

The Clod-Hopper



Volume 6 digital edition 5

Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. — Raleigh, NC

May 2022

Are You Ready for the Great GWC Picnic?

by Kathleen Thompson, President



It's that time again, our annual picnic and plant exchange happens on May 17th, starting at 6:00 PM at the home of Mark and Joanne Boone. The Boone's address is [4401 Dewees Court, Raleigh NC, 27612](https://www.google.com/maps/place/4401+Deweese+Court,+Raleigh,+NC+27612).

We give thanks to Mark and Joanne Boone who are again hosting this year's picnic in

their beautiful backyard and garden. It's exciting to see what's growing in their gardens, the vegetables, perennials and the changes made in the garden since last year's picnic. Touring their garden encourages me to grow more plants, do a better job of planning, and pick up a few tricks that I can incorporate in my garden.

Dinner will be catered by several members with a menu that will be as tasty as always. This year there will be two main dishes and several sides provided. Going back to previous traditions, we are **ASKING MEMBERS TO BRING AN APPETIZER TO SHARE if you would like.**

This year tickets must be purchased IN ADVANCE by mailing your \$10 dollars per member check to Mac and Vivian Williamson by May 10th. Their address is 1408 Lake Pine Dr. Cary, NC 27511.

There will be NO at-the-door, last minute meals available this year. The cost is ten dollars per member, and the first guest will pay \$10.00, any additional guests will pay \$15.00 each. The Club will be picking up the difference since actual cost is greater than what each member is charged. This is a "Thank You" to the many members who volunteered time to help out with this year's very successful Azalea Sale. Your efforts make our Club's scholarship and activities programs possible!

Marvelous May!

May is a special month for the GWC because May's when our Club's Annual Picnic and Plant Exchange occurs. It's a custom that harkens back to our organization's very beginnings. This year the event will be catered by some of our own talented Club members who will serve a delicious spread including two main dishes and several sides. Going back to previous traditions, we are asking members to bring an appetizer to share. The doors open about 6:00 PM for schmoozing and socializing with dinner served around 6:30-ish. The cost is a bargain at 10 dollars per member and must be paid IN ADVANCE (send checks to Mac Williamson at 1408 Lake Pine Dr. Cary, NC 27511). **Remember, there are NO ticket sales at the door.** This year's event is scheduled on the traditional third Tuesday of the month—that's May 17th at the beautiful home of Mark and Joanne Boone located in Raleigh at [4401 Dewees Court](https://www.google.com/maps/place/4401+Deweese+Court,+Raleigh,+NC+27612) (click for a map). As always, the evening wraps up with the justly famed stampede and plant exchange. Don't miss the long-awaited annual return of a magnificent classic!

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Club Officers and Committees

Board members

President: Kathleen Thompson

Vice President: Tom Packer

Secretary: Joanne Boone

Treasurer: Charlie Leverett

Immediate Past President: Paul Hoffman
sitting in for Ginny Parker temporarily

At-large board members: Kate Bartos, Jim Shaloiko, Shay Campbell, Jim Swanson

Committee members

Activities Chair: Will Farmer, Reed & Christine Elliott (seed swap), Renee Engates (refreshments), Mark Boone (picnic), Ginny Parker (awards banquet)

Audit: Charles Gilliam, Kathy Moore, Reed Elliott

Azalea Sale: Charlie Leverett

Beautification Awards: Laine Thomas

Club Awards: Jim Moore

Endowment Investment: Charles Gilliam

Friendship: Donna Farmer

Historical: Donna Farmer

Membership, Barbara Brown

Newsletter Editor: Reed Elliott

Nominating: TBA

Programs: Christine Elliott

Projects: Sharon LaRusch, Lynn Swanson

Publicity: Charles Gilliam

Scholarship: Christine Elliott

Telephone: Johnny and Sherrill Johnson

Webmaster: Reed Elliott

Are You Ready for the Great GWC Picnic? *(continued from page 1)*

After dinner, we'll share the names of this year's scholarships to the outstanding students from the North Carolina State University College of Horticulture, and introduce any who may be able to attend. These students were selected based on need and the high quality of their work both in class and their fields of study. They have worked full or part-time to help support their goals and many have volunteered in their communities as well. We'll share specifics about each recipient in next month's *Clod-Hopper*.

The usual 50/50 drawing will be held. Tickets are \$1.00 apiece or 7 tickets for \$5.00. What a bargain! Some lucky member will go home with half the purse. It could be you? It could be me! So bring some cash to join in the drawing.

Finally, the traditional **PLANT EXCHANGE** (and free-for-all melee) will be held afterwards. Please have the plants labeled. As always, please bring a plant or two (or a dozen) to exchange with fellow members. And you don't have to bring plants to play, that's okay too—others always bring extra.



Contact Us

For additional information email our Club at gardener@gardenersofwakecounty.org

Contact Kathleen Thompson, President,
919-469-0991 or ktompson365@twc.com

Our Club webpage is online at <https://gardenersofwakecounty.weebly.com/>

Mac Williamson, our starting line judge, says the same rules apply as in past years: All participants have to be behind the starting line until the signal to "go" is given, only one plant per participant per trip, no holding, pushing or tripping! No special treatment for ladies, this is an equal opportunity event.

Got Rose Rosette?

by Johnny and Sherrill Johnson, Club Members and Past President

Our Master Gardener Agent, Jeana Myers, participated in an agent training that focused on rose rosette, which was very good. There are a couple of attachments the lecturer provided in the links below.



Big takeaways:

- Rose rosette is a virus, and can infect all roses (except Rugosa does not seem to get it, yet).
- An extremely tiny mite, an eriophyid mite (*Phyllocoptes fructiphilus*), is blown around on the wind and lands on plants indiscriminately. It only seems to infect roses with the virus it carries. Comparing it in size to a spider mite, which you can barely see with your eyes and a hand lens, it is like comparing a rabbit to an elephant - so way smaller than even a spider mite, and you can't see them with a hand lens.
- They lay one egg a day, for 30 days.
- It takes the virus 9-12 weeks, and even up to 1 and a half years, to show symptoms.
- No chemicals or other treatments cure the infected plants.
- Populations of mites on infected, rosetted foliage, are 40-60 times higher than on other foliage, so if you see rosetted foliage, you should immediately remove (and also remove the whole plant).
- Pull out diseased plants as soon as you see the early symptoms: **a. Hyper (excessive) thorniness (you will see a ridiculous amount of tiny thorns, and some big ones.** b. Distorted flower buds. c. Affected tissues may be red, but they are sometimes green. d. Strapped (thin) leaves. e. Thickened stems. The development of the rosette will come later, but hopefully with regular scouting you will identify the problem earlier, and remove the plant. You can put a bag over the foliage as you are digging out the root ball, or just dig and remove carefully (without the bag).
- You can spray insecticides preventively, but this has not been effectively studied, and would possibly require spraying at 2 week intervals from late May through frost. Better to remove plants if they become infected.
- The mites are not in the soil, so you can dig out one plant and put another one in. There could be infected mites in the area, but there is not a problem replanting in the same spot right away.

<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP806.pdf>

<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W833.pdf>

So we are ready for those summer rose rosette questions! Email or call us at:

icimoonlite@gmail.com or sherrillhj@gmail.com (919) 271-2558

Smooth Sale-ing at Joslin Gardens

by Sharon LaRusch and Lynn Swanson, Activities Co-chairs



The weather was perfect and the crew at Joslin had done SO MUCH WORK to prep for the sale. As you crested the driveway, there were several tables, filled with tagged plants ready for purchase. Last minute, we also had the Will and Donna Farmer donate some irises as well (thank you!) The local community enjoys morning walks and so many made the sale a part of their morning ritual. I helped one gentleman that had moved away but heard of the sale. A big thanks to Chris, Nell and Helen for the tremendous prep work. We had a crew of twelve, so, while some helped customers, loaded plants and manned a table to talk about our club, others tackled a paver path near the gazebos by the house.

Our next workday should be very productive and Joslin's

gracious gesture of dedicating the earned funds to our project area has been fun for Lynn and I to consider. **The funds earned might go toward future frog pond area**



(pictures were in March's Clodhopper) or obtaining some of the plants from Lynn's design. More to come on that!

Thank you so much to those that came out to volunteer, came to visit the sale and continue to be enthusiastic supporters of our Club

projects! It's been so rewarding to build friendships as we volunteer together!

Until our next meeting! That's Saturday, May 21st at Joslin Gardens!

RSVP if you plan to attend or have questions. Sharon can be reached at sharon-larusch@gmail.com and Lynn's address is Chocolategardener@yahoo.com



Big Bloomer

by Paul Hofmann, Past President

You start to think maybe you've been around too long when the century plant you put in the ground as a small pup starts putting up its huge flower stalk.

Just a month ago that my sister and her husband came by for a visit. I was showing them my Southwest garden on a steep south-facing slope in the direct North Carolina sun. There are a couple of large agaves that have doing very well there for over 15 years. I told them that these were century plants, so called because in the high Mexican desert they bloom spectacularly once after waiting about 100 years and then die. I did also mentioned they tend to bloom a little more quickly in North Carolina, probably due to higher rainfall here.

Well they left and, lo and behold, only one week later Judy asked me what that three-foot stalk was growing out of the middle of one of the agaves. Sure enough, that plant had decided it was old enough to get going. Now three weeks further on I'm guessing the stalk is about 15 feet high. Just amazing!

I've included photos taken on April 14, 20, 27, and 29 so you can get idea how fast this thing is reaching for the sky. I'll send in another picture next month once we know how it looks when the blooms come out.

If you think the plant looks like an asparagus spear, you're right. Agaves are card carrying members of the asparagus family. The plant in question has an impressive pedigree. It may be displaying some hybrid vigor since its official name is *Agave lophantha* x *A. salmiana* var. *ferox* 'Logan Calhoun'. I purchased it at Plant Delights. I don't see it in the catalog any more, but if you are lucky you might be able to catch one of its descendants in the plant rush and give away at the GWC spring picnic.



4-14



4-20



4-27



4-29

My Corner of the Garden

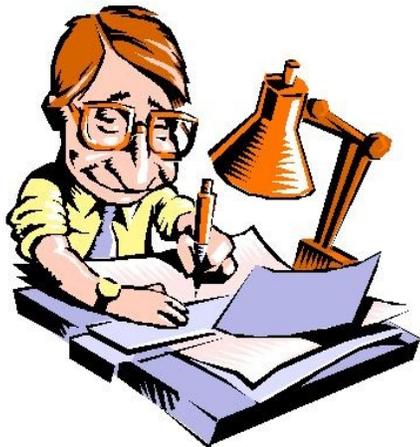
by Reed Elliott, Editor

This month I'd like to celebrate the triumphant 2022 return of the GWC annual Azalea Sale that just wrapped up. Despite facing the usual significant challenges, this year's sale was a stunning, record-setting success! Our net profits were nearly \$25,000, about twice what we've cleared in many recent years – and those profits not only fund the scholarships we award to hard-working NCSU horticulture students annually, they also pay honorariums for our monthly presenters, pay our room rent at the JC Raulston Arboretum for our monthly meetings, keep our annual membership dues stable and reasonable, and cover a large part of the actual costs for both the Spring Picnic and Plant Exchange (happening this month!) and the December Awards Banquet. The success of this year's Sale is owed to a lot of people, not least the many Clubmembers who volunteered day after day, to staff this year's sale at [Campbell Road Nursery](#) unloading, arranging, inventorying, and selling azaleas.

There are several specific individuals whose efforts and generosity I'd especially like to acknowledge. First is Charlie Leverett, once again our incomparable Azalea Sale Chairman. Charlie confronted and overcame many daunting uncertainties including the usual problems to finding enough high-quality vendors, scheduling deliveries, managing staffing, to say nothing of the vagaries of weather that included last-minute freezes reducing or at least significantly changing what some vendors actually were able to supply (versus what they'd promised). Charlie put in months of effort selecting and negotiating for the hundreds of varieties of azaleas we stocked, hammering out the detailed plans and organization that's required for a sale of this size, and all topped off with weeks of full-time work when the azaleas actually arrived and the sale kicked off. Our Club and our scholarship recipients owe Charlie a huge thank you. Selfless, hard-working folks like Charlie make the good works of the GWC possible. I'm sure I speak for every member when I say, THANK YOU Charlie Leverett. Job well done!

And then there's Mac and Vivian Williamson. When it comes to unselfish dedication, these folks take a prize. As always, both Mac and Vivian were present virtually every day of the Sale from start to finish. They were there every morning when the sun came up and the doors opened. They were there every evening when the sale closed and the equipment had to be put away and the tent taken down. They monitored our expenses and our sales meticulously and communicated our progress to the Board. They added to their usual duties this year as they worked to train a new generation of Azalea Sale cashiers who hopefully will shoulder some of their burden in future sales.

Finally there are Phil Campbell and the staff of [Campbell Road Nursery](#). As always, they went the extra mile and then some for us again this year. They provided space. They provided carts. They provided water. They provided nighttime security. And they did it all for free despite the obvious inconvenience to the Nursery's own operations. An important reason this year's Azalea Sale made a record-setting profit was Phil Campbell and [Campbell Road Nursery](#). If you're in the market for plants and gardening supplies, or if you know someone else who is, do yourself and them a favor - refer them to [Campbell Road Nursery](#).



It's a pleasure and a privilege to shout out a great big, heartfelt GWC THANK YOU! to Charlie, Mac, Vivian, Phil and to all the members who made the 2022 Azalea Sale one of our best ever! You made a difference to our Club, to gardens, and to gardening!

New Members

The Gardeners of Wake County welcomes anyone and everyone who loves gardens and gardening. This month we're happy to have added Jessica Sudduth of Wendell, Stagg Madry and returning Club veteran Rick Tate, both of Raleigh. Be sure to say, "Hi and welcome" when you see them at the Club Picnic!