



The Grapevine

December 2018

New River Valley Master Gardener Association Newsletter

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Fall Potluck By Susan Perry

On November 29th, Master Gardeners celebrated the end of another great gardening season at a potluck dinner. Master Gardeners have until the end of the year to complete their hours and enter them in VMS. Hopefully, everyone can enter their hours in advance of year-end, so that we don't make Wendy too crazy!

As usual, the potluck involved good food, conversation, announcements, a presentation from Trish Poole about her year as an intern/trainee, and door prizes. Three upcoming activities to keep an eye out for are seed sorting, developing a MG calendar to sell, and a project fair where Master Gardeners can learn about the various projects available to us. Wendy provided information about upcoming MG College details (see p.11 for details). Service awards were presented and trainees graduated to Master Gardeners. All in all, it was informative *and* fun.



Fall Potluck
Photo: Susan Perry

Highlights from the NRV MGA 2018



Message from the Master Gardener Coordinator

By Wendy Silverman

This year has been amazing. The wonderful work that we do as Master Gardeners never ceases to impress me. According to the VMS, **YOU** have volunteered 11,348 service hours, assisting in 64 different Master Gardener and Extension projects and completing 3,744 educational hours. I am so honored to work with such a dedicated group of people. **We contributed \$305,942 over and above what the state of Virginia provided this year** (based on \$26.96 per hour from the independent sector https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time), not including the educational hours. And the year is not over yet!

This year, we started a small award program to give a token of appreciation to the person who earned the most hours this year. Once you receive the award, you cannot qualify for it again - so others have a chance to receive it. **The 2018 Master Gardener Volunteer award goes to Gwen Ewing.** Gwen served a total of 525 hours of service and continuing education this year. Congratulations Gwen!



I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season. Rest up for the Spring garden season – it's just around the corner!

Reminders:

- If you wish to be a Master Gardener in 2019, please fill out your Master Gardener Volunteer Re-Enrollment form.
- If you are the leader of a Master Gardener project I have a new form for you! It is an evaluation form of your project. If you fill this out and you are going to continue your project in 2019, then you *do not* have to fill out a new project proposal form.
- If you would like to be a member of the NRV Master Gardener Association in 2019, please fill out the 2019 Association form as well!

VMGA 2018 Educational Meeting: "Bats, Birds and Bugs: Gardening on the Wilder Side"

Follow-up Report By Nina Templeton

I just got back from the fall Virginia Master Gardeners' Association meeting, and it was AMAZING!!!

FYI, it was organized by our very own Erica Jones!!! Kudos to Erica for all her hard work and creativity in organizing such a great meeting!

It was so cool to meet and talk to 75-ish MGs from all over the state at the Holiday Lake 4-H Center in Appomattox. Erica gathered amazing speakers on topics including Bats, Birds, Bugs/Pests; Native Plants; and an amazing talk called "What's in Your Back Yard." One of the speakers led us on a Bug Walk and another (Ian Caton from Wood Thrush Nursery in Floyd, who also gave NRV MGs an educational presentation in May) brought wildflowers to sell. The staff at the center made us a buffet lunch.

I have to say, as someone who has almost become famous for falling asleep in lectures ... I didn't nod off even once, and Lyle was not there to nudge me awake!

Please thank Erica when you see her. Rumor has it that she may be drafted to organize another VMGA meeting in the spring. I sure hope so and would encourage everyone to attend.

Photo Updates from Fairview Home Garden Club Project

The Fairview Home project is coordinated by Jeanne Donovan, Penny Tully, and Sarah Smiley. Fairview Home is a 24-hour assisted living facility located in Dublin. The project is always happy to welcome new Master Gardener volunteers. For additional information or to arrange a visit, please contact Jeanne, Penny, or Sarah.



The Fairview Home Garden Club members and their Master Gardener project leaders are very proud of their pumpkin patch! (Photo by Jeanne Donovan, 9-26-18)



Members of the Fairview Home Garden Club celebrated the end of the 2018 season with certificates and a fun party! (Photo by Sarah Smiley, 10-10-18)

“When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that’s amore’ ”

By Stan Stanley

From pizza and bread, to baked pies and cakes, crispy bacon or roasted meats and fresh veggies from the garden, the versatility of the outdoor wood-fired pizza oven is an age old tradition that has been around for centuries. On September 23 of this year, on an overcast damp Sunday afternoon, the NRV Master Garden Association held their end-of-the-year celebration at the home of Stan and Gabriella Stanley in Pulaski. Master Gardeners and their significant others enjoyed hot pizza from Stan’s oven, a variety of sides, desserts, and beverages of choice for a fun afternoon of food, fellowship, and catching up with friends and making new acquaintances.

There was a lot of interest in how and why Stan had a wood-fired pizza oven in his back yard. Actually, it was all inspired by several trips to Italy to visit Gabriella’s family. After hours of research during the winter months, a plan was developed and things started to take shape. The use of recycled materials was most important. The block and brick were left over from a previous project; the roofing structure and materials were bought at the local Habitat For Humanity store, along with the decorative tile; a slab of marble was obtained from a local auction; and the clay dome was made from red clay dug up when the Stanley’s built a covered patio, also inspired by their Italy trips. With these materials and a minimum purchase of fire brick, fireproof mortar, and sand, the wood-fired pizza oven in Stan’s back yard was ready to take shape. It was a slow process and could not be rushed. From start to finish, it took approximately two months to build. The majority of time was spent on building and curing the clay dome. It must be cured over several days to make sure that it sets up to withstand temperatures of plus 800 degrees. Once the dome started to cure, then insulation was added to it in order to maintain the high temperature needed to cook pizza and other goodies.

Wood-fired pizza ovens are simple and efficient, and have been in use for centuries. There are no electronics or moving parts and they can cook a variety of foods. A few sticks of wood and a door can provide hours of cooking time if strategic planning is done in advance. Temperatures of 600 to 800 degrees are great for pizza or flat bread...once the temperature is 450 to 500 degrees, crusty Italian bread, roasted veggies, or crispy bacon can be cooked...as the temperatures drops to around 350 to 375 degrees, pies, cakes, casseroles, etc. can be baked...then ribs or pork roast can be put in at 275 to 300 degrees for mouthwatering goodness. Even fruit or wet wood can be dried overnight once the temperature drops below 225 degrees. It is all in the planning.



Preparing the dough



Hot pizza in the oven



The finished product – yummy!

I Could've Been A Spy

By Susan Perry

I realized a few years ago that I could have been a spy. Seriously! I'm not bragging, but I think I do have a lot of the skills needed for the job. I'm observant, can keep a secret, am a good listener, and when necessary can hatch elaborate plans. Unfortunately, by the time I figured this out, I had exceeded the age requirements of the CIA – something ridiculous like 30 years old! Come on, it's not like over 30 is really "over the hill". After all, while someone under 30 can run faster, jump higher, and dodge bullets better, I think a more "mature" person has the life-experience to be an equally good spy and probably one who won't be running or dodging but sadly, my mid-life plans to become a spy have been foiled – drat! And besides, as I've "matured" I've developed a real aversion to being hurt.

More recently, I also realized I could have possibly been a writer. Maybe I don't have the Great American Novel in me, but I can crank out little stories and articles. This revelation came to me after a year or so writing Grapevine articles and doing occasional pieces for The Roanoke Times. There's an old saying that "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" but I wonder if you do manage to teach an old dog a new trick, will it enjoy doing the trick as much as I've enjoyed re-kindling my interest in writing?

All this is preface to saying that I think the Master Gardener Program is wonderful because it offers so many opportunities to so many people with so many interests. With all the projects available, it would be hard to imagine someone not being able to find a project they enjoy. There are approximately sixty-four active projects during any one year, many of them ongoing for multiple years. They range from hands-on gardening to public speaking to writing to developing horticulture-related programs to organizing social functions to collecting and identifying insects to hosting a home garden tour to helping with the county fair to staffing a plant clinic at the farmers market. What a variety of projects to choose from!

Now is the time of year that the New River Valley Master Gardener's program begins accepting applications for next year's program. Maybe there is someone you know who might be interested in applying. Space is limited this year and applications are due by January 18, 2019, and then there are interviews. And of course, everyone knows that besides service hours there are continuing education requirements (once one completes the apprentice program).

So, I could've been a spy or a writer.... or probably a couple of other things I haven't figured out yet. But instead, I'm a New River Valley Master Gardener and I get to do lots of things I enjoy except spying!



The Story of River Farm Gardens

By Sharon Eifried



A clear, cool day at the end of October turned out to be a beautiful day to visit River Farm Gardens in Alexandria, Virginia. River Farm is a 25-acre historic site that sits along the Potomac River and serves as the headquarters of the American Horticultural Society (AHS).

Historical records indicate that the River Farm property was first purchased by George Washington in 1760 to be used as a working farm where he planted wheat, rye and corn.

The original house on the property was built in 1757 and serves as the core of the much larger, modern house that became the permanent headquarters of the AHS in 1973.

The Gardens feature perennial and annual beds, fruit trees, an Osage orange tree estimated to be more than 200 years old, a children's garden, boxwood and perennial borders, a wildlife garden, and a lovely meadow between the lawn and the river. A few of the plants to be enjoyed in October are aromatic aster, Liriope, fall blooming crocus, Rudbeckia, Echinacea, tall autumn sedum, hydrangea, cacti and yarrow.

The four acre Andre Bluemel Meadow abounds with different types of native grasses, Echinacea, Rudbeckia, a large black oak tree dating to the time of George Washington and many wild flowers. Birds could be seen enjoying the many seeds and berries available in the meadow which is separated from the lawn by a ha-ha wall. This type of wall, introduced in England in the 18th century, is a short wall with a wide ditch on the meadow side for the purpose of keeping animals away from the house and gardens. It allows a long view from the house to the Potomac River without the obstruction of a tall wall. If you walk to the edge of the lawn, you will be surprised (ha-ha!) that you cannot walk straight onto the meadow. Steps are provided for those wishing to enter the meadow and stroll to the river's edge.



The Ha-Ha Wall at River Farm Gardens



In the children's section of the gardens, one can find a "little house on the prairie," a boat filled with sand, a fairy garden, a bat cave, a jungle hut, a sitting area with a kid-sized table and chairs made from tree stumps, and a mini hedge maze. Twelve different children's garden areas were designed,

some by elementary school groups and some by professional designers, and installed at River Farm in 1993. The area continues to be a multisensory and educational space for children visiting the gardens with their families or school groups.

At River Farm Gardens the AHS provides displays that teach the public about the importance of being a "better steward of the earth." "The Green Garage" is an exhibit that highlights the correct garden tools, best type and size of plants for your garden, importance of recycling of waste, efficient use of water, and use of integrated pest management, and proper care of the soil in your garden. Two buildings within the gardens display very healthy and beautiful green roofs.



You can learn more about River Farm Gardens at: <http://ahsgardening.org/about-river-farm/virtual-tour>.

Have You Hugged Your Cactus Today? Scintillating Succulents - A World-Wide Craze

By Sarah Smiley

I was reading an article on the Asian craze for succulents. Did you know that Californian rare and endangered species were being poached and smuggled due to consumer demand? Most of the article reads like something from a spy movie, so I highly encourage the read. The lengths folks will go to for flora! According to the article (<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/27/stolen-succulents-california-hipster-plants-at-center-of-smuggling-crisis>):

Demand in China and Korea has led to thousands of *dudleya* being stolen from California as officials lament 'plant poaching'. In China, they are prized for their chubby limbs and cute shapes. In Korea, they are a treasured hobby for housewives. But on the coastal cliffs of California, the *dudleya* succulent plants are vanishing, snatched up by international smugglers and shipped to an Asian middle-class market hungry for California native flora. California department of fish and wildlife wardens have made five busts this year, involving more than 3,500 stolen plants, evidence that the succulent, a symbol of American hipster style, has gone global to grievous effect.

When I saw tiny succulents for sale in the Bangkok markets, I often wondered how these plants were surviving in the humidity (perhaps a great marketing strategy to guarantee repeat purchases due to product demise). In the US, there is also a succulent craze, for one reason, as the above article states that the hipsters love it. To prove this point, I dare you to go into Target or TJ Max and not see a succulent either on a product or as a product.

In a recent on-line article "Why cactuses and succulents are the perfect plants for this cultural moment: The big business behind the resilient, social media friendly plants" Patrick Sisson wrote:

There's no easy way to break down sales by species in the \$13.6 billion U.S. plant and flower industry. But growers have seen increased interest from young adults -- 37 percent of millennials grow plants indoors, as opposed to 28 percent of baby boomers -- and sales have been booming. Altman Plants, the country's largest grower of succulents and cactuses, has for the last decade posted double-digits gains each year. A recent *Garden Center* magazine survey of independent retailers found that cactus and succulent sales had risen 64 percent since 2012. (April 4, 2018)

One main reason for the increased demand in the US is that more gardeners are looking for water conservation growing options. Native species, and the sweet spot of native succulent species, is a growing business.

According to the book, *Flora of Virginia*, there is one cactus species native to Virginia: the *Opuntia Humifusa* (Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus, Devil's Tongue or Indian Fig). There are several spots on my shale rich farm where this species flourishes. Sadly, they may be too prickly to be of desire in the Asian market. Interesting fact - the red fruits are edible.

According to the USDA Forest Service Wildflower database:

Eastern prickly pear is in the Cactaceae (Cactus) family. This family contains about 1,800 species all but possibly one or two native to the New World. The prickly pears are considered an old group within the cactus family with about 150 species in *Opuntia*. It has the largest range of any cactus in the United States and can be found from New Mexico and Montana east to Florida and Massachusetts. It is also found in Ontario. Eastern prickly pear can form large colonies or occur as a few individuals in an area. In older botanical manuals, it is often listed as *Opuntia compressa*.

Take a quick look and notice all the varieties of succulents around you. What home in our area doesn't have a colony of Hen and Chicks (which are native to Southern Europe and Northern Africa) somewhere out in the yard? We, in SWVA, may only have one native variety of succulent, and sure, maybe it is not (yet) a world-wide craze, but we knew what visual interest succulents added to an area before it became hip. Don't hug your cactus.



Photo of Prickly Pear Cactus

<https://worldofsucculents.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Prickly-Pear-Cactus.jpg>

Virginia Master Gardeners: State News in Brief

By Erica Jones

In 2019, Virginia Master Gardener College is moving to Norfolk as a "trial run" for the International Master Gardener Conference which Virginia will be hosting in 2021. The dates for the 32nd Annual Virginia Master Gardener College will be September 19-22, 2019 and it will be held at the "Hilton Norfolk The Main" hotel (aka "The Main") in Norfolk, Virginia.

As a Roanoke MG friend said, "No day trips for us!" We should organize a field trip and stay at The Main at 100E Main St, Norfolk. (Who would have thought Norfolk would have a Main Street?) This hotel is new and is one block from the Elizabeth River. Fun places like the Norfolk Botanical Garden are 8 miles away, and the Chrysler Museum of Art is one mile away. The Rooms cost \$159.00 per night. The nearby Sheraton is a smidge cheaper.

The 2019 International Master Gardener Conference will run June 16-21 2019; the 16th and 17th being set aside for approximately six different tours to local gardens. The 2019 International Master Gardener Conference will be at the Valley Forge Casino Resort in Valley Forge, PA, approximately 400 miles from Blacksburg. This sounds like maybe another field trip! There will be three full days of speakers. Generally, the mornings will feature a keynote speaker, followed by three sessions. Afternoons will be filled with two blocks of speakers offering six possible choices. Friday, the 21st will be a half day. You can find more information about this event at <https://www.internationalmastergardener.com/>. You can book your room right now. However, registration is not yet available.

In 2020, Virginia Master Gardener College will be in Blacksburg. And in 2021, Virginia will host the International Master Gardener Conference at the Norfolk location. There will not be a separate Virginia Master Gardener College in 2021.

Finally, in 2019, the Virginia Master Gardener Association (VMGA) Education Day will be held on May 4, in Roanoke at Virginia Western Community College. 2019 is the 25th anniversary of the arboretum there. This will be the third year I have organized this event. It would be fabulous if we had as many participants in Roanoke as we did at the 2018 Ed Day at Holiday Lake 4-H center.

VMGA Ed Day 2018 Report

The 2018 version of Educational Day was held at Holiday Lake 4-H center at the end of September. This center is one of about five 4-H camps scattered around the state. Holiday Lake rents the camp out for meetings before and after the summer camp season.

Speakers talked about bats, birds, behind the scenes "activities" in your garden (this speaker was a hoot); unusual wildflowers in our region; and "The Good, Bad and the Ugly (Bugs)." A group of about 20 attendees went outside at the end of the day on a bug hunt.

The Master Naturalist bat speaker mentioned four bat facts I did not know: wind turbines are murder on bats, literally; bats are very tough to get to move into any bat houses you might build; not all bats live in caves -- about 50% live in logs, trees, and maybe your barn. A bat can consume some 1200 mosquitos per hour, which is 20 per minute, meaning it catches one every 3 seconds!

Our own local Eric Day talked about the good (imported ladybugs are as good as the natives) and the bad (bug damage often looks amazingly similar to disease problems on foliage). Different insect species have different anatomy and will do different types of leaf damage -- from stripping everything and leaving a skeleton to poking leaves all over with little dots (points of insertion).

Attendance was great: we had about 72 attendees! We had lunch at Holiday Lake because they have their own cafeteria. We shared lunch seating with the Hunter Education folks who had been rescheduled after the hurricane, so we had a nice chance to mingle.

The Plant Historian – Cooking, Dosing, and Smudging with Sage

By K. W. Jones



My interest in sage piqued when I heard a chef talk about “fried sage leaves” as the ultimate garnish for a butternut squash soup. Sage leaves, fried quickly in oil, drained and sprinkled with salt. For sure, every summer I dry sage leaves from my herb garden; I have several plants, the common silver-leaved *Salvia officinalis* and a tri-color sage (*Salvia officinalis* ‘Tricolor’) with green leaves tipped white with tinges of pink. Both are good cooking herbs, though the leaves of the tricolor seem less pungent. Despite the annual renewal of my dried sage jar, sage seems to find its way into fewer of my dishes than other garden herbs. Which likely explains why my sage plants gravitate to the ordinary, rather than the more exotic varieties like

pineapple sage. Perhaps French-fried sage leaves might just make sage a new culinary treat.

Although my feelings about sage are tepid (at best!), *Food&Wine* calls sage the “ultimate Fall herb” and says its “fragrant, woody aroma makes it the perfect herb for fall cooking.” (Recipes, including fried sage leaves, at <https://www.foodandwine.com/blogs/11-recipes-make-ultimate-fall-herb-sage>) Given this endorsement, sage must be an essential plant for any modern culinary herb garden. But there’s more to sage than its potential for seasoning food.

Sage has had a long and a global history, used not just for cooking but also for healing, and for cleansing bad auras. The Egyptians used sage as a fertility drug. The Greeks and Romans used sage to preserve meat, but the ancients also ascribed many medicinal uses to sage. Nero’s military physician, Dioscorides (known as the “father of pharmacognosy” or the study of medicines that come from plants and herbs), thought sage one of the most important medicinal herbs. A military man, he found sage useful to stop bleeding from wounds. When made into a tea, Dioscorides prescribed it to soothe sore throats and hoarseness, to promote digestion and to improve memory. Nicholas Culpepper, the seventeenth century physician/herbalist, cited Dioscorides as the source for his advice to make “a decoction of the leaves and branches of sage” to “bring down women’s courses [and] expel the dead child.” Culpepper also noted that “Pliny [the Roman naturalist (and friend of the emperor Vespasian)] saith it procures women’s courses, and stays them coming down too fast: helps the stinging and biting of serpents, and kills the worms that breed in the ear, and in sores.”

Charlemagne, who united much of Europe in the early Middle Ages (late 8th century) as the Holy Roman Empire, transported sage to Germany, where its cultivation was strictly regulated and all state farms were required to plant sage along with other medicinal plants. During the Middle Ages monks planted sage in their monasteries, one of sixteen plants preserved for medicinal purposes. Sage is native to North Africa; it would have been transported to North America by early colonists and found in the gardens of American settlers for whom home remedies rather than physician prescriptions provided most medical care. Records from Monticello indicate that Thomas Jefferson’s 18th century plantation gardens grew sage, and given the plant’s extensive uses, it’s likely that Jefferson’s contemporaries did so as well.

For historians, herbal prescriptions are a way to understand the medical problems that afflicted ordinary people in the past, the problems for which they sought relief. Culpepper's description of the uses for sage tells us that "lethargy," a "dull and heavy spirit" and "memory" problems were chronic conditions in Europe. Culpepper's contemporaries also suffered "pains of the joints" "ulcers," "the stitch, or pains in the side coming of wind," and coughs, sore throats and earaches; sage teas were employed for all these ailments. Then too, "gargles . . . made with Sage, rosemary, honey-suckles, and plantain boiled in wine or water, with some honey or al-lum" could be used to "wash sore mouths and throats, cankers, or the secret parts of man or woman." ("Secret parts" is likely a reference to symptoms of venereal disease.)

Historians are hard-pressed to decode into modern diagnoses these complaints found in historical documents like Culpepper's book, though it is possible to make some guesses. Culpepper's advice, "Three spoonfuls of the juice of Sage taken fasting, with a little honey, doth presently stay the spitting or casting of blood of them that are in a consumption," suggests the presence of tuberculosis. Sage was prescribed as treatment for "palsy," or involuntary tremors; "the leaves sodden in wine, and laid upon the place affected . . . helps much." Today's physicians might find "palsy" a symptom associated with many diseases. Culpepper notes that sage "taken with wormwood is good for the bloody-flux [or bloody diarrhea, likely dysentery]." Epidemics of "plague" plagued the people of Culpepper's time (a diagnosis likely referring to diseases caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*); the herbalist found that the "juice of Sage drank with vinegar, hath been of good use" for treating plague.

Sage was a soothing herb, a far gentler treatment than the herbs used for vomiting and purging (the approach to disease that saw humoral imbalance as the cause and evacuation as the cure). Culpepper's contemporaries drank sage in a tea, bruised the leaves and applied sage to the skin, and steeped sage in water to bathe sore or cramped limbs. Today, sage remains one of many herbs associated with alternative approaches to medical care. I checked the website of the NIH National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health for the modern version of Culpepper's thoughts on sage. NCCIH finds that the herb is used now for some of the same troubles that afflicted Culpepper's contemporaries: digestive problems, sore mouth or throat, memory loss, and depression. But the NCCIH also notes that little research has been done to verify the herb's efficacy and also cautions that large doses can have toxic effects. (See: <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/sage>)

Despite its long association with herbal medicine, sage is not just for dosing. Nor should we think of it as primarily a way to season the holiday turkey's stuffing. Sage is also for smudging. In many cultures, including Native American societies, sage is one of the plants used for ceremonial cleansing. In these ceremonies, dried plants are burned to create a smoke intended to purify the individual body or a ritual space. Not all cultures call the ceremonial purification with smoke smudging and sage is one of many plants used for this purpose (cedar is another). Which plant is burned depends on particular cultural traditions. I think of smudging with sage bundles as a "new age" ritual, but its association with magic and with purification can be traced far into history.

So, however you enjoy your sage, know that you are part of a tradition of sage aficionados. For me, I'm thinking the burned turkey stuffed with sage leaves may have purified my kitchen more times than I care to remember!

Tips:

- Now is a good time to check clean & sharpen your tools.
- Enjoy the winter break from gardening!

Maywood Triangle Report

By Erica Jones

The Maywood Triangle, located at the intersection of North Side Rd and Route 42, has been a roadside garden for some 50 years, giving passersby a nice glimpse of horticultural happenings of the season. The garden is on the right of way for three intersecting roads, plus a smidge of private land in the center.

The origin of the garden is a little fuzzy, but it was probably started by a land owner who then sold it to a family who eventually owned the property for some 40 years. When the land was sold 40-ish years ago, the Maywood Garden Club got in the act. Over the years, different Club members have had the directive to keep it looking pretty. The garden has two signs: one giving the name, and the older bigger one has a short saying, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." (Always thought this an odd saying to put in a garden, as gardens are anything BUT necessarily long-lived). It is a fairly popular spot for tourists to stop, particularly motorcycle riders (who really enjoy our country back roads).

I mentioned owners because the property got auctioned off this summer after some 40 years in the same family. The farm was split up into seven lots and the garden was put with one of the lots that was listed as "absolute," meaning they would sell no matter the price.

I talked to a lawyer about easements because the land that the Garden Club has cared for all these years is actually entitled an "easement," plus the smidge in the center that is privately owned. The previous owner was happy with us gardening there (and planted a *Magnolia grandiflora* which has managed to survive). I have to admit I have not contacted the new owner, but was told if I was chased off the property, I would probably have a leg to stand on, so to speak.



This is a very late fall shot after I did some cleanup of 5' stalks of perennials in the closest bed to foreground. There is a road running immediately behind the garden (in front of that oak tree) and a third road about 20' behind the me.

Maintaining the garden has had its challenges, with the perennial big problem being water supply. This year, yes, we had the water supply (rain), but too much water is as bad as not enough. The too much problem caused two more problems. Early in the year, transplants just sulked, given that they were trying to breathe in all that saturated soil. And in the mid-summer, my late summer stand-by – dahlias – flopped over making the blooms harder to see. And one more thing – the fairly primitive and not very comfortable bench fell over!

This was the first year in a long time I did not grow any calendulas. In the past, I've been alternating putting in plants the first year, and then spreading seeds from those plants in late summer for the next year's crop. Calendulas seem to revert very quickly to basic yellow and not very double, but they are fairly drought tolerant. In years with lots of rain, I get behind on my dead heading and will go through and take the plants down to about 12". They bounce back quickly. The larkspur reseeded itself fairly well this year. The volunteer (annual) poppies were too spread out to be effective but are amusing close up.

Summer bulbs, such as dahlias, are also fairly drought resistant and have been my mainstay for years. Dahlias will do better in cooler areas (the higher altitudes in Craig Co that is) if they are started inside in pots and then transplanted after all danger of frost. Dahlias have no (that is, zero) frost resistance. Another good summer bulb is gladiola, and one that looks very much the same but is winter hardy is crocosmia. Both of these have a shorter blooming period than dahlia, but the foliage holds up decently-well after blooming.

This year was unusual in that none of the Garden Club members planted things to memorialize or honor someone. Over the years roses, peonies, and iris have shown up with suggestions that I keep them alive. I am proud to report that I did manage not to kill the shrub rose that got planted last year but it became evident that it is not very disease resistant. Whoops. The peonies have done fine. Tuberous iris are, in my humble opinion, not good candidates for such a garden with their fairly short bloom period, tendency to flop, and tendency to get overrun by grass and weeds.



Larkspur with a dahlia coming along in front

THE GIRL FROM IPANEMA

By Sharon Eifried

If you like "bossa nova," a Brazilian style of music, you probably are familiar with the song *The Girl From Ipanema*. The song was co-written and sung by Antonio Carlos Jobim, aka Tom Jobim, who grew up in the town of Ipanema in Brazil. The songwriter, composer, arranger, singer, pianist and guitar-



tarist was inspired to write the song in 1962 when he met a special woman in a bar in Ipanema. The song was made famous in Brazil, but has since been sung in many other countries by many other musical artists.

So, you ask, what does this have to do with gardening? Well, Tom Jobim came to enjoy strolling from the town of Ipanema to the nearby *Botanical Garden of Rio de Janeiro*. Here he found a very large Kapok tree and discovered that he enjoyed making music while standing in the crevices created by the tree's trunk and large roots. The acoustics were wonderful and it is said to be his favorite place for musical inspiration. When I visited the garden I ventured to the tree, stood in a crevice and burst into song. According to my travel companion and our tour guide, the acoustics did not help me to carry a tune! The Kapok tree (*Ceiba pentandra*) tree can reach 60 meters high and 210 cm. in diameter and has huge tubular roots reaching 5 meters long. The tree is also known as the Java cotton, Java Kapok, silk-cotton or by the Brazilian name "samauma."

Development of the 1.5 kilometer square Botanical Garden began in 1808 and includes 6,500 species of Brazilian and foreign plants, 140 species of birds and some wild monkeys. I managed to get a picture of the monkeys, but the birds were too elusive for my camera. One of the main features of the garden is the Avenue of Royal Palms, a 750 meter path lined with 134 palm trees (*Roystonea oleracea*), all descended from the seeds of a single tree planted in 1809. In the central part of the garden, visitors can gaze on several different species of water lilies floating on Friar Leandro Lake which is a man-made lake dating back to 1824. The most spectacular lily here is the Victoria Regia (*Victoria amazonica*) lily with its very large leaves lying flat on the surface of the water. There are upturned edges on perfectly round leaves that can grow to over 6 feet in diameter.

Some additional features that I enjoyed include an orchid house, a bromeliad garden, a cactus garden and a sensory garden. In addition to being a park, the Rio de Janeiro Botanical Garden is also home to a Research Institute that offers Master's and PhD degrees and advanced courses in botany. Their goal is to "promote, undertake and disseminate teaching and research of Brazilian flora." A description of some of the large variety of plants at the garden can be found at: <http://en.jbrj.gov.br/our-garden/plants?page=1>.



MASTER GARDENER PHOTOS



Photo: Ruth Ann Whitener



Photo: Gwen Douglas



Photo: Sharon Eifried



Photo: Lisa Lloyd

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A special thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of the newsletter.
 You know who you are!