



The Colonial Master Gardener

February
2021

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MARTIN OAKES

We are in the middle of our winter – both from a weather perspective and a coronavirus perspective. Please enjoy these February days with the cool and crisp mornings and the bright sunshine. If we are lucky, a little snow may blow into town. Remain diligent with preventive steps for COVID – 19. Please continue safe practices. Hopefully, the vaccine will become more available in the near future. I certainly miss seeing and interacting with the membership – Zoom works well but the interpersonal touch is just so important.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, February 4
9:00am
VIA ZOOM

Program:

Bulbs in Companion Planting

Speaker:

Brent Heath



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I like to use this platform to update the members. Minimal new information is available. The application for the position of the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) agent for JCCW / New Kent will remain open until January 31. The interview process will begin mid-to-late February. I will keep you informed. Janet Spencer is excellent at providing timely updates.

Our unit will be the host for the Virginia Master Gardener Association (state level) meeting on Saturday February 13. This meeting will of course be virtual through Zoom. Please contact [Marilyn Riddle](#) or [Joanne Sheffield](#) for additional information.

A number of the association board members – including myself – plan to attend an initial administrator training session for Better Impact. Better Impact is the new volunteer management software for VCE. It will replace the VMS system in March of this year. It only took me five years and many hours of instruction from Barb Floyd to understand and comprehend VMS – and now I have to start over. This is progress. I ask all members to be patient with this new program. Training will be provided in early March.

We are looking for a “few good people” to act as sponsors for new transfer master gardeners. Vickie Rockwell (VP Administration) will address this topic at the monthly meeting.

The association's operating procedures have now been updated and revised. Thank you so very much, Patsy McGrady. We will distribute the new procedures document to the members in the near future.

Finally, I want to tell you wonderful flower lovers that my hellebores are starting to bloom. The winter color is fantastic. The flowers look especially nice with the bronze Nandina shrubs. Who knew --- even Oakes can grow something worthwhile?

Please let me know if you have any concerns or suggestions. I have surrounded myself with a smart, strong board (I respectfully refer to as the cabinet), and we are here to serve your needs.

2021
MGA Board

President:
Martin Oakes

President Elect:
Deborah Bussert

VP Administration:
Vickie Rockwell

VP Projects:
Rick Brown

VP Internal Ed:
Bill Dichtel

Secretary:
Paulette Atkinson

Treasurer:
Linda Neilson

VMGA Rep:
Marilyn Riddle
Alternate:
Joanne Sheffield

Past President:
Patsy McGrady

*VCE ANR Program
Assistant:*
VACANT

Newsletter Editor:
Hope Yelich
hopeyelich@gmail.com

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.

PLEASE NOTE:
During the pandemic and while the library remains closed, the board meets through video conferencing.

VMS WILL BECOME BETTER IMPACT BY VICKIE ROCKWELL, VP FOR ADMINISTRATION

I am just so excited – my miniature early irises are poking up through the mulch, and I found a few of my lazy daffodils waking up from their winter sleep. They have brought a smile to my face and added to my hope that we are headed to a bright new year. I have been devouring the catalogs for new ideas and pacing around my beds to see which perennials are still hanging in there. (The rabbits have discovered my chives, parsley, and dill unfortunately.)



As we head into 2021, changes are coming. As a reminder, the VMS system is being retired and a new system is being put in its place. Both Rick Brown and I are asking that you keep track of your 2021 volunteer and continuing-education hours and NOT enter them into the VMS system at this time. Training for the administrators is just now happening. Once that happens, keep on the lookout for the notices for volunteer training that will allow you to enter your hours. It is a case of “make haste slowly.” As gardeners we should be used to this, but I keep wanting to hurry things along.

Stay well and healthy. Wear your masks and get vaccinated when available. I want to see “all y’all” really soon!

THIS MONTH'S SPEAKER BY BILL DICHEL, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

Watch for your Zoom Invitation from Rick Brown for the February 4 virtual meeting of the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners Association. Our speaker will be Brent Heath, founder and principal in [Brent and Becky's Bulbs](#) in Gloucester, Virginia.

Well known as great bulb producers and distributors throughout the country, Brent and Becky's farm has been in the family for over one hundred years and their company has been producing and distributing bulbs since 1979. Brent's topic at our meeting will be “Bulbs in Companion Planting.” He will focus on combining bulbs with annuals, perennials, ground covers, and flowering shrubs for maximal benefit in your garden throughout the year. It will be a presentation you won't want to miss.

President Marty Oakes will convene the monthly business meeting after the instructional presentation is completed. The presentation will qualify for education hours for Master Gardeners who sign in to the presentation.

Don't forget to check out our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/VCEMasterGardeners/>. Lots of great articles, educational videos, beautiful photographs, upcoming events, and more! Marion Guthrie is doing a great job keeping us up to date, especially during this time when things are changing so frequently.

To get to our VCE James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener homepage quickly, click on <http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/>

2021 INTERNAL PLANT SALE UPDATE

BY DONNA TIERNEY, PLANT SALE CHAIR

We need your help to propagate plants! Spring is just around the corner.

When: Saturday, May 1, 2021 (Setup for sale will be on Friday, April 30)

Where: Historic Triangle Community Service Center (HTCSC)
312 Waller Mill Road, Williamsburg

Time: 9:00am—12:00pm

Wear: Your Master Gardener badge, mask, and gloves.
Maintain a social distance of at least six feet when shopping, waiting in line, or socializing

Payment: Checks only

Audience: Master Gardeners only. Note: MGs can buy plants for friends or relatives, but ONLY MGs can attend the sale to prevent any potential COVID-19 liabilities from public attendance

There will be no Trash and Treasures offered at this sale.

Need help with digging or potting plants? Contact Kim Owens at (757) 592- 8181

Need pots or labels? Come to the MG storage unit on **February 11 between 10:00am-12:00pm**

Ready to start potting and inventorying? Please use the form at the end of the newsletter

Happy Valentine's Day and thanks for your support!!

Your Plant Sale Team —
Donna Tierney, Linda Berryman, Angela Cingale, Stacy DeMeo,
Kim Owens, Jim Pressly, Jean Johnston, and Gary Streb



Photos of the 2020 plant sale by Hope Yelich

BOTANICAL PRUNING CLINIC PROJECT 2021: DAMP BEGINNINGS

BY HARRY FAHL, CO-CHAIR, PRUNING CLINIC

January 26, our first day of pruning at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden, was a success. Given that the drizzling rain did not stop for nearly an hour after we arrived, the hardy volunteers who came were happy to continue. But was the success of the day because of all the pruning and trimming? Nope! We didn't cut a single twig.

After our initial housekeeping meeting, I offered the option of quitting for the day or continuing on with the project. Bill Dichtel suggested that we take the group and walk the garden discussing why, what, and how to cut. I had walked the garden a few days earlier and Bill, garden volunteer Dave Mershon, and I did the same the day before the clinic began. These dedicated pruners on this dreary day were anxious to continue to learn. We spent the next hours reviewing nearly all the pruning and trimming that we would be working on throughout the garden. There was considerable discussion and questions about pruning that arose as we walked the areas of the gardens where we would be working. I was excited about and welcomed the active participation, and I believe everyone benefited from this as time well spent.

The clinic will continue every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00am to 12:00pm until the project is completed—or March 4, whichever comes first. If you are interested in participating contact Harry Fahl, hfahl@gmail.com or (410) 382-0225. Please leave your name and cell number.



Photo of snowdrops in her garden taken by Susan Miller

FROM THE WILLIAMSBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN

BY JUDITH ALBERTS

Our own Justin Diaz will share practical tips on starting your own seeds more successfully at the next Learn and Grow Virtual Program, [From the Ground Up: Seed Starting Success](#), which will take place on February 20, from 10:00-11:30am..

Please register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/138044929099>, and check out his video about a spring planting tool at <https://youtu.be/RSMz58SDaBE>.

Justin will also reprise his presentation on composting for the WBG. If you missed his MGA presentation or just want a refresher, register for the Learn and Grow on March 20, [Compost is Garden Gold](#).
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/99653175330>

Interested in joining the WBG volunteer team? Join us on Wednesday, February 10, at 3:00pm for an informational meeting for both new and returning volunteers via Zoom and find out how you can get involved both in the garden and behind the scenes. Sign up at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/138052686301>.

THIS AND THAT

The Virginia Flower & Garden Expo

The [Virginia Flower & Garden Expo](#) will host virtual garden shows beginning Saturday, February 13, from 12:00noon to 3:00pm, with scheduled Zoom lectures and various demonstrations.

Each month will showcase seasonal garden tips and information, along with virtual garden tours from around the Commonwealth. Visit www.vafgs.org for more information.

—Pam Mageland



Speakers Bureau Update

Garden clubs are meeting via Zoom these days, so the Speakers Bureau is updating its listing of programs and speakers who are comfortable and willing to give virtual presentations.

If you're interested in getting involved as a speaker, contact Judith Alberts and Elizabeth McCoy at mgspeakersjccw@gmail.com.

—Judith Alberts



Online Continuing Education Opportunities

From the state EMG office, Kathleen Reed lists *several* online CE resources MGs can utilize while away from projects. Click on: <https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/biweekly-update/>

Master Gardener Apparel Now Available

Our vendor A Logo for You has recently updated its website. For those of you who have ordered before, you will have to set up a new account. If this is your first order, you will also need to set up an account. I do not know if orders can be picked up in person yet; but the company will ship directly to you.

Any garments with the embroidered logo will be available quickly since they are done one at a time. However, check before you order t-shirts. They are not on the website yet. If you are ordering t-shirts, expect a delay. Screen printing is done when there is a total of at least twenty items to print. That doesn't mean you have to order twenty --just twenty t-shirts have to be ordered by Master Gardeners.

Below is the link to our order page:

https://stores.alogoforyou.com/master_gardeners/shop/home

Contact information:
757-220-9259
alogo@alogoforyou.com

100 Stafford Court
Williamsburg, VA 23185

—Cathy Hill

Photos taken by Hope Yelich

PLANT OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY 2021

BY HELEN HAMILTON

JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

SEX IN MOSSES

Most plants actually do it twice – non-sexual (fragments, runners, rhizomes) and sexual (eggs and sperm). Most mosses can start new plants from fragments broken off leaves or stems. Many make roundish bodies called gemmae at the ends of stems or leaves that carry the same genetic information as the parent and will grow into a mature plant if relatively undisturbed.

I am always amazed when I find yet another plant or animal that has sex essentially the same way we do – swimming sperm and stationary egg. Throughout the living world there are many variations on this procedure. Some bacteria form conjugation tubes between two bacteria through which they exchange genetic material. Many single-celled organisms do the same.



Haircup moss. Photo by Seig Kopinitz

The sexual phase involves stationary eggs and swimming sperm, that act in the same way as in humans, whales and dogs. The only difference is the method of transport. Most animals use a structure to transfer the sperm from male to female but the medium all living things use to carry sperm to eggs is water.

The green leafy moss body, most familiar on tree trunks, in sidewalk cracks, on bare spots in lawns, is either male or female. That means all parts of the plant have only one set of chromosomes in all the cells. So they must have developed from sperm or eggs that have only half the chromosomes of the body cells.

The male moss plant produces sperm at the stem tip that must swim through a tiny amount of water to reach a female plant with egg cells at the top of the stem. This is the sexual part of moss reproduction. Biologists have actually photographed these swimming moss sperm!

From the moss fertilized egg, a stalk with a rounded or cylindrical capsule arises. Inside, the double set of

chromosomes that came from the sperm and egg divides to form spores that each have only one set of chromosomes. Spores are very tiny bodies, averaging only 50 microns (0.05 millimeter) in diameter. Essentially invisible to us, they travel lightly through air or on animal bodies, or shoes of walkers.



Apple moss. Photo by Helen Hamilton

When spores find a moist habitat, they germinate to form a minute green thread that closely resembles aquatic plants like green algae, often seen in quiet bodies of water as slimy threads. From these green strands of mosses a leafy stem will grow as the familiar moss body that is either male or female.

Mosses, ferns and some algae reproduce by this method of alternating their sexual and non-sexual generations. Many and varied are the ways these plants have their sex!

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

Important Dates



pixabay

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the March 2021 newsletter will be Monday, February 22.

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

THINKING OF OUR MEMBERS

The organization sends cards to members with difficult medical issues or who have experienced a death in the immediate family. We also acknowledge achievements/milestones and donations made to the association.

This month we sent cards to:
Bob Strang — Sympathy
Pat Cowan — Sympathy

If you know any member who should receive a card, please contact our new secretary, Paulette Atkinson, at (757) 813-7234 or papinehurst@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.

PLANT INVENTORY FORMAT FOR JCCWMGA INTERNAL PLANT SALE

SAMPLE

Name of Master Gardener Who has Plants:		
Mary Jones		
Telephone Number: 757 545-2234		
Location of Plants: (address)		
3366 Maple Lane Williamsburg, VA		

Note: Plants should be labeled, in good condition--clean, free of any type of pest or disease. MG owning plants is responsible for transporting them to the sale site.

If transportation is a problem, please circle below:
I NEED ASSISTANCE With Transportation

Name of Plant/Color if Appropriate:	Quanty	Plant Size (gallon/inches or Container Type
White Dogwood Trees	6	1 Gallon
	5	5 Gallon
Large Red Azalea	10	5 Gallon
Boston Fern	5	12" hanging basket
Trailing White Geranium	6	5" pots
Purple Iris Bulbs	40	1 plastic bag