



THE COLONIAL MASTER GARDENER

Celebrating 41 Years of Helping our
Neighbors Grow!

2025 JCCW MGA BOARD

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PLEASE NOTE: Our Board typically meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Room B at the Williamsburg Regional Library on Scotland Street. All members are welcome to attend.

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Project Leaders: Marion Guthrie & Wayne Koenig

Newsletter Editor: Marion Guthrie

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Social Media Manager: Linda Becker

Social Media Reporters:
Crystal Skeeter-Davis, Emily Coyner, Jay Templin, Michele Garrard

Video Producer: Crystal Skeeter-Davis

Webmasters: Dave Banks & Wayne Koenig

Writers: Judy Kinshaw-Ellis, Beverly Davis, Elizabeth McCoy, Michele Garrard

There is no newsletter in January 2025. The upcoming February 2025 newsletter submission deadline is Friday, January 17.

Send your submissions to our editor, Marion Guthrie, at vp-communications@jccwmg.org and copy our vice president of projects, Gary Griffith, at vp-projects@jccwmg.org.

The newsletter layout is graciously donated by [Odd Moxie](#).



The James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association is a volunteer-driven non-profit that supports the outreach mission of the Virginia Cooperative Extension by utilizing research-based information to educate the public on the best practices in sustainable horticulture and environmental stewardship in our communities, which include Williamsburg, James City, Charles City, Upper York, and New Kent counties.



Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its 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, military status, or any other basis protected by law.



President's Message

VICKIE ROCKWELL '19

Year's end is a time for reflection, and when I reflect on 2024, I'm proud and impressed with all our Association has accomplished. All of you have been very generous with your time and sharing your knowledge with our communities. There are many highlights, including our planting of thousands of new trees, shrubs, and perennials throughout the greater Williamsburg area.

Perhaps chief among our activities are the improvements you have made in our gardens while deepening our alliances with area schools and businesses. In fact, we were recognized by the Williamsburg-James City County School Board as a Business Honor Roll recipient, and one of our members, Judy Kinshaw-Ellis, was awarded the James City County Volunteer of the Year Award.

You made more home visits than I could count among the Pruning Clinic, Landscape Love, Tree Calls, Turf Love programs, and our ongoing Help Desk and Farmers Markets appearances. All the while, the training team successfully schooled and graduated over 20 new interns.

The Plant Sale was another successful project. Revenue from this event and our annual dues make it possible for us to fund over 25 programs for the greater Williamsburg/James City County community, like the occasional party celebrating Matthey's Garden's 25th anniversary, putting on our first-ever Pollinator Palooza at the garden in Veteran's Park and taking time to mark the beginning of Fall with our ice cream social.

Then there are all the outstanding monthly lectures we've enjoyed, thanks to the efforts of our VP of Internal Education, Debera Sineath, who was also responsible for organizing and executing our successful bus trip and tour of the Norfolk Botanical Gardens.

Last month, we elected a new slate of officers to

maintain our successes and continuity into 2025. These officers start their terms on January 1, see page 2 of this newsletter, and Dave Kleppinger will be stepping into my current role as the Association's President.

From me to all of you, Thank You for allowing me to work with you - a very exceptional group of talented people. A special Thank You to the 2024 Board: Deb Bussert, Dave Kleppinger, Linda Neilson, Dot Finnegan, Debe Sineath, Gary Griffith, Marion Guthrie, and Marilyn Riddle. May our Holiday Season be filled with Happiness and Joy!

Vickie



Master Gardener Member Meeting Programs

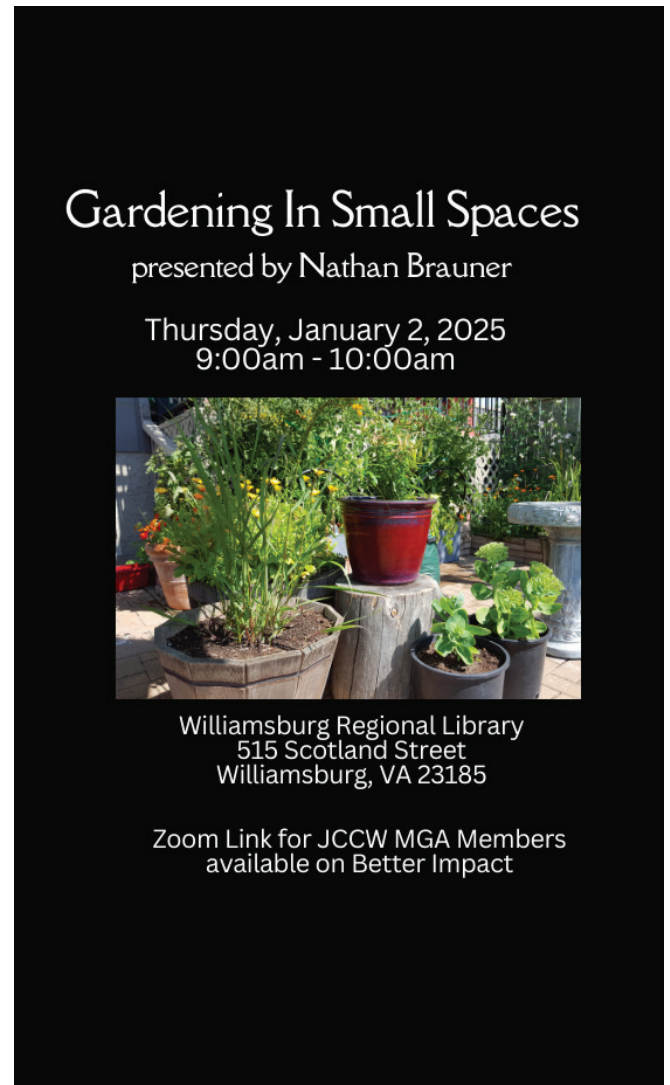
Gardening in Small Spaces

January 2, 2025, at 9:00 am in the Williamsburg Regional Library or via Zoom

Do you have limited room to plant a garden? Have your past attempts at growing vegetables and flowers been less than you had hoped for? You are invited to join the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardeners at the Williamsburg Regional Library from 9-10 a.m. on Thursday, January 2, 2025. Nathan Brauner will discuss intensive gardening techniques that can transform your small garden into a success for your favorite plants.


Nathan is a Master Gardener and heads up the Speaker's Bureau for the York County/Poquoson MG Assoc. He is a Virginia Master Naturalist and an active member of the Colonial Beekeepers Association. He also finds ways to introduce others to nature, guiding them to understand the natural world around them.

Nathan shared his expertise about the Amazing Honeybee last year. You can view that fascinating presentation by clicking on the Educational Videos tab on our website, jccwmg.org.



Gardening In Small Spaces
presented by Nathan Brauner

Thursday, January 2, 2025
9:00am - 10:00am



Williamsburg Regional Library
515 Scotland Street
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Zoom Link for JCCW MGA Members
available on Better Impact

Final Touches at Water Wise

End of a Fantastic Year

ELVIN AND KAY CLAPP

Our last work session on November 6th capped a fantastic year at the Water Wise Demonstration Garden. The team spread four yards of quality compost over the entire garden, incorporating good organic material and some nutrients into the soil. Before the recent two inches of rain, three flats of colorful violas were planted to provide additional color for the visitors who will walk through the garden in the late fall and winter. Winterberry, Beautyberry, Amsonia, Sweet Flag grass, Sedums, Tarragon, and other perennials display fall and winter foliage and berries.

Aaron Thompson, Executive Director, and Susan Dunn, Executive Assistant of the Old Towne Medical and Dental Center (OTMC), visited with us on the last workday. Aaron expressed his appreciation for all the hard work that the Water Wise team has poured into the garden over the past few years. About 12,000 patients and their families visit OTMC each year, and 3,000 visit the Human Services side of the building.

Thanks to Andrea Case, Sustainability Division of the JCC General Services Department, for her commitment and support of the garden. Andrea has been instrumental in providing technical support and lending a hand working in the garden. She visits the team often and gives insight on how we can better grow and maintain the garden in a sustainable manner. We look forward to working with Andrea to provide sustainability tips, tools, and techniques to garden visitors.

We are grateful for the fantastic team that volunteers in this garden. They cultivate, weed, and tend this garden while interacting with the visitors during each work session. They also support each other while having fun. If you want to join the team for 2025, contact Elvin or Kay Clapp at elvkay@gmail.com or 602-647-9988.



A Brickyard Thank You

JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS '15

Brickyard Landing, Phase Three, is complete! Thank you to everyone who came out to plant from November 11 to 15. We had over 40 volunteers, some of whom had put in multiple shifts to help plant our 130-plus trees and shrubs. Thank you also to James City County Parks and Recreation and Grounds personnel who dug holes, delivered mulch, ordered plants, and helped to plant! It was a great cooperative effort.



Did anyone see the Eagle at the Pollinator Garden?

CAROL DICKERSON '03

It wasn't a bird. That was an Eagle Scout Candidate, David Layou, a 17-year-old senior at Warhill High School whose interest in the environment led him to seek out the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association and Master Gardener Cheryl Lynch on a potential Eagle Scout project to expand an area of the Native Plant Pollinator Garden in Veterans Park/Kidsburg, at 3793 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg.

Beyond its aesthetic appeal, this garden raises awareness about the pressing pollinator crisis. It demonstrates the importance of biodiversity, the value of our local ecosystem, and the benefits of proper landscaping practices that can be replicated in a homeowner's own yard.

David has been a Boy Scout since he was seven years old. A member of Scout Troup 414 from Our Savior Lutheran Church, Norge, he is also a member of the National Honor Society. By graduation next Spring, he will have completed seven Advanced Placement (AP) courses leading to college credits, including the Environmental Science class he is currently taking.

A great deal of David's time over the past several months, mainly since February, has been spent developing this garden project. He has been working under the guidance of Jen Campbell, JCCW Master Gardener and one of the Pollinator Garden's leads. The plan included clearing the swale area of weeds and debris, amending the soil as necessary, and, most importantly, selecting the appropriate plants to attract pollinators in a somewhat shady swale area. David led his Scout team in planting more than 100 native and pollinator-attracting plants in the swale while watering and mulching in the appropriate spot (right plant, right place).

Fun facts about David: He has a twin who is also working on his Eagle Scout project. In addition to David's passion for the environment, he is an avid photographer and plays acoustic guitar. He hopes to eventually combine his love of art and ecology with plans to attend an in-state college and major in environmental science and ecology. His favorite part of the project, in addition to the opportunity to develop his management and leadership skills, is learning more about native plants!

Two takeaways from David's project are that James City County is becoming a more robust environment for our life-sustaining pollinators through projects like the Pollinator Garden. Secondly, seeing the upcoming generation of young environmentalists like David renews our hope for the future. For more information, contact Carol Dickerson, MG Class of 2003 (2cjdickerson@gmail.com).

The Native Plant Pollinator Rain Garden is a collaborative effort between James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association, James City County Parks and Recreation, and the Environmental Sustainability Division. As a demonstration garden, it highlights sustainable landscape practices to the local community by showcasing a variety of native plants that support pollinators while at the same time reducing the negative impacts of stormwater runoff. The extension was made possible through a Dominion Energy Grant to expand the garden's biodiversity, providing interpretive signage and other educational opportunities.



VMGA Report

December 2024

MARILYN RIDDLE '01

The Virginia Master Gardener Association (VMGA) meeting on October 12 occurred at Popular Forest, hosted by the Hill City EMG unit, Lynchburg region. The President's December question was: What are our best suggestions for encouraging Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs) to chair events?

At this meeting, Vickie Rockwell and VMGA Rep Marilyn Riddle represented the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association. Ed Olsen, VCE's Master Gardener Director, announced that he and Grace Monger, newly named MG State Coordinator, have participated in a state leader training session. The December 14 and February 8 meetings will be conducted on Zoom only. The next in-person meeting is slated for April 12 at the Northern Shenandoah unit.

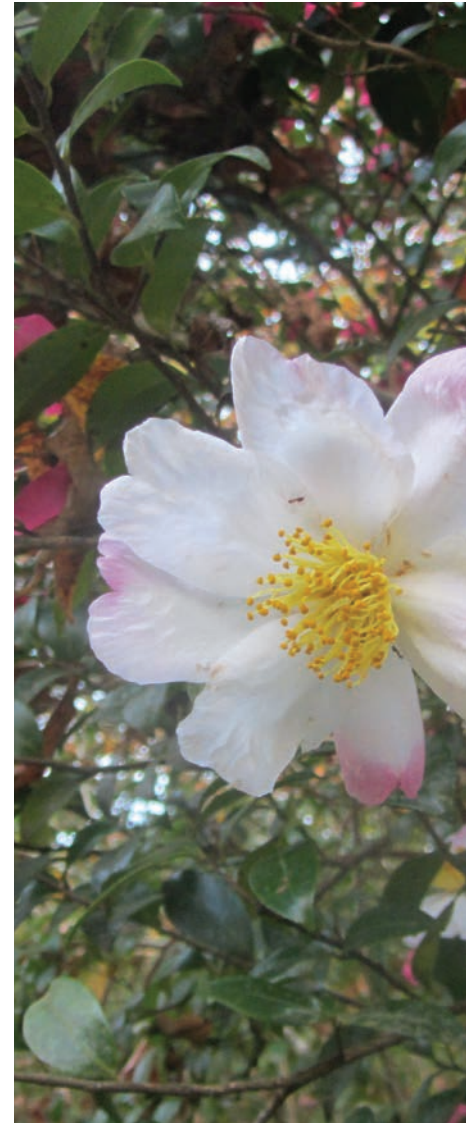
The mission of the Virginia Master Gardener Association is to foster communication, education, and fellowship among Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteers. Our Association is pleased to support this goal. For more information or to join, visit the VMGA website at vmga.net or contact our VMGA representative, Marilyn Riddle, via email at vmga-rep@jccwmg.org.

Plant Literacy: Common Landscape Plants to Know and Love

ELIZABETH MCCOY '18

Master Gardener volunteers often find it useful to build a repertoire of common plants that grow well in our area. Folks who love plants and gardening have become very knowledgeable about the plants in their area over the years. It helps to know a plant's name and something about what it needs to grow well. Knowing more about its

history and how it fits into the local ecosystem is a bonus. This article highlights more than 150 plants under cultivation in the Williamsburg area that local gardeners will find useful to know. It also helps unlock the useful information found in the formal botanical names of plants and offers tips to learn them more easily. [Learn more here....](#)



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH MCCOY

Business Notes

EDIBLE GARDENING

Did you know that the Virginia Cooperative Extension website has bundles of information and resources concerning edible gardening? Based on scientific research and known agricultural best practices, you can learn how to grow fruits, vegetables, herbs, raised gardens, and more. And better yet, you don't have to be a farmer or have acres of land! Click on this link to [start planning now for your own healthy and tasty landscape in 2025](#).

OVER 500 POUNDS DONATED TO AREA FOOD BANKS

As we prepare for the holidays, the Historic Triangle Learning Garden sends out a big thanks to all the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardeners and gardening friends who volunteered their time and energy in the food pantry beds. They weeded, watered, planted, and harvested, resulting in a donation of 533 pounds of fresh vegetables that were donated to FISH and House of Mercy this year, 73 pounds of which were shared during November alone!

ATTEND EPA'S WEBINAR INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

December 10, 2024, from 2-3:30 PM ET

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)-based tactics, like field monitoring and scouting, can help arborists and foresters identify and manage common plant health problems. [This FREE webinar](#) will focus on fungal diseases like oak wilt, sudden oak death, and overall oak decline. Experts will share IPM practices and the latest control tactics to reduce the impacts of these devastating oak diseases. Here is the link to register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1774548436236255326>

SUPPORT YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS

If you know of a Master Gardener who is experiencing difficult times or deserves recognition, please let us know by contacting Dot Finnegan, at secretary@jccwmga.org.

WILLIAMSBURG'S 78TH ANNUAL GARDEN SYMPOSIUM

Early Bird Registration is now open for Colonial Williamsburg's 78th Annual Garden Symposium: Celebrating the Influence of Great English Gardens, April 10-13, 2025. Here is the link to the [Conference Website and more information](#).

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

Pay your annual dues and support the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association by renewing your Annual Membership today. The cost is \$25.00, due by December 31, 2024. It is easy to pay. Pay by check and mail it to JCCWMGA at PO Box 1951, Williamsburg, VA 23187. Or pay your dues [on our website](#). If you have any questions, please contact Linda Neilson, our treasurer, at mocknbrd24@gmail.com. Thank you.

In the CW Gardens

PAT ABRAHAM '10

Our happy crew in Shields Garden completed this season with a chilly late November morning. Lorraine and Tom worked on leaf pickup while Pam added a layer of pine straw to the herb beds. Janet and I weeded and trimmed. The good news is that recently planted fava beans, garlic, and shallots are all growing.

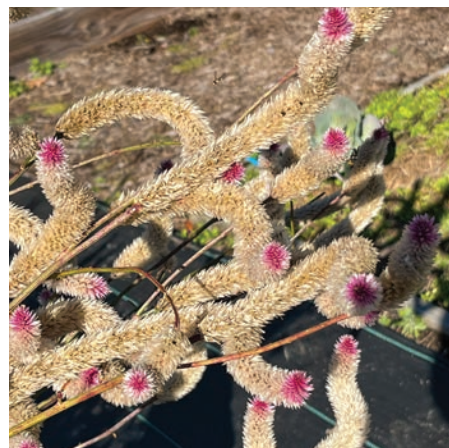
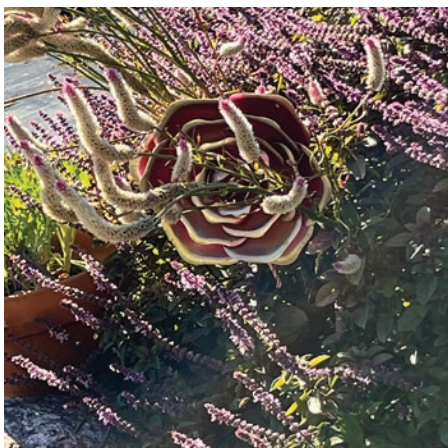
Many thanks to all volunteers for their dedication, persistence, and skills during the 2024 season. Thanks to the nursery staff for our beautiful plants, advice, and encouragement. Hope to see you next year in the gardens. Happy Holidays!



Donation for Blayton's Garden!

Eagles Aerie 4548 Williamsburg made a \$1000 donation to Blayton Elementary School Garden. Funds will be used to update the garden beds and to put in hardscaping for our new sensory garden. The garden is behind the school on 800 Jolly Pond Rd, Williamsburg.

Pictured left to right: Amy Livingstone, Assistant Principal with JCCW Master Gardeners: Amanda Kiritz, Helen Cronk, Tom Reahl, and Wallace Williamson.



PHOTOS BY MICHELE GARRARD



Comprised of over 200 master gardeners, the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association serves the gardening public in Williamsburg, New Kent, Charles City, Upper York, and James City Counties.

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