

Open Gate Club learns about organic gardening

By DOT HAM

Club Reporter

Fourteen members of the Open Gate Garden Club met at Boyce Memorial ARP Church with Betty Alexander as hostess. Mrs. Alexander served a delicious dessert course before the meeting and presided over the meeting which opened with the Club Collect.

"What is organic gardening all about?", asked Mrs. Alexander who presented the program, "Pros and Cons of Organic Gardening." She said that we hear so much about this method of gardening now and most gardeners would say it is gardening without using artificially synthesized pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers. That sounds pretty simple, she said, but organic gardeners start with the soil. Instead of focusing on the cosmetics of your garden focus on what makes your plants healthy in the first place - rich, organic soil.

If you practice composting, you have a free and endless source of nutrient-rich organic soil for your garden, 30-50 percent of all household waste can be turned into garden soil. Organic matter in the soil means having an entire culture of good insects, microbes,

worms and fungi to help in our garden. Microbes churn dirt into richer soil, the tunnels of worms aerate the ground, good insects eat the bad insects and weed seeds, and beneficial fungi forms a symbiotic relationship with the plant's roots. The bottom line is that you need a lot of patience to build up the natural defenses of your organic garden.

There are many advantages to organic gardening and Alexander mentioned several. There is no need to buy, store, mix water or spray potentially dangerous chemicals - even professionals with protective clothing have been affected. Most people say organic vegetables taste better - don't rely on artificial flavors. You get health benefits of exercise in your garden and really fresh and tasty vegetables. Increased soil organic matter reduces erosion, conserves water to give drought resistance and feeds plants in time with their needs and avoiding excesses. With patience it is time to think about organic gardening.

Alexander gave timely tips and stated that it is time to rejuvenate annual vegetable and flower beds by tilling them. While the dirt is being turned over, it's a good idea to mix in liberal amounts of compost, leaf mold or de-

cayed organic matter to help improve the soil by adding natural nutrients into the soil. Prune summer beauties such as althea, buddleia, crape myrtle and pomegranate at the beginning of March to stimulate more flower production later in the growing season. Go easy on the pruners though because not all trees and shrubs benefit from a spring shearing.

Treasurer Dot Ham reported that it was time to pay dues.

A Thank you note was read from Bill McCarter, son of the late Margaret McCarter, and an invitation from Friends of the Library to arrange a floral arrangement for the homes to be on tour. The club voted to make one arrangement or present a monetary gift.

Betty Grant, secretary, gave an update on the back parking lot project and reminded that the nandinas need to be replaced. Mrs. Louise Roberts noted that the planting should start at the gate section by section after determination of how many and where to place them in each section.

The arrangement for the meeting was a beautiful shamrock. Peggy Baird will be hostess in April and Stella Ware will give the program.

ACCEPTING AN HONOR



EMILY WEAVER/HERALD
Eric "Big E" Pardo, center, recently accepted the KM Business person of the year award for his former business partner the late Mark Beach with Beach's daughter Kelly Hargett, left. It was presented by Ronnie Franks, right.

Piedmont Peeps Show

Enter our 2nd Annual Piedmont Peeps Show Diorama Contest!

How do you like your marshmallow Peeps - soft and squishy or maybe a little dried out? Here at the Kings Mountain Herald we like ours having fun - maybe hiking in the mountains, whitewater rafting, gardening, playing baseball or football, or whatever it is that means fun in the Piedmont region to you.

So what does this have to do with you? We want you to enter our Second Annual Piedmont Peeps Show Diorama Contest! Your diorama can be any three-dimensional scene with a painted or modeled background. The rules are simple: Your scene must feature Peeps as the characters and must depict some aspect of living in the Piedmont region. You may work by yourself or as a team.

As you will see below on our entry form we will have several age divisions as well as a business category so our local businesses can depict their workplace and/or employees. We will award one winner in each category so please, get creative and free the Peeps!

Judges will base their decision on the dioramas design, quality of execution, creativity, and relevance to life in the Piedmont region. All dioramas must be turned in to the Kings Mountain Herald office located at 700 East Gold Street with the entry form attached by 5:00 pm, Friday, April 2, 2010. Dioramas will be on display in our office so stop by and see what great ideas people have come up with so far. And remember, this is a family contest so please don't take the 'Peeps' show literally! Winners will be announced in the Kings Mountain Herald.



Peeps on the Farm

Chloe Cooke of Kings Mountain
winner of the 2009 0-6 age division.

Kings Mountain Herald

Piedmont Peeps Show Official Entry Form

Name(s) _____
 Phone Number _____
 Diorama Title _____
 Brief Description: _____
 Categories (please check one)
 _____ Ages 0-6
 _____ Ages 7-11
 _____ Ages 12-15
 _____ Ages 16 & Up
 _____ Business

Tape this completed entry form to the back of your diorama and bring the diorama in to:

The Kings Mountain Herald
 700 E. Gold Street, Kings Mountain, NC • 704-739-7496

by 5:00 pm on Friday, April 2, 2010