

# From the president...

As we move forward with the enthusiasm of a new year, don't forget the February Board of Directors' meeting. The meeting will be hosted by Henrico MGs on February 12<sup>th</sup>. The Board encourages the membership to attend their meetings and participate in them.

We still need a Coordinator of Fundraising Item Sales. As I previously mentioned this is a position which generated \$3,000.00 for the State Coordinator Endowment last year. Please seriously consider volunteering for this position. This represents a great way to begin

volunteering with VMGA. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding the position.

At the December meeting we reviewed, with the Board of Directors, the redirection of VMGA's efforts to successfully complete funding of the State MG Coordinator Endowment Fund. Vernon Meacham, Director of Development for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, was introduced. He discussed fundraising in general and specifically how he and his staff plan to work with us. VMGA's Endowment Committee is currently

being reorganized and we are recruiting statewide representation for the committee. If you have any questions or interest in serving on the Committee, please contact me.

I look forward to meeting and working with all of our membership in the coming months. If you have any questions or issues, I can be reached at my home number, 703 791-2646 or by email: [wjscott2@verizon.net](mailto:wjscott2@verizon.net).

Hope to see you at Maymont for the meeting!

Bill Scott



## Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Training Module



A free online course on EAB monitoring and management training is accessible at: <http://cbc.at.ufl.edu/>

**Developed by** Eric Wiseman, Sarah Gugercin, Dave Close and Heather Boyd (Virginia Tech)

**Reviewed by** Jodie Ellis (Purdue University and [emeraldashborer.info](http://emeraldashborer.info))

**Module Objectives:** Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive wood boring pest that is native to Asia. Since its discovery in southeastern Michigan in 2002, it has killed millions of native ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) trees in the Midwestern United States and Canada. Experts predict that EAB could spread throughout 25 eastern states over the next ten years without effective sup-

pression measures.

A key to slowing EAB spread is early detection and rapid response, which requires education of citizens and resource professionals. This on-line course provides an overview of EAB ecology and will empower learners to effectively detect and manage EAB in their communities.



### VMGA Executive Board

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[ctb47@comcast.net](mailto:ctb47@comcast.net)

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SECRETARY: Peggy Fox, Newport News  
[peggyfox@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyfox@hotmail.com)

### Next VMGA Board Meeting

• February 12 Henrico MGs hosting at  
Maymont

1700 Hampton Street  
Richmond, VA 23220

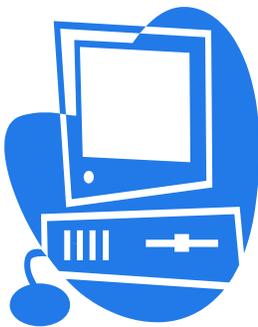
10:00am-2:00pm

For directions go to:

[www.maymont.org](http://www.maymont.org)

## Bedford Area Master Gardeners—Training goes online

Plans have been laid to teach a Master Gardener training class using computer format, starting in February. The Master Gardener Handbook and PMG will continue to be used as hard copy textbooks. Instead of face-to-face classes, the theory is packaged into learning modules which contain Power-Point slides, interactive learning tools, online references, and quizzes. Students will receive a CD that contains all the learning modules – no need for high speed internet. There will be ten face-to-face, hands on labs; students will



be required to complete at least five of these. The class will be somewhat self-paced: students have up to six months to complete the theory requirements and final written exam. Lecturers include Eric Day from VT for insects; Mary Ann Hansen from VT for plant diseases; Stuart Sutphin from Danville for trees and

pruning; and Jim Revell for plant propagation. Each student will be assigned a mentor who will maintain contact during the class, help them stay on track, help them get into the internship projects they need after completing the theory part of the course, and help them get involved in BAMGA (Bedford Area Master Gardener Association). Enrollment in this first time computerized class will be limited.

Jim Revell

## The Graine Thumb: Putting ecology back into the landscape

*We have wrought in our time a calamity of habitat destruction unprecedented even during the previous three centuries of agricultural abuse.*

Sara Stein in *Noah's Garden* (1993)

Recall the Douglas Tallamy text *Bringing Nature Home* ©2007 (VMGA Report, May/June 2009) where he discusses the need for biodiversity, that is, how native plants sustain wildlife in our garden. He is a big picture kind of guy. What else could you say as he goes on and on railing about habitat destruction that results from paving over the land and erecting too many buildings? We pay a price for this kind of expansion. Some call this the price for progress whereas others become terribly upset because some greedy developers are in league with zoning officials. This is the big picture and Tallamy carries the torch for change because our environment is really fragile.

Now let us bring the problem of an ecologically sound way to landscape down to a level that many quarter-acre gardeners and others can understand and put into practice. In essence, designing and

managing property with an eye toward natural interactions. An answer to the ecological movement (a variant of greening America) is readily found in another award winning book written 18 years ago by noted author Sara Stein. This book is *Noah's Garden: Restoring the Ecology of Our Own Back Yards* (Houghton Mifflin, 1993). She champions a different (read better) approach to gardening and indicates how your own suburban property can become a living laboratory for an ecologically sound way to landscape. Her message comes through loud and clear. Convert your "normal" neatnik shrub and flower garden into a naturalist environment. You will be amazed at the effect when such a transformation takes place and how native wildlife is welcomed.

Imagine how this approach to gardening, if implemented on a neighborhood scale, would look. Our communities might return to less lawn and a greater habitat for the natural order of nature. (This might create havoc for those who live in homes governed by a home owner association which seems to thrive on rules and order.) Of

course gardening with nature might be akin to learning a new scheme. To garden with nature requires an understanding of having the "correct" native species for your cold hardiness and heat tolerance zones. Additionally, having these species in the right numbers and combinations is also critical to success. Having achieved this kind of garden makeover, you now need patience for wildlife to return.

Stein says your landscape can co-exist with the old and new landscape. One does not have to become an overnight purist in order to garden naturally. In fact, a varied habitat will probably enhance predatory insects, support song birds and if you include a water garden you will further enhance your landscape. When you get down to it, Stein has a simple and powerful message. She is a true visionary who speaks to all of us. Her book provides inspiring information and it is an enjoyable read. Unfortunately she passed on in 2005. We need more of her kind to continue a fight worth having.

George Graine

Fairfax Master Gardeners

# State Master Gardener Coordinator Liaison Report

Three candidates were interviewed for VCE Director: Mary Holz-Claus from Iowa State, Ed Jones from NC State, and Mike Parella from UC Davis. It is not known when the Dean will make a final decision and announce to whom the job has been offered

If your unit needs copies of the 2011 PMG, it is being recommended that you download the pdf file and have it printed locally. VCE will not be printing and shipping copies of the 2011 edition.

MGCAT met in October to continue working on 2011 MG College; June 21-26, 2011. We have outlined the keynote speakers, tours, workshops, and concurrent

sessions. Be watching for more details soon.

Our presentation at the 2011 IMGC was accepted. I will be teaming up with Frank Reilly and Barb Stewart to present our Smart Yard Care book and project.

Due to lack of time I backed out of the People's Garden Initiative proposal. I am still a supporting partner if they receive the grant. We will have access to the network they hope to establish and any trainings they would offer.

The Department of Horticulture has recently concluded interviews for three positions. one on campus and two at ARECS. These positions are:

Rhizosphere Biologist – on campus; research & teaching split

Tree fruit – Manchester; research & extension split

Landscape/Green Industry – Hampton Roads; research & extension split

The Hort Department will go through a NIFA (National Institute for Food and Agriculture, formerly CSREES) review in January; we have compiled a document on the department that addresses all three mission areas: teaching, research, and outreach. I contributed to the outreach portion under the direction of Joyce Latimer.

Dave Close

## Systemic Insecticides 101

Peter Warren's recent announcement of his intent to move (to The University of Arizona) leaves each of us with differing degrees of a sense of loss.

Perhaps at the desk, he may be most missed as the go-to guy for bug information and identification. We have truly been spoiled having an entomologist on site to quickly and accurately identify insect pests and how to treat them.

Questions of any pesticide application and treatment efficacy depend upon the type of pest, weather and environmental conditions, growth stages and variations of plants, and soil in which plants are growing. Without Peter's vast store of knowledge and input, we shall be slowed in our responses to questions.

With sensitivity to this looming prospect of having to work harder to find answers to mite and insect pest problems, I happened across the November 2010 issue of American Nurseryman. It contains an

exceptional article by Dr. Raymond A. Cloyd, professor and Extension specialist in ornamental entomology and IPM at Kansas State University, Manhattan. Though the article focuses on greenhouse and nursery grown crops, the information about how systemic insecticides (SI) work is clearly presented and directly relevant to in-ground plants in the landscape.

We all know that systemics are taken into the plants and then move within the tissues to parts which insects prefer and when dined upon, 'do in' their dinner guests. This is in contrast to topical substances that smother or poison on contact or remain on the tissues of the plant until consumed in sufficient quantity to be toxic to pests. But there is so much more to the story. SI may be neater, cheaper, more effective and better for the environment and they may be more effective and able to be used with less application of the toxic substances we all try to avoid. In the best of all worlds, we would

have perfectly healthy plants growing in perfect places with perfect balance between beneficials and pests to the exclusion of need for pesticides. Lacking perfection, please enjoy Dr. Cloyd's article,

Systemic Insecticides 101

<http://www.amerinnursery-digital.com/nov2010/nov2010#&pageSet=9&page=0>.

Debbie Miller

Piedmont Master Gardeners

*Reprinted from the Piedmont Master Gardener newsletter, The Cultivator, vol.22, no. 12.*



Mealy bug

Sarfacenia.com

VMGA Report  
3172 Westwood Road  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

VIRGINIA  
MASTER GARDENER  
ASSOCIATION

*A voice  
for Virginia Master Gardeners*



**We're on the web at**

[www.vmga.net](http://www.vmga.net)

A VMGA Continuing Education Program

*Expanding Horizons  
in  
Horticulture*



**Master Gardener Day at VSU**

Presented by the  
Virginia Master Gardener Association

Saturday, February 26, 2011  
L. Douglas Wilder Building  
Virginia State University  
Petersburg, VA 23806

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Virginia Cooperative Extension

Knowledge for the Common Wealth



8:00-8:45 Check-in, coffee

8:45-9:00 Welcome

9:00-9:50 **General Session 1**  
"Therapy thru Gardening -  
Objectives and Methods"

Barbara Gustafson and Linda Lucas

10:00-10:50 **Concurrent Session 1**  
[select 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices]

#1A "Horticulture Therapy for the  
Mentally Challenged"  
Rebecca Clark with  
Board Members

#1B "Insect Pests: New Invaders and  
Evolving Control Strategies"  
Dr Mark Kraemer.

#1C "Recipes using *Specialty and  
Niche Crops*"  
Wanda Johnson

#1D "Season Extension Techniques  
for the Home Gardener"  
Chris Mullins



11:00-11:50 **Concurrent session 2**  
[select 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices]

#2A "Horticulture Therapy for  
Prison Inmates"  
Micheal Ferguson

#2B "Food Safety -a Valid Concern?" TBA

#2C "Protected Culture of Fresh Cut Flowers  
in Virginia"  
Andy Hankins

#2D "Gourds 101-How to Grow,  
Cure and Craft"  
Janice Kiehl and  
Angela Mohr

NOON- 12:50 Lunch

**Brown-Bag or Pre-order lunch  
by March 15th**



1:00 - 1:50 **General Session 2**

"Potential of Specialty & Niche Crops"  
Dr. Reza Rafie

2:00 - 3:00 **Concurrent Session 3**  
(select 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices)  
All will be held at Randolph Farm

#3A "Appropriate Tools for Horticulture"  
Clif Slade

#3B "Growing and Using Herbs  
For Tea and Tea Time Treats"  
Ira Wallace

#3C "Pruning Raspberries and  
Blackberries"  
Dr. Reza Rafie

#3D "Grafting - Make a Better Tomato"  
Chris Mullins  
(Workshop fee \$3.00 paid at registration)



Open to all Master Gardeners. Pre-registration required. **Registration closes on February 15, 2011**

Sorry, no refunds for cancellations made after February 15, 2011 **Questions? Call (804) 861-8055**