



The Colonial Master Gardener

November
2017

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY GARY STREB

"Gardening is an art that in the end must be largely learned by experience, and the earlier you begin to practice it the sooner you will find out some things all the books in the world cannot tell you."

--- Cecily Ullman Sidgwick, *The Children's Book of Gardening* (1909)



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Our youth programming has begun a resurgence. A small cadre of EMGs is now working with promising young gardeners at Clara Byrd Baker Elementary School in their raised garden beds as part of an after-school program. A lot of time, effort, and money had gone into the layout and construction of the previously established garden, which even had deer fencing. The only thing missing was a dedicated group of Extension Master Gardeners to help teach students about gardening. In response to school requests Kate Robbins formed a youth programming committee to address this community need. The well-respected EMG involvement at the school gardens at Matthew Whaley and J. Blaine Blayton elementary schools has set a high standard.

Sixteen third- and fourth-grade girls enthusiastically participated in a lesson held on a recent Wednesday afternoon. Interns (soon-to-be EMGs) Wendy Hamrick and Ryan Andrews joined leaders Jan Marry, Su Carlile, and Cathy Hill as they showed the students how to plant garlic and white and red onions, as well as how to harvest an abundance of cherry tomatoes. It was encouraging to see the students genuinely excited about gardening and what to expect from their labors. In response to requests from additional schools that have requested our unique talents, we are seeking additional volunteers for this invaluable project.

We have another informative presentation at our next monthly meeting on November 2. Karen Duhring from William and Mary's Virginia Institute of Marine Science is scheduled to speak about our tidal wetlands and how to create environmentally friendly landscapes. Her update will be a great refresher for our sustainable-landscaping education mission. Reminder—the presentation will begin at 10:00am, and VIMS would appreciate each of us signing in.

What a colorful autumn we are now experiencing! This is the perfect time of year to reflect upon the ending year and prepare for the next. The slate of nominees for the election to fill empty slots on the 2018 Executive Board of the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association will be held during the MGA business meeting starting at 9:00. A special thanks to the Nominating Committee for their dedication and successful completion of this task.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, November 2

Program:
Tidal Wetlands
and /or Environmentally Friendly
Landscaping

Speaker:
Karen Duhring, Virginia Institute of
Marine Science

**Note: The program will start at
10:00am, preceded by the business**

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

Enjoy the natural beauty of the cool, fall season as we put our gardens to sleep for the winter and plan and anticipate the rebirth of spring.

“Notwithstanding our disasters born of unseasonable frost and wet, sunless skies, I console myself with the reflection that we have made good progress. The garden is in better order than it was....last year.”

--- H. Rider Haggard, *A Gardener's Year* (1905)



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ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

BY CATHY HILL, VP FOR ADMINISTRATION

Election day for our association is at the November 2 association meeting. The slate of officers is:

President: Gary Streb
President-Elect: Cathy Hill
VP for Administration: Dee Arbegast (one year to finish term)
VP for Projects: Janet Smith
Treasurer: Liz Favre
Secretary: Jennifer Campbell

A big THANK YOU goes out to the nominating committee (Liz Favre, Kathy Bush, Su Carlile, and Marty Oakes) for their success in finding candidates for these board offices.

It is also that time of year when we start collecting recertification forms. We will have the forms at the November, December, and January meetings. You can also access the form on [our website](#).

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.

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN: 2018 DUES

BY LIZ FAVRE, TREASURER



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I will be collecting the dues at our November 2 and December 7 meetings. Checks should be made payable to JCCW Master Gardeners in the amount of \$15.00. I will also accept cash and give you a receipt. Checks can also be mailed to my home.

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



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NEW FACES ON THE BOARD

BY HOPE YELICH

Jennifer Campbell is our candidate for secretary of the association. Jennifer has lived in the Williamsburg area with her husband Don and assorted cats since 2005. She retired from the Army Transportation Corps after twenty-seven years of service



in 2009, after which she worked several years as a defense contractor. Finally coming to her senses, Jennifer stopped working to pursue her dream of being a Master Gardener -- graduating with the class of 2016. In addition to perfecting her own garden, she enjoys working as part of the EMG training team and in the Williamsburg Botanical Garden.



Dee Arbegast, if elected, will serve one year to finish Cathy Hill's term as vice president for administration. Dee moved to Williamsburg when her company relocated to Virginia from Pennsylvania and retired a little over three years ago as a director

of Icelandic Seafood, where she worked for twenty-four years and had the privilege of seeing various countries around world. Prior to that Dee was an office manager for a broker in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. She and husband I enjoy gardening, boating, and traveling to new places.

THIS MONTH'S SPEAKER

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

Karen A. Duhring, marine scientist supervisor, Center for Coastal Resources Management, Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences (VIMS), is our November speaker. Karen received a B.S. in environmental studies from New College of Florida and a master of science in coastal zone management from the Florida Institute of Technology.

Karen's research interests involve the long-term effectiveness of "living shoreline" techniques for erosion protection, and the facilitation of shoreline stewardship and behavior change. Her current projects are: (a) continuing education and training for Virginia Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, local and state governments, citizen advisory boards, and the marine industry; (b) living shoreline project tracking and adaptive management feedback; and (c) coastal resource management plans and decision tools.

In her talk, Karen plans to highlight the following research:

Bilkovic, D.M., Mitchell, M., Mason, P., and Duhring, Karen. "[The Role of Living Shorelines as Estuarine Habitat Conservation Strategies.](#)" *Coastal Management* 44, no. 3 (2016): 161-174.

Duhring, Karen A. "[Overview of Living Shoreline Design Options for Erosion Protection on Tidal Shorelines.](#)" *In Management, Policy, Science, and Engineering of Nonstructural Erosion Control in the Chesapeake Bay: Proceedings of the 2006 Living Shoreline Summit*, 13-18. Summit held December 6-7, 2006, in Williamsburg, Va.

Hardaway, C.S. Jr., Milligan, D., and Duhring, Karen. 2010. "[Living Shoreline Design Guidelines for Shore Protection in Virginia's Estuarine Environments, version 1.2.](#)" *Special Report in Applied Marine Science and Ocean Engineering* No. 421 (2010), Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester Point, Va.

The topic of Karen Duhring's talk is Tidal Wetlands and/or Environmentally Friendly Landscaping.

UPCOMING SEMINARS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

November 2 (535 Beech St., Petersburg). 9:30-11:30am. **Urban Ag Field Day**. A workshop on urban agriculture, which helps alleviate urban food deserts and provides a wide-range of community benefits. Free and open to the public.



November 4 (Mariner's Museum, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News 23606). 2:00-4:00pm. **Fall Photography Nature Walk on the Noland Trail**. Join members of the James River Camera Club and pick up some tips on taking great photos. Free and open to the public, although please [register](#).

November 4. (VaTech's Litton-Reaves Hall, Room 1860, 175 West Campus Drive, Blacksburg). 8:00am-12:30pm. **Fall 2017 Virginia Judging School**. The purpose of the judging school is to train and certify judges for county fairs, the state fair of Virginia and other related competitions throughout the commonwealth. Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension, Caroline County Agricultural Fair Association, and the Virginia Association of Fairs Inc.



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November 9. (Algonkian Regional Park, 47001 Fairway Drive, Sterling, Va. 20165). 8:30am-3:30pm. **Urban Forest for Your Health: How Trees Can Save Your Life**. Explores the relationship between nature and human health. Cost is \$85.00. Please [register](#) in advance. Sponsored by the McLean Trees Foundation and the Virginia Department of Forestry.



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UPCOMING SEMINARS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES --CONTINUED

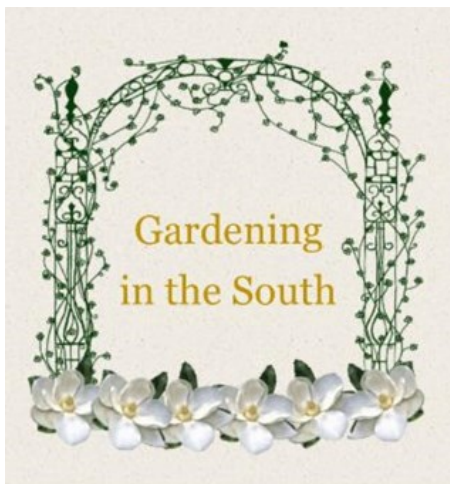
BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

November 16. (Virginia State University Randolph Farm, 4415 River Road, Petersburg). 10:00-12:00pm. **Ginger & Turmeric Field Day.** Learn more about the production and marketing of ginger and turmeric and see how to harvest, clean and package these spice crops. This educational event will include classroom presentations, a grower panel discussion, a culinary demonstration, and a field visit. Cost is \$20.00, payable on the day of the event. Register [here](#). Sponsored by VCE and the VSU College of Agriculture.



November 18. (Freedom Park Interpretive Center). 10:00-11:30am. **Medicinal Herbs: Myths, Stories, and How to Grow.** Briscoe White, co-owner of [The Growers Exchange](#) in Charles City, a successful web-based business, will share his knowledge on growing herbs. The program is free, although a \$5.00 donation to help the garden grow is appreciated. For more information, contact Briscoe by email at bwhite@thegrowers-exchange.com.

November 24-January 8, 2018. (Ginter Park, Richmond). 5:00-10:00pm. **Dominion Energy GardenFest of Lights.** A holiday tradition featuring more than a half million lights, botanical decorations, etc. Various ticket prices.



January 15, 2018. (Founders Inn, Virginia Beach). **Home Gardener Day 2018.** Hosted by the Virginia Horticultural Foundation, the day offers six forty-five-minute garden lectures, a catered lunch, garden book store, and a winter plant sale. It concludes with hands-on learning opportunities in three ninety-minute afternoon workshops. Registration is \$85.00 through December 1, \$100.00 through January 8, and \$125.00 January 9-16. Register [here](#).

As always, don't forget to take a look at John Freeborn's latest biweekly update from the state EMG office. Click on <https://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/current-master-gardeners/sample-page/bi-weekly-update/>. If that doesn't work, click on <http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/>. Then click on "I am currently a Master Gardener/News/Bi-Weekly Update."

VMGA REPORT

BY MARILYN RIDDLE, UNIT REPRESENTATIVE

Following is Marilyn's report from the October 14, 2017, meeting, held at the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center (AREC), in Painter.

- Ten units worked at the state fair. Poster on Monarch butterfly migration distributed to all in attendance from material left over from the fair.
- List of the VMGA hosts from Dec 1999 was distributed.
- Reorganization of VCE
 - ANR and part of FCS will be under B. Grisso
 - 4H and other part of FCS will be under C Sutphin
 - Jeremy Johnson will be the state program leader in 4H
 - Essentially three parts to become two is my assessment.
- Leadership Training will be held in Richmond on November 9.
- MG Coordinators' Manual will be out soon.
- MG College will be held June 21-24 in 2018 in Blacksburg.
- MG College will be held in September in 2019 at the Main in Norfolk to prepare for hosting the Intl Conference there in 2021. It also prevents a conflict with the International in PA in 2019.
- MG College is to be held in 2020 in Blacksburg.

The Nominations Committee is working on the 2018-2020 slate. Frank Reilly is the chairman.

Forty two MGs attended the education event on trees in August.



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Therapeutic Gardening Project

Fall Meeting

**For TG Volunteers
& Prospective Volunteers**

Thursday, November 9, 1:00PM

Freedom Park Interpretive Center



If you've not volunteered with Therapeutic Gardening before but think it might be for you in 2018, join us to learn more.

RSVP to Linda Lucas or Pat Crowe by 11/6

PLACES WORTH SEEING

BY KATHY BUSH

Wouldn't it be interesting if Extension Master Gardeners shared their garden explorations? We have a group that travels a lot and sees many exotic gardens and plants. How fun to share your experiences with the rest of our group.

My travels are humble but last month, while visiting family, I finally got my husband to accompany me to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

We went to the [Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens](#), and it was delightful! They were displaying a myriad of chrysanthemums, including a variety of cascading mums that were trained to drape and hang. Beautiful!

In addition to the twenty-five gardens and rooms, there were special art installations by glass artist Jason Gamrath. (Think Dale Chihuly but more realistic and less fantastical but still fantastic!)

This artist creates larger-than-life orchids, daffodils, mums, and Venus fly traps that were exhibited throughout the inspiring garden displays.

They have a green café with healthy foods to sample and a lovely gift shop with books, art, jewelry and more. If you ever find yourself near Pittsburgh, check out the Phipps!



Photos by Kathy Bush.

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH NOVEMBER 2017

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



Photo: Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*) taken by Phillip Merritt

PERSIMMON *Diospyros virginiana*

This native tree produces luscious fruit and yellow, red, or purple leaves in the fall. With its dark-colored bark, cut into little blocks, persimmon is easy to recognize while one is walking woodland trails. Flowering dogwood also has blocky bark, but the branches form twigs that are opposite each other – persimmon has alternate branching. And no one would mistake the leaves and fruits of dogwood for that of persimmon.

Persimmon leaves are shiny, dark green in spring, turning vivid yellow, red, and purple in the fall, usually with black spots. The leaves can be mistaken for those of other

nearby trees, but the edges are smooth, without teeth, and they arranged alternately on the stems. A medium-sized tree with a somewhat irregular shape, it thrives in full sun or part shade and tolerates any kind of soil from low, swampy, sites to upland dry woods.

Tiny white urn-shaped flowers appear from May through June, hidden among the leaves. Male and female flowers are on separate trees, and while female trees are necessary for fruit production, immature trees or those in poor growing conditions will have low fruit set. Unripe fruit is highly astringent due to tannins which have a drying effect on tissues. After a frost the fruit becomes soft, fleshy and delicious, with a custard-like flavor of mangoes and banana.

Cultivars of American persimmon in the nursery trade modify the fruit qualities, fall leaf color and growth rate. Seeds of an oriental persimmon reached this country in 1856, sent from Japan by Commodore Perry. Cultivars were collected in China and are now widely distributed throughout the southern states.

The wood is hard, smooth, and even-textured, resembling ebony that comes from relatives in the tropics, eg, *Diospyros ebenum*. The wood has been used commercially for golf club heads and textile shuttles. Fruits feed many birds and mammals, from songbirds to turkeys, dogs and deer, which help disperse the seeds.

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

Important Dates

- 11/2 Urban Ag Field Day (Petersburg)
- 11/4 Photography Nature Walk (Mariner's Museum)
- 11/4 Virginia Judging School (Va Tech)
- 11/9 Urban Forest (Sterling)
- 11/16 Ginger & Turmeric Field Day (Petersburg)
- 11/18 Medicinal Herbs (Freedom Park)
- 11/24-1/8 GardenFest of Lights (Ginter Park, Richmond)
- 1/15 Home Gardener Day (Virginia Beach)
- 4/21/18 Annual plant sale

SUNSHINE NOTES



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 cathyjpj@gmail.com



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NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the December 2017 newsletter will be Monday, November 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.

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