



**VMGA Executive Board**

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**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

(Short) June VMGA Meeting: 5 PM, June 20, MG College, Torgerson Hall

Annual VMGA Meeting: 7 PM, June 21, MG College, Torgerson Hall



Getting close to the end, but...  
**I AM NOT DONE YET!**

Cheri Haggerty, VMGA President

I can't believe my two years as President are almost up. Where did the time go? This is my second to last report. I reviewed my past reports and it seems like I am always asking you to do something! Don't get complacent; I am not going to stop now! My biggest request this month is a request for Brag Boards.

• **MG Brag Boards for College Display**

One of my favorite activities at MG College is viewing the Brag Boards. It's great seeing what other units are doing and how they manage their projects. (I have actually borrowed some ideas for use locally.) As President, I accept reservations for table space for Brag Boards. As of this writing, no unit has reserved space. I know the projects are out there because I read your newsletters and your unit reports.

As you are aware, we have changed the Brag Board display to Search for Excellence. The full criteria have not been completely established so you may present a brag board based on the "old way". Your unit may present a Brag Board without participating in the Search for Excellence. The main objective of the Brag Night is to share your unit's accomplishments with other MGs around the state. A lot of valuable networking takes place over Brag Boards! Your Brag Board is very welcome, whether or not you enter the competition.

The deadline for space reservation is June 10. The construction of a Brag Board does not have to be elaborate or high tech. It simply needs to represent one of the projects or which you are proud. I have sent the criteria via e-mail to VMGA reps but any MG in a Unit can take the responsibility.

• **VMGA Membership**

The *VMGA membership* has grown this year and that is a direct result of you, the member, representing us to your new class members and your units. The attendance at our bi-monthly meetings has increased over 30% these past two years and I am very proud of that number! However, there are still a number of MGs who have no idea what the VMGA represents and what it can do to support the MG program in

UPCOMING EVENTS

24 May, 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Rose Show,  
Richmond Rose Society, Lewis  
Ginter Botanical Garden

<http://www.lewisginter.org>

24 May, 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Herb & Garden  
Festival, The Edith J. Carrier  
Arboretum

<http://www.jmu.edu/arboretum/programs/>

31 May, "Good Scents", 1 - 4 PM,  
National Herb Garden

<http://www.usna.usda.gov>

17-22 June, Virginia Master  
Gardener College, Virginia Tech

<http://www.hort.vt.edu/mastergardener/mgcollege.htm>

5 June, "Myth, Magick, and  
Medicine", State Arboretum of  
Virginia, 2 - 4 PM

<http://www.virginia.edu/blandy>

14 June, Curator Tour: Bonsai  
Museum, 2 - 3 PM, National Bonsai &  
Penjing Museum

<http://www.usna.usda.gov>

21 June, "Perennials in the  
Garden", 10:30 AM, Meadowlark  
Botanical Gardens

<http://www.nvrpa.org/parks/meadowlark>

29 June, 4<sup>th</sup> Tidewater Daylily  
Society Flower Show & Plant Sale,  
Norfolk Botanical Gardens

<http://www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org>

Send VMGA calendar inputs to  
Kathryn Debnar, [k2garden@cox.net](mailto:k2garden@cox.net).

## ...NOT DONE YET!(continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Virginia. It's our ongoing task to get the word out and inform Virginia Master Gardeners about the VMGA. You, as members, can help as you continue to promote the VMGA at your local level and the VMGA can help by having a presence at regional events.

I apologize for the tardiness of this edition but somehow time got away from me this month (still could use a real Editor!) and then my newest grandchild was born in Indiana and I *had* to go meet her. She's adorable!

**Hope to see you at MG College!!**

## VMGA's Silent Auction

**PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE** support the VMGA Silent Auction at the Master Gardener College this June. All proceeds from this auction will go towards the State Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment Fund. Our on-campus Coordinator is essential for the continued success of the Master Gardener program in Virginia. Funds for this position from traditional sources are not guaranteed! VMGA realizes both the dependence of Virginia master gardening on the State Coordinator position and the need for stable funding. In that regard, VMGA initiated an agreement with the Virginia Tech Foundation to partially fund this position with a one million dollar endowment. We need to help make the endowment a reality.

Lively bidding on enticing items donated by our Unit and by individual Master Gardeners are of the utmost importance to the success of this effort. You can help by donating any of the following. Bring your donated items to with you to College or arrange for items to be transported with your local Master Gardener office.

Include your name on the item, value of the item, and your recommendation for a minimum bid on each item. Below are examples of the wide variety of items that we are looking for at this upscale auction. This list is not meant to limit your donations.



gardening tools  
planters  
fountains  
bird houses  
garden art  
bird baths  
home décor  
plants

new and "gently"  
used books  
bird feeders  
gardening gloves  
hand crafted toys  
culinary items  
baskets  
straw hats

Contact Leslie Paulson ([ljp6651@comcast.net](mailto:ljp6651@comcast.net), 703-330-9441) or Sharon Corbin ([sharonandtrish@comcast.net](mailto:sharonandtrish@comcast.net)). Please let us know soonest what contributions we can expect.

## April News From Across the State

The full report of the units can be found at <http://www.vmga.net>.

## Central

### **Amherst, Campbell and Lynchburg (Hill City)** <http://www.hcmga.com>

Our School Programs in five of Lynchburg's City's Schools are in full swing. Programs include Houseplants and Geography; Insects, the Good and the Bad; Composting; All About Seeds; Birds of Virginia; and planting the school beds with wave petunias.

### **Bedford**

During our April 26 plant sale we offered six workshops: Hypertufa Pot making, Herb Garden planting, Dahlia growing, Container gardening, Beekeeping, and a demo of composting from Royal Oak Farms.

### **Danville**

Exciting things are happening with Danville MGs. Our radio program, "**Here's the Dirt**", airs each Wednesday at 11:00 AM on WBTM. It features gardening tips and gives listeners an opportunity to call in with their questions and comments.



## Northeast

### **Chesterfield** <http://www.chesterfield.gov/extension>

The training for the "Gardening for New Residence Pilot Program" took place on April 12 with 15 Master Gardeners receiving the training. The trained staff is anxious to begin and just awaiting the applications.

### **Gloucester** <http://www.gloucesterva.info/ext/mastergardener/home.htm>

For the past seventeen years, Master Gardeners George and Mary Simpson have weekly provided horticultural therapy to the residents of Walter Reed Convalescent Center in Gloucester rarely missing a visit. Recently at our regular meeting, this amazing contribution was recognized by the Walter Reed community with a plaque and by officially naming a garden at the center, created by them for therapy, the "George and Mary Simpson Garden". A beautiful sign will be placed along the side of this garden for all to admire in the years to come. We are so proud and blessed to have this dedicated couple a part of our Master Gardener team

### **James City County/Williamsburg** <http://www.jccwmq.org>

Workshop, May 10, 2008 JCC/W Community Center, 5301 Longhill Road 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., registration required. The purpose of the workshop is to provide local residents practical ideas for improving our watershed.

## April News From Across the State

## Northeast

### Northumberland, Lancaster, Richmond, Westmoreland and Essex (Northern Neck)

<http://www.nnmg.org>

The Northern Neck Master Gardeners successfully hosted their annual Seminar, this year entitled "Working with Nature—Creating Living Shorelines". Over 260 people attended this multi-tracked event where recognized experts presented varied topics of interest. The NNMG worked in coordination with speakers from the VT Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Educational Center, VIMS, Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreational Shoreline Erosion Advisory Service, and the Richmond Co. Environment Planning Office to educate the residents who own shoreline properties about their roles as proper stewards in the environmentally sensitive Chesapeake Bay area.

## Northern

### Arlington, Alexandria (Northern VA)

<http://www.mgnv.org>

Our Public Education Committee has been presenting demonstrations on pruning, lawn care, container gardening and botanical drawing. They also helped the Continuing Education Committee with the April 24 Organic Gardening Extravaganza, a four hour combined continuing ed and public ed presentation by Professor Andy Hankins of Virginia State University.

### Fairfax

<http://www.fairfaxmastergardeners.com>

Due to apparent state budget problems and the potential impact on VCE-MG programs, a series of talking points was developed in order to discuss the impact of the program and its importance to our county of more than one million citizens. Based on correspondence with the State MG Coordinator and his discussions with campus horticultural leadership, it was deemed inappropriate to contact our elected representatives via mail or office visits at this time. With the support of the State Extension Leadership Council Representative-at-Large, a 2008 contact list of county officials was compiled along with a list of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committee members. This material will be saved and updated for future reference.

### Fairfax – Green Spring

<http://www.fairfax.county.gov/parks/gsgp>

Two 'all hands' Green Spring Master Gardeners meetings will be held in April for the purpose of initiating new procedures for maintaining active Master Gardener status. There will be a presentation on the GSMG recertification process, which will require each MG to verify their commitment to fulfill their volunteer service and education hours for the 2008 year. A fee for the recertification will be used for expansion of the MG program projects. A portion of the recertification fee will be sent to the State Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment Fund. Previously, there were no dues and therefore no funds available for any distribution needs.

## April News From Across the State

## Northern

### Fluvanna

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

The Fluvanna Master Gardeners are moving forward with a number of projects for 2008. Some include: the Fluvanna County Office Complex Help Desk expansion of hours from one half day to two half days from April to October, the addition of a brief educational session to the Gardeners' Help Station at the Fluvanna Pleasant Grove Farmers Market, and work on the Holland Page House Garden at Pleasant Grove with a focus on using native plants. The Master Gardeners, Girl Scouts and 4<sup>th</sup> graders are working on this Garden during the spring and summer. Community Garden at Pleasant Grove has opened with 33 plots rented. Fencing and a water sources are available on the site and a compost company is donating compost. Master Gardeners provided an educational session on vegetable gardening March 14<sup>th</sup> for those participating in the Community Garden.

### Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, King George, Caroline (Central Rappahannock)

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

The First Saturdays in the Garden program for April 5 was held at the University of Mary Washington on wildlife gardening. May's First Saturday program will be held May 3 at Chatham Manor, Stafford County, on water gardening and cool critters. June's program will be held at Ferry Farm (boyhood home of George Washington) on heirloom gardening. For more information on First Saturdays, contact the VCE office at 540-658-8000.

## Northwest

### Roanoke, Botetourt and Craig

Roanoke is still without an agent, but we hope to fill the position soon. While we cannot begin any new projects or programs, we will be holding our Spring Plant Sale and Tea on April 12th.



## Southeast

### Isle of Wight and Southampton

Plans for the plant clinics for the Isle of Wight County Fair, the Smithfield Curbside Market and the Windsor Farmers Market are well underway. The farmer's market clinics will be presented weekly. We render assistance to the county fair by assisting with the 4-H as well as the clinic. Last year's Honeybee as Beneficials for Orchards, Home gardens and Crops, exhibits and presentations of an observation hive were especially well received and are hoped to be repeated this year.

### Norfolk

<http://www.nmgv.org>

26 trainees graduated to become Norfolk Master Gardener Interns this month. Also this month, Norfolk was the host unit for the Regional Advanced Training that was conducted at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. 104 master gardeners attended the tree related training session.

## April News From Across the State

## Southeast

### Virginia Beach

<http://www.vbmg.org>

A multitude of Virginia Beach projects are beginning with the onset of spring weather. Most of our gardens are now open. Ready, Set, Grow is actively participating in schools. Speakers Bureau continues to provide a wide variety of presentations. Tree Stewards were involved in the city Arbor Day celebration. We continue to have excellent educational opportunities for our volunteers.

## Southwest

### Carroll, Grayson, and city of Galax (MGs of the Blue Ridge)

Extension agents led grafting workshops April 8 in Grayson County and April 12 at the Foggy Ridge Cider House in Dugspur. We participated in the Memorial adopt-a-highway cleanup on April 19. We aided student gardeners at St Paul Elementary School in Cana to plant on April 19. We supported the first Grayson Earth Day Festivities in Independence on May 10. Matthews Historic Farm Museum heirloom herb and vegetable garden support is planned again for 2008. We also plan to be involved in the Leaf and String Festival in Galax in June.

VMGA  
Faces



This VT ribbon was planted at the Chesterfield Extension Office on April 16th. Chesterfield MGs will have several hundred dollars to donate to various Virginia Tech Foundation funds, including the Jocelyne Couture-Nowak Memorial Garden Fund. Next time you are in the area please stop by and see it in person.

Back row L-R: Sandie Alexander, Sallie-Rives McCrea, Melissa Damiano, Henrietta Yaworsky, Ralph Gove. Front row L-R: Clarence, Mike Likins, Susan Edwards, and Ed Avau (Lynne's dad).

*Photo submitted by Lynne Foote, who thanks Sandie Alexander's friend, Clarence, for freshening up the mulch with the tiller. And a special thanks to my dad for chipping in today! He was unknowingly recruited.*

## Celebrating One of Our Own



## National Society Daughters of the American Revolution

*Linda Gist Calvin, President General***CONSERVATION COMMITTEE — Elizabeth Blake Hotchkiss, National Chairman**121 Harborside Rd, Harborside, ME 04642-3004 ★ Phone: (207) 326-8570 ★ E-mail: [hotchkiss@wildmoo.net](mailto:hotchkiss@wildmoo.net)

March 15, 2008

Mrs. Janice Clark, Regent  
John Rhodes Chapter, NSDAR  
25 Court Lane  
Luray, VA 22835

Dear Janice,

I am writing to you today to let you know that I have approved the John Rhodes Chapter's recommendation that Dr. Arthur Gregory receive the NSDAR Conservation Award. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations to you and the members of your chapter for selecting such a worthy member of your community to honor with our award. The application packet including the letters of recommendation and newspaper articles that you provided painted a vivid picture of Dr. Gregory's thoughtful conservation activities.

I would like to extend my personal congratulations to Arthur Gregory as a recipient of the NSDAR Conservation Award. His willingness to share his knowledge and expertise as a Master Gardener is clearly visible. His friends and neighbors appreciate every effort that he makes to help others know how to plant and then care for the things that they wish to grow. From the youngest citizens to county officials – everyone is grateful that Bud Gregory is part of their community, helping to make things “green.” Please let Dr. Gregory know that we sincerely appreciate all that he does for the city of Luray and Page County, Virginia. He is a true conservation steward and we praise his dedication to making our world a better place in which to live.

Congratulations and my best wishes for a wonderful presentation ceremony on May 15th.

Most sincerely,

*Elizabeth Hotchkiss*

*Congratulations, Dr. Gregory!*

## State MG Liaison Report for April

By David Close, Virginia MG State Coordinator



The winter issue of ***In Season*** was emailed and mailed this week. It highlighted the keynote speakers for our 2008 MG College. I am in the process of updating our mailing records and email records so I will likely be coming to each unit asking for the most current mailing and emailing lists. There has been a serious disconnect in getting it in the hands of volunteers, both in print and electronically. I have abandoned the In Season listserv due to spam problems. I have a new alternative that will hopefully resolve the problem. The spring issue will only be available electronically (it is 14 pages instead of the usual 4).


- Update on **State Record Keeping System**. We met with CALS IT folks and VCE Administrators on March 11 to further discuss the status of the project. We left the meeting with the understanding that buy-in would be sought from all state program leaders about the proposed system.
- **MG College** planning is coming together nicely. The MG College Advisory Team met on April 4 to polish a few details. We have the following speakers confirmed as keynotes: Rick Darke, Colston Burrell, Michael Raupp, Robert McDuffie, and Rick Fell (entomologist at VT), Bob Lyons and Holly Scoggins. We also currently have more than 40 concurrent session choices and a nice list of tours (19 choices). Paul Campbell is in charge of recruiting moderators for the concurrent sessions.
- A team of VCE administrators, VCE specialists and VCE agents met on April 8, to work on a turf nutrient management program template based on existing programs such as Lawn Knowers, Great Scapes, Smart Lawns, and Turf Love. We are working with the VA Turf Grass Council to promote this program in other parts of the state where there is need and interest. We will use the template as a basis to offer a Turf Tract at our 2008 MG College. Also, agents will hopefully be given a chance to receive advanced training in turf nutrient management to take the lead in organizing interested VCE MGs and implementing a program where one doesn't currently exist.
- **MG Program Reviews**.
  - A panel of professors from Horticulture; Crop, Soil and Environmental Science and Plant Pathology & Weed Science departments has been assembled to review our programs. Dean Quisenberry requested this review. I'll keep everyone posted on how it proceeds and the potential end results.
  - I will be working with our Consumer Horticulture National Committee to develop and conduct a national assessment of the Extension MG program. We will meet in June to begin the evaluation process.
- We've had a new unit added in Surry County along with renewed efforts in Greensville/Emporia. There may be other new units popping up over the next couple of years. We are seeing some restructuring of the unit in Augusta & Rockingham counties.
- We received a \$320 check in March from ***Fine Gardening*** for the endowment fund.
- Just a reminder. . . . just because I forward **training opportunities for MGs** don't assume they will be approved locally by your agent. You must get prior approval for any training you intend to count toward continuing education from your extension agent and/or local coordinator. Some units have more strict guidelines on what does and does not count. I send things out if they meet the minimum standards I would expect, but local agents have the discretion to maintain higher standards for what will and will not qualify as continuing education credits.



## The Graine Thumb

Stretch and Bend for Gardeners:  
The Right Way

By George Graine, Fairfax County Master Gardeners



Spring is the busy season for gardeners and that often means bending, lifting, kneeling, hauling, digging, raking, weeding, and more. Whew....How is your back holding up? Legs fatigued? Out of breath? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions then perhaps you need to indulge yourself in getting fit in order to enjoy and pursue the great pleasure of yarding about in your own outdoor sanctuary. Everybody starts with a measurable fitness level and this level can be improved if you apply proper exercise principles. Does the Pilates method come to mind? Assuming that you have been hibernating during the past winter season (except skiers), you probably have longed for the first hint of spring. You saw the crocus, robins, and forsythia. Maybe you got carried away with the splashy flyers from the big box stores and the rows of bedding plants in front of the supermarkets along with bags of mulch and topsoil piled five feet high. Did you make a "To Do" list that went on for a few pages?

Gardening is a lifestyle and lends itself to a sense of accomplishment. You will have something to show for your efforts when compared to joggers, bicyclers, and gym rats. Before you plunge into some chores, stop for a moment and think about what almost all athletes do before they start playing sports. They warm up. We too need to take care of our body as well as our own emotional well being. Working outdoors can be exhilarating, restful, and even therapeutic. It can also be physically damaging if you do not adhere to the principles of gardening safely. Most of us have been taught to bend our knees and keep our back straight before picking up a heavy object, but there is so much more to learn. We also need to recognize our own physical limitations in order to prevent soreness, stress, and strain. Repetitive movements with a pruner can result in many days of an aching hand. Awkward bending and twisting can also lead to some problems. What can be done to prevent back aches or sore necks or something worse?

A new book co-authored by Bunny Guinness (garden designer and landscape architect) and Jacqueline Knox (physiotherapist) called *Garden Your Way to Health and Fitness* (Timber Press, 2008) blends their specialties by carefully and fully highlighting, through photos and text, various options on how to incorporate your gardening ideas with fitness in the early chapters of the book. To get technical for a moment, the fact is that being an active gardener should really make you feel better. Studies have "...suggested that exercise can delay or forestall some of the brain's aging processes and improve memory. With more strenuous activity the body releases adrenaline, along with endorphins like serotonin and dopamine, and these work together to enhance mood." Doesn't that say a lot about why we should garden?

Whether you want a high maintenance garden, a low one, or anything in between is up to you. You are the master of your own property. Before you start to dig some holes, lift pavers for a walkway, or pull some weeds, take a few minutes to warm up as noted earlier. The authors want you to think about your property as an outdoor gym and to garden safely using the tools that you probably have in your shed. But the question remains, are you using your garden tools properly? Hint: Perhaps for Mothers Day or Fathers Day a new ergonomically designed hand tool or long handled tool is in your future.

The second half of the book is a step-by-step "manual" on how to perform the myriad of gardening tasks without becoming a physical wreck. In other words, if you get tired early and easily, aching, or dehydrated, then perhaps you need to learn how these problems can be avoided. In that regard the latter chapters are oriented towards design ideas and at the same time emphasize the thrust of the book: health and fitness. Thus the authors combine the earlier chapters on "proper" ways to garden with how to achieve greater enjoyment (results) from your labor. Emphasis throughout the book is placed on low maintenance so that you will have time to enjoy your gardens. What does all of this mean? Briefly stated, if you garden intelligently you can do it for the rest of your life!

**VMGA Report**

The VMGA Report is the bimonthly newsletter of the Virginia Master Gardener Association.

Submissions should be received by the 1st of January, March, May, July, September, and November. Send inquiries and submissions to:

Dawn Meyerriecks,  
[dmyrix@hotmail.com](mailto:dmyrix@hotmail.com)

**General Announcements**

Get your VMGA **REPORT** via e-mail. Receiving your newsletter via e-mail is faster and cheaper for us to deliver it! If you have e-mail and a broadband connection and are still getting this newsletter via US Mail, please consider e-mail distribution instead. Send a note to [maryann.kincaid@verizon.net](mailto:maryann.kincaid@verizon.net) and we'll take care of it for you!

**Please help us keep your listing current.** When you have changes to your e-mail address, street address, zip code, phone number or name, please forward these changes to the Membership Chair, Mary Ann Kincaid. She can be reached at [maryann.kincaid@verizon.net](mailto:maryann.kincaid@verizon.net) OR 1549 Beechwood Cove, Virginia Beach, VA 23464.

**About the Virginia Master Gardener Association....**

The Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc. is a statewide association of Master Gardeners and Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) employees whose mission is to foster communication, education and fellowship among Master Gardeners, and to give support and input to the state leaders of our VCE effort. We are a non-profit educational organization as described by section 501(3)(c) of the US tax code.

VMGA Report  
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