

September 2023

Gardening & Beautification

A Publication of the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club



Welcoming Men & Women

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President	Phil Abers
Vice President	Bruce Fraedrich
Secretary	Denie Crowder
Treasurer	Mary Ann Hipp

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Mark Carlson
Charlie Crescenzi
Curtis Marshall
Ben Waddell
Beth Waddell
Sheila Middlebrooks

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Gardening & Beautification

is the newsletter of the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club. It is published monthly except in December, and is available to the public free of charge. Sign up for the emailed newsletter by sending your request to:
Webmaster@DirtDaubers.org

President's Corner

I just returned from a three week car trip to California. I drove through parts of the south, midwest, desert southwest and California. To me, the desert is an interesting place to visit with the unique plants and animals. However, living there I could not grow many of the plants I enjoy having in the Upstate. California has a great climate for growing, but has chronic water shortages. Most of my friends there have reduced or eliminated lawns and shrubs.

The people in the midwest must be tough just like the plants. Summer temperatures reach into the 100's with winter temperatures plunging to - 30 F. Our climate is relatively moderate and, in most years, we have an abundance of water. We have a great place to grow a variety of plants. Let's be thankful for our good fortune. Happy gardening to our members, friends and community in this, our 75th club anniversary year.

Garden Club Picnic, Monday, September 18 at the SCC Pavilion

- The picnic will start at 6 PM. The club will furnish hamburgers, buns and fixings. It is suggested that members with last names starting from A through M bring side dishes and those with last names starting with N through Z bring desserts.





Post Office Box 1502
Spartanburg, SC 29304
DirtDaubers.org

Founded in 1948 as the "Dirt Daubers" the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club welcomes men, women and corporate members with an interest in nature.

As well as sharing gardening interests, the club has planted over 5,000 trees in Spartanburg, assists with many area beautification projects, and conducts a twice-yearly Tree & Shrub sale.



2023 Litter pickup schedule

Dec. 9 rain date **Dec 16**

Our area for litter control is Pine St. from Palmetto St. to McCravey Dr.

We meet at 8 AM in parking area behind Chamber of Commerce (off Oakland Av.)

Renew Now 2023 Membership

Single \$20 Family \$28 Student \$5
Corporate \$100

Forms are located at
DirtDaubers.org/Membership
and will be available at the next
general meeting.

Bring check or cash & completed
form to Joyce Crescenzi.



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Upcoming Events

Fall Plant Sale will be Friday, October 13 and Saturday, October 14 from 8 AM - 2 PM both days.

75th Anniversary Celebration Dinner at the Piedmont Club - Thursday, November 9



Fall Community Day in partnership with Hatcher Garden - Saturday, November 11





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Spartanburg Men's Garden Club

2024 Officer/Director Member Candidates

Club Officer Nominations:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer

Phil Abers
Beth Waddell
Denie Crowder
Sheila Middlebrooks

New Directors Nominations:

Darvin Helvy
Linda McHam
Curtis Marshall
Joan Marshall
Charles Covert



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Biography

Darvin Helvy

I joined the SMGC around 1991. Recently I was looking at an old copy of our newsletter: Gardening and Beautification. There was an article in that issue about the Adopt-a-Highway Litter Pickup and it reminded me of when I led that program. In those early years as a club member, I also participated in the following activities: working at an Earth Day and Rose Show setting up displays at Westgate mall; helping at tree and plant sales; working on the Pine Street landscape upgrade and the I-85 bypass tree planting. I have successfully taken the Master Gardener program, enjoyed helping with the container plant and landscape evaluation programs, and volunteered with the Kudzu Coalition. I was actively involved in the early days of Hatcher Garden, volunteering with Harold Hatcher's many work teams. I really believe this club has made Spartanburg a great place to live through service, education, and beautification over the years. It's a part of who we are. Men and women dedicated to making a positive impact in our community.

I grew up in New Kensington, Pennsylvania, a small town outside of Pittsburgh. Coal and steel mills were the main employers. After high school I received a NROTC scholarship to Florida A&M University, where I received a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and was commissioned in the US Navy as a naval officer. In the Navy I was stationed in Norfolk, VA, and assigned to the USS Neosho, a refueling ship, then to the USS Richard E. Byrd, a destroyer. After four years and two ships I returned to civilian life. I spent the next 33 years working for Michelin Tire Corporation in Spartanburg. During this time, I received an associate degree from Spartanburg Technical College in Horticulture. Due to my work schedule, I was not an active member of the SMGC for a while, but it wasn't long before I returned with the same excitement and enthusiasm. It was as if I'd never left.

As a Director, Vice President, and President in the years between 2014-2021, I gained a lot more appreciation for what our club was doing. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure that our focus on being a dynamic, working organization will continue through our volunteer efforts. Currently I'm involved with a team working on our 75th Anniversary Celebrations throughout this year. We plan to have our final celebration enjoying dinner at the Piedmont Club in Spartanburg.

I married my wife Audrey in 1973 and we will be celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary in August 2023. We have three grown sons, 10 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. We worship at the Central Church of Christ in Spartanburg.

When I'm not doing club work, I'm involved with Southeastern Children's Home, serving on their Board of Directors and I also work as a poll manager during elections. I've also enjoyed volunteer work for the United Way.

My favorite hobby is working in my vegetable garden all year long. We like to travel and I also like to run 5k's to help maintain a healthy lifestyle.



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Photography
by Linda McHam

Poncirus trifoliata, a
citrus tree native to
China and Korea



Hydrangea



Japanese Painted Fern

Our Corporate Members are listed below. Please support them.

Creekside Garden & Nursery
Hatcher Garden & Woodland Preserve
Piedmont Farm & Garden
Peggy Wilson, Realtor
Schneider Shrub & Tree Care
Wofford College



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Member Musing

By Denie Crowder

Pass-Along Plants

The term “passalong” plants is used frequently in gardening circles. For gardeners, it is a joy to share their gardens with friends or family. Or, as with the Spartanburg Men’s Garden Club, it is propagating cuttings from favorites to sell at our spring and summer plant sales. To me, “passalong” plants are those that have been given to me by friends, or ones that I have propagated from family and friends. While I enjoy seeing well-manicured lawns and gardens with many new varieties of plants, nothing speaks to my heart as much as riding through Converse Heights in the late spring and seeing all the azaleas and hydrangeas in full bloom.

I remember seeing the blue mophead hydrangeas in full bloom at both my grandmothers’ homes in Greenville. A cousin gave me a cutting that she had propagated several years ago in a small Maxwell House coffee can. I was told this was the way Grandmama “rooted” it. It came from my mother’s family home. It has a new home now in my back garden at my bay window. I named it “Grandmama’s Hydrangea”. Another special hydrangea is one from my mother’s home. Mom would break stems from hydrangeas and azaleas, stick them in the ground and be able to get them to root and grow. This particular plant was my first successful effort at rooting a stem. In her honor, this hydrangea is named “Duchess”.

There are many other hydrangeas in my garden—some propagated—others purchased. Two of the more meaningful ones growing in the garden were gifts and a prize at one of the Spartanburg Men’s Garden Club meetings. The one given to me is a white mophead and was given by a dear friend when my dad passed in 2004. This past spring when all the other hydrangea did not bloom, this one had one bloom for the first time. The other one was propagated by Jess Taylor, a deceased member of the garden club.

A white hydrangea in the back corner of the garden bloomed prolifically this spring. It came from my daughter’s home in Aynor, SC.

Don, my late husband, grew up on a farm in Newberry County. There are many plants that we transplanted over the years from the property. A large pink crape myrtle, pink Camilla, and several of his grandmother’s iris are included in the landscape.

I would be remiss not to mention all the iris and daylilies that Don planted and tended. Many of these came from Everette Lineberger’s garden. Others came from friends. Don also propagated many crape myrtles and buddleias for the garden club sales. There are two Natchez crape myrtles in the landscape that he propagated and planted for me.

To be able to walk in my garden and remember family and friends from my garden of life brings joy to my heart and sometimes a tear to my eye.

History of the club continues on the following pages.

Chapter 13

Sometimes We Lose Trees: THE BILLBOARD CONFLICT

*I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree
Indeed, unless the billboards fall,
I'll never see a tree at all.*
- Ogden Nash

The Club's 1976 Bicentennial planting project on North Pine Street (Interstate 585) involved some 400 trees planted on the intersections at US-221 (Chesnee Highway), at SC-9 (Boiling Springs Road) and at California Avenue adjacent to Milliken's outstanding landscaped area and a row of Sweetgum trees on the west shoulder between SC-9 and California Ave. The latter trees were planted as a double row, with trees in planned random spacing to give a somewhat natural look, and to make it less noticeable if an occasional tree were missing. They were planted as small seedlings, donated by Spartanburg Landscape and Nursery. Everette Seixas, the nursery's key horticulturist, provided a major part of the volunteer planting labor.

A few years later, it became obvious that the back row was so close to the fence that the Highway Department's grass cutters couldn't mow there, so that row was cut down. This created no problem because the remaining randomly spaced Sweetgums of the front row remained intact and were beginning to provide the desired improvement to this important highway. In fact, not a single tree had been lost due to drought or damage. They continued to grow and prosper. By 1986 they were healthy, approaching semi-maturity at almost six inches in diameter, and had become a significant enhancement to this primary entry highway into Spartanburg. These Sweetgums provided elegant green beauty in the summer, gorgeous color in the fall, and beautiful form and shape during the dormant season. The Highway Department was performing a fine job of grass mowing and maintenance.

13 – THE BILLBOARD CONFLICT

This shoulder planting was separated from the new Metro Business Center by a chainlink fence. Behind the fence was a thicket of weed trees and brush that Metro had not yet cleared. Also behind the fence was a large Naegele Billboard (Naegele was owned by the Morris Communication Company, an Augusta based outdoor advertising company of great stature and breadth of business, the largest billboard company in Spartanburg County. It was later sold to Fairway Outdoor Advertising Company, the current owner of the business.) In addition to the basic beautification the trees provided, they also supplied a view break to the weedy area behind the fence—and to the Naegele billboard.

It was somewhat of a shock on Sunday, May 20, 1986, for Henry Pittman to see an open, treeless gap of over 400 feet in the planting. He had been chairman of the Club's Bicentennial committee, had designed the staggered row plan, and had helped Seixas do the planting.

A quick meeting of other members of this committee was convened; Jess Taylor, John Nevison and Tom Bartram attended. They were as concerned as Pittman and easily decided

**From the SMGC's "Gardening & Beautification" newsletter
of May, 1986**

NORTH PINE STREET BEAUTIFICATION. The area beautification project chairman, Henry Pittman, and his committee had a rude shock along with the rest of our membership about May 1. Fifteen of the North Pine Street Sweetgum trees, 3-1/2 to 6 inches diameter had disappeared! This in about a 130 yard stretch before a low standing billboard on the property west of the highway and between Route 9 and California Avenue intersections. These trees on the state highway roadside had been planted and nurtured by club members with the cooperation of the highway people over the past decade. More careful inspection revealed the trees cut from the highway right of way had been tossed over the border line chain link fence and dragged back into adjoining wooded areas. A triangular opening in the fence near the sign gives simple access to the highway property. Treelets and brush next to the sign had been cut about the same time. These cuttings occurred before leaf buds had opened, probably before or early April. The cut trees were not missed by passers until the remaining line of 18 to 23 foot trees had leafed out in late April. A county sheriff officer qualified this act as grand larceny. No request for permission to remove these trees had been filed with the Highway Department. A local nursery firm has quoted a price of \$450 per 3 to 4 inch diameter tree to replace those cut. The County Sheriff's office has assigned this case to an investigating officer. A number of contributions have been offered for use as an apprehension reward or for tree replacement this Fall.

John Nevison, Editor

this could not be allowed to go unchallenged. Nevison reported the destruction to the County Sheriff immediately.

Upon more careful investigation, the group found that the 15 trees had been cut flush with the ground, and the trunk stubs neatly covered with soil and grass clippings to make it appear that there had never been trees growing there. None of the tree remnants were in sight. The next day, however, a few of the "corpses" were found hidden in undergrowth behind the fence on Metro Center's property. By careful matching, it was possible to confirm which tree trunk matched which of the ground level

stumps. The other cut trees had undoubtedly been hauled away. It seemed quite clear that the tree cutting involved a deliberate effort to make their removal appear as if they had never been there.