

# The Compost

Summer 2021

UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND  
EXTENSION

MASTER  
GARDENER 

## WELCOME 2021 CC MG INTERNS!

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*Tori Crichlow* - Over the past 20+ years, Tori has enjoyed gardening at her home. In 2020 she decided to learn more about it and came across the MG Program at UME. The opportunity came at a good time in her life as she retired in 2021 from the training and development industry working in health care. Tori holds a BA degree in Behavioral and Social Sciences from UM and a MA degree in Health Care Administration from GWU. To further her knowledge, she works part-time at a local plant nursery. She plans to continue her studies and work in the horticultural industry, applying best practices in her own yard and educating family, friends and customers along the way.

*Gail Black* - Gail is a retired nurse, grandmother, volunteer grounds maintenance chair for her neighborhood HOA and an avid traveler. Her interest in gardening goes back many years to when she used to garden with her mother-in-law who was a Master Gardener - she always admired her horticultural knowledge. When COVID hit and the MG course became virtual, her youngest daughter took the class in Virginia, which in turn encouraged Gail to take the class here to learn more about gardening. She looks forward to meeting people and volunteering with the CC MGs.



*Tom Belote* - Tom wanted to become a Master Gardener in order to give back to the community. He recently retired after a career in the Army and Department of Defense. Although he received a degree in Agronomy from Virginia Tech a long time ago, he never used it, so Tom felt that it was time to try to resurrect some long forgotten knowledge and gain some new information while helping people. He hopes to be able to assist in a meaningful way.

*Gary Jackson* - Gary owns a Lawn Care Service and wanted to learn everything he could about soil and pest control in order to provide the best possible service to his customers. He wants to continue to educate himself about horticultural subjects as he plans on adding more services to his business. Gary lives in Pomfret, MD.



"And now we're going to play she-loves-me, she-loves-me-not!"

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hello Charles County Master Gardeners!

Summer is in full swing, and our volunteers are hard at work! Fortunately, our state has seen a decrease in the number of positive COVID cases being reported which has allowed us to lift many of the restrictions on volunteering. We've been able to be much more involved in the community over the last month, and we will be gearing up for the County Fair in September. During the fall, we will switch to a hybrid model for our monthly general meetings to be as accommodating as possible. I am looking forward to meeting more folks outside of Zoom.

In May, our spring 2021 Basic Training Course finished. Many of you have already started getting involved with various projects and I am looking forward to working with all of you!

In June, we were able to hold the annual composting and rain barrel workshops in person at the Department of Public Works' office in La Plata. We had 32 participants and gave out 29 composters. Special thanks to St. Mary's MG County Coordinator Mariah Dean and CC MG Intern Tom Belote for their assistance!

Best regards,

Kaitlyn Baligush

CC MG County Coordinator



Photos taken at the  
Bel Alton CC MG  
Demonstration Garden

## 4-H CAMP

From June 21 through 24th, CC MGs Marguerita Harding, Bill Allen, CC MG Interns Gail Black and Tom Belote, and myself participated in this year's 4-H day camp. We engaged 60 youths over the course of the week at the county fairgrounds. Activities included making seed bombs, using sweep nets to collect pollinators, using photo-sensitive paper to create nature prints, and the "Match the Lepidopterans" board game. The campers enjoyed getting their hands dirty and capturing bumblebees! I'm looking forward to creating some new activities for next year.



Article by CC MG County Coordinator Kaitlyn Baligush

## ORNAMENTAL GRASSES



“Before”

Ornamental grasses soften harsh environments with their waving height and cooling stature. They stabilize areas prone to run-off and help retain organic matter so topsoil can form. They can take root where no other plant can survive.

At new home construction, ornamental grasses add interest beyond the obligatory placement of foundation greenery. Plus, for brand new homeowners, their attention to watering can be delayed until boxes are fully unpacked and pictures are hung.

However, ornamental grasses are not maintenance free. They need to be cut back each year so new, green growth can launch. Waiting until early spring allows the dormant grasses to provide winter interest.

More importantly, ornamental grasses need to be divided every three to five years, otherwise they “donut”, meaning the insides die and only an outer ring has healthy shoots. The “Before” photo shows what happens if dividing fails to occur over a twelve-year period.



“After”

Photos taken at the Good Samaritan Church in Waldorf

The original peripheral plantings around the circular concrete walkway was to provide privacy while sitting on the benches, as the hilltop view looked onto an adjacent parking lot. Now a row of Leyland cypresses fully hides the parking, but in the meantime, the grasses ran wild.

They turned into bullies, choking out other plants and re-seeding inside the four interior quadrants. Digging out these monsters was like digging out a stone foundation. Some of the original plants cleared 36 inches in diameter! Taking out the entire root ball was impossible and the interiors had to be pried into pieces using a beater bar.

Once all the grasses were out, over 100 divided pieces remained, finding new homes with another CC MG who needed erosion control and a nearby neighbor who wanted to hide her gravel parking area.

The last photo shows installation at a friend’s home who is putting the home on the market, but will have an easier time without the outline of erosion around the tree line.



Article by CC MG Linda Bronsdon

## SOUTHERN MARYLAND FOOD BANK GARDEN



The Southern Maryland Food Bank “Seeds of Hope” Community Learning Garden got a ‘face lift’ this year!

Starting in early May, the Food Bank purchased lumber in stages for the new beds. Food Bank staff started building the new beds while CC MGs, Interns, and spousal volunteers used soil from the old beds to fill some of the new ones. When Food Bank staff became busier with their primary food distribution programs, we switched to building the beds to help out. Later, a truck load of soil was delivered to finish the new beds. By mid-June, all the new beds were constructed and ready for the season.



The rest of the month was busy -



⇒ CC MGs, Interns, and a spousal volunteer built a new, tiered strawberry bed and transplanted existing plants into the new bed.

⇒ The garden beds and overall layout was revised.

⇒ A local high school art major and her assistant painted murals on interior storage (pallet) fencing and our rain barrels.

⇒ The Demonstration Patio Garden was moved and set up to display ideas for what could be done with pots on a patio.

⇒ A CC MG donated over 42 tomato plants for the garden, which filled up two beds. Other beds were planted with transplants purchased or donated by Food Bank staff and/or other CC MGs/Interns. Some beds were started from seed.



By late June, the vegetable garden was fully planted and, on its way to finally growing. Even the Food Bank's mascot, ‘Oswald the Turtle’, got a face lift!



Building Trellis for Watermelon bed next to Cucumber bed with Tepee trellis

Many of the crops were planted to grow up and not out. For example, rather than using cages for the tomatoes, the plants were tied up using bamboo stakes from the old garden. A neighbor of a CC MG Intern donated bamboo to use for new trellises in the garden. Several CC MGs and Interns spent two evenings harvesting bamboo and hauling it to the garden. Different types of trellises were built with the bamboo. Cucumbers in a 4’ by 8’ bed were planted to grow on tepee-style trellises. Butternut squash and Sweet Baby watermelon were each planted in 2’ by 8’ beds to grow on framed trellises, as were cantaloupes in a 4’ by 8’ bed. Pole beans were planted from seed to grow

up twine runners supported by a large bamboo frame. Small bamboo trellises were made to hold up sweet potato vines growing in three tire planters. And, rather than using cages for pepper plants in a 4’ by 8’ bed, twine was interwoven to provide support.



Article continued next page



# SOUTHERN MARYLAND FOOD BANK GARDEN CONT.

Ten potato baskets planted in April by CC MGs and Interns were transferred to the garden and strategically placed around. Four round baskets contained red potatoes, four white, and two oblong baskets had a mixture of each. CC MG Karen Westhead harvested the first last week (see below).

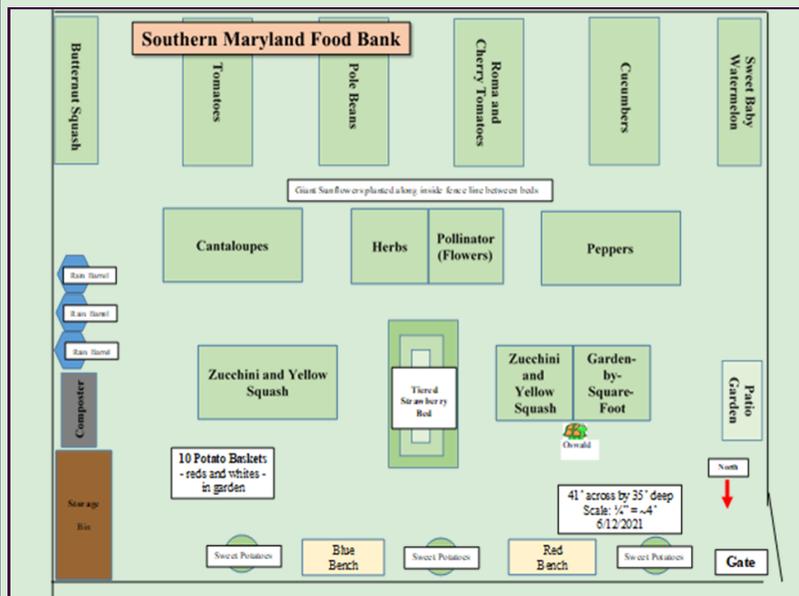
A gardening-by-the-square-foot 4' by 4' garden was set up to demonstrate what home gardeners could do with small garden plots.

In early July, a group of CC MGs and Interns gave the garden a 'finished look' by spreading hardwood mulch in the open areas around and in between the beds in the garden (see CC MG Julie Nethon-Williams in photo).

Several CC MGs and Interns donated salvaged flowers for our demonstration pollinator and herb gardens.

Now that the garden is up and running (i.e., growing), CC MGs, Interns, and spousal volunteers formed daily watering crews. These crews also do some garden maintenance and harvesting, leaving the heavier garden duties for only a couple of work days each week.

The Food Bank is starting to schedule outreach activities for community youth groups, which should start in August.



Article by CC MG Brent Burdick.



## VIRTUAL CORNER!



CC MG  
Michelle Chenault

*The Virtual Learning Team (VLT) provides virtual support and enhancement for current and new Projects or Community Outreach activities. More specifically, over the last seven months, VLT members, organized as SubTeams, provided content development and assistance with various 'virtual' needs. These needs included interactive worksheets, presentations, educational products via surface mail, e-mail, social media posts and videos.*

*All CC MGs and interns are welcome to join the VLT. For more information and meeting invitations, please send your name, cell # and email address (use your email address listed in the UME*



CC MG  
Paris Reed

*VMS Directory) to the VLT Lead, CC MG Michelle Chenault (cell # 301-526-3225 or email [vmchenault@gmail.com](mailto:vmchenault@gmail.com)) and VLT Co-Lead, CC MG Paris Davis-Reed (cell # 301-717-3385, email [paris.reed@verizon.net](mailto:paris.reed@verizon.net)).*

The VLT's cross-cutting Multi-Media SubTeam (SubTeam Lead, CC MG Paris Reed) developed a special two-part virtual activity for the Victoria Park (Vic Park) Senior Living Apartment residents in Waldorf, MD.

The first activity, held on June 17th, consisted of a modified Horticulture (Plant) Q & A Clinic. Topics were "Growing Healthy Seedlings", "Insecticides for Vegetables" and "Good Pests vs Bad Pests". The SubTeam prepared a PowerPoint presentation based upon questions submitted by the residents, which was also provided as a handout. Residents were then able to call a toll-free number to listen to the presentation. Educational materials also included a Word Search puzzle entitled "Seeds and Pests".

The second activity will take place on July 29th and consists of a virtual presentation, educational materials and a discussion on site in the garden at the Vic Park raised garden boxes. CC MGs comprising the Vic Park 'Plant Q & A' working group include Julie Nethon-Williams (slides template and format), Donna Ball, Lori Guido, Mary Ellen Howard, Brian Larson, Linda Ivko, Avery Johnson, Theresa Jones, Erika Smith and Gail Enid Walker. A part of this group participated in a preparatory site visit to the Vic Park raised garden boxes to help plan for the July activity.

Several CC MGs are forming a SagePoint Sub-Team in cooperation with the VLT Multi-Media Team. This SubTeam will develop an educational activity to be held in August for residents of this senior facility. The activity will be entitled: "Succulents". Planning for other activities, including (designing and developing the courtyard gardens) for the rest of the year is underway.



Garden box of Mike Keeler

CCMGs - Michelle Chenault,  
Paris Reed, Linda Ivko and  
Mary Ellen Howard

Vic Park Gardeners - Judy Dennis,  
Henry Foster, Mike Keeler and  
Debra Hanes

Article continued next page



# VIRTUAL CORNER! CONT.



Resident Judy Dennis on her garden level apartment patio



Note the unique and savory vegetable, the watermelon radish. It was grown in the raised garden box of one of the residents, Ms. Debra Hanes. It is delicious in a salad or on sandwiches. Learn more about this vegetable in the next issue of the COMPOST.



Ms. Dennis and CC MGs Linda Ivko discuss the garden box shared by Ms. Dennis and Ms. Hanes. Some dill and basil plants provided by CC MGs in 2020 are still thriving here.

Article by CC MG Michelle Chenault/photos by CC MG Coordinator Kaitlyn Baligush

# CALLING FOR PUPPETEERS!



After a long break we are now, once again able to perform "The Misadventures of Peter Rabbit in Farmer McGregor's Garden" puppet show at the Charles County Fair on Saturday, September 18th at 10:00 am.

We need a few cast replacements for Farmer McGregor, a Beetle and a narrator. We have scripts! It's a fun interactive show and mistakes are allowed! No experience required.

Please send me an email or text, if interested. We will hold a few readings and dress rehearsals prior to show time.

CC MG Terry Thir aka Ripley Rat



## BEL ALTON DEMONSTRATION GARDEN



After a long break due to the pandemic, work has resumed on the Bel Alton Demonstration Gardens.

Signs have been installed to identify the three garden themed plots that have been planted or are under construction.

The Maryland Historical Garden has been mostly planted and the plants continue to establish over the last two seasons. Daffodils blossomed profusely in the spring. Unfortunately,

all the tulip bulbs that bloomed bright red while flowers last spring, have disappeared. It is likely that animals ate the bulbs during the winter.

Currently, thriving plants include donated little bluestem, blue fescue plugs, black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) and purchased orange coneflower (*Rudbeckia fulgida*). Flowers of donated crimson bee balm (*Monarda didyma*) and American alumroot (*Heuchera americana*) will add to the color in the future.

The Bay-Wise Garden will demonstrate principles of landscaping to protect the Chesapeake Bay, Potomac River and local waterways. A design for the garden has been selected that will include an extension of the dry river bed and beds of numerous coastal natives. Three beds have been planted, including orange coneflower (*Rudbeckia fulgida*), American alumroot (*Heuchera americana*) and purple lovegrass (*Erogorstis spectabilis*). Purchases for later planting include blue mist flowers (*Conoclinium coelestinum*), two types of slow spreading mints (*Pycnanthemum*), Indian wood oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*) and muhly grasses (*Mulenbergia*).

The Pollinator Garden plot is covered with cardboard and blue tarps to prepare the beds for future planting. Planning meetings for the garden plot are being scheduled to determine the design, hardscape materials and plant selections.

Co-coordinators CC MGs Kathy Jenkins and Terry Thir lead the planning committees and look forward to the time all CC MGs will be able to help with installation and planting. Master Gardeners who are interested in garden maintenance and planning for future gardens, are welcome to contact either Terry ([thirccmg@aol.com](mailto:thirccmg@aol.com)) or Kathy ([kgjenkins@comcast.net](mailto:kgjenkins@comcast.net)).



Article by CC MG Kathy Jenkins



## BAY-WISE CORNER!



Hello All,

We have some exciting news to share since our last edition. We recently discovered that electronic bay-wise yardsticks are in the process of being created for on-line use and will be available soon. A new yardstick is also being developed for use in small spaces such as apartment and condo balconies. Maryland Extension Bay-wise chairs are looking at the possibility of creating public bay-wise webinars.

Those of you who are interested in **Bay-Wise advanced training**, virtual training via zoom is set to begin Sep 8, 9 am - noon. An in-person site certification training for CC MGs will be held on a date to be determined. Full attendance is required. These sessions will not be taped. Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2021-hybrid-bay-wise-advanced-training-tickets-163850857325>.

We conducted two vegetable gardens and one landscape in-person certifications this spring. CC MG Molly Moore's vegetable garden (photos #1 + 2) on May 18 and on May 24, we certified CC MG Marlene Smith's home vegetable garden (photo #3). On June 2, CC MGs Patti Faulkner, Barbara Hays and I certified CC MG Bill Allen's home (photo #4). We have been working with two other MGs and hopefully we will be certifying their properties soon. I encourage those who are still thinking about it, to go to this link and download the yardstick at <https://extension.umd.edu/locations/charles-county/master-gardener/bay-wise>. Most of you will be surprised to find that you are ready to have the Bay Wise team certify your properties.



We also presented a "Who Polluted the Potomac" simulation to Camp Accomplish campers at the Melwood Recreation Center in Ironsides. This activity is designed to help participants examine how their daily habits can have an effect on the Potomac River and helps them to visualize their impacts on not only the rivers they live near but the Chesapeake Bay. CC MG Kathy Jenkins was kind enough to conduct a presentation with 10 young participants and three adults. CC MG Janet McGrane and I assisted and we had a very active and engaging session with them (photos #1 + 2). CC MGs Terry Thir and Gail Enid Walker (photo #3) also presented the simulation to a very active and engaging group of 16 youths and 1 adult. It was a fun experience for the adults, too. Here are some of pictures of the activity from both sessions. Enjoy!!!



Article by CC MG and Bay-Wise Coordinator Rose Markham  
[Rosemarkham@comcast.net](mailto:Rosemarkham@comcast.net)

## CICADA DAMAGE - FACTS



- ⇒ The only damage cicadas cause to plants results from their egg laying habits. Female cicadas use an appendage, called an ovipositor, to gouge longitudinal slits in twigs into which they then deposit eggs. The ovipositor cannot harm people. Adults do not feed on leaves. If they feed at all, it is by sucking plant fluid from tender young twigs.
- ⇒ Cicadas pose no health threat to people or pets, although consumption of large numbers by pets should be discouraged.
- ⇒ Twigs with many slits often break or hang down from the tree, a condition known as *flagging*. This damage is not serious. The trees will easily replace branches that have been broken or “pruned” by cicadas.
- ⇒ Young or newly planted trees may be killed, or their growth stunted if this type of injury is extensive during brood years. These plants may be protected by covering them with netting or a breathable fabric.
- ⇒ Cicadas have been known to lay eggs on over 200 types of trees to some extent. Some common trees that are most susceptible to cicada damage include oaks (*Quercus*), maples (*Acer*), cherry (*Prunus*), and other fruit trees, hawthorn (*Crataegus*), and redbud (*Cercis*). Evergreens are rarely used for egg laying.
- ⇒ When large numbers of nymphs emerge from the soil, exit holes may be noticeable in a lawn. Several weeks before emergence, some nymphs construct mud chimneys over the emergence hole. These mounds may be 2-3 inches high and 1-2 inches wide with a hole approximately 1/2 inch wide in the center. The activity may be unsightly but does not harm the turf.

Adapted from publication HG 43 Periodical Cicadas, Authors: M.R. Raupp, F.E. Wood, J.A. Davidson, & J.L. Hellmans, Department of Entomology, University of Maryland. Revised: H. Menninger, & S. Frank, Dept. of Biology & Entomology, University of Maryland. Updated by Emily Zobel, University of Maryland Extension, 2020.

Photos by CC MGs Marlene Smith and Tina Bailem



# FACEBOOK CORNER!



If you're not an active Facebook user, you may want to consider creating an account to follow the CC MG Facebook page, as well as other related pages. Recently, there were two posts recognizing CC MG's work at the [Southern Maryland Food Bank](#) and [NatureFest](#).



Curious what other Facebook pages your fellow MGs follow? Each quarter, I will introduce a page that you may find interesting. This quarter's Facebook page to visit is the statewide [University of Maryland Extension](#).

The statewide UME page provides information related to all of the programs under the UME umbrella, including 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, Agriculture and Food Systems, and Environment and Natural Resources (which includes the Master Gardener program). [One recent post of interest from June 28](#) provides links to upcoming climate change webinars by Dr. Sara Via, Professor and Climate Extension Specialist at the University of Maryland College Park. We welcome your contributions to our Facebook page. If you'd like to write an article, share photos of your gardening projects, or share a page of interest to you, please send them to Terry ([thirccmg@aol.com](mailto:thirccmg@aol.com)) or Marlene ([nikhaven@comcast.net](mailto:nikhaven@comcast.net)).

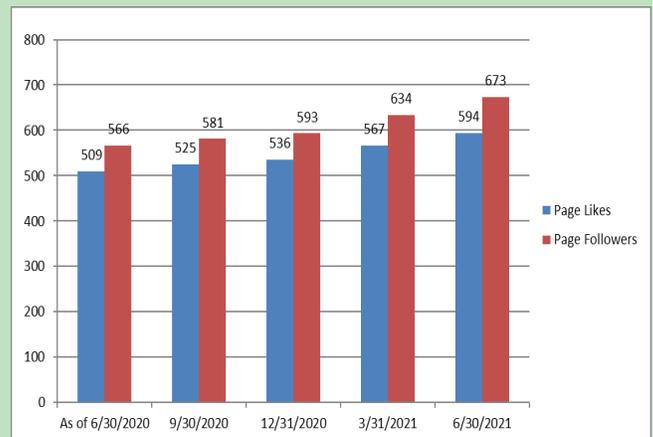
## Facebook Stats

Last quarter (Jan-March 2021) I was pleased to announce that we had exceeded 600 Page Followers and was hopeful that we'd do the same for Page Likes this quarter (April – June 2021). We haven't quite reached the 600 Page Likes goal, but we are SO CLOSE with 594 Page Likes as of June 30. Working together, we can continue to increase our social media presence on Facebook. Next goal for the upcoming quarter is to exceed 600 Page Likes AND exceed 700 Page Followers. BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!

It's easy to help grow our Facebook Likes and Followers! Remember, the more sharing we do, the more people see our posts. Once someone new sees and "likes" one of our posts, we can then 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 600 Page Likes AND 700 Page Followers this quarter!

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

# MELWOOD'S HORTICULTURAL THERAPY PROGRAMS SUMMER 2021



Tee-pee surrounded by red scarlet runner bean vines

Baby it's hot outside. CC MGs have been busy at the Melwood Recreation Center in Nanjemoy, MD. We have two large gardens. The Learning Center has several vegetable gardens full of tomatoes, basil, radishes, swiss chard, peppers, watermelons, beans, cucumbers, squash and much more.

We also planted a large bed of zinnias and other flowers in the Learning Center to attract beneficial insects. The pollinator garden, now in its third year is thriving and stunning. We have large established colorful and fragrant anise hyssop, asters, bee balm, spotted bee balm, blanket flower, butterfly weed, coneflowers, Joe Pye weed, liatris, goldenrod, various varieties of milkweed and more.



CC MG Jackie Jenkins with zinnias



The butterflies and bees are enjoying the bouquet of nectar. Our spiral herb garden is beautiful and providing lots of nectar for pollinators. Our vegetables and herbs are used in daily food preparation on campus. Excess vegetables will be donated to local food banks. This years new garden feature is a large bamboo tee-pee. CC MGs designed and installed the tee-pee under CC MG Pam Sarvis leadership. Surrounding the 12 foot high tee-pee are sunflowers with red scarlet runner beans climbing the bamboo poles. Campers will be able to sit in the tee-pee and enjoy its beauty.

You must come visit our gardens!



CC MG Jan Lakey-Waters harvesting vegetables



Female military veterans helping the CC MGs to prepare soil around the tee-pee garden



Article cont. next page

## MELWOOD'S HORTICULTURAL THERAPY PROGRAMS SUMMER 2021 CONT.

Our Tithonian (Mexican sunflower) bed is growing quickly and will provide a beautiful fence line of brilliant orange flowers that the butterflies, skippers, hummingbirds, bees, and other insects will enjoy.

The summer youth camp is in full swing. Camp 'Accomplish Garden Club' meets daily. CC MGs Teresa Jones and Jan Lakey-Waters provide horticulture therapy lessons on garden activities. Children have garden chores, watering plants in the gardens and greenhouse, lessons about pollinators, growing food and indoor plants through hands-on experiential learning. They also helped to remove the lettuce from the raised beds and helped to plant beans and squash. In addition, the kids work among other CC MGs who are busy with the gardens.

Recently, CC MGs worked with female military veterans in the 'Operation Todhidu' program. Every Friday, CC MGs work with returning adults participating in therapeutic horticulture. Currently, participants are sowing fall vegetable seeds, making flower arrangements and attend to other horticulture activities.

Special thanks go to our regular CC MG volunteers: Jan Lakey-Waters, Pam Sarvis, Paula Hutzell (John Hutzell), Gail Enid Walker, Jackie Jenkins, Rose Markham, Barbara Hill, Teresa Jones, Avery Jones (Lydia Jones) and Terry Thir.

There are still many volunteer opportunities 7-days a week. Come join our team and learn about horticulture therapy. If interested, please contact Terry Thir, Melwood Project Leader at [thirccmg@aol.com](mailto:thirccmg@aol.com) or by phone at 240-441-4902.



'Who polluted the Potomac?' workshop on 6/22/21 with CC MGs Terry Thir and Gail Enid Walker



The Pollinator garden



Unwelcome visitor:  
A tomato hornworm



Article submitted by CC MG Terry Thir, Melwood Project Leader

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Published Quarterly by the  
Charles County Master Gardeners  
University of Maryland Extension, Charles County  
9501 Crain Highway, Box 1  
Bel Alton, MD 20611  
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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 October 15, 2021 for the Autumn 2021 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.



Happening frequently these days!

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>