



# The Bloomin' News

Sandhills Community College

Vol. 08, No. 4

Winter 2013

*The Sandhills Horticultural Society - dedicated to the support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens since 1987. Please help the Gardens grow by becoming a Society member.*

## Holiday Hollies

Sandhills Horticultural Gardens presents the Ebersole Holly Collection as its special contribution to the local and national interest in the *Ilex* genus. A trip to the gardens in winter reveals a wonderland of holly varieties with colorful berries. How the college became home to one of the finest holly collections in the United States is interesting. In 1969, Dr. and Mrs. Fred Ebersole, members of the Holly Society of America, retired to Pinehurst, NC. They began to expand a small collection of holly they brought with them. During the next decade specimens of most of the species grown in the United States at that time had been collected and grown at their home. This labor of love demanded a plan for perpetual care.

Mr. Fred Garrett, Coordinator of the Landscape Gardening program and Dr. Raymond Stone, President of Sandhills Community College, welcomed the addition of this collection in planning the now Sandhills Horticultural Gardens. The site was prepared and in February of 1979 the first transplanting began. Transfers were made each spring continuing into 1982 with a total of over 500 plants. In 1985, the Holly Society of America designed this collection as official HSA Arboretum number 20 in its group of National Arboreta.

Most holly pictures show the berries as being red, but a trip to the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens in winter reveals they can be various shades of red, burgundy, magenta, yellow, cream, orange, or black. Hollies are either male or female and it is the female that bears fruit. For the most part they are evergreen, but not always. The different species vary in size from small to gigantic. The leaves can be spiny or smooth and present all colors of green or variegated.

In many cultures holly is a traditional Christmas decoration and is one of the few plants found in all fifty states, as well as much of the world. Over the centuries, holly has been surrounded by myths and legends. The approach of Christmas means the winter solstice is near. When it does arrive, the shortest day has been reached, and from then on we gain more daylight. Ancient people were keenly aware of the ebb and flow of daylight. Many of our Christmas customs and the use of holly for decorations are deeply rooted in ancient mythology.

In Celtic mythology, holly leaves were worn in the hair during rituals at the solstice observances. The pointy leaves of the holly were thought to have magical protection against evil spirits. Holly sprigs were brought into their dwellings during the cold winter months in the

belief they afforded shelter to the fairies, those tiny spirits of the forest. Throughout Europe holly was believed to repel evil and this belief lingers to the modern day.

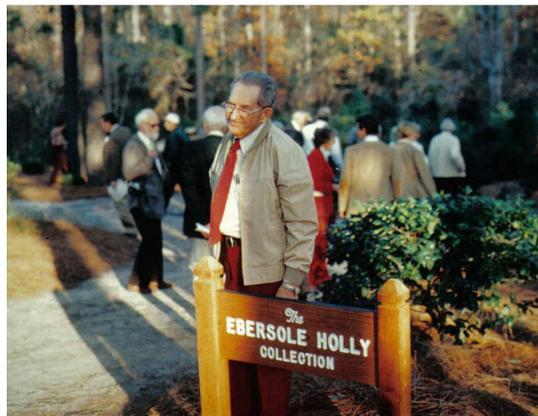
Holly was adopted by Christians as a Christmas decoration. In Christian folklore the prickly leaves came to be associated with Jesus' crown of thorn, while its berries represented the drops of blood shed for human salvation.

The wood of holly is heavy, hard, and whitish in color and has been used to make the white chess pieces. Looms, in the 1800's used holly wood for the spinning rod because it is dense and could be sanded very smooth so the rod was less likely to snag the threads being used to make cloth.

Several species of holly had medicinal uses. Caffeine-rich herbal teas as well as invigorating drinks were made from the leaves. Native Americans used the yaupon holly as a ceremonial stimulant known as the "black drink." It was a sacred plant to the Cherokee and Creek Indians at least into the 1930's. Syrup to cure coughs was made from the bark.

Holly berries are mildly toxic and will cause vomiting and/or diarrhea when ingested, however they are extremely important for numerous species of birds and other wild animals.

Stop by the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens this winter and see the incredible collection of hollies – This plant that has been surrounded by so many myths and legends



*Dr. Fred Ebersole, 1978. The Holly Garden is the largest accessible holly collection on the East Coast. Within the collection are 28 holly species and some 350 different cultivars.*





Ranger Nancy Williamson and the Waymouth Woods Sandhills Ecology Exhibit

If it is true that variety is the spice of life then the event offerings of the Horticultural Society have made for a spicy last several months. Programs included Tai Chi in the Gardens, a photography workshop, a cooking class teaching how to prepare "Real Food in Fast Times" and the annual Fall Plant Sale with a special Friday evening for members only.

Members were able to have first choice of plants offered and pick up their pre-ordered plants. Refreshments were served making it a fun evening.

We once again co-sponsored a presentation with the Council of Garden Clubs. Katherine Schlosser, expert on native plants, spoke about using natives in the landscape. Our 2nd Annual Children's Treasure Trail Adventure was held on a beautiful day in late August. Over 250 adults and children came and followed the treasure map visiting eight stations of discovery, enjoyed refreshments and took home a plant for their garden.

It was an exciting quarter and we look forward to seeing you at the fun, informative events we have planned in the coming months.

## Pruning Brambles

Johanna Westmen

The title of this article may not be a term familiar to most people, but the term brambles is the name given to plants in the genus, *Rubus*. These can include the many forms of raspberries as well as blackberries. Reasons for pruning brambles can be as simple as wanting more fruit production, but it can also include reasons such as pest management as well as cultural practices such as increasing air circulation and light exposure. Another reason to prune your brambles comes from the very nature of these plants, the fact that they are rampant growers.

In order to prune your brambles, you will need to assemble your tools and materials. I would recommend you have a pair of pruners, pair of loppers, heavy gloves and if all possible arm protection such as a long sleeved shirt or jacket.

Understanding the physiology of how your brambles grow will also help you understand their pruning needs. Brambles are plants where the roots and crown are perennial, but the canes (upright stems) that come from the crown are biennial. This means that they live just two years. In their first year, the cane will grow vigorously and will store energy for the second year that it produces fruit. Once the cane has fruited, the cane will start to decline and eventually die. Keep in mind that there are some everbearing species that fruit late in the first season and can again fruit once again in the second year. Since your two year old canes will die after the fruit, you can plan to cut them down to the ground immediately after you have the opportunity to pick the fruit. Be careful when doing so that you do not damage the crown of the plant.

Since different types of brambles have different growth and fruiting patterns, each one will have their own pruning practices. Keep in mind that you can always prune to remove any dead, diseased or damaged canes at any time of the year. I have listed below the different types of brambles and their pruning practices required.

Raspberries (summer bearing red and golden). These plants produce tall, unbranched canes as well as root suckers. The best time to prune these plants is in late winter or early spring before your actual new growth begins. If you are growing these brambles in a bed, rather than a row, you should thin them down to six to ten canes per square foot. Another way to look at this is to try to leave an average of 4-6 inches between your canes. When your new growth starts back in the spring you can tip prune your second year canes to about 4-5' high.

### Holiday Flower Arranging Workshop

**December 12 (Thursday) 10AM to Noon** Ball Visitors Center  
Maggie Smith of Maggie's Farm Design will conduct this workshop. Participants will make a holiday floral arrangement to take home for the Christmas holiday.  
Horticultural Society members \$30, Non-member \$35

### Pruning Workshop

**January 25 (Saturday) 10AM to Noon** Ball Visitors Center  
Taylor Williams, Moore County Extension agent will talk about the basics of pruning and then go into the Gardens for a hands-on demonstration.  
FREE – but reservation are necessary.

### Follow the Leader Painting Class

**February 10 (Monday) 10AM to 3:30PM** Ball Visitors Center  
Create a floral oil painting to take home following the instructions of artist Joan Williams. All materials supplied. Bring a bag lunch – a beverage and dessert will be provided. Space is limited to 15  
Horticultural Society members \$60, Non-members \$65

### Growing Vegetables in Containers

**March 1 (Saturday) 10AM to Noon** Stephens Laboratory – Steed Hall Jan Leitschuh, Master Gardener and organizer of the popular "Farm to Table" program will conduct this workshop. Participants will go home with a five gallon container of vegetable plantings. Space is limited to 24. (Cost to be determined)

### Plant a Living Wall Picture

**April 5 (Saturday) 10AM to Noon** Stephens Laboratory – Steed Hall Linda Hamwi the "Plant Diva" will conduct this workshop. Participants will create a wall picture with plants – like the ones at Belk in Pinecrest Plaza. This is a make it and take it workshop. Space is very limited. (Cost to be determined)

Blackberries (black and purple). These plants tend to branch profusely and will grow in a vase shape. They will not send up any root suckers, usually. In the spring, when your first year canes reach about 18-20" tall, you will want to prune back the tips so that strong branching will be encouraged. In



the second spring you may trim back your branches to 8-12 inches. If you are thinning your canes, try to leave at least 5-10 canes per plant.

Raspberries (everbearing). These varieties are sometimes called fall bearing as well. The first year the canes should produce fruit at the tips of the canes and in the following summer these same canes will produce fruit, but much lower on the plant. The answer to pruning these popular everbearing plants is to remove the cane tip after the fall harvest the first year. When the summer harvest has happened the following year, you can prune the rest of the cane to the ground.

I hope this introduction to pruning your brambles will be useful to those that are already growing their own and perhaps encourage those that are not to try them in their garden. I would recommend doing your research on varieties that do well in the Sandhills and give them a try. The rewards can be delicious!

We would like to say “Thank You” to those who have supported The Sandhills Horticultural Gardens and the Landscape Gardening Program at Sandhills Community College during 2012-2013.

Mr. John Ambrose  
 Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Auman  
 Ms. Meg Bassani  
 Ms. Helen Brissette  
 Representative James Boles  
 Mr. John Bowman  
 Ms. Mary Byrne  
 Mr. and Mrs. Anthony M. Chriscoe  
 Mr. Richard T. Conlon and  
 Mrs. Teresa M. Kendregan  
 Mr. Jim Deal  
 The Honorable Robert J. Dole  
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred W. Garrett  
 Mrs. Allene Graves  
 Ms. Delos Hanna  
 Happy Hackers  
 Mrs. Margaret Hayes  
 Mrs. Jean G. Haynes  
 Mr. John Hoffman  
 Ms. Jean Holcomb

CDR (Ret.) and Mrs. William C. Hugh  
 Mrs. Gloria Johnson  
 Mr. and Mrs. Ronald H. Keohn  
 Mrs. Mary Jane Knight  
 Ms. Cody Lewis  
 Loblolly Garden Club  
 Ms. Nancy Lee Lloyd  
 Mr. Walter J. Maurer  
 Ms. Gwen Mellows  
 Ms. Eleanor P. Mischinski  
 Drs. Michael and Angela O’Rand  
 Mr. and Mrs. Anton Oswald  
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph L. Owen  
 Ms. Carol Ann Palmquist  
 Mr. Alan Parker  
 Mr. Mark Peters  
 Mr. and Mrs. Vincent D. Pellegrini  
 Ms. Nancy Pierce  
 Pinehurst Garden Club  
 Ms. Nancy S. Roberts

Mr. Michael J. Romans and  
 Mrs. Lucy Lardner  
 Sandhills Pediatrics Inc.  
 Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Smith  
 Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Stephens  
 Mr. and Mrs. Colen M. Swain  
 Tar Heel Tracers  
 Dr. and Mrs. Russell J. Tate  
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Wafer  
 Mr. Paul F. Wagner and  
 Ms. Jane Wagner Erdman  
 Dr. and Mrs. John Wagnitz  
 Mr. and Mrs. David Watson  
 Mr. Terry Weaver  
 Whispering Pines Garden Club  
 Ms. Lottie Sue Williamson  
 Mrs. Dorothy T. Young  
 Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey A. Zegel

## Gifts from the Garden

Rebecca Rodriguez

My assignment for this news letter was titled ‘Gifts from the Garden.’ At first I thought I was going to write about clever, crafty things to make from natural materials to share with family and friends during the holiday season, but my two daughters inspired me to see that title from a different view. So please forgive me if I wane a little more on the emotional side then on the practical side in this issue.

Earlier this spring, my older daughter (17) built a large teepee out of bamboo and grew peas and then pole and lima beans on it. She found an old wind chime to hang in the door way, large logs to use as seats, and used her long-held rock collection to decorate it. She introduced it to my younger daughter (4) and two neighborhood friends (5 & 3) as their new club house. The young kids have been playing in it ever since as my older daughter happily waters the plants and collects the produce. Early this month, watching from a window, I witnessed my daughters walking hand-in-hand to the teepee, one carrying a little plastic red bucket, the other a watering can. My heart melted, and that’s when I realized the greatest gifts from the garden: love, learning, community...the types of gifts we should give all year round.

Love comes in the form of feeding your family with healthy, delicious food you raised yourself. Bringing a bouquet of flowers from your yard to a friend who needs a cheery surprise. Surrounding your house in beauty, so it becomes a home you and your family really love.



The "Teepee"

After construction and prior to the first planting of peas.

I still remember the lessons my grandmother taught me about gardening over 30 years ago. She composted before it was trendy and taught me to care for the soil as much as the plants. With pride, I watch my older daughter take the lessons she learned in the garden and pass them on to younger school children

through internships preparing her for college and career involving sustainable agriculture. I’m amazed at the fearless curiosity of my youngest who must examine and ask questions about every bug she finds. Her favorite question is “Mamma, is this one a garden friend or a bad guy?” She gets to smash the bad guys and find nice homes on leaves for the garden friends.

Large and small communities can thrive around a garden. When I moved to the area, I became fast friends with my 93 year old neighbor over discussions about our gardens. She has lent me old pots, wire fencing, and a lot of local garden advice. In exchange, I try to get her to let me help her with some of her heavy lifting. Which brings up another gift – health – her daily exercise is working in her yard and garden and

it sure seems to be working! We are also blessed in the Sandhills to have several larger communities built around garden, our Horticultural Society being one of the best!

With that said, I hope you all have a wonderful Holiday Season and find some way to share a ‘garden gift’ with someone you love.



Sandhills Community College  
 3395 Airport Road  
 Pinehurst, NC 28374  
 www.sandhills.edu

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 PERMIT NO. 55  
 PINEHURST, NC



## A Gift That Keeps On Giving

Your gift of a Sandhills Horticultural Society membership includes a FREE subscription to Better Homes and Gardens magazine. In addition to BH&G a membership includes many more on-going benefits. Such as . . .

- Free Garden Seminars
- A discount at the student's spring and fall plant sales
- Access to Horticultural Trips
- Bloomin' News quarterly newsletter
- Use of the Ball Garden Visitors Center for garden related events
- Reciprocal admission to over 200 gardens throughout North America
- A member discount on Horticultural Society workshops and programs

The most important benefit of membership is support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens. Membership dues and Society sponsored programs provide the funds required in the planned development of the Gardens. The Society also acts as a volunteer organization, contributing time and energy to specific needs of the Garden, as well as continuing educational opportunities.



### Gift Membership Information 2013-2014

Name of Membership Recipient \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to: SCC – Sandhills Horticultural Society.**

Individual \$25.00     Family \$45.00     Individual Life \$350.00

Buyer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

We will send a card to acknowledge your special gift. Message you want included:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Mail to: Sandhills Community College, Attn: Dee Johnson, 3395 Airport Road, Pinehurst NC 28374