

# The Seed Pod



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

Founded 1940



Brent Russell

## December 2019

### Upcoming Events

December 10

11:30 am Annual Holiday  
Banquet and Awards.  
First Baptist Church  
(see p. 4)

(No Dec Board Mtg.)

Seed Pod of the Month  
(see p. 2)



Nellie R. Stevens Holly

## From the President

Greetings to All! As the end of the year is in sight, I am reflecting about many of the experiences with the Men's Garden Club during my time as President. What is foremost is the encouragement and help from so many who shared knowledge and time with me at every turn. It really does take a village to keep our club moving forward. Thank you to all of those who helped guide and lent a helping hand.

Our club has a number of ongoing priorities that will help ensure future growth and longevity. Not much different than when we plan the planting and placement of certain plants around our own gardens, the Club must look to the future when prioritizing projects. The Horticultural Center is well on the way to rebuilding and make improvements for future success. The annual plant sales are being reviewed to ensure we meet the correct growth, bloom and demand by customers. The various sites the Club maintains around Asheville are thriving. The programs continue to be outstanding with speakers and garden visits. Thank you to all who volunteer to keep these priorities on track.

Claude Williams will be the next President. He is a proactive and conscientious leader and will help our club grow and flourish. We are also blessed with a strong board of volunteers who care deeply about our club. The Club is in good hands!

I thank all of our members for the privilege to lead the club this past year. I learned a great deal, strengthened friendships and certainly have been honored to serve. I look forward to celebrating with everyone at the December 10 Lunch and Installation of our new officers.

See you in the Garden,  
Brent

## Seed Pod of the Month

For December, it's hard to argue against holly berries for a seed pod. This is a Nellie R. Stevens holly, a cross between English and Chinese holly. It is a vigorous grower and is not a good choice for a foundation planting. It can grow to 30 feet and keeps a classic pyramidal shape. I'm sure some have suggested the term "Whoa Nellie" could apply to this plant.

Holly berries typically have four seeds inside a drupe. Most hollies are dioecious, having male and female flowers on separate plants. However, Nellie hollies can produce berries without a male plant nearby, although they produce far more berries with regular pollination.

Some years ago, the Club had a glut of Nellies raised from cuttings and offered them at a bargain price. I bought eight and all are doing well or better.

Tom Mills

## Horticulture Center News

On Saturday the 9th of November we conducted our last major work day of the year. The wonderful turnout on a cold day was very productive. The center is fully winterized and the plants and bulbs are bedded. Thanks to all who have participated through the year.

The Horticulture Center developments to date:

1. The old shade house has been demolished and the site has been cleared.
2. Two tons of debris has been removed from the site.
3. 260 square feet of raised beds have been constructed and filled with mulch and planting material. The purpose: Wintering over the perennials and the growing of same over the spring and summer.
4. A nice variety of daylilies have been planted for future production and sales. They will be transferred to the raised beds in the spring.
5. The frame for the meeting pavilion has been put in place with the final design coming soon.
6. An end cap with a door has been built creating a new shade house for the spring and summer.
7. New gates and fencing are in place.
8. The club was gifted a chipper by Warren Sproul now being stored and used at the center.
9. The greenhouse has been cleaned and organized.
10. The spring plant order is in the last stages of completion.

Thanks to everyone again.

Ray Geiser

## Dues

Members are reminded that it is the time of year when we request that you pay your dues for the upcoming 2020 year. You should have received an email reminder about this. Dues are \$30 and can be paid at the December banquet lunch or mailed to:

MGCA  
PO Box 633  
Asheville, NC 28802

This is also a good time to review your information in the 2020 Directory for updates or corrections. If you have any, let Walt Leginski ([wleginski@yahoo.com](mailto:wleginski@yahoo.com)) know. We work to submit the Directory for printing by mid-December. If you miss paying dues before then, you risk not appearing in the Directory.

## Annual November Elections

The following Officers and Directors for 2020 were elected at the annual November business meeting:

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| President                         | Claude Williams |
| President-Elect                   | Warren Sproul   |
| Past President                    | Brent Russell   |
| Secretary                         | Leo Bjorlie     |
| Treasurer                         | Bob Sharp       |
| Membership Director               | Walt Leginski   |
| Horticulture Director             | Ray Geiser      |
| Beautifications Director          | Dick Rothenberg |
| Plant Sales Director              | Open            |
| Publications Director             | Tom Mills       |
| Publicity Director                | Bob Jones       |
| Scholarship and Outreach Director | Mike Maxwell    |
| Historian Director                | Dave Farnsworth |
| Director at Large                 | Gerry Hardesty  |

In addition, the Amended and Restated Bylaws of the MGCA were accepted by vote of the members.

## November Members' Meeting

We were pleased to have Matt Timmer of Reems Creek Nursery talk about conifers at the November 5 meeting of the Club. Matt told us the various size categories of conifers, what their general needs and care entail, and brought a number of conifer specimens he was enthusiastic about. Interest was high and Matt answered quite a few questions from the floor, and remained to answer more following the talk. We were particularly appreciative of Matt agreeing to give the talk on short notice when a previously scheduled presenter had a conflict for that date.

## Overwintering Tender Plants

A recent question arose about overwintering plants. Here's my solution:

In an attached two car garage, the ambient winter temperature might be 55 degrees F. I use a bank of four each, 4 foot LED T5 propagation light bulbs. They each draw 41 watts and are set on a timer. A full spectrum of 5500K would allow propagation and full term plant growth. The lights are daisy-chained together and provide enough light for 49-64 square feet of floor space. I built my own frame from inexpensive materials. I water plants 1-2 per week with a spray can filled with water. The plants sit on a tarpaulin inside a raised bed box.

Warren Sproul

## December Members' Meeting

Our December meeting will be the annual holiday banquet, on December 10 at the First Baptist Church at the normal time of 11:30 am. We will install the new Club Officers and Directors for 2020, recognize member efforts with awards, and host our scholarship recipients and their college scholarship coordinators. There will not be a specific gardening talk.

The meeting will be more festive to help celebrate the holiday season. While it is not required or expected, many members choose to bring spouses or guests and to dress up a bit. The meal will be more special than usual in fitting with the celebration.

Traditionally, Dave Farnsworth conducts the Officer and Director installation with some creative topical references that may make you smile or groan. Ted Faber, Awards Committee chair, asks prior Club Presidents to present members with the well-deserved awards. Our scholarship recipients from Mayland Community College in Spruce Pine and from Blue Ridge Community College in Hendersonville will be recognized. Usually they say a few words about their interests in horticulture, and their scholarship coordinators update us on the horticulture programs.

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 told by the callers. Contact Walt Leginski at [wleginski@yahoo.com](mailto:wleginski@yahoo.com) if you have not been contacted by November 1.