Hello Master Gardeners,

Summer has truly arrived! This hot humid weather reminds us how challenging summer can be in central MD. So far, my vegetable garden is doing ok. My lettuce and romaine have all bolted, so I have pulled up most of it, but am letting some flower to attract pollinators.

Cucumbers took forever to sprout and then birds plucked off the tops. But they're finally established and have begun flowering. I'm keeping a close eye on my tomatoes which have lots of fruit and healthy vines for now. I've had a bit of blight of some kind (I think), but have treated with copper fungicide and am pruning out anything that looks suspicious. Hopefully it won't take hold as it has in years past. I would really like my tomatoes to keep producing on into September and October. That's not too much to ask for! I've had to bid a farewell to my strawberry bed, which I'll replant in the fall. The plants were 4 years old and this year the berry crop was pathetic. I guess the experts know what they're talking about when they say you should renew your beds every 3 years. We replaced our cherry trees this year. We planted very young trees in 2007 and have been waiting for them to bear fruit. They kept producing very little cherries like the ones on the wild cherry trees. I finally consulted Stanton Gill and he said that it sounds like I have sand cherries. The grafts didn't take and the root stock was producing basically wild cherries. So, we pulled them all up and replaced them. They were doing great until the Japanese beetle scourge of the last 2 weeks, which left the leaves looking like skeletons. Hopefully they will recover, but maybe we're just not meant to grow cherry trees.

And then there are the bees. After my hive swarmed and half my bees flew away, I was alarmed because the surviving queen in my hive didn't seem to be laying eggs. Dear fellow MG and beekeeper Ted Moran spent 2 hours with me inspecting the hive. We found the queen, but didn't see any eggs or larva. Ted assured me that she would eventually start laying eggs. He was right! The next week, I investigated the hive again and found tiny larva in some of the cells. Hurrah! Then fellow MG and good friend Eleanor Cone called to say they had another swarm and if it could be captured, I could have it. Now have 2 hives and they both are very busy. What an adventure beekeeping has become. I love it!
It’s Farm Fair season. We have the Harford County Fair at the end of July and the State Fair in Timonium at the end of August. I hope many of you will volunteer to staff the booths at both those events. Thanks to Alma Ilian and Ellen Post for organizing our efforts at these two annual events. We’re also looking in to participating in the STEM program - a sort of science open house for middle school kids. Grace Wyatt is heading up our team, so if you are interested in helping out, get in touch with Grace. Our work at Eden Mill, Liriodendron, Bright View, the Farmers Market and Plant Clinics continues. There is lots of stuff going on and all your efforts are greatly appreciated!

Joan Parris ’09

SCIENCE - TECHNOLOGY - ENGINEERING – MATH (STEM)

Grace Wyatt

Master Gardeners are taking on a new project! We will be developing a science program for STEM nights hosted by local middle schools. During these events, organizations are invited to provide educational programs to students from 4th to 6th grade (9 to 12 years olds). There are three ways for organizations to participate in STEM nights: 1) a classroom session lasting 20 minutes, 2) a table set up to distribute information, 3) or both.

Master Gardener volunteers are needed to help brainstorm, organize and develop an educational program as well as assist at the evening events. If MG’s choose to do a classroom session a MG teacher and assistant will be needed. At least two Master Gardeners will be needed for the table educational display each night. STEM nights last about 2 hours and the school provides dinner for participants. The best part about these events is the great atmosphere created by enthusiastic youth who attend voluntarily because of their sincere interest in science!

STEM programs take place in January and February 2014. Our commitment as Master Gardeners will require registration sometime in this fall. I will be scheduling meetings soon to kick off our participation in this exciting new program. If you are interested, please send me a note at dgracew@comcast.net or locate my number in the Master Gardener directory. I look forward to hearing ideas and getting started organizing this activity.

WHERE DID THE NAME STRAWBERRY COME FROM?

Elaine Dodd

Have you wondered how a particular fruit got its name? While eating some strawberries recently, I got curious about their name origin and decided to check the web for information. Over the years I have heard various explanations on the name straw-berry, with the most common being the name came from the straw that was used to protect the fruit from freezing. According to several internet sites no one really knows for sure. The following strawberry information is taken from Wikipedia.

“Fragaria × ananassa, commonly known as strawberry (ˈstrəˌberi/ or ʻstrəˌberi) or garden strawberry, is a hybrid species that is cultivated worldwide for its fruit. The fruit (which is not a botanical berry, but an aggregate accessory fruit) is widely appreciated for its characteristic aroma, bright red color, juicy texture,” and sweetness.

It is consumed in large quantities, either fresh or in prepared foods such as preserves, fruit juice, pies, ice creams, milkshakes, and chocolates. Artificial strawberry aroma is also widely used in many industrialized food products.
The garden strawberry was first bred in Brittany, France, in the 1750s via a cross of *Fragaria virginiana* from eastern North America and *Fragaria chiloensis*, which was brought from Chile by Amédée-François Frézier in 1714.\[1\]

*Cultivars* of *Fragaria × ananassa* have replaced, in commercial production, the woodland strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), which was the first strawberry species cultivated in the early 17th century.\[2\]

Technically, the strawberry is an aggregate accessory fruit, meaning that the fleshy part is derived not from the plant's ovaries but from the *receptacle* that holds the ovaries.\[3\] Each apparent "seed" (*achene*) on the outside of the fruit is actually one of the ovaries of the flower, with a seed inside it.\[3\]

I found it interesting that the cultivated strawberry did not come from England but from France. To be honest, I really do not care where this delicious berry came from – I am just very happy that for a short time during the year I can enjoy this delicious berry. I hope you are enjoying one of the great joys of summer – eating strawberries!

**STATE NEWS**

**MG Advanced Training Classes** - For full detail about each class and for registration forms, go to http://extension.umd.edu/mg/advanced-training

**PLANT DISEASES**

UME Howard County (Ellicott City)
Thursday 9/5 9:30-3:30pm

**Presenter:** Dave Clement, Ph.D., Plant Pathologist, University of MD Extension
Registration Fee: $35; Reg Deadline: one week before class (6/4 or 8/29)

Plant diseases often seem like exotic mysteries left up to the experts to solve. Well, guess what- we MG’s can now begin to unravel some of these mysteries ourselves. In this course you’ll learn all about the bacteria, fungi and viruses that cause plant problems. You’ll also learn about their symptoms, cycles and controls. In addition to the lecture and handouts you will get hands-on training using samples. We hope that you’ll feel comfortable enough with the basics of plant diseases to be able to recognize problems in your own gardens and to use the information to competently help clients at plant clinics.

*Photos by Marlene Lynch - butterflies in her garden.*
LIRIODENDRON AUGUST BLOOM SCHEDULE

Linda Baker

Have you ever seen four foot tall Azure Monkshood (Aconitum *carmichaelii*) in bloom? Our Blue Garden at Liriodendron has an impressive stand of the bright blue flowers. How about the orchid-like flowers of the Toadlily (*Tricyrtis spp.*)? We have two groupings of Toadlilies which will bloom in August.

One plant that always seems to shine in every season is our chartreuse-colored *Hakonechloa macra* ‘Aureola’, or Japanese Forest Grass. Even on an overcast day this clump seems to brighten that area of the garden. It doesn't need flowers to be one of our showiest!

Visit this column next month to find out September bloomers or better yet… come to see the show!

Hakonechloa macra ‘Aureola’, or Japanese Forest Grass - L. Baker

Zebra Swallowtail Butterfly – L. Baker

TOMATO BREAD SALAD

Kent Phillips, Howard County MG

- 2 tablespoon red-wine vinegar
- 2-4 garlic cloves, minced and mashed to a paste with a pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 cups 3/4-inch cubes crusty bread
- 1 pound vine-ripened red tomatoes, cut into 3/4-inch wedges
- 1 pound vine-ripened yellow tomatoes, cut into 3/4-inch wedges
- 1/2 cup Niçoise or Kalamata olives
- 1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, washed well, spun dry, and chopped fine
- 2 tablespoon fresh marjoram leaves, chopped fine

**Preparation**

1. In a bowl whisk together vinegar, garlic paste, and pepper to taste.
2. Whisk in oil until emulsified.
3. Add remaining ingredients, salt to taste and toss to combine well.
4. Let salad stand, covered with plastic wrap, at room temperature for at least 15 minutes prior to serving. This will allow bread to soak up the dressing and tomato juices.

It was one of the interesting dishes served at a recent State GIEI meeting. An easy recipe for surplus tomatoes from the garden! In addition people raved about the [http://food52.com](http://food52.com) website for recipes.
2013 Scholarship winner, High School graduate Rebecca Postowski, with MG President, Joan Parris, at the July Master Gardener meeting.

**NEWSLETTER DUE DATES**
Submit articles to: Elaine Dodd, edodd3@yahoo.com.
Articles can be submitted at any time, but time sensitive article submission dates:
August 3, Sept. 7, Oct. 5

**REMINDERS**
1. The next meeting is on August 1, 7:00 PM.
2. Planning Meeting at the Extension Office, August 29 – 10:00 AM, Everyone is welcome.

Joyce Browning, Urban Horticulturist,
Master Gardener Coordinator, Harford County Office

MARYLAND MASTER GARDENER MISSION STATEMENT

The Maryland Master Gardener mission is to support the University of Maryland Extension by educating Maryland residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities.

*The University of Maryland, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources programs are open to all and will not discriminate against anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, or gender identity and expression.*