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## NEWS February 2015

### Volunteer of the Month: Susie Ellis

This month we celebrate Susie Ellis, Secretary of the LLFB Board and all-around super volunteer. Susie not only spends time tending the garden beds, but is a member of the Garden Design team, made work buckets for our volunteers and has created signs for every occasion, among many other contributions.



Here is Susie's story:

*Though not exactly a native, I certainly call this area home. Born and raised in Hendersonville, I started coming to Lake Lure in the early 60's to the cabin/boathouse that my parents and another family shared. As the baby sister of three older brothers, I found my playground in our neighborhood. Trails made under the pines led my imagination to pirate ships, castles, and a variety of adventures. A tomboy at heart, I remember making forts in the rhododendrons and then decorating them with flowers from the yard. Flowers were always a staple in our home.*

*After graduating as a Bearcat I spent the next four years in Chapel Hill where I met Charlie - the love of my life and best friend. After we married we lived in Raleigh and bought our first home. There I tried my hand at gardening (which consisted of scattering a packet of zinnias.) We then moved to Clearwater, Florida where I had fun with banana trees, ferns and all things tropical. After about a year and a half we finally came back to the Carolinas and settled in Charlotte. It was there that I truly developed a love of piddling in the dirt. Not that I know what I'm doing, but it is truly gratifying to see plants emerge after a long winter and flower boxes filled with colorful blooms.*

*Charlotte is also where we raised our two wonderful kids who have now left the nest. Charles is working in New*

*York City at an advertising firm and Lauren is a senior at UNC-Wilmington where she is student teaching in first grade. In addition to raising the kids while in Charlotte I was an Elder at our church, taught at Charlotte Country Day, was involved in several clubs and organizations, and in October will be a 10 year cancer survivor! Life is good!*

*Four years ago, we sold our home in Charlotte, bought a condo where we stay when in town, but happily Lake Lure is now our home. Soon after moving to the lake I became involved in various activities and organizations here - the Flowering Bridge being one. Although I do not know much more than the difference between annuals and perennials, I have always loved flowers and the joy they bring. I have also enjoyed being a part of the continuing evolution of the bridge. The volunteers are wonderful, the visitors appreciative and the experience rewarding. It has become a connection that has brought this wonderful community together on so many levels and continues to be a positive addition to this beautiful place we call home. Our "bridge to somewhere beautiful" is truly a privilege and joy to be involved with and I look forward to watching it "wake up" over the weeks to come.*

### Native Plants Help Protect Our Hickory Nut Gorge

Friends of the Hickory Nut Gorge promotes protecting our biodiversity by using native plants. Now Audubon North Carolina has developed the Local Roots program to encourage both growers and sellers to bring back native plants that specifically benefit birds, our environment and our local economy. As part of this effort, Audubon NC has initiated the *Bird-Friendly Native Plants of the Year* promotion. Each year, a handful of plants will be selected to highlight, adding to the list year after year. The intention is to grow a base of buyers and give NC growers time to prepare for future years. These lists will emphasize and promote current annual selections while also marketing the plants from previous years.

Bird-Friendly Native Plants selected for 2015 include Eastern blue phlox, threadleaf coreopsis, Eastern aromatic aster, purple coneflower, winterberry, spicebush and others. Some of the plants on their lists are already part of the LLFB gardens, like the purple coneflower shown above.

The 2016 list includes black-eyed Susans, smooth blue aster, wild bergamot and others. For more information about Local Roots, go to: [NC Audubon Local Roots](http://www.audubon.org/nc/local-roots)

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## Working with Lake Lure Lions To Enhance the LLFB's Sensory Garden Experience

Volunteer Dick Nealon has agreed to chair a subcommittee of the LLFB Garden Committee to work as the Sensory Garden Team. This team will be responsible for the planning, preparation, direction and promotion of the LLFB Sensory Gardens, with the approval of the Board Garden Committee. Joining Dick's team are: LLFB Board Chair Bill Miller, LLFB Board member and Education Chair Alice Garrard, Terry Ashley and Sue Lewis and Penny Watkins of



the Lake Lure Lions Club.

What is a Sensory Garden? In our case, it is a joint venture with the Lake Lure Lions Club that will further heighten the experience of our gardens to stimulate the senses of smell, hearing, and touch as well as sight for the further enjoyment of both disabled and non-disabled visitors. We will create a list of sensory-appealing plants, select appropriate locations for them within the gardens, secure the chosen plants and develop appropriate signage.

Speaking of LLFB's Sensory Garden efforts, Bill Miller said, "I am confident that as word spreads through the visually impaired population of the Carolinas we will see thousands of new visitors coming to see the LLFB through different eyes. It will be exciting and educational for all of us."

The Lake Lure Lions Club has supported the LLFB from its inception with both financial and volunteer support. The Lions partnered with us on a preview we hosted of our Sensory Garden efforts with a visit from nearby Black Mountain's McCune Center folks on 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 can provide the joy of touch, hearing and smell.



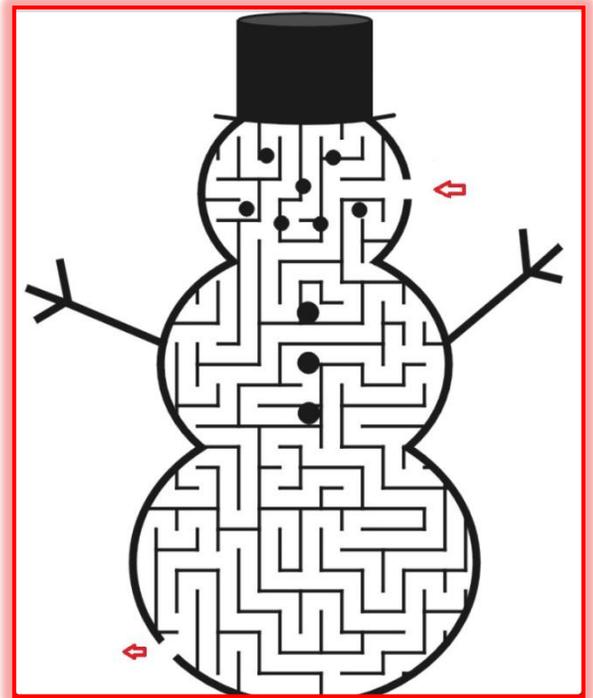
## Get Your LLFB Auto Plate

You can get a Lake Lure Flowering Bridge vehicle plate for your car for a donation of just \$10.



Help spread the word about our special place wherever you drive. To order, email us at [llfb@bellsouth.net](mailto:llfb@bellsouth.net).

## Kid's Korner from Susie Ellis



*How appropriate to have our maze looking like a snowman with wintry weather all around us this month!*



## "The Garden in Winter" by Lucy Maud Montgomery

"Though the winds are keen and chill  
Roses' hearts are beating still,  
And the garden tranquilly  
Dreams of happy hours to be  
In the summer days of blue  
All its dreamings will come true."

The Lake Lure Flowering Bridge has been recognized as a *Certified Wildlife Habitat* by the National Wildlife Federation. LLFB is a member of the American Public Gardens Association.