



The VMGA Report

The Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners

<https://vmga.net/wordpress/>

November/December 2021

Volume 27, Number 3

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VMGA Officers

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Prince William

Vice President
Nelda Purcell
Franklin County

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Betsy Brown
Bedford County

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Georgianna Hall
Loudoun County

From the President Leslie Paulson, Prince William

In December we will have our first in person meeting since February 2020. It seems like such a long time ago. I hope some of you will come join us on December 11th in Christiansburg at the Montgomery Government Center, 755 Roanoke Street Christiansburg, VA 24073-3181. Our host is the New River Valley Master Gardeners. More information will be available as we get closer to the date. If you do not receive it contact your Unit Rep.

At this meeting our Merchandising Manager, Mary Martinez Rigo will have it there for you to see. If you do not live close, we do have rooms set aside at these 2 hotels as there is an event at Virginia Tech that weekend which has raised the prices of rooms. See below:

Holiday Inn & Suites Express - Choice #1

2725 Roanoke Street
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073
Phone: (540) 382-6500 \$131.45

Fairfield Inn & Suites - Choice #2

2659 Roanoke Street
Christiansburg, Virginia 24073
Phone: (540) 381-9596 \$158.88

Only bad weather or a change in Covid guidelines will allow you to cancel once you book.

I have fielded many questions since becoming president. Many are about what VMGA does for the individual or unit. We truly try to help and direct you to becoming the Unit you want to be. This sounds a bit like a military recruitment commercial but maybe that's because my husband is a 30-year veteran of the Navy. Our group is shaped by all our members over the years. We make suggestions and listen to all our Master Gardeners and try to proceed in what we do taking this to heart.

Here is one example. Back in 2004-5 we were very aware that the position of State

Coordinator could be taken away from us if the Virginia Tech decided the funds needed for this job were needed elsewhere. We started the State Coordinator Endowment so we would not have to worry about this in the future. We now have raised \$985,920.01. We have met that goal and will still be raising funds for this position as we go forward. This is quite the accomplishment. I thank and congratulate all who have given money to the Endowment over the last 16 years. We could not have gotten here without support from across our state.

As we go forward you will here about another way to contribute to the State Master Gardener program by giving to the Operating Fund. Once we have worked through what we will be calling it I will let you all know. This gives you a choice in how to put your donations to work for all of us.

There is another way you can help support our organization. It is time to appoint a Nominating Chair and Committee to help find people for our Executive Board positions. I sent emails to all the Unit Reps asking for input on who we might approach to ask to serve. If you all want to be on the Committee or run for a position on our Board, please get in touch with me. It really is nice to get a mix of people across the state to serve so we get a good representation of us all. Give it some thought and would it not be nice to see a crowd vying to run?

As we watch October fly by, let me say thank you to all of you and I hope this year you all can be with family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving. May we all look forward to seeing each other in person at Master Gardener College in Blacksburg in June 2022. The dates are the 22nd – 26th and we will have Landcare Steward Training as well.

Thank you,
Leslie Paulson

VMGA President – president@vmga.net

2021 VMGA BI-MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

December 11 New River Valley <http://www.nrvmastergardeners.com/>

2022 VMGA BI-MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

February 12th
April 9th
June 25th
August 13th
October 8th
December 10th

VMGA Membership has its advantages:

- ◆ Unit Support
- ◆ Scholarships
- ◆ Newsletter
- ◆ Advanced Training
- ◆ Discount Event Fees
- ◆ Membership Directory
- ◆ Statewide Networking

NEWS AND NOTES FROM VCE LIAISON

Kathleen Reed, EMG Program State Coordinator

For updates, be sure to check out the Bi-weekly Update at <https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/biweekly-update/>

VMGA EDUCATION SPONSORSHIPS

VMGA is continuing to offer Unit Sponsorships for events that deliver Advanced Continuing Education. We had six units accept our sponsorship during 20/21.

The purpose of our Sponsorship is threefold. We want to:
Encourage Advanced Continuing Education for Virginia's EMGs.
Demonstrate to units the value of VMGA.
Have an opportunity to recruit members.

We will sponsor in-person, virtual, and [in-between](#) formats. While our preference is large symposium or workshop events with lots of EMG in attendance, any size event can seek our sponsorship.

If you desire VMGA to defray the costs of your event, submit an application. For more information, please visit <https://vmga.net/wordpress/vmga-educational-sponsorships/>

If you have any questions, please reach out to Kirk Barley at VMGAEdCmte@gmail.com

CALENDAR

November 10 Dolley Madison Garden Club Presents: Big Dreams, Small Garden, by Marianne Willburn. Brunch, illustrated lecture, book signing and shopping. \$50 per person, space is limited. www.dmgevirginia.org

November 12 – 14 The 28th Annual Northern VA. Christmas Market. Dulles Expo Center. 4320 Chantilly Shopping. Friday & Saturday 10am – 6pm; Sunday 10am – 5pm.

December 3 Advance Integrated Pest Management Conference. See link for registration <https://dec2021ipmconference.eventbrite.com>.

From the Editor

Deadline for Nov/Dec issue:
December 27th

We would love to feature your unit's announcements, events or articles in the next issue. Articles can be about a favorite plant, tree, project, book review, or other topic of interest. This will encourage involvement around the state, getting more involved.

Please send to:
VMGA Newsletter Editor
newsletter@vmga.net

FUND RAISING

The Fund Raising Committee is working to bring this process online. We have been implementing an entirely new system and establishing procedures for distance deliveries. Samples will be made available for each unit representative to share with their membership.

I wish to share with membership, ordering will take place the first of every month that we meet minimums. Product will be distributed the first and fifteenth of each month as available. Our returning in person gatherings will resume in December 2021. I hope this schedule and sample availability will aide in the decision making process for our membership. The current inventory has a wide range of sizing in the actual product line. We will improve upon this moving forward.

You are appreciated and we welcome your contributions to the refinement of this process. Please feel free to telephone Mary directly at 703.216.1479.

Thank you in advance.
Mary Martinez-Rigo
VMGA, PWC, 2007

VMGA CALL FOR TOPICS AND INSTRUCTORS

The Education Committee is planning an in-person training event for March 2022.

We are looking for recommendations for both topics and instructors. Self-nominations are welcome.

The theme of this one-day workshop will be *Training the EMG Educator*. We are looking for classes that focus on making the EMG confident and well-equipped to present the topic to the public.

To be clear, the typical class would orient the EMG students to the classroom, discuss enabling points like how to create or source props or handouts, then offer the EMG the chance to present the topic in whole or part. Each class will be different, as long as the student can present the topic, the details are up to the instructor.

So please share your ideas, recommendations, or nominations with Kirk Barley VMGAEdCmte@gmail.com

Would you like to be more involved in the VMGA??

We are asking for volunteers for our Nominating Committee for our VMGA Elections in the spring. If you are interested, get in touch with Frank Reilly at communications@vmga.net.

We also are looking for people who would like to join our Executive Board or one of our committees. Please consider joining us as we work hard for all the Master Gardeners around the state. If you are interested get in touch with Leslie Paulson at president@vmga.net

NEWSWORTHY NOTES FROM NOTABLE NEWSLETTERS

The VMGA Report is always looking for submissions from EMGs, Unit Representatives, VMGA Committee Chairs, VCE Agents, and VCE Program Associates. What can you submit? All the news that's fit to print! Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

- Training recaps. Tell us your takeaways!
- Highlights of your successes in programming, lessons learned, photos of volunteers in action
- Upcoming events offered by your unit
- Book reviews
- Plant or garden spotlights.
- Photos of your plants
- Recipes using produce from your garden or a farmer's market
- Garden-related poems and other creative writing

Be sure to include your name and unit name. Submit your content by email to newsletter@vmga.net.

Pollinator Garden in Unexpected Location

By Amanda Greene, MG
Southside Master Gardener



While camping our way to and from the western United States this summer and fall, I came upon an unexpected 'garden' on the edge of the small campground along the Colorado River in Utah where we were camped. The climate there is dry with very low humidity. There is lots of scrub brush with some cottonwoods and conifers. While out walking with my dog, I noticed flowers that I was not familiar with, so I looked these up. I found Colorado Four O'Clock (*Mirabilis multiflora*), Desert Pepperwood (*Lepidium fremontii*), Woolly Paperflower (*Psilostrophe tagetina*), Red Dome Blanketflower (*Gaillardia pinnatifida*), all natives of southeast Utah. Then I noticed a sign that said *Bee Inspired Garden*. It indicated that its goal is to "create a corridor of pollinator-friendly, perennial, edible, and water-wise gardens." It was heart-warming to see gardeners on the other side of the U.S. interested in pollinators like our own local pollinator garden at the Staunton River Battlefield State Park.



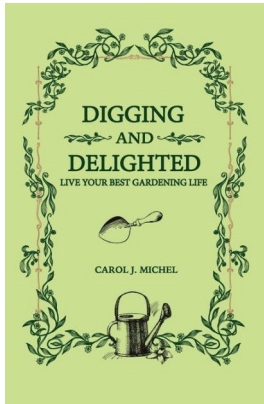
The GraineThumb

About Garden Rules and their Exceptions

By George Graine, Fairfax Master Gardener

“Nature does not hesitate to interfere with me. So, I do not hesitate to tamper with it.

-Henry Mitchell in “One Man’s Garden” (1992)



Yes Virginia, there is humor in the garden and it is not too hard to find. Put aside your shovel and stop fussing over insect pests or icky leaves. Award winning garden author Carol J. Michel self-published her fifth book in a series filled with numerous mirthful essays this time called “Digging and Delighted: Live Your Best Gardening Life” (2021). Of course she manages to sneak in some important gardening advice that

needs to be carefully considered. It is absolutely true when she writes that her book is “...going to change your gardening life and make it better than you ever imagined.”

Within 118 pages and 30 essays do not look for beautiful color photos like those you see in coffee table books. Likewise, you will not find lists of plants for some specific purpose. The rationale behind this is because Carol insists that you should take a mental picture of your own garden and imagine this garden as you read her book. No doubt you will see some exceptions when you do this and then you will understand why this book is a must read. To some extent, reading this book is almost like an autobiography of your own life in the garden. You may find yourself saying YES after reading essay after essay and realize that Carol is speaking to you. She lets you down easy and explains how to correct, or at least, how to contemplate and then overcome a particular garden problem.

The book explains some of the foibles you may have experienced in your own garden. For example, growing plants you love only to find out later that this was a bad choice. Perhaps you tired of a plant because its uniqueness is no longer such a big deal. Stop fretting! Give away this plant at the next plant swap and replace it with something that has caught your fancy. But wait... just a word of caution. Do you wonder why this new to you plant is on the table? Is this a thug plant? Will this plant attract unwanted wildlife (deer)? Will it become a magnet for insect pests or disease? Think and ask questions.

Garden with Style – Essay #13 is particularly intriguing. Here you may find yourself confused about the many ways to garden. For example, plant it and forget it or I never met a plant I did not want or a rare and unusual plant. Of course, there are also native plants that have become more popular, especially among those who are dedicated environmentalists. Then there are gardeners who prefer a bit of whimsy. While this may be difficult to define, you will know it when you see it. It would take

many more pages to list and define the many types of gardens. To get the idea, check out the garden shelf at a full service book store. Also, now-a-days when you pick up a publication devoted to gardening it is easy to find what is trendy. Of course there is nothing wrong with that because gardening should be personal. Think of the old expression –“If the shoe fits, wear it.”

The fact remains that gardens are forever in a state of change. This is Mother Nature’s way. Sometimes these situations can be a minor inconvenience or a catastrophic event. For example, a shade garden overnight becomes a sun garden as a result of storm damage that toppled a large tree. To be sure, this happens and now, you will unfortunately experience a eureka moment. Consider what can be done with an overgrown conifer or shrub that blocks the sidewalk or view of your house or brushes up against a car as you pull into the driveway? In typical Carol style her answer is that you need some “garden editing.” How quaint! You may have heard about plant pruning, but this subject is all gobbledygook. In fact, many books have been written on this subject. Not to worry because Carol provides succinct advice in just two pages. How is this possible? Easy – because the basic pruning rules apply to most plants whereas the big pruning books go into minute detail for specific plants especially for trees and shrubs.

Particularly important, regardless of what you plant, includes feeding and watering the plant, found in essays 17 and 18. This may sound simple; however, these garden rules need to be considered for your plants to thrive. Feeding your plants, according to Carol, means it is “... sometimes necessary but do it with the long term goal of improving soil health.” Note the emphasis on soil health because this is where the plant roots absorb the chemical elements of the fertilizer. A less understood problem is the concern for watering plants, often the bane of gardeners - either too much or too little water. What is the correct amount of water? Carol notes “...few gardeners get all the rain they need, so make plans to water your garden as needed.” Observe your plants and they will indicate when they need to be watered. An exception to the dependence on a good soaking rain is for those who grow any type of plant in a container. On a very hot day you might need to water containerized plants a couple of times, especially if they are in a sunny location.

Carol leaves us with a few sage-like sentiments. Think about these for a moment. “...no garden is perfect and all gardens contain a range of conditions.” Another point is to “Figure out why you garden, but don’t think too hard about it. Sometimes, it’s enough to enjoy gardening for the fresh air and the scent of a pretty flower.”

In summary, “Digging and Delighted” is a “book that is going to change your gardening life and make it better than you ever imagined.” How does Carol dare to make such a bold statement? The answer is simple. Aside from

the fact that her book contains humor with good gardening advice it is not preachy. It does not discuss the current heavy hand of sustainability, biodiversity or ecology. Humor and good gardening advice is something most of us need if we want to continue to enjoy gardening.

Plants I Love.....And Deer Ignore

By Elizabeth McCoy, MG and Tree Steward
Colonial Master Gardeners

Gardening should be fun and bring joy to our lives. That is why I am always happy to share a plant that thrives in our climate, grows beautifully without a lot of fuss, and that won't attract the attention of hungry deer looking for the salad bar. Allow me to share another of my favorites....

The woody, green fragrance of rosemary brings happiness. It filled my car on the way home from the garden center last Saturday. My hands were bathed in rosemary oil while a flat of 4" rosemary plants bumped along in the back.

Rosemary, known now as *Salvia Rosmarinus*, rather than the *Rosmarinus officinalis* we all learned, has one of the longest cultural and botanical histories of any plant in the garden. When cuneiform tablets left by the ancient Sumerians were translated, we found mention of rosemary from more than 7000 years ago. The Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and many other Western cultures have used rosemary throughout recorded history.

Herbalists, chefs and gardeners prize rosemary for its fragrance, its flavor, its evergreen growth, its flowers, and its medicinal properties. Now considered a species of *Salvia*, it is a member of the Lamiaceae family of mints and other herbs. Close to thirty named cultivars of rosemary currently are available.

We consider rosemary a Mediterranean herb, native in the dry, rocky regions of Southern Europe, the Middle East and Northern

Africa near the Mediterranean Sea. While some varieties aren't frost tolerant, several prove hardy to at least Zone 6. Once established, rosemary tolerates both heat and drought. It requires good drainage and will decline in consistently wet soil.

Plant rosemary in full sun where it has space to develop into its potential. It prefers neutral to slightly sweet soil, like Lavandulas and other woody herbs. A little dolomitic lime might be mixed into the

planting hole or scattered around the plant where the soil is acidic. If planting into heavy clay soil, incorporate some compost in a hole at least twice as wide as the root ball. Gravel mulch reflects heat and light into the center of the plant, and it promotes good health by keeping the lower branches clean. It can also help insulate the roots during the coldest weeks in winter.

Rosemary matures into a woody, evergreen shrub. Cold hardy varieties like 'Arp' may grow 4'-6' high and wide over time. A healthy rosemary may live 20 to 30 years, and becomes a permanent structural fixture in the garden, like other non-edible evergreen shrubs.

Plant rosemary as a focal point, space plants 2'-4' apart for hedges,

incorporate them in four-season outdoor pots, or use them in a dedicated herb or kitchen garden. Rosemary will grow well in a pot with spring bulbs, Violas, and other annual or perennial herbaceous plants. As other plants come and go, the rosemary will anchor an outdoor arrangement throughout the year. Rosemary plants require direct sunlight near a window or on a sunporch to prosper indoors.

Rosemary topiaries come to market around the holidays. Rosemary responds well to frequent clipping and may be trained in formal shapes.

'Prostratus,' or creeping rosemary, may be used along the top edges of walls, in hanging baskets or tall pots, or as groundcover. Rather than growing up into a shrub form, its long branches grow sideways and cascade downwards. It will grow to 1'-2' tall but will cascade 3'-4' below its crown, where space allows. It is considered hardy to Zone 8, but when mulched and given a sheltered location, will survive our Williamsburg winters. There are other named cultivars with a similar habit, such as 'Irene,' valued for their exceptional flowers.

Another interesting cultivar rated to Zone 8 is 'Barbecue.' Its strong, straight stems may be used as skewers for foods cooked on the grill. 'Tuscan Blue' has attractive blue flowers and grows to about 6'. Also rated to Zone 8, it is sold locally and grows well in our area.

Cultivars with golden variegated leaves sometimes come to market locally.

Rosemary may be propagated from stem cuttings in sterile potting soil or vermiculite. It responds well to layering. It isn't a good candidate for division and may be slow from seed. Plants may be found through most of the year at nurseries that sell herbs, and in some grocery stores.

Rosemary flowers support many pollinators. Though small, they offer abundant nectar. Rosemary often blooms in the summer and then again during the cold season, in our garden, offering nectar when little else is available. Find cultivars with flowers in various shades of white, pink, blue, and lavender.

Essential oils that make rosemary useful and delicious also protect it from grazers. Deer, rabbits, and other animals avoid it. Its fragrance repels them. It is largely disease and pest free when given sunlight and good drainage.

Use rosemary fresh or dried in cooking; use it to



(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)



(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)

flavor oils, vinegars, honey or butter; and add dried rosemary leaves to potpourri. Fresh sprigs of rosemary may be used in wreaths, flower arrangements, and added to corsages. There is a long tradition of wearing rosemary (for remembrance) to funerals and memorial services. It is used in the religious practices of several cultures.

Rosemary remains vibrantly green and blooms even in the winter. It is a timeless classic. Easy to grow, it proves an endlessly useful plant for gardeners. And it smells like happiness.

The 2021 State Fair of Virginia

By Christy Brennan

Thank you to the Master Gardener units, Master Gardener volunteers and VA Cooperative Extension MG Coordinators Office that help to “bring back” the State Fair of Virginia from the pandemic and isolation. The last week of September and first week of October are set for Virginia State Fair time.

Planning this year’s fair was different from previous years; the State Fair had all new staff that had no idea of the history of the VCE Masters Gardeners and our strong connection with the State Fair of Virginia. This was all worked out with several phone call meetings to explain that the Master Gardener booth an interactive education booth and the MG’s considered this a statewide event and we would have presentation from as many units and counties as we possibly could. There also was a serious negotiation for tickets and parking passes this year as other “vendors” only get three tickets. We were extremely thankful the VMGA budget covered tickets for our volunteers. Because we are scheduling many groups for many days – dates and times are scheduled on a first volunteer/given basis, some groups are willing to share days and shifts as long as we do not go over the daily total for tickets- this was especially important this year as we were reporting staffing and ticket use daily to the State Fair.

Because the State Fair is a ticketed event, we encouraged MG groups and units to select a State Fair Coordinator – that is responsible for choosing a date and time for volunteering, gathering and confirming volunteers for each day and time their group will volunteer (normally we have 10 volunteers to cover 10 am - 9pm). These unit and group State Fair coordinators play a critical role in staffing the VMGA/VCE MG – they are the VMGA State Fair Coordinators point source for scheduling groups, distributing individual tickets and relaying information about the theme of the MG Booth and what demos and information is available. Units and groups are always encouraged to bring their own information. Delegating unit and MG group coordinators has greatly helped the information flow and budgeting process, especially this year since we had to confirm volunteers and tickets needed several times during the negotiation process. Thank you, unit /group coordinators, for your patience with the process specifically for this year.

Planning for a booth for this year’s fair was different, how do we protect our MG volunteers and the public, how many people should we plan to visit the State Fair with the current public health status? We started with picking a theme of Decomposers as Hanover Master

Gardeners already had several great models to use as demos. We also decided to bring some of the Madagascar hissing cockroaches for a wow factor and hopefully entertain the visitor to our booth. Due to current health concerns, Hanover MGS’ set up the booth to allow 6ft of space between our MG volunteers and the public. VMGA funds provided personal protective equipment of face coverings, hand sanitizer and antibacterial wipes. The MG booth was designed to minimize personal contact and handouts were limited to soil test kits and our VCE publication list.

The State Fair reported less than average attendance during the first weekend and during the week, the second weekend was almost normal recorded attendance. A big thank you to the units that participated in this year’s State Fair. Thank you to the units that participated in this year’s very different State Fair of Virginia.

Units from: Hanover, Henrico, Chesterfield, Green Spring, Goochland/Powhatan, Northern Neck, James City County / Williamsburg, Master Gardeners Central Rappahannock Region Association (Spotsylvania, Spotsylvania, Caroline, Stafford, and King George counties), Louisa, Dinwiddie, and Central Shenandoah Valley.

The State Fair usually has an educational tour which is advertised as the state’s largest outdoor classroom and the VCE/VMGA MG booth is a part of the tour. The plans for this yearly event were really changed due to schools cancelling all field trips and the current health guideline recommendations. This was pretty sad as the educational tour really is major part of our booth and participation really excites our Master Gardeners and provides great educational opportunities for students. The tour composes about 2/3rd of the normal contacts counted at the State Fair.

The staff at the State Fair had requested that we create short videos and worksheets accessible by QR Codes to match our theme for this year’s Educational Tour. Hanover Master Gardener’s and a VCE summer intern worked very hard to get these videos along with coordinating activity sheets done (a list is included at the end of the report.

The VCE MG Coordinators Office (Devon) created wonderful backdrop posters to match information shared in the videos for us to use. The VCE MG Coordinators Office supported the booth paying for printing these large

posters on vinyl. Thank you to everyone at the MG Coordinators Office, these posters look great and are very informative as they illustrate both composting and vermicomposting, these are available for other MG groups to use. Contact the Hanover VCE Office (804) 752-4309.

Master Gardeners reported 2386 contacts for the 2021 Fair of Virginia, and we had a great time. Not too bad for a restart from a worldwide pandemic, complete quarantine, and cancellation of the 2020 State Fair.

We hope to see everyone at the 2022 State Fair of Virginia with a killer Education Tour!

Remember you can enter your arts and crafts, crops, plants, baked goods and preserved foods each year by visiting Get Involved (statefairva.org)

The following resources have QR codes available at the Fair and VMGA web site for scanning purposes:

Vermicomposting worksheet:

https://www.cvswwmd.org/uploads/6/1/2/6/6126179/do_the_rot_thing_cvswwmd1.pdf

Food Chain Word Search:

<https://monsterwordsearch.com/geography-word-search/food-chains-word-search/>

Food Web Diagram:

<https://socratic.org/questions/which-represents-an-ecosystem-better-a-food-chain-or-food-web-why>

Videos (thank you to the many Master Gardeners and Interns that helped with the videos) available by QR codes:

Vermicomposting for Adults -<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/601836157>

Vermicomposting for Kids-<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/601862265>

Composting demo – Three Bin method-<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/600464822>

Composting for kids-<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/600482697>

Virginia Master Gardener Programs Honored at SFE 2021

Green Spring Gardens Extension Master Gardener Program

First place in Special Needs Audiences (senior, disabled audiences, or horticultural therapy) for "Resiliency Gardening Program: The United Service Organization (USO) and Green Spring EMG Program Partnership"

Green Spring Master Gardener (GSMG) Program in Fairfax, Virginia has developed and facilitated a yearlong gardening program since 2016 for Ft Belvoir Active-Duty individuals in addiction treatment. The program features both technical gardening education and the wellness benefits of gardening. The individuals participate in this project as part of their addiction treatment. We serve about 300 service members and 100 staff annually. Each week a group of up to 16 patients and 4 staff join us at the USO garden, which consists of 11 raised beds in three locations on a 4-acre parcel. The individuals participate in hands on gardening that yields a bounty of vegetables and herbs that the group enjoys in the USO kitchen. [Click here to watch their presentation.](#)



Green Spring Gardens Extension Master Gardener Program

Second place in Youth for "Learning Beyond the Classroom: The Wolf Trap National Park & Green Spring Gardens Extension Master Gardener Partnership"



Fifth and sixth grade boys and girls from Title One schools join Boy Scout Troop 55 of the Virginia Boy Scouts to participate in "First Time Campers" at Wolf Trap National Park. First Time Campers is a collaborative partnership between Boy Scout Troop 55 of the Virginia Boy Scouts, Green Spring Gardens EMGs, and Friends of Wolf Trap, which is held in April and October each year. Its purpose is to give children an opportunity to enjoy an overnight camping experience that they might not otherwise experience. It includes several educational, outdoor "super activities" for approximately 75 campers. [Click here to watch their presentation](#)

Virginia Master Gardener Programs Honored at SFE 2021

Norfolk Extension Master Gardeners

Second place in Demonstration Gardens for their "Fred Heutte Square Foot Gardening Demonstration Garden"

For over 10 years, Norfolk Extension Master Gardeners have operated a Demonstration Garden at the Fred Heutte Center in the Ghent neighborhood in Norfolk, Virginia. The garden, consisting of 40 4ft X 4ft raised beds, utilizes Square Foot Gardening (SFG) techniques to demonstrate how to maximize food growing potential in an urban environment. The entire garden is maintained by a cadre of extremely dedicated Norfolk Master Gardeners and a few neighborhood volunteers. All produce is donated to the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia. The garden has annually provided over 1,500 pounds of fresh, locally grown produce to help feed those in underserved communities of Southeastern Virginia. [Click here to watch their presentation](#)



Northern Shenandoah Valley Extension Master Gardener Program

Second place in Community Service for "Seed Exchange at Blandy"



The Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Program hosts the Seed Exchange at Blandy at the State Arboretum of Virginia's Blandy Experimental Farm in cooperation with the Foundation of the State Arboretum of Virginia. 2020 marked the 10th time the event was held. It typically is scheduled for the last Saturday in January to coincide with National Seed Swap Day. The event is free and open to gardeners of all levels, from true novices to experts. Marketing for the event is through a combination of press releases to local media, the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association Facebook page and website, e-mail to our distribution list, and outreach from the State Arboretum. [Click here to watch their presentation.](#)

Northern Shenandoah Valley Extension Master Gardener Program

Second place in Research for "Citizen Science Spotted Lanternfly Detection Program"

In an effort to mitigate this threat, the Northern Shenandoah Valley Extension Master Gardener Program and Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association (NSVMGA) have partnered with Virginia Tech, Extension Master Naturalists, and local government employees to determine the boundaries of SLF's expansion into Virginia and provide that data to researchers at Virginia Tech.

Within months of the first sighting of SLF in Virginia, Extension Master Gardener volunteers in the Northern Shenandoah Valley received training from Virginia Tech researchers on how to identify and trap for SLF. Training sessions and trapping expanded in 2019 and 2020, with more volunteers across the state providing more data points each year.



Virginia Master Gardener Programs Honored at SFE 2021

Outstanding Coordinator of the Year: Southeast Region

Stacey Morgan Smith, Northern Shenandoah Valley Extension Master Gardener Program



Join us in congratulating Stacey Morgan Smith, Northern Shenandoah Valley EMG and EMG coordinator. Smith, who has been an Extension Master Gardener for eight years and has logged more than 5,600 volunteer hours, was recognized for her outstanding, effective leadership and dedication to her unit. During her time as an Extension Master Gardener, Smith has been involved in horticulture outreach projects including educating through social media about the highly invasive spotted lanternfly and serving as the project lead for the Seed Lending Library, inspired by the annual Seed Exchange at Blandy, in which members of the public are invited to swap seeds with one another or pick up a few packets of donated seeds for free.

“Stacey is one of the hardest working, most dedicated individuals I know,” said Mark Sutphin, Frederick County Extension Agent. “Her involvement has truly raised the level of our programming, our marketing, our outreach to the underserved, and the overall effectiveness of the unit in nearly every capacity.”

