



# Brunswick County Master Gardener Volunteer Association Newsletter

Final 2015 Volume VIII Issue 6

## “THE OPTOMISTIC GARDENER”

Maryann Horgan, President BCMGVA

*“Gardening is a humbling experience.” Martha Stewart*

*Did you know that the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer program has only been around for about 35 years? Not long considering our collective ages! We should take immense pride in our own ‘train-the-trainer’ program and commend all our volunteers for their ability to provide so much expert information in a professional and enthusiastic manner. As Dorothy once said, “You don’t have to look any further than your own backyard to find your heart’s desires!”*



*Let’s take a moment to appreciate all that has been accomplished this year:*

- 1. Many members used the Volunteer Fair to sign up for a year’s worth of fun*
- 2. Planning Committee assembled by Sam Marshall came up with a dedicated focus on education, public outreach and use of the Botanical Garden to meet those goals*
- 3. Staff offered Advanced Training in pruning, turf, vegetables, propagation and info line procedure*
- 4. Brown Bag Lunch program tried in the Botanical Garden*
- 5. The Plant Sale Committee was formalized into a Standing Committee: Vicki Fuhrmann, Ann Gallman, Sonia Smith, Joanne Norman – they used their vision of bringing natives and proven winners to the public through an incredibly successful spring sale, despite lashing winds and rain*
- 6. Goldfuss Irrigation Co. was hired. They simplified and replaced a broken, antiquated system in Phase 1*
- 7. Botanical Garden Committee was created and formally made into a Standing Committee – a long term vision for the garden was introduced; newly irrigated gardens resurrected through volunteer efforts: rose bed, sunny perennials, Live Oak garden*
- 8. Certified Plantsman Garden: Identification process tackled with plan for permanent engraved markers and temporary signs; mapping; invited David Barkley to help identify all plants*

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***We like someone because, we love someone although.***

*–Henri de Montherlant*

## Meeting Minutes

For the complete minutes of the membership meetings, go to <http://www.bcmastergardenerva.org/> under the About Us tab

## Scheduled Speakers

**November 19** – Poinsettias, Susan Brown, New Hanover Extension Agent.

## Certified Master Gardeners

Check the NCSU Website for opportunities to fulfill your 40 hours are required to remain qualified. Click here Note: For Botanical Garden work, if there are no 'slots' available, just show up. There's always something to do.

## **PARTY PARTY PARTY**

### **MG Graduation Party**

The new class of MGs will graduate on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Come help them celebrate at 10:30am



### **Holiday Party**

The annual celebration will be on December 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am. Awards, catered lunch and a surprise. Look for an Evite coming in November.



**Regular meetings on 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday each month at 9:00 am**

## Sam Marshall

Extension Horticulture Agent



### Horticulture Program Updates

It is hard to believe that we are already winding down for the year and beginning to look towards 2016! But what a year it has been so far. Though things may be winding down for the year, there are still things to look forward in the next couple of months.

### 2015 Master Gardener Training

We are welcoming into the fold 23 new Master Gardener Volunteers who promise to be a dynamite addition to our program and already making an impact. They have undergone 8 weeks of intensive training in the classroom, as well as working one-on-one with their mentors. They have already started volunteering on the Info Line and in the botanical garden, and will soon begin work on their class project. Master Gardener mentors have been diligently working with their trainees to get them accustomed to volunteering and helping to show them the ropes. I am deeply grateful to our 2015 Master Gardener Mentors:

Donna Coulson	Michelle Spencer
Maryann Horgan	Shirley Waggoner-Eisenman
Dominique Lowenstein	John Williamson
Beverly Mastrovich	

Our graduation ceremony will take place on November 4th from 10-12p in the large training room at the Extension Office. You are welcome and encouraged to attend!

### Advanced Plant Propagation

Plant Propagation Training will begin November 3rd and we have a full class! This year, propagation will be co-taught by Master Gardener Volunteers who completed the training last year. We will be working diligently in the greenhouse and hoop house getting plants ready for the botanical garden and the spring plant sale.

### Fall Tips and Tasks for Cooler Months Ahead

#### Lawns

- Keep lawns free of fallen leaves and other debris.
- Mulch leaves for an added (and free!) addition of fertilizer.
- Irrigate as needed. Lawns, even in winter months, can suffer due to drought.
- Applications of lime in January—February will be ready to go to work in the spring.

#### Fruits and Vegetables

- Sow lettuce and other greens in cold frames for winter use.
- Asparagus can be planted at this time.
- Top dress planting beds with compost.
- Start spring and summer vegetables indoors in January—early February
- Fruit trees can be planted at this time.

- Sam

## Master Gardeners Board

### Elected Officers:

#### President

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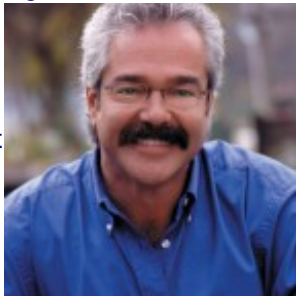
## Gardeners: Stewards of the Environment! (Report on the State Conference)

-submitted by Judy Thuer

What a great conference title for a wonderful gathering of gardeners from the state of North Carolina. Gardeners gathered on Sept 21 & 22 at the Embassy Suites in Cary. A wonderful hotel with great accommodations for the meetings AND comfortable for the guests!

The conference started with a full, made to order breakfast for hotel guests and welcome opening talk by Dr. Damon Waitt, the new Director of NC Botanical Gardens (Blowing Rock). What an interesting man....he made our mouth water to get over and see those gardens first hand. But the other interesting thing is, he worked in Texas with Lady Bird Johnson and gave us a delightful insight into this very quiet but tenacious Texas woman and her love of wildflowers. Breakout sessions were plentiful and interesting...5 different sessions given at two different times...so if you missed one you wanted to hear, you just had to wait until the next session...everyone seemed to like this format really well and it was a good thing, as it was the same format in the afternoon, but with different speakers,...everything from Native Plants to Attracting Birds to your yard, Pollinators, composting with worms, and even journaling your garden experiences!

Topping the day, was a warm greeting for an old TV friend, Paul James, "The Gardening Guy". He is no longer on HGTV, but is well remembered by most attendees and gave a walk down "memory lane" of some of his most commented on shows. He is retired now, but was most encouraged to return to some public format as his shows are greatly missed.



But oh, did I miss Cocktail Hour? Not me! Very nicely done (again if you were a hotel guest) with hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and any beverage of choice....including those tall fruity kind with umbrellas!

There WAS a downside, but it was a GOOD downside.... there weren't many vendors, so we only spent "a little" money. BUT there was a GREAT used book sale and wonderful baskets auctioned off at the end of the conference.

And of course, one of the BEST reasons to attend a conference...the camaraderie! You meet new gardeners and renew old friendships....and WE came away feeling the knowledge gained was worth the \$\$\$ spent and are looking toward 2016....and YOU joining us!

## Hummingbirds

are always welcome guests in gardens. It's fascinating to watch them flit from plant to plant like tiny sprites, pollinating flowers as they pass. So how can you lure these delightful "flying jewels" into your garden? By filling your beds with plants that attract hummingbirds naturally.



The tiniest of birds, the Ruby-throated and Rufous hummingbirds being most common. They select their food by sight and choose flowers that provide high nectar content, with native species being top choices. When choosing flowers for your hummingbird garden, keep in mind that cultivated hybrid plants may not produce the high nectar content these birds require. It's also important to keep your garden pesticide free to allow a safe place for hummingbirds to gather, eat, and thrive. In addition to nectar, these tiny birds will also feed on small insects, which is another reason to stay away from insecticide and pesticide use in your garden. Hummingbird feeders, moving water sources, and garden decorations such as gazing balls and other ornaments swirled in hues that mimic those found in native plants will also aid in attracting the birds to your property.

### 5 Plants That Attract Hummingbirds to the Garden

**Bee Balm** A staple in most herb gardens, this plant is a member of the mint family, and, as the name suggests, it also attracts bees and butterflies as well as hummingbirds.

**Petunia** An annual plant with waves of continually blooming flowers, these are particularly appealing to hummingbirds. Hanging pots dripping with petunias secured to a porch rafter can provide the ideal spot to watch hummingbirds gather to dine.

**Azalea** A flowering shrub typically sporting deep pink flowers, this bush is related to the rhododendron, which also attracts hummingbirds.

**Foxglove** The repeated bell shape of the foxglove flowers is ideal for providing a concentrated food source for hummingbirds.

**Morning Glory** The twining blue flowers of the morning glory will attract hummingbirds to its opening blooms for their morning feed and throughout the day as well. When planted to grow around a lamppost or porch post near a window, great views of these fluttering feeders can be expected.

Have you planted flowers to entice hummingbirds to your yard?



## Greenlands Farm – Organic Farming

submitted by Maryann Horgan

Henry Burkert from Greenlands Farmstore was our October speaker. His passionate topic was about organic farming and he used stories about starting his homestead farm on Midway Road in Bolivia to illustrate how he and his wife produce organic and natural farm goods.



He and his wife are landscape architects. When the bottom dropped out of the economy, they decided they needed to gather their resources, skills and gumption to survive on the 23 acres they had bought in Bolivia. The property was "spill and spoil" which meant the previous owner had sold all the top soil and dug 7 huge ponds to sell that earth. After thousands of pounds of compost and manure were added, they were ready to start planting.

Their philosophy of life is sustainability so they are running a "responsible farm". The manure from goats, sheep, llamas and a donkey are aged five months and used as fertilizer. All rain runoff goes into the ponds. No synthetic fertilizers, fungicides or pesticides are used. There are free range chickens and 24 bee hives.

This year has been particularly difficult with extreme heat, monsoon rains and plagues of grasshoppers and mole crickets. Burkert uses diatomaceous earth for aphids and other pests, spinosad A & B for caterpillars and thrips. As a last resort he will turn to food grade pyrethrum.

Please support this local business with a trip to Greenlands Farm (668 Midway Rd. SE, Bolivia, NC 28422). There is a family oriented "Winter Farm Fest" on Dec. 5 - 5:00-8:00PM with Llama sleigh ride, Santa, winter crafts, toasting marshmallows and hot chocolate, a live Nativity ( I bet that donkey has a part!) and live music.

### OPTOMISTIC (Continued from Page 1)

9. House Calls from Master Gardeners launched to help newcomers to Brunswick County; MG can earn Info Line hours! INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL ! This concept was brought to Planning Committee by Amanda Kiel and developed with MG and Sam and Tom.

10. Gardening By The Month was completely revised. Spearheaded by Ron Wedekend and refined with Shirley Waggoner-Eisenman and Linda Swanson, with lots of MG proof-readers

11. We tried a recess in July ("only mad dogs and Englishman go out in the noon day sun")

12. "Weekly Weeder" started by Amanda Kiel to keep everyone up to date on volunteer opportunities, activities, community events and pictures of all our efforts

13. Mentor program established to nurture new Master Gardener class members

14. Fall on-line plant sale + rain barrels + composters was amazingly successful despite rains of biblical proportions; thanks to Amanda Kiel for setting up an amazingly informative website and to Donna Coulson and Mary Dixon for emphasizing POA websites and electronic bulletin boards to spread the publicity far and wide. Jeanne Pavero Chair and Vicki Fuhrmann as the driving force organized a well-oiled machine.

15. MG invited to sit in on Master Gardener training and Day in The Yard classes

16. Water feature FIXED – no leaks, proper flow volume, invasive plants gone from pond!!!! All done under budget.

17. Planking in outdoor classroom replaced by Fred Mina & an intrepid team of MG

18. SBMS sent 300 6th graders to tour the garden and cover curriculum goals at learning stations. Teachers earned CEU's (certified education units).

19. Invitations are going out for groups to visit the Garden and have educational presentations or workshops. The Garden Club of St. James is coming in April and Brunswick Newcomers in the spring

20. The By-laws and Policies & Procedures are being revised – spearheaded by Shirely Waggoner-Eisenman, Judy Thuer and Grace Wrigley.

21. A scholarship for a BCC student in Horticulture or Turf Management is being investigated = "pay it forward" and help the youth in the county reach their dreams of further education in the field we all love!

*In reflection, this year has been rewarding, frustrating and exciting. It has been a joy to get to know and work with so many of the Brunswick County Master Gardeners who are energetic, enthusiastic and dedicated. A goal for 2016 is to harness some of the untapped energy in some of the less involved members and get them excited about continuing to learn and to share what they have learned with others.*

*We have projects to finish. There are projects to initiate. There are projects that still need to be dreamed up. Won't you get involved? Won't you help when the call goes out? We would love to hear your ideas. We would love to have you help! 2016 looks like an exciting year!*

*"I don't think of myself as having a "gray" thumb, but I think am more of a hospice worker. I'm easing the transition so plants can go to Jesus."*

*Maryann*

### Entrance Pots

Using autumn plants- cabbage, kale, rosemary, nandina, fountain grass, heuchera, creeping jenny mondo grass - Judy Thuer created some magnificent displays for the front of the Extension office. Here is just one:



Come see the others in person!

### Too Pretty to Eat



If you think Independence Day is Americas defining holiday, think again. Thanksgiving deserves that title, hands-down. -Tony Snow

*Thank you for all the kind remarks about the newsletter. It's been my pleasure to have been of service for the past 4+ years. Best wishes for Joy of the Season!*



*Hank*







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[First Class Mail](#)

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<http://brunswick.ces.ncsu.edu/>  
<http://www.ncmastergardeners.org>  
<http://pendergardener.blogspot.com/>