**News Release**

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**Extension Delivers Gardening Answers**

Who says you can’t go home again?

After a brief hiatus, I happily am sitting once again at my old desk at the Extension office, proud to be the Extension Educator for Horticulture, aka the Bug and Plant Lady. That means I get to answer your gardening questions, troubleshoot problems, offer classes and work with the wonderful folks that volunteer as Master Gardeners.

How lucky am I.

Extension is education. So, I get to share the latest fact-based, research-supported information on all things gardening. Whether you have spots on your tomatoes, skimpy soil, wimpy violets, dastardly bugs or a burning desire to compost, I can help.

I answer about 1,000 gardening questions a year by phone, e-mail and visits. And if you stump me, (hey, it happens) I can call on another expert at the University of Maryland to lend a hand. We are all about finding you solutions.

Our classes bring you the newest tools and techniques to help you garden and manage your landscape in environmentally smart ways. Master Gardener volunteers and I talk to garden clubs, businesses, social and civic groups about everything from growing vegetables to attracting wildlife to your garden. Each year our spring seminar series spotlights the latest garden trends.
We come to you. You’ll find me and our volunteers teaching at the HCC Flower & Garden Show, Boonsboro Days and other events throughout the community. Last weekend, we taught visitors about Victory Gardens during WWII Weekend in Williamsport. This Saturday, our historic 4-square garden will be part of Living History Day at the Rural Heritage Museum.

There is always something new at Extension. Check out the latest additions to our Home & Garden Information Center website at www.hgic.umd.edu. You’ll find over 500 free online publications, how-to videos, a Grow It Eat It blog and a user-friendly plant diagnostic section that gives you short, sweet answers to questions about everything from aphids to squash bugs.

As the gardening season slows down, I’m revving up. I’m working on plans for a new Master Gardener class starting in February. (Call or e-mail me if you want in.) We’re cooking up ways to celebrate the Year of the Root Crop with classes and demonstration garden plantings that focus on carrots, beets and other unsung underground veggies. Plans are humming along for many new programs that will give you more ways to make your green thumb even greener.

The chair still fits. I consider myself lucky to be rejoining a team of educators that specialize in food, finance, 4-H, agriculture, nutrition and more. I am continually impressed by the talents and helpfulness of my colleagues that spell real solutions for our neighbors. We’re here to help.

So call me, e-mail me or stop by any time you have a gardening question. I’ll work hard to find you the answers.

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