

The Seed Pod



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

Founded 1940



Brent Russell

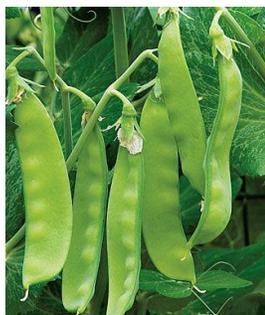
March 2019

Upcoming Events

Mar 5 Monthly Meetings
First Baptist Church
10:00 am Board Meeting
11:30 am Lunch Meeting

Mar 9 Plug planting 10 am

Seed Pod of the Month
(see p. 2)



Snow Peas

From the President

History, roller coaster and excitement are three terms that come to mind for March.

I hope you are planning to attend the March luncheon where Gerry Hardesty, Director Emeritus, will give a presentation on the history of the Men's Garden Club of Asheville.

From the very first meeting through today's rich, knowledgeable membership, this will be an informative and most interesting recap of our club. I bet that for each of us, there will be a number of facts or events we were not aware of that helped shaped our club. I know Gerry has been preparing this presentation and it promises to be outstanding. I hope you will join me in setting a record for the number of members who attend and the number of guests invited. This is the best time to invite a neighbor or friend to attend and hear the history of one of Asheville's oldest membership clubs. I hope to see you there.

I recently heard someone describe the Asheville weather as a roller coaster ride, up one day and down the next (that could be the stock market also) and that was all in a four-day period! From dressing in shirt sleeves and yes, even shorts, to heavy coats and gloves, you really have to stay ahead of the forecast. March promises more of the same with cool mornings, bright sunshine, and afternoon highs that draw us outside.

Speaking of outside, that's where the excitement comes in! Just this last week in a sea of brown, old wood and haggard looking landscapes, I see some green! How exciting to catch an early bud or a glimpse of green breaking the ground. I hope you are not like me, as many times, it takes some time for me to remember what I planted and where. Often, I was wrong and get a big surprise as to what springs up! March is the big month to usher in spring and the promise of a changing landscape and winter falling behind.

(Continued next page)

More, From the President

We are entering the busy season with the spring plant sale and other interesting programs planned for you. Thank you again to all of our members who volunteer in leadership roles or special project oversight.

Thanks to all members for sharing your interest in the club and promoting fellowship and the love of all things in the garden.

See you in the garden,

Brent

Seed Pod of the Month

There are few seeds maturing in March, but this is much more a month of anxious anticipation. We want something to lift our spirits by starting quickly, growing fast, and maturing early. In New Mexico I used to plant snow peas on St. Patrick's Day, although this was perhaps a few weeks early for best results. But they came up and grew!

Some varieties bear in as little as two months, since they are harvested while immature. Snow peas do best in cool weather, and they tolerate less than perfect soil, but legume inoculant and good quality soil will greatly help their growth. Most varieties need physical supports, which can be as simple as crisscrossed brush sticks, and some are considered to be "bush" varieties.

Sure, you can purchase them at the store, but it's a thing to brag about when you serve them from your garden! Another tip – look for lemon cucumber plants for early harvests of non-bitter fruit. But it's way too early for them now.

Tom Mills

MGCA Board News

At the February 5 board meeting, the board decided to defer the grade school Container Gardening Contest for one year while we consider how it will be conducted. Many thanks are due to Ed Heidel, who shepherded the program the past several years.

Terms of the lease of the Horticultural Center site are developing but not yet finalized. We will continue to provide labor for the Azalea Road Park as part of the terms.

The 2019 Club budget was presented and approved. We forecast improved proceeds from sales, in part due to our plans to increase sales of member's perennials (story below). Club records more than three years old are turned over to the UNCA Library for archive purposes. Anyone may review those records by asking at the Library.

The next Club board meeting will be held Tuesday March 5, 2019 at 10:00 am, prior to the regular March members' meeting. Club members are always welcome to attend board meetings.

Member Perennials for 2019 Plant Sale

As you may have learned, the Club is asking members to donate perennial plants for this year's plant sales. This is an expansion of last year's efforts which brought in about \$800 from a few members donating perennials. Besides helping the Club raise money for scholarships, it would be a good opportunity to thin out perennial beds and use these plants for a worthy purpose.

We are also considering using some of these plants to start perennial beds at the Horticulture Center. This would be a source for future plants and an opportunity to engage with fellow members while working on these beds.

Typically, we would prefer plants in 1 gallon pots, but 4 inch and greater than 1 gallon pots would also be acceptable. To help with this project:

- The Club will provide **pots and potting soil** which will be available near the Horticulture Center's outdoor potting table starting March 23rd. Take what you need for the plants that you will be donating. Bring a container/ bag for the soil.
- Let me know if you need help dividing and potting plants and a mutually convenient arrangement will be made.
- Bring your potted plants to the Horticulture Center between April 19th and May 1st. Leave them in the Hoop House nearest the Greenhouse.

These plants will be available for purchase at member discount prices at the Horticulture Center. Member sale day is tentatively set for May 2nd. The remaining plants will be taken to the Botanical Garden sale on May 3rd and 4th.

For best sale results, plant labels would be needed for each pot. As such, when you come up with your plants to donate, please send me a list with each plant's name, a brief description (height, flower color, if applicable, sun/shade, wet/ dry soil, etc.), and an approximate quantity you think you will have. This will be used to make labels and possibly a picture of the plant.

Thanks for your help.

Nelson Sobel
nsobel11@gmail.com

Horticulture Center Activities

Ray Geiser has announced there will be only three planting days for annuals for spring sales. They will be at 10:00 am on Monday or Saturday mornings to allow for members who work on weekdays to participate.

The first workday will be Saturday, March 9 at 10:00 am, and we will plant approximately 2000 plant plugs. The other two days we plan to handle about 4000 plugs each. Later workdays will be announced by email or in the Seed Pod. Come on March 9 to get us started for the spring growing season!

From The Harter Arboretum

Randy Harter has been enjoying the winter blooms of some of his more unusual plants and is sharing their pictures. Below are varieties of witch-hazel: "Pallida", "Diane", and "Jelena". The super fragrant edgeworthia is now in bloom. His star and "Jane" magnolias are attempting to bloom before the end of February.



March Members' Meeting

Our March luncheon meeting will be held on March 5 at 11:30 am at the First Baptist Church. The speaker will be Gerry Hardesty, and he will talk about the 75-plus year history of the club and its activities.

In his earlier life, Gerry was a chemical engineer and served in a variety of senior management positions. Gerry has been a Club member since 1989 and served as President in 1993. Since then, he has been one of the driving forces of the Club, and has particularly specialized in directing the propagation of woody plants via cuttings. Gerry continues to serve on the Board of Directors and is the most knowledgeable member of the Club's history. If you want to know about what the Club did and when, plan to come to his presentation.

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. Cost of the meal will be \$12. Contact Gerry Hardesty at gerry327@charter.net if you have not been contacted.