

Welcoming garden immigrants, wind at their backs

By Ginny Gregory

There was a locomotive charging through my woods last week. It was fierce and such a splendid power to behold. I have always been a great lover of strong winds. Forty- to 50-mile-an-hour winds in the non-hurricane season really kept my eyes glued to the windows. The entire forest had this sway action going on that really beat any dance number I have seen on stage.

The pines would sway from side to side in long, slow arching movements and then like turning on a dime they would begin to swivel their hips and let their heads just revolve in a circle. The trees still holding on to their leaves (some oaks and beech) shook as if the earth were vibrating ... shimmy, shimmy ... shake, shake, shake. Not to worry, those leaves were going no where. Sure branches broke and flew around, mulch was blown down the walkways, wire cages long since finished holding plants ... left to be dealt with this spring began to run end over end across the garden, but no leaves gave it up. Those holdouts will shed their leaves only as the new leaves literally kick them to the curb.

In most of the hurricanes I have known, I have found myself driving my white van while the hurricane is in a fit of fury. Just fate. No real intention. It is almost a joke among friends, "So, since the wind is



whirling around like a mad man, you must be out in the van." These are the voice messages left on my cell phone during these times. (At least I don't answer the phone anymore.) I think I am drawn to the pure wild-

ness. You know, we are taught to hold our voices down in church, to whisper in the movies, to smile behind out hands, to laugh in a controlled manner in meetings etc. etc. That is most definitely not my M.O. I love the wind. I love my hair flying out into space. I have lost many an earring on windy days. You can hoot, holler and bellow into the wind and it vanishes. On the wings of the wind comes an open spirit.

I think the reason Chloe (my 3-year-old terrier) and I are so tight is she lives for wind. When she heard the locomotive sound barreling through the woods, her ears perked up and she hurled herself against the front door to be let out to run. She pointed her nose straight up in the air, closed her eyes and smiled. I know she was smiling ... trust me. Then like a bolt of lightning hitting a tree, she was off ... gone into the wind.

Another reason I love these winds is because you never know what new plants are going to have come "from away" to take up residence in the garden. This is really something to be mindful of as you scan your gardens in early spring. These seeds that migrate here on the wings of the wind may soon become permanent residents. Depending on the time of year, that is often how certain annuals and perennials get relocated in your garden. It is by chance that this migration happened. It is with love I welcome them

here. There is the off chance that some new arrival must be escorted into the compost, but it is rare.

Well, buds are finally forming all around in the garden. It is the promise of spring. I will relish this spring ... this new beginning. 2010 has given me great loss and many gifts. I never thought I would be 59 years old, adoring birds, sharing my writing with others and eager to work on the next right garden project. On the wings of wind come many seeds. It is up to us how we chose to plant them. Relish the moment. Open your hearts. Spring is calling.

Ginny Gregory is the owner and creative energy behind "Beyond The Pail...Creating Gardens and Beyond". She is starting "Beyond The Crate...Finding simplicity out of chaos", an organizing, de-cluttering, down sizing business. For more information, please check www.beyondthepail.net

20th Annual Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon

Join more than 500 volunteers along all 110 miles of the Haw River and Jordan Lake for the 20th Annual Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon Saturday, March 20. Be part of a group picking up trash from plastic bottles to old tires along the banks of the river and lake. We have more than 30 sites from Greensboro to Moncure that need your help! Volunteers are provided with supplies and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you've helped improve the health and beauty of the Haw River watershed!

This year, the annual Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon is working in partnership with clean water advocates, canoe outfitters, and local and state

agencies interested in environmental and river issues including, New Hope Creek Watershed Association, Friends of Northeast Creek, Eno River Association, Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association, Kayak Adventures, Haw River Canoe and Kayak Company, Frog Hollow Outdoors, City of Durham Stormwater Services, North Carolina State Parks, Durham Parks & Recreation.

If you would like to volunteer, or get more information, please call or email Germane at germane@hawriver.org 919.542.5790. Remember, we provide supplies and instructions; you need only bring clothing appropriate for the weather, sturdy work shoes and a willingness to lend a hand.

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