

# The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION & VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

June 2009

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT:

### WATERWISE GARDEN

BY HARRIET PARSONS

As an intern in 2008, I would leave the classroom at the Human Resource Services Building and pass the Waterwise Garden project every Monday and Thursday from January to March. Sometimes I would reach down and pull a wayward weed and wonder about the garden. In the spring, Judy Hansen spoke to the class about the garden and encouraged us to earn intern hours at the site. I knew it would interest me because I was new to this area and not used to the high temperatures and lack of rainfall. I worked with Judy throughout the year and she encouraged me to take over the chair, which I agreed to do with Edith Schoenig as co-chair.

The garden was set up several years ago as a water conservation demonstration garden with James City County Cooperative Extension and the Master Gardener program. Sue Voigt and Judy Hansen were instrumental in the planning of the garden and with many master gardener volunteers in the planting.

And so our first work day was in late April with about ten new interns and some veteran master gardeners working hard at the official spring clean-up. To our chagrin, the landscape crew had decided to prune the forsythia, Russian sage and butterfly bush. That means they gave everything a flat-top! They have still not recovered. We weeded, deadheaded, cleaned up tossed cigarettes, weeded some more and made great progress. We have since had several more workdays in which we added a loosely defined walkway, cleared the overgrown cannas, installed a new trellis for the autumn clematis, cleared the periwinkle of wiregrass, and moved wayward rudbeckia back in place. In addition all new interns have been oriented to the site and are aware of the "no water" rule unless absolutely necessary for new plantings or in extreme drought conditions. This is not a problem this year, in fact we have been faced with runoff and standing water issues after some of the recent storms.

We have also co-opted with the Incredible Edible team and have added 3 earth boxes to the site. We hope to show how a container with a



water reservoir can be used to grow veggies such as tomatoes, peppers, basil. This concept works well on a condo patio or deck and will protect plants from hungry deer and rabbit. We feel this project is worthwhile and educational to many of the residents who visit the center and might not have the land or resources for a garden. In fact, I received an e-mail from the Director of JCC Social Services who expressed what the Waterwise Garden meant to them. She commented on the beauty of the garden, thanked us and mentioned that many people coming to DSS or the clinic really don't want to be there to begin with, but the floral greeting they are getting has to make it a little easier!

As I remember back to the days leaving the classroom site I don't think I realized the potential of the garden. I have now witnessed the progression of the early spring daffodils, the tulips, and forsythia, followed by waves of iris and now sundrops, red hot poker, shasta daisy, and cranesbill, soon to be followed by rudbeckia, liatris, yarrow and columbine. I can't wait for the rest of the show!



## Next Monthly Meeting

June 4, 9 a.m.,  
Williamsburg Regional  
Library.

Ken Thompson, IPM  
Specialist at Green  
Guard Associates will  
present:  
Integrated Pest  
Management.

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## INTERNAL EDUCATION NEWS

BY CAROL FRYER



Resident of the Virginia Zoo

Please remember that we are having **Risk Management Training** at our monthly meeting on June 4<sup>th</sup>. **Jeremy Johnson**, our VCE 4-H agent, will provide the ½-hour training instead of our customary business meeting. If you have not had Risk Management training within the last 3 years, it is important that you try to attend this session - master gardeners and interns.

We will be scheduling a live internet Risk Management training with Dave Close, VMGA director, in the fall for those members who are unable to attend the June session. That training will be held at the Toano VCE office through an Internet connection with Virginia Tech. A notice will be sent out once the date has been scheduled.

As I mentioned last month, **Ken Thompson, IPM specialist** at Green Guard Associates, will be our June monthly speaker. He will be giving us an update on **Integrated Pest Management**. This will be the perfect opportunity to ask your questions about pest and disease control. At this time of year, during Landscape Love visits, we have seen plants affected by various fungi, roses with black spot (another fungus), and dog vomit fungus which has made its appearance on bark mulch after periods of rain and high humidity. My neighbor's native dogwood trees seem to be affected by anthracnose. I know I will come prepared with several questions for Ken, and I hope you do the same. When I looked on-line at the VCE Pest Management Guide for Home Grounds and Animals, I noticed that there is one page for *organic controls of insects* on ornamentals. There is not a separate section for organic control of *diseases of ornamentals*. Since we all are becoming more focused on being good stewards of our environment, it will be helpful to learn more from Ken about 'Green' approaches to pest and disease management.

If you attended the Virginia Zoo field trip with Marie Butler, horticulture director, you might remember her mentioning that their large rose garden is controlled organically for any pests or disease problems. Marie graciously spent 3 hours with the master gardener group touring and discussing the gardens and greenhouse. We cannot thank her enough for all her time and plant knowledge she shared with us.

In the June/July issue of *Organic Gardening*, the former curator of the Rose Garden at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens states that he tends his own roses without the use of chemicals. He states that his main organic approach is pruning, combined with creating good soil and watering judiciously.

If you are looking for horticultural information through Virginia Tech Extension, you will find their web pages

have been re-organized. To quickly open the web page that list the articles/publications go to: [www.pubs.ext.vt.edu](http://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu). For the Pest Management Guide: *Field Crops 2009*, type in *pest management guide* in the search box of the above web page.

The Board has not scheduled a monthly meeting for July since the first Thursday is so close to the holiday weekend, and July seems to be a month for vacations for many of our members. Enjoy your Fourth of July weekend!

At our August 6<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting, our speaker will be our own Helen Hamilton. Helen is always a delightful and enlightening presenter. We look forward to learning more from her about our Tidewater Plants. See you in August.

## FROM THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION REPORT MAY-JUNE 2009:

At the March International MG Conference in Las Vegas, Bill Hoffmann from USDS/CREES/CES reported that in 2008 there were 95,000 certified MGs with an expected 20% increase this year; more than 5 million hours were volunteered, with 4.8 million personal contacts, and 100,000,000 times that via the web; with a \$65,000,000.00 value.

One of the speakers, Alaskan Jeff Lowenfels, who has written gardening columns in the Anchorage Daily News for more than 25 years, delivered a one-two punch in two separate, disparate presentations. The first, a scholarly presentation on organic gardening, explored the secrets of the soil food web. Lowenfels' latest book is *Teaming With Microbes*. Jeff's second talk was a testimonial to his personal walk with humility: How remorse and shame for turning his back on a homeless man led him to found a program called *Plant a Row for the Hungry*. He urged Master Gardeners to join with and promote this nationwide program in their respective locales.

2009  
MG Board

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258-8632

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564-6191

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Doris Heath  
564-2170

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

BY KARI ABBOTT



The field trips to York River State Park were a great success this year for both DJ Montague and Matoaka Elementary Schools! A big Thank You to all the volunteers who made the walk a memorable experience for our first grade friends. There were some exciting moments on each school's trip...a baby fawn showed its wobbly legs and spots to several classes of first graders, while 5 Bald Eagles circled overhead. I think that the mass of children let the fawn live another day. The children found turtles, lizards and snakes, and of course trees all of sorts and sizes, ferns, wild ginger, trillium and equisetum were in the forest for MG's to enjoy. There were some children who definitely got excited about science, and some parents who learned a new thing or two.

On the Matoaka Elementary school trip, there was a copperhead curled up in some dead leaves, sitting right off the path. Thanks to our rule, "do not go off the path," there were no incidents with the snake, but valuable lessons were learned about this predator. Copperheads can camouflage well, and dried leaves are a perfect backdrop for their markings. Copperheads will sit in their spot, watch and wait, and this one surely did, because 120 first graders, their parents, and Master Gardeners walked on by and it never moved. If someone had gone off the path and stepped on it...well, that would have been another story, and one I am glad I did not have to tell. We all learned a lot about copperheads this year.

The classes have finished for this school year, with the field trips being the big year-end adventure. For anyone who would like to join in E2, please look for the training in August, so you will have the background to jump in and have fun!

## MELISSA'S MEADOW

BY GRACE RAYMOND



We will be in the meadow on Thursday, June 18 around 8:30. Bring your own tools for weeding, clipping and carrying away weeds.

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE WINNER

James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners placed 3rd at the March International Master Gardener Conference in Las Vegas for their Youth Environment Education entry in the Standards for Excellence (SFE) Awards. The Project Chair, Kari Abbott, having won the brag board for Youth Education at MG College in 2007 and a National Extension Award with the project, decided to submit it for the international award.

Congratulations James City County/Williamsburg MGs and Kari Abbott!!

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## BRUTON HIGH NATURE TRAIL

Amy Lockwood, a teacher at Bruton High School, is interested in working with Master Gardeners on a nature trail. This is currently not an approved project but if you are interested in making it one, Jeanne Millin will work with you on the project application. If you are interested in working on the trail, please contact Amy at home at 664-6317.

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## INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL PROJECT

Jeanne Millin, who is both a Master Gardener and a Master Naturalist, is working on a Master Naturalist invasive cutting/pulling project at New Quarter Park. Volunteers will be working on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month at approximately 9:15 am (immediately after the 7 to 9 am Williamsburg Bird Club walk). The next scheduled date is June 27<sup>th</sup>. Meet at the office and we will work for about two hours.

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*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*

# The Colonial Master Gardener June 2009

## DONATE TO VMGA'S SILENT AUCTION

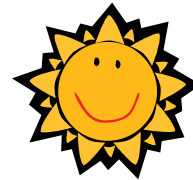
Please support the VMGA silent auction that will take place at Master Gardener College this June. All proceeds from this auction will go towards the State Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment Fund. Our on-campus State MG Coordinator is essential for the continued success of the Master Gardener program in Virginia. Funds from traditional sources for this position are not guaranteed! VMGA realizes both the dependence of Virginia Master Gardening on the State Coordinator position and the need for stable funding. In that regard, VMGA initiated an agreement with the Virginia Tech Foundation to partially fund this position with a one million dollar endowment.

We need to your help make the endowment a reality. Lively bidding on enticing items donated by your unit and by individual MGs are of great importance to the success of this effort. Bring your donated items with you to MG College or arrange for items to be transported through your local Master Gardener office. Please be as generous as possible for this worthwhile endeavor. You can help by donating any of the following: garden & landscape tools, planters, culinary items, new & gently used books, baskets, plants, gardening gloves, fountains, hats, hand-crafted items, garden art, bird feeders, bird baths or bird houses. These are not the only items you can donate, just a sampling of things donated in past years.

You all did really well last year in picking items that made us a lot of money. Let's try to top it this year. With that in mind, we encourage you to ask for donations from your local nurseries as well. Every item large and small helps our cause. Thank you for your support of the State MG Coordinator Endowment and the VMGA Silent Auction. Contact Leslie Paulson (ljp6651@comcast.net or 703-330-9441) or Sharon Corbin (sharonandtrish@comcast.net) if you have questions or would like to assist. Let us know as soon as possible what contributions we can expect from your Unit. Early notification is helpful for record keeping. We will, of course, accept donations up to the end. Please use the following form to help us create our spreadsheet.

### VMGA Auction Donation 2009

Name:  
Street Address:  
City: Zip Code: Phone Number:  
County: Email Address:  
Value (will use to help select starting bid):  
Donated Item(s):



## SUNSHINE NOTES

If you know a Master Gardener who is ill, facing surgery, has suffered a family loss, or any event in which that person might benefit from a **sunshine note**, please contact the MG Secretary, Pat Crowe. She will send a note or take appropriate action on behalf on the organization.

Pat may be reached at 645-4538 or pk.Crowe@cox.net.

EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the July MG Newsletter is **June 22**. Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at cathy.lohwater@cox.net or call 757-259-1133. Comments and questions about the newsletter are also

Remember to check out the **Calendar Of Events** on our website ([www.jccwmg.org](http://www.jccwmg.org))

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

- **June 4** Monthly MG Meeting @ WRL; Ken Thompson of Green Guard Associates, "IPM Update"
- **June 18** New Kent VCE Educational Seminar
- **June 18-21** MG College @ VA Tech
- **June 28** Taking Root Farm Tour
- **August 6** Monthly MG Meeting @ WRL; Helen Hamilton, "Tidewater Plants"

## 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.