

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



April 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY LINDA LUCAS

Many thanks to all of you who wrote to our legislators regarding VCE and the State budget. As you have no doubt heard, an amendment regarding VCE did pass, reducing funding by one million from the general fund in FY 2011-2012 and requiring a report by VCE on their strategic planning process "that (1) places priority on the historic mission of extension to fulfill the land-grant mission in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture, (2) defines programming, locations, and funding sources, (3) addresses potential duplication of effort with state and local agencies, (4) eliminates low-priority programs, and (5) seeks to restructure and consolidate local offices in a manner that is financially and logistically beneficial while preserving delivery of critical programs in high priority areas."

Obviously it is still very important that we help legislators and community decision makers understand what VCE and its Master Gardeners do and the impact our programs have on the community. Also, please remember, when you are preparing presentations or putting together flyers and handouts for various projects, to check with Sandra Kee at the Extension Office for the appropriate formatting.

It has been a treat to get back to gardening this past week after a long, cold winter. Pruning volunteers have been helping homeowners with their trees and shrubs. Turf Love

is in business, and Landscape Love is taking applications now from homeowners needing some horticultural guidance. Incredible Edibles has been working with the "Green Team"...a group of local teens participating in a community gardening project through Community Action Agency. You will be hearing more about that as the garden progresses. VCE-MG projects in the elementary schools will be keeping the younger ones busy in April and May. Hopefully you have decided where you would like to volunteer this year. You will find all of our projects described in the "members" section of our website as well as contact information for each.

And surely everyone has April 24th circled on his or her calendar. How will you be participating in this year's Plant Sale? There are so many ways to get involved... growing, publicizing, transporting, setting up, selling, giving advice. Pick one (or more!) and help make this the best sale yet.

Next Monthly Meeting:

Apr. 1, 9 a.m., Williamsburg Regional Library;

Bill Garlette, "Organic Gardening and Soil".

LOGO SHIRTS

Logo Sport Shirts will be available for Master Gardeners to purchase, as soon as our brochure and order sheet are ready. It has been a couple of years since an order was placed, and we have made a change to a lighter weight short sleeve shirt made of 5-ounce, 65/35 poly/cotton pique. This material which is called Silk Touch™ and has a good feel, should wear well, fade less, and be much cooler than the 7 ounce cotton polo shirt some of us have. We have expanded the color options that we hope will please you. We will offer Ladies, Men's and Men's Tall Silk Touch™ Sport Shirt to fit people of all sizes. Our logo will be embroidered in color on the top left of the shirt front.

We hope to place a small order within 1-2 weeks, and possibly receive shirts around the time of the Plant Sale - no guarantees that this will happen before P-S



Court Green

Day. Prices range from \$18.98 to \$20.98 for the Ladies and Men's sizes, and from \$24.98 to \$26.98 for Men's Tall sizes. Shipping is extra - \$1.50/shirt for a bulk order.

Carol Fryer will send out an email and take orders for the first shipment of logo sport shirts. Watch for the email.

Logo T-shirts, identical to ones ordered last year, will also be available for purchase soon. The company we worked with previously will print the T-shirts locally. The cost will approximately be in the range of \$8-\$10 with no shipping charge. Master Gardeners and Interns are eligible to order T-shirts. Linda Lucas or her designee will be in charge of facilitating a T-shirt order. More info to come.

INTERNAL EDUCATION

BY CAROL FRYER

Our monthly meeting, **May 6th**, will be held at **James City Community Center** (aka "The Rec. Center") on Longhill Road in Williamsburg from 9 to 11 AM in Room A

This change occurred because the library's theater was not available to us on our regular meeting date during the month of May. Our monthly meetings for the rest of the year will be at the Williamsburg Regional Library, as usual.

We are very fortunate to have **Melissa Butler** from the **Norfolk Botanical Garden** with us on **May 6th** who will be speaking about *Sensual Gardens*. The Norfolk Botanical Garden began as a WPA project and has expanded to a 155 acre garden filled with thousands of plants. More than thirty themed gardens are spread throughout the site.

Even if you have been to the Norfolk Botanical Garden several times, their website makes you want to visit again – soon! Did you know that there are e-cards on the website that you can send to friends ... or that the garden is home to 23 state champions in the Virginia Big Tree Program?

... or that you can view online the resident pair of American Bald Eagles attending to their 3 new babies born this year? You can access all this and more at the NBG website: www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org. I am really looking forward to **Melissa Butler's** presentation and her inspiring images of the gardens.
Mark your calendar with the date and location!

As you know, **Bill Garlette** (organic gardening and soil) will be our speaker at our **April 1st** monthly meeting at the **Williamsburg Regional Library**. Don't forget to send any last minute questions for Bill to



Paperbush (*Edgeworthia chrysantha*)

arcingale@cox.net. He is planning to frame his presentation around your questions, so let him know what your interests are.



If you would like to be on a waiting list for the National Arboretum trip in case someone needs to cancel, please let me know.

The nominating committee consisting of **Mary Liz Sadler**, **Becky Sutton** and **Carol Fryer** has been appointed by the board to fill three positions for the coming year. The board positions that will be open as of July are the vice president of administration, vice president of internal education and representative to the Virginia Master Gardener Association. Each position is for a two year term of office. If you are interested in serving on the board, would like to nominate a member, or would like information about the positions, please contact any member of the committee.

The committee will present a slate of candidates at the May monthly meeting, and the election of officers by the membership will occur at the June monthly meeting.

LANDSCAPE LOVE

BY ANNE NIELSEN

Landscape Love will host MGs and interns for the annual training class on Thursday, April 8th, at the Health and Human Services Bldg on Olde Town Rd. Intern training will be from 9:30 -10:30 with team meetings to follow.

Please remember that **March 31st** is the deadline for JCC/W Association dues for 2010! Send your check for \$15 to our treasurer, **Linda Wever** (3253 Oak Branch Road, Toano, VA 23168).

2009
MG Board

President:
Linda Lucas
565-0335

VP Projects:
Jeanne Millin
258-4724

VP Internal Ed:
Carol Fryer
220-0759

VP Administration:
John Giffin
345-5209

Secretary:
Pat Janot
221-0289

Treasurer:
Linda Wever
566-0286

VMGA Reps:
Jim & Nelda Pressly
220-1858

Past President:
Dave Banks
258-8632

Co-op Ext Rep:
Doris Heath
564-2170

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month, at 9:00 am, at the James City County Health and Human Services Building, on Olde Towne Road.

The Board meetings are open to all Master Gardeners, and all are encouraged to attend.

The Colonial Master Gardener April 2010

PRUNING PROGRAM

This has been quite the year for the pruning program team to schedule home visits and workshops. Due to the snow and rain in February, some home visits were re-scheduled as many as four times. Forty-four applications were received in James City County/Williamsburg for the home-based pruning lessons that consisted of teaching sessions with individuals and with small groups of homeowners.

Nancy Harris and Sue Voigt organized a pruning workshop in Lanexa at The Colony, and Nancy and VCE staff members organized the 3rd annual New Kent pruning workshop, held in March at the new Virginia Cooperative Extension office site. A total of approximately 48 people participated in these two workshops.

Jeanne Millin gave a pruning presentation in February to the Ford Colony Garden Club. Jerry Babski was scheduled to speak to the Berkeley Garden Club, but the session was cancelled due to snow. Carol Fryer will give a hands-on training session to the youth at the Merrimack Detention Center at the end of March. Many of the Pruning team members participated in the March 1st training session at Mary Liz Sadler's home for our current MG training class.

Our pruning team consists of 20 master gardeners: Tod Allen, Flora Adams, Jerry Babski, Annette Bell, Lois Enlow, Carol Fryer, Art Gustafson, Nancy Harris, Jane Healy-Nobrega, Barbara Landa, Jeanne Millin, Ruth Murphy, Ruth Schultz, Sally Sissel, Dan Tevlin, Toddy Voorhees, and new members Mitzie Emory, Evi Oakley, Bill Roemer and Jan Wolford from the class of 2009.



Carol Fryer, Ruth Murphy and Nancy Harris at the Pruning Workshop in Lanexa, Feb. 20th



"BEE HAPPY!"

Bee Happy is a program of fun facts about the life style of bees with Pam Burton, beekeeper. After the program, we will plant seeds of sunflowers with differing heights to form a "sunflower house". Admission is free; bring a water bottle and dress for the outdoors.

Saturday, April 17, 2010, 10:00-11:00, rain or shine, at the Ellipse Garden in Freedom Park, 5535 Centerville Road, Williamsburg Botanical Garden. For more information, contact Programs Chair Barb Dunbar, 757 880 8875, twotac@cox.net



Lyn Natanski, chair of the beautification committee for Carriage Homes, is pictured here with her committee, including fellow VCE-MG Claire Gross, and the beautification award they recently received from the Williamsburg Area Council of Garden Clubs.

The Colonial Master Gardener April 2010

CAROLE'S GARDEN, MG PROJECT 35, NEW KENT DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

BY SUSAN VOIGT, PROJECT CHAIR

This project demonstrates successful home gardening techniques using raised beds and provides hands-on learning and research opportunities for master gardeners. Originally established in 2007 in Providence Forge under extension agents Paul Davis and Leanne Dubois as a VCE special project, it became MG project E35 in 2009. The garden has been dedicated to the memory of Carole Ashton, an active Master Gardener in New Kent and JCC/Williamsburg.

The project program has been expanded and improved each year, including use of drip irrigation, organic gardening practices, pest control and companion planting.



In the summer of 2009 Carole's Garden was physically relocated to the New Kent government complex and enjoys much more public visibility. The Soil and Water Conservation board along with the county has installed a 2500-gallon cistern to catch rainwater to be used for garden irrigation. The garden will be a featured item at the New Kent Envirothon/Earth Day celebration open to the public on Saturday April 17 from 9 a.m. -2 p.m. (see flyer; last page).

As soon as the beds were reconstructed at the new site, the NK master gardeners planted a fall garden of spinach, kale, cabbage, arugula, romaine lettuce and garlic. The photo at right was taken in mid-December.



In January, the NK MGs met to plan the garden for 2010. Some of the crops survived the cold winter and in February we harvested some cabbage, spinach and arugula during the workday to ready the garden for spring. We cleared out the remnants of the fall crops and amended the soil in the 15 beds, and built a cold frame house over bed 1, against the building brick wall. Three additional beds were added outside along the fence by Patty Townsend, NK Horticulture program assistant, and friends, and the MGs moved herbs and some over-wintered plants (spinach, romaine, arugula and several herbs) out of the interior garden to make room for the spring planting.



The garlic planted last fall was left undisturbed and will be harvested in another month. Mary Mills created the planting plan and in early March, 10 NK master gardeners planted beet, carrot, lettuce, spinach, and chard seeds along with 3 types of onion sets and 2 varieties of cabbage. The raspberry, blackberry and strawberry beds were undisturbed. Neither the berry plants nor the fruit trees in large pots show signs of new growth yet.

Raised beds provide for intensive gardening, confined soil preparation, good drainage, easy access for planting, weeding and harvest, and multiple crops per season.

Carole's garden beds are 4' wide, 8' or 12' long and about 18" high. The paths between the beds are covered with fine crushed rock laid over a black fabric barrier. Each year at least one bed has a trellis or support for vertical crops. A new cold frame house, temporarily constructed over one of the beds, is filled with flats of seedlings (which were started indoors) including broccoli, herbs and flowers, as well as pots of tender plants. Later this spring buckwheat and other plants that will attract beneficial insects will be interspersed in the garden as part of our organic pest control strategy. Floating row covers are also planned this year.

The original garden was protected with a netting deer fence and low wire fencing to keep out the rabbits. It used water from a nearby well.



The current garden is located within an existing chain link fence, and uses the cistern water. The 3 new beds outside the fence need to be covered with netting since local wildlife quickly found the unprotected plants!

Additional crops will be added to the garden later this spring and the garden will be showcased at the NK Envirothon on April 17. JCC/W master gardeners and interns are welcome to participate in Project 35.



WE HAVE A NEW WORM FARMER IN TOWN

BY ART GUSTAFSON

I read an article in the Gazette about Ron Crumb who has started a commercial worm farm here in James City County and I was very interested in visiting his facility. Luckily, Barbara and I went to the Maymont Flower show this year and Mr. Crum had a booth at the show. He has a number of products that are of interest to Master Gardeners.

He sells worm compost and worm casting at Jamestown Feed and Seed for \$1.00 and \$3.00 respectively. He also has worm farms available, fully stocked with worms. I was impressed with his products and his enthusiasm and made an appointment to visit his "farm". I found his activities



interesting and innovative. For example, his breeding bins, pictured below, are concrete partially in the ground. The bins face south and the tops of the bins are slanted to make good use of the sun. The worms are also insulated with straw which helps keep them warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Pictured also is his castings separator which he designed and built himself.

He is located on Forge Road within a few hundred yards of the Extension. His facility is quite interesting and I would like to get together a field trip to visit in the near future. If you are interested please let me know and I will arrange the visit with Mr. Crum. Please indicate your availability so I can give him a range of dates to choose from.



DRIP IRRIGATION

BY HELEN HAMILTON



Drip irrigation is the most efficient method of irrigating your landscape beds. Sprinkler systems are only 75-80% efficient, while drip systems are 90% or more efficient. You won't be wasting valuable water because the water soaks into the soil before it runs off or evaporates. You will be putting the water where it does the most good.

Systems are easy to design and install, and inexpensive to run. Drip irrigation can even be run off of a rain barrel, as long as the barrel is raised at least three feet off the ground. Even then, it will work only for a short run and at a very slow rate. Because of a lack of pressure, it is difficult to empty more than three quarters of your rain barrel. However, it is a totally "green" system. My own system is designed to take advantage of my rain barrels - and then can be reattached to a standpipe if necessary.

The website www.irrigationtutorials.com answers questions on parts required and gives tips on designing your own system.

WATER TIPS OF THE MONTH

BY HELEN HAMILTON, WATER STEWARD

Wash vehicles on lawn areas that could use some water. The grass helps to filter the water before entering the storm drains. Using biodegradable detergents helps protect our waterways.

Be a responsible pet owner. Pet waste contains bacteria and other pathogens that can wash into our waterways. Pick up after your pet and dispose of the waste in the trash or toilet.



...and you thought you had problems
...elk herd in a neighborhood in
Canada...."Yummy tree"

The Colonial Master Gardener April 2010

MASTER GARDENERS ON THE GO!

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TODDY VOORHEES

Hard at work on the Plant Sale:



Turf Love U:



Barrels & Bins Workshop:



Landscape Love Booth at Turf Love U



BOOK REVIEW

BY JEANNE MILLIN



Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants by Douglas W. Tallamy

This new addition to the MG library addresses the importance of selecting the right plant for your location, and why natives are important for wildlife. This 350+ page paperback has information on the importance of diversity in gardens and lists plants and trees that are beneficial to birds, butterflies and beneficial insects. There are extensive index's in the back that list native plants with wildlife value and desirable landscaping attributes by states and regions. This book should be used by MG's who are involved in Landscape Love and by all of us who wish to sustain beneficial wildlife in our gardens.

Frances Knight would like to thank the MGs for the sympathy note and plant sent to her upon her mother's passing. She appreciates your thoughts and concerns.



SUNSHINE NOTES

Get well notes were sent to Roger Evans and Denis Mehigan. A sympathy note and Peace Lily were sent to Frances Knight on the death of her mother.

If you know a Master Gardener who is ill, facing surgery, has suffered a family loss, or any event in which that person might benefit from a **sunshine note**, please contact the MG Secretary, Pat Janot. She will send a note or take appropriate action on behalf of the organization. Pat may be reached at 221-0289 or janotap@verizon.net.

JCC/W Master Gardener Mission Statement

The purpose of the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener is to learn, educate, and communicate environmentally sound horticultural practices to the community. Trained by the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Master Gardener volunteers are committed to offering information to the public through sustainable landscape management educational programs.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The deadline for submission of material for the March Newsletter is Apr. 26. Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at cathy.lohwater@cox.net or call 757-259-1133.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Apr. 1 Monthly Mtg. @ WRL; 9 AM; Bill Garlette
- Apr. 17 Envirothon; New Kent VCE
- Apr. 17 Bee Happy; Ellipse Garden, Freedom Park
- Apr. 24 PLANT SALE !!!
- Apr. 26 May Newsletter Deadline
- May 6 Monthly Mtg. @ Rec. Center; Melissa Butler
- May 17 Field Trip; National Arboretum
- June 27 Taking Root Farm Tour

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth.

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.



Envirothon Earth Day



Saturday, April 17, 2010

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

A day of activities for all ages designed to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's environment.

**Join us at the New Kent Extension Office
11809 New Kent Highway, New Kent, VA**

**Earth Friendly Educational Demonstrations
For The Whole Family Featuring:
VA Aquarium's "Ocean In Motion" Touch Tank & Aquarium**

Storm Water Management Demonstration

Rain Barrel Making Demonstration

Cub Scouts Pack 518-taking orders for Rain Barrel Kits

How To Grow Mushrooms

Honey Bee Display

Handmade Milk Soaps

Alpacas

Recycling "Chicken Tractor"

Chickens

Carole's Garden

Forestry Department-Free Tree Seedlings

Extension/Master Gardeners'

Recycled Art - NKHS

Recycled Clothing

Raised Bed Garden

Master Gardeners' Demonstrations:

Raised Bed Gardening

Container Gardening

Activities

Gardening Help Desk

Composting

Worm Composting

Plant Sale

And

More

Additional Booth Displays by:

Southern States Cooperative-Vegetable Gardening

Colonial Soil & Water Conservation District-Child

Parks & Recreation—Earth Day Activities for Kids

Heritage Library

Central VA Waste Management

Environmental Division

General Services—Public Utilities

Providence Forge Rescue Squad

And Many More