

# The Compost

Winter 2022

UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND  
EXTENSION

MASTER  
GARDENER

## Inside this issue:

CC MG Vol Hours Earned in 2021	1
Coordinator's Corner /MELWOOD	2/3
Programs for MG Continued Education	4/5
Southern MD Food Bank Garden	6/7
Winter Sowing	8-9
CC MG Plant Sale	10
Beanstalk?/ Perspective!	11
Bay-Wise Corner!	12
Education Taskforce Corner!	13
Facebook Corner!	14/15
Resources	16

## CC MG VOLUNTEER HOURS EARNED IN 2021

Dear Fellow Master Gardeners,

Happy New Year and congratulations to all of you! 2021 was a very successful year for Charles County Master Gardeners.

CC MGs and CC MG Interns logged in

**4,015 Volunteer hours** and

**1,096 Continuing Education hours.**

**A wonderful achievement and we thank all of you for your hard work!**

As we begin a new year, we recommend that you

- ⇒ Log in your hours as soon as you earn them, or at least once a month, so that you make sure to fulfill the requirement for 20 hours of volunteer time for Master Gardeners and 40 hours for Master Gardener Interns by the end of the year.
- ⇒ Ten (10) continuing education hours have always been a requirement for active MGs – even during times of COVID. The winter months are a good time to start earning these. Look for CC MG County Coordinator Kaitlyn Baligush's announcements of programs to advance your education or see CC MG Tori Crichlow's recommendations in this newsletter.
- ⇒ When logging in your MG hours in the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Management System (VMS), please round your volunteer and/or education time to the nearest quarter-hour, such as:

- 15 minutes = 0.25 = one-quarter hour
- 30 minutes = 0.50 = one-half hour
- 45 minutes = 0.75 = three-quarter hour
- 60 minutes = 1.0 = one hour



If you experience a problem accessing VMS or entering your hours, please do not hesitate to reach out to CC MG County Coordinator Kaitlyn Baligush at [kbaligus@umd.edu](mailto:kbaligus@umd.edu) for assistance!



Article by CC MG Pauline Spurlock

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Happy New Year to Everyone!

It's been wonderful getting to know all of you over the last 10 months and seeing the creative projects you have developed. Time has absolutely flown by!

2022 certainly started off differently than we all had hoped. Once again, we are seeing COVID cases rise within our county and across the nation. I know you are all eager to stay connected to your fellow Master Gardeners and serve the residents of Charles County. We will continue to do the best we can!



CC MGs are initiating several new projects this year that I hope will revive us all. I would also like to shake up the monthly meetings, so I have included a calendar below that shows when we will have regular Zoom meetings or alternative activities scheduled.

In addition, the next CC MG Basic Training class is starting soon, and 11 participants have signed up. We are trying a hybrid approach for this class. The training will be conducted on Wednesday nights through Zoom along with additional in-person activities on Saturdays. These will be opportunities for class participants to meet and work with each other as well as current Master Gardeners! I will be reaching out to various MGs and project leaders to help with these activities and schedule work days to ensure Interns get a sample of each project. I will also extend an invitation to participants of the 2020 and 2021 class, since they have missed out on many opportunities due to COVID.

I hope everyone stays safe and warm while we wait for spring!

Date	Event	Location
01/25	6:00 PM <b>General Membership Meeting</b>	Zoom
02/22	6:00 PM <b>General Membership Meeting</b>	Zoom
March	<b>Possible Greenhouse Tour</b>	TBD
04/23	12:00 PM <b>Volunteer Appreciation Week Luncheon</b>	TBD
04/30	12:00 PM - 4:00 PM <b>Celebrate La Plata Day</b>	La Plata Town Hall
04/30	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM <b>NatureFest</b>	Tilghman Lake Park
05/21	8:00 AM - 1:00 PM <b>CC MG Annual Plant Sale</b>	La Plata Farmers' Market
05/24	6:00 PM <b>General Membership Meeting</b>	Zoom

Article cont. next page

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER CONT.

Please also join me in welcoming our two outstanding new CC MG Steering Committee Officers, CC MGs Patti Faulkner and Marlene Smith, and thanking retiring Officer, CC MG Tima McGuthry-Banks!

CC MG Patti Faulkner graciously started taking meeting minutes for the monthly general membership meetings when I became the CC MG County Coordinator in March 2021. She became the official CC MG Secretary when she was appointed in October 2021. Thank you, Patty!



CC MG Tima McGuthry-Banks has served as the CC MG Treasurer for four years. Her meticulous recording keeping has been a great asset to our program. Thank you, Tima!



Last, but not least, beginning in January 2022, CC MG Marlene Smith will become the new CC MG Treasurer. I am sure her great skills with Excel and as an amazing organizer will serve her well in this position. Thank you, Marlene!



Best regards,  
Kaitlyn Baligush  
CC MG County Coordinator



## MELWOOD'S HORTICULTURAL THERAPY PROGRAMS - WINTER UPDATE

Melwood's Horticulture Therapy is busy planning activities for the spring growing season. Seeds have been purchased to grow perennials, vegetables and herbs. MGs will be invited back in February to help sow seeds with Melwood participants.

Maintenance repairs were made to the irrigation systems in both the pollinator and learning center gardens and will be fully operational this spring.

Melwood also offered the use of their greenhouse to allow CC MGs to grow vegetables, herbs, and flower plugs for our Annual Plant Sale. More information to follow.

Other community activities are being planned for Easter Egg dying with natural plant dyes.

Melwood's flagship veterans program, Operation Tohidu® is a transformative retreat program that promotes "Peace with the Past, through Power in the Present" and encourages participants to reframe their trauma, so that they can approach life with renewed purpose and positivity. Women veterans will visit Melwood for therapeutic support. Interested vetted MGs will participate in horticulture activities.

Anyone who is interested in joining us, please let me know or contact Suse Greenstone, Manager, Horticulture Therapy program at [sgreenstone@melwood.org](mailto:sgreenstone@melwood.org). Training is now provided online to become vetted to work at Melwood Recreational Center in Nanjemoy, MD.

Contact CC MG Terry Thir, CC MG Liaison for more information at [thirccmg@aol.com](mailto:thirccmg@aol.com) or call her at 240-441-4902.

Article by CC MG Terry Thir, Project Leader



## PROGRAMS FOR MG CONTINUED EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Below is a comprehensive list of horticultural activities that we can enjoy in 2022! There are Zoom meetings and also on-site events. As a new Master Gardener, I plan to participate in all of these and am happy to coordinate for us as a group to attend when appropriate. Note that you can receive continuing education credits for most of the presentations (EC).

Please identify the events that are of interest to you. If it is a Zoom event, register on the link provided. If it is an on-site event, feel free to send an email to me to let me know you are interested in attending the event in a group at [ToriCrichlow@gmail.com](mailto:ToriCrichlow@gmail.com).

### January

**Zoom event: US Botanic Gardens, Planning and Planting for Winter Interest (EC)**

⇒ Date: Saturday, January 22

Time: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

⇒ FREE: Pre-registration required. See link for more details: <https://usbg.doubleknot.com/event/2870151>.

**Zoom event: US Bot Gardens, Exploring the World of Hydroponics and Indoor Food Production (EC)**

⇒ Date: Friday, January 28

Time: 12:00 to 1:00 pm

⇒ FREE: Pre-registration required. See link for more details: <https://usbg.doubleknot.com/event/2875434>.

**Zoom event: Smithsonian Gardens, Virtual Tour of the Smithsonian Gardens' Orchid Collection (EC)**

⇒ Date: Thursday, January 27

Time: 12:00 to 1:00 pm

⇒ FREE: See link for more details: <https://gardens.si.edu/learn/lets-talk-gardens>.

### February

**Zoom event: Hillwood Estate, Museum, & Gardens, Wild Creations: Great Gardens in Homes with Hilton Carter (EC)**

⇒ Date: Tuesday, February 8

Time: 6:30 to 7:30pm

⇒ Fee: \$10

⇒ See link for more information: <https://hillwoodmuseum.org/events/wild-creations-great-gardens-homes-hilton-carter>.

**On-site event: Smithsonian Gardens, Orchids: Hidden Stories of Groundbreaking Women (EC)**

⇒ Date: Friday, Feb 18 or Saturday, Feb 19 (choose your best date) Time: 11:00 am

⇒ View the exhibit and the orchid display at the Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard

⇒ See link for more details:

<https://gardens.si.edu/exhibitions/upcoming-exhibitions/orchids-hidden-stories-of-groundbreaking-women>.

### March

**On-site event: Loveville Produce Auction**

⇒ Date: Friday, March 25

Time: 9:00 am

⇒ Address: 40454 Bishop Road, Loveville, MD



Article cont. next page



## PROGRAMS FOR MG EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES CONT.

### March cont.

**On-site event: US National Arboretum, The National Bonsai & Penjing Museum and more!**

⇒ Date: Saturday, March 26 Time: 12:00 pm

⇒ See link for more information:

<https://www.usna.usda.gov/discover/gardens-collections/national-bonsai-penjing-museum>.

### April

**On-site event: Brookside Gardens, self-guided tour of tulips, daffodils and more!**

⇒ Date: Friday, April 8 or Saturday, April 9 (choose your best date) Time: 11:00 am

⇒ Address: 1800 Glenallan Avenue, Silver Spring, MD; Brookside Gardens in Silver Spring, MD.

⇒ See link for more information: <https://montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/brookside-gardens>.

**On-site event: McCrillis Gardens, self-guided tour of azaleas, ornamental trees, and more!**

⇒ Date: Friday, April 29 or Saturday, April 30 (choose your best date) Time: 11:00 am

⇒ Address: 6910 Greentree Road, Bethesda, MD 20817

⇒ See link for more information:

<https://montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/mccrillis-house-gardens>.

**On-site event: Cherry Blossoms in Washington, D.C., self-guided tour**

⇒ Date: Monday, April 4 (date may change if blooms are not at peak) Time: 10:30 am

⇒ Note: If interested in attending the National Cherry Blossom Festival, see link below for more information:

<https://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org>.

### May

**On-site event: Annmarie Garden, The Glenn Dale Azalea Collection and more!**

⇒ Date: Friday, May 6 or Saturday, May 7 (choose your best date) Time: 11:00 am

⇒ See link for more information:

<https://www.annmariegarden.org/annmarie2/node/86>.

**On-site event: Farmers Market in LaPlata**

⇒ Date: Wed, May 4 or Saturday, May 7 (choose your best date) Time: 10:00 am

⇒ See link for more information: <https://www.laplatafarmersmarket.com>.

### June

**On-site event: US Botanical Gardens, Outdoor Garden**

⇒ Date: Friday, June 3 or Saturday, June 4 (choose your best date) Time: 10:30 am

⇒ Check website to determine if the Conservatory and public restrooms are open: <https://www.usbg.gov>.





# SOUTHERN MARYLAND FOOD BANK GARDEN



Harvesting and Sampling Cherry Tomatoes



Harvesting and Sampling Hot Peppers



4-H Participants Plant Seed Cups



Pots to Take Home and Plant Seeds



Learning How Strawberry Plants Send Out Runners for New Growth

The Southern Maryland Food Bank “Seeds of Hope” Community Learning Garden is resting after a successful year. Oscar – the garden’s mascot – is trying to survive the winter and came out to view the garden - once melting began after New Year’s first major snow storm.

Prior to wrapping up the garden in late October, CC MGs Brent Burdick, LaVerne Madison, Julie Williams, Marlene Smith, and Tori Crichlow, along with St. Mary’s MG Bill Smith, hosted a 4-H youth group from St. Peter’s Church at the site.

Attendees toured the garden and harvested/sampled vegetables. They also learned about seeds, proper planting techniques, and planning for spring gardens. A local High School student also participated in this outreach program to learn more about the ins and outs of establishing a community garden. In addition to seed cups participants planted during their learning activities, the Southern Maryland Food Bank provided participants with larger pots, soil, and seeds they could plant to start their own gardens at home. This was our last outreach program for the year. We hope to continue providing more community outreach programs next year.

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## SOUTHERN MARYLAND FOOD BANK GARDEN CONT.

In late November, available members of the CC MG Food Bank garden team met virtually to reflect on the project activities conducted this past season.

MGs Brent Burdick, Tina Bailem, Inette Furey, Karla Costello, Sally Matts, Tori Crichlow, and MG Intern Gail Black reflected on what worked and what did not this past season, and what we could do to improve our program next year. We all agreed that the garden was a success in spite of COVID-related restrictions and concerns.

It was unanimously agreed that the program was a success due to the dedication and the contributions by all the volunteers who participated throughout the year – from cleaning up the old garden; building and filling new garden beds; harvesting bamboo and building trellises; transplanting donated plants received from CC MGs grown at home or in the Melwood greenhouse, or salvaged from local nurseries/hardware stores; planning, planting, and tending the garden beds; building and installing the bee house; harvesting veggies for use by the Food Bank; planning and conducting outreach activities; to closing up the garden for the year by cleaning up the beds and planting cover crops for the winter.

CC MG Brent Burdick passed on to the group laudatory comments by Mr. George Mattingly, the new Southern Maryland Food Bank Director and that Food Bank hierarchy and beneficial community donors felt the garden had a fantastic year.

Planning discussions for next year's garden included activities for winter sowing, potato baskets and sweet potato slip plantings, preparing beds from crop covers for no-till spring plantings, trellises, crop rotation and additional outreach programs.



January 2022 - Oswald Wintering Over After Major Snow Storm Starts Melting



Article and photo by CC MG Brent Burdick/  
Outreach photos by CC MG Julie Williams

## GARDENING IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER? HERE'S OUR SECRET!

Sick of winter already and pining to get out in the garden? Or just looking for something safe to do while Omicron sends us back into isolation?

Winter sowing is an easy, fun, environmentally-friendly way to jumpstart your spring planting. You plant seeds in open milk jugs or other plastic containers, put them outside in the cold, and wait for the seeds to sprout. No more moldy seed bags in the fridge or grow lights taking up space in your apartment or hardening off seedlings on the back porch.

Winter sowing is especially great for raising native plants from seed. It provides the natural cold stratification many native plants need to germinate. Now is the perfect time for winter sowing natives. For vegetables and tender annuals it is best to wait until March or April.

### Here's what you need to get started:

- ⇒ Seeds
- ⇒ Milk jugs, plastic lettuce boxes or any other plastic containers that provide you with at least four inches of space for the starting medium and several inches of headroom for the seedlings
- ⇒ Seed starting medium (not garden soil or compost)
- ⇒ Tape for sealing/labeling your containers (duct or painters tape)
- ⇒ Water proof marker
- ⇒ Scissors, sharp knife or Exacto blade
- ⇒ Water
- ⇒ Drill, heat gun, or other item to make drainage holes



Winter Sowing can be broken down into 10 simple steps. Here we will briefly describe the steps for a milk jug. Our video contains information for other types of containers, as well as more details and recommendations for each step.

**Step 1:** Collect and wash milk jugs to remove any residue. Remember, any transparent or translucent container that lets light in that can hold at least 3-4" of soil will do. Use your imagination.

**Step 2: Cut drain holes** into the bottom of the container using a sharp knife, hot glue gun, wood burning tool, drill, etc.

**Step 3: Cut the jug in half** 4" from the bottom, leaving a hinge under the handle. Discard the cap.

**Step 4:** Prepare labels for inside and outside the jug. This is one of the most important steps. You can use duct tape on the bottom labeled with a permanent marker, a UV-resistant marker on the sides/top, and/or a plant marker on the inside.

**Step 5: Add 3-4" of potting mix, then water thoroughly.** Some of the most frequently asked questions are about what type of potting mix to use. Remember: seeds don't care; they'll sprout in the crack in a sidewalk so they'll also sprout in potting soil or soilless mixes. But for containers, do not use garden soil. It is too heavy and doesn't drain well for this method.

**Step 6: Sow your seeds.** Ignore the directions on the seed packets except for the planting depth and the sun requirements for germination. You can simply sprinkle smaller seeds on top of the potting mix, and space larger seeds for ease of transplanting later. Whichever way you choose to sow your seeds, once sown, remember to cover them with potting mix to the recommended planting depth, or simply press them into the potting mix to make good contact if they require light for germination. Follow up with a sprinkle of water to ensure your seeds and top surface are nice and wet.

**Step 7: Seal the jugs** with your choice of tape. Duct tape, packing tape, and painter's tape are popular choices. Some winter sowers do not use tape but use alternate methods to keep their containers closed.

Article continued next page



## GARDENING IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER? HERE'S OUR SECRET! CONT.

**Step 8: Care of Jugs.** Do not put the caps on the jugs. Place them outside in a protected area safe from wind, in part sun/part shade. Monitor your jugs and remember to keep them wet, but not waterlogged. You can water through the mouth of the jug with a spray bottle, or by bottom watering. Now sit back, relax, and patiently wait. Trust the process! Mother Nature knows when to awaken the different seed varieties after they have been exposed to the winter elements for the right amount of time.

**Step 9: Open jugs in the spring.** Once your seeds have sprouted, you want to ensure they do not get cooked from too much heat that can accumulate in the jug. In lieu of opening too soon, you can also cut additional vent holes in the top or move them to shade to control the heat. We recommend you open them a few days before you plant in the ground so they can adjust to the change in humidity, wind, etc. that exists between the jug and the outside.

**Step 10: Transplant your seedlings** as soon as they have true leaves, or you can wait until they are taller and fuller. Water the transplants thoroughly. If transplanting individual plants, pull the seedlings apart gently. Although one of the benefits of winter sowing is a stronger root system than when started indoors, the roots can still be fragile. Alternatively, you can use a sharp knife to cut the seedlings apart brownie-style and plant the sections (hunk of seedlings, or HOS method). Mother Nature knows best and the strongest, healthiest plants will survive in these mass plantings.

Sounds too good to be true, right? Winter sowing has become one of the most popular methods of starting seeds and growing seedlings. We presented a webinar on “All the Dirt on Winter Sowing” at the November CC MG general meeting. You can find it [here](#) and our PowerPoint slide presentation is [here](#).

Since the presentation was posted on our YouTube channel, it has had close to 6500 views and has earned many positive comments. Our presentation has been added as a reference on the UME Maryland Grows blog article on [“Winter Sowing: How I Get a Jump Start on My Summer Flower Garden”](#) and has been featured on the home page of the hugely popular [Winter Sowers FaceBook group](#) created by Trudi Davidoff, considered the founder of winter sowing.

Molly is winter sowing Cardinal flowers, orange cone flowers and spotted bee balm from her garden and rudbeckia from the Master Gardener demonstration garden at the Extension Office for the CC MG Annual Plant Sale. Marlene is experimenting with dozens of natives in hopes of having some to donate to the Plant Sale. She is also growing vegetables, herbs, and companion plants for her own garden, as well as donating to family, friends, neighbors, and the GIEI garden at the Foodbank. What will you try??



Graphic courtesy of Skycrest Studios



## SAVE THE DATE - CC MG PLANT SALE

Great news!! We will hold our CC MG Annual Plant Sale on Saturday, May 21, 2022, at the La Plata Farmer's Market from 8:00 am - 1:00 pm.

This is a wonderful time for CC MGs and CC MG Interns to bond! All are welcome to help plan, support and work at the sale.

At our first meeting on January 11th, we agreed to only one location (as opposed to two in previous years), more focused plant offerings and furthering horticultural education.

We will have two dedicated booths - "Ask the MG Expert/Plant Clinic" and a Bay-Wise table.

We will issue guidance on which plants, vegetables and herbs we would like to sell. We will also provide guidance on which plants we will not accept.

The next Zoom Plant Sale meeting will be on Thursday, February 17 at 6:00 pm.

**Look for the link and, please, join us!**

Article by CC MG Terry Thir, Project Leader

## RECORDING VOLUNTEER HOURS FOR THE CC MG ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Dear Fellow Master Gardeners,

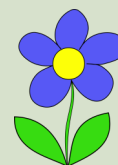
We expect that many of you will want to join the CC MG Annual Plant Sale Committee. As it is a fundraiser, please follow these guidelines when logging your hours:

- ⇒ The 'Activity Code' is "Administrative"
- ⇒ The 'Site' is "Plant Sale".



This is how you can earn volunteer hours:

- ⇒ Attending meetings related to the Plant Sale;
- ⇒ Planting seeds, etc. for the Plant Sale and all care related to these plants;
- ⇒ Digging up, dividing, repotting and caring for plants for the Plant Sale;
- ⇒ If by chance you have plants, or are caring for seedlings at a greenhouse elsewhere, include travel time between your residence and the location in caring for these plants and, again, use 'Site' "Plant Sale";
- ⇒ If you spend time watering your plants, for example, 3 times a week for 10 minutes each, log in 30 minutes (0.50) under one date instead of logging each 10-minute segment;
- ⇒ Delivering your plants to the staging location prior to the Plant Sale;
- ⇒ Helping to label plants at the staging location;
- ⇒ Delivering the plants to the Plant Sale on the day of the sale;
- ⇒ Working at the Plant Sale.



Article by CC MG Pauline Spurlock

## DAVE AND THE BEANSTALK?



CC MG Dave Lewis experimented to see how tall a Velvetleaf weed, *Abutilon theophrasti*, would grow in his yard this summer. According to literature the plant can grow up to 8'. At last measuring, and with several months left in the growing season, Dave's Velvetleaf was 14' tall with leaves that were 24" from tip to tip. His family called it "Jack and the Beanstalk". No news of Giant sightings yet.

Photos and article by CC MG Dave Lewis



## IT'S ALL IN THE PERSPECTIVE!



The snow, coming down on Monday, January 4, 2022, was beautiful, indeed. Charles County had not received such a massive amount for many years.

However, the snow came with its challenges. People were stuck at home without power, stuck on highways, trying to maneuver traffic on slick roads. Trees and shrubs toppled.

Yet, there were opportunities to be explored in the beauty and the damage from the storm. During the next few days, I posted a request on social media for donated wood chips as people cleared trees and shrubs from their properties. The chips would be saved to be used in the next Bel Alton Demonstration Garden at the Extension Office. And people responded!

CC MGs now have plenty of wood chips for the Dem Gardens! Thank you, Smart Tree Service for the donation, Jay Shelton for helping with the arrangements, and CC MG Terry Thir for setting up the transaction.

This mountain of wood chips in the photo will remain at the back of my driveway until they are needed in the Demo Gardens Spring Clean-Up and installation of the next garden. Be ready to volunteer!!

Article and photo by CC MG Kathy Jenkins





## BAY-WISE CORNER!



Happy New Year, Master Gardeners!

We had a cold start to the New Year with quite a snow storm that brought frigid and heavy, wet snow to our area. The storm was bad news for less hardy plants like crepe myrtles, Japanese maples and, yes, our flowering dogwoods. I hope you all fared better than I did. I've had a challenging few weeks trying to recover and save several of my small trees.

Our Committee has experienced some changes since your last visit. In November, co-chair Janet McGrane stepped down, so that she could pursue other Master Gardener interests. She agreed to remain on the committee as she is interested in volunteering on many of our projects. Just a bit of history for those of you who are newcomers. Janet joined the CC MGs in 2008 and became chair of the Bay-Wise committee in 2016. She initiated several great changes and we want to thank her for a job well done!

I am happy to report that CC MG Tima McGuthry-Banks has agreed to step up as her replacement. We are very excited to have her on our team and I am looking forward to working with her. We are planning to meet every second Wednesday of every other month at 6:00 pm. We will schedule additional meetings as needed.

One of our goals for 2022 is to certify all CC MGs. Sadly, due to re-location or other life-changes, we have lost many of our seasoned Bay-Wise certified MGs. Moreover, in 2020, we saw an interruption of our program due to the COVID-19 pandemic and because of the slow recovery in 2021, we did not experience the sustained growth we normally do. As a result, we were only able to certify one garden.

I encourage you to visit our website at

[www.extension.umd.edu/locations/charles-county/master-gardener/bay-wise](http://www.extension.umd.edu/locations/charles-county/master-gardener/bay-wise)

to see what we can offer. I am planning to give an informal talk at the upcoming training session and would like to invite all of the new CC MGs and CC MG Interns to come and experience what the Bay-Wise program offers. As a reminder, when you become certified, we not only present you with a certificate and signage, we can also assist you in applying for a 50% remediation fee on your property taxes. We were just informed that the fee is going up every year. You should take advantage of it.

This program is a perfect example of how local government, organizations and homeowners can work together to help reduce the negative impact our gardens and landscapes may have on our environment. Feel free to contact me with any question you may have at [rosemarkham@comcast.net](mailto:rosemarkham@comcast.net).



Article by CC MG and Bay-Wise Coordinator Rose Markham





## EDUCATION TASK FORCE CORNER!

Happy New Year, Fellow Gardeners!

The VLT ended 2021 strong with the completion of several projects. There are several exciting changes forthcoming in 2022.

Paris Reed gave a presentation on 'Cold Weather Gardening' at the Nanjemoy Senior Center on October 26th. 8 seniors were in attendance. The presentation used materials and information developed by the VLT. Paris reported that the discussion was highly spirited and well received, and the residents were appreciative of the information.

The Virtual Learning Team (VLT) / Virtual Learning Team MultiMedia SubTeam (VLT MM), formed a 'Sagepoint SubTeam' and developed an educational video entitled "Transplant a Succulent" as part of a virtual educational module. This educational activity session was successfully conducted on November 17, 2021 for 14 residents of this senior facility. The Activities Director, Ms. Esmeralda Cline, and an activities assistant guided the hands-on activity after the residents saw the video. Each person transplanted a small aloe vera plant into a small planter for their own apartments at their own (socially distant) workstation, and with materials provided by the facility.

The residents received educational materials prepared by the VLT MM, including a booklet entitled: Succulents 101, Instructions on Transplanting Succulents, an Aloe Vera Fact Sheet, a Common Succulents Handout and a Common Succulents Word Search Puzzle. Members of the VLT MM Team were available on Zoom to lead the educational portion of the session, answer questions and remotely facilitate the hands-on activity. Ms. Cline said that the residents enjoyed the activity and hopes to continue providing presentations like these.

Residents of Victoria Park (Vic Park) are learning to take care of the indoor herb garden consisting of containers of chives, oregano, thyme and 2 varieties of garlic in containers in the garden box area planted on October 15, 2021. In early November, additional hands-on training was provided regarding care for the seedlings. The garlic in the outdoor pots is growing nicely. Due to the holidays and new COVID restrictions, CC MGs have not been inside the facility since late November. The residents will learn to harvest and dry the herbs produced from the garden in a future educational activity session.

The residents are also interested in growing Ginger and Turmeric. There is a new building manager at the complex! This is great news because it may now be possible to actually conduct virtual activities. Because of the limited technical capabilities at the facility, all activities transitioned to on-site in the late summer and fall. As such, Vic Park project activities as of 2022 will be coordinated and managed via a project meeting separate and apart from the VLT. The Vic Park Project meeting will be held the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6 pm via Zoom. Contact Michelle Chenault (cell # 301-526-3225 or email [vmchenault@gmail.com](mailto:vmchenault@gmail.com)) for more information and to receive links to the meetings.

The VLT provided virtual support and enhancement for current and new projects or Community Outreach activities for the last 10 months. As of January 2022, VLT (and VLT MM) will become the "Education Task Force" (ETF). This is a new concept that will be led by Kaitlyn Baligush, CC MG County Coordinator. After reviewing the original purpose of the VLT, its accomplishments during 2021, and the evolving response to the pandemic, the decision was made to shift gears towards a more proactive educational team. CC MGs are receiving very few requests for virtual programming, but access to online horticulture information will remain constant. The goal of the ETF is to create a well-rounded library of quality demonstration videos. All CC MG members and interns are welcome to join us. Meetings are held virtually on the second Tuesday of each month. Contact Kaitlyn Baligush (office # 301-934-5404 Ext 200 or email [kbaligus@umd.edu](mailto:kbaligus@umd.edu)) for more information.

Sincere thanks to all who participated in VLT activities this past year. We look forward to seeing you at the new ETF meetings and working on new projects together.



## FACEBOOK CORNER!

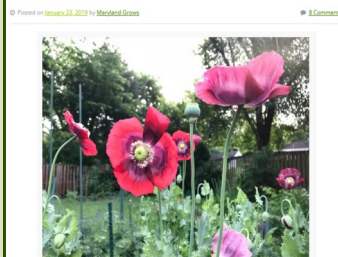


Charles County Master Gardeners,  
University of Maryland Extension

The CC MG “All the Dirt on Winter Sowing” Facebook post has 169 shares. It is also included as a “Featured” post on the home page of the Winter Sower’s Facebook group, which has 86 shares from there.

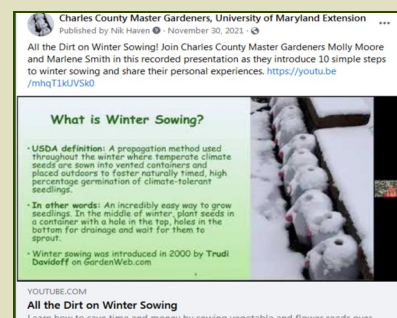
The video presentation, with close to 6500 views, is included as a reference on the UME Maryland Grows blog article on [“Winter Sowing: How I Get a Jump Start on My Summer Flower Garden”](#) and has recently been shared by the Southern Maryland Audubon Society.

Winter Sowing: How I Get a Jump Start on My Summer Flower Garden



The power of social media is bringing more followers to the Charles County Master Gardener’s Facebook page, and to the UME – Charles County YouTube channel.

After our [“All the Dirt on Winter Sowing”](#) presentation was uploaded to the UME - Charles County YouTube channel, the video was shared via the CC MG website and on Facebook.



This type of educational presentation shared via social media is an excellent example of the power of social media!

### Curious what other Facebook pages your fellow master gardeners follow?

This quarter’s Facebook page to visit is the [Winter Sowers FaceBook group](#).

The winter sowing method, as defined by the USDA, was introduced by Trudi Davidoff in a GardenWeb.com blog post in August 2000. In that post, Trudi described her experiences the previous winter, in which her addiction for

trading and collecting seeds, coupled with her small sized cottage in Long Island, New York, led her to experiment with sowing seeds in a recycled aluminum pan with a plastic cover, and placing them outside exposed to the winter elements. The method proved to be a practical solution to her problem and had a very successful germination rate, including seeds that required cold moist stratification. Although others may have sown seeds directly in the soil or in open containers, Trudi's method was unique in that her intent was to use recycled containers to protect the seeds from washing away, drying out, or being eaten by “birds, bugs, and critters.” According to Trudi, she quit her job to start a nonprofit organization, “Wintersown Educational”, focused on teaching her winter sowing method to others digitally and internationally.

Trudi worked with the USDA to develop the definition (“A propagation method used throughout the winter where temperate climate seeds are sown into protective vented containers and placed outdoors to foster a naturally timed, high percentage germination of climate tolerant seedlings.”), which recognized the viability of the technique and added the term to the National Agricultural Library Thesaurus in 2006. Trudi has also obtained several copyrights about her method.

As we continue to expand our use of social media, I encourage you to follow our CC MG Facebook page. Posts on our Facebook page include CC MG events, links to educational webinars, garden tips, garden humor, and more. We welcome your contributions to our Facebook page. Please send articles, share photos of your gardening projects, or share a page of interest to Terry ([thirccmg@aol.com](mailto:thirccmg@aol.com)) or Marlene ([nikhaven@comcast.net](mailto:nikhaven@comcast.net)).

Article continued next page





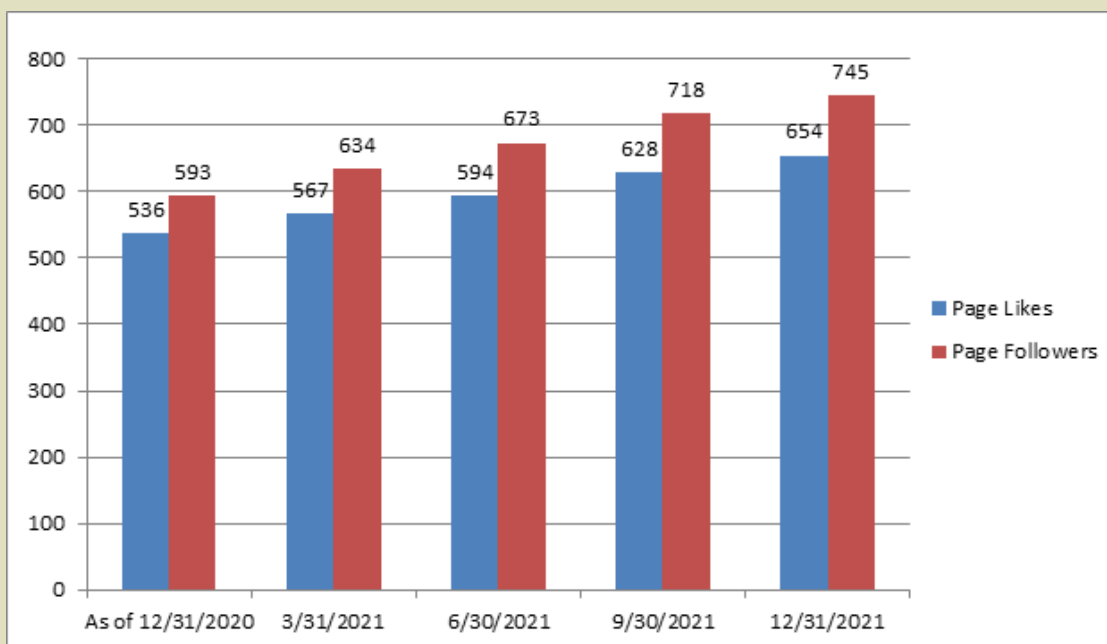
## FACEBOOK CORNER!



### Facebook Stats

As of December 2021, we have 654 LIKES and 745 FOLLOWERS. That's up 118 LIKES (22%) and 152 FOLLOWERS (25.6%) in the past year (since December 2020). 'THANK YOU' to those who contribute to our posts and to everyone who likes and shares our posts. We are starting to engage our community more. One of the highlights this quarter was the sharing of our Facebook post on "All the Dirt on Winter Sowing", which has been shared by hundreds of Facebook users, including the creator of the method, Trudi Davidoff.

Working together, we can continue to increase our social media presence on Facebook. Current goals: 700 Page Likes AND 800 Page Followers. Does anyone want to guess when we will reach these goals? How can you help us reach these goals??



Please continue to help grow our Facebook Likes and Followers! Remember, the more we "share", the more people see our posts. Once someone new sees and "likes" one of our posts, we can invite them to "like" our page and follow us. Please consider sharing CC MG Facebook posts that you like on your personal Facebook page or to a Facebook group that you belong to. With your help, we can reach and exceed 700 Page Likes AND 800 Page Followers!

If you have not joined our Facebook community, please like, follow us, share our posts, and invite your friends, too! <https://www.facebook.com/charlescountymastergardeners>

Article and stats by CC MG Marlene Smith

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Find us on the Web at:

<https://extension.umd.edu/locations/charles-county/master-gardener>

Submit articles, photos, reports, events, and other items for publication to Tina Bailem at [nicholas8555@msn.com](mailto:nicholas8555@msn.com) by April 15, 2022 for the Spring 2022 newsletter. If you send a photo, please include a brief description of the activity and names of persons included in the photo, as well as the photographer's name. If you send a photo of a plant, please include the scientific name.



White Wood Aster (*Aster divericatus*)  
grown by  
CC MG  
Tima  
McGuthry-  
Banks in a  
shady  
corner of  
her garden,  
attracting  
late summer  
pollinators.

University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.

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Check out the new Charles County Master Gardener page on [Facebook](#)! If you haven't already, please like us and share with your friends. This will be a great way to expand our reach into the community!

<https://www.facebook.com/charlescountymastergardeners>