

The Garden Master News

Newsletter of the Atlantic Master Gardeners Association

ISSUE # 5

VOLUME # 3

S U M M E R 2 0 1 3



From the Faculty of Agriculture, Dalhousie University

- by Joy Galloway-Jones
Extended Learning,
Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture

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Greetings to the Master Gardeners from the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus!

Summer School has come and gone and the fall is upon us. Campus is getting ready for the new academic year and we, at Extended Learning, are gearing up for a new year of courses and welcoming new Master Gardener candidates.

The course intakes have been adjusted slightly to be October 1, November 15, and February 15th. The November 15th date was included as every year there are many who are finishing preparing their garden for the winter and don't meet the October deadline. Instead of scrambling and possibly not giving the best level of service, we added the November 15th date to accommodate these participants.

We have also set it up so that all intakes have the full 6 months to complete courses.

The website (<http://www.dal.ca/faculty/agriculture/extended-learning/programs-courses/master-gardener-training/maintaining-the-garden.html>) is continually being updated as clarifications are identified and more information is needed. If you have suggestions for the website, please let me know at

joy.galloway-jones@dal.ca.

As the seasons change and evolve, so do the processes and procedures here on campus. Enjoy the crispness of fall and we'll see you online.

All the best,
Joy Galloway-Jones

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



- By Heather Connors-Dunphy
AMGA President



Daylily bed

Hello AMGA Members

I have just come in from deadheading hosta, daylilies and veronicastrum... where did June and July go? It has been a strange gardening season; things that normally bloom at the same time haven't, others like ornamental rhubarb and German iris didn't bother at all. Now coneflowers and garden phlox are giving the front bed a great dose of pink, purple and white.

The veggies got off to a slow start but are doing fine now. I bought pole yellow beans, we put up a nice structure to support them, and got bush beans. I planted the "goose bean" seeds we got at Summer School last summer; they are growing

well and I'm thinking they will be great in the bean crock in the winter.

The Association had a very productive AGM.

The change in format was a success. I'd like to thank Bonnie Snow, on your behalf, for the great work she did as Secretary. I'll also welcome Aileen Reid, our new Secretary and Jane Plant, Member at Large. Congratulations to our first Master Gardner Emeritus, Emily Miller.

You will see the President's AGM report, so I won't repeat it here. We did make progress on a number of fronts in the past year; there is still work to be done too.

In brief:

- ☐ Your Executive met six times in the last year.
- ☐ We gathered all the meeting records (in electronic form) for the life of the organization.
- ☐ We are proceeding with audit of the books of account.
- ☐ We have tried to improve communication with MG students through messages in the "moodle" software used to deliver their courses. We have done two and a third will be done this fall.
- ☐ We have tried to establish a firmer relationship

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from page 2)

between FA Dal and the AMGA by having a report on the program in each newsletter

□ We have tried to communicate more effectively with members

- by contacting those who did not renew their membership

- by providing the Executive meeting schedule and Agendas in advance of the meetings and asking for input

- and by providing a precis of meeting results in the next newsletter.

□ We have instituted hours of service pins for 200 and 500 cumulative hours of volunteering, to recognize the continuing commitment to volunteering among MGs. We awarded some of each!

The new Executive had a brief meeting after the AGM in Truro and set out the following as items to be progressed this year:

□ Improving communication and enhancing member involvement.

□ MG areas of Specialization... landscape design

□ Other MG training opportunities

□ Follow up with members who have not renewed their memberships by the September meeting

□ Impliment a recertification sticker for members

□ Graduation certificates, starting in 2014.

□ Fall Volunteer Event at the IWK Children's Hospital. Notice and details to be

included in the Newsletter.

The schedule for upcoming Executive Meetings is: Sept 9, Dec 1, 2013 and Feb9 , April 6 June 2, 2014.

Happy Gardening! Heather



Beds with fountain and planters



IN NEED OF SOME MASTER GARDENER LOVE

- BY LYNN BROOKS



Hidden away behind a fence to the side of the IWK on University Avenue in Halifax is a garden. It is not just a garden but a place for sick children and their families to play, learn and heal. Funded by the IWK Auxiliary and built in the early 80's to replace the playground that was lost to the construction of the new Grace Hospital for Women. It reflects the landscaping of that decade. Over-planted with boring uninteresting trees and shrubs picked for hardiness and supposedly little maintenance.

Today the area is a very functional playground with a terrific new playhouse painted in vibrant reds and yellows, but the garden has been lost. At sometime Virginia creeper was planted along the fence line, this has taken over, shrouding shrubs in a curtain of green. The trees planted in raised pressure treated boxes are dying and the boxes so root filled nothing else can survive. What was supposed to be a flowerbed in front of the playhouse is weed choked and ugly.

The point of this sorry tale is my hope to bring this garden back as an ongoing project of the AMGA. Some may role their eyes at this point, because it is in Halifax! But this hospital belongs to all of us. There are children and women treated in this facility from all over Atlantic Canada. The Master Gardener training program is now part of Dalhousie University, why couldn't level II Summer School be held in Halifax at the Dal campus just a walk up the road from the hospital?

We would need to have accommodation available on campus for people out of town, and classroom access the same as Truro. Our required level II training could be about learning and practicing design, pruning, working with other groups such as students from the local universities and community colleges, etc. We could learn and do at the same time. The local MGs could be charged with doing some of the prep work that couldn't be accomplished at summer school.

Volunteer hours could be earned growing plants for the beds and planters by members who are blessed with green houses. If you are a member of a local garden club perhaps a small portion from plant sales or events could be donated to the AMGA for this project. .

Already there are two very interested parties: the hospital's Department of Child Life, who in this time of cutbacks have seen their summer staffing cut to zero. They would love to have Master Gardener assistance to help the children and staff plant up planters they hope to have built. And the Auxiliary have already provided some financial aid to cut away the Virginia creeper, (already starting to regain lost territory) and do some building and fence repairs. What we could do is redesign the entrance to the garden. Possibly create a garden that would greet you as you

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IN NEED OF SOME MASTER GARDENER LOVE

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enter, full of tall interesting perennials and grasses to keep the playground beyond as a mystery which can only be viewed after you cross a bridge.

This?



Or this?



Right now this is only the dream of one, but with enough energy and support this could be a reality. As an organization we would gain a focus, learn by doing, create the opportunity for some exposure about what we are, and above all have the chance to make a difference.

What has to happen: first we need to agree that this would be “our” project. Let your executive know how you feel. Then we would have to establish a steering committee to work with not just Child Life but also the hospital administration; they will need convincing, (not a gardener in the bunch).

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead



TWITTER

- By Lynne Marie Sullivan

Of the myriad of challenges faced by volunteer organizations, one of the biggest is communications. How does an organization like AMGA reach an intended audience without incurring expenses? Social media, naturally. It's where it's all happening. These days, if you aren't on the internet you may as well not exist.

While Facebook provides a conversational forum, Twitter is different.. It's more like a bulletin board. It allows just 140 characters to grab the attention of your *followers*, the people and organizations who have elected to follow your *tweets*. Using creativity and brevity, AMGA can provide bits of real information that advise, amuse and capture the imagination of our gardening public.

The real beauty of Twitter is how a good tweet is rewarded by being repeated (*retweeted*) by other Twitter users. When that happens, our tweet is sent to all of *their followers*, exponentially expanding the public exposure. When *Landscape Ontario Magazine* retweeted one of our tweets, it showed up along with their posts where all 2379 of their followers could see it! Those who liked our tweet could then choose to follow AMGA, too!

So how do you use Twitter? Easy! Anyone can **read** AMGA tweets without opening an account. Just go to twitter.com/AtlanticMGA. You can also get there

from the AMGA website at atlanticmastergardeners.ca/, and click on the Twitter bird.

The key to survival on the internet is to keep it fresh and new. So we need you to **post** something on AMGA's Twitter account. Just send your tweets to me and I'll do the rest.

What can you post? Almost anything that might interest home gardeners as long as it stays within the guidelines set out by the AMGA (*ie. in accordance with standards approved by Dalhousie University and its Master Gardener Program*). Examples are:

- Promote your Master Gardener events including answer sessions or gardening demonstrations. (Be sure to give details about when, where, who, etc.)
- Get creative! Share advice, inspirations, folklore, quotes ("*Soil is not an inert substance, it's an ecosystem filled with living creatures...*" - *Eliot Coleman*)
- Links to good websites, articles (review guidelines above.)
- Fact sheets or how-to sheets you have written. (We can link to a blog page where there are essentially no limits on length.) Be sure to provide the name and date of publication if these were published previously.

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Twitter

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If you want to tweet yourself, you'll need a Twitter account of your own. Then you can *follow* AMGA: Sign in to Twitter, search for @AtlanticMGA (the ampersand indicates a Twitter account name); then click the *Follow* button on the AMGA page. *Note:* Your Twitter timeline displays all of the tweets from everyone you follow. To limit what Tweets you see, consider creating a *List*.

Tweets are just tidbits. But in the world of social media, little things get around!



AMGA Members & Instructors Meeting & Greeting



Thelma MacKillop Carol Goodwin



Heather Thelma Sherry Bibiane
Connors-Dunphy MacKillop Chaisson Lessard

ZEN GARDENING

- by Roy Greening

If you Google the definition of Zen, you will get approximately 11,600,000 results. According to urbandictionary.com, one definition of Zen is: "a total state of focus that incorporates a total togetherness of body and mind. Zen is a way of being. It is also a state of mind." This is the very first hit on Google and is closest to my personal understanding and feeling about Zen. To me it is wonderful feeling of flow and joy you get when you are moving towards a goal or totally focused on an observation or both. Sometimes it just happens naturally, sometimes you have to work at it and practice.

Please notice that the title of this article is Zen Gardening, not Zen Garden. It is my opinion that although Zen Gardening is certainly involved in making a Zen Garden, the idea of Zen in Gardening applies to any kind of gardening, big or small, indoors or out, beginning or finishing and everything in between.

There is a Zen proverb that says "Before enlightenment; chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment; chop wood, carry water." For me, this means that in order to truly live in the moment, one should concentrate on the simple tasks in life. It also alludes to the positive results of simply doing. As gardeners, we have so many simple tasks to get involved in, which enable us to live in the moment. There is preparing soil, planting, weeding, pruning, mowing, composting, harvesting...oh, yes...and carrying water! These simple tasks help us focus mind and body, giving

the satisfaction of the end product such as beautiful flowers, shrubs and trees, a lush green lawn, healthy tasty vegetables, as well as the added bonus of exercise.

As a further practice of focus, I would suggest making gardening a daily activity. I hear you saying "But wait, what about winter time" or "But you don't realize how busy I am." I'm sure you have all heard the saying "the longest journey begins with a single step". I would also say that in order to enjoy the journey to the max along the way, as well as when you get there, that single step could be taken each day. For instance, putting that banana peel, apple core or teabag in the compost is one step. Growing herbs indoors, (I grow basil, coriander, thyme and rosemary on my windowsills all year round) including sowing, watering, fertilizing and pruning are easy steps along the way. It is extremely important to focus ones' mind on that single step. If you do it in the morning, it will give a sense of accomplishment as well as a little momentum, regardless of what the rest of your day has in store.

Another aspect of Zen gardening is just being in the garden. It is being aware of things around you, whether or not you are involved in some task. You feel the sun on your face, hear the wind in the trees, see the birds at your feeder, taste that new herb, and yes, smell the roses (corny as it sounds, gardeners actually do it!). Sometimes, usually just before sunset, I like to just walk around my garden and observe the play of light and shadow from different angles. This never fails to be achingly poignant, so I have to remind myself that I can do it again tomorrow.

ZEN GARDENING

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My wife smiles at me when I finally come inside (usually with a contented, goofy look on my face) and asks if I've been "Zenning again".

Why Zen Gardening? Well, I certainly have no formal training and I don't use the word Zen with any religious connotation. I use it because just the sound of the word reminds me of its meaning. That is, lose yourself in the moment while doing something useful, even if that is just observing nature's beauty.



Observing nature's beauty



Notes From the Secretary

- by Bonnie Snow

Atlantic Master Gardener Association Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, July 10, 2013

Saltsclapes Restaurant, Truro, NS

Present:

President	HeatherConnors-Dunphy
Vice President	Lynn Brooks
Past President	Carol Goodwin
Secretary	Bonnie Snow
Treasurer	Johanne Robertson
Volunteer Coordinator	Anita Sulley
Newsletter	Sue Stuart
Members at Large	Janet Elsie

Members:

Emily Miller	Linda Hatchez
Thelma MacKillop	Kim Mudge
Bibiane Lessard	Sarah Burchell
Rodger Ledrew	Louise Smith
Aileen Reid	Gloria Graham
Carolyn Downie	Carol Taylor
Jim Sharpe	Karey Flemming
Donna Flemming	Pauline Kemp

Guests:

Kevin Long	Jean Kruger
Dawson Miller	Jennifer O'Neill
Mary Oldford	Marion MacDougall
Joan Evong	

Approval of Agenda by Thelma MacKillop/Aileen Reid

Approval Of Minutes of 2012 AGM by Lynn Brooks/Rodger LeDrew

Business arising from Minutes

Audit to be conducted by Anita Sulley/Aileen Reid

Reminder to members that dues are payable each year by June 30th. Further discussion needed re nonpaying members.

Reports of Officers

To be included with mail out of Minutes to members. Also located in Dropbox
Move to accept reports Johanne Robertson/Carol Goodwin

Report of Nominating Committee

Lynn Brooks/Sue Stuart

Election of Officers

Secretary Aileen Reid by acclamation
Member at Large Jane Plant
Lynn Marie Sullivan

Discussion re reasons for having a Member at Large from Ontario

Vote - in favour of Jane Plant

New Business

Advanced Master Gardener Training - majority of members present indicated interest in this with landscape design as suggested topic.

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

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Level II Summer School - do we want Dalhousie/ Agriculture Campus to conduct this Summer School or do we attempt to provide our own course; hire someone to deliver program

Members indicated interest in delivering our own program

Roles of AMGA Executive (see Document) Vote to accept Rodger LeDrew/Johanne Robertson

Non-Atlantic members of AMGA - discussion re circumstances of Ontario members such as Lynn Marie Sullivan whereby membership in AMGA allows her to fulfill volunteer/certification requirements

Agree to accept non-Atlantic members and certify them

Motion to Adjourn Anita Sulley

Presentation of Master Gardeners Emeritus to Emily Miller

Presentation on Master Gardener Conference by Rodger LeDrew

Attachments to accompany Minutes - Reports of Officers, Treasurer's Report

Respectfully submitted

Bonnie Snow
Secretary

AGM 2013



AMGA AGM 2013
at Saltscapes Restaurant



Emily Receiving
Master Gardener Emeritus



A Week In The Life of A Master Gardening Student

- by Aileen Reid



It was the hottest weekend of the year. In fact, there were all sorts of record breaking heatwaves in Dartmouth and in Truro.

This student turned up in Truro during the late afternoon of the Sunday, checked in to learn that:

I was on the third floor in the attic
 There was no elevator
 There was no assistance with the mountain of luggage
 There was no air conditioning
 The window was stuck shut
 There was one mere single outlet in the room

I thought to myself: "I won't last 24 hours. I'll be outa here and in the Comfort Inn by Monday supper time!"

But, I bucked up! Unstuck the window, got my fan plugged in, and investigated the bathroom and shower facilities. And once again said to myself "I won't last 24 hours, I'll be outa here and in the Comfort Inn by Monday supertime!"

Leaving my fan on full blast setting, I decided I needed a Tim's to perk me up.

I had already gotten to know a few of my fellow students through FACEBOOK and was looking forward to meeting them in REAL FACE.

Last year, I started a FACEBOOK site called "The Life of a Master Gardening Student", and several fellow travelers joined in the conversation. We compared

Last year, I started a FACEBOOK site called "The Life of a Master Gardening Student", and several fellow travelers joined in the conversation. We compared notes, got to know each other a little bit, and as July got closer, we were much looking forward to turning our FACEBOOK friendships into real friendships.

By the time I returned to campus, several other students were starting to arrive and settle in. I came armed with the one thing guaranteed to help people eliminate their shyness and get to know each other ---- bottles of wine, and a package of plastic wine glasses.

I decided NOT to wimp out and head to the Comfort Inn.

We all had a fantastic week. We got to know each other, terrorized Truro in the evenings, marveled and laughed at what we were learning, shared photos of our gardens, became FACEBOOK friends with each other, and by Friday, swore eternal friendship.

We all had favorite lessons, favorite teachers, best new skills learned.....and not all were the same. Some of us had better knowledge than others in certain areas. Some of us had completed more courses than others and were ready to graduate. Some hadn't yet started any of the actual courses.

"The Dutch Hoe"

I wasn't the only one who hadn't heard of a Dutch Hoe, but when Sherry gave us all one and showed us how to use it, we were IN LOVE. If you could see the chatter on our facebook pages since coming home, you'd

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A Week In The Life of A Master Gardening Student

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know that most of us raced to our favorite tool stores and acquired a wide variety of hoes. I now own 3 of them; but am still waiting to find a real old fashioned dutch hoe like the one Sherry demonstrated.

“Sharpening Tools”

Who knew tools needed to be sharpened? Many of the married students returned home, and before greeting their hubbies, went out to their garden shed, got all of their tools, and said “I’m home, I missed you, please sharpen all these tools”. I have no husband, but fellow student Kim Mudge loaned me her husband who kindly sharpened all my tools.

“Diapers”

Okay, how did I get to be this ripe age without knowing the trick of ripping apart diapers and putting them in your planters. This was probably the Number 1 “OOOOGH” and “AAAAWH” that came from every student watching. I guess my diaper days are not behind me!

Those of you who follow our AMGA facebook site know that I have several suggestions and recommendations for better communication between the Association and the students, so I won’t repeat them here.

And, if I was asked, I also have a few suggestions on how the summer school can become an even better experience for the students.

But all in all, everyone had a wonderful week.

2013 Atlantic Master Gardener Graduates

Congratulations to the new Graduates from the Atlantic Master Gardeners Program, July 18th 2013!

(We will have a photo and list for the Fall Newsletter)

Congratulations as well to newly Certified members of AMGA:

Dianna Smith
Pauline Kemp
Jim Sharpe

THE AUGUST GARDEN

-PHOTOS BY BRENDA HILTZ



"Shall I compare thee to a
summer's day?"

- William Shakespeare

Fairest of the months!
Ripe summer's queen
The hey-day of the year
With robes that gleam with sunny sheen
Sweet August doth appear."

- R. Combe Miller

Tis the last rose of summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone.

-Thomas Moore



New Kid On the Block !

- By Sue Stuart



Ever thought of growing Nut trees?

Other people in the Maritimes have ! In fact they have become interested enough to get together and form a group! A brand new Organization has been born—

"Maritime Nut Growers Association", MNGA!

It all started with a group of people who have an interest in nut trees... either already growing various types of nut trees or in finding out how to grow them!

On August 4th 2012 , a tour took place, for interested individuals, of various properties with established nut trees in the Annapolis Valley. Eighty people attended and visited locations with Walnut, American Chestnut, and Hazelnut trees.

The group decided to look into forming an organization to support and promote the growing of edible nuts in the Maritimes.

Such organizations currently exist in other Provinces e.g. "SONG" (Society of Ontario Nut Growers).

The first Meeting of MNGA took place at the Faculty of Agriculture, Dalhousie University campus in Truro on March 9th, 2013. Potential members represented all three Maritime provinces. Lots of enthusiasm was evident in the room with many questions and discussions relating to nut growing. Among those present were some folks very knowledgeable about the growing of trees - including our own Carol Goodwin!

Another very enthusiastic member present was Les Corkum. Les has many years of experience growing all types of trees. He became particularly involved in the growing of the American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) in the Maritimes.

Les instructed a Grafting Workshop on April 20th in Windsor for any interested members. He also conducted a tour of his property on July 27th, a large collection of some unique trees including nut trees .

This was followed by a Grafting session. Les, while not a young man, has an infectious enthusiasm when he talks about growing trees particularly in the Maritimes. A conversation with him about growing any tree but particularly nut trees is both educational and inspirational! You just want to go home and grow your own trees!

Members of MNGA have another event coming up on September 7th, 2013 in PEI. This will be a Tour of Hazelnut Orchards in several PEI Communities.

As Master Gardeners, this organization seems worthy of our support. With lack of viable industry in the Maritimes , could this become a possible lucrative industry - something we could undertake in our own back yards and that might keep some of our young people from heading West! Sure seems worthy of support to me!

For further information about membership in MNGA contact the Secretary, Fran Smith at:

53hummingbird@gmail.com



AMGA NEWS



The Executive would appreciate your comments on some of the items in this Newsletter.

1) In the article by Lynn Brooks, "In Need of Some Master Gardener Love", Lynn talks about a project involving the Children's Garden at the IWK Hospital that could combine Level II Summer school and Master Gardener Volunteer Hours. Please send your comments /suggestions regarding this idea to any of the Master Gardener Executive. The List of Executive Members for 2013 can be found on page 17 of this Newsletter. Your input would be very beneficial to AMGA!

2) To the right you will see the description of the position "Events Coordinator". In order to provide meaningful educational and social events for AMGA members, the Executive would like to enlist the services of an Events Coordinator from the AMGA Membership. If you might be interested in this position or know of a member who might be, please contact one of the Executive members.

3) My apologies for sending this Summer Newsletter so late in the season! Technically it is still Summer! But Fall is not far away. If you have a summer project or an event, a gardening practice you would like members to read about or ideas for Fall Gardening Projects share them in the Fall Newsletter.

Please send any items for the Fall Newsletter to:

Newsletter Editor: suestuart@accesswave.ca
by October 18th, 2013.

Events Coordinator

The role of this position is to:

- Survey membership for desired workshop topics
- To choose two topics in consultation with the Association executive
- To find qualified workshop presenters for desired topics
- To calculate profitable attendance goals for events
- To organize two events per year among the three Maritime provinces
- To notify members by email of upcoming events 2 months in advance, and then send out two reminders, the last one two weeks before the event
- To provide workshop information for the Events page on the AMGA web page
- To decide, in consultation with the Association executive, whether events should be cancelled

AMGA EXECUTIVE

2013



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PAST PRESIDENT: Carol Goodwin - goodwin.carol56@gmail.com

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TREASURER: Johanne Robertson - daisyluc@xplornet.com

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR :

Anita Sulley - asulley@accesswave.ca

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MEMBER AT LARGE (2): Lynn Brooks - lynbrook@eastlink.ca

MEMBER AT LARGE(3): Jane Plant - cotaras@ns.sympatico.ca

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