When the committee starting discussing topics for this quarter’s newsletter I thought “Oh, Boy I have an easy one this quarter.” Then I started looking at my pictures and thinking about some of the amazing gardens I have had the opportunity to visit and I thought “Oh, Boy how am I going to narrow this down to just a few - do I only think about US gardens, do I only do Europe?” The possibilities brought back some amazing memories. The following is just a glimmer of the fun you can have visiting gardens. A reminder that Sandhills Horticultural Gardens is a reciprocal garden for many other gardens and museums across the US. This gives you reduced entrance fee and/or discounts in their gift shops if you are a member of our Gardens.

I have to start with what is considered the number one garden in the US not only by me, but by official standards. That would be Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA. I have visited this garden over twenty-five times in all seasons except Christmas and that visit is on my bucket list. It never disappoints and the diversity of the experience is hard to match. If you cannot get to Europe this season visit Longwood. Peirce-du Pont brought many of the European ideas to this Garden. While you are in that area I will just list a few other gardens to visit: Nemours, another DuPont home; Chanticleer, one of the most unique small gardens I have visited; Winterthur, amazing house with a garden and another of those DuPont homes.

National Geographic named Dumbarton Oaks as the sixth most beautiful garden in the world. This garden is located in Georgetown and I would have to say it is my favorite garden. You will read the word favorite on several other gardens I mention, but truly this is my top favorite garden. I love how the resident, Mildred Bliss worked with architect Beatrix Farrand for almost thirty years to create garden rooms that make you feel you have left the city and are enjoying nature at its best. These garden rooms are complete with furnishing designed specifically for the area.

If you want to visit a plant collectors dream visit Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis. It was the first established botanical garden in the US, established in 1850. The Garden’s plant explorations show in their diverse plant collections.

Another top botanical garden, voted #2 public garden by USA Today is Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond, Virginia. It is a young garden as far as botanical gardens go. It was established in 1982. Highlights for me there are the Children’s Garden and the Conservatory.

Two more US gardens that are relatively close to each other and certainly worth a visit are Brooklyn Botanical Garden and Wave Hill. Both of these gardens are in New York City area, one in Brooklyn and the other in the Bronx. Brooklyn Botanical garden is an urban garden that allows people to enjoy a quiet get away from the city. If all you want to do is have an amazing view of the Hudson River and the Palisades visit Wave Hill, but the gardens are so much more than the view. Wave Hill is another one of my favorites. Can you have too many favorite gardens?

I have decided not to list my favorite gardens outside of North America because I would need a book for that, but I will add two more special gardens in Canada that you might consider visiting. First is Montreal Botanical Gardens. I have to say they know how to do topiaries like I have never seen before and flower combinations that are amazing. As a side note to the Gardens, I have never seen so many weddings in one afternoon in one place. Montreal Botanical Gardens seems to be the place to have your nuptials if you are in the area. The other famous garden I will mention in Canada is Butchart Gardens. It is a must see stop if you are on the west coast of Canada located in Brentwood Bay, British Columbia. It is a floral display garden that will take your breath away. Color is everywhere you look. That cool, moist weather makes for beautiful growing conditions.

I feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to visit these gardens and so many more. I have learned that gardens can be small or large, but the commitment of the people who started them or have continued to maintain and grow them is the same. We are all connected through our love of plants and nature. Happy Travels this Summer!
Summer Turf Maintenance  
Johanna Westmen

When most people think about maintaining turfgrass through the summer months, they are usually thinking about mowing and watering. Yes, these are vital aspects of summer turf maintenance but it can go much further than that.

Watering can be the number one concern for most people in the summer. It can also be the driest time of the year for us in the Sandhills. Also, contributing to the need for watering is the fact that most of our soils in this region are comprised mainly of sand. As you may or may not realize, sandy soils drain very quickly. For this reason they will require much more watering than a soil that may have clay as its primary component. The rule of thumb for all turfgrasses is that they receive at least one inch of water per week. This can be accomplished by irrigation or if we are lucky, by rainfall. One way you can determine the amount of rainfall is to simply install a rain gauge in your garden. If you are watering with an irrigation system, run the system on your lawn, gather the amount of water that is being used in a can and then measure that amount. You will need to use something that is low and has straight sides, not tapered, so that you can receive an accurate measurement. It is also recommended that you water deeply and infrequently to encourage the roots to travel down and not stay shallow near the soil’s surface. This will help your turf withstand our hot and sometimes dry summers.

By the time summer rolls around, you should have already fertilized your warm season grasses at least two times utilizing the recommendation for bermudagrass and zoysiagrass of 1 lb. Nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. starting when the turfgrass is actively growing. For us, this can be as early as April or as late as May. You will note that I did not include centipedegrass in the above recommendation. That is because centipedegrass prefers a lower percentage of Nitrogen in its fertilizer as opposed to bermudagrass and zoysiagrass which prefers a higher percentage.

Lastly, aerification of your warm season turfgrasses such as bermudagrass and zoysiagrass occurs in the growing months. This is not something typically performed by most homeowners. Most people usually do not own aerating equipment, but it is something that most professional lawn maintenance companies offer as part of their services. Aerification can help reduce compaction and increase root vigor due to a more favorable soil environment created by increasing the amount of water and air exchange. The key to aerification is to do it only when turfgrass is actively growing. Then the turf is capable of healing itself.

I hope I have not made maintenance of summer turfgrasses seem like a chore. It can be very rewarding, especially when the outcome shows all your hard work.

Horticultural Society Events & Workshops  
Dolores Muller

2016 began with our ever popular Pruning workshop in January taught by Agricultural Extension agent Taylor Williams. 89 people attended. Pruning basics were taught inside and a demonstration was conducted on shrubs outside the Ball Visitor Center. An Air Plant workshop was taught by Linda Hamwi and me, Dolores Muller, in February. The class included information on how to display, grow and maintain air plants. Each participant took home a plant and glass container to display their treasure.

In March we had a real treat when Sueson Vess presented a Demonstration and Tasting of Springtime Foods with Benefits. Three delicious salads were prepared along with lavender lemonade and we all got to taste them and bring home the recipes. Also that month, artist Jane Casnellie lead a group of 24 in painting a floral picture using acrylics. It was Breakfast and Painting with Jane and all enjoyed tea, coffee and scones while painting.

April was a busy month. Jan Leitschuh, from Farm to Table, gave a Growing Vegetables in Containers workshop, there was the Sandhills Horticultural Society Plant Sale, the Annual Bedding and Plant Sale for the Benefit of the Student’s Educational Fund and we conducted our first Lunch and Learn in the Gardens for 2016. Janet Peele of Aberdeen Florist and Nursery talked about Planting for Success in the Sandhills. She brought many plants for purchase too.

It is with great anticipation that we welcome Peter Hatch in May. He is the former director of the Gardens & Grounds for 35 years of Thomas Jefferson’s home Monticello. His topic will be, “Thomas Jefferson’s Revolutionary Garden.” He is the author of ‘A Rich Spot of Earth’: Thomas Jefferson’s Revolutionary Garden at Monticello, and he is an alumni of the Sandhills Landscape Gardening program.

Check out the workshops and events we have coming up. I think we have something for everyone.

Johanna Westmen

Student aerating turf
Summer Pruning
Jim Westmen

This time of year is often when many people will prune their ornamental trees and shrubs. As with any pruning, knowing the reasons and results desired is extremely important.

Choosing the proper tools for the job is very important to achieve the end result you want. Here is a list of tools with recommended stem sizes and type of pruning performed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Recommended Stem Size</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand Pruners</td>
<td>½” and below</td>
<td>Selective Cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loppers</td>
<td>1”-2”</td>
<td>Selective Cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pruning Saw</td>
<td>2”-6”</td>
<td>Selective Cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedge Shears</td>
<td>½” and below</td>
<td>Non-selective Cut</td>
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Selective Cuts are removing individual parts one at a time resulting in a more natural look. Nonselective cuts are removing multiple parts at the same time usually creating forms that are very geometric and formal looking.

Pruning may be needed to limb up ornamental trees to allow access under low branches for walkways and driveways and also opening up for air circulation between the top area of shrubs and the trees above. This will help maintain cooling breezes for the summer months.

We also want to control size, both the height and width of shrubs. Keep in mind the ending form whether round, square or other should always be widest at the bottom and taper as you go up to the top. This will allow sunlight to reach to the bottom branches and help keep foliage all the way to the bottom of these shrubs.

Formal hedges may be pruned a couple times through the summer to maintain growth in a neat and crisp look. Again remember to keep the bottom of hedges wider than the top.

Upcoming Events... register by email or call Tricia Mabe at 910-695-3882

Edible Flowers & Flowering Herbs
June 15 (Wednesday) 10AM to Noon – Ball Visitors Center
Norma Burns from Bluebird Hill Farm in Bennett NC is the workshop instructor. She will discuss how to grow and care for these plants followed by a kitchen demonstration and hands-on tasting. Learn how to beautify and enhance the flavor of ordinary dishes, plus tips to use at home. Horticultural Society members $30, non-members $35. Space is limited. Payment due at registration.

Lunch & Learn in the Gardens
June 27 (Monday) Noon to 1PM – Ball Visitors Center
Dolores Muller will discuss Attracting Birds to Your Yard. Learn the tips and tricks to provide an environment that birds will love year around. Bring your lunch and the Garden will provide drinks. FREE – register by email: landscapegardening@sandhills.edu.

Making a Cement Leaf Bird Bath
August 19 (Friday) 1PM to 3PM – Outside Steed Hall
Instructor Pat Banville will lead participants step-by-step to create your very own bird bath. All materials will be supplied. Horticultural Society members $25, non-members $30. Space is limited. Payment secures a place in class.

Lunch & Learn in the Gardens
August 22 (Monday) Noon to 1PM – Ball Visitors Center
Master Gardener and Sandhills Horticultural Society board member Bruce Fensley will discuss Growing Fall & Winter Vegetables. Bring your lunch and the Garden will provide drinks. FREE – register by email: landscapegardening@sandhills.edu.
Summer Gardening Tips

- Fertilize annuals regularly with liquid feed for continuous blooms.
- Remove spent blooms on annuals to encourage blooms rather than seed production.
- Collards for fall harvest need to be planted in August.
- Do not prune spring blooming shrubs after the first of July.
- Provide at least one inch of water per week during the summer to your lawn.
- Aerate turfgrasses in the summer when they are actively growing.