Are you Bay-Wise certified? This is a question that we would like every Master Gardener to ask. Have you taken the challenge to have your efforts rewarded by the program? If not, now is the time to take the plunge.

The Bay-Wise program is experiencing growth and more visibility as the introduction of the Sustainable Watershed Act is now a reality. This tax is aimed at reducing the amount of impervious surfaces in the county. Currently, this tax is $39.00 per year. One way to reduce this tax (by 50%) is to be Bay-Wise certified. Commissioner Robinson, who was the first commissioner to go through the process, proposed the Bay-Wise program as the perfect solution for implementing a tax credit.

Once people become aware they can get this tax credit, the Bay-Wise program will have an influx of new applicants. Inquiries and applications have already begun to arrive. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with residents and attract people who would not normally think twice about an environmental program. This is a moment in history for our program and we are seeking to assist the county in whatever manner is necessary. The Maryland Yardstick will be put to use as we inspect native plants and measure the length of the grass.

If you would like to be Bay-Wise certified, please contact Janet McGrane at: mcgranejanet@gmail.com

Article by
Ronda R. Goldman

Amendment to Bylaws Passed September 24, 2013
Effective Immediately

Article VII. Section 3. Eligibility for Longevity Pins.

The first calendar year (January 1 - December 31) after completion of the training class shall count as the first year toward a longevity pin, except in the case of Master Gardener Interns who complete training in the first quarter of a calendar year. The remainder of that year shall count as a year toward a longevity pin. Years spent on Hiatus do not count toward longevity pins.
Hi! I am excited about taking on the role of editor of The Compost and look forward providing an efficient communication forum for Charles County Master Gardeners. In looking on the internet for ideas on what a newsletter should be, I find that they should educate, inform, advocate, promote, or simply connect. The most important thing is it must provide value to the reader. So, readers, please take this first edition under my hand as my good faith attempt to do all those things. But, as in any communication, it must not be one-way and I ask that you provide your thoughts and comments on what you would like to see in our newsletter. What features, articles, or information would you like? Or, what ones do you think should be cut? I truly welcome your thoughts, and you can email me at CompostSubmissions@yahoo.com. Again, I look forward to my new role!

Deborah

Nominations for Chairman, Vice Chair, & Secretary Needed

Please provide your nominations (you may nominate yourself) to Gale at gkladitis@comcast.net. Elections will be at our November General Membership Meeting Tuesday, November 26.

Know anyone who Should be Invited to our Holiday Party?

Please provide names and addresses of anyone you know who has been instrumental in helping or advocating for our Master Gardeners to invite as VIP guests to our Holiday Party. Send to Gale at gkladitis@comcast.net by November 6!

Time to Vote for Master Gardener of the Year

Master Gardeners and Interns,

It’s time to vote for the Master Gardener of the year 2013. You can vote either by email to Elizabeth (esolismc@umd.edu) or by ballot at the Extension Office. The person selected will be announced at the holiday party. Closing date will be Monday, November 4th. All of us have somebody in mind who has added to the MG program either in the past or present so plan on voting—one time—before Nov 4th. Thanks, Gale
Christmas in April a Success

Christmas in April was a success again this year! Carol Teets was lead for the April 27 event and for the first time, the Charles County Master Gardeners were recognized as a sponsor on the Christmas in April T-shirts!

Watch out for Kudzu Bugs!

Kudzu bugs look for a warm place to overwinter. You thought marmorated stinkbugs and exotic ladybugs were all you had to worry about coming into your house. Now you can watch for kudzu bugs too. The interesting point is that the researchers are trying to find out just when the bugs look for safe places to go dormant for the winter. If you know of a kudzu site, please report it to www.mdkudzubug.org.

Information provided by Jessica Milstead

Detention Center Sunflower wins Blue Ribbon

The Detention Center garden opened on the first Wednesday in May and closed on the last Wednesday in September. This year, the classroom portion of the program was held outdoors to maximize the time the students spent in the garden and the change proved very successful. While the number of students varied during the Summer, we had 6+ Master Gardeners and/or Interns every week—ensuring we had a well-tended garden. While some crops didn’t do well (squash), we had several good harvests. Our sunflower won a blue ribbon at the Charles County Fair and our sweet potatoes won 3rd place. The garden opens up again next May.

Article by Deborah Determan

Gale Kladitis, Jeff Merchant, Jan Lakey-Waters
Photograph provided by Gale Kladitis
CCMG Offers Plant Clinics

In the 2012 growing season Charles County Master Gardeners (CCMG) began offering monthly plant clinics at the Waldorf Farmers’ Market, working with the nutrition specialists at St. Mary’s County Extension Office. Gale Kladitis pioneered our work, specializing in edibles and showing off things like our salad box and sweet potato baskets.

In August 2013 we broadened our scope while continuing to work with St. Mary’s Extension staff. In June, Gale again did a salad box and demonstrated a potato basket. Later in the summer, announcements in the Independent brought in residents with their samples and photos of problems with their plants. We made a couple of site visits based on requests that came in; a number of residents went away feeling they had a better understanding of how to grow both ornamental and edible plants – and CCMG gained valuable publicity and public awareness. This year we ran the plant clinics through October 19, and we’ll start again in Spring 2014.

Article by Jessica Milstead

Plant Clinic also held at Cobb Island Butterfly Festival October 12, 2013

Mary Sims speaking to the public at Cobb Island Butterfly Festival Plant Clinic
Photograph provided by Terry Thir

Anne Gillespie speaking to the public at Cobb Island Butterfly Festival Plant Clinic
Photograph provided by Terry Thir
Hillwood Garden Tour October 8, 2013

Hillwood Gardens
Photograph provided by Terry Thir

Hillwood Gardens
Photograph provided by Terry Thir

Back Row: Robert Peregoy, Neal Johnson, Janet McGrane, Terry Thir, Mary Gaskins, Guest
Front Row: Patricia Faulkner, Millie Head, Doris Santimays, Rose Markham
Photograph provided by Terry Thir

Show me your garden and I shall tell you what you are.
Alfred Austin
Sunday, September 29th provided a perfect Autumn setting for an enjoyable and educational day at the Adkins Arboretum, a 400 acre native garden and preserve on Maryland’s Eastern Shore dedicated to promoting the appreciation and conservation of the region’s native plants. The main event of the Tent Symposium was a talk by University of the South biology professor and author, David George Haskell, on his award-winning book, *The Forest Unseen: A Year’s Watch in Nature*. The day’s offerings also included a native plant sale, assisted by Eric Wittman, one of my favorite MG training speakers, and a guided walk by arboretum docent, Margan Glover. A wonderful lunch buffet was also included in the $45 non-member ticket fee.

Highlights of my guided walk included lovely thickets of “Hearts-a-bursting” or “Strawberry bush” (*Eunonymus americanus*) in bloom and the discovery of a new (to me!) kind of creature---the woolly aphid (*Grylloprociphilus imbricator*)---a fuzzy white aphid, which congregates like snowflakes on branches of beech trees to suck sap. A waxy filament extruded from their posteriors links these individuals and makes them unpalatable to predators. Otherwise known as beech blight aphids or boogie-woogie aphids, they seem to dance in rhythm when disturbed. They will not kill a healthy tree, but may damage that branch. Truly fascinating little buggers!

The premise of *The Forest Unseen* was based upon the author’s one year of quiet, unobtrusive observation of 1 square meter of Tennessee forest using only his senses. No meddling or scientific testing was allowed, just a search for oneness with the forest and an attempt to spotlight fascinating stories of nature. Two stories, from the speaker, sharply illustrated to me the amazing forest network of symbiotic relationships. Firstly, the point that 300+ wildflowers, in this 1 square meter of forest, bloom because of work performed by fungi and ants. Secondly, I learned that lowly land snails exist as a vital and primary calcium source for the region’s birds. David Haskell bemoaned the fact that land snails get little respect or research dollars in the scientific community! I look forward to reading his book and learning more interesting facts about life in the forest. I highly recommend a day trip to the Adkins Arboretum for a simple day on the trails, a plant sale or a special event---it is well worth your time!
As a new intern, I’m very excited about volunteering this year—not only to meet the requirements of the Master Gardener Program, but to get more gardening experience, meet other Master Gardeners, and to continue learning beyond the classroom lectures we received in Feb/Mar. Learning is such an individual thing and current thinking identifies 7 learning styles: Visual using pictures, images, and spatial understanding; Aural using sound; Verbal using speech and writing; Physical using touch; Logical using reasoning; Social learning in groups; and Solitary learning using self-study.

As for me, I learn using physical, visual, and social learning skills so my involvement at the Charles County Detention Center has been a perfect opportunity to get the most from my volunteer time!

I was, admittedly, a little nervous at first. However, the group of men who were part of this program are non-violent, minor offense detainees and have, quite frankly, been a pleasure to work with each week. They added to my learning experience, as quite often one of them will have experience in some area of the gardening project where we learned from them. And, I learned something new each week. From identifying diseases effecting the vegetables we are growing, to recognizing what you can and cannot compost, to learning about rotating crops…the list goes on. But, because I am physically doing these things and/or seeing them done by others, the information received during the lecture portion of our Master Gardener training is reinforced in a way that really helps me learn.

As I am also a social learner, working each week with detainees and 6-8 Master Gardeners has been a great experience. The Master Gardeners who volunteer at the detention center have been wonderfully welcoming and helpful, and it is especially nice to know that I am not alone, as not everyone is an expert gardener. But, I’ve always believed a team approach is the best to finding solutions, and invariably when one of us doesn’t know the answer someone else in the group will—again, helping all of us learn.

I know everyone absorbs information differently. I am not an aural learner…I can listen to a lecture, but learn the material much better if it is written so I can visually see it. And, in teaching something, I know you can’t provide the material in a way that every learning style needs. So, it is great that the Master Gardener program doesn’t rely solely on the lecture portion of our training and provides us these kind of opportunities to learn in other ways.

Article by Deborah Determan
On October 2, 2013, Governor O’Malley joined Deanna Wheeler and her science class for an outdoor experience that the children will always remember. In order to kick off his School Shed Initiative, the Governor chose to spend his day of service learning about JC Park’s Wetland Classroom and the Pomonkey Stream. He sat with the students while talking about the importance of protecting our waterways, planted a tree in honor of the day, and joined the school and volunteers in exploring water quality, invasive removal, and identifying beneficial aquatic life forms.

Three years ago Deanna called the extension office requesting assistance with a problem area on the school’s property. JC Parks shares space with Matthew Henson Middle School and water from both properties drains to a centralized location near the Pomonkey Stream. During significant rainstorms, run-off caused flooding and massive loss of vegetation. After being introduced to the Bay-Wise Program, Deanna and her 5th grade class assessed the area and agreed that an environmentally sound solution was needed. The Wetland Classroom was born. With help from Bay-Wise Master Gardeners, Tom Russ, Environmental Concern, and Parks and Henson personnel, the project was developed and implemented. Within weeks of its completion, wildlife began to moving into the wetland and the children had a science classroom without walls. The outdoor classroom is a riparian buffer zone of a pond, meadowland, and forest (Designed/installled by Jessica Milstead).

The School Shed Initiative seeks to encourage science teachers to develop activities and lesson plans that foster stream stewardship. This is a statewide partnership which promotes the adoption of a local stream for the purpose of hands-on learning experiences. Governor O’Malley stated that JC Parks is the first school to participate in the program. What an honor for our county and the educational system to be recognized as instrumental in solving matters of local and national concern. Once again, Charles County is leading the state of Maryland in implementing innovative and creative solutions for the environment and the Charles County Master Gardeners are leading the efforts.

The event was attended by Charles County Bay-Wise Master Gardeners Ronda Goldman and Gale Kladitis, volunteers from Chapman Forest Foundation and the Mattawoman Watershed Society, the Department of Natural Resources, the Superintendent of Charles County Schools Kimberly A. Hill, the Superintendent of Maryland Public Schools Lillian Lowery, Charles County Commissioner Ken Robinson, Deanna Wheeler, JC Parks Principal Thadine Wright, and a host of other officials.

The best part of the day belonged to the children whose faces glowed with excitement as they explored a new world teeming with healthy aquatic life, native wildflowers and grasses, and a dream realized. Their wetland classroom was a success that will provide more opportunities of exploration for many generations. One student exclaimed, “I don’t like science, but today was the best day of my life.”

Article by
Ronda R. Goldman
The Compost

Suggested Response on…Home Horticulture and Pest Management Questions

“This is the suggested response to use when you receive unsolicited home horticulture and pest management e-mail questions from the public that you would like to direct to HGIC. Please share with other staff, faculty, and Master Gardeners who might find this handy.

Thanks, Jon

Information provided by Jon Traunfeld

Thank you for your inquiry. For the fastest service please copy and past this link into your web browser: https://extension.umd.edu/hgic and click “Ask Maryland’s Garden Experts.” You can also call the toll-free “hotline” (1.800.342.2507), Monday-Friday, from 8am-1pm and speak to a Certified Professional Horticulturist.

Home horticulture and pest management questions are answered by University of Maryland Extension’s Home and Garden Information Center (HGIC) https://extension.umd.edu/hgic staff. This state-wide resource will provide you with free information and consultation services that will help solve your garden, landscape, and pest problems.”

Suggested Response on…Recommending Particular Businesses

Now and then a client asks us to recommend a good nursery or tree company or some other business that they might use. It seems like an innocent request – until you think about the fact that we are part of the University, which is a taxpayer-funded institution. We can’t favor one business over another. Following is a statement provided by Jon Traunfeld, the State Master Gardener Director, for our guidance:

We cannot recommend specific companies. Pubs that mention brand name products include the statement that it does not constitute an endorsement. In some cases only one company sells a recommended product. MES and Leafgro fit that kind of exception. So telling people to look for bagged compost, like Leafgro, is ok.

When I encounter this kind of request, I’ve found it helpful to name several companies and refer inquirers to the Yellow Pages. When I explain that since we’re part of the University, and therefore we can’t make a particular recommendation, people always seem to get the point.

Article by Jessica Milstead
November-January Calendar

November

26 (Tuesday)  10 am Membership Meeting, Extension Office

December

3 (Tuesday)  6 pm Holiday Party, Hampshire Community Center

January

TBD  Quarterly MG Volunteer Activity Log for hours activities October 1-December 31 due

28 (Tuesday)  10 am Membership Meeting, Extension Office

Training Opportunities

November 16, 2013 – The Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council (CCLC) is bringing its 5th "Turning a New Leaf" Conference to the National Conference Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The conference provides professionals with the latest information on sustainable landscaping and development best practices.

Environmental Concern's Fall Professional Development Workshops:

December 11, 2013: 10am- 4pm  WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands
December 12, 2013:10am- 4pm Rain Gardens as Outdoor Classrooms
December 13, 2013: 10am- 4pm POW! The Planning of Wetlands

Held at Wetland Learning Center, 201 Boundary Ln, St. Michaels, MD 21663.


April 1, 3, & 4, 2014 – Bay-wise Training in Charles County. More info to follow.
November Gardening

- Test soil for pH and apply limestone or wood ash accordingly. It takes time for these products to react with the soil and affect the pH. Fall application will ensure the pH is adjusted by spring.
- Prepare open beds in the flower and vegetable garden with organic matter and organic fertilizers.
- Clean tools for storage. Remove soil with a brush (coconut fiber, nylon or a metal brush) and then remove any rust with steel wool. Sharpen tools with appropriate files or sharpeners.
- If you don’t plan on using the mower this winter bring your mower in to your local dealer for winterizing.
- Mow lawn to 1.5 to 2 inches for the winter. This keeps the lawn healthy and prevents the lawn from matting down.
- Drain and clean man made pools and ponds. Remove tropical plants and store hardy lilies.
- Get out with hoe and remove cool weather weeds like shotweed that germinated during the October rains.

December Gardening

- Review last years garden. If you didn’t take notes during the season set aside some time on a nice cozy evening and jot down what went well in the garden and what did not. Then put down ideas on what you would do differently last year.
- Take evergreen and hardwood cuttings. Dip them in a rooting hormone before putting them in pots filled with rooting media and place in a coldframe for the winter. Roots should form by spring.
- Apply mulch. Clear days are good for applying mulch to beds you didn’t get to earlier in the fall.
- Cut evergreen boughs for wreaths.
- Rake up leaves from under late leaf releasing trees like Pin Oaks.
- Seed catalogs start arriving in December.
- Poinsettias - These harbingers of Christmas is a Euphorbia native to Mexico. The colorful bracts come in a multitude of colors now. Don’t over water them. Let the soil dry out slightly between watering.

January Gardening

- It is still a good time to take evergreen and hardwood cuttings. Dip them in a rooting hormone before putting them in pots filled with rooting media and place in a coldframe for the winter. Roots should form by spring.
- Monitor trees for winter damage and disease. Prune to healthy wood using proper pruning techniques.
- There is still time to apply mulch. 2-3 inches is sufficient in most cases.
- Keep an eye on cool weather weeds. Mulching as suggested above would help control winter weeds as would light cultivation of the soil surface with appropriate cultivating tools.
- Start seeds of indoor plants.
- Live Christmas trees – can be transplanted into their permanent location in the garden.
- Continue forcing bulbs like amaryllis and paperwhite narcissus

http://www.horticulteguy.com/garden-calendar-planner
Submit articles, photos, reports, events, and other items for publication to Deborah Determan at CompostSubmissions@yahoo.com by January 15, 2014 for the Winter 2013/2014 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, if known.

Bring your favorite dish to share. RSVP Terry Thir with your food contribution at: thirccmg@aol.com.

Advanced Training on Vermi-Composting presented by Master Gardener Esther Reaves.

Drawing: Holiday centerpieces, Holiday Basket, and Vermi-composting

Hampshire Neighborhood Community Center is located from Route 301, turn west onto Smallwood Drive (toward the Mall). Turn right at St. Stevens Drive (across street from Wade Elementary). Take left at stop sign at Hampshire Circle. Approximately ½ mile turn right into community center.