



The VMGA Report

A Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners
vmga.net

July/August 2020

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VMGA Officers

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Prince William County

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Editor-
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With assistance from-
Lynn Hamm,
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OUR MISSION

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

From the President

Leslie Paulson, Prince William

Hard to believe the last two years have passed so quickly. By the time you read this, Master Gardener College will be done. Can you believe that 1200 people participated? It is amazing and, of course, Zoom has become our new way of life. It is our new safe and new normal these days.

Our next VMGA meeting will be conducted virtually on August 8th, via Zoom. If ever you want to join us, let us know. We can send you the link. Our Education Committee has some new ideas and that group is chaired by Kirk Barley, Central Shenandoah. If you have any input, go to <http://vmga.net/board-meet.php>. This is where you will find easy access to all the email addresses of our Board Members and the Committee Chairs. Also, Erica Jones, of New River Valley, is putting together a Speaker's Bureau from across the state for all units to use. Hopefully, we will soon be able to travel and meet in person for classes.

Our next big event is, of course, International Master Garden College in Norfolk next September. We all hope to go forward with this and that all events will have returned to a new normal that will be safe, and we can gather in Norfolk. I've only gone to one such event but enjoyed it greatly. It is always nice to talk with people who love to garden and exchange ideas.

This may sound like it is way too early to discuss, yet I believe it's important to start thinking about the next Board of Officers for VMGA. If we do this, it will allow the prospective persons to watch and learn what is involved. If you enjoy people and Master Gardening, you are a good match. Think about it. I will bring it up again, I promise.

I also would like to charge all of you with visiting at our website regularly. Please let us know when something is missing, or a link doesn't work. Also, Peggy Fox, Newport News, newsletter@vmga.net wouldn't mind you sharing an article related to Master Gardening that you think would be enjoyed by our membership.

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

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 have the members of your unit been featured in your local newspaper? Let us know! Send links to:
newsletter@vmga.net

Soon our merchandise will be available to buy online. Check out VMGA.net and select MG Gear. Jody Purches, assisted by Jennifer Gallion, do a wonderful job selling MG items and all proceeds benefit the State Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment Fund.

I look forward to getting to know more of you as we go forward. I'm just hoping that soon it will be in person and not on our computers. Please let me know if you have anything that you wish to bring to the Board. And please stay safe. Take care,

Leslie

State Fair of Virginia

Christy Brennan, Hanover

Virginia Master Gardeners are the best! Our interactive booth at the 2019 State of Virginia (Sept 27-Oct 6, 2019) was a huge success. Despite record breaking temperatures, volunteers answered horticulture questions and educated fair visitors about pollinators and native plants in the landscape through demonstrations and hands-on activities. Even a friendly bee stopped by to help create a buzz of activity at the booth.



Thank you to the many volunteers of these units who made this event a success:

- ✚ Chesterfield
- ✚ Goochland / Powhatan
- ✚ Green Spring
- ✚ Hanover
- ✚ Henrico
- ✚ Louisa
- ✚ MG Association of the Central Rappahannock Area
- ✚ Norfolk
- ✚ Northern Neck
- ✚ Prince George
- ✚ Richmond City
- ✚ South Central / Mecklenburg
- ✚ Suffolk
- ✚ Williamsburg/ James City County



Plans for the 2020 State Fair are still under development as VCE guidelines and policies help us determine how to proceed. At present, the State Fair will open Sept 25.

**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.

VT Giving Day

Originally scheduled to take place on March 18-19, **VT Giving Day** has been postponed until September 9-10. Generous donations from supporters can be directed to specific areas of support statewide and/or to local VCE programs (such as VMGA or your local VCE Unit). Information will be sent out as the date grows closer. For more details about this annual fundraising event hosted by VT, go to: <https://givingday.vt.edu/giving-day/19789>

2020 VMGA BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS

August 8	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
October 10	Charlottesville
December 12	Danville

June 13 VMGA Board Meeting news and notes

Wanda Gerard presided. Her question to all units asked, "What is your unit doing for outreach during the pandemic?" Here are a few of the activities being carried out despite cancellations and stay at home orders:

- Brown Bag lunch and learn via Zoom
- Online education
- Facebook segments: "Our Favorite Flowers" and "Uncommon Invertebrates"
- Donations of community garden harvests
- Fall training classes scheduled
- Zoom meetings
- Virtual garden tours
- Implementation of QR codes at Williamsburg Botanical Garden made possible by a grant from VA Dept of Treasury
- Zoom training classes
- Cataloguing of plants in demonstration garden and posting the list online

MG COLLEGE 2020 RECAP

We had 1200 Extension Master Gardeners register for this year's virtual College!!!

- 1100 from Virginia
- 100 from out of state (NC, TX, KY, FL, MA, OR, CA, NM, IN, OH, MD, DC, WV, MO, GA, PA, TN)

VMGA Website

Leslie Paulson,
Prince William

Please submit additions,
corrections or report
broken links to:
Leslie Paulson at:
ljp6651@comcast.net

Dave Banks
webmaster@vmga.net

VMGA

Membership has its
advantages:

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

So many high-quality speakers provided advanced training to more attendees than ever before. All presentations were recorded and have been archived for additional training and will be available until December 31, 2020. If you attended, please take time now to complete the online evaluation. This link was provided in an email from the State EMG Office, Subject: Thank you &, dated June 29, 2020. The responses you provide to the MG College Advisory Team will assist them with plans for future conferences. Your input really does make a difference!

A question has been posed about whether it is or is not okay to access the MG College presentations for viewing by individuals who did not attend the conference or for group viewing at future MG unit meetings.

Volunteers who attend Master Gardener College when it is hosted on campus make their choice of sessions to attend. Now that access is granted to PAID registrants to view all the archived sessions, we have this incredible opportunity to gain training in every session offered. Out of respect for those who paid to “attend” MG College 2020 and the speakers who shared their expertise and proprietary material, the presentations should be protected. Therefore, attendees of MGC 2020 must not share the link to the archived sessions.

Our next Master Gardener College will be held in Blacksburg in 2022 with advanced training in Land Care Stewardship.

VMGA EDUCATION—EVENT SPONSORSHIPS

Kirk Barley, Central Shenandoah

VMGA is happy to announce that we are accepting applications for educational event sponsorships. Between June 2020 and May 2021, we hope to sponsor units hosting educational events in their area. So, if you are planning a symposium, workshop or other event that provides advanced continuing education to Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs), please apply for a sponsorship to defray your costs. Questions? Ask your VMGA Unit Rep, any of the VMGA Education Committee, or send an email to Education@VMGA.net. The Cover Letter and Example, and Application can be found at <http://vmga.net/vmgaeducationsponsorships.php>

MAKING LEMONADE FROM LEMONS

Patsy McGrady, James City County/Williamsburg

While COVID 19 restrictions prevented us from having a public plant sale, our Plant Sale Committee was able to develop a bare bones approach for an internal sale that conformed to the various COVID 19 precautions. The sale was open only to MG members. The plants were in a large open area. Buyers had to wear masks and

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](#)

gloves and practice social distancing. All payment was by check only. Members managing the sale insured that the number of people in the area at any time did not exceed what was allowed in Virginia due to the COVID 19 restrictions.

Our best estimate of attendance is just under 50 members who bought approximately 360 plants that returned over \$2300. Expenses were minimal. The internal plant sale allowed us to take advantage of the efforts that the committee and many of our members had already put in planning and preparing for a sale. This included the hard work of harvesting excess plants from the yards of people who wanted to get rid of them. The sale also prevented many of these plants from being destroyed.

VMGA SPEAKER'S BUREAU

Erica Jones, New River Valley

Are you comfortable speaking before large groups? Are you looking for an excuse to see more of Virginia? Join the VMGA Speaker's Bureau. We're working on compiling a comprehensive list of EMGs who can bring their speaking talent and horticulture expertise to other EMGs across the state at unit and regional education events.

Please consider becoming a volunteer who is excited to share their talent and knowledge in topics of great interest and advanced training to fellow MGs across the state. The Education Committee is compiling a list of the names of MGs who are willing to give presentations to units around the state or at VMGA Education Events.

DID YOU KNOW?

Parliamentary Procedure: Steps of a Motion

During board meetings, topics are presented for discussion and acceptance or rejection by the board and/or voting members of the organization. Here are some things to remember:

Every motion requires 6 steps (with some exceptions). The should's and should-nots are as follows:

STEP 1. A member stands up, is recognized, and makes a motion;

STEP 2. Another member seconds the motion;

STEP 3. The presiding officer restates the motion to the assembly;

STEP 4. The members debate the motion;

STEP 5. Presiding officer asks for the affirmative votes and then the negative votes;

STEP 6. The presiding officer announces the result of the voting; instructs the corresponding officer to take action; and introduces the next item of business.

<http://www.roberts-rules.com/parl09.htm>



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

The Quarry Gardens at Schuyler

Why Do Some States, Like Virginia, Have Two Universities with Cooperative Extension Programs?

Reprinted with permission. VSU Connection Weekly, July 7, 2020

The portion of the Virginia Cooperative Extension system managed by Virginia State University is part of the 1890 Cooperative Extension System. That system assists diverse audiences, with emphasis on those who have limited social and economic resources, to improve the quality of life and vitality of individuals and communities through transformational engagement and outreach education.

The 1890 Extension program includes 19 institutions of higher education and focus on five core themes:

- Nutrition, Health and Wellness of Individuals, Families and Communities
- Economic Prosperity and Well-Being of Rural & Urban Underserved Communities
- Community, Youth and Family Resilience/Sustainability
- Environment, Natural Resources and Renewable Energy
- Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability of Small-Scale Farms

[Learn more](https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Connection-Weekly---July-7--2020.html?soid=1129806658008&aid=M1ZBwkC2BrQ) about the 1890 Extension system and why the U.S. southern and border states have two land-grant institutions that manage that state's Cooperative Extension program.

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Connection-Weekly---July-7--2020.html?soid=1129806658008&aid=M1ZBwkC2BrQ>

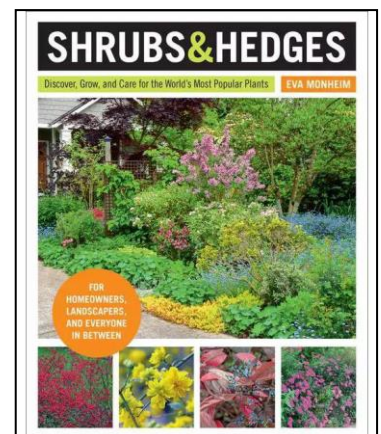
THE GRAINETHUMB

George Graine, Fairfax
HURRAH FOR SHRUBS!

“Half the interest of a garden is the constant exercise of the imagination.”

---Mrs. C. W. Earle in “Pot-Pourri from a Surrey Garden” (1897)

When you arrived at the garden center or the box store and came upon an abundance of shrubs, did you experience an overwhelming feeling of frustration? Did you have a queasy feeling of being overwhelmed when compared to looking at pots of “pick-me-up and buy me” pretty flowers? Do not fret any more. Help is on the way with a new book called “Shrubs & Hedges” by Eva Monheim (Cool Springs Press, 2020). This is an up-to-date treatise on the subject, and the sub-title should help to acknowledge





Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech
Virginia State University

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.

most of your concerns because you will “Discover, Grow, and Care for the World’s Most Popular Plants.” That is a lot of ground to cover and you will see how below.

Let’s begin. Monheim clearly covers the full spectrum of the why and how of shrubs and hedges as she removes the mystique of these plants and shows how they will enhance your landscape. Furthermore, shrubs have so much to offer in the landscape because they serve a variety of purposes, not the least of which is beauty. She will help you visualize and incorporate some of your own ideas into reality. Shrubs also provide a “bonus” because many change colors with the seasons and, of course, some **will** flower depending on your shrub of choice. The rationale for choosing shrubs is clearly explained in the introductory chapter of the book. Upon reading this material you might find your head bobbing up and down in agreement. You might even wonder why you limited incorporating these stalwart plants in your landscape. The author makes a very telling case for this family of plants that is both inspirational and understandable and without resorting to horticultural jargon. Perhaps, even more important, she is clear about why you will not regret planting shrubs as they are the perfect plant.

Between the covers of this 200+ page book are many color photos, illustrations and charts. This is definitely not a coffee table book. Reading this book in a methodical manner, you most likely will come away with an appreciation of shrubs. Why? Because you will learn so many things that perhaps you did not previously consider. The book, written as a building block of progressive steps, will make you aware that shrubs are an absolute necessity for the “finished” landscape (even though many gardeners know that a landscape is often a work in progress). Perhaps a better and more exciting title for the book could have been something like “Shrubs – A Necessary Journey for Landscaping” but let’s not get too poetic. The reason to have shrubs in your landscape is because they are a connection between trees and all of your other plants. Shrubs are extremely variable! Consider the numerous sizes (height and width), shape, texture, and color. You will then realize that shrubs are without a doubt a perfect need and fit in a landscape.

Monheim helps ease you into the wide world of shrubs through a process of discovery. She explains where the shrubs got their start and where they came from. This is general information that leads to more specifics regarding many plants that are discussed by seasonal interest. You are now better informed so that you can consider which ones would make excellent choices for your own landscape situation. Of course, these plant selections are necessarily limited because this book is not an encyclopedia of shrubs. She does provide you with clues regarding what you should look for when planting or renewing your landscape. At the same time, consider your design with nature that is all around you. Think songbirds, bees for pollination and butterflies for beauty. In other words, consider how plants and nature interact in a positive way.

A chapter called “Tailored to Fit – Designing with Shrubs,” although short on pages, will help you realize and consider the practical side for your design as well as designing with seasonal changes as noted previously. Also true is the need to consider the time factor because, just as with other plants, maintenance, although

generally minimal, is a factor that should be considered. In other words, consider how to reduce overall maintenance while at the same time provide visual interest. With this in mind, you should be able to create a landscape that is both personal, functional and will provide you with abundant pleasure.

And now if you are ambitious, consider trying to propagate some of your own plants. You might experiment for your own enjoyment and if successful, have pass-along plants to share with other gardeners. Think of propagation as “...the art and science that allows for reproductive activity.” Note that propagating plants will add to your understanding of why shrubs cost so much more than perennial plants. Time and nurturing new plants over several years, before they reach the retail trade, is the reason these plants are pricier when compared to perennial plants.

Not to be forgotten is a chapter on hedges and hedgerows. It is false to believe that these are synonymous words. The hedgerows of yesteryear are wonderful if you have space that permits. In just a few words, growing a hedgerow is a fine landscaping practice because hedgerows are grown as a wild natural boundary. On the other hand, hedges are often treated as neat barriers, as for example, between your property and the one adjacent. Another form of hedge is grown as whimsical and sculptural plants. An example is Disney-like living sculpture. Some full-service garden centers carry fanciful topiary designs that truly make a statement in your landscape. You may be surprised to know that topiary is not a new horticultural phenomenon. In fact, the first book on the subject was published in 1904 (not a typo) by Charles H. Curtis as “The Book of Topiary.”

To summarize, in recent years and with more to come, the green industry has provided homeowners with a wide diversity of plant material. In addition to “basic” landscaping, Monheim incorporates, albeit in limited pages, discussions on some unique growing areas such as ponds, rain gardens, hillsides and more. The color photos and charts are sure to enhance your understanding for these growing conditions. “Shrubs & Hedges” should be your go-to book now and for years to come. It is an excellent data base because it will probably answer many of your questions. The book is filled with information and tips that will hold your attention even if you are an experienced gardener. For those who have gardened for a long time, you may be surprised to learn about many facets of gardening skills and “knowledges” that will improve even the most ardent gardener.

What's in Your Garden Tool Belt?

What's APP with that? Gardening with Smartphone Apps

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYWds9sP4Lw&t=1326s>

Pam Bennett, State MG Program Director at OSU | hosted by VCE State EMG Office
This webinar aired March 19, 2020

Other webinars have been archived and are available for free viewing 24/7.

<https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/webinar-archive/>

YOU KNOW YOU'RE A MASTER GARDENER WHEN:

- You spend more time volunteering than at home.
- You arrange your schedule around including your MG hours.
- You've given up trying to get the dirt out from underneath your fingernails.
- You appreciate your Master Gardener badge more than your jewelry.
- You dumpster-dive for discarded bulbs after commercial landscapers remove them to plant annuals.
- You sneak home a 7-foot Japanese maple and wonder if your spouse will notice.
- You buy a bigger truck to haul more mulch.
- You plan vacation trips around the locations of public and private gardens.
- You carry a shovel and a plastic bag in your trunk as emergency tools.



Photo courtesy of
Mary Ann Kincaid,
VA Beach

---North Carolina Cooperative Extension

Calendar 2020

July

16 State Office Webinar Series: **Urban Forestry is a Public Service**
Join Jamie King, University Arborist at Virginia Tech, as he talks about the why's and how's of urban forestry. Register here:
<https://virginiatech.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwtcO6vrT4oHtd2fAEcsCSQ1D7ZEc5Tlqa8>

18 [Blue Ridge Wildflower Society 2020 Annual Plant Sale, Roanoke](#)

August

8 VMGA Bi-monthly board meeting—via Zoom

9-12 [GardenComm Conference, Williamsburg, VA](#)

Sept

7

IMGC T-Shirt Design Contest deadline

The State Extension Master Gardener (EMG) Office is holding a design contest for prints that will go on t-shirts, tote bags, and other such merchandise that will be sold at the International Master Gardener Conference (IMGC). Merchandise sales will provide valuable revenue for our conference and the VCE Master Gardener Program.

Entry form required. For more details, go to:

<https://www.internationalmastergardener.com/2020/05/18/design-contest/>

9-10

VT Giving Day

25

State Fair of Virginia Sept 25-Oct 4 (subject to change)

Contact local VCE unit leadership for EMG participation guidance.

Calendar 2021

Sept 13-17 "Cultivate Our Legacy"

International Master Gardener Conference (IMGC), Norfolk

Save the dates! Planning is already underway!

<https://www.internationalmastergardener.com/>