



Master Gardeners Contribute to Frederick County

Lee Royer, FC Master Gardener

The ways our local Master Gardener program impacts our county may sometimes appear subtle and hard to define, even by experienced Master Gardeners. We influence mainly by word of mouth and example. We strive to teach, not to preach. We cast seeds of knowledge and then, like Johnny Appleseed, we move on, sometimes never seeing those seeds grow into trees.

At the Great Frederick Fair, Ag Week at the Mall, Baughman's Lane Farmers Market, and other events throughout the year, we cheerfully set up our information booths which we call "Plant Clinics" or "Ask A Master Gardener" tables. We offer a Seminar Series twice a year and a Plant Sale in the spring. Willing speakers are always available to other groups through our Speakers Bureau. The Frederick News Post publishes our column "Master Gardener Tips" every three weeks. With only one paid employee, our faithful County MG Coordinator, Susan Trice, we maintain a Horticulture Help Desk and library. We have committees for Jr. MGs, Therapeutic Horticulture, Photography, Grow It Eat It, and our ever evolving Demonstration Garden. We seek to reach young and old and all those in between, in every Frederick County neighborhood, urban, rural, and suburban.

HISTORY & VISION

In 1978 the Maryland Master Gardener program was established by the University of Maryland Extension in an effort to disseminate the horticultural and pest management knowledge amassed by the university. The University of Maryland website states, "Our Vision . . . is a healthier world through environmental stewardship."

FREDERICK COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS TESTIFY:

Julia Cubit

I finished Master Composter certification by speaking at several community events where I have had numerous conversations with people asking about composting. This interest dovetails nicely with the Frederick County Government's push to reduce waste going to the landfills.

Ruth Axelrod

At every public and private event that I have attended, I have seen enthusiasm and gratitude for the information that we MGs are able to pass on to other Marylanders. In my public speaking at garden clubs, I have been amazed at how much information I was able to provide, thanks to my MG training. My neighbors seek my advice because they respect my expertise as an MG; we have the reputation of being highly trained and able to provide reliable information with no hidden agendas.

Donna Scherer

I put off signing on to the MG program for several years. This year I was able to get my paperwork in. Suddenly I was exposed to opportunities that I never thought available. I have managed to grow a vegetable garden with no chemicals, thanks to information given in class and in the spring seminar series. I also have pushed my comfort zone and volunteered to speak to garden clubs and help at plant clinics at the library, some of my garden experiences have also been in the local news paper. Meeting other Master Gardeners has nudged me to try my hand at composting with worms and raising chickens. Joining the Master Gardeners is something I should have done long ago.

Joan Kobetz

I have personally been involved with the Urbana Great Heron Wetlands garden at Urbana Elementary School. This has been a great cooperative program with the school, students, teachers, parent volunteers and MGs. We have received so much positive feedback. They have enjoyed learning about the plants and their aesthetic and environmental benefits to the landscape.

Laura DeShano

I enjoy seeing the MG's in action answering questions for local gardeners. I am also getting involved in helping to design a sensory garden at a therapy center with two other MG's. I love to think of how many people with disabilities will be supported through our work

Meryl Benenati

Through plant clinics and working with community gardens I have seen people receive answers that helped them solve their problems. I have benefitted greatly by sharing with other gardeners; learning so much from the classes and research I have done to answer questions (my own included); having the pleasure of sharing knowledge with people and seeing their appreciation; and growing more relaxed and confident as a gardener.

Kathy Chaney

We interact with a large number of people to encourage gardening pursuits and promote responsible gardening practices - which can only help the planet.

Annmarie Creamer

With easy access to the internet, information on gardening abounds. But not all of it is good information, or accurate for our region, or understandable. There is still just no substitute for what can be learned from real, live gardeners.

Join Us

If you have a passion for gardening, learning, and helping others, consider volunteering with us. As our State Master Gardener Coordinator, Jon Traunfeld, would say, "Go forth and cultivate."

For more information about horticulture or the Master Gardener Program in Frederick County, call the Frederick County Office, University of Maryland Extension, (301) 600-1596, or visit <http://www.frederick.umd.edu/>. Our mission is to educate Maryland residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities. Equal Opportunity Employer/Equal Access Programs.