



## HMGA Activity Reports and Announcements for January 2023

### Announcements -

Amazon is discontinuing their Smile Program where they made a small donation to your charity of choice. The program will end by 2/20. To help the nonprofits they will provide a one time payment equivalent to three months based on what they had earned in 2022.

The new Public Facebook Page is now on FB as [Hanover Master Gardeners - Virginia Cooperative Extension](#). If you are a member of FB, please go to our new public Page and **Follow** it and **Share** from it. Following the new Page will help build its exposure.

Weekly Calendar Update sent by Betty Jane now contains many popular Spring CE events. Don't miss out. The Goochland/Powhatan MG Spring Fest and Prince George Better Gardening Symposium are just two of the favorites. Don't miss out.

**State Fair - Needs Coordinators.** An opportunity for several MGs to partner and engage in the creative process of creating a fun educational Fair experience for school children and adults. This Activity gives the Hanover Master Gardeners widespread exposure and is key element is the State Master Gardener Program.

### Horticulture Learning Center - Bob Durbin -

The HLC committee has met twice since the last board meeting. Progress has been made, but many more decisions to be made.

Cardboard and wood chips will be placed in the garden area, as a base for weed prevention.

The initial garden area has been marked, mowed, and scraped. Cardboard has been gathered and cardboard was cleaned and trimmed on 1/21 so it can be placed in the garden and covered with mulch.

One tree company has committed to dropping wood chips in the garden, a tarp has been placed at a location to have the chips dropped. More tree services need to be contacted to drop chips. The initial garden area is over 6000 sq. ft. and needs to be covered by cardboard and wood chips. An additional work day will be set once some of the wood chips are dropped.

Garden principles have been agreed upon:

Areas of agreement were:

- Promoting principles of sustainability

- Promoting principles of 4th soil
- Promoting principles of waterwise
- Promoting principles of gardening as we age
- Promoting principles of reuse/refurbish materials
- Promoting principles of low maintenance gardening
- Promoting non-use of neonicotinoids

Areas for further discussion were:

- Defining how and what we will use for fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.
- Define how/if we will be organic and to what extent.

**Steve Karcher**, a new trainee, developed a digital version of the garden which will be extremely helpful as we plan to place garden beds, irrigation, etc.

Three sub-committees have been organized and are beginning to meet.

- Finance/Fundraising/PR

HMGA provided \$2,000 seed money for HLC

VCE has pledged \$1,650 in matching funds for a water tank

Year End donations amounted to \$1,348.90

Grant Funding priority is a water tank (Rappahannock Electric Company and Virginia Conservation Assistance Program) are possible options.

Budget requests from committees should be firmed up by mid-March.

Rainwater harvest system/irrigation - Hanover County has agreed to place a water faucet in the garden with up to 100 gal/day use (Do not know at this time if there is a cost associated with this).

Construction/maintenance:

- Decision to place 10 garden beds into the HLC this season.
- Possible greenhouse frame donation is being assessed for acceptance by HLC.
- Meeting with Hanover County staff on 1/27 to discuss needs/wants of HLC
- Soil test, Miss Utility survey completed.
- Site visit by Home Garden Team in the works.

Extension Master Gardener and Community Volunteer Expectation Sheet is being reviewed for comments and has been attached to this report. Please send comments to Bob.

Recruitment of Master Gardeners or Community Volunteers has not been started. If anyone is interested in volunteering to maintain a garden bed please pass their name to an HLC committee member.

Next HLC meeting 2/13 at 3pm

### **Expectations for Extension Master Gardeners and Community Volunteers**

The Horticultural Learning Center space will focus on public horticultural education, based upon research-based practices, and directed by community interests and needs. The HLC will be open for normal operations from April to October (Possible soil amendments in the winter).

**Garden beds will be managed by two Extension Master Gardeners and at least one community volunteer** and will be constructed in a variety of ways and using a variety of materials.

### **Extension Master Gardeners:**

Requirements:

- Be in good standing with VCE policies and procedures
- Operate under the supervision of VCE
- Commit to work in the HLC for one growing season (April – October).
- Agree to utilize only researched based gardening sources.
- Follow horticultural principles established by the HLC committee and approved by VCE.
- Have at least two Extension Master Gardeners for each garden bed
- Review basic safety and sanitation rules prior to working in the garden
- Notify a member of construction/maintenance committee of any need to repair/replace any structure or garden item, or of any need to mow/trim/weed any area of the garden that needs attention.
- Will be responsible for, weeding, watering, harvesting and maintaining the garden bed, and
- must perform other tasks as needed to promote a healthy garden area.

### **Community Volunteers:**

Requirements:

- Have a One Time/Occasional Volunteer Application/Enrollment Form on file with the Volunteer Manager before volunteering. Once signed it is valid until rescinded.
- Work with an Extension Master Gardener at all times (cannot work alone in the garden)
- Commit to work in the HLC for one growing season (April-Oct)
- Follow horticultural principles established by the HLC committee and approved by VCE.
- Agree to utilize only researched based gardening sources.
- Review basic safety and sanitation rules prior to working in the garden
- Be responsible for, weeding, watering, harvesting, and maintaining the garden bed, and will perform other tasks as needed to promote a healthy garden area.

Revised 1/13/23

**Gleaning - Pattie Bland (Pattie Bland and Elaine Daniel, coordinators)** - We plan to offer 2 training sessions by Zoom, one afternoon and one evening, late February or early March. MGs may sign up for either one. Date to be announced. Everyone, even veteran gleaners, must retake the training to be ready for the current season. Elaine Daniel and Pattie Bland will be coordinators again this year, but a third coordinator will also be added to make a coordinating team.

**Home Gardening Series - Katrina Hart** - Attendance by the Public has been low. Delivery of the Series in the future will be evaluated. Want to be a part of this evaluation and move into the future with this Activity? Let Angelette or Katrina know.

### **Virginia Cooperative Extension (VEC) – Angelette Pryor -**

2023 Master Gardener Training Course:

- 15 trainees (full class).
- Almost 30 MGs have helped/will help with planning/training in 2023.
- A wonderful group effort.
- Some new speakers this year.

Thank you to those of you that have taken on new roles. It is much appreciated!

Activity and Contact list is undergoing revision. Will be sent to everyone once finalized and posted in Better Impact.

All activities need to be evaluated - A small group ( 6-7) is needed to take on this task. Need a mix of long term, mid-range and new MGs. This will be a year long process...

No new activities - We need to focus attention on HLC for at least 2023 before taking on other new activities. Each MG should align themselves with at least 2 activities this year. All need at least 2 hours helping HLC activity.

Currently approved Youth activities will increase with the hire of the 4 H Agent – Savannah Steblein.

Extension office floors recently cleaned. They look beautiful!

Some donation checks towards HLC have been sent to the office. Laura's guideline is all monetary donations route through the Extension office.

Please consider that any activity will potentially need funds earmarked towards it, not just "gardens". For example, the Speakers Bureau brings in money – maybe some should go back to them for hands-on activities. Demonstrations items need funding, etc.

**Educational Grants - Becky Watson (Betty Jane Hughes, Mary Wagner, Doris Gullotta, Mike Little)** - Beaverdam ES was given a grant to purchase quality name tags for their Learning Garden.

**Scotchtown Demo Gardens - Doris Gullotta** - The first event is scheduled for April 22, 2023 from 10am to 4pm. Annual Fiber Day event.

**Communications - Betty Jane Hughes & Katherine Hebert -**

The renewal message for our domain name is due on 1/19/23. It looks like it will be \$20.99 (name) and \$9.99 (protection) per year. BJ will pay and get reimbursed.

Website updates:

- The wish list and donation form were added to the newly created HLC page. This page is linked on the home page.
- The slideshow issues have been resolved, and photo slideshows have been restored to the home and native garden pages. A new slideshow has been added to the HLC page and will continue to grow to document the progression of the garden.
- Hanover Master Garden letterhead was created and posted in the member section of the website under Policies, Processes, and Procedures

The Communications Committee (BJ, Sandy and Katherine) met before the holidays to discuss the website's future development. We will work to recruit more members to expand the committee so that the work can be spread out and we can create more content for the website. We want the Hanover Master Gardeners website to be a valuable resource of information for Hanover gardeners. We are inspired by other, more robust Master Gardener chapter websites in Virginia.

A call for volunteers and a welcome meeting will be scheduled in February. Katherine has already been discussing needs with master gardeners and has a few people interested in getting involved. Involvement on the committee is a good way to get hours and help educate the public from home and with a flexible schedule.

Recommended Communications Committee Structure:

- 2 editors/writers
- 3 people with WordPress knowledge to keep the website updated
- 1 person to create a quarterly community newsletter
- 1 person to create an Internal monthly newsletter

Sections we propose adding to the website with information include:

- MG Projects
- IPM Section
  - o Pest and Disease spotlight
- Monthly garden chores – Update previously posted calendar
- How to be an environmental steward
  - o Fire wise
  - o Water wise
- Resource categories for plant recommendations, care and articles.
  - o Natives
  - o Weeds
  - o Veggies
  - o Herbs
  - o Alternatives to invasives
  - o House plants
  - o Trees
  - o Pollinators
  - o Lawns

Katherine has requested presenters in the HGS to write articles on their topic for inclusion on the website. Other older content on the Resources page can be refreshed and updated. This information will be organized better into the above categories to make it easier to find.

Information Wish List:

Katherine would love to get information/photos to include on the website.

- Photos from Home Visits
- A write-up about each garden at Scotchtown and an up-to-date plant list
- Garden book recommendations that master gardeners love.
- A paragraph or two about each project we are working on.

Members only area:

At our members meeting on 1/9, part of the program was a presentation by Eleanor about winter squash. She treated us to delicious samples and provided us with the recipes. For those of you who could not attend I have posted those recipes plus one of my own on our website.

**Veggies** - Lemony Summer Squash, Baby Arugula Butternut Squash with Maple Vinaigrette, Butternut Squash, Parmesan Herb Roasted Acorn Squash, Spaghetti Squash Cheesy Bread.

### **Land Care Steward - Linda Hazelwood -**

Home Visit to Atlee Little League Complex, 8324 Whippoorwill Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Date Visited: December 14, 2022

Pattie Bland and Emily Gianfortoni, met with William Vehrs, Secretary for Atlee Little League

Goals of the Visit: A visit was requested to view the grounds, make recommendations for new landscaping with native plants, and identify invasive plants present. The overall plan is to improve the appearance of the property with plants that are native to the property. Possible signage highlighting native plants and their benefits was discussed. The Atlee Little League Board plans to apply for one of HMGA's grants.

Overview: The 50-acre property includes 9 baseball fields, several outbuildings including restrooms, a snack bar, office, and storage building. A main parking lot and an overflow lot are located on the property. Both open and wooded areas surround the fields and buildings. Picnic tables are situated under trees throughout the complex. There were pathways and roads, but no border indicators along these walkways to guide the flow of foot traffic. Because of the heavy foot traffic, throughout the complex, the ground has become quite compacted. Roots of trees were exposed in compacted eroded soil, particularly in picnic table areas. The wooded area is mostly pine trees, and understory plants.

Recommendation: General landscaping recommendations

Confine foot traffic to established paths, roads and walkways with a combination of hardscape barriers, signage, and planting beds. The goal is to prevent visitors from walking on the planted beds.

Maintain the health of the existing trees, especially in groves where the picnic tables are located. A 2-inch layer of wood chips on the exposed roots and under the tables would prevent further erosion and might reduce compaction. Care should be taken to ensure that the mulch is no more than 2 or 3 inches deep or the roots could be deprived of oxygen.

Native shrubs would be good choices for the edges of wooded areas. A small number of raised beds for perennials in selected areas would be a good starting point and a test for which plants will thrive in the given conditions. Native grasses and ferns would be good choices because of the deer.

Testing the soil in areas selected for planting is a good idea.

There are several areas where plantings could improve the overall appearance of the complex. Many of the plants can be found in Native Plants for Virginia's Capital Region.

Conclusion: The Hanover Master Gardener Home Visit Team is ready to answer any questions about this report and to provide further information about how to construct raise beds, how to plant trees and shrubs, or further information about particular plants.

Any questions, contact Pattie Bland or Emily Gianfortoni.

## **Meetings, Trips & Tours, Continuing Education - Eleanor Fukushima, VP -**

- Hanover Evangelical Friends Church approved all of the requested dates for meetings and the plant sale.
- February 13, 2023, Monday evening member meeting will be a presentation on Tips on Preventing Disease in Hydrangeas by Joan Vandervort, HMG.
- March 13, 2023, Monday evening member meeting will be a presentation on Hanover's Comprehensive Plan Update. This meeting is also a Potluck Dinner.
- No member meeting in April

## **Plant Sale - Pat Reyes, Sandy Pence, Betty Jane Hughes -**

We have submitted the 2023 Activity Proposal to Laura. Sandy is working on vendors and has already secured three.

The following dates have been added to BI and Weekly Calendar Update.

Sat 2/28 – Planning Meeting

Sat 3/18 – Potting Party

Fri 4/21 – Deliver items for sale to the church

Sat 4/22 – Plant Sale

**Plant Clinics - Needs a Coordinator.**

**Youth Activities - Needs a Coordinator.**

**MG Help Desk - Val Kish -** As you can see, we had the greatest number of contacts in 2022 compared with 2019-2021. Report Attached.

**2023 MG Training Class (MGTC) - Val Kish/Kate Sandy -** No report.

**Extension Office Demo Garden - Sandy Pence -** Want to be a part of this garden? Let me know.

**Pole Green Butterfly Garden - Sandy Pence -** Planning for next year will begin soon. Want to be a part of this garden? Let me know,

**Rural Point Elementary School Garden - Sandy Pence -** Nothing to report.

**Speakers Bureau - Carol Brown -** No report.