




garden experts and local nurseries, we have acquired the plants to fulfill the vision.

It's time to put it all together, so please join us Saturday, April 6, for a day of community gardening, beginning at 9:00 a.m. on the bridge.


 **LAKE LURE FLOWERING
BRIDGE PLANT SALE
SATURDAY APRIL 20TH
8:00 AM TILL 3:00 PM**

From Sandra Nelson and the Garden Committees – The gardens on the bridge are shouting "Spring is here!" How does your garden grow?

The Friends of the Lake Lure Flowering Bridge will host their annual plant sale **Saturday, April 20 between 8am and 3pm in conjunction with the Gorge Sale on the Trail.** All proceeds will go to further the development and enhancement of this well-received community project. In their search to fill the Bridge Gardens, our plant committee has gathered a large variety of beautiful plants. Come see what's been happening on the Bridge and lend your support while adding to the beauty of your own garden. You'll be so glad you did!

NEWS

MARCH 2013

 **TO THOSE WHO MAKE IT
HAPPEN: THANK YOU!**

The Lake Lure Flowering Bridge will bloom as a tribute to community spirit and the willing labor of dedicated volunteers. Two of them are pictured here, Chuck Watkins and Charlie Yelton, seen working to load soil into the planters on the bridge. These two have led the preparation of the infrastructure on the Bridge, laid the irrigation and electrical conduits and so much more.



When you see Chuck or Charlie, say thanks. Their diligence is a gift we're all grateful to see at work.

 **JOIN US FOR PLANTING DAY
SATURDAY, APRIL 6**

Months of planning and working come to fruition Saturday, April 6, when we hope you will join other volunteers to help plant the bridge gardens. The infrastructure team, led by Charlie Yelton and Chuck Watkins, has worked to install irrigation and electrical systems. Volunteers have helped waterproof the bridge surface, and put in washed stone for drainage, as well as the recommended soil mix for the beds.

The garden committees have worked together to design an exciting and varied plan for the beds to insure a diverse and pleasing experience for those who will walk the bridge or pass by on the highway. Through the diligence of committee members and the generosity of



The creativity of the garden committees is on display with visual enhancements like these gates that welcome visitors to the East End Gardens. There is much more to come. Photographers will find many special touches within the gardens. Be sure to join us on Facebook to see other photos and a video from our friend Heidi Fischer.

 **LLFB BOARD CHANGES**

We regretfully say goodbye and gratefully thank Melanie Greenway for her service on the Lake Lure Flowering Bridge board as she leaves us. Her

contributions were meaningful in the early development of our organization, especially lending her expertise to the initial planning for the gardens. We look forward to seeing her with us again as her time permits.

Joining the board is Susie Ellis who will serve as our secretary. Susie has been a consistent and hard-working volunteer, bringing not only her time, but also a fountain of fresh ideas to the garden planning.



Looking toward the river from the Founders Circle you can see early signs of spring in the gardens. Thanks to Chuck and Diane Merrick of Lake Lure and U Pick Daffodils in Bluffton SC for their generous gift of 500 bulbs for our gardens.



LLFB REPORT TO LAKE LURE TOWN COUNCIL

On March 12, Lake Lure Flowering Bridge Board Chair Bill Miller and Ex-Officio Board Member Linda Turner reported on the progress of the project to the Lake Lure Town Council. We share excerpts below.

Mayor Keith, Members of Town Council, Town Staff and friends,

Linda Turner and I are happy to return to Council to (1) provide an update on your Flowering Bridge project, (2) to share with you the 5-year financial plan you requested, and (3) present to you the 2013 budget for The Friends of Lake Lure Flowering Bridge.

First, we want to thank all of you and the Town Staff, collectively and individually, for your strong and enthusiastic support and encouragement of this community based beautification project. We hope that you are pleased with the progress that has been made in recent months.

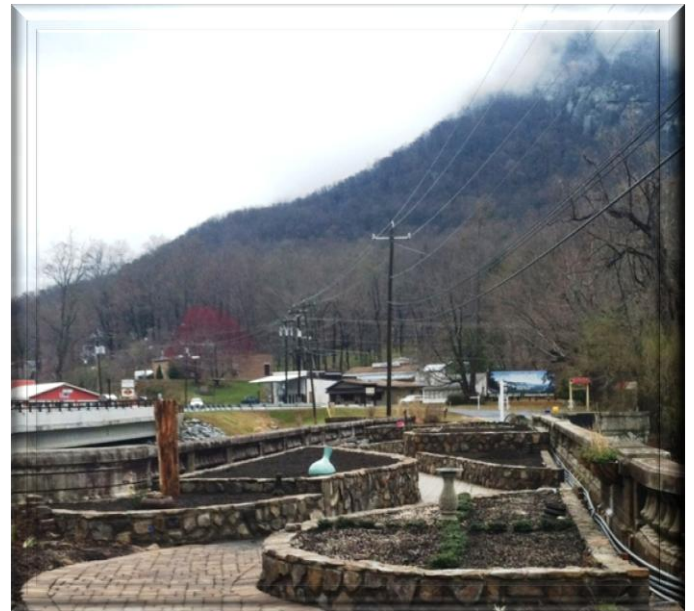
As bids for the construction of this one-of-a-kind flowering, pedestrian bridge greatly exceeded our financial resources, our Board made the decision to self-contract the project, following the design of architect Andrew Hill and Cardno. We planned to do this, as far as possible, with donated materials and volunteer labor, and to proceed as money was available. Where professional help was needed we committed to hire local craftsman, most notably masons Jay Freeman, to build the beautiful block and natural stone planters, and Tom Gorman, to install the pavers. Community volunteers provided hundreds of hours of hard labor, and local vendors either donated materials or offered us discounted prices. All of this was done under the direction of the LLFB Board and the careful guidance of Project

Superintendents Charlie Yelton and Chuck Watkins. The support services of Chris Braund, Lake Lure Town staff and employees have been invaluable.

As a result, the project is on schedule for spring planting in April and our Grand Opening in October. The East End Gardens and the construction of the natural stone bridge planters exceeded the original plans. However, thanks to the frugality of our leaders, the generous support of individuals and businesses, The Friends of the Bridge, and the selfless efforts of a small army of volunteers, we will complete the East End Gardens and Lake Lure Flowering Bridge over \$300,000 less than our lowest contractor estimate.

At the same time we have made every effort to make these gardens environmentally friendly, educationally oriented and aesthetically beautiful, while protecting and preserving this historic bridge for future generations.

We are more confident than ever that this flowering bridge and surrounding gardens will become a major tourist attraction in the near future. A recent feature article on the Bridge in the WNC Magazine and future publicity across North Carolina will bring a new generation of visitors to this beautiful place we call home. One can only guess what the financial impact of that will be in Lake Lure, Chimney Rock Village and the Hickory Nut Gorge community.



Each of the beds on the bridge has a theme and a special feature that will make a visit both interesting and educational. Many of the features were donated by volunteers. Our thanks to our "idea brain trust" (Terry Ashley, Mary Ann Brown, Susie Ellis, Sandra Nelson and Kathy Tanner) for their inspired garden creations.



HELP MAKE OUR GARDENS GROW AS A 2013 DONOR

As plants emerge this spring, our work is still very much in development. We continue to stretch every dollar donated, but need your help to continue to grow and maintain the gardens. Any gift is appreciated. Our address is Lake Lure Flowering Bridge, PO Box 125, Lake Lure, NC 28746. You can also donate online at <http://www.lakelurefloweringbridge.com/>