



# The VMGA Report

A Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners  
vmga.net

Jan/Feb 2020

Volume 25, Number 4

## VMGA Officers

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Vice President-  
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## In This Issue

- Message from the President
- Spotlight: Hanover
- Save the Date
- Speaker's Bureau
- In the news...
- The Grainethumb
- Calendar

Editor-  
Peggy Fox, Newport News  
Proofreading-  
Lynn Hamm,  
Western Tidewater

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Master Gardener Association is to foster communication, education and fellowship among Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteers.

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## From the President

Wanda Gerard, Suffolk, President

Happy New Year!

The Virginia Master Gardener Association turns 30 this year! If this newsletter has reached you and you are not a VMGA member – please consider joining our state association. If you are a member, why not ask someone who isn't yet a member to join, or give them a one year membership as a gift? Let's grow our membership during this anniversary year!

Regardless of where you are in the commonwealth, share your unit's events with others by sending the info to Joan Richards for the calendar on the VMGA website. *Everyone who submits something for the calendar before the February bimonthly meeting will have their name placed into a drawing to win a prize.* While you are at it, why not ask or solicit volunteers to write articles about these events for our future newsletters? Perhaps a picture of the event held last year can be included?

Perhaps your resolutions for 2020 mirror mine: replace plants that have seen better days or are in the wrong place, amend the soil, attempt to grow something different in the vegetable garden, add a few more natives to the landscape, add interesting 'artsy items', and most of all, enjoy the fruits of your labor by spending quiet time in the space you've created. Watching the hummingbirds flutter about is probably my personal best, so I guess a personal goal would be to add a few more attractions for them. Another goal is to begin sharing the garden with others this year, so I must get that fairy garden designed and installed this spring.

Happy New Year to you with wishes that it's a great gardening one both personally and in the volunteer sense too.

Wanda

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# VMGA Meeting February 8, 2020

Hanover Evangelical Friends Church

6420 Mechanicsville Turnpike, Mechanicsville VA 23111

Boxed lunch catered by Publix (please see page 8 to place your order)

Got an upcoming event to publicize?

**Submit your unit announcements to the State MG Coordinator for inclusion in the Bi-Weekly EMG Update**  
<https://www.mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/biweekly-submission/>

**AND**

also to our **VMGA Calendar of Events** in care of:  
[Calendar@vmga.net](mailto:Calendar@vmga.net)

Submissions via email should include:

- The title of your event
- The date of your event
- A sentence describing your event
- The location of your event
- A link or attachment providing additional information

## In the news:

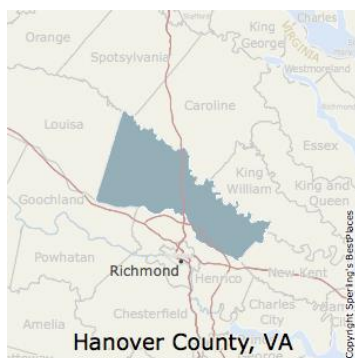
Has your unit or the members of your unit been featured in your local newspaper? Let us know! Send links to:  
[peggyfox@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyfox@hotmail.com)

***NEW FEATURE!***

## SPOTLIGHT ON:

### Hanover County Master Gardeners

Contributed by Angelette Pryor, Christy Brennan and Pattie Bland



The Hanover Master Gardener Association (HMGA) was formed in 1988 to partner with and provide support for the local VCE office, funding for the EMG program and staffing for its projects. As the Hanover Master Gardener program developed, the early board members of the HMGA realized the importance of a local as well as state association and worked together with other VA Master Gardener units to help start the Virginia Master Gardener Association (VMGA). The first VMGA meeting was held in Hanover 30 years ago, in 1990. Many of our Hanover Master Gardeners have held office and board positions in the VMGA. Our Association values our partnership with VMGA and looks forward to the next 30 years.

Currently, there are eighty three active Master Gardeners, eleven trainees, eight interns and one emeritus volunteer, working with the VCE ANR Agent Laura Maxey-Nay and Volunteer Coordinator Angelette Pryor. This year alone, EMG volunteers, trainees and interns volunteered 7,393 volunteer hours, received 1,717 continuing education hours and drove 39,729 miles to serve the community.

Since 1988, the Hanover Master Gardener Program has trained hundreds of VCE volunteers by offering training classes during day and evening hours. Hanover Master Gardeners are well known throughout the Richmond area as dedicated volunteers who are committed to building local area opportunities for public education. Our unit annually coordinates MG units from across the commonwealth to staff the VA Cooperative Extension booth at the State Fair.

Hanover Master Gardeners (HMGs) can be seen throughout the county staging plant clinics staffed by a minimum of four MGs and interns. In 2019, HMGs conducted 36 plant clinics and reported 4930 contacts. These HMGs are easy to identify as each of the plant clinic kits includes four "uniform" Hanover MG aprons to wear. HMGs have made a variety of tabletop demonstrations that are part of a theme for each plant clinic. These mini demos include composting systems, hoop houses, intensive/square foot gardening, cold frames and native bee houses. HMGs hold a large spring plant sale every year, the organization's signature event, to fund our Education Grant Program. This program allows organizations within the community to apply for funding for a gardening or environmental project to further public education. Since 2012 HMGA has awarded \$10,496 to 23 recipients—a



## ABOUT VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION (VCE)

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 VCE, 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. VCE 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.

church, schools, county and state agencies. These groups have installed or revamped reading and butterfly gardens, as well as installed community gardens and gardening boxes.

Over the past three decades, Hanover Master Gardeners have developed special relationships with community partners such as Maymont, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and the State Fair of Virginia. HMGs support educational booths at these locations during regional educational events.

Learn more about the EMGs of Hanover County, Virginia  
<https://hanovermastergardeners.org/>

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## VMGA BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS

### Save the Dates in 2020:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Feb 8      | VMGA 30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting, Hanover County MGs<br><a href="https://hanovermastergardeners.org/">https://hanovermastergardeners.org/</a> |
| April 11   | Louisa County MGs<br><a href="https://www.louisacvmg.org/">https://www.louisacvmg.org/</a>   |
| June 25-28 | 33 <sup>rd</sup> Annual MG College at Virginia Tech  |
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## Speaker's Bureau

Erica Jones, New River Valley, member of Education Committee [emjones@vt.edu](mailto:emjones@vt.edu)

VMGA will be creating a list of speakers who are willing to present to groups within the state. An on-line list like this will be helpful for planning future educational events for EMGs. Please forward the following to Erica Jones:

1. Speaker's Name
  2. Contact information
  3. Topics they will talk about
  4. Compensation
  5. Travel area
  6. Travel expenses
  7. References
- 

## In the news

### America's Champion Trees Announced

American Forests has unveiled its latest National Register of Champion Trees  
<https://www.americanforests.org/get-involved/americas-biggest-trees/champion-trees-national-register/>

which includes nearly 700 of the largest and most impressive tree species in the United States. Congratulations to the [Virginia Big Tree Program](#) on remaining the #2

## VMGA Website

Leslie Paulson, Prince William

Please submit additions, corrections or report broken links to:

Leslie Paulson at: [ljp6651@comcast.net](mailto:ljp6651@comcast.net)

Dave Banks [webmaster@vmga.net](mailto:webmaster@vmga.net)

## VMGA

Membership has its advantages:

- Online modules
- Unit Support
- Scholarships
- Newsletter
- Advanced Training
- Discount event fees
- Membership Directory
- Statewide Networking

**Deadline for submitting articles for the Mar/Apr issue: Feb 22, 2020**

**Please send to:**  
Peggy Fox,  
VMGA Newsletter Editor  
Newport News unit  
[peggyfox@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyfox@hotmail.com)

ranked state for the most documented national champs.

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## National Seed Swap Day: January 25, 2020

Is your unit hosting a Seed Swap? In addition to our VMGA calendar your event can be listed on a national web bulletin board.

Check it out:

VMGA Calendar of Events at <http://www.vmga.net/mg-links.php#> and [PlantsMap.com](http://PlantsMap.com)

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## Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-xUNpA3DF4&feature=youtu.be>

Peggy Fox, Newport News

The quarantine and spread of this invasive insect from China was discussed in detail by ANR Agent Mark Sutphin of Frederick County. Mark also serves Clarke, Page, Shenandoah, and Warren Counties and Extension Master Gardener volunteers in the Northern Shenandoah Valley. First detected in January of 2018 in the city of Winchester and Frederick County, VA, officials are working hard to learn more about the lifecycle, feeding habits, the destruction it causes to agriculture, viticulture and horticulture industries, and effective measures to control the SLF. Mark gave an hour long, advanced education presentation to VMGA Board Meeting attendees at the Northern Virginia 4H Center in Front Royal, VA on December 14, 2019. The SLF is an invasive pest to not only farmers and commercial growers, but to homeowners as well. Picture yourself and your family seated beneath a shady tree attempting to enjoy a picnic and a cool breeze. Instead, you could find yourself becoming bathed in a multitude of droplets of honeydew, if your tree is infested with SLF. Parked cars, children's toys, garden furniture all become covered in a sticky residue, making a once enjoyable setting a very unpleasant place to be. Education of EMGs and the general public is just one of the pieces in a puzzle of many. You can learn more online through local and regional authorities such as:

[VCE Pubs](#), [USDA](#), [Northeastern IPM Center](#), [eXtension OneSearch](#), [Penn State Extension](#).

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## Piedmont Master Gardeners' 30th Anniversary

commemorative event held September 8, 2019



Frank Reilly,  
EMG volunteer for Central Rappahannock Unit,  
and environmental consultant,  
served as master of ceremonies.

## Resources

Find out more here

[Extension Master Gardener website](#)

[VMGA.NET](#)

[VCE MG YouTube](#)

[State Office Blog](#)

[VCE—Facebook](#)

[Volunteer Management System](#)

[Online Learning Opportunities](#)

[VA EMG Bi-weekly Update](#)

[Marketing and Branding Resources](#)



Links to places of interest around the state:

[Virginia Is For Lovers](#)

[Blandy Experimental Farm](#)

[Hahn Hort Garden](#)

[Norfolk Botanical Garden](#)

[Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden](#)

[Maymont](#)

[Williamsburg Botanical Garden](#)

[Meadowlark Botanical Gardens](#)

[Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU](#)

[I Love Gardens.com](#)

[Virginia Gardening](#)

[Greenspring Gardens](#)

[Southern Virginia Botanical Gardens, South Boston, VA](#)

[US National Arboretum](#)

Article featured in the December 2019 issue of **The Garden Shed**, the monthly newsletter published by the Piedmont Master Gardeners.

Go to:

<https://piedmontmastergardeners.org/article/climate-change-is-happening-in-central-virginia/>

## THE GRAINETHUMB

CURIOUS ABOUT PLANTS

George Graine, Fairfax

*“A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all, it teaches entire trust.”*

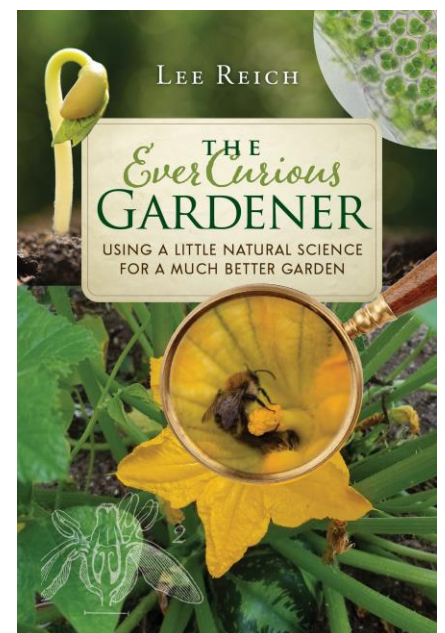
---Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932)

Many books extol the virtues of landscape design as a form of art; however, it is unusual to find a book that discusses gardening from a scientific perspective. Can the two be combined? Of course they can! Dr. Lee Reich, a horticulturist and scientist has ably melded gardens with science in his new book **“The Ever Curious Gardener: Using a Little Natural Science for a Much Better Garden”** (New Society Publishers, 2018).

Please do not get turned off by the word “science” in the title. After all, every time you purchase a bag of fertilizer you will see three numbers on the bag that indicate the chemicals nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. Some fertilizers may also indicate other chemicals that are nutrients known to help plants to thrive and survive. In this instance, chemicals are part of the landscape equation.

Reich takes you on a trip through your garden and provides easy to understand explanations of perceived mysteries. He tells you what happens when you garden as if it is a huge experiment. Most important he helps you understand how to garden with greater success. In other words, Reich provides practical advice that piques your curiosity. He helps you to understand how and why plants respond to your stewardship as gardeners. He stresses that “gardens are variable and complex ecosystems which makes growing plants both interesting and, if you want to know why a plant did what it did, frustrating.”

Reich’s book is “not a comprehensive overview of botany and related sciences, just the natural science that can be applied in the garden.” Furthermore, you can randomly browse other chapters that most interest you. Each chapter stands by itself and provides the rationale for what is



happening in your garden. With minimal effort and know-how you can have a decent garden.

After reading this book you will become a better gardener because you will have an increased understanding of why your garden looks better. Combining scientific knowledge with your previous knowledge of gardening will definitely improve your gardening experience. Once you have a better scientific understanding of your garden, you will also become a better observer of each plant whether it is a flower, shrub, vegetable and more.

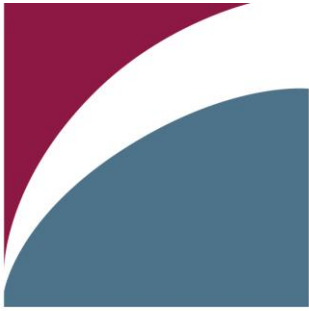
Each chapter begins with a few opening remarks that set the stage for an interesting discussion. The author's words are like a conversation with you, the reader. Reich makes gardening interesting as he explains what lies beneath your feet and how the sun interacts with plants. Note that in addition to being an informed read, this book also has its humorous side as well.

Below are Reich's introductions to each chapter in the book. Throughout each chapter is a symbol of a magnifying glass that provides more insights germane to the chapter.

- Chapter 1 – Propagation and Planting: A lot of deception helps me get some seeds to sprout that under natural conditions would wisely stay asleep.
- Chapter 2 – Soil: In which we watch the progress of water traveling through soil, with methods to, at the same time, speed it up and slow it down.
- Chapter 3 – Flowering and Fruiting: Sex is introduced and its sometime importance is emphasized.
- Chapter 4 – Stems and Leaves: In which my thumbnails, pruning shears, and branch bending coax plants into bushiness, lankiness, or anything betwixt.
- Chapter 5 – Organization: Wherein families migrate together around my garden and for good reason.
- Chapter 6 – Stress: On steps, human and otherwise, to avoid the havoc of icy cells during frigid temperatures.
- Chapter 7 – Senses: In which I elucidate, abet, and alter the color of leaves, vegetables, and flowers.

In summary, after reading this book you will develop a better understanding of the science behind success with your plants. Dr. Reich writes in a pragmatic way. Throughout the book he dispels some gardening myths although not necessarily referring to them as such. You will be amused by his personal experience and how he reduces them to humorous explanations. In other words, be curious – it is good for your plants.

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# Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech  
Virginia State University  
[www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu)

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

## Calendar 2020

### January

- 24-26 VA Flower & Garden Expo in Virginia Beach  
25 Central Rappahannock Area EMGs 4th Annual Seed Swap

### February

- 1 Washington Gardener Seed Exchange, at Greenspring Gardens Alexandria, VA  
6 Piedmont Landscape Association Seminar 2020  
8 Stop Mowing, Start Growing!  
2nd Annual Native Plant Symposium for Beginners  
15 Greenspring EMG: Eco-Savvy Symposium  
29-8 Mar Philadelphia Flower Show

### March

- 7 2020 Horticulture Extravaganza York County  
20 Shenandoah Valley Plant Symposium  
21 Annual Gardening Symposium, Loudoun County  
21 CNU Gardening Symposium, Newport News  
21 Green Matters Symposium, Silver Spring MD

### April

- 17-19 Williamsburg Garden Symposium  
18-25 Historic Garden Week

### June

- 25-28 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual MG College, VT Campus

### August

- 9-12 GardenComm Conference, Williamsburg, VA

## 2021

- Sept 13-17 International Master Gardener Conference, Norfolk

# VMGA 30 Year Anniversary Meeting Feb. 8, 2020

## Lunch Orders (Boxed Lunches by Publix)

The Boardroom Sandwich Box #1 \$8.50  
Ultimate sub (3 meat combo-ham, roast beef - turkey) -side potato or macaroni salad, cookies, tea or lemonade

The Boardroom Sandwich Box #2 \$8.50  
Turkey sub, side potato or macaroni salad, cookies, tea or lemonade

The Boardroom Sandwich Box #3 \$8.50  
Ham and cheese sub, side potato or macaroni salad, cookies, tea or lemonade

Executive Box Salad #1 \$10.00  
Traditional Greek Salad (, lettuce blend, feta, tomatoes, olives, garbanzo beans, cucumber, onions, pepperoncini, red wine vinegar dressing), chips, piece of fruit, tea or lemonade.

Executive Box Salad #2 \$10.00  
Southern Cobb Salad (lettuce blend, chicken tenders, blue cheese, tomatoes, dried cranberries, green apples, balsamic dressing), chips, piece of fruit, tea or lemonade.

Executive Box Salad #3 \$10.00  
Turkey Cobb Salad (lettuce blend, turkey, guacamole, green onions, bacon, blue cheese, avocado ranch dressing), chips, piece of fruit, tea or lemonade.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch Selection: \_\_\_\_\_

Please order your lunch and send checks by **Jan 30<sup>th</sup>** to  
Christy Brennan  
2416 Lauderdale Drive  
Richmond, VA 23238