



HMGA Activity Reports and Announcements for August 2023

Compiled August 19, 2023 - Sandy Pence

Announcements -

- Hanover Day of Service - Hanover County will be participating in the national **9/11 Day of Service**, a federally recognized day of service which has transformed September 11 into the largest day of service in America. A project at the HLC has been submitted to the County for approval so that County employees can participate in it.
- Saturday, September 16, HMGA Picnic and Plant Swap at Taylor Park, home of the MG office and the Horticulture Learning Center. A Plant Swap and tour of the HLC will follow the potluck meal. You are encouraged to bring one or two plants with identification information for the plant swap. See BI for details and to sign up.
- Looking for some continuing education? Here are webinars produced by our state MG office: <https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/webinar-archive/>

Horticulture Learning Center - Bob Durbin and Holly Owens -

Irrigation

- The pad for the rain water tank has been laid out beside the office.
- VCAP Grant - submitting application for funding (due 9/11/2023). Eligible for costs covering tank, pad, plumbing and labor for the tank.
- Irrigation for the garden is not covered under VCAP Grant, and will be a separate project.

BI/Schedule

- Workdays, including Saturdays, are scheduled for 7:30am for the rest of August due to heat.

Google Docs/Pics

- Setting up HLC Google Doc folders for HLC information

Ashland Harvest Run – Oct. 21st

- Signups for the run are on the Harvest Run and HMG websites.
- A participation group has been created under Hanover Master Gardeners.
- Participants will get a discount if they sign up under the group name.
- Entry fee increases as of 9/1/23.
- Need 10 + MG volunteers to be Course Marshals for the race.
- Also need 4+ MG volunteers to support the Information tent for Master Gardeners, the theme will be “Good Bugs/Bad Bugs” and we will be using the materials from the State Fair.
- Businesses may donate amounts from \$1,000.00 to \$100.00 with different benefits for each level.
- If you are unable to participate it is possible to sponsor a runner instead.

In the Garden

- Bob has been spraying vinegar on the wire grass.

- We have had several visitors including children come to the garden. Interest from the community is growing.
- High tunnel project is on hold until planning for 2024 is completed.
- Working on a plan for wrapping up the garden for 2023.

Planning for 2024

- Plan plantings to line up with teachable topics.
- Finish current projects.
- Form outreach and fundraising subcommittees.
- Formulate goals for 2024.

Succession Plan

- Board to nominate one EMG to be Co-Coordinator by November, and another nominee by April.

This month's volunteers include: **Alexander, Jen and Ray, Pam Barbour, Sammye Daou, Bob Durbin, Joanne Einsmann, Linda Hazelwood, Katherine Hebert, Pat Holt, Sherri Prunty, Holly Owens, Kate Sandy, Buz Sawyer, Melanie Smith, Janice Thomas, Bill Wittig, Juanita Wren.**

Tree Stewards - Joan VanDervort and Mike Little -

Tree Steward Project 2023 - Our Tree Steward Intern project is well underway. For those unfamiliar with our project, it is a three-phased, multi-year effort that includes: 1) Identification, signage, and descriptions for 12 native tree for the new, Lake Hanover Nature Trail at the courthouse, 2) Selection and planting of trees on the boundary of the HLC, and 3) Selection, planting, and signage of native trees and native woody shrubs in the area of the Taylor Complex playground and parking lot. (This is a modification of the original Phase III Home Grown National Park concept for the large field across the street from the cannery since the county is planning to construct additional buildings in that area in the future.

The Phase I project, which is nearing completion, has been a coordinated effort with the Hanover Director of Parks and Recreation, Mr. Aaron Reidmiller, and the VA Department of Forestry whose representative confirmed our native tree identification at the Lake Hanover Nature Trail. An Eagle Scout will be using our project as a jumping off point to earn his badge and will be heading up a team of boy scouts to clear invasive species from portions of the trail, build the posts for the signs, and add descriptions for fauna and flora along the trail. (This may be a multi-year effort for the scouts.) The signage will be produced by the County and they will oversee the scout project and the placement.) In addition, a kiosk may be added at the trailhead with the descriptions of the trees and other flora as well as fauna in the area paid for by contributions made to the Eagle Scout project. We believe the project will be completed by mid-October.

We are currently working with the VA Department of Forestry, Angelette, and the chairs of the HLC to identify the appropriate native trees along the boundary of the HLC. We will be coordinating with Mr. Reidmiller later on in the year for possible identification and planting for trees for Phase III.

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

From July 25-August 16, MGs gleaned six times and picked 20 bushels of sweet corn, 29 bushels of tomatoes and 906 pints of blackberries. We delivered the produce to 10 different pantries.

Home Gardening Series - Darlette Meekins, Ronni McCord, Noel Oakes - No Report.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VEC) – Angelette Pryor - No Report.

Educational Grants - Becky Watson (Betty Jane Hughes, Mary Wagner, Doris Gullotta, Mike Little) - Program is temporarily suspended and is under evaluation.

Scotchtown Demo Gardens - Doris Gullota -

August 17 – Workday in all gardens

Today, in the perennial gardens, we removed spent plants, did some pruning and deadheading on currently growing plants and removed more daylilies. The daylilies will be saved to be given out to anyone who wants them.

In the kitchen garden, we removed spent squash and bean plants. We pruned dried foliage and tied up plants that were leaning over. Becky worked the soil and planted seeds for Dwarf Grey peas and collards along with plants for Leeks and Kohlrabi. We were able to use some of the compost from the bin on the new plantings. The other plants are doing well but the birds got all of the corn. Marigolds are blooming nicely. The remaining squash plants had bugs on them, so we tried to remove as many as possible. Next year we will plant marigolds among the squash.

In the fabric garden, the flax, hemp and cotton plants are doing well. The leaves on the tobacco plants were eaten by the tobacco worm, although none were visible. The plants in the dye garden are still blooming. We also did some watering in the kitchen, dye and fabric gardens.

MGs present were **Becky Blake, Pam Barbour, Paula Willoughby,** and **Doris Gullotta** contributing 11 hours of volunteer time.

July 22 – Workday in all gardens

We worked in three of the five gardens. In the kitchen garden, we placed support poles for the black-eyed peas and got the vines trained on the supports. We removed spent plants and removed weeds in the beds and between the bricks. The tomato plants also needed to be tied up. Thanks to Noel and Alexia, we now can identify the male and female blossoms on the squash plants.

In the perennial gardens, we began pruning the shrubs that sit on each corner of the beds. We removed weeds and pruned back and deadheaded spent plants. Seed pods were left to spread when they matured. Work was also done removing invasive plants along the fence and removed suckers from the holly trees.

The following interns participated: **Noel Oakes, Mary Corbett, Kathy Davis, Alexia Miles,** and **Janis Thomas**

The following Master Gardeners participated: **Janis Thomas, Pat Holt, Veronica Cosby, Chris Baum, Janet Bailey,** and **Doris Gullotta.**

A total volunteer hours for the workday were 24.5.

Communications - Betty Jane Hughes - No news this month.

Website - Katherine Hebert

- The site has been moved to the new server and is being updated and backed up regularly by the new hosting provider - TecAdvocate. The master gardener email remains with GoDaddy.
- We are collecting emails for a future newsletter. **Scott Bateman** is doing a great job managing this. We need to make some decisions about the newsletter and start getting that workflow going once the list has grown a bit more. We outlined some ideas a while back. I recommend promoting the mailing list at events and potentially through online RSVPs for things like the 2024 training open house and HGS series. Community members could opt-in to the mailing list with their RSVPs.
- I have made progress on the monthly chores and will get those posted shortly.
- Scott has been working with the HGS committee and is creating a flyer and graphics for promoting the series. We will likely create a separate web page for them and potentially collect RSVPs that will allow us to follow up with reminders and build our mailing list.

- I created a google doc folder system for HMG. This can be used to house member docs. They can still be linked from the member-only section as normal, but will not need to be housed on the web server. HLC is currently using the folders for photos and documents.
- The 2024 training class updates have been added to the website with a new page accessible from the Join Us navigation button. The open house has been added to the home page with a button to learn more.
- The Native Plant page under Resources has been converted to an HTML webpage from a link that downloads a PDF.
- Plant clinic dates updated on home page

Website stats since July 16th

273 Sessions

619 Page Views

213 Users with 94% new

Top 5 visited pages

1. Home page
2. Member-only
3. Become a Master Gardener
4. Resources
5. About Us

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

Three Home Garden Visits are reported for August:

1. Douglas Bush residence, August 4, 2023. Master Gardeners: **Pattie Bland, Carol Brown, Emily Gianfortoni, Linda Hazelwood, Mike Little**. An extensive lawn, established trees, and beds of shrubs surround the 31 year-old home. The property is being prepared to sell in the Spring. Help was requested with evaluating the condition of the plantings and recommendations for pruning, care, and/or removal of the existing trees and shrubs. A bank alongside the house adjacent to a road was a concern because of erosion.
2. Charu Jain residence, August 8, 2023. Master Gardeners: **Emily Gianfortoni, Mike Little**. A home visit was requested to assist the Jains, who are new homeowners with recommendations for the care and maintenance of established plants and lawn, vegetable garden and suggestions for new plants for flower beds.
3. Cold Harbor Elementary School, August 9, 2023. Master Gardeners: **Emily Gianfortoni, Pattie Bland, Linda Hazelwood, Sandy Pence**. Katlyn Richardson, a kindergarten teacher, requested a home visit for 7 existing raised beds, how to prepare, and what to plant in a school garden. The beds were very overgrown with weeds, but were full of native plants that were buzzing with pollinators. It was very exciting to see! Laurel Hill, a horticulturist at Lewis Ginter Botanical, planted the garden beds several years ago with the help of Sandy Pence, Pat Reyes, and other volunteers. Laurel has emailed Katlyn and offered to help her identify the native plants and provide previous suggestions for using the garden as a teaching tool. Katlyn will organize a volunteer day to remove the weeds from the raised beds. There may be potential to formally involve MGs with these beds in the future.

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

- Twenty three MGs and Interns attended the native plant garden in Westover Hills on Saturday the 19th.

Plant Sale - Pat Reyes

No report.

MG Help Desk - Val Kish - (Next quarterly report in October.)

2023 MG Training Class (MGTC) - Ann Margaret White and Joanne Einsmann -

This year's MG Training Class is off to a great start thanks to our training council led by **Joanne Einsmann and Anne Margaret White and consisting of Val Kish, Kate Sandy, Ronni McCord, Paula Willoughby, and Janice Thomas**. Classes this year will be held at Covenant Woods on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 - 12:30 from January 10th through March 29th. This week, the registration link went live and we already have new registrants signing up. The Open House and early interviews are scheduled for September 27th from 10 until noon. Our goal is to have 20 trainees attending classes in 2024.

Extension Office Demo Garden - Sandy Pence -

The resulting flower pods of the Butterfly Weed in the garden is covered with Milkweed Bugs (*Oncopeltus fasciatus*). Here is an article about them: <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/good-growing/2021-07-30-more-monarchs-what-are-those-bugs-my-milkweed> They are not considered a pest and have been left to feed on the seed pods.

Pole Green Butterfly Garden - Sandy Pence - The garden is showing signs of dry weather.

Speakers Bureau - Carol Brown -

Paula Wilobe gave a talk to the AGAP Adult Day care group in Mechanicsville on August 11.

Bob Durbin and Holly Owens are arranging a talk to the Pumunkey Womens club in April 2024.

The Clay Spring garden club is still waiting for speakers to fill their January, February, March and May meetings. They are not particular about the topic. They did express a liking for the topics of Bluebirds, water conservation and recycling/composting/mulching.

State Fair - (Reported by Sandy Pence)

A team of enthusiastic and creative master gardeners is planning a meaningful educational booth at the Virginia State Fair this year. The theme is "Good Bug and Bad Bug." The focus of the booth each year is to meet the Standards of Learning (SOL) for school children who visit the fair on weekday field trips. Therefore, there is more to this effort than simply creating colorful booth displays. The result is then a learning experience for both the master gardeners creating the material and the visiting fairgoers.

There will also be a display on becoming a master gardener with information on Hanover and the surrounding counties. **Christy Brennan** is again coordinating the effort in her role as a representative of the Virginia Master Gardener Association to facilitate tickets and participating master gardener units. Information on becoming a master in Hanover and the surrounding counties will be available.

Those participating in project and attending the most recent meeting were: **Dian McConnel, Christy Brennan, Eleanor Fukushima, Kate Sandy, Wayne Bryant, Angelette Pryor, Boshia Nelson, Ronni McCord, Kathy Davis, Pat Reyes, Alexia Miles, Sherri Prunty, Marianne Vermeer**