

Board Meeting BRGC April 22, 2026

Quick Recap

The Blowing Rock Garden Club held their monthly meeting to discuss various updates and plans for the coming year. Marie led the meeting and provided updates on upcoming events, including a Sip and Shop event and Stop the Knot initiatives to address invasive plant species. The group discussed changes to the Bingo date, moving it to September 09 at the Blowing Rock Conference Center. The budget was reviewed, with proposed adjustments including increasing the apparel budget to \$800 and removing the donation to the Banner Elk Garden Club which was intended to be a one time donation following Hurricane Helene damage. Evenlight provided updates on horticulture plans, including new partnerships with local greenhouse operators and plans for hose reels and tool sheds at the garden. The group discussed upcoming programs, including a presentation on rare and endangered plants by Elizabeth Trot and a field trip to Reynolda Gardens. Lise reported on website updates, including new sign ups for field trips and the development of the Stop the Knot initiative. The conversation ended with discussions about the 4th of July parade preparations and potential changes to the traditional "Mile of Flowers" event, with suggestions to explore alternative formats that might be less labor intensive for club leadership.

Next Steps

Barbara

Contact Martha Ann to get September's (2025) minutes for approval at the next general meeting.

Contact Tricia Aiken to remove the Banner Elk Garden Club from this year's donation.

Crystal

Bring all current apparel inventory to the May meeting for review and discussion of reorder styles/sizes.

Consider focusing apparel budget on popular items (visors, stickers, etc.) and prepare recommendations for reorder.

Draft and submit (or coordinate submission of) a newspaper announcement for the May 6th meeting, including relevant details and a photo if possible.

Joyce

Reach out to Mona to determine the cost of reusable flowers purchased for the parade last year for budgeting/reimbursement.

Send email blast to all members reminding them to bring enough food for 10 people to the May luncheon including guests.

Evenlight

Reach out to garden volunteers and potentially other club members to form a committee to address hose reels and tool shed projects for the garden.

Plan a horticulture committee meeting in May to create more structured teams and roles.

Put together information about Shannon Coffey's greenhouse opening and share with club members.

Ask club members to start saving and bringing empty pots for Shannon's plant growing efforts.

Lise

Set up Eventbrite capability on the website for online ticket sales, starting with Bingo.

Change the members-only website password to "FlowerPower" and communicate to members.

Distribute Stop the Knot (Japanese Knotweed) flyers at the May meeting and coordinate with members to post at local businesses and the Post Office once the final version is approved by the town.

Once town approval is received, post the final Stop the Knot flyer on the website.

Add the tentative June social to the website calendar.

Research George Santusti's invasive weed database for the town of Boone (as suggested by Marita).

Lynda

Move the \$350 Arborcrest donation back to the field trips budget line for 2025.

Marie

Reserve all future year's meetings after this meeting.

Send October 2025 meeting minutes to Barbara and make copies for her.

Announce at the May meeting that this year's donation to the BROOC (Blowing Rock Opportunities Commission) will be in memoriam of Sandra Holland Collins Hatcher (Melaine Campbell's mother) and Bill Dabney (Peggy Appleton's brother). And consider putting this on the website.

Send Crystal the previous year's press release/article for the Watauga Democrat and/or draft and submit a new announcement for the May 6th meeting (including Bingo TBD).

Add the tentative June social (June 7th 5-8pm) to the club calendar).

Ask club members if anyone has a source for hay bales for 4th of July parade seating.

Help Melaine/Mona with carpool coordination for the May 13th Reynolda Gardens field trip as needed.

Connect Crystal with Barbara Ballistry (local potter) regarding potential club merchandise (mugs, trinkets) when Crystal is in town.

Take the previous year's press release/article to Crystal or email it to her for reference.

Marita

Obtain and bring a gift for the May 6th guest speaker.

Elmyra

Send Evenlight a list of available dahlia tuber varieties for potential use in the garden.
Check with Susan Sweet about whether the Women's Club leaves tables set up for the Garden Club's use.

Collaboration

Joyce: Check with Susan Sweet about the possibility of setting up tables the night before and coordinating with Marie and others to assist if needed.

Lise/Evenlight: Consider issuing a press release and/or coordinating with local newspapers for an article about the club's Stop the Knot initiative.

Summary

Meeting Links and Budget Updates

Marie and Barbara discussed technical issues with Zoom meeting links and agreed that using meeting ID's as an alternative worked well. The updated budget from Tricia was reviewed and which Barbara had sent to everyone. Regarding a statue proposal, they aligned on allowing a donor to pay for it as a one time in memoriam donation, though it was noted there could be concerns about setting a precedent that Joyce had raised.

Marie announced a Sip and Shop event scheduled for next Wednesday April 29th with the Women's Club where attendees can donate items to the Village Thrift and purchase gardening supplies that have been donated.

Knee surgeries

The group discussed two members undergoing knee surgery very soon, Mona and Marita.

Apparel budget

It was agreed to increase the apparel budget from \$400 to \$800.

Budget Review and Planning Updates

The board reviewed the proposed budget which included a \$4,000 allocation for garden maintenance and a \$2,000 estimate for the new Sip and Shop McLaughlin event. The group discussed removing the Banner Elk GC donation and moving the \$350 Arbor Crest field trip budget to field trips. The horticulture committee reported plans to implement hose reels and a tool shed with Evenlight seeking volunteers to lead these projects. The hospitality committee announced plans for a luncheon at the May meeting with members asked to bring food for approximately 40 people including new members.

Presentations and Field Trips

Marita announced that Elizabeth Trott from Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation Will present on rare and endangered plants of Southern Appalachian on May 6th. Melaine outlined plans for an early morning trip to Rinaldo Gardens on May 13th starting at 8:00 with lunch at Village Tavern afterward.

Invasive Weeds Management DiscussionLise explained that while the town of Blowing Rock handles issues within its limits, residents outside can use over-the-counter herbicides for removal.Evenlight suggested issuing a press release and writing an article about the Club's involvement in the initiative. The group discussed potential collaboration with other organizations like the Boone Garden Club and Blue Ridge Hiking Club. Marita mentioned an upcoming June meeting featuring Dr. Ann KotranRose who will provide information on invasive weeds.

BRAHM Collaboration and Events Planning

The meeting covered updates on the BRAHM collaboration which is progressing well with plans for the meeting to be on September 3rd. Elmyra shared she is working on speaker arrangements and hospitality details. Marita shared information about the ASU Biology Department greenhouse on Dale Street in Boone which is open Thursdays and Fridays from 11-4 and suggested collecting used pots for recycling. Marie and Joyce discussed planning a social event for early June , tentatively June 7th from 5-8, which will be added to the calendar and website as tentative.

Mulch Day

The upcoming Mulch Day is Thursday April 23rd.Volunteers are to bring buckets and wheelbarrows.

Mile of Flowers Planning

There was a discussion of concerns about the garden tour event, including historical origins, current challenges and potential alternatives.The idea of transitioning to a strolling flower show similar to one implemented in Ft. Myers which would be more walkable and potentially bring more business to local downtown areas.

Bingo

It was discussed moving the Bingo night date to September 9th instead of the 3rd to avoid conflict with the Denim Ball which is on September 3rd. Plans to have merchandise like custom mugs with the Clubs logo on it were discussed.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara F. Law, Club Secretary 2026

