



The Bloomin' News

Sandhills Community College

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Fall 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.*

50th Year Anniversary Celebration of the Sandhills Community College Landscape Gardening Program

Skip Ragland

On June 9, a 50 Year Anniversary Celebration of the Sandhills Community College Landscape Gardening Program took place at Steed Hall on the SCC campus.

Over 300 people were in attendance including over 100 alumni of the Landscape Gardening Program.

Events during the day included lunch on the grounds, a raffle and door prizes, an address by Dr. John Dempsey, President of the College and Fred Garrett, the first Coordinator of the Landscape Gardening Program.



Fred Garrett and Dee Johnson

During the celebration, Dee Johnson, current Coordinator of the Landscape Gardening Department was honored for her 17 years of service to the Department with a bronze sculpture of a young girl with her dog titled, "The Dog Ate My Homework." The statue will be placed in the Hoad Children's Garden.

Fred Garrett, commented on how they have met his original vision of over 50 years ago. "The Program and the Gardens have overwhelmingly exceeded any dream or vision that I might have had for them. I couldn't be more proud of what has been accomplished. Fred Heutte who suggested so long ago that I consider the job would be so pleased with what has become of all this. I know how strongly he felt about what could be done. He believed that a strong future is based on the excellence

of the past. That is how we approached things. We took the best, most innovative and efficient practices we could find at schools such as Wisley and Kew in England and built upon them. That continues today."

JJ Faulk, owner of JJ's Place Greenhouse and Nursery in Sanford, NC, had this to say about what the training she received from the SCC Landscape Gardening Program. "I wouldn't be where I am today as the owner and



*Co-Chairpersons
Jessica Faulk and Chris Burrows*

operator of my own greenhouse and nursery had I not received my training in the SCC Landscape Gardening Program. Not only did I benefit from a strong 'hands-on' gardening experience, but also I learned how to work with different people and personality types. I found out how important attention to detail is in any endeavor. The knowledge I gained here continues to give me the skills I need to succeed in my business."

Pete Gulley, owner of Gulley's Garden Center in Southern Pines, and a graduate of the SCC Landscape Gardening Program is very enthusiastic about his SCC experience.

"I was just back from Vietnam when I became a student. Getting into the Landscape Gardening Program really helped to mellow me and to enable me to move on into my new life back home. I wouldn't take anything in the world for what I learned here. I loved it and still do. These Gardens are a little spot of Heaven to me."

Continued on Page 2



Horticultural Society Events & Workshops

Tracy Reiland

We kicked off June by bringing back by popular demand the Concrete Leaf Casting workshop taught by Pat Banville and Peggy Hudson. Participants learned how to make a birdbath out of cement in the shape of a large leaf. Everyone went home with a lovely addition for their garden.

We had a new speaker and topic for our June Lunch & Learn. Keely Harpster, an SCC Landscape Gardening Program graduate and landscape design contractor, gave a very informative talk to 40 people on the basics of houseplant care. We've had many requests to bring Keely back so stay tuned for more talks from her in the future.

We were very fortunate to have as our July Lunch & Learn speaker, Mike Rowland. Mike is a retired surgeon, Master Gardener, and local farmer. He gave his very popular Circle of Life presentation to 35 people which discussed the history of nutrient depletion in the soil and how that affects our health. He talked specifically about Vitamin D, Magnesium, and Boron and why they are important in our diet and how to monitor for them. For those who could not be present, Mike's PowerPoint presentation is available on his website at www.mooregrassfedbeef.com. Simply select Menu > then select Nutrition > below the Suggestions is a reference to Circle of Life.



Dr. Mike Rowland

Upcoming Events . . .

Register by:

emailing landscapegardening@sandhills.edu, or call Tricia Mabe at 910-695-3882

Lunch & Learn

September 24 (Monday) Noon to 1PM – Ball Visitors Center

Broadway Hemp Company Presentation David Burns will be sharing information about the Industrial Hemp Growth in North Carolina. He will be discussing his company, products and the reported uses extracted from the plant. A hemp plant will be on display and products will be available.

FREE – bring your lunch, the Gardens will provide drinks.

Fall Plant Sale

October 6 (Saturday) 8AM to Noon – Steed Hall

Woody plants (azaleas, hollies, camellias) pansies, daffodils and spring flowering bulbs will be available. This is the annual Sandhills Horticultural Society and Student Horticultural Club plant sale. Pre-orders are recommended. Call Johanna Westmen at 910-246-4959, or you may purchase plants the day of sale. Horticultural Society members receive 5% off orders of \$100 or more.

Fall Flower Arranging Workshop

October 16 (Tuesday) 10AM to Noon – Ball Visitors Center

Vicki Garner, master designer with Jack Hadden Floral Design, will demonstrate how to make a fun, fall floral arrangement for your home. Vicki will use seasonal flowers and greenery to create a unique presentation. All material will be provided.

Horticultural Society members \$50, non-members \$60. Space is limited.

Everything You Wanted to Know About Hummingbirds

October 26 (Friday) 1PM – Ball Visitors Center

Susan Campbell, nationally recognized hummingbird expert, will tell us about their life in your backyard and how they fly to Mexico for the winter! This program is jointly sponsored by the Council of Garden Clubs and the Sandhills Horticultural Society. FREE – but space is limited. Please register early.

Holiday Finger Painting

November 8 (Thursday) 1PM to 3PM – Ball Visitors Center

Local artist Magda Sonderfan will show how easy it is to paint on canvas using your fingers. Each participant will leave with their own beautiful painting of a poinsettia. Price includes an 11" x 14" canvas, all paints and expert instruction. Horticultural Society members \$30, non-members \$40. Space is limited.

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 make a holiday floral arrangement to take home for the Christmas holiday. Horticultural society members \$35 non-members \$40. Space is limited.

Continued from Page 1

50th Year Anniversary Celebration

According to SCC President Dr. John Dempsey, "The Landscape Gardening Program at Sandhills Community College is incredible! It means so much to this community and is in many ways the face of our college. Nearly 30 years ago when I was becoming President of SCC, Dr. Raymond Stone, then President, told me that there were four things, which made SCC special and different from any other community college. He said, 'First, it is the prettiest. Second, it has the best faculty of any

community college in the country. Third, the Foundation. And, Fourth, the Gardens.'

Dempsey went on, "The College is a bridge to the community and it serves and reflects the community. The North Carolina Sandhills are beautiful and our Gardens certainly reflect that beauty. I believe that the Sandhills Community College would not be where it is without the Landscape Gardening Program and our Gardens."

Dee Johnston Retires as Coordinator of Landscape Gardening Program

Skip Ragland

It is a long way from the hills of Grafton, West Virginia to the Sandhills of North Carolina, but the constant in the journey of Dee Johnson has been a love of the outdoors.

Dee was brought up to enjoy the outdoors from a young age. Her Dad was a huge influence in her early life taking her on hunting and fishing trips and introducing her to working in their vegetable garden and appreciating the forest around their home. Her Nanny showed Dee that amazing flowers could be grown in very difficult terrain with raised beds and walls to retain the hillside she lived on. Nighttime was special to young Dee when her grandmother would take her out to see her moonflowers in bloom. They were magical and these early influences led her to wanting to teach botany or biology and to becoming the Coordinator of Landscape Gardening at Sandhills Community College.

Academics have always played a large role in Dee's life. She attended West Virginia University, Sandhills Community College, Saint Andrews University and North Carolina State University where she earned an Associate Degree, a Bachelors of Science Degree and a Masters of Science Degree.

Her work career is impressive. She began work as an Administrative Assistant to the Civil Engineering Department at West Virginia University. Later she started her own landscape design business. She co-owned a retail flower shop and design business. In 1979, Dee began working at SCC and was a Continuing Education Instructor. She has worked full time at SCC for 18 years and became Coordinator of the Landscape Gardening Program in 2000.

Family means much to Dee. Her father at 91 is very active and growing a large vegetable garden. She has a brother, Glenn, a son, Matthew, and a grandson, Brenden. Brenden is now attending SCC and is studying architectural engineering. Dee also has a large extended family of cousins who are like brothers and sisters to her.

Dee feels that her greatest mentors to her have been her family. From the landscape gardening side, she says that Fred Garrett has encouraged and supported her in many projects through the years as well as has taught her so much while she has been associated with SCC. Warren



Dee Johnson

Steed, under whom she did her landscape gardening internship, was also a tremendous influence generously sharing his knowledge with her. She hopes that she has taken what she learned from all of those who mentored her and shared it with her own students and others throughout her career.

Dee's best memories are those of the many students that she has had the pleasure of getting to know over her career. She says, "To see them being successful in the industry, getting married and raising families makes me smile. It's like having multiple children that you helped raise. They don't call me Mother Johnson for nothing."

When asked if she had any advice for her successors, she had this to say, "Get to know the whole student, not just the classroom one, but the individual and all they have to offer. Everyone is an individual with individual needs. I have always tried to support those special needs in any way I could as do all the faculty in Landscape Gardening. I think this is why we have been so successful throughout the years. We care about the whole student."

Dee also has advice for new landscape gardening students, "Take advantage of every opportunity to learn and to network. This is an amazing industry where so many leaders are willing to share their knowledge. There are not a lot of secrets in our business. Everyone wants to help you, so take advantage of that. Network, make connections."

Dee feels that the best advice she ever got was, "Be present right here, right now. We are not promised tomorrow and we cannot do anything about what happened in the past. It makes me appreciate every day and every opportunity that has come my way."

The future for Dee after SCC looks bright. She plans to do more with her landscape design business, Deesigns, spend a little more time helping her Dad, travel, and do some volunteer work in the community and in her church.

One thing is for sure. Everyone who has had the pleasure of working with her will long remember Dee Johnson and the statue of the little girl with the dog in the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens will evoke special memories of a woman who dedicated herself to those Gardens and to those who loved them.

Support the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens

As the end of the year nears and it's time to think about charitable contributions for 2018, please consider including the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens in your plans. A donation can be sent directly from the Required Minimum Distribution of your IRA without the donation being subject to taxation (please consult your financial adviser for details). This support would go directly to upgrades being planned for the Gardens and should be sent to SCC-SHS, Attn: Jim Westmen.

Thank you for your consideration.



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Fall Gardening Tips

- ❁ Plant cool season vegetables such as lettuce, broccoli, cabbage and spinach
- ❁ Excellent time of the year for planting trees, shrubs and perennials
- ❁ Time to plant cool season annuals – pansies, violas, snapdragons, ornamental cabbage and kale
- ❁ Plant spring blooming bulbs such as daffodils, tulips and crocus
- ❁ Move house plants back indoors. Be sure to check for insects.