



Portsmouth Master Gardeners Association Newsletter October 2022

Note from the President

Greetings, PMGA members! Our meeting and picnic on September 20 at City Park was well attended, the weather was beautiful and everyone enjoyed time to catch with other folks. The food, of course, was outstanding. I sent out to all the proposed bylaws amendments, which we will vote on at the October meeting. The changes include adding a standing committee for Horticulture, which was requested by the members in the summer. It also adds a term limit for the past president, so that the person holding that office is not committed for such a long time but still serves to give continuity to the Board. Congratulations to the milestone award recipients for 2021: Glenda Richard, Bob Perkins, LuAnne Copeland and yours truly, Barbara Byers. We sincerely appreciate the hard work these folks have done for Portsmouth Master Gardeners. If you have not checked out the PMGA website (PMGV.org), Facebook page or Instagram, be sure to do that. The Communication Committee is working hard to get our story out to the community. Congratulations also to the Vegetable Garden crew and Kat Shevlin who have grown and donated 710 pounds of produce to the food bank. Our presence at the Olde Towne Farmers Market and Library talks are wonderful ways to provide advice and knowledge to the public. Sign up to participate in these activities if you can. Advanced Regional Training will be held in Suffolk on November 5. Watch your email for more information. I look forward to seeing many of you at our next meeting on October 18 at 6:00 pm.
Barbara Byers, President, PMGA

Fall Membership Picnic by Kathy Rivenbark

Tuesday, September 20th, was a beautiful day for our monthly meeting and picnic at Portsmouth City Park. Those who were able to attend enjoyed a delicious lunch with fried chicken and lots of sides and desserts. Portsmouth Master Gardeners are not only great gardeners, but also outstanding cooks! Many thanks to those who set up the tables, decorated, and provided the fun favors. At the close of the general meeting, Cyndi presented the milestone awards for this year. Congratulations to the following members who were recognized for their outstanding service to our group and to our community:

Barbara Byers-500 hours
Glenda Richard-1000 hours
Bob Perkins-2000 hours

Upcoming Events

Oct. 18- Membership Meeting at VCE office at 6pm
Garden Talks- 6:30-7:30pm at Churchland Library
Oct. 19- Creepy Scary Plants
Nov. 16- Making Holiday Decorations with Garden Materials
Dec. 21- Decorating the Garden to Attract Wildlife
Nov. 5- ART Suffolk

Officers

President- Barbara Byers
V. President- Glenda Richard
Treasurer- Sharon Salyer
Secretary- Michelle Ryan
Past President- Bob Perkins
Cor. Secretary- Nancy Perkins

Standing Committees

Communications- Ellen Bible
Education- Louise Roesser

Ed Officio Advisor
VCE Horticulture Agent- Cyndi Wyskiewicz

LuAnne Copeland-5000 hours



4-H Horticulture Club

4-H is off to a great start this fall. The Horticulture Club is wrapping up and the members have had the opportunity to plant in the garden. Looking into the future we are hoping to grow the club into something bigger and give kids with a passion for gardening the opportunity to explore. Thank you to all of the Master Gardeners who assisted with the meetings.

Coming up on October 20th Portsmouth and Norfolk 4-H is starting a Teen Club next. This club will take place at the Norfolk Cooperative Extension office on Thursdays from 6PM to 7PM. The club will give teens the chance to work together on leadership, team building, and public projects. If you are interested in volunteering to help with meetings you can reach Aaron at armartin@vt.edu

For the remainder of fall and winter the focus will be on school projects before it is time to begin planning camp for next year.

Aaron Martin
4-H Youth Development Extension Agent

105 Utah St.
Portsmouth, VA 23701

Office (Portsmouth): 757-393-8109
Office (Norfolk): 757-683-2818
armartin@vt.edu

Norfolk Master Gardeners Visit Greenhouse by Jimmy Robinson

Norfolk Master Gardeners were invited by Cyndi to visit our greenhouse. Fred, Jimmy, and Kat met with them on Saturday, September 17th and showed them around. We explained all the steps it takes in raising seedlings from planting seeds on heat mats to placing them under lights and watering (They dry, they die). The meeting went well and questions from everyone were answered. After the meeting was over, Fred invited them back any time for any follow-up advice or suggestions. A very positive meeting with all.

Field Trip to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden by Kathy Rivenbark

The weather was a little breezy, but on Thursday, September 29th, several of our Master Gardeners traveled to Richmond to visit the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. The group had a fun time touring the gardens and had a delicious lunch in the cafeteria. The Education Committee hopes to schedule more field trips throughout the coming year. Many thanks to those of you who sent in field trip suggestions earlier this summer. We continue to be open to new ideas for places to go!



Advance Regional Training Coming Soon by Jo Perakes

Save the date! Saturday, November 5, 2022. Suffolk Master Gardeners will host the next ART. Registration will be available soon. The following presentations are planned:

- ✚ History of Agriculture in South East Virginia
- ✚ The Great Dismal Swamp
- ✚ Native Plants

Local Gardens to Explore By Kathy Rivenbark

This month's featured garden is right in our own backyard! All of you are familiar with it, but here are just a few more details to share about this beautiful nature park located here in Portsmouth!

Paradise Creek Nature Park

As many of you know, Paradise Creek is a 40-acre public park with 11 acres of restored wetlands and two miles of trails. Paradise Creek is open to the public year-round. It is located at 1141 Victory Blvd. The park offers many special events during the year. For specific information concerning monthly events, visit their website at paradisecreek.elizabethriver.org. The following are two upcoming events in October:

- **Fall Bird Walk**- October 15 at 8:30 AM
Cost: 10.00 for members 15.00 for non-members
- **Nature Explorers at Paradise Creek**
This program is for children ages 4-8 years old.
Dates: Tuesdays October 18, 25, November 8 and 15
Time: 10-11:30 AM
Cost: 15.00 or pay what you can, no questions asked
Contact: Sarah McBride at smcbride@elizabethriver.org

Many of our members also enjoy *Norfolk Botanical Gardens*. The following events are scheduled for the remainder of October. Please check their website at norfolkbotanicalgarden.org for details, registration, and costs. FYI...their events seem to fill up fast!

- **Mushroom Medicine**-October 18 (10:00-12:00)
- **Transform Your Lawn**-October 20 (2:00-4:00) This class discusses lawn alternatives that are "beautiful and ecologically beneficial."
- **Flower ID from A to Z**-October 25 (1;00-3:00)

October is a beautiful month to explore our local gardens and wildlife areas! Enjoy!



Volunteering at the 2022 State Fair of Virginia on September 30 by Ben Dukes

The State Fair of Virginia, in its 168th year, is held every year during the latter half of September, rain or shine. Only a few events were impacted this year due to steady afternoon rain from Hurricane Ian.

Volunteering at this event as a Master Gardener is a superb delight. Most other volunteers were basically local to Richmond yet many were familiar with our great city as several other MGs have lived or visited our area; the hosting unit was Hanover. Welcomed with open arms, I had a chance to speak about our fall festival, display gardens on Utah St., outreach programs, and of course about home gardens and what we all grow personally.

Decomposers were the topic of discussion for the booth in the Horticulture Tent. Displays included a bin with red wigglers to teach visitors about vermicomposting (or vermiculture), and a mini "mock" wooden compost bin. For youth, a scavenger hunt was provided with seed packs as a prize for completion. Numerous handouts, soil test kits, coloring books and great conversation were available for anyone who stopped by. There was ample opportunities to walk the fair, get food and just enjoy the day.

This was overall a truly wonderful experience as a Master Gardener. I am looking forward to 2023 Fair. For more information, visit www.statefairva.org



Get to Know Our Members- Barbara Byers

What year did you join the PMGA?

2010

Which PMG activities do you enjoy the most?

Plant sales, Olde Town Farmers Market

What is your favorite type of gardening? Vegetables? Containers? Annuals/Perennials? Others?

I have begun spending time developing a perennial pollinator garden. I usually have a few tomato plants in pots in the summer. I enjoy house plants and succulents, also.

What other hobbies do you enjoy?

Singing with the Virginia Symphony Chorus, reading, spending time with my grandson, and volunteering with several nonprofit groups.

As a PMG volunteer, what impact do you feel you have made on our community

I have talked to many people in Portsmouth to answer gardening questions and help them figure out what plants best suit their growing space. I enjoy meeting new people and feeling helpful when they have gardening concerns.

How Was Your Summer Garden by Jimmy Robinson

My garden this year did very good. I had tomatoes in all different sizes and varieties. All were very productive. I had cucumbers, squash, sweet and hot peppers, egg plants and different herbs. All produced very well. I have just planted my fall garden consisting of cabbage, collards, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, kohlrabi, and two kinds of kale and cauliflower which all should be ready to harvest before frost. Looking for a good fall crop. Hope your garden also did well and your future fall crop.



Visit to Wilson Botanical Garden, Wilson NC - by Ben Dukes

On another recent summer trip to Durham, I had to stop in and see what this place was all about. I have probably passed by here a hundred times on I-95 in the past decade.

This 6 acre (+5 undeveloped) garden is located at the Wilson County Agricultural Center and houses several USDA, county, and NC Extension Service offices including

Master Gardeners, who also maintain the grounds. Admission is free, plenty of parking, and hours are dawn to dusk.

Themed areas of the garden include native plants, children's, vegetables, herbs, an arboretum, and a turf grass demonstration. My favorite part of the garden was a motion-activated waterfall (on the front gutter) as you entered the back gazebo which also has an honor system plant sale.

Many neat animal and flower sculptures of metal abound, including a mini "whirligig" (an ode to a local attraction) and modern exhibits focusing on STEM and solar power.

Pay a visit if you're in town or just passing through, there's lots to see here.



VBMG Fall Festival by Martha Bouis

The “Three P’s of House Plants” went to the Virginia Beach Master Gardeners’ Fall Festival. It’s been a few years since Portsmouth Master Gardeners has been able to participate at this festival and we were excited to renew a tradition. Our focus was centered on the potting, propagation and pest of house plants. We had several examples of propagation techniques. Showed fellow gardeners how to tell an aphid from a mealy bug and the many ingredients found in potting soils. Both kids and adults were entertained with a matching game testing their knowledge of biotic and abiotic systems. In our down time we were able to explore the other booths and do a bit of shopping. A good time was had by all and we learned so much.



Garden Reminders - Mid-October to Mid-November by Louise Roesser

- Keep a watch out for those ‘sneaky’ bugs or mealy bugs on your moth orchids (Phalaenopsis). Mealy bugs love to hide at the base of the bloom, inside the flower, and under the leaves where they suck the plant juices. An obvious sign is their excrement or ‘honey dew’ appearing as a shiny substance on the leaves.
- Be aware that our first average freeze is around the middle of November so be prepared. Delay any last minute outdoor pruning until the spring.
- Compost your raked leaves as well as your grass clippings instead of putting them into plastic bags for trash pickup. They make great additions to your soil come spring.
- It is not too late to purchase and plant spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils, tulips, hyacinths and crocuses.
- Fall vegetables that should be ready to harvest include lettuce, spinach, radishes, mustard greens, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, collards, Swiss chard, kale, kohlrabi, pumpkins, rutabaga, winter squash, sweet potatoes, and turnips.
- Remember not to mow your lawn after reseeding until the grass is at least 2-3 inches tall.

- And lastly get out and enjoy the beautiful blossoms of our fall blooming camellias, *Camellia sasanqua*.



PMG Fall Picnic





 **Virginia Cooperative Extension**
Virginia Tech. • Virginia State University

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law.