

# The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WBG MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION & VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



May 2006

## President's Corner Charlie Clapper

Studying historic gardens as models of good design provided me great pleasure as a student landscape architect. When I read the Wednesday, April 12 *Virginia Gazette* front page article about water it brought back memories of one particular design we studied – the 16<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance garden of Villa d'Este near Tivoli, Italy. There, water provides the special effects of this exquisite garden. Each pause in the ascent of this hillside delight, whether by direct lines of the paths or by the diagonals of the ramps is marked by varied uses of water -- by fish ponds at the lower level, glittering water staircases as the climb begins, by great monumental fountains enclosed in tree-nestled garden rooms. The superb promenade of the 'one hundred fountains' provides a breathing space before the steepest part of the journey. Even here, in the thickly planted wood, grottoes and fountains mark the terminal and junction points of the ramps. Finally, one last silver water jet sprays upwards to the sky on the great open terrace just before the villa.

We can appreciate the elegance and beauty of this historic garden. But times have changed! Maintenance costs are prohibitive. We all worry as we become immersed in volunteer master

gardener activities when we will "get to" our own gardens. We may dream of elaborate fountains, grottoes and fish ponds. But concerns about declining water tables, water quality, water pollution, energy usage (to run the fountain pumps for the fountains) point to the ever-increasing need to use judiciously our precious water resources for our own future use and for future generations. Americans use drinking quality water to wash our cars, flush our toilets, and water our lawns and gardens. As we enter the heart and heat of the gardening season we must educate ourselves and those we work with and ourselves in better ways to design, construct, plant and maintain gardens to wisely use our finite water resources. Fountains without water are sad sights; gardens shriveled by inadequate water worse. By using water sparingly now we'll have it for the future.

And speaking of the future, the current members of the MG Association Board have with one exception agreed to serve another year. Ann DeForest, State Representative has told us she cannot serve another year. Anne Odle, the second State Representative, has agreed to manage all the State Representative duties. The by-

laws of the Association allow one year terms for Board members with elections at the June meeting. Board members may serve multiple terms. The current Board members will run for election this June. Additional nominations will also be accepted then, before the "call for a vote." I know that the by-laws require a nominating committee. Last year the Nominating Committee had great difficulty filling the slate of officers. Consequently, not all the Association positions were filled until the fall! To avoid that very disruptive situation again, I simply asked people whether they were willing to serve another year. Most agreed. This approach will allow the Association to move forward more smoothly now. I do very much want the Association to have an energetic nominating committee next year. The Board is also discussing other options for filling Board positions including by-law changes to allow election for two year terms. The Board will make a proposal to the membership at the June meeting. I welcome your suggestions and assure you that this Board is working with the Association's best interests—we don't want to become a lifetime Board!

## Next Monthly Meeting

Thursday, May 4, Williamsburg Regional Library

Angela Cingale, Secretary of the 2006-2008 Virginia Master Gardener Association and James City County Master Gardener will present the program, "What's Growing In Our Garden" a presentation on the Past, Present and Future of the Williamsburg Botanical Garden



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# The Colonial Master Gardener

## Internal Education News Jean Winters

April showers are bringing May flowers! Happy Spring!

How glad we were to see the "stalwart three MGs" on Saturday, April 8th, at the "makeover house" on Centerville Road! Jarl Christensen worked diligently on a paver walkway, while Phyllis Jennings and Judy Hansen planted shrubs and annuals! Sod was laid, as

well, with the help of the Water-Smart folks...Leanne DuBois and her young daughter (good scout!) applied their sod-laying skills amidst showers and dry spells too. All in all, the transformation from morning to late afternoon was great! Our thanks!

I have planned a steering committee meeting for "Programs and Re-

Certification Ideas" for Wednesday, May 3rd at 9:30 a.m. at our home. I plan to send directions to those who will be attending...I'll be in touch about a week before that date.

Enjoy these busy days! Stop to smell the flowers too!

## Graphic Design Assistance Leanne DuBois

With the Master Gardener Association becoming more diverse and reaching an increasingly larger audience in the community it's important that the public understands that our educational programs reach all of our citizens. We are mandated by law to indicate this to the public by adding equal opportunity clauses to all our documents, flyers, and brochures that are distributed to the public. Three such

clauses have to be added to all public documents, they include the "EEO" and "ADA" statements indicating the our programs are open to all race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, and disability. The third statement identifies that our programs are administered through Virginia Cooperative Extension/Virginia Tech, being the point of contact for the community. If you would like to draft bro-

chures for your programs or develop flyers for upcoming events whereby the public is invited, please forward the information to Sandra at our office via email ([skee@vt.edu](mailto:skee@vt.edu)) or give her a call so she can add these statements and also our VCE and Master Gardener logos. She will even assist in creating an attractive design for you. We are here to help and this will ensure that the information looks great and includes the proper documentation also.

## MG Summer Picnic Barbara Gustafson

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, June 3. The Master Gardeners of JCC/Williamsburg are going to have a Picnic-type Bash by the James at the home of MG Cathy Ripley. Spouses and children are welcome. And speaking of spouses, Dennis Sissel will be chef with his famous barbeque. It is up to us to provide the rest, so we're asking each

family to bring a side dish, chips, condiments, or dessert (serving of 4-6) to share.

There will be games (and probably competitions) to play such as badminton, horseshoes and bocce. We are exploring types of musical entertainment. The only thing we are asking of you, other than to come to

the picnic, is to tell co-chair Ann Deforest or me that you're coming, as this will help Dennis know how much barbecue to provide. There will be a sign-up at the next general meeting or you may email one of us, [barbarasg@cox.net](mailto:barbarasg@cox.net) or [ann\\_deforest@hotmail.com](mailto:ann_deforest@hotmail.com).

We're on the web at [www.jccwmg.org](http://www.jccwmg.org)

### 2006 MG BOARD

#### PRESIDENT

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564-6191

#### PAST PRESIDENT

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259-9025

#### VINTAGE MG

Ailene Bartlett, '85  
229-2822

#### EXTENSION AGENT

Leanne DuBois, '96  
564-2170

## PROJECT UPDATES

**Melissa's Meadow** The College generously gave us mulch and with the help of some energetic students, it was spread on the pathways. On May 18, we will meet around 8 or 8:30. Plan to weed and clip.

### Seeds of Learning Mary Ann Kimminau

SOL'S are off to a GREAT start. We have completed 3 schools before Spring Break and have had many compliments. The interns have been awesome and several have become experts already. A special BIG Thanks to Alice Kopinitz for always being there with a helpful hand. The greenhouses that have been given to every classroom we visit seem to be very well received. We will be finishing up with SOL'S on May 9th. Thanks so much to all who have helped or are scheduled to help. When we finish we will have made over 1000 contacts, mostly with the 7 and under age group (future Master Gardeners)!



MGs Reba Hazlewood, Andrea Eadie, and Faye Anderson prepare for the Plant Sale on April 29.



MG Tree Stewards Rich Bunger, Flora Adams and Sue Liddell work at the Tree Reforestation project at the Rec Center.

## Monthly MG Meeting Project Presentations

<u>Month</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
May	Reid Garden	Marilyn Riddle
June	Junior Master Gardening	Kari Abbott
July	Therapeutic Gardening	Barbara Gustafson
August	To be announced	
September	Tree Stewards	Sue Liddell
October	Incredible Edibles	Barbara Gustafson/Ailene Bartlett
November	Water-wise Gardening	Judy Hansen
December	4-H Wetlands Walk	Tree Stewards

# The Colonial Master Gardener

## May Gardening Tips Helen Hamilton

**EDITORS NOTE:** The deadline for submission of material for the June Newsletter is May 15. Please send to Lise Kline at [legskline@cox.net](mailto:legskline@cox.net) or call 757-259-9477. Thank you.

Please Note change of address for:

Sue Voight

[svoigt1@cox.net](mailto:svoigt1@cox.net)

From Jim Lachowicz, Home Gardening Newsletter for Hampton Roads Area  
Spring is here !!! The last average killing frost for this area is around April 20<sup>th</sup>. Know your plant and its cold and heat tolerance. Planting plants that are ideal for this area (or whatever area you live) requires a lot less work, care, time and money. On average this month, it will be a high of 67 degrees and a low of 47 degrees and Hampton Roads will get 10 days of rain averaging 3.10 inches. On average this is the second driest month for the year next to November, so watch your new seedlings and plantings carefully. Remember all plants need 1 inch of water per week. Newly planted annual flowers beds and vegetables may need more frequent watering but not more water per week. DO NOT OVER LOVE YOUR PLANTS ... they can drown.  
Turf: Deep water all turf grasses with 1 inch of water every 7-10 days in the absence of rain. Turf will readily let you know when it needs watering. When you walk on it and it stays down ... it needs water. Never .... Never .... Never ... water in short intervals or more than twice a week. Deep watering promotes deep root system so in July and August when it really hot and dry your lawn will still be green with minimal water. Alternate mowing patterns. Following the same path all the time just creates ruts and

a place for weed seeds to congregate.  
Bulb Plants: Have you wondered what to do with those wonderful daffodils and tulips after the blooms have browned out? Well, all plants grow to reproduce. Once a plant loses its flower luster, the plant will put its energy into seed production. Dead-head (cut off) the spent flower and the plant will put its energy into bulb production rather than seed production, so next year you'll have more or bigger flowers. After dead-heading the flower, do not cut the plant to ground level for at least six to eight weeks (the plant will brown out).  
Easter Lilies: If you want to plant an Easter lily outside, don't plant it near other lilies. Easter lilies may carry a virus that can infect other lilies. They will naturally bloom next year in early summer. To have them bloom at Easter they must be forced in a greenhouse or other controlled environment  
Annuals: When you are out shopping for annual flowers for your garden, look for plants with lots of unopened buds. Plants that bloom in the pack are often root bound and may be stunted for several weeks after being transplanted. Plants not yet in bloom will actually bloom sooner, be better established, and grow faster.  
Soil Test: To determine if soil is ready to work, squeeze a handful into a tight ball, then, break the ball apart with your fingers. If the ball of soil readily crumbles in your fingers, the soil is ready to be worked. If the soil stays

balled, however, it is still too wet to work. Use this test in another week to determine if the soil is ready to be worked.  
Birds are a wonderful and natural way to rid your garden of many unwanted pests. Maintaining a good source of food for birds will attract them to your yard. If you see a pest problem (aphids, whitefly, etc) stop refilling your bird feeders for a day or so and watch them clean your plants. Birds consume hundreds of insects each day, and wise gardeners encourage them to take up residence in orchards and gardens by installing bird houses, feeders, and water sources.  
Planting Trees: Don't add organic matter to the soil when planting trees. It does not help the tree become established and may create conditions that encourage the roots to stay inside the planting hole instead of spreading into the surrounding soil. Do dig a wider (but not deeper) planting hole, but fill it with the original soil.  
House Plants: You should leach your house plant pots once every 6 months. Some plants such as Spider Plants should be leached between each fertilization. Don't be too anxious to move your house plants outdoors. Even a good chill can knock the leaves off of tender plants.  
Vegetables do not need their own garden. You can plant your vegetables with your flowers. Vegetables provide wonderful plant textures, and leaf and flower colors

## MG College Scholarships Available

A limited number of \$50 scholarships are being offered to members of the JCC/WMG MG Association to help defray expenses for the June 2006 Master Gardeners College. College agenda information should be available soon on the Virginia Tech website. MG's

may nominate themselves or be nominated by another MG. Deadline for applications is May 20.

Criteria for selection are:

- program or project chairs
- volunteers who demonstrate future potential

- financial need
- new VCE mg's (less than 150 hours)
- individuals with desire to continue contributing

Please send or e-mail applications to Mary Ann Kimminau, Secretary . Car pooling will be arranged.

If attending MG College, contact Anne Odle at [anneodle@cox.net](mailto:anneodle@cox.net) for carpool/caravan info.

## Food Lion MVP Contributions

MGs can have a portion of Food Lion profits from their grocery store purchases donated to the VMGA's Endowment Fund through their MVP cards. Follow these instructions:

- Go online to [www.FoodLion.com](http://www.FoodLion.com)
- Click on In the Community
- Click on LionShop and Share
- Register MVP Cards
- Select Organization
- Select State (pause/wait then arrow down to VA)
- Select Organization (pause/wait then arrow down to Virginia Master Gardener Association)
- Add MVP Cards
- Fill in information and then click on Next

Save the date and tell your friends!

## Taking Root Farm Tour

Sunday, June 25

12 Noon - 5 p.m.

New Kent County

Visit 6 farms including Cattle, Sheep & Goat, Horse, Vineyard, Horticulture Crops, Organic Farm plus a Farmer's Market  
Map and brochure available soon.

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

- April 29 MG Plant Sale, JCCW Rec Center, 9am to noon
- June 1 Monthly MG meeting, Rich Earth, Liz Witkowski, Williamsburg Regional Library
- June 3 MG Summer Picnic, see page 2
- June 25 Taking Root Farm Tour, New Kent County
- July 6 Monthly MG meeting, Creating Backyard Habitats using Native Plants, Louis Verner, VA Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries, Quarterpath Recreation Center