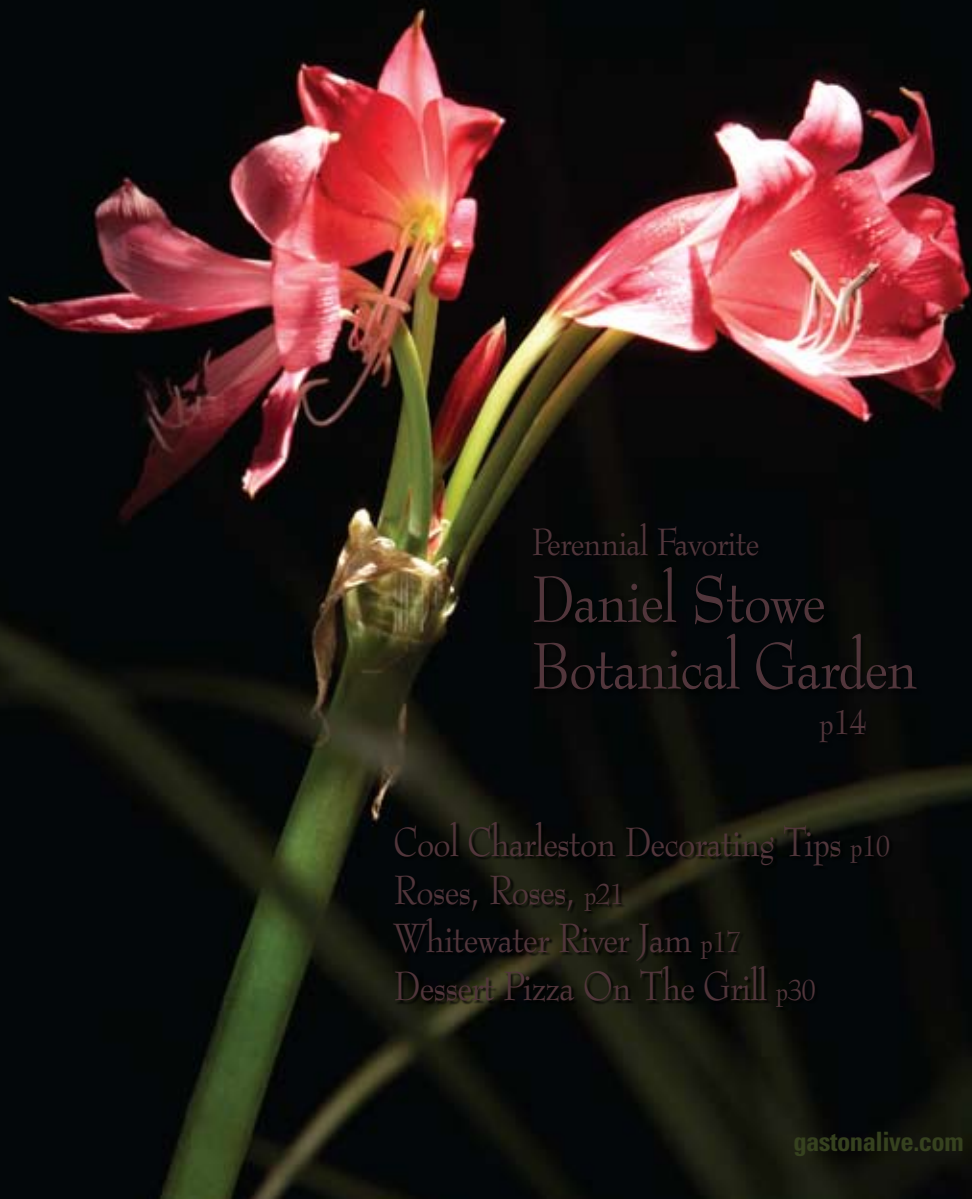


# Gaston *Alive!*

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Daniel Stowe  
Botanical Garden  
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# about the cover

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Pictured on this month's cover is a Crinum Lily from Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, photographed in studio by Rick Haithcox. See related story on page 14. Cover graphic design by David James.



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## Cool Charleston Decorating Tips

By Nan Bridgeman



Nan Bridgeman is the owner of Blythe Gallery in downtown Belmont. Blythe Gallery specializes in home furnishings, interior design, and gifts.

As we approach the scorching days of our Carolina summer, I would like to share some easy tips to give your home a cool down effect. My grandmother lived in beautiful Charleston, South Carolina, and she passed down summer housekeeping rituals that were used to keep homes comfortable in that hot, steamy climate. Some practices really do lower the temperature and help lower today's power bill, while others work psychologically to make us seem to feel cooler.

### **1. Bring out the cottons and linens.**

Just as we put away our woolen sweaters, our corduroy pants and our tweed jackets that keep us toasty warm in the winter and bring out cotton and linen clothes that allow heat to escape our body, so our grandmothers dressed their homes for summer. Hot, thick velvets, nubby chenilles and dark colors were covered with light cotton slipcovers. My mother had slipcovers custom made in creamy white cotton with green piping to dress our dark green sofas and chairs in a bright summer look. The light colors looked cool and the cotton fabric was cool against our skin. You can still have custom made slipcovers or you can buy slipcovers in local discount stores that can be tucked in to size. It gives your home a fresh, cool look, and actually feels cool, too. I highly recommend slipcovers for families with children who are home for the summer. If there is a spill of cherry red Kool-Aid, mom can be relaxed knowing cotton slipcovers can be washed and even bleached if necessary.



### **2. Dress up the fireplace for summer**

Fireplaces are cozy focal points in the winter months, but often look dirty, dark and cave like in the summer. Put away your unused firewood, clean out the fireplace and if you wish, you paint the firebox with black paint to hide the soot lines. Then polish your brass andirons to make them gleam and bounce light back into the room. Finally, place a nice, cool looking Boston fern or a Chinese Evergreen on the hearth. This fills the space and looks summery,





giving a cool effect to your primary living space. Depending on the formality of the room, a clay pot can work well here or you can purchase a cache pot to hide your pot and have a dressier summer look.

### **3. Toss out some throw pillows!**

Purchase some cotton or linen covered throw pillows in cool colors such as white, icy blue or pale green. Swap these for your velvet or nubby dark pillows used for winter. Textured fabrics hold in heat and dark colors just look hot! It will not break the bank to invest in some summer pillows made of cotton or linen and these pillows will give you room a fresh, cool look that feels cooler too. The cool color palette visually tricks the brain into thinking your room is cooler.



### **4. Adjust your blinds.**

Rooms with windows facing south or west in the afternoons take in lots of hot sun rays as the earth tilts toward the sun in the summer months. These direct rays fade furniture, rot drapes and can heat up a room like an oven in no time. Before air conditioning, it was common practice to lower shades or tilt shutters to block these hot rays during the daytime and open the



>>Article continued on page 24

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Meet Kara Newport, Executive Director Of Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, Gaston County's

# Botanical Treasure

*By David Hamrick*

**GA!: Kara, so how old is the garden now, and how long have you been here?**

**Kara:** The Visitor Pavilion and main perennial gardens opened in 1999, the White Garden opened in 2003 and the Orchid Conservatory opened in 2008. I am came on board in 2006 so was able to be part of the design and construction of the Conservatory.



**GA! What would you say to those folks who have never visited the garden or haven't been in a really long time?**

**Kara:** Before the opening of the Visitor Pavilion, the Garden operated for a number of years out of the little white house and log cabin on New Hope Road – some folks have said they still thought that was the Garden! There is much, much more to see. Also, if you haven't seen the Orchid Conservatory it is really unique and very different from some other conservatories in the country – a true gem.

**GA! What are the major sections or exhibits at the garden?**

**Kara:** The Garden is designed in rooms that have different display themes – the Four Seasons features plants of interest year round, the Cottage Garden has heritage plants you may find in grandma's garden, the Canal hosts what we call 'marginal tropicals' such as palms and bananas and is also a primary site for our changing seasonal display, and the perennial gardens have different themes based on color or plant forms.

**GA! Do you have anything special going on for the summer- any events coming up?**

**Kara:** This summer we have Garden Nights every Thursday evening with food and beverages available – it is a great time to see the Garden. We also have Wild Wings, our very popular hummingbird banding event coming up the first weekend in August. And we have variety of classes – check our website at [www.DSBG.org](http://www.DSBG.org) for the latest.



## GA! Anything new of exciting as far as plants, exhibits, etc.?

**Kara:** This year, the Garden opened Meadowood Walk which includes a series of trails that meander through five acres of natural meadow and a portion of the surrounding forest, including a vista of Lake Wylie. This fall we will have a special exhibit complete with pumpkins and gourds and one of our new favorite events called Botanical. And, of course, we will once again have Holiday Lights – now a regional family tradition – beginning the day after Thanksgiving through New Year’s Eve.

## GA!: What is the number one thing you’d like folks to know about the Garden”?

**Kara:** Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden is a dynamic and ever-changing place. We have five seasons (that’s right, five!) with changing display themes – A Southern Spring, Summer at the Garden, Fall with a Flourish, Holiday Lights and Orchid Spectacular. Each season we offer events and programs that are sure to entertain the whole family. The Garden is a great place to learn, relax and be inspired!

## GA! Do you see the Garden as different in the coming years, and if so, how?

**Kara:** Absolutely! The Garden is only 12 years into a 50-year master plan through which new displays and garden areas will be added to the nearly 400 acres contributed by Daniel Stowe. Included in the plan are a children’s garden, rose pavilion, a dock, and a restaurant. The timeline will be driven by public contributions to support the development of the new areas.

## GA! Lot’s of folks rent your facilities for wedding receptions, community events, etc...

**Kara:** The Garden has over 100 events a year and is a great location for day time meetings, corporate or social events, and especially for weddings. We have a lot of options in ways that we can work with our clients to create the perfect event for any group from a low-key team building to an upscale reception.

## GA!: I know you have a lot of local volunteers- how many employees and volunteers do you have now?

**Kara:** At the current time the Garden has 37 employees. Because we are open 7 days a week year round with lots of evening events, we rely on a number of part time staff who work flexibly with us. We also count on volunteers. Right now we have 200 active volunteers – this number has tripled in the past few years (but we are always looking for more!). They help with everything from events to horticulture - we definitely could not do the work without them! I should also mention that we work with a number of community partners especially for our events and programs. All in all we have a terrific team at the Garden and I am proud to work with them!



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# MUSIC

# river jams

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At first glance, you may think that the Whitewater Center is strictly for people who are into all things outdoors. However, it's more than just whitewater rafting, rock climbing and zip lines. It has become a popular destination site in the area for people of all ages to come out and spend some time with good friends and family. Sprinkle in a little live music, and you have yourself the perfect outdoor experience.

Live music has been a strong focus for the Whitewater Center since its grand opening back



by Ben Dungan  
bdungan@charter.net

in 2006. With four music festivals per year and their River Jam music series (held every Thursday night from May until September), there is rarely a time where music is not involved in some form or fashion at the center.

And while many area towns and municipalities have outdoor musical events during the warmer months of the year, the Whitewater Center prefers showcasing original music by bands that are rooted in American music in some way. Some of the types of music you can hear on a given Thursday night include blues, folk, rock n' roll, bluegrass and more.

In an age where many of us stay technologically connected for many hours a day, the Whitewater Center provides the perfect place for people to disconnect from their devices and get reconnected to each other.

If you can't find a dock by the bay, try sitting on the bank of the man-made river at the Whitewater Center. And just waste some time listening to some great music, just like Otis Redding.

**For more information on the River Jam music series, you can visit the U.S. National Whitewater Center's website at [www.usnwc.org/riverjam](http://www.usnwc.org/riverjam).**

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# *In The* GARDEN *With Cindy*

If I could only have one flower, I would choose the rose. Through out history, the rose has held its role as a symbol of devotion and mystery. Songs are written about the rose, so are essays and poetry. I'm not talking about your standard florist variety of red roses for Valentine's Day—I want a rose with some character and a fragrance. I find these qualities in English roses.



In 1960, English hybridizer, David Austin, took some hybrid tea roses and bred them with some old roses known for their fragrance, cabbage blossom shape and hardiness. English roses have the variety of color of the tea roses but with incredible fragrance and a strong and constant bloom cycle. In other words—the perfect roses.

At this point in the column, I'd like for you to do as I say instead of what I do. I have done that infamous deed that is known in the South as “letting my roses go”. I intend

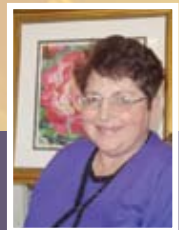
to “do better” and bring my roses back to the healthy ever-blooming shrubs they were in the past even if I means I have to start over with some varieties. I've decided to go back to my favorite five English roses and take good care of them. Linda Cobb, a Master Gardener and renowned rose gardener, suggests planting three bushes of the same variety in a grouping for maximum impact. My rose budget is much smaller than Ms. Cobb's so I'll stick to one rose of each variety. This time of year is not the best for planting a rose garden so I'll scale back on some of varieties that have proven to be less “deserving” in my rose garden and work toward my personal “Five Best in Show”.

My favorite rose of all time is 'Abraham Darby', a pinkish-apricot rose, fading to yellow in the center. The blooms are 4" across and it has a rich fruity (melon) fragrance. 'The Prince' is my second selection with a lush and rich old rose fragrance with blooms of lovely dark burgundy red. It grows 4-5' tall with a dark attractive foliage. 'Gertrude Jekyll' is an outrageous rose with an aggressive growth habit and hot pink blooms with a strong rose fragrance. The blooms are 3'across but there are so many flowers that they seem much larger. 'Graham Thomas' is a large bush rose that can be trained as a climber. It color is a rich pure yellow with medium-size bloom, 3" across.

>> *Article is continued on Page 25.*

## BY CINDY HOVIS

If you have any gardening questions,  
call the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Services  
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Cindy Hovis  
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>>Article continued from page 11

blinds after the sun went down. Don't have blinds to tilt or shades to pull down? Consider purchasing bamboo shades from a home hardware store. These are moderately priced and are fashionable as well as practical and offer yet another way to keep your summer power bill in check.

### 5. Accessorize with cool looking items

One last tip. Look at the room you spend the most time in and see what accessories you have in this room that look dark, heavy, hot. Put these in the closet until fall and find a few light, bright accessories to put in their place. Again, white, cool blues and greens are natural summer colors that visually cool off a room. Put these out until fall, then pack them away until the first sweltering day of summer next year. It is amazing how different your living space can look and it offers a fun and inexpensive way to give a new look to the same spaces.



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>> Article cont. from Page 21.

Though the fruity fragrance is less pronounced than other English roses, a cobalt blue bowl with ten of these yellow roses is fabulous as a summer centerpiece. My last selection is a new rose for me, 'The Dark Lady'. It is said to have 3-4" blooms across and is a deep crimson bordering on dark magenta, and has the scent of old roses. I'm eager to try it since Linda Cobb reports that it a good grower in the United States.

Try some English roses in your garden and keep it simple—grow only the roses you can care for comfortably. In other columns I'll give some tips of what to do when you plant these beauties and good maintenance techniques. Take some time to smell the roses.



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# COOKING



## Summer Fruit Grilled Dessert Pizza

We all love pizza, but how about a dessert pizza cooked on the grill? This is a great summer treat. Feel free to substitute fruits and toppings of your choice. This is easy and everyone is sure to enjoy this.

You can either make your own pizza dough (recipe follows) or purchase pizza dough from a store like Trader Joe's.

### **Pizza Dough – makes 2**

*1 1/2 cups warm water (105°F-115°F) 1 package (2 1/4 teaspoons) of active dry yeast (check the expiration date on the package)*

*3 1/2 cups bread flour (can use all-purpose but bread flour will give you a crisper crust)*

*2 Tbsp olive oil*

*2 teaspoons salt*

*1 teaspoon sugar*

### **Toppings**

*2 Bananas, sliced*

*1/2 pound Strawberries, hulled and sliced (macerate in 1/4 cup of Orange Liquor)*

*1/2 cup Semisweet Chocolate Chips*

*1 cup Mini Marshmallows*

In the large bowl of a heavy duty electric mixer (such as a Kitchen Aid), add the warm water. Sprinkle on the yeast and let sit for 5 minutes until the yeast is dissolved. Stir to dissolve completely if needed at the end of 5 minutes.

Attach a mixing paddle to the mixer. Mix in the olive oil, flour, salt and sugar on low speed for about a minute. Remove the mixing paddle and replace with a dough hook. Knead using the mixer and dough hook, on low to medium speed, until the dough is smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. If you don't have a mixer, you can mix and knead by hand. If the dough seems a little too wet, sprinkle on a bit more flour.

Place ball of dough in a bowl that has been coated lightly with olive oil. Turn the dough around in the bowl so that it gets coated with the oil. Cover with plastic wrap. Let sit in a warm place (75-85°F) until it doubles in size, about 1 to 1 1/2 hours (or several hours longer, a longer rise will improve the flavor).

At this point, if you want to make ahead, you can freeze the dough in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

Divide dough in half and shape into pizza, let the dough relax for 5 minutes and continue to shape. Let dough rest for 1/2 hour and you are now ready. (This is why buying pre-made dough is much easier; you only have to follow this last step)

### **Making the Pizza**

Heat your grill until you can not keep your hand above the flames more than 2 seconds. Lightly grease your racks (olive oil on paper towel with tongs will work).

Take a pizza and place on the prepared grill, after 2 minutes, open the grill and check underneath the dough to see if it is getting browned. If it is on one side, but not another, use a spatula or tongs to rotate the dough 90 degrees and cook for another minute.

Once the pizza dough has browned lightly on one side, use a spatula to flip the dough over so that the grilled side is now up. Arrange the fruit on top of the grilled side along with the semi-sweet chocolate and mini marshmallows.

Grill until the chocolate and marshmallows begin to melt. Remove from the grill and cut into wedges and enjoy!

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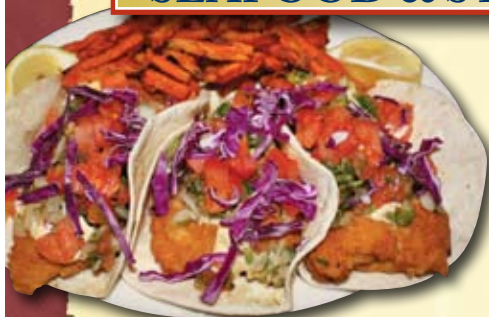
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