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TO THE BRIDGE

Those cute little "pumpkin people" have



returned to our gardens, designed and made by volunteers in a special workshop held at the LLFB on October 15. Creativity abounds with some truly delightful characters popping up all over. The little fellow left, the at Saundra creation of called Nelson, is Below is an "Teddy."

inventive and somewhat scary skeleton designed by Danny Holland.



See more pumpkin people photos on Facebook.

MCCUNE CENTER VISITORS EXPERIENCE LLFB AS A GARDEN FOR ALL SENSES

In partnership with the Lake Lure Lions Club, LLFB volunteers hosted visitors from Black Mountain's McCune Center October 16. They were the first group who came specifically to enjoy not just the visual beauties of the gardens, but also the way our gardens provide the joy of touch, hearing and smell.

Our guests, several of whom were blind or visually impaired, were encouraged to touch and feel the velvety leaves of the lambs ear plants and to smell the lovely aromas of the rose and herb gardens.

Strolling on the path, they could hear the buzz of bees and the calls of birds.

[Photo by Bill Miller]



Amy Wagenfeld is professor of occupational therapy at Rush University and one of the authors of the forthcoming book *Therapeutic Gardens: Design for Healing Spaces*. She says these gardens "systematically and sensitively nourish the five basic senses." Researchers report that sensory gardens benefit human development. These gardens are being created in a growing number of schools around the country.

"Our plan is to modify the existing gardens to create a Sensory Garden for the Blind and Visually Impaired to be opened in the spring of 2015. It will be the only such garden in NC, as far as we know," said LLFB Chair Bill Miller.

The Marjorie McCune Memorial Center is a licensed Adult Care Home owned and operated by the Lions of Western North Carolina. Originally intended to accommodate the visually impaired, the McCune Center has expanded to include anyone with disabilities or the inability to manage everyday life on his or her own.

The McCune Center mission statement: "To meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of our residents, with independence, freedom of choice and dignity, in a home-like environment." For more information go to www.mccunecenter.org.

TO VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH: MARYANN BROWN

Kathy Tanner shares many reasons we celebrate our October Volunteer of the Month:



Maryann has been very interested and involved since we first started visiting gardens to get ideas 2 years ago. She is smart, talented, and knowledgeable. She also gives constantly, every time we call to ask her to do something, her gracious

answer is always "Yes!" She has shared her expertise, her plants, and her time.

Maryann's Story: My earliest memories of gardening center around my parents' azalea gardens. I was four and my little sister, three. We were both assigned jobs to help our parents. My sister would bring me a small bucket of azalea cuttings and I took the bucket from her, stripped the cuttings of all but the top leaves and placed them in neat rows in a cold frame. Each row was labeled with a Popsicle stick. Most children of that time glued Popsicle sticks together to make forts, but we gave ours up to our parents to become plant labels.

My sister also became an avid gardener and we still get together to tear up each other's gardens and exchange plants even though she now lives in Florida and I live in Lake Lure. Both of us have gardened in shade gardens in northern Virginia and find ourselves gardening in hotter and sunnier locales in our retirement years. We have accepted the challenges of new weather patterns and differing soil and call each other for advice and to commiserate over struggling plants and destructive critters including our boxer pets who love to garden with us.

My husband and kids have tolerated my gardening knowing that they will be--and have been-dragged into my hobby. My boys complain that plants never stay where they are put and sometimes have to be dug up, chained and pulled out behind my pickup truck only to be planted 15 ft away from the original spot. They learned not to question my muse but retained the right to grouse at my fickleness. Now, grown with homes of their own, all three of my children e-mail me for plant advice for themselves and their friends.

Ken, my wonderful husband who can't tell the difference between poison ivy and petunias, is my go-to grunt man, the one who does the heavy digging without any grousing. Gardening is not his hobby but for the

love of me, he slathers on the sun screen and bug spray to venture into the garden to help me create my living palette.

I love living in Lake Lure and gardening at my home and at the Flowering Bridge. Watching the Flowering Bridge progress from an idea to one of the most beautiful and interesting sites in Western North Carolina has been a very rewarding experience. But most rewarding is seeing the Flowering Bridge bring people together creating new friendships and a closer more cohesive community in the gorge.

Q&A: WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROTECT OUR WATER

fertilizer Question: Are and insecticides/pesticides from the LLFB gardens going into the river which flows into Lake Lure?

Answer: We are very conscious of protecting the river and lake waters. We don't use pesticides or insecticides. For instance, for the Japanese beetles and aphids, we used soapy water and removed them by hand. We use water safe weed killer and mostly organic fertilizers. The Green Screen used to control the deer is organic and deemed safe also. The rich soil mixture in the planters and the amount of rainfall are the biggest contributors to the success and growth of the plants. From Saundra Nelson, Garden Co-chair

THOW YOU CAN GARDEN TO HELP SAVE THE MONARCHS



With concern seriously declining Monarch butterfly populations, Nina Veteto of Monarch Rescue spoke to the Friends of the Hickory Nut Gorge recently. She shared the tips below as ways we can help Monarchs

recover.

- 1. Plant Milkweed native to our regions. In WNC this would be the common milkweed and the swamp milkweed. Plant in full sun. 2. Plant native flowers. 3. Obtain plants from local seeds. (Seeds from big box stores can be pesticide-treated and can leave a deadly residue up to 6 years.)
- 4. Buy organic produce and food. 5. Protect evergreens that supply the cover and warmth needed for roosting along the migration route. For more information, go to Monarch Rescue

WE SALUTE CHUCK AND DIANE MERRICK UPICKDAFFODILS.COM



Saundra Nelson expresses our gratitude to Chuck and Diane Merrick of UPickDaffodils.com. Chuck and Diane have gifted the Flowering Bridge with thousands of daffodil bulbs each fall beginning in 2012 for our first planting on the east end of the bridge. Every spring

their blooms burst forth and brightly welcome our visitors with their beauty. The Merricks also lend their hands as volunteers whenever they are at their home in Lake Lure. Thank you Chuck and Di for being such good Friends of the Bridge.

The Merricks' story: Daffodils were once a major cash crop in Beaufort County where Chuck and Diane Merrick are owners and operators of UPickDaffodils.com. But competition from growers in other countries caused the local daffodil businesses to

close in the 1970s. The fields that Chuck's family had leased to growers lay fallow until ten years ago, when Chuck decided to revive the daffodil tradition on the farm that has been in his family some two hundred years. [Photo by Diane Merrick]



The briars and brambles that covered the fields were burned off. Numerous trees and scrub pines were removed. The fields were bush hogged and fertilized. Bare patches where daffodils had once thrived fifty-five years ago were replanted and the first season of UPickDaffodils.com was underway.

Each year, as Chuck researched and added more varieties of bulbs to the fields, the site's reputation grew and families picking the beautiful blooms became a sure sign of spring in the Carolina Low Country to those living on Hilton Head Island, Savannah, Beaufort, and surrounding areas.

Planting an additional five to fifty thousand bulbs per year, the fields are now lush and beautiful. Still, each year Chuck adds yet more bulbs to the fields, never satisfied and constantly seeking to discover new varieties to add color and excitement.

Now, the Merricks' son and grandsons are helping to carry on a beautiful tradition.

FLIGHT 93 ROSES ARE NOW IN THE LLFB GARDENS

Thanks to the generosity of a donor, we



now have to Flight 93 rose bushes in the Lake Lure Flowering Bridge gardens on the Chimney Rock end of the bridge. These very special hybrid, one-of-a-kind tea roses were created in memory of the courageous passengers whose journey on Flight 93 ended in Shanksville, PA, on September 11, 2001. We are grateful to share them with our visitors.

Our two rose bushes were bought especially for the LLFB gardens by an anonymous donor. If you are interested in having one for your garden, more information is available at <u>Flight 93 Rose</u>.

TLLFB FEATURED AT FINEGARDENING.COM

Carol Thompson, saw who the Flowering Bridge when she came to the Hickory Nut Gorge for her daughter's wedding September, shared her story and pictures (like the one here) with writer



Michelle Gervais, resulting in a big shout-out to the LLFB at finegardening.com. Follow the link below to see the article and enjoy the photographs. http://www.finegardening.com/lake-lure-

http://www.finegardening.com/lake-lureflowering-bridge-north-carolina

HICKORY NUT GORGE CHAMBER ANNUAL MEETING AND HOLIDAY PARTY

Mark your calendar for the HNG Chamber Holiday Benefit Thursday, December 11. You can donate items for the benefit auction now. Tickets are on sale and the public is invited. For more information call the Chamber at 877-625-2725.

October in the Gardens

Photos by Mike Lumpkin









