

# The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &  
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



May 2012

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY ROGER EVANS

Wow, here it is the last of April and now it's cooler. Thank goodness that we finally received rain. I was just about to set up a new drip irrigation system but have put that on the back burner for now until I catch up on a few other things.

As I write this, I am really looking forward to the plant sale. This year, I am more than doubling my contribution of plants to our cause as it is the one time of year that we all really pull together to make the event a success. I hope to see you there!!

This month things have been a whirlwind of activity in the school system with four schools asking for plans and advice. Patricia (Patty) Ridgway is a new co-chair for Schools. She is really excited about working with the schools and I've already taken her to meetings. Patty will be taking over the school projects soon as Genrose and I step aside and assist her as needed with support and information.

The Historical Triangle Community Garden had their kick off meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> and was well attended by eager gardeners



within the community wanting to learn more and have a place to practice their horticultural skills.

I was privileged to speak at the Ft. Eustis Spouses' Club at their April luncheon. The topic requested was gardening for small spaces. The enthusiasm that I received was wonderful with all asking many questions afterwards. A self-watering container from Bins and Barrels was the door prize along with three small indoor plant containers that were filled and ready to admire. They were so enthusiastic about the plant sale that they requested a copy of our flyer electronically so they could send it out to all their members.

Here's hoping that you are enjoying the spring weather, the longer days of light and that your gardens are bountiful this year.

## BY-LAWS UPDATE

BY MARGENE HARTSOUGH

As a result of the by laws change made last June adding the office of President Elect there are two additional sections which need to be brought into agreement with that addition. We will vote on these at the May meeting.

First:

**Article IV Executive Board**

**Section 1:**

**Change the number of officers required to constitute a quorum from four to five.**

*Rational:* With the addition of the office of President Elect there are eight officers on the Board with the potential of nine when there are two VMGA representatives. In order to have a simple quorum five must be present for any votes.

### Monthly Meeting

**May 3**, 9 a.m.,  
Williamsburg Regional Library;  
Speakers:  
Suzanne and Andy Warner from the English  
Connection

Second:

**Paragraph 2 under Section 1**

Wording should be:

**The term of office shall be two years with the exception of President and President Elect, who shall serve for one year terms. To ensure Board continuity, three officers are to be elected one year and four the next. President Elect shall be elected annually.**

*Rational:* Adding the wording "President Elect shall be elected annually." brings wording into agreement with action taken previously.

# The Colonial Master Gardener May 2012



2012  
MG Board

*President:*  
Roger Evans

*VP Projects:*  
Beth Fugate

*VP Internal Ed:*  
Harriet Parsons

*VP Administration:*  
Margene Hartsough

*Secretary:*  
Mary Ellen Edwards

*Treasurer:*  
Bob Winther

*VMGA Reps:*  
Marilyn Riddle and  
Angela Cingale

*Past President:*  
Linda Lucas

*Co-op Ext Rep:*  
Doris Heath  
564-2170

## INTERNAL EDUCATION

BY HARRIET PARSONS

Did you know that there is a social media Master Gardener blog? Some months ago our group had the option of joining in and being an active participant but did not see the interest within our membership at the time. I was perusing my old e-mails with the eye of cleaning house when I noticed one from Karen Jeannette, our Extension Consumer Horticulture Content Coordinator, that mentioned the month-end wrap-up, not live but more like a newsletter. I clicked on the site and 45 minutes later found I was still moving from topic to topic. Who knew? Check your e-mail from Roger on April 11 for background. I clicked on school gardens and read about and viewed videos from schools across the country that are establishing urban school gardens. Great ideas and the comments, "We made food!" and "I want to take my garden home," were priceless. They **are** taking their gardens home in their hearts and minds.

Please take a few minutes to read the open (love) letter to extension Master Gardeners under recent posts on the right hand side. It will make you proud to be an MG. If you can't find the e-mail go to <http://www.blogs.extension.org/mastergardener/2101/04/06/emg-blog-monthlyupdate-march-2012/>

Next thing I knew, I found myself looking at the University of Maryland Extension blog, *Grow it Eat it*, discussing high tunnel vertical growing and showing how to utilize a 5-gallon bucket filled with water with small holes punctured in the

bottom and placed between tomato plants to ensure a constant but slow flow of water. Then I went on to read *16<sup>th</sup> Century Gardening in Villandry, France*, and I tried to stop at the *Garden Rant*, but I had to do just one more click on *Garden Bloggers Fling Asheville 2012*. There really is no end to this!

The speakers at the next monthly meeting on **May 3** will be Suzanne and Andy Warner from the English Connection. Their topic will be water features in the garden. If you have not visited their garden center in Surry it is well worth the ferry ride. Beautifully planted expansive rock gardens and separate themed garden rooms abound. Don't forget the field trip to Powhatan on **May 8<sup>th</sup>**. We will travel first to Chadwick's Orchid greenhouses, lunch at Erin's and on to J. Sargent Reynolds Community College for a tour guided by Mike Locatel, of Roots & Bloom, who has an Iris and Peony demo garden on site.

Our next field trip in June will be to Seigman's five-acre garden in Gloucester. This is a garden full of surprises from the huge varieties of perennials to the "bottle" tree, the 20 by 20-foot pond with waterfall and koi to the original sculptures that abound. Mark your calendar for **June 8**. Words of wisdom from Les Seigman, "there is no reason why you cannot grow a tomato plant in a pot right side up."

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.

## WILLIAMSBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN

### Save the Date

Third Annual

### Spring Garden Party

### "Vines and Wines"

Thursday, May 24, 2012, 5:30—8:00 p.m.

Colonial Williamsburg

The Williamsburg Inn in the Rockefeller Garden

Food, Music, Silent Auction and more

Proceeds to benefit the Williamsburg Botanical Garden at Freedom Park

For more information and tickets visit  
[www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org)

Contact for details 757-220-3575

## MAY WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH

BY HELEN HAMILTON, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA  
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

### FRINGE TREE *Chionanthus virginicus*

With a wonderful display of lacy white flowers in spring, fringetree is unbelievably beautiful! This tall shrub or small tree is attractive in all seasons, with its clusters of strap-like petals in spring, lustrous dark green summer leaves, and golden fall color. The male and female flowers appear before the leaves, on separate trees. Both the male and female flowers are gorgeous and fragrant, but the male is showier. In mid-summer, groups of dark blue olive-like are formed on the female trees, feeding birds and mammals.

Growing up to 20 feet tall, fringetree usually has a single trunk, 8-10 inches in diameter with reddish-brown bark. Fringetree prefers loose, moist, acidic and well-drained soils. The tree is native to eastern U.S. including most counties of Virginia, and grows in rich woods and along streams. One of the last trees to bear new leaves in spring, this tree appears dead until the leaves and flowers appear. The genus name *Chionanthus*, meaning "snow" and "flower," describes the blossoms. It was named the "Snowball Tree," as the official tree for the Jamestown 2007 celebration.



**Photo:** Fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*) taken by Helen Hamilton

For more information about native plants visit [www.claytonvnps.org](http://www.claytonvnps.org).

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## VIRGINIA MEETING REPORT

BY ANGELA CINGALE

The VMGA meeting held on April 14<sup>th</sup> at the JCC Community Center was a huge success with 41 Master Gardeners attending from all over the state. In addition to Marilyn Riddle and myself, there were five board members who helped in every way that was necessary: Roger Evans, Mary Edwards, Harriet Parsons, Linda Lucas, Margene Hartsough.

We give sincere thanks to all the JCC/W MG helpers: Jane Davis, Yvonne Forbes, Carol Fryer, Pat Janot, Alice Kopinitz, Sue Liddell, Anne Nielsen, Jim and Nelda Pressly, Joanne Sheffield, Kendra Swann and Kate Wilhide. Their assistance was greatly appreciated. Doris Heath and some of our other members also stopped in and joined us for the meeting.

Following is the April VMGA report:

1. After 4 ½ years as Education Committee chair, Barbara Geer has retired from this position. She assembled a wonderful committee who put together great programs. Bill Scott thanked her for all her hard work.
2. Dave Close spoke about discontinuing the Leadership Training at MG College and instead have four regional programs which would make it easier for the local MGs to attend. He also informed us that the speakers and time slots are in place for MG College, June 20-24<sup>th</sup>. Information will be available in May on the VA Tech and VMGA websites.
3. Christy Brennan informed the membership that the state fair will not be held in Doswell this year but other groups are interested in bringing it back to the Richmond area.
4. The next VMGA meeting is at MG College on June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

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## GR/SHIELDS GARDENS' HAPPENINGS

BY SUE LIDDELL

Thirty-two Master Gardeners and ten Interns are volunteering in the GR/Shields Gardens. Some work Vegetables, some Flowers, some Herbs, some Orchard and some a mix. The Friday Vegetable group got a late start with CW doing some repair on Bed borders. Even so, with the warm spring, we got in our seeds and plants and have harvested lettuce, radishes, onions, parsley, and mustard, and have used beet thinnings as salad greens.



Kendra Swan with Tennis Ball Lettuce Harvest



Kathy Briggs, Lucy Oakleaf, Phyllis Putnam, Kathy Bush, Pam Woodson

The Interns have been willing workers, taking part in planting, weeding, watering and harvesting. Five have mastered the hoses and will be valuable assets when the weather turns hot.

On Tuesdays, the Flower group works its magic on the borders making an ever changing, always beautiful background. Early this spring everyone had the opportunity to refresh their herb pruning techniques at a special training session led by Laura Viancour. "Meet the Gardener" on Thursdays is attracting many guests. With the Paper Mulberry gone, the apple tree provides some shade. The GR Paddock offers a bonus on some days when sheep and lambs can be seen beyond the Orchard. Blossoms on the peach, plum and even the small apple trees were beautiful this spring. The MG/CW partnership is an opportunity to learn and teach through the maintenance of these two Colonial Demonstration Gardens.



GR Garden Overview



Herb Pruning - Rosemary

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## WATER STEWARDS NAMED “VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR” !!

BY JEANNE MILLIN

At the York County Volunteers of the Year ceremony on Tuesday April 17th, Carol Fryer, Jeanne Millin and Anne Nielsen were awarded York County ‘Volunteers of the Year’ by Park and Recreation Director, Molly Nealer. They were nominated for their work in designing and installing a rain garden in New Quarter Park. Installation of the garden was the work of both Master Gardener-Water Stewards and Master Naturalist from the area, as well as some of the friends of New Quarter Park. Laurie Fox from the Virginia Tech’s Hampton Roads Agricultural Research Center in Virginia Beach provided both advice and plants.



Molly Nealer, Jeanne Millin, Carol Fryer and Anne Nielsen

The over 2,000 plants installed in three work sessions were provided by York County funding and plant donations from members of the Native Plant Society and from the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener Plant Sale. The garden was put in a shady location at the end of a parking lot drainage pipe. Modification of the original design was required after a heavy storm washed some of the plants down the hilly

area. With the design modification and installation of additional plants, the rain garden managed to survive last year’s hurricane. The hilly area is no longer being scoured by rushing water. More plants will be installed this year. A plant list for the area is available from the New Quarter Park office and presentations to community groups are now part of the New Quarter Park program offerings.



## NEW WATER STEWARD CLASS

BY JEANNE MILLIN

All members of the Water Steward Class have completed their class requirements and will be working on various Water Steward projects (stormwater control, rain gardens, shoreline plant advice, etc.) in the community for the remainder of the year before their graduation in December.

**1st row:** Katherine Duncan (Newport News-NN), Jimmy Espich (NN), Mitzi Balma (JCC/W), Barbara Foley (NN), Rosemary Brennan (JCC/W), Beverly Baker(JCC/W), Judy Younger (JCC/W), Joanne Sheffield (JCC/W), Margene Hartsough (JCC/W)  
**2nd Row:** Jeanne Millin (JCC/W-Instructor), Mike Millin (Master Naturalist), Sue Liddell (JCC/W-Water Steward), Jim Newton (Gloucester-Water Steward), Ray Robinson (NN), Bob Busick (Northern Neck-NorNeck), Vanessa Connell (NN), Ian Cheyney (NoNeck), Kathleen Hadd (NoNeck), Judy Casone (NorNeck), Art Ritter (Hampton), Hunter Sledd (NoNeck), Gary Streb (JCC/W), Tod Allen (JCC/W), Bob Winter (JCC/W).

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## GARDENING TIPS

BY AILENE BARTLETT

Well, here we are again, caught in the middle of more weird 'n' wonderful weather. I think we can go ahead and plant whatever we want, cool-weather or hot-weather. However, I think I would make sure I have some covers available for things like tomatoes and peppers, since our night temperatures might get down to the 40s yet.

You may have noticed what a good year it was for camellias and azaleas, no doubt because of cooler weather. Therefore, some of the semi-tropicals might be a little late in blooming, although I must say, my salvias are going bonkers!

Water selectively, trying to save water if you can. It's a good time to consider drip irrigation for those plants that need watering more frequently. And don't forget the rain barrel!

I reiterate, it is a good time to be keeping a log of when you plant, what you plant, rain amounts, daytime highs, nighttime lows, and other factors that might enter in to the success or failure of your garden. You can do that at end of day when you're sitting on the patio with your feet propped up and a glass of iced tea in your hand!

Lots of luck in the garden!

An old Italian gentleman lived alone in New Jersey. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work, as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament:

*Dear Vincent, I am feeling pretty sad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here my troubles would be over. I know you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days. Love, Papa*

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

*Dear Papa, Don't dig up that garden. That's where the bodies are buried. Love, Vinnie*

At 4 a.m. The next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son.

*Dear Papa, Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances. Love you, Vinnie*

Submitted by Roger Evans and Jim Pressly

## FARMERS' MARKET SUMMER SCHEDULE

May 5	<i>National Herb Day</i>
May 19	<i>Vegetables; Barrels and Bins</i>
June 2	<i>Gardening with Children</i>
June 16	<i>Flowers</i>
June 30	<i>Water Stewards</i>
July 14	<i>Therapeutic Gardening</i>
July 28	<i>Drought Tolerant Plants</i>

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## NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The deadline for submission of material for the **June Newsletter** is **Monday, May 28.**

Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at [cathy.lohwater@cox.net](mailto:cathy.lohwater@cox.net) or call 757-259-1133.

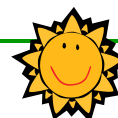
## Upcoming Dates to Remember

- 4/28 Plants Huzzah Sale
- 4/28 New Kent Envirothon/Earth Day
- 5/3 Monthly Meeting @ WRL
- 5/8 Field Trip: Powhatan
- 5/24 Spring Garden Party for WBG
- 5/28 Deadline for June Newsletter
- 6/8 Field Trip: Gloucester
- 6/20-24 MG College

### **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, Mary Ellen Edwards. She will send a note or take appropriate action on behalf on the organization. Mary Ellen may be reached at (804) 966-9366 or [JMEE12350@verizon.net](mailto:JMEE12350@verizon.net).

## 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.