

**ESVMG**

# Gardening on the Shore

**Winter, 2020**

## Message from the President

Well, winter is upon us, although not fierce, yet. I've already started cleaning up the leaves and debris from around my house and garden on the warmer sunny days. I'm sure that you have also.

The class of 2019-2020, 13 strong, will graduate in February giving us a new source of ideas and help. At the February 4 General Membership Meeting, all Chairs and Leads gave an overview of their activities, which will be an opportunity to recruit the trainees. Also, at this meeting, Theresa Pittman, our Coordinator, gave the annual MG presentation on Risk Management.

Now for things we are planning that you can participate in:

- Heritage Celebration at the ESCC on Feb 29, 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM.
- The President of VMGA will speak at the April 7 General Membership Meeting,
- A Native Plant Give-Away with the Arbor Day Give-Away of Native Trees by Soil & Water Conservation & the Forestry Service.
- A Field Trip to Chanticleer in Pennsylvania is being planned.
- Herb Symposium May 12, featuring speaker Cindy Wyskiewicz and walk to Ker Place.

Also, we need volunteers for the Hospitality Committee. We seem to burn them out each year, so please step up. Don't forget that the slate of officers for 2020 is:

- Vice President: Jocelyn Grover
- Past President: Phil Goetkin
- Secretary: Marianna Francavilla
- Treasurer: Cathy Mikel
- Member-At-Large Accomack: Victor Klein
- Member-At-Large Northampton: Paul Tiffany

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Jim Crunk

## Feature Article

### 2019 WAS A BUSY YEAR



ESVMG members enjoying a delicious lunch at the Onancock Market Street Grill during the 2019 Holiday Luncheon & meeting.

At the December meeting and holiday luncheon our president, Jim Crunk, presented an impressive list of the 2019 accomplishments and volunteer events. He began by noting the well-deserved administrative enhancements which included an update to the Standing Rules and Catalogue of Volunteer Opportunities, a restructure of the VMS charge categories to be more user friendly, the development and implementation of an Annual Project Review Form and Process and a Continuing Education and Training Approval Form. And, for the first time in several years, new ESVMG T-shirts, sporting our updated logo, were made available to members to buy.

Here are the highlights from the fun and educational 2019 events:

With the addition of a 1<sup>st</sup> grade program at Kiptopeke Elementary, the existing 2<sup>nd</sup> grade garden **programs continued at Kegotank, Kiptopeke and Pungoteague Elementary schools**. These programs offer science and general gardening lessons on a scheduled basis. Where possible, these programs take students into the garden for a hands-on experience. A program of note is the New Roots Garden, located in Cape Charles, which offers weekly garden lessons and experiences for the area youth. This program kicked off with the "Blessing of the Worms" in April and extended through October.



ESVMG Volunteers working with 1<sup>st</sup> graders at Kiptopeake Elementary School.

A **fall plant sale** was held at the Blue Crow Antique Mall on Lankford Highway. The proceeds from this sale, along with a companion sale at the Outdoor Exploration Day the following weekend, brought in a total of \$2,080 to the ESVMG treasury! In addition to the sale, we gave away native plants to anyone who purchased a plant. We are very appreciative of the 12 nurseries and other local businesses who donated plants for the sale. We were also very pleased with the location and hope that it will be available again for the 2020 sale. This effort – one of the biggest undertaken this year - involved over 20 volunteers to obtain, transport and store the donated plants and to set up and work the sale. According to Sharyn McQuaid, "Customers started coming even before we were fully set up and the traffic was steady until our stock was dwindling."

In addition to extending the earlier plant sale, the ESVMG volunteers participated in **the Outdoor Exploration Day** where they provided information and native plants to visitors. This annual community event, held at Kiptopeake State Park in September, provides the public with an opportunity to learn about the natural world of the Eastern Shore. During this, the third year of our participation, we were able to give away 25 plants of 10 different species for a total of 250 plants. The Outdoor Exploration Day has proven to be an excellent opportunity for us to provide educational ideas and material to the public. Since this event is heavily attended, it also provides wonderful exposure for the Master Gardeners.



Successful construction/installation of the first rain garden at the Museum of Chincoteague.

ESVMG partnered with the **Museum of Chincoteague** for two big events in the year. An educational program on native plants was held in the spring for Roads Scholar volunteers and community. This was followed by a native plant sale open to the community which sold out in the first hour! Volunteers were also involved in planting and labeling native plants on the museum grounds.

The fall project included a “Rain Garden: Design, Construction and Maintenance” presentation along with actual construction of a rain garden at the museum. A second rain garden has been planned for 2020.

ESVMG volunteers participated in the **Heritage Celebration**, held at the Eastern Shore Community College in February. This family-oriented event provided our organization a good opportunity to inform the public about gardening. Our unit provided printed materials, a child activity and an exhibit with plant clinic materials.

With the convenience of the event held in Norfolk this year, many members were able to attend the annual **Master Gardener College** sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension. And the Cape Charles Plant Clinic, held the first Tuesday of every month in conjunction with the Farmers Market, continued with advice and ESVMG information disseminated to many market goers.

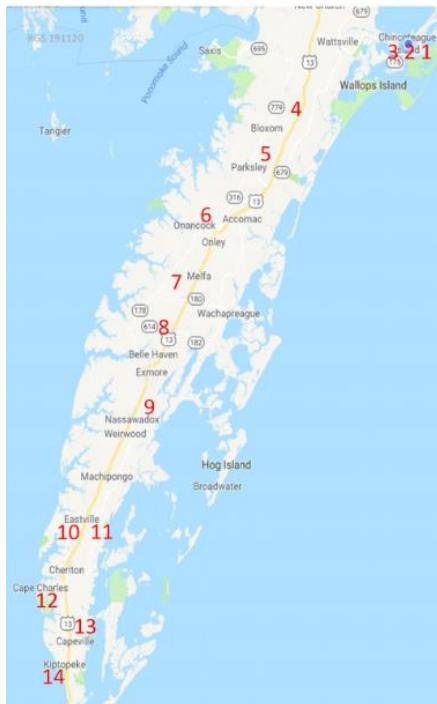
Following the passing of Jack Humphreys, for whom a Memorial Service and tree planting was held in his memory, a **Radio Program** committee was formed. This committee composed and recorded weekly gardening segments which were aired on WESR radio.

ESVMG volunteers provided an experience for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students from all Accomack County schools at the **2019 Farm Day**, sponsored by Accomack County Extension Service. The ESVMG exhibit involved a role play for the children on creating compost. They had an opportunity to view and touch three types of soil in different stages of compost development. They saw charts that show pictures of materials used in creating compost and participated in a discussion of how and what should be used to create compost.



Master Gardeners getting ready for the 2019 Farm Day.

The **2019 Garden Symposium**, held in October at the Cheriton Firestation, was the second symposium organized by our organization and open to the public. With about 90 participants, it was well attended by our own Master Gardeners, as well as Master Gardeners from across the bay and other interested gardeners. The day consisted of presentations by three exciting speakers, a lively raffle, door prizes and an impromptu lunch of pizza from Gerry's Ristorante on Langford Hwy outside of Cheriton. Proceeds from this event totaled \$1,374.



Unarguably the largest project which involves the greatest number of volunteers is the maintenance of the **ESVMG Supported Gardens**. These gardens are spread throughout Northampton and Accomack counties and, with the exception of those at the elementary schools and the Community Service Board, all are open to the public. The total number of supported gardens grew in 2019 to include the addition of the Museum of Chincoteague demonstration garden and the expansion of the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (CNWR) bird garden and wildflower meadow. An updated map of the supported gardens was produced and is available on the VMS site and on our website. See the map to the left and chart on the following page to identify the names and themes of the 14 supported gardens.

Additionally, **garden guides** were completed for the Chincoteague Island Nature Trail Shady Landscape garden, Ker Place Herb & Kitchen garden, and Eastville garden. For more information on the development of these guides, see the article "New Garden Guides in 2019" to learn how they were developed.

Reference the map on the prior page to identify the location of the ESVMG supported gardens. The map is cross-referenced to the chart below.

	Supported Garden	PlantID Marker	Garden Guides	Theme
<b>#</b>				
	<b><u>Accomack County</u></b>			
<b>1</b>	CNWR Birdgarden and Wildflower Meadow * CNWR Bateman Center, Assateague Island	Y		Helping visitors to envision a more bird and pollinator friendly backyard incorporating native plants.
<b>2</b>	Museum of Chincoteague Island 7125 Maddox Blvd, Chincoteague Island	Y		Preserving barrier island environments using Eastern Shore native plants in landscaping & rain garden.
<b>3</b>	CI Nature Trail Shady Landscape * Hallie Whealton Smith Drive, Chincoteague Island	Y	Y	Paved loop thru native forest and freshwater marsh with plant identification and a shady landscape garden.
<b>4</b>	Kegotank Elementary School Lankford Hwy (US-13), Mappsville			Outdoor classroom & native plant garden used in related student learning activities.
<b>5</b>	Community Service Board (CSB) - Parksley Greenbush Rd, Parksley			A therapeutic and learning vegetable and flower garden for clients of CSB.
<b>6</b>	Ker Place Herb & Kitchen 69 Market St, Onancock	Y	Y	A Jeffersonian style Herb/Kitchen garden using historically accurate plants from the 18th century.
<b>7</b>	Pungoteague Elementary School Bobtown Rd, Melfa			Outdoor plant garden used in related student learning activities.
<b>8</b>	Virginia Tech Research Center 33446 Research Dr, Painter	Y		An established low maintenance shade garden.
<b><u>Northampton County</u></b>				
<b>9</b>	Northampton Free Library 7745 Seaside Rd, Nassawadox	Y		A Small Garden of Native & Non-native Plants for a Diversity of Pollinators.
<b>10</b>	Eastville The Horns, Eastville	Y	Y	A formal ornamental courtyard garden with a wide variety of native & non-native plants for sun & shade.
<b>11</b>	Indiantown 1399 Indiantown Rd, Eastville			A 6'-wide foundation garden to add color & texture while tolerant of afternoon sun.
<b>12</b>	New Roots Youth Corner of Fig & Mason Sts, Cape Charles			For local youth to develop personal growth, environmental stewardship & healthy lifestyles.
<b>13</b>	Kiptopeke Elementary School Fairview Rd, Cape Charles			Outdoor plant garden used in related student learning activities.
<b>14</b>	Kiptopeke State Park Native Plant * Kiptopeke State Park	Y		Native plant demonstration garden with a diversity of native plants, trees and shrubs.
* Plant Eastern Shore Natives Campaign Demonstration Garden				RGS 191125

## Articles of Interest

### THE INS & OUTS OF GROWING INDUSTRIAL HEMP

by Suzanne Grizzard, ESVMG Master Gardener



One would be hard pressed to find a plant more unique than hemp. Growing, harvesting and processing the crop doesn't disappoint with its own unique challenges.

Years ago when industrial hemp was finally starting to be considered for use again in the US (after a long hiatus), I remember hearing 'it really does grow like a weed!' Obviously, this was implying that hemp has very few water and nutrient requirements. Well, I can tell you from experience this simply isn't the case.

Some of the processes involved in growing hemp are similar to certain other agricultural crops, as well as plants in the landscape. These include ensuring a good growing medium that is well drained, nutrient rich, and in the proper PH range for the plants. Another similarity would be monitoring for pests both above and below ground.

While there are many different techniques to grow hemp for CBD production, we chose to germinate our seeds in a small greenhouse. Eventually, after a short hardening off process they were planted in the field covering roughly one acre. Perhaps the most critical (and unique) part of the growing process was being certain that only female plants were allowed to grow and that the males were immediately removed from the field before they release pollen. This is a problem because pollinated female plants will focus their energy on seed production instead of CBD production.

Another obstacle we encountered more than once was dealing with something we are all familiar with: strong thunderstorms coming across the Chesapeake Bay. Fortunately, we have thus far 'dodged the bullet' by not experiencing any hail damage to our crop. However, we did have several severe storms that easily blew plants on their sides. Lesson learned - stake plants BEFORE the 60 mph wind! Thankfully, hemp plants are quite resilient. We were almost always able to

stand them upright which allowed them to continue to thrive. A tremendously important part of the process of growing hemp is monitoring THC levels. Levels tend to spike when plants are under stress or if they are "too" far along in the budding process. Current law states that any plant containing over 3% THC is considered marijuana and will have to be destroyed. So, a good and common recommendation in the business is to send samples off for testing early and often.

Once you hit the sweet spot of balancing high CBD and low THC, it's time for harvest! This happens toward the end of the summer and into the fall, when harvesting the plants takes center stage. With a good portion of the plants standing at least six feet tall (some close to 10 ft), harvesting the plants was certainly the most labor intensive part of the process. Once the plants are cut at the base and hung upside down in our stable, it was time for the drying process.

Drying the plants can be tricky because mold has to be avoided at all costs. A moldy product is nearly impossible to sell to any reputable buyer. Again, we were able to avoid a disaster – this time from mold - by providing good air circulation and ventilation in the barn where we hung them.

All in all, being one of the first farmers in Virginia (and in the US) to grow industrial hemp in decades was a great experience. This crop does require patience, hard work, and sound knowledge. Experience in horticultural and agricultural practices are a must.

Despite regulatory uncertainty and the challenges with the crop itself, we have already started growing hemp for the 2020 seasons!



## Member Spotlight: Suzanne Grizzard



Suzanne grew up in Norfolk loving the beaches and surrounded by relatives. She is proud of the history of the Tidewater area.

When she stopped working full time, Suzanne answered the phone for her son's landscaping business. Never being that interested in gardening other than planting pretty annuals, she began to become intrigued with what went on in gardening and landscaping.

Spending a lot of time on the Eastern Shore visiting relatives, she was excited to move here five years ago and to renovate an 1897 farmhouse with some acreage. This is when she began to think it was time to begin learning more about gardening and farming. That led her to becoming a Master Gardener which has helped her "tremendously."

Her son and his wife are now growing industrial hemp, pumpkins, and Suzanne's beloved Hayman sweet potatoes. Suzanne is responsible for daily oversight of the crops since her son and daughter-in-law still live in Norfolk. She sends them pictures and reports on the status of the crops.

She is also proud of her newly acquired ability to drive a 72" Zamboni riding mower and tractor!

## LIFECYCLE OF A GARDEN BROCHURE

by Bob Shendock, ESVMG Master Gardener

As mentioned in the Feature Article: “2019 Was a Busy Year,” garden guides were completed for the Chincoteague Island Nature Trail Shady Landscape garden, Ker Place Herb & Kitchen garden, and Eastville garden as well as the list and map of all supported gardens. Described in this article is the process followed for the creation, production, and maintenance of brochures in the ESVMG Garden Brochure series.

### History

While ESVMG has developed garden brochures in the past, in 2016, then President Julie Rogers envisioned a series of brochures developed to highlight applicable ESVMG Demonstration Gardens. The intent was to fulfil our primary goal of providing useable horticultural information to the public free of charge. To make this a reality, several capabilities would need to be in place.

Theresa Pittman, Extension Agent and Unit Coordinator, has been very supportive of this effort from inception and makes Extension Office resources available to us for brochure electronic data management, software application use, black and white copy services, and use of their tri-fold machine. This ensures long term development, maintenance, and production of the brochure at no cost to ESVMG.

The development of a new garden brochure begins with a request by the Garden Lead and a meeting with the Development Team to discuss objectives and general appearance.

The development process relies on the support of the stakeholders. To minimize the effort and manage production costs, a standardized outer side has been developed, reserving the inner side for garden specific information. With that completed, the task required processes for development of the garden-specific side, production of hardcopies, and brochure maintenance. These procedures, discussed below, were the result of working with several gardens to develop their brochures.

Since the first release, the brochures have proven to be an effective means of branding our efforts and make the public aware of our organization. To date, four brochures have been developed and released for distribution to the general public, with the count approaching 1,000 copies.

### Development Procedure

The development of a new garden brochure begins with a request by the Garden Lead and a meeting with the Development Team to discuss objectives and general appearance. The collection of site dimensions for a preliminary site plan and defining the specimen data to be collected are also part of the initial development step.

Once the critical data is obtained, the Development Team produces the site plan using drawing software. The Garden Lead, then, reviews the site plan and uses this document to mark the locations of plant

specimens. Specimen data is delivered to the Development Team who updates the plan, adding selected fields from the specimen data. Another iteration of review is performed by the Garden Lead, followed by a site visit to work out any changes or additions. A final draft is produced for final approval. The Development Team trains the Garden Lead and one or more Garden Team members on the reproduction and folding of the brochures for distribution.

## Production Procedure

Reproduction and folding is the responsibility of the Garden Team. Although color copies are more appealing, they are cost prohibitive in large quantities. Currently, black and white copies are free to ESVMG at the Extension Office. Most Garden Leads have decided to

utilize a brochure box located near the garden entrance for dissemination of the brochures.

Once established and the inner side is seen as stable enough to support production in volumes of 1,000 copies or more, production of color copies can be outsourced and the inner side of the brochure can be produced utilizing professional graphic design software.

## Maintenance Procedure

Annually, usually in the Fall, the Garden Team can provide input to the Development Team for update of the inner side. After update, review, and approval, the master hardcopy of the brochure is replaced at the Accomack Extension Office.

## Gardeners Tips

### EXCERPT FROM MASTER GARDENER HANDBOOK

*With a highlight of the various events in 2019 supported by ESVMG volunteers and with a new and eager class of trainees currently completing their required classroom and volunteer hours, this is a good time to review the steps to becoming a successful EMG as defined in our Handbook.*

#### Being an Extension Master Gardener

EMG volunteer opportunities are unique in that they provide opportunities to build the local community through education about environmentally-sound horticulture and to improve quality of life through horticulture for special populations, such as low income, elderly, or physically challenged. EMG volunteer opportunities increase individual knowledge of horticulture through activities that help the community and assist VCE in its mission to provide knowledge for the Commonwealth. Individuals joining VCE as an Extension Master Gardener are joining a local group of volunteers that is part of a state group, which is part of a national group of distinguished volunteers recognized for their knowledge, skills and for the significance of the work they do in improving their communities.

The Extension Master Gardener program was created by Extension to meet an enormous increase in requests from home gardeners for unbiased, research-based horticultural information.

## **Steps to Becoming an EMG**

Upon entering the EMG program, the volunteer is entering into a contract. In essence, he/she agrees that in return for the training received, he/she will volunteer an equal number of hours with Extension in an approved internship experience to be completed within one year of the contract date. Failure to complete this obligation means the individual does not receive the title of EMG, is not entitled to wear the Extension Master Gardener badge and cannot participate in EMG activities. All individuals receiving EMG training must be able to commit to a minimum of 100 hours within 12 months. A minimum of 50 hours will be spent in classroom instruction, and an additional 50 hours (minimum) handsOn internship will be spent on field experience in horticulture-based, education programs.

Before volunteers are accepted into the EMG training program, the local coordinator or training coordinator should make sure that there are volunteer opportunities available that fit the schedules of the trainees. Some jobs require workday hours and other volunteers can perform tasks that can be done after-hours, such as research, writing, correspondence, and record keeping. Job descriptions for volunteer internships should be available so volunteers know exactly what is expected of them and to ensure that program needs are met.

There are five levels of EMG status. Each status level is determined by level of training and

internship (community education service) experience. The levels include:

- **Extension Master Gardener Trainee:** One who is currently in classroom training to become a EMG, but has not yet taken or satisfactorily passed the examination(s) on course material. No more than three classes can be missed, and all required course work must be made up.
- **Extension Master Gardener Intern:** One who has completed the EMG program classroom training requirement, achieved 70% or better cumulative average on the final examination, and is currently fulfilling the initial internship experience of 50 hours educational efforts/work time.
- **Extension Master Gardener:** One who has completed the full EMG training program – classroom and internship – and is actively volunteering with VCE, fulfilling the program requirements necessary to remain active.
- **Advanced Extension Master Gardener:** One who has received specialized training in any of the advanced-level EMG training programs and has completed the program requirements.
- **Emeritus Extension Master Gardener:** A dedicated EMG who “retires” due to health or other reasons after 1,000 hours of service or as determined by the coordinator and/or Extension agent.

From Master Gardener Handbook  
Chapter 19, “Stormwater Best Management Practices”

## WINTER GARDENING TIPS

**Test & Amend Soil** – Beautiful plants and veggies start with good soil. It's a good idea to make testing your soil an annual affair (minimum every 3 years) to ensure that your plants get the proper nutrients. You can buy a soil testing kit online or – better yet – send a soil sample to the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service for analysis. You can pick up materials from the [Agriculture Research and Extension Center](#) in Painter.

**Buy Seeds and Start Early Planting** – If you have left over seeds, test for [germination rate](#). You can start sowing seeds indoors for early crops such as beets, broccoli, cabbage, celery, kale, lettuce, mustard, onion, and others. Use this [seed sowing calculator to find](#) the optimal time to sow seeds using April 16 as the last frost date.

**Create a Winter Bouquet** – Look for greens, colorful stems, berries and seed heads available in your garden and in the wild. Deep green conifer branches with vibrant red dogwood stems, tan seed heads, and brown pinecones make a stunning container arrangement. Also force blooms by bringing indoors cuttings of quince, crabapple, forsythia and other early bloomers.

**Prune Dormant Trees & Shrubs** – The best time to prune trees and shrubs is when they are dormant. In addition to being best for the plant, now is the best time to see the structure of the plant. To learn the ABC's of pruning, view the [Arbor Day Foundation video](#) or go to the VCE publication ["A Guide to Successful Pruning."](#)

**Don't Forget to Water** – It's easy to forget to water newly planted trees & shrubs in the winter, but, for the first 2 – 3 years, they do need an occasional good soaking on a relatively warm day following a dry spell.

## 2019 Membership Milestones Met

With a total of 82 members in 2019, including 13 trainees, ESVMG volunteers spent a total of 677 hours continuing their education and 5,857 hours of volunteer time.

Congratulations to the following ESVG members achieved milestone awards for total hours volunteered in 2019:

### 50 Hours

- Joyce Almond
- Julie Callahan
- Brenda Fitzsimmons
- Julie Fisher

### 250 Hours

- Joyce Falkenberg

### 500 Hours

- Jim Crunk
- Diane D'Amico
- Paul Tiffany
- Susan Weir

### Emeritus Status Awarded

- Sharyn McQuaid

It's advisable to record your hours in the VMS system as soon as the time is earned so that you and ESVMG will get credit for all the hard work volunteered. We must volunteer a minimum of 20 hours and get 8 hours of continuing education per year.

## Save The Date

Feb 4, 9:30 – 11:30	General Membership Meeting
Feb 29, 9:00 – 3:00	Heritage Celebration
March 3, 9:30 – 11:30	Executive Board Meeting
April 7, 9:30 – 11:30	General Membership Meeting
April 23 – 26	ESVMG with Road Scholars at Museum of Chincoteague

*Refer to the Volunteer Management System calendar for more details and ESVMG Garden work schedules.*

## 2020 ESVMG BOARD MEMBERS

President – Jim Crunk  
Past President – Phil Goetkin  
Vice-President – Jocelyn Grover  
Secretary – Marianna Francavilla  
Treasurer - Cathy Mikel  
Member at Large (Accomack) – Victor Klein  
Member at Large (Northampton) - Paul Tiffany

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