

The Colonial Master Gardener



Publication of JCC/WBG Master Gardener
Association & Virginia Cooperative Extension

February 2006

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

Feb. 2, 9 am,
Williamsburg Library
Theater, Caren
Schumacher and Bill
Frymoyer, Executive
Director and Vice
President respectively,
of the Williamsburg
Land Conservancy will
present a program on
*The Historic Triangle
Corridor Enhancement
Project.*

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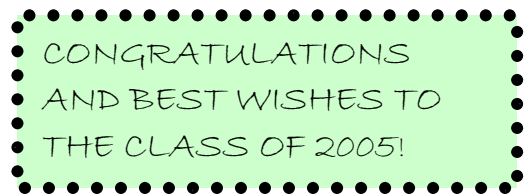
The Master Gardener Board's ongoing "Visioning process" is clarifying the Association's role in the programs of the Virginia Cooperative Extension. An organized effort is underway to better manage our projects to ensure that an adequate number of trained volunteers are available to accomplish the work. Leanne Dubois and the Board have agreed to work together to fully implement these principles:

- All proposed projects or one-time programs requiring volunteer support will be presented to the Board by the Extension Agent for discussion and concurrence before any commitment of volunteers is made. Within ten days the Board will inform the Agent by e-mail of its decision on the proposal.
- Any use of volunteers by the Agent will be coordinated through the Board to ensure that any proposed new use of volunteers will not affect ongoing projects.
- The Board will be responsible for conducting and managing new training classes. This Board leadership role is necessary to ensure that interns are available to projects needing volunteers.
- The Board will develop criteria for recommending the approval of proposed projects. In most cases projects will be approved for a one year trial period to determine their effectiveness and volunteer interest.
- In accord with the By-laws, all ongoing projects will be reviewed annually by the Board to determine their effectiveness and volunteer interest.
- The Board will prepare a long range training plan to ensure that volunteers receive necessary training.

Leanne has also provided the Board her priorities for 2006.

- Hire a part time Master Gardener coordinator (if funded by James City County).
- Water Quality and Conservation. Strengthen existing programs, develop public education programs, demonstration sites, and volunteer programs (Water Stewards) to reduce water use and mitigate pollution

from storm water runoff on the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (i.e. Lake Powell). Raise awareness on local water issues by providing more training and educational materials for MGs.



EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the March Newsletter is February 15. Please send to Lise Kline at legskline@cox.net or call 757-259-9477. Thank you.

- **Project Management.** Develop uniform project management within our existing Environmental and Horticultural programs processes by strengthening succession planning, organizing and managing volunteers efficiently, establishing goals, measuring impacts, and documenting successes.
- **Underserved Communities.** Reach out to underserved communities with our existing project teams. Work with neighborhoods such as Burnt Ordinary and Strawberry Plains, and organizations such as Housing Partnerships and Habitat for Humanity. Provide skills and programs that enhance quality of life such as basic landscape design to increase home values, and vegetable gardening to lower grocery bills, improve nutrition and supplement income.
- **Outreach.** Increase our community outreach especially with one time projects & events such as community fairs, neighborhood programs, health fairs, diagnostic clinics, etc.

The Board will be working with Leanne to implement these priorities. Stay tuned.

THE GOVERNOR PLANTS A LASTING IMPACT LEANNE DUBOIS, '96, EXTENSION AGENT



It was an honor to have the Governor plant the first America's Anniversary Garden as part of his official inaugural event. I was delighted to see so many of the new class and all the MG volunteers who came to rub elbows and plant a garden with the Governor, as well as the many other officials from Virginia Tech, the State and County. Our own Peggy Kraph designed the landscape plan at the site on Jamestown Road and an estimated \$20,000 worth of landscape plants, mulch, labor, supplies, food and more were donated. The community rallied in support and thanks go to the many who made it happen: the

Williamsburg Land Conservancy, the Corridor Enhancement Committee, landscape and greenhouse businesses, beautification committees and the Master Gardener volunteers. The show of force also signified the unity of the many groups involved who donated their time and talents to work together towards making a positive difference in the community. Governor Kaine's simple act of planting the garden had far reaching significance; support for Jamestown 2007 commemoration, support of community service and volunteerism, as well as a beautification and environmental impact. Volunteerism is an essential ingredient in a healthy community and from the show of support lavished on that single event, we are thriving. In the coming months and through the years as the landscape grows and matures, we can take comfort in knowing the part we played in creating a lasting impact in the community. Thank you all and also congratulations to the class of 2005!



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2005 JEAN WINTERS, '01

Hopefully all who attended the Annual Graduation and Awards Dinner on January 12th enjoyed an evening of being together and partaking of a good meal and tasty dessert. It was all made possible with many hands contributing! I am so grateful for the work done by Virginia and Dave Banks...there

were many details about the dinner, the member/guest list and nametags (thank you to the helpers at the front table!), shopping and all! The set-up was helped along with Bob Winther and Marilyn Riddle...the church was made into a dining-room quite efficiently! And, we are grateful to the Unitarian Universalist Church for their part. The cheerful baskets gracing the tables were the idea of Jodi Luke...many thanks! Mary Ann Kimminau was responsible for that tasty dessert...delicious! The Class of 2005 was welcomed and graduated by Sally Sissel and Sue Liddell...we now have twenty-seven new Master Gardeners as a result of their efforts. My special thanks to Art and Barbara Gustafson...though not able to attend, Barbara was a "mentor" for me. Charlie Clapper and Leanne DuBois lent their support throughout the planning and the evening...much appreciated! Thank you all for making the many details "mesh"! Now we look forward to a new group...the Class of 2006! Let's do all we can to help them on their new journey!

PROJECT UPDATES

LANDSCAPE LOVE WINTER 2006 RICH STRENKOWSKI, '04

I just wanted to bring everyone up to speed regarding current activities the Landscape Love project. Last November a few of us got together and reviewed the project and made some suggestion for improvements. The status of these recommendations is as follows:

- I have been in contact with Judy Hansen and expect to get a copy of the Drought Tolerant Native Plants for our area to add to the Landscape Love Reference materials on our website.
- Helen Hamilton was asked to review the Helpline information for 2005...she has done this and has reported that the information has not changed so no additional Helpline data will be added to our reference database
- Wayne Blatner has volunteered to take over the administrative role formally performed by Jerry Clarke. I will be meeting with Wayne shortly to discuss this important area.
- Most of the volunteer kits have been refurbished and are at the Extension office. The others are in the hands of last year's volunteers.
- We thought an additional refresher training course on Landscape Design to be given to the MG's (not necessarily the Interns) would be a good idea. I am working on that with Leanne and hope to have a schedule before the start of the Landscape Love spring session.

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 • Check out the latest including
 • minutes, calendars, and past
 • newsletters on our website:
 • <http://jccwmg.org>
 •

There are a number of initiatives I would like some help with and I am seeking volunteers for the following:

- We thought that a far-reaching review of Mole and Voles from other University websites might yield some new information on dealing with these creatures. Is someone interested in developing a "summary paper" on this subject? It would be ideal if this project was completed before the spring session.
- Further regarding Landscape design, we thought a "Step by Step Do It Yourself Landscape Design and Rehabilitation" reference handout should be created. This information would be designed to better serve the "underserved community" in understanding basics of landscape design, to help those on a tight budget and bring awareness to the increased home value potential using landscape design. It would be ideal if this project was completed before the spring session. Can we get a small team to work on this?
- I would like to create a small "Steering Committee" to tackle three items:
 1. Future course and direction of Landscape Love.
 2. Ways we might better serve the "underserved" community.
 3. How to improve our awareness of horticultural practices that improve water use while mitigating the polluting effects of storm water runoff into the Chesapeake Bay
 This committee might require regular meetings throughout the year to fully review these items.

Please contact me if you have interest in working on any of the above areas.

MATTEY'S GARDEN 2005 GENROSE LASHINGER, '02

Mattey's Garden at the Matthew Whaley Elementary School continued to be a wonderful outdoor classroom for the students and teachers. It also serves as a good learning experience for MG interns and veteran MGs.

The monthly Herb Unit with the kindergarten classes had a special visit from the chefs at the Fat Canary. They helped the students harvest vegetables from the Peter Rabbit garden and brought addition unusual salad vegetables to share with the students. They then prepared and served a garden salad to the students, teachers, and volunteers. The Fat Canary is interested in continuing this partnership. Plans are in the works to put together a cookbook using recipes from the herb sessions.

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• "Weather Alert" from Melissa's Meadow:
• We will not be in the meadow in February; the
• Farmer's Almanac has February in blizzard mode!
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Second graders continued the eight week Roots and Shoots program planting vegetables and flowers in the raised beds. During summer school, students added additional vegetables to make a pizza garden. The culminating activity was a harvest of all of the vegetables in the garden followed by lunch prepared by the cafeteria manager for the students and staff.

Mattey's was visited by several Northern Neck MG's who are working on a similar program with the Lancaster Elementary School. They toured the garden and received numerous handouts and web sites information.

November brought a time for the garden to be put to bed. Over 150 students (K, 1st and 5th) as well as numerous MGs pulled and cut back plants and added compost/top soil to all of the beds over a two day period. The garden is ready now for spring planting.

Mattey's Garden offers many opportunities for MG's to work with children and others in the community to bring gardening to many.

MG PLANT SALE CATHY RIPLEY, '02

The JCC MG Plant Sale will be April 29 at the JCC/W Recreation Center. Please start seedlings and keep your eyes opened for those plants that will need dividing. If you think you have enough in your yard to have a crew come over and help, let me know and we will set up a dig day for you. Spring is just around the corner and we want to be ready for it! Any questions, call Cathy at 804-829-2984

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• Your News Now Wanted!! Anyone who has not
• reported on their success/failure with
• vegetable gardening last summer should
• please send Ailene Bartlett a report ASAP
• via e-mail at bartpear@widomaker.com,
• "snail" mail, or phone at 229-2822! Thanks!
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SPEAKERS BUREAU YEAR END GREG ALLEN, '97

In fulfilling our Communicate and Educate missions, 21 master gardeners of the Speakers' Bureau spoke at 34 separate events and reached over 1350 residents during 2005. Ailene Bartlett, Bob Winters and Rudy Roberts were our busiest speakers. Thanks to all of our members who made this a successful year.

We continue to solicit additional members for this wonderful community service. "Water wise gardening" in all of its various aspects is a favorite and requested topic. If you have expertise in this or other subjects, please consider joining us!

JUNIOR MASTER GARDENERS KARI ABBOTT, '04

January has brought all sorts of good news for the Junior Master Gardener Project! The first challenge has come quickly too. JMG was awarded a \$1,250 Grant from 4-H and the Natural Resource and Environmental Education Foundation. This will be used to teach a curriculum created by James City County /Williamsburg Junior Master Gardener Project, W³ & U, Aquatic Adventures (Water, Wetlands, and Wildlife and You). The first classes started on January 13. While teaching about the three stages of water, solid, liquid, and gas (or vapor) a first grader asked, "What is water?" I blinked, checked with the teacher, and then answered it was an oxygen molecule and two hydrogen molecules. The chemist way of writing water is H₂O. The molecules were held together like a magnetix's do when you play with them. That seemed to answer the question, and we moved on. It is a thrill to teach a little chemistry and have it make sense. (IF you knew my chemistry grades in high school, this whole conversation would have been scary!)

Also before the first class, JMG also found out that in partnering with one special teacher, Mrs. K. Kelly of DJ Montague, she received a grant for \$425.00 from the Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce to also have W³ & U, Aquatic Adventures taught in her classroom. So far, so exciting!

The W³ & U, Aquatic Adventures course will be a 10-hour (over the spring semester) block instruction for six, first grade classes at DJ Montague. I will have more information as it comes together, but JMG will need VOLUNTEERS to help with the field trip for these first grade classes to YORK RIVER STATE PARK. This will be the highlight of the instruction, where the children have a significant watershed experience (Chesapeake Bay Initiative lingo here). More information will follow!!!!

There will be 2 summer camps and a JMG after School program at Matthew Whaley that will also teach W³ & U, Aquatic Adventures so there are lots of opportunities for Master Gardeners and interns to be involved in the project.

Connected with the children's education, W³ & U, Aquatic Adventures, also is offering an **adult class**, Wetland Habitats Workshop. It will be held April 12, 2006 here in James City County. Advanced Training hours are approved for this class. It will last from 8:30 – 4:00. The location will be announced in the March JMG article, so stay tuned. There are 12 spaces left for any Master Gardeners who would like to sign up. Please call me (564-4539) or email me (bearsbaskets@cox.net) if you would like a space.

As always, if you want to join in the fun and excitement give me a call or zap me a note. JMG has room to grow!

UPCOMING PROGRAM AT WILLIAMSBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN

The Williamsburg Botanical Garden's program on Wednesday, February 15th at 7:00p.m.at the Williamsburg Library will be guest speaker, Dr. Louis Verner, Watchable Wildlife Biologist with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Dr. Verner has over 25 years experience as a university professor, ecologist and wildlife biologist and his major interest is educating the public about the ecological and economic values associated with the conservation and restoration of wildlife habitat. His presentation, "What Makes Sense?" will assess "standard" park maintenance practices and compare them to alternatives based on ecological principles and community cooperation. Specific examples will be provided for various habitats, including grassland/meadows,

forests, and streams and ponds. Alternatives will be discussed in terms of cost, labor, wildlife habitat, and attractiveness to visitors and eco-tourists. Using actual case studies, the value of developing both community and inter-departmental/agency partnerships with regard to park management will also be discussed. Please join us.

FEBRUARY TIMELY GARDENING TIPS HELEN HAMILTON, '04

Amaryllis: Always cut off the faded flowers of your amaryllis so no seeds form. Producing seeds robs the bulb of strength that should go to next years flowers. To insure next year's flowers on amaryllis, keep the plant growing strongly until mid-July before allowing it to go dormant

House Plant Care: To make economical "sticky stakes" for trapping whiteflies and aphids, cut bright yellow cardboard or plastic, such as recycled detergent bottles or margarine tubs, into strips. Coat with petroleum jelly. Insert into unused pots or hang near problem areas.

Research shows that a pot-in-a-pot set-up for irrigating houseplants is better than capillary action through water wicks. By using a small, unglazed clay pot placed inside a larger, glazed clay pot with a water reservoir in between, plants are better irrigated, and have higher visual quality, greater plant leaf area, and improved root growth.

For an interesting ornamental plant and a culinary addition, buy a plump, unshriveled, ginger root at the grocery store and plant it in a light, sandy soil just under the surface in a 6- to 8-inch pot. Place it in a warm, sunny window and keep damp until shoots appear. Water more frequently and fertilize monthly with high-phosphorus fertilizer. Harvest your crop in about eight months, saving a piece to replant.

To invigorate potted chives, cut them back to 1 inch above soil. Place in the refrigerator for two weeks, and then place the pot in a sunny window.

Pruning Trees and Shrubs: February and March are ideal times for pruning most trees and shrubs, with some exceptions. Check out the Virginia Tech website for a pruning calendar -- <http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/nursery/430-462/430-462.html>

Transplant trees and shrubs that are in the wrong spot. Cooler temperatures and increased rainfall in the winter provide a good environment for trees and shrubs to get established in their new homes. (Note: Carolyn Will of the plant rescue team in the Williamsburg area says you can replant trees and shrubs at any time during the year, or heel them in when the weather is too cold.)

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• please note a change of address: •
• Linda Lucas esllal@cox.net •
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UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

- Feb. 14, 1:30 pm, Herb Society of America, Colonial Triangle of VA Unit, "Butterflies are Magic", Ruth Burch, charter member of The Butterfly Society of VA. The program will be held at the Fellowship Hall of Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Norge. Contact: Lillian A. Campbell, 564-9580.
- March 2, Monthly Master Gardener Meeting, Williamsburg Regional Library, "Risk Management," Leanne DuBois, '96.
- April 6, Monthly Master Gardener Meeting, Williamsburg Regional Library, "Container Gardening", Bruce Barton, Grafton shop owner and plant provider for Busch Gardens
- April 12, Wetland Habitats Workshop, Advanced MG training, 8:30-4:00, call Kari Abbott at 564-4539.
- April 29, JCC MG Plant Sale, JCC/W Recreation Center