

The Colonial Master Gardener



January 2007

President's Corner Charlie Clapper

PLANT SALE NEWS Becky Sutton, Becky Morgan, Barbara Gustafson and Ailene Bartlett are the 2007 Plant Sale Chairs – thank you. The sale will be Sunday afternoon, **April 29, 2007** at the Williamsburg Community Building (across North Boundary Street from the Williamsburg Library). Thanks to the efforts of MG Helen Hamilton we will have a combined plant sale with the Native Plant Society. After the December General Meeting twenty eight members signed up to help with the sale. Great! Every member should be thinking about what plants you will contribute to the sale.

AWARDS NEWS Minouche Robinson is chairing the awards committee with members Lynn Flood, Lise Kline, and Milt Berube. Five awards will be given: Master Gardener of the Year, Master Gardener Project of the Year, Steady as a Rock Award, Sustained Excellence Awards: for a MG in good standing for three years and for a MG in good standing for less than three years. Please use the nomination form you picked up at the December General Meeting. Or, get the form from the MG website or your email. Please send your nominations to Lynn Flood by **January 2, 2007**. Let's recognize the outstanding performance of our MG's.

The Board approved a number of recommendations concerning the Colonial Williamsburg's Reid/Shields Garden at our December meeting. I know that a number of members are concerned about our future relationship with Colonial Williamsburg – an important partner. We are close to an agreement but

we still need further work with Leanne DuBois and Colonial Williamsburg. Then we will communicate the recommendations to the membership. The Board adopted two policy resolutions that apply to all projects and will help clarify how projects are managed.

The Board is the final authority for any changes affecting hours of the MG Association

All projects are open to all Master Gardeners. Should a situation arise where there's limited volunteer space suggested or required, the Project Chairs are responsible to ensure any selection system is fair and equitable to all members.

**BEST WISHES
FOR A HAPPY
HOLIDAY AND A
WONDERFUL
NEW YEAR!**

As we look forward to the New Year please consider our earth and its future!

*This grand show is eternal.
It is always sunrise somewhere:
The dew is never dried at once:
A shower is every falling, vapor
is ever rising.
Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset,
eternal dawn and
gloaming,
On sea and continents and is
lands, each in its turn,
As the round earth rolls.*

-- John Muir

Next Monthly Meeting

January 4, Williamsburg
Regional Library

David D. Close, VCE State Master Gardener Coordinator, Virginia Tech Dept. of Horticulture, will give a presentation on the Endowment Fund, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Master Gardener involvement.



David Close, VCE State MG Coordinator will speak at the next monthly MG meeting. Photograph provided by Angela Cingale.

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FROM THE EXTENSION OFFICE LEANNE DUBOIS, EXTENSION AGENT, HORTICULTURE

The Woods in Your Backyard: **Learning to Create and Enhance Natural Areas** **around Your Home**

The Woods in Your Backyard is a new book distributed through the Cornell Cooperative Extension system. The book promotes the stewardship of small parcels of land for the personal enjoyment of the owners and improved environmental quality for all. This book is geared towards owners of 1-10 acres of land that is forested or has un-mowed natural areas and to owners interested in turning mowed lawn area into a forest. Improving water and air quality, enhancing wildlife habitats and overall health of natural areas, and spending less time mowing the lawn and more time enjoying outdoor activities with family and friends are just some of the benefits to be gained by learning how to manage and shape your backyard parcel of land. The first four parts (Introduction, Inventory Your Property, Ecological Principles, and Put Your Knowledge into Practice) describe concepts necessary to fulfill land management goals for your property. Part five is a workbook with blank activity sheets designed to apply the lessons in parts I-IV to your own land. Includes color photographs and list of resources also.

A copy of the book is available in the Extension office. Feel

free to stop in to review the book and/or order a copy for yourself. (Ordering details available upon request.)

MG: Year in Review

It's always interesting at the end of the year to review the impacts, successes and even disappointments we've had over the past year. Gregg Allen recently shared the Speakers Bureau impacts with us all in last month's newsletter. I would welcome you all to share your impacts over this past year so we can compile them for an annual report and present it to the membership. It's especially nice to hear from the many people who you've touched throughout the year. I sometimes receive thank you letters or phone calls from citizens who express their gratitude for the knowledge you've shared or the time you took to help. Quotes also are an invaluable to express an impact, especially from the youth we serve and of course the awards and grants we've achieved. If you have something to share, please send me an email and I'll compile them and consider writing an article for the newsletter too.

2006-07 MG BOARD

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Charlie Clapper, '02
564-6191

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Rich Strenkowski, '04
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TREASURER, WEBMASTER

David Banks, '03
258-8632

STATE REP

Ann Odle, '04
259-9025

VINTAGE MG

Ailene Bartlett, '85
229-2822

EXTENSION AGENT

Leanne DuBois, '96
564-2170

Internal Education News Jean Winters

My 2007 Good Wishes for you were penned by Virginia Richardson...

May you always walk where flowers bloom

With a sky of blue above you;

May you always have a heart that sings

And faithful friends to love you;

May you have so many joys to reap,

There'll be no time for pining;

And if a cloud should happen by,

May it have a silver lining.

Our new year begins so soon, our first meeting of 2007 is on the 4th! Please join me in welcoming David Close, our State Master Gardener Coordinator, who will speak about the Endowment Fund, VCE and our involvement in it, and the work that his position oversees. There will be a question and answer period

during which you may participate with concerns you may have about Master Gardeners in Virginia. This will be a start to our new year of exploration into our roles as Master Gardeners in James City County/Williamsburg and how we can learn more so that we can share more. Our meeting will again be at the Library...a note of appreciation for our continued support of the Library has been received and we are grateful that we are welcome there...their meeting space and technical support are always ready and waiting! See you there !

January Gardening Tips HELEN HAMILTON

(From Jim Lachowicz's Gardening News-letter for Hampton Roads)

Don't let the holiday shopping stress you out ... take time to play outside in your winter gardens. There are many winter blooming plants (perennial and annuals). Look around and if you have nothing in bloom then you may want to consider some late fall and winter blooming plants such as some *Sasanqua* camellias, hellebores, winter roses, pansies, etc. Now is a great time to plant the bulbs for early spring blooms. On average this month, it will be a high of 52 degrees and a low of 35 degrees and Hampton Roads will get 9 days of rain averaging 3.23 inches.

The potted plants you receive during the holiday season are not meant to be kept as permanent house plants. They were raised in a greenhouse and do not adapt well to the conditions in your home. Treat them like long-lasting cut flowers -- enjoy them as long as possible, but discard when they become unattractive.

Poinsettia: (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*). The poinsettia has gotten some bad press. It is **not poisonous** although many people think so. Some people are allergic to the milky sap of the plant produces. They are available in many varieties having different colors and shapes. Generally, the poinsettias purchased for holidays are considered **disposable**. What you see as the color on a poinsettia is actually the bracts and not flowers. To bring back color next year the plant requires 14 hours of darkness, and even a flash of light from an opened closet will re-set the photoperiod. It's easier to discard the plant and acquire another next year.

BUT, keep mistletoe out of the reach of children and pets, as the berries **are poisonous**

For the birds: Sunflower seeds will attract desirable birds, such as chickadees, tufted titmouses, finches, cardinals,

and grosbeaks, to your feeder. Goldfinches and woodpeckers are attracted to suet.

Use branches from discarded cut live Christmas trees to mulch beds of bulbs. If stored bulbs begin to shrivel, they are too dry. Place them in a container with potting medium, peat moss, or sawdust to stop the loss of water.

Mulching.

Mums and pansies tend easily to be heaved out of the ground during weather freezes and thaws, causing root damage. Place discarded cut live Christmas tree branches over flower beds to prevent this from happening.

Mulch perennial borders after the ground freezes to a depth of a two or three inches. Applying mulch too early increases the chance of harboring destructive field mice that are still on the lookout for comfortable winter quarters.

Indoor gardening.

Seeds taken from fresh grapefruits and oranges sown in a well-drained, sandy soil will soon produce attractive, green-leaved plants.

House plants with large leaves and smooth foliage (philodendron, dracaena, rubber tree plant, etc.) benefit if their leaves are washed with clear water at intervals to remove dust and grime, thus keeping the leaf pores open.

Make herb vinegars from chives, shallots, garlic, or any herbs on your windowsill. Use approximately four ounces of fresh herbs to one quart of wine vinegar. Allow the herbs to infuse for at least two weeks.

(From Virginia Native Plant Society, John Clayton Chapter)

The Jerusalem artichoke, *Helianthus tuberosus*, a perennial sunflower, is a native of the Great Plains. The Italians gave it a name that meant "turning to the sun" which the English thought sounded like Jerusalem. It is grown throughout the world today for its tuber, a root vegeta-

ble. The artichoke part of the Jerusalem artichoke's name comes from the taste of its edible tuber, which is a cross between a radish and an artichoke.

The tubers are gnarly and uneven, vaguely resembling ginger root, with a crisp texture when raw. Unlike most tubers, but in common with other members of the Asteraceae (including the artichoke), the tubers store the carbohydrate inulin (not to be confused with insulin) instead of starch. For this reason, Jerusalem artichoke tubers are an important source of fructose for industry. The carbohydrates give the tubers a tendency to break down and dissolve when cooked, in addition to giving them a legendary facility to produce flatulence.

Jerusalem artichokes are sold in the produce departments of many supermarkets as "sun chokes". The freshest roots are plumpish and vibrant in appearance. If they are left too long in the open, they become wrinkled and soft and can develop a bitter taste.

The scent of bayberry candles is derived from the Northern bayberry *Myrica pennsylvanica*, a salt-tolerant, semi-evergreen shrub well adapted to the Tidewater area. A close relative, southern waxmyrtle, *Myrica cerifera*, has similar properties. A male and female should be planted together to ensure production of the ornamental berries. Like legumes, wax myrtle fixes atmospheric nitrogen and so is able to thrive in infertile soils.

The aromatic compounds present in wax myrtle foliage seems to repel insects, particularly fleas. It was traditionally planted around southern homes to help keep living spaces pestfree. A sprig of wax myrtle in a closet or drawer is reputed to keep cockroaches out!

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PROGRAM UPDATES (AND OTHER MG INFO)

The Sunshine Fund sent remembrances this month to fellow MGs:

Ailene Bartlett

Rudy Roberts

Bob Warren

EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the February Newsletter is January 15. Please send to Lise Kline at legskline@cox.net or call 757-259-9477. Thank you.

2007 TRAINING PROGRAM

Master Gardeners will again be able to "audit" the classes presented for new Master Gardener training (with the exception of field trips). Due to limited space at the training facility, the number of MGs auditing these classes is limited to five (5) persons per session. Therefore, attendance will be on a reservation basis. A copy of the schedule has been emailed to JCCW MGs. Copies will also be available at the January MG meeting.

To request a reservation, contact Rich Bunger,

JCCW Master Gardener, 2003, at shadyldy@bellatlantic.net. Use MG Class in the Subject Line. Please provide the date and topic title of the class you desire to attend. I will provide a response, stating if there is space available or that I am placing you on the alternate list. If you are unable to contact me by e-mail, I may be reached at 757-253-9118.

Auditing of these classes will be credited for recertification training hours.

JMG SETTLES IN FOR WINTER MONTHS KARI ABBOTT, JMG PROJECT CHAIRPERSON

As the New Year arrives, JMG hopes you had the holiday of your choice and it was delightful.

Junior Master Gardening Project will move indoors and classes will be about water and how it helps everything to grow. Dr. Walten and I have been having fun with the children, and look forward to the New Year and the challenges it brings.

The Field Trips for DJ Montague have been reset for May 1-3, 2007. There has been some discussion of having some training for the field trips to include a Project Learning Tree Workshop or a Project Wild Workshop to help make people more comfortable. I am excited about doing such workshops for fellow master

gardeners, and if anyone would like to participate in the workshops and or the field trip please let me know at the email address below. This year the children will be walking the Beaver Trail, and there are so many cool plants like *Equisetum hyemale*.

As you start cleaning out for the holidays, or new year please remember JMG would appreciate any old nature, wildlife, animal, fish, even aquarium fish calendars, magazines, Highlights, or Ranger Rick, the pictures are always a great to share in classes and help spark and idea here and there. Bring them to the Master Gardener meetings, or contact me by email below.

And as always, any of you are welcome to join in the fun! Please email me at bearsbaskets@cox.net.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU REPORT GREG ALLEN

During 2006, there were 45 speaking engagements that reached over 1553 people. Helen Hamilton wrested the number-of-engagements crown away from Ailene Bartlett with over 16 appearances reported for the Bureau! Our own Leanne DuBois was a close second. Not surprising considering the speaker, the #1 topic was *Native Plants*. Other topics of particular interest during the year were *Drought tolerant plants*, *Anniversary Garden*, *Ask the Experts*.

There are already 12 requests for speakers for the New Year. This winter hibernation period might be a great time for other master gardeners to consider joining the Speaker's Bureau. If interested, please call Greg Allen at 258-5348. We'd love to have you join this team!

PLANT SALE 2007 REBECCA SUTTON

Master Gardeners will join the Native Plant Society for our annual Plant Sale on April 29, 2007, at the Williamsburg Community Building. To all of you who signed up at the December meeting to help at the Plant Sale, I thank you and will be in touch. If anyone else wants to sign up, has plants to dig for the sale or empty pots, contact me.

The committee for the Plant Sale is Rebecca Sutton, Becky Morgan and Barbara Gustafson with support from Ailene Bartlett and Cathy Ripley.

MG BANQUET AND MG DUES

The MG Graduation Dinner and Annual Banquet is January 11, 2007, at 6 pm at the Williamsburg Unitarian Church, 3051 Ironbound Road. Tickets are \$12.00 each. The Class of 2006 interns are free, but spouses need a ticket. Please bring your checks to the January MG meeting or mail to Dave Banks at 215 Charter House Lane, Williamsburg, VA 23188. No tickets will be sold after the January meeting.

It's time to pay your 2007 dues, which are \$15.00. Again, please bring your checks to the January MG meeting or mail to Dave Banks at the above address. To the Class of 2006 interns: it is time for your 2007 dues as well. Dues should be paid as soon as possible, no later than the February meeting.

YOUTH EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

The new 4-H Extension agent is Jeremy Johnson. He is doing a variety of youth programs and would like help. The following is a brief description of areas where help is needed:

"The 4-H school-enrichment program currently provides 30 minute lessons for fourth grade students. Each lesson is correlated with the Virginia Standards of Learning. All of the supplies and lessons are provided by the 4-H office. We are currently providing lessons in the following areas:

Oct–Nov: Weather

May: Plants/Living Systems

In addition to the school enrichment program, we are also planning a National Youth Service's Day project. For this project, we will be training the STRIVE program, an at-risk youth prevention program, in horticulture landscape using the Junior Master Gardener Curriculum. The STRIVE youth will use that information to provide a

two-hour lesson to Beyond the Bell, a James City County, Parks & Recreation after-school program. As a culminating project, the STRIVE and Beyond the Bell youth will plant two 8X10 anniversary gardens at their respective sites. We are very interested in partnering with the Master Gardeners and the new intern class to make this program a success. The dates for the project are: Thursday, April 5, Thursday April 12, and Thursday, April 19."

Please call or e-mail Jeremy directly if you can give him a hand. These projects would be counted as E22. Youth Programs.

Jeremy has been invited to speak at our March meeting during the youth programs section. He will be speaking briefly, this will give us an opportunity to be acquainted with him.

Jeremy Johnson

PH: 564-2170

E: jejohns1@vt.edu

Please welcome proposed new member:

Jack Hostetter
6323 Glenwilton Lane
Williamsburg, VA 23188
jhostetter@cox.net
221-0160

We're on the web
at
www.jccwmg.org

MG changes in address:

Caryl LeFever
3.caryl@gmail.com

Nancy Green
223 Wingate Drive
Williamsburg, VA 23185
345-0415

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JCC/W MG APPRECIATION AWARDS DEADLINE IS FAST APPROACHING

The JCC/W Master Gardener Association would like to recognize the hard work and community involvement of its membership.

Below are listed the possible awards available. All Active Master Gardeners in good standing may nominate candidates for the following awards. Please see the website for a nomination form, or call Lynn Flood. **The deadline for submission of nominations is January 2, 2007.**

Master Gardener of the Year Award: Has demonstrated effective leadership and organizational abilities, provides quality horticultural information, and has contributed volunteer hours to various projects.

Master Gardener Project of the Year Award: A Master Garden Project that has met all the goals of VCE. Has had a significant educational impact on the commu-

nity and has had an influence on improving the environmental and horticultural needs of the area.

Steady as a Rock Award: A Master Gardener who has been very dedicated and steadily involved. A person you can count on, not necessarily a person who has been in a leadership position.

Sustained Excellence: Has been a Master Gardener in good standing for at least three years. Has been continuously involved in volunteer services and has demonstrated effective skills in horticultural practices.

Sustained Excellence: Has been a Master Gardener for less than three years. Has been continuously involved in volunteer services and has demonstrated effective skills in horticultural practices.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY REPORT ART GUSTAFSON

I am pleased to report that in 2006 the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners (JCC/W MG's) contributed 6300 hours to our projects! For an average of 58.3 hours per Master Gardener. The Interns did well also, their Project Hours was 2574 for an average of 99 hours per Intern. Also, JCC/W MG's and Interns made a total of 23,077 contacts during the year, and our web site had 10,706 visits in 2006! The highest contributing Master Gardener was Kari Abbott with a total of 1663 hours in 2006. Good job Kari! She will be earning her 3000 hour award this year. The highest contributing Intern was Dan Tevlin with a total of 158 hours. Incidentally, I did not include travel time in any of the above hours, but of course travel is reported as a part of your total hours and counts towards hours awards.

During 2006 JCC/W MG's improved their horticulture knowledge by taking 1600

hours of training from a variety sources. Training is the hours that you report under RT1 & RT2.

I would be remiss not to mention that 3505 hours of administrative time was contributed by our members in 2006. The biggest segments of Administrative time are put in by Lynn Flood (membership), Dave Banks (treasurer and web master), Lisa Kline (news letter), myself (hours), and of course by those that run the yearly training class.

I want to thank all of you for your cooperation in submitting your hours report throughout the year, it makes my job an easy one. A few Master Gardeners have been tardy in submitting their hours and I will be contacting those few after the holidays.

May you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Helen Hamilton, as God, Jarl Christensen as St. Francis, and Nancy Greene as Saint Catherine, performed an entertaining skit on native plants at the December MG meeting.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- The MG Graduation Dinner and Annual Banquet, Jan 11, 2007, at 6 pm at the Williamsburg Unitarian Church
- Feb 1, 2007 MG Monthly meeting, TBD, Williamsburg Regional Library
- Mar 1, 2007, MG Monthly meeting, Remember Our Youth, Kari Abbott and Jeremy Johnson, Williamsburg Regional Library
- Apr 29, 2007, Annual Plant Sale, Williamsburg Community Building
- May 2-5, 2007 International Master Gardener Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas. For more information: <http://mg2007.uaex.edu> or call 501-671-2000.