

The Mt. Airy Claybreakers Garden Club met on 9 January 2014 at the home of Pat Hall, who, along with Jessica Sherlock, hosted the 16 members present. President Gilda Allen demonstrated how to access the online photos through the **website**: [www.photobucket.com/mountairyclaybreakers](http://www.photobucket.com/mountairyclaybreakers) and **password**: *GardenClubPhotos*. She also commended Deborah Denneman for the lovely Christmas party at her home. Iona Black and Ann Williams celebrated birthdays in January; Joyce Myer and Sonia Johnson remain on the sick list, as does Arminta Donovan's husband, Dan. Esther Neckere, recording secretary, read the minutes of the December meeting and Carol Ober, treasurer, reported a balance of \$1,061.39.

**PROGRAM:** Elaine Arnold introduced her daughter-in-law, Maria Arnold, leader of Bowie Gardens for Habitat, and a self-professed "native plant geek." Her topic was "Bloom Time for Native Plants," which she illustrated through a slide show that depicted native plants in bloom during each of the 12 months of the year. \*January: *Winterberry Holly*; \*February: *(bird feeder)*; \*March: *Redbud, Spice Bush, Coral Honeysuckle*; \*April: *Serviceberry, Stonecrop, Green&Gold, Eastern Columbine, Blue Eyed Grass*; \*May: *Inkberry, Elderberry, Chokeberry, Indigo, Menarda, Virginia Creeper, Native Iris, Butterfly milkweed, wild Columbine*; \*June: *Spicebush, Button Bush, Mountain Mint, Thimbleweed, Sundrop, Coneflower, Cardinal Flower, Ironweed*; \*July: *blueberry, Whitewood Aster, Pond Arum, Lobelia, Smooth Aster*; \*August: *Clematis, Obedient Plant, Goldenrod, Cardinal Flower*; \*September: *New England Aster, Pyeweed*; \*October: *Witch Hazel*; \*November: *Carnivorous Plants, Winterberry, Obedient Plant*; \*December: *Sunflower seed heads*. Ms. Arnold recommended as a reference the US Fish and Wildlife Services publication "Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat." She also mentioned native plant gardens at the Meadowlark Gardens in Vienna, VA; Mt. Cuba; and the National Arboretum.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Design:** Julie Harrison demonstrated an original design in a red-stemmed wineglass that included spurge, camellia and gardenia greenery, and a calla lily. To turn the arrangement into a festive Christmas theme she added two small Poinsettia flowers.

**Horticulture:** Jessica Sherlock told "The Story of Marigolds." The Pot marigold, which comes from southern Europe, has antiviral properties and as a variety, calendula, is used as an ingredient in skin care creams. The Mexican Marigold gives a tarragon flavor to tea and is burned to smoke away mosquitoes. The African and French Marigolds are better known as our common garden flowers, thought to repel insects in vegetable gardens. These marigolds are popular in festivals in India.

**NCAGC Project: "Lots to Shout About":** Linda Millette reported on the progress of gathering information on the number of hours (and dollars) spent through the club's participation in gardening-related projects in the community. With help from club members, Linda is close to completion on compiling the 15 categories of data requested by David Healy, President of NCAGC, whose goal is to bring awareness of garden clubs' major contributions to their communities.

Gilda Allen, President, requested that members be prepared to present a contribution they would like to make to the club or something they would like the club to accomplish in 2014 at the next meeting at Dot Lower's home. The topic will be the Gardens of Mt. Vernon. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm and was followed by a 50/50 drawing won by Carol Ober.

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Neckere

Esther Neckere, Recording Secretary