



The Seed Pod

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

Founded in 1940

January 2021 Upcoming Events



Zoom Board Meeting
January 4 - 10am



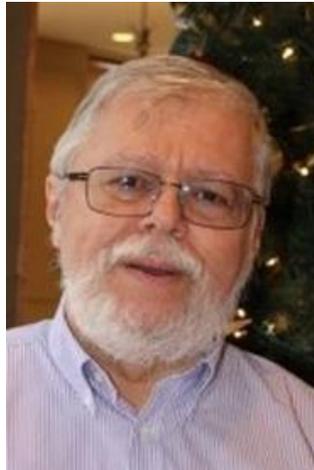
Zoom Presentation
Details on following page
January 5 - 12:30pm



Martin Luther King, Jr Day
January 18



Presidential Inauguration
January 20



Claude Williams

A
FEW
WORDS
FROM THE
PRESIDENT



Happy New Year,

Through my words in the Seed Pod this last year, I have told of the trials and tribulations, and the triumphs during these uncertain times. Now, to look forward to the NEW YEAR. Ah, hope springs eternal, especially after a White Christmas! It is time for the World and especially, the USA to go on the mend. By this time next year, we hope for a strong semblance of normalcy.

The Club is continuing as well... The Board members and the committees are resting and reviving to gather strength for the year to come. Warren's Zoom presentations will continue for at least a while, and maybe even after we have meetings again. Ray is doing a stellar job on managing the buying and growing of the plants for sale. And finally, you will even get a chance to "grow your own" in the greenhouse.

The 2021 Directory will be sent out to members in late January. Included with the Directory will be Contact Cards. Keep one in your wallet with contact information. If you meet a potential new member (from a safe distance), give him the card and invite him to get in touch for further information. Strengthening the MGCA as the COVID crisis wanes will ensure our sustainability into the future. We welcome Club growth in the new year!

May 2021 be better than 2020. As always, my best to you and your families. Please be safe,
Claude



Most of us can attest that we have little difficulty producing an abundance of weeds in our gardens. On Tuesday January 5, 2021 at 12:30PM, the Men's Garden Club of

Asheville will offer the presentation:

All about Weeds in your Landscape. How to ID and make them go Away. by Leah Dail in conjunction with the JC Raulston Arboretum with introductory comments by Gerry Hardesty.



Editor Note: I initially searched for weed images on Google and I received a plethora of Marijuana material. Is marijuana or cannabis a weed. One website claimed that people search for "Is marijuana a weed?" over 7.5 million times each month.

"What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered." — Ralph Waldo Emerson. According to Wikipedia, "A weed in a general sense is a plant that is considered by

the user of the term to be a nuisance. However, today Cannabis is now a billion-dollar industry and many use cannabis products for medicinal use.



Gardening Technology

If you didn't know, there are websites and cell phone apps that can identify plants (and many other things) from a photo. One must still master taking and uploading a digital photo but most of us have conceded that film cameras are generally now used only by diehard photo enthusiasts.

The website Plant.id is free for up to 5 IDs per week. After uploading a photo, the site will respond with its assessment. You may be provided with several possibilities with likelihood percentages when identification is not definitive (e.g., the uploaded photo is not the best).

Please let the editor know of other apps or sites and why you recommend them with any helpful comments for dissemination in a future SP.



IT'S A NEW YEAR FOR THE GREENHOUSE

The ballots are in; we officially have a New Year! – bringing with it some new and/or amended procedures at the greenhouse.



First, we are having two workdays, January 6th and January 20th, from 9am until you want to leave, for updating and repair.

Second, we are firing up the furnace on Feb. 1st to accommodate member seed starts. Space allocation for this endeavor will be around 30 percent of the greenhouse. With advance notice, we can provide several forms of watering systems, heat beds and lighting. Each member will be responsible for their own maintenance or we can create teams. The only caveat is you donate around 50 percent of your production to the club. Starter trays and soil are available or bring your own.

Third, is the spring planting which will be held on or about March 5th, 12th and 19th. This year's order is a bit over half of our past orders with the intent to provide more space for larger plants, lower our risk due to unknowns and provide space for member plant starts.

Lastly, we are looking to finish many of the Horticulture Center projects that were started last year which were focused on increasing member interaction, – the meeting pavilion, perennial gardens and special interest installations.

Looking forward to renewed club camaraderie as a new year begins.

–Ray Geiser, Horticulture Center Director

Ray will send out an email update in January with more details. Meantime, order some seeds.



An old feature, that will occasionally appear, is Seed Pod of the Month and here it is:



Years ago, on a very cold December day, I was picking up fallen branches and tidying up an area at the edge of a mostly wooded section of my yard. I looked up and was amazed to see a shrub with a frosty coating on the glossy evergreen leaves and beautiful white

flowers on most of the branches. Camellias may be old news for most of you, but I had never seen one. When all the leaves have fallen from the trees and flowers are distant memories, it was fantastic to see this shrub cheer up the otherwise bleak landscape.

Camellias are evergreen shrubs whose leaves are alternately arranged, simple, thick, serrated, and usually glossy. The colors of the flowers vary from white through pink colors to red. Tea varieties are always white-flowered. Camellia flowers throughout the genus are characterized by a dense bouquet of conspicuous yellow stamens. The so-called "fruit" of camellia plants is a dry capsule, sometimes subdivided in up to five compartments, each compartment containing up to eight seeds.

The various species of camellia plants are generally well-adapted to acid soils rich in humus, and most species do not grow well on chalky soil or other calcium-rich soils. Most species of camellias also require a large amount of water, either from natural rainfall or from irrigation, and the plants will not tolerate droughts.

Camellia plants usually have a rapid growth rate. Typically, they will grow about 12 inches per year until mature – though this does vary depending on their variety and geographical location.



Trivia Question: The MGCA logo in the Seed Pod masthead (Don't Look Yet!) shows a seedling being held in a man's hand. Is it the right hand or left hand? If you can identify the type of plant that the seedling represents, you get extra credit.



The club thanks Tom Mills for producing the Seed Pod for the last three years. After handling the SP as well as serving our club in many other roles, he will take a well-deserved rest (hoping it is merely a hiatus).

Tom advised the new editor to have his own take on the Seed Pod, but it will be something old, something new, something borrowed and what to do? All comments/suggestions/criticisms are welcome.

A few new things are:

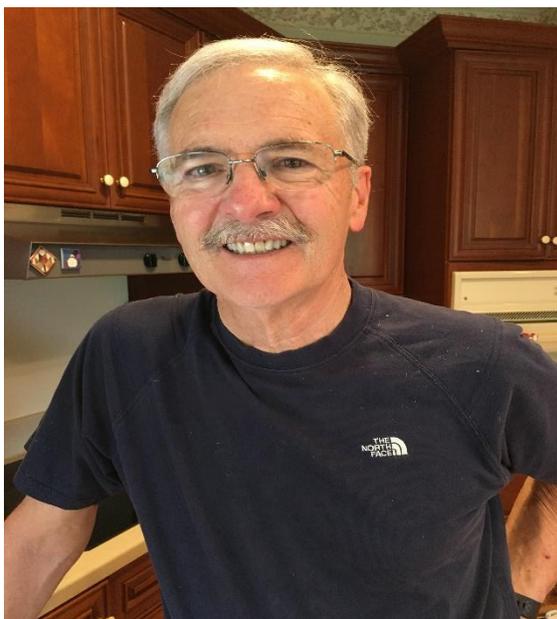
A plainer, larger size font to make it a little easier on the eyes (but not as pretty and increases the number of pages).

A new feature, [If You Didn't Know](#), to help us get to know each other a little more.

If You Didn't Know

TOM MILLS – Our now-former Seed Pod editor, treasurer, president will spend more of his time tending to his large property in the Town Mountain area. In the photo below, he proudly displays the moustache sprouted at home while waiting out the Coronavirus. Tom graciously provided us a little about himself that you may not have known.

I was born in Minneapolis and grew up in Peoria, which explains my Midwest accent. As a teen, I was frustrated at being too short to make the basketball



teams but played with my friends every weekend. I earned chemical engineering degrees at the Universities of Illinois and California and started work on isotope separation research at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Later I worked with plutonium and assisted on a program to dismantle nuclear warheads. After 30 years on the job and a 50,000-acre forest fire in Los Alamos, I moved from the New Mexico mountains to Asheville to enjoy the greener and warmer climate. I've always been a gardener and have enjoyed the outdoors. In New Mexico I had seven compost bins and

succeeded with fruit trees and gardens in soil on top of compacted volcanic ash. I went skiing and backpacking with friends in Colorado and New Mexico. Sandy and I met and married in Los Alamos and each brought two children to the union.

In Asheville, my gardening aim has been to create a woodland garden/arboretum/park. I've planted many hundreds of tree and shrubs, often too close to another. Now I'm seeking to backfill the understory with perennials. I wrestle with a conflict of accepting nature's habit of plant growth with creating my own 'natural' setting. If ever I conceived of a completed garden, I would ask "what's the point?"

IN MEMORIAM



Lewis Honeywell Merrill, (April 27, 1924-December 24, 2020). After being employed in the field of horticulture for five decades, Lewis and his late wife Helen moved to Asheville in 1998 to be closer to their son. In that year, he joined our club and became an active member. Lewis was a life member of our club. He will be remembered for his good nature, humor and eagerness to help with club activities

