

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WBG MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

March 2008



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATING MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2007 AND TO THE 2007 MG AWARD WINNERS:

Master Gardener of the Year
Master Gardener Projects of the Year

Steady as a Rock
Sustained Excellence, MG over 3 years
Sustained Excellence, MG less than 3 years

Barbara Gustafson
Landscape Love
Turf Love
Becky Sutton
Kari Abbott
Carol Fryer



MG Class of 2007 at the MG Banquet in January: Front row: John Giffen, Pembroke Hoffmeier, Debbie McLean, Katherine Nice, Pat Janot, Rosemarie Brennan
2nd row: Nancy Harding, Roger Staskiel, Lois Enlow, Caroline Spinella, Cathy Lohwater
3rd row: Richard Prosl, Ruth Schultz, Jim Word, Dennis Mehigan, James Kavitz, Deborah Secrist, Pat Hester
Not pictured: Laura Hill and Jamie Lavin



Kari Abbott, left, and Barbara Gustafson, right, receiving their awards from MG President, Dave Banks, at the Banquet.



Next Monthly Meeting

March 6 9:00 am,
Williamsburg
Regional Library,
*Photographic
Journey of My
Native Gardens*,
Lance Gardner, VIMS
doctoral student

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EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the April Newsletter is March 24. Please send to Lise Kline, newsletter editor, at legskline@cox.net or call 757-259-9477. Comments and questions about the newsletter are also welcome. Thank you.

2007-2008 MG Board

President:

Dave Banks '03
258-8632

VP Projects:

Judy Hansen '04
345-0958

VP Internal Ed:

Jean Winters '01
564-1662

VP Youth:

Lynn Flood '02
220-3864

Secretary:

Pat Crowe '05
645-4538

Treasurer:

Sarah Dougherty '06
565-7954

VMGA Rep:

Anne Odle '03
259-9025

Past President:

Charlie Clapper '02
564-6191

At-Large:

Barbara Gustafson '99
564-1888

Extension Agent:

Leanne DuBois '96
564-2170

Internal Education News Jean Winters

*"He that plants a tree loves others besides himself"...*Thomas Fuller

So it is that this time of year we celebrate Arbor Day, planting young trees to take places where others have never been or have been removed. With so many trees being taken down where we live here, it is good to know that there are those who love others besides themselves!

Going from the 1600's into the beginning of the 21st century, we look forward to hearing Lance Gardner speak about a "Photographic Journey of My Native Gardens" at our March meeting. As Robert Beverley told about the many botanical wonders he encountered in the early days, as described by Charlie Stayton last month, now we'll get a better understanding of

our local wetlands, soil, ecology, and organic gardening being studied by Lance at VIMS (Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences). Lance is a PhD student working on eelgrass ecology and restoration. We look forward to having him with us!

Our Education "Team" is working on several plans to enhance our learning of environmental topics. The trips to the Busch Gardens greenhouses, scheduled for May, have been filled but we may be able to add another date as this appears to be very popular. Another trip in the fall, to VIMS, is also being planned. The monthly programs for April (butterflies and their role in our environment) and May (therapeutic gardening techniques) promise to be interesting too.

Enjoy the new growth that is appearing daily. Our Lenten roses, though modest, have been blooming for several weeks now and are a joy! Maybe you have some as well! Happy Spring!

NEW MASTER BEEKEEPER PROGRAM LEANNE DUBOIS, EXTENSION AGENT

One of the fallacies of being a Horticulture Extension Agent is that winter is our down time. How I wish it were true! Not only do we have a year-end report due but also we attend a professional development conference in Blacksburg. It is at the conference that we learn about new ideas and programs that may be of interest to the communities we serve. This year, one of the programs that I learned more about was the Master Beekeeper program being developed through VT and Virginia Department of Agriculture. Bees have been in the news lately and the office has received calls from homeowners noticing that honeybees seem to be in short supply. The Mas-



ter Beekeeper program hopes to assist with declining bee populations by encouraging recruitment of new beekeepers. Recent problems that have plagued bee populations include the Var-

roa mites and a relatively new problem known as Colony Collapse Disorder. The goals are to improve the level of beekeeping knowledge, provide a coordinated program for training new beekeepers and reward efforts in advancing apiculture, (AKA Beekeeping). Improving a beekeeper's knowledge of apiculture correspondingly improves their successful management of honey bees. I'll keep you posted as the program develops and let me know if any of you would be interested.

E2 News Kari Abbott

Many thanks to John Giffin, Pembroke Hoffmeyer, Ruth Schultz and Nancy Harding for a wonderful month making paper with the first graders. This year we were able to provide more information about how trees are used to make paper, and how much water was used. On to more water adventures next month. As

always all Master Gardeners are welcome to join in.

Save the dates of April 29, 30, and May 1 for the best field trip ever, to the York River State Park.

Proposed MG Bylaws Changes February 2008

*The text in **bold italics** are proposed changes to be voted on at the March MG meeting.*

ARTICLE IV EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board, hereinafter the Board, shall consist of the officers of the Association, and shall carry out the responsibilities of the Association. All actions and business conducted by the Board shall be by majority vote, provided a quorum (four) of the officers is in attendance. The Board may invite other members to attend meetings as necessary and prudent, but these members will be non-voting.

The officers shall consist of a President; First Vice President, Projects; Vice President, Internal Master Gardener Education; ***Vice President, Administration***; Secretary; Treasurer; State Representative; and, such other Directors as deemed necessary by the Board and appointed by the President. These officers, plus the immediate Past President (ex officio), and the County Extension Agent (ex officio) shall constitute the Executive Board.

The term of office shall be for two years. ***Three of the six officers are to be elected one year, and four the next, to ensure Board continuity.***

Officers shall be elected by the membership not later than June of each year and assume their duties at the July meeting.

Section 2. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

1. The President shall preside at all meetings, appoint all chairs, and coordinate the work of the officers and committees of the Association. The President shall meet with the County Extension Agent at a minimum on a monthly basis to discuss ongoing work of the Association.
2. The First Vice President, Projects shall be responsible for all community educational service projects. The First Vice President shall serve in place of the President in his/her absence.
3. The Vice President, Internal Master Gardener Education shall be responsible for all projects that further the education of master gardeners and master gardener trainees.
4. ***The Vice President, Administration shall be responsible for all administrative projects to include the newsletter, special events, awards, nominations and publicity.***
5. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings of the Association and the Executive Board. The Secretary shall maintain the records of the Association and turn them over promptly to his/her successor.
6. The Treasurer shall maintain all funds of the Association, disburse any funds for official Master Gardener activities, and provide periodic reports, including an annual report to the general membership at the close of the fiscal year. The Treasurer shall turn over all records to his/her successor.
7. The State Representative shall attend meetings of the Virginia Master Gardener Association.
8. The immediate Past President (ex officio) ***shall*** provide support as requested.

ARTICLE V COMMITTEES AND VACANCIES

Section 1. Committees may be created by the President, with the approval of the Executive Board, to manage and/or conduct the responsibilities of the Association.

Section 2. Standing committees for awards and nominations shall be maintained throughout the year.

Section 3. Vacancies. Executive Board vacancies shall be filled by Presidential appointment, in consultation with the Board, to complete the expired terms of office.

MG Contact Update

Bob & Jean Winters
Email at Home
rowinter@verizon.net
Email Bob at office
rowinter@vt.edu

JCC/W MG 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.

Our thoughts and prayers are with fellow MG:

Jean Barter on the occasion of the death of her daughter.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

or "It's Not Too Late to Start Seeds" Helen Hamilton

Some warm days lead us to think of spring planting, and then we get a cold snap. Meanwhile, get a tray, egg carton, peat boxes, (whatever), and plant a few seeds for later garden installation. For just a few dollars invested in a seed packet or two, you will be able to plant rare heirloom varieties, wildflowers from your childhood, or yummy vegetables that bear no resemblance to what's in the produce section of the supermarket.

A few tips:

Seed cover. Bury seeds to a maximum of three times their diameter, and keep the soil moist. The tiniest seeds can be shaken across soil and patted into place, watered with a fine spray. Early colonists used turkey feathers to gently brush soil over the smallest seeds. An artist's soft-bristle paintbrush will do as well.

Scarify. Staple a 100 grit dry-wall sanding screen near the edge of your potting bench, place the seeds on the screen, and rub them back and forth with a block of wood. Or, brew a cup of hot tea and drop the seeds in to soak overnight. Some common plants needing a "rubdown" are camellia, dogwood, lupine, redbud, sweet pea, tree peonies, American wisteria.

Large seeds. Germinate between two sheets of damp paper towels, tucked into a clear plastic bag. In a week, check the seedlings, and if sprouted, plant in a soilless potting mix. Water gently and enclose the tray or pot in a plastic bag or plastic wrap, creating a mini-greenhouse. Then sent the plants in a warm, well-lit area.

Pencil planting. A triple-duty tool! Make small holes, appropriately spaced with the point of a lead pencil. Then, sharpen the pencil to a fine point, and dip into moistened planting mix – lightly touch the tip of the lead to a seed, and it adheres like magic! Gently poke the seed into the hole and use the eraser end to cover the seed with the planting mix.

Toilet paper tape. Make your own paper planting tapes. Mix some water and flour to a thin consistency and paint it (or squirt it from a squeeze bottle) onto the center of a long piece of toilet paper. Sprinkle fresh seeds into the moist goo. When it's dry, place the tape on a weeded and prepared bed. Sprinkle a light dusting of soil on top of the tape, and water thoroughly. Keep the seeds moist until germination, then water as needed.

Seed shaker. Mix tiny seeds with a handful of fine sand in a grated-cheese shaker. Then, rake your bed or prepare your pot, and shake the seed mix lightly onto the soil.

Ground cover. Tiny seeds and seedlings are often eaten by birds or slugs. But birds won't touch a bed that's covered with small chipped gravel, and slugs won't traverse the sharp terrain. So, when planting, spread a thin layer of gravel across the potting mix or soil, shake the seeds on top and water thoroughly. The gravel acts as a protective mulch and reflects light and heat.

Damping-off. This fungal disease often attacks and destroys seedlings, especially those started indoors and in greenhouses. Find an old fork and bend the first half of the tines to a 90-degree angle. Use this "rake" to cultivate the soil around the remaining plants.

Starter pots. A variety of containers, filled with soilless seed-starting mix, can be used to start seeds. Empty rinds of grapefruits, lemons, limes, and oranges can be transplanted directly into the garden soil. A pleated paper drinking cup at the water cooler will

expand to twice its size when you blow into it. When ready to transplant, just slit the sides of the cup and place in the garden.

Biodegradable pots. Make your own, using a soup can as a mold. Wrap two sheets of newspaper around the outside of the can, fold the leftover paper to shape the bottom, and tape to hold it in place. Run a piece of tape around the center to strengthen the sides, and slip the paper pot off the can.

Recycle. Other planters are cardboard egg cartons, empty milk cartons, soup cans, foam cups, yogurt and cottage cheese containers, and take-out food containers. Be sure to provide drainage holes.

Back saver. Tired of bending over the plant seeds? Use a four foot length of narrow pipe to drop the seed down the pipe, and cover with soil.

Markers. Plant larger, faster germinating seeds near tiny seeds. These markers break the crust for the smaller seeds, and also show exactly where they are planted, a great aid for weeding. Victorians always planted the round, robust seeds of radish along with their tiny carrot seeds.

Capillary pad. Professional growers reduce their irrigation chores and keep plants moist by setting containers on capillary mats. Make your own by laying a sheet of black plastic on the ground and cover with 10 to 12 sheets of newspaper. Place the potted plants on the newspaper and water them thoroughly. Run-off is absorbed by the newspaper, then slowly released back to the plant. The mats can be used for about two months, then tossed into the worm bin or compost pile.

Plants Galore 2008 News

April 26, 2008

12:00 noon to 4:00 pm

Williamsburg Community Building

401 N. Boundary Street



Volunteers are needed:

Week before the sale

getting plants ready

Day of the sale

8:00am to 12:00 noon

transporting plants, set-up

12:00 noon to 4:00 pm

working at the sale

4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

clean-up

MGs interested in helping please contact
rebecca.sutton@cox.net. Thanks for your support!

Plants Galore 2008 thanks Jerry Babski, Debbie Secrist and Linda Lucas for conducting the well attended Seed Propagation Workshop. It was a wonderful workshop!

A Thank You

To all the Master Gardeners, we greatly appreciate the out-pouring of support through the cards, calls and the beautiful plant sent to us. All of this has helped us more than words can express to get through this difficult time on the loss of our Patty.

*Sincerely,
Jean Barter and family*

**We're on the web
at**

www.jccwmg.org

Upcoming Events at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden

The Williamsburg Botanical Garden's Monthly Walk and Talk Educational Series, Saturday, March 1st from 10:00-11:00 AM "Foolproof Trees and Shrubs" hosted by Sue Liddell, JCC Master Gardner and Peninsula Tree Steward. Find out how to have a great looking landscape without breaking your back or your budget. The WBG is located at Freedom Park, 5535 Centerville Rd in Williamsburg. For more information 229-1995 or www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org.

The Williamsburg Botanical Garden's Monthly Walk and Talk Educational Series will be held on Saturday, April 5th from 10:00-11:00 AM. "Butterfly Gardening for the Entire Family" will be hosted by Denise Greene, owner of Sassafras Farm in Hayes, VA and member of the Virginia Society of Landscape Designers. Learn from an expert in native plants how to have a colorful and low-maintenance garden that is a magnet for butterflies and hummingbirds. And bring the kids along--they will learn about pollination and plant a "Three Sisters Garden." The WBG is located at Freedom Park, 5535 Centerville Rd in Williamsburg. For more information 229-1995 or www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org.

Start planning for MG College 2008

- June 17-22
- VA Tech, Blacksburg
- Additional information will be made available at our March and April meetings.
- Six scholarships are available.

Those interested can contact Anne Odle, our VMGA rep

The Colonial Master Gardener March 2008

2008 EVENTS OF INTEREST

Mar. 1	TURF LOVE "U" James City County/Williamsburg Community Center, Longhill Rd. Free, Pre Registration Required Virginia Cooperative Extension James City County (757) 564-2170	Mar 15	VIRGINIA BERRY PRODUCTION AND MARKETING CONFERENCE Virginia State University, Petersburg 10-3:30 - \$7 (payable to "VSU") by Mar 10 (name, address, phone, email) to VSU, Attn: Dr. Rafie, PO 9081, Petersburg 23806, 804-524- 5960 or agsuite@vsu.edu
Mar 1	2008 YORK COUNTY VCE HORTICULTURAL EXTRAVAGANZA Tabb High School, York County 9-3 www.yorkcounty.gov/vce/progareas/hort/hort_extrav	Mar 29	BEST GARDEN PLANTS FOR VIRGINIA (Richard Nunnally) and HOW TO GROW OR CHIDS AT HOME (Art Chadwick) Central Virginia Community College, Bedford 9-12 540-586-7675 (also to register)
Mar 5	NO TREE LEFT BEHIND VA Western Community College, Roanoke 7:30-3:30 - \$70 by Feb 29; \$80 after Feb 29 434-220-9024 or becky.woodson@dof.virginia.gov www.treesvirginia.org	Apr 5	CONSTRUCT A RAIN BARREL TO TAKE HOME Bedford Farmers Market, Bedford 9-12 - \$25 (payable to "BAMGA"); pre- registration by Mar 27 to VCE-Bedford, 122 E. Main St., Ste. 102, Bedford, VA 24523 (name, address, phone, email). – Limit 25 540-586-7675
Mar 5 or 6	GREAT GARDENING AT MAYMONT: ROSE CARE AND PRUNING FOR MASTER GARDENERS Stone Barn, Maymont 9-11:30 - \$20 – register by Mar 3 Note: Approved for MG CEUs by VA Tech 804-358-7166 or www.maymont.org	Apr 9	2008 VIRGINIA WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE Blue Ridge Community College, Weyers Cave 8-4 - \$30 – register by Mar 21 – 200 limit Cyndi Marston (540-432-6029)
Mar 10	WATER WORKSHOP Sponsored by JCC/W Master Gardener/Water Stewards, JCC/W Community Center, Longhill Rd., 9:00 - 12:30 pm, Pre registration required. Call Virginia Cooperative Extension to Register 564-2170	Apr 18-19	NEW KENT 4-H GOLF CLASSIC Brookwoods Golf Club, Quinton 1-6 – Pre-registration required 804-966-9645
Mar 12	RICHMOND AREA VEGETABLE GROWERS CONFERENCE Quinton Community Center, Quinton 8:30-3 - \$5 (pre-registration required) Call Virginia Cooperative Extension New Kent County, 804-966-9645	Apr 26	SPRING GARDEN FEST T.J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College, Goochland 9:30-3 - \$10 (plus materials for some classes) – Register by Apr 20 Note: Classes count as Cont Ed for Master Gar- deners, 804-556-5841 or www.gpmga.org
Mar 15	GARDENING FOR DISABLED AND ELDERLY Central Virginia Community College, Bedford 9-12 - \$10 at door 540-586-7675 (also to register)	June 17-22	Master Gardener College VA Tech, Blacksburg, additional information will be made available at our March and April meetings. Six scholarships are available. Those interested can contact Anne Odle, our VMGA rep.
Mar 15	PRUNING CLINIC JCC/W Master Gardeners Pruning Team Wallace Manor, New Kent, 10-12 – Free but pre-register by Mar 13 – Limited space, Virginia Coop Ext 804-966-9645		