



# The Colonial Master Gardener

December

2018

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

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY GARY STREB

**“Every emperor or ruler must, upon retiring from his official duties and audiences, have a garden in which to stroll, to look around and have rest in his heart. If he has a suitable place for this, it has a refreshing effect upon his mind and regulates his feelings, but if not, he becomes engrossed in sensual pleasures and loses his strength of will.”**

**—Emperor Ch'ien-Lung (1711-1799)**

**Next Meeting:**

**Thursday, December 6**

**Program:  
Introduction of Gardening Skills to  
Maasai Women**

**Speaker:  
Dr. Camilla Buchanan**

Red, orange, yellow, pink, chartreuse, burgundy, purple, lime green, maroon, copper, scarlet. Imagine all these colors intermixed with deep forest green, bronze, and tan. Now you have a mental picture of the magnificent colors of the fall leaves that I see out of our window. Without any doubt this is the season when my deep-shade garden shines. Absolutely stunning! But, as you know, it takes a lot of planning and maintenance to achieve this final burst of gardening excitement. Well worth it!

The fall holidays of Halloween and Thanksgiving are behind us, and we are anxiously looking forward to the Christmas season and all that it entails. Most of our Master Gardener projects have finished for the year. Fortunately, our gardening chores are somewhat limited with the exception of floral displays that brighten our shorter and darker days. I still have quite a few spring bulbs that need to be planted, already anticipating the renewal and continuity of spring. A gardener is never “done.”

Congratulations to the newly elected members of the 2019 James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association executive board. We will have changes **and** continuity as we welcome the new board at the January 2019 general association meeting. Cathy Hill will advance as the incoming president. Patsy McGrady will start guiding our association as president-elect. Already in position are our treasurer, Liz Favre; secretary Jennifer Campbell; vice president for administration Dee Arbegast; vice president for projects Janet Smith; vice president for internal education Hazel Braxton; and VMGA representative Marilyn Riddle. I graduate to past president!



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At the upcoming December 6 meeting Liz, Dee, and Kate will again have the [reenrollment form](#) and [standards of behavior form](#) for your execution if you have not yet completed these for 2019. Association dues remain at \$15. If you aren't able to attend you can print the forms from our website at [MGA members](#) (or click on the links above), sign them, and mail them to the extension office. Without fully executing the required paperwork you will not be in compliance and will be unable to participate as an Extension Master Gardener volunteer or participate in the projects. Let's strive to get all of these finished by the end of the year.

Earlier this month several JCC/W Master Gardeners attended the annual leadership conference sponsored by the state Master

*(The president's message is continued on the next page, page 2)*

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE -- CONTINUED

2018  
MGA Board

*President:*  
Gary Streb

*President Elect:*  
Cathy Hill

*VP Administration:*  
Dee Arbegast

*VP Projects:*  
Janet Smith

*VP Internal Ed:*  
Hazel Braxton

*Secretary:*  
Jennifer Campbell

*Treasurer:*  
Liz Favre

*VMGA Rep:*  
Marilyn Riddle

*Past President:*  
Vacant

*VCE ANR Program  
Assistant:*  
Kate Robbins  
(757) 564-2170

Gardener coordinator's office. Updates were presented, especially about Master Gardener College 2019, 2020, and International Master Gardener College 2021. Having the program in Norfolk in September 2019 should allow many more of us to attend on a daily basis, with car pools. Seems every unit has an issue with recruiting leadership for ongoing community projects and administrative positions. Several ideas were bantered about on how to resolve the problem that stems from less-than-optimal volunteer enthusiasm about the Master Gardener program and individual projects. *We need to have more fun!* We are always open to hear how we can have fun *and* serve our Williamsburg community. Let us hear from you.

Our guest speaker at our December 6 meeting will be Dr Camilla Buchanan, who will explain how she helped introduce gardening skills to the women of the Maasai in Kenya, her goal being to improve family nutrition. Not a typical Master Gardener subject! I'm really curious and excited to hear her experiences of this vital and essential endeavor. I have been assured it is not about how to grow the perfect tomato.

After the business meeting the board members will present our traditional Christmas reception/get-together in the lobby of the library. Please plan to stay and take a few minutes to share your holiday spirit with your fellow Master Gardeners while you enjoy the delicacies. *Camaraderie is one of the unwritten benefits of our association, and you cannot find a better group of comrades with whom to share the magic of the season.*

And lastly, this is my last president's message as president of our JCC/Williamsburg Master Gardener Association. It has been quite a journey, with several bumpy roads, but also times of smooth-sailing seas. I cannot adequately thank you for all the help and support that you offered me in our attempts to maintain and improve our association and the local Master Gardener program. It has been an honor to have had the privilege of working with all of you in this capacity. I am confident that things will only get better—we have a strong incoming team that remains focused on our mission and on you, our Master Gardener volunteers.

With my sincere wishes for a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.—Gary

**“My experience in the garden leads me to believe that there are many important things about our relationship to nature that cannot be learned in the wild. For one thing, we need, and now more than ever, to learn how to use nature without damaging it. That probably can't be done as long as we continue to think of nature and culture simply as antagonists.”**

**— Michael Pollan,  
Second Nature: A  
Gardener's  
Education (2003)**



Simon Dell, "Christmas Robin in Snow," courtesy of flickr

The MGA board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30am at the Williamsburg Regional Library, Room B, on Scotland Street, Williamsburg.

The board meetings are open to all Extension Master Gardeners, and all are encouraged to attend.

## A WORD FROM PRESIDENT-ELECT CATHY HILL

I want to personally thank Gary for his service above and beyond in his tenure as president of this association.

Some of you will recall he was unexpectedly thrown into the president position very shortly after his election as president - elect. He has been a steady hand at the helm.

I plan on using him as a sounding board this next year. I have big shoes to fill and hope I can keep things on a calm and steady course.



Vasily Surikov, "The Old Gardener" (1882), courtesy of WikiArt

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## THIS MONTH'S SPEAKER

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

Camilla Buchanan is an OBGYN physician who practiced in Williamsburg for thirty-two years. Since retiring from clinical practice, she has been teaching public health classes at the College of William and Mary in the Department of Kinesiology & Health Sciences. Dr. Buchanan has a particular interest in maternal, neonatal, and child health in low resource countries. Since the year 2000 she has traveled frequently to Kenya as a board member of MAO Kenya, a 501(c)-3 non-profit that supports programs in community health and education there.

She graduated from the College of William and Mary with a BS in chemistry in 1966. Her MD degree from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine was completed in 1976. Dr. Buchanan obtained a master of public health degree from Eastern VA Medical School in 2007 and in 2009 finished a diploma in tropical medicine and hygiene from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Dr. Buchanan has three adult children and is married to Debra Hill. Together they have ridden a tandem bicycle from Yorktown to Florence, Oregon; from Key West, Florida, to Bar Harbor, Maine; from Washington, D.C., to Seattle, Washington; and from Vancouver to San Diego. In March 2019 they plan to ride from San Diego to St Augustine to complete their circle tour of the U.S.A.

Dr. Buchanan will speak on the introduction of gardening skills to Maasai women in an effort to improve the nutrition of their families.

## COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG LANDSCAPE VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS BY PAT ABRAHAM, PROJECT CO-CHAIR

The Colonial Williamsburg Landscape Department will be accepting applications for volunteer positions at the Reid and Shields gardens. The purpose of our volunteer program is to maintain the two gardens as "demonstration gardens" while growing flowers and vegetables of the colonial period. Through our labors, we provide support for Colonial Williamsburg and create an enviable attraction for passing visitors and touring guests. While accomplishing these goals, our volunteers maintain a mutually beneficial partnership between the Virginia Cooperative Extension, James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener Association, and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Each Master Gardener who wants to volunteer in the Reid/Shields gardens must commit to volunteering a minimum of forty annual hours: thirty-six hours of garden work plus four hours of training scheduled by CW landscape management. These hours can be spread among all the projects in the Reid/Shields Gardens....Perennials, Herbs, Roses, Veggies, and Orchard.

To facilitate the entry process, applications will be available from Barb Floyd and Pat Abraham at the December Master Gardener meeting. Completed applications are due Friday, January 4, 2019. They can be mailed to the address on the application or dropped off at the Franklin Street office, attention Trish Barner, volunteer coordinator. If you are unable to attend the December meeting, contact Barb or Pat to make arrangements to obtain an application.

Barb Floyd: [bmfloyd57@gmail.com](mailto:bmfloyd57@gmail.com) Pat Abraham: [tspmeritage@cox.net](mailto:tspmeritage@cox.net)



Brenda Delores Poole, "Snow Lambs, Colonial Williamsburg," courtesy of flickr

## UPCOMING SEMINARS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

**November 22-January 1, 2019.** (Newport News Park, 13560 Jefferson Avenue, Newport News 23603). 5:30-10:00pm. **Celebration in Lights.** Newport News Park will be transformed by over a million individual lights, creating animated holiday and fanciful scenes. For its twenty-sixth year, the event will add special effects snow that will fall on the cars as they drive into the Winter Wonderland area on special nights. Cost \$12.00 per car.



**December 1-8** (Colonial Williamsburg). **Christmas Decorations Walking Tour.** Enjoy a guided look at Colonial Williamsburg's picturesque building exteriors and streets decked out in holiday splendor. Discuss the materials and construction techniques of these traditional holiday decorations. Tickets \$15.



All images from pixabay



**November 23-January 7, 2019,** except December 24 and 25. (Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, 1800 Lakeside Avenue, Richmond 23228). 5:00-10:00pm. **Dominion Energy Gardenfest of Lights.** A holiday tradition featuring one million twinkling lights, handcrafted botanical decorations, model trains, holiday dinners, firepit with s'mores and hot chocolate (for purchase); nightly family activities & more. The region's ultimate holiday extravaganza! Nonmember tickets \$13.00 adults, \$11.00 seniors.



**January 14, 2019.** (Founders Inn & Spa, 5641 Indian River Road, Virginia Beach 23464). **Home Gardener Day: Rethinking the Modern Garden.** Hosted by the Virginia Horticultural Foundation. Explore low maintenance gardens, easy care plants, and design techniques to create a beautiful and bountiful garden. Enjoy a catered lunch, visit educational booths and garden vendors, place a bid at the silent auction, shop the bookstore, and take home a few additions for your garden from our winter plant sale. Speakers and afternoon workshops. Registration is \$100 until January 6, \$125 after. [Register here.](#)

As always, don't forget to take a look at John Freeborn's latest biweekly update from the state EMG office. Click on <https://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/current-master-gardeners/sample-page/bi-weekly-update/>. If that doesn't work, click on <http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/>. Then click on "I am currently a Master Gardener/News/Bi-Weekly Update."

## MASTER GARDENERS ARE GOING ROGUE! BY KATHY BUSH, SPEAKERS BUREAU PROJECT CHAIR



Now that I have your attention, let me explain. Sometimes a Master Gardener is asked to give a talk or presentation to a local group. That is good! We want to get the valuable and useful gardening information out to the community. The “going rogue” part comes when you do not get credit or VCE insurance coverage for it as part of a recognized JCCW MG project, you do not give credit to the VCE by using their logos on your presentation and handouts, or when your contacts are not counted by a recognized project for state recognition or credit.

But you say you put contacts in the Volunteer Management System (VMS) when you log your hours. I don't want to disappoint you, but the contacts logged on the VMS are not the contacts that get reported to the state for credit. We have a vice president for projects (Janet Smith) who tabulates monthly and yearly all the contacts reported by the project chairpersons. That is why it is essential that you report your hours and contacts to the proper chairperson in a timely way!

Why is it important to report the contacts (and hours)? Because each county is trying to reach a cross section of their community. We are striving for diversity by age, gender, and ethnicity. This can only be proven by the statistics. The number of hours volunteers contribute helps to persuade the state legislature to see the benefit of the VCE and fully support it in the Virginia state budget. If you are asked to give a talk, please run it through the proper channels. The [speakers bureau](#) is the place to go if you have any questions or want to report your speaking experience with the community.

Report your contacts to me at [kathykbush@verizon.net](mailto:kathykbush@verizon.net). Thanks.

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## MOVING DAY BY DIANA TILLER-DICHTEL

November 9 was a rainy day. Very rainy. And chilly. Nevertheless, several dedicated Master Gardeners spent the morning moving plants before construction began on the walkway at the waterwise project (located at the James City County Social Services building on Olde Towne Road). It poured rain most of the morning, and we were soaked to the skin. But we got most of the plants moved!



## THIS AND THAT

### Class of 2018 Graduation

By Hope Yelich

All Master Gardeners are invited to the Class of 2018 graduation and reception during the association monthly meeting on January 3. These interns have worked hard to become full-fledged Master Gardeners. Please plan on congratulating them during the reception in the Stryker Center immediately following the graduation in the Williamsburg Regional Library.



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### Interested in Coordinating the Help Desk?

By Barry Holland

I want to turn these duties over to another volunteer for the 2019 help desk season. Short job description: The Master Gardener coordinator for the help desk administers the operation of the help desk and allied projects serving the citizens of James City County and the city of Williamsburg. The allied projects are the Master Gardener presence at the Williamsburg Farmers Market (this project has a sub chair), and the operation of education outreach booths at local commercial nurseries and hardware stores.

Interested? Contact Barry Holland at [fholland@cox.net](mailto:fholland@cox.net)

Please note: Avril Purvis has also indicated that, after five years, she is also stepping down from the help desk; so that project will need a vice-chair or co-chair too.



### Join the Speakers Bureau Team

By Kathy Bush, Project Chair

There is still time to sign up for the advanced training opportunity for those who want to be a presenter for the JCCW MG speakers bureau. We have a professional trainer scheduled for the morning of Wednesday, January 30, 2019. If you are interested or have questions, see me at the December meeting or email [kathykbush@verizon.net](mailto:kathykbush@verizon.net). The class is limited to ten. Spaces are filling fast!



Ken Caro reports that the Blayton bumble bee garden set a new sweet potato harvest record with 198 pounds from a three-foot-by-twelve-foot raised bed!

## WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH DECEMBER 2018

BY HELEN HAMILTON  
JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

### SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA *Magnolia grandiflora*

Southern Magnolia is a magnificent tree of the South, densely covered with leathery, dark green, evergreen leaves. They are shiny on top and velvety brown underneath, much used in December for holiday decorations. Very large, very fragrant, creamy-white flowers appear from spring and occasionally through summer. The flowers are five inches wide, usually with six thick petals, slightly cupped at the tips. Conelike seedpods follow the flowers with large red seeds.

This handsome tree grows a straight trunk and conical crown and can get quite large, over sixty feet tall and forty feet wide, so it needs a lot of space. Southern magnolia is often planted as a lawn specimen when the lower branches are allowed to reach the ground. The tree grows best in rich, moist soils in part shade. It does not do well in extreme wet or dry soils and should not be planted near pavement because the roots can lift and crack concrete.

Few trees can match its year-round beauty. Deer do not bother southern magnolia, it has few pests or diseases, and is salt tolerant. The leaves can be a nuisance since they fall throughout the year and do not decompose. They can be chopped with a mower and sent back under the branches to recycle the nutrients.

Southern magnolia is not really native to the southern Coastal Plain in Virginia but has been planted extensively throughout and frequently escapes into local woodlands and moist bottomlands.

Dr. Stewart Ware says: "The northern limit of the natural range of southern magnolia when Bartram did his explorations was at the South Carolina/North Carolina border.

But as soon as colonists began to introduce it into various places in North Carolina, it began to reproduce as birds spread the seeds. Presumably that means that the northern limit in colonial days was not solely climate, but was a combination of climate, transport, and competitive interactions." The growth rate is slow – over the past forty years, Dr. Ware has watched seedlings in the College Woods that are not over four feet tall and have never bloomed.



Photo: Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) taken by Helen Hamilton

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



## Important Dates

- 11/22-1/1 Celebration in Lights (Newport News Park)
- 11/23-1/7 Gardenfest of Lights (Lewis Ginter, Richmond)
- 12/1-8 Christmas Decorations Walking Tour (CW)
- 1/14 Home Gardener Day (Virginia Beach)
- 9/19-22 Master Gardener College (Norfolk)

## SUNSHINE NOTES



The organization would like to send cards to members with difficult medical issues or who have experienced a death in the immediate family.

This month we sent a card to:

The family of Ann Gregory

Please provide names to the EMG secretary, Jennifer Campbell, at (757) 968-9499, or [jenkcampbell@yahoo.com](mailto:jenkcampbell@yahoo.com)



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## NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the January 2019 newsletter will be Thursday, December 27.

Please send any submissions to Hope Yelich, newsletter editor, at [hopeyelich@gmail.com](mailto:hopeyelich@gmail.com)

### **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.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.