

Sow and Tell

February 2024
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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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Happy Valentine's Day!

What a perfect winter we've had—a couple of weeks of cold weather and beautiful snow and now it's almost gone! I'm not quite ready to get back out in the garden but I do enjoy the fact that we are experiencing longer daylight hours.

Last month we appointed our nominating committee to identify a slate of officers for the next term. Elizabeth Huebner, Val Plisko, and Rosemarie Jaksetic will be asking those of you that have interest in taking a position on the executive committee to please contact them. Later, after the executive committee is voted on, Joy Salpini, our incoming President, will ask for volunteers to accept committee chair positions. Obviously, everyone enjoys Five Hills Garden Club or you wouldn't be coming to our meetings. If you want the club to continue offering great programs, organized lunches, field trips and a chance to make new friends, we need new people with new ideas to run the club. Please consider taking on one of these positions, it does require a little more of your time but the enjoyment of working with the other members of the board makes it worth it.

I want to thank Trish Phillips, Val Plisko, and Joy Salpini for all the time they have spent this last month filling out the paperwork that is required for Five Hills to apply for 501c3 status. They have spent hours of their own time working on this. We're lucky to have such hard working members in our club. We will cross our fingers that the IRS will grant us 501c3 status.

I want to thank Shelia Creswell, Elizabeth Huebner, Candace Dibble, and Julia Smith for spending time updating our bylaws. Shelia will present the proposed changes at our March meeting and then we will vote on their adoption.

If anyone is interested, Nancy Walker has flower foam for sale at \$2 a block. This flower foam is the kind that is safe for our environment rather than the foam you buy at places like Michaels. Please let Nancy know if you are interested in buying some. She can bring some to our meeting or you can drop by her house to pick it up.

Andy

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

- February 20 General Meeting: Getting started with Eastern Bluebirds and Helping them Stay
- March 12 Board Meeting, 10 am
- March 19 General Meeting: Preparing for a Successful Flower Show—Ready, Set, Go
- April 9 Board Meeting, 10 am
- April 16 Five Hills Flower Show: For the Love of Nature
- May 14 Board Meeting, 10 am
- May 21 General Meeting: Member Plant Exchange

Philadelphia Flower Show Green Spring Gardens offers two trips to the Philadelphia Flower Show -- Monday, March 4, 8-8 and Wednesday, March 6, 10-10. Cost - \$179

You can register through Parktakes

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

Program for February 20, 2024

Valerie Kenyon Gaffney

Getting Started with Eastern Bluebirds and Helping them Stay



Valerie Kenyon Gaffney, active locally with the Prince William Wildflower Society and two NCAGC clubs and statewide as the President of the Virginia Bluebird Society, will present on the lifecycle of the bluebird. The bright blue breeding plumage of the male, easily observed on a wire or open perch, fluttering down to the mowed grass to capture a grasshopper, cricket or beetle makes this species a favorite of birders. Valerie will describe what led to its decline in population, and what role we can play in supporting bluebirds and attracting them to our backyard and communities. Bluebird Photo by Tina Nord

Program for March 19, 2024

Deneen Wilson

Preparing for a Successful Flower Show--Ready, Set, Go

Our own Deneen Wilson will devote the March program to present on how we are going to bring a successful flower show to fruition. She will begin by outlining the responsibilities of the chairs and all our members and then go into detail about what judges expect in horticulture and design. For horticulture, she will go over the requirements including selection, staging and placement. For design, she will describe practice, transport, and placement. After her presentation we will all be better prepared for putting on a beautiful April flower show.

Special Joint Program with Ayr Hill Garden Club

We have a special joint program with Ayr Hill on Monday, March 25 at 1 pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church (2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna VA 22181). The presenter is Ellen Seagraves on *Catching Trends in Floral Design Globally*.

Ellen Seagraves is both a leader as president of the Independent Floral Designers Association and a follower, an Instagram viewer of over 1000 floral designers to see what is trending daily. A floral designer for 25 years, Ellen has an avid curiosity about all aspects of floral design—from its history to the latest design styles worldwide, as well as the mechanical intricacies of putting arrangements together. She will share with us her current favorites: Asian designers who are designing in the “western Constance Spry garden style” and at the other side of the globe, European and American designers who are making structures and decorating them with flowers. She will highlight the designers she is following and demonstrate her own work of both garden and structural style. While these avant-garde trends have yet to enter the lexicon of flower show requirements, they may spark some creative applications to your own work.

Join Ayr Hill at 12:30pm for socializing; the program runs from 1 to 2 pm. Please let Val Plisko know at plisko@msn.com if you plan to attend, as Ayr Hill needs a headcount for its hospitality committee. Five Hills will reciprocate in the fall at its September meeting.

Membership News

Membership Chair—Joy Salpini

Membership Dues for 2024-25 - Due March 31, 2024

Active Members - \$70.00

Associate Members - \$75.00

Spring is right around the corner, and that means it is time to review and update your contact details, and pay dues.

Please check your listing in the current directory. If there are **no changes**, simply email me (jlsalpini@gmail.com) indicating there are no changes.

If there **are** changes to your details, complete the Registration form attached to this newsletter and either scan and email it to me (jlsalpini@gmail.com), mail it to me (9321 Tovito Drive, Fairfax, VA 22031), or give it to me at our meeting in February or March.

Checks can be mailed to me at the address above, or given to me at the February or March general meeting. If you have any questions or need any help, please feel free to contact me.

Five Hills Garden Club Newest Members:

Elvira (Elvie) Germino Hausken

I grew up in the Philippines in a home surrounded by gardens tended by two avid gardeners, my mother and aunt. Fruit trees, tropical plants, roses, and orchids grew in the garden. My mother also raised pigs and turkeys. After working and living overseas, I settled in Virginia with my husband, Gary and our three fur babies, two standard and one mini schnauzer.



Since retiring after 40 years of working for the federal government, I have had more time to grow my interest and appreciation of our environment. My hobbies include growing orchids, learning about native plants, birds, traveling to learn about different cultures and cuisines, and reading.

Marsha Hendrickson

Marsha Hendrickson, a mother of two, a grandmother of two, and a lifelong resident of Long Island, New York, moved to Northern Virginia in July 2022. She settled in the Mantua area of Fairfax, conveniently close to her children and grandchildren. Marsha's roots on Long Island were deeply intertwined with years of boating on the Long Island Sound, navigating the waters of the Northeast from Block Island to Martha's Vineyard, and up to Maine. During this time, she managed the Christopher Gallery in Stony Brook, NY, where she curated art, jewelry, and American crafts. Additionally, Marsha dedicated her time volunteering for both the Family Service League and her local church, as well as attending local theater performances.

In her new Fairfax home, Marsha volunteers at the Second Chance Thrift Shop, whose proceeds support the Humane Society of Fairfax. She enjoys exploring the museums of the DC area and attending events at the Kennedy Center and Capital One Hall. Marsha is an active supporter of her grandchildren, frequently attending their basketball or field hockey games, orchestra and chorus performances, and serving as their non-parent form of transportation, earning her the endearing title of "Grandma Uber." Marsha's hobbies include gardening, birding, socializing with friends, traveling, learning the game of Mahjong, and training her new puppy, Coco.

CONSERVATION

Conservation Chair—Elizabeth Huebner

Consider your Carbon Footprint

Resources incorporated for this article were drawn from “Sustainable Austin TX, blog March 24, 2017” and “Impactful.Ninja Newsletter”. Special thanks to Willow for suggesting the topic.

The Merriam Webster dictionary defines carbon footprint “as the amount of greenhouse gases and specifically carbon dioxide emitted by something (such as a person’s activities or a product’s manufacture and transport) during a given period”. Basically, it is **the amount of carbon emitted by an activity or an organization**. This includes greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from fuel that we burn directly (e.g. heating a home, driving a car) and GHG emissions from manufacturing the products that we use (e.g. power plants, factories, and landfills).

The carbon footprint is one way we measure the effects of human-induced global climate change. Each one of us has our own carbon footprint and it is important to reduce it much as possible to mitigate the effect of climate change. Reducing one’s carbon footprint also has a positive cascade effect on public health and plant and animal diversity. In addition, this can boost the global economy and lead to innovative, more environmentally-friendly solutions.

Carbon emissions cause negative environmental effects:

Increasing temperatures, Earth’s atmosphere has warmed 1.5°C since 1880.

Rising sea levels, Global sea levels have increased approximately 8-9 inches since 1880, displacing people living along coastlines and destroying coastal habitats.

Melting of sea ice, Since 1979 arctic sea ice has declined by 30%. Sea ice plays a major role in regulating the earth’s climate by reflecting sunlight into space and providing habitat for animal species.

Changing precipitation patterns, Extreme weather events (e.g., hurricanes, floods, droughts) are becoming more common and more intense. Storm-affected areas will experience increased precipitation and flooding whereas areas located further from storm tracks will experience decreased precipitation and droughts.

Ocean Acidification, The ocean absorbs 30% of the carbon dioxide (CO₂) released into the atmosphere, which decreases the pH (increases the acidity) of the ocean. In the past 200 years, the pH of oceans has decreased by 0.1 pH units, which translates to a 30% increase in acidity. Aquatic life unable to adjust to this rapid acidification will die off. A prime example of this is coral bleaching.

The more we reduce the amount of GHG emissions, the more we slow the rate of temperature rise, sea-level rise, ice melting, and ocean acidification. When these rates are slowed, the earth's biodiversity does not have to struggle to adapt to temperature and pH changes. People will not be displaced due to the flooding of coastal areas. And icebergs will continue to provide climate regulation.

Here are 10 easy ways to help decrease your carbon footprint:

1. Stop buying your water in plastic. Get a reusable water bottle and keep it filled and with you. You'll save money and the environment.
2. Incorporate walking or biking to some of your regular short-trip destinations. In most instances you can walk a mile in less than 20 minutes. This is a great way to add exercise to your busy schedule.
3. Turn off lights and unplug devices when you're not using them. Every little action adds up.
4. Keep the tires on your car properly inflated and get regular tune-ups. When your car's tires are low on pressure, it has to work harder to move from point A to point B, wasting gas and increasing emissions in the process.
5. Eat more food that is grown or made locally and less red meat.
6. Use the cold water cycle for washing full loads of clothes. This will decrease the amount of water and energy used, helping you save time and money. Bonus points for line-drying.
7. Set your thermostat to 78 in summer and 67 in winter. And turn-off the heat and AC when you're not home. You'll be surprised at the difference it makes in your energy bill.
8. Drive efficiently. Use the accelerator lightly, coast to red lights, stay near the speed limit, and park and go inside instead of stop idling your engine in a drive-thru.
9. Keep stuff out of the landfill. Sell items you no longer use to thrift shops, have a yard sale, or donate them to sale, donate to a charity. Recycle or repurpose everything you can't give away or donate.
10. Use alternative transportation (bus, train, carpool, or bike) to get to work one day per week. Enjoy the chance to catch up on your reading instead of testing your patience in traffic!

Garden Therapy

Garden Club Co-chairs—Willow Prall Martin and Anne Nelson

On Tuesday, February 6, we presented a Valentine's Day themed program for the residents of Iliff Nursing Home. We had 6 club volunteers and 12 residents participating in our two-part session. Willow played a selection of Love songs which gave the room a lively and sentimental feel.

Willow led first part of building a bouquet into a vase. Each resident was given 3 fuchsia and 3 red silk roses with a spray of silk greens, an acrylic vase with an inside base of little plastic hearts. Volunteers assisted each resident to spread out and place the greens into the vase, add pink roses, then red ones, using symmetry with colors and greens to support each stem. Willow added a spritz of rose scent, if resident requested it, for the full effect of having real roses.

Anne led the second part having each resident create a Valentine Card for a loved one or to keep for themselves. Pipe cleaner stems were pre-glued, as was the inside heart. A set of 7 different hand-cut paper flowers and green leaves were given to each person. Volunteers helped with glue sticks to adhere the flowers and leaves onto front of folded red paper, as residents placed themselves or pointed to where they wanted their flowers to be placed. Volunteers then wrote on inside of cards whatever sentiment each Iliff resident dictated; a few were able to write their own messages.

The residents all loved their beautiful silk bouquets, and were happy that the flowers would never die in their rooms. We were all so touched by how heartfelt most of the Valentine notes were, especially the 3 addressed to their mothers, wife, and friends. One resident created a card for one of club member volunteers, who had written cards for two years before meeting her Iliff resident pen pal. We enjoyed another successful Garden Therapy program and appreciate our hard-working volunteers: Gail Gile, Debbie Doody, Rosemarie Jaksetic, and Darla Anderson.

A new sign-up sheet will be circulating at the February 20th General Meeting for March, April, May, and June.

Ways and Means

Ways and Means Chair—Valerie Warriner

We will have the White Elephant table at our general meetings for the remainder of the year. If your donation is not adopted, please remember to take the item/items home.

Also, a fundraiser is planned at our April Flower show. The plan is to offer 4 to 5 items for auction during the show. A clip board will be assigned to each item so visitors or members can make bids for the items of their choice — examples are a wine tasting for four individuals at Sunset Hills Winery in Purcellville, Va (accompanied with two bottles of wine) and a beautifully decorated blue bird house. We are still identifying additional items (e.g., dinner out at a Vienna restaurant or flower design class provided by local florist). We welcome other auction suggestions and potential donor contacts. Hopefully, this will be an opportunity to add a little more money in our coffers.

New Club Shirts to be ordered

We are in the process of gathering styles and prices for our new Club Shirts. All shirts will be in a deep purple color, with a silk-screened logo, and each member has option of style and size. Anne Nelson will be presenting color, style and fabric samples at our Tuesday, February 20th General Meeting. Ideally, we would like to place our Club's order by the end of February to accommodate Custom Ink's two-week turn around window. We would like for all members to wear their fabulous new Club shirts to our April 16, 2024 Flower Show. The minimum order is 6 of any style, so if you decide not to place an order, we will not have extra shirts to sell at a later date. Please go to southlakes@customink.com to view online the 6 shirt styles we have selected: Cotton T-shirt, crew neck, short sleeve, long sleeve; Cotton Polo* with collar, short sleeve; Athletic scoop neck, long sleeve, Athletic v-neck, short sleeve, long sleeve. Any questions, please call Anne @703-403-0244.

*Polo can have embroidered logo.

Horticulture and Design

Horticulture and Design Chair—Jane Schmiedekamp

Committee members: Helen Mertz, Anita Parke, Margaret Bain

Do you love rocks? Bring any favorite rocks to share.

Design: Make a floral design incorporating rocks or other natural elements.

Horticulture Guidelines for the Flower Show:

Selecting plant material:

1. Select plants from your garden for cutting early in the morning, and place them directly into cool water.
2. Cut at the peak of maturity for show purposes, that means when the main bloom is 3/4 open.
3. Cutting on a slant encourages the uptake of more water for hydration.

Grooming:

1. There should be no dust, dirt, pollen or spray on leaves.
2. The specimen should be free of evidence of pests and disease.
3. No leaf polish may be used.
4. If a container plant is being used, the container should be clean.

Exhibiting

1. Wedging material should be used to hold the plant upright and in the best position for viewing. Our club will instruct you on the type of material to be used.
2. The bottles should be clear green glass so that the stem is visible.
3. The plant should be well hydrated and conditioned for several hours.
4. The stem must be visibly submerged in water.
5. Only one stem may be exhibited in the container.
6. There should be no foliage below the water line.
7. The plan must be properly and legibly labeled. Genus and species preferred but common name is acceptable for club meetings.

For additional information, refer to the National Garden Clubs, Inc. *Handbook for Flower Shows* link below:

<https://www.gardenclub.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/fss-handbook-secure-july-2023.pdf>



REGISTRATION FOR MEMBERSHIP – FIVE HILLS GARDEN CLUB

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Birthday (Month & Day) _____

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP: (\$70)

_____ Active Member, continuing

_____ New Member, Joining by application

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP: (\$75)

_____ Associate Member, continuing

_____ Current Active Member, becoming Associate

I agree to abide by the By-Laws of the Club and to pay the year's dues by March 31, 2024

Signature: _____

Please email or mail this application to:

Joy Salpini, Membership Chair

9321 Tovito Drive

Fairfax, VA 22031

jlsalpini@gmail.com