

# The Compost

A Newsletter celebrating Charles County Master Gardener Projects

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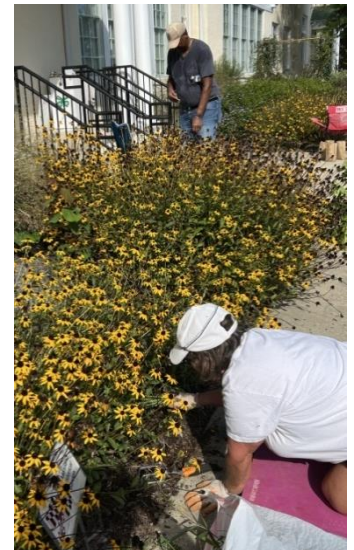
## CCMG Demonstration Pollinator/Native Gardens

Article and photos by CCMG Terry Thir

On September 20, a group of CCMGs gathered to weed and cleanup our flower beds. We evaluated what plants needed to be divided or relocated in the spring. Seeds were collected to share at our county outreach activities. Several MGs and Interns are cleaning and packaging the seeds.



June Leyland and Gail Black



Bill Allen and Gail Black



Kathy Jenkins



Busy Bee enjoying Showy Goldenrod (*Solidago*)

# Southern Maryland Food Bank

Article and photos by CCMG Brent Burdick

The Southern Maryland Food Bank "Seeds of Hope" Community Learning Garden is wrapping up another successful year! As of 10/12/23, the garden produced **562 pounds of produce** for the Food Bank! This is a bit more than the 530 pounds harvested last year.

On a Thursday evening in July, several of our CCMG and Intern project volunteers hosted an Open House for all CCMGs and Interns. We wanted to share the progress we made this year on our project. The Food Bank Director and their Outreach Coordinator also helped by setting up a canopy and having water and cookies for attendees. However, we had a total of only 6 visitors: 3 MGs with 1 spouse, 1 Intern, and one guest of the Food Bank. One MG and the Intern were already members of our project team. We were kind of dismayed with the turnout, but it was good to "show off" all the hard work that the team had put in this year. Kudos to all who made this year's garden such an early success!

The project team was disappointed that we were not able to conduct any other outreach activities with the public or youth groups during the late summer months. With covid restrictions still on the minds of many organizations, the Food Bank was not able to get any other outside groups to tour the garden or to participate in other gardening activities that CCMGs could have provided. We are already working with Food Bank staff on plans for next year's outreach activities.

During the hot summer days in July and August, our CCMG and intern volunteers maintained daily watering schedules to keep our garden lush and producing. This was in addition to our Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday morning garden work sessions.

We had a few garden successes this year. We planted okra for the first time, and it was well-received by the clients. Each of the three tire planters produced an abundance of sweet potatoes – at least 15 pounds each for a total of 46 pounds. With the daily heat behind us and cooler fall weather setting in, we are still harvesting kale, Swiss Chard, cabbage, and Brussel Sprouts. We also still have a few more peppers, green beans, and tomatoes to harvest.



CCMGs Ivko and Westhead with 15 Lbs of Garnet Sweet Potatoes and other produce in October.



16 lbs of "White Hannah" Sweet Potatoes and harvested Peppers, Tomatoes, Okra, Green Beans and Yellow Squash.

## Southern Maryland Food Bank, cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Brent Burdick



CCMG Larson planting more kale for a late fall harvest.



CCMGs Burdick, Westhead, Larson, and Ivko

We have been discussing getting new fencing for the garden with the Food Bank staff. The existing pallet fencing is rotting and falling apart -- it is over six years old. We also discussed moving the garden closer to the parking area (since the trees behind the garden provide too much shade on the back half of the garden) and extending to the right over the grass to slightly increase the size of the garden. We took down the bamboo deer fencing, and removed a pallet on each side of the garden where new back fencing will run through the existing garden area. Once the Food Bank has a new fence installed, we will have to move several of the rear beds into the new garden area.

On Friday night, September 15, CCMGs Brent Burdick, Linda Westhead, Brian Larson, and Linda Ivko attended the Southern Maryland Food Bank's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at the Waldorf Jaycees Community Center. Catholic Charities of the Washington Archdioceses hosted the event to honor all the Food Bank's sponsors and representatives from the approximately 30 food pantries partnered with the Food Bank. CCMGs were also recognized as having contributed to the Food Bank by operating their "Seeds of Hope" Community Learning Garden since 2019. During dinner, Mr. Jim Malloy, President and CEO of Catholic Charities, sat down with CCMGs Ivko, Westhead, and Burdick to personally thank them for CCMG's support to the Food Bank by providing education for youth and activity groups as well as fresh vegetables for those in need.



Pallets removed for new fence line and bamboo deer fencing removed.

MG and UME-related program groups can schedule garden tours/activities by contacting the MG Project Coordinator. Other community members and groups can schedule garden tours and other gardening learning activities by calling Monica, the Food Bank Community Outreach Program Manager, at (301) 274-0695.

## Southern Maryland Food Bank, cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Brent Burdick

### Food Bank Project Team Members Support the UME MG Learning Garden at the State Fair!

Again, Charles County MG project team members of the Southern Maryland Food Bank "Seeds of Hope" Community Learning Garden volunteered as docents at this year's State Fair Learning Garden. In September, CCMGs Karen Westhead, Linda Ivko, and Brent Burdick travelled to the Maryland State Fair Grounds in Timonium, MD, to support UME MG's Learning Garden project. CCMGs Westhead and Ivko worked one four-hour afternoon shift, and CCMG Burdick worked four-hour afternoon shifts on two different days. Volunteers for docent duty came from several counties but primarily from Baltimore County and Baltimore City MG groups. In August, prior to the opening day of the Fair, Robert Cook, the MG Project Manager for the UME MG Learning Garden, conducted an orientation for any docents who were able to attend (see picture).



Above: MG Robert Cook providing docent training in August.

Below: Front and back of our Garden Docent T-shirts.

This year's State Fair UME MG Learning Garden was just as spectacular as previous gardens had been! CCMGs Westhead and Ivko were impressed by this year's display depicting the history of tomatoes in the Americas. CCMG Ivko found the Amish Sorghum plants interesting in that they were tall and looked like corn stalks. CCMG Burdick used the luffa and chocolate-mint plants to draw spectators into the garden for guided tours.

This year, UME provided green t-shirts for docents to wear while interacting with the public in the garden. All three CCMGs commented they were glad they supported the UME MG Learning Garden again this year, not because of the t-shirts, but because it gave them ideas on how they could improve their own Food Bank Community Learning Garden project.

The State Fair is over for this year and plans are already being made for next year's MG Learning Garden. You, too, can help and join your fellow CCMGs in supporting the UME MG Learning Garden next year!



## Dr. Samuel Mudd House

Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham

Patti Faulkner and Rose Markham visited the Herb Garden for the last time this month. Surprisingly, we found the garden thriving and the herbs looking their best.

We found a few interesting volunteer seedlings that we could not identify growing in a particular spot, so instead of pulling them out we decided to surprise ourselves in the Spring. We did some weeding, made sure there was enough mulch to maintain the garden during the cold weather ahead and planted a few pansies for some nice fall color.

We want to thank Kathy Redman for coming out to help us this season and for cleaning up the iris bed on the outside area of the garden overlooking the field and for clearing out the rest of the ivy that was in the planter in front of the well. We hope to plant some natives there in the Spring.

Until next time, Rose and Patti



### Need a CCMG Shirt?

Members are asked to wear a Charles County Master Gardeners shirt at community events. Purchase a royal blue color polo or t-shirt and have it embroidered with our official logo at:

The Embroidery Factory  
12150 Acton Lane, Unit A  
Waldorf, MD 20601  
301-885-0000

[embfactorymd@gmail.com](mailto:embfactorymd@gmail.com)

<https://www.theembroideryfactorymd.com>

Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm



The Embroidery Factory also has shirts available for purchase. Printing takes approximately 1-2 weeks. Once printed, there are no refunds.

## Charles County Junior Master Gardener Program

Article by CCMG Rose Markham

Charles County Master Gardeners are happy to announce our new Junior Master Gardener Project. We kicked off our program in September with a home school club group and our JMG class is being taught once a week at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM), La Plata Campus.

Briefly, the Junior Master Gardeners (JMG) is a Master Gardener national program whose headquarters is located at Texas A&M University. Instructors for the program are required to attend an on-line via Zoom training session and follow the activities provided in the Teacher Leadership Guidebooks.

Our students named their group "Ecosystem Juniors." Six master gardeners are involved with the planning and teaching of the classes. We are seeking newly certified MG/interns to join our team so I encourage you to reach out to Kathy Davis, Lori Guido, Kathy Jenkins, Terry Thir, Gail Walker, or Rose Markham with any questions you may have.

More information about the on-line JMG National Leader training can be obtained at the following website: <https://jmgkids.us/2024jmgnt/> or by emailing [jmgntconference@gmail.com](mailto:jmgntconference@gmail.com).



**What:** An Engaging and Hands-On National Leader Training

**When:** February 20th - 21st, 2024

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Registration Closes:** February 12, 2024

## Meet A Charles County Master Gardener Intern from CCMG Intern Keonia McGhee



I became a master gardener to learn to safely feed my family, friends, and community, save money, and educate others on the importance of this skill. I also want to become an herbalist. Enjoy these photos of my garden. -- Keonia McGhee

Shout out and big hug to CCMG Laverne Madison to get well soon!

If you have a landscape, insect, or plant disease question, please use the [Ask Extension webpage](#) to submit photos and other details.



## All the Dirt on Native Seed Collecting

Article by CCMG Molly Moore

What's the difference between shakers and beaks? How is harvesting a conehead different from harvesting a crumbly conehead?

Twenty-four participants from five counties and Washington, DC learned "All the Dirt on Native Seed Collecting" at a workshop co-hosted by Charles County Master Gardeners and Southern Maryland Audubon at the Leonardtown Library on Oct. 14.

After the presentation, the enthusiastic audience -- from as far afield as Germantown in northern Montgomery County -- had a chance to practice their lessons on a buffet of native plant seed heads harvested from the library's "Front Yard" native garden. Some hardy souls donned rain gear and toured the garden which was ablaze with brilliant yellow Willow-leaved Sunflowers and Pink Muhly Grass.

Participants hailed from Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's, Arlington and Montgomery counties and DC, representing Master Gardeners from each jurisdiction as well as representatives from Southern Maryland Audubon, Maryland Master Naturalists, St. Mary's Garden Club and Friends of St. Clements Bay.

It was a great chance to spread the word on the importance of native plants for birds, insects and beauty!



Presenters: CCMGs Molly Moore (left) and Marlene Smith led the hands-on workshop. Photo by Becki Wolf



Selecting Seeds: Participants chose seeds collected from Leonardtown Library's "Front Yard" native plant garden. Photo by Molly Moore.



# Senior Education Programs (SEP) (formerly Victoria Park Senior Apartments Project)

Article by CCMG Michelle Chenault

It's Fall, Ya'll! Hello Fellow Gardeners!

The project team has more exciting announcements to share:

- The scope of this project has expanded to include all senior-oriented Master Gardener activities, events, and projects in Charles County. We have completed the selection of a suitable and self-explanatory project name: Senior Education Programs (SEP).
- NEW! - The SEP team has been asked to serve as horticulture consultants for the gardeners at the Indian Head Senior Center located at 100 Cornwallis Sr in Indian Head. This senior center has an experienced group, the "Green Thumb Club," consisting of approximately 10-12 very active seniors. They have effectively used several raised garden beds for their vegetables and some pollinator flowers for over 10 years. These raised beds are deteriorating, and the Southern Maryland Sierra Club is in the process of rebuilding them. SEP will be contacted to provide educational presentations and information regarding potential plant selections for their new raised garden beds starting in 2024. **Volunteers are needed** to work on ideas for this location. Contact Michelle Chenault or Donna Ball (contact information below) if you are interested in working on this new SEP effort.

The project team includes the following CCMGs and Interns: Michelle Chenault and Donna Ball as Project Co-leads, Tiffany Daniel, Kathy Davis, Lori Guido, Jeanine Harrington, Linda Ivko, Kathy Jenkins, Brain Larson, Aileen Lennon, Rose Markham, Janet McGrane, Meg MacDonald (representing Grow It Eat It- GIEI), Laura McManus, Paris Reed, Jessica Richards, Stacey Sheffey, Teri Thir, Karen Trundle, Gail Walker, Karen Westhead, Teri White, Julie Nethon-Williams, and Karina Willette.

Top: Two Clark gardeners with their floral arrangements and CCMG Rose Markham. Bottom: Flower arranging activity with each Clark gardener creating their own vase of flowers with help from CCMGs Rose Markham and Donna Ball inside the circle. Photos by Meg MacDonald.



Flowers donated by a local florist to be used for floral arrangement activity. Photo by Donna Ball.

## Senior Education Programs (SEP), cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Michelle Chenault

The project team has completed 9 of 10 Senior Plus gardening classes scheduled for 2023 at the Richard S. Clark Senior Center in La Plata. The 2023 inaugural gardening participants, "Clark Gardeners," are 16 physically and or mentally challenged seniors enrolled in a special Senior Plus Program through the center. In September, the Clark Gardeners received beautiful, embroidered aprons to wear when they are participating in their class sessions. The aprons were donated by a local restaurant and the cost for the embroidering was provided by a private donor. Each session includes an educational presentation, a hands-on horticulture activity, a craft activity and during the harvest season, a 'tasting' activity that includes produce from their garden, when possible. A special thank you to Brian Larson for sharing his salsa and Kathy Davis for the fun pesto making session. One of the most popular classes was on "Flower Arranging" using annuals and perennials, donated from a local florist that included the types of flowers in their garden. The October class was on 'Bulbs' using the 'Lasagna' or layering technique, led by Terry Thir. This is an expanding and ongoing effort starting again in the early spring of 2024. The patio garden at the Clark Senior Center is a beautiful and peaceful place often frequented by all the seniors (and staff) at the center to chat and relax. An 'Herb Dying' workshop for all county senior center registered seniors will be held on **Wednesday November 15, 2023, at 10am**. The speaker is Kathy Jenkins. **Again, volunteers are needed.**



Coneflower (*Echinacea spp.*) and Butterfly – possibly a Swallowtail. Photo by Donna Ball.



Left: Clark Gardeners wearing aprons and observing a frog in a clear domed container, captured in the Clark patio garden for the class to observe and then release. Right: Close up of CCMGs Donna Ball and Kathy Davis working with a Clark gardener. Photos by Meg MacDonald.

## Senior Education Programs (SEP), cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Michelle Chenault

It has been an active growing season for the gardeners at the Victoria Park (VP) Senior Apartments site. Given the location and soil challenges with the teaching bed at the Victoria Park location, we will plant flowering pollinators and natives in this area next year. To prepare for winter, we will dismantle, clean and store the barrels and manual pumps for the free-standing water delivery system in the raised bed garden area and clean out and apply mulch to the bed. This workday at the VP location (rear of the complex, between 11080 and 11060 Weymouth Ct. in Waldorf) will take place on **Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> starting at 11:30am**. This is another opportunity to earn **volunteer** hours, so please join us there. Thanks again to the great team of CCMGs that are working above and beyond at the VP site building the delivery system, monitoring the demonstration garden, and watering: Donna Ball, Linda Ivko, Brian Larson, Gail Walker and Karen Westhead. New ideas are welcome!

Our next SEP General (Zoom) meeting is on Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. It is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in November to accommodate the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. The last SEP meeting for the year will be held on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1:30pm-3:30pm at a restaurant location to be announced soon.

The Senior Education Programs (SEP) Project meeting is usually held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6pm via ZOOM. Contact Michelle Chenault (cell #301-526-3225 or email: [vmchenault@gmail.com](mailto:vmchenault@gmail.com)) or Donna Ball (cell # 202- 286-9291 or email: [dball15226@aol.com](mailto:dball15226@aol.com)) for more information about volunteer opportunities and to receive email invitations to the meetings. Everyone cannot or does not come to all the meetings, workdays or classes or serve as speakers or writers, but each person listed above makes a meaningful contribution. You can, too! No task is too small or trivial. Remember, many hands make light work. Again, sincere thanks to all for your efforts, hard work, and input.

*"Autumn is a second Spring when every leaf is a flower."* --Albert Camus

## Native Plant Clinic

Article by CCMG Molly Moore. Photos by CCMGs Molly Moore and Marlene Smith



Huge shout out to Charlie Reilly and the team at Pop Pop's Greenhouse in Newburg, MD for hosting our native plant clinic in June at their colorful plant pavilion. Enthusiastic participants came prepared with great questions about natives, birds, and beneficial insects. CCMGs Marlene Smith and Molly Moore shared the benefits and beauty of growing native plants.



**Charles County Fair - Booth**  
**Article and photos by CCMG Terry Thir**

We had a good response from CCMGs and Interns who volunteered all weekend to staff our education outreach booth September 14-17, 2023. We were so lucky that the rain held out until the very end of the weekend. Lots of information was shared with fair goers who were genuinely interested in gardening and the role that Master Gardeners provide to our county. There were lots of questions about gardening, bugs eating plants and what to do about it to salvage their vegetables. We were able to help promote the Bay-Wise program and encourage folks to get their property evaluated. People were happy to learn about the tax reduction for the water remediation fees once Bay-Wise certified. It was nice hearing stories from fair goers about how they got into gardening and their passion and thirst for more information. We had 20 people express interest in taking the basic MG course. Lesson learned—need lights inside our tent since we were there until 8-9 p.m. Thanks, Bill, for helping solve that problem.

Top: Jon and Rose Gazarek.  
 Bottom: Rose Markham, Marquerita Harding and Bill Allen.



## COSTUME PLANNER *for Gardeners*

FIRST letter of your first name	FIRST letter of your last name
A - Tattered	A - Sweet Potato Vine
B - Rugged	B - Parasite
C - Enchanted	C - Purple Eggplant
D - Willowy	D - Harrow
E - Spooky	E - Seed Catalog
F - Spindly	F - Organic Gardener
G - Scary	G - Preying Mantis
H - Magical	H - Apple Blossom
I - Surprised	I - Tomato Hornworm
J - Evergreen	J - Yellow Jacket
K - Majestic	K - Overgrown Zucchini
L - Hovering	L - Pile of Compost
M - Rotten	M - Japanese Beetle
N - Messy	N - Compost Pile
O - Invincible	O - Bamboo Trellis
P - Masked	P - Honeybee
Q - Blighted	Q - Self-Watering Planter
R - Rustic	R - Pile of Manure
S - Thriving	S - Yellow Pear Tomato
T - Frightened	T - Cornstalk
U - Homegrown	U - Beehive
V - Dirty	V - Garden Hose
W - Bashful	W - Monarch Butterfly
X - Glamorous	X - Terra Cotta Pot
Y - Slimy	Y - Seed Packet
Z - Damaged	Z - Watering Can

## Charles County Fair - 4-H Judging

Article by CCMG Molly Moore

And the winners are...! Charles County Master Gardeners had to make some tough decisions at the County Fair 4-H vegetable and flower and house plant judging just before the fair opened. The vegetable entries made us want to break out a knife and have a taste.



Looking over a collection of colorful gourds are (from left) Brianna Bowling, supervisor, and judges Kaitlyn Baligush, formerly Charles County Master Gardener coordinator and now program management specialist for the University of Maryland Extension Home & Garden Information Center, and Master Gardener Molly Moore. MG Judge Meg McDonald is behind the camera.

At the next table, judging was intense for the cut flower and house plant entries. Supervisor Holly Dunbar (left) guided Master Gardeners Pauline Spurlock and Janet McGrane in the judging. Photo by Molly Moore.



### Garden Dictionary

**Chlorosis** - A condition where the foliage of a plant becomes yellow due to nutritional deficiencies, too much water, not enough chlorophyll, or disease.

# Charles County Fair – The Misadventures of Peter Rabbit in Farmer McGregor’s Vegetable Garden – Vegetables!!

Article by CCMG Terry Thir

CCMG’s Gail Walker (Peter Rabbit), Mother Rabbit (Connie Nesbary), Paris and Jerry Reed (Farmer McGregor and Mrs. McGregor), Terry Thir (Ripley Rat), Laura Walker (Ladybug Beetle), Teri White (Japanese Beetle), Rose Markham (Praying Mantis), Jamila Barton (Busy Bee), Teresa Jones (Butterfly) and Kathy Jenkins (narrator) performed at this year’s county fair on Saturday, September 16. It was great to have new interns join our cast!!! Once again, fun was had by all!!!



Cast: (L top row) Connie Nesbary, Jerry Reed, Gail Walker, Rose Markham, Teri White  
Kathy Jenkins, Terry Thir, Teresa Nelson, (Font row) Laura Walker, Jamila Barton, Paris Reed. Photo by Nikki Nesbary.



Teri White, Jamila Barton, Gail Walker, Laura Walker, Teresa Nelson.

We had a lively group of young children participate in the show. Special thanks to Jackie Jenkins for making homemade fabric bunnies and Connie Nesbary for making stickers for the kids!! Thank you to Rose Markham for getting us room at Sacred Heart church for rehearsals.

## La Plata Farmers Market Pumpkin Fall Fest

Article by CCMG Terry Thir



Teresa Nelson, Antoine (Tony) Johnson, Kathy Davis, and Terry Thir.

We had lots of people stop by our booth to ask gardening and horticultural questions. There were a lot of questions regarding whether to kill or not to kill the Spotted Lantern Fly due to recent opinions expressed on FaceBook by Nancy Larsen, author, Humane Gardener vs. FB Capital Naturist website administrator Alfonso Abugattas (Terry reached out to HGIC for guidance).

Terry and the team provided demonstrations on how to winter-sow native flowers. We talked about the different types of native flowers they could add to their landscape to provide nectar sources for pollinators. We encouraged folks to get Bay-Wise certified. Many people expressed interest in taking the basic Master Gardener course. The day ended up being a very successful event.

CCMGs and Interns participated in this community outreach event on Saturday, October 7, from 9:00 am - 2:30 pm. Mother Nature didn't want to cooperate, and we sat in our tent for several hours until the sun finally came out. It was really nice seeing people in person and engaging in great conversation. However, I had brought bags of native seeds that had been collected at the Extension Demonstration Garden so we used the down time and cleaned and packaged the seeds. ***A win-win.***



Rain didn't stop us! Abigail Clements, Marguerita Harding, Kathy Davis, Tiffany Daniel, and Tony Johnson.

# La Plata Fall Festival

Article by CCMG Terry Thir



From left to right: Karen Westhead, Rose Markham, Linda Ivko, Beth Grem, Terry Thir, Kathy Jenkins, Marguerita Harding, Kathy Davis, Jeanine Harrington (Polly Pollinator), Janet McGrane, Tina Bailem

What a busy fun day! CCMGs and Interns participated in the annual fall festival on Sunday, October 8 at the La Plata Town Hall. We had a great turnout of volunteers to staff the GIEI, Bay-Wise, Plant Clinic, and native and pollinator booths.

Demonstrations were provided about growing lettuce in a container and winter-sowing. We encouraged visitors to try winter sowing and to plant native flowers in their gardens.

Children enjoyed all the fun educational activities. We had a special participant this year, "Polly the Pollinator" (aka Jeanine Harrington, Intern) who dressed in a bee costume and engaged with children. She was a definitely a big hit! There was a lot of foot traffic at the event.



Jeanine Harrington (Intern) "Polly Pollinator" - Photo by Terry Thir.

Below: Tina Bailem, Kathy Jenkins, Beth Grem, Kathy Davis, Laura Walker, David Gardner. Photo by Terry Thir.





# Melwood Horticultural Therapy

Article by CCMG Barbara Hill. Photos by CCMGs Barbara Hill and Suse Greenstone

Summer months mean lots of growing and a chance to participate in a lot of activities. Melwood gets quite busy, giving Master Gardeners a lot of opportunities to volunteer.

In July, Summer Campers had educational activities on Pollinators and also, sessions on "Grow it, Make it, Eat it," which is always a yummy crowd favorite!

Master Gardeners were kept busy with plant care activities like weeding, deadheading, watering and watching out for summer pests. An example is this picture of Squash Bugs (eggs, nymphs, adults).



Pollinators were really happy!



## Melwood Horticultural Therapy, cont.

Article by Barbara Hill. Photos by CCMG Barbara Hill and Suse Greenstone

By August, there was an abundance of produce and flowers that we realized this year with the expansion of the garden and was used during summer camp for meals and cooking demonstrations & tastings, in adult and youth classes, participant crafts and art projects and donations to some local food pantries. Can you believe it? We harvested 1,550 pounds of produce so far this season! Picture has CCMG Brian Larson with beets.



In September, Melwood's old teepee garden, that we Master Gardeners helped create a few years ago after it had been destroyed by a huge tree limb falling on it in a storm, got a much-needed facelift. The OP-T (Operation Tohidu Veteran Program), which is a Women's Therapeutic Program, donated \$1,000 and T.E.Woods Farm, Inc. donated \$1,000 in landscaping services. T.E.Woods pulled out the old astroturf, dug out and leveled the ground, added new soil & 3 large boulders, edged the walkways and added a stone dust center. The results are amazing, see pictures.



# Melwood Horticultural Therapy, cont.

Article by CCMG Barbara Hill. Photos by CCMG Barbara Hill and Suse Greenstone

September 16 was the next OP-T Group session, and the Focus was on PEACE. The 17 women who attended created peace poles to take home and then we split the group into two units and the Master Gardeners helped guide them as they put down landscaping cloth and planted a rosemary circle inside the basil and Mexican sunflower outer ring. Check out these pictures.



And finally, adding the PEACE POLE!

If you would like to work at Melwood, Nanjemoy, you must be vetted. Contact Suse Greenstone, by email at [Sgreenstone@melwood.org](mailto:Sgreenstone@melwood.org) or by phone or text at 240-882-5280.



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Support Us: [Donate Now](#) | [CFC# 21166](#)



# A Busy Season with Nurture Natives

Article by CCMG Marlene Smith

So, what has the Nurture Natives/CCMG team been up to since we last reported on UP Meadow Day in July? A LOT!

In August, Esther Bonney and Marlene Smith gave a presentation to the [Adolescent Clubhouse of Calvert](#) at the East-John Youth Center in Lusby, MD. Esther spoke about biodiversity, native species, and pollinators. In Esther's words, "Our team is excited to support the youth in installing a native garden in front of their 'Choose Peace' mural! This garden will serve as a testament to the power of youth, collaboration, and the profound impact a handful of dedicated individuals can make and the benefits of replacing [invasive species] with native plants." Following the presentation, we toured the area that they will convert to a native garden in which visitors can relax and reflect. Photo by Bill Smith is of CCMG Marlene Smith (on right) and Esther Bonney (second from right) in front of the 'Choose Peace' mural with members of the Adolescent Clubhouse.



In September, Esther, Marlene, and Sam Rutherford had the opportunity to volunteer at two [Bona Terra](#) native seedling giveaways in Friendship, MD. According to their website, Bona Terra is "the largest retail inventory of strictly native plants using restorative growing methods in the DC area". While at Bona Terra, we learned how to forage local eco type seeds and nurture seedlings from nursery owner Jeremy Tidd, explored the nursery's beautiful property, and provided Bona Terra with several *Nurture Natives Guides* for its customers' reference use. Photo on the left by Bill Smith is Sam Rutherford, Jeremy Tidd, and Esther Bonney.



Left: Sam and Esther with seedling trays. Right: Checking seedlings in the hoophouse with Jeremy. Photos by Bill Smith.



Above: Esther separating seedlings for customers. Photo by Bill Smith.

# A Busy Season with Nurture Natives, cont.

Article by CCMG Marlene Smith

In October, Nurture Natives enjoyed the SOMD Invasive Species Festival hosted by [Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum](#)! Esther and Marlene spent the day teaching youth and adults how to make soap and laundry detergent using English Ivy!



Right: Marlene and Esther with Lindsay Hollister, a horticulturalist and the Director of the Invasive Species Festival. Photo by Bill Smith. Left: Esther prepares English Ivy leaves while helping Girl Scouts. Photo by Marlene Smith.



Left: Marlene and Esther with Jessalyn Mehrkam of Earth Liaison Garden Consulting and Designing foraging for edible natives. Photo by Bill Smith.



Right: Marlene helps a young participant make his English Ivy soap. Photo by Esther Bonney.

## A Busy Season with Nurture Natives, cont.

Article by CCMG Marlene Smith

So, what's next for the Nurture Natives/CCMG teams? We are beyond excited to be partnering with [Bona Terra](#) to host the **first-ever Community-Led Satellite Giveaway with Bona Terra native seedlings!**

The giveaway will take place as part of the Native Plant Swap at the Leonardtown Library on Saturday, October 28, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM. Stop by for free native seedlings!

Species include: *Rudbeckia triloba*, Brown-eyed Susan; *Solidago juncea*, Early Goldenrod; *Penstemon digitalis*, Foxglove Beardtongue; *Eryngium yuccifolium*, Rattlesnake Master; *Oligoneuron rigidum*, Stiff Goldenrod; *Ludwigia alternifolia*, Seedbox; *Solidago speciosa*, Showy Goldenrod; *Solidago odora*, Sweet Goldenrod; and *Solidago rugosa*, Wrinkleleaf goldenrod.



Bona Terra seedlings being nurtured by CCMG Marlene Smith while we await the giveaway. *Solidago rugosa*, Wrinkleleaf goldenrod in bloom. *Ludwigia alternifolia*, Seedbox, has gone to seed. Lucky recipients of these plants will also get seeds! Photos by CCMG Marlene Smith.

"Nurture Natives are our inaugural recipients and couldn't be a better fit for our program! By volunteering at two of our previous giveaway events, they received all the knowledge and training necessary to pick up the mantle and host their own events. In addition to training, they have also been granted thousands of seedlings and access to forms, information, and other necessary materials to give seedlings away." Jeremy Tidd

# Bay-Wise Landscape Management

Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham

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Happy Fall Master Gardeners:

Where does the time go? It has been a very busy summer and now that the last of our yearly events are coming to an end, I want to thank all our Bay-Wise team members who came out to help with certifications and sharing their talents with other projects during our “temporary shutdown.” Let’s hope that the University-wide effort to fill the Master Gardener Coordinator position ends soon.

## Bay-Wise Certifications

**Elena Wilcox** - We met up with Elena in August. She has worked very hard on her property since I visited her earlier in the year. She installed two rain barrels, added a vegetable garden and is planning to add more native plants to her garden. One of the highlights of our visit was to learn about all the water plants and grasses that Elena has added to her beautiful pond. We even came upon a surprise - check out the “fairy ring” in her front yard. The photo on the left is Janet McCrane and Elena Wilcox.



# Bay-Wise Landscape Management, cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham

**Jennifer Godlewski** - We visited Jennifer’s lovely home in La Plata, located in a beautiful woodsy area enveloped by beautiful pines, hollies, and other vegetation. As we walked around the property, it was obvious that Jennifer and her family are one with nature. The landscaping design used for the flower gardens, shrubs and other plantings surrounding the home was impressive. Photo is of Rose Markham, Jennifer Godlewski, and Kathy Jenkins.



**Karen Trundle** – Karen’s property was certified in September. Her property was full of surprises. As we identified a variety of both wild and native flowers, bushes, and trees it became clear that Karen is a lover of nature and believes in letting Mother Nature take care of its own. The property is full of native plants and trees of all descriptions. Her vegetable and herb garden produced a very rich crop this year and she is preparing her beds for winter. It got too dark by the time we finished up, but I managed to get just a couple of snapshots. Photo on the right is Karen and Collin Trundle with Rose Markham.





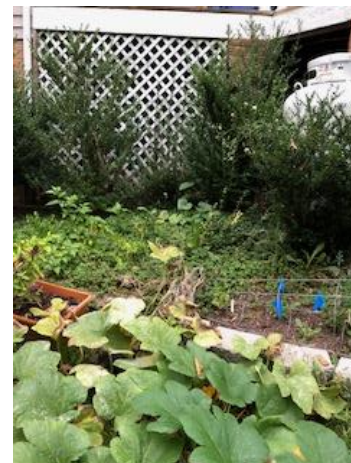
## Bay-Wise Landscape Management, cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham

**Tom Belote** - When our team met up with Tom Belote it was a very hot, humid day, but as soon as we started our walk thru, we forgot about the heat as Tom described how he went about designing his landscaping before he began putting in his plants and trees. It was obvious he loves working outdoors and tending his flower and vegetable gardens. Photo is of Lori Guido and Tom Belote.



**Karen Hile** - Karen Hile, who lives in the Kings Grant area, has a very interesting piece of property. Her home is built on a somewhat hilly area that slopes into a beautiful, wooded area at the edge of the community. As you can see from the photos, she has met the challenge of designing the unique flower and veggie gardens surrounding her home. Photo shows Rose Markham with Karen Hile.



# Bay-Wise Landscape Management, cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham

**Heidi and Dana Feston** - We also had the opportunity to visit the home of Heidi and Dana Feston who just moved to the Brandywine area near the Samuel Mudd House. They came here from Michigan to be near their daughter. We were all enchanted with the work they have accomplished in the few months they have been here. They took advantage of our tree and shrub give-a-way in April and planted even more trees in their back woods which leads to a brook/stream that is full of flowers and vegetation. They created themed areas and interesting signage along the paths leading to the stream that flows through their property. In the front of their home, they have a beautiful flower and veggie garden. Enjoy these photos of some of the interesting areas we explored.



Rose Markham, Heidi Feston, Dana Feston, Kathy Davis and Janet McGrane.



Janet McGrane, Kathy Davis, Heidi Feston, Barb Hays and Dana Hays checking off Native Plant credits.



## Bay-Wise Landscape Management, cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham

**Mary Vance** - We just recently certified Mary Vance's home in La Plata. Mary loves her flower gardens and has converted some of her lawn into beautiful homes for many of them. One of the highlights of our visit was a rain garden that takes up the back and side of her property. Mary was having serious water run-off so she hired a company to come in and give her some advice. She was thrilled when the company decided a rain garden was the answer to her problems and with the added natives, ferns and other plantings, it certainly is an "eye catcher." Mary plans to have her La Plata Garden Club members come and tour her home sometime next year.



Left: Two photos of the rain gardens. Right above: Mary Vance and her granddaughter with Rose Markham. Below: CCMG Barbara Hays.



Congratulations to Elena Wilcox, Jennifer Godlewski, Karen Trundle, Tom Belote and Karen Hile for stepping up and receiving their Bay-Wise certifications.

# Bay-Wise Landscape Management, cont.

Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham



We also certified the Rootbound Farms in La Plata in August owned by Woody DeLauder. He converted his property into a no-till farm some years ago and has become very successful by offering his produce to markets and other clientele. As we toured his vegetable gardens, Woody explained how he builds his gardens, the soil he uses and how he comes up with the next products he will offer. For example, in addition to his regular produce, Woody experiments with different types of peppers and tomato varieties for his Kimchi sauce that is very popular among his customers. He also produces a variety of cold-pressed soaps that seems to fly off his table at the La Plata Farmers Market where Woody can be found on Wednesdays thru mid-Oct and every Saturday until early November.



Right: Janet McGrane, Kathy Davis, Woody DeLauder, Rose Markham, Barbara Hays.  
Below: June Leyland, Barbara Hays, Kathy Davis, Kathy Jenkins, Woody DeLauder.



**Bay-Wise Landscape Management, cont.**  
**Article and photos by CCMG Rose Markham**

Sometime soon we will be certifying our demonstration garden at the Bel Alton Extension office. We are just waiting for a date to be assigned by the project leaders. In the meantime, CCMG Rose Gazarek, who is also the lead docent for Maxwell Hall in Hughesville, is awaiting word from the Charles County Parks for permission to certify this historic property. It would be a great way to close out the year.

We signed up several homeowners for future certifications at the County Fair, the La Plata Town Festival, and the Cobb Island Monarch Mania event. Mike Callahan did a great job sending off the five Monarchs on their way home. The children learned a lot about tagging and identifying by gender and date. Thank you all for supporting our events during the year.

Until next time, Rose Markham, Chair



Above: Mike Callahan and a youngster preparing to release Monarch butterflies.

## Irises in My Life

Article and photos by CCMG Sally Matts

2023 turned out to be a very good year for irises (*Iridaceae*). The flower bed next to my driveway was stunning this year.

It all started when Granny, my husband's grandmother, gave me some of her violet blue irises almost 40 years ago. I planted them in my garden near Pittsburgh. When my family moved to Indiana the irises went too. After we moved to Mississippi, I added some hybrid peach irises, called Beverly Sills (*Iris Germanica 'Beverly Sills'*), to my iris collection. The irises got transplanted at various times of the year (as late as November) and sometimes were kept out of the soil for several months. Once I got to Maryland, a friend from work gave me some standard white ones. My current bed of 'tall bearded' irises started in 2011.



Tall Bearded Irises (*Iridaceae*)

I learned how to care for irises by reading instructions in my first gardening book, *McCall's Garden Book* (c. 1967). Iris rhizomes should be planted: 1) in a bed that drains well. You can add soil to raise it if necessary. 2) Shallowly in the soil. Don't bury them like tulip bulbs. Barely cover the rhizomes with soil. Spread out the roots and they can be a little deeper in the soil. 3) Add some fertilizer, bone meal or bulb fertilizer works well. 4) Cover with some mulch to keep the weeds to a minimum

In the early spring, pull off the dead leaves and water if it has been especially dry. In zone 7b, irises bloom in late April and into May depending on where they are planted and the type of iris. Cut off the dead flowers after they bloom, as your garden will look much better. Cut down the flower stalks after the flowering stops, too. During the rest of the year, irises require minimal attention and don't need much water after blooming. Irises can be infected with borers and diseases, but I haven't had any of those problems.



Irises in my grandmother's vase

It is recommended that irises need to be divided every 4 years and late summer is the best time. In 2020, I dug up my entire bed and the rhizomes were so crowded that some were three layers deep! When you divide them, cut or break off the sections that have leaves. Discard sections without leaves. You can trim the leaves to about 4". I like to cut them into fan shapes. To distinguish which is which, nail polish can be used to mark them.

I have given away many rhizomes to friends, neighbors, and family. In 2024, I plan to dig up the whole bed again. If you would be interested in some, email me at [sjmatts@yahoo.com](mailto:sjmatts@yahoo.com) and I'll contact you when they are available.

## Recipes for Vegetables

Article and photos by CCMG Marlene Smith

Have you ever come away from a potluck wishing you'd asked someone for a recipe? This summer I had the pleasure of enjoying Tomato Pie for the first time. It was soooo good that I went back for seconds. But before I had the chance to ask around for the recipe, the meeting was adjourned, and I left without knowing who had made it and without getting the recipe. But never fail, an internet search provided lots of options. Never one to follow a recipe exactly as written, I combined several and came up with the following. If you still have any fresh tomatoes sitting around, I highly recommend you try it! This recipe was adapted from [https://www.theseasonedmom.com/wprm\\_print/70737](https://www.theseasonedmom.com/wprm_print/70737) See original recipe for tips and notes.



Before (left) and after baking (above right) and sliced. Mmmmmm.....



## Southern Tomato Pie

Prep Time 40minutes minutes  
Cook Time 45minutes minutes  
Resting Time 20minutes minutes  
Total Time 1hour hour 25minutes minutes  
Servings 6 - 8 people

### Ingredients

- 1 9-inch pie crust, brushed with egg white and baked
- 1 egg, separated
- 2 ½ lbs. fresh tomatoes, cut into ¼-inch thick slices (about 3 large)
- 1 Vidalia onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup grated Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 ½ cups grated cheddar cheese, divided
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- Kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons Italian-seasoned bread crumbs
- 2-3 strips crumbled bacon

### Instructions

1. Separate egg. Brush unbaked pie crust with egg white and bake according to directions.
2. In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion; cook until lightly browned on the edges (about 6 minutes). Transfer onion to a large bowl and set aside to cool completely.
3. Line 2 baking sheets with paper towels. Place sliced tomatoes in a single layer on the paper towels. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt. Allow to sit for 30 minutes to remove some of the moisture, then pat dry with additional paper towels.
4. Once the onion is cool, stir in egg yolk and remaining egg white, Swiss cheese, 1 cup of the cheddar, mayonnaise, basil, pepper, and ½ teaspoon salt.
5. Spread half of the mayonnaise mixture in the bottom of the prepared crust. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon breadcrumbs. Arrange half of the tomatoes on top. Repeat with another layer of the mayonnaise mixture, another layer of breadcrumbs, and another layer of tomatoes. Sprinkle remaining ½ cup of cheddar cheese over top and crumbled bacon.
6. Bake in a 350°F oven for about 45 minutes, or until brown and bubbly.
7. Cut into slices and serve warm or at room temperature. I find that it's easiest to slice when I allow the pie to rest for at least 20 minutes being cutting into it.



## Save the Dates and Volunteer!

### **November 1 – Native Tree Identification Hike**

Hosted by the Accokeek Foundation at 3400 Bryan Road Point in Accokeek from 10 to 11:30 am. Fee is \$5; Advanced registration required. [Click here.](#)

### **November 4 – GIEI Fall Vegetable Gardening at the La Plata Library**

Volunteers are needed to help with table set up/take down and to talk to participants (answer questions, handout literature, etc.). This is a great way to earn volunteer hours. Please email [Meg MacDonald](#) or [Beth Grem](#), if you'd like to join us. Please [download the flyer here](#) to share with friends and family.

### **November 11 (tentative) – Cleaning and Storing Native Seeds**

You've collected your native seeds. Now what? How do you prepare them for use at your Master Gardener workshops and demonstration gardens? The goal of this workshop is to clean and bulk package the seeds collected from tri-county native gardens and share them with participating Charles/St. Mary's/Calvert County Master Gardeners for use in their own programs that promote native plants. Organized by Marlene Smith and Molly Moore. This is a workshop for tri-county Master Gardeners and interns only and limited to 30. More info coming soon!

### **December 2 – Winter Sowing Volunteer Training/Refresher**

This workshop will be held at the Charlotte Hall Library from 10am to noon and is limited to tri-county Master Gardeners and interns interested in volunteering at public winter sowing workshops in the tri-county cluster. Participants will be expected to volunteer for at least one public workshop. Attendance is highly encouraged for those volunteers who participated in last year's winter sowing presentations, as new information and techniques will be introduced. Leaders are Marlene Smith and Molly Moore.

### **January 6 - All the Dirt on Winter Sowing**

A collaboration between Southern Maryland Audubon and Charles County Master Gardeners, this public workshop teaches new and experienced gardeners how to sow native plant seeds in plastic jugs in the dead of winter. It's an inexpensive and relatively easy way to grow more native plants. Time and location TBD, limited to 30.

**[2023 CCMG Calendar Link](#)**



**The Compost**

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Click on photo above to visit our website.

The mission of the Charles County Master Gardeners is to support the University of Maryland Extension service by educating residents about safe, effective, and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities.



**Submissions to The Compost** - Submit articles, photos, reports, events, and other items for publication to the editor at [thecompostofccmg@gmail.com](mailto:thecompostofccmg@gmail.com) by January 15, 2024, for the Winter 2024 newsletter. Please include a brief description of the activity, names of persons in photos and the photographer's name. Please include scientific names of plants.

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