

NC Cooperative Extension



ROWAN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2009

FEBRUARY-Groundhog Day. More winter. Blooms where you least expect them. Hints of Spring winging around the bird feeders. Clean out those bird houses, hang the gourd bottles for the purple martins. Force a few stems of pussy willow or forsythia. Start some seeds.

ROWAN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION MEETING TUESDAY February 10, 2009 1:00PM Ag Center

We will be hosting a special guest speaker Mr. Matt Hunter of the American Camellia Society. Mr. Hunter's topic "Beautiful Landscape Camellias for North Carolina" will be open to the public. The presentation will be followed immediately by a Q&A session and refreshments for the audience. This program is open to anyone interested in camellias. Admission for non-Master Gardeners will be a \$5.00 donation to the Association to help fund community and youth projects.



After the program and follow up, we will have our regular meeting. We are asking all members to assist by furnishing additional refreshments (cookies, brownies, 2 liter drinks, etc.) Pam Ervin and Karen Busby are primary servers for this event.

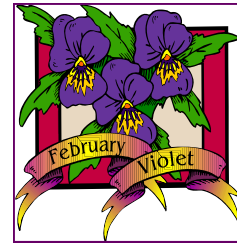
If you have not paid your 2009 dues or signed a Recertification agreement, this will be your last opportunity to do so. The 2009 MG Directory is being planned and current information will be compiled for publication, including the Class of 2009. Please let us know if you have any changes; E-mail address or phone number, or addition of a cell number.

BEGINNING GARDENING

Cooperative Extension is offering a series of workshops for first time gardeners. Believe it or not, there are people who do not know how to garden, and would like to learn more about vegetable gardening in Rowan County, NC. All of us can improve our skills with new techniques and new varieties of insect and disease resistant plants. It wouldn't hurt to review the basics of soil preparation, fertilization and irrigation either. The first of these sessions will be offered Thursday, February 5 at 7:00 PM at the Mt Ulla Fire Station on Rt. 801. Additional sessions will be offered as needed through out the county. If you know of a club or civic group that would be interested in such a presentation, please let Darrell know.



From the President:



Have you noticed the days are getting longer? I was in Lowe's recently and they are making space for spring inventory. When I visited Rufty Garden Center this past week I was informed that the spring shipments are starting to trickle in. Even my mailbox is getting weighed down with garden and flower catalogs. All of this is great news for us Master Gardeners as these simple occurrences just seems to kick start the gardening juices flowing in our veins again. As if these simple signs of spring were not enough to get us thinking gardening, how about the 2009 Rowan Master Gardener retreat that just concluded at Villa Franca Estates? Wasn't that a great planning session and how could anyone possibly complain about Ginger's home cooking and hospitality?

Well now our platter is full of challenges and opportunities to apply our skills for the next eleven months. With the economy as bad as it is, Master Gardeners will surely become a critical component as educators in our local community. In fact as we discussed at the retreat, it now appears 2009 will offer more choices, in more areas, for each of us to use our individual skills. In the coming weeks the Board of Directors will finalize a plan of programs, projects, educational opportunities, day trips and overnight trips. There will be plenty of work to be accomplished this year but guaranteed, we will have our laughs, learn a little and even socialize some.

BOB



Speaking of Violets:

If you send violets to someone you are sending them a message of love, humility, modesty, resurrection, spring and the immortal soul.



2009 RETREAT—January 27, 2009 Villa Franca Estate



Immediate Past President Carolyn Alexander with members Joanne Johnson and Ed Joyner

President Bob Bruce facilitates 2009 Retreat at the Villa Franca Estate.



Carolyn Glasgow, Sara Campbell, Sally Bradley, Martha Mincey, Lana Turner, Karen Busby and Eleanor Sandifer discuss goals for upcoming year.

Darrell Blackwelder provides insight for the coming year to Kay Ball and Pam Ervin.



Jean Gillooly and Beth Boger enjoy lunch.

Returning Secretary Martha Mincey and another former president Sonja Skelton.



Classmates of 2008 Jim Stricker and Lana Turner catch up.

Social Chair Virginia Klutz is ready for lunch.



Sue Davis, Dawn Holshouser, Jim Stricker, Edna Burger, Anne Zaffino, Jean Lamb, Sonja Skelton and Bob Bruce have a pre-retreat visit.

Edna Burger is going for extra credit with double badges! That's Karen Busby in the background!



Anne Zaffino and Jean Lamb are smiling for the camera. (They are actually waiting for lunch.)

Many thanks to our hostess (for the second year) Ginger Black. She provides the facility as well as a marvelous lunch, in addition being a contributing Master Gardener, Class of 2008.



WSTP RADIO-1490AM—



Carole & Darrell on air

Thanks to Darrell's hard work, our twice a month radio show will be going weekly in the near future! Tune in on Thursday mornings, 8:35-9:00AM for the latest in horticultural happenings around Rowan County. We also feature Cooperative Extension events and activities with Community involvement. The show is also available on cable TV.



Kent Bernhardt & Howard Platt

FEBRUARY CHECKLIST:

Continue perusing seed catalogues— Check out the 2009 All American Selections

[-http://www.all-americanselections.org/Winners.asp](http://www.all-americanselections.org/Winners.asp)

Prepare beds for planting. Or create new planting boxes for square foot or lasagna gardening.

Plant asparagus crowns and other early vegetables. Remember to trellis those English peas.

Clean up ornamental beds, checking mulch and winter weeds. Control wild garlic and chickweed with a lawn formula broadleaf herbicide (one containing 2,4-D) Check out a new gardening book at the library. A review might make a good newspaper article. Judicious pruning for winter damage to trees and ornamental shrubs.

Continue to plant. It's not too late for bulbs, but quality of bloom may be compromised.

Plan trips to local garden shops and nurseries. Venture off the path. Get the Garmin or TomTom and go!

Houseplants need some TLC about now. Give them a shower, check for mealy bugs and scale. Treat appropriately. Start new plants from leggy begonias. Think Plant Swap.



Great Backyard Bird Count

<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>



The 12th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count February 13-16.

Anyone can take part, from the novice bird watchers to experts, by counting birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as you wish) on one or more days of the event and reporting the sightings on-line at www.birdcount.org

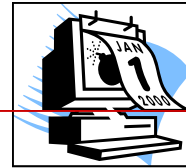
If you have been feeding the birds all winter, this is one pleasant way to take some time and really see what's been coming to your feeders. The pine siskins, gold finches, red polls, house finches, chickadees, downy woodpeckers, doves and more are all around the black-oil sunflowers seeds. The bluebirds are staying the coldest of nights in the vacant bird condo. They appreciate the warm water in the bird bath. The robins are flocking in the fields, crows are chasing the red tailed hawks (who have driven the red shouldered hawks away) and I can hear but not see an owl at dusk. Rehab the birdhouses. It won't be long before new families and old friends will be moving in.

Southern Spring Home & Garden Show—

Wednesday-March 4—Sunday March 8—The Park, Charlotte NC

http://www.southernshows.com/sss/index.php?general_info=1&





CALENDAR 2009

FEBRUARY 2009

- 3 11:00AM—Poncho Villas Restaurant –Writers Forum
1:00PM—BOD—Special meeting—Conference Room Ag Center
- 4 8:30AM—WSTP Radio
- 10 1:00PM Association meeting—Ag Center – Open to the public
Beautiful Landscape Camellias –Matt Hunter
- 13-16 Great American Backyard Bird Count
- 19 8:30AM—WSTP Radio
- 24 10:00AM—BOD—Chamber of Commerce

MARCH 2009

- 1-4 Philadelphia Flower Show –co-op with Davidson County MGs
- 5 8:30AM-WSTP Radio
- 10 1:00PM Association meeting
- 19 8:30AM—WSTP Radio
- 31 10:00AM—BOD—Chamber of Commerce

Horticultural Happenings:

Hellebore Days 2009—February 14– March 21 9AM-5PM Mon-Sat
Gethsemane Garden & Nursery—Greensboro, NC
www.gethgardens.com
Wing Haven Plant Sale www.winghaven.com
UNCC Plant Sale www.gardens/uncc.edu

Please note that some of these dates may change due to unforeseen circumstances.
Please check the web page for updates and corrections.

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