



The Colonial Master Gardener

February
2017

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY GARY STREB

**"Life begins the day you start a garden."
--Chinese proverb**



Next Meeting:

Thursday, February 2

**Program:
Training for JCC/W Master
Gardeners**

**Speaker:
Kate Robbins**

Looks like we are off to an exciting year! On January 4 we eagerly welcomed twenty-five new trainees, the Class of 2017, to the VCE James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener training class to begin the start of their educational journey to become Extension Master Gardeners. The next day we had the opportunity to welcome fifteen new Extension Master Gardeners (thirteen interns and two transfers) — the Class of 2016— to our ranks after a full year of learning and interning in all of JCC/Williamsburg projects. And their volunteer career as an EMG begins. Two days later we had a crippling snow storm, forcing the cancellation of the first two days of the new class. But every gardener is an eternal optimist and understands the whims of Mother Nature.

I can't go further before thanking the social committee for the graduation reception that they planned and meticulously executed. Sincere thanks to Angela Cingale for her creative flower arrangements and to the rest of the team of Lyn Natanski, Beth Fulgate, Kathy Johnson, and Kate Wilhide. Top notch job!

We still have some administrative actions to complete before we can all begin the new volunteer year. Our next Master Gardener Association meeting will be devoted to the completion of our yearly compliance requirements, so please plan to attend. Kate Robbins, our VCE Agriculture and Natural Resources program assistant, will present our required class on risk management.

The other annual VCE requirement to remain an active Extension Master Gardener should have been completed already. Executing these simple requirements is your personal responsibility if you want to continue to volunteer. If you have not yet completed the recertification form for 2017 and the standards of behavior form, Cathy Hill will have some available for your execution at the monthly meeting. They are also available on the [Master Gardener website member's webpage](#). By now all of your 2016 volunteer hours should be posted in the volunteer management system (VMS)—twenty project hours and eight continuing education hours are the minimum to maintain your status as an EMG. Every project leader must ensure that every person working on the project is in full compliance.

The president's message is continued on the next page

2017
MGA Board

President:
Gary Streb

President Elect:
Vacant

VP Administration:
Cathy Hill

VP Projects:
Janet Smith

VP Internal Ed:
Hazel Braxton

Secretary:
Cathy Johnson

Treasurer:
Liz Favre

VMGA Rep:
Marilyn Riddle

Past President:
Vacant

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—CONTINUED

Currently we have on the rolls about 185 Extension Master Gardeners (and an additional twenty-five with emeritus status) but **over fifty** are not yet in compliance for the 2017 project year. Of this number, only 135 have joined the association and are able to enjoy its benefits. We have extended the deadline to join the association for 2017 until **February 10**. After that date a new roster will be posted on the member's webpage with only association member information. Liz Favre will be available to collect your \$15 annual dues at the meeting—or you can mail your check to her (4419 Chickasaw Court, Williamsburg, VA 23188).

You might have noticed that our webmaster, Dave Banks, is starting to make some of the promised changes to jccwmg.org website. It is still a work in progress! If you have any questions, problems, comments, or suggestions please let me or Kate know.

At the next meeting we plan to start taking photos for the association photo roster that the association approved a couple of months ago. Hope to see you there with a great big smile!

We all joined Master Gardeners because we enjoy gardening and volunteering to share our knowledge, not because we love meetings and a desire to obtain a “political” office. But a group of this size and scope does need some organization and leadership. I want to thank those who recently offered their time and talents to assist with its smooth functioning. Margene Hartsough, parliamentarian; Stacy DeMeo, inventory control; and as historian, Deb Bussert. Board meetings are open to all association members.

“ There is not amongst Men a more laborious Life than that of a good Gard'ner's.” — John Evelyn, *Kalendarium Hortensis* (1664)

The MGA board meets on the third Friday of each month at 9:30am 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.

RECERTIFICATION FORMS BY CATHY HILL, VP FOR ADMINISTRATION

I am happy to say we have almost all of the recertification forms needed for members to participate in our programs. Remember this is a requirement of the Virginia Cooperative Extension. I will again be in front of the theater with forms for those who need them. I also will be able to tell you if you are current and if you have paid dues to the association for 2017.

AND don't forget to start logging your hours for this year.



pixabay

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2016!

BY THE TRAINING TEAM OF MARTY OAKES, KATHY BUSH, KATE ROBBINS,
SUSAN SHOULET, JANET SMITH, MARY WOOL, AND HOPE YELICH



Front row: Judy McCormack, Sue Carruth, Roberta Gump, and Jennifer Campbell

Back row: Carrie Evelyn, Valerie Brooks, Judith Shuck, Su Carlile, Deb Bussert, David Kleppinger, Iris Burke, and Linda Slyfield. Absent: Suzy Warren-Alef, Robin Paladino, and Lee Fuerst

Thirteen members of the Class of 2016 graduated to the rank of Extension Master Gardener with all proper pomp and circumstance at the association monthly meeting on January 5. Two transfers were also part of the class. Despite its small size, the group completed 750 hours of classroom training and 1,199.5 hours of volunteer service to the citizens of Williamsburg and James City County—an average of 92.27 hours per student. Assisting in their transition from individual gardener to community volunteer were many mentors, class managers, speakers, project chairs, and other class supporters.

We're sure you join us in thanking them for all their hard work and wish them well as part of our team.



Linda Slyfield receives her certificate from Kate Robbins, while Gary Streb looks on (left).

Enjoying the reception after the ceremony (right).



Photos: Hope Yelich

JCC/W MASTER GARDENERS' 2017 MONTHLY PROGRAM SCHEDULE BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION



All meetings take place at the
Williamsburg Regional Library Theatre
the first Thursday of each month at 9:00am
except where noted.

February 2: Kate Robbins, Virginia Cooperative Extension representative for JCC/W, will conduct required training for JCC/W Extension Master Gardeners. She will discuss risk management and standards of behavior as well as the need to complete eight recertification hours and twenty volunteer hours annually.

March 2: Williamsburg landscapes by William Fidler, City of Williamsburg landscape superintendent

April 6: House plants by Ailene Bartlett

May 4: The importance of maintaining a healthy body in order to be a successful gardener, by Betsy Mitchem, health and well-being coordinator at the [R. F. Wilkinson Family YMCA](#) in Williamsburg

June 1: Ferns and mosses by Helen Hamilton

July: No monthly meeting

August 3: How to prepare your garden for fall and winter, by Linda Hertzler of [Hertzler & George](#), a landscape design and construction company in Williamsburg

September 7: "Landscape Like a Pro...Tips and Tricks to have the Best Looking Yard in the Neighborhood," by Peggy Krapf, a certified landscape designer for [Heart's Ease](#)

October 5: 10:00am. The state of the Chesapeake Bay, by Blair Blanchette, a grassroots coordinator at the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#).

November 2: 10:00am. Tidal wetlands and/or environmentally friendly landscaping, by Karen Duhring from the [Virginia Institute of Marine Science](#)

December 7: Locally grown agriculture, by Randy and Michelle Gulden from the [KelRae Farm](#) in Toano



UPCOMING SEMINARS, OPEN HOUSES, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

February 4. (Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, Danville). 8:30am-4:00pm. [Spring to Green Symposium](#). Sponsored by the Danville Master Gardeners, this is an opportunity to ask questions of experts on a variety of topics. Cost is \$50.

February 11-12. (Hampton Convention Center). 10:00am-5:00pm. [Hampton Roads Home Show](#). Shop over 100 of the areas best contractors showcasing the latest products and design trends in beautifying your home inside and out. \$5 in advance, and \$10 at the door. There will be a \$10,000 landscape makeover prize, and a garden stage for seminars and demonstrations.

February 15-17. (Massey Conference Center, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond). 8:30am-4:00pm. [Winter Symposium and CVNLA \(Central Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association\) Short Course: In Pursuit of High-Performing Landscapes](#). Continuing education hours are offered for each day, along with book sales and signings and opportunities to network with industry colleagues. \$70 per day 2/15 or 16; \$125 two-day combo ticket 2/15-16; \$55 2/17; \$180 three-day ticket 2/15-17. Fee includes continental breakfast, lunch, and all sessions.

February 18. (Freedom Park). 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.

February 18. (Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria). 8:30am-12:30pm. [13th Annual EcoSavvy Gardening Symposium: Cultivating Biodiversity in the Home Garden](#). At this symposium, you will be presented with the latest information on the importance of biodiversity. Cost

March 4 (Reynolds Homestead Learning Center, Critz). 9:00am-2:00pm. [Patrick County 10th Annual Spring Gardening Symposium](#). Presented by Patrick County Master Gardeners. Topics are daylilies, edible landscaping, and rose culture. Cost is \$30 (\$35 after February 10).

March 18 (Freedom Park). 10:00-11:00am. [Attracting Birds with Water](#). Award-winning nature photographer Bob Schamerhorn will show us how to bring numerous species of birds to our yards by adding a water feature. The program is free, although a \$5.00 donation to help the garden grow is appreciated. For more information, contact Bob by email at bob@iPhotoBirds.com After the program, Master Gardeners will be in the garden to answer questions and talk about what is in bloom.

March 24. (Waynesboro). 8:00am-4:00pm. [Shenandoah Valley Plant Symposium: A Gardener's Palette](#). 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.

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.

March 25-26. (William & Mary Hall). 10:00am-5:00pm Sat., 10:00am-4:00pm Sun. [Williamsburg Home Show](#). The show is sponsored by seven local companies. Cost is \$10. \$5 coupon available by clicking [here](#).

March 28. (Battlefield Farms, Rapidan). **Bulbs and Corms and Tubers, Oh My!** The focus of the day will be bulbs, as Battlefield is one of the largest producers of potted bulbs in the United States. Cole Burrell and others will discuss bulb production, the history of bulbs, and what they do at Battlefield Farms. Cole's keynote address, titled: "Bulbs and Corms and Tubers, Oh My!" will cover environmental stresses and how dormancy allows plants all they need to survive below ground until the good times return. He will also offer an exciting smaller breakout session on Native American bulbs. more Registration (opening in February) will be limited to 100 people with a registration fee of \$25, lunch provided. This event is supported by the State EMG coordinator's office, Battlefield Farms, and the VMGA.

JCC TREE STEWARD JOINT ACTIVITY WITH THE JAMES RIVER ASSOCIATION

BY PATSY MCGRADY



Hertzler George/ flickr

JCC Tree Stewards have been invited to partner with the James River Association (JCA) in their effort to have fifty trees planted in fifty JCA member homes in JCC/Williamsburg this spring. After receiving a grant to fund this effort, the JCA reached out to the Virginia Cooperative Extension for assistance in educating tree recipients in tree selection, planting, and maintenance. JCA will purchase the trees and have them delivered to the homeowners. Tree Stewards will provide information on the available trees to ensure that the homeowners make an appropriate choice, educate the homeowners on the appropriate method for planting and maintaining the trees, and provide oversight to ensure the trees are correctly planted.

The JCA and Tree Stewards coordinated on the selection of the following trees for the activity:

Ornamental Trees – Sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), white fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*), and eastern redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*).

Tree for narrow space – Red maple (*Acer rubrum*), cultivar 'Armstrong' or 'Bowhall'

Canopy trees – Black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), willow oak (*Quercus phellos*), and baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*)

There will be two events for Tree Steward participation.

An initial workshop on Saturday March 11 and March 25 at 10:00am at Freedom Park (same program given both dates): The purpose of this workshop is to provide information on the available trees so homeowners can make an informed decision in selecting their tree and inform the participating homeowners on the appropriate way to plant and maintain their tree.

Tree Delivery and Installation, Saturday April 1 and April 8: Tree Stewards will go to each tree recipient's home and ensure that the tree is planted correctly. This may include watching the homeowner plant the tree. Please note, Tree Stewards are NOT planting these trees – only ensuring that they are planted correctly.

We will send out a list of workshop activities before the end of the January to align Tree Steward volunteers with activities.

For the tree installation portion in April, we will need people to go to the fifty homes and ensure the trees are correctly planted. Given the number of homes to be covered, we need a strong participation.

This is an excellent opportunity for us as JCC Tree Stewards to serve the community. If any Tree Stewards can participate in this project, please contact Patsy McGrady at patsymcgrady@cox.net or call (me at 757) 561-6503.



Hugo C/ flickr

THE 2017 JCC/W MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE

BY CO-CHAIRS BESS HOPEWELL AND LIZ FAVRE

The plant sale committee had its first meeting of 2017, on January 18. It was a very productive meeting, and we have a very good start on formulating our plan for a successful plant sale on April 29, 2017.

Pat Rathke and Pat Abraham will, once again, have pots and soil available for us. They will be in the parking lot, at the library, February 2, before our monthly meeting. Also, we NO LONGER need any donations of 6" pots, as we have a large supply.

Now is the time to start seeds, and check on the length of germination time for whatever you're planting. Remember, it takes awhile to raise a seedling to become a strong, healthy, and saleable plant. We want the best!

If you plan to dig and/or divide plants from your garden, we have included some great information about dividing perennials. Following these simple guidelines— and not waiting until the last minute to dig— will provide the best specimens. Think like our customers! Would you buy this plant? If the answer is "No," then they won't buy it either.



Tomato Varieties

This year I would like those growing tomatoes to choose from the following list. I would suggest one dozen of whichever you choose; however, you must let me know which variety you choose! This will help control an over-supply of one variety.

Last year we ran out of cherry tomatoes. In the past, I have noticed that the pinks, greens, and indigos do not sell as well as others. Purchasers, in general, are looking for a reliable tomato, but one that is a notch above Home Depot or Lowes. Plus, we want hardy six-to-eight-week-old transplants. That means we need to start our seeds no later than the first of March, but preferably by mid February so that we will have twelve-inch hardy specimens by planting time in May. The categories I would suggest are: Cherry/Grape tomatoes, such as Juliette, Supersweet 100, Black Cherry, and Purple Brandywine or Purple Bumble Bee. Heirlooms, such as Cherokee Purple and Brandywine. Roma/Plum like San Mariano. Intermediates, like Better Boy and Early Girl. I, personally, like to peruse *Johnny's Selected Seeds* (in print or online). Plus we need basil, green/red peppers, plus some chili peppers. Maybe cukes. NO cold hardy veggies, since it will be too late. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (Harriet Parsons) at dparsons1@cox.net.

Dividing Perennials

There is an excellent summary on how to divide perennials, [Dividing Perennials](#), from the Cooperative Extension Service at Clemson University. Click on the title to read the article. Used with permission.

THIS MIGHT BE FOR YOU

BY HOPE YELICH

Peggy Krapf passed on the following: Jamestown Feed and Seed in Norge is looking for someone experienced with trees and shrubs to work part time in the store from late February through June 1 and from late August through the end of October. If you're interested, contact Shirley Hatten at Jamestown Feed and Seed, phone number (757) 564-8528.



THERAPEUTIC GARDENING

BY LINDA LUCAS

The Therapeutic Gardening Project will have an organizational meeting on Thursday, February 9, at 1:00pm in the interpretive center at Freedom Park. Last year's TG volunteers have already heard from us, and we hope all of you will be able to join us as we plan a new year of gardening programs.

If you are thinking about participating in Therapeutic Gardening but are not currently on our Therapeutic Gardening roster, please join us for this meeting. It will be a great opportunity to hear about 2017 Therapeutic Gardening programs around the community and decide if TG is for you.

Just contact either Pat Crowe (pk.crowe@cox.net) or Linda Lucas (esllal@cox.net) to let us know that you will be joining us on February 9.



Photo by Sue Liddell



WINTER AND EARLY SPRING PLANT WALKS

BY HELEN HAMILTON

Nude Tree Walk. February 18, 10:00 am. Walk with Charlie Dubay to learn about identification of trees in winter condition. At the top of the hill is a nice comparison of three Virginia pines – loblolly, Virginia, and shortleaf. Participants may park in the William and Mary Hall parking lot, which is open to the public on weekends. Meet Charlie at the Sports Center, 400 Brooks Street to walk to the College Woods. And although most trees will be nude at this time of year, it is usually cold in February, so wear enough clothes! Contact Charlie Dubay at (757) 870-0284 to register, and in case of bad weather.

What Is That Weed? Saturday, March 18 at 10:00 am. A walk in the Freedom Park area to identify emerging spring weeds and wildflowers. Learn which weeds are welcome and why others should be eliminated, and expect to see the first flowers of spring! Meet at the Freedom Park Interpretive Center parking lot. Contact Helen 564-4494 or helen48@cox.net for more information.

These walks are sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society. All walks are free and open to the public.

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY 2017

BY HELEN HAMILTON

PAST PRESIDENT, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Tulip Tree *Liriodendron tulipifera*

This is a beautiful tree for all seasons – in the spring tulip-shaped whitish flowers stand on short stalks near the leaves. Often the flowers are first recognized on the pathway below the tree, each pale petal with an orange spot at the base. Numerous straight stamens are inside the petals, surrounding a cone-shaped pistil that looks much like the seed cones of magnolia, a close relative. In the fall fruits are formed around the upright cone, as dry, tan samaras with one seed inside, covering the ground nearby as they fall.

The leaves look like no other, with an unusual square shape and four shallow lobes. Bright green in the spring, the leaves are a rich gold in autumn. When they drop from the branches late in the growing season, a distinctive scar remains, round and somewhat elevated with several dots in the center arranged in a circle-- these remain from the tubes carrying water and food to and from the leaf. The branches are stout and lustrous and end with buds shaped like a duck's bill with a line (stipule) underneath running all the way around.

Tulip tree is easy to recognize since no other broad-leaved tree in our area has a gray, grooved trunk without lower branches. It is one of the largest hardwoods in the east, commonly reaching 80-100 feet with a two-to-five-foot trunk diameter. While preferring moist, well-drained soils and rich woods, it makes a very desirable street, shade, or ornamental tree. Tulip tree ranges throughout eastern U.S. to the Mississippi River, and in every county in Virginia.



Photos: Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) taken by Helen Hamilton. In flower (above) and as it appears in February (below)

In the 1600's few plants were available in London nurseries and gardeners were sent abroad on plant-buying trips. In 1637 John Tradescant The Younger voyaged to Virginia and returned with 200 specimens, including tulip tree and bald cypress. As early American botanists John Bartram, Mark Catesby, and John Clayton collected and identified the flora of eastern North America, a vigorous business developed, supplying nurseries in London with American species.

With its long, straight trunk, tulip tree was a favorite of the Native Americans for their dugout canoes. Bees make quantities of honey from the flowers, and the seeds are eaten by squirrels and songbirds.

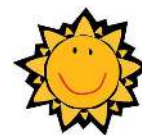


For more information about native plants visit www.vnps.org

Important Dates

- 2/4 Spring to Green Symposium (Danville)
- 2/11-12 Hampton Roads Home Show (Hampton CC)
- 2/15-17 Winter Symposiums (Lewis Ginter, Richmond)
- 2/18 Spring and Bluebirds (WBG)
- 2/18 Nude Tree Walk (College Woods)
- 2/18 EcoSavvy Gardening Symposium (Fairfax)
- 3/4 Master Your Garden (Critz, Va.)
- 3/18 What Is That Weed? (Freedom Park)
- 3/18 Attracting Birds with Water (WBG)
- 3/24 Shenandoah Plant Symposium (Waynesboro)
- 3/25 Gardening in the Northern Neck (White Stone)
- 3/25-26 Williamsburg Home Show (WM Hall)
- 3/28 Bulbs (Battlefield Farms, Rapidan)
- 4/29 JCC/W Master Gardener Plant Sale

SUNSHINE NOTES



In the past month we sent cards to:

The family of Jim Massengill
with condolences for his death

Nancy Schusheim (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



pixabay



pixabay

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the March 2017 newsletter will be Monday, February 20.

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.

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.