



The Colonial Master Gardener

November
2016

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY GARY STREB

"I cannot endure to waste anything so precious as autumnal sunshine by staying in the house."

**—Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The American Notebooks*,
October 10, 1842**

Next Meeting:

Thursday, November 3

**Program:
Peonies**

**Speaker:
Mike Lockatell
of Roots & Blooms**

By now all of us are in the midst of our autumn garden "to do" list. And fortunately most of the chores are outdoors.

Now is the best time to plant most tree and shrubs so the new roots can grow throughout the winter, giving them a head start on spring-installed plants. It is also a great time to find plants on clearance sale as the nurseries are preparing for the all-too-soon influx of Christmas trees. Just ensure that your bargains are healthy—check the roots—sickly plants are no bargain. Select your spring blooming bulbs while the assortment is still good and plant after the soil gets quite a bit cooler. We will have some additional choices for peonies during Mike Lockatell's presentation at the November general association meeting.

Don't rake and bag your fallen leaves only to have them hauled away. Rather, sweep them into your beds or forest wood line as they provide a perfect heavy mulch to protect against the upcoming winter weather, and they will also decompose to rich humus and compost. Or mulch them with your lawnmower and distribute throughout your beds or put into your compost pile. If you haven't already, now is the time to fertilize your cool weather/fescue lawn, but not the warm weather/Bermuda or zoysia. Remove the shriveled leaves, stems, and flowers from perennials, herbs, and vegetables to prevent overwintering insects and diseases from building up in the soil. Leave some interesting seed heads and grasses for winter wildlife needs.

The list could go on and on. The gardener's work is never done is a trite cliché but we all fully understand its truth. But be sure to take time to enjoy the year's labors and plan for next year's projects. As Extension Master Gardeners we each have our own administrative "to do" list that looms ahead. Project leaders will need to prepare the year-end summary report for the project; ensure that the year's expenditures are submitted to our



pixabay

treasurer, Liz Favre, for reimbursement; prepare the budget request for the 2017 cycle; and submit the annual project proposal so the project can be approved for the upcoming 2017 year. All of us will need to recommit to our intention to remain as active Extension Master Gardeners with VCE recommitment forms. Standard of Conduct standards need to be met.

And our annual \$15 association dues need to be collected. Our dues provide a significant source to engage speakers for our monthly general association meetings and our social functions.

The president's message is continued on the next page

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—CONTINUED

2016
MG Board

President:
Gary Streb

President Elect:
Vacant

VP Administration:
Angela Cingale

VP Projects:
Janet Smith

VP Internal Ed:
Kathy Bush

Secretary:
Cathy Johnson

Treasurer:
Liz Favre

VMGA Rep:
Marilyn Riddle

Past President:
Vacant

*VCE ANR Program
Assistant:*
Kate Robbins
(757) 564-2170

Have you recorded all your educational and work hours on the VMS system? Minimum hours are required to remain an active EMG, but the viability of our projects is demonstrated by the number of recorded hours that provide the valuable services to the JCC Williamsburg community. The job is not done until the paperwork is done.

Elections for the 2017-2018 board are upcoming. We have had some tremendous volunteers step up to board positions and project leadership. But opportunities are still available! Let one of your board members know if you are interested in providing direction and guidance for your association. Your untapped talents are waiting to explode!

If all of this administrative stuff is overwhelming just recall a well-known adage: **"You can bury a lot of troubles digging in the dirt"** (author unknown). I'm now going outdoors and play in the dirt. Let's get our gardens in order, our administrative house in order, and get ready for the holidays and a new year.



pixabay

THE LOVE OF PEONIES

BY KATHY BUSH, VP INTERNAL EDUCATION



publicdomainpictures.net

I have heard it said that you never forget the flowers you knew as a child.

For me they are still some of my favorites. Lilacs, rambling roses, orange tiger lilies, lily of the valley, and peonies grew with gusto on the farm where my German immigrant grandparents settled in Bucks County, Pa. I remember the lane was edged with peony bushes on each side. There must have been thirty of them in white, light pink, and the deep rose color. We walked that lane every day to catch the school bus. I would look

forward to the red shoots as they pushed up from the ground in early spring. Before you knew it they were green and bushy with buds the size of huge gumballs and crawling with ants.

Then the soft petals would emerge and you would wonder how they fit so compactly into that bud. Even the smell I remember. It wasn't a delicious smell but it was fresh and clean and seemed to be fitting for the flower. Peonies grow well here in the Tidewater. If you don't have any, maybe you would like to try them. If you do grow them, maybe you would like to expand your collection with a single or double bloom variety.

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month at 9:30 am at the Williamsburg Regional Library, Room B, on Scotland Street, Williamsburg.

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

NOW WHILE YOU HAVE PEONIES ON YOUR MIND...

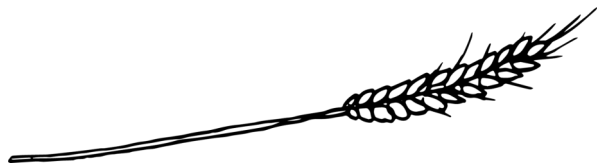
BY KATHY BUSH



This month we welcome Mike Lockatell, owner of Roots & Blooms, as our November speaker. He has spoken to us before about bearded reblooming iris.

This time, Mike plans to tell us about modern herbaceous peonies for the central Virginia garden and to show us various examples.

Bring your checkbook or cash, because Mike will have many varieties of potted peonies for purchase!



IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!

BY ANGELA CINGALE, VP ADMINISTRATION

Please be prepared to sign the VCE re-certification form and standards of behavior form for the 2017 year so you are in compliance and able to participate in VCE projects.

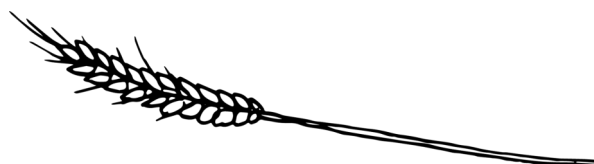
I will be at the library at 8:30am on Thursday, November 3, with the two forms ready for you to complete. I will also be accepting them at the break. Please do not wait until the end of December to complete these forms; if you do, you cannot work on projects in January.

We want to have this paperwork completed by December 31. If you know that you will not be at either the November or December meetings, please let me know, and I will send them by email for you to complete.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.



A healthy garden includes insects such as this praying mantis.
Photo by of Judy Kinshaw-Ellis.



The Graphics Fairy

THE 2017 SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR POSITIONS IN THE JCC/W MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

BY ANGELA CINGALE, VP ADMINISTRATION

The Nominating Committee consisted of chair Linda Wever and committee members Dee Arbegast and Anne Nielsen. Last month they recommended, the board approved, and the announcement was made at the October meeting of the candidates for the available board positions. No nominations were made from the floor.

The election will be held at our November general meeting for the following officers: VP Administration – Cathy Hill, and VP Internal Education – Hazel Braxton. Once elected, the new officers for 2017-2018 will join President Gary Streb, Vice President of Projects Janet Smith, Secretary Cathy Johnson, Treasurer Liz Favre, and VMGA representative Marilyn Riddle. We want to thank the leaders of our James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener organization. The board's commitment is appreciated by the membership, Kate Robbins, our VCE Coordinator, and the community.

The President-Elect position has not yet been filled, but we are hopeful that someone will accept this position. Please give some thought to how you can volunteer your time for this important leadership position and make Gary or myself aware of your interest.

Thank you.

Hazel Pittman Braxton was born in Edgecombe County, N.C. She received a BS degree in chemistry from Hampton University and a MA in public administration from the University of Northern Colorado.

She completed the Master Gardener's program in 2012. Hazel volunteers in the Seeds of Learning, Therapeutic Gardening, Landscape Love, Pruning, and Matthey's Garden programs and has served on the scholarship committee.

Hazel is a Colonial Behavioral Health Board member, a board member of (NARFE) National Active and Retired Federal Employees, a member of the Mayor's Beautification Committee, and a lover of classical music who's looking forward to serving as an officer of our organization.



Cathy Hill has been a Master Gardener since 2010 and has worked mostly with E2 as a lead at Clara Byrd Baker Elementary and the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. Cathy started with the botanical garden as an intern and as served as a tour guide, among other responsibilities. She is currently developing a presentation about the seasons at the garden and a brochure describing its perennials.

Cathy and her husband retired to Williamsburg eight years ago from Northern Virginia. They have lived in various exotic locations such as Alaska, Europe, and Georgia courtesy of the U.S. Army. She is currently a volunteer at Literacy for Life, vice president of her neighborhood HOA, and is looking forward to serving our association as an officer.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY KATHY BUSH, VP INTERNAL EDUCATION

November 19 (Freedom Park Interpretive Center). 10:00am. **Native Uses of Native Plants.** Helen Hamilton will talk about the food, structures, and medicines used by Native Americans. She will explore how the native materials provided the survival needs for early settlers of eastern North America, with an emphasis on the experience at Jamestown. A \$5 donation is suggested to help the Williamsburg Botanical Garden grow.



January 16, 2017. (Founder's Inn, Virginia Beach). 8:30am-5:00pm. **Home Gardener Day.** Speakers, classes, and workshops. \$85 early registration through Dec.1. \$100 Dec. 2-Jan. 9. \$125 Jan. 10-16. For more information, click on the [website](#).

January 21. (Williamsburg Botanical Garden). 10:00am-11:30. **Pruning-Winter Tree Care.** This workshop will provide instruction on early winter tree care. James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners will discuss the basics of pruning trees and shrubs and will demonstrate the proper use of pruning tools. This event is part of the Learn and Grow Educational Series sponsored by the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. The program is free, although a \$5.00 donation to help the Garden grow is appreciated. For more information, contact Barb Landa at 757-259-2079 or by email at barb@landa.org.



February 18. (Williamsburg Botanical Garden). 10:00am-11:30. **Think Spring and Have Bluebirds in Your Yard.** Join **Nancy Barnhart and a team of certified Master Naturalists** to learn all about bluebirds and how to attract them to your yard. This event is part of the Learn and Grow Educational Series sponsored by the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. The program is free, although a \$5.00 donation to help the Garden grow is appreciated. For more information, contact Nancy Barnhart, at 540-454-3014 or email her at barnhartnt@gmail.com.

March 24. (Waynesboro). **Shenandoah Valley Plant Symposium: A Gardener's Palette.** 8:00am-4:00pm. Doug Tallamy, Will Hooker, Ellen Ecker Ogden, and Vincent Simeone are the speakers. \$80 early registration before Jan. 3, \$90 regular registration, \$100 registration after March 1. Lunch included. This is a great way to get you're your educational hours. For more information, click on the [website](#).



March 25. (White Stone). 8:00am-3:00pm. **Gardening in the Northern Neck Seminar.** Rick Darke and Dr. Doug Tallamy, co-authors of *The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden*, will speak. Registration opens February 1. For more information, click [here](#).



TIME ENTRY REMINDER

BY JANET SMITH, VP PROJECTS



The Graphics Fairy

Please be timely when entering your volunteer hours into the Virginia Management System (VMS), the online reporting system for VCE.

It is important to capture the hours as close to the activity as possible. VCE staff can check this information any time, so waiting until the end of the month, quarter, or year to record your hours does not reflect accurately how much work we are doing. This is what VCE looks at when it makes budget decisions that affect our organization; remember- numbers drive decisions.

Also, when you record your hours, you will notice halfway down a section called "Population Served," where you are asked to list the sex, age, and ethnicity of those with whom you interacted on a project. This contact information is also important. If you're unsure how to do this, check with your project chair.

We know we do a lot in the community. Let's make sure VCE knows that too!

MGA DUES ARE DUE

BY LIZ FAVRE, TREASURER

Part -Time Position

Looking for a part-time job? The VCE is seeking a person to provide administrative/marketing support for the Turf Love Program.

If interested please contact Kate Robbins: (757) 564-2174 or kateor@vt.edu

Application closing date 11/1/16

MGA dues are \$15.00 and they are due now for 2017.

I will be at our association meetings in November and December to collect the dues. Checks made out to JCCW Master Gardeners or cash are accepted. We no longer have the PayPal option. Checks can also be mailed to my home.

Liz Favre-MGA Treasurer
4419 Chickasaw Court
Williamsburg, VA 23188

THE COLLEGE WOODS FORTY-FIVE YEARS LATER

BY HELEN HAMILTON

For her 2016 graduate thesis Caitlin Cyrus observed and counted the plants growing in this forest, owned by the College of William and Mary, to document the changes that have occurred since the last plant study in 1989. Predictably the presence of deer has had a significant impact.

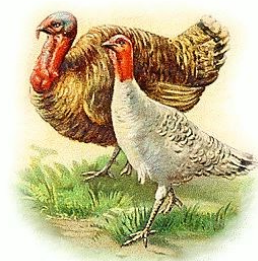
Caitlin will present her findings at the November meeting of the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society. Starting at 6:45 pm, on Thursday, November 17, in Room A, at the James City County Recreation Center at 5301 Longhill Road, Williamsburg 23188. The meeting is free and open to the public.



VCE UPDATE FOR THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

BY ANGELA CINGALE

Angela passes on the following report given by Dave Close at the October 8 VMGA meeting in Harrisonburg. Angela attended the meeting.



The Graphics Fairy

EMG State Coordinator Office Liaison Report Harrisonburg, VA, October 8, 2016

- Modules--First six are complete and posted in the VMS for viewing. Guidelines and recommendations are there as well as an intro PDF. Access is for Agents, members of training classes, and trainees at this time. We will continue to work and release more of the remaining units in the coming months.
- PDF of handbook--Coming soon. Pricing for handbooks, \$85.00 new folks, \$50 for existing/continuing EMGs, and no shipping on order of three or more. Pricing of PDF to be released along with PDF. The interactive PDF is complete but we are working through several logistics issues before making it available.
- LDT on November 2— We will be offering it once in one central location. We have confirmed Dr. Curt Friedel, Dr. Martha Walker, Mr. Dan Goerlich, and Mr. Jeremy Johnson as speakers. It will be a combined in-person and hopefully live-streamed event. Details soon to follow.
- New Agent / Coordinator training – similar to the event we hosted in Charlottesville back in February, we will offer this again later in the fall or early winter.
- Battlefield Farms Day -- March 28, Focus on bulbs, keynote speakers, breakout sessions. More details to come.
- Instagram account for EMG to be released in 2017. We are meeting next week to set up the parameters and timeline with an intended launch in January. It will give us another outlet to share photos of events and video clips of things such as the 'weed, disease or insect of the week.' The power in the tool is that things can be archived and they are searchable.
- Fall edition of In Season to be released soon.
- Save the date for MG College – June 22-25; advisory team met in August and will meet again in less than three weeks. We are working on a conference theme, the keynote speakers, a logo design contest similar to what we did for the 25th Annual MG College.
- National State Coordinator's Conference -- more than 100 state and county coordinators came to the conference in Pray, MT; two very intensive days of talks with a couple of special highlights: Park Superintendent of Yellowstone was a dinner speaker and Dr. David Gibby was a luncheon speaker on the second day. The next conference will be hosted by Wisconsin.
- YouTube videos coming out soon – we have several video clips on propagation that will be the first installment of videos on our YouTube channel.
- Water Steward Manual is updated – Sam Allaire of Loudoun and Frank Reilly of the Central Rappahannock group recently hosted a WS training for 15 EMGs. Kudos and Congratulations to them both for their work to organize and pull off the event.
- Recorded WebEx sessions – Carol Heiser on Backyard Habitats and Alex Niemiera on woody plant material; in a password protected area of the website in order to meet Fair Use standards, but the password is VirginiaEMG.

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH NOVEMBER 2016

BY HELEN HAMILTON
PAST PRESIDENT, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

COMMON SNEEZEWEED *Helenium autumnale*

Golden, daisy-like petals surround the round, yellow centers of this late summer perennial. The common name is misleading—the plant isn't a weed, and it doesn't cause sneezing, since the pollen is too heavy to be carried by wind. Some Native American tribe members dried the leaves and used them as snuff to cause sneezing, which was supposed to rid the body of evil spirits.



Photo: Common Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*)
taken by Helen Hamilton

Common Sneezeweed is highly desirable in the fall garden and stunning when paired with purple flowers such as asters and blazing star (*Liatris* spp.). This local native is easily grown in rich, moist soils in full sun. It grows two-five feet tall on erect stems, with lance-shaped leaves arranged alternately on the stem, each leaf base continuing down the stem as a wing. The plant can require staking but can be cut back in early summer to force shorter and more-branched flower heads. Clumps can be divided every few years to maintain vigor and provide new plant starts, or seeds can be collected.

Like other members of the aster family, the showy ray flowers look like petals, with the disk flowers in the center containing nectar and pollen. The centers of common sneezeweed are ball-like and surrounded by fan-shaped, drooping “petals,” each ending in three teeth, which distinguishes this species. Flowers appear in September, and some isolated plants are still producing blooms in November. After the petals fall, the striking round centers which remain provide winter interest in the garden and can be collected as additions to flower arrangements.

Sneezeweed is attractive to many species of insects; most late butterflies and bees are seeking nectar, and some feed on its pollen. It is a highly desirable pollinator plant, providing food for honeybees, many native bees, wasps, and beetles—all late-season insects preparing for survival over the winter.

Although the straight native species will draw more native butterflies and other insects, many cultivars are available from garden centers and nurseries. Hybrids appear in autumn colors of golden yellow, flame red, orange, and russet, and their centers can vary from deep red to chartreuse.

For more information about native plants visit www.vnps.org.

Important Dates

- 11/19 Native Plants (Freedom Park)
- 1/16/17 Home Gardener Day (Virginia Beach)
- 1/21 Pruning-Winter Tree Care (WBG)
- 2/18 Spring and Bluebirds (WBG)
- 3/24 Shenandoah Plant Symposium (Waynesboro)
- 3/25 Gardening in the Northern Neck (White Stone)

SUNSHINE NOTES



In the past month, we sent a card to:

Dennis Wool, who is recovering from surgery

The organization would like to send cards to members with difficult medical issues or who have experienced a death in the immediate family. Please provide names to the EMG secretary, Cathy Johnson, at (757) 208-0065, or cathypj@gmail.com



NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the December newsletter will be Monday, November 21.

Please send any submissions to Hope Yelich, newsletter editor, at hopeyelich@gmail.com

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.



The Graphics Fairy

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.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.