

The Seed Pod



The Official Newsletter
of the
Men's Garden Club of Asheville

Founded 1940



Brent Russell

January 2019

Upcoming Events

Jan 8 Monthly Meeting

Holiday Banquet
First Baptist Church
11:30 am Lunch Meeting

Seed Pod of the Month
Story p. 3



Pepper (*Capsicum*)

From the President

Welcome to 2019! What an opportunity every new year brings for all things in life! I am excited to be leading the Men's Garden Club of Asheville this year. Well done and thank you to Gary Anderson for his leadership and guidance in 2018. Thank you also to all of you who volunteer your time and efforts throughout the year. We have many members who have entered new challenges to help our club grow and prosper. Thank you all.

I often ask myself, what do I know of plants and such? I have often said that most members have more knowledge of all things in the garden in a little finger than I have in my whole body. I do know this - when I was growing up, at times of crisis, our family headed to the garden. A death in the family, illness, stress or just a nice day after rain, my father and mother would head us outside for yard work, flower garden tending, or just general enjoyment digging! Throughout my life, I have found that getting your hands dirty in dirt can help you think through issues, solve a problem and gain satisfaction in the beauty of plants. I bet you do too!

At this time of year, we are all eager and impatient to get out and dig, so we put our minds to work on planning, learning and gathering. I look forward to the many programs, fellowship and learning opportunities our club provides year-round to help us grow our gardens.

Holiday Banquet Rescheduled, Again.

If you reviewed your 2018 personal calendar, you'll note we held the 2017 annual Holiday Banquet on January 6. Undoubtedly it was due to another weather reschedule like we had to do for this year's banquet. The banquet has been rescheduled to January 8, 2019, and the details remain the same, as noted on page 5. The program for January has been rescheduled to February 5, and our speaker will be Peter Loewer.

MGCA Board News

The next Club board meeting will be held Tuesday February 5, 2019 at 10:00 am, prior to the regular February member's meeting. This is due to the rescheduled Holiday Banquet.

Martin Gibson has resigned as Club secretary in order to pursue other endeavors with his wife. We thank him greatly for his service in this office the past two years.

Leo Bjorlie has agreed to serve as secretary in 2019, and the board welcomes and thanks him for this service.

Chamber of Commerce Membership

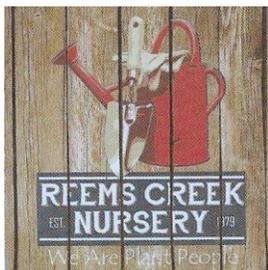
Did you know – the Men's Garden Club of Asheville became a member of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce this past year? We are a member and we have placed a number of Club brochures in the Chamber's building to inform potential members of our Club as to our activities.

You can log in to the member's portal online at ashevillechamber.org. Select Chamber of Commerce - enter, and select member enter icon at upper right. Our user name is 63843 and the password is 2284.

We've been told that Office Depot offer discounts to chamber members. Perhaps other places do also.

Friends of the MGCA

Three of the major local nurseries have agreed to also display our membership brochures and have been designated Friends of the MGCA. They will be featured in the new Directory along with our continuing Corporate Member, Biltmore Farms.



Seed Pod of the Month



Many plants go by the name pepper, but gardeners are familiar with are the ones in the genus *Capsicum*, in the nightshade family. All of the 20-27 species are native only to the Americas.

Capsicum peppers are generally for culinary use, but they also have ornamental uses. This potted plant has continuously bloomed and fruited for eight months. The chile ristra, shown on page one is a traditional way of preserving ripe chiles for food, but it is also used as a seasonal decoration at Christmas.

Spring Sales and Beyond

Operations of the Horticulture Center will continue as they have under the most expert guidance of Ted Faber given I don't get burned by the most recent passing of the torch. I will be forever grateful for my tutelage under Ted and Gerry with the hope that they don't throw me to the beavers too soon.

As stated in the last Seed Pod, the plants have been ordered and the planting/sales schedule will be similar to last years. There was also mention of the success of the sales of plants provided by, harvested by and presented by our generous members. This is a practice the Club would like to promote by providing harvesting volunteers and materials.

In Gary Anderson's comments upon his completion of tenure, he mentioned the desire to expand the utility of the Horticulture Center. We are moving forward with those and other thoughts having established a committee for the processing and implementing of programs and design of additional gardening opportunities and on site facilities.

We are looking forward to an exciting and fruitful year. I hope all those who participated as members of the center crew in the past will see fit to continue, and for those who have not enjoyed the camaraderie, please come help make this year as productive as in years past.

Your ideas and comments are encouraged and appreciated. Please feel free to call me, Ray Geiser at (828) 779-2022 or email me rbgeiser@gmail.com.

What the Woodpeckers Tell Me

I have noticed large orange-colored patches appearing literally overnight on the trunks of white ash in my yard. Looking closely, I saw myriad pieces of bark at the tree base and concluded woodpeckers have been working overtime seeking grubs. I also noticed a number of small (1/8") holes in those orange areas. Later, I saw a beautiful male pileated woodpecker clearing bark at a rate of square feet per hour.



You may have heard that the emerald ash borer was attacking white ash trees in Tennessee but was not here yet. That's no longer true. I have already lost a number of ash and only recently learned the reason why. The white, inch-long larvae of the beetle attack the cambium layer of the trees, leaving paths that resemble river meanders. This weakens and eventually girdles the tree, killing it. The emerald ash borer beetle is an invasive species from temperate Asia.

Treatment using chemical drench or injection is possible for selected trees, but it's pretty clear the white ash will follow the American chestnut, American elm, and Canadian hemlock in disappearing from our forests. I have had a dozen trees treated this fall and will see how well they respond to the treatment.

Tom Mills

In Memoriam



We sadly note the passing of Lewis Lamb on December 6, 2018. Lewis was a retired dentist and had been a club member since 2005. He always seemed to be smiling and talking in an uplifting manner, and it was a joy to talk with him at meetings. Lewis also regularly participated in spring plantings and at other Club activities.

Dues and Directory

Reminder - it's time to pay your annual dues and update any information for the 2019 Directory.

Annual Club dues were approved to increase from \$25 to \$30 by the membership at the November meeting. If you joined the club since July 1 of this year, you don't owe dues for 2019. Please mail dues to the address on the front of past directories (P.O. Box 633, Asheville NC 28802) or pay our treasurer, Warren Sproul, at the next luncheon.

The Directory is in final proof stage, so contact Gerry Hardesty (gerry327@charter.net) immediately if any info has changed.

January Members Meeting

At this hectic time of year, we take pause to reflect on the year's accomplishments, contemplate the coming year, and enjoy each other's company.

The MGCA annual Holiday Installation and Awards Luncheon will be held at the First Baptist Church on January 8, 2019 with lunch beginning at 12 noon. This is a festive occasion with a special lunch, and spouses and friends are encouraged to attend. The menu is roast beef, baked potato casserole, green beans & carrots, strawberry & spinach salad, and cheese cake. For this special lunch the cost is \$16. For those new to the club, the dress is normally a bit more formal than that at our routine luncheons.

The new Club officers and directors will be installed, usually with some hoopla. The superb efforts this past year of many members will be recognized by awards. The two scholarship awardees at Mayland and Blue Ridge Community Colleges are invited for recognition, along with their instructors and scholarship coordinators. These people typically make a few comments on the programs we support. There will not be a specific gardening presentation.

Please note the meeting is on the **second** Tuesday of January. We will assemble for fellowship at 11:30 am, eat lunch at noon, and have the program following lunch. Club members will be contacted regarding luncheon reservations. Contact Gerry Hardesty at gerry327@charter.net if you have not been contacted.