



# Hill Garden News

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Member of National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc., Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc.

Volume 25, Issue 3

We meet at the Church of the Brethren, N. Carolina Ave. SE at 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Enter by the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Door.

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## **Sam Droege, *A Bee's Eye View***

On October 9, Sam Droege gave us the bee's eye view of our community. "Think of Capitol Hill as a savanna", he urged, "with 'rocks' (concrete, asphalt, and bricks) and 'vegetation' (our gardens and pocket parks) dotted here and there." It's meadow, not forest, in which bees thrive, so leave some open spaces in the garden to attract them.

The other ingredients that native bees need are native plants and bits of bare, loose soil. Native bees and native plants have co-evolved. The bees receive nourishment from nectar and the plants are pollinated by the bees. Some plant structures and bee body shapes have such specific characteristics that both plant and bee are totally dependent upon each other for survival.

By leaving a bit of soil unplanted, native bees can make nests underground near sources of food. Unlike yellow jackets or other wasps, native bees are not aggressive. Many are also solitary. We walk over native bees nesting underfoot, and do not know they are there.

With solitary habits, native bees have no need for stingers. They do not live in large colonies with a queen. Honey bees, perhaps the most well known of the social bees, and other social bees, form colonies in which each bee has evolved a specialized role. For social bees, the stinger is an essential tool in protecting the queen. Honey bees were brought to America from Europe to pollinate orchards.

There are about 4,000 species of bees native to the United States, 400 of which are native to Maryland and 120 to the District. Most native bees live in prairies and deserts, not our few Eastern forests or many concrete jungles. Unfortunately many non-native bees are introduced to this country by hitching a ride on container ships. For example, in vacant lots and ditches that surround the port of Baltimore, Sam Droege and other researchers have found species of non-native bees that locate plants on which they can survive. There is a danger that these non-native species may become the starling or kudzu of the bee world.

To garden for native bees Mr. Droege recommends that we plant diverse native perennials, shrubs, and grasses, minimize lawn, and forgo dense tree planting. A few plants that attract native bees are rubeckia, monarda, liatris, tickweed, joe pieweed, milkweed, and herbs. Good nearby places to see these and other native plants are the U.S. Botanic National Garden and the butterfly habitat garden along the east side of the National Museum of Natural History.

For lists of native bee friendly plants and practices go to the following websites:

- <http://www.xerces.org/pollinators-mid-atlantic-region/>
- <http://dda.delaware.gov/plantind/forms/publications/Delaware%20Native%20Plants%20for%20Native%20Bees.pdf>

### **November 13 Featured Presentation: *The Leaf Alone* by Sandra Flowers**

We, as gardeners, become enamored of flowers and often focus our garden plant purchases on the latest beautiful flowers to have caught our eye. But flowers are fleeting, lasting only 1-3 weeks for shrubs & perennials, a season for annuals. What about the rest of the year? Our gardens need all season interest and something to anchor the garden composition, while the flowers come and go. This presentation will focus on the importance of making plant choices based on the beauty and interesting qualities of their leaves, rather than focusing only on the flower. What if the plant has both interesting foliage AND beautiful flowers? That one is coming home with me!

Sandra Flowers has a rich and varied background. With a master's degree in nutrition education from Georgia State University, she taught nutrition to parents, teachers, administrators and students in the state school system. She put herself through college working as a florist and later ran her own special event and wedding flower business for nine years. Deciding that she preferred gardening to all else, she took a job as Deputy Head Gardener at the British Embassy Ambassador's Residence in Washington, D.C. for seven years. She then worked with Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria, VA coordinating their Community Horticulture Program. For the past eight years, she has been working as a private estate gardener in Washington, D.C. She will be moving on from this position at the end of this year, looking forward to new creative opportunities ahead.

### **Bargain Bulbs for Sale at the November 13 Meeting**

Beautiful tulip bulbs will be available, two for one dollar. Come early for the best of the rest. Let a few extra yellow, pink, white or coral tulips adorn your garden and tree boxes next spring. Surprise your friends and neighbors with an unexpected gift of beauty. We hope to sell **all** remaining inventory at this meeting and achieve our fundraising goals for the 2012 bulb sale. Checks and cash are welcome. Please help with the change-making by paying with bills in small denominations.

## Other News

**Terry Lewis**, facilities manager of Washington Church of the Brethren, is recuperating from a stroke and undergoing rehabilitation. Well wishes may be sent to him through the church. Many thanks to Gwen Miller, who is staffing the church for garden club meetings.

At the October 8, 2012, general meeting of the Capitol Hill Garden Club the nominations of the board of directors to fill the vacant offices of secretary and treasurer through the remainder of the 2012-2014 term were approved by majority vote of the membership. Congratulations to **Joyce Jones, Secretary** and **Donna Brauth, Treasurer**. The 2012-2013 budget was also approved by the membership. For information about the budget, please contact Donna Brauth.

## Now is the Time

Besides being the title of a famous jazz tune and the season for planting spring-flowering bulbs, now is the time for many garden activities.

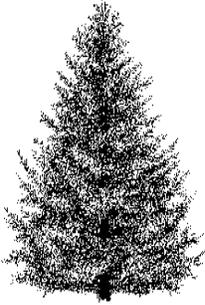
- Plant or transplant shrubs now. They will have time to establish roots before new leaf growth competes for nutrients.
- Remove and store tender bulbs, corms, and rhizomes like cannas, elephant ears, and dahlias in a dry, cool place. Start them in pots in next spring to give them a head start and transplant them only after night time temperatures remain above 50 degrees.
- If you plan to plant tomatoes next summer, add calcium in the form of gypsum to your garden bed now. Calcium takes time to become useable to vegetation.
- Instead of mulch, add a light layer of compost on top of your flower beds. No need to dig it in. Eventually the worms will do the work.
- Divide perennials now. It seems gardeners always have cone flowers, daylilies, coreopsis, or similar plants to thin. It would not be fall if your neighbors did not roll their eyes when they see you walking down the block with a smile and an armload of vegetation to give away, would it?
- Order your favorite catalogs now so you will have something to drool over as you are shut in over the winter. A few of my favorites are ForestFarm, Plant Delights, Lambeth Seed Company, and Klehm's Song Sparrow. Send me an email (cedwards00@comcast.net) with your favorite catalogs and we will post a list on the blog.

## INVITATION TO THE 2012 DECK THE HALLS GREENS WORKSHOP

### Capitol Hill Garden Club

6:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 5, 2012

At the Church of the Brethren, corner of North Carolina Avenue at 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SE. Enter through the 4<sup>th</sup> Street door.



All members of the Capitol Hill Garden Club are cordially invited to attend the 2012 Deck the Halls Workshop. Only members who have paid their 2012-13 dues may register. We will provide evergreen boughs enough for a wreath and centerpiece, with some left over; a wreath form and/or a block of oasis for making a centerpiece; a rich supply of beautiful new ribbons and wreath-making pins. Old hands will gladly help first-timers. *There will be demos of wreath and bow making.*

**NOTE:** The party begins with a light buffet potluck supper at 6:30 p.m. The earlier hour allows time to eat supper before working on wreaths and arrangements. Those who wish to come for the supper only are welcome to do so – no fee or registration is necessary – just bring some food.

Advance reservation and a \$20 contribution toward the cost (\$40) of the greens are both required. Please bring the completed registration form (see below) and payment to the November 13 meeting, or mail your check and registration form. All registration forms and checks must be received by Wednesday, November 28. You may NOT pay at the party. Please do use the registration form to submit your request, whichever way you choose to respond. We use these forms to place our orders.

**Food:** Each member attending should please bring a plate of sweet or savory finger food – canapés, hors d’oeuvres, sandwiches, fruit, cookies and other desserts. Bring only enough for 8; in earlier years, a great deal of food was left over. The Club provides paper plates, plastic glasses and beverages. Please take “finger food” literally. We provide no cutlery, so, please, no casseroles!

*Optional Soup Kitchen Donations: The Church of the Brethren Nutrition Program needs “boring but essential” household items such as detergent, bleach, sponges, rag mops, large garbage bags, toilet paper, paper towels, saran wrap and tin foil. **NO FOOD ITEMS THIS YEAR, THANKS.***

Items you may wish to bring to the party: An apron to protect clothes from pitch; for making a wreath, swag or centerpiece -- garden gloves, pruning shears, scissors, pliers, a Swiss army knife. For a centerpiece, you need to bring a watertight container to hold your oasis. Persons allergic to the greens may wish to bring antihistamine. If you have your old wreath forms, please bring them to re-use or to share. We welcome anything from your garden that you feel is nice enough such as extra magnolia leaves, pinecones, and seedpods. Remember to label your tools.

**Cleanup:** Wreath-making is untidy. We must leave the room as we found it. All members attending are requested to help with the cleanup at the end of the party: Put the room in order for the next day's activities, return the folding chairs to their proper racks, sweep floors and bag all trash. Cleanup must be completed by 9:00 p.m.



Please note bagging the greens and set-up in the morning. Volunteers will be contacted about which times we will need you. If you haven't already signed up to help and wish to do so, PLEASE CALL Greens Party Chair Sandra Bruce at 202 256-5059 or email her at [cococonure@gmail.com](mailto:cococonure@gmail.com).

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## REGISTRATION FORM

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### ***Capitol Hill Garden Club Deck the Halls Workshop***

***6:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 5, 2012***

**THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**

**PLEASE NOTE: ONLY MEMBERS WHOSE DUES ARE CURRENT MAY ATTEND.**

Yes, I Will Attend \_\_\_\_\_

No, I Will Not Attend \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S) (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_ PHONE# \_\_\_\_\_

ENCLOSED CHECK # \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_

*(\$20 per bag of greens, one bag per membership household)*

***Checks are payable to Capitol Hill Garden Club.***

*Please tell us which supplies you want with a check mark:*

Wreath form \_\_\_\_\_ Oasis \_\_\_\_\_ Both \_\_\_\_\_ Greens only \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL TO Sandra Bruce, 116 7<sup>th</sup> Street SE, Washington, DC 20003-1212**

**or SUBMIT THIS FORM IN PERSON AT THE NOVEMBER 13TH MEETING.**

**DEADLINE: REGISTRATION MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28.**