

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



December 2013



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MARGENE HARTSOUGH

A little over one year ago Hurricane Sandy devastated the east coast particularly in the New Jersey and New York areas. We all know the destruction these events cause to homes, businesses, infrastructure and the like but I am not sure we comprehend the long term damage done to the trees, shrubs and other plants. In an article in the New York Times dated August 19, 2013, the effects of what the storm did to the trees was cited.

The article started by telling the story of a couple who had an old weeping cedar on their front lawn. For the first time since it had been planted the powdery blue needles had not returned. Other neighbors in the area noticed similar situations. "Trees that had stood tall and strong for decades leafed into twisted creatures, part green, part scorched. Well into the height of summer, hundreds of branches remained dark and barren." The damage was somewhat of a surprise because these are trees that have stood the test of time. Salt water is thought to be the culprit as salt dries out the root system. Just another example of how dependent we are on Mother Nature to provide the right balance for the trees, plants and shrubs we love to survive and flourish.

Remember our December meeting date has been moved to December 12. Also, if you missed the November meeting, check the JCCWMG website members' page for the website to get the Civil Rights Training now required of ALL MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS. Once you view the training send an email to David Sisson, VP Administration and to Doris Heath. This is needed in order to participate in ANY projects beginning January 31, 2014.

As we approach the holiday season, be safe, enjoy family and friends, and celebrate your faith. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Happy gardening. Margene

**Next Meeting:
Thursday, December 12**

Speakers: Pam and Dave
Sisson

SUMMARY OF YEAR-END "TO DO" LIST FOR ALL MG's

The following is a summary of important actionable items that appear in articles in this newsletter. Please read all the articles for more information:

- 1. Civil Rights Training** (if you were not at the November Meeting). Go to: http://connect.ag.vt.edu/vce_vol_cr_training/. Watch the video, and send an e-mail confirming your training to Dave Sisson (sisson2@cox.net) and Doris Heath. There is also a link provided on the Members page at our website.
- 2. Recertification Forms.** Go to: www.JCCWMGA.org; click on Members Page, 2014 Click on Recertification form; complete form and send to Dave Sisson (4301 Stylers Mill Crossing, Wmbg, VA 23188).
- 3. Dues;** \$15, send to Bob Winther (4751 Regents Park, Wmbg, VA 23188).
- 4. MG Hours Posted Online by 12/31.** Go to: www.JCCWMGA.org; Click on Members Page, Click on VMSHours System.
- 5. Expense Reimbursement.** Submit all expenses (forms found on website) to Bob Winther by 12/15 (at above address).



2013
MG Board

President:
Margene
Hartsough

President Elect:
Sue Liddell

VP Projects:
Debbie Griesinger

VP Internal Ed:
Judy Casone

VP
Administration:
David Sisson

Secretary:
Patsy McGrady

Treasurer:
Bob Winther

VMGA Reps:
Marilyn Riddle and
Angela Cingale

Past President:
Linda Lucas

Co-op Ext Rep:
Doris Heath
564-2170

INTERNAL EDUCATION BY JUDY CASONE

Please remember that the meeting will be **December 12th**. There will be a holiday buffet provided by the Board. Our program will be from two of our own, Pam and David Sisson. The Sissons traveled to England with a group from CW and toured many of the gardens. They will be sharing the gardens of Capability Brown.

Thank you to all of those who came to the Risk Management Meeting, paid your dues and brought your Recertification forms. It makes

everything so very much easier when we do these things in a timely manner.

The Internal Education Committee is planning field trips and finishing out the first six (6) months of 2014. Speakers will be posted on the calendar as soon as I get past Thanksgiving.

TREASURER'S REMINDER BY BOB WINTHER

Current year reimbursements ...

Please submit any and all requests for reimbursement for the current year (2013) by December 15. The reimbursement form is out on our website. Please affix this reimbursement form to all receipts and have the form signed by you project/committee chair. As in every other year this information is very important for our Board as they prepare the new 2014 Budget and attempt to create a balanced budget.

MGA annual dues ...

NOTE : *I will be collecting dues at the December MGA General Meeting at a table set-up at the entrance to the meeting room.* MGA dues are still \$15. These monies help to support the programs of your MGA and are crucial to the well being of our organization. Since these funds are the primary dollars which support our efforts in the greater community your timeliness of payment is appreciated.

Checks made out to "JCC/W Master Gardeners" with the note "Association Dues" in the memo line may be handed to me at the MG monthly meeting or sent directly to my home address.
Bob Winther - MG Treasurer
4751 Regents Park
Williamsburg, VA 23188-1798

Your prompt consideration of both these important matters is well appreciated by your MGA board.

RECERTIFICATION FORMS/DUES/HOURS BY DAVE SISSON

Thanks to all who responded on the first round of Recertification forms.

Over ½ of the membership has Recertified for 2014. If you have, thanks for getting your form to me early. If you have not, print it now while you are at your computer reading this <www.JCCWMGA.org> [members page, 2014 Recertification form]. Fill out the form. Mail it to Dave Sisson, 4301 Stylers Mill Crossing, Wmbg, VA 23188 or bring it w/ you Dec.12 to the December Meeting.

*Remember, you must **Recertify, pay your dues** {\$15 check payable to JCCMGA sent to Bob Winther}, and **have your required hours completed and accounted for on the VCE hours website by December 31, 2013. Don't put this off—DO IT TODAY!***

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month, at 9:00 am, at the James City County Health and Human Services Building, on Olde Towne Road.

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

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E2 NEWS FOR DECEMBER

BY KARI ABBOTT



It is time for the Tree Farm Field Trips this fall to the MillFarm Christmas Tree Farm at 4900 Fenton Mill Road.

On December 4, Matthew Whaley will be going to the tree farm. The children will arrive a bit after 10:00 a.m. so volunteers should arrive by 9:45. You will be done 1 hour after the children arrive, a bit after 11:00.

On December 6, J. Blaine Blayton will arrive at 10:00 a.m. with volunteers getting to the farm at 9:30 and the field trip ending around 11:00.

On December 10, D.J. Montague and Matoaka will be there. Volunteers should arrive at 9:30 and be finished by 11:00. December 12 will be the final school field trip. Volunteers should be at the Tree Farm at 9:30 again to sort out stations.

Anyone new is welcome to join in the fun. Ask anyone in the E2 program. This is a fun field trip. There are two stations with no walking if that helps anyone make a decision in volunteering. Send me an email to me at bearsbaskets@cox.net if you would like to join us. Everyone is welcome!

During the field trip, the children go through three stations. The first teaches them the three things that trees need to grow properly. The second station is a walk through the tree farm, finding...well the adventure is there, what you find. The third station is a game played to say thank you to

the Appersons who own the farm. The Appersons are volunteer fire fighters and the third activity shows children how quickly wildfire can spread. The children get to be Smokey the Bear and try to stop forest fires. If there is time, the children see how many of them it takes to go around the circumference of the biggest tree on the property. Then the children hop back on the yellow school bus and you go on with your day, after fresh air, the smell of evergreens, and an occasional bald eagle or two.

The new Freedom Park Turkey Game was introduced in Kindergarten this month. Thumbs up from our test marketing groups so far. Good suggestions were made to make the game better. The children had a fantastically fun time playing. More test marketing will be done in first grade during the month of December.

Most of our schools enjoyed the Leaf Man activities, and cool art was created. A new "What We Get From Trees" was conducted at Matthew Whaley. The children had fun being able to identify things that were made from trees, like crayons, rug, rulers, tape, and more. Did you know that crayons and tape are products that have trees in them? Join E2 and learn lots of cool stuff!

Also if anyone has any empty 45 mm film canisters, E2 would appreciate you donating them to E2. We have an activity that uses the canisters and we need a few more.

Thanks so much, Kari Abbott
(bearsbaskets@cox.net)

HELP WANTED—OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

BY DAVE SISSON

In last month's Newsletter, I asked for those interested in serving on the Nominating Committee or those willing to fill a vacancy for office next year to send me an email or give me a call. I must have forgotten to give you contact information, because **no one** responded—how neglectful of me!

So here it is: sisson2@cox.net, or 757-903-7118. If you find the line busy when you call, just assume that someone else is on the line volunteering also—so leave a message and I will get back to you!

I can't guarantee a high salary, but you surely can accumulate hours toward your required minimum!

SAVE THE DATE: TURF TRAINING FOR MG'S

BY BARB FOLEY

Prince William VCE is tentatively scheduling a Turf Training program for MGs on Wednesday, March 12, from 9:30 am - 3pm. Mike Goatley and Derek Cataldi will be speaking. This is a good opportunity, so save the date. More information will be coming.

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH – DECEMBER 2013

BY HELEN HAMILTON

JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT
SOCIETY

Slender Goldenrod

Euthamia caroliniana (Solidago tenuifolia)

This erect perennial grows 1-4 feet tall, with many-branched stems. Tiny golden flowers grow on the tips of the branches, forming a flat-topped floral spray. The leaves are alternate, pointed, very narrow (less than ¼ inch wide), and smooth on the margins. The tiny one-seeded fruits have fluffy hairs to aid in dispersal. The leaves of a related species Flat-top Goldenrod (*E. graminifolia*) are wider, over ½ inch across.

Growing in damp to dry, sandy soil, these plants are found in brackish and freshwater marshes, roadsides, and thin woods. Slender Goldenrod grows along the coast from Nova Scotia to Florida and Louisiana, including central and eastern counties of Virginia. Blooming from September through December, the stems and fading seedheads are visible most of the winter. Overwintering insects will lay their eggs in the hollow stems of these plants.

Flat-top Goldenrod blooms earlier, from August-September, and has a wider distribution, occurring over most of U.S. and Canada.



Photo: Slender Goldenrod (*Euthamia graminifolia*) taken by Helen Hamilton

The genus name *Euthamia* is from a Greek word meaning “well-crowded,” referring to the dense flower clusters. Also known as goldentops, these two species were formerly placed with other goldenrods in the genus *Solidago*.

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

REID/SHIELDS GARDEN APPLICATIONS

BY PAT ABRAHAM

The Colonial Williamsburg Landscape department will be accepting applications for volunteer positions at the Reid and Shields gardens. The purpose of our volunteer program is to maintain the two gardens as “demonstration gardens” while growing flowers and vegetables of the colonial period. Through our labors, we provide support for Colonial Williamsburg and create an enviable attraction for passing visitors and touring guests. While accomplishing these goals, our volunteers maintain a mutually beneficial partnership between the Virginia Cooperative Extension, James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener Association and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Each Master Gardener who wants to volunteer in the Reid/Shields gardens must commit to volunteering a minimum of 30 annual hours: 20 hours of garden

work plus 4 hours of training plus 6 hours of miscellaneous gardening in CW. These hours can be spread among all the projects in the Reid/Shields Gardens....Perennials, Herbs, Roses, Veggies and Orchard. The 6 hours of miscellaneous can be administrative work (team leaders), the Colonial Williamsburg Volunteer Enrichment series, or additional work in the gardens.

To facilitate the entry process, applications will be available from Barb Floyd and Pat Abraham at the December Master Gardener meeting. Completed applications are due at the January 3 meeting. If you are unable to attend the December meeting, contact Barb or Pat to make arrangements to obtain and submit an application.

Barb Floyd: bmfloyd@cox.net

Pat Abraham: tspmeritage@cox.net



RAISED BED GARDENING IN CAROLE'S GARDEN, NEW KENT EXTENSION OFFICE BY PATTY TOWNSEND

Do you know the advantages of a raised bed garden? It allows vigorous growth in contained small beds, whereas with the regular in-ground gardening method, you may have heavy soils and poor drainage problems. It also allows for more root growth in the amended soils, which creates higher yields. Not only does it provide a good source of food, but it can be attractive too.

Carole's Garden Master Gardener Project (E-35) was very rewarding this year. The harvest was very plentiful. During the spring and summer months we talked about how to amend soils, prep the beds, planting various vegetables, pest control, harvesting, and what to do with the vegetables and herbs that were harvested. The garden was a three-season garden. The success of this garden relies on the Master Gardener volunteers to plant, maintain and harvest Carole's Garden. This takes dedication, physical labor, and sweat. By using the raised bed garden method of gardening, vegetable gardening was made much easier.

Did you know that Master Gardeners are great cooks?! The proof was at our annual Master Gardeners' Harvest Lunch on October 24, 2013. The task for this luncheon was simple: cook something that our Master Gardeners grew at home or harvested from Carole's Garden. A variety of dishes were shared by all.

Prior to our luncheon, the Master Gardeners gathered in the conference room to perform a craft project. During our summer collection of fruits and vegetables, we talked about what to do with all the extra produce. So our craft was to make a harvest wreath. The collected items were dried fruits and vegetables such as watermelon, cantaloupe, pears, apples, peppers, lemons, pumpkins and a few other items. Many new talents were discovered on that day.

I look forward to next year in Carole's Garden, and hope that our Master Gardener friends will return, and that I get to meet new friends too!



COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG TRAINING

BY SUE LIDDELL

On November 5th, Laura Viancour, Manager of Landscape Services for Colonial Williamsburg, led a group of 20 MGs on a Tree Tour of CW. Tall Treasures is a short tree tour offered to ticketed Colonial Williamsburg guests in the vicinity of Chowning's Tavern, the Palace Green and the Colonial Garden. The purpose of the tour is to identify some major trees of VA, and point out their value to the colonists, to us, and to wildlife. We met in front of Chownings where she distributed the new Self Guided Tree Tour Map of DOG Street. These can be picked up at the Colonial Garden upon request.

Trees really are a treasure. Their leaves give us the oxygen we breathe. Trees provide shade in the summer; their roots filter water; the wood is used in countless ways, both utilitarian and ornamental; and trees furnish food and shelter for many forms of wildlife. She talked about the value of oak trees in particular. In addition to being the framework of the colonial life, it was a major export to England. The white oak wood in particular is especially strong. She explained how to ID the white and red oaks and talked about the value of the tree as a food supply for animals.

The trees at the first stop provided wood for the necessities of life for the colonists. The next stop highlights trees that provide beautiful wood for ornamentation. The wood of American holly is ivory color and growth rings are not visible. It is good for inlay work. The berries have value, not for our use but for the birds. Seventeen species of birds feed on the berries which persist through the winter until the last one is eaten. Lucky for the birds, the deer don't eat the berries. Holly is used on the floor of the palace stairs. The linden is another tree with fine wood for carving. Grinling Gibbons in England had become famous for his sculptures in linden wood, which is called lime wood in England. He was known as the King's Carver. There is a very sweet smelling flower in the spring which attracts bees which make honey from the nectar.

There are three trees visitors always ask about. One is the crape myrtle. We pass one on the corner of Nicholson and North England. Documents tell us that George Washington imported crape myrtle in 1786. In the 18th century it was only available in pink. On Nicholson across from St. George Tucker House is the second tree visitors ask about, the Compton oak, VA State champion: 14' trunk circumference, 70' tall, and 97' crown. The Compton oak is a cross between the live oak and the overcup oak. The Compton oak has leaves favoring the overcup, its evergreen habit favoring



the live oak. The paper mulberry is the third tree visitors ask about. This is one of the few non native trees on our tour. It is native to China and Japan where the inner bark has been used in making paper umbrellas. The heartwood of this tree and many other paper mulberries in CW has been eaten away by a red rot fungus.

The next stop is an example of the first known use of trees in America as an architectural feature. The catalpas line the Palace Green as they did when Thomas Jefferson was governor. As we walked across the green Laura pointed out a sourgum in showy red fall color. Sourgum is also known as black gum, and swamp tupelo. It is valuable as a shade and ornamental tree. The wood is used by wood carvers.

Our last stop highlighted trees with exceptional fall color. We stopped by Bruton Parish to talk about the brightly colored American dogwood. Just past the Colonial Garden are some maples. Red maple has red flowers, fruit, leafstalks and autumn foliage. Next to the red maple is a sugar maple. This hardwood was used for flooring and furniture making. The softer wood of the red maple is used in kitchen ware. Maple syrup can be made from both the red and sugar maple, but the sugar maple produces more syrup. Fall color of the sugar maple ranges from gold to orange to red. Laura pointed out the brilliant color of the maple in front of the courthouse. In the Bruton church yard across the street from our last stop is a ginkgo, the oldest living seed plant - a leaf fossil dates back 270 million years. In Jurassic times it was densely growing in North America, Asia and Europe. Fall color is a brilliant yellow, but ours has not turned yet.

This tour was the last of the training sessions Laura provides for those who work in the George Reid and Shield's Tavern gardens. She included her thoughts on soil compaction, safety, the CW tree replacement program and plant monoculture. The tour was an entertaining and educational close to the MG gardening year at CW.

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Colonial Williamsburg Training—
A pictorial account
(Story by Sue Liddell on preceding page)



Blackgum near Bruton



Dogwood at Bruton



Sugar Maple by Courthouse



Paper
Mulberry



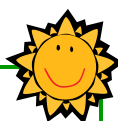
Bruton Dogwood
and Crape Myrtle



BOXWOOD BLIGHT AND HOLIDAY GREENERY

You will find an article on the next two pages submitted by Barb Foley regarding the concern that using boxwood in holiday decorations will spread Boxwood Blight to landscape boxwoods.

More information on Boxwood Blight can be found in the October 2013 issue of the MG newsletter.



SUNSHINE NOTES

The JCC/W Master Gardener organization has sent cards to the following people over recent weeks: Genrose Lashinger, Jan Rockoff, and Anne Odle.

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 MG Secretary, Patsy McGrady, 258-1181, patsymcgrady@cox.net.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The deadline for submission of material for the **January** Newsletter is **Sunday, December 22.**

Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at cathy.lohwater@cox.net or call 757-259-1133.

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.

Important Dates

- 12/12 Monthly Meeting @ WRL
- 12/15 Expenses due to Treasurer
- 12/22 Newsletter Submissions Due
- 12/31 Civil Rights Training, Hours, Dues and Recertification forms are due

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.

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Boxwood Holiday Greenery at Historic Sites

Homeowners and managers of historic properties should be made aware of the potential for the box blight pathogen, *Cylindrocladium pseudonaviculatum*, to be introduced to landscapes on infected boxwood greenery used for wreaths or holiday roping. Boxwood greenery (stems and leaves) that originated from boxwood plants infected with this pathogen has the potential to carry the pathogen into the landscape. The susceptibility of English and American boxwood to the box blight pathogen cannot be overemphasized. Severe defoliation occurs on these cultivars. Unfortunately, the disease has been found at several sites in Virginia, as well as surrounding states. If greenery originated from infected boxwood plants, the pathogen may produce spores on the greenery that could be spread to boxwood plants in the landscape. This possibility could have long-term repercussions for landscapes with historic boxwoods.

Some historic sites decorate with significant amounts of boxwood greenery over the holidays, increasing the potential for the pathogen to be introduced to landscape plantings. Although the fungal spores do not spread easily by air currents, they can potentially be carried on leaf debris adhering to people's shoes, on clothing or on tools used to trim greenery. Precautions should be taken when purchasing and installing greenery for the holidays and when discarding greenery after the holidays. If possible, homeowners and property managers should make sure to purchase boxwood greenery from reputable suppliers where box blight has not been found. Growers who have entered the Boxwood Blight Cleanliness Agreement follow strict best management practices along with routine inspections by the Virginia Department of Agriculture. When consumers purchase boxwood plants from a retail nursery or garden center, they should ask if plants have been purchased from a supplier in the Boxwood Blight Cleanliness Program.

All incoming boxwood greenery should be inspected carefully for symptoms of the disease, including leaf spots, leaf browning, black streaks on stems, and leaf drop. (Refer to the images of box blight symptoms below.) Wreaths should be assembled away from any existing boxwoods in the landscape. Workers who directly handle greenery or boxwood plants should be educated about the disease. After the holidays, boxwood greenery should not be composted or discarded on-site. It should be bagged (preferably double-bagged) and removed to the landfill.

The importance of preventing introduction of this disease to landscapes with healthy boxwood plantings cannot be overemphasized. Please make sure that homeowners, growers, landscapers and property managers are made aware of this potential means of introducing the box blight disease.



Leaf spots



Black streaking on stems

Additional information about box blight can be found at the following web sites:

- <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/PPWS/PPWS-4/PPWS-4.html>
- http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/publications/fact_sheets/plant_pathology_and_ecology/boxwood_blight-a_new_disease_for_connecticut_and_the_u.s._12-08-11.pdf
- <http://plantpath.cals.ncsu.edu/ornamentals>