



The Colonial Master Gardener

July
2017

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY GARY STREB

"If there was a big gardening convention, and you got up and gave a speech in favor of fast-motion gardening, I bet you would get booed off the stage. They're just not ready."

— Jack Handey, *Deeper Thoughts: All New, All Crispy*

"Summertime and the Living is Easy" is the theme of our third annual picnic. Please see the article later in this newsletter for all the details. It will be a guaranteed fun and good time, with top-notch camaraderie, fantastic food, and superb entertainment. We look forward to another great time!

Summertime and the time is not always so easy in the garden. Fortunately we have had a nice temperate spring and have not yet had to contend with the nasty, humid Tidewater Virginia summer. But don't worry, it will soon be here. We all need to take care of ourselves as we enjoy our summer gardening tasks—it seems lots of us take better care of our gardens than we do ourselves! As I mention to any/all gardening volunteers who I am working with, I have three basic gardening rules and they are 1. Safety, 2. Safety, and 3. Safety. Please stay hydrated, take frequent breaks, and work in slow motion. Gardening is not a stop-watch-measured activity. Your garden will never be done or finished so enjoy the ride, the never-ending journey. Dress appropriately and for comfort. Forget the coordinated Lily Pulitzer garden outfit. Big hats and gloves are almost requirements. This is tick and mosquito season—use repellent liberally and frequently—tuck your slacks into your socks if you can. Sun screen is essential. Sunburn is not only painful and inconvenient but can also lead to future skin cancer possibilities. Again apply liberally and frequently. And yes you can get burned in the shade or during an overcast day.

Also when the weather is hot you need to help your plants survive and thrive. **Mulch more.** The recommended 2-3 inches of organic mulch helps retain soil moisture and keeps the temperature moderate. Darker mulches and rock absorb and retain more heat so consider grass clippings or

Next Meeting:

Thursday, August 3

Program:

Preparing Your Garden for Fall and Winter

Speaker:

Linda Hertzler

**THERE IS NO MEETING IN JULY,
BUT DON'T MISS OUR ANNUAL
PICNIC ON JULY 20!**

cedar bark to reflect heat and soil to stay cooler. **Water correctly.** Your lawn, planting beds, and annuals need at least an inch of water a week. Containers need considerably more—some need daily attention and maybe even twice on particularly nasty days. Drip irrigation or soaker hoses are more environmentally friendly than many in-ground irrigation systems. And as we were taught—water early in the morning for less evaporation and better plant health. **Add shade.** The addition of shade-producing trees, shrubs, or structures will assist in lowering the soil temperature. Shaded surfaces can be up to twenty to forty-five degrees cooler than sunny areas in the same suburban yard. Plant sun-susceptible plants on the north side of the house, and more heat-resistant plants in areas that get a little shade during the day. Some sun lovers include petunia, zinnia, Angelonia, sedums, and French marigolds.

Summer is a fun time—just remember to take care of yourself and those you love (and that includes your plants!).

And lastly, on a personal side, I want to sincerely thank all of you who cheered me up with cards and calls during my recent/ongoing recovery from back surgery. I was touched by each and every one and want you to know that they all did the trick! I am getting back to my normal self and hope to show off during the picnic on July 20th. Hope to see you all there!

"Though an old man, I am but a young gardener"

—Thomas Jefferson

OUR ANNUAL PICNIC WILL BE HERE SOON!

BY ANGELA CINGALE

2017
MGA Board

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Gary Streb

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Vacant

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Marilyn Riddle

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Vacant

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



Photos: Hope Yellich

The annual 2017 picnic sponsored by our James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association board will be held on **Thursday, July 20, at Freedom Park, 3:00 – 7:00pm**, and all members are invited to enjoy good food, camaraderie, games, fun prizes, and

entertainment too! **The deadline for registration has been extended to JULY 9**, so it's not too late to register. You'll find a form at the end of this newsletter.

The members who attended last year had lots of fun, and we hope that everyone will be able to join us. In late afternoon the Freedom Park interpretive center is a great setting for a barbeque supper. You will find picnic tables on the patio and tables inside for a little respite from the heat. Food will be warmed, cooled, and serviced from the kitchen. There is also ample parking, ADA access, and restrooms onsite to ensure every convenience for attendees.

The picnic is being catered by Pierce's Pitt Bar-B-Que and will feature barbecued pork and chicken sandwiches, potato salad, coleslaw and drinks, all for the nominal fee of \$8.00 per person. We ask Master Gardeners who attend to bring either an appetizer or a dessert to complete our menu. Last names from A - Q, please bring an appetizer, and those with last names R-Z, a dessert.

If you still have a reservation form that was handed out at the June general meeting, please fill it out, enclose your check and send it in asap—or use the one as part of this newsletter! We hope you will join us along with your spouse, family member or, guest. You'll be glad you did!

Thanking you in advance for your participation.

—The Social Committee of Lynn Natanski, Beth Fugate, Kathy Johnson, Kate Wilhide, Bess Hopewell, Caroline Hedrick, and Angela Cingale.



The MGA board meets on the third Thursday 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.

UPCOMING SEMINARS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

July 7. (Williamsburg Regional Library Theatre). 5:30-6:30pm. **A Conversation with Jerome Grant.** As part of its Stakes in the Ground: The Future of Our Food series, the Williamsburg Farmers Market is hosting Chef Jerome Grant from the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Jerome will discuss African American foodways and the design for the menus for the Mitsitam Native Foods Café in the National Museum of the American Indian, and the Sweet Home Café in the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Plan to attend the market the next day to catch Jerome at the chef's tent!



Photo: Stephanie Klose / Wikimedia Commons

July 15. (Freedom Park). 10:00-11:30am. **Old and New Garden Favorites—If I Knew Then What I Know Now.** Free and open to the public, although a \$5.00 donation to help the garden grow is appreciated. John McFarlane, assistant director of gardens and grounds at The College of William and Mary, will talk about his favorite plants and local garden treasures from the Williamsburg area and William and Mary campus. He will share gardening insights from more than thirty-five years as a Virginia horticulturist and his experience at William and Mary. This event is part of the Learn and Grow Educational Series sponsored by the Williamsburg Botanical Garden.

For more information, contact John at jdmcfa@wm.edu After the program, Master Gardeners will be in the garden to answer questions and talk about what is in bloom.



Photo: Courtesy of the College of William & Mary

July 22. (Woodland Farms, Toano). 10:00am-12:00. **Backyard Natives.** Join us for a walk around Jim and Joan Etchberger's property at 100 Woodland Road in Woodland Farms, 23188, to see native plants and mosses. Contact Joan at (757) 784-6870 for more information.

Sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society.



UPCOMING SALES, SEMINARS, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES —CONTINUED



Photo of a buckeye butterfly on a brown-eyed susan

July 29. (Warhill Tract). 10:00am. **Plants and Butterflies.** Join butterfly experts Adrienne Frank and Gary Driscoll with Helen Hamilton for a walk around the Warhill Tract (4725 Stadium Road, Williamsburg, Va 23188) to watch butterflies collecting nectar from native plants. From the meadow of dogbane and pearl crescents, the walk continues around the pond near the stadium with grasses, sedges, and skippers. Returning to the parking area, the meadow will be blooming with late summer perennials, sulphur butterflies, and many others. Park in the last area past the WISC center, in front of the community garden. For more information, contact Helen Hamilton at (757) 564-4494, helen48@cox.net.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED BY CATHY HILL, VP FOR ADMINISTRATION

I am looking for volunteers for two committees. The most important is the nominating committee. The committee needs to have a slate ready by October for the vote in November. I need at least two volunteers for this committee.

I also need two volunteers to help finish the bylaw review and be able to propose any changes by the December membership meeting.

I will chair both committees and plan on meeting with each committee as soon after Labor Day as we can get organized.

Please contact me at :
needles51@icloud.com or phone number:
(757) 345-2588.

Please check our website for what I believe to be an accurate membership roster. If you see some corrections that need to be made please let me know.



30TH ANNUAL MASTER GARDENER COLLEGE BY PATSY MCGRADY AND ANGELA CINGALE



Left to right: Angela Cingale, Liz Favre, Ginny Cranford, Anne Nielsen, and Patsy McGrady.

The 30th Annual Master Gardener College (MGC) was held at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, and seven JCC/W Master Gardeners attended: Angela Cingale, Ginny Cranford, Liz Favre, Patsy McGrady, Anne Nielsen, Marilyn Riddle, and Donna Xander. Lectures ran from Thursday, June 22, through midday Sunday, June 25. Our program assistant, Kate Robbins, joined us on Saturday. Patsy and Donna received scholarships from our association to assist in their attendance.

MGC provided a wide range of topics. Examples of available activities include touring

VT green infrastructure (bioretention areas, water gardens, green roofs) for storm water management, viewing local gardens of interest, touring VT greenhouses and labs, and a workshop on floral arranging. Lectures covered a wide variety of horticulture topics.

At the Saturday Virginia MG Association meeting, the JCCW MGA was recognized for our generosity by selling the T-shirt logo merchandise and donating the proceeds to the state organization. They were appreciative of our efforts. Following the meeting, there was a lovely reception and time to pick up items for which we won the bid at the silent auction.

The concluding keynote presentation on Sunday was

The History of the EMG Program by David Gibby, founder of the Master Gardeners program. Mr. Gibby's account was informative, humorous, and inspirational.



Back row: Anne Nielsen, Marilyn Riddle, Liz Favre. Front row: Patsy McGrady.



Left to right: Liz Favre, Donna Xander, and Kate Robbins.



Marilyn Riddle, Anne Nielsen, and Patsy McGrady with David Gibby, founder of the Master Gardener program in Washington state in 1972.

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH JULY 2017

BY HELEN HAMILTON

PAST PRESIDENT, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

SWAMP MILKWEED

Asclepias incarnata

Swamp milkweed is one of the best plants for monarch butterflies – the nectar feeds the adults, and the larvae (caterpillars) eat the leaves. The deep pink flowers growing in wide clusters are attractive also to pollinating bees, wasps, and other butterflies. Long, narrow leaves are paired on thick, four-foot stems. This species follows common milkweed (*A. syriaca*) that blooms a little earlier and has wide leaves with pale pink to greenish white flowers.

Typical of milkweeds, the tiny flowers have five petals curving downward, and a complex central crown. The unusual structure of milkweed flowers can trap small insects. The pollen is held in two connected sacs (pollinia) that easily attach



Photo: Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) taken by Helen Hamilton.

to the legs of a visiting insect. When the insect visits another flower, the pollinia are deposited into a groove in the stigma where the pollen grain germinates and grows pollen tubes through the stigma to the ovules in the ovary. Small insects such as honeybees can perish in the milkweed flower if their legs get stuck in the stigma's slit.

While milkweeds are valuable food sources for many insects, the plants have three defenses against caterpillars: (1) the leaves are hairy and distasteful, (2) latex fluids in the stems and leaf veins are sticky, and (3) the leaves contain toxins which the larvae and adults store in exoskeletons and wings. Predators learn to avoid monarchs and other orange and black insects since they taste bad, or make them vomit.

Swamp milkweed prefers moist open areas and is typically found growing wild near the edges of ponds, lakes, open ditches, and low areas. The plant is found in every county in Virginia, growing easily in full sun and moist soil in local gardens.

After a long blooming period, from June through August, upright thin pods are produced which split open in the fall, releasing seeds attached to silky hairs that act as parachutes to carry the seeds on the currents of the wind. During World War II milkweed floss was used in life jackets and flying suits; it is warmer than wool and six times lighter.

On an expedition to Utah in 1850, a traveler reported that the Pueblo Indians rub the stems to separate the fibers, to make beautiful and very strong fishing lines and fine sewing thread. A decoction was used for various medicinal purposes. Although American colonists used swamp milkweed for asthma, rheumatism, worms, and as a heart tonic, the plant is potentially toxic.

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

Important Dates

- 7/7 African-American Foodways (WRL Theatre)
- 7/15 Garden Favorites (Freedom Park)
- 7/20 Extension Master Gardener annual picnic
- 7/22 Backyard Natives (Woodland Farms, Toano)
- 7/29 Plants and Butterflies (Warhill Tract)

SUNSHINE NOTES



In the past month, we sent a card to

Gary Streb—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 cathypi@gmail.com



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NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the August 2017 newsletter will be Monday, July 24.

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.

Summertime...

And the Living is easy



*You are invited to a "Easy Living Picnic": Thursday, July 20, 2017
Freedom Park
3:00 - 7:00 PM*

Sponsored by WBG/JCC Master Gardener Association Board

We will gather late afternoon at the Freedom Park Interpretive Center for a Barbeque Supper. You will find picnic tables on the patio and tables inside for allergy-prone, bug-prone, heat-prone, and/or rain-prone members. Food will be warmed, cooled and serviced from the kitchen. Ample parking, ADA access and rest rooms available onsite will ensure every convenience for attendees.

Barbequed pork and chicken sandwiches, potato salad, cole slaw and drinks will be provided for a nominal fee of \$8.00 per person. Master Gardeners who attend are asked to bring either an appetizer or dessert to complete our menu. From A - Q - please bring appetizer and R - Z , a dessert.

We hope you will join us along with your spouse, family member or guest for food, fun and relaxation.

Thanking you in advance for your participation.

JCCW Master Gardener Association Picnic Reservation

Please complete this Picnic Reservation Form and **return to Angela Cingale , 4077 Coronation, Williamsburg, VA 23188 by Thursday, July 9th**. This information is needed for planning of food, refreshments, etc. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Checks should be made payable to: JCCW MGA. The cost for each attendee is \$8.00 per person.

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

I am including my check for _____, and understand that this will become a non-refundable contribution if my plans should necessarily change.

Number of attendees _____

A - Q , please plan to bring an appetizer

R - Z , please plan bring a dessert

Please circle. I plan to bring: Appetizer Dessert

Loking forward to seeing everyone at the JCC MGA Picnic!

