

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



September 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY LINDA LUCAS

Mattey's Garden has received this year's City of Williamsburg Beautification Award for Service Clubs and Organizations! Congratulations to Genrose Lashinger and all VCE-MGs who work on this project. Not only does Mattey's Garden provide a year-round learning experience for the children at Matthew Whaley Elementary, it has also been featured on garden tours and provides inspiration to other schools in the area.

The minimum number of volunteer hours needed to maintain active VCE-MG status is 20 hours on projects and administration each calendar year. Mattey's Garden is one project that will continue to need volunteers throughout the fall. Landscape Love and Turf Love will also be active this fall, and the Diagnostic Clinic will be running a session in September this year. These and other projects provide opportunity for you to complete the hours' requirement if you have not already done so. Check the website for project leaders and give them a call.

Also required each calendar year for continued active status are a minimum of eight hours of advanced education. If you attend our monthly MG programs, you are accumulating advanced education hours. Information on programs in other areas is often emailed to you. These opportunities are listed in our newsletter as well. Attending the Therapeutic Gardening Symposium September 22nd would give you five advanced education hours with just a short drive to the Recreation Center!

Next Monthly Meeting:

September 2, 9 a.m.,
Williamsburg Regional Library;
William Fidler, Williamsburg Landscape
Superintendent. "Heritage Tree
Program"

Now the hard part...remember to report those hours to Art Gustafson. He must receive them by the end of January, 2011; but simplify his life...and eliminate the possibility of your forgetting...by reporting them in a more-timely manner.

Bill Garlette, VCE-MG from Hampton, has been giving the Organic Gardening presentation for our Training Class for several years. We are pleased that Bill will continue in that role. Also he has recently gone back to his musical roots and is now Music Director and Conductor of the Chesapeake Bay Wind Ensemble. Check their website (www.cbwe.org) for performance schedule.

William Fidler, Landscape Superintendent for the City of Williamsburg, will be the speaker at our September 2nd meeting. We will begin at 9:00 with his presentation on Williamsburg's Heritage Tree Program. Our Therapeutic Gardening Project will provide refreshments during the break, followed by the business meeting. See you then!

In memory of Denis Michael Mehigan

April 30, 1939 – June 27, 2010
JCC/ W VCE-MG Class of 2007

Memorial Mass for Denny at St. Bede's October 12 at 9:00am

Interment at Arlington National Cemetery October 13 at
3:00pm

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2010
MG Board

President:
Linda Lucas

VP Projects:
Jeanne Millin

VP Internal Ed:
Jerry Babski

VP Administration:
Margene Hartsough

Secretary:
Pat Janot

Treasurer:
Linda Wever

VMGA Reps:
Marilyn Riddle and
Angela Cingale

Past President:
Dave Banks

Co-op Ext Rep:
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.

WIIFM ?

BY PAT CROWE



VCE and the James City/ Williamsburg Master Gardeners will sponsor a one-day symposium, *Healing thru Gardening* on September 22 at the JCC Recreation Center.

Why should I care? What's in it for me, you may ask. Well

Regionally known experts will discuss a variety of topics related to gardening as we age. Who doesn't want to learn about new, more effective and lighter weight tools? How about considering container possibilities to add to your home garden when you lack the time, interest or physical ability to prepare those large garden beds? Never thought much about herbs? There could be a whole new world out there for you – everything from cooking to crafts to hardy perennial ground covers!

You'll see your fellow unit members in action as presenters and support personnel and meet professionals and caregivers for those with many types of special needs.

Every Master Gardener, regardless of whether you are part of the therapeutic gardening team, will earn training hours for attending the symposium. If you wish, CEUs are available as well.

There's still time to register. Visit our website (www.iccmg.org), download the registration form and mail it in by September 8. We hope to see you there!



The smiling faces serve as testimony to the success of the VCE-Master Gardeners award-winning Therapeutic Gardening Program. Our clients get outside, enjoy digging in the dirt and experience again or perhaps for the first time, the joy of growing vegetables and herbs, and sampling the harvest. The workshops conducted at the Symposium will give professionals and caregivers additional skills to make their programs even more successful.



Jack Gross at the County Fair with his award-winning self-watering container!



Sue Liddell received her 6000-hour milestone award at the August MG meeting. She is pictured here with Angela Cingale and Marilyn Riddle, our VMGA representatives, who helped present awards.

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ADVANCED EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Sept. 11 “Centsible Gardening”

Virginia Beach (www.vbmg.org)

Sept. 11 “Heritage Harvest Festival”

Monticello in Charlottesville (www.heritageharvestfestival.com)

Sept. 22 “Healing thru Gardening”

Williamsburg Recreation Center (jccwmg.org)

Sept. 24 Wildlife Habitat “Train the Trainer”

Advanced Workshop - Abingdon, VA (email Carol.Heiser@dgif.virginia.gov for details)

Nov. 1 Doug Tallamy – “Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens”

Chesterfield Co. Public Library at 2:00pm & 7:00pm (email suedwards@vt.edu for details)

PLANT SALE 2011

BY PLANT SALE STEERING COMMITTEE



Important news: The 2011 Plant Sale is scheduled for April 28/ 29.

New location: JCC Recreation Center parking lot – a street fair theme.

Steering Committee: Jerry Babski, Kathy Lykins, Toddy Voorhees, Dennis Wool.

A request will soon come out for volunteers to chair the newly reorganized focus areas within the Facilitators Team. Plant digs will be organized throughout the Fall so that we are not dividing plants in the snow next March. Start planning now –please. It is the Steering Committee’s request that each MG contribute at least 6 plants next April for the Sale. Thank you in advance!

FARMER’S MARKET SCHEDULE:

FALL 2010

BY SALLY SISSEL

September 11: Drought Tolerant Plants
September 25: Composting
October 9: Trees/ Shrubs
October 23: W&M Homecoming; Turf
Plus General Q&A

RAIN BARRELS

BY WATER STEWARDS

Rain barrels collect and store rain water from rooftops for later use. Not only do they conserve water, they also decrease storm water runoff which carries pollutants and other contaminants into neighboring ecosystems and on into the Chesapeake Bay.

You can obtain rain barrels pre-made from numerous nonprofit agencies, commercial manufacturers and retailers, in prices ranging from \$25 to \$150. Inexpensive rain barrels can also be made from plastic barrels or heavy-duty trash cans. Rain barrels can be used individually or linked in tandem to capture a greater volume of water. They can be tapped to fill a watering can or used as the central water source for water-saving drip irrigation systems.

James City County is now offering a \$25 rebate per rain barrel purchased by citizens of JCC for up to 4 rain barrels. The county’s “WaterSmart” website has this information: <http://www.bewatersmart.org/RebatePrograms/rebatesintroduction.html>. Or, check out the VCE Master Gardener website: www.jccwmg.org/helpdesk and select "Index", select "R", select "Rain Barrel". <http://www.bewatersmart.org/RebatePrograms/rebatesintroduction.html>



WATER TIPS OF THE MONTH

BY ALICE KOPINITZ, WATER STEWARD



- Use native groundcover plants instead of turf in hard-to-water areas such as steep slopes and isolated areas.
- When running a bath, plug the tub before turning on the water, then adjust the temperature as the tub fills.

ALIEN ALERT!!!

BY HELEN HAMILTON

The highly invasive Asian stiltgrass *Microstegium vimineum* seems to be everywhere, growing along roadsides, in parks, and on homeowner's properties. Birds and the wind have distributed seeds far from the ditches and edges of woods where you see growing populations each year. This harmless-looking grass, not more than a foot tall, but straggly, is a very nasty invasive. It furnishes no nutritive value to wildlife and rapidly outcompetes all natives. Deer won't eat it, does that tell us something?? Like Kudzu, it has heavily infested national parks, roadsides, and homeowners' properties.



Asian Stiltgrass

Stiltgrass is an annual. In the fall, each plant releases up to 1,000 seeds which remain viable for many years in the soil. The only control is to destroy the plant before seedset. Hand-pulling is the best method, as the roots are shallow and it comes up easily. The non-invasive native look-alike called deer-tongue grass is well-anchored in the soil –if you have to tug on the plant it's probably harmless. On our plant walks at New Quarter Park, participants have been encouraged to pull a sackfull of stiltgrass while walking. The local Master Naturalists have started a weed-pulling project at this park, targeting stiltgrass and beefsteak plant (*Perilla frutescens*), another nasty invasive.



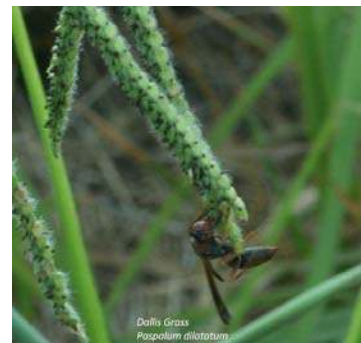
Please pull this plant wherever you see it, or mow before it sets seed. In the fall it releases millions of seeds which remain viable for MANY YEARS in the soil. So, it must be pulled or mowed for 3-5 years before exhausting one seed drop. On large properties, mowing is effective, if done before the seeds appear. The National Park Service has approved the use of the herbicide Fusion on this invasive.

INSECTS ARE A FACT OF LIFE!

BY HELEN HAMILTON

In fact, Doug Tallamy tells us in his book "Bringing Nature Home" that "a world without insects is a world without higher forms of life." All kinds of insects are busy around a variety of blossoms, far too busy to bother attacking me while photographing. Check out the bee with the yellow pollen sacs!

The message is: don't squash, spray, kill these important components of our ecosystem. They are pollinating our plants, and furnishing food for native birds. (I am sure Master Gardeners don't need this message, so pass it on to the neighbor's kid who thinks it is fun to stomp on caterpillars...)



Dallis Grass
Paspalum dilatatum



Seashore Mallow
Rosteletzkya virginica



False Sunflower
Heliopsis helianthoides



Solder Mallow
Hibiscus laevis

Bee with pollen sacs

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TAKING ROOT FARM TOUR

BY PATRICIA TOWNSEND

The New Kent Extension office would like to say thank you to the many Master Gardeners who gave their time, effort and labor to make this program an outstanding event. Without their support, this program would not have had the success that we experienced on Sunday, June 27, 2010. We had almost 200 people attend even with the high temperatures. The tour gave the public an opportunity to learn about agriculture and to experience farm life first hand.

Stes are already being looked at for the 2011 tour. Hope to see you next year!



SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

BY AILENE BARTLETT

Rodale Press came out with a new book last year, and it's a really good one; the author is Jeff Bredenberg, and it is titled HOW TO CHEAT AT GARDENING AND YARD WORK. Sounds like something we all need, doesn't it? I am reading through it now, and later will go back with a pencil and mark things I really want to remember. (Yes, it's okay if you mark up your own books...)

Bredenberg draws on a vast array of experts: Mel Bartholomew, Felder Rushing, Michael Dirr, and a host of others, for tips pertaining to every aspect of your home garden. They are plainly written, and basted with large helpings of humor along the way. He covers soil, veggies, garden design, containers, composting, flowers, turf, trees and shrubs, tools, seasonal challenges, and pests - something for everyone!

If you're looking for something to see you through the last remaining Dog Days of Summer, I recommend this, with the requisite glass of iced tea, to prepare you for the fall gardening season.

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MG LIBRARY BOOK REVIEW

BY JEANNE MILLIN, LIBRARIAN



Success With Water Saving Gardens, by Graham Clarke

As this review is being written, it is July and the middle of one of the hottest summers Williamsburg has experienced, a draught and talk of water restrictions. I thought this book might be especially relevant to those who have to replant and who are committed to reducing water consumption in the effort to be both environmentally aware and who want to save their landscaping.

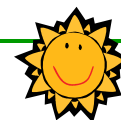
This book was a 2007 Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit winner. In section one, the basics we all should know about preparing good soil and using rain barrels are discussed. What I found especially useful was Section 2 which is a directory of low-water plants by hardiness zone and type. This book can be found in our library under call number SB475.82 c.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The deadline for submission of material for the **October Newsletter** is **Monday, September 27.**

Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at cathy.lohwater@cox.net or call 757-259-1133.

SUNSHINE NOTES



A plant and card of sympathy were sent to the family of Denny Mehigan.

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 Janot. She will send a note or take appropriate action on behalf of the organization. Pat may be reached at 221-0289 or janotap@verizon.net.

MELISSA'S MEADOW

BY GRACE RAYMOND



We will be in the meadow on Sept. 15, 8:30 a.m., to begin collecting seedheads.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- Sept. 2 Monthly Meeting @ WRL, 9:00 a.m.
- Sept. 22 Therapeutic Gardening Symposium
- Sept. 27 October Newsletter Deadline
- 4/ 28-4/ 29 2011 Plant Sale (Rec Center)
- 6/ 21-6/ 26 MG College 2011

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.

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.