

# The Clod-Hopper



Volume 28 Edition 1 Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. – Raleigh, NC

JANUARY 2012

## AWARDS BANQUET

It was a beautiful night for our Awards Banquet at the University Club. We missed those of you who were not able to join us for a very good meal and the opportunity to visit with members and guests. We look forward to seeing you at a meeting very soon. Thank you to Ginny Parker for making the arrangements for this year's party. Thank you also to Charles Gilliam for keeping the business portion of the meeting short so members could enjoy the party.

Mac Williamson presented the first awards. The Green Thumb Award was made to Bill and Donna Farmer of Wake Forest for their participation in our "Plant-a-Row" program. Beverly Hurley, owner and Editor of Triangle Gardener, received the Dogwood Award for her graciousness in providing us with copies of her publication and for allowing us to use her booth space to promote club membership at several local tradeshows this past year. Trowel Awards went to three very deserving members: CJ Dykes, Dick Lankford and Ginny Parker.



We specifically thanked CJ for his help taking care of our "Community Garden." We appreciate the help Dick Lankford, Archivist/Historian with the NC Division of Archives in maintaining the historic records of the Club. Ginny Parker has been a valuable Board member and her help with the 2011 Awards Banquet was noted above.

Ginny Parker presented two Beautification Awards. Gerald Adams was honored for his work as "Curator" of the gardens at The Executive Mansion. We appreciate his presentation at our Club meeting last year and his help in arranging our tour of "The Governor's Garden". The other Beautification Award was given to Logan's Trading Center, specifically for their help in fostering the "Plant-a-Row for the Hungry" in Wake County.

The Silver Vase Award for exemplary service by a club member was given to Paula Hoffmann. The 2012 Directory will contain additional information on the awards.

The last item of business for the evening was the installation of officers by Anne Clapp, past Club president. Returning officers are Charles Gilliam, president; Mark Boone, vice-president; Paula Hoffmann, secretary and At-Large Board Members Bob Jackson and Ilene Vakkur. Mac Williamson was installed as Treasurer. CJ Dykes and Sherrill Johnson were installed for two-year terms as At-Large Board Members.

## CLUB MEETINGS

*Meetings are at 7:30 pm at the JC Raulston Arboretum*

- Jan. 17** Lauri Lawson, Niche Gardens "Using Native Plants"
- Feb. 21** Phil Campbell, Campbell Road Nursery "Spring Planting"
- Mar. 20** Jeff Kish, Bartlett Tree Experts "Tree Trimming"

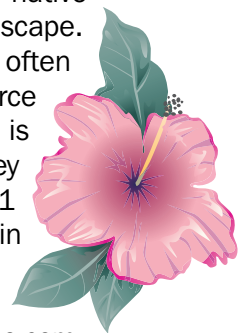
## JANUARY PROGRAM

Many of the national gardening magazines have been featuring articles on using native plants in the landscape.

A nursery that is often included as a source for native plants is Niche Gardens. They are located at 111 Dawson Street in Chapel Hill and their web address is [www.nichegardens.com](http://www.nichegardens.com).

Our speaker for January is Lauri Johnson from Niche Gardens and we are listing her topic as "Using Native Plants."

For some additional information you may want to read the article "A Formal Design with Natives" written by our local member Helen Yost in the October issue of *Carolina Gardener*.



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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### Vice President

MARK BOONE

### Treasurer

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### Secretary

PAULA HOFFMANN

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ILENE VAKKUR

CJ DYKES

SHERRILL JOHNSON

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MAC WILLIAMSON

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Audit . . . . .	Gary Jewel
Azalea Sale . . . . .	Bob Hartgrove
Beautification Awards . . . . .	Ginny Parker
Club Awards . . . . .	Spencer Clark
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Flower Show . . . . .	Charles Gilliam
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Webmaster . . . . .	Jim Wilson

[www.gardenersofwakecounty.org](http://www.gardenersofwakecounty.org)

## MEMBERSHIP

We welcome several new members to the Club. Their addresses will appear in the 2012 Membership Directory. They are Wayne Hurder of Raleigh, Jennifer Midthan of Cary, Michael Lehmann of Siler City and Douglas and Linda Mann of Youngsville.

The membership form is included in this issue on page 3. It backs up to the address section so you do not lose "editorial information" when you return it to Carole Johnson. We ask you to return the form as quickly as possible so the 2012 Membership Directory can be distributed.

## AZALEAS

The fall of 2011 produced some early blooms on plants that are not supposed to be "Encore" azaleas. Some plants may have started to produce new growth that will not be hardened off by the time cold weather finally arrives. If that growth freezes, and especially if the stem splits, clip the stem back to old wood.



Some of that growth may have been triggered by fertilizer that "escaped" when Fescue lawns got fertilized this fall. Be careful when spreading fertilizer on lawns in the fall because it can produce growth spurts in shrubbery, especially when soil and air temperatures are warmer than average. The best time to fertilize and cut back azaleas is right after they bloom in the spring.

Check the mulch around the base of azaleas to make sure it is not too close to the base of the plant. A mulch layer that starts just under the drip line of the plant and extends to the outside margin of the root ball helps retain moisture in the soil and insulate the roots from severe temperature changes. Some gardeners have noticed gnawing at the trunk of the plants that may have been from voles. It is easier to detect that damage if mulch does not cover the trunk of the plant.

Bob Hartgrove is hard at work on the Spring Azalea Sale. There will be some new varieties as well as the ones that have been so popular over the years. If you lose some azaleas or simply want to add some new ones to your landscape remember that we will have an early "members sale". Members who help unload plants at the Fairgrounds or sign up to work on the first day of the sale have the best opportunity to get the plants they need or want so get in touch with Bob to volunteer your help.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Gardening Special Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Other Interests/Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor (not required) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for families for the calendar year: January – December. Make checks payable to Gardeners of Wake County. Application form and check are to be mailed to:

**Gardeners of Wake County**  
**Carole Johnson, Membership Chairman**  
**5346 Lake Wendell Rd.**  
**Zebulon, NC 27597**

## FALL CLEAN-UP

Many of us did not get all of our fall gardening chores finished before Christmas. The average date of the first frost in Raleigh is October 16 but many of us made it until December before we saw the effects of a frost in our yards. It was warm and plants were still attractive after Thanksgiving so we postponed some of our fall clean-up. In many yards the oak trees were still hanging onto their leaves when the leaf pick-up crews came through our neighborhoods. Those can still be bagged for later pick-up or they can be shredded and composted.



Annuals that are now dead can be pulled and added to the compost pile or you could cut the tops off at ground level and leave the roots in the ground. Most perennials can be cut back to 2 or 3 inches above ground level. If there is new green growth at the base of chrysanthemums, daisies, iris



or other plants leave that in place. Also be careful of the new foliage of early spring bulbs that is emerging.

Remove the dead leaves and stems from the garden and add them to the compost pile. If you leave them in the beds they seem to attract slugs that can damage early-emerging plants.

If you did not clean up the hosta beds get that dead foliage removed as well. Slugs are very fond of early-emerging hostas. Canna foliage also needs to be cleaned out of beds. If you had problems with canna leaf rollers last year make sure all foliage is removed from the area. Some gardeners treat the area with bT to prevent the development of the leaf rollers in the spring.

You can cut back the brown stalks of ornamental grasses if they were damaged by winds or other causes. If the clumps still have an attractive form you can keep them for winter interest in the garden. Some adventurous gardeners have been

known to use a can of acrylic spray paint on grass clumps to provide a bit of winter color. (Your editor uses that technique on hydrangea blooms.)

Don't cut back hellebore foliage. It is not very attractive but it is still helping store some energy for the late winter bloom. It also helps mark the space where you will look for that spot of woodland color.

Roses were still blooming in mid-December so most of us postponed cutting them back. If there are very tall canes on hybrid tea and shrub roses it is a good idea to cut them back to no more than



4 feet. This reduces the chance of damage from winds uprooting bushes. Climbing roses may need to be tied in place for protection from ice and strong winds. Standard roses (tree roses, either miniature or full size) also need to be tied to a support. They do not need additional protection in this area. The rest of the rose pruning can wait until March.

**GARDENERS OF  
WAKE COUNTY**

5346 Lake Wendell Road  
Zebulon, NC 27597

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Raleigh, NC  
Permit No.2494

Change Service Requested

## PRUNING

The March program on tree trimming is scheduled for the middle of our best season for pruning in this area. During the winter you may want to take photographs of some of your deciduous trees to figure out which limbs might need to be removed for better shape, rubbing branches or to remember where damaged limbs are in the tree.

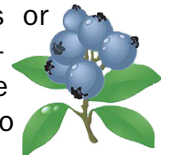
If we have a heavy snow you may want to take a photograph of some evergreens that may show the effect of snow load on limbs. The snow drops off quickly as it warms up and limbs straighten up. Later in the season that tree may have a limb that appears to suddenly die. A quick glance at the winter picture may show that limb was weighted down by the snow and might have been damaged.

## BITS AND PIECES

Durham garden writer Frank Hyman has an article on growing food in the shade in the February 2012 issue of *Fine Gardening*. Some of the plants he recommends are beets, leaf lettuce, Pawpaw, rhubarb and black currants. Your editor will add one tip — if you really must have a home-grown tomato, try growing them in a container that you can put on a deck or driveway in the sun.

The October issue of *The American Gardener* had an interesting article on small trees. With smaller lots homeowners welcome recommendations for trees that are more in scale with their living spaces. Some that were recommended for our area include the fringe tree (*Chionanthus praecox*) especially the cultivar Prodigy, the Taiwan herry

(*Prunus campanulata* and one of its hybrid offspring “Okame”). Several of the Amelanchiers or Serviceberries are included because the birds are attracted to the fruit.



### 2012 PROGRAMS

Mark Boone has a very interesting series of programs planned for the coming year. The meeting calendar has been updated and a complete listing will appear in the Membership Directory. If you have suggestions for a special field trip please forward your suggestions to Mark or to Charles Gilliam. Their contact information is in the 2011 Directory.