

The Seedling – September 2020

Volume 45, Issue 9

The Men's Garden Club of Burlington NC

<https://burlingtonmensgarden.club>



Next Meeting: September 22, 2020 Bring a guest!

Located at your house via Zoom

Topic: "Lasagna Gardens"

Gail and Kurt Moore

A Message from President Dirk Sprenger

Dear Garden Club Members and Friends,

I begin today with an optimistic heart. It must be the apples. I have been cooking apples with my wife a lot this week and listening to an old reliable radio that forecasts vaccine arrivals by November or December. Due to herd immunity, I am thinking that even if I do not get a vaccine in October, perhaps my neighbor will and we will all be a bit safer, week by week, until we are up and out of the Covid pit.

Apples do not have pits, they have seeds of hope. There are many apple quotations and a thousand recipes. I selected a favorite quote for the Seedling. The recipe is on another page. Here is the quote. Vera Nazarian, an American-Russian author

younger than me, said "When bobbing for apples an idealist reaches for the best apple, the pessimist settles for the first apple within reach. While the OPTIMIST drains the barrel, gets all the apples and makes Pie." I feel so optimistic that I am just going to ask you, members and friends, to send us \$100 each to strengthen our war chest before we donate our annual gifts to Horticulture Students at ACC, FFA, etc. (This would be less than 10 bucks per month spread over a year or the cost of attending our 10 regular meetings). Some can give more, some will give less. Yet knowing that I challenge you to give it some thought on the front burner of your mind.

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Officers & Contacts

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President: Dirk Sprenger	Treasurer: Ray Schwartz
Vice President: Eric Levine	Chaplain: Bob Held
Secretary: Harry Porthouse	Seedling Editor: Kurt Moore



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Our program this month will be about Lasagna Gardening. Please Google that for a foretaste and then tune in to our meeting and see pictures and participate in some firsthand experience with Kurt and Gail Moore.

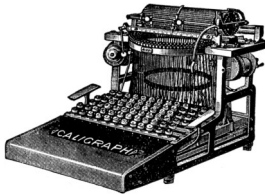
By the end of the first week in September you will have a paper letter from the Garden Club in your hands. If it is still lying around, pop it in the mail today, please. We need all of you to vote to follow our constitution and bylaws. Ray worked hard to get it to you for early voting, so the least we can do is get it back to Harry in a timely fashion. I mail ballots like these the day I get them so that I don't get coffee and apple butter all over them.

Yes, I am back to talking apples. Our dear friend Ray Eller makes tons of apple preserves, including apple butter. Today I made a confection called apple leather. I would butter you up some more if there were space to spread it. If your grand-kids are back in school, rejoice. If you believe they will be within a year, rejoice too because they have their health and a school to go to. Look on the sunny side and for goodness sake tune into our September Zoom Meeting on the 4th Tuesday. I will show a few gourds and Korean Radishes. Kurt and Gail will give us a fabulous talk. Then to top it off Harry will give us the results of our first vote-by-mail experience in 2020.

Last but not least, we will decide whose garden will be our first target for the weeding and pruning committee, which includes every able-bodied member. This new idea has been spinning for awhile and we had better act on it before it snows. Since I am so optimistic today, I won't mention snow again.

Sincerely, optimist Dirk Warren Sprenger

Editor's corner



Send me your news for 2020!

This is your newsletter! Please feel free to send me content that you would like to share with your fellow members—upcoming events, gardening tips, resources, pictures, websites and online tools, things learned, recipes using things from your garden, deals and other great bargains, etc. Please send to me via email to me and let me know that it is for the newsletter. Kurt.

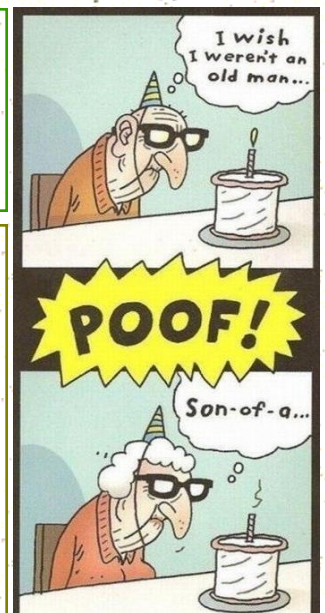
September Birthdays

Tony Caminiti—1st

Your perk is to head the virtual chow line with our guests!

Upcoming Meeting

The Executive board will host the regular September meeting virtually via Zoom starting at 6:30. Harry Porthouse will send out the link for joining the meeting via phone, computer or smart phone. Login instructions are on page 4. You can learn more about Zoom at <https://zoom.us/>. In addition to our regular business meeting, we'll have an update on a memorial for Joseph Castagna, who recently passed away (see page 3). Member Kurt and his wife Gail Moore will be our speakers and tell us about 'lasagna gardens'.



August Meeting Highlights



We held our August 25th meeting by Zoom arranged by Harry Porthouse. Our speaker was Ray Schwartz who presented *Oleander Extract* and its potential use and dangers for COVID.

Again, with only 6 members present, we did not have enough for a quorum (9 needed) to conduct a full business meeting. The Executive Board and the Gardener of the Year committee has decided that we do not have enough info and activity to make the GOY award. However, without a quorum, we could not officially vote on the matter. It was decided that we would vote by mail on this and other issues. The ballot went in early September. Please return your ballots to Harry Porthouse if you have not already done so.

We are also asking those who have not done so, for \$100 (or what you feel appropriate) donation to the club so we can make our annual donations to the groups we support. So far we have raised \$870 towards our \$1200 target and Ray reported we have \$1,697 total in the bank.

Memorial for Joseph Castagna

In a previous Executive Board meeting, the members approved a memorial for Joseph Castagna in the form of purchasing a tree from the New Leaf Society to be planted in Alamance County. The tree has been purchased on behalf of the club and New Leaf will send a notification to Mrs. Louise Castagna. If you would like to make a donation towards the tree please send a check to Ray Schwartz.

The All American Apple Cake; by the wife of a New England Apple Grower

Submitted by Dirk Sprenger

Wisk together the following in a large bowl.

2 cups of baking apples, coarsely diced

½ cup sugar + ½ cup brown sugar

¼ cup oil

1 egg

Then sift in while stirring:

1 cup of flour

½ tsp salt

1 tsp baking soda

1 tsp cinnamon

When batter is smooth and stiff, fold in 1 cup chopped walnuts. Bake in a square greased pan (8 x 8 x 2 inch) for 45 minutes at 350 F.

Optional: buttermilk sauce to be added to the hot cake after punching a few holes.

Combine these 4 ingredients in small saucepan, stir over med heat until boiling and remove from heat.

½ cup sugar

¼ tsp baking soda

4 tbsp butter

¼ cup buttermilk

Source: 1984 Cookbook from antique store.

ZOOM MEETING INSTRUCTIONS

This isn't hard! **We need your attendance.** We have not had a quorum to conduct regular business.

We will send you an email containing a meeting invite via Zoom. At the scheduled date and time, join the meeting using one of the following methods. Note: You do not need a camera to participate.

1. To join from a laptop or desktop just click on the blue link (shown in a red circle here so you'll know where to find it).
2. To join from your smart phone, just click one of the "Phone one-tap" links shown below the circle.
3. To join by phone with no video (not recommended, as you will miss a lot of the meeting content), just dial one of the phone numbers at the bottom of the message.



You will be placed in a waiting room, and the moderator will admit you to the meeting.

A screenshot of a Microsoft Word document titled 'Harry Porthouse's Zoom Meeting - Meeting'. The document is a meeting invitation template. The 'Title' field is filled with 'Harry Porthouse's Zoom Meeting'. The 'Start time' is 'Fri 5/1/2020 3:00 PM' and the 'End time' is 'Fri 5/1/2020 3:30 PM'. The 'Location' is a Zoom URL: 'https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84049105447'. The body of the invitation starts with 'Hi there,' followed by 'Harry Porthouse is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.' Below this, the 'Join Zoom Meeting' link is circled in red. The link is 'https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84049105447#'. Below the link, there are phone one-tap numbers and a meeting ID: '840 4910 5447'. On the right side of the document, there is a 'Room Finder' sidebar with a calendar view and suggested times for the meeting.

Gardening in the News—Odds and Ends

By Kurt Moore

Mystery Seeds Update:

Last month I reported on mystery seeds from China being sent to people in several states as part of a “brushing” scam. I ran across a recent update and apparently people have received them in all 50 states. In North Carolina, over 1,000 people contacted the state’s Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs. Nationally, over 15,000 people reported getting seeds, so this is a big under-representation as many people probably did not report them. Hundred’s of people planted the seeds. One woman from New Mexico reported that everywhere she planted them, all her other surrounding plants started to die off. And ... wait for the drum roll ... at least one person reported eating them!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=baXSrl5Vmb0

New Shortage:

As gardening became more and more popular during the pandemic as people had more time on their hands and also looking to stretch food budget, there was a shortage of seeds. Now that we’re entering the fall harvest a new shortage was created by the gardeners. As more people are also learning home canning, the extra demand has caused a shortage of canning supplies, especially bands and lids. I learned about that last month and casually checked at several stores while I was shopping. Yep. Gone from the shelves. A box of 12 regular mouth lids (without bands) that generally sell from \$1.47 at Walmart (their brand) to \$3.99 for Ball brand at Southern States, were selling up to \$18.99 on eBay and up to \$19.51 for wide mouth lids!

<https://m.startribune.com/some-gardeners-in-a-pickle-over-scarce-canning-supplies/572346842/>

Here we go again—Gardeners vs. local ordinances:

A college buddy sent me a recent story from Chicago about local ordinances that infringe on people’s rights to garden in their lawn. As gardening has become more popular, people are looking for places in their yard where they can have a vegetable garden and the front yard may be the best spot. In this case a neighbor complained about another’s hoop house. It appears that Elmhurst has an ordinance against temporary structures that is selectively enforced www.chicagotribune.com/opinion/commentary/ct-opinion-garden-hoop-property-rights-elmhurst-20200828. Usually it involves front yard gardens that violate HOA covenants or city ordinances such as the case in Miami Shores, Florida. After nearly two decades of having a front yard garden the city decided to enforce an ordinance that restricts edible gardening to backyards www.treehugger.com/its-illegal-grow-vegetables-your-front-yard-florida-town-4858115#. Then in a show of bipartisanship the Florida legislature passed a bill in 2019 “*which prohibits local governments from banning vegetable gardens on any part of a residential property.*” www.publicnewsservice.org/2019-07-01/environment/new-florida-law-on-home-gardens-banishes-local-ordinances/a66937-1. Sometimes, pushback and advocacy can get a city to change it’s mind if the state legislature will not step in as was a case in Orlando (prior to the 2019 bill) with some prodding from the Institute for Justice and some bad PR for the city across the nation

<https://ij.org/action/support-front-yard-vegetable-gardens>.

From the Members



Pictures from Alvis' Yard

Upper Left: One of three gin ice begonias that actually over-wintered and came back for 2020.

Bottom: Two shots of his butterfly bush.





Pictures from Dirk's Yard

Upper Left: Deer doing Dirk's weeding.

Upper Right: Sign of Fall—the Writing Spider
Argiope aurantia