



VMGA Executive Board

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NEXT BOARD MEETING

10 AM - 2 PM, October 13, 2008
Transportation Museum Building
73 Monument Place
Heathsville, VA

President's Message

Betty Villers, VMGA President

Thanks for the vote of confidence you bestowed on me when you elected me your President for the next two years. Cheri is a hard act to follow but I will do my best to lead the Virginia Master Gardener Association during this time.

Your new Executive Board, Cheryl Sebera (Vice-President), Christy Brennan (Secretary), Bill Scott (Treasurer), Cheri Haggerty (Past President) and I met with the previous board in July to talk about the direction for VMGA in the next two years.

- VMGA will evaluate the educational offerings throughout the state to provide opportunities for the VMGA community.
- Insure that the website is current by providing additional resources.
- VMGA newsletter will include more articles from unit newsletters.
- Encourage unit support committee to be proactive in solving unit issues.
- Improve communication between VMGA and MG College Advisory Board.
- VMGA Exec Board will meet with VT at least twice a year.

Backyard Living Magazine approached us in August for gardening tips from Master Gardeners. From the request I sent out to the unit reps, 60 tips were received and out of those 17 were sent to the magazine. Be sure to check the December/January issue of Backyard Living Magazine to see if any of the Virginia Master Gardener tips were included.

You will be hearing more about our commitment to interface with the green industry from Cheri Haggerty, who will be attending the September Virginia Green Industry Council (VGIC) meeting.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at bettyv@cox.net or by phone, 757-481-6398. I'm here to serve you. Thanks for the opportunity. Betty

UPCOMING EVENTS

13 September, Virginia Beach MG 9th Annual Community Garden Festival, Hampton Roads, 10 AM

<http://www.vbmg.org>

13 September, “Honeysuckle and Reed Basketmaking”, Smithfield Plantation, 1 - 4 PM

<http://vmga.net/2008%20Smithfield%20Plantation.htm>

19-20 September, Fall Plant Sale, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, 9 AM

<http://www.lewisginter.org/>

25 September - 5 October, Virginia State Fair, Richmond Race Way

<http://www.statefairva.org/>

4-5 October, Rose Fest, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, 12 - 3 PM

<http://www.lewisginter.org>

11-12 October, Arbor Fest, State Arboretum of Virginia, 10 AM

<http://www.virginia.edu/blandy/FEST2008.htm>

11-13 October, 61st Annual Orchid Show and Sale, National Arboretum

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

25 October - 16 November, Autumn Bonsai Exhibit, National Arboretum, 10 AM - 4 PM

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

1 November, Advanced Master Gardener Training, “Adventures in Gardening”, Cedar Point Country Club, Suffolk, 9 AM - 2 PM

Send VMGA calendar inputs to Kathryn Debnar, k2garden@cox.net.

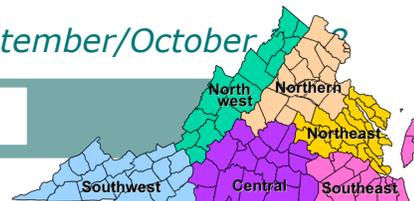
State MG Liaison Report for August

By David Close, Virginia MG State Coordinator

- Master Gardener College was a success with record attendance of 250. The Advisory team will start meeting soon to finalize speakers and plan for 2009.
- The 2008 Silent Auction went very well and everyone is pleased.
- Handbook revisions are due out late October for spring 2009 training.
- The National Coordinators Conference will be in Northern VA, spring of 2009. This conference draws a good crowd, in previous years 36 out of 50 states had representation. The plan is to “march on the hill” and meet with State representatives one on one. This is a conference for paid coordinators only. Northern district MG’s have been asked to help with the conference.
- The administration is working on the request for unit e-mail addresses for each help desk; the problem is a single address with multiple users and potential security risks. There may be a way to do this with the help of the VA Tech IT department.
- With Dr. Jersey Nowak leaving the VT Director position of Horticulture earlier this month, Dr. Roger Harris has been appointed as the interim director. Dr Harris will serve in this position for at least one year
- Northern VA agents are participating in a survey to determine the training needs of the public and extension and are developing a base level of information for clients. This will include a bullet point checklist of Best Management Practices to use as a tool in public education.
- Forty letters of interest were set to corporations by the Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment team. One company responded favorably and will be meeting with Dawn Lerch and Dave later this month. The company is very interested in developing a long-term relationship and could prove to be very valuable when attracting other corporate sponsors.
- The Emerald Ash Bore is officially here in VA. The US Forest Service is developing a National Program to engage Master Gardeners as front line detectors. They are currently developing a protocol and pilot project. The Emerald Ash Bore has been identified in several small pockets throughout the US, due in part to commerce. We are moving this pest though fire wood and pallet distribution.
- August 27th is the dedication ceremony of the Jocelyn Coutre-Nowak Garden at VA Tech.

August 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 have settled down to requiring just watering and weeding through the summer. Our School programs will resume in September. The Master Gardeners are keeping busy this summer at several community centers throughout the city.

We continue to staff the phone in the office to assist our Extension Agent, Don Davis. with horticulture questions. We also staff a booth at the Community Center every Saturday morning.

Danville

DMGs assisted with "Butterfly Thyme" June 7th at the Danville Community Market to benefit the Danville Butterfly Station. Vendors sold herbs, plants and garden-related products.

On July 7th, DMGs gathered at Baleau Park in Danville for their annual MG picnic. Brag boards from MG College were displayed and everyone enjoyed hearing details of MG College from our attendees.

At the August regular monthly meeting of the DMGA, Brenda Sutton from Reidsville, NC, will present a program on growing shitake mushrooms. The Public is invited.

Northeast



Chesterfield

<http://www.chesterfield.gov/extension>

The Chesterfield County MGs have had a busy summer. They assisted 316 Grass Roots clients with 475 soil samples. The New Resident's Program has accepted 35 applications. The Urban Tree Specialist MGs have made 4 site visits and there was a great article in the Richmond Times Dispatch about the program.

Northeast



Chesterfield (continued)

<http://www.chesterfield.gov/extension>

The final Rain Barrel workshops were completed on July 16 and MGs assisted with the preparation and instruction. The interviews for the MG class of 2009 will take place at the end of August.

The fall seminar series began on August 12 and 14 talks have been scheduled through September 18. 116 people have registered for these seminars. There will be scheduling for fall plant clinics at garden centers soon. There have been many requests for speakers at garden clubs and other organizations.

The MGs continue to staff the phone lines on a daily basis. The MG table at the Chesterfield County Fair will be manned all day. On October 1st and 4th, the State Fair will have Chesterfield MGs on duty. The Chesterfield MGs will be involved in horticulture education with the residents of the Angus Road Habitat for Humanity neighborhood. Also, several MGs will help in the spring with the Women's Diversion Center to plant and plan a vegetable garden.

Hanover

<http://www.hanovermastergardeners.org>

In addition to the well received, compost and vermicomposting demo, the Landcare Stewards have plans for a "firewise house" demonstration at the State Fair. Master Gardener units with Landcare Stewards are encouraged to volunteer. This year, we are adding a DNA Lab to our presentation in addition to the insect cage, pruning, and mulching demos.

Master Gardeners and interns participated in the Hanover Tomato Festival and reported 442 contacts: one third of these contacts were youth.

Hanover Master Gardeners will be volunteering during the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Plant sale (September 19 & 20) and The Green Industry Garden Festival, as well

August News From Across the State

Northeast

**Hanover** (continued)

<http://www.hanovermastergardeners.org>

as Richard Nunnally and Andre Viette. HMGA has reserved a booth which will feature a plant clinic.

Fall Home Gardening Classes are being scheduled for homeowners on consecutive Saturdays during October.

Gloucester

The lazy hazy days of summer are upon us but that has not hindered the pace of our continued contributions to the Gloucester community.

In May, Gloucester opened a Farmers Market and we have set up a booth to answer questions and assist customers. Eco-Expo in June was a huge success, serving over 500 students.

A field trip and lunch in July gave us a chance to just sit back and enjoy each other's company in a different venue.

The upcoming Plant Extravaganza and participation in the Gloucester, State and Guinea Fairs will help usher us into cooler temperatures and beautiful fall colors. Happy gardening – look forward to seeing you in October/December.

James City/Williamsburg

<http://www.jccwmg.org>

Leanne Dubois, our ANR Horticulture agent, left us on July 21. She has accepted a job with the Virginia Department of Agriculture as the Manager of Marketing for Specialty Crops and Direct Marketing. We wish her the best but are very sorry to see her go.

Our Water Quality/Conservation Seminar in May was well received.

Super Turf Saturday will be August 16, 2008, from 8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. at Lafayette High School.

Kari Abbot and her team of MG'S received the Natural Resources/Environmental Education award by the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents.

Newport News

<http://www.nnmastergardeners.org>

On September 20, 2008 the Newport News Master Gardeners will present a half-day event, "Go Green - \$ave Green" at the Virginia Living Museum (VLM) from 8:45am – 12:00 noon followed by a one hour demonstration and hands-on activity period. The program is designed to offer homeowners Earth friendly landscaping, lawn care and water use techniques that are money saving and practical. The event is in conjunction with the VLM's Fall Native Plant Sale.

Speakers and their topics include:

- Laurie Fox, Horticulture Associate of the Virginia Tech Hampton Roads AREC, on "Sustainable Landscaping" and "Buffer Zone Landscaping".
- Lisa Ziegler, The Gardener's Workshop, on "Fall Planting for Spring Blooms".
- Bill Garlette, Newport News Master Gardener, on "It's Alive – Soil, Composting, Bugs and Weeds" and "Fall Lawn Preparation".
- Peggy Fox, Newport News Master Gardener, on "Rain Gardens".
- Libby Carmines, Newport News Master Gardener on "Rain Barrels".

The fall session of horticulture enrichment at the NN Juvenile Detention Center will begin in October. The summer session of the Boys and Girls Club Garden Club was a success with weekly harvesting of vegetables from the garden. The Gardening in the Park children's gardening series resumes in September. Twelve new MG trainees will begin classes September 2.

Northern Neck

<http://www.nnmg.org>

The Northern Neck Master Gardeners had considerable success in holding rain barrel workshops for the citizens in this part of Virginia. These hands-on workshops demonstrated an economical way to collect rainwater for the homeowner's use on their gardens or houseplants. (Typically, our local well water here has a high sodium content

August News From Across the State

Northeast

**Newport News** (Cont'd)

<http://nnmg.org>

that affects plant growth.) Empty, heavy gauge plastic barrels were obtained from a N.C. pickle processor at a nominal cost. We cleaned them up, drilled holes, and then offered a hands-on demonstration on how to install a brass spigot, an overflow spout, and mosquito screening. A local hardware store "packaged" the necessary parts in zip-loc bags for our use.

Northern Neck Master Gardeners acted as hosts at the annual "Just Gardens" charity event. Several of the gardens on the tour are owned and lovingly tended by our Master Gardeners. Donations amounting to \$11,700 were raised for the local battered women's shelter this year.

Over 30% of our Master Gardeners came out one evening to the Northumberland Courthouse where the County Board of Supervisors were holding hearings on budget cuts. We were there to support our VCE Agent's rebuttal to their proposed cuts, especially for the part-time employee in the VCE office. Our show of support was instrumental in the Supervisors' restoration of salary money for Margie Beane, a Master Gardener and WEB master for NNMG.

Northern

**Central Rappahannock Area**

The First Saturday programs continued in July at the Fredericksburg library with "Keeping Your Garden Alive and Thriving in the Heat of Summer and Throughout the Year." In August the program was held at Belmont with guided tours of the butterfly garden, grassy meadows and woodland paths given by the staff, Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists.

Our August Master Gardener general meeting featured Shelly Arthur, a landscape designer from Richmond and a member of the Association of Progressional Landscape Designers, speaking on Healing Gardens.

The new Master Gardener training class will begin September 16.

Northern

**Central VA Master Gardeners (Louisa)**

The Central VA Master Gardeners will be participating in the Second Annual Heritage Harvest Festival held on September 6th at Monticello's Tufton Farms. This is a family event which includes special workshops for the kids. Everyone will have an opportunity to see the presenters: Carl Linnaeus, the Father of Taxonomy; Samuel Hilles, Dr. Arthur Tucker, co-authors of "The Big Book of Herbs"; and garden guru Felder Rushing will present workshops on "Slow Gardening" and herbs. For more information go to the festival website www.HeritageHarvestFestival.com. The events are free; the workshops will have a small fee.

Master Gardeners participated in the Louisa County Agricultural Fair as judges, building sitters and educators, giving out publications and gardening advice. Plant Clinics continue every Saturday from April through October at the library and local farmers market.

Green Spring

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gsgp/mastergardener.htm>

Green Spring Master Gardeners have continued to work at information tables at three Farmers' Markets each week, set up displays at libraries on topical garden issues, and lead tours of the demonstration gardens at Green Spring Gardens.

A series of four basic gardening classes in September and October will be taught by MGs: September 12th, "Ornamental Grasses"; September 26th, "Pollinators and Other Beneficial Insects"; October 10th, "Native Plants in the Landscape"; October 26th, "Selecting and Maintaining Garden Tools".

The new class for interns will begin in early September and will conclude prior to Thanksgiving. Classes meet Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1 to 4.

Finally, Saturday, September 27, Green Spring Gardens is hosting a Fall Festival. Master Gardeners will staff a table from 9 to 3 with a display on planting trees and shrubs.

August News From Across the State

Northern



Loudoun County

<http://loudouncountymastergardeners.org>

LCMGs are busy selling bulbs for our fall bulb sale.

We continue with our "Lunch & Learns" in the Demo Garden on Tuesdays at noon.

We have started "Saturday Morning in the Garden." We offer educational talks, garden tours and activities in the Children's Garden.

Our unit is organizing to help at the Loudoun County Fair July 28 to August 2, the Lucketts Fair August 22-24 and the Bluemont Fair September 19-22.

Our volunteers continue with gardening clinics at Leesburg Farmer's Market, Purcellville Farmer's market and Lowe's at Dulles Crossing Plaza.

Southeast



Western Tidewater Master Gardeners, Isle of Wight & Southhampton Counties

The WTMG installed a new slate of officers in June. They are enthusiastic and ready to go.

Our unit is hard at work on the Junior Master Gardeners Day Camp as well as planning for exhibits and a plant clinic to be held at the Isle of Wight County Fair in September. We will be hosting the Regional Training in Smithfield on October 25.

Southeast



Norfolk

<http://www.nmgv.org>

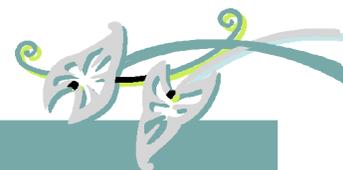
Norfolk Water Stewards are beginning a rain garden project at the Virginia Zoological Park in Norfolk. It will probably take a week to complete and it will eliminate the water runoff problem with the fountain area at the zoo. Other projects are pending for the Water Stewards.

Northwest



Rockbridge Area

RAMGA's annual June picnic was held on Thursday, June 26, and included election of new officers: Barbara Thomas, president; Nancy Smith, vice president; Tracy Smith-Oliver, treasurer; Penny Wilson, secretary; and David Mims, VMGA representative. On May 10 our annual plant sale and clinic took place and, once again, was very successful with 2000 plants sold, and earning over \$5000 for our organization. Once again RAMGA and the Rockbridge Regional Fair sponsored the ever-popular Horticulture Show. RAMGA's own Barbara Thomas won the Award of Merit for best perennial in the show.



Check out the latest Tech Pubs!

- There are a number of new publications available through Va Tech. A short sampling:
- Emergency Preparedness Media Kit (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/news/mediakit-emergencypreparedness.html>). Extension has [disaster preparation and response publications](#) about bottled water, emergency supplies, cleaning up after a disaster, and much more.
- Vegetables: How Much Do I Need? (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/nutrition/348-721/348-721.html>) The complete scoop on how much you need daily, when they are fresh, and how to properly care for them.
- Kids Kitchen: Fight Bac! (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/nutrition/348-485/348-485.html>) Basic information presented to entice kids to pay attention to this important topic.
- Your Lawn and the Environment (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/news/periodicals/cses/2008-03/YourLawn.html>). How you can be an environmental steward with any piece of earth for which you are responsible.

The Graine Thumb

On Being a Fall Guy

By George Graine, Fairfax County Master Gardeners

A change in the weather is sufficient to recreate the world and ourselves."

--- Marcel Proust, "Remembrance of Things Past", 1921

If spring is like the awakening of your landscape then what is fall like? Could it be the last hurrah of the gardening season? The challenge of the fall garden is to know when this interesting and often unusual season will end. For sure we know about the red twig dogwood against a backdrop of new fallen snow. We also know about the swaying and rustle of tall ornamental grasses in winter. But the idea of extending your garden season into fall is perhaps often overlooked even if it is reasonably easy to define and execute as a landscape transition plan.

Trees and shrubs are probably the first plant material that comes to mind when thinking about fall. The melding of unique fall coloration is forever changing due to the unpredictability of the weather. When the temperature starts dropping in September and you experience clear cool days and nights, this tends to stimulate what we usually refer to as fall color. Conversely, if the weather turns cold and rainy with less sun, then the fall palette results in less red color. Blame the sun because red pigment is stimulated by sunshine. Have you wondered why leaves in any given year stay green further into the fall season? The answer is because the temperatures remain warm and the chlorophyll stays active and keeps the leaves green. Thus, a colorful fall season rests with necessary cool temperatures in order to degrade the chlorophyll. If that happens, then you will see a red and orange color pattern until it is time to (dare I say it)...grab a rake or leaf blower.

The first half of *Fallscaping: Extending Your Garden Season into Autumn* by Nancy J. Ondra and Stephanie Cohen (Storey Publishing 2007) deals with a multitude of plants that will enhance and extend the fall season. In fact, the chapter labeled "Perfect Partners for Fall" discusses how to carefully combine plants that will provide plenty of color, encourage song birds, produce colorful berries, showy seed heads, and generally create a flowering season that should last longer than you might have otherwise realized. Need more help? The authors are on top of this. Detailed garden plans using line drawings, renderings, color photos, and explanations that focus on the final design product are provided. Lastly, a relatively short chapter reviews basic gardening principles. These serve us well as a reminder regarding such things as improving the soil, plant propagation, staking, pruning, grooming, and lest we forget, preparing plants for winter.

Now let us turn to the bones of the garden, your trees and shrubs. When selecting trees and shrubs you should definitely take extra effort when compared to purchasing annuals, perennials, bulbs, or other impulse plant material that is often bought based on cuteness. As a companion source of information to *Fallscaping*, *The Homeowner's Complete Tree & Shrub Handbook: The Essential Guide to Choosing, Planting, and Maintaining Perfect Landscape Plants* by Penelope O'Sullivan with photography by Karen Bussolini (Storey Publishing, 2007) is jam packed with down-to-earth practical ideas. The second half of this book is a tightly edited extensive encyclopedia. Each of the 357 entries (more than 200 pages) provides sufficient information so that your landscape decisions will be much easier. Additionally, many of the descriptions include a helpful "designer's choice" where "garden-worthy trees and shrubs for standout traits" are listed. Following the encyclopedia is a reference planning chart that breaks down the trees and shrubs that should help fill out your landscape dance card including special features such as fall color, attracts wildlife, bark, etc.

You will learn about design and selection considerations and how to plan your landscape in a more personal and non-technical manner. You will be drawn into thinking about a rationale for your own personal choices in order to integrate your landscape with the surrounding area, such as your house. Throughout this book you will find that the color photos and graphics include easy-to-understand explanations. A chapter on buying and planting your landscape plants provides a good review and reminds us that you get what you pay for, so beware of so-called bargains. More important are the maintenance sections including pruning, rejuvenating shrubs, hedges, fertilizing, and coping with common trees and plant diseases. Take caution here regarding the treatment noted because our liability extends only to use of the VCE Pest Management Guide.



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:

Peggy Fox, peggyfox@hotmail.com

Dawn Meyerriecks, dmyrix@hotmail.com

General Announcements

NOTICE: The Education Event at Mount Vernon scheduled for October has been cancelled.

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 OR 1549 Beechwood Cove, Virginia Beach, VA 23464.

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 and we'll take care of it for you!

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(c)(3) of the US tax code.

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