



HMGA Activity Reports and Announcements for October 2023

Compiled October 14, 2023 - Sandy Pence

Announcements -

- Reminder - All MGs are required to earn 2 hours associated with the HLC this year. Angelette sent an email with the requirement and how to search your BI records to see if you have met the 2 hour requirement.
- Please take the time to record hours that haven't been recorded because we will begin to gather information required by Virginia Tech before the year ends.
- A meeting to evaluate the HMGA community grants program is scheduled for Wednesday, November 15, 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM. Anyone interested is invited to attend. Look for it on BI.
- A Fundraising Committee is being formed to oversee and create opportunities to raise funds for our varied educational programs. Interested, sign up on BI. First meeting is Wednesday, October 25, 10:00 AM.
- As a reminder, please "Sign Up" for events because all activities are on BI, also please "Remove" your name if you are not attending the activity. The option to remove your name is under Schedule on the home page.

Horticulture Learning Center - Bob Durbin and Holly Owens (reporting) -

Finance/ Fundraising/PR

- Preparing Budget for HLC 2024 is in process.
- Ashland Harvest Run 10/21- The HLC has been designated as a recipient for funds received by Ashcake Women's Club from the Ashland Harvest Run. HMGA is participating in the run with 22 runners/walkers, 12 Course Marshals and a display booth to promote the Race and Master Gardeners and highlight "Good Bugs/Bad Bugs".

Construction/Maintenance/Irrigation

- **Bob Durbin** and **Ed Hazelwood** have begun to lay out the pad for the Rainwater Collection project. Construction is scheduled to begin on the pad the week of 10/16/23. Volunteers are needed to assist with the construction.
- Boy Scouts will be volunteering in the garden on 10/28/23 to dig trenches and lay piping for the irrigation system into the garden/beds. Additional projects may be completed if time allows including moving the storage area. Volunteer spots for two shifts to help with this project are in BI. HMG volunteers are needed to assist.
- Three types of Compost bins are being developed in the garden as a Demonstration/Learning area.

Planting Committee

- Meetings have been held with the tree stewards, **Joan VanDervort** and **Mike Little**, to discuss placement for trees to provide shade and windbreaks for the garden.
- Cover Crops- several Bed Stewards have planted cover crops in the garden.
- Planning for 2024 Growing Season is in process.
- Limited Hours in HLC Starting November 1st - April 1st. One day per week for planning and routine maintenance with opportunities for larger projects.
- **Wayne Bryant** donated Daylily plants for Sale or for the HLC. Thanks to **Pam Barbour, Annette Schanz, Kate Sandy, & Holly Owens**.
- Developing Seed Saving Program- Asking HMGs to save seeds for the collection.
- The Garden Opening Ceremony April 2024 is in the planning stage. Anyone interested is encouraged to join.
- Working with Tree Stewards to plan for Planting a Tree for Arbor Day (April 26th).
- Training for Operating the Rain Harvest System will be scheduled for Spring.

Extension Office Demo Garden - Sandy Pence -

Fall garden clean up will begin as a part of the scheduled HLC workdays. Thanks to **Rosemary Wilkinson & Sammye Daou** for helping me. We also learned many gardening tips from each other. Most of my gardening education has come from association with MGs.

Pole Green Butterfly Garden - Sandy Pence

Thank you for responding to the request for interested MGs to participate in this garden.

Gleaning - Pattie Bland (Corinna Muldowney, Pattie Bland) -

Gleaning has officially ended for the 2023.

Home Gardening Series - Darlette Meekins, Ronni McCord, Noel Oakes (reporting) -

HGS Planning Committee continues to finalize details for our first two events this year, Oct. 21 and Nov. 18. In Better Impact, we've had 10 or so MGs signed up to help (and learn)! The committee has been working with the first two sets of presenters to gather their presentations and assign reviewers from those who have expressed interest. Additionally, we've reached out to another EMG who has ties with the food and beverage industry to seek donations for snacks and drinks for the event. The year's final report will have a recap of our first event, so stay tuned!

Communications - Betty Jane Hughes -

Shared results of the Member Survey done earlier this year. Overall results were shared with all MGs. Detailed results for various activities were sent to the specific activity leaders.

Website - Katherine Hebert -

We recently changed hosting providers, and the website has been running smoothly. Regular updates have been made to the events section of the home page. The Home Garden Series, Ashland plant clinic, and the Harvest Walk are featured.

Work has continued on the Resource section. The Garden Basics page has had all the Word documents and PDFs converted to HTML posts. A new article for Tree Grafting was created using the PDF presentation and additional information about troubleshooting and why grafting is done. The month-by-month chores are also completed. The previous bulleted list of tasks was updated with additional chores that may be required in zone 7b, and the lists were broken out by different categories, i.e., Flowerbeds, Trees and shrubs, Lawns, Kitchen Garden, House plants, Weeds, and

Other tips. This could be used as monthly posts on our social media and, eventually, a community newsletter.

Work will continue to convert files that download on the public site to HTML pages.

It would be great to have a page with in-depth content for the below topics. The people who responded to the recent survey will be contacted to see if they are interested in helping to write these.

- Invasive Plants and Alternatives
- Lawns
- Fertilizers
- Pollinators

Website Usage

In the last 30 days, the site has been viewed by 264 unique visitors. That's up 42% from last month. I think the 2024 class and open house interest drove much of the traffic, given the pages with the top hits. The member-only section also got significant traffic.

Facebook Public Page (Hanover Master Gardener - Cooperative Extension) - September Sickinger and Noel Oakes -

Please share posts from our Public page to your FB page. This will expand our exposure when your Friends view the share post.

Noel Oakes is now our second FB Admin.

Home Garden Visits/Land Care Stewards - Linda Hazelwood (reporting) & Emily Gianfortoni -

Bug Bizarre

Linda Hazelwood and **Christy Brennan** participated in the Henrico Bug Bizarre on October 7, 2023. The event was located at Deep Run Park in Henrico. Christy and Linda shared information on vermicomposting with red wiggler worms. This is always a fun day and a learning event for all ages. There were 484 visitors at the event during the 3- hour period.

Site Visit - Cool Spring Elementary School

Emily Gianfortoni, Sandy Pence, Linda Hazelwood met with Kelly Ridenour, PTA member, on October 11, 2023.

Kelly had sent in a request for a visit to the school asking for help with installing a pollinator garden for the K-3rd grade children at the school. She needed advice on a good location for the garden and also what native plants would be a good choice for the garden.

It was decided that the west side of the school would be the best location, which was also located by the kindergarten classes. There were five former 4x8 beds in this location, but had been neglected and would need to be refurbished. The soil was compacted and would need amending. A soil test was given to Kelly so that she will know what is needed for amendments.

We also walked around the other areas where Kelly had concerns with beds located that didn't have enough sun for their intended purpose.

Sandy will send information from Beaverdam Elementary School, where they have an established native pollinator garden that is working well for the students. This may be helpful with the garden here at Cool Spring School.

As Master Gardeners, we will help answer any questions and give advice to the school when installing the garden.

Emily will send a more detailed report to Kelly Ridenour with recommendations on native plants and installing a pollinator garden.

Plant Sale - Pat Reyes - No Report

MG Help Desk - Val Kish - See attached

Speakers Bureau - Carol Brown

2024 MG Training Course - Anne Margaret White (reporting) and Joanne Einsmann -

The training Open House held in September was a rousing success. Thanks to **Joanne Einsemann, Val Kish, Janice Thomas, Holly Owens, Noel Oakes, Rowena Fratarcangelo, Mike Little,** and **Angelette Pryor** for helping with the event by interviewing, greeting, tour guiding, explaining and otherwise being a welcoming presence to our applicants. We now have 6 applications in process and 17 additional applications that have been submitted. We look forward to continuing planning and getting ready for the January start of training classes.

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

Our member lead meeting for October was held at Agriberry for a Tour. 17 people were in attendance. We walked around the farm while Pierson and June told us about various aspects of their farm: acreages, plants, drip irrigation, fertilizers, workers and connections with other farms. We then toured the kitchen and warehouse. We each left with 3 different types of apples and Kiwi Berries.

November Member Led Meeting - 6:30 to 8:00



Good garden tools lead to happy gardening. Join us to learn how to sharpen your tools led by Pat Reyes.



Ice cream social. We will provide the ice cream. You are requested to bring your favorite topping to share.



Hanover Evangelical Friends Church
6420 Mechanicsville, Tpke Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Tree Stewards - Joan VanDervort (reporting) & Mike Little -

We have completed Phase I, the identification and write-ups for the native trees along the Lake Hanover Nature Trail, and we are waiting for the county to make the signage and new kiosk. Additionally, we have finalized the tree selection for Phase II (4 loblollies for a windbreak, a Black Gum, Red Maple, and Hackberry) and Phase III of the Tree Steward Project in coordination with the HLC chairs, the Director of Hanover Parks and Recreation, and our Department of Forestry mentors. Phase III consists of trees across the street from the Extension Office Bldg in the Taylor Complex.

We are looking into applying for a grant from the Department of Forestry to cover the cost of the trees, reservoir bibs, mulch, and private utility line survey. More to come on how our Master Gardeners can volunteer to help plant and take care of our new trees as well as outreach to the public!

Community Grants - Becky Watson,

We want to take a look at the HMGA Roddey Jones Memorial Grant program to explore if there are alternative opportunities for public education. The number of grant applications has declined significantly since Covid, and our service to the community is increasing with other programs, such as the Horticultural Learning Center.

We plan to meet on Monday, November 13th, at 4:30 p.m. at the Extension Office for an open discussion on this matter. Please sign up on B.I. to attend if you're interested in participating.

Scotchtown Demo Gardens - Doris Gullota

October 7 – Annual Fall Festival

We had two shifts set up. We had information available on all of the gardens to answer questions about the plants. It rained in the morning so the traffic by the table was limited. Once the sun came out, there were more visitors walking around. We had daffodil bulbs to give out for a donation to the HMGA.

Becky Blake entertained visitors of all ages with her baskets of vegetables and herbs for people to identify. She handed them cards and they were to match the names on the cards with the vegetables in the baskets.

There were a total of 32 direct contacts and ten volunteers. Two of us were present for both morning and afternoon sessions. Present were: **Doris Gullotta, Becky Blake, Ronni McCord, Barbara Bosha Nelson, Janet Bailey, Janice Thomas, Patty Skjei, Sherri Prunty, Noel Oakes, Mary Corbett** contributing 36.5 volunteer hours.

September 19 – Workday in the Gardens

The work done today was for the perennial gardens. We removed more of the daylilies and some of the pink phlox. The phlox will be kept for the plant sale in the spring, if wanted. The daylilies were put in the compost pile. We also planted the Blue Flag Irises, versicolor, that were donated by the Iris Society. A clump was placed in both gardens. We removed about 2 gallons of daffodil bulbs. They will be offered at the Oct event as a give aways with a donation to the HMGA.

There were 2 MG volunteers – **Pat Barbour** and **Doris Gullotta** for a total of 7 volunteer hours.

Help Desk Report – Val Kish - next page

2023 MASTER GARDENER HELP DESK CONTACTS											
						5-year comparison					
						2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	
		Walk-In	Email	Phone	Sum	Month	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	
January	Female	0	5	4	9						
	Male	0	1	5	6						
						15					
February	Female	0	5	9	14						
	Male	1	4	5	10						
						24					
March	Female	0	5	10	15						
	Male	0	2	7	9						
						24	63	70	49	57	
April	Female	0	6	22	28						
	Male	3	0	6	9						
						37					
May	Female	1	8	15	24						
	Male	2	7	14	23						
						47					
June	Female	1	19	11	31						
	Male	1	2	11	14						
	HLC	11			11						
						56	140	118	116	101	
July	Female	3	6	13	22						
	Male	4	5	7	16						
	HLC	0			0						
						38					
August	Female	4	5	11	20						
	Male	0	1	15	16						
	HLC	2			2						
						38					
Sept	Female	5	4	4	13						
	Male	3	6	5	14						
	HLC	0			0						
						27	103	127	118	106	
								48	59	38	
										58	
Total								363	342	302	343