that might try to swallow the seeds by accident. The seeds have two double prong ends with little fishhook fibers covering the ends which make them very hard to remove from fur or hair. Each grass head has hundreds of seeds and they can spread on the wind as well as clinging on clothing and animals, to fall off later and find a new home to grow and spread. The plants grow in clumps about three feet in diameter, and with seed heads about three feet tall. They look pretty, and many would think they are a nice addition to the garden. You can find them with white seed heads as well as dark seed heads, but they work the same way. I don't use poison in my garden, but that field may need it – there must be trillions of seeds there. Good luck to all of you with your sharp eyes. I reported the field to the manager in River Bend Park, and hope she will contact the owner to see if they might be inclined to work to eradicate the massive area taken over by the Buffel grass as I am leaving in two days to be with my sister for her surgery.

Elizabeth Huebner, Conservation



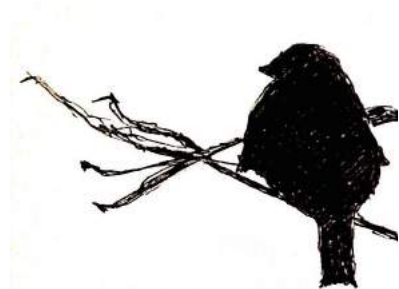
Listen! The wind is rising, and the air is wild with leaves! We have had our
summer evenings! Now for October Eves!

Humbert Wolfe, Poet, 1885-1940

Wait Until Spring to Prune Perennials

For gardeners, fall is the time of year to prepare the yard for the long winter sleep. In the coming cold months, birds will rely on the seeds left in spent flower heads for their survival. While once it was common practice to dead-head flowers as part of the fall tidying up, we know that when the ground is hard and covered with snow, the protruding seeds heads of spent flowers are the main food source of many birds, and the plants themselves, a source of protection from the elements. Please be sure to leave your spent flowers for them; this one practice may keep many birds from starvation.

When the snows come, go out and look for shadows cast by the protruding pods; these are often beautiful. Dormant plants on cold winter morning can be truly lovely when covered with frost. Gardeners know that they will find beauty in their gardens in all four seasons.



Where do birds roost during the cold months? Some answers may surprise you.
Joe Smith has some information in his birding blog at Cool Green Science:

<http://blog.nature.org/science/2016/01/19/how-birds-stay-warm-cold-winters-night/>

“In a Nutshell” ~ September Program Summary



The Windowsill Art of Nancy Ross Hugo Gardener, Author and Floral Designer

Of all the titles she may claim — floral designer, lecturer, author and nature journalist — Nancy admits that her favorite title is gardener. From Ashland, Virginia, she shared her wisdom and her books with Five Hills for a third time over some years; this time she spoke about her passion for creating windowsill arrangements from the common wildflowers, weeds, tree plant and shrub leaves, fruit and vegetable forms that are often under-represented in suburban backyards. We were delighted that she returned to share her wisdom and ideas.

Nancy often collects plant material and discarded objects while on her country rambles — seed pods, peaking flowers or spent flower heads, ivy, fruited bows as well as fern fronds, even an old tin can or bottle — anything that her eye may fall upon to be pressed into use for her next creation.

For several years Nancy has posted her photographs of her creations on a regular basis (for two years she posted every single day) on her blog which can be found here: <http://windowsillarranging.blogspot.com>. She suggested to those who might wish to try windowsill creating, to engage in it regularly and deliberately. In this way one keeps in touch with the seasons on a day-to-day basis. Sometimes she walks around ‘just to look, which is a pleasant thing to do; it’s flat-out fun, just to play’.



She mentioned some of her favorite plants to use in her creations: Roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*), the seeds of which are used to make Red Zinger Tea, castor bean, okra ‘which I would grow before I would grow a rose’ — cow horn, red and green okra. Collards are her favorite green; especially in winter when there’s not much green in the garden, she will use greens from her kitchen, giving her kitchen scraps another incarnation before going to the compost pile. She mixed daffodils, crocus, foliage and sweet box in a glass vase; in another she had cyclamen, stinking hellebore, rodea and sacred lily. She said someone suggested that what she does might be called ‘Floral Haiku’.

She advised that a squat container with a narrow neck is the ‘little black dress’ of floral containers for her kind of arranging. Additionally, she loves how things look in a black container. She said that her arrangements are not for the front hall but designed to sit in an out-of-the-way location because ‘you want to be able to do outlandish, small things and make a mess’. She advised that whatever is going on outside your windowsill view, you can use as a ‘prompt’ for your creation; keep in mind what’s going on outside. And, too, when you come home with things from your rambles, you can remove spent materials from a creation and replace them with your new finds; in this way your arrangements change and evolve in a continuing process.

Nancy said the beauty of her art is that you can do it with no expense of money, and little expenditure of energy; this makes it a good creative activity for the elderly. The chance to repurpose kitchen bottles and jars, tins and decorative boxes, as well as coasters and tiles, makes this an excellent exercise in conservation. A berryed spray looked attractive in an acquired Hendricks gin bottle; a group of test tubes can show off bright colored summer blooms. She loves the hibiscus holders that lie on their sides, so useful to display a single bloom or showy flower.

Her favorite top five materials to use are pansies of every hue, okra, nandina, ferns, and fruits and vegetables. Other ideas: Climbing spinach or Malabar spinach will climb up a deer fence and it’s all edible; bindweed, an invasive, lasts forever in an arrangement; use produce items in an arrangement for a short time before eating or cooking them, including pattypan squash, strawberries, tomatoes, peppers or curly kale, pomegranate, swiss chard, gourds in bird shapes, and celery foliage. ‘Don’t overlook it — take the chance to celebrate it. Keep your eyes open to all things wild and wonderful.’

Brigitte Hartke, Historian

In Touch with Our NGAGC & District III

Very Useful NCAGC Web Links to Keep Handy

District III web site: <http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/district3.html>

District III Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=ncagc%20district%20iii%20garden%20clubs%20%20northern%20virginia>

National Capital Area Garden Clubs blogspot: <http://ncagardenclubs.blogspot.com>

National Capital Area Garden Clubs web site: <http://www.ncagardenclubs.org>

National Capital Area Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/National-Capital-Area-Garden-Clubs-Inc-184614411614341/>

Read all the NCAGC District Newsletters here: <http://www.ncagardenclubs.org/publications.html>



***District III to Host Two Field Trips
in December and Next Spring***

District III is offering two opportunities to travel by bus to tour wonderful gardens both in December and next spring, 2017.

This December join in the fun and visit both Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden's Dominion GardenFest of Lights and afterwards tour and enjoy some of the Tacky Lights displayed around the city of Richmond. Date, cost, and all details will be available at the September 16 District III meeting at the Atrium.

Next spring 2017, plan to travel with us to see the inspiring and amazing Barnes Arboretum in Merion, Pennsylvania, and also admire the many stunning garden 'rooms' at Chanticleer Gardens in Wayne, Pennsylvania, both located on the Philadelphia area Mainline.

Both excursions will be fundraisers for our District III Director's project, and we know you won't want to miss either opportunity to meet other District III garden club members!

Recent Events & Field Trips

TWINBROOK FLORIST OUTING: Last week, several Five Hills members took part in a succulents workshop at Margaret Fleegal's Twinbrook Florist shop. The workshop was led by Margaret's daughter, Amy. The shop is decorated with, and carries, many beautiful seasonal items. Twinbrook Florist has for many years been especially supportive of our Braddock Glen Garden Therapy programs.

(photos ~ Brigitte Hartke)

