



The Garden Gate Newsletter

October - November, 2004

OFFICERS

President:
Jack Kelzer

Vice President:
Mary E. Vetovec

Treasurer:
Chuck Bingley

Recording Secretary:
Lauryn Lindemann

Corresponding Secretary:
June Walker

COMMITTEES

Master Gardener Training:
Shelby Earehart, Cynthia Seal

Programs / Continuing Education:
Mary E. Vetovec

Horticulture Helpline:
Lyn Dodge

Finance:
Jim Smith

Communications:
Jody Taggart, Debbie Wilson

Hospitality:
Peggy Lowry, Cynthia Seal

Service and Recognition:
Joyce Carole Brannon

Historian:
Joyce Carole Brannon

4-H Youth / Junior Master Gardeners:
Stephanie Feaser

Plant Clinic:
Dave & Joanie Brobst

SMART Lawns:
Stephanie Feaser

Special Events:
John Simmonds, Judy Burton

Website:
www.co.henrico.va.us/agent
Ann Boland

Henrico Extension Extravaganza

*****Revised Dates and Locations*****

Wednesday October 6, 11am-2pm

Friday October 8, 3-6pm

(see last page for details)

Association Meetings

October 13

Chuck Peple will be with us to speak about a fast growing Virginia agribusiness: **wine production**. He has 25 years experience in the VA wine industry and owns a local vineyard. Please come for a discussion of grape varieties, pruning techniques, soils and microclimates.



Don't forget the **plant sale** which will take place after the meeting on October 13. (details inside)



November 10

Eileen Weldon, the landscape manager of **Busch Gardens** in Williamsburg, Virginia will speak about her work caring for over one hundred acres of grounds. She and twenty-five gardeners manage the planting and care of over one hundred thousand flowers each year. Busch Gardens has been named "Most Beautiful Theme Park" for fourteen consecutive years. They are an ecologically concerned company using beneficial insects, 'get-tough' methods on voles and water conservation.

December 8

Reception for all Master Gardeners at 3:00pm.
No meeting in January.

President's Message

July 1 marked the beginning of a new year for HMGA. In this, my first message to the membership, I would like to thank the officers and committee chairpersons who served so well and all of you who worked on the various programs and projects this past year.

You have elected a new slate of officers and we have filled all the committee chairs for the coming year. This is a great group of volunteers that I am enthused about working with.

The Master Gardeners Association now has over 90 members.

We have several new projects in the works including the Friendly Garden Tours, support for the Extension Unit Situation Analysis and the Extension Showcase event in October.

We need the volunteer help of all of you to move our organization forward as we carry out our mission of Horticulture Education in the community.

Jack



Don't Forget the Plant Sale Fundraiser

(see insert page for more details)

This is your reminder that the second annual "members only" plant sale sponsored by the Association's Finance Committee will be held on October 13, 2004 immediately following our monthly meeting. Please refer to the insert to this newsletter, SUBJECT: Donating Plants for Plant Sale.

The success of this plant sale fund-raiser depends on you, our members. Your generosity and support of this effort is truly appreciated.

The Extension Office Kitchen will be open and Finance Committee Members present to accept your donations starting at 11:00 A.M. on October 13. If you will be unable to attend the meeting and plant sale but would like to donate plants for the sale, the plants may be brought to the Extension Office earlier and left with Stephanie.

-Finance Committee

To Prune? Or Not to Prune? Hydrangeas

By Debbie Wilson

That was the question on the minds of the many attending “Permanent Perennials” with Richard Bir. Dr. Bir, North Carolina State Emeritus, spoke at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in mid July to a full house including some familiar Master Gardener faces. Seems we all arrived with the same question on our minds, “when and how do we prune or cut-back our hydrangeas”. In July, the hydrangeas in our gardens as well at the botanical gardens were in full bloom. The hardy plants were a colorful treat for the eye. The last thing anyone would want to do would be to ruin the flowering potential for the next year. Our questions were answered along with much more information about this favorite shrub of gardeners.

Beginning to understand how to treat hydrangeas, we start with a division into four basic groups (and another special grouping that will be mentioned later). There are *Hydrangea paniculata* and *Hydrangea arborescens* which bloom on new growth, and *Hydrangea quercifolia* and *Hydrangea macrophylla* which bloom on old wood. Of the first group – *paniculata* and *arborescens*, we learned that they can be pruned in the spring because they bloom later in the flowering season and on new growth. *Paniculata* refers to a “panicle” shape, a loose, irregularly branched flower cluster, like a raceme or a flower cluster with individual flowers

growing on small stems at intervals along one center stem. Once established, these can take more sun and will tolerate a fair amount of water. Varieties include ‘PeeGee’ – old Victorian landscapes & white in color, ‘Floribunda’ – adaptable for shade and tolerant of neglect, and ‘Tardiva’. Good, hardy plants all.

Perhaps the most familiar example of *Hydrangea arborescens* is ‘Annabelle.’ We see and enjoy ‘Annabelles’ in so many places and for good reason. *Arborescens* bloom on new growth, which means they can be cut back in the spring. The ‘Annabelle’ maybe popular in Richmond because it thrives when planted among high pine, shady areas; the same spaces in which azaleas grow so well for us. With more sun they will re-bloom in September and October when deadheaded to nodes. Other *arborescens* mentioned as noteworthy include: ‘White Dome’, *ssp radiata* which possesses an interesting white underleaf color, and *ssp radiata* ‘Samantha’ – a new variety *grandiflora* with silver underleaf.

The “other” hydrangeas are grouped into *quercifolia* and *macrophylla*. These bloom on old wood which means that you cannot prune in the spring. Any cutting back or shaping should take place immediately after blooming because the next year’s blooms are set early, like azaleas. “Blooms on old wood” means early blooming

shrubs. These groupings will grow in damp to moist soils. They like shade and flower best if in partial shade.

Oak leaf hydrangeas flourish throughout the Richmond area. They are an example of *Hydrangea querciflora* and are considered a native plant. Oak leaf hydrangeas love Richmond and love shade. Their bonus features include the leaf-turning colors in the fall and the winter interest of peeling bark. Other *quercifolia* varieties mentioned were: 'Alice' – container grown and easy propagation for nurseries = available, 'Snow Queen' compact habit/large flowers/beautiful Fall foliage, 'Harmony' a double bloomer, 'Pee Wee' compact 4 to 6 feet, and 'Little Honey' a shrub with yellow leaves that light up a dark corner.

Macrophylla are the big leaf, French (non-native), more exotic hydrangeas that we see everywhere. These are the flowers that allow us to play with their color. Two flowering shapes include the mopheads or hortensia like Nikko, and the lacecaps like 'Kardinal'. Color is determined by genetic potential and by the pH of the soil. Acid soil assures blue; pH 5.0 to 5.5 results in a soft blue, 6.0 to 6.5 or slightly higher maintains pink. If a plant is not genetically ready to alter bloom color then it will not like 'Mme Emile Mouillere' which have no pigment and will remain white. Some varieties, like the 'Nikko Blue', are affected by a change in pH of the soil. As most Richmond soils test acidic,

managing the range of blues is not difficult. To experiment with the range of pink tones aluminum sulfate can be added in the springtime when new leaves are fully expanded. Try a mixture of aluminum sulfate in the ratio of 1 tablespoon per gallon of water, in three different applications about 10 days apart. Soak the soil around the hydrangea and see what happens.

Varieties of *macrophylla* abound. One that caught my attention is 'Lemon Zest' – yellow leaves, plant in deep shade as they are sensitive to light. What a shining light for a shady corner. Two varieties with variegated foliage include 'Mariessii' which has white edged leaves, and 'Wave Hill'.

A very special group of hydrangeas is called "Remontant." They bloom more than once per season! Examples include: *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'David Ramsey' a blue flower, *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Penny Mac' almost ever blooming, *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Endless Summer' readily available with good root hardiness, and *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Mme Emile Mouillere' a shade loving white blooming shrub. Summary: *Paniculata* and *arborescens* – prune anytime. *Macrophylla* and *quercifolia* – prune before mid-summer. Remontants – prune anytime and deadhead to encourage re-blooming. And if you forget what kind of hydrangea you have, keep a garden diary and record when your hydrangeas begin to bloom; that seems to be the key. ☀

A Little Bit about... Roses

By Peggy Lowry

Roses have been cultivated for more than 4,000 years and were revered and enjoyed in almost every walk of life. Even in the Iliad the rose was used at funerals and in perfumes. The island of Rhodes is believed to be named for the Greek nymph, Rhode, whose symbol was the rose. Although unrelated, the word rhododendron means rhodo = rose flowered; dendron = tree. And rhodology is the study of roses—not rhododendrons.

Roses became the symbol of many things—virginity, love, purity and innocence to name a few. The Romans imported great quantities from Egypt to use as cures for various ailments, as flavoring in food and general enjoyment. At banquets, crowns of roses were worn by Romans as an antidote for too much wine.

Guests waded through rose petals, and swags of roses were hung over banquet tables indicating that anything said or done there was confidential—thus the phrase *sub rosa*; “under the rose.”



During the Middle Ages the rose was still connected to the Roman degeneracy and was not allowed in the churches. But roses were grown in monastery gardens and slowly gained their former importance in decoration, food and medicine and became the symbol of Mary. The word Rosary means “Crown of Roses.” Rosaries were at one time made from the wood of the rose and/or from a paste made of salt and ground rose petals.

Every country that grew roses had recipes for rose use. In medieval times, the rose garden was important to the manor house. Roses were dried, preserved and mixed with other herbs to be used as potpourri, medicine, and to flavor foods. Rose water was distilled and used in ointments, flavorings, in vinegar and preserves. “Rose syrup, rose honey, rose water, rose aromaticum, wine and oil and ointment—for humoring human aches and ouchings.”

Since the rose had become the symbol of Mary, it was a prize that Crusaders brought back to Europe. Persians and Muslim Arabs had intensely cultivated roses for centuries.

Twenty some species of roses are native to North America, but about 90% of those cultivated are of foreign origin. Even the famed Cherokee Rose was found to be an oriental rose introduced by Spanish

colonists, but it spread through the west and naturalized. In their efforts to Christianize the American Indians, many mission Padres told the story of Adam and Eve driven from the garden for picking a rose. Apples were unknown in Spanish America. The only apples native to this continent were small, almost insignificant crab apples.

Roses were in such high demand in 17th century Europe that they were sometimes used as legal tender. Napoleon's wife, Josephine, established an extensive collection of rose bushes at several of her residences, and it became popular throughout Europe to grow roses - if one could afford it.

Not too many years ago, old roses began to peak the interest of rose growers, and modern day plant hunters have successfully found many old and native roses still growing throughout the country. In fact, one very old sought after rose was found still growing in Hollywood Cemetery here in Richmond.

Today we still have many uses for roses - practical and symbolical. On Mother's Day in the 1930's men and women both wore a rose—red if one's mother were alive—white if she were dead. During World War II with limited imports, the British gathered hips from roses growing in the hedgerows. They made syrups, conserves, jams and jellies from them. The government made syrup and pills from hips to distribute in hospitals knowing that a handful of rose hips has more vitamin C than 50 oranges.

One can find many recipes today for using roses in jellies, jams, conserves and tea. To make rose hip tea, dry hips from roses that have not been treated with pesticides. Dry the hips until they become shriveled and hard. Chop a few tablespoons of hips, add boiling water and steep at least five minutes. Pour through a strainer and enjoy! ☀

Cream Cheese Coffee Cake

2 pks (8 oz ea) crescent rolls
2 pks (8 oz ea) cream cheese softened
1 cup sugar
1 tsp vanilla
1 egg – separate yolk and white

Spread one pack of rolls to cover the bottom of a lightly greased 13 x 9 baking pan.

Mix the cheese, sugar, vanilla and egg yolk and spread on top. Cover with the other pack of rolls and brush with the egg white. Mix ½ cup sugar, 1 tsp. Cinnamon and ½ cup chopped nuts. Sprinkle this evenly over the top. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

-Mary Shakespeare

Lost and Found

There is a time sheet in the “pending box” in the volunteer room that is missing a name. Please check to see if it belongs to you. Thanks, Joyce Brannon ☀

Thank-You

Thank-you to all the Master Gardeners who donated their Ukrop’s Golden Gift points to the Association. We received \$108 from Ukrop’s! Keep Shopping! ☀

Thanks to the Year Book Committee for putting together this year’s book:

Joyce Brannon

Carol Colby

Peggy Lowry

Susan Robson

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help with
The Extension Extravaganza

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Human Services Building, Second Floor

Featuring:

Virginia Eggs: Make Your Own Omelets

Agricultural Products and Hands-On Exhibits

Henrico 4-H: Developing Confident & Productive Youth

If you have display items (such as baskets, preserves, autumn themed, garden or agricultural products) that you could lend us for the event, contact Jackie Dean at 737-1986.

We can also use some last minute volunteers; call Stephanie if you can attend the event.

Also join us on **Friday, October 8 from 3-6 p.m. at Brusters Old Fashioned Ice Cream at 9101 Staples Mill Road for our BBQ Dinner Fundraiser.** If you pre-ordered, dinners can be picked up at Brusters on Friday from 3-6 p.m. Limited walk-in service is also available if you did not pre-order. To volunteer to help with BBQ preparations or clean up, call Jack Kelzer at 527-0579.

Henrico Master Gardeners Association

P.O. Box 27032

Richmond, VA 23273-7032

The Henrico Master Gardeners Association, and all VCE programs, services, activities, and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age national origin, handicap, or political affiliation. VCE is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Master Gardener Reminders

Board Meetings

October 6, 1:30 p.m.

November 3, 1:30 p.m.

Association Meetings

October 13, 1:30 p.m.

November 10, 1:30 p.m.

Please e-mail your contribution to the newsletter

By **November 20** to

Jody Taggart j.taggart@worldnet.att.net