

The Colonial Master Gardener

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

May 2008

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY PROJECT JUDY HANSEN

The new Habitat for Humanity Project got off to a great start with a landscaping plan and planting crew for the 100th Habitat for Humanity home. The homeowner, Franetta Johnson, was very pleased.

First the team walked the property and talked about the land with the homeowner. Then Peggy Krapf drew up a landscaping plan, and we put the word out to all of our members with requests for plants. Cooke's Gardens and Countryside Gardens donated plants or provided plants at a discounted price. Several Master



SHAPING THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF OUR COMMUNITY LEANNE DUBOIS

As you are aware, James City County is in the process of gathering information for the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan serves as a master plan for the future, addressing topics such as land use and development, population, economics, housing, the environment and community character among other things. I recently attended a Community Conversation whereby the planning team gathers citizen input to use in drafting the Plan. I was surprised, given the growth and population of our county, that more citizens were not present to voice their opinions of our future direction. Although I attend these meetings as a citizen, I find it im-

portant, given the opportunity, to represent Extension and the Master Gardener volunteers in support of the good work we are doing to bring our Virginia Tech researched based education to some of the local issues, (i.e. RPA, stormwater solutions, water conservation and quality, sustainable landscapes, agriculture, quality of life, etc.)

Our organization has been proactive in many of the environmental issues and concerns being addressed by citizens and other groups engaged in this process. As volunteers you are considered Extension Educators so as long as you represent the positive impact of our programs, let the public know of the support we presently give to increase the education outreach on matters of importance in our community.

Gardeners came through with more plants that were needed, and willing workers (even some husbands!) showed up to dig and work on the Saturday before the Grand Opening. Since the water connection wasn't hooked up yet, we had to carry water from the edge of the property on planting day, but Mother Nature cooperated with a nice gentle rain on Sunday, and everything looked great for the dedication service on Monday morning.

Leanne Dubois presented the homeowner with a beautiful booklet prepared by Cathy Lohwater, showing pictures of everything we had planted, with care instructions, and location on her property. Cindy Haliday managed the project very well, and listened to what the homeowner wanted, and assured her someone from the Master Gardeners Habitat for Humanity Project team would be revisiting her to answer any questions at a later date. She was encouraged to also call us with any questions.

The home is located at 120 Carriage Road, and there will be two additional Habitat homes built at that location - one on each side of Franetta Johnson's home. Carriage Road is off Ironbound, near New Town. Drive by and admire the new landscaping.



Next Monthly Meeting

May 1, 9:00 am,
Williamsburg
Regional Library,
Therapeutic Gardening,
Gabriela Harvey
and Charlie
Martino, Cooke's
Gardens

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EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the June Newsletter is May 19. Please send to Lise Kline, newsletter editor, at legskline@cox.net or call 757-259-9477. Comments and questions about the newsletter are also welcome. Thank you.

2007-2008
MG Board

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258-8632

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345-0958

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564-1888

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564-2170

Internal Education News Jean Winters

"The worst enemies to Gardens are Moles, Catts, Earewiggs, Snailes and Mice, and they must be carefully destroyed, or all your labor is lost."

Sir Thomas Hanmer, 1589

A new planting and growing season is upon us...will those "annoying" creatures bother us again? I hope not! Perhaps remembering the pictures and comments of Ruth Burch, our wonderful speaker in April, will help us to appreciate Mother Nature even though we sometimes wonder.

This month our regular meeting at the Library will feature Gabriela Harvey and Charlie Martino, from Cooke's Gardens. Their shared topic is "Horticultural Therapy versus Healing Gardens". Gabriela is a horticultural therapist, working to achieve treatment goals with garden related activities and Charlie is now working to

develop new markets in green roofs, rainwater reuse and horticultural therapy. Please join us to learn about this important type of therapy.

The Busch Gardens greenhouse tours are full. We hope all who have signed on will enjoy their visits! On May 29th, the trip to VREC in Virginia Beach is planned, and we already have more than twenty folks interested and will share more information at the general meeting.

The June meeting will feature Randy Chambers, from The College of William and Mary, who will tell us about concerns with water quality on College Creek and its buffers. We will explain more about our July meeting in May as well. We have sent out an e-mail requesting your availability to attend, so that appropriate plans can be made.

In closing, I'd like to mention that we would like to honor our Emeritus members and to formally welcome our Interns "into the fold" so please plan on enjoying some punch and cookies during the break-time in June!

A Happy Customer is a Loyal Customer

Feb. 27, 2008

Dear Muck Company staff,

I am writing to tell you about a special feature I discovered about your daily garden shoes. Recently, I developed a stress fracture in my foot (in my 5th tarsal bone) during a ski trip. I was unaware of the stress fracture which progressed to a full fracture in 3 weeks. Instead, I thought I had an inflamed tendon.

I was hobbling along on crutches and was worried how I could conduct a garden pruning demonstration for a Master Gardener training class this week. I went to the demonstration with my Muck Shoes on and found that they provided me with so much support, I could put weight on my sore feet without pain, and could move around using 1 crutch for walking short distances. I've worn the shoes in the house all day, every day, this week which has allowed me to move short distances around without crutches, and carry a cup of coffee, or a book with me. I have been

reluctant to take them off at night when I go to bed.

I am having surgery tomorrow morning to reduce the fracture and have a plate inserted to ensure that the fracture heals, so I will miss wearing my Muck Garden Shoes for a while. If you make the garden shoes in purple with rhinestones in woman's size 9, I would like to buy a pair to take to China with me in April, or to use ballroom dancing.

Thank you so much for developing such a wonderful product!!!!"

Carol Fryer



The Muck Company responded to Carol's letter by sending her this almost-made-to-order shoe.

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MG HELPDESK NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The Master Gardener Helpdesk is now open. Call Monday-Friday from 9:00 am through 1:00 pm to reach a Master Gardener who will answer your questions about gardening, insects, plants, diseases. The number is 564-2170.

As a pilot program, a Diagnostic Clinic

will be staffed by Master Gardeners on five Monday mornings from 9:00 am through 11:30 am at the Toano Extension Office. Please save your samples for these dates: May 5, 12, 19 and June 2 and June 9. Often samples brought at other times remain in the office for several days before they are mailed to Virginia Tech for identification. We hope this weekly Diagnostic Clinic will answer homeowner's questions quickly.

JAMES CITY COUNTY FAIR LEANNE DUBOIS

The James City County Fair is scheduled for June 20 - 21 at the Chickahominy Riverfront Park and the VCE/Master Gardeners plan to maintain a booth during the fair days. Saturday is date when volunteers are most needed. The Mobile

MG, Enviroscope and Turf Love usually are represented. It would also be good if we could have a schedule of projects, demonstrations or Ask the Experts. Let me know if you are available for those dates.

JCC/W MG 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.

Melissa's Meadow will gather together around 8:30, May 15. Come and see the early meadow blooms-you will be sorry to miss it. We will be weeding and clipping, some deadheading.

MG Contact Update

Ailene Bartlett new email address:
bartpear@live.com

VMGA NEWS ANNE ODLE

The MG College is approaching, June 19-22, in Blacksburg, Virginia. Please visit vmga.net for details on tuition, on-campus housing and meal costs.

Please nominate yourself or a fellow MG for a \$100 scholarship to the MG College from our unit by contacting anneedle@cox.net or 259-9025.

Include reasons for nomination such as:

- Member demonstrates future potential
- Financial need - Minority

- Young Adult
- Role model; actual or potential
- Individual with desire to continue contributing
- New VCE MG (less than 100 hours)

Nominee should be willing to report MG College experience to local unit and newsletter. The deadline from submission of nominations is May 16.

Your expertise is needed

Most of you are likely familiar with the whole new push for eXtension (www.eXtension.org). We have a Consumer Horticulture Community of Practice. We are currently looking for people willing to sign up as experts for the 'Ask the Expert' feature on eXtension. We desperately need help from Extension Specialists to agree to field questions (on a rotating basis) in your area of expertise. If this is something you are

willing to do, please go to the link below to participate in a brief training on 'Ask the Expert.' There is no pressure and no obligation, but we do need help. Please pass this on to others you think would be a great and willing resource for this opportunity. This can include Field Faculty and VCE MG volunteers as well.

For more information, please contact David Close, VCE State Master Gardener Coordinator, Virginia Tech, Department of Horticulture, 540-231-2714.

Our thoughts and prayers go to fellow MGs:

Ralph Aston, whose wife and fellow MG, Carole, passed away recently. JCC/W MGs have sent a gift certificate to Ralph for use in purchasing a blooming tree or shrub for his yard in memory of Carole.

Barbara and Art Gustafson, on the passing away of Barbara's former mother-in-law.

GARDENING TIPS FOR MAY Helen Hamilton

Indoor Plants: Most should be outside by now, enjoying the rain showers. Place them in a sheltered area for gradual acclimatization to light intensity and hot afternoon sun.

Shrubs: Prune the early spring shrubs such as forsythia and azaleas after blooming has finished; mulch all trees and shrubs to conserve moisture.

Perennials: They will benefit from light feeding with compost or 10-10-10 six weeks after the first early spring feeding. Pinch or cut garden mums back to about 6 inches above ground until July 15.

Annuals: Now is the time to plant annuals like geraniums, petunias and zinnias among the spring bulbs to hide the yellowing foliage. All foliage should remain on the daffodils, tulips and others to nourish the bulbs for next year's flowering. Bending and tying the leaves is counterproductive, since the flow of carbohydrates from the leaves to the bulb is interrupted.

Compost Tea: Add a handful of rabbit food pellets to a gallon of water and let steep for a day or so. Makes great plant food, since the rabbit food is almost 100% alfalfa.

Homemade Pesticide: For the occasional bad insect, not yet taken out by the good insects, spray with a mix of soapsuds, garlic, chives and Tabasco sauce.

Lacewings: Also known as "aphid lions", lacewing larvae are voracious predators. Commonly found in grass, weeds, and on the foliage of trees and shrubs, most adult lacewings are greenish in color and have beautiful golden-colored eyes. The eggs are unusual in that each egg is laid on the end of a tiny stalk.



Because young larvae are susceptible to desiccation, they may need a source of moisture. Adult lacewings need nectar or honeydew as food before egg laying and they also feed on pollen. Therefore, plantings should include flowering plants, and a low level of aphids should be tolerated.

Several species of aphids, spider mites (especially red mites), thrips, whiteflies, eggs of leafhoppers, moths, and leafminers, small caterpillars, beetle larvae, and the tobacco budworm are reported prey for the lacewing larvae.

Recently, USDA Agricultural Research Service scientists have identified a compound in catnip that mimics the pheromone emitted from the male lacewing to attract females. Lacewing lures, produced from catnip oil, should be available this year.

Other studies have demonstrated that carrot family plants like angelica, dill, and cilantro attract lacewings and provide for their needs. Add a little catnip to your flower and vegetable beds and you may see more lacewings – as well as pollinators and butterflies – on pest patrol in your garden.

Transplants: Researchers at the University of Florida have found no difference in the performance of 3 sets of begonias – rootbound, non-rootbound, and sliced rootbound, after three months of growing out of their pots. The study called the conventional practice of cutting off the bottom of rootbound plants or slicing the sides to stimulate new growth "an inefficient utilization of labor." Of course, the study was done only with begonias and no reference is made to the growth habit of other annuals.

Irrigation: Poke several small holes in the bottom of a large milk jug, fit it with water, and set it next to a tomato plant. A great way to water plants when the homeowner is traveling.

Butterflies: While colorful flowers attract butterflies to feed on nectar, Momma butterfly will look for native trees such as hackberry, willows and oaks to lay her eggs. When hatched, the caterpillars will need different sources of food. Plant some parsley, dill and fennel for yourself (covered with netting) and plant a lot of these herbs for the butterfly larvae.

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

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ESTEEMED (AND PUBLISHED) COLLEAGUES

More proud accomplishments for the Master Gardeners are courtesy of Kari Abbott and Susan Powell, who were published in the Journal of Virginia Science Education. The link to the journal with

their article is below. We are proud of these accomplishments not only locally but throughout the state

The link to the journal : <http://www.vast.org/content/File/v2n2/v2n2.pdf>.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM FOR MATTEY'S GARDEN GENROSE LASHINGER

Thanks to the JCC-Williamsburg Master Gardeners and the Williamsburg Garden Club, Matthey's Garden, the outdoor classroom at Matthew Whaley School, will soon have a drip irrigation system. The system, designed and installed by landscaper, Joe Hertzler of Hertzler and George, (who is also a Matthew Whaley parent) will feature six zones will allow us to water several areas at one

time. This will reduce the amount of water used as well as freeing up our volunteers to spend more time with students and on other projects in the garden. Thank you to the membership for your continued help and support!



GUIDED TOUR OF YORK COUNTY MASTER GARDENER LEARNING GARDENS

Dates: second Thursday of the month (May - October). that's May 8, June 12, July 10, Aug. 14, Sept. 11 and Oct 9

Time: 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Cost: Free

Location: corner of Goodwin Neck Rd. and County Drive.

MGs will guide you through the learning garden and answer your questions.

THE GREEN MAN

The Williamsburg Botanical Garden in partnership with This Century Art gallery presents an Outdoor Classroom Educational Program for Kids: THE "GREEN" MAN with Kendall McCall, Artist and Master Gardener, on Saturday, June 7, 2008 (Rain Date: June 14, 2008) 2:00-3:00 PM in Freedom Park, 5535 Centerville Road, Williamsburg. An artist and gardener will show the children how to create an original Green Man work of art using natural and recycled ("Green") materi-

als in an open-air garden setting. The class is limited to 12 students from 7-12 years old. All supplies are provided. Advance registration is required: a \$10 per child donation is requested at the time of registration. The registration deadline is June 2, 2008. Applications are available on line or by calling WBG 757-229-1995 www.williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org or TCAG (757) 229-4949 or www.thiscenturyartgallery.org.

In memory of

Carole Ashton
MG Class of 2004