



Sow and Tell

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

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President's Message

Noreen Linnemann

March is such a fickle month. It can be bitterly cold or pleasantly warm. Will it be windy, rainy or calm? The best part about March is that it brings spring. There aren't too many more beautiful places at spring time than the Washington DC area. Aren't we lucky! And then there are the beautiful cherry blossoms that are frequently at peak in March.

For us gardeners, we can't wait to get out in the dirt and ruin our manicures. But it is all worth it when we see all our spring bulbs come up and paint our landscapes in beautiful color.

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I just put down some pre-emergence in my mulch areas in hopes that I can keep the weeds under control. Isn't it interesting that what used to be considered a weed is now admired as a perennial? I quote Robert Orben who so beautifully stated, "Spring is God's way of saying, 'One more time' ". Enjoy the opportunity to get out in your garden, and enjoy God's gift of spring.

Next General Meeting: Tuesday, March 20

Tuesday, March 13 — General Meeting Program

“Designing on the Verge”

Kirk Brown is a high-energy and entertaining garden speaker. He is best known for his impersonation of John Bartram. Now, he has a new topic — “Designing on the Verge” — that he is excited to present. His talk is about gardens and changing lifestyles.

A graduate of Cornell University, Mr. Brown wears many hats: author of “Landscape Contractor”, he is also an actor and playwright. With many accolades to his name, Mr. Brown travels the country expounding on the works of two of America’s foremost landscapers, John Bartram and Frederick Law Olmsted, and lecturing on design and garden history. His presentations have received outstanding accolades from audiences of his peers. This is sure to be an excellent and informative lecture!



Calendar

Tuesday, March 6 - Meadowlark Volunteers
Friday, March 16 - Dist. III Awards Meeting, Meadowlark
Tuesday, March 20 - FH General Meeting
Wednesday, March 21 - Judges Council Mtg & Flower Show
Wednesday, March 21 - Field Trip to Lincoln’s Cottage
Mon. & Tues., March 26-27 - Landscape Design School

Tuesday, April 3 - Meadowlark Volunteers, 9:30 am
April 2-7 - NGC Trip to Gardens in Georgia
Friday, April 13 - NCAGC Award Meeting & Conference
Sat, April 28 - Blue Star Memorial Rededication Ceremony
Tuesday, May 1 - Five Hills Flower Show

District III Clubs Flower Show dates:

Ayr Hill GC — April 29, “Bringing Nature to Your Home”, 307 Windover Avenue, NW, 2 to 5 pm

Five Hills GC — May 1, “In the Merry Month of May”, Home of Willow Prall, times to be decided

Great Falls GC — May 18 & 19, “Celebrating Gardening Diversity”, at the Great Falls Library, 10 to 4 pm

Details of our March 21 Field Trip to Lincoln's Cottage

by Karen Fleming

Lincoln's Cottage is located on the grounds of the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) at 140 Rock Creek Road, NW Washington DC. You may enter the property through the Eagle Gate located at the intersection of Rock Creek Church and Upshur Street NW. On site parking is available. It is also accessible by Metro; however, it's about a mile walk from the Georgia Ave/Petworth stop (on the Green Line.)

The tour will begin at 10 am. There are several exhibits worth seeing but not part of the tour. Depending on the weather, we may also wish to "stroll around the grounds." We'll gather for lunch

at 12:30 pm at the Lincoln Restaurant which is located about three miles down the road at 1110 Vermont Ave, NW (along Lincoln's historic commute from The Cottage to the White House).



... a memento from a trip taken earlier in the month to Pennsylvania for the Philadelphia Flower Show ~

Several Five Hills Members and others attended this year's Philadelphia Flower Show. Five Hills members and others pictured: Darla Anderson, Carolyn Staska, Ronnie Levay, Dottie Hanson and trip organizer, Barbara Tozzi

**FROM
“HISTORIC VIENNA INK”**

submitted by Ann Carter

**HVI Spring Membership Meeting
“Home Front and the Great War”**

The Spring Membership meeting of Historic Vienna, Inc. will be held on *Tuesday, March 20 at 7:30 PM in the Town Council Chamber of Vienna’s Town Hall, 127 Center Street, South.* There will be a brief business meeting before the program, and this year’s Heritage Preservation Award will be announced.

In commemoration of the centennial of America's involvement in World War I, the program will be the *“Home Front and the Great War”*, presented by Mike Berger and Jon Vrana. They will provide a glimpse into the Great War in Europe and the Vienna area’s involvement to support the war on the home front. Mike and Jon are both historians with a strong focus on military history, HVI Board Members, and designers of the exhibit.

The HVI Membership meeting is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

A World War I War Garden Returns to Vienna

James Montgomery Flagg created a “Sow the Seeds of Victory” poster and was among many who featured clever phrases and colorful posters to encourage Americans to use their home gardens to cultivate food, needed for the War effort. It was Charles Lathrop Pack who had the brilliant idea to create War Gardens. In turn, preserving of garden products was strongly encouraged, and by 1918 canned vegetables and fruits tripled from the previous year, totaling 1,450,000,000 quarts put up. Children were also encouraged to be thrifty, industrious, serve others, show patriotism and

responsibility as part of the U.S. School Garden Campaign. After the War ended, the Victory Gardens continued to be cultivated mainly for personal use. Excess harvests from farmlands could then be sent to Europe’s needy. After the armistice, these War Gardens were called Victory Gardens to support the food needs after the end of the war.



We Want You to Sow the Seeds of Victory in Vienna - Seeking Gardeners of All Ages

Historic Vienna invites all interested gardeners to join us in creating and planting a Vienna War Garden on the Freeman Store and Museum grounds. A planning meeting is scheduled for March 17, 10 AM at the Freeman Store and Museum. Contact Nancy Moats, smoats5555@aol.com with questions and to volunteer.

“Women’s Rights through Cartoons”

The hallway museum exhibit, *“Women’s Rights through Cartoons”*, is the third in the five-year series of exhibits chronicling the struggle for women’s rights. The exhibit features more than 50 political cartoons and images collected from newspapers, postcards, and other publications from the 1850s onward that made a statement about what people were really thinking about at the time. The cartoons focus on the right to vote as well as other women’s rights for which Elizabeth Cady Stanton fought, including rights related to parental custody, property ownership, employment and income, divorce, economic health of the family, and birth control. *Photo by Ron Dicker*



“Walk on the Hill” – April 29, 2-5 PM

The Walk on the Hill will take place on April 29 from 2 to 5 pm, *rain or shine*. As the streets close, the Windover Heights homeowners will welcome visitors to stroll the neighborhood to enjoy the landscaped gardens of this historic district. At 288 Windover Avenue, local bands will play starting at 2 pm. Hickory Grove will play old-fashioned music throughout the afternoon in the log cabin at 223 Walnut Lane.



This year, Ayr Hill Garden Club will present at 307 Windover Avenue, *Bringing Nature to Your Home*, a Small Standard Flower Show, featuring floral designs, horticulture and educational exhibits. And the Garden Club will have a table at Salsbury Spring to explain the history of the Spring, its importance to the town and docents will show visitors the native plants in the park that support the wildlife habitat and native pollinators.

As always, the event is free, with Historic Vienna, Inc., and the residents providing punch and cookies. An online walking map will be available before the event on the Town website at <https://www.viennava.gov/>. We are always looking for ideas or assistance to make this a better event. If you would like to volunteer your time or talents, contact Carey Sienicki, csienicki@viennava.gov, or 703-242-5785, or online at <http://goo.gl/PuvoCE>.

Photos ~ Brigitte Hartke, “Walk on the Hill” homes, April 2012. The poolside climber is an example of a native wisteria.

The Vienna Community Enhancement Commission (CEC) is pleased to once again hold the annual Green Expo in conjunction with the “Walk on the Hill”. The CEC serves the citizens of Vienna by working to make Vienna a more sustainable community. The CEC will be providing information about its projects.





Cares and Concerns

Five Hills members offer condolences to Karen Fleming whose mother, Sheila O'Meara Kowalski, passed away on Sunday, February 25, 2018, in Southbury, Connecticut at the age of 94.

April 5, 9:30 am
Spring Cleaning at
Glendon Park & West
End Cemetery

Bring your rake, garden
clippers, gloves and
broom, and spend some
time gardening in the
spring air, preparing the
flower beds we tend for
the coming growing
season. Many hands
make light work!



May you always find
three welcomes - In a
garden in summer, at a
fireside during winter
and, whatever the day
or season, in the kind
eyes of a friend.
- gaelic welcome



The Plant NOVA Natives Regional Initiative, partnered with the Virginia Native Plant Society, created an excellent guide entitled "Native Plants for Northern Virginia". It can be downloaded as a pdf for your computer free, or you can purchase a copy for \$8.50.

Visit www.plantnovanatives.org

TWO OVERLOOKED TREES TO PONDER

by Karen Lucas

I spent most of my youth wandering the woods adjacent to the bay or swimming in it. Two trees that I loved were the Pawpaw and the Sassafras. As we blazed trail after trail we always had a sassafras leaf or small root to chew on as we explored. In late summer we harvested the pawpaws we had found in our earlier travels.

Both trees grow in abundance on their own in Calvert County and, I'm sure, would be great additions to Vienna gardens.



Asimina triloba

The Pawpaw is native to the East Coast. It produces the largest native fruit in the Continental U.S. (not counting the gourd ... most consider it a vegetable). Their fragrant fruits do not travel well so are rarely found in stores. They can be eaten raw (texture like a soft banana) or cooked into a custard or pie.

The pawpaw is usually found as a small "patch-forming" understory tree, although in time it can grow up to 35 feet. It has a large root system.

Leaves: bright green, simple, alternate, cluster at ends of branches, 5 to 8 inches in length.

Flowers: 1-2 inches, maroon in color, 3 sepals, and 6 petals, single attached on a stout peduncle.

Planting: Select a site that has partial shade. Dig a hole large enough to give the roots room to expand. Place top soil or compost or manure on bottom of hole. It likes well-drained soil with a pH of 5.5-7. Trees need about 1 inch of rain a week. If the soil is too dry fruit drop results.

Fruit is produced on new growth so a winter pruning is a good idea. The tree has both male and female flowers but cannot fertilize itself. To assure fruit production, plant another pawpaw selection (there are many) 15-25 apart. In nature, flies and beetles do the pollination, but you can help it along. With an artist's brush dab some pollen from a male flower when the anther is topped with a brownish powder, and apply it to a female flower's ovary which is green, glossy and sticky.



Some selection available include: Alleghany, Mango Potomac, Rappahannock, and Shenandoah. Southern Living recommends "Just Fruits and Exotics".

Sassafras albidum

Sassafras is a tree native to our region. It is a small-to-medium deciduous tree. It has greenish-yellow blooms in April or May. These trees are dioecious (male and female trees); the female trees may develop bluish-black berries in fall.



It will develop root suckers and can be removed if you want a tree-like look or leave them if you want the look of a multi-stemmed shrub.

Leaves: three shapes (mitten, ovate and trilobe), bright green and white below, red, yellow and purple fall color.

It takes full sun to part shade and is very low-maintenance. It tolerates deer and drought and poor soil. It develops a large tap root, so plant it where you want it!

I will try to pot up some small ones for our plant exchange.



Horticulture Projects



For the hort table, bring in a horticultural specimen from your garden in a proportional green bottle. Label it correctly. Suggestions include Narcissus, Tulips, Witch Hazel.

Design Theme: Windy Days

Design: Designer's Choice or Sculptural

Conservation News March, 2018

by Elizabeth Huebner

I did check with the US Drought Monitor for Virginia for our area; we are still in a moderate drought. We need 6.65 inches of rain this month to alleviate our drought prognosis. We might get there. Meanwhile I thought we could review gardening tips for saving energy.

If your power and water bills rise dramatically every summer, your garden might not be as green as it looks. Although a beautiful garden can bring joy, it can also waste energy. Changing some habits can save significant amounts of power, water and money. Even if your garden doesn't cost much to grow, you can still improve it and save energy with clever landscape design.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends watering during the coolest part of the day, usually the early morning. Set sprinklers to water only where it's needed and prevent overflow onto the street or sidewalk. Collect rainwater in barrels, and then use it to water indoor and outdoor plants. Always check hoses, faucets and plumbing for leaks, and water plants only when they need it, not every day. For some areas soaker hoses are a promising idea.

In California, most people are reconsidering what they plant to conserve water, and they use gray (used dish water, bath water, etc.) water to water plants. Given our power outage this past weekend which lasted 4.5 days for people on my street where we have no water, no heat and no electricity, I was watering indoor plants with my used dish water as there was nothing else.

Mowing and equipment during sizzling summer months, raise your mower's cutting height to leave grass longer. This helps shade the roots, reducing browning and weed growth as well as water needs. Maintain mower and garden equipment regularly so they continue to function as efficiently as possible. The EPA recommends using manual tools whenever possible to save energy and protect air quality. If you do need larger equipment, rent or borrow it to save money, energy and resources.

Save energy and labor in your garden by making nature do some of the work for you. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to keep beetles away, and keep weeds down with fast-growing plants. When you mow, leave the clippings on the lawn to act as fertilizer. Compost kitchen and garden scraps and use the resulting material as an enriching soil amendment; this can reduce the amount of water plants require and help keep weeds at bay. Likewise, shred untreated wood and leaves into chips, and use them as mulch in garden beds. This regulates soil temperature, helps retain moisture and adds nutrients to the soil.

The U.S. Department of Energy recommends green scaping or designing your yard for energy efficiency. Choose plants that flourish in our regional climate and microclimate and reduce the amount of lawn and turf to maintain. Plant the garden in such a way that water runoff reaches all the plants without excessive waste. Consider planting trees that will shade and windbreak your house, reducing heating costs in the winter and cooling costs in the summer.

Many thanks to SFGate (San Francisco) for conservation ideas.



Please don't spray or pull the spring dandelions. They are one of the first sources of food for the bees in spring.



Feeding Bluebirds

Bluebirds love mealworms and can be fed year-round. It is easiest to start feeding them when they have babies in the nests. Bluebirds usually reject commercially sold bluebird feeders. We have devised a fix for these that seems to work. We take the Plexiglas out of these feeders and replace it with metal hardware cloth and expand the entrance holes. Often you need to put the mealworms in a shallow dish under a perch that they commonly uses and once they associate the dish with food you can begin to move the dish until you move it inside your feeder. For more feeding information, check out [this guide](#) from the North American Bluebird Society.

Mealworms –

Mealworms are available in bulk (1000 or more) from many birding supply stores or from various suppliers such as Grubco 800-222-3563, Nature's Way 800-318-2611, or Sunshine Mealworms, Silverton OR, 1-800-322-1100 (www.sunshinemealworms.net).

Mealworms can be stored in the refrigerator for over a month at a time in a container with air holes on the top. Keep them in oat bran meal and put a few slices of fresh apples in the container every week. As you need mealworms for feeding, use a course sifter of some sort to scoop up the mealworms and sift them out of the bran meal.

Vegetation to Attract Bluebirds – Bluebirds eat berries in the winter. Many types of berry producing plants will attract and nourish birds. This includes plants such as holly, dogwood, bayberry, winterberry, service berry, hawthorn, sumac, privet inkberry, and Virginia creeper. Learn more about [berry-producing plants](#) and [plants that attract birds](#).

Suet For Bluebirds – 1 cup crunchy peanut butter, 1 cup lard, 2 cups quick oats, 2 cups cornmeal, 1

cup flour, 1/3 cup sugar, berries like currents optional. Mix dry ingredient. Melt peanut butter & lard together, and mix with dry ingredients. Press into pan, cool, cut into squares and freeze until needed.

Water – Water is key to attracting bluebirds. You can often attract more birds by providing water than food as it can be hard for them to find water sources. Baths should be located far enough from brush to protect birds from predators such as cats but close enough to a low tree or perch to make the birds feel secure and able to escape. Change the water frequently and limit the depth to around 1.5 inches to guard against newly fledged birds drowning. Heating coils are available for keeping the bath from freezing in the winter.

Predators — These include wasps, snakes, squirrels, raccoons, opossums, cats, wrens, ants, house sparrows, and blowflies.

Build a Bluebird Box: Those handy with a hammer and nails can find a plan for building a box here:

http://www.virginiabluebirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/BB_Box_Plans_12-11-2012.pdf

And mounting method can be found here:

http://www.virginiabluebirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/recommendedboxmounting_feb23_2010.pdf

This article and more information can be found at the Virginia Bluebird Society's website: <http://www.virginiabluebirds.org/about-bluebirds/feeding-bluebirds/>

The Virginia Bluebird Society is always looking for volunteers to monitor their bluebird boxes throughout the state; their program has resulted in a rebound in bluebird population numbers which, at one time, were in serious decline. In 1996, the number of bluebirds that fledged from the boxes was just 83; by 2011, that statistic had climbed 14,423. In fifteen years, the total number of bluebird fledglings totaled 120,924! Citizen involvement was key to this success.



More Upcoming Events



Flower Show

We are so excited about the enthusiasm the Club shared with our *Merry Month of May* Flower Show plans. Lisa will have updated schedules available for viewing at our meeting this month. M'Ellen will continue to take Design Entries.

Jill will be asking for volunteers to assist in logistical preparations, set-up, clean-up, clerking, providing refreshments and decorating Willow's beautiful yard to represent the celebrations during the month of May. In particular, we are seeking an Outdoor Decorating Chair to coordinate our club members efforts in the garden. This will allow Lisa to focus on the set-up of our judged portion of the show in Willow's home.

The Handbook for Flower Shows – 2017 Edition is available for \$25.00 in hardback or digital on the National Garden Club website at this link: <http://www.shopgardenclub.org/shop/category.aspx?catid=11>

*Lisa Adelman and
Jill Hecht*

Rededication Ceremony

Five Hills invites you to our rededication ceremony for our Vienna Blue Star Memorial. The Memorial pays tribute to members of our armed forces. The event will take place on Saturday, April 28 at 10 am, at Vienna Centennial Park on Church Street; there will be refreshments served after the event. Please respond if you plan to attend to barbaratozzi@aol.com. Below is an image of the invitation.

