

IN AND OUT OF THE GARDEN

The July 2011 Monthly Journal
Rockbridge Area Master Gardeners' Association
www.ramga.org

"The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses."
- Hanna Rion

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN By Amy Scheuer



First of all, I would you all to join me in welcoming Molly Delappe and Cecile West-Settle as our **new** Co-Editors of the RAMGA Newsletter! Sherry Smith, our previous Editor, has done a fine job over the years, and we thank her for her time and effort.

Our own Master Gardeners are again in the spotlight. The hard work done by Barbara Thomas and Kim Seroki and others has resulted in the grand opening of the Glasgow Community Garden. . What a great writeup in the 06/15/11

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The President's Column.....	1
The Visitors Center at Buena Vista.....	2
Hunting for Continuing Education Hours?.....	4
A New Way to Report your Volunteer Hours.....	5
Volunteer Alerts.....	5
Educational Calendar.....	6

Rockbridge Weekly. Along with our involvement in the LDMS "Kids Growing Food", our organization appears to be making an impact in our Rockbridge community. Way to go Master Gardeners!!

This month is the 2011 Horticultural Show beginning on July 19 at the Horse Center. Maureen Becker has sent out a special request via email for volunteer help. Please contact her at (540)462-6119. We can also look forward to August with our participation in the Community Festival held in downtown Lexington. Pat Kovach is in charge and I'm sure she could use some help. She can be reached at (540)463-7713.

I knew Mother Nature was going to get back at me for complaining about all the rain. Right now, it looks gloomy for July and August, never mind what we had in June. This year we extended our own garden from tomato, pepper and cukes to adding corn, onions and snap peas. I sure hope the weather cooperates, and we all can enjoy the bounty of our gardens.

Again, please check out the VOLUNTEERS ALERT column.

HAPPY JULY 4th!!!!



Our leader, Katherine Smith, Laura Mattingly, Sherry Smith and kneeling, Heather Marion Missing: Gordon Jacoby, Sally Nunnely, Liz Mauer and Penny Wilson

THE VISITORS CENTER GARDEN AT BUENA VISTA

By Katherine Smith

RAMGA's demonstration garden at the Buena Vista Visitor Center began as something completely different in 1997 when, as the Center construction began, we were asked by the city to design the landscaping. The plan was simple—just low maintenance shrubs around the building and parking lot. We would assist in proper installation and train their public works staff in upkeep procedures, then monitor their efforts. By late spring, 1998, we had completed this portion of the agreement. By the end of the second year, it was clear that RAMGA should assume responsibility for upkeep, and thus was born the second project in RAMGA's history.

During the 75th anniversary of the Blue Ridge Parkway this year, our 2009-2010 team invites all fellow MGs to visit the site. But to appreciate our progress fully, follow these directions. Drive Route 60 east up to the

Parkway, and using it as a turnaround, come back down. If you drive slowly after the run-away truck exit, you can begin to see the land as a tourist would when looking for relief and information. The perspective for our gardening begins a little farther down. The problem was how to provide visual relief as well. Imagine how it might have appeared in March, 1998 as construction ended—a bare doublewide with sidewalks and a gravel parking lot. As you pull in there, you will see the results of countless volunteer hours spent upgrading just about everything.

Here's a summary of what we've done and learned during those hours. Of the original landscaping around the building, the Hollywood Junipers and the yews remain. Looking back toward the parkway, the Trident Maple, the flagpole with its grassy skirt, and the more colorful one beneath the welcoming sign are also original, though much enhanced. And all else is new.

First, though, what to do about the soil? Clay compacted by construction work can be turned into soil within five years. (We found our first earthworm the fifth year.) Therefore, if you must have immediate beauty, plant choices are obviously critical. Ann Spivey wisely chose daylilies and Boltonia. These were set out in holes chopped into the clay, lined with wet newspaper, then filled with pulverized clay. Rocks can be decorative and need no loam. Al Gordon placed several under the sign. (But now, in the growing season, they're obscured by plants.)

Water has always been a problem. At first we used city water, running hoses everywhere. Then, there was the year of drought when the City called a halt to irrigation. Team members brought water from home most of the summer, and the toted jugs saved most of our plants. Subsequently, with the help of Bob Burguières, part of the team focused on engineering.

Soaker hoses went everywhere! Finally, we installed water barrels at the building's four corners. Gordon Jacoby is mastering their use. Many native plants perform well in a xeric landscape, and we continue to emphasize them.

Pests have been a problem, also. The original Barberries between the Hollywood Junipers and Yews have been replaced twice. While they may never attract deer or webworms in a service station area, they did in ours. The webworms were a surprise. Looking them up in our Extension Office library, we discovered they are creatures of the Gulf Coast, and they proved impossible to control. The Barberries were consigned to the county landfill. There will always be abundant weeds in an area surrounded by busy roadways. Glyphosate is a good friend, as is corn gluten. The one culprit we have difficulty controlling is crown vetch.

Finally, signage of all kinds was a problem, one we've solved imaginatively. A large sign in the center of the "honeysuckle fence" (Thank you, Debbie Lugar) announces our presence. Bright yellow wooden sunflowers (Thank you Sherry Smith) ask everyone to forgive our occasional mess. For our own reference, the beds are numbered and records kept of their plantings. Lorraine Lemmer began a notebook kept in the Center itself as a reference for docents. Greg Lemmer continues to work on labels for each plant.

As you exit, we want you to know that while the building and grounds are the responsibility of the Rockbridge Regional Tourism Office and the City, our MG team is responsible for the beauty. Members are Gordon Jacoby, Heather Marion, Laura Mattingly, Liz Maurer, Sally Nunnally, Katherine Smith, Sherry Smith and Penny Wilson. (Over the years, we've had thirty team members.) The team is there on Tuesdays from nine to eleven, and most gather for lunch afterwards for lunch at Franks for the Memories. The garden is meant to be attractive

year round, and so we garden year round, taking only late December and early January off.

Our RAMGA budget has invariably been appreciated, but team members have been known to enhance it along with the look of the place.

Note: This is the fifth in a series of articles reporting the activities of our unit's projects. The series was mandated by the RAMGA Board and is overseen by Vice President Pat Kovach. The purpose is to keep all MGs aware of how busy we are and what good work we do



Hunting for Continuing Education Hours?

By Carol Schoner and Liz Maurer

Continuing Education is critical for each Master Gardener. We need to keep current with new ideas in land stewardship, new gardening techniques, diseases which threaten our native plants, chemicals that are harmful to the environment, etc....the list goes on.

Continuing Education (CE) credit can be obtained by attending the RAMGA monthly programs or an approved class or lecture offered at nearby universities, nurseries, or botanical gardens etc. Most of these are listed in the last pages of our monthly newsletter.

In addition to these normal offerings, the RAMGA board has agreed that you can get **CE credit for research** that you do for tasks such as teaching a MG class or presenting a program, or writing an article for the newsletter or newspaper. The research must be done with proper resources, preferably Virginia Tech

sources, or other state universities, or state agricultural groups. This is particularly important when using the Internet as a resource for information. **The rule will be for every hour of valid research you do, you get one CE hour credit.** All time reporting is on the honor system as is the validation of research time and resources.

So here are some specific possibilities to fulfill the 8 required hours for 2011:

Choose from among RAMGA's monthly programs held at the Rockbridge Regional Library: **Thurs, Oct 27th** Sustainability - Chris Wise ,W & L Kitchen Gardens - Bill Hamilton; **Thurs, Nov 17th** Organic Farming & Running a CSA - David Beebe (Cherry Ridge Organic Farm near Rockbridge Baths). Each of these programs counts for 1 credit hour.

Check the last page of RAMGA's newsletter for Educational Programs. Several programs will be listed with differing credit hours each month. Programs listed will include selected adult education programs at places like Boxerwood, Va Tech, W&L, Monticello, Bland, Lewis Ginter, JMU, etc.

Research and write an article for RAMGA's newsletter. CE hours will be earned for the research time; volunteer hours are earned for the article writing time. Check with Education Coordinator for topic approval and newsletter editor for space availability.

Prepare and present a Speakers' Bureau program for the community. CE credit hours earned for research. Check with Education Coordinator for topic approval.

Questions? Call or email Education Coordinator Liz Maurer (esm306@yahoo.com; 757-428-4777 cell; 540-377-9095 home)

A New Way to Report Your Volunteer Hours

No one likes to fill out the time sheets whether digitally or on paper. But now there is a new and easier way - much less work for you and me. Internet, here I come!!!! That is as long as you have access to the Internet. (If you do not, just continue to record your hours on a time sheet and I will enter the hours for you.)

I will be sending out a separate email to all of you with step-by-step instructions, but the process is so easy that you might just try going to the system yourself and working through it.

You can get to the reporting system by visiting our great and informative website www.ramga.org. Look for the **Time Reporting** button under "**For Current Members**". Selecting this button will take you to the on-line new reporting system.

This new reporting system will be used for reporting 2011 volunteer and CE hours. Any 2010 hours will still use the old process (send the time sheet to me).

My goal is to have everyone on the system by the end of the year. So I ask you all to go and try the system. I am sure you will like it.

Carol SchonerRAMGA Records Coordinator



Volunteer Alert

1. 2011 Horticultural Show, July 19, 2011 at the Horse Center. Maureen Becker still needs volunteers. Her contact # is (540) 462-6119 or email: mbecker@wlu.edu.

2. Fall 'Dig and Divides' - Tracey wrote an article in June's newsletter outlining our needs.

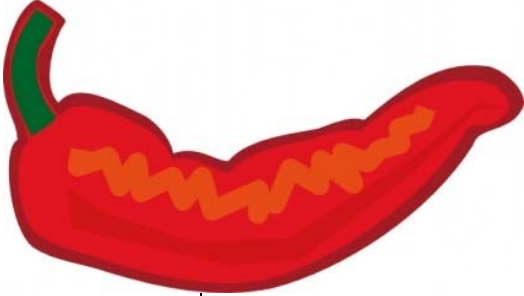
This activity is our major fund raiser which allows us to maintain our projects. We would like more MGs involved so that this activity doesn't fall onto one person. Please call or email Tracey for more info, (540) 348-

6734, tsmitholiver@centurylink.net.

3. We have a position opening on the Board of Directors for Vice-President. Pat Kovach will be moving to the President's position next year and we need to fill her spot. Please contact Amy Scheuer (540) 464-1818 or Pat (540) 463-7713 if you are interested.

Calendar of Educational Events -July 2011

Date	Event/Credits	Content	Location/Contact
July 7 6-7:30 PM	Propagation techniques for Herbaceous Plants Hahn Garden Pavilion, VA Tech, Blacksburg Credits: 1.5 hrs	Stephanie Huckestein, Instructor for the Indoor Plants course at VT, will conduct a hands-on workshop for herbaceous perennial & tropical plants. \$10 Friends of the Garden members/ \$15 general public	http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/events.html
July 9 9:30-11:30 AM	Natural History Tree Walk Monticello Credit: 2 hrs	Peter Hatch will lead a walking tour that explores the natural history of Monticello's exotic and native trees. Learn to identify about fifty species through an understanding of their ornamental, cultural, and historical character. Reservations required. \$15.	More info at http://www.monticello.org/site/visit/events/natural-history-trees-walk
July 14 6-8 PM	Hypertufapalooza! Hahn Horticulture Garden Pavilion, VA Tech, Blacksburg. Credit: Multiple Credit hours depending on classes attended Credit: 2 hrs	Experienced Hokie plantsman, gardener, and overall talented designer, Doug Jessie, will share his hypertufa skills. He will discuss molds, recipes and technique & help participants create a uniquely designed planting container to take home. Must pre-register! \$30 general public/\$20 Friends of the Garden members.	http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/events.html
July 16, 9:30- 11:30 AM	Natural Dyes Workshop Tufton Farm Credit: 2 hrs	Pat Brodowski will lead a workshop to learn how the palette of European dye expanded with the discovery of dyes from North & South American flora such as goldenrod & black walnut. \$15.	http://www.monticello.org/site/visit/events/natural-dyes-workshop

SAVE THE DATES			
Aug 29-21	13th Annual "In The Garden With The Experts". Homestead, Hot Springs Credit: 4.5 hrs	Andre Viette will show you which plants make the wonderful gardens in the United States and Canada great. Michael Goatley will discuss keeping lawns green & water clean & Bart McDowell shows you how to prune like a pro. Mike Western talks about three season vegetable gardening.	More info at http://www.thehomestead.com/events
Aug 27	Down and Dirty Garden Symposium II: The Wicked Garden. VA Tech, Blacksburg Credit: Hrs TBD	All-day symposium featuring Amy Stewart, author of "Wicked Plants" and coming in 2011, "Wicked Bugs".	http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/events.html
Online courses available	Department of Plant Pathology, Ohio State University	Various Online Courses Available	http://plantpath.osu.edu/extension/outreach/online/index.html .
Credit *** For credit hour questions, contact Liz Maurer esm306@yahoo.com 757-428-4777 (c) or 540-377-9095			
			

Officers

Amy Scheuer, President
Pat Kovach, Vice President
Bob Kovach, Treasurer
Ann Gruner, Secretary
David Mims, Representative, Virginia Master Gardeners Association

Standing Committees

Carol Schoner, Records Coordinators
Caren Nash, Programs
Faith Vosburgh, Publicity
Ted Jenks, Plant Sale
Liz Maurer, Education coordinator
Molly Delappe and Cecile West-Settle Newsletter

IN AND OUT OF THE GARDEN

Editors-in-chief Molly Delappe and Cecile West-Settle

In and Out of the Garden is published monthly by the Rockbridge Area Master Gardeners Association. Items to be published in the newsletter must be submitted not later than the twentieth of the month prior to publication. Articles, Letters to the Editor, and inquiries about subscriptions may be addressed to the Rockbridge Area Master Gardeners Association, c/o Molly Delappe 1705 Raphine Rd Raphine Virginia 24472 or e-mail mkbluce@yahoo.com.

The newsletter may also be viewed at www.ramga.org

Subscription rates: \$10.00 per year.



ROCKBRIDGE AREA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION
P.O. Drawer 897
Lexington, Virginia 24450