



TAG TALK

January, 2023

President's Message.....Carol Sevelowitz

HAPPY NEW YEAR !

By now I'm sure you all know that our December Holiday Tour of Homes was a smashing success! I'd like to add my thanks to those expressed on the next page by Liz Van Alstyne for everyone involved in helping to make it so. Aside from the obvious financial success — we netted a profit in excess of \$4000 — we brought community recognition of, and interest in, our Club. Although at this point it is uncertain whether this will become an annual event, it will likely be repeated at some point, and I can only hope that the enthusiasm and spirit of cooperation will continue as well. Maybe we will gain some enthusiastic new members as well.!

And, speaking of new members, we have set a new date for our long postponed New Member luncheon. On February 14, the Board will officially welcome our “new” members from the past two years with a special event *just for them and their mentors* at the home of Dede Bethke. Board members will provide the meal and a very special door prize will be raffled off. New members should watch their email for their invitation.

Looking ahead, we have lots to be excited about. Our General meeting this Friday will feature our own Barb Holmes presenting a program on the HHP Farm Club. (please note that the program originally scheduled for January, featuring an expert from Taylor Landscape Supply, has been swapped for March's Farm Club presentation due to a scheduling conflict). In February we will learn about the key elements of Container Gardening. And in April, at least 30 of us have purchased tickets to the Savannah Garden Club's Hidden Garden Tour!

All in all, we look forward to a Spring filled with information, creative ideas and opportunities to getting our hands into the warming soil of our gardens. Be sure to join us!!



Note: Program Change

(Due to a conflict for the planned speaker, we have swapped March's planned program with January's)

January Meeting Friday, January 20 9:30am Spring Lake Pavilion

HHP Farm Club

Hear about the history of the Hilton Head Plantation Farm Club at Seabrook Farm. Take a virtual four season tour of the Farm with Barbara Holmes, member of The Avid Gardeners Club and "Farmer" and Secretary at the HHP Farm Club.

The Board is soliciting Programming ideas for next year. What are your primary areas of interest? Would you like more emphasis on floral design? Horticulture? Container gardening? Field trips? When you sign in for this Friday's meeting, you will be given an index card on which we ask you to list your ideas. Be as specific as possible. We want to bring the programs you want to see and hear.

The Fundraising Committee would like to thank our Hostesses: Olivia Ford, MaryEllen Phillips, Jane Johnson, MaryAnn Snyder and Trudee Bamberg, as well as the docents, parking assistants and the membership for making our first "Holiday Home Tour" the wonderful success that it was. Without you we would never have been able to do it.

We are also proud to announce that we raised \$4200.00 after expenses that will help The Avid Gardeners continue our initiatives in Hilton Head Plantation and for future Community projects.

We look forward to 2023 events that will continue our commitment to fundraising.

Thank you again,
Liz Van Alstyne, Jane Alexander and MaryAnn Sweet

Horticulture.....Ann Clayton

January is usually a quiet month for gardening even here in the south. This year we have seen an historic freeze both in depth of temperature and length of time. The damage done to plants and foliage means that we can do very little in the garden. So, I thought I would check and get some advice as to how to deal with the damaged foliage and plants. I have included some excerpts to give ideas as to how to deal with the situation.

Question "Should we cut them back or not touch them"?

Now, we have to consider how to care for freeze-damaged plants. Additionally, you should water plants, especially container plants. Water is an insulator, and wet soil will be warmer than dry soil. It is best practice in the fall and winter to mulch landscape plants to help insulate the roots. Use straw or pine straw mulch loosely packed around the base of plants.

You should understand the signs of freezing damage. The signs are pretty evident. Our plants will not look the same. Most tropical plants will become droopy or shriveled. Additionally, foliage will turn from green to brown or purple. Under an extended hard freeze, you may see plant stems splitting and peeling. It is questionable as to whether they will return.

In extended hard freezes, the water in between and within the cells of the plants will freeze, causing the cells to expand and rupture, resulting in damaged plant tissue. This type of damage is typically irreversible. You will see this most often in tropical plants after a freeze. These



include plants like hibiscus, cannas, pentas, vinca, gingers and succulents. Think leafy plants. Sadly, it is typically those with the best flowers.



If you did get caught off guard and your plants suffered freeze damage, you can do some things to help them recover. The amount of damage depends on the severity and duration of the freezing temperatures. If you have light freezes for short periods of time, plants can usually recover. After hard, long freezes, there is no guarantee.

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Horticulture.....(continued)

After the freeze, you should be patient. Do not go straight for the pruners and cut everything back. It takes several days for plants to show us just how damaged they are. If plants are mushy and slimy, remove this material to prevent fungal infection or disease in the days to come. You may cut out the dead material to clean things up. For woody plants, it's best to wait until spring. You can check for life on woody plants and perennials by scratching the bark of stems and look for green color underneath. If you find green, you're in luck. Your plant is still alive. Plants that were moved into shelter can be moved back out on warm sunny days. They will need plenty of sunlight to photosynthesize and stay healthy. Remember, plants make their own food from energy from the sun. You can keep tropical and sub-tropical plants going year-round by taking the proper precautions. Let us hope that they recover and flush out again in the spring, coming back from their roots.



PLANT IT PINK GARDEN

Rob and Janina Cushman

We had a very productive meeting with the new maintenance manager (Bryan Evans) of the hospital and the watering hose is now operative. Through him we plan to meet with the person responsible for irrigation to be sure we have the water we need for the garden. Since The Greenery are responsible for the general maintenance of the Hospital area we plan to have a meeting with them as well.

A small ancillary project is to plant the area just in front of PIP where a tree came down in Mathew. We might need to get a stump grinder in to prepare the ground but more information will be forthcoming. We want the whole area to look as nice as possible.

Any suggestions are greatly appreciated.

Yellow Warblers and Two Birding Tools

This month I'd like to begin with two tools that have helped me a lot in identifying birds and increased my love of birding. The first is Merlin. This is a free app that goes on your phone. It is very easy to use. It has the capability to identify birds by appearance but also by sound. I find this a great resource when I'm walking my dog. I can turn it on and track what birds are in the area. In the summer, at dusk, I've heard up to 21 different birds in less than twenty minutes. Using it in a backyard with binoculars I know what birds I am looking for by what I can hear.

The second was a gift and it is Birdfy by NetVue. It is a birdfeeder with a camera that records everything that comes to my feeder in ten second videos. Hooked up to your home internet, the videos are saved and can be viewed on a computer or other device. You can set up notifications for your phone but the constant pinging drove me nuts. It also takes still photos of the birds and tries to identify them but that feature is not very accurate. I have better luck matching the photos to another resource such as a book or website. There is a solar panel attachment that powers the camera so no battery changes are needed. I'm keeping lists of what birds appear each month so I'm seeing some migration patterns emerging.

Two birds that appeared this month are the Yellow Rumped Warbler and the Yellow Throated Warbler. These birds are small like a chickadee and have a lovely song. The yellow throated has a grey, black and white patterned back with a yellow throat patch and a white breast. The yellow rumped have a more grey and less black on their backs with yellow patches on their heads, throats, breast, and lower back from which they get their name.



New Member Luncheon

February 14 12:00 noon

Home of Dede Bethke

Under the heading of “it’s never too late”, TAG’s Board would like to welcome all our new members from 2021 and 2022, along with their mentors, to a special Welcome Luncheon on February 14. Lunch will be provided by Board members and a very special door prize will be awarded. Watch your email for your invitation and please respond promptly.

Savannah Garden Tour Update from Nancy Renner

Delighted so many of you have purchased tickets to the Savannah Garden Tour. Reminder—The last day to purchase your discounted ticket with the Avid Grdeners group was January 15. You may still purchase tickets by contacting them directly, but can no longer receive a discount nor reserve a 1pm Tea Time as it has sold out. Other Tea Times are still available at the regular ticket price of \$60. If you have already purchased tickets and NOT told Chris Thumm nor myself, would you please let us know. We will send a separate email list of attendees to help create carpools

Here are some informational updates you might be interested in:

There are 7 or 8 gardens on the self guided Tour and artists will be in many of the gardens. Your ticket includes a tour of the Green-Meldrin house, floral demonstrations during the garden party, musicians playing. The house will be the setting for lovely arrangements made by club members. The tea will be a sampling of traditional Southern tea items: cheese straws, assorted finger sandwiches, sweets and iced tea. It is not a sit-down tea.

You will need to pick up your ticket in Savannah at the Green-Meldrin House on the day of the Tour. All the gardens are no further than a 10 to 15 minute walk from there. You are urged to park, either on the streets nearby or in a city garage. Here is a link to Savannah Parking Garages: <https://www.savannahga.gov/2516/Parking-Garages> .

Continue to check your email for ongoing information and updates.



February's Meeting

Feb 17 9:30 am Spring Lake Pavilion

Container Gardening

A designer from the Green Thumb will demonstrate the key elements in creating stunning containers for sun and shade.



Happy January birthday wishes to:

Rob Cushman
Barbara Di Russo
Mary Ann Snyder

Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle.
..... *Luther Burbank*

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Deadline for submitting articles for this newsletter is the second Sunday of the month.