



# The Colonial Master Gardener

Publication of JCC/WBG Master Gardener Association & Virginia Cooperative Extension

JUNE 2004

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN (Continued)

“Making a Habit of Restoration. Where the landscape fabric is damaged, it must be repaired and/or restored. As most of the ecosystems are increasingly disturbed, every development project should have a restoration component. When site disturbance is uncontrolled, ecological deterioration accelerates, and natural systems diminish in diversity and complexity. Effective restoration requires recognition of the interdependence of all site factors and must include repair of all site systems – soil, water, vegetation and wildlife.” from “Sustainable Design: A Collaborative National Park Service Initiative”

### **PRESIDENT**

Barbara Schroeder Gustafson  
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### **NEWSLETTER**

Charlie Clapper '02

*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.*

You know you're a master gardener when after purchasing \$300 worth of plants you enter Winn Dixie in your check register.

## HELPLINE CALL OF THE MONTH: HONEY BEE SWARMS

*We've received a number of calls lately about bee swarms. Bees are our friends and because of their amazing pollinating and honey producing talents, should be protected. If you like flowers, corn and tomatoes... you've got to love bees*

Honey bee colonies reproduce by *swarming*. During mid-winter, the queen begins laying eggs and the colony population grows. By spring, the nest is congested with many new bees. The colony raises a new queen and the old queen flies away accompanied by more than half the bees. This flying swarm temporarily clusters on an object, such as a tree branch, while scout bees search for a permanent nest site. Swarms in the clustered stage are relatively gentle, and the risk of stings is low. Nevertheless, treat swarms with caution. A swarm usually relocates to a permanent nest -- a hollow tree, abandoned beekeeper's hive, or inside a hollow wall -- within 24 hours. I spoke to a number of beekeepers in the area who will collect swarms and have listed their names in the Helpline office. (Even our own brave Wayne Moyer is on the list.) Please discourage people from using pesticides by helping them arrange a rescue mission.

**LEANNE DUBOIS**

VISIT THE MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION WEBSITE AT <http://iccwmq.org>



## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

The first Special Recognition certificates were awarded at our April meeting to fellow Master Gardener volunteers Eileen Kuras, Jim and Nelda Pressley, Ailene Bartlett, Wayne Moyer, and Carl Brown. Selecting these first recipients was difficult as many Association members donate significant time and expertise. So we chose those who have contributed steadily over the longest time and in many varied ways. What a fantastic group to begin this new tradition!

A very special thanks to Cathy Ripley for heading a most successful plant sale and to our many members who contributed time and effort. We netted a profit of over \$1900, \$200 over our projected amount, in spite of having lost our generous past donors Southern States and Greener Side and not getting contributions due to personal crises from several generous Master Gardeners.

Slightly fewer than half our active members have returned their surveys. With a group as diverse and lively as ours, it is always helpful to get your unbiased opinions. Art handed me a tally showing how 2003 volunteer time is divided between projects, administration, fund raising and advanced training. I plan to have copies of 2003 hours and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2004 hours for comparison with survey results at our July meeting.

The second week of June will be Master Gardener College at Virginia Tech. Leanne and Lynn have e-mailed us the information. Please consider attending to represent JCC/Williamsburg. Rich Bunger, Leanne, Art and I are planning to go. We'd love to have some company.  
Your President-**BARBARA SCHROEDER-GUSTAFSON**

## **THE BOOK CORNER**

All of us have no doubt heard of "companion planting." Probably most of us have accidentally done some in our gardening careers. I think we would all benefit from reading Louise Riotte's **CARROTS LOVE TOMATOES AND ROSES LOVE GARLIC: A GUIDE TO COMPANION PLANTING**. (Storey Publications, 2004). She details what should (and should not) be planted close together to reap the benefits (or the woes). There's lots of good information on butterfly gardening, soil preparation, and general tips. A good read, a learning experience - and printed on acid-free, recycled paper! Now, THAT'S environmentally friendly!

**AILENE BARTLETT**

## **SEEDS OF LEARNING 2004**

We had another successful year, thanks to all the great help from Master Gardener volunteers. We went to 32 classes and taught 613 first-graders. Our program is tied to science Standards of Learning, and many teachers have said that the program is part of their lesson plans to meet that S.O.L. We received outstanding evaluations, and I even received a phone call and e-mails at home from the schools complimenting our programs and volunteers. Comments from the evaluations: "We enjoy having you come out each year." "You always do a great job." "The children said, 'This is fun like Cultural Arts Day'." "It's very relevant to our S.O.L.s" "What a great opportunity to have you show your expertise with the children." "Kids really need to see, hear, smell and touch these plants. They don't otherwise have that opportunity." All who participated did an outstanding job, but I especially want to thank Alice Kopinitz, my right-hand intern. I have "retired" as Seeds of Learning Chair. The search is on for replacement(s)!

**CHARLENE TALCOTT**

## HERBS WITH THE ZEST OF LEMON

Recently I came across an article about having an herb garden made up of the citrus herbs. As I didn't want to give up my entire herb garden to this, I did put most of my lemon herbs in one area, which started me on a search for lemon (or citrus herbs) As a group these herbs are used in cooking (great with fish or poultry), baking (have you ever tasted lemon thyme cookies or lemon verbena shortbread?), teas (both hot and cold), and in potpourris. Use fresh or dried.

Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) is probably the most common of the lemon herbs. If you don't have a plant, I am sure someone will give you one or more as it is both a spreader and re-seeder. Two varieties, 'Variegata' and 'All Gold' are not quite as aggressive. Medieval maidens carried it as a charm for luck in love. We know it was planted near bee hives to attract bees.

Lemon verbena (*Aloysia triphylla citriodora*) is one of the strongest lemon scents. It is a tender perennial that can live over in the Williamsburg area if the winter is mild or if it has protection. A native of South America, it was imported to Europe by the Spanish who used its essential oil for perfumes. (Scarlet O'Hara used a lemon verbena perfume!) Most likely the favorite of the lemon herbs it dries beautifully so that it can be used the entire year.

Lemon thyme (*Thymus citriodorus*) is available in several different varieties-- a silver leaf 'Silver Queen' and a gold leaf variety 'Aureus'. Try putting a handful in when you roast a chicken.

Lime thyme (A close relative) If you've gone to the Lewis Ginter Gardens recently, it was hard to miss this plant that literally glowed!

Lemongrass (*Cymbopogon citratus*), another tender perennial, is a sharp-edged grass used in many Thai or oriental dishes. It lived over in my herb garden for several years, but this past winter killed it. Many in this area grow it in a pot and take it in before frost.

Lemon Basil (*Ocimum basilicum x citriodorum*) and lemon scented geraniums, such as 'Mable Gray' are also available.

If you still have room in your garden, there are many citrus mints that you can add. Best to put these in pots unless you want a garden full of mint. **DEE ALBRIGHT**

## NEWS FROM PENINSULA TREE STEWARDS

Eighteen Master Gardeners have completed the classroom training to become Peninsula Tree Stewards: Flora Adams, Richard Bunger, Ann DeForest, Tony Dion, John Dodson, Lynn Flood, Wade Green and Arthur Gustafson, from James City County/Williamsburg; Wendy Mooring, Marilyn Smith and David West from Hampton; Julie Mericle from Newport News; and Carol Brower, Dan Hawley, Angie Large, Larry Riddick, Jim Robertson and Teela Robertson from York County. After completing twenty volunteer hours they will receive their full Tree Steward status. Their projects cover a wide range of educational benefits to the community, such as teaching children and adults correct tree planting methods, the value of trees, and their environmental impact. One project for school children focuses on the apple tree. Tree identification projects include coastal plain species and trees along the Noland Trail. Pruning practices associated with utility lines will be documented and responsible pruning methods recommended. The wetlands area adjacent to the Learning Garden in York County will be the site of a project stressing the importance of trees in upland wetlands ecosystems. For Jamestown 2007 a project associated with a nature trail is planned. Finally, this spring's very successful Reforestation Project will be repeated next year. Current tree stewards are looking forward to working with this enthusiastic and talented group.

**SUE LIDDELL, Coordinator, Peninsula Tree Stewards**

## BIRDHOUSES

**Minouche Robinson** is inventorying our birdhouses. To purchase a birdhouse, call or email her and she arrange to get you one or more. Place orders through her. Please pay when the birdhouse is delivered or mail a check with your order. Email – [Minouche@cox.net](mailto:Minouche@cox.net)

## THROUGH THE GATE...to the George Reid Garden

On April 8th, Helen Walter, Becky Sutton and Judy Mays drove to Monticello to visit their famous restored vegetable gardens. Since this is our first year in charge of the Reid Vegetable Garden, we felt we wanted to educate ourselves more about the vegetables grown during the Colonial times and what better place to begin than the gardens of Monticello.

We had a private appointment with Peter Hatch, Director of Gardens and Grounds, to tour the gardens but upon arrival were advised he unfortunately had another tour. His Associate, Gabriele Rausse who immigrated from Italy in 1974 and started the first vineyard in Virginia near Charlottesville before being hired by Monticello impressed us with his knowledge of vegetables and their importance in Colonial times. We really came to understand what people ate, how and why they ate what they ate and how the presentation of food at a host's table reflected their position in society.

After the tour of the greenhouses and back work areas of Monticello we went to the huge 1000 foot restored garden terrace which Thomas Jefferson had originally set up on the South side of the mountain, just below his house. There we met Allison Skaer and Rob Brown who kindly walked us through the whole garden with its rows and rows of heirloom vegetables. We peppered them with questions. We learned so much about soil, methods of planting, use of plants, what grew well and what didn't and what was used and why. Jefferson liked to experiment but it was surprising to learn how little they understood why things failed or succeeded.

We ended our tour by stopping at the Monticello Garden shop where we could not resist buying some of those heirloom seeds. **HELEN WALTER**

### **NEXT MONTHLY MEETING** **Bruton Heights Lane Auditorium** **June 3, 9:00 am**

Bayberry Lane Field Trip – we will leave after the business meeting; Salad Lunch for \$8.50. YOU MUST HAVE YOUR RESERVATION AND CHECK PAYABLE TO BAYBERRY ROW TO GENROSE NO LATER THAN MONDAY, MAY 24 – NO EXCEPTIONS!

### **OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS**

**JUNE 27 - 1:00 – 5:00 Taking Root, Self Driving/Biking Tour of Small Farms in New Kent**

**JULY 1 - Town Meeting at Bruton Heights Lane Auditorium. Discussion of MG Survey**

**AUGUST 5 - Annuals That Thrive in July and August – Mark Weathington, Norfolk Botanical Garden**

**AUGUST 21 - Super Turf Saturday JCC/W Community Center**

**SEPTEMBER 2 - Tentative – Lynn Trott, Dahlias**

### **WHERE DO ALL THE PANSIES GO?**

What shall I do with my winter pansies, which have served me so magnificently throughout the winter, snow and all? I can't, in good conscience, throw them out, or even in the compost, although I know their time in the garden is (theoretically) about over. They deserve better. So, I've lifted them from the planters, carefully weeded and deadheaded, and planted them in places protected from the summer sun. Perhaps they'll die. Then I can, without qualms, consign them to the compost. But, if they should live, perhaps in late summer I can cut them back severely, and by cool weather maybe they'll be ready to put back in the sunny planters for the winter! Stay tuned! **AILEEN BARTLETT**

**E-mail address changes:** Debbie Maddocks, Treasurer: [doodah@verizon.com](mailto:doodah@verizon.com)

Robert Schulz, [schultzrosi@aol.com](mailto:schultzrosi@aol.com)

**Pick your own Strawberries – Locally!** Cockrell Farm, 2724 Forge Rd. Toano (Just around the corner from the Extension office) Monday – Saturday 7 am – noon, Closed Sunday.