

McCoy Farm & Gardens NEWSLETTER

Main entrance: 1604 Taft Highway • Front gate: 1715 Anderson Pike • Mail: P.O. Box 443, Signal Mountain, TN 37377 • 423-598-1658 • www.mccoypwalden.org

Volume Seven: Issue Two

February 2022

Boxwood Restoration

The Boxwood “maze” is an intriguing area for many. Kids love to play hide-and-seek there, and brides like to use the aisle formed between rows as an entry point to the lawn.

The boxwood (*Buxus*) variety at MFG can grow very big over time. Since they were not pruned properly for many years, our plants had become so overly large and crowded that their formal spacing had almost disappeared. Rejuvenation, or hard pruning, was in order. This process involves cutting back the over-



New growth on an old boxwood undergoing rejuvenation at MFG. In future, other big limbs will be cut to let in light and air and to reduce size. The plant will recover and can be correctly trimmed into a pleasing, compact shape.

grown central woody stems by 1/3 each year over a period of 3 years or more.

Beginning in 2019, board members Larry Mick and Karen Stone set about reducing the 32 old boxwoods by 1/3. For four years they have worked when the end of winter meets the beginning of spring, just before the new growth appears. They have also removed invading privet, bittersweet, briars and English ivy. Perhaps you have been disturbed to see the radical cutting back and wondered what was going on. If you visit the maze now, you can see how the plants are responding.

According to local lore, at the time when the crocuses open or the forsythia blooms, you can prune your own boxwoods. Fortunately, now is the right time. To learn all about boxwoods, try the Boxwood Society <http://www.boxwoodsociety.org/>

Spring Bluebird Houses

Volunteer Terry Knox has completed nine bluebird houses constructed from a poplar he harvested from the poplar grove. Terry learned the craft from Sam Powell and is able to continue thanks to his daughter, Julia Rafter, and help from Linda Kelley and Bob Banner.



Terry Knox selecting a poplar tree to harvest for the bluebird houses, and exhibiting the finished product (insert)

The Mission of McCoy Farm & Gardens is to restore, enhance, and preserve the historic McCoy homeplace so that it may serve the community as an arboretum, natural area, and venue for public and private events.



Hemlock trees recovered from pest attack and dressed in snow at McCoy Farm & Gardens, January 17. Photo by Dan Reynolds

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Birdhouses sell for \$75 each with proceeds benefiting MFG. Since bluebirds will begin looking for spring nesting boxes soon, this is a great time to acquire one. Melissa Nimon will facilitate your selection and purchase.

Hemlock Trees In Danger

Though the hemlocks at McCoy Farm & Gardens have been treated to kill the invading woolly adelgid, they and all the hemlocks on the mountain are still in danger of dying from the insect invasion.

Professional photographer Dan Reynolds sees the beauty of the hemlocks through an artist's eye, and he is devoted to the cause of saving the trees. Not only does he encourage people to learn about the destructive woolly adelgid, he also pursues a personal mission of treating all the trees he can. To learn how you can help save the trees, please go to <https://www.facebook.com/SaveSignalMtnsHemlocks>

Benches Along the Trail

Special benches are being placed along the trail and in other choice spots at McCoy Farm & Gardens. Andy Jones is handcrafting the benches with help from volunteers. If you would like to assist him, please text him at 423-802-6025 or call the MFG office 423-598-1658 to leave a message.

As they go in place, you may select a bench, and a plaque of recognition will be attached. Some benches will be in quieter locations and some in more noticeable areas. Board members Andy, Leanna Jones or Anne Leonard will guide you to the various locations so you can make your choice. Cost is \$500 on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Melissa Nimon 423-598-1658 to arrange a tour and purchase.

Share your memories about the McCoy family and place through the Oral History project. Call 423-598-1658 to participate.

Hours, Access & Information

The 1.1 mile long walking and running trail is open during daylight hours, seven days per week. Access the trail by the 1604 Taft Highway entrance and park in the trail parking spaces or the gravel lot. Dog waste pickup bags are at the trailhead and by the Anderson entrance.

We encourage our MFG visitors to practice healthy COVID measures at all times.

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NEWSLETTER [Karen Stone](#)

Support McCoy Farm & Gardens

McCoy Farm & Gardens is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. All contributions are charitable and tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

The 38-acre parcel contains the Bachman-McCoy home, pavilion, carriage house, barn, blacksmith workshop, apple house, various other structures, and gardens. Volunteers are very important to the organization in all areas. Your donations are welcome and will be used to improve the structures and gardens.

Please send your check to:
McCoy Farm & Gardens
P.O. Box 443, Signal Mtn., TN 37377
423-598-1658

www.mccoywalden.org

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