



# VMGA REPORT

## Sept/Oct 2011

Volume 18 no. 5

## *From the President...*

The October Board meeting will be on October 8th in Roanoke. The meetings are open to all of the membership and are rotated around the state during each fiscal year. I encourage as many of the members who can to attend these meetings and to participate in them if you have input or questions for the Board of Directors.

Subsequent to the Annual Meeting in June, I have concentrated on recruiting new committee chairs and committee members to fill

vacancies and increase membership on the committees. Roslyn Tharp, Gloucester, is Fundraising Chair and Paul Campbell, Virginia Beach, has accepted the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Linda Silver, Newport News, has agreed to serve on the Membership Committee. Yolana Williams, Kathy Stewart, Kathy Frame and Gwen Pote, Central Rappahannock, have joined Barbara Geer, Betty Jo Hendrix and Ira Wallace on the Education Committee. Frances Wall, Washington County, is working with Peggy Fox on the Newsletter. Our goal has been to increase membership on the committees to get a cross-section from around the

state and lighten the workload for the members working on the committees. We still need additional help in membership and newsletter and always welcome more participation in education from around the state. Finally we have one or two small committees to staff. There are always opportunities to volunteer if you want to actively participate in VMGA!

Volunteering not only gives you an opportunity to support the VMGA directly, but also lets you meet and develop friendships with a dedicated group of volunteers who are supportive and helpful when you need any assistance. Please consider volunteering

your time to maintaining VMGA as a strong link between Virginia Cooperative Extension and all Virginia Master Gardeners.

As you can see above, VMGA is moving forward. Educational programs are scheduled around the state and planning is in process for the 2012 MG Day at VSU. In the next few weeks I hope to finalize our plan for cleanup of our website.

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.

Hope to see you in Roanoke!

**Bill Scott, President**

### PRESIDENT:

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wjscott@netzero.com

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## *From the State MG Coordinator* *Dave Close, VCE*

### Liaison Report

August 13, 2011

Charlottesville, VA

**MG College** was successful by most accounts; we should end the conference in the black this year; ~ 195 registered attendees.

**Urban Nutrient Management** (UNM) in-service coincided with MG College; I recently found out that our Extension MG UNM programs being managed by Extension staff who are certified by the Dept of Conservation and

Recreation (DCR) as UNM planners would count in the Chesapeake Bay Model (number of turf acres under nutrient management); as a result of discovering this, I organized a meeting between Dr. Mike Goatley, Dr. Greg Evanylo, and myself Dr. Jones and Dr. Cathy Sutphin to discuss VCE's continued involvement with UNM, additional training resources, and ideas about leveraging our support of DCR for potential funding from DCR in the future

Joyce Latimer held a planning meeting with the PMG Design Team to discuss the **2012 PMG**; we are shooting for an earlier release in 2012 than we had for 2011; hope to continue incorporating additional suggestions/changes that have been recommended.

**Volunteer Management System (VMS)** – I am in the process of recruiting more units units to test the new system; Sarah Kelly has created a Scholar site to house VMS documents, tutorials,

**SAVE THESE DATES**Sept/Oct

**Water Steward Training**  
 offered by the Chesapeake,  
 Norfolk, Portsmouth and  
 Virginia Beach Extension  
 Offices  
 757-382-6348

Sept 29-Oct 9

**State Fair of Virginia**  
 The Meadow Event Park  
 www.statefair.com

Oct 18

**Building Communities  
 Through Gardening**  
 Fairlington Community  
 Center Arlington VA  
 alexcoan@gmail.com  
 610-914-9347

Oct 22

**Waterwise Landscaping:  
 Good Practices = Good  
 Water Quality**  
 Registration deadline Oct 7  
 see page 4 for more details

Jan 20-22, 2012

**Virginia Flower and  
 Garden Expo**  
 Virginia Beach  
 www.vafgs.org

Jan 29-Feb 2

**Mid-Atlantic Horticulture  
 Short Course**  
 Newport News  
 www.mahsc.org

February 25, 2012

**MG Day at VSU**  
 Sponsored by VMGA  
 Continuing Education  
 vmgaedu@rcn.com

June 19-24, 2012

**MG College 2012  
 25th Anniversary**

**NEXT VMGA  
 BI-MONTHLY BOARD**

**MEETING**

**OCTOBER 8, 2011**  
 3738 Brambleton Ave SW,  
 Roanoke, VA 24018

## *Invasive Plants in Virginia*

*Jeanne Millin, JCC/WMG/SBG*

Perhaps prompted by my article in last month's newsletter, (The Colonial Gardener, August 2011) I received two invasive inquiries this month from Master Gardeners and one request about invasive Japanese Stilt Grass from the staff at New Quarter Park.

Japanese Stilt Grass is a persistent concern. A team comprised of Master Naturalists, Friends of New Quarter Park and local Boy Scouts have been working over a period of three years to control and remove Japanese Stilt Grass, Japanese Honeysuckle, Purple Loosestrife and Beefsteak Plants from various areas within New Quarter Park. We are winning but it isn't easy and it requires commitment over a period of years. What I have learned, especially concerning the Japanese Stilt Grass is that it must be pulled by hand, late in the growing season, just prior to seed production. If you pull it earlier you just disturb the soil and allow the seeds in the soil to sprout. Estimates are that you need a six to seven year commitment to completely remove the seeds and the grass from the area. Look for our fall request for volunteers for our work days.

The second request was for identification of potential *Phragmites australis* (Common Reed) from a

wetland area of a Master Gardeners home. I happened to be volunteering the day after the specimen was dropped off at my home at the New Kent Forestry Center. The leader of our project was a VIMS doctoral candidate who is familiar with wetland plants. I felt better when he explained that many people have trouble identifying *Phragmites*, mixing it up with the Wild Rice that this specimen turned out to be. However, *Phragmites* is becoming a problem in this area and property owners should monitor potential invasions. Repeated mowing and applications of Glyphosate herbicides is the recommended procedure to handle this invasive.

Finally, the invasion of *Pueraria Montana* or Kudzu vine in many places in James City and New Kent Counties and throughout the south. Like many invasives, Kudzu destroys native trees and shrubs.

Kudzu is especially vigorous and difficult to control. In the areas of the country where Kudzu is under control the state DNR and local officials are working together and are committed to the effort, knowing control will take commitments of five to ten years (estimates are one year of attack for each year a stand has been allowed to grow). Kudzu is a perennial, leguminous vine. It is deciduous and can grow up

to 50 feet in a single growing season. Its roots are deep and starch-rich, storing food reserves that support its regrowth each spring. August and September are prime months for starting a Kudzu attack program since these are the months where the plants start storing food for next year's regrowth. Eradication can take many forms. Repeated mowing weakens the tangle of leaves and vines, grazing and burning are also possible as well as application of a kudzu specific herbicide. Persistent strategies as well as attacking patches when they are small can work. A single crown can start an invasion. Commitment to control in Virginia and in James City and New Kent Counties over a period of years has to become a priority of our government if we are to attack this invasive before it destroys all of the beautiful plants and trees of the area.



## The Graine Thumb

by George Graine, Fairfax

### MISCONCEPTIONS IN THE GARDEN: UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY

*Sometimes ignorance is bliss; you don't know enough to see all the problems.*

Author unknown

Turn back to the time when you were in high school or college when many of us were introduced to a concept called the scientific method. This is a technique for investigating phenomena, acquiring new knowledge or correcting and integrating previous knowledge (as explained in Wikipedia). Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott understands this methodology and applies it to her work as an extension urban horticulturist. She also has the academic credentials to be called a genuine horticultural expert.

If you are a fan of conspiracy theories or reading about unfounded claims or speculation, then Dr. Chalker-Scott's books are not for you. Her two books, *The Informed Gardener* (2008) and sequel *The Informed Gardener Blooms Again* (2010) are compilations of

previously written columns of horticultural no nonsense myth-busting that will often surprise and possibly astound you as well. Together, both books expose and often "blow up" almost six-dozen horticultural myths in an easy to follow 1-2-3 writing style. She informs you of the premise, i.e., the myth (e.g., drainage material in a container), then provides you with the facts, i.e., the reality and finally the whamo, i.e., an explanation or as she likes to write, the bottom line. As if this was not sufficient, after torching each myth is a list of references including scientific literature from scholarly research papers and field studies that support the facts.

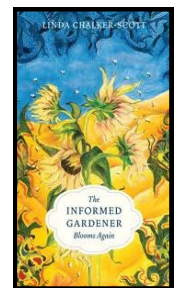
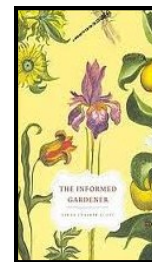
After reading both books, one should (not could) ask how can so much wrongful garden lore be perpetuated from so many sources like the media, internet, books, nurserymen and so-called horticultural gurus. Just because you hear or read something over and over does not make it correct or a fact. For example, we know that the

family tradition of digging a hole to China and replacing all of the soil in order to plant a tree is just wrong. So too are the vitamins that are often pushed by nurserymen who claim this will reduce transplant shock by stimulating new root growth. Come on folks, get real, these plants do not need anything like Geritol. Science-based information regarding this process is the preferred alternative. More....Consider the snake oil products that are readily available for sale at garden centers or advertisements that make unfounded claims or deal in half-truths. These ads are cleverly written so that you want to buy a product that you probably do not need. Whether it is harmful or not is an entirely different story. Here are just a few products that should not see the light of day in your landscape: wound gunk, anti-transpirants, water crystals, compost tea, gypsum and landscape fabric. The reasons are carefully explained by the good doctor.

Aside from saving dollars on unnecessary products you also become, as the book title indicates – Informed. The information contained in these books is not just invaluable to you as a Master Gardener but they contain logical advice for you to provide research-based information at a plant clinic and elsewhere. After all, isn't this our tour de force?

think and act accordingly. These two books will shake the skepticism or cynicism out of you because there is no denying the dazzling truth.

**S u g g e s t i o n :** Check out the blog, <http://www.gardenprofessor.com>. You will be well informed and surprised at who are the professors contributing to this blog.



### Liasion Report continued from page 1

these resources have been created by the first generation of test units; hope to fully role out by the end of 2012.

**MG College 2012** 25th Anniversary of MG College, June 19-24

#### **2012 International MG**

**Conference** – October 11-15 in Charleston, WV; currently there are 50 participants from

VA; ≈30 of those registered are VCE MG volunteers; Dave, Frank Reilly, and Barb Stewart (from the National Park Service) will be giving a presentation on our Smart Yard Care book.

Also in October, Dave will be traveling to London to participate in a panel discussion during the

**International Leadership Association** meeting; I will be talking about volunteer leadership in the context of the Extension Master Gardener program.

**Online modules** are to be developed for the MG training ; Bedford just completed their pilot training using asynchronous modules; they started with 5

enrolled but ended up with 13 who completed the module training and passed the exam; I will be working with Bedford in the development of statewide modules; they are planning for their second training.

**MGCAT** will be meeting in mid-September to begin work on our 25th Annual MG College.

## WATERWISE LANDSCAPING

GOOD PRACTICES =  
GOOD WATER QUALITY

OCTOBER 22, 2011

9 AM TO 3 PM

W.E. SKELTON 4-H CENTER  
EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER AT  
SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE  
775 HERMITAGE ROAD  
WIRTZ, VA 24184  
540.721.2759  
SKELTON4H@VT.EDU

Water is essential in our lives. In this workshop, we will explore landscaping techniques which are Water-Wise, from the perspective of conservation, retention and impact. Included in the day will be a tour of the 4H Center Buffer Landscape which was installed by the Franklin County Master Gardeners.

Open only to VCE Master Gardeners, MG Interns and VA Master Naturalists. Registration is limited to 70, so please register early!

If you have any questions, please contact the host for this event, the Franklin County Master Gardener Association.

Nelda Purcell: [purcelln@hughes.net](mailto:purcelln@hughes.net) or  
540 576 9931

## "Waterwise Landscaping"



8:00-9:00 Registration

9:00-9:15 Welcome

9:15-10:15 "Water Quality and the

Home Landscape" Laurie Fox

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 *Water Quality Projects:*

*Concerns and Strategies Panel*

12:00 -1:00 Salad Buffet Lunch

1:00-2:00 "Waterwise Plant Selection"

Sandra Reichert

2:00-2:15 Break

2:15-3:00 Slide show and Tour of 4H

Buffer Landscape

3:00 Tie-Up: Evaluations

This workshop will provide a forum for better understanding the role of MGs & MNs in educating our constituents on the positive impact waterwise landscaping has on water retention, water quality and the environment. The registration fee includes a workshop packet, refreshments and a delicious all you can eat Salad Buffet for lunch.

Rooms are available at the 4H center for Friday night Oct.21<sup>st</sup>

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Knowledge for the Commonwealth

Virginia Tech

Virginia State University

## VMGA Continuing Education Program "Waterwise Landscaping"



October 22, 2011, 8 AM to 3 PM

REGISTRATION FORM\*

\*Only one form per person; copy as needed

Pre-registration required with registration deadline October 7, 2011. We are sorry but cancellations after October 14, 2011 will not be refundable.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

MG/MN Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Your email will only be used for confirmation of your registration.

### Registration Fee

- \$25.00-Current VMGA Member
- \$30.00-Non-VMGA Member (even if you're part of a local MG organization)
- \$64 per double room, Friday Night Lodging at the 4H Center.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

Mail the completed form with check made payable to VMGA to: Kathy Scott, FCVMG  
371 Elam Ln, Boones Mill, VA 24065-4696

Confirmation, directions and emergency contact will be emailed to you unless otherwise requested. The facility is handicap-accessible.

### ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth.

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.



VMGA, Inc.  
2416 LAUDERDALE DR  
RICHMOND, VA 23238

A voice for  
Virginia Master Gardeners  
<http://vmga.net>

**Go Green!** If you currently receive a hard copy of this newsletter, help us save some green. Please consider requesting the delivery of this newsletter to your email address. Please contact Christy Brennan, Membership Chair, today!