



The VMGA Report

The Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners

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

September/October 2022

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From the President Georgi Hall, Loudoun County

President's Letter

On August 13th, we had our first FY23 Bi-monthly meeting. It was great hearing from our new officers and committee chairs. We had good attendance, considering it was a zoom meeting and a beautiful day for gardening. We are off to a great start.

Our next Bi-monthly meeting will be in-person on October 8th hosted by James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners Association. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in person, renewing acquaintances and meeting new members. It will be a great chance to exchange ideas in person. At our October meeting, we will continue to discuss focus topics which are of interest to our units. This month's topic is "Other than brochures, what methods or displays do you use to attract visitors to your Garden Clinic tables?" You can send your unit's responses to our secretary; Deb Straw at Secretary@VMGA.net and she will combine and send the responses out before our in-person October meeting where we will discuss the topic. If your unit has a focus topic they want to discuss with other units, please send the focus topic to me at President@vmga.net.

Our October meeting will be a great opportunity for you to stock up on Master Gardener merchandise. All proceeds benefit the State Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment Fund.

Dr. Michael Gutter will become the next Associate Dean and Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension. The official announcement is included in this issue.

The Virginia State Fair is September 23rd to October 2nd. The primary education topic of VMGA's booth is decomposers, with short videos, an educational tour and handouts. See more information about the State Fair in this issue. Contact Christy Brennan, State Fair Chair if your unit is interested in volunteering.

Thank you,
Georgi Hall

VMGA President – president@vmga.net

2022 VMGA BI-MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

October 8th December 10th

VMGA Officers

President

Georgianna Hall
Loudoun County

Vice President

Nelda Purcell
Franklin County

Secretary

Deb Straw
Hill City County

Treasurer

Stacey Morgen-Smith
Suffolk County

Past President

Leslie Paulson
Prince William County



VMGA Membership has its advantages:

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

From the Editor

Deadline for November/
December issue:

October 23rd

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

CALENDAR

Coming up in Loudoun County...

October 6th, 7:-8:00pm—Selection Trees by Matt Bright, Earth Sangha

[For more information please contact the Loudoun County Master Gardeners](#)

Coming up in Prince William County...

October 8th, 9:00-12:00pm—Saturday in the Garden (9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow, VA 20136)—Propagation/Shade Gardening. Join Master Gardener Harriet Carter as she discusses the shade gardening and previews beautiful native plants for shade.

[For more information please contact the Prince William County Master Gardeners](#)

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/>



photo by: Rachel Healy

New Associate Dean and Director of VCE

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that Dr. Michael Gutter has accepted our offer to become the next Associate Dean and Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension. Dr. Gutter will be moving from his position at the University of Florida (where he has been serving as Professor and Associate Dean for Extension & State Program Leader for 4-H Youth Development, Families and Communities in the Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences) to Virginia Tech. He will begin his new role on November 1, 2022. I am delighted that he is bringing his talents and experiences to CALS and VCE.

Thank you everyone who participated in the search and interview processes, especially the search committee, which included Tom Thompson (committee chair), Scott Barrett, Adria Bordas, John Bovay, Melissa Breen, Lori Greiner, Ben Grove, Brian Hairston, Kathy Hosig, Jeremy Johnson, Ray McKinnie, Susan Prillaman, Mark Reiter, Tracy Rutherford, Elena Serrano, John Thompson, and Emily Wong. In addition to the search committee, everyone's participation has been an important part of the search and interview process. Special thanks to Virginia Farm Bureau for hosting part the interview process at their offices in Richmond, and to the many external stakeholders that were able to engage in the process.

I am also very appreciative of Drs. Ed Jones and Cathy Sutphin for providing administrative leadership during this transition. Cathy is serving as an interim director for the month of August, and then Ed is returning to provide oversight until Michael is on board.

Sincerely,

Alan L. Grant, Ph.D.

Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MC 0402)



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Thank You Notes

I would appreciate you sharing my expressed thank you below with the VMGA Board:

Humbled, grateful, flattered, encouraged, reminded, appreciated, valued, honored, and proud. These are just a few words and feelings that come to mind as I reflect back on the honor and recognition VMGA bestowed on me back in June at the conclusion of the Awards Ceremony during Master Gardener College. My feelings of pride are not for myself or my personal accomplishments. My feelings of pride arise from where the program has been and where it is now. Pride in a program that has grown from its strong roots and heritage into a sustaining program that will continue well into the future and beyond my own personal involvement. I am grateful for all of the relationships and friendships that have been established over the past 18 years. So, to be recognized as a “Friend of Virginia Master Gardeners” is a high honor for me personally. I can sincerely say that my time with you all for nearly two decades has been personally and professionally gratifying and rewarding.

I also want to thank you for the generous gifts you gave me. The gift certificate, the NexGen Boxwood that I’m thrilled to have in my landscape, and yes, even the Olla! It brings a smile on my face every time I see it. And just for kicks and giggles, I have it sitting next to a couple of terra cotta planters as you approach the front of our house!

From the bottom of my heart and with all the sincerity I can convey, THANK YOU!

Wishing the program, VMGA, Inc., and all EMG volunteers continued success and FUN! I look forward to continuing to interact with you and engage with you as time and opportunities allow.

All my best to you all,

Dave

David D. Close
Specialist, Volunteer Engagement
Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech

Hi Georgi,

We wanted to say thank you for your support of the EMG program during College and for your gift to the endowment. Please see attached letters for VMGA and pass along our thanks to the entire organization! (I would be happy to send these via paper mail as well if you have an address I can mail to!)

Devon Johnson (she/her)
Communications Project Coordinator
Extension Master Gardener Program
Virginia Tech
School of Plant and Environmental Sciences

What Did Our Scholarship Recipients Think of EMGC 2022?

Stacey Morgan Smith, 2022 Scholarship Committee Chair

Our seven scholarship recipients had a wonderful time at EMGC this year! VMGA is happy to have been a part of their attending, most for the first time in person. If you haven't attended, please consider joining us next year and applying for the 2023 Diane Relf Extension Master Gardener College Scholarship!

We asked this year's recipients to send photos of them volunteering at their favorite projects or from EMGC and to share a little about attending. While the conference offered a wide range of opportunities for new and returning EMGs, each of our recipients below mentioned the chance to meet volunteers from across the state.

(We should hear from more of our award recipients in the next issue of The VMGA Report.)



The VMGA Scholarship gave me the opportunity to experience the EMGC for the very first time. What a fun, wonderful time of sharing knowledge! (1st timer that will be back.)

Peggy Agnor, Rockbridge
(at the Hahn Horticulture Garden)



I am thankful to have been a recipient of the VMGA Scholarship. I loved every aspect of the program. The Keynote speakers were phenomenal, the classes were taught by experts in their field and I enjoyed the off site tours. I met so many interesting and enthusiastic Master Gardeners throughout the state. I am grateful to have been given this extraordinary opportunity.

Joan Dozier, Wise
(at left, in a butterfly garden at a neighborhood park.)



The scholarship enabled me to come to what was a wonderful experience at EMGC, from thought-provoking sessions and lovely tours to meeting fellow EMGs from around the state. Spending time with EMGs from my unit deepened these relationships, and I made some new friends! I truly appreciate VMGA's generosity in awarding me this scholarship, and I'm proud to serve as NSV EMG's unit rep. I look forward to becoming more involved with VMGA!

Jennifer Flitton Adams, Northern Shenandoah Valley
(as a Spotted Lanternfly, at the GardenFest project)

Remembering George Graine

I was very saddened when I heard about George Graine's death. Later, when I started looking online to see what I found, I discovered an article he wrote for our newsletter in 2012. He also shared that with *Atlantic Gardening Magazine*. I hope you will all enjoy reading it. The content was typically George. He knew so much about gardening and its history. I have a statue of St. Fiacre in my garden as well as in Prince William's Teaching Garden. I hope you enjoy his article. Know that you can also go to our VMGA website for other past newsletters that contain a column from George as well. <https://vmga.net/wordpress/vmga-report-archive/>.

We all teased George about his plaids and stripes, but I think if it hadn't been for his clothing choices, maybe I would not have gotten to know him. He gave us many hours of his time over his tenure as a Master Gardener. He was Chairman of the Scholarship Committee for several years as well on the Advisory Board for 15 years. He was a fixture at MG College. Many teased him and I apologized once for doing so, as I thought I may have hurt his feelings. When I did, he told me he had a tough skin. That statement caused me not to do it again. We all need to show our best sides to those we want to call friend. I know I will miss this friend and member of our Master Gardener Family.



Leslie Paulson

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. The next deadline for the VMGA Newsletter is August 28th. 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.



“A HEART-SHAPED EGG MASS, FRAYED AROUND THE EDGES”

By: Nancy Lawson

Raindrops keep falling not on my head but in the canopy above, a quiet beginning to a new day and season. Peace comes to the neighborhood in small, unexpected doses. This is the kind of morning I live for. On the outer edges of our habitat, sun chases shadows, and last night's storms are long gone. But here by the pond, droplets still fall on the leaves above me. The tulip trees generate their own kind of rainfall even after the clouds have cleared.



From the bench, I watch butterflies waking up and drying their wings. A hummingbird flies toward me, we say hello, and she heads to the cardinal flowers, where a few minutes later the spicebush swallowtails sip nectar too. Cardinals chirp, a blue jay squawks, a Carolina wren dives furtively into her nest, and occasionally the green frogs—usually so chatty by this time—emit a quick blurt. It seems that everyone's enjoying the rare quiet today. The only human voices I hear are those of children playing: a welcome sound of summer, of my own childhood and a world so different from the usual blend of semis grinding over interstate highway rumble strips, men slamming pickup truck doors and yelling to compete with the noise of their tree-cutting chainsaws, mowers racing across neighbor's yards, and cars and delivery vehicles going twice the speed limit and

sometimes crushing smaller beings in their hurry to get somewhere.

I'll enjoy this while it lasts, this peace that is as short-lived as my wild friends. It's the time of year when yellow Eastern tiger swallowtail and orange Sulphur butterflies flutter on the flowers, and it can be hard to distinguish them from the first yellow leaves floating down from the walnuts. It's the season to match our grief, a simultaneous celebration and mourning of the people my family has lost over the past year and a half: first my aunt, then my dad, and then, most unexpectedly of all, my 17-year-old nephew. It's a time of transition, when all the life above ground starts getting back to its roots and its burrows, worrying over nut, pollen and sugar stores that will see them through the winter. There are undercurrents of uncertainty, when mornings are cool, afternoons are hot, and rain could come at any time (or not), weather forecasts be damned; when many of us, like the cuckoos and the wrens, are still busy making more life in the waning light, racing against the sense that we are running out of time. Over the past couple of weeks, the green frogs have felt this urgency, and several times after a long day of clucking and carrying on in the pond, they've left an egg mass that forms a shape resembling a heart—but with edges continuously fraying as the mass separates and sinks.

Transitions are never easy for me. Calendars are too boxy and rigid, and even as a little girl I found it hard to make the walk home from school, where homework and snacks and TV awaited. First I needed to rest my brain and sit with the leaves on the side of the road, sometimes for hours, or visit the dog chained in the yard behind the school. We only lived two blocks away, but sometimes I'd wander into unknown territory and get lost, and my mom would come looking for me.

I know where I am now, but my mind is still fundamentally the same as that child's, wanting to explore during the in-between times. As I finish my new book, which is almost ready for the printer, I know there will always be more to say. But during a time of loss, words are either not enough or too much. Often they come and go before I can make sense of them, getting lost in the jumble of trying to help my family heal.



In the past, I've mostly posted meticulously researched articles and essays on this site, drawing on my background as a journalist. I've usually saved individual sightings or insights for my books, wrapped them into larger pieces to contextualize them, or posted them as quick snippets on social media. But I might mix in some of these smaller pieces and ideas here going forward, partly because I think readers find them useful but also because I've missed this community. Over the years, your own efforts, ideas and feedback have encouraged me to keep following this wild path. I don't really know where to start again or where the path will lead next on my decades-long rewilding journey. So I'll just start with this: Thank you, and good morning. May your day be wildly peaceful too.

FALL WORD SEARCH

H J N I F I P J K R F H R E T
A D M B Z O R U E T F J E Y H
L I U F T W O B M V R F W R A
L Y T N B R O T E P A J O E N
O Y U A Z T N Y B C K S L B K
W J A T C J D R S A E I F M S
E G L O F N D S O E L Q N E G
E S W E A T E R E C V L U V I
N C C C I D E R H L A A S O V
S I E D I R Y A H P P T E N I
O W O R C E R A C S U P M L N
W I Y C G V Y A F R G T A W G
N L D T E Y Y K K P I E I X E
J Q R S L X R E B M E T P E S
Y E T E V G Y T H W I C K U J

ACORN

FOOTBALL

NOVEMBER

SEPTEMBER

APPLES

HALLOWEEN

OCTOBER

SUNFLOWER

AUTUMN

HARVEST

PUMPKIN

SWEATER

CANDY

HAYRIDE

RAKE

THANKSGIVING

CIDER

LEAVES

SCARECROW

TURKEY