



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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The Green Thumb

A Newsletter of Extension Horticultural Activities and Events
For York – Poquoson Extension Volunteers

September
2015
Vol.16 Issue 7

Merrilyn Dodson
Editor

While this section is normally focused on upcoming events and since we have had a summer break but still been busy with Master Gardener projects, two upcoming events need the attention and participation of all MGs.

1. September 12 Go Green Expo – see Becky Mitchell’s article on pages 6 and 7
2. September 26 PLG Plant Sale – see the bullet point about this plant sale on page 6

Future Calendar Events

- October 8th Hampton Roads Horticultural Society Annual Plant Auction (7 pm at NN Women’s Club)
- October 13th Master Gardener **Bethany Beck** presents “A Sip of Garden History” at MG Monthly meeting

Reminder:

We need to wear our name tags at MG events. While the long term MGs know everyone, the newer members do not. A name tag helps us learn each other’s names and form relationships.

Master Gardener Mission Statement

Our mission, as trained volunteers in partnership with the York – Poquoson, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent, is to provide horticultural educational opportunities to the public through research-based horticultural programs and activities to enhance our environment, lives and community.

For additions/corrections to the Calendar of Events contact Merrilyn Dodson (872-0824, joint_dod@verizon.net) or Becky Wells (890-4940, becky.wells@yorkcounty.gov). The deadline for news for The Green Thumb is ALWAYS the 15th of the month.

Contact Information: York – Poquoson MGs. If you have changes to your email, phone #, or address, please notify Becky Wells.
We want to keep all communication channels open.

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GREETINGS FROM SALLY

Hello Master Gardeners,

As you all know, our beloved Horticulture Agent, Dan Nortman, left his position with Virginia Cooperative Extension in July for a move to Illinois. We sure do miss him around the office, but we have been in communication with him and he seems to be doing great! Not long after Dan left, VCE opened his position up to other VCE Extension Agents that might be interested in transferring to the York-Poquoson office. From that process the interview committee selected Megan Tierney, Horticulture Agent for the City of Hampton, to fill the empty Agriculture and Natural Resources/Horticulture position in York-Poquoson.

Our office is extremely excited to have Megan coming on board. She has a wealth of experience in regards to horticulture, extension work, and working with Master Volunteer groups. We are very lucky that we were able to hire someone from within VCE, as Megan already knows and understands VCE and also has a basic understanding of our local office and Master Gardener unit. I know she is very excited to work with you all, and I encourage you to stop by the office and introduce yourself to her. Megan's first day at the York-Poquoson office will be August 25th.

Many of you may also be aware that Dan served as the Unit Coordinator for the York-Poquoson office. Starting very soon (as soon as the paperwork is completed), I will be the new Unit Coordinator for the office. I will still serve as 4-H Agent for both York-Poquoson and James City County, but my Unit Coordinator responsibilities will shift from James City to York-Poquoson. So what does that mean for the Master Gardeners? Probably very little in all honesty! As Unit Coordinator my responsibilities include: working with local government on VCE's role and finances within the county system, managing and reviewing the office's financial accounts, supervising office staff (such as the administrative assistant, I do not supervise other Extension Agents), maintaining required reports and documentation, and ensuring that our office is following all VCE/VT policies and procedures. Megan will remain your main point of contact for all things Horticulture or Master Gardener related, just like Dan was. She will bring any larger issues (such as questions regarding finances, county relations, etc.) to me as they arise.

Please feel free to stop by or call the office any time if have questions or concerns about my or Megan's new roles. With my shift in the Unit Coordinator position, that means I will be spending more time in the York-Poquoson office than I was able to before. I am looking forward to seeing you all around more often!

I also want to give a quick "shout out" to all of the wonderful Master Gardener volunteers that helped with 4-H camp prep, check-in, and check-out. It was a great week of camp, and I went into it feeling very organized and confident about the week in large part because of your help getting ready. I am continually amazed at the wonderful people we have in the York-Poquoson Master Gardener group. THANK YOU!

Sally Brooks

*4-H Agent (York-Poquoson and James City County)
Unit Coordinator (York-Poquoson)*

Master Gardener Coordinator's Corner

I would like to welcome you all back and hope that you have had a terrific summer – your *Green Thumb* Editor and I did! Using our networking skills, we arranged for a private tour of the gardens of the Horticultural Centre of the Pacific <http://hcp.ca/> located in Victoria, British Columbia. Our tour was conducted by **Meralin Young**, a personable and informative Master Gardener in the **Victoria Master Gardeners Association of British Columbia**. Merrilyn and I later toured the famous Butchart Gardens on Vancouver Island, before heading into the 17 million acre Tongass National Forest of Southeast Alaska.

I would also like to introduce to you **Megan Tierney**, our new Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources



Entrance to the Horticultural Centre of the Pacific



Megan Tierney

for York County/City of Poquoson. Megan is the 'girl next door' so-to-speak, coming to us from the Hampton Extension where she had been Agent since 2008. Megan has an extensive background, including a MS degree from Troy State University and a BS degree in biology from Christopher Newport University, specializing in horticulture. If you have not had the pleasure of meeting Megan, stop by her office and introduce yourself.

And I would be in remiss, if I did not re-introduce our 4-H Agent **Sally Brooks** as our new Unit Coordinator.

Congratulations go out to both Megan and Sally.



Sally Brooks

Also, congratulations go out to our newest Master Gardeners from the Class of 2014, **Shirley Showalter** and **Von Biggs** for achieving their 50 hour goal.

Here is our lineup of our monthly programs, starting with this month and on into December.

- Tuesday **September 8th** we will be playing catch-up with all that has happened over the past three months.
- Tuesday **October 13th**, Master Gardener **Bethany Beck**, from her outstanding presentation at last year's Horticultural Extravaganza will present "A Sip of Garden History."
- Tuesday **November 10th** is open.
- Tuesday **December 8th** will be our delicious pot luck brunch reception for the York/Poquoson graduates of the 2015 Peninsula Master Gardener Training. The reason for this late date is that graduation is not until November 19th, the week before Thanksgiving. Also, **Laura Marlowe** will be taking over this month as your Master Gardener Coordinator.

With this issue of *The Green Thumb*, on the cover, under Master Gardener Mission Statement you will see **For additions/corrections to the Calendar of Events contact Merrilyn Dodson (872-0824, joint_dod@verizon.net) or Becky Wells (890-4940, becky.wells@yorkcounty.gov).**

This is the last time you will find **Becky Wells'** name here, because Becky is leaving us after nine years as the Unit Administrative Assistant for the York County/City of Poquoson Extension. On behalf of all our Master Gardeners, I would like to thank Becky for all she has done for our unit. Hope you all can find time to get by the Extension to thank Becky in-person as her last day with us is September 11th.



View of Sunken Garden at Butchart Gardens in Victoria BC

One final note before I head out into the garden is that **Kris Wessler** is stepping down as our unit's liaison with the Peninsula Master Gardener Training Committee. Kris has done a fantastic job on our behalf, over the years and now we need one of you reading this newsletter to step up to the plate and take over for her; *please* consider doing so. If you do decide to take on the position, please let Kris and Megan know as-soon-as possible, so that you can start to learn the ropes so-to-speak, with this year's class. And I can assure you that you will get a detailed turnover from Kris, along with all the team support you would ever want or need. Thanks for your consideration.

See you in the garden.
Steve Dodson

Learning Gardens

As summer starts to wind down in the Learning Gardens, we can step back and take a look at what has been accomplished since our last article in June. Following the highly successful Spring Plant Sale work continued on the pathways in the York Learning Garden under **Mary Boxer** and **Jill Schuff's** leadership and a hardy core of volunteers. So much has been done that we can see the end of the pathways project almost coming into sight!



1) Remove grass



2) Lay weed fabric & lay bricks



3) Spread stone dust



4) New pathway

Two raised garden beds have been added to the York Learning Garden, planted with bulbs, annuals, and native perennials, and labeled by Tony Sousa

and his excellent wood working skills.

Lots of mulch has been laid on the regular pathways and weeding done weekly to keep them looking good.

Carol Bartram cleaned up and organized the containers and pots in the pot corral behind the shed.

The number of volunteers on the Thursday work days has been steady and dependable all summer, thank you!

The Poquoson Learning Garden under **Noel and Nancy Talcott's** guidance has had a great summer in my opinion.

During their Wednesday work days much has been done to

continue to improve and expand the garden. A new drip watering system for the raised beds was installed, Bald Cypress trees planted, an old donated boat turned into a planter, and the foundation laid and beginning reassembling of the greenhouse are just a few of the major activities in the Poquoson garden this summer. The volunteers have been loyal and steady in support of the PLG all summer.



Our next Learning Garden Monthly Meeting will be **Wednesday** (not our usual Thursday), **2 September, 0930 at the Poquoson Learning Garden** under the pergola. We'll get organized for the remaining months of 2015 and focus primarily on the preparations for the **Fall Plant Sale coming on Saturday, 26 September** at the Poquoson Learning Garden. Hopefully, we all are propagating plants and following Noel's instructions on labeling and preparing them for the sale. Future Learning Garden Monthly meetings will be 1 October and 5 November at St Luke's and our December meeting/Christmas party will be on 3 December, location TBD.

Welcome to our new Extension Agent! May you find our Learning Garden Master Gardeners ready, willing, and able to help you in your new position.

As usual, we'll be working in the gardens each Wednesday (PLG) and Thursday (YLG) mornings, 9:30-12:00; there's always plenty to do!

Jerry Coffman
jcoffman12@cox.net, 757-867-9014

Poquoson Learning Garden News

- **Watering** at the PLG - Watering days in the garden are Monday, Wednesday (our weekly work day in the garden), Friday and either Saturday or Sunday. We are still looking for more volunteers to water on those days this fall and would like to have two people work together. From a safety perspective, it is good idea to have a partner while you are at the PLG. If you are interested in helping, let Noel know.
- **Biochar** demonstrations has been conducted by Greg Hajos at the PLG the third Wednesday of each month, weather permitting. If you have one of the small can pyrolizers from the MG training class or biochar workshops and want to try it out, bring it out and Greg will do a hands-on session on loading and processing your char.
- **Greenhouse** – The foundation wall and six support piers are in place and MG volunteers moved approximately 20 tons of stone dust to create a 4 - 6" layer inside and along the exterior of the foundation. New hardware has been received and reassembly of the greenhouse has begun. The outer frame of the greenhouse, and the front and back walls are all together now as well as the hardware required to open and close the top section. The next step is to attach the ribs on the sides and clean out all of the old caulking compound in them to get ready to reinstall the glass.
- **PLG Phase 2** – The next section of the PLG will include the greenhouse and a variety of adaptive gardening ideas, ranging from various height raised beds, tabletop and wheelchair accessible planting beds and



several vertical gardening ideas. Once the greenhouse frame is assembled, another load of stone dust will be delivered and spread to prepare the rest of Phase 2 for the placement of the adaptive garden beds.

- **Plans for Phase 3** – Phase 3 of the PLG will complete the overall footprint for the PLG. The focus for this section is a “wet” planting demonstration area. Approximately 75' x 60' in scope, it will be set in the area directly beyond the pergola. The area is lower than the rest of the garden and is often wet and at times has several inches of standing water. It will be left as is, more or less, and will be planted with trees, shrubs and other items that are compatible with wet soil and standing water. Plans are to install one or more raised boardwalks to enable visitors to have access even at times of standing water. If anyone is interested in helping develop the plans and layout for this section please contact Noel.
- **PLG Plant Sale** - Noel hasn't received any notes regarding plants you are getting ready for the fall sale. Potting medium and some pots and trays are available at the PLG. The potting medium is to the left of the compost bin. There are two rows of soil: one is compost and the other is soil blend (50/50 top soil and compost). If you need anything else, let Noel know. **Please do not pot and leave any plants at the PLG.** There is little to no shade and the pots will dry out very quickly. Please keep the plants at home and care for them until mid-September when we will ask you to drop them off at the York LG or at the PLG the week of the plant sale. Please let Noel know what you plan to bring, the plant's number from the master list and quantity, if known. Noel will double check the plant number and confirm with you so that you can go ahead and make up the numbered plant labels. If you need mini blinds for the plant labels, they are available at the York and Poquoson gardens and can be picked on the weekly work day at that garden.



Mark Your Calendars for the Fall Plant Sale

Saturday, September 26, 8am-noon, at the Poquoson Learning Garden

Noel Talcott



Becky Mitchell, our Landscape Extravaganza/Go Green Expo coordinator needs volunteers for the Go Green Expo event to be held from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday, September 12, 2015 at Brittingham Midtown Community Center in Newport News, VA.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR:

- Distributing flyers to community and businesses
- Setting up and manning York/Poquoson MG table (6 people)
- Serving as moderator with Assistant with survey (2 person team)
- Obtaining and assisting with A/V equipment in room #104 (1 – 2 people)
- Greeters for each speaker (6 people)
- Assisting with face painting (2 people)

SPECIAL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- Speakers: Dr. Reza Rafie (Bountiful Berries), Mr. Fred Coolbear (Community Gardens), Ms. Megan Tierney (Growing Food), Mr. Dennis Wool (Vegetable/Herb Boxes), Ms. Foley (Food Preservation), and Chef Patrick Kearny (CIA Cooking demonstration)
- Sustainable gardening, composting
- Vendors

- Bake sale
- Music by Paul Norfleet and Scott Varney
- Kid's Zone with games and animals
- Rain Barrel Workshop \$50
- Wrap N Roll food trucks
- and much more!!!

IF YOU CAN VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT BECKY AT Rmitchell9789@hotmail.com or call 757.898.6937 ASAP.

Healthy Living With Herbs: Chervil (*anthriscus cerefolium*)

A wonderful herb to plant in the fall is chervil. It is a delicate, fernlike member of the parsley family, being similar in appearance and use. There are two main varieties of chervil, one plain and one curly. Hardy annuals, they have a fernlike leaf structure as delicate and dainty as their flavor is subtle. The stems are branched and finely grooved, and the root is thin and white. The plant is native to southern Russia and western Asia, and has been cultivated in France for centuries.

Chervil's flavor and fragrance resemble the myrrh brought by the wise men to the baby Jesus. Because of this and because chervil symbolizes new life, it is linked to the Easter celebration in parts of Europe where it is traditional to serve chervil soup on Holy Thursday. In folklore it is believed to make men 'merry' and sharpen the wit as well as make old people feel young again. In the language of flowers, it symbolizes sincerity. The warmth of this herb suggested medicinal uses to many of history's herbalists. The first-century Roman scholar Pliny and the seventeenth-century herbalist Nicholas Culpeper believed that chervil, as Culpeper put it, "does much please and warm old and cold stomach."

During the middle ages, chervil was used for a variety of ailments. Eating a whole plant reportedly relieved hiccups, a practice still tried by some people today. In various folk medicines, chervil, when brewed as a tea, has been used as eyewash to refresh the eyes and when the tea is ingested to reduce blood pressure. The active constituents of chervil include its volatile oil, which has a smell similar to Myrrh. Chervil is also a rich source of bioflavonoids, aiding the body in many ways, including Vitamin C

absorption. As with most herbs, chervil is an aid for digestion. It has also been used as an ingredient in dyes and perfumes.

Washing your face with chervil water is supposed to maintain the suppleness of the skin and to keep wrinkles at bay.

Chervil makes a very useful addition to salads, sauces, fish and seafood dishes. When added to sauces or stews, it should be added no more than 15 minutes before the end of the cooking time because exposing it to prolonged heat will cause it to lose its flavor.

Chervil grows easily in pots, and is best grown from seed not older than a year. Scatter seeds on the soil surface in cool, moist conditions, lightly covered, keeping the moisture steady during germination. In hot weather or dry soil, the plants will bolt (flower and set seed) rather than produce the tender leaves for harvest. For this reason, chervil should be grown during the coolest part of the growing season. In Zones 7 and south, plant it in late summer to early fall for harvest throughout winter and spring. Although

chervil is quite hardy, it will need some protection, such as a row cover, when temperatures drop below freezing in fall. Or, simply plant chervil directly in a cold frame in the fall for harvest throughout the winter. Chervil does not take to being transplanted, so direct seed where you want it to grow.



Chervil



Chervil is a great herb with a very refreshing, light taste. If intended for any medicinal purposes, it is always important to speak with a physician before adding any herb to your medical regimen.

Georgia Holtz

2015 Master Gardener Training Class

This fall we welcome 10 York/Poquoson residents to the Peninsula Master Gardener training class who start their training on September 8th. They are Beth Check, Dee Davis, Maggie Haley, Lib Hall, Bobbie Halvorsen, Nettie Lamb, Leah Lively, Donna Merkle, Cathy Thacker, and Carol Weakley. This year there are approximately 40 people from Gloucester, Hampton, Newport News, and York/Poquoson making up the 2015 training class.

Current York/Poquoson MGs who will be facilitating their training classes are Steve Dodson, Gwen Harris, Marilee Hawkins, DeAnn Posey, Joe Ranalli, Tom Rawls, and Jan Wiener. Starting this year, the training classes will be held at Providence United Methodist Church on Old Dare Road.

I will be stepping down as Unit Training Coordinator so please let me know if you might be interested in doing this important job. I work with a fabulous team of our own MG's on this committee and they are hard-working, dedicated and absolutely the best ever!

Kris Wessler



Seventeen of our Master Gardeners were recognized at MG College this year for achieving multiple milestone awards. They were Mary Boxer, John Dickens, Steve Dodson, Barbara Dunbar, Pat English, Hal Hertzler, Herb Hotchner, Carol-Marie Kiernan, Anne McHenry, Peggy Nettles, Tom Rawls, Nancy Talcott, Noel Talcott, Kathy Thomasson, Nancy Thompson Lorraine Waida and Karen Ward.

Congratulations to all of you, in recognition for the magnanimous amount of time you have donated as Master Gardener volunteers! You, along with 797 other Master Gardeners in Virginia gave back 716,000 hours in 2014. Those hours are equivalent to 1,158 full-time positions and are valued at \$16,518,120.

Summer Landscape Series Continues

For Japanese Maples Lovers: Over the summer months did you start to envision where to plant another one or two Japanese maples in your garden?

On September 29, 2015 you will have an opportunity to visit a Japanese maple hybridizer and grower who has over 400 cultivars and over 3,000 trees – Acer Acres in Hanover County. This grower's trees offer exceptional value in quality, appearance, variety, and price. Trees are available in 3, 7, and 15 gallon sizes. A similar 3-gal Japanese maple in a retail nursery sells for 3 to 4 times what it can be purchased for at this wholesaler. The price of the trees will be wholesale plus sales tax - **cash or check only**.

Mark your calendar for **September 29, 2015 at 9:30 AM**.

Travel time will take approximately 1.5 hours. Ride sharing is recommended and remember to save space for trees purchased. Acer Acres is located at 17110 Beaver Dam Road in Beaverdam, Virginia. It is 93 miles from the York/Poquoson Extension Office parking lot, 20 miles northwest of Ashland and 4 miles north of Montpelier (James Madison's home).

Evelyn Parker (parkerew@aol.com/868-0496)



Hampton Roads Horticultural Society: Irises for the Tidewater Gardens



Hampton Roads Horticultural Society speaker for the September 10, 2015 meeting will be Bill Smoot, Director of the Board for the Fred Huette Center, Norfolk, VA, certified Iris Judge, and Portsmouth Master Gardener.

Late summer or early fall is a perfect time to plant and or divide bearded iris. Bill will discuss various types of irises and their care including a discussion on re-blooming iris, success and challenges. Bill's presentation is visually beautiful, timely, and interesting.

Our meeting location is the Newport News Woman's Club, 461 J. Clyde Morris Blvd, Newport News, VA. Meetings start at 7:00 PM and are free and open to the public. For additional information, call 868-0496.



Shirley Showalter, Carol Scott, Harry Haley, and Jane May participated in York County's Safety Town. They taught poison ivy awareness to rising kindergartners and on graduation day provided handouts to their parents. Parents were surprised to learn that poison ivy can be dull, shiny, small, large, and look different as the seasons change.

On graduation day it is hard to compete with popcorn, snow cones, face painting, etc. but many did stop at our table to learn about the of the leaves of three.



The 2015 VMGA Educational Symposium will be held on 19 September at Virginia State University in Petersburg. Registration for this symposium entitled "Native Plants: Their Use in Beautiful & Sustainable Landscapes" will be available shortly on the web site, <http://www.vmgga.net/nexteducatevent.php>. Lunch is included in the registration fee, \$25 for VMGA members and \$40 for non-VMGA members. Please register by September 10th as late registration is by availability only.

Here's the schedule:

9 AM *arrival and registration with coffee*

9:30–10:30 AM Karl Shank, *"If you could hire Nature to design your farm, your landscape, your village green..."*

Short break

10:45-11:45 AM Jim Revell, *"Native Pollinators -Who are they and are they important?"*

11:45 AM lunch break

12:45–1:45 PM Anita Tuttle, *"Wild Natives for Civilized Gardens"*

Short break

2 -3 PM Bryce Lane, *"Home Gardening to Attract Wildlife"*

Short break

3 PM *panel Q&A Session*

~ September 2015~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Locations: YH – York Hall, 301 Main St NQP – New Quarter Park RWL – River Walk Landing EDS – 105 Service Drive		1	2 9:30 am Learning Garden Mtg at PLG	3 9:30 – noon YLG Workday	4	5 9 am – 1 pm Market Day at RWL 6 pm “Music in the Garden” at Williamsburg Botanical Garden (Freedom Park) 7:30 pm Virginia Symphony Concert at RWL
6	7  LABOR DAY County Offices Closed	8 9:30 – noon MG Monthly Mtg at St. Luke’s Methodist Church	9 9:30 – noon PLG Workday	10 9:30 – noon YLG Workday	11 6:30 – 8:30 pm Rhythms on the Riverwalk Concert Series at RWL 9 th Annual Heritage Harvest Festival, at Monticello	12 8 am Bird Walk at NQP 9 am – 1 pm Market Day at RWL 10 am – 3 pm Go Green Expo at Brittingham-Midtown Community Center 570 McLawhorne Dr. NN 8 am – noon Household chemical Collections & Computer Recycling Program at EDS
13  (sunset)	14	15	16 9:30 – noon PLG Workday	17 9:30 – noon YLG Workday	18 VIMS Public Tours (reservations required, call 804-684-7061) 6:30 – 8:30 pm Rhythms on the Riverwalk Concert Series at RWL	19 8 am – noon 13th Annual Plant Extravaganza by Gloucester MGs in Main Street Center parking lot 9 am – 1 pm Market Day at RWL 9 am – 2 pm Hampton MG Fall Plant Sale at Bluebird Gap Farm 9 am Bring Your own Kayak at NQP
20	21	22 9:30 am Hort Therapy at York Convalescent Center Fall Equinox at 10:29 PM 	23 9:30 – noon PLG Workday 6:30 pm Moonlight & Music at NQP  Yom Kippur (sunset)	24 9:30 – noon YLG Workday	25 6:30 – 8:30 pm Rhythms on the Riverwalk Concert Series at RWL	26 7 am Bird Walk at NQP 8 am – noon YP MG Plant Sale at 968 Poquoson Ave 9 am – 1 pm Market Day at RWL 9 am - 2 pm “Art in the Garden” at Williamsburg Botanical Garden (Freedom Park)
27 11 am – 6 pm Yorktown Art Stroll at RWL  Full Moon	28	29 9:30 Maple Tree Hybridizer visit	30 9:30 – noon PLG Workday			