



The Garden Gate *e-Newsletter*

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Websites
www.co.henrico.va.us/agent
www.henricomga.org

April—May, 2008

Association Meetings

April 9, 1:00PM

Camellias at the home of Rosalee Nachman

We have the special pleasure of seeing local Camellia expert Rosalee Nachman's garden in person. If you saw her slides you know this is a great opportunity. Directions to her home are on page 7.



May 14, 12:00PM

Annual Plant Exchange and Potluck Luncheon at Pat Greene's

When: Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Time: 12 noon

(Note time change one hour earlier than our normal meetings)



Where: Pat Greene's home located at 9410 Sir Barry Court (off Pemberton Road, three blocks north of Quioccasin more details next page)

Remember there is no April board meeting

**Advanced Training Wednesday, April 2, 1-3 PM
Field trip to Sneed's Nursery 8756 West Huguenot Road**

President's Message



Junior Master Gardeners

In this message, I want to highlight a sub group within our larger master gardening organization - Junior Master Gardeners. This committee of 12 master gardeners headed by Faye Derkits and Elizabeth Steele offers gardening education and hands on activities at area elementary schools. The program is offered at the request of a school group and is conducted either as part of the class room day or as an after school program.

Held during the spring and fall, there are age appropriate lessons on plant propagation, how plants are used in our daily lives and identification of plant parts. Each class has a take home project related to the activity of that day. As the weather warms the classes are moved outside to gardens at the schools. Children divide and replant perennials, plant seeds and put in bedding plants as they learn of the needs of the plants. They also learn about bulbs and plant fall bulbs to be enjoyed in the spring.



An exciting new component of this program is teaming with Lewis Ginter horticulturists and working with students at St. Andrews School in Oregon Hill. The master gardeners will work with the children in small groups to carry out the plans made by professional horticulturists. This certainly seems like a win/win situation. LGBG gets hands on help and we get to "borrow" ideas for use in the future.

Children and gardening — it's a good thing!
Mary E Vetrovec mevetrovec@aol.com



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Where: Pat Greene's home located at 9410 Sir Barry Court (off Pemberton Road, three blocks north of Quiocasin)

Bring:

1. **Luncheon dish, salad, or dessert** that does **not** require re-heating.
2. A **serving utensil** for your dish.
3. **Five plants to exchange**. Label them with as much information as possible. If you need to do so, you may bring purchased plants (such as annuals from a discount store).
4. **\$1 contribution** for drinks and paper products.
5. Your Master Gardener **nametag** to wear and meet new friends!
6. A **folding chair** if you want to be assured of comfortable seating.

Notes:

1. **Please RSVP by calling the Extension office at 501-5160.**
2. **Rain date** will be Wednesday, May 21. Rain date is only in effect if it rains **HEAVILY** on May 14.
3. Plant exchange will take place **after** lunch!

Getting to Know Cheryl Bergh

by Peggy Lowry



Cheryl became a master gardener in 2006, and today she is a co-chair of the Master Gardener Training Committee; a job she really enjoys.

Cheryl loves buttercups, the Virginia Sweetspire and all types of gardening. The Black Gum is her favorite tree for its fragrant flowers that are in bloom on Mother's Day, its midsummer, small purplish drupes, its crimson fall leaves and its black silhouette against the winter sky.

Born in Richmond, Cheryl spent most of her childhood in Europe, the Middle East, and a short time in the Pacific Rim Islands. Cheryl's father was in the Navy and was stationed in Okinawa. Surprisingly, Henrico master gardener Jim Smith was also stationed in Okinawa at the same time that she was there with her parents.

Cheryl attended Mary Washington and VCU. She has a Masters in Early Childhood Education and Administration and also a Masters in Applied Abstract Math Concepts. She had a certificate in Dietetic and Nutritional Counseling but has let it expire. Also she has a "Grand Diplome" from Le Cordon Bleu, the famous cooking school in Paris. Cheryl is married to Donnie (the most wonderful man in the world, she says). They have seven grown children, four of whom are adopted, and they still keep in touch with the eleven they fostered.

At present Cheryl is a bee keeper and is also experimenting with natural (wild) yeast. There is a very tasty type of wild yeast in her area, and she has been culturing her own sourdough starter for about six months. She hopes that this coming spring she will own an Alpaca so that she can shear and spin the fiber into yarn.

In 1960 Cheryl and her parents attended a barbecue hosted by Richard Nixon, and Sean Connery was an invited guest. He had just been cast in the role of James Bond. Connery and Cheryl's father were chatting, and a photographer asked if Cheryl could sit on Connery's lap for a picture. And so, Cheryl is probably the first and youngest Bond Girl!

The Moss Lady

Those of you who know of Norrie Burnett (Richmond's Moss Lady) will be interested in this upcoming show on HGTV. It's titled "Mad about Moss" and airs on Thursday, April 3 on "Gardener's Diary" at 7:00 am. The show was filmed some time ago, but is just now making its debut. So, tune in if you can, and see a bit of Richmond on national TV. In Richmond, HGTV is channel 61 on Comcast and 229 on DirectTV.

–Beverly Cochrane

Something new about the Easter Lily, variant “Nellie White”

From the Smithsonian:

“The Nellie White’s bulb can move in the dirt where no one can see it. Cornell University researchers have found that the bulb develops one set of roots for taking nourishment from the soil and another set for digging. If the bulb is planted too shallowly, those roots contract, pulling the bulb farther into the ground until it hits the optimum depth. The researchers say two things about this ‘contractile’ root business: One, it is stimulated by light, and two, they’ll be darned if they can say exactly how it works.”

The cultivar most widely grown today for greenhouse potted Easter Lily production is called “Nellie White.”
—Peggy Lowry



News about Roundup

In the 1970’s the chemical glyphosate was introduced as the “herbicide of the century” and as safe and effective. Marketed under the brand name *Roundup*, over time it has become cheaper and glyphosate-resistant crops were genetically modified to survive repeat sprayings. Corn, cotton and soybeans are planted by the farmers without tilling the soil; saving time and money and preventing erosion.

However, certain weeds have genetic mutations that allow them to resist Roundup. The first showed up in Australia in 1996, and in time, glyphosate-resistant weeds began to grow in Delaware. They have spread west, other weeds have followed, and more are expected. These pests are also growing in Argentina and Brazil. They tower over crops and deprive them of water and nutrients. Some of the worst offenders are horseweed/mare’s tail, common water hemp, giant ragweed, and johnson grass.

Experts say that farmers will probably have to go back to tilling the soil and using different herbicides.
—Peggy Lowry

Ukrop's Golden Gift Certificates



Ukrop’s is sponsoring their Golden Gift program again this year. Since they created this program in 1987, they have distributed \$11.6 million to local non-profits. The HMGA has registered to be one of those non-profits this year and you can help us earn funds by participating in this program.

Any customer who has a valid Ukrop’s Valued Customer Card can participate without any additional registration. If you need a UVC Card, just stop by the Customer Service counter at any Ukrop’s retail location. Every time you shop at Ukrop’s and use your UVC card between February 4 and March 29, 2008, you will earn one Golden Gift Point for every \$1 spent. The more you shop, the more you earn. Points are automatically calculated and tracked on your purchase receipts. At the end of the program period (around the end of April) a Golden Gift Certificate that details your household’s points will be mailed to you. Then, simply bring your Golden Gift Certificate to me, or leave it in the VCE office by the end of May. I will collect the certificates and take them to Ukrop’s. They will mail the checks out around the end of August. I will report on how much we earned in the newsletter following the payout.

Thanks for your support of your Henrico Master Gardeners Association. — Beverly Cochrane

A Little Bit about Peonies

Peonies are one of the oldest plants cultivated for flowers and culinary purposes. They were grown in Chinese gardens probably as early as 2000 B.C., but it was not until the seventh century that they were thought to have been grown as ornamentals. When they became popular in the imperial gardens, they were put under imperial protection; the best varieties commanded large prices and were often part of a dowry. As new dynasties moved their courts, peonies moved with them, thus spreading new cultivars throughout the country. Chinese horticulturists were the first to introduce double flowered herbaceous and tree peonies. They used grafting techniques to reproduce the cultivars – all of this by the twelfth century.

Peonies were called “sho yu” (most beautiful) and became part of Chinese poetry, legends and art. Peony seeds were used for seasoning foods, and the roots were used to treat wounds, pain, fungal infections, and spasms. The mongols used the root in soups and throughout Siberia teas were flavored with ground peony seeds. In 1903 the peony was declared the national flower of China, but today the People’s Republic has failed to use it. The plum blossom is Taiwan’s national flower. The 4th month of the Chinese year is called Moon of the Peony.

Peonies reached Japan around the beginning of the 8th century, brought by Chinese missionary Buddhist monks. Only the Japanese elite could afford them, and even today, the peony is a Japanese symbol of prosperity. It was Japanese horticulturists who produced the less complicated peony flower heads, and in our catalogs today they are listed as the Japanese form.

The peony arrived in the Near East and parts of the Mediterranean before recorded history. The horticulturist, Theophrastus, a friend of Aristotle, recorded the peony as “Glycoside.” By 77 AD the peony was declared an important medicine for its healing powers and was re named for Paeon, physician to the gods. In time, Paeon was identified with Apollo. Peonies were included in physicians’ lists as a cure for over twenty ills when different parts of the plant were used. These records were used up to and throughout the Middle Ages.



Roman legions took the peony with them for medical purposes and spread them all over their empire. They were used for centuries of Roman occupation.

During the Middle Ages peonies were grown in monastery gardens as healing herbs. The seeds were swallowed whole to prevent bad dreams, and petals were dried to make a tea that soothed coughing. Different parts of the plant were used to treat jaundice, for teething pain and to control epileptic seizures. Parts of the plant were often worn as an amulet to protect the wearer from the Devil and the Evil Eye. Peonies were also thought to possess supernatural powers and be important in casting spells. As late as the 18th and 19th centuries in rural England and America, peony seeds were hung about the necks of infants to prevent teething problems, convulsions and epilepsy. Modern studies show that peonies contain compounds that can be used in antioxidants and anti-epileptic activity. The compounds also can be used in appetite suppressants, to relieve muscle cramps, stimulate metabolism and to treat various health concerns in women.

The peony was brought to Virginia in the 1600’s and records show that by 1698 they grew in Williamsburg gardens. Jefferson, Washington, and John Custis also planted several varieties. Peonies were grown in some of the northern colonies before the Revolution. Peonies traveled west with the pioneers and today they grow everywhere in the continental U.S. except in the Deep South. No old time garden was considered complete without this incomparable flower. It was commonly called “piney” in early rural America. Some people call it pe’ ne, some people pronounce it pe o’ ne, but the only pronunciation given in Webster’s is pe’ o ne.

The Dutch and British East India Companies were responsible for bringing many varieties of peonies to Europe. The companies also brought tales of the tree peonies, some of which could bring 100 ounces of gold. Some had been living for 200 years, were closely guarded in the mandarins' gardens, and were sometimes included in marriage settlements. The tree peony and herbaceous peony belong to the Ranunculaceae, or buttercup family. Tree peonies can grow up to eight feet and may be covered with 100 blossoms at one time. The first ones sent to the West did not ship well and did not perform as beautifully as expected in European gardens, so it remained rare and expensive. Hybrids are now available that can survive winters in southern New England and westward in the same planting zone.

As you probably know, peonies can be super hardy and capable of abuse and neglect and still put forth foliage and blooms and outlive some of us. The period of bloom can be extended by choosing early, mid, and late season cultivars. Most double flowering types are more fragrant than singles, and pink tend to be more fragrant than red. Few plants offer your garden so many advantages as the herbaceous peony. Although they resent being moved, they are resistant to most plant diseases and are unappetizing to most insects, mildew, slugs and rabbits. They deserve a place in your garden.

By Peggy Lowry

Pesto Chili Peanuts



1 envelope pesto sauce mix
1 tbs olive oil
1 tsp chili powder

¼ tsp ground red pepper
4 ½ - 5 cups salted dry roasted peanuts

Whisk together the oil, pesto mix, chili powder and red pepper.

Pour slowly over the peanuts while stirring them. Continue to stir to coat evenly. Or – pour into a large resealable plastic bag, add peanuts and shake to coat.

Spread peanuts in a 13 x 9 inch baking pan. Bake uncovered at 350° for ten minutes. Stir and bake ten more minutes. Spread on waxed paper to cool. Store the peanuts in an airtight container.

—Peggy Lowry

Find a Farmers Market

For those of you who are interested in shopping at farmers markets, Quaker Foods has some good information on their website. Go to www.quakersimpleharvest.com and then roll your mouse over the “Farmers Markets” drop down box at the top of the page, then click on “Find a Farmers Market”. This will bring up a US map (it's very dim, but it is there). When you roll your mouse over a particular state and click, it will bring up a map of that state with blue dots all over it. If you roll the mouse over a dot, it will show the city where the market is located as well as the number of markets in that city. Click on the Blue dot and it will bring up a page that gives details about the market(s). It includes the name and address, the months and days of the week that it is open, contact name, phone number and email address. There is also a section for visitor comments and you can add your own comments if you have been to this particular market.

This website is not only useful for finding local markets, but as you prepare for a vacation or a road trip this summer, you can find some markets that may be convenient to where you're going. What a great way to eat healthy no matter where you are. The site also has tips for shopping at farmers markets along with other good ideas and information for living simply and eating healthy.—Beverly Cochrane

Camellias with Rosalee Nachman April 9, 1:00pm

Address: 205 Westham Parkway, Richmond, VA, 23229 www.mapquest.com

Directions from the Extension Office take Parham Road South and cross Broad St.

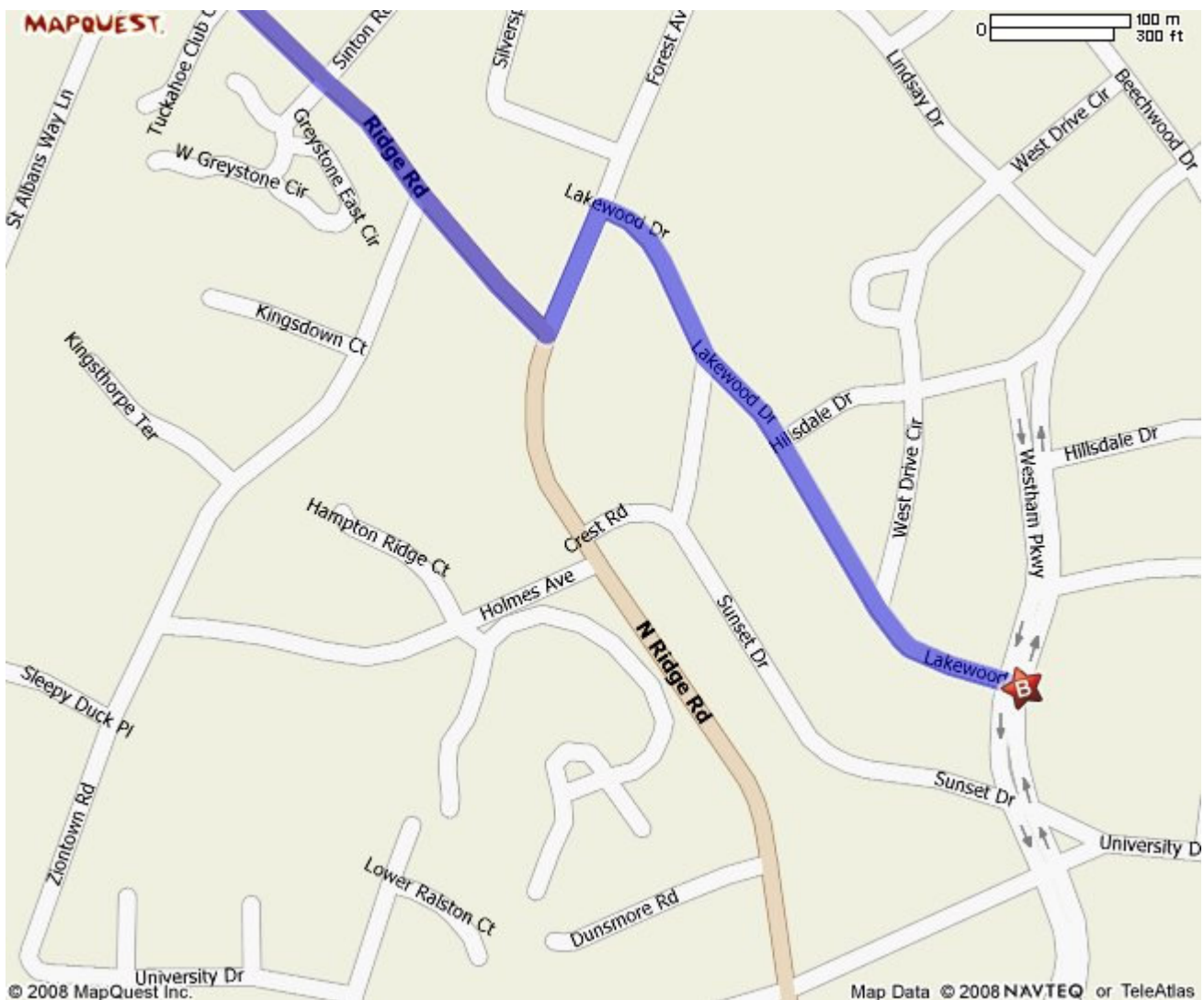
Continue on PARHAM RD. approximately. 3 miles

Turn LEFT onto RIDGE RD. 1.0 mi

Turn LEFT onto FOREST AVE. 0.1 mi

Turn RIGHT onto LAKEWOOD DR. 0.4 mi

Turn LEFT onto WESTHAM PKWY.



Henrico Harvest Fair Planning



On March 12 the Henrico Harvest Fair committee met at The Armour House and Gardens. It was a fun meeting; walking the grounds, playing on the playground and choosing where each activity will be held. Thanks to Elaine from the Henrico Recreation and Parks department for her contributions to the meeting. It is wonderful to have such good cooperation with the people from Armour House.

The front parking area will be used primarily for the vendors. We hope to have around twenty vendors representing a wide variety of garden and nature ware, and you may recognize some of them from the Maymont Home Show or Lewis Ginter plant sales.

We plan to have a 30x40 foot tent that will house around a dozen demonstrations. Other tents will hold the remaining demonstrations. Some of the topics are Weed Identification, Beekeeping, Care of Tools, Mosquitoes, Composting and many more. *See the detailed information on the next page about volunteering.*

Children's classes will be held in a tent in front of the picnic pavilion. In addition to outdoor classes some classes will be held inside the Armour House. Volunteers will hold Rain Barrel and Hypertufa workshops in the picnic pavilion. These workshops will take two allotted class times. Hypertufa class is scheduled 10:00 to 11:50 and Rain Barrel class at 1:00 to 3:50.

A caterer arranged by Judy Burton will set up close to the food pavilion and serve hamburgers, hot dogs, drinks, chips and barbecue. On the front walk between the parking lot and the house we will set up a registration and information area. After registration time the table will be used as the central information center for all volunteers and attendees. Theresa Hawkes and Ann Dutton have agreed to lead the committee which will handle the table.

We will have emergency personnel and security on site. Security will be provided by the Recreation and Parks Department. Recreation and Parks will provide communication radios, a sign at the park entrance and two shuttle buses. Parking will be available at the Arthur Ashe School and the lower parking lot at the park.

Donation request letters were mailed and a couple of responses have already been received. Approximately 25 businesses in the area were contacted. Letters to the speakers have gone out, expressing our appreciation for their agreement to speak and a confirmation note.

I estimate we will need 60 volunteers on the morning shift and maybe 50 for the afternoon. Many volunteers have agreed to work both shifts, but **we need the majority of the association to participate**. Volunteering time for the fair will undoubtedly be a fun way to obtain work hours for certification. Later we will be able to list assignments and recruit volunteers for specific jobs.

Each committee will schedule their own meetings to work on their goals. There are seven months to go and much work to be accomplished to make October 18 an Oscar winning performance! The partnership of Master Gardeners and Recreation and Parks will make the FIRST Henrico Harvet Fair a winner.

Volunteers Needed for Fair Demonstration Activities

A major attraction at the Harvest Fair will be the demonstration area where the attendees will have an opportunity to observe and discuss demonstrated techniques of gardening and horticulture, learn about important and relevant horticulture related issues, obtain handouts, get answers to questions and purchase items for sale. We currently need to identify Master Gardener volunteers to staff the various activities and events.

The demonstration areas and booths will be open from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and our committee would like to have at least two Master Gardeners present at each station for each shift; the number of shifts and the duration of each shift will be contingent on the number of volunteers for that particular demonstration topic.

See the table below for a list of the demonstration topics and a brief description of what each entails. Volunteers are especially needed for pruning, mosquitoes, weed identification, beekeeping, care of tools, vermicomposting, proper methods for planting trees and shrubs, home insect/pest control, and fire ants. However, volunteers are needed for the other topics as well. For those of you that have already volunteered for this project, thanks. No further action is required on your part.

All Master Gardeners are encouraged to take part in what will be a fun-filled, educational and rewarding experience. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Barbara Tompkins at 501-5160 and give her your name and the demonstration topic or topics for which you are interested. Feel free to sign up for more than one demonstration topic. “The more the merrier.”—Jim Smith

2008 Henrico Harvest Fair Demonstration Tent and Activities

Demo Topics	Staffing	Demonstration Description
1. Pruning		Demonstrate proper pruning techniques
2. SMART Lawns booth, soil sampling methods		Info on SMART Lawns Program, signup for spring 2009 and handouts on lawn care and maintenance.
3. Mosquitoes		Samples of life cycles of mosquitoes and information on diseases
4. Book Sale Association's Richmond Area Book and used books		Sale of new Richmond Area Book and Used Books written by the Association's MG's and used/no longer used garden books donated by MG's and from other sources.
5. Green Elephant Sale		Sale of gently used gardening tools, etc. and donated plants.
6. 4-H Honey/Peanut Sale	MG's & 4-H Members	Sale of items designated by 4-H.
7. Weed ID – Top 10 Warm Season Weeds		Ten (10) containerized weeds for hands-on ID plus weed handouts from Extension Office.
8. Beekeeping		Demonstrate and explain steps and procedures of beekeeping.
9. Care of Tools	MG's and/or Local Person	Demonstration of how to care for tools and tool ID. Interactive participation – what is this weird tool?
10. Composting		Show the different stages of compost. Discuss how to compost. Brochures
11. Vermicomposting		Have bin with worms. Work out something with Starbucks to be there
12. Proper Methods for Planting Trees and Shrubs		Demonstrate and explain the steps of planting trees and shrubs. To be an on-grounds demonstration. Brochures
13. Mulch		Proper method for mulching plantings, types of mulch, calculating quantity of mulch for an area
14. How to Become a Master Gardener		Have manual, information leaflet, sign up for 2009 training class, mailing to be sent fall 2008.
15. Home Insect/Pest Control; Good Bugs/Bad Bugs		Brochures, enlarged photos of bed bugs, etc. PMG handouts.
16. Fireants		Where they are in Virginia so far, what to look for and what not to do.
17. Children's Activities		Activity tables – planting seeds, etc.

Meeting Date Reminders

Board Meetings

No April Board Meeting
May 7 1:00 Board Meeting

Association Meetings

April 9 Rosalee Nachman 1:00
May 14 Plant Exchange 12:00

Please submit your contribution to the newsletter
By **May 20** to Jody Taggart
jody.taggart@comcast.net 360-2680