

January 2024

Gardening & Beautification

A Publication of the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club



Welcoming Men & Women

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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

Happy New Year to everyone! This month we start the second 75 years of our club. We had very successful plant sales in 2023 and are working to have more success in 2024. With the revenue that has been generated, we are planning to develop new projects this year. All ideas are welcome!

To maintain our container garden and execute projects, we need active members. Our goal this year is to add many new members to help continue our mission. I will be asking our members to invite at least five people each to a membership meeting this year. We will also be developing some initiatives to help in our membership drive. More information will follow in the next few months. Put your sales hat on and extol the virtues of our club!

Beth Waddell SMGC Speaker January 16, 2024

"A Tour of Butchart Gardens"

Our Tuesday, January 16, program will feature a tour of Butchart Gardens through the magic of Power-Point. Each year over a million visitors flock to see and experience these beautiful display gardens. In 2004, the gardens were inducted as a National Historic Site in Canada, and it is consistently named one of the most beautiful gardens in the world.

The speaker will be Beth Waddell, a retired music teacher, who is a Spartanburg native. She and Ben have experienced many trips to Europe and Hawaii, as well as the Caribbean and Alaska. The world is a beautiful place to visit, but Spartanburg is home.



<https://www.facebook.com/SMGCDirtDaubers/>



Post Office Box 1502
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Upcoming Events

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.

Presentations for 2024

February 19	Floral Design	Mary Ann Kirby
March 18	Modern Day Farming	Jon Stauffer
April 15	Children's' Garden/Hatcher	Dan Shook
May 20	Native Perennials	Davis Sanders
June 17	Highlights of 2023 Plant Survey of Glassy Mountain	Dan Whitten
July 15	A Guide to Wildflowers of SC	Dr. Douglas Rayner
August 19	Skin Care for Gardeners	Dr. Christopher Thompson Dermatologist
September, 16	Club Picnic	
October 21	Birds	Irvin Pitts



2024 Litter pickup schedule

March 9	rain date	Mar 16
June 8	" "	Jun 15
September 7	" "	Sep 14
December 7	snow "	Dec 14

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 2024 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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Photography
by Linda McHam



Cornus canadensis
(Bunchberry dogwood) in
Yoho National Park, Alberta,
CA.

Clematis blooming on
November 22, 2023.



Propagation of *Camellia sinensis* and
Camellia sinensis 'assamica' by seed.

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 Bruce Fraedrich

Louisville Kentucky



Louisville, Kentucky is a great place to visit for tree geeks and bourbon lovers—I will address the botanical attractions in this musing. The Louisville area supports a wide diversity of plants: southern species such as Southern Magnolia perform well, but cool climate species such as sugar maple, spruce and fir are equally at home. Two “don’t miss” horticultural attractions near Louisville are the Cave Hill Cemetery and Arboretum and the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest.

Cave Hill is a rural cemetery found just a few miles from downtown Louisville. Rural cemeteries became popular in the second half of the nineteenth century when American cities began to expand and living space was at a premium. These cemeteries were sited within an hour’s carriage ride from the city and designed as a park-like setting with many trees, gardens, winding roads and ponds. Rural cemeteries were the first parks for urban dwellers. Cave Hill is sited on 300 acres of hilly land and contains approximately 6,000 trees, many that date to the cemetery’s establishment in 1850. We visited in late October when the sugar maples and blackgum were still at peak fall color. The “signature” tree in the Cave Hill collection is a massive Ginkgo that alone is worth the visit. Several mature Amur cork trees with their unique branching habit and thick, corky bark, were also at peak fall color. Cave Hill is the permanent resting place for many Louisville notables including Muhammed Ali, Colonel Harlan Sanders (think “fried chicken”) and George Rogers Clark, Revolutionary War General and brother of William Clark of Lewis and Clark fame.



Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest is located about 25 miles south of Louisville on 16,000 acres of forested land. The 600-acre arboretum is an Olmstead Brothers design and contains more than 8,000 plant taxa, vegetable and children’s gardens and a restored prairie. Over 40 miles of trail wind through the forests at Bernheim. We had only a few hours to spend at Bernheim on a rainy morning in October, but plan to return in spring to take advantage of the early native wildflower display and spend time in the arboretum collections.

History of the club continues on the following pages.

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And so it went though to the end of 1986.

This is not the end of the story, however. Sweetgums are tough trees. They put up suckers from the flush-cut trunk stubs during the summer and after a couple of years, with some pruning to create a single trunk, they were *real* trees again! After an amazingly short period of time, with a little probable fertilizer pushing by Club members, they essentially caught up with their un-cut siblings. Today, they are equal in all respects.

Certainly the destruction of the MGC's row of Sweetgums on North Pine Street was a catalyst for the issue of billboards vs. trees in both the Club and in the community. Controversy and unhappiness are not to be sought after, and the Club would not want to undergo another tree cutting episode, but the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club received a huge amount of publicity—most of it excellent publicity—over this. The incident, and its ensuing controversy, enhanced the name and reputation of the Club, probably almost as much as did Mr. W. O. Ezell's great beautification efforts in the 1960s and 70s. So, good can come out of bad.

Interestingly, an *ad hoc* group called "Citizens Group for Sign Control" formed later in 1986 with Ann S. Allen as its leader and member participants including noted Wofford professor Dr. Gibbes Patton, Corrie Whitlock, Dr. Bob Powell, architect Al Jolly, Sid Moorhead, Dave Kennemur, Dr. Gil Hooper, Art Justice, Margaret Wells, Margaret Hayslip, Claire Sasser, Jim Wagner, and Henry Pittman. In August, Allen sent a letter to many citizens with the opening statement, "A group of concerned citizens has organized recently to combat one of the area's most blatant abuses—the proliferation of giant BILLBOARDS along our roadways. The May incident of Naegele's tree cutting on 585 prompted our action. Fearing that the scenic beauty of our countryside is seriously threatened by this type of commercial onslaught, we are uniting our efforts to halt and eliminate BILLBOARD growth."

The September, 1986, "Gardening & Beautification" newsletter reported the upcoming Club meeting with the announcement that Ann Allen, Jim Wagner and Pittman would make a presentation on "Billboard proliferation." It brought members' attention to the fact that, "The topic is an active one in conversations, news media articles, letters and legislative action. The speakers will present an awareness slide program and up-date on local control activities and report on county inventory of billboards." The October newsletter reported, "We commend those [who] brought us up-to-date on Billboard Proliferation concern at our September 16 meeting. We follow further regulation development—local, state and national—with interest."

That fall, an interesting survey had been made by Allen's group which reported a count of 985 billboards in the City and County and an estimate that the total number was actually over 1,000. Naegele owned over 50% of them, followed by Carolina Poster, Daisy, National 3M, Ed Yarborough, Abbot, and eight others. Examples of "billboard blight" were the 22 on Drayton Ave (equivalent to 24 per mile), and 37 on South Pine St. (25 per mile). On I-26 between US-29 and I-85 and on North Pine St. between Milliken and Main there were 14 billboards per mile.

The group worked closely with the national organization "Coalition for Scenic Beauty" (now named "Scenic America") and made personal pleas to City and County organizations and to the U. S. Congress to develop ways to control the proliferation of the signboards. It

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was a part of the national effort to further improve the “Lady Bird Johnson” highway beautification effort. Unfortunately, however, little progress was made.

The conflict between trees and billboards hasn’t been solved or ended, but the attitude of both the general public and Club members may not be as “anti-billboard” as it was earlier. However, in 2007, the Club’s large treescape project on Interstate-85-Business triggered a conflict. This discord was between the Club and Spartanburg County (partners in the project), and the SC Department of Transportation and its agreements with the outdoor advertising industry. Through the effective efforts of the latter’s strong lobby in Columbia and Washington, the SCDOT has a strong agreement to protect billboards. It insures a 150-foot open viewing window for each billboard face—no trees, no obstructions on the shoulders (public property) of the highways. Some of the Club’s 2007 shoulder trees were erroneously planted inside the sacred windows, and some were purposely planted in front of two billboards which had been abandoned and were in shambles—genuine highway eyesores. The DOT forced the project’s contractor to move them all, even though there are even larger “weed trees” still growing in those “windows.” The Club’s trees were all moved successfully and are enhancing this important highway in different locations without disturbing billboards.

Surely there are differences of opinion about billboards today as there were in the 1980s. The Men’s Garden Club board, and many of its members, may not publicly promote billboards as a type of *highway litter*, as proclaimed by the national organization, *Scenic America*. There may be a general or even widespread uneasiness about the proliferation of these highway structures, particularly as huge electronic ones are becoming more popular.

While the early motto of the Noble Tree Foundation was, “Trees are the answer!” may be questioned by some, the Spartanburg Men’s Garden Club has continued its tree planting projects not to compete with billboards, but to beautify and improve our ecology. Ogden Nash’s chapter opening quotation indubitably has some ongoing value.