

The Seed Pod



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

Founded 1940



Brent Russell

April 2019

Upcoming Events

April 2 Monthly Meetings

First Baptist Church

10:00 am Board Meeting

11:30 am Lunch Meeting

Work Days see p. 5

Seed Pod of the Month

(see p. 2)



Tulip

Randy Harter photo

From the President

Happy Spring to all! With the arrival of spring, the club begins its most active period allowing for volunteering and enjoying each other.

Before looking ahead, I want to review the active pace of the first quarter. Many initiatives have begun and will continue as the year unfolds.

1. The long term lease for the Horticultural Center was renewed with the city, allowing us to enjoy many years of club activities at this location.

2. The agreement for the MGCA to work collaboratively with the city to plant and maintain the gardens at the John B. Lewis Soccer Complex was finalized.

3. The initial review of the bylaws is underway, and this work will continue through the year to update and enhance our bylaws to reflect the current efforts of the club.

4. The Container Garden contest with local schools is under review, and we will appoint a leader for this project and re-engage with the schools next year.

5. The Horticultural Center committee is working to continue to improve and enhance the space and use of the center.

Now is the time that we spring into action with many upcoming opportunities. Planting days are already underway for The Spring Plant Sale occurring May 3 & 4. What a great time to come out and enjoy each other and help our club. The Black Mountain sale will be May 17 & 18. The critical water schedules are in place and many volunteer hours will be needed to ensure a great success this year. The plant sales are fun and such a good way to showcase our club in the community. In addition, there will be volunteer calls for the annual spruce up of the Smith-McDowell House and the soccer complex.

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More, From the President

As always, thanks to all members who volunteer your time and expertise in so many ways. Thanks to those of you who have helped introduce three new members and encouraged growth. As we get busy, let's be sure to remember to check on members who we have not seen in a while or who may under the weather. The strengths of our club are the friendships we make and the fellowship we share.

On a final note, I hope you have your MGCA caps, pullovers, or sweatshirts. They are super smart, attractive, fun to wear, and I have found, great at getting a conversation started about our club!

See you in the garden,

Brent

Seed Pod of the Month

After tulips lose their classic cup shape, many gardeners discard them or cut them back. This picture shows an over-bloomed tulip can have its own beauty. Note the pistil in the center of the flower – this is the seed pod starting to form.

Recall the tulip mania in the Netherlands in the 1600's. By selective pollination you too could create hybrids that may be desirable. Generally you would remove the anthers from the flower and pollinate the pistil from some other tulip. Isolate the pistil with plastic to avoid further pollination. In only a few years a new flower will perhaps surprise you.

Or you could simply enjoy the wonder of the entire blooming cycle and go buy some new exotic tulips at the nursery.

What We Do in our Spare Time



We know each other via meetings and working together. But we also have other hats and lives. Many of them started before we joined the club.

Alan Williams has been recognized for raising one million dollars for the Asheville Habitat for Humanity via the silent auction he conceived of and started some years back. You may recall Alan was the originator of our Container Garden Contest for primary school students, which has had some 3500 participants since its inception.

Congratulations, Alan!

Donate Perennials for 2019 Plant Sale

The Club is asking members to donate perennials for our Plant Sales.

Typically, we would look for 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. Mark each group of plants so I can identify the plants to make labels for each pot.

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. I will use this to make labels and possibly a picture of the plant.

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.

Thanks for your help.

Nelson Sobel
nsobel11@gmail.com

Other Plant Sales

It's spring and we're looking ahead to our spring sale, both to sell and to buy our own plants. But we won't have everything you might want and it's good to try other sales for those different plants. Here's a list of some other area sales and their websites:

Abingdon (Virginia) Garden Faire - at community college (2 hr drive!) April 19-20. gardenfaire.org

Growing in the Mountains - WNC Farmer's market, April 26-27. ashevilleplantsale.org

French Broad River Garden Club sale - April 27. 1000 Hendersonville Rd. fbrgcf.org

Herb Festival - WNC Farmer's Market, May 3-5. ashevilleherbfestival.org

Botanical Gardens - our sale, May3-4. ashevillebotanicgardens.org

Conservatory Springtime

Randy Harter recently took a number of photos in the Biltmore conservatory. It's always springtime in a conservatory! As a preview to an upcoming field trip for the Club (in May perhaps) to the Biltmore gardens, here are some of his pictures.



Various Bromeliads



Shrimp Plant

Clivia

Bird of Paradise

Golden Barrel Cactus

Also, there will be an orchid show at the NC Arboretum April 6-7.



News from the Horticultural Center



Additional uses for the horticultural center are currently being considered and further information will be available after the plant sales committee meeting and board meeting.

Dates have been set for the spring planting of annuals:

Preparation-for-planting days Friday, March 22 and Friday, March 29 at 10:00 AM

Planting days Saturday, March 23 and Saturday, March 30 at 10:00 AM

Other work days will be Monday, April 15; Monday, April 29; and Monday, May 16, 10:00 AM

Plant Sales Dates

Member plant sale date is Thursday, May 2. Hours TBD

Plant sales dates are Friday, May 3 and Saturday, May 4 at the Botanical Garden.

Plant sales dates at Black Mountain are Friday, May 17 and Saturday, May 18

A mowing volunteer request will be sent out soon.

Anyone interested in working at the horticultural center should contact Ray Geiser at <rbgeiser@gmail.com>

Thanks to those members who have agreed to do these jobs at the horticultural center.

April Members' Meeting

Our April luncheon meeting will be held on April 2 at 11:30 am at the First Baptist Church. The speaker will be Bud Mayfield of the US Forest Service, and he will talk about invasive insect pests of our forest trees.

Bud is a research entomologist at the Southern Research Station located near the Asheville Botanical Gardens. He will cover insects already present in WNC such as the Hemlock woolly adelgid and emerald ash borer, as well as others likely to impact us. Bud will talk about recognition of infestations, effects on the trees, and potential for management of the insects. Whether you have many trees yourself or appreciate our forests, this will be important to know.

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.