

The Seed Pod



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

Founded 1940



Claude Williams

January 2020

Upcoming Events

January 7

10:00 am Board Meeting
11:30 am Lunch Meeting
First Baptist Church
(see p. 4)

Seed Pod of the Month
(see p. 2)



Kousa Dogwood

From the President

I'm getting ready to start my indoor early vegetable seeds Jan 1st. That's usually onions, along with some perennials and herbs I want to start this year. DJ starts her flowers that need a jump on spring. Hope beyond hope, this year I will finally have at least some of the garden space I would like, now that I have "retired" from one job, at least.

On growing things and prognostication, weather is weather... what you see day to day that affects your outdoor activities, what you wear, and which day you plant. Weather forecasts work well for about 5 days. Seasonal forecasts are probabilistic, indicating regions that will be warmer/cooler or drier/wetter than normal. Here are 1981-2010 normals for Asheville from January to June:

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Avg High Temperature: | 47 | 50 | 58 | 67 | 75 | 82 |
| Avg Low Temperature: | 28 | 31 | 37 | 45 | 53 | 61 |
| Total Precipitation: | 2.87 | 3.23 | 3.35 | 3.03 | 3.27 | 3.39 |

I wanted to see what the general weather will be for the first half of the coming growing season. So, I dug down into the NOAA web site to see what the group who makes these calculations, the Climate Prediction Center said. Looking at next month and the three month average seasonal forecasts for Asheville, NC.

Temperature

Jan 2020 - Close to Normal

Winter - Early season, even chance to be normal. On into the season increased chance to be warmer than we are used to.

Spring - High chance to be warmer than normal into June.

(Continued on page 2.)

From the President (Continued)

Precipitation

Jan 2020 – Likely to be wetter than normal. Unfortunately, with cool temperatures and low sun angle, it's going to be damp.

Winter - For the rest of winter, we are on the edge of wetter and close to normal.

Spring - Planting season may be wet! So, if we get even close to plantable (friable) conditions, then DO IT!

Check out for more general information: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>

The information above came from the maps listed by clicking on the “Three Month Outlook” on the second dark blue line.

Happy New Year to one and all!

Claude Williams

Seed Pod of the Month

Kousa dogwood (*Cornus kousa*) has many good things going for it. Its profuse spring bloom of white bracts comes after it has leafed out and after the native dogwood has finished blooming. Last year my best kousa appeared to be covered in snow, from the many bracts. The tree is not susceptible to the anthracnose disease that plagues native dogwoods, so the leaves remain attractive all season. Fall color is also spectacular, with rich red-orange leaf color and the large red edible berries.

I have found some volunteer plants in my yard and have grown a number of trees from the seeds in the fruit. The outer rind of the fruit is rather coarse and I spit it out if I eat a berry. The bears severely damaged my best tree and bent over some smaller ones while trying to get at the fruit. I'll try ropes and stakes to straighten them and try to prune the big one.

All in all, the kousa has to be one of the better bets for growing an attractive, three-season ornamental tree.

Tom Mills

Directories Available at January Meeting

The 2020 Club Directory is going to print before our January 7 meeting, and we hope to have them available at that meeting. It is now too late to make changes on your information for the Directory. However, if you have changes that you haven't yet shared, be sure to communicate those to Walt Leginski (wleginski@yahoo.com or 828-505-1097). If you have not yet submitted your dues because you will not be renewing your membership, as a courtesy, please inform Walt.

If being overwhelmed by the holiday season is your reason for not yet paying dues, our new treasurer, Bob Sharp, will gladly accept your dues payment when you come to the meeting. You may also mail your dues to P.O. Box 633, Asheville NC 28802.

Early Winter Interest in the Garden

Randy Harter has provided some pictures of his garden showing that color, texture, and structure of plants can provide significant beauty at a time when we may feel our garden has gone to sleep for the winter. Even the fallen leaves and still-green grass provide color and a backdrop to set off our treasured plants.



December Holiday Banquet Meeting

At the December holiday banquet, we enjoyed a special meal and honored those who made special efforts in support of the Club's goal last year. Ted Faber served as master of ceremonies, and notable awardees included James Wade (Ivey Silver Cup), Ned Guardenier (Walter Peacock Fellowship Award), and Walt Leginski and Claude Williams (Bill Krause Gardening Awards). The new Board of Officers and Directors were installed by Dave Farnsworth. Carolyn Evans of Blue Ridge Community College and Margaret Early Thiele of Mayland Community College gave updates on their horticulture programs and facilities. Nancy McCrory was recognized for providing many years of fine lunches at the First Baptist Church.



Our MC



New Board



Dave Installing Board



James Wade



Ned Guardenier



Carolyn Evans



Margaret Early Thiele



Nancy McCrory

January Members' Meeting

Our January meeting will be held on January 7, 2020 at the First Baptist Church at the normal time of 11:30 am. Our speaker will be Life Member Peter Loewer. He is a well known writer and botanical artist. His book, "The Wild Gardener," was named one of the 75 best garden books of the 20th century by the American Horticultural Society. Peter lectures at various horticulture institutions around the country and teaches art at AB Tech. He gardens along Kenilworth Lake in Asheville. His website is www.thewildgardener.com.

Peter has titled his talk, "**The Flora and Fauna of Our End of Buncombe County in Western North Carolina**". This is an illustrated talk about the various creatures that have visited the shores of his Kenilworth Lake property over the almost 30 years he has lived there. Not all of his visiting creatures have been welcome, but they have all been of extreme interest, ranging from microscopic dwellers of the lake, to birds of the air, and creatures of the land.

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 Walt Leginski at wleginski@yahoo.com for meal reservations if you have not been contacted.

As usual, guests interested in the talk are welcome, and people not eating lunch can arrive at 12:45 for the free presentation.