



# The Colonial Master Gardener

December  
2015

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &  
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY SUE LIDDELL

Thank you for your service! As I near the end of my eighteen months in office, I want to express my appreciation to every MG for the work you have done educating the public. Especially deserving are the seven who were awarded emeritus status during this time.

**Next Meeting:**  
**Thursday, December 3**  
**Program:**  
**Lyn Pence**  
**"Decorating with Natural Materials"**



Jean and Bob Winters

Bob and Jean Winters became MGs as a team in 2001 and continued to work together on the Turf Love program. They trained many "lawn rangers," who in turn trained the homeowners of JCC/W to be better stewards of the environment. Bob took the Water Steward training, with emphasis on rain gardens. During Jean's time on the board she encouraged us with both the spoken and written word. Ann DeForest was in the MG class of 2003 and completed Tree Steward training in 2004. She gave presentations on her specialty, which was grafting. She even went the extra mile trying to get a graft from a treasured Japanese maple when a family moved.



Ann DeForest

Barbara Schroeder became a MG in 1999, Art Gustafson, in 2001. In 2004 they became a team both by marriage and on the Incredible Edible project. They each had their specialty; Barbara had initiated the Therapeutic Gardening project as an intern and helped coordinate its growth for ten years. Art managed our hours and became a compost expert. Both became Tree Stewards to expand their areas of expertise.



Barbara and Art Gustafson



Rosemarie Brennan

Lois Enlow, not pictured, and Rosemarie Brennan were both in the class of 2007. Lois turned her attention to children's programs, supervising E2 field trips and helping students learn from the environment.

Rosemarie worked extensively with the Turf Love program, helping to measure and evaluate fertilizer requirements on golf courses and community common areas. She took extra training to qualify for this work. She became a Water Steward, and, as her intern project, installed a rain garden at St Olaf Catholic Church.

**To each of you, Well Done!**

## ADMINISTRATION

BY DIANE HARE

2015  
MG Board

*President:*  
Sue Liddell

*President Elect:*  
Debbie Griesinger

*VP  
Administration:*  
Diane Hare

*VP Projects:*  
Wilma Sharp

*VP Internal Ed:*  
Kathy Bush

*Secretary:*  
Cathy Johnson

*Treasurer:*  
Bob Winther

*VMGA Reps:*  
Marilyn Riddle and  
Jeanne Millin

*Past President:*  
Margene  
Hartsough

*Co-op Ext Rep:*  
Doris Heath  
564-2170

*Program Asst.,  
ANR:*  
Kate Robbins

### ***A Secure Members' Web Page***

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have launched our new/secure members' page at: <http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/>

The password for this site is **JCCWMGardeners**, and is case sensitive. In the coming days, you will have access to our roster, newsletters, minutes and other important information for our members on this secure members' page. Many, many thanks to Dave Banks, our web master!

### ***Hours, Hours!!! Get your Hours Posted!***

Just a gentle reminder to record your volunteer hours, along with your education hours and mileage for 2015. We really want to recognize our members for their milestone achievement hours, and we can only do this if you will take a few minutes and post all that you do for JCCWMGs in the VMS hours web page (see link on the members' page). And you not only help us give thanks and recognition to you, but you also help us to summarize all the work our unit does on behalf of James City County and the city of Williamsburg, information which is critical to obtaining funding, grants, and personnel.

### ***Most Importantly***

I just want to express my sincerest gratitude to each member of our unit! You are awesome! The accomplishments of this year are amazing. Thank you for the gift of your time, talents, and resources to the projects we help to support. Thank you for the friendship and support that you give to your fellow MGs. Merry Christmas!!! Blessings to you in the New Year!

## **A REMINDER FROM BOB WINTER, MGA TREASURER 2011-2015**

*Once again ....*

Fiscal Year 2015 is quickly coming to an end. I would ask that you please submit any and all requests for MGA project reimbursement for the current year by December 15. The reimbursement form is out on our website. Please affix this form to all receipts.

Since I will be closing the accounts for 2015 on December 31, and turning over all financial related materials to the new incoming treasurer, Amy Higgins, it is important that all reimbursements occur well before that date (December 15, 2015). Any requests after that date will be applied against the 2016 budget.

*And dues collection ....*

MGA dues are still \$15.

I will be at association general meetings in November and December to collect any and all checks. Checks made out to "JCC/W Master Gardeners" with the note "Association Dues" in the memo line may be handed to me at these MGA monthly meetings or sent directly to my home address:

Bob Winther - MGA Treasurer  
4751 Regents Park  
Williamsburg, VA 23188-1798

If by chance a check is inconvenient, our MGA website has a PayPal option which is available to those wishing to pay in that manner.

*As always ...*

Your prompt consideration of this matter is well appreciated by your treasurer and MGA board.

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month, at 9:30 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.

## UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITES

BY KATHY BUSH

**December 12** (Williamsburg Regional Library) **Virginia Master Gardener Association meeting.** Open to all.

**January 18, 2016** (Virginia Beach, the Founder's Inn and Spa). **2016 Home Gardener Day.** 8:00am—4:00pm. Registration: <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ebissv0haf08977a&llr=v5ryi8bab>

Includes hot lunch, free parking, and a gardener's dream day of fellowship and knowledge! Has our world changed? Is your garden prepared? Speakers invited to this event include Thomas Rainer, Doug Tallamy, Vincent Simeone, Karen Bussolini, John Kartesz, and Pam Beck.

**January 19-22** (same location as above). **Mid Atlantic Horticultural Short Course.** Nationally Recognized training for professionals in the green industries sponsored by Virginia Horticultural Foundation. For more info and registration <http://www.mahsc.org/registration-details/>

**February 9** (Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Norge) **Victorian Valentine's Day Tussie Mussies by Julie Stanton.** 1:00pm. An open meeting sponsored by the Colonial Triangle of Virginia Unit of the Herb Society of America.

**March 18** (Waynesboro, Va., Parks and Recreation). **2016 Shenandoah Valley Plant Symposium.** 8:00am - 4:00pm. A *Gardener's Palette* of speakers. It requires an overnight stay but is well worth the effort. Details will be coming soon.

**April 16** (Freeman Center, CNU). **19th Garden Symposium.** Focus will be "Creating Environmentally Friendly Gardens" oriented to our specific geographic areas. There will be three speakers in the morning session and a panel discussion with audience participation after lunch. (In collaboration with the CNU Grounds Department.) Vendors will be outside to include the Colonial Triangle Chapter of the Herb Society of America with a tent full of herbs.

They say if you want to get something done, ask a busy person. **Calling all busy people...**The Education Committee is looking for Master Gardeners to contact and secure speakers for our monthly meetings and organize field trips. If interested in joining our team, contact Kathy at [kathykbush@verizon.net](mailto:kathykbush@verizon.net).

## Attention Project Chairs!

Please put Monday, March 21, 2016, on your calendars. That's the day of the annual Project Fair at the rec center for the trainees-about-to-be interns. This is your chance to show off your project and sign up some enthusiastic new members of our MG family.

—Hope Yelich, for the Training Team



Pavers installing the patio

## Dominion Foundation Grant Funds Patio in WBG Therapy Garden

Belgard Pavers and SiteOne Landscape Supply recently held a paver patio installation class in the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. Ten men and women attended the hands-on program which resulted in a new 12ft by 16ft paver patio under the Therapy Garden Pavilion completed in a single day.

Also participating in the project construction were two local landscape companies: John Spears Landscape (Newport News) and The King's Garden Landscape (Williamsburg). Funding for the project came from an Environmental Stewardship Initiative Grant from The Dominion Foundation.

For more information about the Williamsburg Botanical Garden and upcoming programs visit [www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org)

—Peggy Krapf



## INTERNAL EDUCATION

BY KATHY BUSH

Looking back through this year's monthly MG programs, we have had many opportunities to learn and grow in our knowledge and understanding as VCE Master Gardeners. We saw the fruit of Mike Locketell's labors with pollination in his beautiful iris; traveled to the Virginia Zoo gardens both in pictures and on a guided field trip; learned about the amazing marsh grasses in our local rivers; heard from the author and owner of the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange about saving seeds to grow heirloom vegetables and how GMOs threaten our seed supply; and marveled at the complex world of honey bees.

Monthly meetings are a great way to accrue your eight hours of education required by the Virginia Cooperative Extension to remain an active Master Gardener, but other garden-related lectures, symposiums, webinars, and classes count toward this requirement.

Be sure to include your educational hours on the Volunteer Management System page where you record your volunteer work hours. These need to be in by the end of the year. Thank you for taking this reminder to heart so we don't have cause to repeat it!

With the upcoming holidays only weeks away, we are going to learn some festive ways to decorate our homes with natural materials, fresh greenery, and berries. Lyn Pence, recent president of the Colonial Triangle Chapter of the Herb Society of America, will share her creative ideas with our members in a delightful program on December 3. Your MG board will have sweet and savory treats for all to enjoy in the gallery after the meeting. Thank you, Kendra Swann, for organizing this holiday reception.

As we finish our outdoor work for the season and spend more time indoors, we have time to reflect on our efforts and make new plans. In a little book I picked up called *Words for Gardeners to Live By* (illustrated by Mary Engelbreit), I found several quotes to ponder as we look to a new year of gardening. I share some with you and hope you enjoy them. Wishing you a warm and meaningful holiday and a healthy new year!



***"When you take a flower in your hand and really look at it, it's your world for the moment." Georgia O'Keefe***

***"I'm inclined to think that the flowers we most love are those we knew when we were very young, when our senses were most acute to color and to smell, and our natures most lyrical." Dorothy Thompson***

***"I think this is what hooks one on gardening: it is the closest one can come to being present at the Creation." Phyllis Theroux***

***"There is little risk in becoming overly proud of one's garden because gardening by its very nature is humbling. It has a way of keeping you on your knees." Joann R. Barwick***

***"Gardening Is an exercise in optimism. Sometimes, it is the triumph of hope over experience." Marina Schinz***

***"Nature is painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty if only we have the eyes to see them." John Ruskin***



## LANDSCAPE LOVE

BY GARY STREB

The Landscape Love project recently completed another successful year of providing knowledgeable insights to the homeowners of James City County and Williamsburg city. Over sixty VCE Master Gardeners and interns of the Class of 2015 completed 151 educational visits to almost 225 James City and Williamsburg residents in their own garden landscapes.

All the Landscape Love volunteers have provided a “common good” that increases the awareness of the importance of a sustainable landscape, leading to a cleaner watershed and Chesapeake Bay. Each and every VCE Master Gardener and intern is to be commended for his or her part in this educational, customer-oriented service to our community. Excellent evaluations continue to validate the intangible value that the homeowners receive from each volunteer participant. They learn while each of us continues to learn, educate, and communicate, to empower our community.

A sincere **thank you** to the whole Landscape Love team, especially to the new and acting team leaders. The interns of the Class of 2015 have proven themselves within a hectic ops tempo for each of the two sessions. Enjoy a well-deserved break and hope to see all of you back again in the spring.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!



## E2 NEWS

BY KARI ABBOTT

Wishing you all holiday cheer as E2 enters December. This month it is all about trees, for schools will either be going on a field trip to the Mill Farm Christmas Tree Farm or learning about tree products in class.

The tree farm field trip is a great time, and anyone is welcome to join us. The field trip is usually done in three stations so you would not be alone; there will be other Master Gardeners with you. You also would not have to lead an activity, so you could come out and enjoy the fresh air, the greenery around you, and the cheerful laughter of the children. This trip is always a delight, and it lasts only one hour— so it is quick and to the point.



Thursday Dec 3: JBB First graders are going to the tree farm.  
Tuesday Dec 8: DJM First graders are going to the tree farm.  
Wednesday Dec 9: Matoaka first graders are going to the tree farm.

If you would like to help, email me at [bearsbaskets@cox.net](mailto:bearsbaskets@cox.net).

Classroom visits are already in full swing, but also again you are welcome to join us at any time, just to watch and see what is going on.

Again, best holiday wishes to you all.

## AN UPDATE ON THERAPEUTIC GARDENING

BY LINDA LUCAS

Therapeutic Gardening is becoming more of a year-round project, with programs at the Respite Care Center at the Williamsburg United Methodist Church, New Zion Baptist Church, and Our Saviour's Lutheran Church taking place monthly. These three facilities offer daytime activities for seniors with memory loss, providing a stimulating environment for the seniors and relief for their caregivers. Woodhaven House at the Landing is a residential facility for seniors with serious dementia, and Therapeutic Gardening has run a program there from September through February for the past several years.

During the month of November, TG session activities included talking about and planting spring bulbs; discussing good and bad critters in the garden; and learning about the history and uses of ginger and cinnamon, followed by a simple craft using the herbs.



We have found that, when working with clients with memory loss, the more senses we can involve and the more tactile we can make the sessions, the better able we are to connect with the seniors and encourage them to communicate with us and with fellow participants. Our MG volunteers rise to the challenge and often come up with clever new ways to capture and hold our clients' attention as we share gardening activities with them.



Also in November, TG participated in Empowering the Caregiver, an event organized by Colonial Heritage Community Foundation. MG Therapeutic Gardening volunteers shared information on the benefits of gardening for the caregivers themselves and for those for whom they are caring. In addition, participants enjoyed several relaxing take-home activities: filling a sachet with fragrant lavender buds and planting a tiny pot with low-maintenance succulents. Events like this enable us to spread the word that gardening-related activities are beneficial for all, including those with special needs.

If you would like to join one of our TG teams, just email Pat Crowe ([pkcrowe@cox.net](mailto:pkcrowe@cox.net)) or Linda Lucas ([esllal@cox.net](mailto:esllal@cox.net)). In addition to the four programs mentioned above, we will have at least five other programs in facilities around the community in 2016 and would welcome your help!

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Have a peaceful, happy  
holiday season, everyone!



## CW LEARNING GARDENS END A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

BY SUE LIDDELL

The George Reid and Shields gardens had a good turnout to put the vegetable beds to rest for winter in CW. We harvested the last of the bull nose peppers and cayenne peppers, some cabbage and endive, and planted fava beans to over winter with the rest of the cold hardy vegetables. Visitors continue to walk through the gardens so we want to keep them interesting.

If you would like to be a part of the team next year, see the article on page 8 of this newsletter.



The "vegetable group" says goodbye to the 2015 season



Barb Floyd, Ruth Murphy, and Becky Sutton harvest Glory of Enkhuizen cabbage. Its taste lives up to its name!



Pat Abraham describes MG activity to visitors



## COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG LANDSCAPE VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS

BY PAT ABRAHAM



Harvesting basil in the Reid garden



Summer flowers in the Reid garden

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 thirty annual hours: twenty hours of garden work plus four hours of training plus six 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 six 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 Friday, January 8, 2016. They can be mailed to the address on the application or dropped off at the Franklin Street office, attention Trish Barner, Volunteer Coordinator. If you are unable to attend the December meeting, contact Barb or Pat to make arrangements to obtain an application.

Barb Floyd: [bmfloyd@cox.net](mailto:bmfloyd@cox.net)

Pat Abraham: [tspmeritage@cox.net](mailto:tspmeritage@cox.net)



## WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH - DECEMBER 2015

BY HELEN HAMILTON

PAST PRESIDENT, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

### CHRISTMAS FERN

*Polystichum acrostichoides*

Christmas fern is so named because the leathery fronds are green throughout the winter and have been used as holiday decorations. Children enjoy imagining the leaflets represent Santa's boots, as each leaflet broadens into a boot-like top where it attaches to the scaly stalk.

Few garden plants are so accommodating to growing conditions; while this fern prefers full to part shade and fertile, well-drained soil, the plant is very adaptable and will tolerate dry conditions and some sun. Christmas fern grows in clumps and does not form drifts, but it can be a groundcover or planted along the edges of walkways. In the growing season, fronds are one-two feet tall, but they lie flat on the ground throughout the winter. Always green, they furnish welcome color all year in zones 3 through 9.

Ferns reproduce by alternating spore-producing versus sexual generations. In the spring, some taller, more erect, central fronds will be among the new crop of fronds produced. These fertile fronds have much shorter leaflets on the upper third of the frond, and their undersides carry spores in tiny round clusters. While zillions of spores are produced, only a few find a suitable moist habitat in the surrounding soil where they will grow into tiny green plants that produce eggs and sperm. Successful fertilization produces a new plant which will be of the familiar spore-producing generation.

While this alternation of generations is considered a much more primitive method than reproduction by seeds, it can be very effective; there are often dense colonies of Christmas fern in second-growth woodlands locally because of its rapid dispersal into disturbed areas by wind-blown spores.

If winters are harsh, some fronds will show damage, becoming wrinkled and brown; they can be removed, providing space for the silvery fiddleheads that will emerge in early spring. In a garden, new plants should be installed after the last frost, and pine needles, shredded bark or leaf mulch around the plants will help protect them and hold in moisture.

Christmas ferns can be grown indoors, in front of a window with morning sun and afternoon shade. The soil should be kept evenly moist but not over saturated, and regular misting will help increase humidity.



Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) taken by Helen Hamilton

For more information about native plants visit [www.vnps.org](http://www.vnps.org).

## Important Dates

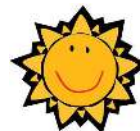
- 12/3 MG Monthly Meeting, WRL
- 12/12 VMGA Meeting, WRL
- 1/18/16 Home Gardener Day, Virginia Beach
- 1/19-22 Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course, Virginia Beach
- 2/9 Tussie Mussies, Our Saviour's
- 3/18 2016 Shenandoah Plant Symposium, Waynesboro
- 4/16: 19th Gardening Symposium, CNU
- 4/30: Annual Plant Sale, Jamestown Beach Park



### **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.*

## **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 MG secretary, Cathy Johnson, at (757) 208-0065, or [cathypj@gmail.com](mailto:cathypj@gmail.com).

## **NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

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

**Please send any submissions to Hope Yelich, newsletter editor, at [hopeyelich@gmail.com](mailto:hopeyelich@gmail.com)**

## **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.