



The Colonial Master Gardener

January
2017

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY GARY STREB

“Gardening, like other bents, will find a way but it will run more smoothly if it has a little help at the beginning.”

—Cecily Ullman Sidgwick, *The Children's Book of Gardening* (1909)

Next Meeting:

Thursday, January 5

Program:

**2016 EMG Intern
Graduation
And
Reception**



The hectic and frantic pace of the Christmas holiday is behind us. I hope your holiday was filled with the love of family and friends. Now we turn to a new year, filled with new challenges and goals. Resolutions to “do better, be better” will fill our planning calendars for a while, but we must plan diligently for the changes to succeed. I’m sure we have made some “gardening” resolutions as well as identified some personal ambitions.

Now is the time to rework your landscape design—survey for empty spaces to fill with new plants, switch out those that are not quite “up to par,” and create a new, updated vision. Seed catalogs give us fresh ideas for our edible gardens—and possibilities for home-grown plants for the Plants Huzzah! sale in April. Bulbs can still be planted until the ground is frozen (I put my daffodils in yesterday!). You may have to cover the emerging foliage with compost or mulch if they pop their heads up too soon.

It is also a great time to spray dormant horticultural oil on your plants that may need it. Examine the condition of each plant while you are pruning (also the perfect time—while dormant) and take appropriate remedies for a healthy landscape later on. Sharpen your tools. Clean up the winter debris.



Both images from pixabay

The president's message is continued on the next page

2017
MGA Board

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Gary Streb

President Elect:
Vacant

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Cathy Hill

VP Projects:
Janet Smith

VP Internal Ed:
Hazel Braxton

Secretary:
Cathy Johnson

Treasurer:
Liz Favre

VMGA Rep:
Marilyn Riddle

Past President:
Vacant

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—CONTINUED

So many of these garden tasks can be applied to our Extension Master Gardener tasks and the Master Gardener Association plan of action. Let's reevaluate what we are doing and set a course that will get us to these goals. Try a new project. Assist your association in a new way. The 2017 executive board members have taken over their new responsibilities, and there are still lots and lots of opportunities to lead and serve. Much of the association work is done by committees, both large and small. Please let either Cathy Hill, your incoming vice president for administration, or me know if you are ready, willing, and able to help with some of the important tasks that need to be done for the entire association.

Some of the committees and chairs have been doing their jobs for years—if you would like to continue, that is great. If you want a new challenge, that is great too. We are looking for an association historian, parliamentarian, inventory control manager, social/reception/picnic coordinators, merchandise handler, membership accounting, among others. Jeanne Millin could use a co-chair with the Water Steward program. These are jobs can don't require the mobility of an active gardener—many of us are finding the ups and downs in the garden aren't as easy as they once were. We have lots of opportunities to stay an active Extension Master Gardener with some of these positions, among others.

We are taking a critical look at our JCC/Williamsburg Master Gardener Association website. It was created in 2003 and, quite frankly, it is looking a bit tired. We have made a commitment to completely overhaul the website to make it more meaningful to the citizens of the county and city and definitely more attractive, inviting, and user friendly. I am looking for a person (or persons) for a new position, **Website Content Manager**, who will work with Hope Yelich, our newsletter editor, and Dave Banks, our webmaster, to update current gardening information on the website monthly, to keep it fresh and current. No graphic design or computer science degree necessary—just a desire to corral the information and get it to the webmaster.

Let's not forget our preparations for the annual plant sale. This year we are planning to make it much more like an information symposium—with active information booths and specialized public presentations. This is your opportunity to showcase your gardening talents and not only your plant donations.

Our next general meeting on Friday, January 5, will be the graduation of the Extension Master Gardener Training Class of 2016, followed by a reception in the Schell Room of the Williamsburg Library. Please plan to attend to welcome these new Extension Master Gardeners to our ranks. And to each them, a sincere Congratulations! Special thanks to Kate Robbins, our Extension Agricultural Natural Resources program assistant, and the Training Class committee of Martin Oakes, Janet Smith, Mary Wool, Hope Yelich, and Susan Shoulet for making it all happen—with the help of many weekly classroom managers, presenters, mentors, and others.

Lastly, I would like to thank each of you for allowing me to be your president during this "practice" year. With your continued help and support our association can all do some great things. I am excited about the prospects!

The MGA board meets on the third Friday 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.



ANOTHER REMINDER TO FILL THESE OUT BY CATHY HILL, VP FOR ADMINISTRATION

Happy New Year! I am looking forward to working with all of you this year.

To stay active, all Extension Master Gardeners must complete two forms before the end of January. The first is the Extension Master Gardeners Recertification form and the other is the Standards of Behavior form.

I know a lot of you have completed and turned in both of the forms. For those who have not, I will be at the meeting in January with both of these forms.

These forms can also be found on the members page on [our website](#). You can download them and send to [me](#) or [Kate Robbins](#).



AND ANOTHER TWO REASONS TO CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR BY HOPE YELICH



Wahoo! We are so proud of our 2016 VCE MG Training Class! They have spent the year digging through facts, planting ideas, and even dealing with some compost. Now it's time to harvest the rewards. (Yep, I really said that; I can't believe it either.)

All Extension Master Gardeners are invited to the Class of 2016 graduation ceremony at the JCCW Master Gardener Association monthly meeting Thursday, January 5. We are pleased that Bryan Hill, the James City County Administrator, has accepted our invitation to speak about the importance of volunteers in our area. Please join us as we welcome our new group of EMGs and their guests with a ceremony and reception.

The day before, the Class of 2017 begins its journey. With nearly thirty students, the class is full!

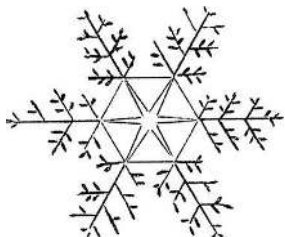
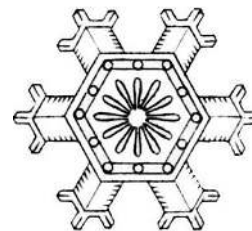
The Training Team hopes you will stop by at the rec center Wednesday, January 4, at 9:00am to meet the trainees and wish them the best.



UPCOMING SEMINARS, OPEN HOUSES, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP INTERNAL EDUCATION

January 16, 2017. (Founder's Inn, Virginia Beach). 8:30am-5:00pm. **Home Gardener Day.** Speakers, classes, and workshops. \$85 early registration through Dec.1. \$100 Dec. 2-Jan. 9. \$125 Jan. 10-16. For more information, click on the [website](#).



January 19. (WJCC Rec Center, Longhill Rd.). 6:45pm. **John Clayton: Up Close and Personal.** The colonial era botanist, John Clayton, namesake of the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, is lauded for his role in producing the first flora written for Virginia and for his international stature among 18th century botanists, but what do we know about him as a person? Join us on January 19th and become much better acquainted with this important Virginian. Martha McCartney has gathered new information about the life of John Clayton in the course of writing a history of Mathews County,

January 21. (Williamsburg Botanical Garden). 10:00am-11:30. **Pruning-Winter Tree Care.** This workshop will provide instruction on early winter tree care. James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners will discuss the basics of pruning trees and shrubs and will demonstrate the proper use of pruning tools. This event is part of the Learn and Grow Educational Series sponsored by the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. The program is free, although a \$5.00 donation to help the Garden grow is appreciated. For more information, contact Barb Landa at 757-259-2079 or by email at barb@landa.org.



February 18. (Williamsburg Botanical Garden). 10:00am-11:30. **Think Spring and Have Bluebirds in Your Yard.** Join **Nancy Barnhart and a team of certified Master Naturalists** to learn all about bluebirds and how to attract them to your yard. This event is part of the Learn and Grow Educational Series sponsored by the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. The program is free, although a \$5.00 donation to help the Garden grow is appreciated. For more information, contact Nancy Barnhart, at 540-454-3014 or email her at barnhartnt@gmail.com.

March 24. (Waynesboro). **Shenandoah Valley Plant Symposium: A Gardener's Palette.** 8:00am-4:00pm. Doug Tallamy, Will Hooker, Ellen Ecker Ogden, and Vincent Simeone are the speakers. \$80 early registration before Jan. 3, \$90 regular registration, \$100 registration after March 1. Lunch included. This is a great way to get you're your educational hours. For more information, click on the [website](#).



March 25. (White Stone). 8:00am-3:00pm. **Gardening in the Northern Neck Seminar.** Rick Darke and Dr. Doug Tallamy, co-authors of *The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden*, will speak. Registration opens February 1. For more information, click [here](#).

CONGRATULATIONS, 2016 EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER GRADUATES!

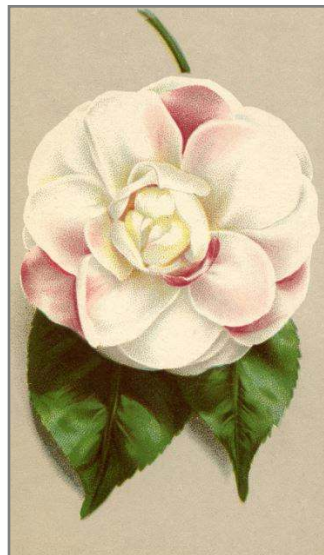
BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

The members of the James City County/Williamsburg Extension Master Gardener Association give the new graduates a wreath of laurel for their achievements. The laurel wreath (or crown) is made of interlocking branches and leaves of bay laurel. Each symbolizes the winning or commemorating of an event. For the graduates, we commemorate the past months of studying, researching, experimenting, teaching, and serving the Williamsburg/James City County communities.



We also give each graduate a bouquet of lavender, camellia Japonica, and gladiolus. Lavender means devotion; camellia Japonica means excellence; and gladiolus means strength of character.

These are all characteristics which you have exhibited and are those which will stay you as full members of our organization.



To the teachers, mentors, project chairs, and all other class supporters, we give a big bunch of roses to show our appreciation for all the hard work, love, and support given to the graduating class of 2016.



CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME!

All images from The Graphics Fairy

FROM COTTON TO CLOTH AT BLAYTON ELEMENTARY BY KEN CARO

It was definitely not winter at the J. Blaine Blayton Elementary School recently, where again this year the children grew cotton, picked it, and removed the seeds. We had a spinner come to the garden, card the cotton, and spin it into yarn.



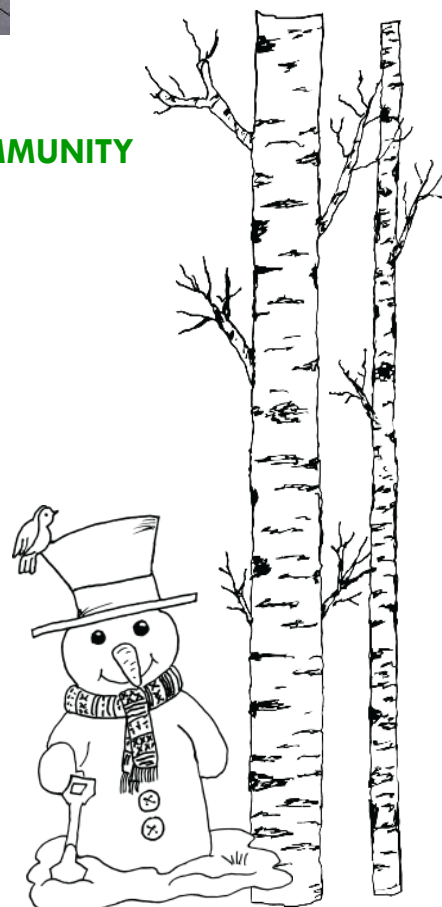
AN INVITATION TO SHARE YOUR SKILLS WITH THE COMMUNITY BY PATRICIA PAQUETTE AND JEANNE MILLIN

Winter is the best time to prune many plants in our area -- and the time when Master Gardeners can help people in our communities learn best pruning practices during on-site visits to their yards and gardens.

We visit homeowners in teams of two or three to give them hands-on training to maintain healthy shrubs and small trees, answer their questions, and offer advice. The rewards go both ways, as team members have the opportunity to experience a variety of landscapes and interesting people.

The on-site visits are held in February and March. We are scheduling orientation and review sessions for 2017 volunteers on Thursday, Jan. 12 and Wednesday, Jan. 18 at noon with a pruning overview for new volunteers and for those who would like a refresher. Our full team organizational meeting will immediately follow at 1 pm. Both sessions will meet at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden (5537 Centerville Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188).

If you have any questions would like to join us this year, please contact Jeanne Millin at scotfarquhar@cox.net.



The Graphics Fairy

UPDATE FROM THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

BY MARILYN RIDDLE

Highlights from the meeting held in Manassas on December 10:

- ◆ New host for website
- ◆ Leadership Development Training in Charlottesville—40 in attendance, 20 EMGs, Gary Streb and Angela Cingale attended from JCC-W
- ◆ Handbooks ready, \$50 for hard copy or PDF download
- ◆ Tablecloths ready. We ordered and have received two for JCC/W
- ◆ Webinar on Dec 15 at 10:00am; watch for future ones, q and a to follow when live
- ◆ Temporary name badges are downloadable for interns at coordinators' site
- ◆ Landcare Stewardship is the topic for the next MG College
- ◆ Dr. David Gibbey, Father of EMG in America, will be presenter at MG College
- ◆ Program at Battlefield Farms (Rapidan/Orange) on March 28 on native bulbs; Cole Burrell will be there.

WINTER PLANT WALKS

BY HELEN HAMILTON



NEW PROJECT CO-CHAIRS

Lisa Stefanick and Ken Carol have assumed the role as the project co-chairs of school gardens. Please contact them if you are currently working in any school garden with the exception of Matthey's Garden and the Blayton School Garden.

Ken Caro: kencaro2@gmail.com,
Lisa Stefanic:
lvstefanick@gmail.com.

Skunk Cabbage walk. Saturday, January 28, 10 am. Come look for skunk cabbage in Longhill Swamp with Helen Hamilton, and Gus Hall will lead a walk through nearby upland woods. Meet at the Christian Life Center on Longhill Road across from Lafayette High School and wear waterproof footwear. To register, call Helen at (757) 564-4494 or email at helen48@cox.net. Snow, ice and bad weather will cancel this walk.

Nude Tree Walk. February 18, 10:00 am. Walk with Charlie Dubay to learn about identification of trees in winter condition. At the top of the hill is a nice comparison of three Virginia pines – loblolly, Virginia, and shortleaf. Participants may park in the William and Mary Hall parking lot, which is open to the public on weekends. Meet Charlie at the Sports Center, 400 Brooks Street to walk to the College Woods. And although most trees will be nude at this time of year, it is usually cold in February, so wear enough clothes! Contact Charlie Dubay at (757) 870-0284 to register, and in case of bad weather.

What Is That Weed? Saturday, March 18 at 10:00 am. A walk in the Freedom Park area to identify emerging spring weeds and wildflowers. Learn which weeds are welcome and why others should be eliminated, and expect to see the first flowers of spring! Meet at the Freedom Park Interpretive Center parking lot. Contact Helen 564-4494 or helen48@cox.net for more information.

**These walks are sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society.
All walks are free and open to the public.**

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH JANUARY 2017

BY HELEN HAMILTON

PAST PRESIDENT, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Tree-clubmoss

Dendrolycopodium obscurum
(*Lycopodium obscurum* var. *isophyllum*)

Often used in holiday decorations, ground pine somewhat resembles a tiny, thickly branched pine tree with oversized cones.

A perennial which stays green all winter, the erect stems grow to twelve inches tall; the plant propagates from extensively rooting, deep-creeping rhizomes. The linear leaves are dense and sharp-pointed. Ground pine is distinguished from other tree-like clubmosses by round branches and pine-like rather than the flattened and cedar-like branches of running cedar and other species.

Ground pine reproduces by spores which are clustered in single, stalkless cones at the stem tips. The underground sexual phase which produces the sex cells alternates in the life cycle with the spore-producing plant, the above-ground form.



Photo: Tree-clubmoss (*Dendrolycopodium obscurum*) taken by Helen Hamilton

Found in moist sites in woods, thickets, and clearings in nearly every county in Virginia and cool, northern forests in North America and Asia, ground pine prefers acid soil and cool temperatures. The plant tolerates low nutrients and can withstand a wide range of light conditions. In general, if temperatures become warmer and the forest becomes drier, this species would be expected to decrease.

The species of *Lycopodium*, often split into several genera, are seedless plants representing a division of the plant kingdom called Club-mosses. In the Paleozoic era (about 300 million years ago), the ancestors of modern club-mosses reached gigantic proportions. These huge plants, some up to over 100 feet tall, formed a major part of the plant material that developed into coal beds.

The ground pine gets its name from its resemblance to a miniature coniferous tree. The genus name *Lycopodium* is from the Greek lycos, 'wolf', and podus, 'foot,' after a fancied resemblance of club-moss plants to a wolf's paw.

Club-mosses have been boiled in water to make a medicinal tea that was cooled and used as an eye wash. At one time, fresh plants were put on the head to cure headaches and worn on clothing to ward off illness.

Books are Still Available

Helen's new book, *Ferns & Mosses of Virginia's Coastal Plain*, has just been published. Her earlier title, *Wildflowers & Grasses of Virginia's Coastal Plain*, is also available. To order a copy of either book, fill out the form at the end of this newsletter and send it on.....

For more information about native plants visit www.vnps.org

Important Dates

- 1/16/17 Home Gardener Day (Virginia Beach)
- 1/19 John Clayton Talk (WJCC rec center)
- 1/21 Pruning-Winter Tree Care (WBG)
- 1/28 Skunk Cabbage Walk (Longhill Swamp)
- 2/18 Spring and Bluebirds (WBG)
- 2/18 Nude Tree Walk (College Woods)
- 3/18 What Is That Weed? (Freedom Park)
- 3/24 Shenandoah Plant Symposium (Waynesboro)
- 3/25 Gardening in the Northern Neck (White Stone)



The Graphics Fairy

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the February 2017 newsletter will be Monday, January 23.

Please send any submissions to Hope Yelich, newsletter editor, at hopeyelich@gmail.com

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. Please provide names to the EMG secretary, Cathy Johnson, at (757) 208-0065, or cathypj@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.

Order Form

Ferns & Mosses of Virginia's Coastal Plain: _____ copies @ \$18 each, total \$ _____

Wildflowers & Grasses of Virginia's Coastal Plain: _____ copies @ \$28 each, total \$ _____

Order total \$ _____

Your Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Info (email/telephone) _____

____ Check enclosed ____ Credit Card (Credit card # _____ Exp. date _____)

Send check or credit card order to: **Helen Hamilton
PO Box 314
Lightfoot, VA 23090**

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