

New Hanover's Arboretum programs in 2021



Lloyd Singleton

With action words like pivot, zoom and quarantine high-lighting the 2020 workplace lexicon, I eagerly anticipate being able to use words like reopening, face-to-face, and large group events some-time in this new year. In the mean-time, our New Hanover County Cooperative Extension agents share a bit of their vision for 2021.

Scott Enroughty shares the 4-H/Youth Development program will focus on cultivating new and existing relationships. With the recruitment of adult volunteers, we plan to provide increased school enrichment, after-school, and special interest programming. Strong relationships in the community will bring in new sponsors for our events, such as Pumpkin-Palooza, and we intend to engage more people in the 4-H Alumni & Friends group. Contact Scott Enroughty at jsenroug@ncsu.edu to see how you can become involved.

With Heather Kelejian leading the Ability Garden and its therapeutic horticulture program, we will again be sharing vegetable seedlings with community partners to help fight food insecurity in New Hanover and surrounding counties with a "Spring Veggie Sharing Project." Facilitating a Public Health Intern through UNCW will give us the opportunity to



Cooperative Extension and New Hanover County Arboretum welcomes you to its grounds and programs in 2021. [CONTRIBUTED]

define the intersection of public health and gardens, exploring the ways gardening, gardens, plants and natural spaces benefit wellbeing at a local level. Our focus will be on creating a plan to build equity in opportunities to engage in gardening for the area's low resourced communities. Creating and expanding educational opportunities for therapeutic horticulture across North Carolina will include the collaborative efforts of NCSU, UNCW and the NC Botanical Garden. Contact Heather Kelejian at hkeleji@ncsu.edu

edu for more information.

Our soon-to-be-hired Consumer Horticulture agent Matthew Collogan shares his program vision to include connecting the kitchen to the garden where people live, play, work, and heal. He plans to promote horticulture as a coherent educational message shared across age, discipline, and background through our Extension Master Gardener volunteers outside the Arboretum fence. The program will continue to offer assistance to anyone who comes to the center, but also seeks to improve outreach capabilities

as every backyard, window-sill, office plant, and porch balcony has the potential to benefit from knowledge found through Extension. You may leave a message for Matt, 910-798-7660.

Amy Mead, our new tri-county Natural Resources agent will be hosting a "Backyard Sustainability" series this spring with classes covering stormwater solutions for homeowners, native plants for wildlife, planting trees for resiliency, composting and recycling, urban wildlife, pollinators and more. Her work will help us balance the

rapid growth and economic prosperity of the area while maintaining the quality of the environment that draws us all to live here. Contact Amy at afmead@ncsu.edu.

I support the Commercial Horticulture industry and Community Development in my program, ranging from pesticide applicator training and proper tree care (don't plant too deeply, use root ball bracing, and never let mulch touch the trunk) to big picture community work serving with the Alliance for Cape Fear Trees board and co-chairing the Eagles Island Central Park task force. The Friends of the New Hanover County Arboretum are intentional in their focus on enhanced fundraising and improving the diversity of membership. The Arboretum grounds continue to improve as an educational resource for our community in areas of sustainability and great horticulture.

Collaboration between all of our program areas and staff is a primary objective for our team in 2021. We are blessed with a great team of agents and staff, councils, boards and volunteers. As we currently remain steadfast to wash, wear, and wait, we will continue to make a difference in our community as your Cooperative Extension at the New Hanover County Arboretum.

The Arboretum is free and open every day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Lloyd Singleton is director of the N.C. Cooperative Extension Center for New Hanover County, located at the Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive. Reach him at lsingleton@nhcgov.com or 910-798-7660.