



Over The Fence ... and Crossing County Lines

West Virginia Master Gardener Newsletter
Issue 1, February 2003

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State
Master Gardener Coordinator

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Barber,
State Master Gardener
President

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West Virginia Master Gardeners have taken another step forward with this, the inaugural issue of the State newsletter. In this first issue, I would like to take the opportunity to let you know what Master Gardeners accomplished over the last year.

Since its inception in 1993, the Master Gardener Program has continued to spread across the State. In 2002, there were 32 West Virginia counties involved in Master Gardening programming. Four hundred and 34 individuals received training with the Master Gardener curriculum. Of these, 310 became Certified Master Gardeners within six months of training--bringing the statewide total to approximately 1,200.

Master Gardeners spent 2,636 hours presenting educational programs and conducted 88 advanced training activities in their communities. They provided consultation and teaching to 3,704 adults and 2,476 youth. One hundred and thirty-two Master Gardeners are engaged in some form of leadership role around the State and help coordinate 240 community service and educational projects. In 2002, West Virginia Master Gardeners volunteered a total of 30,338 hours to West Virginia University Extension Service and to community service.

Your work does not go unnoticed. This same statistical information is reported at both the State and Federal level and helps secure support for the program.

The Extension Service is grateful for the time and commitment you have given to West Virginia and is proud of the impact you have made in your communities. I am happy to be involved with such a fine group of people doing a great job. Keep up the good work.

Thanks,
John Jett, Ph.D
Extension Specialist-Horticulture

A little seed
for me to sow...
A little earth
to make it grow...
A little hole,
a little pat...
A little wish,
and that is that.
A little sun,
a little shower...
A little while,
and then--a flower!

Maytime Magic
Mabel Watts

BOARD NEWS: The West Virginia Master Gardener Association Board of Directors meets quarterly. The last meeting was held on January 11, 2003 near Weston.

- Mary McCormick, Vice President and Spring Conference Chairperson, reported on the progress of the Conference, which will be held April 4, 5 and 6 at the Holiday Inn/Oak Hill High School in Oak Hill. The Saturday keynote speaker will be Dr. Ozzie Abaye, an Environmental Specialist, and the Sunday featured speaker will be Anita Stone, a Horticulture Therapy Specialist. She encouraged everyone to attend.
- Lee Reger, Treasurer, reported on the Endowment Account which awards a \$500.00 scholarship to a second year student, or higher, attending West Virginia University pursuing a degree in the horticulture field. The fund was created from the proceeds of the auctions held at each year's Spring Conference. Thanks to all the Master Gardeners, the total of the Endowment Account is \$14,728.53, and Lee has been working closely with WVU personnel on the application process for this scholarship.

HAPPY 10th ANNIVERSARY AND CONGRATULATIONS ON A JOB WELL DONE!

West Virginia University Extension has provided us with the wonderful opportunity to become a Certified Master Gardener. During the last ten years they have worked to expand the program and provide the support county agents and coordinators need to have the program grow and run smoothly. As a result we now have more than 30 counties with active Master Gardeners.

All of these programs serve their community by donating their time and talents to further our mission of community service and education. Projects vary from county to county, but include Plant a Row for the Hungry, community gardens, newsletters that help educate others, working with children in classrooms and 4H, working with the elderly in nursing homes or extended care facilities, community beautification projects, working at fairs and plant clinics to educate the public on horticulture/agriculture topics. These are just a few of the many ways our members volunteer their time and talents in their communities.

All of these volunteer activities make a difference in our lives by giving us a feeling of accomplishment and of helping others. These projects also make a difference in our communities. They help people learn, beautify our surroundings, teach children to understand plants and their value, and contribute in too many way to list. And, **YES**, these activities are noticed and appreciated. This is proven by the recognition we've received, which includes two formal awards.

In July 2001 West Virginia Master Gardeners received the Governor's Service Award for Organizations. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding individuals and groups who volunteer their time and services to help meet community needs. Criteria for judging included identification of community need, achievement, impact and innovation of the project or service provide. This was given as a result of the many Master Gardener projects that have been completed throughout the state, many of which have been recognized during state conferences as outstanding.

In September 2001, the West Virginia Master Gardener Association was recognized as an "Outstanding Partner" by West Virginia University Extension Service. This was a result of our efforts to successfully host the Northeast Regional Master Gardener Conference in Wheeling in the fall of 2000, which was attended by more than 450 individuals from 25 states. Other factors that contributed to this award were the funding of our scholarship Endowment Account and other community service.

In addition to these awards, we have raised enough money to fully endow our scholarship fund and will award a scholarship to a West Virginia student this year. We plan to continue granting a scholarship each semester to help a student studying horticulture complete their education.

All West Virginia Master Gardeners should be very proud to be a part of this organization. It is the work of each and every member that makes it possible for us to be recognized as a group that makes a difference in our state. I applaud each of you for your dedication and support of the West Virginia Master Gardener Program. Your efforts are what make this a worthwhile and giving program.

Delores Barber, President, West Virginia Master Gardeners

Meet Marshall County:

Marshall County is located in the northern panhandle along the Ohio River and is known for the Adena Indian Mound, the Delf Norona Museum and the State's first penitentiary. The first Master Gardener program was started in 1993 in Marshall County under the leadership of Extension Agent, Cathy Brown. Their officers are: President-Jill Dolen, Vice President-Joyce Davis and Secretary-Liz Harper, and they currently have 30 active members. Some of the many outstanding projects were starting a wheelchair garden at a nursing home, a Secret Garden Tour of Master Gardener members' gardens open to the public with over 200 people attending, and starting a butterfly garden at the riverfront. The current winter project is the annual sale of the Marshall County Master Gardeners' calendars for \$3.00 if ordered by mail. The calendar is full of gardening information, planting dates, moon phases and informative articles written by Master Gardeners from Marshall County and others from around the state. For more information, contact Jill at Twodolens@aol.com.

Marshall County is looking forward to an even more exciting 2003!

WHEN PRUNING ANY PARTICULARLY THORNY BRANCHES, HOLD THEM BACK OUT OF YOUR WAY WITH A PAIR OF BARBECUE TONGS FOR EASY "OUCHLESS" PRUNING.

"If Winter Comes, can Spring be far behind?"

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Winter Gardening Tip:

Winter is a good time to locate and eliminate garden pests. You can prevent a measurable amount of caterpillar damage during the traditional spring feeding frenzy. Among the easiest to locate are the distinctive and disgusting egg masses of tent caterpillars. Look for shiny brownish-black, bubbly masses, often wrapped completely around the small twigs and thin branches, especially of wild and ornamental cherries, as well as apple and crabapple trees. When feasible, try to prune off small twigs to capture the entire egg mass, containing from 150 to 400 eggs, and destroy them through burning or crushing.

Gypsy moths await hatching in early April in fuzzy, felt-like tan egg masses, generally found on the trunks of oak trees and other hardwood species, although they are also found in secluded corners of sheds, carports, stacks of firewood and picnic tables. Thoroughly scrape these masses, containing several hundred to 1,000 individual eggs, into a container for disposal. Use a coffee can filled with soapy water, which will be flushed later on. Do not scrape egg masses onto the ground where they still may hatch.

*Montgomery County, Maryland
Department of Environmental
Protection*

Garden Gift:

Don't underestimate how special a gift becomes when it is put into a canning jar with a decorated lid. For a unique gift to layer in a jar, try this:

Potting Soil Blend for Leafy Green Houseplants

1 c potting soil 1/2 c perlite
 1/2 c perlite 1 1/2 c potting soil
 1 c ready to use peat moss
 Optional: Add 2 t bone meal to soil

1. Place 1 c potting soil into a wide-mouth, quart canning jar. Press down firmly.
2. Continue layering each ingredient on top of soil.
3. Place remaining 1 1/2 c soil into jar last, adding more or less to completely fill the jar.
4. Place lid on jar and decorate.
5. Give with instructions below. Give a plant and pot along with jar of potting soil in a gift basket.

Give these instructions with the gift:

1. Empty jar into large bucket or large flowerpot.
2. Use 1 6" flowerpot. (Place a broken piece of pot to cover the hole in pot.)
3. Place a leafy green houseplant into pot and place remaining soil around plant.
 (This jar fills one 6" flowerpot)

Garden Greetings--Jackie Gannaway

"without having experienced the cold of winter, one cannot appreciate the warmth of spring"
Chinese Proverb

Winter Gardening Activities For Children:

When chilly temperatures force you inside, what can you do to keep children interested in gardening.

Here are a few tips:

1. Peculiar plants--what child wouldn't be interested in an insect-eating plant? Many garden centers sell Venus flytraps in their houseplant section. Then visit your library or search the Internet for more information on the natural habitat and grown habits of this unusual plant.
2. Read a book--books like *Peter Rabbit* or *The Secret Garden* can spark your child's interest in gardening.
3. Worm farm--line a large cardboard box with a garbage bag. Fill it with soil, organic matter, and a few worms. Keep it shady and moist, but not too wet. Add kitchen scraps (vegetables only!). Worms will help teach your kids about the interdependence of plants and organisms as they turn vegetable kitchen scraps into valuable compost.