

Gardening & Beautification

A publication of the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club, founded 1948

January 2012

Monthly Meeting: Tuesday, January 17

**Reminder: This is a change of date:
We will be meeting on Tuesday, not
Monday. Please mark your calendar!**

7:00 PM SCC, Community Room

Betty Montgomery



Betty is a life-long gardener and writes a bi-weekly column for the Spartanburg Herald Journal. She gardens in Campobello and Tuxedo, NC and has a special interest in hydrangeas and camellias.

Refreshments

Charlie Crescenzi and Peggy Romine

Upcoming Events

Jan. 20-22: Rose Conference, Asheville

Feb. 20: Jerry Blackwell, Bud Grafting

Mar. 19: Jay Moore, Weed Science

Apr. 16: Joe Maple, Plants of the Bible

Membership Renewal for 2012

2012 renewal period is now! Half of our members have renewed. We hope that the rest of our members will continue to support the Club. We need not only your check – we need your participation! Please bring your completed application and dues to the next meeting or mail your check to the address on the application. You can find the form here:

<http://dirtdaubers.org/Shared/PDF/MemberShipApplication.pdf>

Website Updates

We have an outstanding website so it makes sense to use it to find out what the Club is doing. Our sale dates are listed on the Plant Sales page and the countdown is on the home page. It's about three months until our Spring sale and a lot needs to be done – a few people pitching in can make a big difference.

Community Garden Spots

The Sherrill Garden spot across from Hillcrest Shopping Center is recovering from the run-in it had with a vehicle in the fall. The damaged rose appears to be recovering and pansies, snapdragons and ornamental cabbages have been added. The loropetalums were trimmed and the roses will be pruned in late February. Thanks to the Crescenzis and Charles Covert who have worked to make this a lovely spot.

Propagation/Container Nursery

Dedicated volunteers have been preparing the nursery for the winter and the upcoming growing season.

Don Crowder, Lou Adams and Ben Waddell have revised some of the irrigation to make it easier to drain the system. They installed automatic drains and a shut off valve near the shed. This will allow us to keep watering longer through the winter without having to worry as much about freezing temperatures.



Detail of the automatic drain valve recently installed at the nursery. Photo by Don Crowder, 2012.

Notes from the Board

If you are on a committee and have receipts for funds that you have spent on behalf of the Club, please turn them in to our Treasurer. While it is kind of you to do this, most of our committees have money set aside in the yearly budget to accommodate general expenses such as stamps, perennials for the community garden spots, etc. It helps if you will turn your receipts in within a week or two of the purchase so that it can be recorded. Ben Waddell, our Treasurer notes, "I think over the long term, it makes the financial picture for the club more accurate. And, when some future person takes a position of responsibility for one of these areas, they won't be surprised to think that nothing happened in these areas."

Habitat for Humanity Landscaping

If you have time this spring, set aside a few hours to assist the Club in planting shrubs and trees at Habitat homes. The dates tentatively are: January 21st, February 28th and March 2nd. Those who want to assist should contact Lisa Lassiter at 591-2221, ext. 105, or 504-0291 (office cell).

Community Gardener Class (SCC)

As of Monday, January 9, the class is completely filled! Thirty students have signed up for the spring class that will be held at Spartanburg Community College. The first class will begin on Feb. 7. The sessions will include basic information on soil, fertilization, grasses, insects (good and bad), pruning and design. Other topics will cover plant growth, annuals, perennials and houseplants, vegetables, and ornamental trees and shrubs as well as natives. There are ten classes of two-hour sessions. All are held at Spartanburg Community College. A free one-year membership to SMGC is included.

Linda Cobb has written an article about the class and it has been posted on our website. For more details, see Linda's article on our website: http://dirtdaubers.org/Shared/PDF/Press/HeraldJournal_12-01-06.pdf

How to Grow Kousa Dogwood From Seed

Henry Pittman has long been interested in growing *Kousa* dogwood. They are unusual because their blossoms appear after the foliage, unlike our native *Cornus florida*, which blooms in April around Easter and then the leaves emerge. Henry asked Kevin Parris, director of the arboretum at SCC to give us some guidelines for growing these trees from seed. Here are Kevin's recommendations for growing *Kousa*:

1. Peel away outer covering.
 2. Clean "fruit" to remove pulp material from the seeds within.
 3. Rub remaining pulp away from seed in a weak detergent solution.
 4. Soak for a few minutes in a 10% bleach solution. Then rinse away excess bleach in tap water, at this time discard any floaters as they are not filled with embryo or endosperm and will not germinate. Save only the sinkers.
 5. Place seed in Zip-loc bags with peat or finely milled sphagnum moss that is moist but not damp.
 6. Store in the fridge for 2-4 months, to allow embryo maturation and unify germination
 7. Plant in 4-6" deep open flats or in individual cells- like the 38 cell cone flats we have used to stick cuttings in.
 8. Ideally, keep on a bench and in a greenhouse.
- Some of this may be overkill, but I get nearly 100% success with dogwood and *magnolia* with this process (except I don't eat the "fruit" of magnolia, and you don't have to eat the *kousa* fruit either, but it is tasty.



Above, on the left are the round fruit of the *Cornus kousa* dogwood. On the right are the cleaned seeds. Photo by Henry Pittman, 2012.

Volunteers in the Nursery

Charlie Crescenzi has done a great job of organizing volunteers to help in our Container Program. In addition to potting sessions, members have been assigned a slot to monitor the water system two times a month each. This includes making certain that all the plants are getting water because dry plants don't survive cold as well as ones that have enough moisture. The volunteers also check to make sure that plants have not been blown over. A "plant corral" was made from plastic fencing found in the dirt piles near the shed. This seems to have kept most of the plants upright except from the strongest wind. The following people have made time to check on the plants and we greatly appreciate their help! They are: Lou Adams, Chuck Covert, Charlie Crescenzi, Don Crowder, Frank Falk, Tim Hemphill, Linda McHam, Gail McCullough, Lyn Pesterfield, Peggy Romine, Prafull Gajendragadkar and Jim Weeks.



The windbreak helps keep plants from blowing over.



Bob Reynolds and Linda McHam visited three area nurseries to ask for unused pots for our propagation. The effort netted several hundred pots in varying sizes (one, two and three-gallons). Photos by Linda McHam, 2012.

New Nursery Grounds Committee

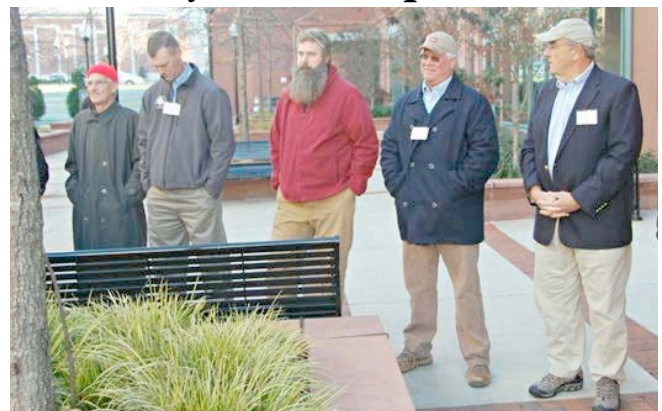
Don Crowder will be directing a new committee. He will coordinate tasks that are required to be consistent with both the SMGC and SCC environment. This includes proper maintenance of the grass, the landscaped area as well as other general maintenance issues. Also, the landscape fabric will need to be assessed and repaired periodically.

Although Lou Adams has disbanded the "Kudzu Irregulars", he will coordinate with Don to keep an eye on control of the kudzu. Spraying with Milestone VM has dramatically reduced its presence. It has taken many hours of volunteer labor but the rewards are visible: very little kudzu remains. Thanks to the following people who helped: Charles Crescenzi, Don Crowder, Tasso Ghionis, Newt Hardie, Tim Hemphill, Gail McCullough, Linda McHam, Henry Pittman, Bob Reynolds, Peggy Romine and Ed Wilde.

If you would like to be involved in keeping our site in top-notch shape, please contact Don at 864-580-1829. Otherwise, he will be calling to request your help.

SMGC is lucky to have the amazing facilities that we do. Let's keep them looking great!

Arbor Day at USC-Upstate



*Above, Bob Reynolds (president of SMGC), Jason Bagwell and Jay Moore of SCC, Bruce Suddeth of USC-Upstate and Dr. Michael Dirr, featured speaker at Arbor Day, listened as Junie White, mayor, gave his opening remarks at the dedication of a Chinese Fringe Tree (*Chionanthus retusus* 'Tokyo Tower') at the George Dean Johnson School of Law Building. Photo by Linda McHam, 2011.*

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Spartanburg Men's Garden Club
Post Office Box 1502
Spartanburg, South Carolina 29304
www.dirtclubbers.org
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