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Charlene Efird sits on the bench donated in her honor, where a plaque captures her attitude toward life: Come and sit. Stay a while and rest with me. The best is yet to be. [photo by David Efird]

## Stay a While and Rest With Me

If you've crossed the Flowering Bridge recently, you may have noticed a black bench nestled under the blue trellis on the east end. David Efird donated the late nineteenth century bench, a cast iron design of intertwining tree limbs, twigs and leaves, to honor his wife, Charlene. The gift is perfect because Charlene loves gardening,

values community, and has been involved with the bridge from the very beginning.

A highly respected real estate agent in the Hickory Nut Gorge, she attended the first community meetings in 2011 to decide what to do with the decommissioned 1925 bridge. She sat on the steering committee that worked for a year to create the nonprofit Friends of the Lake Lure Flowering Bridge in 2012, and she served on the first board of directors as vice president and membership chair. "Charlene was one of our earliest and staunchest supporters," says fellow board member Janet Walters, who believes Charlene saw the gardens as a way to unite the community. "She came often during the infancy when there was a lot of heavy lifting to be done to get the bridge ready for the gardens."

Charlene left the board in mid-2014, more than a year after the first gardens were planted, to open a real estate office a few steps from the bridge, but she has remained one of its most enthusiastic supporters. Says husband David, "She believes the bridge adds so much to the town, provides pleasure to those who visit, and inspires people to go home and garden."



[photo by Mike Lumpkin]

In a photo from April 2013, Charlene lends a hand on "Planting Day," when plants were first put in the soil on the Flowering Bridge.

## News June 2020

### Calendar of Events

#### June - July – Special Feature: Darlings in Denim



Check out our "planters with personality," created by our volunteers, on display this and next month! See more photos on our [Facebook Page](#).

#### June 22 - 29 – National Pollinator Week

Information and activity ideas for children and adults available on the bridge

#### Tuesday, June 23, 10 a.m. – Tips for Growing Healthy Herbs

Led by master gardener Charlotte Gardner  
Flowering Bridge Secret Garden

#### Tuesday, July 28, 10 a.m. – How to Grow Healthy Roses

Led by rosarian Steve Earnest  
Flowering Bridge Secret Garden

**TO MAKE SURE A CLASS IS BEING HELD,**  
call Alice or Danny at 828-625-2540  
or email [alicegrrrd@gmail.com](mailto:alicegrrrd@gmail.com)

Visit the  
**Pollinator Partnership Website**

to learn about the importance of pollinators  
and find activities you can do at home  
to celebrate Pollinator Week.



**SEE WHAT'S BLOOMING ON THE BRIDGE.  
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK.**





Charlotte Gardner is shown on the right with Janet Walters during a presentation about growing herbs. Janet and Charlotte maintain the LLFB's herb garden.

# Create a Combo Herb Planter

Working with herbs to create an attractive planter of varied heights, textures and colors is similar to planting a variety of flowers in one container. However, herbs are less forgiving when planted in a mixed container. They do not like to be crowded together as these plants require good air circulation in order to stay healthy.

Choose herbs with the same light and water requirements when selecting plants to grow in a mixed container. Herbs that have woody stems and leaves or needles, such as rosemary, sage, lavender and thyme, need extremely good drainage to prevent root rot, and are best grown in clay pots that dry out quickly. Basil, chives, parsley, fennel and

tarragon are examples of herbs with fleshy stems and leaves. They need to be kept relatively moist and grow well in plastic or ceramic pots. Herbs that tend to be more aggressive, such as mints, lemon balm and oregano, are best grown as single specimens unless they are planted around the edges of a container and left to trail. However, constant trimming and thinning of such plants is necessary to keep them from overcrowding the other plants in the container.

Use an organic fertilizer to feed your herbs. However, for optimal flavor as well as fragrance, it is best to keep fertilizing to a minimum. Rapid and excessive growth results in lower levels and concentration of the herb's essential oils. Growing herbs in containers allows even folks with very little gardening space to add a multitude of flavors and fragrance, as well as health benefits, to their lives!

– Charlotte Gardner

**Editor's Note:** Charlotte Gardner is a Polk County, NC, master gardener and LLFB volunteer who is a wealth of knowledge about growing and using herbs. For more invaluable tips on herb gardening, attend Charlotte's class in the Flowering Bridge Secret Garden at 10 a.m. on June 23.



The container above is planted with compatible herbs: chives, fennel, parsley and oregano. The trailing oregano in the front must be kept thinned and trimmed.

## Recipe for Indian Chicken Curry from Janet Walters

Few recipes include more savory herbs and spices than an Indian Curry. Not only are they flavorful, but many have documented health benefits.

### Indian Chicken Curry

Recipe from Janet Walters, co-chair of the LLFB Herb Garden

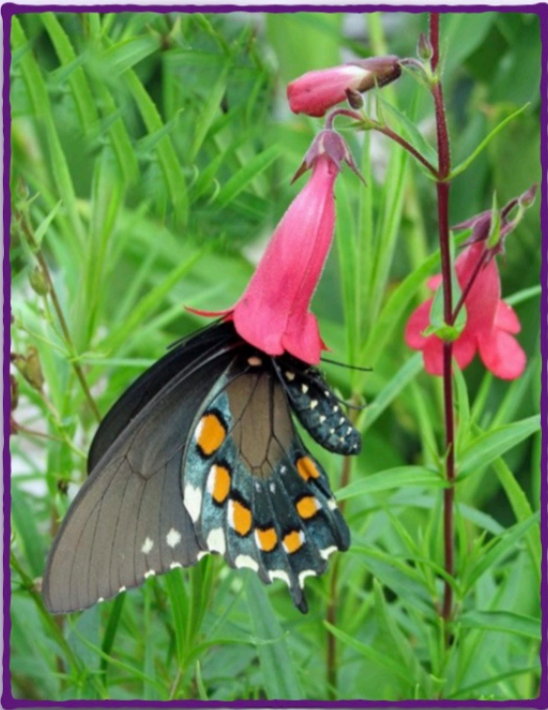
vegetable oil spray	1 teaspoon ground cumin
3 boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1" chunks	1 teaspoon ground turmeric
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt	1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 tablespoon vegetable oil	1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 yellow onion, diced	15 ounces crushed tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, minced	1 cup fat free plain yogurt
1 tablespoon curry powder, hot or mild	cilantro for garnish
2 teaspoons ginger, minced	

1. Coat a large skillet with vegetable oil spray and cook the chicken breasts on medium heat until cooked through, about 5-7 minutes. Remove from pan.
2. Add the vegetable oil to skillet along with the onions and cook for 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally until softened. Add garlic and ginger, and cook an additional 1-2 minutes.
3. Add curry powder, cumin, turmeric, coriander and cayenne pepper. Stir well for 30 seconds. Add tomatoes and yogurt, stir well and cook on low for 10 minutes.
4. Add the chicken back in the skillet and stir well to combine. Garnish with cilantro.



# June Scrapbook

North Carolina is home to a large diversity of pollinators that includes bats, bees, beetles, butterflies, hummingbirds, moths and wasps. Enjoy these photos of pollinators that were caught on camera on the bridge.



[photo by Marily Floyd]



[photo by Sandra Nelson]



[photos above and left by Lynn Lang]