

Wake County JMG - 4H Newsletter



Next Meeting: Thursday, March 11, 2010 7:00-8:30pm

Greetings to All!

Hopefully, spring will appear very soon with warmer days for us all to get out and begin working in our gardens and yards. I'm looking forward to having winter behind us for sure!

First, I want to say a special "Thank You" to those who read the JMG Newsletter on-line last month. Don't be surprised if you (students and adults) are asked a question or two about the current newsletter at one of our meetings. Comments/suggestions are most welcome! Mimrah Hossain did a remarkable and timely job on the February edition!

Thanks to the parents who participated in the Parent Meeting last month. It was a great opportunity for me to review our basic JMG program, and discuss other 4-H opportunities for all students such as possible summer programs, Plant ID sessions, and the Garden Contest. I will continue to hold these periodically, but want you to always feel free to inquire if you have questions about any aspect of our program. Stop me at the meetings, e-mail me, or call anytime.

With the arrival of spring we have several opportunities we need to consider. Some of them are the Red Wolf Garden behind the office building, the annual Youth Flower and Vegetable Garden Contest, the County 4-H Presentation Contest, and hopefully the Plant ID Contest. These contests will be mentioned later in the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Carol Norden

Sunflower Club News



The Sunflowers brought back such beautiful, creative “Fantastical Plants”. Some were drawn, some were made out of everyday objects, and one child brought in one made of Legos. Well done!

We reviewed **plant parts and their functions** by identifying individual plant parts Mrs. Z had brought in: roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds.

After learning about the various **flower parts** by examining a lily flower with a magnifying glass, we looked at the main parts of the flower including the pistil (made up of the stigma, style, and ovary), the stamen (made up of pollen on the anther, which is on the end of the filament), and the petals themselves. It was interesting to note that lilies do NOT have sepals, which are the protective material that is at the base of the flower.

Just as human beings need things in order to survive, (most of these needs being met by plants: air, water, food, clothing, and shelter), **plants have needs**, too, in order to survive:

P Place

L Light

A Air

N Nutrients

T Thirsty (for water)

S Soil

We examined **samples of soil** after seeing a demonstration by adding water to a soil mixture, shaking it, and seeing how it settled. We found three layers of particles; sand on the bottom, silt in the middle, and clay on top, with water on top of that and organic matter floating on the water.

We had little time to read our book, *Westlandia*, so we will finish it first thing at the next meeting. We’ll see how Wesley manages his garden.

The **homework** assignment is to examine the flower given to each student and locate the flower parts identified on the enclosed diagram. The flower doesn’t need to be returned, but please bring back the paper with the student’s name on it, circling the parts of the flower he/she could see.

We hope to see you at our March meeting!

Mrs. Zimmerman (Mrs. Z), Jan Beresford, and April Pelton, Leaders

Dandelion Paws News



The Dandelion Paws spent the last meeting discovering all sorts of new carnivorous plants. A guest was nice enough to bring in several plants that are carnivorous so we learned some new things about meat eating plants! We read *Plantzilla* by Jerdine Nolen and followed with an activity creating our own carnivorous plants.

Next month, we will be focusing more on leeks/onions and citrus fruits!

There is no homework this week, but feel free to take something for show and tell. We look forward to seeing you in March!

Mimrah Hossain, Judi Harper, Jill Mills, Peter Zierz, Leaders



Wildlife Club News

The Wildlife group spent the February meeting learning the value of camouflage by creating and hiding paper insects. We will focus on a different aspect of the relationship between animals and gardening at our March meeting. There is no homework assignment this month. Enjoy the break! I look forward to seeing you again in March.

Bianca Howard, Priscilla Haddad, Jason Botts, Leaders

Wildflowers/Weedbusters Club News

February's class was especially interesting! We started with a follow up to our sweet potato experiment from January's meeting. As you'll recall, students took home a sweet potato and each stored it under different conditions. They cooked them, and brought them back to class, and performed a taste test to determine the best storage conditions. They judged on appearance and taste and confirmed that room temperature, low light environment is best – yum!

Our lesson this month was about grafting. Grafting is accomplished by joining the stems of two different plants. The root system, the “rootstock, is from one plant, and the top portion of the plant, the “scion”, is from another plant. Grafting is done to combine desirable traits from two or more different cultivars of the same species, for example: disease resistance and desirable fruit set.

Each student grafted an heirloom tomato plant scion onto a disease resistant tomato plant rootstock as follows:

- Select plants with similar stem diameters so the union will line up properly.
- Carefully cut the stem of each plant at a 45° angle – dispose of top part of rootstock material and root system of scion material.
- Attach the scion to the rootstock with a grafting clip.
- Cover plant loosely with plastic bag and store in low light, low stress, high humidity environment while the graft heals – 2-4 days. Carefully mist inside of bag periodically to maintain humidity.
- If plant is not showing signs of wilt, slowly introduce indirect light over the next week. Maintain humidity levels.
- If plant continues to show little sign of stress, slowly decrease the humidity levels to match surroundings. Avoid injuring the graft union as plants continue to acclimate: overhead watering, jostling, etc.
- Once plants have acclimated they can be transplanted outside. Be sure graft union remains well above the soil line.

Homework assignment is to care for your plant and cross your fingers – hopefully you'll have good results to report in March.

In closing, let me take the opportunity to congratulate Liz and Jared on the arrival of their baby girl, Cora Jane! No doubt a future plant lover! Congratulations, Driscoll family!

Cheryl Koch, Leader

Upcoming Events

JMG Plant Sale -

April 16, 17, 18 at the State Fair Grounds, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday; noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Plants will be delivered on Thursday, April 15 approximately 9 - 11 a.m. and help will be needed Thursday morning and early afternoon.

This is our only activity to raise money for all of our club expenses, so we need everyone's help. All youth should wear their JMG T-shirts and put in an appearance to help with the sale. Adult help is encouraged as well. To date, camellias have been ordered and arrangements have been made for some other small shrubs, Knock-out Roses, etc. Please put this on your calendar. Sign-up sheets will be available beginning at our March meeting.

Wake Youth Flower and Vegetable Garden Contest –

The 2010 Youth Garden Information Letter and Registration Form are posted on the JMG web site. Print, complete, and turn your registration in to Carol Norden. Youth are encouraged to visit the NJHA web site www.njha.org/ and see the write-up under Young America for more information about the contest. Participants compete based upon their age as of 12/31/10; youth 5-14 should consider submitting their Garden Record Book for National Competition to Carol Norden by September 15.

Plant ID Classes –

We would like to have a series of classes to expose all youth to learning more about identification of plants - vegetables, flowers/indoor plants, landscape ornamentals, and fruits/nuts/berries. The State Contest takes place on Monday, July 19 at NCSU. If we have sufficient numbers to have Junior and Senior Teams, they can compete on July 19. The county with the highest scoring senior team participates at the NJHA Convention in Cleveland, Ohio in October. Individuals can go to state and take the contest for practice. The contest is comprised of an ID section, a written exam, and a judging section. In the past our students have excelled on these tests.

For more information visit http://www.njha.org/projects_hortid.html to look at the pictured specimens; older students have the opportunity to begin reading some of the manual. We'll try and schedule a time after the weather warms up to visit the JC Raulston Arboretum to have a leisurely stroll to look at some of the material on the exam.

4-H Presentations

All students, ages 5 - 18 are encouraged to participate in this event. You may view part of a young girl's presentation on "How to Darn A Sock" at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXjRRvexICA> or a young boy's presentation on "Butterflies" at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v15j0Ucezv4>. For more information on 4-H presentations visit <http://www.nc4h.org/publications/presentations/index.html>. Note all of the categories and under each you'll see objectives, resources, rules, etc.

So far, I've been unable to get confirmation on the date for the county event. Several of you have expressed the urgency for getting an early date for this as school calendars are already filling up. I would encourage you to write to Heather Tart, Wake Co. 4-H Agent at Heather.Tart@wakegov.com or call her at (919) 250-1093 for a response.

E-mail or call Carol Norden if you have questions or need suggestions for topics.



Just in case everyone did not read the Weed Buster/Wildflower News we want the entire membership to know that our Weed Buster/Wildflower Leader, Liz Driscoll and her husband Jared welcomed their daughter, Cora Jane on Tuesday, February 16. They are all doing well. Already, we've added Cora Jane into our JMG membership!

Other Reminders:

- Remember to wear your JMG T-Shirts
- Be ready for class at 7:00 pm.
- Don't forget your homework! If you have not completed 4-H registration forms, please do so now.
- Remember our Severe Weather Policy: If Wake Co. Schools are cancelled; JMG 4-H will not meet.

A Fun Event for All Ages

The News & Observer Birdhouse Competition will be held at the JC Raulston Arboretum April 8-11. For complete details please check the Arboretum web site

http://www.ncsu.edu/jcraulstonarboretum/calendar/event_details.php?ID=285 .

The competition is for adults and children ages 4 – 15. In previous years this has been a wonderful event for those interested in creating birdhouses, and there have been lots of spectators admiring all the creativity.