

The Colonial Master Gardener



February 2007

President's Corner Charlie Clapper

Congratulations to the 2006 Class!

Congratulations to the following award winners!

•Alice Kopinitz

Sustained Excellence less than three years

•Sue Voigt

Sustained Excellence more than three years

•Art Gustafson

Steady as a Rock Award

•Farmers Market , Art Gustafson and Sally Sissel

Project of the Year

•Linda Lucas

Master Gardener of the Year

Thank you all for your outstanding contributions. Thank you to the Awards Committee: Minouche Robinson, Milt Berube, Lise Kline and Lynn Flood.

Thank you to everyone who made our awards and graduation dinner a success. Thanks to Leanne DuBois for her after dinner remarks.

AS YOU GARDEN THIS YEAR CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDER YOUR ACTIONS!

Climate Experts Worry as 2006 is Hottest Year on Record in U.S.

Last year was the warmest in the continental United States in the past 112 years – capping nine-year warming streak “unprecedented in the historical

record that was driven in part by the burning of fossil fuels, the government reported yesterday. *The Washington Post, January 10, 2007*

7 Waterways Flunk Test

The latest study of local streams and ponds reinforces how growth is harming our waterways. Among 17 bodies of water in the College Creek watershed, seven received failing grades in the latest review by the College Creek Alliance. That's two better than last year but still provides fresh ammo to the slow-growth movement.

Did you know? Here's how long it takes the following products to biodegrade:

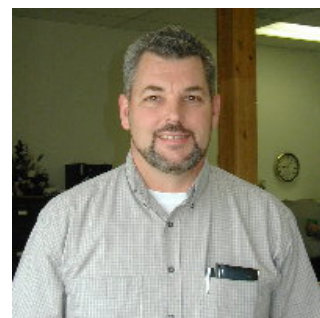
Cotton Rags	1 to 5 months
Paper	2 to 5 months
Rope	3 to 14 months
Orange Peels	6 months
Wool Socks	1 to 5 years
Cigarette Filter	1 to 12 years
Plastic-Coated Paper Milk Cartons	5 yrs
Leather Shoes	25 to 40 years
Nylon Fabric	30 to 40 years
Plastic Bags	10 to 20 years
Plastic Six-Pack Holder Rings	450 years
Glass	1 million years

“Where is our comfort but in the free, uninvolved, finally mysterious beauty and grace of this world that we did not make, that has no price? Where is our sanity but there? Where is our pleasure but in working and resting kindly in the presence of this world?”

Wendell Berry

Next Monthly Meeting

February 1 , Williamsburg Regional Library, “The Eight Tools of Watershed Protection” , Brian Noyes from the Colonial Soil and Water Conservation District and Scott Thomas and Mike Woolson from the Environmental Division of Development Management of James City County will lead a panel discussion.



Brian Noyes will be one of the panelists at the next MG monthly meeting.

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FROM THE EXTENSION OFFICE LEANNE DUBOIS, EXTENSION AGENT, HORTICULTURE

Congratulations to all the "Newbie" MG's!

The volume of conversations taking place prior to taking our seats at the Annual Dinner was a true testament to the camaraderie you've established and the warm welcome you've received by the Master Gardener organization. We welcome you all and hope you won't be a stranger now that a mere 20 hours plus 8 hours recertification is all you need to maintain your MG standing. I feel honored to be part of this organization especially when I see you all gathered together and know the extent of great work you do in our community.

Heirloom Gardening

We are fortunate to have a partnership with the CW Reid Garden and knowledge of the historical significance of heirloom varieties of plants. With the coming of the 2007 commemoration and through my work as a Volunteer Research Assistant for CW prior to becoming an agent, I've enjoyed learning about heirloom varieties and especially the stories they tell. This past year, I attended a few workshops at Monticello learning about seed saving techniques and varieties Thomas Jefferson grew, many of which were discovered from the Lewis and Clark expedition.

As you are planning your gardens this year, why not

try a few of the heirloom annual flowers or vegetables. One plant of particular note is the *caracalle bean*, a tender perennial climber with clusters of highly fragrant, white and purple flowers flushed with creamy yellow. Buds resemble a corkscrew or snail. The flower was popular in florists' corsages in the late 19th-century. In



In 1792, Thomas Jefferson wrote to Benjamin Hawkins, "The most beautiful bean in the world is the *caracalla* bean." To learn about interesting varieties, ask Reid Garden volunteers for recommendations; visit the CW Nursery or check out the websites of Monticello www.twinleaf.org or Seed Savers exchange www.seedsavers.org. You can shop on line or order a seed catalog and today with growing popularity there are many more catalogs available to choose from.

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Internal Education News Jean Winters

"Apprentice yourself to nature. Not a day will pass without her opening a new and wondrous world of experiences to learn from and enjoy"

Richard W. Langer

And so it is that our new interns have embarked upon their "apprentice" journey, for we must do that in such ventures before we become "masters". Having completed their apprenticeship, the members of the Class of 2006 have become our newest "masters". I congratulate and welcome all of you!

As we continue our programs for 2007, we will feature Brian Noyes, Scott Thomas and Mike Woolson, who will serve on a panel discussing "The Eight Ways of Watershed Protection" in February, followed by a program about the Water Stewards in March. We continue to see articles in the newspapers about water concerns in our immediate and surrounding areas. We anticipate bringing about a

better understanding and appreciation for this precious resource, for the present and the future, with these topics and others related to caring for our environment.

In keeping with our Educational Opportunities, we invite you to the Turf Love "U" Spring Session, Saturday, March 3rd, 10:00 to 12:00, at the James City County/Williamsburg Community Center on Longhill Road. All turf and soil topics, with a review of the latest research from Virginia Tech, will be presented. It's hard to believe that it will soon be time to work on lawns and gardens as this session appears on the calendar!

Winter Gardening 2007, or June in January! HELEN HAMILTON

From *The Washington Post*, January 5: "If the region's flora is confused, spare a thought for the dumb-founded homeowner who doesn't know whether to rejoice or worry about global warming and a springtime in shambles."

While this mild winter permits blooming daffodils and dandelions in January, we could get a freeze next month. The advice from horticulturists is "don't fret, just enjoy it." If blossoms are harmed by the next frost, the roots and leaves will live to perform next year. And most bulbs can take temperatures down into the teens, even in flower.

So, let's not remove the protective mulch just yet -- maybe we will have winter next month. Anyway, I like to see plant stalks as winter interest, so I don't remove the fall-blooming plants until the stems and leaves are black and ugly. The birds appreciate the remaining seeds, and the dead stalks and leaves serve as cover for small animals. If the plant was healthy, the discarded plant parts can serve as mulch or go into the compost pile.

Of course, any diseased plant material should have been removed (burned, discarded, out of your garden space) in the fall, to discourage overwintering of insect pests.

Since we have an urge to be out in the garden, now is a

good time to add compost, either as top-dressing or tilled into the soil. Compost contains highly nutritious, decomposed plant material and beneficial organisms and is an excellent soil builder. The insects and microorganisms will help integrate the compost with the soil. If you wait until spring to add organic material to the garden, it may not have time to decompose and add nutrients to the soil by the time you are ready to plant.

Don't Kill Them! -- Beneficial Insects, that is! Gardeners are just now realizing what Chinese farmers have known for millennia -- that a garden filled with a diverse population of spiders promises rich productivity. Spiders are responsible for about 80 percent of the biological control in a healthy garden.

Turn terra-cotta pots upside down (holes up) in your garden. Spiders enter the holes and take up residence. They will tackle earwigs, sowbugs, and beetles, and feast on larvae emerging from the soil and heading toward the light.

Soybean farmers have found that pest damage to plants is less in the area surrounding spider boxes -- upside down old produce crates (or the plastic equivalents) in borders, beds and fields. Or, building small twig mounds throughout your garden to shelter spiders, or stack a permanent rock-pile

home for them.

Mulching with grass clippings and compost supplies spiders with a dark, moist and sheltered environment from which to launch bug patrols.

Always avoid using broad-spectrum pesticides, which destroy spiders and a host of other beneficial insects.

Worm excavations improve soil structure, increase aeration and root penetration, and allow water to percolate slowly and deeply into the ground. Before you mulch your beds to encourage worm's population, the most important thing is to stop using harsh fertilizers and pesticides.

And, look before you squish! Greenish, maggoty-looking larvae could be the beneficial and hungry young syrphid or flowerflies, which consume dozens of aphids each day. Most important, they are out early in the season and are on the job before the ladybird beetles.



Charlie Clapper presenting the Sustained Excellence less than 3 years Award to Alice Kopinitz.



Charlie Clapper presenting the Steady as a Rock Award to Art Gustafson.



Charlie Clapper presenting the Sustained Excellence more than 3 years Award to Sue Voight.

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PROGRAM UPDATES (AND OTHER MG INFO)

Melissa's Meadow is in hibernation. Work resumes in March.

The Sunshine Fund sent a remembrance this month to fellow MG:

Max Walton

JMG IS RECYCLING IN FEBRUARY KARI ABBOTT, JMG PROJECT CHAIRPERSON

Thank you to everyone who donated calendars and magazines, you increased the library of plants, gardens, and birds to show the children. The pictures have been laminated and pressed into service already.

After learning all about water, how precious a natural resource it is, the first graders in February will embark on a recycling class. In January the first graders thought about ways to save water that they could control. Ideas such as scooping up dog poop, turning off water when they brushed their teeth, not letting the water run when they washed their hands, all were good suggestions and ideas that they could implement. Each child (yes all 140 of them) were given

shower timers to take home and use. Five minutes in the shower or water up to your belly button in the bath. The idea of a five minute shower created a lot of discussion!

This month's class focuses on how trees and water are used to make paper. It will reinforce last month's lesson on how precious water is, and show the children how water is used in one industry. The class also looks at how important it is to recycle paper, because it saves both water and trees. Also discussed are the many ways a single tree is used in producing a lot of materials. Did you know that chewing gum has tree sap in it? This is a really hands on class. It is exciting and fun for the children, a true experiential learning class!

As always everyone is welcome to volunteer with JMG, one hour, two hours, we have a task and fun for everyone. You can reach me at bears-baskets@cox.net.



Charlie Clapper presenting the Master Gardener of the Year Award to Linda Lucas.

YOUR HOURS FORM ON THE JCC/W MG WEBSITE ART GUSTAFSON

Here are some pointers for those who use our web site (<http://jccwmg.org/>) to submit their hours:

On the left side of the home page under "More Information" the eleventh item down is "Member's Page". Click on that and, again, under "More Information" click on the appropriate on-line Hours Form. That is 2006 or 2007, the Intern form will be for 2007.

Your form selection will be the next screen.

Please fill in all appropriate fields. CAUTION!! Use the tab key or the mouse to navigate through the form. If you hit ENTER the form will submit at that point. Should you make that mistake just hit the back arrow and your form will reappear. When the form is complete click the submit button. You will get a message that says "Thank You! Your MG hours sheet has been sent".

I will be illustrating these steps at the next MG meeting, and will be available to answer questions.

EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the March Newsletter is February 15. Please send to Lise Kline at leqskline@cox.net or call 757-259-9477. Thank you.

FEBRUARY HERB SOCIETY MEETING

The February meeting of the Herb Society of America, Colonial Triangle Unit will be held in the Fellowship Hall of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, 7479 Richmond Rd, Norge on Tuesday, February 13, starting promptly at 1:30.

Ron Ferqueron, Education Specialist at Lee Hall, will be speaking on "Herbs: History's Magical Plants". Ron will portray a 17th century herbalist and lead a journey into the age-old world

of herbs and plants discussing the use of herbs as both medicinal and as a food source.

The program is first, after which guests can quietly leave or are welcome to stay for the business meeting. The meetings conclude no later than 3:30.

This meeting is open to the public and all Master Gardeners are invited to attend. The lecture would apply towards the 8 hours required for RT2.

TREASURES FROM THE GARDEN EXHIBIT

Perk up your winter blues with a visit to see beautiful, original botanical drawings sketched by local artists. This exhibit is at the Williamsburg Regional Library, now through March 14, 2007.

THROUGH THE GATE...TO THE GEORGE REID AND SHIELDS KITCHEN TAVERN GARDENS- MARILYN RIDDLE, PROJECT CHAIR

Leanne Dubois, Rich Strenkowski, and I recently met with Colonial Williamsburg liaison, Laura Viancour, to review the volunteer procedures that will be implemented in 2007. We are pleased to announce that the Colonial Williamsburg Landscape Department will be accepting applications for volunteer positions at the Reid and Shields gardens for 2007.

Colonial Williamsburg volunteer positions in the Reid and Shields gardens are limited to Master Gardeners in support of a mutually beneficial partnership between the JCC/W Master Gardener Association and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Any Master Gardener interested in volunteering in the Reid or Shields gardens must commit to vol-

unteering a minimum of 30 hours annually (20 hours of garden work plus four hours of training and six hours of miscellaneous activity related to the garden).

There are a limited number of positions available. Lynn Flood will be sending an e-mail to all Master Gardeners explaining the application process. In the meantime, if you would like to fill out an application, applications may be picked up at the CW Human Resources Reception Desk in the Franklin Street Office Building (located on the same street as the Fife & Drum Building and the stables). Or if you prefer, you can call Ginger Bryan, 220-7181, and request an application be mailed to you.

Please e-mail or call me if you have any questions.

We're on the web
at
www.jccwmg.org



Charlie Clapper presenting the Project of the Year Award to The Farmer's Market project chairs Art Gustafson and Sally Sissel.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Feb 13, 2007, Herb Society Meeting, "Herbs: History's Magical Plants," Our Saviour Lutheran Church, see page 4 of this newsletter
- Mar 1, 2007, MG Monthly meeting, Remember Our Youth, Kari Abbott and Jeremy Johnson, Williamsburg Regional Library
- Mar 3, 2007, Turf Love "U", see page 2 of this newsletter
- Apr 29, 2007, Annual Plant Sale, Williamsburg Community Building
- May 2-5, 2007 International Master Gardener Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas. For more information: <http://mg2007.uaex.edu> or call 501-671-2000.

MG address correction:

Jack Hostetter email:

hostetter@cox.net



Congratulations to the Master Gardener Class of 2006! Bottom L-R: Caryl LeFever, Nancy Harris, Lillian Woolfolk, Laurie Bland, Toni Webb & Carol Fryer Row 2: Sandi Gauthier, Carolyn Robertson, Reba Hazlewood, Mary Lib Puller, Beth Fugate & Donald Parker Row 3: Andrea Eadie, Leslie Meyer, Joan Jones, Libby Hedstrom, Ann McGee & Nancy Greene Top Row: Jim Massengill, Sarah Dougherty, Jarl Christensen, Bill Pearl, Anne Stewart, Dan Tevlin & Jim Jenkins

SALLY SISSEL'S GRADUATION DINNER DESSERT

There were many requests for the recipe for the dessert served at the past several graduation dinners. It was suggested I put it in the newsletter, I hope no one objects to using this means of communication.

I first received this recipe from a friend in St. Croix who used it for a dessert for a church dinner. Dennis and I then used it for many spaghetti dinners at our church here in Williamsburg. By the time it got to MGs though it was changed.

Here is original recipe with some changes noted.

Ingredients:

- one pound cake, cooked as directed, cut into 16 pretty uniform slices (*Mary Ann Kimminau suggested using angel food cake instead as it's easier, cheaper and*

lighter-pound cake is a bit firmer though) Obviously you could also buy the cake.

- one 4 oz. package instant pudding--I have used vanilla, banana or a combination--all good. Prepare as directed on package and let set 5 minutes.
- one 8oz Cool Whip, thawed

Directions:

Fold Cool Whip and pudding together and spread a thin layer over bottom of 9x13 pan as a base

Place 8 slices of cake in bottom of pan-cut to fit. Doesn't have to be "beautiful"--will all meld together. Does need to cover pan. If slices are smaller or bigger, the number may change.

Spread 1/2 of the remaining filling mixture over (*for MG, I decided to fold some fruit into this layer of filling--have*

used frozen or fresh blueberries, strawberries, raspberries. I never have used the fruit in the normal size recipe but you can just use your own judgment as to how much fruit looks ample)

Repeat cake layer

Top with rest of filling mixture (*no fruit this time*).

Refrigerate at least 3 hours

Cut, garnish if you wish (for our church dinner, we sprinkled cocoa on top, *for MG used fruit pieces*)

That's it!! As you can see once the cake is made and sliced the rest only takes about 10 minutes.

I'm glad you all seemed to enjoy it. Once you've made it, you will think of all different ways to be creative. I'd like to try it with pistachio pudding and nuts.

In Memory of

Robert Warren,

MG Class of 2004