

# The Clod-Hopper



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Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. — Raleigh, NC

October 2019

## Leaves

by Mark Boone, Past President



When the leaves fall off the trees, we can see the road from my back porch. The view is a picture of green for most of the spring and summer. By January the naked branches look normal and I've forgotten trees look like anything other than bare sticks until greenery pops out of those sticks in April.

Now that summer's wrapping up, it's time to clear the fallen leaves off my grass. When I was a boy my grandmother had a huge oak tree just outside her

farmhouse. Perhaps it's just my childhood memory but it seemed like it took my brother and me almost a whole weekend to rake up the leaves from that one tree. We would make as big a pile as possible and run and jump into the leaves. It was more fun then than it seems to me now. I've developed an allergic reaction to leaf mold and an almost identical allergic reaction to using a rake. I've still got two or three of them, but they rarely get used. One rake has big plastic tines capable of clearing a two-foot swath at a time. None of the rakes work as well as my backpack blower with its category 4 hurricane wind. Twenty minutes, and the yard is clean.



## Club Meetings

The Gardeners of Wake County meet at the JC Raulston Arboretum every 3rd Tuesday. Refreshments and socializing start at 7:00 and the evening's guest presentation begins at 7:30.

Our guest speaker for October is Jeana Myers, a longtime Raleigh resident and NCSU Wake County Extension Agent for Horticulture and Agriculture. Jeana has an extensive academic background in Agricultural Economics and Soil and Crop Science as well as international experience in the Peace Corps and in a recent year-long sabbatical journey of gardening discovery across the globe. Jeana will share her thoughts and expertise as she discusses home and community gardening in North Carolina.

This is an opportunity to hear a "world class" expert and long-time Wake County gardening specialist.

Don't miss out!

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## Club Officers and Committees

### Board members

President: Virginia (Ginny) Parker  
Vice President: TBA  
Secretary: Jim Moore  
Treasurer: Mac Williamson  
Immediate Past President: Paul Hoffman  
At-large board members: Barbara Brown, Rich Engates, Leslie Cohen, Eddie Robinson

### Committees

Activities Chairs: Will Farmer, Reed & Christine Elliott (seed swap), Renee Engates (refreshments), Mark Boone (picnic), Ginny Parker (awards banquet)  
Audit: Charles Gilliam, Sharon LaRusch, Reed Elliott, Donna Farmer  
Azalea Sale: Charlie Leverett  
Beautification Awards: Laine Thomas  
Club Awards: Jim Moore  
Endowment Investment: Charles Gilliam  
Friendship: Chris Elliott  
Historical: Donna Farmer  
Membership, Barbara Brown  
Newsletter Editor: Reed Elliott  
Nominating: TBA  
Programs: TBA  
Projects: Sharon LaRusch, Lynn Swanson  
Publicity: Charles Gilliam  
Scholarship: Joanne Boone  
Telephone: Johnny and Sherrill Johnson  
Webmaster: Reed Elliott

## Contact Us

For additional information email our Club at [gardener@gardenersofwakecounty.org](mailto: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/>

## Leaves

*(continued from page 1)*

I was in my labor-saving nirvana mindset happily clearing the leaves when one of my son's friends said, "Why are you doing all that work? You should use my blower." The next day he brought over a three-foot diameter fan on wheels with a 10-horsepower motor. The thing was even self-propelled. It took only two passes across the lawn to make it leaf free.



If only my brother and I had had such a contraption! The leaves would have been gone in a few minutes. But maybe it is just as well we didn't. The blower doesn't make any piles for jumping in and my dad would likely have asked us to split firewood for heating the house with all our extra spare time. Of course, if I can imagine we had a fan blower, I can also imagine that we had a hydraulic log splitter like I use to split my firewood now. Times change but leaves go on forever.

# Community Gardens Growing Wild in Wake County!

*by Sharon LaRusch*

Jeana Myers grew up in West Virginia, and studied Agricultural Economics at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. After graduation, she joined the Peace Corps and served in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1984-86 as an Agriculture Extension agent teaching villagers about modern gardening methods and small animal raising.

After completing her MS in Crop Science, Jeana went on to earn her PhD in Soil Science. Her intent had been to return to overseas work, but, instead, she met her future husband here and has stayed in Raleigh ever since.

In 2000, Jeana and her husband took a sabbatical year's leave of absence from NCSU to travel the globe with their 2-year-old son, visiting farms and gardens in eleven countries.



The Myers family home, on a 1/3 acre lot near downtown Raleigh, serves as an example of urban sustainable living with solar panels, water catchment, vegetables and fruits, chickens, tiny ponds and honeybees.

Jeana has been the Horticulture Extension agent in Wake County since 2012, and considers it the best job she's ever had.

At the GWC October meeting, Jeana will share her thoughts and expertise in the area of home and community gardening. This month's meeting is on Tuesday, October 15th at the JC Raulston Arboretum. The meeting begins with refreshments and socializing at 7:00 PM. The evening's presentation begins at 7:30. This is an opportunity to hear a "world class" expert and long-time Wake County gardening specialist. Don't miss out!

# Cancelled Now but Not for Long(view)

by Sharon LaRusch



First off, I'd like to welcome the new members who have requested me to add them to our Longview crew!

For the moment, I want to provide a quick update. As you can tell from the title, we cancelled the scheduled September workday.

As WakeMed finalizes its budgets, schedules and the like, we aren't quite ready to begin preparation for planting—yet. I can hardly wait until that workday

comes! It is going to be so fun to have our crew start *painting our garden palette* we have so diligently prepared. If you are like me, envisioning our finished garden has been in my mind during the previous long months of clearing wisteria and digging out and piling bricks!

I visited Longview a few days ago and WakeMed has recently cleaned up for us and the weed inhibitor is doing a good job. In addition, the lack of rain has kept at least some of the weeds from prospering. Other than a fallen crepe myrtle and a couple of small wisteria vines still infesting a boxwood, there just isn't a lot of work to do. That said, we decided everyone's time could be better spent playing in their own gardens this month and so there was no September Longview workday. We will just need to keep in mind that when we are ready to measure, plot, dig, plant, water and admire... there will be a quick bit of tidying to do first.

So.... we will keep the anticipation building and I'll keep you posted! Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks for the enthusiasm and be ready to start planting soon—hopefully this month!



# It's Fall—It's Garlic Time!

by Will Farmer

Garlic is planted in the fall for harvest 7 to 9 months later (midsummer is good in NC). After planting, apply a 2"-4" blanket of mulch (e.g., straw, untreated grass clippings, shredded leaves) to retain soil moisture and provide insulation plus weed control. This will also help prevent frost heave. Loosen the mulch in the spring so the shoots can push through. Reapply mulch after the shoots pop up. Remember that gardeners, as always, are on "weed patrol". Remove weeds regularly to decrease competition for water and nutrients. If the garlic plant produces a tall stem with a swollen flower bud at the end (a scape) remove it in favor of bulb growth. Consider applying a high nitrogen fertilizer, such as fish emulsion or blood meal according to fertilizer product label directions when the shoots appear. Apply again about 2 to 3 weeks later. When next summer rolls around and the 3 – 4 bottom leaves turn brown, harvest your garlic for curing, storing and enjoying.



Harvest garlic before tops completely die down, preferably with 5-8 green leaves still attached. Pay particular attention to the color of each leaf where it meets the stem – browning there will correspond to decay of that wrapper layer around your bulb. Waiting too long before harvesting your garlic will cause all the paper skins to fall away from the bulb, exposing it to soil, insects, and plant pathogens. Remove excess soil from the outer paper skin, but do not wash your garlic bulbs. Lay whole plants on screens or hang to dry. Common clothespins can be used to hang garlic from a line between barn rafters or a similar space. Allow it to cure completely in a warm well-ventilated room. Watch for rotting bulbs, remove these and increase air circulation if needed. Curing will take about 4-6 weeks. At that time roots and tops can be trimmed, and outer dirty skins can be removed. Store cured garlic in a cool (50-70 degrees F.) and dry (50%-70% humidity) place. Garlic varieties generally taste the same at harvest time, but after curing and some storage time, individual variety flavors will come out, with flavors becoming stronger over time.



Read more at: <https://lee.ces.ncsu.edu/2018/10/growing-garlic-lee/>

# My Corner of the Garden

*by Reed Elliott, Editor*

Well, it wouldn't be October if the stores weren't already gearing up for Christmas. I was in Costco today (October 1st) and, sure enough, right next door to the rack of Halloween costumes were aisles of Christmas decorations and plastic Christmas trees.

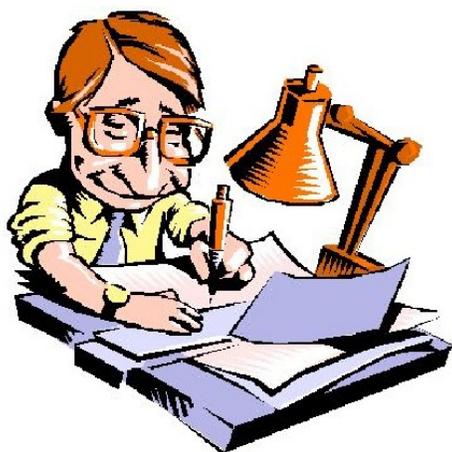
Not to be left out of the Holiday rush, I've been asked by our esteemed President, Ginny Parker, to make a first reminder about the not-so-distant-as-you-may-think Annual GWC Awards Banquet. This is a major Club event that happens in December each year. If you haven't attended one in the past, don't miss out!

The Banquet is historically held at the NC State University Club. It provides not only a delicious and bounteous feast and tons of good fellowship with fellow Clubmembers, it's also the time when our Club honors some deserving members and non-members for outstanding service to our Club and to gardening.

In addition, the December Banquet is the moment our Club presents the annual scholarship awards to an inspiring group of deserving NC State Horticulture students. Making these scholarship awards is an important purpose and reason for our Club's existence. The money for these scholarships is generated by the dedicated work of many of our wonderful members. The big fundraisers this year were, first, as always, the Annual Azalea Sale, and, second, for the first time, the Azalea Sale proceeds were augmented by our members' participation as monitors at the NC State Fair Flower Show.

The Annual Awards Banquet is one way our Club thanks the many members who contributed their time and effort to our Club's various projects and activities throughout the preceding year. It's an honor to be associated with such a group of fine people. Every GWC member will want to be present at the 2019 GWC Annual Awards Banquet.

All that said, Ginny tells me that, starting right now, people can reserve their place at this year's banquet. The location is the NC State University Club. The date (mark your calendar) is Tuesday, December 10th. The price for members is a bargain at \$19.00 each for the first two. Guests after that have to pay what it actually costs to put on an event of this quality—\$50.00 each. Did I mention that this is a bargain for members?!



No one wants to get left out of the fun, so bring your checks to the next regular Club meeting on Tuesday, October 15th. If you're like me and have a tendency to forget your own name unless frequently prompted, you may want to do this on a "sooner than later" basis, but, if you forget to bring your check this month, there's still time to "remember in November." Don't get left out—get out your checkbook now!

## New Members

The Gardeners of Wake County welcomes anyone and everyone who loves gardens and gardening. This month we're happy to have added Gene Jowyk of Cary and Sundeep Chennupati of Raleigh to our GWC family. Be sure to say "Hi and welcome" when you see them at the next meeting.