The Gardening Dirt

January/February 2016

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BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS
Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens

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Our Mission
Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens promotes public knowledge of plants, gardens & the environment; & receives, raises & administers resources for these purposes.

Our Vision
The vision of Birmingham Botanical Gardens is to be one of the nation’s preeminent botanical gardens.

On the Cover

More than 140 participated in the 2015 Dirt Dash 5k Fun Run at The Gardens on November 15. The Dirt Dash was presented by ServisFirst Bank and organized by our Junior Board. All proceeds from the event benefit education programs at The Gardens.
Dear Friends:

Happy 2016!

When I was much younger, my grandfather used to tell me that as one grew older, one’s perception of time became compressed and the passing of days, weeks and months was a blur. With no context, that was impossible for me to fathom: it seemed like I would never grow up, let alone make it to the next summer vacation! You likely have heard the same refrain, and perhaps now are experiencing the same thing that I am when I write that I simply can’t believe it’s already January!

Being a gardener grounds me in a ritual-like observation of the passing of the seasons – not based on calendar holidays or on social media but on the natural cycles of plant growth, light, shadow and sun angle. Whether walking the grounds here or in another similar outdoor setting, I can at least temporarily slow down a bit, and savor the moment. The Japanese idiom “ichi-go ichi-e” describes a cultural concept of treasuring time spent with people. It translates roughly as “one time, one meeting” and refers to the fact that, despite seeing the same people in the same place multiple times, each meeting is unique, never to be replicated. Originating with the tea ceremony, it’s an important observation that when practiced reminds us to be “in the present.” I hope the tea masters don’t mind if I extrapolate that to encompass my “meetings” with plants, too, because I sincerely believe that a walk in the woods (or through the garden) is the perfect cure for tempus fugit. So you’ll understand when I say that it’s a lovely day to be at The Gardens. And I mean right now: today.

Project work in The Gardens proper is winding down, and work in the Garden Center is proceeding smoothly; completion should be sometime in mid-March. We’re excited about all of the positive changes and can’t wait to show them off a little to all of our members and visitors. Since the building has been closed for events during the construction, we’ve decided to push a few of our winter activities into spring. If you’ve been looking forward to our annual Members’ Celebration in January – sorry! It’s been moved. And the Spencer Lecture, usually in March? Not this year. Watch for more details about these and more in our bi-monthly email blasts and in the next issue of The Garden Dirt.

See you in The Gardens,

Fred Spicer
Chief Executive Officer

MEMBERSHIP DUES TO INCREASE MARCH 1

The last time our basic rates were raised was in 2001. As of 2015, the economic realities have caught up with us. While The Gardens has done a good job of keeping our costs down internally and giving you the best services we can for your money, other factors are simply out of our control. Everyone’s costs have gone up in the last 14 years.

For The Gardens, these include printing and postage, and many others. We have done as much as we can to hold off an increase for over a decade, but now it is a necessity.

This step allows us to continue giving you the level of service you have come to expect and will ensure that high-quality educational programs and services will continue for all.

When does the new rate take effect?
March 1, 2016

How much are dues going up?
Trillium “Individual” level will increase from $45 to $50 per year.
Hydrangea “Family” level will increase from $60 to $70 per year.
Magnolia level will increase from $125 to $134.50 per year.
All other levels will not experience an increase at this time.

Can I renew today and beat the price increase?
Yes, any current member can renew between January 1-February 28 and save on their 2016 dues.

To renew your membership today and save: bbgardens.org/membership
You Made Our Night!

On October 1, Birmingham Botanical Gardens kicked off Antiques at The Gardens with Stifel’s Gala in The Gardens. The annual black-tie event was reinvigorated for its tenth year, welcoming more than 500 guests to shop Alabama’s premiere antiques show. Guests made their way to Blount Plaza as the evening concluded, dancing to the sounds of the Atlanta Pleasure Band and enjoying desserts.

View all of the photos from Gala in The Gardens at www.bbgardens.org/antiques.

Photographs courtesy Dee Moore Photography.
**Good Things Growing... In The Gardens**  Fred Spicer, chief executive officer

*Edgeworthia chrysantha*, Chinese paperbush is a daphne relative (both are in the Thymeleaceae) that excels in the winter garden with fragrant cream-yellow flowers, but it’s a terrific specimen all year. My first exposure was in 2002 – I smelled it 100’ away – and I quickly bought a few for The Gardens: they have never disappointed.

In season, the plant sports 3-7” long, slightly drooping leaves that are a pale, matte-blue, owing to a coat of silky hairs. In early to mid-November decent pale yellow fall color can occasionally be seen [below right]. Leafless, the plant reveals a curious branching pattern where at each ‘break’ three thick stems are typically produced, the longest distinctly horizontal and the shorter two upright. Numerous green, hazelnut-sized flower buds dangle at the tips of the smooth, reddish-brown stems. The effect is a strikingly coarse texture (I’d say “bold” when in leaf) on a beautifully-layered shrub that is wider (by half+) than tall. The oldest ones here are 6x10’.

The flower clusters can open as early as late January but really get going in early to mid-February, lasting a month or more, depending on the weather. The inside of each small floret is bright yellow, the outside creamy-white [below top left]. A mature plant in bloom is stunning, the essentially cream-colored, golf ball-sized blooms appear to float across the top of the plant [below bottom left]. The fragrance is heavy, sweet-musky (not cloying) and carries a good distance. Unopened, flowers withstood a low of 6-7°F in January ‘14 with no injury. However, 8°F blasted off all open flowers in February ’15 (unopened flowers bloomed normally). Site in a shady location in rich, well-drained soils; water in summer if it flags. This is an easy and rewarding plant to grow.

*Edgeworthia* is relatively new and because several forms were introduced at about the same time, their names and their attributes were confused. *E. chrysantha* (possibly a tetraploid) has thicker stems, larger leaves, earlier flowers and abundant fragrance. Cultivar names include ‘Snow Cream’, ‘Winter’s Gold’ and ‘Nanjing Gold’ and indicate large-flowered forms. A sister species, *E. papyrifera* (possibly a diploid) is a bit smaller in all respects; it also flowers later and with scant fragrance. ‘Akebono’ (‘Red Dragon’ and ‘Jitsuko’s Red’ are likely synonyms) is worth checking out for its red-orange flowers [top]. Chinese paper bush stems are used to make calligraphy paper. Plants in public places in China, where the plant is known as lovers’ bush, are full of knots: people tie up the supple stems and believe that as the stems grow and the knots tighten, the love they represent strengthens.
The Edgewood Garden Club has championed The Gardens’ Centennial Tree Program, making it an official on-going project in fulfillment of one of its primary objectives, “To protect and preserve native woodlands, trees, plants and birds for future generations.” For the last two years, club member Chris Underwood has coordinated about a dozen volunteers. Members of the club have cleaned, organized and labeled seed lots; placed seed in moist-chilling and monitored them for germination; selected and planted germinating seed in containers; and transplanted, weeded and fertilized seedlings. Club president and Perennial Society member Suzanne Clisby recently drove eighty miles round-trip to a planting site on an abandoned strip mine overlooking the Cahaba River, where about a hundred locally-sourced native upland oak seedlings were planted by ten volunteers. Club members had sown the seed for these seedlings in the fall of 2014. Thank you, Edgewood Garden Club for supporting the Centennial Tree Program as it has grown in for the last two years, bringing the total number of seedlings produced and planted to 2,000 since the program began in 2009. Special thanks to Chris Underwood for coordinating this important work between the Edgewood Garden Club and the Gardens.
Hours of operation
Birmingham Botanical Gardens is open daily from dawn to dusk every day of the year.

Check out the new pedestrian entrance on Cahaba Road.

ADMISSION: Admission and parking are FREE.

bbgardens.org • 205.414.3950
Children’s Summer Camps Coming Soon

Please visit www.bbgardens.org/summercamps for details & online registration.

Due to construction there will be no Art Display or Gerlach Plant Information Center Display inside the Garden Center until April 2016.

SPRING PLANT SALE
Location to be announced soon.

S A V E T H E D A T E

Due to construction there will be no Art Display or Gerlach Plant Information Center Display inside the Garden Center until April 2016.

All members of The Gardens receive a 10% discount off of purchases.

HOURS
Monday-Saturday: 9:30-5:30 p.m.
Sunday: 1-4 p.m.

205.877.3030 leafnpetal.com

PREVIEW PARTY: Thursday, April 14 | 5 - 6:30 p.m.
MEMBERS-ONLY SALE: Thursday, April 14 | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
PUBLIC PLANT SALE
Friday, April 15 | 9 - 7 p.m.
Saturday, April 16 | 9 - 5 p.m.
Sunday, April 17 | 11 - 3 p.m.

205.414.3950 bbgardens.org/springplantsale
classes

ADDITIoNAL ADuLT CLASSES

adult&family classes

To register or to read class descriptions visit www.bbgardens.org/classes or call 205.414.3950.

BOTANICAL BEAUTY SECRETS
Instructors: Brooke McMinn & Hope Long
Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens
Part I
Saturday, January 16, 2016 | 10-noon
Part II
Saturday, January 30 | 10-noon
Single Class: Members $30 | Non-Members $35
Both Classes: Members $50 | Non-Members $60

THE GRACIOUS ART OF FLOWER ARRANGING
4 week series
Instructor: Peggy Conway Fortier
Starts Tuesday, February 2 | 9-noon
$190 per student

SPRING CLEANSING
Instructor: Antonia Viteri & Cameron Strouss
Saturday, February 13 | 10-noon
Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens
Members $15 | Non-Members $20

FOR THE LOVE OF CHOCOLATE
Instructor: Pam Childers
Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens
February TBD

SEASONAL SERIES
Instructor: Hank Siegel
Saturday, February 13, 2016 | 9-noon
Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens
Members $65 | Non-Members $75
2 for 1

children’s classes

To register or to read class descriptions visit www.bbgardens.org/classes or call 205.414.3950.

AMERICAN GIRL® GIRLS JUST LIKE ME:
BAKING FROM THE HEART
For children age 5 and above
Instructor: Robin Geurs
Thursday, February 4 | 3:30-5 p.m.
$20 Members | $25 Non-Members

AMERICAN GIRL® GIRLS JUST LIKE ME:
BAKING FROM THE HEART
For children age 5 and above
Instructor: Robin Geurs
Sunday, February 7 | 2-4 p.m.
$20 Members | $25 Non-Members
2016 BOOK LIST
Join us in The Library at 6 p.m.
No registration required.

January 5
- Voracious: A Hungry Reader Cooks Her Way through Great Books by Cara Nicoletti

February 2
- A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson

March 1
- Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation by Michael Pollan

April 5
- Lost Antarctica by James McClinton

May 3
- Mister Owita’s Guide to Gardening by Carol Wall

June 7
- Driving Over Lemons: An optimist in Andalucia by Chris Stewart

July 12
- The Beekeepers Ball by Susan Wiggs

August 2
- The Gardener of Versailles: My Life in the World’s Grandest Garden by Alain Baraton

September 13
- Food: A Love Story by Jim Gaffigan

October 4
- My Southern Journey by Rick Bragg

November 1
- My City Was Gone by Dennis Love

December 6
- Monet’s Palate Cookbook by Aileen Bordman

For more information contact Hope Long, director of library, at 205.414.3931 or hlong@bbgardens.org
GARDENING "TIPS" CALENDAR

JANUARY

- SHRUBS -- Plant shrubs and trees, including broadleaf, narrowleaf, and deciduous. Spray all deciduous shrubbery with a dormant spray to control diseases and insects. Spray when weather is on warming trend.
- LAWNS -- Soil test before setting up fertility program.
- ROSES -- Start planting.
- ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS - Plant hardy annuals.
- BULBS - Late plantings of Dutch bulbs will flower if planted now. Lilies of all types, except Madonna, may be planted. Check stored bulbs and discard rotten ones. Make indoor plantings of amaryllis, callas, and gloxinias.
- Give houseplants a bath in lukewarm water to remove dust. To keep poinsettias that have finished flowering, turn pots on their sides and let them dry completely. Cut them back lightly. Keep in a temperature of 55 to 60 °.
- VEGETABLE PLANTS - Set out cabbage plants.

FEBRUARY

- SHRUBS -- Planting season continues. Visit camellia shows to learn of hardy varieties in your area. Graft camellias in Central Alabama. Spray all shrubs with a fungicide before new growth starts.
- ROSES -- Continue planting.
- ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS - Prepare beds for summer annuals.
- MISCELLANEOUS - Fertilize houseplants with liquid or soluble fertilizer according to manufacturer’s directions.
- VEGETABLE SEED - Plant some vegetables listed for January in Central Alabama plus collards, salsify, and Swiss chard. Add tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts to coldframes.
- VEGETABLE PLANTS - Plant cabbage, onions, lettuce, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts.

Did You Know?

The Women’s Auxiliary of Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Fifty years ago, Mrs. Virginia Black, secretary of Birmingham Botanical Society and Mr. William R. J. Dunn, Jr., president, saw the need to have a group of women, interested in The Gardens, to aid the Society in various projects and to raise funds. Virginia wrote to members of the Brooklyn Botanic Women’s Auxiliary and modeled ours after theirs. At a founder’s luncheon in 1967, the Women’s Auxiliary was formed. The Auxiliary started the first Garden Fiesta held under “the big tent” in May of 1969 and raised $6,500 to go to the building fund. They also helped establish the Gatehouse Gift Shop at The Gardens in 1973. Throughout the years they served as docents and ambassadors for the gardens. Later, in 1989, they started Glorious Gardens. In June 1997, the Society and the Auxiliary restructured and merged into one support group. For more than 30 years the Auxiliary supported The Gardens with their time, energy and resources.

To learn more about the archives at The Gardens or to donate an item to the collection, contact Jason Kirby at jkirby@bbgardens.org or 205.414.3956.
Thank you to the Individuals, Foundations, Companies & Cities who awarded us grants in 2014 & 2015

**Chairman Level**
Mrs. Louise D. Johnson

**Advisor Level**
The Forman Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. William R. Ireland, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Carl E. Jones, Jr.

**Benefactor Level**
Mr. Richard M. Adams
Ms. Elna R. Brendel
Dr. & Mrs. John A. Floyd, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. T. Michael Goodrich
Jones Family Fund
Ms. Lori Oswald & Mr. Hans Paul
Mr. & Mrs. Wilmer S. Poynor, III
Mr. & Mrs. Murray W. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph C. South, III
Southern Progress Corporation
Mr. & Mrs. Rick Stukes
Anonymous

**Patron Level**
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Goodrich
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Grinney
Mr. & Mrs. Guy K. Mitchell, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Fred W. Murray, Jr.
Dr. James L. Newsome
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew J. Noble, III
Mr. & Mrs. Charles S. Northen, III
Mr. & Mrs. Henry B. Ray, Jr.
Rucker & Margaret Agee Fund
Mr. & Mrs. William J. Rashton, III
Mrs. Lucille R. Thompson

**Anonymous**

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**Grantors**

As of October 31, 2015

- Birmingham Kiwanis Foundation
- Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Alabama/The Caring Foundation
- Brooke Family Foundation
- Cavacon RC&D
- City of Birmingham
- City of Mountain Brook
- City of Vestavia Hills
- The Corner Foundation
- Dr. & Mrs. John A. Floyd, Jr.
- The Goodrich Foundation
- Hillcrest Foundation, Inc.
- The Hugh Kaul Foundation
- Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation
- The James Milton & Sallie R. Johnson Foundation
- Jemison Investment Company Inc.
- Joseph S. Bruno Charitable Foundation
- Junior League of Birmingham
- Kinder Morgan Foundation
- Little Garden Club of Birmingham
- Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation
- Nancy & John Poynor
- Redmont Neighborhood Association
- Regions Financial Corporation
- Shades Valley Rotary Club
- Vulcan Materials Foundation
- Wells Fargo Foundation
- Anonymous

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**Perennial Society**

As of October 31, 2015

- Mr. & Mrs. Susan & Stan Arrington
- Mr. & Mrs. Edgar G. Aldridge
- Mr. & Mrs. Michael Balliet
- Ms. Camille A. Becker
- Mrs. Lucille S. Beeson *
- Peggy Bonfield & Orrin Ford
- D. Joseph & Ida C. Burns *
- Mary Carolyn Gibbs Cleveland
- Suzanne G. Clisby
- Mrs. Martha Stone Cobb Daniel *
- The Daniel Foundation of Alabama
- Aubrey* & Elizabeth Drewry
- The Dunn-French Family
- Dr. John D. Elmore*
- Mrs. Claire H. Fairley*
- Mr. F. Lewter Ferrell, Jr. *
- Dr. R.R. Herbst *
- Mrs. Jimmie Hess *
- Mr. J. Ernest Hill & Mrs. Ora Lee Hill *
- Mrs. Jane Hinds
- Fay B. Ireland
- Mr. George L. Jenkins
- Hugh & Bobbe Kaul *
- Ms. Pamela Kaul *
- Mr. Jason C. Kirby & Mr. Benjamin J. Faucher
- Andrew Krebs
- Fran Lawlor
- Dr. Bodil Lindin-Lamon*
- Hope Long
- Dr. Michael E. Malone
- Ms. Louise T. McWoy *
- Mrs. Mary Jean Morawetz
- Mr. Philip Morris
- Mr. & Mrs. Fred W. Murray, Jr.
- James L. Newsome
- Dr. & Mrs. A. I. Perley *
- Steve & LeAnne Porter
- Mrs. Carol P. Poynor
- Mrs. Dorothy L. Renneker *
- Deborah & John Sellers
- Mr. & Mrs. William M. Spencer, III *
- Mr. Frederick R. Spicer, Jr.
- Mr. Douglas Arant Stockham
- Mr. & Mrs. Rick Stukes
- Dr. Wendell H. Taylor, Sr. *
- Mrs. Barbara D. Thorne *
- Mrs. Carolyn D. Tynes *
- Mrs. Ann H. “Nancy” Warren *
- Mrs. Robert Wells
- Anonymous

*Deceased
memorials

GIFTS RECEIVED BETWEEN 9.1.15-10.31.15

JANE ANDERSON
OAK STREET GARDEN SHOP

MILES CALLAHAN
MR. AND MRS. WARREN CLEMMONS

HOMER E. CROASMUN
MRS. THERESA CROASMUN

ELAINE DE METZ
MR. AND MRS. JOHN M. MUSGRAVE

JAMES A. DREWRY
MR. AND MRS. CHUCK JENSEN

JAMES O. FINNEY
MRS. CORNELIA B. MALONE

NORVELLE N. FRINGS
MS. SHARON A. HULON

PAM GODWIN
MS. JANE VALLEY

CHUCK GUY
MR. AND MRS. WARREN CLEMMONS

JANE J. HAGAN
MR. AND MRS. THOMAS B. COX, JR.
OAK STREET GARDEN SHOP

F. DONALD HAMRE
MR. AND MRS. DAN HART
MRS. JAMES K.V. RATLIFF

STEVE HANNA
HANNA GARDEN SHOP EMPLOYEES

JOAN C. HARRISON
JESSIE S. JEMISON
OAK STREET GARDEN SHOP

BETTY MCGOWEN
MR. AND MRS. JOHN M. MUSGRAVE

GARY OSBORN
MR. AND MRS. WARREN CLEMMONS

LAURELLE OWENS
MS. ROSALIND MCCLANAHAN

JOYCE PALLA
THE TOUR DE HAM FAMILY

MARY ANN PASS
MR. AND MRS. WARREN CLEMMONS

JANE E. REICH
MR. AND MRS. ROBERT D. REICH, JR.

ELLEN J. SCHMIDT
DR. AND MRS. J. DENIS CATALANO
ANNETTE H. DRUMMONDS
HOPE LONG
JOAN S. MIRREE
MR. AND MRS. NORM REMICK
MRS. PEGGY C. THOMPSON

HENRY G. SEIBELS
MRS. JAMES K.V. RATLIFF

EDNA SNOW
MS. MIRIAM MCCLUNG

RUTH TURNER
DR. AND MRS. JOHN A. FLOYD, JR.

DAVID WHITESIDE
MR. AND MRS. ROBERT W. TULLIS

LAURA WOOD
OAK STREET GARDEN SHOP

If we have inadvertently left your name out or incorrectly listed you, please accept our apologies and contact Drew Rickel, donor relations officer, at 205.414.3955 or drickel@bbgardens.org.
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President’s Circle $1,000
Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Bissell
Mr. and Mrs. John Zuber
Mr. and Mrs. C. Douglas Ritter
Mr. and Mrs. Stan Roth

Ambassador $500-999
Ms. Lisa B. Fuller
Mr. and Mrs. John S. Steiner

Oak $250-499
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ballard
Dr. Kathy Buchan
Ms. Ann Ash

Magnolia $125-249
Ms. Anna Alts-Armum
David Baker & Lois A. Gaeta
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Bean
Jean S. Bissell

Hydrangea $60-124
Mrs. Margaret Alvin
Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Armstrong
Lucia B. Arnold

Magnolia $125-249
Ms. Anna Alts-Armum
David Baker & Lois A. Gaeta
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Bean
Jean S. Bissell

If we have inadvertently left your name out or incorrectly listed you, please accept our apologies and contact Drew Richel, donor relations officer, at 305-414-3955 or drichel@bgardens.org.
**SPRING PLANT SALE**

**Preview Party:** Thursday, April 14 | 5 - 6:30 p.m.

**Members-Only Sale:** Thursday, April 14 | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Public Plant Sale**
- Friday, April 15 | 9 - 7 p.m.
- Saturday, April 16 | 9 - 5 p.m.
- Sunday, April 17 | 11 - 3 p.m.

*Staffed by hundreds of volunteers ready to answer your plant & gardening questions*

**Location to be announced soon.**

**SAVE THE DATE**

205.414.3950

bbgardens.org/springplantsale