

The Clod-Hopper



Volume 4, digital edition 11

Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. — Raleigh, NC

November 2020

Horse Manure

Paul Hoffman, Immediate Past President



Forty-five years ago when we as a young family had just moved from an apartment to a small town home in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC, I spent three dollars to buy the “Washington Star-News Garden Book,” a regularly revised garden guide by Wilbur H. Youngman, the *Star-News* garden writer since 1938. One of Mr. Youngman’s primary recommendations was the copious use of “well rotted horse manure” as a soil amendment.

Not having the good fortune of ever owning a horse or even knowing someone who did, I have never been able to evaluate Mr. Youngman’s advice until Judy and I were able two weeks ago to visit the garden of Club members Jim and Rita Shaloiko just across the Wake County line in North Raleigh.

I understand the Shaloiko’s back yard was mostly lawn when they moved in several



years ago. However Jim made the acquaintance of a stable owner, and for a few years, hauled trailer load after trailer load from the stable and dug it into the soil of his backyard.

The results are amazing as shown in the accompanying photos. Castor beans and bananas 15 feet high, dahlias like 6 by 6 foot shrubs, creeping Jenny in one year growing into



Club Meetings

For November, GWC presenter Doug Ruhren will take us on an indoor adventure via live *Zoom* presentation from the JC Raulston Arboretum itself. He’ll show us branches, stems and flowers cut from spectacular plant specimens that command attention with superb autumn interest. Doug’s background is amazing and includes participating in the design of the Sarah P. Duke, Paul J. Cienier, High Point University, and Daniel Stowe Gardens. If you’re anxious for an autumn adventure, zoom in to the Gardeners of Wake County meeting on Tuesday, November 17th at 7:30 for a garden tour without getting any mud on your shoes.

As always, Club members in good standing will receive a *Zoom* link via email to see the presentation live and text questions to our presenter. If you miss it, or more sadly still, if you’re not a GWC member, we’ll post a recording a few days later on the GWC website. Better yet, join the GWC and enjoy the action live! And don’t forget, now’s the time to reup your GWC membership for 2021. Contact Barbara Brown now!

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Club Officers and Committees

Board members

President: Virginia (Ginny) Parker

Vice President: Kathleen Thompson

Secretary: Jim Moore

Treasurer: Mac Williamson

Immediate Past President: Paul Hoffman

At-large board members: Leslie Cohen, Christine Elliott, Rich Engates, Eddie Robinson

Committee members

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

Audit: Charles Gilliam, Sharon LaRusch, Donna Farmer, 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: Kathleen Thompson

Projects: Sharon LaRusch, Lynn Swanson

Publicity: Charles Gilliam

Scholarship: Joanne Boone

Telephone: Johnny and Sherrill Johnson

Webmaster: Reed Elliott

Immediate Past President: Paul Hoffman

Horse Manure

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3 by 3 foot patches. And then there were tick-seed (coreopsis) plants that are about 15 inches tall in my yard (and the seed catalog), but 7 feet tall in Jim and Rita's garden.



Even the garden art that Jim created himself seems like it's on steroids. Take a look at the flowers growing on the fence and the stained glass, like a stately church window, standing at attention in the middle of the garden.

I could go on and on, but you might well want to go and see for yourself. I'm pretty sure Jim and Rita would be happy to walk you around if you called on a lazy Sunday afternoon and asked to stop by.

Spoiler Alert: I understand horse manure is not always what it once was. If you locate a source for yourself, make sure that the horses were not fed with hay or grass treated with the latest long lasting herbicides....



Contact Us

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

Contact Ginny Parker, President, by phone at home: 919-832-5483 or by cell: 919-880-3233

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

In Need of an Autumn Adventure?

by Kathleen Thompson, Vice President



Many of us have missed visiting the JC Raulston Arboretum these past many months. We want to know what's blooming, what has fall color, what unexpected plants are worthy of attention right now!

Issue solved! At our November online meeting, presenter Doug Ruhren will take us on an indoor adventure walk through the Arboretum, illustrated brilliantly with branches, stems and flowers cut from spectacular plant specimens that command attention and provide superb autumn interest.

Mr. Ruhren is an expert in plant science with an education that includes degrees from Cook College and Rutgers University.

Doug has been the Gardens Manager at the JC Raulston Arboretum since 2017 and takes the lead in grounds maintenance and plant production. Starting as a volunteer, he has a history of working at the Arboretum for nearly 30 years, helping design and maintain the long perennial border walk, as well as teaching classes. He also stepped in temporarily as Interim Director of the JCRA in the late 1990s.

Doug's diverse and extensive career includes gardening at many private estates and well known public gardens, notably participating in the design of Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens and becoming head gardener there, directing the maintenance and development of the gardens. He also serves as horticulturist for the American Camilla Society. Other design projects include the Sara P. Duke Gardens, the Paul J.



Ciener Botanical Garden in Kernersville, as well as several of the gardens at High Point University.

So if you're anxious to see what's happening in the autumn garden, zoom in to the Gardeners of Wake County meeting on Tuesday, November 17th at 7:30 for a garden tour without getting any mud on your shoes. The GWC looks forward to joining Doug Ruhren for an autumn adventure!



What Is Lasagna Layering?

brought to us by Mark Boone, Past President ([from the Bulb Blog](#))

Do you ever feel like a chef while gardening? While chefs add various ingredients to recipes to make their masterpieces, gardeners use different plants to create stunning landscape designs. Add a dash of this bulb here, a pinch of that annual there, and voila! You have a beautiful garden.

Well, as you know, gardening takes a bit more effort than tossing bulbs and seeds around your yard. But there are for sure similarities between chefs and gardeners—and if you're not convinced yet, then "lasagna layering" might make you think otherwise!



Besides being a fun way to incorporate color themes into your garden, lasagna layering can ensure something is always in bloom in your garden. Here's what lasagna layering is and your guide—or recipe!—on how to do it yourself!

Lasagna layering is a gardening method where you plant various bulbs in different layers of soil. This can be done in pots, and we call it "living flower arrangements." But when done in garden beds, bulbs planted with the lasagna layering method have more room to grow, which is ideal if you want them to come back year after year.

With lasagna layering, since the bulbs share the same garden bed soil, they are also sharing the same nutrients. That's why you should choose plants that peak at different times, so they don't have to fight for sunshine or nutrients from the soil. That means you can do staggered planting by including bulbs that bloom early, mid, and late spring, or you can opt for simultaneous planting and choose plants that perhaps bloom around the same time but don't compete with the other plants, so they all can take what they need to thrive.



Start with soil with lots of compost worked into it. This makes sure the soil has the nutrients plants need to grow, plus many bulbs appreciate well-draining soil. We'll give some examples of three-layer arrangements, but if you don't have soil deep enough, you can always do just two.

Once you determine where you'll put the bulbs—keep in mind most bulbs thrive in full sun but be sure to check the label—and after you have amended the soil, dig the area where you will place your lasagna layers. In general, you should plant bulbs three times its height deep, and four times for tulips. That means this first layer should generally have the largest bulbs since they require the deepest holes. When you space out the bulbs in your layer, have them about three times their width apart.

What Is Lasagna Layering?

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After you place the first layer of bulbs, cover with two inches of soil, then add the second layer of bulbs, but don't put them directly on top of the bulbs in the first layer. This will ensure the bulbs all have enough space to grow their roots in their own soil. Repeat this process until you have done all three layers, then water well.



To finish it all off, you can also overseed with annuals—sort of like adding Parmesan cheese on top of your lasagna.

If you select [fall-planted](#), spring-blooming bulbs that bloom in early, mid, and late spring, then you'll have a garden continuously in bloom! You

can also instead choose plants that bloom around the same time that will share the same soil profile without impinging on each other. Here are a couple of combinations you can use in lasagna layering.

The deepest layer of this bulb combination blooms the latest in the season, and the top layer blooms the earliest, meaning you'll have a garden bed always in bloom. This all-white flower theme will light up the night—they look simply stunning in the evening as your yard lights highlight them.

Layer 1 (Deepest Layer): [White Giant Allium](#)

Layer 2 (Middle Layer): [Antarctica Tulip](#)

Layer 3 (Top Layer): ['White Splendour' Anemone](#)



With this combination, each plant takes what it needs from the soil at different times of the year, even though they bloom around the same time, from late spring to early summer. This is a liberty or patriotic-themed combination since it features red, white, and blue flowers.

Layer 1 (Deepest Layer): [Red Impression Tulip](#)

Layer 2 (Middle Layer): [Thalia Daffodil](#)

Layer 3 (Top Layer): ['Blue Jacket' Hyacinth](#)

Lasagna layering helps you to maximize the space in your garden since you can plant more bulbs in less space! Have some fun with it, and see what kind of themes you can come up with!

Share and Care FAQs Answered

Sharon LaRusch and Lynn Swanson, Projects Co-Chairs

Garden Share and Cares are one-day (3-4 hours) events where you get to check out someone's yard (I love getting ideas that way!) while showing some GWC love by helping thy neighbor with a few tasks (while maintaining social distancing etiquette, of course)! These workdays employ micro crews of members who enjoy visiting other folks' gardens and want to lend a helping hand. *Garden Share and Care* projects extend invitations into other members' gardens and provide an opportunity to help with a project or chores while there. Our mission isn't just to form a work crew, but also to connect with fellow members and lend a helping hand. We will organize and hold these as the opportunities arise and schedules permit.



Let's run through some basic guidelines for our workdays during our temporary Cov-19 status. The great thing is that gathering safely is much easier outdoors! Perfectly suited for our Club!

For starters, if you aren't feeling up to par, stay home and self-quarantine. **RSVPs will be important** so we can gauge tasks and spacing. At the workdays, we will provide gel, masks, and Lysol wipes for those that need them. If we have more than 10 people, Lynn and I will separate tasks into two or more distinct groups, working in different parts of the garden area or two different member's yards.

Workday etiquette/suggestions:

- Use your own tools- We'll have painter's tape to mark them if needed. Garden gloves are also suggested.
- Maintain at least six feet social distancing from other individuals, with the exception of family or household members.
- Masks or other face covering should be worn outdoors when you cannot maintain at least six feet distancing from other people with the exception of family or household members. If folks work six feet apart, masks are at the discretion of the wearer.

As gardeners, we all enjoy the opportunity to visit other gardens. Most of us have also experienced times when, because of health or other life circumstances, particular garden chores may be overwhelming. What could be better than other GWC members coming alongside to lend a helping hand! If find yourself sidelined due to surgery, illness, etc., consider offering your garden for this program. We would love to visit you and your garden!

Lynn and I are available to discuss further and answer any questions you have.

Sharon
1-919-656-1717

Lynn
1-919-345-9708

The GWC December Banquet and Awards Ceremony Is On!

by Kathleen Thompson, Vice President



After much discussion, it has been decided to offer an in-person event for those who wish to attend in December, keeping in mind that we want everyone to stay safe and still have a good time. Accordingly, the Gardeners of Wake County will celebrate our annual December Banquet and Awards Ceremony as originally scheduled on December 8th at the NC State University Club at 6:00 pm. A buffet is planned with a delicious menu of two salads, two entrees, three sides and finishing with a choice of dessert along with expected items such as coffee, tea, warm rolls with

butter. The entrees on the buffet are Black and Blue New York Strip Medallions and Grilled Mahi-Mahi with tropical Mango Salsa, along with mixed greens and fresh fruit salads, vegetables and potatoes. And, of course, there will be chocolate on the dessert table with other choices. A cash bar will be open at 6:00 pm until 7:00 pm when dinner will be served.

The cost for the buffet is \$20 for each member and each member may bring one guest at the \$20 member price. So, a member plus one guest would be \$40.00. Any guest or non-member over the one allowed will need to pay the full cost for the dinner at \$42 each.

Here is some important information for those who choose to attend:

Reservations need to be made by sending a check with payment in full to our treasurer (below), along with your name and number of members and number of guests attending. Please include your e-mail address with your payment. Send checks and attendee information to:

Mac Williamson
1408 Lake Pine Dr.
Cary, NC 27511



Reservations and checks must be received by December 2nd. Once reservations are finalized, they'll be confirmed via e-mail and a list of attendees will be sent out. If you've paid, you should verify that your name is on the list. You must have a reservation as no walk-ups will be accepted on the evening of the banquet. There are no refunds once you have paid.

Masks must be worn at the University Club while indoors except when seated and eating. This is standard procedure in all restaurants. Each person attending will have their own pair of gloves to wear while going through the buffet line (with mask on, of course).

The University Club has assured us that they practice all necessary safety measures for every event held there. We look forward to having a wonderful time in this long-awaited gathering. Hope to see everyone on December 8th. For those who can't make it, we'll endeavor to provide a video of the awards presentations on the website some time after the event.

My Corner of the Garden

by Reed Elliott, Editor

Another November is here, another time to marvel at the kaleidoscope of color as falling leaves swirl around us on nippy morning walks. Like Chris and I, I'm sure most GWC members have been working hard to bring in the final harvest and prepare our gardens for the winter months to come. And, of course, all those swirling kaleidoscopic leaves have to be dealt with, too, once they hit the ground—that part's not my favorite!

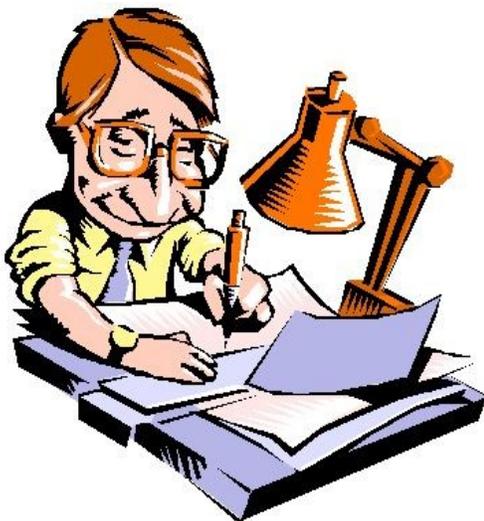
Although our gardens may be shutting down for the winter, the GWC is not about to go into hibernation! COVID may have cramped our style a bit, but we've learned to live, and even to thrive, under these demanding conditions. Doing so has required some changes in the way we operate for the moment, of course, but I'd like to call everyone's attention to a few of the new and exciting GWC adaptations that make this Club such a vibrant place to be!

For some time now, a couple of years in fact, GWC members have worked together to do garden service projects to benefit our community, our Club, and ourselves. The Garden Walk at Longview was a prolonged commitment that saw us play an instrumental role in initiating the restoration of a long-neglected masterpiece garden at Wake Med's Longview House. Sadly, COVID has shut that project down temporarily, but, when one door closes, two doors open at the GWC!

I want to call everyone's attention to major revisions in the Service Project area on the Club webpage. Not only is there a great new slideshow featuring pictures from our most recent projects, but there also are two, all-new links to opportunities that continue our Club's tradition of service to gardens and to our community.

First are the links to Share and Care. Share and Care workdays allow us to lend our green thumbs (and strong backs, of course) to fellow GWC members who need a helping hand. The Share and Care links on the website tell about the concept in general and then detail the specific monthly project. For example, in November we'll be helping out at Clubmember Mia Fiedler's garden. The Share and Care links will be updated every month.

They include a direct link to send an RSVP to Sharon and Lynn who coordinate the Share and Care service projects. You can help a fellow GWC member today. Visit the Service Project section on the webpage and sign up now.



Second, and right below the Share and Care links, are two links to our new, long-term project commitment to Joslin Gardens. Joslin Gardens is a lovely 4-acre hidden jewel near downtown Raleigh. Tucked away inconspicuously in an old forest, this secret garden is a conservancy that once was the home and garden of the Joslin family. Deeded to the city, it's now a little-known, secluded bit of beauty that's available to all. It's also been a bit neglected for awhile so it's a perfect long-term clean up, fix up project that's right down our GWC alley. Come join the fun with your fellow Clubmembers at Joslin Gardens. The signup links and annual calendar await you on the webpage.

THE GWC WANTS YOU—Renew Today!

As we near the end of another year, it's time to renew those GWC memberships! Being a GWC member is an amazing bargain. To keep those Club member benefits coming to you and flowing to our communities, just send your check to our Membership Chair, Barbara Brown — she's in the Club Directory.