After The First 40

Abiotics, pistils, stamens and xylems,
Genus, species, cultivars and phylum.
All of these were taught, and a whole lot more,
And even homework was given, just to be sure.

Before class began we certainly thought,
Why would it take 40 hours just to be taught?
What’s so hard about planting a bulb or a seed
Or growing a pansy, or killing a weed?

What we learned about gardening
Has enriched us for sure,
All the experts they brought us,
Whet our appetites for lots more.

There was Herb Reed, an appropriate presenter for sure,
Bob Stewart with turf grass and botany and more.
Brian Clark with his bugs, Eric Wittman with his shrubs,
And Dr. Gouin with composting and don’t forget Rick LaNore.

With all this new knowledge still fresh in our heads,
We march off to duty, to the community planting beds.
These first 40 hours, oh how they made us yearn,
But truly what they taught us was how much we have to learn!

By Mary Grant and Judy Ruth, Interns
We Are In The Running For A Search For Excellence Award

The International Master Gardener Search for Excellence is the recognition program for Master Gardener volunteer work throughout the United States and Canada. The Horticultural Education Project for Charles County Detention Center inmates has achieved an outstanding record, and Gale Kladitis has submitted an application in the Innovative Projects category. With a letter of support from Karol Dyson, County Extension Director, we sent our application with photos depicting the garden at the start of the season and at harvest time.

Search for Excellence has seven categories in which Master Gardeners can demonstrate their outstanding contributions to their communities. Awards will be presented at the International Master Gardener Conference in Charleston, West Virginia on October 11-14, 2011.

We will need to attend and give a PowerPoint presentation and display of the project if (no, when!) we win.
Introducing Extension Educator Brian Clark

The Class of 2011 Was So Phenomenal!

By Barbie Walter

All 22 of my students brought to the program knowledge, interest, and energy. They all seemed eager to get going so they could get busy doing and learning more.

Some began contributing to the MG program while still in classroom training, such as writing an article for the Compost. I overheard another student offering to repair garden tools for a classmate, and as I continued to eavesdrop she talked about how she had been repairing broken or damaged garden tools for years. What a valuable resource to add to our group. Although they couldn’t officially do it, other students began trying to sign up for committees, and many wanted to know about other programs we did.

Our speakers did a wonderful job of making learning fun, and I’m not sure the students realized how much they were doing just that. For the information of MGs who have already gone through the process, the pre- and post-tests that made little sense are (Continued on page 18)
Two Reviews For A Compost & Fertilizer Guru
By Brenda Elmore, Intern
As I made my way into the Potomac library on February 24 for my Master Gardener training session, I got one of the last chairs in the standing-room-only crowd raptly listening to a gray-haired gentleman. Meet Dr. Frank Gouin, a man who can make a discussion on composting fill a room to overflowing.

Dr. Gouin worked at the University of Maryland for 33 years, and retired in 1995 as Chair of the Department of Plant Sciences. He is an internationally known and respected consultant and his work has kept him busy to this day. Among his accomplishments are determination of the correct balance of nutrients for maximum container plant growth, development of coatings for time-release fertilizers, cloning of the Wye Oak, and establishment of a scholarship program for deserving students of horticulture.

Accomplishments and all, Dr. Gouin is approachable for gardeners of all levels. His passion for what he does, his willingness to share knowledge, and his wit and energy kept his audience riveted. We spent the three hours learning an amazing amount about plant chemistry and physiology, and

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Accomplishments and all, Dr. Gouin is approachable for gardeners of all levels. His passion for what he does, his willingness to share knowledge, and his wit and energy kept his audience riveted. We spent the three hours learning an amazing amount about plant chemistry and physiology, and how composting is the answer to so many problems that far exceed those of the backyard gardener. Sometimes laughing, sometimes sharing, sometimes asking questions, all the while taking notes as they listened, the gardeners and students in the room were completely under the spell of Dr. Gouin, a man who loves the earth, and who certainly takes a hands-on approach to learning and teaching. It is no wonder that he is considered to be among the top ten experts on plant science in the world.

By Pat Biles, Class of 2009
We MGs had a grand time at the Potomac Branch library for Dr. Gouin’s presentation. We packed the place...

It was great to see new faces and old -- thanks to all who helped this happen. The main thing I got

(Continued on page 5)
from the talk was COMPOST, compost, compost. So many things can be composted, and while we homeowners may not be able to compost a cow, for instance (it can be and has been done), we can compost our yard waste and almost all of our garbage. This is a win-win situation.

The trace elements that our plants need are in the compost. The N-P-K (nitrogen, potassium, phosphate) found in commercial fertilizer are in the compost. Our plants, our soils, and our planet benefit from compost. Compost is free and it utilizes garbage and yard waste to benefit us. So - no excuses - compost. I had heard of using compost for mulch. That bit about not tilling, using compost to build up your soil has me excited.

While talking about trace elements in soil, Dr. Gouin mentioned, as an aside, that zinc contributes to a healthy prostate. I asked my husband if he was taking zinc and found he’s been taking it for something like twenty years, so I think he has a pretty good chance of maintaining a healthy prostate. Thanks again to another fine MG training, it was a great morning. We are now into March: one month closer to spring.

**Editor’s note:**

Dr. Gouin writes *The Bay Gardener* column, in the “Bay Weekly” newspaper based in Annapolis, Maryland. Current topics posted are:

- Are Your Houseplants Dying of Thirst?
- Attack Your Holly Now
- The Best Fruit Grows on Pruned Branches
- Tomato Alert!

Ask Dr. Gouin your questions at frgouin@erols.com. All questions will appear in Bay Weekly. Please include your name and address.
On October 21 I joined with the National Aquarium in their riparian conservation project. I arrived at the Welcoming Hut of the Naval Base about 9 a.m. to check in. Then I learned about security at a facility like this. The volunteers’ names were all on the Aquarium list at security, and, even with all the required documentation, the check-in process took the better part of an hour. Finding the spot where we were to meet the van in the maze of buildings and streets on the base took more time.

Once the van transported us, it was about a quarter mile walk on the shoreline to the project. We were given gloves, shovels, and mattocks. A very quick demonstration of tree planting was given, and then we were off to plant trees. Lots of trees. As soon as the trees got planted more trees arrived. We took a break for lunch then back to -- you guessed it -- planting more trees. This time we made it to the point of no return. There was nowhere else to plant trees - but still there were more trees to plant. This was hard manual labor. Those soil bags got heavier as the day progressed.

There was one big BOOM (this is an explosive ordnance research center), but it was a ways away.

(Continued on page 7)
IN\u2011DIAN HEAD (Continued from page 6)
I did take note of the flashers and the sign - it warns that if these flashers go off you should immediately leave the area.

The people on the project were mostly in their 20s and 30s. Three of us older ladies (40+) were volunteers. The kid from the Navy who was driving the Gator ATV must have been all of 19 years old. It was good to see the young men and women working together as a team.

There is a science base for the project. Only trees were planted this year because the deer ate all of last year’s shrub plantings. The kinds of trees that had survived were chosen to be planted again this year. Bags of soil and three fertilizer sticks provided supplemental nutrition for the young trees.

The wind never stops and the tide continues to wash away the shoreline. It’s a tall order for a bunch of little trees. At the end of the day I was sorely tired. There is a sense of accomplishment however, when one walks past all the trees we planted. Good luck, little trees.

La Plata Library Outreach

Janet McGrane and Anne Gillespie created an outstanding display window at the La Plata library. The window showcased our achievements and let the public see what a diverse and talented group the Master Gardeners are.
Beekeepers - All A Buzz By Our Presentations

By Dianne Shisler, Class of 2003

On January 15, 2011, Rick LaNore and I spent the morning talking to the Southern Maryland Beekeepers Association about plants that bees like and pesticide use. This meeting had to be cancelled last year due to a big snowstorm.

Imagine my surprise when the beekeepers wanted to know what kind of flowers bees like. I would have thought that since they were beekeepers they should tell me. After a great deal of research to answer this question I found that bees really prefer flowers that are flat, like the daisy and coneflower. These flowers provide them with an easy landing platform, but they will also go to other flowers. Bees also like plants with tubular flowers, and there should be a mix of flowers for different kinds of bees - some have short tongues and others’ tongues are long. Bees’ favorite flowers are those yellow things in our grass called dandelions, as well as clover. They prefer the colors yellow, blue and purple. In planting a bee garden, be sure to plant colorful, fragrant, nectar-rich plants, and include flowering shrubs, perennials, and annuals. Be sure to plan for successive blooms. Let’s welcome our friends the bees to our gardens; after all, we need them for pollination.

By Rick LaNore, Class of 2003

My talk to the beekeepers was on protecting bees from accidental pesticide poisoning.* Well, I think I was well received by a majority of the group, but if you want to stir up a hornets’ nest (no pun intended), just talk about pesticides at a beekeepers meeting.

I reported on a new study that diagnosed the problem of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) of bees. The study confirmed that the dis-

(Continued on page 9)
order is not being caused by pesticide poisoning. Rather it is caused by a combination of two common infections - one fungal, one viral - working together to create a condition far more serious than either would in isolation. It was a challenge to get that point across to the beekeepers, who firmly believed the disorder was caused by the insecticide imidacloprid. Needless to say, it made for lively conversation.

I centered my talk on the ways that beekeepers can work with growers to ensure that their bees are not put at risk for poisoning. I discussed different types of insecticides and which were more toxic than others, as well as the relative safety of different formulations of insecticides. I explained that the best time to apply insecticides is when weather conditions are not favorable for drift and the bees are not actively foraging. I also gave them some pretty good information on how to work with growers and how to be sure that growers too have the bees’ best interests in mind.

While my talk seemed to be controversial, I believe it had some valuable information for the beekeepers. Their reluctance to believe that CCD was not caused by pesticides is an illustration of the way that emotions can cloud the water and make it harder to see the truth. If you can’t see the truth, you will never find the cause, and the issue will never be resolved. Now, more than ever, scientists, writers and others we trust have an important obligation to seek and write the truth rather than perpetrating their own agenda.

I greatly enjoy the opportunities I have through the Master Gardeners Speakers Bureau and I hope the beekeepers will ask us back again sometime.

*Rick’s reference material for this talk was an Oregon State University publication, “How to Reduce Bee Poisoning from Pesticides,” PNW 591.

Editor’s note:
If you have questions about Beekeeping please contact Chip Whipkey, President of Southern Maryland Beekeepers, at 240-925-2196.
A Number Of Projects Go Forward This Year

By Ronda Goldman, Class of 2006

It’s Planting Time!

The hills are alive with the sound of Bay-Wise! As the daffodils awaken from their winter slumber, so Bay-Wise awakens from the labor of last year. Our efforts are being rewarded and now we are seeing wonderful progress in our local watershed.

In February 2011 the new Board of Commissioners joined the Bay-Wise program by approving an effort to certify the landscape at the government building. The initial site visit will take place on March 28; when the landscape has met the B-W criteria the award will be presented to the Commissioners in April. Currently, we are working towards holding the ceremony on Earth Day. More information will be forthcoming. This will be a wonderful opportunity for the Commissioners to lead the way in protecting our waterways and encouraging county residents to do the same.

The Schools and Communities project is diligently growing. JC Parks Elementary School finally received their final permit in December and now they are ready to move forward with the planting project. The project is scheduled to begin after spring break, providing ample time for the ground to be prepared. They are excited about planting a wetland classroom, a reading arboretum, and an amphitheatre. Thanks to Nancy Maude, the Mustangs will also be able to enjoy a lovely apple orchard, which will be planted in the fall of the year. Go team!

The Bay-Wise Schools and Communities Project also welcomes Thomas Stone High School to the effort. The Cougars began exploring the possibility of being a Bay-Wise school in the summer and they decided to “take the Bay-Wise Challenge.” They are in the process of securing Bay-Wise certification and will be the first high school in the county to obtain it. They are also the first high school in Charles County to obtain Green School certification. This ambi-

(Continued on page 11)
BAY-WISE (Continued from page 10)

A enthusiastic group of teenagers has sprung into action and is planning a campaign with the goal of certifying approximately 1250 residential landscapes. With this type of action and energy in our county, it’s time to clean the muck boots, prepare out hats and help get more certifications in our county. If you want to join in the effort, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Our 2nd Annual Involvement With Artsfest

By Gale Kladitis, Class of 2008

Once again Bay-Wise and Master Gardeners have been offered space for information tents at the River Artsfest. The Charles County Arts Alliance, in partnership with the Town of Indian Head, will hold this annual event Saturday, June 11, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the Village Green in Indian Head. It is always a very festive occasion with lots of music and food.

This is a good opportunity to introduce or reintroduce Master Gardeners to the western side of the county and to spread the good word about Bay-Wise. It’s also a marvelous way to get hours while attending a really fun event. Any Master Gardener interested in coordinating or working with the project please call me and I will give you all the information and requirements needed to make it a fun project.

Last year our combined MG/Bay-Wise tent was staffed by Ronda Goldman and Jan Lakey-Waters and they were very successful in informing the patrons at the festival about both. Ronda spoke with two of the County Commissioners concerning certification of the County building’s landscape, and this year that landscape will be certified. Master Gardener Pat Biles submitted an art design for the Art Design logo contest sponsored by the CCAA county-wide and won. Her design will be featured as the official River Artsfest 2011 logo.

Let’s make this year even better. Call me!
Spring Is In The Air At The Detention Center

By Gale Kladitis

The spring session of training at the Detention Center will begin on Tuesday, May 3 and run through June 14. The Center’s administration was so impressed with the vegetable garden last year that they have asked us to continue the project. The Detention Center will once again prepare the garden prior to the beginning of class by rototilling and applying County compost. Our first order of business will be to plant all the seeds, such as beans and corn. I have enlisted several new instructors this spring for a more diverse classroom experience. Both the gardens prepared last session at the annex and the pergola landscape at the main building will be monitored. The moonflower did so well on the pergola last year that our plans call for one on each side. The personnel working the late shift were fascinated by the night-blooming plant, and collected seeds to have for their gardens this summer. Once again we are planning an ambitious undertaking with the spring session and as always the Charles County Master Gardeners will rise to the occasion. I’m looking forward to adding several of the class of new interns to this project. For additional information and requirements, please give me a call.

Editor’s note:

Join Jon Traunfeld at the Charles County Detention Center, in La Plata on Tuesday, July 26, 9 a.m.-11 a.m. for a Vegetable Plant and Pest Diagnostic Walk.

Let’s go see what’s happening in the vegetable garden. We’ll be looking for and identifying summer pests, diseases and abiotic problems, then proceed to a discussion of prevention, deterrence and cures. A great fun way to learn.

See page 22 for registration information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Ongoing</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas In April</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Contact: Carol Teets</td>
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<tr>
<td>This valuable community effort provides a</td>
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<td>wonderful opportunity for earning volunteer</td>
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<td>hours. Assess assigned Christmas In April</td>
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<td>properties before April 30 or join us for</td>
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<td>the actual day of service, on Saturday</td>
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<td>April 30, 2011.</td>
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<td>Nature Walks with Jessica</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Contact: Jessica Milstead</td>
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<td>These are ongoing walks as the seasons</td>
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<td>allow. The walks do count as Advanced</td>
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<td>Training for Master Gardeners and are open</td>
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<td>to all Interns. See Calendar for dates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Visits</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Contact: Jessica Milstead</td>
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<td>When someone calls or visits the Extension</td>
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<td>office with a question about problems with</td>
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<td>their plantings, or for advice on</td>
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<td>landscaping, the call is referred to me.</td>
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<td>Mary Beth Chandler and I share the task of</td>
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<td>putting together a team to go out to look</td>
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<td>and give advice.</td>
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<td>Charles County Detention Center Healing</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Contact: Gale Kladitis</td>
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<td>Garden</td>
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<td>A contemplation garden within the walls of</td>
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<td>the Detention Center is proceeding at its</td>
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<td>own pace with the Charles County Garden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Club seeking funds through grants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speakers Bureau</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Contact: Barbie Walter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use your knowledge to inform the public or</td>
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<td>your fellow Master Gardeners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Zion United Methodist Church Gardens</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Contact: Nardine Daniels</td>
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<tr>
<td>You may want to join the team of MGs who</td>
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<td>maintain the herb garden and surrounding</td>
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<td>landscape at the Dr. Samuel Mudd House in</td>
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<td>Waldorf, April through October.</td>
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Contact the project leader by referring to your Membership Directory.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 April</td>
<td>Friday, Hydroponics Nursery Field Trip. Date and time to be confirmed, more information to follow via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 April</td>
<td>Wednesday, Native Plant Walk, Time and Location TBD, contact Jessica Milstead</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 April</td>
<td>Tuesday, 10 a.m.; Membership Meeting, Extension Office, Open to all MGs</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>Saturday, Christmas in April, contact Carol Teets</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 May</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; Detention Center Training starts, contact Gale Kladitis for more information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>Friday, Plant Sale staging and work party, contacts are Jessica Milstead, Louise Kearns, and Sue Brewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>Saturday, 8 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., MG Plant Sale, Farmer’s Market, La Plata and P.D. Brown Memorial Library, Waldorf, For more information and to volunteer contact Gale Kladitis (La Plata) and Terry Thir (Waldorf)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 May</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; Detention Center Training</td>
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<td>17 May</td>
<td>Tuesday, MG Annual Training Day, Stamp Student Union, University of Maryland, College Park, For more information go to <a href="http://www.agnr.umd.edu/Extension/gardening/mastergardeners/MGAnTrDay2011/index.cfm">http://www.agnr.umd.edu/Extension/gardening/mastergardeners/MGAnTrDay2011/index.cfm</a> Also see page 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 May</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; Detention Center Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 May</td>
<td>Wednesday, Native Plant Walk, dedicated to learning and practice in plant identification, using the keys in <em>Newcomb’s Wildflower Guide</em>. Time and location TBD, contact Jessica Milstead</td>
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<td>24 May</td>
<td>Tuesday, 10 a.m.; Membership Meeting, Extension Office, Open to all MGs</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; Detention Center Training</td>
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*(Continued on page 15)*
### CALENDAR (Continued from page 14)

#### May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; Detention Center Training</td>
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#### June

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Saturday, Native Plant Walk, Time and Location TBD, contact Jessica Milstead</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; Detention Center Training,</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Saturday, River Artsfest, Indian Head, booths for Bay-Wise and MG's, more information to follow</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; last day Detention Center Training, La Plata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Thursday, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.; Entomology: Getting Intimate with your Foe, St. Mary's County, Sotterley Plantation, Hollywood, $35, Registration deadline 6/16  See page 22 for registration info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Tuesday, 10 a.m.; Membership Meeting, Extension Office, Open to all MGs</td>
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#### July

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wednesday, 9:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.; Plant ID/Taxonomy, St. Mary's, Charlotte Hall Library, $35, text $16, Registration deadline 6/15  See page 22 for registration info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Plant ID/Taxonomy, St. Mary's, Charlotte Hall Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.; Vegetable Plant and Pest Diagnostic Walk, Charles County, La Plata Detention Center, $10, Registration deadline 7/19  See page 22 for registration info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Tuesday, 10 a.m.; Membership Meeting, Extension Office, Open to all MGs</td>
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(Continued on page 22)

If you would like more information on a project, please contact the project leader by referring to your Membership Directory.
Two Locations For Our Plant Sale in 2011

By Gale Kladitis, Class of 2008

On Saturday, January 22, we held the organizational meeting at the Town Mouse for the annual Master Gardeners plant sale. Turnout was great and we made most of the major plans for a terrific sale. Terry Thir will be the project leader for the PD Brown Library location in St Charles and I will be the project leader for the Farmers’ Market location in La Plata. The plant sale will be held Saturday May 7, come rain or shine. We have set a very high goal for this year (grossing $2,000) and with everyone’s help we should reach it.

Jessica Milstead, Louise Kearns, and Sue Brewer will handle preliminary arrangements via email notifications, such as when to start getting the plants ready, identifying and labeling them, and staging. Cheryl Kasunich will be taking responsible for advertising and Dianne and Chuck Goodrich will be taking care of transportation. We will have a plant expert at each location, Jessica Milstead in Waldorf and Maggie Tieger in La Plata.

Once again we will offer salad boxes for sale and we’re hoping to have 10 available at each location. Our vegetable plants were a big seller last year, and hopefully our new interns will have an interest in starting some of the vegetable seeds.

The staging area for the plants this year will be Barbie Walter’s house in Mt Carmel, with Jan Cooney’s house taking the overflow. Mary Gaskins has offered her sales tent for the Waldorf location and the Master Gardeners’ tent will be used in LaPlata. Now is the time to start thinking about the plants you need to divide for the sale. Remember, this is our biggest fundraiser for the year and with everyone participating we may just exceed our goal. I promise to all a joyous and enjoyable experience.

(Continued on page 17)
Digging For The Plant Sale

Guess who provides the merchandise for the sale? All the Master Gardeners. Now is the time to start digging and dividing perennials. (You’ve probably already heard via email about starting seeds for edibles.)

Those plants you don’t have room for will grace someone else’s garden and make some money to help support Charles County MG programs. And all of the time that you spend digging and preparing plants for the sale counts as volunteer hours. So what do we want?

● Desirable garden plants
   No Invasives
● Established in 4”-8” pots (i.e., dug ahead of time, not the day before the sale)
● Labeled

We verify the plant names, so you can give us whatever information you have and we’ll figure it out. Just don’t make us guess. Recycled pots are fine. Plants are to be brought to Barbie Walter’s and Janet Cooney’s yards during the week before the sale.

The workday to check, organize, and label the plants will be on Friday, May 6. Louise Kearns is our people organizer and she will be emailing for volunteers. Sue Brewer is in charge of organizing the plant gathering and staging for the workday. You’ll be hearing from her about details of needs.

And from me you’ll be hearing more details about kinds of plants and how to make sure your plant donations help to assure a positive impression on our customers. So watch your emails for all this - and start digging!

The Master Gardener 2010 Plant Sale in La Plata

Our salad boxes (above left) were a new endeavor for us and we sold 12. Ronda Goldman (above right) presented a Bay-Wise demonstration to very interested MGs and the public. Photos by Gale Kladitis
no longer given. For the first time there was a real final exam, and well over 50% of the class scored in the nineties.

Like a grandmother I could go on bragging about this class for a while, but I think you’ve got the idea. Yessiree, I expect grand things from the class of 2011!

Reflections on the MG Program:
By Brenda Elmore, Intern

Gardening is an activity that I have been around all of my life. It is not something I began doing myself, however, until we moved into our current home about 16 years ago. The cement-like ground kept my activities to a minimum until I finally persuaded my husband to purchase a big rotor-tiller several years ago. At long last I could plant. I love gardening, even though my success has been hit-and-miss.

When I heard about the Master Gardener program, I jumped at the chance to learn more about gardening. And believe me I have!

With still so much to learn, I only wish I had taken this course years sooner.

From testing and amending the soil, to proper placement of plants, to composting and fertilizing; from trees to turf grass, expert gardeners have shared their knowledge and passion with the students who are now Master Gardener Interns.

This next year will be full of hands on interaction with projects that share what we’ve learned with novice gardeners, as we continue to learn more from our mentors, the expert Master Gardeners who have been in the program for years. It will be exciting and instructive to find ways we can add to the program through our 40 hours of volunteering during the upcoming months. My own garden should benefit greatly from the knowledge and advice I’ve been given in the past two months.

But best of all, like ripples that grow out from a small splash, the Master Gardener Program continues to educate and interest more people each year in land management, home gardening, and better stewardship, helping our world to be a greener, more beautiful place. I’m glad to have been given the opportunity to become a part of it.
Welcome To Our New Master Gardener Interns

Congratulations to all of the 2011 Master Gardener interns who completed the classroom phase of the program and were honored on March 10 in Waldorf. University of Maryland Extension is honored that you have chosen to participate in the program and devote some of your valuable volunteer time to work on MG projects throughout the county. I look forward to seeing you at some of the MG projects and events later on this year. I would also like to thank Barbie Walter for her excellent organizing of the training program and the many current Master Gardeners who served as speakers, hosts, etc. You bring great credit to the county and the University with your professional efforts. Happy spring to all!

Karol Dyson
County Extension Director
Seeds, Sprouts and Blossoms…

By Carol Teets, Class of 2003

On Thursday May 19, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. the Master Gardeners will be hosting a Container Vegetable Gardening Class in the Healing Garden at Civista Hospital. This class will be open to the public and will set the stage for the hospital cafeteria to utilize fresh vegetables and herbs in their kitchen. (When the hospital’s chef was told we were planting herbs he was more than delighted and ran out to the area to visualize where and what the herb pots will contain for enhancing his cooking.) Gale Kladitis and I will be teaching. If you are interested in helping with this project please contact me.

The hospital partnership is going to provide us with other teaching opportunities. They will be celebrating National Hospital Week May 9-13 and they would like the Master Gardener’s to provide a Grow It Eat It class for their employees sometime during that week. Stay tuned for more details.

By Jan Lakey-Waters, Class 2009

A grant from the Chaney Foundation has been applied for to renovate the raised beds. Join us on Thursday April 7 at 10 a.m. for one of our work parties. Watch for emails regarding the dates and times we will be working in Nanjemoy at Camp Merrick.
Growing Cacti & Other Succulents in Zone 7
By Carol Teets

On October 23, 2010, a small group of Master Gardeners from Charles and Prince George’s Counties gathered to learn more about hardy cacti and succulents. These special types of plant material are very drought-resistant and ALMOST deer-proof. Nicole Stewart, an artist with a passion for portraiture, provided this learning experience as an added opportunity for visitors to her showing at the Mattawoman Creek Art Center (MCAC). Bob Stewart, Nicole’s husband, is an expert grower of these plants. When he was taken ill, Nicole took over; she has shared Bob’s passion for over 20 years.

Did you know? "Succulent" is a descriptive term; implies a plant that can store water and survive extended periods of drought. Examples of succulents: *Agave parryii*, *Yucca baccata*, and *Semper-vivum (hens and chicks).*

Did you know? There are cacti and other types of succulent plants that can be grown indoors and outdoors year-round in the D.C. area. Examples of cacti: *Opuntia humifusa* (our native prickly pear) with a flat shape and *Cylindropuntia* (chollas), cacti of a cylindrical shape.

Did you know? Cacti and succulents are considered easy to grow but, as with most plant material, you must follow a few simple rules. In general, they grow best if given at least six hours of full sun each day. The container and soil must provide really good drainage, and watering is still required despite their ability to endure long periods of drought. They will not grow well if kept perpetually dry, but the main cause of death for outdoor cacti is rot from winter wetness.

Would you like to know more? For more information contact:

Bob Stewart - Stewart723@gmail.com

National Capital Cactus & Succulent Society
http://www.cactus-mall.com/clubs/nccss.html

Cactus and Succulent Society of Maryland
(Continued from page 15)

August

4   Plant ID/Taxonomy, St. Mary’s, Charlotte Hall Library

23  Tuesday, 10 a.m.; Membership Meeting, Extension Office, Open to all MGs

September

10  Saturday, Native Plant Walk, Time and Location TBD, contact Jessica Milstead

14-18 Wednesday through Sunday, Charles County Fair

27  Tuesday, 10 a.m.; Membership Meeting, Extension Office, Open to all MGs

October

6   Thursday, Native Plant Walk, Time and Location TBD, contact Jessica Milstead

11-14 Tuesday through Friday, International Master Gardener Conference, Charleston, West Virginia, for more information go to http://imgc.ext.wvu.edu/

25  Tuesday, 10 a.m.; Membership Meeting, Extension Office, Open to all MGs

For more information and to register for Advanced Training Classes mentioned in this Calendar please go to: http://mastergardener.umd.edu/AdvancedTraining/index.cfm

MG ANNUAL TRAINING DAY 2011

Tuesday, May 17, 2011
8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.
Adele Stamp Student Union
University of Maryland College Park

Registration is $69 until April 18, and $79 after that date.

To register go to: http://www.agnr.umd.edu/Extension/gardening/mastergardeners/MGAnTrDay2011/index.cfm. Information on classes being offered, and colored photos of merchandise being offered for sale are available also.
Compost: A collection of unattractive materials that, when mixed together and properly treated, becomes something useful and enriching.

Submit articles, photos, reports, and other items to Cindi Barnhart by June 1, 2011 for publication in the Summer 2011 newsletter. Submit calendar items to Janet McGrane by June 1, 2011. Articles and pictures may also be submitted at any time for future publication.
University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, gender, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, or national origin.