

# Sow and Tell

Volume 59 Issue 6, February 2019

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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fivehillsgardenclub@gmail.com



## President's Message

The images in our minds of the winter garden tend to be that of a season of rest, with gardens quietly tucked away under a blanket of snow. Perhaps this comes from our traditional childhood educations, reading English poems about winter. But gardening in the mid-Atlantic is far more confusing! I'm no longer surprised to see hellebores and daffodils showing signs of growth in February. And although I know they may get nipped by colder weather ahead, I'm happy to see them and to know that the days are getting longer. Most of the plants we cultivate are resilient, as are those of us who tend them.

Even in winter, Five Hills Garden Club is not resting. We are planning educational courses, potting up daffodils for the upcoming Plant Sale, contributing to the White Elephant fundraisers, volunteering to run programs, organizing field trips, brightening the days of the elderly and inviting friends to join us in learning and serving. I continue to be so appreciative of the many hands who are helping me and the club in my first year as president.

And although cold wintery days are still ahead of us, "One kind word can warm the winter months" - Japanese proverb.

Gratefully, Julia



General Meeting:  
Tuesday, February 19

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## Calendar and Upcoming Events

*Our February Program Has Changed —*

### David Yost: “Do’s and Don’ts in the Winter Garden”

We were unable to find a vendor to speak about garden tools, the published topic of our February meeting. Instead, David Yost of Merrifield Garden Center has volunteered to speak on the topic of “Do’s and Don’ts in the Winter Garden” with an emphasis on pruning in these months of unpredictable weather. He will certainly touch on some of his favorite tools of the trade. David is a well-known figure at Merrifield Garden Center’s Help Desk and is an avid gardener, Virginia Certified Professional Horticulturalist and Pesticide Applicator, and a past president of the Fairfax Master Gardeners Association. *(Pictured, David learning to use the Flora of Virginia App while attending Marion Lobstein’s FOV workshop last summer; photo, Brigitte Hartke.)*



## CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY

Monday, February 25      Garden Therapy, Braddock Glen, 9:15

### MARCH

Tuesday, March 5      Meadowlark Gardens Volunteers, 9:30 am  
Sat-Sun, March 2-10      Philadelphia Flower Show  
Friday, March 15      District III Meeting, 10 am at Meadowlark Gardens  
Wednesday, March 20      NCAGC Awards Meeting  
Sunday, March 31      FH Membership Registration deadline  
Mon-Tues, March 25-26      Landscape Design School #4, Merrifield Fair Oaks

## Garden Therapy

*by Gail Gile and Janet Kremer*

Our garden therapy project for Monday, February 25th has a St. Patrick’s theme. Our volunteers this month are Karen Fleming, Carolyn Staska, Anne Nelson and Lucia Bacon. We will meet about 9:15 at Braddock Glen Assisted Living Center located at 4027 Olley Lane in Fairfax. Thank you to all of our volunteers!! If you have clippers you could bring, that is always helpful. See you then!

## Ways and Means

by Kathy Nebhut

### Immediate need for February meeting:

Dozens of 8-15" deep plastic pots (the cheap ones perennials & bushes come in). I have oodles of healthy, free daffodil bulbs to force for selling in bloom at our plant sale! Please give to Kathy in February.

**Collecting until mid-April:** Any kind of wine corks. They may be used at the plant sale, too.

**White Elephant Report:** Our back table is a good source of painless fundraising! To date we have netted the following from donated items at general meetings: October – \$88, November – \$115, January – \$25

**\$5 raffle:** In December the \$5-per-ticket raffle for donated items netted \$181.

*Thanks to all who donate and purchase for these two activities!*



### Simmering Scents Workshop Wrap-Up:

On January 15, 13 of us participated in this workshop. Each person concocted three different combinations in mason pint jars. One was orange slices, cinnamon sticks, crushed whole nutmeg, whole cloves, allspice and star anise. The second composition was lime slices, fresh thyme sprigs and vanilla extract. The third jar held lemon slices, fresh rosemary sprigs and vanilla extract. These were easy and pretty to make. I hope everyone enjoyed the various aromas simmering in their kitchens over the cold weeks following. As a minor fundraiser, we netted \$87.

*Thanks to all who were game! (And thanks to the contributors of the photos!)*

## Membership Registration

by Shelia Creswell

The Membership form for the 2019-2020 year is attached at the end of this newsletter. Please print the form, fill it out, and mail it along with your dues check to Shelia Creswell by Sunday, March 31, 2019. Forms will also be available at the February and March meetings, and you can hand them and your checks to me at that time. Thank you!

## Vienna's "Walk on the Hill"

Sunday, April 28, 2-5 PM

The Walk on the Hill will take place on Sunday, April 28 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. Thanks to Jane Schmiedekamp for sending information on the Walk.

## Please Add These New Additions to Your Yearbooks

The new email address for **Barbara Petersen** is [rpetersenretired@gmail.com](mailto:rpetersenretired@gmail.com).  
Cell phone: (703) 395-2414.

And we welcome our newest member, **Candace Dibblee**, who joined Five Hills this month!

9115 Westerholme Way  
Vienna, VA 22182  
[Candace.dibblee@aol.com](mailto:Candace.dibblee@aol.com)  
Cell phone: (703) 307-0444

## Horticulture



The Horticulture Display Table is one of the highlights of our monthly meetings; in an appropriate green bottle, please bring in anything you would like to share that is currently growing in your garden.

This Month's Floral Design Challenge:

### A "Windowsill Art" Arrangement

As always, your floral designs may include both purchased flowers and flowers from your garden.



BONAP:

A Database for Native Plant Geeks

by Ann Balch

bi·o·ta: *noun* The animal and plant life of a particular region, habitat, or geological period. E.g. "the biota of the river"

Some of us have marveled at the *Flora of Virginia* with its 1,572 pages, weighing in just under 7 pounds and retailing for \$107. So can you imagine a source that purports to contain all of the plants native to North America, and identify every state and county where each is found?

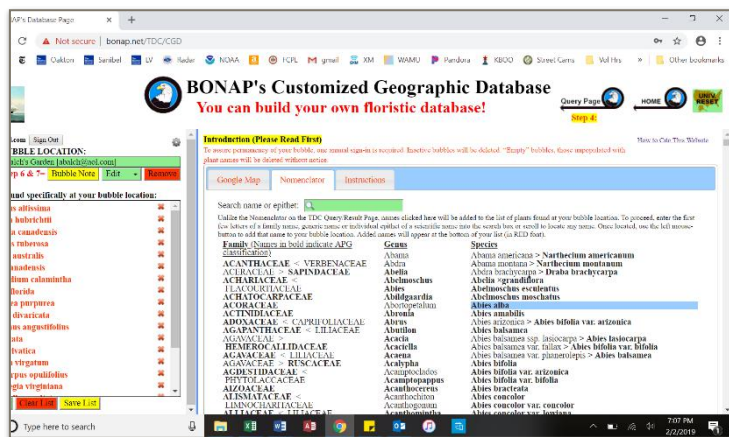
Last summer, Willow and I heard John Kartesz who has devoted his career to exactly that. The **Biota of North America Program** (BONAP) maintains a botanical database for all "free-living vascular plants" found in North America. "For over four decades, we have worked collaboratively with many federal and state government agencies, private groups, and individuals across the continent to produce and edit our databases."

BONAP is available free to the public at [www.bonap.net](http://www.bonap.net). It is a complex site and requires a little exploration. There are three main areas of interest to us: **TDC**, **NAPA**, and **CGD**.

1) **TDC-Q** – Taxonomic Data Center Query is where you can select a plant, learn its characteristics (geographic distribution, bloom time, color, edibility, etc.), and see pictures. For example, on the left of the screen in the Genus column, search for the Milkweed genus **Asclepias**. The Species column will then be populated with the *Asclepias* species. Choose our Butterfly Weed, **Asclepias tuberosa**, to see the characteristics of this plant on the right half

of the screen. Under Image Gallery, you can choose to see images or not.

- 2) **NAPA** – North American Plant Atlas is where you can choose any plant genus and see maps of the geographic distribution of the genus and each of its species, down to the county level. For example, search again for the Milkweed genus **Asclepias**. Scroll down to find the distribution for milkweeds native to our area, including *Asclepias tuberosa*. It's fascinating to see the sheer number of species and also how localized is the distribution of some of them.
- 3) **CGD** – Customized Geographic Database is where you can create a small database (called a **bubble**) for your own garden or a local area, or you can search for bubbles in a specific area. For example, search for **Ann Balch's Garden**, and you'll see the list I've populated so far. You can also zoom in on the map to an area and click on bubbles that others have made. (Beware: Some have not been completed and some others seem to have all plants included.)



To create your own bubble, you'll want to create a sign-in and then follow these steps:

- 1) Enter the address for your bubble and then click "Find Location".
- 2) A dialog will ask you to name your bubble. Remember the exact name you enter.
- 3) Begin to populate your bubble with your plants by clicking the Nomenclature tab on the right. Choose a Genus, and then select from the list of Species. Note: It takes a few seconds for these lists to be populated. Wait until the display settles before selecting.

- 4) Be sure to save your work frequently using the Save List button on the bottom left. Do not click "Add All" unless you want every plant known to man in your bubble!

After you have added some plants to your bubble, return to the TDC by clicking "Step 4" in the upper right of the screen. Enter your bubble name to see your list of plants. Now you can select a plant to see its characteristics on the right side of the display.

The site is complex and sometimes confusing. But if you are patient and play with it a bit, a wealth of information is available.

Citation: Kartesz, J. T., The Biota of North America Program (BONAP), 2015, <http://www.bonap.net>. Chapel Hill, NC.

**The Biota of North America Program**  
North American Vascular Flora

[BONAP News and Notes](#)   [Institutional Collaborators](#)   [Personal Contributors](#)   [BONAP Plant Images on Flickr](#)   [References and Documentation](#)   [Contact BONAP](#)

**NOTICES (Please Read First. Updated 10/12/2015.)**

**Taxonomic Data Center (TDC-Q) Page**

**North American Plant Atlas (NAPA)**

**Customized Geographic Database (CGD) Page**

**BONAP Botanical Garden (BBG)**

**External Resources**

- Taxonomic Data Center (TDC)**
  - Introducing BONAP
  - Help Index
  - How can I contribute to BONAP?
- BONAP's Web Resources**
  - BONAP in the Federal Register
  - Announcement: BONAP and the National Wetlands Plant List
  - BONAP's Facebook Page
  - BONAP's References (Russian Translation)
  - Introducing BONAP (Danish Translation)
  - BONAP's References and Documentation (Spanish Translation)
- Selected Institutions and Organizations Using BONAP Data**
  - Audubon: Native Plants Database
  - Consortium of Northeastern Herbaria
  - Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS)
  - Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN)
  - Harvard University Herbaria
  - Integrated Taxonomic Information Systems (ITIS)
  - Minnesota Wildflowers
  - The National Wetlands Plant List
  - Native Wildflower Seeds and Plants Nursery (Iron Exchange, Inc.)
  - New England Botanical Club (NEBC)
  - New England Wild Flower Society
  - North Creek Nurseries

## Better Berry Choices: Why Nandina Berries and Certain Birds Don't Mix

by Elizabeth Huebner

As the snow melted in my yard, I found a beautiful bird feet up and quite dead. Since there was little food for birds the previous week, I suspect the little guy (?) feasted on nandina berries that are plentiful on my street. The red berries of *Nandina domestica* contain cyanide and other alkaloids that produce hydrogen cyanide (HCN), which can be poisonous to all animals, [according to Audubon Arkansas](#). It is particularly dangerous to the Cedar Waxwing as it feeds mostly on berries. Designing our gardens to include berry-producing plants as a winter food source for birds is a good idea, but maybe we should reconsider planting nandina (native to Japan, China and India) though it is easy to grow, pretty, deer resistant, evergreen and not good for children if in flower arrangements where young ones can reach them. Nandina berries were part of the reason we didn't allow berries in Christmas arrangements in adult day care where some older folks might have picked and eaten them.

The best way for homeowners to avoid unintentionally creating an attractive but potentially lethal food source for cedar waxwings is to plant native species. Here are five native species with similar growth habits to nandina that would grow well from Washington, D.C. down through the southern states. They are:

- **American beautyberry (*Callicarpa Americana*)**. This is a shrub that is about the same size as nandina and produces interesting white or purple berries. "I know a lot of people in the Northeast who are super jealous because it is not native there," Crain said. "They would love to have those in their yard. It is a great showy plant."



- **Northern spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)**. This plant can grow into a large shrub or small tree. It produces small yellowish flowers in spring before the leaves appear. The flowers turn into bright red fruits in September. The plant gets its name from these berries, which have been used as a substitute for allspice. "This is another great plant that would grow well in the Southeast where you might be planting nandinas," said Crain. *(Editor's note: Spicebush, in the laurel family, is a favorite food plant of two butterflies: the spicebush swallowtail (*Papilio troilus*), and the promethea silkmoth, (*Callosamia promethea*)). If you would like to see them flitting about your garden, planting spicebush will increase your chances and help to keep up their numbers!*

*(above photo, Beautyberry; below, Spicebush)*





- **Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*).** This is a species of chokeberry that produces red berries that persist into winter. Because the berries have a sour taste for the human palate they are more often used in processed jams and other foods rather than eaten off the bush. Chokeberry gets its name from the astringency of the fruit, which can cause a choking sensation. Like with nandina berries, chokeberries are sometimes reported as being one of the last to be consumed in the winter – although this is not a universal rule.
- **American holly (*Ilex opaca*).** This native evergreen has lustrous, dark green leaves and a slow to medium growth habit. It's found from Massachusetts to Texas and across the Southeast. Female trees produce an abundance of red berries but to do so, they must be planted within range of a male pollinator. "This is a showy evergreen that has big berries and a slightly different growth habit than nandina,"
- **Wax myrtle (*Morella cerifera*).** Not all birds will consume wax myrtle, but it has been documented in the fecal matter of many species, including myrtle warblers, gray catbirds and tree swallows. Myrtle warblers have a special relationship with this plant – the warblers specialize on this plant, allowing them access to a food source without as much competition, and the plant benefits from seed dispersal.

One other thing to keep in mind as you create a garden with year-round interest for yourself and wildlife: cedar waxwings are not migratory birds in the sense of songbirds that migrate through

flyways to the tropics. People are often confused about that, she said, because they tend to see them in their yards in flocks in the winter and then, suddenly, the birds are gone.

Their typical range in the winter, she said, is roughly south of an imaginary line through the middle of the country. They drift northward in the warm months to breed. As the weather turns cold in the fall and winter, they move south and concentrate in the Southeastern coastal plains where they remain during the winter. Once there, they follow food. "So, they will get together in flocks, be in one place, eat everything that's there and then drift over to another location looking for berries in that place."

Seeing a flock of them descend into a berry-laden bush and strip the plant of its fruit is one of the delights of the winter garden. If the berries aren't nandinas.

*Cedar Waxwing eating berries, by photographer Gregg Thompson, <https://www.birdnote.org/blog/2017/02/cedar-waxwing-eating-berries>*





# Spring Field Trips & Travel Opportunities

## Philadelphia Flower Show

Tuesday, March 5 – Thursday, March 7

Tickets to the show are available and Barbara Tozzi is still holding rooms at the hotel with our group. Fourteen Five Hills members are already signed up and it's not too late to join!

Coordinator: Barbara Tozzi,  
[barbaratozzi@aol.com](mailto:barbaratozzi@aol.com), (703) 402-2450

## Historic Charleston SC Home and Garden Tour

Monday, April 1 – Friday, April 5 (or flexible to your schedule)

An email was sent to Five Hills members on January 9 detailing Cary's research and planning for our enjoyment. Cary welcomes questions if you need further information.

Coordinator: Cary Fichter-Vu,  
[Cary@caryfvu.com](mailto:Cary@caryfvu.com), (703) 861-8259

## Sycamore Island Club & Clara Barton Historic Site at Glen Echo

April or May (date to be determined)

Sycamore Island is a small privately held island in the Potomac River, reached by a hand-pulled wooden ferry from the C&O canal. Getting there for a picnic is a unique experience! The Clara

Barton House and Glen Echo National Historic Park are located nearby.

Coordinator: Julia Smith, [jsmith5227@mac.com](mailto:jsmith5227@mac.com), (703) 385-2883

## G. Richard Thompson Nature Preserve

May (date to be determined)

This is one of the richest botanical areas of the Blue Ridge mountains, easily accessible from Rte. 66 in Fauquier Co. There are walking trails through the abundant wildflowers and other flora.

Coordinator: Brigitte Hartke,  
[brigittehartke@gmail.com](mailto:brigittehartke@gmail.com), (703) 585-5504



photo: *Trillium*, Brigitte Hartke

If you have other opportunities you'd like to plan for our club, please see Anne Nelson to coordinate the schedule.

## Monty Don's "Big Dreams, Small Spaces"

Available on Netflix

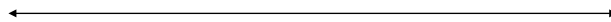
Murial Turner has a recommendation for members – a gardening program she has recently been enjoying through Netflix. In this series, English gardener, writer and presenter Monty Don helps England's budding horticulturists plant and grow the garden of their dreams.

In one episode, a tiny Dorset yard is transformed into a Norwegian garden complete with waterfalls. In Bromley, an overgrown patch becomes a Japanese tea garden.

Gardens in tough locations are Monty's challenge as he tackles one spot subject to salty sea air and another on a rocky Welsh mountainside. One client wants to put in an edible garden, while in another episode a widow leaves her beloved garden behind and plans a new one at her cottage.

"It's not just the garden that's getting some well deserved attention,' says narrator Vicky Hall, as Monty manfully tugs at the undergrowth in John and Jan's overgrown little piece of Yorkshire."

Watching what sounds like a wonderfully entertaining and informative show on gardening in challenging spaces, there's the added enjoyment of armchair traveling to various locales in England. Brilliant! Here you can find the program on Netflix and get a free month, too: <https://www.netflix.com/title/80232852>



## Green Spring Outing

Several Five Hills members enjoyed a Sunday afternoon at Green Spring Gardens to view the documentary "Five Seasons, the Gardens of Piet Oudolf."

Oudolf is a Dutch landscape designer, known for his innovative and contemporary gardens around the world, including the High Line in New York City.

After a visit to the gift shop (of course!) the adjoining greenhouse made a good backdrop for a photo. (Thanks to Julia Smith for the photo.)

**Landscape Design School  
Series XV, Course IV  
Monday, March 25, 2019**

8:15 Registration – Continental Breakfast  
 8:45 Welcome & Greetings from NCAGC  
 9:00 Kirk Brown  
**History/Development of Community Gardens**  
 10:00 Break  
 10:15 Kirk Brown  
**Designs of the Future**  
 11:15 Break  
 11:30 Kirk Brown  
**Community Participation – Organization  
and Individual Responsibility**  
 12:30 Lunch  
 1:15 Kirk Brown  
**Evaluating the Landscape Designs of  
Residential, Public & Business Property**  
 2:15 Break  
 2:30 Announcements  
 Tour of the Kitty Poser Garden

**Tuesday, March 26, 2019**  
 8:15 Registration – Continental Breakfast  
 8:45 Greetings from NCAGC  
 9:00 Gordon Chappell  
**Development of Landscape Architecture  
From World War II to Present**  
 10:00 Break  
 10:15 Karen Rexrode  
**Redesign of Areas**  
 11:15 Break  
 11:30 Gordon Chappell  
**Contemporary Landscape Design**  
 12:30 Lunch  
 1:15 On-Site Tour of Landscaped Garden  
Areas  
 2:15 Gordon Chappell  
**Special Interest Lecture - Designing the  
Cottage Garden**  
 3:30 Announcements  
 4:00-5:00 Test for students

**Instructors**

**Kirk Brown**  
 Conversationalist on Gardening, Art, History  
and Business; Leader of Programming as John  
Bartram and Frederick Law Olmsted; Award  
winning Designer, Speaker, and Dramatist  
**History and Development of Community  
Gardens**  
**Designs of the Future**  
**Community Participation – Organization  
and Individual Responsibility**  
**Evaluating the Landscape Designs of  
Residential, Public & Business Property**

**Gordon Chappell, FASLA**  
 Private Practice of Landscape Design  
Architecture in James City County focuses  
primarily on historic properties.  
**Development of Landscape Architecture  
From World War II to Present**  
**Contemporary Landscape Design**  
**Designing the Cottage Garden**

**Karen Rexrode** was the founder of Windy  
Hill Plant Farm which operated for 25  
years and specialized in unusual perennials  
and unique annuals. She is currently an  
estate gardener for Oak Hill in Aldie,  
Virginia and for Eastwood in Warrenton,  
Virginia  
**Redesign of Areas**

**Location**

**Landscape Design School  
Series XV, Course IV  
Will be held at  
Merrifield Gardens, Fair Oaks  
Fairfax, VA**

**Merrifield Garden Center is located  
at 12101 Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
703-968-9600**

**PLEASE**

**Park in the overflow parking lot.  
This will allow customers of the Garden  
Center to park in the main parking lot.  
The classroom is on the second floor.  
You may take the stairs up or use the  
elevator.**



## REGISTRATION FORM

National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc.  
Landscape Design School, Series XV, Course IV

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Garden Club & State Federation  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Fees – please check your preference:

**Full Course with Exam** ..... \$95.00 ( )  
Monday & Tuesday lectures, continental  
breakfast, lunch & afternoon dessert break.

**Full Course, Refresh only** ..... \$95.00 ( )

**One Day Only: Monday ( ) or Tuesday ( )**  
(Lectures & Food) ..... \$45.00 ( )

**Total Remittance Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration cut-off: Friday, March 22, 2019**

Make checks payable to:  
**Landscape Design School, Course IV**

### Mail to Registrar:

Rosemarie Jaksetic  
3103 Valentino Ct.  
Oakton, VA 22124

### School Objectives

“The PURPOSE of Landscape Design School has been to educate garden club members and the public to achieve the GOALS of promoting good landscape architectural practice and of serving as consultants and stewards of outdoor beauty in the USA.”

Course IV is the last in a series of four courses that are open to garden club members, civic association members, nursery personnel and any others interested in landscape design.

### Required Reading for Course IV

The National Gardener magazine

A three-year subscription to TNG costs \$18.00. Test question to be determined.

### Stewards of the Land

Required reading: Chapters 26, 21, 36, 20, 33 & 31. Cost \$40 + shipping & handling

### To order, email NGC Member

Services at:  
[headquarters@gardenclub.org](mailto:headquarters@gardenclub.org)

### Certificates

A person receiving NGC Certification as a Landscape Design Consultant must be a member of a State Garden Club and must have completed all four courses within seven years with a passing grade of 70 for each course.

**Students must provide information (dates/ place/test scores) for previous courses taken.**

## Landscape Design School Series XV, Course IV

March 25 & 26, 2019

Presented by:  
**National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc.**

**Robin Hammer, President**

In cooperation with:

**Federated Garden Clubs of MD, Inc.**  
Diana Bonner, President



### Co-Chairs:

**Lisa Adelman & Karen O'Meara**

[Lisadel321@aol.com](mailto:Lisadel321@aol.com)  
703-476-8353

[Ravkaren4334@cox.net](mailto:Ravkaren4334@cox.net)  
703-281-4334

### Registrar:

**Rosemarie Jaksetic**  
3103 Valentino Ct.  
Oakton, VA 22124  
703-255-9673  
[ejaksetic@aol.com](mailto:ejaksetic@aol.com)

### Refresher Chairman:

**Janey Nadler**  
802 Duke Street  
Rockville, MD 20850  
[Jn802@aol.com](mailto:Jn802@aol.com)



**REGISTRATION FOR MEMBERSHIP - FIVE HILLS GARDEN CLUB  
2019-2020**

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, 2019.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this application, with a check payable to Five Hills Garden Club to:  
Shelia Creswell Membership Chair  
404 Millwood Ct. SW, Vienna VA 22180  
(703) 255-3258