

# The Colonial Master Gardener

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



October 2008

## THERAPEUTIC GARDENING SUE LIDDELL

Therapeutic Gardening has continued a long association with the Williamsburg United Methodist Church Respite Care Center this year, visiting once a month. The September session was a favorite, decorating hats to be worn checking on the planters and small garden outside the meeting room. Master Gardeners Charlie Clapper, Angela Cingale, John

Johnson, and Sue Liddell have worked with Darla Krupski (green hat) in creating programs. Charlie and John missed the fun of decorating hats. Following is a note from Darla:

*Dear gardening friends, GREAT project - I really enjoyed it and I just loved Minnie's laugh! If we can help create a bit of joy along life's way it is always a good day.*



*My "hat is off" to you fine folks who think of others through your outreach to those who need you and the therapy of gardening! I need you too - I so enjoy our time together.*

*regards, Darla...I am thinking of the next project....*

## A VOTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION! SUBMITTED BY LYNN FLOOD

In a major victory for our young people, the House overwhelmingly passed a landmark bill today to support environmental education. The bi-partisan vote of 293 to 109 for the No Child Left Inside (NCLI) Act is a show of support by the House of Representatives for the importance of outdoor education and environmental literacy.

This bill, sponsored by U.S. Rep. John P. Sarbanes of Maryland, is designed to help states provide high-quality outdoor and environmental instruction. The legislation is intended to fix the unintended consequences of the No Child Left Behind Act by keeping public schools from becoming too narrow in their focus on standardized testing and by restoring the rich and academically challenging experiences outdoor education provides. Nature provides a powerfully motivating class-

room. Children will carry the lessons they learn outdoors for the rest of their lives.

I ask you to please take a moment to thank Congressman Sarbanes and the other legislators who voted in favor of the bill. We're making real progress toward ensuring that environmental education will become a priority in our schools. Sen. Jack Reed of Rhode Island is the lead Senate sponsor of the No Child Left Inside Act. The House vote underscores the strong Congressional support for environmental education and sets the stage for including NCLI as part of a broader elementary and secondary education bill in the next Congress.

Author H.G. Wells once said, "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." We are still in that race. Help us win. Join us in advocating for outdoor education and the opportunity for children to become our next generation of environmental stewards

## Next Monthly Meeting

October 2, 9:00am,  
Williamsburg Regional Library,  
Leanne Dubois, Former WJCC  
and New Kent County  
Extension Agent, Present  
Manager of Marketing for  
Specialty Crops and Direct  
Marketing Operations,  
Virginia Department of  
Agriculture,  
Plant Pathology

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## INTERNAL EDUCATION NEWS CAROL FRYER

We are very excited to have Leanne DuBois as our featured speaker at the October 2nd monthly meeting. Fortunately, several months ago, we secured Leanne's time for a presentation on Plant Pathology for October. Little did we know at the time that she would be leaving her position at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office. True to her word, Leanne always keeps her commitments, so once again we will have an opportunity to learn from this great leader and supporter of our association, and we will have the opportunity to talk with her about new challenges in her career. We hope many of you will be able to attend the October meeting and give Leanne a warm welcome.

This year, I have had several Japanese hollies decline due to black root rot which was diagnosed from a root sample by Mike Lykens, Chesterfield extension agent, following a training at his office for our unit's pathology team. Little did I realize that I would be intimately involved with plant pathology based on first hand knowledge. Most recently, I've noticed that one of my *chamaecyparis pisifera*, (Japanese False Cypress) is dying, which necessitates me to seek out additional plant pathology diagnostic help. Incidentally [www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu) had an excellent publication on Black Root Rot of Japanese Hollies.

**Up-coming workshop:** For those members who do not have e-mail, we would like to let you know

about an educational opportunity in October sponsored by Bartlett Tree Experts: Andrew Koenig, Master Arborist, at **Bartlett Tree Experts** in Williamsburg has extended an invitation to the JCC/W Master Gardeners to attend their **Hampton Roads Client Seminar**, Tuesday, October 28, 2008 from 8AM to 3:30 PM at the Chesapeake Central Library, 298 Cedar Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322. The seminar is free and breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided.

**Speakers:** Don Booth, PhD entomologist, Andrew Koenig, ISA Board Certified Master Arborist, and Jason Heizer, ISA Board Certified Master Arborist.

**Topics:** "What's New with Insects and Diseases", "Root Therapy for your Drought Stressed Trees", and "Preparing Young Trees for Success".

**Outdoor Demonstration:** Root Invigoration and 7 Common Landscape Concerns.

**You need to register by Oct 1st, and space is limited.** Send, fax or e-mail your name, title, organization, address, phone number, e-mail address to Bartlett Tree Experts along with the title and date of the seminar:

Address: 8979 Pocahontas Trail, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Fax: 757-898-6709

Email: [cgrabosky@bartlett.com](mailto:cgrabosky@bartlett.com)

Phone: Cara Sue at Bartlett Tree Experts if you have questions: 757-234-0403

I'll have car-pool information at our October meeting for members that would like to attend.

2008-2009  
MG Board

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258-8632

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564-6191

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Vacant

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month, at 9:00am, 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.

## Melissa's Meadow Grace Raymond

We will be in the meadow around 8:30 on Oct. 16th and plan to collect seed heads and some preparations for the winter.

## NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIR!

Susan Giandomenico has become the new Membership Chair. Thanks Susan! If you have a change in e-mail, home address or know of any person asking about becoming a member of the Master Gardeners, please contact her.

Her contact info is:

Susan Giandomenico  
103 Panther Paw Path  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
[susangia@cox.net](mailto:susangia@cox.net)  
220-1209

## ATTENTION ALL SINGING GARDENERS!!!

I have collected several choral pieces that I think would be great entertainment for the Graduation Dinner in January. I am giving you an early heads-up as November/December can get crazy! If you like to sing and would be willing to rehearse a few times, let me know. I would love to have four voice parts. Remember this is for fun!!!

Please email Genrose Lashinger at [Page 2](mailto:glash-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

## Virginia Institute of Marine Science Field Trip September 12, 2008



VIMS personnel (light and navy shirts) conduct tour of VIMS salt and fresh water marshes: (L-R) MGs Jerry Babski, Laura Hill, Joan Andrews, Ralph Ashton, George Anderson



MG Mary Lib Puller admiring the shrub.

MG thoughts and prayers are with:

Denny Mehigan as he undergoes medical treatments

Audrey Hoitsma on the recent loss of her husband

Jean Winters as she recovers from surgery

## FALL LANDSCAPE EXTRAVAGANZA

The annual Fall Landscape Extravaganza sponsored by the Virginia Cooperative Extension-York County Office will be held on Saturday, October 4, 2008, at St. Joan of Arc Church, 9041 George Washington Memorial Highway in Yorktown.

Sign-in begins at 8:30 a.m., with orientation at 9:00 a.m. Two blocks of concurrent educational programs will be offered from 9:15 to 10:30 a.m. and from 10:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The event is offered free of charge and is open to the public. Registrations can be made online at [www.yorkcounty.gov/vce/upcomingevents/hort/landscapeext\\_08.htm](http://www.yorkcounty.gov/vce/upcomingevents/hort/landscapeext_08.htm) or by calling the VCE-York County Office at 890-4940.

Those attending the event will have their choice of participating in one class from each session.

### 1st Session:

- Landscaping with the Environment in Mind, Joe Hertzler, Principle, Hertzler and George
- Environmentally Friendly Garden Designs, Brian O'Neil, Director of Horticulture, Norfolk

### Botanical Gardens

- Fall Plantings in the Garden, Kendahl Huber, Horticulturist, Anderson's Garden Center

### 2nd Session:

- What Makes a Garden Look Good, Tami Eilers, Landscape Designer, McDonald's Garden Center
- A Personal Landscape is Always a Work in Progress, David Rauch, Horticulturist, Gardens By Dave
- Bulbs That Will Tolerate Dry Soils, Brent Heath, Owner, Brent and Becky's Bulbs

The speakers will be focusing their discussions on plants and practices that homeowners can do to be environmentally friendly. The goal of the Fall Landscape Extravaganza is to provide practical, useful information for homeowners, and to provide it via experts. This is a popular event and seating is limited, so early registration is strongly advised. This event is open to the public and is free of charge.

## 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.

Pat may be reached at 645-4538 or [pk.Crowe@cox.net](mailto:pk.Crowe@cox.net).

## MG Email Update

**Audrey Hoitsma:**  
[audhoits@gmail.com](mailto:audhoits@gmail.com)

**EDITORS NOTE:** The deadline for submission of material for the November MG Newsletter is **October 20**. Please send to Lise Kline, newsletter editor, at [legskline@cox.net](mailto:legskline@cox.net) or call 757-259-9477. Comments and questions about the newsletter are also welcome. Thank you.

## E<sup>2</sup> NEWS FOR OCTOBER! KARI ABBOTT

Thank you to you all, for funding my conference registration for the Galaxy III conference. Jeremy Johnson and I received the Southern Regional Award at the Southern Region 4-H Breakfast. There were several extension agents there from Virginia, and it was nice to meet other 4-H agents, and some Regional Directors. The national award was presented at the national meeting of 4-H Extension Agents. It was a bit overwhelming, as I did wear a dress and not overalls to the large breakfast meeting. We received a 4-H plaque and certificates.

October is also a busy month in school. Thank you to Bev Baker, Jeanne Millin, and Steph Harris. They have stepped forward to bring the E<sup>2</sup> curriculum to Matoaka Elementary School. They start in October with seeds. This is exciting for the E<sup>2</sup> Project to be expanding to a new school. DJ Montague will be

working on insects, always a creepy subject!

The E<sup>2</sup> Project is working with the Clean County Commission and the Williamsburg/James City County Schools to do a Project Learning Tree workshop for teachers in October. It will be an exciting chance to get some more teachers excited about environmental education.

Again, thank you.

If anyone is interested in volunteering with the E<sup>2</sup> Project, please email [bearsbaskets@cox.net](mailto:bearsbaskets@cox.net).

My best to you all!

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

## RESEARCHERS DISCOVER THAT STRESSED PLANTS PRODUCE ASPIRIN-LIKE CHEMICAL, BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID, AP SCIENCE WRITER, SUBMITTED BY LYNN FLOOD

WASHINGTON (Associated Press) -- Aspirin is among the most popular remedies used by people. Turns out some plants like it, too. Researchers at the National Center for Atmospheric Research were surprised to discover that stressed plants produce an aspirin-like chemical that can be detected in the air above the plants. The chemical may be a sort of immune response that helps protect the plants, the scientists speculated. According to the researchers, the finding raises the possibility that farmers, forest managers and others may eventually be able to start monitoring plants for early signs of a disease, an insect infestation or other types of stress. Currently they often do not know if an ecosystem is unhealthy until there are visible indicators, such as dead leaves.

"Unlike humans, who are advised to take aspirin as a fever suppressant, plants have the ability to produce their own mix of aspirin-like chemicals, triggering the formation of proteins that boost their biochemical defenses and reduce injury," NCAR scientist Thomas Karl, the lead researcher, said in a statement.

"Our measurements show that significant amounts

of the chemical can be detected in the atmosphere as plants respond to drought, unseasonable temperatures or other stresses." While researchers had known that plants in the laboratory produce a form of aspirin known as methyl salicylate, they had never looked for it in the forest. But when they set up measuring devices in a walnut grove near Davis, Calif., to monitor plant emissions that can affect pollution, they discovered measurable amounts of methyl salicylate. Previous studies have shown that plants being eaten by animals also produce chemicals that can be sensed by other plants nearby.

The new findings, announced Thursday by NCAR in Boulder, Colo., were published in the journal *Bio-geosciences*. The research was funded by the National Science Foundation, NCAR's sponsor. Measuring instruments 100 feet above the ground measured methyl salicylate from plants that were stressed by a local drought and unseasonably cool nighttime temperatures followed by large daytime temperature increases. In addition to having an immune-like function, the chemical may be a means for plants to communicate to neighboring plants, warning them of the threat. "These findings show tangible proof that plant-to-plant communication occurs on the ecosystem level," says NCAR scientist Alex Guenther, a co-author of the study. "It appears that plants have the ability to communicate through the atmosphere."

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## WHAT THE STORM BROUGHT IN A STORY BY DIANA NOLAN

The day after tropical storm Hanna passed through Virginia I discovered mushrooms growing in my large pot of basil that I left on my deck during the storm. I quickly turned to my trusty pocket guide to mushrooms with its colorful photos of American mushrooms, and zeroed in on the Destroying Angel mushroom. Surely this was the culprit, I thought. After taking a few photos, my next move was to my PC and Google.

I contacted Shirley Devan, President of the Williamsburg Bird Club and Master Naturalist. Shirley referred me to someone familiar with mushrooms, Louise Menges of Williamsburg. (Louise denies she is an expert, but I wouldn't mind having her along on a nature hike.) Thanks to an interesting blog and web site, I discovered Dr. Kathie Hodge, an Associate Professor of Mycology at Cornell University. Within hours (even though it was Sunday), I had my answers. Louise noted she had seen mushrooms like these on walks in the local woods, and had taken spore prints for positive ID. Dr. Hodge replied that my mushrooms were not the deadly Angel. She could not be sure from a photo, but it seems they were *Leucocoprinus birnbaumii* or one of its near relatives. Dr. Hodge reported that the Destroying Angel (*Amanita virosa*) grows near forests and is larger. What a relief! Still, *Leucocoprinus birnbaumii* is toxic, not something to dismiss easily.

Before receiving any answers, I scooped the mushrooms with some surrounding soil into a plastic bag for the trash. The remaining soil and basil plant were tossed in the woods near my house. I had asked Dr. Hodge three questions:

- Was it the Destroying Angel?
- How do I dispose of the mushrooms?
- Is there any danger from the spores?

Dr. Hodge answered:

- First, no
- Second, treat them like compost
- Third, no, there are not enough spores to pose danger.

Her only caveat besides, of course, not ingesting them is not to lick them!

I had not seen so many mushrooms growing overnight in such quantities in a container. Actually, my research indicates this small wonder is rather common. Given the right conditions, mushrooms can emerge in houseplants, and some people just leave them there to admire.

I am relating my story to alert those of you, like me, who have not seen mushrooms in containers. We all are aware of the dangers of eating wild mushrooms, but it bears repeating: *never, never* eat wild mushrooms unless you have positive identification from an expert, and do not lick them either.

Dr. Hodge's final words, "Don't worry." Well, I'll try not to, but the next time I see mushrooms I hope it's in an omelet.



## Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Oct 4 Annual Fall Extravaganza, see page 3 of this newsletter
- Oct 6 The Williamsburg Botanical Garden presents a Learn and Grow Evening Lecture, "Iris: The Perfect Perennial for Williamsburg" with P. Michael Lockatell, AIS Certified Garden Judge, Reblooming Iris Chairman for AIS Region 4 and owner of Roots & Blooms, <http://www.rootsandblooms.us/index.htm>. From 7:30-8:30 PM at the Williamsburg Regional Library. Free Admission. For more information: Williamsburg Botanical Garden 757-229-1995 [www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org)
- Oct 28 Seminar by Bartlett Tree Experts, see Internal Ed column on page 2 of this newsletter
- Nov 6 monthly MG meeting
- Nov 13 The Williamsburg Botanical Garden presents a Learn and Grow Evening Lecture, "Creating a Classic Colonial Decoration" with Libbey Oliver, Manager, Williamsburg Farmer's Market. From 7:30-8:30 PM at the Williamsburg Regional Library. Free Admission. For more information: Williamsburg Botanical Garden (see above).
- Dec 4 monthly MG meeting