Sandhills Horticultural Gardens

The Bloomin' News

Sandhills Community College 50 Years 1963-2013

Sandhills Community College | Vol. 13, No. 4 | Winter 2018

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.

Hilarie Blevins Takes Over As Coordinator of the Landscape Gardening Program

Skip Ragland

There is something special about a past student someday assuming the position of her teacher. So it is today as Hilarie Blevins has become the new Coordinator of the Landscape Gardening Department at the Sandhills Community College

Recently we asked Hilarie about her Horticultural experience. "Well, I am a 1998 graduate of the SCC Landscape Gardening Program and am currently pursuing a BS in Agricultural Education from NC A&T. I spent the first 5 years of my career working for Resorts of Pinehurst. While there, I was a grounds foreman and assisted in greenhouse production. The bulk of my career was spent as a Horticulturist at CCNC where I worked for twelve-and-a-half years. My duties there primarily involved seasonal color displays, container gardens, veggie and herb gardens, and renovation and design of existing plantings," she said.

Her perception of the current Landscape Gardening Program is good. "We have a large group of 1st year students and an incredibly devoted and determined group of second year students. The curriculum has changed with the times since I was a student. There is a learning curve to adapting to these changes," she commented.

When asked about what drew her interest in pursuing the new position, she said, "I have maintained a close relationship with the program since graduation. In my career as a Horticulturist I was often called on to give gardening lectures to local garden clubs. I really enjoyed sharing my knowledge and assisting people with their gardens. When talks of the possibility of the position were brought to my attention, it inspired me to go back to school and begin thinking about the next phase of my career."

She believes that having gone through the program was beneficial to her and will be especially beneficial to her in running it. "YES!! This program is so hands on…for students and faculty. This style of teaching was very beneficial to me as a student." She exclaimed.

Hilarie plans to carefully move forward as the Landscape Gardening Program evolves. "I don't see a need for many immediate changes although some have already been implemented. We have re-aligned our general education requirements. They now match the Golf Course Management Program and involve a larger variety of courses, "she said. She went on, "I would love to see our enrollment grow. It's a tough time to be in a field that requires hands-on work. The Digital Age is negatively affecting this and many other fields. My goal is to get students excited about this industry. I'm eager to speak with industry professionals from around the State to hear what their views are of our program and what's good, bad, needs adding, or improving".

One thing is for sure, Hilarie has inherited a very special program which has succeeded over 50 years due to an accomplished and dedicated faculty and a legion of supporters who are extremely proud of the Landscape Gardening Program at SCC and the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens. We welcome Hilarie with open arms and a pledge to help make her tenure as successful as those who have gone before her.

Wabi-Sabi In the Garden

Jim Westmen

The definition of Wabi-Sabi, the 'Beauty of Imperfection', can be present or designed and created in your home garden. Many aspects of a garden may already display this concept and should first be recognized and then appreciated.

Slowing down our busy and sometimes hectic schedules can improve our health and mood. The daily relationships with the outdoors and our sense of self in the world around us is vital. By creating this feeling of peace and appreciation for the natural condition of things in our gardens we can help find relaxation and refuge from daily stresses.

When I see moss growing over a rock or the fissures and cracks a boulder may have, there is a wonder and beauty felt. The age of the rock displays a sense of maturity and wisdom. Imagine the stories this rock could tell for it has seen many more years than myself and has weathered through them all. We can relate this to family, our parents and grandparents and the wisdom they share, which is and should be revered. Embracing their life experiences and history strengthens our souls and appreciation.

Paying attention to those imperfections and natural occurrences, like a decaying fallen old tree full of colors and insect life or observing lichens growing over a tree branch seen supporting birds in their nest construction, is interesting and just plain cool!

I feel thoughtful and serene and, in the moment, as if this is a form of meditation and understanding.

In many instances we see, fallen pine needles, leaves, twigs and pine cones across our lawns, walkways and grounds in our gardens and immediately consider needing to clean and pick them up. But wait, they may have a beautiful pattern expressed, or an indication of a passing storm event and time. This is finding the beauty in imperfection. It is not always constant and permanent, but maybe for just a moment and very temporary. Yes, we all still clean up our gardens after a storm, but maybe it's to prepare a clean canvas for the next new experience.

One of my favorite Wabi-Sabi moments is noticing in the Fall when the Gingko tree drops all it's leaves, seemingly together, blanketing the ground and walkway with those golden yellow shades creating patterns that are breathtaking.

As many of you know, our students of the Landscape Gardening Program at Sandhills spend a residency period at Steed Hall and are tasked with horticultural projects, greenhouse and garden maintenance activities. Occasionally when a student skips a routine morning walkway cleaning, I've been told, "it was for Wabi-Sabi Mr. Westmen". OK, you got me.

My wife tells me she loves my smile lines creeping from my cheeks and eyes when I just see wrinkles and getting older. Hey, that's my Wabi-Sabi-baby.

Anyway, be observant, mindful, appreciative and discover the 'Wabi-Sabi' in your personal garden and, also those public ones.

Tricia Mabe Retires

Skip Ragland

Tricia Mabe who has often been the voice and face of the Landscape Gardening Department has retired after 20 years. The students, faculty, and volunteers of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens will certainly miss her.

Tricia has actually worked for SCC for 25 years. She joined SCC as a member of the Student Services Department in 1993 where she worked for 5 years.

The Landscape Gardening position was a good fit for her since, according to Tricia, "My love for working with students and assisting them as I did in Student Services could be continued in the Landscape Gardening Department."

Special moments over the years were many, but Tricia seems to always come back to her involvement with the students. "Being able to assist students in attaining their goals of higher education at SCC has been extremely important to me," she said. She went on to say, "Visiting with some of them at the 50thAnniversary of the Landscape Gardening Program and hearing them say how much it meant to them to be in the Program was special. I only missed 2 graduations in 25 years and it filled me with pride when I saw LSG students graduating. Some of my best friends now are past students or are members of the Sandhills Horticultural Society and Board."

Tricia has fond memories of many of the past graduates. "I still hear from a lot of them. And the wonderful friends I have made in Sandhills Horticultural Society have been too numerous to count. Some are no longer with us, but I am so glad God has allowed our paths to cross."

Many people over the years have had a major impact on her career. Tricia remembers them well. "I would have to say the faculty in the Landscape Gardening Department have had a huge influence, But the Westmens have been with me the longest. Seeing their love for each other as well as for the Gardens, students and the LSG Program itself have had the largest impact. They have so much patience for the students and their love of teaching the students the curriculum, as well as teaching them some of life's lessons prepares them for the real world. They have been great to me, have listened to any concerns, gave me advice and supported me. I highly respect them!"

Tricia is looking forward to retirement. "I will continue to work in my beauty shop, "Something Different by Tricia.' However, I will make appointments around trips to our second home in Shallotte. I'm planning on spending time with my three granddaughters, Mattie, age 5, Tori, age 4, and Armissa (Missa), age 3. My first grandson will be born in February and I am excited about an addition to our family, and will be able to assist my daughter, Tannah, with the newborn and her two daughters.

Even though those associated with the Landscape Gardening Program will no longer have the pleasure of seeing Tricia every day, there is no doubt her name will come up often and she will be remembered with love and affection by all who have had the privilege of working with her. Actually, just knowing Tricia has been an honor for us all.

Horticultural Society Events & Workshops

Tracye Reiland

We offered the last Lunch & Learn of the 2018 season in September with a very informative presentation given by David Burns, VP Sales & marketing for the Broadway Hemp Company in Sanford. Mr. Burns discussed how his company produces CBD oil products and spoke of the benefits of CBD oil for specific health issues. He shared a YouTube video entitled "The Inside Story of Cannabidiol – What are the benefits of CBD?". I encourage those who are interested to watch this video as it provides a very logical and scientific explanation on how CBD targets and affects certain physiological functions in the body.

On October 26th, a bleak and rainy afternoon, more than 70 people were treated to an informative talk by Susan Campbell – "Everything You Wanted to Know About Hummingbirds". Listeners learned what to do if the birds overwinter in their backyards, when to expect them to return in the spring if they didn't stay, and other interesting hummingbird behavior. This program was co-sponsored by the council of Garden Clubs and the Sandhills Horticultural Society

Upcoming Events . . .

Register by emailing landsapegardening@sandhills.edu or calling 910-695-3882

"Fresh Christmas Décor"

December 4 (Tuesday) 10AM to Noon – Ball Visitors Center

Maggie Smith of Maggie's Farm designs will conduct a workshop in which participants will create a holiday floral arrangement to take home for the Christmas holidays. Horticultural Society member $35, non-members $40. Space is limited to 24. All must prepay to secure a place in class.

Pruning Workshop

January 26 (Saturday) 10AM to Noon – Ball Visitors Center

Moore County Extension Agent Taylor Williams will conduct this workshop. Learn the basics of pruning, then go outside for a demonstration on how it's done.

FREE – but reservations are necessary.

Children's Art Competition and Exhibit

February 8th to the 15th - Ball Visitors Center

Sponsored by the Sandhills Horticultural Society, five area middle schools will compete and exhibit art work that interprets nature. The theme for the 2019 exhibit is "Joining Hands with Nature" and any media can be represented. Judging will take place on February 8th. The awards ceremony will be on Sunday February 10th at 2PM. Refreshments will be served. The exhibit will be open to the public from 1PM to 5PM from the 8th through the 14th and from 10AM to 2PM on the 15th.

Winter Garden Tips

- Winter pruning of deciduous trees can give you a better view of proper branch structure and spacing.
- Consider a preemergence herbicide for your lawn in late February to help prevent weeds.
- Winter months in the Sandhills are perfect for planting trees and shrubs.
- Now is a great time to test your soil.
- January is the best time to plant garden peas.

Propagation of Interior Plants

Johanna Westmen

The propagation of interior plants can be as simple or as difficult as you would like it to be. It can range from the simplicity of placing a stem cutting in a glass of water and letting it form roots all the way to the advanced method of tissue culture or micro propagation which has become so popular in the interiorscape industry today.

The simplest way to produce more interior plants would be the method of division. The ideal time to divide an interior plant is when the plant has become too big for the container it is in. How do you know when this is the case? One of the obvious ways is to pull the plant out of the container and inspect the roots. Are they a circling mass? Does it look like more roots than soil? These are questions that should be answered before you make the decision to divide a growing interior plant. Once you have decided that it is indeed time to divide this plant, there are a few more guidelines that will help you.

Always repot or divide and repot your interior plants when they are actively growing. This means that there is plenty of light and the correct temperature. If you place your interior plants outside during the warm months, this would be the time to divide or repot them. Interior plants should not be divided or repotted going into the winter months unless you have a greenhouse or somewhere the plant will be putting on active growth. You risk the chance of overwatering if you divide and repot during the winter months inside. Since the plant is not actively growing it will not be forming new roots which would then benefit from excess soil and water consumption.

When you decide to divide your interior plant, you can use a knife or a set of pruners to make the division. You can also use your hands and work with the plant until you feel a natural break in the plant's crown or root mass. Once you have made the division, be sure to repot as soon as possible and water it in well. You can place the division in a pot of the same size - no need to increase the size since it is only a division and obviously much smaller than the original specimen. Since the roots will have been compromised, be sure to monitor your plants watering requirements for at least two weeks. This should allow time for the roots to begin growing again. Keep in mind that environmental conditions will always play a part in your plants water requirements.

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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
- Continuing educational opportunities

The most important benefit of membership is support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens. Membership dues and Society sponsored programs provide the funds required for the planned development and maintenance of the Gardens.

Gift Membership Information 2018-2019

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: Jim Westmen, 3395 Airport Road, Pinehurst NC 28374