



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

As I get to know more about our members and a bit about their lives, I'm so impressed to learn about all of the other ways Five Hills members give of their time and talents in our community. We have members who work for hospice organizations, with foster children, the homeless, military families, teaching English to speakers of other languages, and in charity shops, just to name a few. It would be interesting to survey the membership to learn about the variety of ways our members care for others in addition to their own families. I'm glad to take time to reflect on the generous nature of our members and the depth of caring we show to improve our community and the lives of others. Wishing you a wonderful Christmas season and a Happy New Year! ~ Julia

General Meeting:
Tuesday, January 15, 2019

What's Inside

President's Message	1
Calendar & Upcoming Events	2
Communications	3
Horticulture	4
Conservation	5
New Member Introductions	6-7



January Program ~ Sara Via

“Climate Change Affecting Nature and Our Gardens”



Dr. Sara Via, a professor and climate change specialist for the University of Maryland, will tell us about effects of climate change and how they significantly impact gardens and home landscapes. We will learn strategies for adapting to change and improving our chances for gardening success.

<https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/earth-friendly/climate-change-and-gardening>

Calendar: There are no events listed for January other than the General Meeting.

Places to go, things to see . . .

Wolf Trap's First Day Hike

Looking for a fun way to start off your New Year? Whether you have New Year's resolutions or not you can help us start the new year on the right foot. Join trail volunteers for Wolf Trap's First Day Hike on January 1, 2019 at 1 pm. The hike will start at the Filene Center Main Gate (Box Office). Please dress appropriately for the weather and a hike.

“First Day Hikes are part of a nationwide initiative led by America's State Parks to encourage people to get outdoors. On New Year's Day, hundreds of free, guided hikes will be organized in all 50 states. Kids and adults all across America will be participating in First Day Hikes, getting their hearts pumping and enjoying the beauty of a state park...

Last year nearly 55,000 people rang in the New Year, collectively hiking over 133,000 miles throughout the country on the guided hikes. Numerous others hiked state park trails throughout the day.”

Learn more about First Day Hikes at America's State Parks website ~

<https://www.stateparks.org/initiatives-special-programs/first-day-hikes/>

Location: Wolf Trap Trail. Meet at the Ranger Station

Time: 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Fee Information: Free

Contact Name: Interpretative Office

Contact Email: e-mail us

Contact Phone Number: 703-255-1827

Our Wreaths Create Holiday Spirit in Vienna

A big thank you to several members whose additional efforts contributed to our very successful wreath making in early December!

Rosemarie Jaksetic -

for organizing the workshop

Nancy Walker -

for wrapping all of the wreath forms

Brigitte Hartke -

for creating beautiful wreath tags with a Five Hills photo

Deneen Wilson -

for tying dozens of bows

Those of us who delivered our wreaths reported that the recipients were delighted!



"The Gumdrops Tree"

by Julia Smith

The "Gumdrop Tree" was a Christmas tradition when I was growing up. My children loved seeing one in the front hall of my parents' house when we went to visit for the holidays. About 25 years ago, I planted the Hardy Orange, also called Bitter Orange (*Poncirus trifoliata*) specifically for the purpose of having branches for gumdrop trees. The cultivar "Flying Dragon" has the contorted shape that makes the branches particularly interesting. In addition to cutting branches for decoration, the thorns are strong and sharp so the shrub makes an excellent deterrent hedge if needed.



Anyone who would like to cut a branch or two from my shrub is most welcome! It's a fun "grandmother" thing to have when children visit or to take as a house gift to a young family. I have used the same branch for years; the gumdrops are slowly eaten over the holidays and I just stick on new gumdrops the next year. It could be decorated for other holidays too with orange and black candies for Halloween, pink and red for Valentine's Day, etc.



For the January Hort Table ~

Horticulture: "Let It Snow!"

Make an arrangement using Snowdrops.

A favorite recipe for the holidays, one that you may want to keep in your files for many years to come. The recipe can be doubled or tripled to be given as hostess gifts.

Spiced Rosemary Nuts from Williams Sonoma "Thanksgiving" cookbook

2 1/2 cups mixed nuts
2 tablespoons olive or avocado oil
1 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
1 tablespoon sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
Note: Add 1 teaspoon salt ONLY if you are using unsalted nuts.



Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Place the nuts in a bowl. Pour the oil into a small, heavy saucepan, and place over medium-low heat until warm. Add the rosemary, and stir until the mixture is aromatic, about one minute. Pour the flavored oil over the nuts. Add the sugar, cumin, black pepper, cayenne and salt, and stir to coat evenly. Transfer the nuts to a baking pan or sheet.

Bake, stirring occasionally, until the nuts are toasted — about 20 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool completely. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to four days.

Nine Steps to Create a Winter-wonderland ... and Get a Jump Start on the Spring Migration Season.

By Lucia Bacon

1. Choose trees, shrubs and ground covers native to your area. Fall plantings are especially vulnerable to predators. Protect trees from bark-gnawing mice and rabbits by covering sapling trunks with plastic wrap. Pile several inches of shredded leaf mulch or wood chips around the base of new planting to prevent frost heaving that could expose their roots to dry air.

2. Provide water near protective shrubs. Many birds bathe and drink from open water in frigid weather. Baths on pedestals are ideal for protection from predators such as cats. If neighborhood cats are a regular threat, it is better not to provide water.

3. Clear out old nest boxes in the fall because some birds will use them as winter night roosts. Boxes should be cleaned out again in spring before nesting season.

4. Create a songbird boarder along your property edge with plants that meet birds' needs year round. Include plants of varying heights that offer a mix of food, cover, nesting and singing perches. Favor berry producing shrubs such as dogwoods, hollies, chokeberries and elderberries. Evergreens such as spruce, holly and juniper provide covering and nesting.

5. Make mulch - rake fallen leaves under shrubs to create mulch and to protect natural ground-feeding areas for birds such as sparrows, towhees and thrashers. Birds prefer leaf mulch to wood chip

and bark mulches. Earthworms, pillbugs, insects and spiders — songbird delicacies — will thrive as the mulch decomposes.

6. Discard old birdseed, especially if it has been kept in a hot, humid place like a metal garbage can during the summer months. The cans are ideal for protecting seed from rodents but can promote mold.

7. Build a brush pile in the corner of your garden to offer songbirds shelter in extreme weather. During fall cleanup, set aside downed branches and tree trunks for construction. If they are available use large logs as a foundation, then heap fallen and cut branches in successive layers.

8. Clean feeders with a 10% solution of non-chlorinated bleach. Rinse thoroughly and dry in the sun before refilling. Rake up soggy seed from under feeders and bury it far away to prevent the growth of bird-toxic mold. Scrub and store hummingbird feeders.

9. Protect your windows. About a billion birds die from glass collisions each year. You can reduce this by using window decals.

Thank you to the Audubon Society for these helpful hints.

If you watching birds at your feeders consider joining forces with Cornell Lab of Ornithology for Project FeederWatch. Join at www.feederwatch.org or by calling [800-843-2473](tel:800-843-2473).



(image "Cardinal in the Holly" by CL Fowler)

Getting to Know Our Newest Members

It is always a fine thing when we welcome new members to the Five Hills community and get to know them. As we did last December, we are including short bios from our newest members. Thank you for sharing a little about yourselves.

Welcome to the Club, Anne, Lura, and Lucia!!

Anne Boulier

I have lived (and grown plants) in Vienna for nearly 40 years. One of my earliest memories is following my great-grandmother through her garden...strawberries and peonies. I remember sitting in a chinaberry tree with a needle and thread trying to string the jade green berries into a necklace. I collected useless, knobbly osage oranges thinking this must be what Heaven smells like.

If you have a tree or plant that you love, please tell me about it. Does anyone have a *franklinia* or a gas plant, *dictamnus albus*? Have you ever eaten a paw paw? Have you ever tried to grow a tree peony from seed? Would you like to? Let me know.



Lura Marshall (extract from her bio questionnaire)

Lura was born in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey. She has six brothers and two sister, but none live locally. As the youngest child, she attended Mt. Laurel Public Schools, West Chester University, and has a PA and BS in Early Childhood Education.

She works for the Fairfax County Public Schools system as a substitute and now works part time in the Office of Student Testing.

She has been married for thirty-seven years to her childhood sweetheart. He is a computer engineer/developer, and owns his own company.

Lura has two daughters — Kacy is married with three children, and Kelsey has a grand puppy. Lura loves biking, walking and Book Club.

She tells us, "I love to look at flowers and gardens. I like planting and caring for flowers. I want to learn flower design and arranging".

Since joining Five Hills, she has enjoyed working at the Senior Center and at Meadowlark Gardens.



New Member Introductions



Lucia Warner Bacon (extract from her bio questionnaire)

Lucia was born in Poughkeepsie, New York. She has a half-sister and brother, in Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon. She is the oldest of the three.

She has lived in many places. The trajectory — Poughkeepsie — Philadelphia, Penn. — Bryn Mawr, Penn. — Laramie, Wyoming — Wellesley, Mass. — West Hartfield, Conn. — Boston, Mass. — Bloomfield, New Jersey — Framingham, Mass. She attended Northeastern University in Boston studying Medical Technology. Sorority: Alpha Sigma Tau.

“I worked as a medical technologist at Tufts Hospital/Blood Bank Hematology, Framingham Union Hospital — Chemistry, Angell Vet Hospital and in a private practice, Veterinary Medicine.”

Lucia is married — she and her husband met at a soaring meet. Still working, he is a physicist. He attended MIT and Dartmouth, earning a PhD. They have two daughters and two grand-daughters — a two-and-a-half-year-old and a three-month-old.

Her interests include scrapbooking and theater, and they are season ticket holders to the Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap and Arena Stage.

Lucia heard about Five Hills through Trish Phillips. Her garden emphasis is, basically, a cutting garden; she is in the process of down-sizing. She also belongs to Great Falls Garden Club, and Alpha Sigma Tau Northern Virginia Alumnae. She says, “I love the social aspect of the meetings, lunch convos in line and at the tables. I am looking forward to field trips.”

Asked about any illnesses and surgeries, she responded, “I fell down the basement stairs and have had facial reconstructive surgery.”

She ends with a quote by Oscar Wilde ~ “Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.”

