

# November 2023 Gardening & Beautification

A Publication of the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club



## *Welcoming Men & Women*

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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**

We have already reached the end of the year—our 75<sup>th</sup> as a club. It has been a memorable year. Early in the year we had a very interesting field trip to Boris Bauer's property over near Greenville. In April, we had a phenomenal plant sale, eclipsing all results during my time with the club. Darvin Helvy and his 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary team have done excellent work planning two community days with Hatcher Garden and working on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner. I can't wait!

While this year has been one of reflection on our past successes, it is time to look forward in 2024. We need to renew our commitment to have a vibrant club. Let's redouble our efforts to expand the club and increase our community activities. With everyone's help another 75 years can be had. Who will join me at the 150-year celebration!

The November 9, 2023 presentation for our annual meeting will be made by two icons of the Spartanburg Gardening Community. The presentation is entitled "Travel Adventures of Rick McAbee Moderated by Stewart Winslow." Mr. McAbee is the highly successful owner of Roebuck Wholesale Nursery, who provides high quality plants to businesses and landscapers. Mr. Winslow is the Director of Horticulture and Landscape Design at Wofford College. These two gentlemen have been collaborating on projects to make Spartanburg beautiful since 1989.

**THE ANNIVERSARY DINNER ON THURSDAY NOVEMBER 9 IS OUR REGULAR MEETING FOR NOVEMBER. THERE IS NO MEETING ON MONDAY NOVEMBER 20.**





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

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



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





# COMMUNITY DAY

HONORING VETERANS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

10AM-1PM

HATCHER GARDEN

820 JOHN B. WHITE SR. BLVD., SPARTANBURG

PLANT GIVEAWAYS  
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES  
TREE PLANTING IN HONOR OF VETERANS  
BLOODMOBILE  
& MORE!







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Photography  
by Linda McHam



Linda Helianthus maximiliani  
(Maximilian Sunflower)



Camellia sinensis  
(the Lipton Tea plant)



Chrysanthemum 'Sheffield'  
(Sheffield Daisy)

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**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 Curtis Marshall

When our 58<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary arrived on August 28<sup>th</sup>, Joan and I left for two of our favorite places to visit: Pisgah National Forest and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Blue Ridge Parkway is our nation's longest linear National Park, some 460 plus miles long. It connects the Shenandoah Valley which begins in Pennsylvania and passes into Virginia to the Great Smokey Mountains National Park in N.C. and Tennessee. The Blue Ridge Parkway passes through Pisgah National Forest which covers about 500,000 acres.

We usually approach the Parkway on US 276 which enters Pisgah Forest at Brevard N.C. US 276 parallels the Davidson River when you first enter the Forest. As you drive, you pass through what is mainly a hardwood forest. You pass Sliding Rock where you can sit on and slide over the rock in the Davidson River and then drop into a pool at the bottom into 50-something degree Fahrenheit water. It used to feel good on a hot summer day when I was younger. Just up the road you come to Looking Glass Falls whose mist feels nice on a hot summer day, now that I have gotten older. Further up the road, you pass the Pink Beds, a picnic area that gives meaning to the name because of the Mountain Laurel. They border the meandering stream and are covered with pink and white blossoms in the spring. You are now close to the Cradle of Forestry which pays tribute to the first school of forestry established in the United States. A bit further and US 276 ascends rapidly until you reach the Blue Ridge Parkway.



When we left Duncan, S.C., we left sweltering 90-degree temperatures. I had been watering the vegetable garden. The last thing Joan said to me before leaving was be sure to carry a jacket. Guess who forgot to take a jacket? As we ascended to the parkway a heavy rain fell turning into fog. By the time we got to the parkway the temperatures had dropped into the low 60's. Our destination that first day was the Inn on the Parkway where we had spent previous anniversaries. The trail leading to the summit of Mount Pisgah is a short distance to the east. We had intended to try and hike to the summit again, although Joan had noted some years prior, "Do you realize we are the oldest people on this trail?" Alas, it rained the entire time we were at the Inn. Being wet on a strenuous ascent was not as appealing as it was when we were younger. So, I didn't check out my new knees this time around.

However, we were awed, once again, looking down on the clouds, or being in the clouds, and by the spectacular views of botanical displays of the forest. I don't remember having noticed Sourwood blossoms before. Some variety of Sumac was also in bloom along with a plethora of wild flowers.

It's not a formal, human-designed garden, but for us it has been a reminder of how the Garden of Eden may have looked. The passage of the Blue Ridge Parkway through Pisgah National Forest is a place to pause, ponder, and even muse.

**History of the club continues on the following pages.**



### 13 – THE BILLBOARD CONFLICT

John Nevison, a highly involved—and concerned—Club member, former president and current author of its monthly newsletter, voiced great concern in his May edition under the title, “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 is about a 130 yard stretch before a low standing billboard... A county sheriff officer qualified this act as grand larceny.... A local nursery firm has quoted a price of \$450 per 3 to 4 inch diameter tree to replace those cut. A number of contributions have been offered for use as an apprehension reward or for tree replacement this fall.

It was very fortunate that local County Agent (Clemson Extension Agent) Charles Gray was also a part-time deputy sheriff. As a great lover of trees and a professional on their importance and value, he reportedly took personal responsibility for the solution of the case.

While the solution to the crime was not evident, there was a growing public concern over billboard proliferation. In early June, the *Herald-Journal* published a pointed letter by well known Wofford College professor and outspoken naturalist, Dr.

Gibbs Patton on controlling the growing blight with these words, “If a determined special interest can take down trees illegally, then surely determined citizens can take down billboards legally.”

However, on June 10, the *Herald Journal* carried a very large front page story in its second section entitled, “Naegele Trio Charged With Cutting Trees.” Its opening statement was, “The general manager of Naegele Outdoor Advertising was charged Monday with conspiracy in connection with a tree-cutting and removing timber for their alleged participation in the same incident.” It reported further that after the arrests, the three men posted a \$4,000 bond and were released from jail. Ruth Ackerman, Naegele’s company attorney, announced that President William Morris of Naegele’s parent company, Morris Communications of Augusta, had issued a formal statement to the local newspaper which read, in part, “We are deeply grieved over the incident. It is a violation of the law and an affront to the community. This is a very clear violation of company policy which we will



Milliken's Jack Bracken matches a cut trunk to its flush cut stump. May, 1986

### 13 – THE BILLBOARD CONFLICT

not tolerate. We will be apologizing to the Men’s Garden Club of Spartanburg and plan to make amends.”

Tom Bartram secured local attorney Tim Cleveland to join John Nevison and Club President Frank Cunningham in a meeting with Morris. The meeting was quite cordial; Morris gave a strong and apparent sincere apology for the tree destruction and offered a \$6,000 contribution to the club. It was accepted, to be used for additional landscape projects by the Club. However, this was done only with Nevison’s strong contention that it was not a *contribution*, but *retribution*. Later in a letter-to-the-editor, he made a robust point that the payment was not a contribution, but it “has been made as an obligation to offset a misdeed.”

Again the local newspaper printed a major story in mid-July of the settlement with the opening comment, “What might have been labeled ‘the great tree controversy’ is apparently over” and reported that the local Magisterial District Court had dismissed the case earlier that month.

The incident continued high in public interest. In a live interview on WSPA-TV’s 6:00 PM news cast, the reporter made a brief update on the admitted involvement by the billboard company’s employees, and then turned to John Nevison<sup>1</sup> and asked, “Mr. Nevison, will the Men’s Garden Club forgive Naegele?” Nevison looked straight into the camera and said in a stern voice, “We’ll forgive—**but we won’t forget!**” And this reply characterized the attitude not only of the Club but also of much of the community. In the following months, there were dozens of letters to the editor published supporting the contributions of the Club and the concern for billboard proliferation. The following excerpt is from a typical letter published in late July.

**From the SMGC’s Gardening & Beatification newsletter of August, 1986**

**TREE CUTTING INCIDENT:** We shall not belabor this subject too long, but the members should know that after much discussion by your Board, it was decided to conclude the episode, with the approval of the legal authorities. The \$6,000 “amends” or restitution settlement will be used for future beautification projects in the Spartanburg area.

I think the people of Spartanburg, city and county, should be made aware of what is happening concerning the number of billboards being put up in our area....They tower over the rural terrain and in many places trees are being leveled so that motorists can see signs just behind. What happened to the 15 Sweetgum trees put up by the Men’s Garden Club is only a small example... . Wake up Spartanburg! I say down with billboards and up with trees.

Another letter expressed this sentiment. “The *Herald-Journal* has reported the illegal cutting of citizen-planted trees ... and the confession of the night-time act by a national billboard organization.... Billboards are a special kind of environmental impact. Their location, spacing, size, number and maintenance are changing Spartanburg County’s landscape rapidly... .” This writer continued by encouraging the County Planning Commission to seriously work on the environmental impact of these billboards and to

<sup>1</sup> John Nevison served as President of the Club for two years in the early 1980s, edited the Newsletter for over seven years, was a strong supporter of Hatcher Garden, and his strong will was a significant asset to the Club in many ways. In his honor, the Club financed and dedicated the amphitheater at Hatcher Garden in his memory in 1999.

### 13 – THE BILLBOARD CONFLICT

encourage citizen involvement. He concluded with this recommendation, “Let’s help the commission and the Council do this job right and soon. Which is growing faster in our county—trees or billboards?”

Dr. Bob Reynolds, as past president of the Club and ongoing strong leader, wrote a letter promoting the new Highway Beautification Act being considered by Congress. He said, “It is a bipartisan effort to clean up ‘billboard blight’ along America’s federal highways.” He pointed out the local proliferation and said the new legislation would ban all new billboards along federal highways as well as ban tree-cutting on public land done solely to make billboards more visible...” A tongue-in-cheek letter stated, “I feel it is in our best interests as well as in Naegele’s best interest that the company saw their own billboards off at ground level and plant some tall trees quickly.” Possibly the most clever letter author performed this new verb conjugation in August of 1986: “Naegele (nay’gle), v. tr. To cut down a tree, to remove all evidence of the tree, to deny all knowledge of the prior existence of the tree.”

But, not everyone sided with the Club and the community in preferring trees. A man who later became a prominent and respected county official wrote a letter thanking Naegele for its help in fundraising for a community cause, and continued with these comments: “While on the road, I look first to outdoor advertising to find a good meal, a place to stay, and places to shop... I use outdoor advertising to keep me alert as I travel. Our thriving business economy is just as important to the nation as a park. In fact, business enables us to have parks.” And another writer stated strongly: “It disturbs me to see a few narrow minded citizens over-reacting on the issue of billboard advertising. Let’s be fair and sensible. Billboards are good.... Regulations and laws should not be passed to satisfy a small handful of environmentalists who would like to see all of Spartanburg in a park-like atmosphere.”

So the discussion, and the controversy, continued during 1986. *Herald-Journal* headlines during the year included the following:

- City pondering billboard ban
- Billboards face ban in county
- County planners urge timeout for billboards
- Billboard moratorium urged
- Citizens to study billboards
- Sign action draws near
- Council to weigh billboard proposal
- City hedges on billboard restrictions, ponders restrictions.
- Cry goes out for zoning in county
- Billboard battle looms before Congress
- Council prefers to wait on signs
- Signs of controversy—The City wants billboards to come down; their owners want a big chunk of cash, and the law leaves room for debate—and lawsuits
- Constant controversy
- Revised billboard plan to undergo review
- Senate kills billboard ban affecting federal highways
- Signs facing opposition