

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION & VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

March 2009



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT:

PRUNING TEAM

BY CAROL FRYER

Pruning Lessons At Home

February and the first few weeks of March are the time to prune before the new buds break. The Pruning team decided to bring our services directly to the homeowners this year rather than conducting workshops indoors. We advertised "Pruning Lessons At Home" in the local papers from the last week in December until we cut off registration on January 16th due to an overwhelming number of responses. We had projected a capacity of serving 25 families, but our numbers had reached 66 applications when we closed our registration. In addition to these home-based pruning lessons, we will be doing a workshop in New Kent in March that will combine a presentation with an outdoor demonstration.

By the end of February, we will have made home visits to most of our clients. Many of our homeowners were seen individually at their homes, but we have also provided the hands-on lessons to small groups in various neighborhoods. During our visits, we have put the pruning tools in the hands of the homeowners, and brought them through the process of learning how to position pruners correctly for pruning cuts, what type of pruning cuts to make, what tools to use, when to prune, while also teaching best practices of choosing the right plant for the right place, mulching to maintain moisture and soil temperature, use of compost to improve soil rather than overusing fertilizers and good



horticultural practices to prevent disease and need for pesticides. The evaluation forms that have been coming in have praised the services of our team members. One comment I particularly enjoyed was:

"Two of the three residents were so inspired with the instructions that they spent the next day practicing their lessons on the appropriate plantings."

The Pruning Program began in 2007 after several Master Gardeners attended a 'Train the Trainer' workshop given by Jim Orband, York County Extension Agent. Each year we have adjusted our program and added new team members to deliver better services to our communities. Our current team members are: Flora Adams, Tod Allen, Jerry Babski, Annette Bell, Lois Enlow, Carol Fryer, Art Gustafson, Nancy Harris, Barbara Landa, Jeanne Millin, Ruth Murphy, Ruth Schultz, Sally Sissel, Dan Tevlin, Toddy Voorhees and Jane Healy-Nobrega.

We hope to continue learning and expanding our services to reach all JCC and New Kent residents who are willing to learn with us.

Next Monthly Meeting

March 5, 9 a.m.,
Williamsburg Regional
Library.

Wendy Wubbels of
Forest Lane Botanicals
will speak about
*Hostas and Shade
Plants.*

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MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

SARA DOUGHERTY

March 15th is the deadline for paying 2009 dues. If you have not paid your dues yet, please do so as soon as possible. According to our bylaws, in order for a member to retain active status, they must pay their dues and you must have active status to participate in our projects and activities. So, please pay your dues now. Send your checks made out to JCC/W MGA to Sarah Dougherty; 144 Tolers Rd.; Williamsburg, VA 23185. If you have questions, please e-mail me at oakhillmax@earthlink.net or call me at 565-7954. Thanks!

2009
MG Board

President:
Dave Banks
258-8632

VP Projects:
Jeanne Millin
258-4724

VP Internal Ed:
Carol Fryer
220-0759

VP Administration:
John Giffin
345-5209

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220-1858

Past President:
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564-6191

Co-op Ext Rep:
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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.

INTERNAL EDUCATION NEWS

CAROL FRYER

The Natural Habitat Workshop on Feb. 7th for Master Gardeners, presented by Susan Powell, Master Naturalist and Stephen Living, Watchable Biologist, Dept. of Inland Game and Fishery was an excellent learning opportunity. We had 26 attendees, and I was very pleased to see members of the 2009 training class here with our Master Gardeners.

A few of the website resources on Backyard Habitats that the Master Naturalists gave us include:

1. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF): <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/habitat/> DGIF has a Backyard Habitat certification program, in which you can apply to have your back yard added to the list of habitats in Virginia.

2. National Wildlife Federation (NWF): <http://www.nwf.org/backyard/> NWF has a Backyard Habitat certification program, and useful information on habitat creation, conservation, and enhancement.

3. Audubon Society's information on gardening and landscaping for birds: http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/

4. John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society: <http://www.claytonvnps.org/index.htm> List of native plants for habitat gardening, and list of local **sources** of native plants.

5. Virginia Master Naturalists <http://historicrivers.org/>

The Monthly Meeting

On **March 5th**, we are pleased to have Wendy Wubbels, Forest Lane Botanicals with us as our speaker to tell us about **Hostas and Shade Plants** for our gardens.

The monthly meeting is held at the Williamsburg Regional Library with our business meeting starting at 9 AM followed by our speaker. We look forward to seeing you there.

Program Showcase: Each month a different project or program will be showcased. At our March meeting, **Minouche Robinson** will speak about the **Garden Guidance Program** that she and Helen Kidder run at the Detention Center.



Workshop:

Mark **March 21st** on your calendar for the **Self-Watering Container Workshop** presented by the Incredible Edible members, Jack Gross and Dennis Wool. Information is on our website, and fliers will be available at the monthly meeting.

Volunteers Needed:

On **April 18th, 10 AM-2 PM**, the Master Gardeners will be participating in **Earth Day** at Waller Mill Park. We need members to present children's activities, sell birdhouses, demonstrate self-watering containers, answer plant questions, etc. If you can help, contact Carol Fryer at 220-0759, cfryer@cox.net.

I am always grateful for the network of friends and knowledge that Master Gardeners provide. For many of us that have moved to this area, the MG Association has been our connection to integrate into the community, and to form strong friendships.

I am currently reading a book titled *Three Cups of Tea* that tells about another type of friendship and community integration. Greg Mortenson, an American former climber, tackles a one man's mission to promote friendship and peace in Pakistan by building one school at a time. During his attempt to collaborate with a small village, he is given great advice by the village chief: "Here (in Pakistan) we drink three cups of tea to do business; the first you are a stranger, the second you become a friend, and the third, you join our family, and for our family we are prepared to do anything – even die."

Tea anyone?



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E2 UPDATE

BY KARI ABBOTT, E2 PROJECT
CHAIRPERSON

Busy as Ever!

As the last vestiges of winter are upon us, the E2 Project has been busy in schools.

At DJ Montague Elementary School (DJM), things have been hopping! DJM was accepted to be a test for the Bright Beginnings classrooms in the month of February. The Kindergarteners were so excited to learn about worms and soil. They liked worm art, for which they used a plastic worm and paint! A second lesson included a wildlife walk. It was 19 degrees outside on the day we went walking. Though it was a short walk, a red bellied woodpecker, a crow, a turkey vulture, chickadee, and puddle were available. The third activity was water charades, and the last activity was about spiders. It was quite a marathon, but everyone enjoyed it.

The E2 Program was very involved in helping out for Science Night at DJ Montague. Dr. Jeff Kirwan of Virginia Tech came and talked about his new book, *Remarkable Trees of Virginia*. It is a great book, one which I highly recommend to you all when it comes out in April. Guest speakers included students from Jamestown High School Field Biology class, the Williamsburg Regional Library, and a representative from NASA. About 150 students and their parents attended. Parents were delighted with the new ideas and speakers.

Rocks were on tap to learn about in February for the first graders. Lots of sedimentary,

igneous, and metamorphic rocks were shared with the children as well as books about rocks. A big thank you to Ann Davis, because even though she is taking a break from Master Gardeners, she was very kind to share such beautiful rocks with the E2 Project. Second graders are doing a basic forest inventory growth mapping exercise in a 24 x 36 foot section of woods behind the school. E2 has been asked to help provide examples of ways the fourth graders can make a difference in the environment. They will be writing essays using examples.

At Matoaka Elementary School, our steady group of volunteers presented the stages of water activity in the month of February. It all went well for the six classes there. E2 has been asked to do a food web review for the Science Standard of Learning tests coming in April.

Coming up in March, papermaking activities will be going on in both schools. This is a fun exercise where the children learn how trees are grown to make paper, how much water is used in making paper, and how paper can be recycled. It is a very hands-on activity and loads of fun.

April brings FIELD TRIPS for DJM to York River State Park, and Matoaka will be going in MAY to York River State Park. Look for announcements at the March and April

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.*

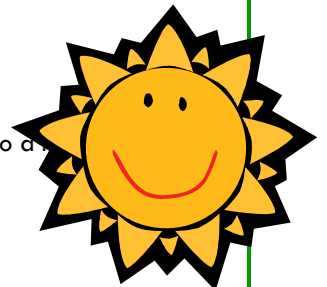
SUNSHINE NOTES

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.**

Recently, she has sent the following:

- A note of condolence to Leanne DuBois expressing sympathy for the death of her Father.
- Get-well notes to Lois Enlow, Barbara Gustafson and Ailene Bartlett after their recent surgeries.
- A note of condolence to Alice Kopinitz regarding the deaths of her sister and brother-in-law; also a condolence to Shirley Mitchell (former MG) regarding the death of her husband.
- A note of cheer to Wayne Moyer who is caring for his wife after her surgery.

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



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RISK MANAGEMENT TRAINING: MARCH 2

Have you taken a Risk Management training class? If not, join the Intern class on **Monday, March 2**. Since we work with the public, it is a good idea to have at least one session of Risk training. The class is at the Rec Center, 9 a.m.

HERB SOCIETY MEETING: MARCH 10

On March 10, the Herb Society of America/ Colonial Triangle Unit of VA has a meeting at 1:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall of Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 7479 Richmond Rd., Norge. Program: **"Name That Poison"** featuring the Williamsburg Botanical Garden's "drama team" (including our own Helen Hamilton) in a mystery thriller about the 13 most poisonous plants in our gardens. You may be surprised!!

LIBRARY BOOK UPDATE

Two of the 10 books missing from the library and listed on the Members pages of our website have been returned. Please check your home library to see if any of those listed on the website made it to your shelves by mistake. When Jeanne Millin was in the office last week, Doris Heath told her that one of our members wanted to take a couple of books home and was upset that this is no longer possible. While a few books have been contributed by MG members, most were purchased by JCC and are government property. Unfortunately, we have to ensure that the library is available to everyone for research when needed and books can no longer be removed.

MELISSA'S MEADOW RETURNS

We return to work in the meadow the third Thursday of April, the 16th. I look forward to meeting new friends of the meadow.
Grace Raymond

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The **New Kent County Farm Tour** is scheduled for **June 28**. Mark your calendars!! They will be looking for volunteers, so reserve the date if you are interested in helping.

TREE STEWARD CLASS

The Peninsula Tree Stewards, consisting of JCC/W, York County, Newport News, and Hampton Master Gardeners who have received specialized training in the advanced-level Master Gardener Tree Steward program, are currently presenting a three month training class for 20 master gardeners who wish to become Tree Stewards.

Led by Sue Liddell, our Peninsula Tree Steward Coordinator and Peggy Manning, our Training Class Coordinator, the 21 active Peninsula Tree Stewards have developed the curriculum, chosen the textbooks, written the exams, and obtained the instructors for each class. Along with such topics as tree physiology, tree planting and site selection and tree health are interspersed a number of practical methods for tree identification and tree inventory. Field trips are also included. At the end of the course, all new Tree Stewards develop projects in which all Tree Stewards, old and new, participate.

Members of this year's class from JCC/W Master Gardeners are Tod Allen, Carol Fryer, Cathy Lohwater, Jeanne Millan, Ann Neilsen, Dan Tevlin, and Donna Xander.



Remember to check out the **Calendar Of Events** on our website (www.jccwmg.org)

EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the April MG Newsletter is **March 23**. 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 welcome. Thank you.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Mar. 2 Risk Management Training, Intern Class, Rec Center
- Mar. 5 Monthly MG meeting, Wendy Wubbels, Hostas and Shade Plants
- Mar. 10 Herb Society Meeting
- Mar. 21 Self-Watering Container Workshop
- Apr. 2 Monthly MG meeting, Andrew Koenig, Arborist, Tree Problems
- Apr. 18 Earth Day at Waller Mill Park