



Caswell Horticulture Club

March 2011 Newsletter

Thanks to all that came to our February business meeting and to Libby for providing delightful refreshments. In addition to committee reports, we had some discussion about this year's programs and would love to have your suggestions. It was decided that committees would remain standing as they are in the directory, serving the same term as the Executive Officers serve, two years. If you have a strong aversion to serving on your present committee, you need to contact me immediately.

Kevin Howard, County Manager, talked with us about grant possibilities for improvements to the Square, and Joey Knight with Agriculture Extension gave a plea for our leadership in creating community gardens. If you have interest with helping Joey out in this capacity in Yanceyville, or in Milton, please contact him at 694-4158. There are many grant possibilities for community gardens and he is willing to write the grants and provide assistance, but cannot oversee the gardens.

It was decided, by vote, to proceed with the removal of the old crape myrtles on the Square, and replace them with Natchez crape myrtles. There will be two crape myrtles per parterre. Our landscape investment has an added bonus. It will provide community involvement, a necessary component for the County's grant application for Square improvements. If all goes to plan, we may, in the near future, see some hardscape improvements around the Square that have not taken place since the widening the streets in the 50s!

Please send your dues as promptly as possible to Cathy Long, 5680 Stephentown Road, Blanch, NC 27212. Any changes to your contact information should be sent to me or Cathy at the same time so that our new directory can be completed. If your dues are not remitted by March 10, the time of planning for the social, we will assume that you no longer desire to be a member. If you are not going to renew, please email or call. Forgive the bluntness, but we need

for dues to be remitted in a timely fashion! To those that have already paid, thank you!

For the March 17 social event the social committee will be contacting only those members who have paid dues. Special guests must be approved by the hostess and host through the social committee.

Spring Social

After all the hard work comes the reward, our social, my *favorite* thing to do in Caswell County! Margaret has graciously said that she and Ben will host our **Spring Social at 6:30 on March 17th**. We were all delighted! It has been a tradition to go to their beautiful home for the spring social, and we all look forward to being with them and basking in their warm hospitality. Also a tradition was the unfavorable weather conditions when we had the social in February at their home. March has proven to be much more pleasant. It was indeed good news to know that Margaret's knee replacement surgery has not kept her down for too long! It was again decided to have heavy Hors d'oeuvres. The committee will be touch shortly. *Thank you* Margaret and Ben!

PLANT SALE

The Spring Plant Sale will be **Thursday, April 21 at the old jail** site behind the historic courthouse. This was a great place for our plant sale two years ago, and we hope to have an equally successful sale this time.

THIS DEPENDS ON YOU! Please begin now to prepare plants for the sale. Perennials, seedlings, houseplants,anything you can donate will be helpful. We're always amazed at what people will "pounce" on. Hostas, small trees, vegetable seedlings, Shasta daisies, begonias—just a few things that have been big hits before.

The hours for the sale will be **10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** We'll be in touch later about volunteers to help with the sale.

Janie Leigh Carter and Cathy Long
Fund Raising Committee Chairpersons

TREASURER'S REPORT

At our church in Pilot Mountain many years ago we had a church treasurer who was very secretive about details of the church's finance. It was not that he was attempting to hide anything; he just didn't want to get caught up in details. So, when asked to give a report, he would always say only, "We're solvent."

I am happy to report that the Caswell Horticulture Club is not only solvent; we have had a good year with an increase in our overall fund balance. This is due, in large part, to the successful note card sale, led by Pat Rowland, the brick project under Pat Ewalt's leadership and the successful Spring Seminar which did better than break even for the first time.

Our balance is sufficient to allow us to proceed with the Square project which was approved at our February 17 meeting. This will be a relatively big expenditure.

The detailed treasurer's report was passed out at that meeting. I will be happy to provide a copy for anyone who missed the meeting, or answer any questions anyone might have.

Cathy Long, Treasurer

Gardening in the spring is so much more pleasant than summer, so we all start out with a burst of energy. Spring raking is important, but it should be done lightly. Lawn raking removes thatch in addition to the ever present fall leaves, and helps loosen the soil, just don't be too vigorous. A light top dressing of compost on your lawn will be very beneficial. For those of us that have voles a helpful hint is to add gravel, or a commercial pumice product available in small bags, to your planting hole. I have bought it under the name of Vole Bloc many years ago. I also add a layer over the top close to the center of the plant to the width of the planting hole, much like mulching and leave off mulch. Voles love cover (mulch and ground covers) because they are more protected from overhead predators.

Be aware that ticks are already out as you move about in the great outdoors. Just in case you were not one of the people that got the bear photos taken by a remote camera near my house, let me be the one to tell you that we have a very big black bear in the vicinity of Cathy's and my house. It (I am guessing it is a female) tore into two of the deer feeders on the farm to get the corn. Now I have to fear bears, and coyotes in addition to ticks and chiggers!