Hi everyone,

I can not believe it is already moving into Fall — one of my favorite seasons. Be sure to harvest a pumpkin, cleanup and put your garden to bed, and most importantly get out and volunteer for some of our great projects.

There is so much to do.

See you soon.

Pamela B. King
University of Maryland
Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources
replaced the boards. We plan to buy soil in October, and Maggie has recommended reinforcing the huge rectangular bed with a wood frame.

Beekeeper Greg Ferris, who has taught us much about bees, created the symbols for each bed and donated his time and materials to this project.

Lions Camp Merrick Director Gregory Floberg is actively pursuing a partnership between the Master Gardeners and the Lions. He was very enthusiastic about the plant donation list and plans to run a copy of it in the Lions newsletter. He would like us to resume control over the flag pole garden, and we will use any extra plants to return the flag pole garden to its original beauty.

The most exciting news from Greg, however, is that he plans to install a brick walkway through the garden area, much like the beautiful memorial bricks surrounding the flag garden. Not only will it be beautiful, but it will improve access and, at the same time, eliminate heavy equipment near the beds.

Still more good news, Master Gardener Larry Martin is organizing a conservation effort at Camp Merrick. Larry has already received emails from several members who wish to volunteer. Larry will be putting together an SOP (or standard operating procedure) for the project and creating a calendar. Contact Larry, if you would like to join in this ongoing program at Camp Merrick.

Above, Bob Eppley, Sandra Womack, Larry Martin and Jessi Thibault admire the five completed garden beds with sensory symbols.

**Camp (Continued from page 11)**

**Master Gardener Advanced Trainings:**

- Plant Diseases - One Day Workshop: 9/29/09
- Master Composter Course: 10/21, 10/28 and 10/29/09

To Register: [http://mastergardener.umd.edu/AdvancedTraining/index.cfm](http://mastergardener.umd.edu/AdvancedTraining/index.cfm)

**Those Wicked Weeds and How to Treat Them**

*By Pam King*

*County Extension Agent*

It rained, and then it didn’t, and then it rained some more. This has been a good year for weeds. Because nothing seems to hold them back—no matter how dry it gets or how many times they are stepped on, they come back for more. Believe it or not, late summer and early fall are pretty good times to get weeds under control for next year. So plan ahead and beat the weeds back now.

- Remember that a weed is simply “a plant out of place”. Turf grass is a troublesome weed in the vegetable garden, but is held in high esteem by lawn owners. Nobody seems to like crabgrass, though. So take a look around and evaluate your weed problems. What are the weeds? Good identification is always important in choosing the best control program. Is it an annual or perennial? Fall control measures differ for weeds that will overwinter as seeds and those that overwinter as plants.

- If there are a lot of plants out of place in your garden, try cultural practices first. To me, there are very few joys associated with pulling weeds, except for the exercise and the mellowing effect it seems to have on some people (it doesn’t work for me). Get them when they’re small if you can. In the vegetable garden, small weeds can be shaved off the soil surface with a clean, sharp hoe, without damaging the roots of your crops. Older weeds are much harder to remove and sometimes must be dug out, resulting in root injury to your garden plants.

- When putting the garden to bed for the fall, steps can be taken to reduce weed problems later. Tilling the soil late, after weeds have sprouted, will help to reduce their numbers. Leave the soil rough to inhibit further weed growth and mulch at least three inches deep with straw, dried grass clippings or other materials.

- Mow crabgrass-infested areas in the lawn very short. Keeping crabgrass mowed short during the late summer is also a good idea, so it cannot set seed - but continue to mow the desirable grasses long. Re-seed the crabgrass-infested areas heavily in September to get a good stand of turf growing that will shade the soil next spring and help keep

(Continued on page 25)
ELIZABETH THE ORGANIC GARDENER

By Alberta Carson

When Elizabeth was five years old she started to bloom, showing up in my garden about 6 a.m. to ask question after question about organic gardening. One day after I had labeled all my transplants, Elizabeth gathered the labels and repositioned them, you know, corn is okra, squash is romaine lettuce. Her comment? “What difference does it make? You know what the vegetables are!! You plant them, enjoy watching them grow, you pick and eat them. What is the big deal!!” Still, she didn’t want to have a section of the garden for her own.

For two years Elizabeth read all my old copies of Organic Gardening and Mother Earth News magazines from cover to cover. When I ordered a subscription for both magazines for her she was elated. Maybe she didn’t know I was just trying to keep my own magazine. Maybe she didn’t know I was just trying to keep my own magazine. When I protested she stated I could buy them at Shopper’s Food Warehouse. “You said they had very fresh vegetables and fruits”. Say WHAT?!? By the time Elizabeth was 9 years old our gardening roles had reversed. She became the teacher and I was her student. Sadly, through the last three years of her life, Elizabeth had to fight a battle with cancer. She lost that battle a couple of months ago.

She left me with a to-do list, some of which, like planting bamboo for a trellis, will not happen. Others, such as building a cold/hot frame and erecting a frog spa, frog motel and toad pent-

(Continued from page 3)

Weeds

crabgrass from germinating.

► Another alternative is to use herbicides for chemical weed control. This is widely accepted by commercial growers and can be safe and dependable. Now is a good time (especially for perennial weeds) to use broadleaf weed killers on the lawn, if needed. (See AM 79- Broadleaf Weed Control for Lawns Fact Sheet).

Crabgrass is an annual weed, and chemical controls are applied in the spring to kill the germinating seeds.

► If you want to try a more organic method to prevent crabgrass from germinating, try corn gluten. The jury is still out on its effectiveness as a pre-emergence herbicide, but you can try it and see. As with synthetic chemicals, follow label directions for best results.

► Late summer and fall are also the best time to use a broad spectrum systemic herbicide like glyphosate (Trade name: Round-up) to spot treat tough perennial weeds, as long as the weeds are actively growing. (Two things to keep in mind: 1) If it is droughty and the weeds aren’t growing, it may not work very well, 2) this herbicide may kill or damage any-thing green that it touches.) Just like your garden plants, the weeds are preparing for winter, pulling resources down into their roots. So they will also pull the herbicide down into the roots for a better kill, if properly applied.

► Always be sure to Read and Follow Label Directions when using pesticides.

Weeds can harbor insects and diseases and steal water and nutrients from your garden plants. Some are so bad that they are monitored and eliminated as a threat to agriculture by the State (for example, Johnsongrass). Keeping weeds under control is a year-round project, but with a little work and planning most can be controlled by proper soil preparation, cultivating and mulching, if you are diligent and keep one step ahead of them. Or you can just learn to smile and make dandelion wine.
Based on practice, not presentation. Practices are rated in inches on the Maryland Bay-Wise Yardstick. The nine areas on the Yardstick include: fertilizing wisely, mulching appropriately, watering efficiently, creating and maintaining a wildlife habitat, protecting the waterfront, mowing properly, composting, utilizing IPM methods, and recycling yard waste. In each category there is a list of criteria for practices and procedures. Gale’s expertise was gloriously shown as she maintained much of the landscape’s original topography and incorporated environmentally friendly solutions to landscape problems. She has provided places for birds to nest and chipmunks to drink. Butterflies and bees love navigating their way through her property and currently her garden is being visited by a local groundhog. Oh, the joys of nature! (Mixed, in the case of the groundhog.)

We salute Gale Kladitis and wish her more success as the fall season approaches. Keep up the good work and thank you for being Bay-Wise.

Ronda R. Goldman
Bay-Wise Coordinator
Charles County

Elizabeth
(Continued from page 4)

house, are either finished or about to happen.

Bringing this child into my garden didn’t just make her happy; it enriched my life and my garden.

Mary Call took this picture of a Luna Moth in May. She looked it up, because it was the largest moth (4 inches wide by 6 inches long) she had ever seen! Her daughters called it the Garden Fairy because that is what it looked like flying through the garden.

Mother Nature
(Continued from page 5)

my friend got hit by a car about a month ago but his contribution to my gardening knowledge is now a permanent part of my gardening repertoire and I don’t think I’ll be messing with Mother Nature again anytime soon.

The Lockhart Chronicles

Mother Nature Came to My Rescue?

By Linda Lockhart

Sometimes it’s best not to fool with Mother Nature. I found this out when I bought a Contorted Dwarf Weeping Cherry Tree. The weeping cherry part of the tree was grafted onto some sort of gnarled dwarf tree stock and when I first saw it at the nursery it was adorable. Just the right size and shape for a prime spot in the front garden. The first few years were wonderful. It grew slowly and the branches draped gracefully.

After three or four years I began noticing that the branches of the tree were really getting long. So long that they not only touched the ground but they grew out sideways across the driveway. Out came the trusty pruners. I began cutting off the long overgrown branches. However, it soon became apparent that I was dealing with a mythical Hydra but instead of two heads growing when one was cut off I had anywhere from four to six branches at each place where I pruned. I continued to prune and at every pruning class that I went to I’d ask the expert for advice.

Finally, one of the experts told me about a tar spray that I could use on the branch when I cut it. This did work but in the fall and winter I ended up with rather unsightly black tar on what should have been a beautiful winter interest plant.

Finally this year Mother Nature has come to my rescue after having her little laugh all this time. This spring, I noticed a little rabbit in my garden. My first instinct was to chase it off but luckily I decided to just let it be. Soon I began noticing that he was eating the leaves on my cherry tree nemesis. I still fought the urge to chase him off. As spring turned into summer my little rabbit friend continued to eat and my tree began looking better than ever. I had a neat pruning job just at bunny rabbit height. But best of all, I noticed that the branches were not growing longer. All I had to do all this time was just remove the lower leaves from the branches and they would stop growing.

Well, unfortunately my little bun-

(Continued on page 24)
Detention Center Healing Garden Planning Begins
By Gale Kladitis

Individuals from the Master Gardeners, Charles County Garden Club, the Extension Office and the Detention Center will tour a proposed location some time in October and start the planning phase. We will have additional information in the winter issue of The Compost.

Rails-to-Trails Landscaping Plan Derails?
By Barbie Walter

Armed only with the knowledge that the plants were going to be purchased at Shelby’s or Heaven’s Garden, Maggie Tieger, Carole Butler, and I went to work to design a landscape for the first of the trailheads on the Indian Head Rail Trail at White Plains. We got a list from Shelby’s of the native plants they could provide, and put together a very pretty, four-season, low-maintenance garden for the entrance, using the plants on Shelby’s list.

Charlotte Mandragos provided her landscape design computer program, so we were able to do a professional schematic of the design. I presented the schematic along with a computer-generated picture and list of the plants needed to Parks and Recreation, and offered to be with them when they did the purchasing and planting in case there were any questions.

Somehow there was a slip in communications between design and execution. On National Trails Day, June 6, we saw that the planting had been done, but not according to our plan; plants had been substituted, and the placement was not according to our schematic. Apparently some of the plants we specified were not in stock. In addition, the design was rearranged.

Thanks to all of you who signed up for this committee, and I will let you know what, if anything, is going to be done next. I promise you that if we are asked to do any more landscape plans I will make sure that the lines of communication are very clear and that everyone understands the importance of checking with us if for any reason it’s not possible to follow our design as provided.

Meet Alberta

Alberta refers to as her “Invasive Weed Morgue … I let that sit and compost for a long time … two or three years.”

The composting shredded paper acts as a walkway throughout the garden and suppresses weeds.

Caterpillars Do Chew But Adults Will Sip

In a little while this guy will be a Monarch butterfly heading for Mexico. I hope it can eat the butterfly weed faster than the aphids. I had to quit spraying the aphids with insecticidal soap when this caterpillar (and its half-dozen companions) showed up. This was a lesson about native plants for me. This native butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa) is getting chewed to bits while adult butterflies nectar on its blossoms. Next to it is a non-native (and invasive) butterfly bush (Buddleia) which is in fine shape. It provides nectar for the adults, but if the caterpillars didn’t have something else to eat they would starve and there would be no butterflies. When our plants stay perfect, it’s a sign that they are freeloaders on the general environment. When they start to get beat up, we know the web of nature is being supported.
Something Awesome To Walk On Barefoot

By Larry Martin

Some folks worry that mints are invasive plants. One mint that I wish were more invasive is Corsican Mint (*Mentha requienii*). My wife and I are very much into herbs and Corsican Mint is one of our favorites. It’s been difficult to find at nurseries, but a few of the Amish growers had some this past spring.

Corsican mint is native to Corsica, Sardinia, France, and mainland Italy. It’s a bright green creeping ground cover with ¼-inch round leaves and little light purple flowers. Some people use it to line walkways or between paving stones. I would love to have a whole yard of it and walk barefoot on it. It’s also reported to repel insects when grown near plants like cabbage and broccoli, as it obscures the smell of the vegetable crops.

This mint can also be used in cuisine, its most popular use being flavoring in crème de menthe liqueur. We usually keep it in pots on our tables outside and just like to rub our hands on it because it’s so soft and strong smelling. Good to rub on after a crab feast.

Corsican Mint is a perennial. Hardiness: Sunset zones: 5-9, 12-24; USDA zones: 7-9. It does best in shady garden areas but will do okay in sun if kept watered. It will rot if given too much water and does turn a rather ugly brown in the winter. To propagate it we plug it, similarly to zoysia grass, but we just use a knife to cut plugs.

Do you wonder where Powdery Mildew on plants comes from?

The fungi which cause powdery mildew are spread by spores produced in the white patches. These spores are blown in the wind to other parts of the plant or to other plants during the growing season.

For more information go to [http://plantclinic.cornell.edu/FactSheets/powdery/powdery.htm](http://plantclinic.cornell.edu/FactSheets/powdery/powdery.htm)

Detention Center Classes - Everyone Wants More

By Gale Kladitis, Coordinator

At the organizational meeting for the Detention Center Program on Tuesday, August 25, we greeted four new volunteers. Welcome aboard to Tom Lewis, Janet Cooney, Janet McGrane, and Jessica Thibault. The program has retained all of our spring volunteers: Joyce Rose, Carol Teets, Jan Lakey-Waters, Pam King, Judy Norris, Carolyn Sauer, Dani Webber, Dianne Shisler, Sherrie Zimmer, and Dianne Goodrich. They are all enthusiastic about the fall schedule. The fall program will start Tuesday, September 29, and end Tuesday, November 10, for a total of seven sessions.

Four new speakers have been added, with subjects from Composting to Soil Testing, and a Bay-Wise presentation by Ronda Goldman, preparing the Center’s annex for certification in the spring. A welcome addition is the inclusion of the women inmates. The classes for the fall will be co-led. We do expect the classes to be larger and require more of our wonderful volunteers.

And the Detention Center project isn’t just classes any more. The administration there is so pleased with the impact of the classes that they are expanding our scope. We are working our way through the process of arranging for our students to volunteer at Camp Merrick. Naturally several steps are required for an arrangement like this one, but we are almost there. A variety of tools are required for this work and for the fall class session, and the Center immediately purchased everything we requested.

The Center has also requested help with landscaping for the new Training Building. Jessica Milstead and I presented a landscape plan for the building on August 28, and it was enthusiastically accepted. The students from our classes will have the opportunity to put their learning to work in planting the new landscape, with MG volunteers to supervise and advise them.

Master Gardeners, this program always has room for one more. If you think you might like to check it out, please call me, or better yet ask one of our other volunteers.
Gilbert Run State Park Reveals Its Treasures

By Jessica Milstead
Field Trip Planner

This year I set out to coordinate a field trip to walk around the lake at Gilbert Run Park each month, to see how everything changes with the seasons. On our April walk we saw everything coming alive, with a variety of spring flowers, and a fascinating purple leaf we couldn’t identify. In June (we missed going in May) the overhead canopy was closing in, but there were still some flowers. The purple leaf was gone, though by this time I had figured out what it probably was. In July we found it was right. At the base of a beech tree right in the path we found lots of purple stems, eight inches or so high, that didn’t look like much, but we knew. This was Crane-Fly Orchid, *Tipularia discolor*, and it was getting ready to bloom. Its leaf comes up in fall and dies back in spring before it blooms. There are a number of little terrestrial orchids that are not terribly showy, and this is one of them. However, orchids somehow arouse passionate interest.

Cindi Barnhart and I monitored the plant, and a couple of weeks later we found it in bloom - and Cindi got a really good photo of it. Another interesting plant, found earlier in the season, was Indian Pipe, *Monotropa uniflora*. This plant has no chlorophyll; it gets its nutrients via a complex relationship with a fungus. Most sources say it is a saprophyte, some of the paths seemed to be covered with white sand. Alberta told us, “That’s from the Health Department ... while I was there one day, I noticed the large bags of shredded papers ... I asked if I could have them ... Once they get wet they form this nice pulp that nothing grows through.”

In her gardening efforts, Alberta has not forgotten wildlife. She leaves fallen fruit for the bees, wasps and other insects. She also has made small refuge areas for frogs and toads which she lovingly refers to as her “Frog Motel” and “Frog Penthouse.” Hummingbird feeders dot the garden.

The compost piles are another “green” aspect of Alberta’s garden. The large wire enclosure filled with scraps from the garden eventually will be a place to plant potatoes. Another compost area

(Continued on page 20)

Meet A Master Gardener: Alberta Carson

By Linda Lockhart

Elaine Miller and I met up with Alberta, class of 2007 at her home one afternoon in mid-August. Alberta’s garden is a fantastic example of “going green.” The raised beds contain a wonderfully eclectic combination of plants, one of the most interesting of which is cotton. Alberta commented, “I love the beautiful flowers on cotton ... they are great for flower arrangements ... with different-colored flowers on each plant.”

In addition to flowers, Alberta raises quite a few vegetables, fruits, and herbs. She pointed out such things as okra, peanuts, cranberries, foot-long string beans, “walking onions,” watermelons, figs, pears, apples, lemon balm, and basil -- just to mention a few. One of the most interesting sights was the watermelon vine on a trellis, with a large watermelon inside a black pair of panty hose, hanging there as if in a hammock with mosquito netting around it.

As she walked us through the paths covered with things like pine needles, pine cones, and grass clippings to keep weeds out, I was impressed with Alberta’s creativity. Then I noticed (Continued on page 23)
as an alternative to using chemicals, even those recommended by a local farm store. Farm stores can recommend safe products which are available and effective locally, such as pyrethrins or Sevin, but these all have their side effects and can kill other insects as well.

Pests and diseases discussed in the IPM seminar included the Colorado potato beetle which has become resistant to pesticides, Japanese beetles and their counter-productive traps, the squash vine borer, corn earworms, spider mites, and others. Copies of Bulletin 252, Control of Insects and Diseases in Home Vegetable Gardens were distributed to the gardeners. Bulletin 252 contains pictures of specific pests and their specific treatment plans.

Editor’s note:
A few copies of Bulletin 252 are available in the extension office. It is no longer being printed but copies can be made.

main ingredient is chlorophyll. I’m hoping ticks, mosquitoes, deer flies, and the like will find it distasteful.

I’ve always liked the idea of bringing “hands on” experience to my teachings but not this time!

Another interesting discovery is that one person can’t keep up with five cucumber hills. Try as I might, I couldn’t eat them or give them away as fast as they ripened. Next year we will cut back to two or three hills.

We enjoyed our little garden and are already talking about enlarging it a bit for next year. It was worth the time and effort and the extra training from GROW IT EAT IT paid off.
Gale Kladitis - Garden & Landscape Certified

“Gale has free veggie plants! Please call or email her if you are interested.” Beth Grem’s call to Master Gardeners was enough to gain my interest and send me traveling down 301 south. This routine plant pick-up turned into Charles County’s first double Bay-Wise certification. On July 10, 2009, Gale Kladitis’ vegetable garden and landscape were certified as Bay-Wise. It’s amazing what can happen on a routine visit.

Gale lives on a one-acre lot that has been cultivated for thirty-eight years. Her landscape is complete with wooded areas, rock gardens, rain barrels, ponds, and bird houses. Her garden contains a plethora of tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, peppers, spinach, eggplants, cabbage, and much more. She maintains a natural composting area in her woods and when asked why she favors a Bay-Wise method of maintenance, she replied, “It’s more economical and easier to maintain.” This element of landscape management is one that the Bay-Wise committee is working hard to communicate to Charles County residents. She indicated that the average homeowner could cut their gardening expenses in half or eliminate most of the cost of managing a healthy landscape.

She also encouraged her fellow Master Gardeners to “take the Bay-Wise challenge,” and not to focus on creating a “House Beautiful” ad, but to highlight the practices that make their landscapes environmentally friendly. Bay-Wise certification is

(Continued on page 24)
The Benefits of A Little Bit of Sloppiness
By Jessica Milstead

Do you faithfully keep the edges of your yard – next to your property line or the woods - neat and shipshape? Or are you like me, rarely getting around to neatening it all up and letting it be just a bit frowsy? Today I was driving my wheelbarrow into the woods when I happened to notice a beautiful butterfly near the ground. When I got down and looked a little closer I saw that I had a brand-new Red-Spotted Purple that had just left its chrysalis and was getting ready to fly away. The chrysalis looked like another dead leaf hanging from a rather bedraggled little weed. It’s visible in the photo if you look closely. If I had been a little more careful about touching up yard edges with my weed-whacker, this weed, and the butterfly chrysalis attached to it, would have been history.

So now I have the best possible excuse to be neglectful of the edges. Even if I don’t happen to see the butterfly emerge, I’m providing more opportunities for a diversity of insects to live out their lives. Some beautiful, some so-so, but all part of the web of life.

The Building Is Done - Let The Planting Begin

Don’t you just love it when a plan comes together? That is what happened at Lions Camp Merrick.

I have to admit that since 2004, when Pam King asked for a volunteer to complete the late Ed Spurlock’s goal for a sensory garden at the camp for blind, deaf and other disabled children, there have been some challenges, including stopping work due to infrastructure issues at the camp grounds.

Despite the challenges, the five planned beds were constructed, beautiful engraved wood signs adorn each of the beds, and the first work day for installing the appropriate plants for each designated sensory bed is October 15.

A number of Master Gardeners have worked on this project since 2004 when Jessi Thibault and I teamed up to coordinate the project. Most recently, Bob Eppley (who has been with us since day 1), Sandra Womack, Maggie Tiegier (and husband Joe), Larry Martin, Cindi Barnhart, Linda Lockhart, Carole Rauchesen, Elaine Miller (and a friend), and Janet Cooney (and her granddaughter) assembled at Camp Merrick on July 20 to finish building the five raised beds.

There was also a lot of hoeing and weeding and planning that day. Maggie shared the final plant list she and her committee created for each sensory garden with the hope that members will be able to donate plants from their own gardens to fill all of them. Linda Lockhart is the gate keeper, so please call or email Linda if you have plants to share. The list of plants is on page 17.

Shortly before this work day, Chaney Foundation awarded $1,000 to the project. So far we have purchased the rest of the plastic boards needed, which ate up most of the funds. Unfortunately, three boards arrived broken--and these boards were to replace already broken boards, most from contact with weed eaters and lawn mowers. The good news is that the company
The Irony Of It All... Teacher Learns Lesson

By Joyce Rose

My name has been splashed around in e-mails and The Compost as being involved with the Detention Center project. I really like this project and the teams of Master Gardeners who have been involved, sharing their basic gardening/landscaping skills. It’s a humble project. As my contribution, I developed and added my own two cents’ worth of instruction on how to keep oneself healthy so that one can keep on keeping on (working, that is). I talk about investing in oneself, such as buying gloves that fit, or wearing a wide-brimmed hat to reduce the sun’s effects. Going further, I try to raise awareness of Lyme disease -- the role deer ticks play, the difference between “wood” ticks and deer ticks, and the nasty bacteria (called spirochetes) which will infest the body’s tissues, thereby turning a simple tick bite into a horrible chronic disease.

Looking back to that fateful last working day (for me) at the Detention Center, I’m forced to ask myself, why did I not clear the work area of poison ivy before we started weeding the overgrown Vinca major? Why did I not wear gloves and long sleeves?

Why didn’t I wash my arms as well as my hands afterward? I left the Detention Center and went shopping. Within the week, I was abloom with -- you got it -- a nasty case of poison ivy, requiring a doctor’s visit after it went systemic. I was embarrassed when I could not make the next class, as I was just that miserable. Did I mention that I got little or no sleep, due to the itching? In fact, the itching was getting worse instead of better even though I was taking Prednisone.

And then there was a new twist. A different rash appeared across my abdomen (no blisters, but welts). I had finished the Prednisone two days before, so back to the doctor I go. “My dear”, the doctor says, “Have you been bitten by a tick?” Imagine that! Why yes, in fact by a wood tick, aka American dog tick (Dermacentor variabilis), and a deer tick (Ixodes scapularis) on the same day, approximately two weeks before. You see, ticks, like mosquitoes and most other obnoxious critters, are attracted to me.

I’m now on Doxycycline and more itching? In fact, the itching was getting worse instead of better even though I was taking Prednisone. I got little or no sleep, due to the misery. Did I mention that I’m now on Doxycycline and more itching? In fact, the itching was getting worse instead of better even though I was taking Prednisone.

I’m reading about a holistic treatment to sweeten the body. It’s a mint tablet taken twice a day. The

(Continued on page 20)
On July 16, 2009, the Extension Office was infested with 35 vegetable gardeners who were interested in learning how to control the most common insects and diseases affecting home gardens. Pamela B. King, County Extension agent and entomologist, asked which pests were in local vegetable gardens. Her audience listed over a dozen garden pests. Pam then described how to address any garden problem using integrated pest management techniques: determine if the pest is really a problem and, if so, what are the choices to control that pest.

To determine whether a pest is really a problem, identify it by using the WAMM’s and examine the pest’s Wings, Antennae, Mouth parts and Metamorphosis. WAMM indicates the what, where, when and how the pest eats and reproduces. Some good insects, such as lady bugs and lacewings, devour bad pests.

The choices for pest control are cultural, biological and, if all else fails, chemical. The best cultural choice is to avoid the pests in the first place. Select plant varieties which are pest-resistant and then plant and maintain the garden at appropriate times in properly prepared sites. If that choice is no longer available, remove pests by hand-picking them off the plant.

If cultural choices fail and the pests have overrun the plant, the next choice should be biological remedies such as insecticidal soap or Bacillus thuringiensis. Insecticidal soap can be purchased at a farm store or garden center; it’s not the same as household soaps and home remedies may do more harm to the plant than the pest itself. Bacillus thuringiensis products, better known as Bt’s, are available for different pests, with differing ingredients and application procedures for specific pests. Bt’s must be used only according to the directions on the product container, as with all biological and chemical pest control products.

Chemical insecticides and fungicides are last resorts for pest control. For cole crops (cabbage, kale, etc.), Pam King suggests merely washing off low infestations of insects with tap water, then examining for beneficial insects before resorting to Bt’s labeled for ‘cabbage worms’. Consider destroying the infected crop

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Fall / Winter 2009 Events

**September**

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<td>2</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. Herb Garden maintenance, Dr. Mudd house, Drop-ins welcome</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>10:00 - 12:00 p.m. Bug Day, Nancy Maude’s house, Newburg, Md., Hunters, Farmers and Food. See below for information.</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. Detention Center classes begin. See details below.</td>
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**October**

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<td>10:00 a.m. Herb Garden maintenance, Dr. Mudd house</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Membership Meeting, Extension office, Open to all MGs</td>
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**November**

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<td>10:00 a.m. Herb Garden maintenance, Dr. Mudd house</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Membership Meeting, Extension office, Open to all MGs</td>
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**December**

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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6:00 p.m., MG Holiday Meeting and Potluck, Hampshire Neighborhood Center in Waldorf, Gardens in Winter</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Membership Meeting, Extension office, Open to all MGs</td>
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**January**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Membership Meeting, Extension office, Open to all MGs</td>
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The topic at Bug Day 2009 will be Hunters, Farmers and Food - Allowing bow hunters to hunt deer on your property, with the meat being given to food banks. For additional information please contact Carol Teets.

Detention Center classes taught by Master Gardeners begin Tuesday, September 29 and continue for seven weeks, until November 10. For information or to volunteer please contact Gale Kladitis.

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Summer MG Meeting Affirms Possibilities

By Linda Bronsdon

The thought of hosting a Master Gardeners meeting seemed like a great idea. It was just the thing to get me to focus on completing pending projects. I envisioned a gorgeous, manicured yard...

And this was LAST year’s plan, until it turned out that the Autumn 2008 guest speaker was a butterfly expert. My woodland property sees only sporadic butterflies. After a slew of e-mails, my invitation was postponed a year. (Those of you attending last year’s meeting might recall monsoons dampened field explorations.)

With this year’s focus on “Grow It Eat It” I felt compelled to launch my first-ever vegetable garden, adding to my pile of unfinished projects. An edging of 6 x 6 landscape ties was finally completed on Memorial Day, causing corn seeds and tomato plants to be planted fairly late.

Invitations to the Summer meeting went out with warnings that our driveway is an eroded streambed. Then, with history repeating, we had another huge downpour just before the start of the meeting.

The brave souls who found their way through rural Hughesville were shown my humble but functional rain garden. While walking the yard, I noted I was simply not going to be able to keep up my garden much longer. Rather than being judged for being more shabby than manicured, I was strongly encouraged to let nature take its course on both my yard and my body. It felt great to be affirmed.

The other important lesson was a group analysis that a vegetable garden full of mulch with no topsoil produces very yellow vegetables. By August, my corn was not yet a yard high. But, the goal was attained: The gathering got me to see new possibilities and attempt new ventures. Seems to me this is the point of Master Gardening.

Linda’s property is Bay-Wise certified and she is extolling the virtues of maintaining a natural space to Karen Patterson, Carol Teets, Janet Lakey-Waters, Pam King, Mary Sims and Ronda Goldman.