No, I am not talking about Charlie Brown and his crew ;-) I am referring to my organically grown ‘Carolina Black’ and ‘Virginia Gregory’ peanuts. I ordered the Carolina Black variety (in homage of my home state of NC) from the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange (SESE) and the Virginia Gregory variety from Park Seed Company.

For those of you who do not know, peanuts grow underground and flourish best in full sun and loamy, sandy soil, but you can add compost and mulch. I created a “loamy” soil by creating a 1” trench in a raised garden bed and adding sand (purchased from Lowe’s), in which I planted the nuts.

I planted the peanuts on June 5th and covered using a row cover. In just three days I saw plants emerging. The growth was amazingly fast!!

For the past month, I have not had a row cover after noticing the yellow flowering, which is a sign that “pegs will drop into the ground under the flower and produce peanuts.” It is important to keep them watered at this point. Using drip irrigation has been a great time-saver. Weeding is also critical – “hand-weeding is the only option after the peanut pegs”¹ so as not to damage them. “Once frost is in the forecast or plant stems begin to turn yellow it is time for harvest.”¹ The Carolina Black peanuts can be harvested within 110 days (September 25th for me) and the Virginia Gregory in 135 days. Growing peanuts requires 130-140 frost free days from the time they are sown.

I cannot wait to taste these delectable treats! The peanuts have been easy to care for – no pest issues and no need to fertilize. Hopefully, I will be able to share the peanuts at the next quarterly meeting! Have a happy summer!

Perennials, like yarrow and salvia, can be cut back now to encourage re-blooming later this summer. Deadhead the spent blooms of annuals like zinnias and marigolds to encourage more vigorous continuous bloom.

Cut sedums back about half way to prevent them from falling over when in full bloom later this summer. Chrysanthemums should be cut back half way to encourage fall blooming. If not trimmed they will bloom later this month and not in the fall. Pinch out the flower buds of asters, mums, goldenrod and other fall bloomers to keep plants bushy and prevent early flowering.

Ticks are active year-round, especially now. Wear light colored clothing, apply repellent, and get in the habit of checking yourself, your children and pets closely for ticks after spending time outdoors.

Reduce mosquitoes in your yard by eliminating their breeding sites. Remove standing water from around your yard - change bird bath water frequently, turn over buckets, lids, garden furniture, and toys after rainfall. The Asian tiger mosquito requires very little water for breeding. Back yard ponds stocked with fish or moving water (fountains or filters) should not contribute to a mosquito problem. However, to be certain, B.t. dunks can be used.

Blossom-end rot of tomato, pepper, squash and watermelon may be observed now. The bottom (blossom) end of the fruit bottoms becomes brown and rotted. Promptly remove any fruits that have blossom-end rot or are badly malformed. This nutritional disorder is caused by a lack of calcium in developing fruits and is brought on by dry conditions and inconsistent watering. Water your plants deeply and regularly and keep them mulched. Tomato plants may need 1-2 gallons of water each at least twice a week during droughty periods.

It’s time to begin thinking of fall vegetables. Seed for fall crops of broccoli, kale, turnip, and cauliflower should be sown in containers by the 3rd to 4th week in July. Late crops of squash, beans and cucumbers can be directly sown through the end of July.

Are your cucumber vines beginning to wilt and die? They could be infected with bacterial wilt, a fatal disease transmitted by cucumber beetles to cucumber and muskmelon plants. Cucumber beetles can be either yellow with 11 black dots or yellow with 3 black stripes. They have a wide host range and begin to feed on all plant parts of all members of the cucumber family as soon as plants emerge. Controlling this pest early in the season is very important. Row covers can be used to cover plants to deter cucumber beetles or you can apply a labeled insecticide. Remove row covers when plants begin to bloom to permit pollinating insects to enter and pollinate the flowers.

Bagworm caterpillars are now very active. Look for the little bags crawling around on evergreen trees and shrubs and be prepared to spray infested trees with the microbial insecticide, B.t. before late July. After late July the older bagworms are not well controlled with B.t. They are best collected by hand and destroyed or sprayed with insecticides containing spirosad. (HG 32)

Now is the time to fertilize Bermuda grass and zoysia grass. (See HG 112) Apply according to the instructions on the bag. Do not fertilize cool-season grasses (i.e. fescues and bluegrass) until fall because fertilizer applications during the summer months may cause undue stress to the grass and encourage weed growth.
Inspired by the MG Intern classroom training, I decided, this spring, to attempt to install drip irrigation in a new flower bed in my backyard. This would save so much time and effort in dragging water hoses across the lawn. I’m delighted with the results!

This new bed gets mostly full sun and I have been amending the area for awhile. This area is just uphill from a natural watershed, so creating a bed here also helps me apply the Bay-Wise landscape practice of Controlling Stormwater Runoff. This new bed will slow down the flow of rainwater from the yard to the small drainage stream.

My husband helped me lay out about 50 feet of 1/2 inch PVC pipe just underground from the back of our house out to the new flower bed. We also buried a 4 x 4 inch post in the bed and installed a faucet on the post. At the house faucet, we installed a timer in case we wanted to automate the water delivery during drought periods. From the photo, on the right, you can see we now have drip hoses going both left and right from the post, and there is also a piece of hose there where we can get water as needed, such as when filling a watering can that has fertilizer, to hand deliver nutrients to specific plants. A thin layer of red hardwood mulch was also put down to help hold in moisture.

The entire installation only took us about four hours. Along the zig-zag hose layout, I planted various seeds such as marigold, zinnia, and several divided daylilies. I also planted cucumber, zucchini squash and bush green bean seeds on the sunniest end. Along the more shaded end, I planted a few shade loving plants and herbs and even got an elephant ear plant to grow! Everything has done exceptionally well and we have harvested a lot of cucumbers and a few squash so far. The rabbits are enjoying the beans!

In late fall we will pick up and store away the drip hoses and winterize the underground pipe. This was a fun project that will give us many years of enjoyment in experimenting with various plants.

Here is another drip irrigation system set-up by MG Lynn Rudigier that helps her hanging baskets look good all season!
Common or striped asparagus beetle: This is the more common beetle feeding on asparagus spears and ferns. The $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long adults emerge from overwintering sites in and around the garden in early spring and feed on emerging spears. The adults have colourful orange and blue-black markings. After mating, very small black eggs are inserted into the spears and the small gray larvae that emerge, begin feeding on spears. There are multiple generations each year and populations can reach high levels leading to severe loss of spears and foliage. Management: Handpick adults and larvae or control with a botanical insecticide (neem, pyrethrum). Cut spears quickly after they reach eating size, and clean up all plant debris and weeds at the end of the season to remove overwintering sites. For more information please visit the HGIC website at https://extension.umd.edu/hgic.

Thank you to Hester Burch for sending in these photos of the asparagus beetles. Unfortunately Hester was overrun with them this year.

Compacted Clay Soil? Check Out a Broadfork

By: Adam Chesser, MG Intern

When my wife and I moved into our new house, most of the soil was deeply compacted from years of farming and from the bulldozers and trucks that drove over the property while building the house. After finishing the Master Gardener class, I knew I wanted to start a small garden, but I wasn’t really sure how I was going to get any vegetables to grow in the compacted clay soil. After a little bit of research, I bought a broadfork to tackle the job, and ever since I’ve been really impressed with it. The two handled tool is 20 inches wide with 50 inches long handles and has 14 inch long tines.

To use the broadfork, hold the tool with the handles slightly forward of vertical, then press the tines as deep into the soil as possible by standing on the crossbar. Once the tines are as deep as they will go, rock the handles backward to lift and loosen the soil. Pull out the tines and step backwards 6 to 12 inches and repeat the process. I found that spreading a few inches of compost over my beds prior to working it really gets the compost deep into the soil and helps break up the compaction. The tool is heavy at 22 pounds; however, that weight works to its advantage when plunging it deeply into the soil. And while it is quite a workout (I might be able to cancel my gym membership!), I don’t have to worry about maintaining a rototiller or renting one to till my garden beds every year. Lighter models and different dimensions are available from many different companies to suit pretty much anyone’s needs.
Why We Need Bees

UMD Researcher Dennis vanEngelsdorp, Ph.D. gave an inspiring, awesome and truly fascinating keynote address at MG Annual Training Day last May 29 on Why We Need Bees. He gave us permission to post the address on YouTube, but not to put links to it anywhere. There are a couple borrowed photos in the presentation, so he can’t give it out or post it everywhere.

But he does want all MGs to have it, watch it, re-watch it and work to make our landscapes as bee-friendly as possible.

Here is the unlisted link http://youtu.beahrdHvPEOUM. Only those given this link can view the address – it will not show up on the HGIC channel or be searchable.

Robin Hessey is Retiring

My last official day with HGIC and the state MG program will be August 31, 2014. After that I’ll be officially retired. Please change my email address in your records or add rmhessey@verizon.net. The rmhessey@umd.edu address will cease to exist after 9/1/14.

I have been most privileged to work for the MG program for the last 17 years and look forward to continuing in a volunteer capacity as a Howard Co. MG. Working with the MGs has been a true privilege because MGs are inspirational. I’m constantly amazed at your wonderful ideas, creativity, resourcefulness. MGs are hard working. You get a vision, you get a job and you do it with all of your heart. MGs always want to help. Whatever, whenever, however. Whatever I’ve needed, there’s a willing, wonderful and skilled MG answering the call for help. And we in my office have needed a lot -whether it’s been for speakers, brainstormers, organizers, data entry, mailings, committee heads, researchers, communicators, writers or helpers on hundreds of varied projects. It’s a constant source of amazement to me that there are so many ultra-smart, knowledgeable, talented, skilled folks out there who want to help the program and the environment and who accomplish so much. MGs care about the earth and constantly strive to do what is right by it. This gives me great satisfaction because I have the hope that I’ve helped you along the way in your mission, which is also my mission. MGs are one of the best parts of the U. of MD Extension. We are the ones out in the community, assessing the needs, education ourselves and offering the best advice we can give, always striving for a better community and environment. Working with the MG program has also allowed me the great pleasure of working with Jon Traunfeld (best boss ever!) and the wonderful HGIC staff and to surround myself with plant and bug issues on a daily basis – to experience and learn about parts of the natural world that I might never have noticed or known about.

If you are interested in my job, please let Jon Traunfeld (jont@umd.edu) know. There will be an official job posting notice sent out sometime fairly soon, but I don’t know if everyone will end up seeing it.

Wishing everyone lots of success in their MG endeavors and in eliminating urban use of pesticides and herbicides. See you in the garden. - Robin Hessey, MG State Advanced Training Coordinator
**Plant Diseases**
UME Frederick County – Thursday, September 4, 9:30-3:30
Registration Fee: $35  Registration Deadline: Aug 28
**Presenter:** Dave Clement, Ph.D. Extension Specialist in Plant Pathology

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. This class counts as your Plant Disease requirement for your Plant Diagnostics certificate.

**Youth Vegetable Gardening**

Presenters: Jon Traunfeld, UME Specialist in Vegetables and Fruit; Heather Buritsch, UME Associate Agent, FSNE Gardening for Nutrition Coordinator, Lisa Gonzalez (FSNE) and others

UME Montgomery Co. (Derwood) Wed. Sept. 24; 9am-4pm Register by 9/17
UME Anne Arundel Co. (Dairy Farm- Gambrills) Sat. Sept. 27; 9am-4pm Register by 9/19

Youth and school vegetable gardening are hot hot topics right now with many schools and organizations requesting MG help. You can be an effective, active part of this effort!

This course will help build your confidence as you learn effective ways to work with kids in the garden, Learn the nuts and bolts about school guidelines, building a gardening team, and starting and maintaining a school program. Our panelists will inspire you with lots of fun and thrifty curriculum ideas. Focus will be on elementary school and shoulder seasons.

This class counts as 1 day towards your Advanced Vegetables Certificate.

**Registration Form** - [https://extension.umd.edu/mg/advanced-training/registration-form](https://extension.umd.edu/mg/advanced-training/registration-form)

**Native Grasses**
UME Harford Co. (Forest Hill); Tuesday, October 21, 2014, 9:30-3pm
Reg. Fee: $30;  Reg. Deadline: 10/14
Field Trip: TBA

**Presenter:** Sara Tangren, Ph.D., MG Trainer and Asso. Agent in Native Plants and Sustainable Horticulture

Fall is the time that our native grasses strut their stuff! Join us for a fun, non-technical class: light on grass taxonomy and heavy on work with fresh specimens of indiangrass, little bluestem, switchgrass, purpletop, bushy beardgrass, purple lovegrass, and more. For each species we will discuss

- design/aesthetic considerations for use in garden beds,
- use in native meadows,
- soil and light requirements,
- availability, establishment, and
- maintenance techniques.

By the end of class you will be able to recognize the most popular native grasses for Harford Co. and include them in your garden/meadow designs with confidence.

***Highly recommended: Native Plant Essentials class (in person or on-line)***

**Registration Form** - [https://extension.umd.edu/mg/advanced-training/registration-form](https://extension.umd.edu/mg/advanced-training/registration-form)

Information about all MG Advanced Training Classes can be found at: [http://extension.umd.edu/mg/advanced-training](http://extension.umd.edu/mg/advanced-training)

For more information call Robin at 410-531-1754, rmhessey@umd.edu.
Places to Visit! - Virtual and Actual

By Linda Crandall

One of my favorite websites is The Gardener's Workshop - http://www.thegardenersworkshop.com/

The Gardener's Workshop is run by Lisa Mason Ziegler and her sister Suzanne Mason Frye. Lisa is a well-known author (The Easy Cut-Flower Garden & Cool Flowers) and speaker. She and Suzanne also run a very busy commercial flower farm in Newport News, VA. Their website has basic gardening info, a garden journal, a blog with current gardening tips, and a small store. The online store carries books, dvds, seeds, seed starting supplies, and tools - including my favorite gardening tool, a Japanese Hand Hoe - that works wonders when weeding. I hope you will find the time to visit The Gardener's Workshop where their motto is "Turning All Thumbs Green!"

Amazing Northwest!
By Paula Pippin

Mid-June in the Pacific NW, Olympic and Ranier National Parks; When you enter the perpetual twilight of our temperate rain forest you step into a place possessing the greatest terrestrial bio-mass density in the world, greater than the vaunted tropical rain-forests. These temperate rainforests were created by a topography of ocean facing mountain slopes, scoured by glacier ice and its runoff, sculpting broad valleys with soils fast draining, gritty, mineral-rich, and perpetually holding ocean mists and rain, they nurture a kingdom of majestic conifers. Ephydrites, lichens, mosses and ferns thickly clothe the trunks creating and then taking advantage of a rich humusy aerial soil. Just recently an accidental dislodging of a patch of growth by a researching grad student revealed no tree roots crossing the margin and implied this symbiosis (previously thought to provide additional soil for tree roots to grow) must aid the trees in another way, perhaps keeping the trunk cool and moist thus enabling the transport system, less burdened, to reach greater heights.

The forest floor is a maze of decaying 300 and 400 year old logs, many sporting files of new conifers serving as “nurse trees”. In the deep shade of standing monarchs sword and deer ferns, mosses, shade tolerant spruce cedar and chamaecyparis grow while the gaps opened up in the canopy give filtered light to permit skunk cabbage sporting 3’ leaves, our familiar bed-straw (also 3’) and smart weed, trillium, tiarella, oxalis, monkey-flower, even two species of puny understory maples, (a.circinatum and macrophyllum) pulled human-scale by their own aerial army. The changing river bed with its sun makes space for red alder, red-barked trunks covered in silvery lichen, masquerading as a birch, and young Douglas firs needing this sunny leg-up to start, are then eventually able to fight it out with the big boys to become the 300’ monarch. The intellect battles but eventually succumbs to an aesthetic and overwhelming but finally inexpressible religious experience. How fortunate we are to experience such a place!
Our Vision: The Maryland Master Gardener vision is a healthier world through environmental stewardship.

Our Mission: to support the University of Maryland Extension mission by educating residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities.

Recipe Box

Summertime Squash – my mother’s recipe and every time I serve it people ask for the recipe
From the kitchen of: MG Intern Lee Lacy

- 2/3 Cup of Salt
- 3 Qts. of Water
- 8 Cups of thinly sliced summertime squash
- 2 1/2 Cups of sugar
- 2 Cups of vinegar (white)
- 2 tsp. mustard seed
- 2 medium white onions (thinly sliced)
- 2 green peppers (thinly sliced)
- 2 red peppers (thinly sliced)

Directions
Stir salt into the water in a large bowl. Add the squash and weigh it down with a dinner plate to keep the squash covered in brine. Allow to stand for 3 hours. Drain and wash off the excess salt. Combine the sugar, vinegar, and mustard seed in a Dutch oven or other heavy pot and bring to boil stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Add other ingredients and return just to a boil. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Transfer to jars or other glass container and refrigerate. Will keep for several weeks.

Herbed Butter
From the kitchen of: MG Intern Steve McKeow

- 1/2 pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon minced scallions (white and green parts)
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Directions
Combine all ingredients in a bowl using an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Beat until mixed, but do not whip. This can then be used immediately or put into a container for future use (up to three weeks). You can place this onto a sheet of Saran wrap, shape into a log and seal/chill. This makes for a nice presentation when you slice and serve. Will keep for several weeks.

Can be used on bread/rolls; with baked potatoes; as a flavor enhancement over steak or fish.

**There are other possible savory herb choices that can be used. This is a matter of what you are growing and what combinations you like. Other possibilities: chives, cilantro, thyme, winter savory, and oregano depending on the desired end flavor!