



The Colonial Master Gardener

June
2015

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY SUE LIDDELL

In 1998 the first tree steward class graduated, and members started looking for projects. One group believed that JCC/W should have its own botanical garden. It didn't take long to realize that we didn't have the contacts or financial backing necessary.

However, there were others with the same idea, and two years later the Williamsburg Botanical Garden became a reality. Master Gardeners have supported the garden from the start. A focus group led by Sally Sissel and Becky Sutton designed and maintained a perennial bed for a couple of years using a "perennial of the year" theme. Tree Stewards helped by planting trees and shrubs. When Patsy McGrady and Mitzi Balma took the tree steward course, their intern project was to identify trees in a wooded section and create a tree tour for the public. They now lead tours on a regular basis. We also have a therapeutic gardening group led by Angela Cingale which meets at the garden.

Many Master Gardeners present programs in the Freedom Park Interpretive Center; sessions on pruning are particularly popular. It was with great pleasure that James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners presented Karen Jamison, Board of Directors Chair of the Williamsburg Botanical Garden, a check for \$1,000 in recognition of the ongoing relationship of the two groups.

Next Meeting:
Thursday, June 4

Program:
"Sustainable Landscaping"

Speaker: Jim Orband, senior extension agent, York County



Patsy McGrady presents the check to Karen Jamison.



Newly planted summer annuals in the Shields Garden

ADMINISTRATION

BY DIANE HARE

With the utmost respect and gratitude, the Board has awarded emeritus status to the following Master Gardeners: Lois Enlow, Barbara Gustafson, and Art Gustafson. Thank you for your years of exemplary service and dedication!

And speaking of dedication and service, please join me in thanking John Giffin for the countless hours he has given our unit as membership chairman. John will be stepping down from that position on July 1, and I will assume these duties.

Other matters: The Board will recommend that our unit donate \$1,000 to a scholarship, as recommended by the Scholarship Committee and as approved by the Board. We will vote on this matter at our June meeting.

2015
MG Board

President:
Sue Liddell

President Elect:
Debbie Griesinger

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Diane Hare

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VMGA Reps:
Marilyn Riddle and
Jeanne Millin

Past President:
Margene
Hartsough

Co-op Ext Rep:
Doris Heath
564-2170

*Program Asst.,
ANR:*
Kate Robbins

INTERNAL EDUCATION

BY KATHY BUSH



Jim Orband

What do you think of when you hear the popular term “sustainable gardening”? Composting, recycling, conserving water, growing enough food to feed your family, row covers and extending the growing season? Our speaker this month is Jim Orband, retired extension agent for York County. He is an engaging and knowledgeable presenter and will bring us up to date on the latest sustainable gardening information and techniques.

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

June 17 (Virginia Zoo, Norfolk)

Two-hour **guided tour** by Marie Butler, horticulturalist, of the many **themed gardens** that we heard about in our February meeting. Cost \$10, non-refundable. Meet at Target at Marquis Shopping Center at 8:00 to carpool . Contact Ruth Schultz: reschultz8888@yahoo.com

Now through June 21 (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond)

“Van Gogh, Manet, and Matisse: The Art of the Flower.” Explore French floral still life through the 19th century.

June 20 (Williamsburg Botanical Garden, Freedom Park) 10:00am

The program is **Barrels and Bins.**” “ Suggested donation \$5.

September 11-12 (Monticello, Charlottesville)

9TH Annual Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello. Sponsored by the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange and Monticello. Lectures, vendors, demonstrations, food. More information at www.heritageharvestfestival.com.

VIRGINIA ZOO FIELD TRIP JUNE 17

It is not too late to sign up for this tour of the extensive gardens at the Virginia Zoo. Marie Butler, the horticulturalist who spoke to us in February, will be our guide. Cost is \$10. Contact Ruth Schultz reschultz8888@yahoo.com

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.

THE SHIELDS HERB GARDEN BY BARB LANDA AND JEAN JOHNSTON



While we all know that herbs prefer sunny, dry locations, it has been interesting working with herbs in the semi-shady, enclosed Shields Garden. The herbs we work with have been remarkably adaptable.

Perennial and annual herbs grow together in a complementary manner. In addition to the old standbys like basil, cilantro, lavender, thyme, oregano, and the mints, we have included some less common herbs like horehound, betony, costmary, comfrey, and valerian. This provides an opportunity for our participating interns to learn how to prune a variety of herbs.

We were challenged last year when our foxgloves developed a significant rust problem. Wanting the foxgloves to be a part of the herb garden, we moved the plants to another area after disposing of the soil and disinfecting our tools. We also divided a large, thick clump of iris (source of orris root) and planted the iris in front of the foxgloves. The migration solved the problem, and the effect is very attractive as well.

We also propagate new plants by cuttings and seeds, although most of our new plants come from the Colonial Williamsburg nursery. Earlier in the spring we were able to pot up lots of the extra seedlings and divisions for our own plant sale. Working in both the Reid and Shield herb gardens on Tuesday is fun with our colleagues. As with any garden, the Shields herb garden is constantly evolving.



Spring flowers are also highlights of the Reid Garden (with foxgloves, at left) and the Shields Garden (right).



IF WINTER COMES, CAN SPRING BE FAR BEHIND?

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, "ODE TO THE WEST WIND"



Kathy Lykins and Pat Rathke celebrating flowers at the Farmer's Market May 16

On May 2 retired William and Mary botany professor Dr. Martin Mathes led a "Campus Trees" walk around campus. Dr. Mathes was responsible for many of the plants on campus and is the author of *Collection of Woody Species: The College of William and Mary*, and *The Planting of a Campus Tradition: A History of the Landscape of the College of William and Mary*.



Marty Mathes



Flowers in the Reid Garden.



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SCENES FROM THE PLANT SALE



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PLANT SALE RECAP BY MARGENE HARTSOUGH



Once again our annual plant sale was a success owing to the hard work of each of you, the plants you donated, and the word spread far and wide promoting the event. The gross revenue this year was approximately \$7547, with a net after expenses of \$4692.62. Master Gardeners contributed 935 plants of all types. In addition, we purchased from Forest Lane Botanicals a variety of shade perennials, and from Atlantic Growers both perennials and annuals along with hanging baskets.

We received many positive comments on the display area, so we should consider using this space in the future. Special thanks to Carol Fryer and Iris Grant for their rain garden demo and to those who created herb and veggie containers and the beautiful floral planters.

We should consider the plant sale as a great teaching opportunity; the demo gardens offered just that. For instance, a member of the Native Plant Society was very complimentary of Harriett Parsons's knowledge of tomatoes. Sharing our knowledge with the public at this event in the future fits into our mission as Master Gardeners.

Here are some ideas as we look forward to 2016:

Think about digging and dividing your perennials this fall. Pot them now or as soon as

appropriate and nurture them over the winter so they can develop strong root systems. Once spring arrives they will be ready for the plant sale, and you'll be ahead of the game. Some plants to consider are iris, asters, day lilies, ajuga, other ground covers, and shrubs.

Keep in mind the type of veggies you might want to propagate. The Plant Sale Committee will send some guidelines for next year with suggestions for the best size plant that typically sells well along with recommendations for pot size.

Throughout the year we'll send additional thoughts about how you can help to make the next plant sale an even greater success. Look for these notes in future newsletters.

If you would like to be part of the 2016 Plant Sale Committee, just let us know. We can always use more participation. Areas in specific need of a coordinator are after plant sale, public relations, and pricing.

Thanks again to my committee for your hard work in bringing the event together: Bess Hopewell, Nancy Cassano, Patsy McGrady, and Chere' Harper.

THANKS FROM A MEMBER OF THE BOARD, WILLIAMSBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN

Kate Robbins passed on this thank-you message from Joanne Chapman, Horticulture Chair of the WBG:

"Kate,

I've been wanting to touch base and let you know how WONDERFUL the different groups of Master Gardeners have been that have been volunteering at Williamsburg Botanical Garden. Jordan Westenhaver has been absolutely instrumental in organizing the MG volunteers that come on Fridays. I know it is just the beginning of that initiative, but what a difference it has made already! I also wanted you to know that the pruning team of Annette Bell, Dan Tevlin, Mitzie Balma and Barb Landa have come to the garden (Dan and Annette twice, Mitzie and Barb once) to help correct some neglected or poorly done pruning in our native plant garden. They did a great job, and I REALLY appreciate their help. And Patsy McGrady, among all other things she has organized with the tours, has also arranged for a group of MG to start to work on re-establishing the perennial garden which is an exciting new project that will enhance that section of the garden greatly.

I can't thank you enough for seeing WBG as a viable learning site and for supporting all of these new initiatives and can't thank all who what taken the time to volunteer at the garden in any way shape or form! On behalf of Williamsburg Botanical Garden, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Sincerely
Joanne Chapman

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH – JUNE 2015

BY HELEN HAMILTON

PAST PRESIDENT, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

ROBIN'S PLANTAIN

Erigeron pulchellus

This daisy-like flower with pale violet rays grows in limy, dry soils, tolerates drought and is low maintenance. It is often overlooked for the home garden because it requires soils that are limy, growing in deep ravines where calcareous fossil-bearing soils are exposed. In the Williamsburg Botanical Garden, Robin's Plantain thrives in the above-ground calcareous ravine, where it has been planted in niches in the stone wall.

Blooming from April through June, the flowers somewhat resemble asters, but the rays are thread-like and more numerous, up to 100 for each flower. The lavender-blue to white flowers with yellow centers are in clusters of 1-6 blossoms. A single flowering stalk comes from a basal rosette of paddle-shaped leaves, each up to 5" long and 3" across. Stem leaves are smaller and clasping. Both the stems and the leaves are softly hairy.

On the Coastal Plain Robin's Plantain is a mountain disjunct since it is found in most of the western counties of Virginia. The range extends from Maine to Ontario and east-central Minnesota, south to Georgia, Mississippi and east Texas.

Fleabanes bloom in the spring whereas other members of the Aster family are fall-blooming. Other fleabanes (*E. strigosus* and *E. annuus*) are weedy with smaller flower heads. Plants in the genus *Erigeron* are often commonly called fleabane as a result of a once widely held theory that these plants repel fleas.

The genus name comes from the Greek *eri*, "early," and *geron*, "old man," meaning "old man in the spring" and referring to the fluffy white seed heads and the early flowering and fruiting of many species. *Pulchellus* means "little beautiful."

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



Robin's Plantain (*Erigeron pulchellus*) taken by Helen Hamilton in the Williamsburg Botanical Garden



Closeup of flower by Phillip Merritt

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E2 NEWS

BY KARI ABBOTT

E2 has completed a fantastic year of field trips. This year was grand. A big shout out! THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered. It was amazing.


The children saw all kinds of cool plants that included pink lady slippers, jack in the pulpit, and poison ivy. There are over twenty different types of trees on the beaver trail at York River State Park; next year we will identify more. There were lots of different birds, frogs, toads, lizards, and caterpillars that amazed and helped the children understand that the outside is wondrous and should be preserved.

This year we're also doing a partnership with the therapeutic gardening group. On May 27 we will take our special education friends to York River State Park, where another day of adventure and wonder awaits us.

The last month of E2 in school will be this May. First graders are doing the "Who Junked UP the James" activity; some of you did this as interns. It is a critical thinking activity, and the children have to figure out from a cast of characters who polluted the James River. It is a nice group activity with which to end our classroom visits. The kindergarteners are learning about the birds in Virginia, and we will see them again next year.

Look for E2 training over the summer, since we're always learning new things, and our curriculum is evolving.

Please email bearsbaskets@cox.net if you would like to join us in E2 volunteering. This next school year shimmers with anticipation.



VMGA SCHOLARSHIP
BY MARILYN RIDDLE

**CONGRATULATIONS TO
KARI ABBOTT!**

**She has been awarded
\$500 by VMGA to attend
Master Gardener College.**

**Kari is one of seven to
receive funds. All awards
are not for the same
amount.**



NEW KENT MASTER GARDENER EVENT

BY SUE DONNELLY

The VCE of New Kent County, Farm Bureau, and the JCC/Williamsburg Master Gardener Association are sponsoring the annual **Taking Root Farm Tour** in New Kent County on Sunday, June 28, 2015 from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. Visitors will have the opportunity to see different kinds of farming operations and learn about New Kent agriculture. Two farms are featured this year: Lightning Ridge Farm and Couch's Corner Berry Farm.

For details, see the flyer at the end of this newsletter.



WILLIAMSBURG/JAMES CITY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC



11:00 AM – 3:00 PM



THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2015
UPPER COUNTY PARK, TOANO



This is your very **special invitation for you and your family** to party with other friends and fellow Master Gardeners.



Let's meet at the Large Pavilion, at the twenty tables, for a day of sun, fun, and food. Many electrical outlets are available on two opposite walls and you will find the restrooms so conveniently attached to the pavilion.



You will have an opportunity to sign up at our next General Meeting on June 5. Check out the table at the back of the auditorium! Forms for your completion are included in this newsletter (see next page), and others will be available on June 5. All reservations are due by July 10, because meats and supplies will need to be ordered.



Thank you. See you at the next meeting, and please reserve **JULY 23** on your calendars!



—**Debby Griesinger, President Elect**
dgriesinger@cox.net
(607) 621-8317



The Colonial Master Gardener June 2015

**Williamsburg/James City County Master Gardeners
Annual Family Picnic
Thursday, July 23, 2015
11:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Upper County Park, Toano
(located behind the Mc Donald's, Exit 227, Rt. 64)**

Hello Master Gardeners,

Please complete the bottom of this sheet and return to Debby Griesinger to secure your reservation at the picnic. Make your check payable to: WBG/JCC Master Gardeners. This is a non-refundable contribution.

The last day to reserve your spot is July 10, because meat orders and other supplies need to be ordered. Please note which item you are willing to bring to share and consider ways to keep cold items cold. There are numerous outlets for crock pots, etc., for items that need to be kept warm. Remember a drop cord, if necessary. The Board will bring the beverages (water and sodas), rolls, meats, plates, cups, silverware, condiments, and some ice.

Please send \$5.00 for each adult; children are free.

Please complete this form, include your check to WBG/JCC MGs and return to Debby Griesinger by July 10. Thank you. I am so excited!!!!

Name

Number of Adults

Number of Children

TOTAL \$

Item you will bring

Appetizer/chips

Salad/Side Dish

Dessert

Debby Griesinger, 3009 Sawyer Way, Toano, VA 23168



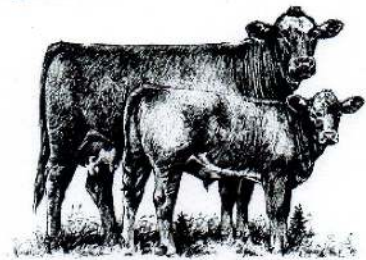
Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

TAKING ROOT

Farm Tour



SUNDAY
June 28, 2015
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM



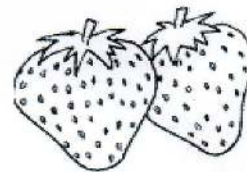
Visit different kinds of farming operations and learn about New Kent agriculture.



Featuring:

Lightning Ridge Farm
10341 New Kent Highway
New Kent, VA 23124

Couch's Corner Berry Farm
8201 Poindexter Road
New Kent, VA 23124



☞ Sites located in New Kent, VA Area ☞

From Interstate 64 take Exit 214 (Route 155) towards New Kent Courthouse (Route 249), travel 2.12 miles., turn left at Stop sign onto Rt. 249 towards Quinton & follow signs to Farm Sites.

Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension, New Kent County, Farm Bureau,
and the JCC/NK/Williamsburg Master Gardener Assoc.

For more information visit: <http://offices.ext.vt.edu/new-kent/> or call the
Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, New Kent County (804) 966-9645.

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact us at (804) 966-9645 during business hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. *TDD number is (800) 828-1120.

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Important Dates

- 5/23 Passion for Trees tour, Maymont, Richmond, 8-9:30am
- 5/30 Two-for-One Plant Walk
Edie Bradbury's home in Gloucester
804-693-4190 or ediebradbury@cox.net
(VNPS)
- 6/4 MG Monthly Meeting
- 6/6 Spring version of Charlie Dubay's "Nude Tree Walk." Chickahominy Riverfront Park, 10:00am (VNPS)
- 6/13 Grafton Ponds Plant Walk
Newport News Park, 10:00am (VNPS)
- 6/14 Farmer's Market: Incredible Edibles
- 6/17 Virginia Zoo tour of themed gardens, Norfolk
- 6/20 "Barrels and Bins," Williamsburg Botanical Garden, 10:00am
- 6/20 Walk around the plantings at Stonehouse Elementary School, 10:00am (VNPS)
- 6/21 Last day for the "Art of the Flower" exhibit at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
- 6/27 Farmer's Market: Vegetables

SUNSHINE NOTES



In the past month we sent a card to:

Lois Enlow – Health
Ray Green – Family death

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 submissions to the July newsletter will be **Monday, June 22**.

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.