



GARDENERS

CAEMG Annual Meeting

About 18 Master Gardeners attended the annual winter CAEMG meeting on a snowy December 9 in Hamden. The meeting began with some positive words from Dr. Norman Gauthier, newly appointed head of the Master Gardener Coordinators Team, on the future of the master gardener program

Some things he mentioned of interest were improved urban IPM, a statewide insect collection center, correspondence and advanced master gardener courses, a lab manual, a data base of the most commonly asked questions. He invited feedback from Master Gardeners and proposed that a focus group meet in the spring to brainstorm ideas.

Business Matters

The slate of officers for 1996 was elected by voice vote. They are Jonas Zucker-President; Pamela Weil-Vice President; John Neff-Treasurer; Judy Davies-Secretary.

Because of increased printing costs for the newsletter and the membership directory, a proposal was made to increase CAEMG dues. A motion was carried to raise the dues to \$10 starting January 1997.

A suggestion was made to change the date of the winter meeting to November to reduce problems due to weather. A motion was passed to change the bylaws to say that the annual meeting will be



Herb Garden
in Winter.

held on the first Saturday of November. The revised amendment will be voted on at the June meeting.

Donation to Fund

Dr. Mark Bridgen of UConn is requesting donations to set up an endowment fund to maintain and improve the perennial and annual garden adjacent to the college greenhouse. This garden is used to teach students about plant identification, planting and propagating techniques. Master Gardeners worked on this garden in past with Dr. Bridgen, who has been generous in offering his time and expertise to our program on various occasions. A motion was passed to donate \$1000 for the fund.

Potluck

A delicious variety of potluck dishes fortified us against the winter weather. See the recipe on p. 2 for rugelach prepared by C. Crowley.

President Jonas Zucker / *Vice President* Pamela Weil / *Secretary* Judy Davies / *Treasurer* John Neff
Special Projects Jeanné R. Chesnow, Gail Collins / *Historian* / *District Coordinators*: North: / South: / East: Positions Open
Past Presidents: Robert McNeil / Wendy Donnelly / Paul Brown / Robert Sherman

Newsletter Editor Susan Munger

Deadline for March / April 1996 Newsletter: March 4, 1996

Mail or fax articles and ideas to Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 Tel/Fax: 860/443-2261

Connecticut Association of Extension Master Gardeners
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR 1996

Dues: \$5/year. Dues paid now are valid through December 1996.

YES, I am a fully certified Master Gardener and I want to be a part of the CAEMG.

I am (a) renewing my membership _____ OR (b) a new member _____.

If you have no changes in the information you provided last year, as shown in the current (1995) membership directory, just fill in your name; leave rest of application blank.

Name: _____ Year Course Taken: _____

Address: _____ Phone (with Area Code): _____

Extension Office: _____

INTERESTS: Circle 10 (or fewer) items of your highest gardening interest.

Annuals	Computers	With Handicapped	Organic	With Seniors
Beekeeping	Containers	Herbs	Perennials	Shade
Birds	Drying Flowers	Historic Gardens	Photography	Slides
Bonsai	Education	House Plants	Plant Disease	Vegetables
Butterflies	Flower Arranging	Integrated Pest Mngmnt	Plant Propagation	Water Gardens
Cactus	Fruit	Landscaping	Plant Therapy	Wild Flowers
With Children	CAEMG Fundraising	Lawns	Rock Gardens	Woody Ornamentals
Community Projects	Garden Design	Native Plants	Seed Saving	Writing
Compost	Greenhouses	Orchids	Seedlings	

Indicate subjects you are willing to teach: _____

What affiliations you would like listed in the CAEMG Directory? (for example: Conn. Horticultural Society, NOFA, Arboretum, Local Garden Club).

Please mail dues to CAEMG Treasurer: John Neff, 18 Knollwood Rd., Farmington, CT 06032

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Rugelach

Crust

2 sticks unsalted butter, softened

8 ounces cream cheese, softened

2 cups flour

Fillings

1/2 cup raisins, chopped

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 cup finely chopped nuts

and

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup ground almonds (1/3 cup whole)

1/2 cup apricot or prune jam

In a small bowl cream together butter and cream cheese. Beat in flour a little at a time. Knead lightly until flour is absorbed. Refrigerate dough for 90 minutes. Divide dough in half. Roll half on a lightly floured board until 1/16" thick. Refrigerate rest. Cut into 16 wedges. Combine raisins, cinnamon, nuts, and 1/2 cup sugar. Spread a small amount on each wedge. Roll up from wide edge to point. Place

on ungreased cookie sheet and sprinkle with sugar.

In a bowl mix together chopped almonds and jam. Spread as above. Place on ungreased cookie sheet and sprinkle with sugar.

Bake at 350 F for 18 to 20 minutes until golden brown. Makes 32 rugelach.

C. Crowley, Branford

1977 Master Gardener Certificate Anyone?

Did anyone take the Connecticut Master Gardener Program in 1977? And have a certificate to prove it? We think the first class was in 1978, held in the evening in Wallingford. But we're not certain. Contact Marie Dube in the Hamden office, 789-7865 if you have information on this.

Connecticut MG in Oklahoma

Ina Goldberg, a Connecticut Master Gardener from Norwich, lives most of the year in Guymon, Oklahoma, which she reports is in the middle of the Oklahoma panhandle. She writes that the Oklahoma State University Master Gardener program is active there. They do a very professional weekly public TV program. We think we had a dry summer in Connecticut last year. Ina says that in Guymon, which is considered high plains, it is warm, windy, and very dry. In the last two months they had 0.02" of precipitation.



Christmas Cactus

These holiday cactus are epiphytes and in their native habitat grow on trees, not in soil. They do not like constantly soggy roots, preferring moist, well-drained soil. After watering remove water that collects in the saucer under the pot. Keep them in bright, indirect light. Keep them in cool temperature to prolong blossoms and away from drafts to minimize premature bud drop.

After their blooming period ends, continue to water. In early spring begin fertilizing every two weeks with a dilute solution. Periodic pinching promotes branching for a bushier plant with more blossoms next year.

Marie Dube, Extension Educator, Horticulture

Gardening Columns

For the past six years Master Gardeners have written weekly garden columns from March to November for *The Day* newspaper published in New London. Those who live outside the circulation area of *The Day* receive a copy of their column when published. I am always looking for more writers to join us. It is not difficult and is one way we can educate the public. If you are interested, call 860-739-5134 or write to me at 16 Danon Heights Road, Niantic, CT 06357, this month for more information. I start working on a schedule in February.

Bob McNeil, Niantic

Add to Your Knowledge! Attend Gardening Symposium

The CAEMG is pleased to present its annual symposium which is open to all gardening enthusiasts. We welcome Nancy DuBrule, President of the Connecticut chapter of NOFA, and proprietor of Natureworks, as our keynote speaker.

New to our program is the addition of vendor tables, where you can obtain free horticultural materials such as catalogs and various gardening publications. There will also be a booth manned by certified CT Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners who can answer your gardening questions. The Master Gardeners will be selling calendars and soil test kits for a nominal fee. And don't forget our fabulous array of DOOR PRIZES to be distributed at the end of the program!

See pages 4-5 for details and registration form.

Pam Jacobsen, Symposium Chair

Don't Forget to Pay Your 1996 Dues NOW

Planning to attend the Symposium on March 2? Want to be listed in the 1996 CAEMG Directory? Not yet renewed your CAEMG membership for 1996?

We must receive your 1996 CAEMG membership dues by February 29 if you want to attend the symposium at the \$10 member fee. Otherwise you will have to pay the higher nonmember fee of \$17. In other words, CAEMG membership cannot be renewed at the symposium.

Although CAEMG membership dues will be accepted throughout the year, you will not be listed in the 1996 directory if renewing after February 29. So if you didn't do it last issue, fill out the application on page 2, write your check, and mail them to John Neff for another year of enjoyable master gardening.

SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS

NANCY DuBRULE is our keynote speaker. She is the President of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut and is also the founder and sole owner of Natureworks, located in Northford, CT. Ms. DuBrule is the co-author of the book *A Country Garden for Your Backyard*, published by Rodale Press in 1993. Her symposium talk is entitled *We Are Weavers of Our Own Webs: The Role of Organic Gardeners in a Balanced Ecosystem*.

SESSION I:

1. BOB SHERMAN presents *Landscape Design Using Woody Ornamentals*. He is a CT Extension Master Gardener and CAEMG member whose expertise on this topic is well known.
2. LEANNE PUNDT presents *Pest Identification: Insects and Diseases of Ornamentals*, in a two-session workshop: Session I, Introduction; Session II, Advanced Concepts. Ms. Pundt is a CT Cooperative Extension Editor. Her specialty is Commercial Horticulture, and she is the Extension's Greenhouse IPM Coordinator.
3. JACK DONOHUE leads a workshop entitled *Designing a Small Herb Garden*. Mr. Donohue is a member of the CT Unit of the Herb Society of America. He is a writer whose work has appeared in *Fine Gardening*; a newsletter editor and board member of the CT Horticultural Society.
4. AUDREY B. REID presents *The Basics of Pruning*. She is a CT Cooperative Extension Master Gardener who often provides talks on this topic.
5. THOMAS RATHIER introduces us to the marvels of soil in his workshop, *Soil Science*. He is a Soil Scientist for the CT Agricultural Experiment Station in Windsor, CT. This workshop includes hands-on demonstrations of soil structure, soil physics, chemistry, and biology.

SESSION II:

1. CAROL KING presents *Redesigning Your Garden*. She is a garden columnist for *The Day*, *Lawrence Eagle Tribune*, and *Senior Magazine*. Carol's first book, *Living in the Landscape*, is already in its second printing.
2. LEANNE PUNDT continues her discussion from Session One. In this half, she presents *Pest Identification: Insects and Diseases of Ornamentals—Advanced Concepts*.
3. PETER FALCINO discusses *Design and Construction of an Outdoor Water Garden*. Mr. Falcino is the proprietor of The Norwalk Aquarium, which specializes in water gardening.
4. FLORENCE H. MARRONE tells how to identify and grow wildflowers in her presentation, *Spring Wildflowers*. A CAEMG member and CT Cooperative Extension Master Gardener, Ms. Marrone often gives talks on wildflowers.

SESSION III:

1. BARBARA W. CLARK specializes in wild plant identification and use, and her talk, *Wild Edibles: You Can Eat Your Own Backyard* includes a hands-on segment. Ms. Clark has been written up in a number of magazines, including *The New York Times*. She teaches Environmental Education in Manchester, CT, and is a frequent presenter at Knox Parks Foundation in West Hartford, CT.
2. DANA KARPOWICH presents *IPM: An Introduction With Practical Applications to Turf Grass and Ornamentals*. She is a CT Cooperative Extension Program Specialist/Turf Grass and IPM.
3. LINDA LABENSKI speaks on *Propagation of Houseplants*. A CAEMG member and CT Cooperative Extension Master Gardener, Ms. Labenski is known for her knowledge of houseplants.
4. PETER PICONE discusses ways to deal with wildlife, such as basic habitat requirements to attract wildlife, and also how to deal with conflicts. His talk is *Wildlife in Your Backyard: Attracting and Dealing With Conflicts*. Mr. Picone is a wildlife biologist from Session Woods WMA, Wildlife Division, in Burlington, CT.

DIRECTIONS TO THE SYMPOSIUM:

From the East or West—Take I-84 to Exit 43 (Park Rd to West Hartford). At the end of the exit, take a RIGHT turn. At the traffic light at Trout Brook Rd, take a LEFT. At the 5th traffic light take a LEFT turn onto Asylum Ave. Very soon after take a RIGHT turn into the next driveway that leads into the University's parking lot. Look for signs directing you to the symposium.

CAEMG Fourth Annual Gardening Symposium
Saturday, March 2, 1996
University of Connecticut, 1800 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:30 - 9 am	Registration
9 - 10 am	Introductions and Keynote Address
10 - 10:30 am	Coffee and time to browse vendor tables
10:30 - 11:30 am	Workshop Session I
11:30 - 12:30 pm	Lunch—Bring your own, beverages provided
12:30 - 1:30 pm	Workshop Session II
1:30 - 2 pm	Time to browse vendor tables
2 - 3 pm	Workshop Session III
3 - 3:45 pm	Closing remarks, DOOR PRIZES

IMPORTANT NOTES: Symposium space is limited to the first 200 individuals who register. CAEMG cannot guarantee space to those who plan on registering at the door. You are not registered until we have payment in full. In case of inclement weather, listen to WTIC radio (860 AM) for cancellation or postponement. Refunds are only provided if CAEMG has to cancel the symposium. For further information call (203) 485-0298 OR (413) 786-1925.

WORKSHOP SELECTIONS

SESSION I

- 1) Landscape Design
- 2) Insect Pest ID (Intro)
- 3) Designing an Herb Garden
- 4) Intro to Pruning
- 5) Understanding Soil

SESSION II

- 1) Redesigning Your Garden
- 2) Insect Pest ID (Advanced)
- 3) Water Gardening
- 4) Spring Wildflowers

SESSION III

- 1) Wild Edibles
- 2) Intro to IPM
- 3) Houseplant Propagation
- 4) Backyard Wildlife

HOW TO SELECT WORKSHOPS:

Make two choices for each session listed above—your first choice and an alternate choice, in the event the workshop is full when we receive your registration. For each session, a number is assigned for each workshop. Example: 1) Landscape Design. Use these numbers to fill in the information requested below regarding workshop session choices.

Cut here✂

REGISTRATION FORM (Must Be Postmarked By Feb. 22, 1996)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE (include area code): _____

SESSION I: First Choice: _____ Second Choice: _____

SESSION II: First Choice: _____ Second Choice: _____

SESSION III: First Choice: _____ Second Choice: _____

FEES: (Check the appropriate space below.)
\$10 FOR CAEMG MEMBERS (1996 dues must be paid by Feb. 29, 1996) _____
\$17 FOR NONMEMBERS _____

Make your check payable to: CAEMG. Do NOT send cash. Confirmation letters are not sent out.

SEND REGISTRATION FORM TO:
Linda Quagliaroli, 206 Spring St., Windsor Locks, CT 06096

CALENDAR

January 17, noon - 2 pm

Bethel Office. Potluck lunch at noon followed by hands-on demo by Master Gardener Tony Inch on starting perennials from seeds. Limited to 50 people. For information call 794-4379.

February 17, 10 am - noon

CAEMG meeting, Norwich Office. Several master gardeners will talk about activities they're involved in. Bob Sherman will show slides of Iceland.

February 21

Bethel Office. Call for details, 797-4176.

March 2

Symposium. Details inside.

March 20

In Hamden area. Audrey Reid will do a crabapple pruning demo. Details in next issue.

April 20, 10 am - noon

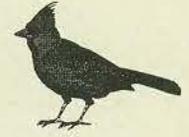
CAEMG meeting, Norwich Office. Details in next issue.

May 18, 10 am - noon

CAEMG meeting in eastern district. Plant swap. At a master gardener's house. Details to come.

Feeding Birds in the Winter Garden

Many of us have bird feeders but how many also have plants that provide birds with food throughout the winter. The other day I noticed a chickadee on a stem where golden rod, asters, and other miscellaneous plants create a jungle in the summer. I started thinking about shrubs and grasses that would provide food for the birds when the ground is covered with snow. Here are a few producing berries that are favored by birds and that may last into winter: barberry, bayberry, beauty berry, bittersweet, cotoneaster, ilex, some crabapples, pokeweed, pfitzer juniper, viburnum, wild roses. Fruit of the black alder or winterberry and the highbush cranberry stay on through the winter and are popular in the spring with robins and cedar waxwings.



Susan Munger, New London

Susan H. Munger
11 Plant Street
New London, CT 06320



- Newsletter deadline: March 4
- Perennials demo in Bethel, Jan. 17
- Symposium, March 2



Robert & Enid Sherman
15 Fire Tower Road
Killingworth, CT 06417



GARDENERS

Symposium Success

We had a great prelude of spring the last week in February that seemed to suggest the weather for the fourth annual Master Gardener Symposium on March 2 would be more of the same. More than 200 people registered for the event, held at the West Hartford branch of UConn, but about a third of them canceled their plans because of the heavy wet snow that fell early in the morning. The timing of the snowfall couldn't have been worse.

However, the hardy souls who attended were rewarded with an excellent program under the superb guidance of Pamela Jacobsen, chairperson. Aided by Judi Mandl, the assistant chair, and Linda Quagliaroli, the registrar, Pam put in many long hours to make the event a great success. All three of them deserve our heartfelt thanks. All the other Master Gardeners who volunteered help did their respective jobs with great energy. I have to congratulate each of them, because without them the symposium could never have occurred. I can't name all volunteers who made the meeting so successful, but I have to point out that I was impressed with the efforts of Majorie Janes of East Woodstock who took over the refreshment table. She contributed cookies by the dozens, which she baked the evening before and which supplied everyone through the coffee break at 10:30 and again at lunch. No one went without. In addition she kept the coffee urns filled for everyone's pleasure throughout

the day. We also owe our thanks to Marie Dube, Extension Educator, who was indefatigable in arranging for all materials, projectors, pointers, coffee urns, etc., to be in place wherever needed.

The program was exceptional. Everyone was enthused by the scope of the subject matter and by the expertise of the speakers. Nancy DuBrule of Natureworks and NOFA gave a stirring keynote speech urging each of us to garden responsibly in our own garden environment. Opening comments by Nancy Bull, UConn Associate Dean, Outreach and Public Service, assured us of her support for the Master Gardener program with interesting and encouraging opening remarks.

The well-planned program allowed for half-hour breaks between workshops when everyone could visit vendor displays and pick up catalogs and literature of various garden suppliers. In spite of the weather, everyone stayed till the end to participate in the door prize drawing when many valuable books were given away. Everyone who participated in the program is to be congratulated.

Anyone who would like to offer suggestions and comments that would help plan next year's symposium should feel free to contact any of the board members.

Jonas Zucker, CAEMG President

*President Jonas Zucker / Vice President Pamela Weil / Secretary Judy Davies / Treasurer John Neff
Special Projects Jeanné R. Chesnow, Gail Collins / Historian / District Coordinators: North: / South: / East: Positions Open
Past Presidents: Robert McNeil / Wendy Donnelly / Paul Brown / Robert Sherman*

Newsletter Editor Susan Munger

Deadline for May / June 1996 Newsletter: May 1, 1996

Mail or fax articles and ideas to Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 Tel/Fax: 860/443-2261

Wiring the Garden

You will be able to take a virtual walking tour among the plants and trees at the UConn campus when the Extension Service Internet home page goes on line in about three months. The Home Page is under construction with part of the project for Master Gardeners.

Other parts of the project will include

- Fact sheet updates, including those for Master Gardeners
- Ability to keep current on projects
- A section for each Center
- Maps of field offices
- The NEMO project (nonpoint pollution)
- 4H camps in Connecticut
- Links to other sources of garden information

"We need to get involved in providing information and helping people," Bruce Wilber, Administrative Officer in the CIT group at the College of Agriculture said when asked what he thinks about the project. "We are under construction now, but in three months we will be one of the best," he added.

Bruce also requested feedback from Master Gardeners to let the college know what we would like to see in a Master Gardener's area. An example could be a page from the Master Gardener calendar each month.

You Can Help

Send your e-mail address to help create a directory of Connecticut Master Gardeners who are on line with any of the on-line services. E-mail the information to Afitzg@snet.net on the Internet, WPKH54A on Prodigy, or send snail mail to Allen Fitzgerald, 19 Caulkins Rd, Norwich, CT 06360.

Allen Fitzgerald, Norwich

Gardening On-Line

Flick the switch, the screen lights up, and you have the world at your fingertips as you head down a garden path on the Internet. When words like web, path, net, gopher, spider, and wormcrawler come up as you move your mouse, you'll wonder if the Internet was put together by a group of gardeners.

A gardener in Florida asked how New Englanders grow tomatoes in such a short season. I explained seed starting inside. He wrote back that they don't buy seeds, they clone and have eight-inch plants in three weeks. It works, I tried it.

Prodigy, America On Line, CompuServe are a few of the on-line services providing bulletin boards, chat groups for gardeners, and access to the Internet. Most cities have local providers in a fast changing business where telephone companies, cable companies, and banks are getting into position to provide access to the Internet.

The response to a search to see how many times the word garden would come up was over 30,000 times. The words Master Gardener had over 7,000 hits.

If you are not a gardener, there are the malls with thousands of stores. Or you can e-mail a member of Congress, do your banking or travel to one of the over 125 countries that are part of the Internet.

Allen Fitzgerald, Norwich

Help Wanted

Salem Country Gardens seeks Master Gardeners to work part time at a new booth called The Plant Doctor answering customer questions. Hours flexible but include some time on weekends.

They are also interested in hiring a Master Gardener knowledgeable about annual flowers during the gardening season.

For information on either spot, call 859-2508.

Time to Plant

March has come in with record-breaking snows, but the avid gardener gets the itch to start the garden despite the weather. It is not too late to begin, and, in fact, it is just the right time to start setting out specific seeds.

You can begin your outdoor garden even now if you have a snow-free area. Peas can be planted directly into the soil as long as it can be worked. Other plants do better by indoor seeding. The seedlings can be moved out when the weather is appropriate. For example, cold weather crops, such as cabbage seed will germinate easily on a windowsill. By April these seedlings will be of sufficient growth and strength to survive outdoors and do well.

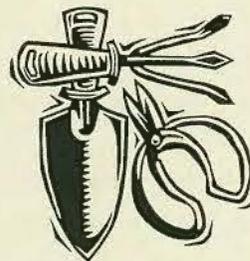
Of special interest to many gardeners is starting tomatoes and peppers from seed. Use a good, sterile soil mix, which is light, to get them off to a good start. Fill a pot with the mix, but do not tamp it down. A single seed per pot is all that is needed. Cover it lightly with additional mix and do not press down. The seedling has all the components it needs for initial growth, so fertilizer is not recommended at this time. Place the seed tray in a pan of water for bottom watering. When the soil is wetted, place the tray in a plastic bag and put it on the windowsill, preferably near a radiator to provide heat for germination. Usually in one week the seeds start sprouting. At this time remove the plastic cover and place the tray in bright light. If you can, provide artificial lighting for a total of 12-16 hours a day with the lamps set close to the seedlings.

The trick in developing hardy tomato plants is to transplant the seedlings after their first set of true leaves form. Use a larger pot than the one in which the initial seed was planted so that the root ball will not be disturbed. As the plant grows transplant it frequently to larger and larger pots to give the roots room to expand.

It will still take 60 days for the first fruits to mature once the plants have been set out-

doors. If you take a chance in setting your plants outdoors in mid-May, know that they will still be at risk to inclement weather and be prepared to take appropriate action to preserve them.

Jonas Zucker, Fairfield



Alternative Ed Program

A teacher of an Alternative Education program for a small class of junior high school pupils is looking for some assistance in helping them learn about gardening and composting between now and the end of school in June. Master Gardeners would provide information and guidance and the pupils and staff will provide the labor and materials.

The best time of day would be some time between 9 and 11:30 am, but the entire program is flexible. The school is located in Norwich at Uncas on the Thames, off Route 32.

This would be an excellent opportunity to promote gardening for children. For more information call Bob McNeil, 860-739-5134.

MG Presentations

Master Gardeners are planning to present exhibits on Sound Gardening and Composting at an Earth Day program on April 20 at the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center in Mystic.

They will also present garden programs in March, April, and May at public libraries in East Lyme, Mystic, Colchester, Norwich (Otis Library), Ledyard, and New London. Call the libraries for topics and dates if interested in attending.

Durgin Park Baked Beans

2 lbs. white beans
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1 large yellow onion peeled
 1 pound bacon or fatback, chopped
 8 tablespoons sugar
 2/3 cup molasses
 2 teaspoons dry mustard
 4 teaspoons salt
 1/2 teaspoon pepper

Soak the beans in water to cover overnight. Cook beans in ample water with the baking soda. Simmer for 10 minutes. Drain and rinse. Place the onion in the bottom of a 3 quart ovenproof casserole. Add half the bacon or fatback. Add the beans. Top with the remaining bacon or fatback.

Mix together the sugar, molasses, mustard, salt, and pepper. Pour this over the beans. Add enough water to barely cover. Bake uncovered at 300F for 6 hours. After a couple of hours stir and check beans. You may have to add a bit of water now and then. Don't make the beans too wet. Serves 6 to 8.

C. Crowley, Branford



Herb Study Group

The Connecticut Herb Study Group has been formed by a group of people who want to learn more about herbs for horticultural, culinary, and health uses. The group meets on the third Sunday of the month from 2 to 4 pm. One member leads a discussion of an herb, and information, experiences, and recipes are shared by all. To join all you need is an interest in herbs and a willingness to meet and participate at regular gatherings. Annual dues are \$10. For more information call Betsy McEwen (860-767-3490), Claudia Van Nes (860-526-3459), or Lynn Rinek (860-443-7103).

Colorado Master Gardening

The following is adapted from "Earning a Master's Degree (Sort of) in the Garden," The New York Times, 11/26/95.

The first master gardening program began in 1972 in King and Pierce counties in Washington State. Since then, 50,000 people have been trained as Master Gardeners in 700 training programs in 45 states, the District of Columbia, and four Canadian provinces.

John Pohly, a Boulder County, Colorado extension agent has answers to even the most perplexing gardening questions, calling on a master's degree in horticulture and 38 years of experience running commercial nurseries and teaching horticulture. He directs the training each year of 50 Master Gardeners.

The program has become more environmentally aware, Mr. Pohly says. In the past, master gardeners were trained to say "you spray with this pesticide to eliminate this pest." Now pesticides are recommended only as a last resort and then only the safest, mildest alternative.

Continued on page 6

Call to Action

Governor Rowland's budget recommends eliminating funding for the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven. Valuable services performed by the Station include food and product testing for the Department of Consumer Protection and Agriculture, water quality testing, research into control of harmful insects and pests.

According to Dean Nancy Bull, the New Haven Station does not duplicate work done at the UConn station, there is a need for both stations, and that UConn is opposed to eliminating the New Haven station.

Please write to Governor Rowland to express your views or contact The Connecticut Nurserymen's Association for information (tel: 860-872-2095, fax: 872-6596).

BOOK REVIEWS

From Seed to Bloom

So there I was, waiting for the snow plow for the umpteenth time and pretending the white stuff outside was really pale green and that the broad bladed shovel was a new kind of garden spade.

At this time of year I find refuge in all the catalogs, promising bigger, better, newer, more exotic, tastier things. It's easy to order much more than is needed, based on the glowing descriptions. It is also easy to forget what will work in the garden.

To keep my feet on the ground, I refer to a few of my own books for information to help my planning.

One source is *From Seed to Bloom*, by Eileen Powell. This large paperback references about 500 common and not too common plants: flowers, fruits, vegetables, and shrubs, by genus. The book is new enough to include ornamental grasses. If you're not familiar with the Latin names, there is an index in back.

For me it serves as a "super-catalog" since I get a thorough description of the plant, including its various colors, germination and propagation requirements, even a clear outline drawing for most entries. There are concise paragraphs indicating what special care is needed. The introduction is basic seed starting and the final pages give names and addresses of popular seed companies. This is not the book to use for reading yourself to sleep but it will help avoid planting costly mistakes.

Eileen Powell, *From Seed to Bloom*. Storey Communications Inc., 1995. \$18.95

Just the Facts

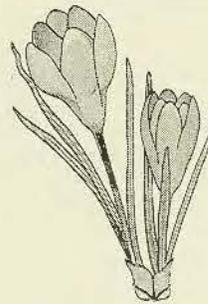
Not as well thumbed is *Just the Facts!* Another large paperback, this book has charts, about 200 pages of them. Topics covered range from fertilizers to companion planting and include

Classified

Anyone interested in heirloom tomatoes?

Or landscaping with native plants?

Allen Gauthier in Ledyard is interested in both subjects and would like to talk with anyone who has had successful experience with either or information to share. Call Allen at 860-464-9929.



common outdoor and indoor plants, shrubs, and trees.

Since topics for related plants are covered in a few pages I can easily compare herbs, bulbs, perennials, or anything in terms of my particular requirements. For my veggies, I can easily determine how many plants and how much space would be needed for my own requirements. If I feel like exercising my pruning tools, I can see quickly which of my overgrown plants can be decimated at any time. By using these charts, it isn't hard to outline a new planting area in terms of amount of light or flower color or to attract birds or to plant in containers.

I tend to use this book for garden planning purposes. I can get information about something I've never used but would like to try such as everlastings or different groundcovers, all sorts of things I might want to know before discovering that orchids won't grown in the middle of my front lawn.

Just the Facts! Storey Communications Inc., 1993. \$16.95

Mira Schachne, Oxford

CALENDAR**April 13**

Class of '96 Master Gardeners tour UConn. Also Dr. Mark Bridgen will be presented by a check for \$1000 from CAEMG for endowment fund to maintain and improve perennial and annual gardens.

April 14, 2 pm.

Acton Public Library, Old Saybrook. Master Gardener Nancy Patenaude will talk on container gardening. Call 860-395-3184 for information.

April 20, 10 am - noon

CAEMG meeting, Norwich Office.

May 18, 10 am - noon

CAEMG meeting in eastern district. Plant swap. At a master gardener's house. Details to come.

May 18, 9 am - 1 pm

Herb Plant Sale. Madison Green, Boston Post Rd, Madison. Common to unusual plants, demonstrations, horticultural information. Organized by CT Unit, Herb Soc. of America. For information call Sandy D'Eugenio, 860-859-3535.

September 19-20

Regional MG Conference, Portland, ME. Tours Sept. 18 and 21. Registration limited to 500. Cost: \$120.

Susan H. Munger
11 Plant Street
New London, CT 06320

Newsletter deadline:
May 1



Robert & Enid Sherman
15 Fire Tower Road
Killingworth, CT 06417

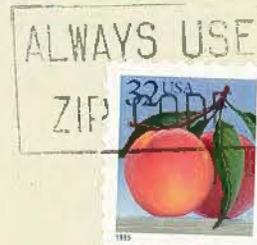
Colorado Master Gardeners continued from page 4

In 1994, Colorado Master Gardeners contributed 31,213 volunteer hours saving the state \$156,000 in staff time. "Everywhere I turn" says Mr. Pohly, "some one has helped with a park or xeriscape program." In Boulder County, Master Gardeners manage a county jail garden where inmates grow their own produce.

For more information on Master Gardening outside Connecticut, contact Master Gardeners International, P.O. Box 526, Falls Church, VA 22040-0526. 703-241-3769.

MG Regional Conference

This year the Master Gardener Regional Conference will be held in Portland, Maine. There is interest in having Connecticut host the 1998 regional conference. UConn has orally agreed to submit a bid. A group will be formed to begin the planning process once we have more information. Most work would have to be done by CAEMG in coordination with UConn. Watch for information in future newsletters.





GARDENERS

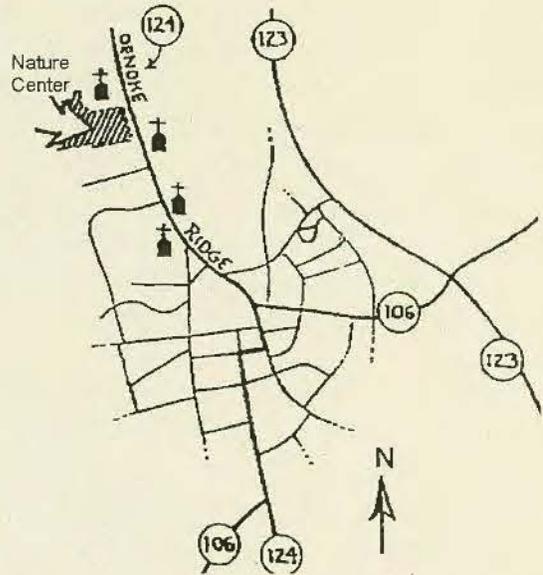
Statewide Meeting in June

On Saturday, June 8, CAEMG will hold its semi-annual meeting at the Nature Center in New Canaan. All Connecticut Master Gardeners are invited. Bring a box lunch and stay for a tour of the Nature Center led by the director after the meeting. The center has an arboretum, greenhouse, trails, herb garden, and gift shop.

Several important CAEMG matters are on the agenda. These include:

- A vote on whether to raise membership dues to \$10 a year.
- Fees for next year's Master Gardener symposium. Under consideration are a higher fee for late registration and a lower fee for volunteers who help before and during the symposium.
- The symposium site.
- Whether to increase the number of vendors with products to sell at the symposium.
- Continuing discussion on whether Connecticut will host the 1998 regional Master Gardener Conference. To make it happen we will need a commitment from many CAEMG members.

Bring your ideas and questions on these subjects or just listen to what others are thinking. The meeting is a great way to meet Master Gardeners in other parts of the state and to get more involved in CAEMG activities.



Directions to New Canaan Nature Center

I-95 (coming from North): Exit 11 (Darien), go right onto Rte 1. Pass under RR bridge (approx. 1 mi). In approx. 100 yards, turn left onto Rte 124 (at light). Continue for several miles to New Canaan. Follow directions below.

Merritt Parkway (coming from North): Exit 37 (New Canaan/Darien), turn left onto Rte 124. Follow directions below.

Take Rte 124 into New Canaan. Pass Saxe Middle School (on right). At 2nd light, turn right (between Mobil and Gulf gas); turn left at next light onto Main St. Follow Main through town and head north on Rte 124 (Oenoke Ridge), pass Congregational and Methodist churches. Nature Center is on left 1/4 mile ahead directly across from St. Marks Episcopal Church. For information on Nature Center or if lost call 203-966-9577.

*President Jonas Zucker / Vice President Pamela Weil / Secretary Judy Davies / Treasurer John Neff
Special Projects Jeanné R. Chesnow, Gail Collins / Historian / District Coordinators: North: / South: / East: Positions Open
Past Presidents: Robert McNeil / Wendy Donnelly / Paul Brown / Robert Sherman*

Newsletter Editor Susan Munger

Deadline for July / August 1996 Newsletter: July 1, 1996

Mail or fax articles and ideas to Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 Tel/Fax: 860/443-2261

Some Ideas for the Future

The CAEMG board and other members are working hard to develop new ideas and plans to make CAEMG an even better organization. As everyone knows, Master Gardeners are a special group of people who use their knowledge, interest, and love of gardening to help others in the community. MGs do this in a variety of ways, helping the incarcerated and the elderly, writing columns, giving talks, to name just few. Many times the organization is unaware of the wonderful things MGs are doing around the state of Connecticut. We'd love to hear more about these activities.

We also want those of you who are not involved in MG activities to step forward and find out what you can do. We need more people to participate in CAEMG. If you haven't done so recently, you might take a look at the CAEMG By-Laws in the green membership directory. Note Article II, Section 1. Statement of Purpose. Here are a few ways we can put people to work:

membership	annual meetings
office resources	the symposium

We will be seeking volunteers to serve on the following committees:

Nominating	Finance
Public Relations	Outreach
Programs	Auditing

With more members actively involved in CAEMG, we can help each member to be more effective in finding his or her own way to make a contribution to the community. In a short while everyone will be receiving a letter inviting them to say what they can do for CAEMG.

Missing!

Does anyone know the whereabouts of the Sound Gardening display unit that stays in the Norwich office when not in use? It will be needed for meetings coming up in the near future so should be returned as soon as possible. Thanks.

UConn Alumni—We Need You!

UConn will celebrate the 50th annual Horticulture Show on October 5 and 6. Plans are being made for that special day by collecting posters, photographs, and other memorabilia from past Shows.

We would appreciate any information or photographs that you have from past Horticulture Shows. Our collection of memorabilia will be displayed during the Show and then used to begin a historic file on the Horticulture Club and past Shows.

We will be happy to duplicate any originals you would like returned. Also, if you know of any other past students, faculty, or staff who would be knowledgeable about the Department, we would appreciate their names and addresses.

We are continuing to piece together the past 50 years of Horticulture at UConn and hope you can help to fit the puzzle together. Please contact Dr. Mark Bridgen, Department of Plant Science, U-67, Storrs, CT 06269. Or call 486-2021 during the day.

Thank you for your assistance.

Mark Bridgen, UConn

New Department Head

Dr. Jerry Berkowitz is the new head of the Department of Plant Science at UConn. He has a doctorate in plant physiology and was formerly at Rutgers University. His background is in applied agriculture and molecular biology. He plans to meld these interests in his leadership of the department.

Seedling Protector

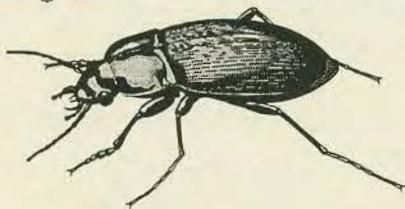
To protect seedlings from weather and varmints, cut the bottom out of 1-gallon plastic milk container and set over tender plants. If you've tried this only to have the containers blow away, cut off just three quarters of the bottom and bend the rest out, like a flap, and bury it in the ground.

Integrated Pest Management

Two important elements of IPM are scouting for insects to determine if there is a problem and use of barriers to protect plants from harmful insects.

Scout for insects. The best time to control insects is when they are small and have not done a lot of damage. The best way to see insects when they are very small is to go out often and systematically look for them. Look for insects at the tips of the plants on new and tender growth, also under the leaves. Some insects are colored to blend in with plants. You may need to look very carefully.

Also know the life cycle of insects that have been pests in your garden in past years in order to scout at the appropriate time. When harmful insects are found, use the least toxic control measure. Manual control, such as squeezing between your fingers, works when there are just a few insects. Spraying with a strong stream of water knocks insects off plants. Insecticidal soaps and horticultural oils are low toxicity spray controls. When stronger controls are warranted, be sure to read the label and follow the directions. By controlling insects when they are small and few in number, you will be using lesser amounts of toxic chemicals.



Barriers. Barriers are a way to control insects without using sprays. A piece of paper or aluminum foil wrapped loosely around the base of the stem of tomato, pepper, or eggplant will prevent cutworms from cutting the stems off at the soil level.

Cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower can be protected from the cabbage root maggot by a 12" square of heavy paper laid flat on the ground around the plant. Cut a slit from one edge to the center and place around the plant.

Marie Dube, Extension Educator, Horticulture

Mushrooms in the Grass—Alas!

Many types of mushrooms appear in lawns after prolonged wet weather. What we call mushrooms are the fruiting structure of the fungi. The underground parts, the mycelium, are living on decaying organic matter such as buried tree stumps, tree roots, and discarded lumber. These mushrooms will continue to develop as long as this organic matter is in the soil. Since digging out the decaying wood is a big undertaking, the best solution is to just rake up and discard the mushrooms. A chemical control is not effective or necessary.

Marie Dube, Extension Educator, Horticulture

Carpenter Bees

Carpenter bees are now looking for nesting spots. These insects look like bumble bees but have shiny black instead of fuzzy abdomens. Carpenter bees drill perfectly round little holes, about the size of a dime, in unfinished wood. These small holes look insignificant but lead to long tunnels that can weaken wood.

The same nest sites are often used every year. Painted or stained wood is less attractive as a nesting site. Treating with an insecticide is recommended when tunnels are found. For more information see the extension system fact sheet.

Marie Dube, Extension Educator, Horticulture

Do-It-Yourself Soil Test

These tips are from *National Gardening* magazine.

For alkaline test: add a few drops vinegar to tablespoon dried garden soil. If soil fizzes, it's very alkaline, pH above 7.5.

For acid test: add pinch baking soda to tablespoon wet soil. If soil fizzes, it's very acidic, pH less than 5.0.

MG Regional Conference

The regional Master Gardener conference will be held at the Radisson Eastland Hotel in Portland, Maine.

- Tours are scheduled for Wednesday, September 18, and Saturday, September 21
- Workshops are scheduled for Thursday and Friday, September 19 and 20

Highlights of the program include:

- A keynote address by **Eliot Coleman** and **Barbara Damrosch**
- A daylong visit to the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association Common Ground Fair
- Tours of a Shaker community and spectacular Maine gardens, a lobster bake on a coastal Maine island

Workshops include:

- Learning from lost gardens
- Improving your soil with compost and green manures
- Antique apples for the Northeast
- Starting a business from a garden
- Building a dry laid stone wall
- Medicinal uses of wild and cultivated herbs
- Add two to ten weeks to your gardening season
- Organizing a demonstration garden
- Water gardening from the practical side
- Creating spaces in the landscape
- Perennial design basics

There are about 40 workshops and tours in all. The basic conference package, including workshops, breakfasts, lunches, banquet, is \$125. Tours are extra.

Information is provided on hotels, B&Bs, campgrounds, and car rentals in the area. Organizers of the conference are encouraging people to register early because there is room

Harkness Update

Last June many of us enjoyed seeing the fine work being done by Master Gardeners at Camp Harkness. Here are some projects they hope to do this year for the handicapped:

- create a shade garden
- put plants around cabins and a flagpole
- create a rock garden
- mow small grassy area regularly
- beautify the main entrance

This winter **Al Romboni** designed and built a trellis for the handicapped garden.

Anyone interested in working with the hard-working, dedicated group of gardeners and providing help to the very appreciative campers should contact **Julia Griswold**, Coordinator, 203-447-0301 (W) or 535-3061 (H)

Position Open

Small grounds maintenance company looking for Master Gardener to help with pruning landscape shrubs. Part time. Choose your own hours. Would work in Madison, Clinton, Old Saybrook area. \$9/hr. Call Diana at Greenscape, 669-1880.



for only 500 Master Gardeners. September is the beginning of the fall foliage season in Maine, making hotel rooms and car rentals scarce.

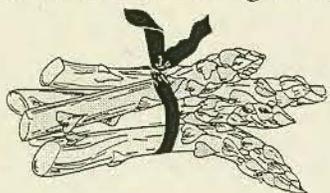
For information and to register, contact:
Barbara Murphy, Oxford County Extension,
 9 Olson Rd, South Paris, ME 04281-6402.
 Tel: 207-743-6329 Fax: 207-743-0373
 E-mail: cesoxf@umce.umext.maine.edu

May 18 Plant Swap

Puzzled about what to do with leftovers after dividing your perennials? Too ambitious starting seeds last March?

Bring your extras to the **Plant Swap on May 18** at **Greg Mackenzie's** house in Mystic. Maybe you'll find just the thing for an empty spot in your garden. Please label everything you bring, including details like color of flower, growing habit, tends to be invasive.

Directions: Exit 90 off of I-95. Follow Rte 27 to Mystic Seaport. At first light after main entrance to Seaport, turn left on Mistuxet Ave. (at Coogan-Gildersleeve Appliance). Greg's house is the first house on right, 18 Mistuxet.



BOOK REVIEW

Growing Herbs: From Seed, Cutting & Root

This useful book has an additional subtitle *An Adventure in Small Miracles*. Here is an interesting tip to break down the chemical that inhibits parsley germination: place seed in old panty hose and soak for a couple of days in an oxygenated aquarium.

DeBiaggio, who has an herb business in Virginia, plants seeds very thickly, touching and even piled them on top of each other in low germination varieties. This is something to think about for those of us who carefully space out each seed. For the price this book is a worthwhile investment for anyone seeking basic information in clear text and tables on growing herbs.

Interweave Press, also publisher of *The Herb Companion* magazine, is in Loveland, CO.

Thomas DeBiaggio, *Growing Herbs: From Seed, Cutting & Root*. Interweave Press, 1994. \$9.95.

Susan Munger, New London

Bee Balm—Herb of the Year

The International Herb Association has selected bee balm as the 1996 Herb of the Year. Bee balm, *monarda didyma*, also called bergamot and Oswego tea, is a perennial in the mint family and a native of North America.

It grows to about 4 feet with pink, mauve, lavender, scarlet, crimson, or white flowers. The flowers are very attractive to bees and hummingbirds. Bee balm thrives in full sun or partial shade. If it doesn't get good air circulation, powdery mildew can infect the leaves.

According to Bremness, *The Complete Book of Herbs*, the name *monarda* honors the Spanish medical botanist Dr. Nicholas Monardes of Seville who wrote a herbal of the flora of America in 1569. Bergamot may refer to the small, bitter Italian bergamot orange. Several Indian tribes used the herb for medicinal teas. It contains thymol, a powerful antiseptic.

Propagation is by stem cutting, root division, or seed sown in spring. After about three years, divide, removing central core. Cut top half of plant when flowering to dry in vases, bags, or bunches.

Susan Munger, New London

Arboretum Tours

Connecticut College Arboretum has announced the beginning of a guided tour program. Among the volunteer docents are several Master Gardeners. They have undergone training this spring so they can knowledgeably guide guests through the Arboretum's Native Plant Collection and the Caroline Black Garden.

Tours are given every **Sunday at 2 pm, May 19 to October 20**. No registration or fee. Meet at the blue sculpture near Olin Science Building.

CALENDAR

May 16, 10 am - noon

Bethel office. Plant exchange; bring a plant and take one for yourself.

May 18, 10 am - noon

CAEMG plant swap at Greg Mackenzie's house in Mystic. See page 5 for details and directions.

May 18, 9 am - 1 pm

Herb Plant Sale. Madison Green, Boston Post Rd. Madison. Common to unusual plants, demonstrations, horticultural information. Organized by CT Unit, Herb Soc. of America. For information call Sandy D'Eugenio, 860-859-3535.

June 6 & 7

Tour of Gardens hosted by Lyme Garden Club. Master Gardeners provide information on history of each garden and plants. Buy tickets/box lunch ahead (\$10 each); tickets on day (\$12). The Lyme Garden Club, PO Box 951, Lyme, CT 06371

June 8 12 - 2 pm

Semi-annual CAEMG Meeting. At New Canaan Nature Center. Brief meeting to be followed by a tour of the center led by the director. Bring a brown bag lunch. See article and map on page 1.

June 21 & 22

Old Lyme Garden Tour, including Florence Griswold Museum. Buy tickets ahead (\$12) or on day (\$15). Garden Boutique. Box lunches (\$10). CFA Lyme/Old Lyme Auxiliary, PO Box 1047, Old Lyme, CT 06371

September 18-21

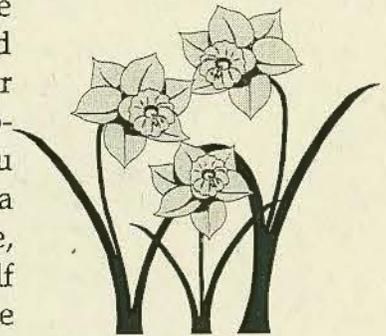
1996 Northeast Regional Master Gardeners Conference. Portland, ME. See page 4 for details.

October 5-6

50th Annual Horticultural Show, University of Connecticut. See page 2 for details.

Fading Bulbs

Don't cut foliage from naturalized bulbs in the lawn, or bulbs will deteriorate rapidly. If you want to give them a neater appearance, fold leaves in half and hold in place with rubber band.

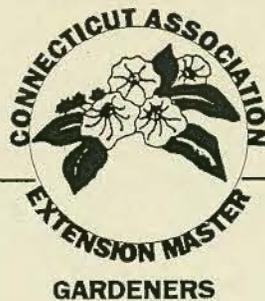


Susan H. Munger
11 Plant Street
New London, CT 06320



- Newsletter deadline: July 1
- Annual Meeting June 8
Details Inside

Robert & Enid Sherman
15 Fire Tower Road
Killingworth, CT 06417



Board Meetings on the Move

In upcoming months the CAEMG board meetings will be held in various locations around the state. On Tuesday, July 9, the board will meet in the Bethel office at 10 am. Board meetings are open to everyone and we encourage all members to attend, to find out what is going on and to offer ideas and suggestions.

CAEMG is a decentralized organization which makes it difficult for many members to get to statewide meetings. By rotating the board meetings to various places around the state,

we hope to make it possible for members to attend and get more actively involved with CAEMG.

Meetings after the July 9 meeting will be Tuesdays at 10 am on September 10 and November 12. The locations have yet to be decided on and we are open to suggestions. Please feel free to contact any of the board members if you'd like to recommend a location or to suggest a matter you would like discussed by the board.

Jonas Zucker, CAEMG President

The Gold Bug

Recently at the Norwich Master Gardener office, I saw a pair of interesting beetles brought in by a gardener who had found them on her morning glories. She was struck by how golden they looked; they appeared to have silver plates on the head. Mary Fox, MG in training, said a similar beetle had recently been identified as the golden tortoise beetle. Someone, who will remain unnamed, took the lid off the jar to get a better look, allowing one beetle to escape. However, by standing on a chair, Paul Stake was able to retrieve the escapee from the overhead lighting fixture. The pair were sent up to Ed Marrotte for identification. Could they have been the golden tortoise beetle, *Metritona bicolor*, said to look like a drop of burnished gold?

Susan Munger

Symposium Update

Several sites are under consideration for next year's Master Gardener symposium. The proposed date is Saturday, March 22, hopefully after the last snowfall. We have had a setback however because our chairperson, Judi Mandl, unfortunately will not be able to continue as chairperson.

Several people are interested in being involved but cannot commit to taking charge. So, we are looking for someone to become the new chair for next year's 5th annual Master Gardener symposium. Much useful information is available from past symposia to make the job easier for the next chair of this very popular event. Anyone interested in taking on this project should contact Jonas Zucker, CAEMG President, 203-368-4978.

*President Jonas Zucker / Vice President Pamela Weil / Secretary Judy Davies / Treasurer John Neff
Special Projects Jeanné R. Chesnow, Gail Collins / Historian / District Coordinators: North: / South: / East: Positions Open
Past Presidents: Robert McNeil / Wendy Donnelly / Paul Brown / Robert Sherman*

Newsletter Editor Susan Munger

Deadline for September / October 1996 Newsletter: September 1, 1996

Mail or fax articles and ideas to Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 Tel/Fax: 860/443-2261

Ciao, Apoidea!

The following is excerpted from an article by Alice Sheriff, Director, in the newsletter of the New London County Historical Society, owner of the Shaw-Perkins Mansion in downtown New London.

For centuries, the Shaw-Perkins Mansion has been home to several families who received warmth from the wind and cold. In early June the last and most extensive of these families was safely removed from this old house. Not your typical move, since this was a family of honey bees, numbering a conservative 200,000.

For years, this colony of hybrid Italian honey bees made its home on the warm, western side of the Mansion, safely tucked up in the dark cornice underneath the roof's edge.

With repairs to the roof scheduled and the tourist season beginning, a conservative but urgent plan was needed.

John Weil, master bee-keeper was contacted. He was elated to find such a monstrous, yet healthy, colony. The hive appeared to have been a good 4 feet long and 8 to 12 inches wide.

First about 1500 babies in the honeycomb were removed; the queen was next. Finally Weil used a harmless vacuum attached to a canister to suck out the remaining thousands of worker bees. The next afternoon those worker bees not at home for capture in the first wave were collected. In addition, about 100 pounds of honey was recovered.

The colony's new home is a quiet country orchard in Griswold. Honey bees are in significant danger of extinction. A powerful infectious mite carrying a deadly bacteria threatens Connecticut's bee population. The Mansion's bees will remain isolated while monitored for disease.

For decades, the Shaw-Perkins Mansion has been the repository for New London county artifacts. Now we can add yet another species to our collection!



Book Committee Forming

Good resource material is essential for master gardeners, both in training and certified, to do their job answering queries from the public. A committee is being formed to identify reference books that can be purchased by CAEMG to put in master gardener offices around the state. We have a list of about 20 titles that was prepared by Ed Marrotte several years ago to use as a starting point.

A first step will be to make a list of books in each office, with comments on the usefulness of each.

The next step will be identify holes in the list that most urgently need to be filled.

Along the way we will put together a list of good candidates for purchase.

The committee will then make a recommendation to the board on which titles to purchase and how much money will be required. Although there is money in the CAEMG treasury to use for book purchases, we need to keep in mind other uses of the organization's funds, such as the annual symposium, the directory, and newsletter.

Most, if not all, of the work of this committee can be done through telephone calls and the mail. Few if any meetings will be held. Anyone interested in serving on the book committee by researching and recommending books for purchase, reviewing the books now available in each office, and more, should contact me, Susan Munger, at 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 860-443-2261. It is important to have each office where MGs are in training represented by some one on the committee.

Susan Munger, New London

MGs Work with Inmates

At the end of the 1993 Master Gardeners course in Hamden, our master-in-chief the ubiquitous Marie Dube sought volunteers to give "a lecture or two" to the inmates of a prison in Cheshire. Ken Graham and I said we would see what we could do. We visited the Maloney Correctional Institute, a new multi-million dollar experiment in re-introducing to society young men with a year or more of their sentence to serve. Imprisoned for nonviolent crime, they had promised to get the GED, spend 3 hours a day in therapy, and undertake various projects, including growing a vegetable garden. We met the warden and many of the staff who were enthusiastic and promised support. It was decided we would need 5 or 6 evening visits, to cover soil preparation, seeds and propagation, planning, tool care, etc.

The attention span of our audience was limited, usually 3 or 4 minutes, so we learned to talk alternately, changing the subject, drawing pictures, showing movies (3-minute clips). We showed them a carrot seed and a coconut and told them that both were seeds, both grew in the same way. We gave them a little botany, remembering, I hope, that our audience varied from a couple of college-bound students to marginal literates. Then we started to garden. First we doubled the size of the plot where a former attempt to develop a garden had failed, added compost, lime, and peat moss, went for raised beds. For each lesson we had a detailed, timed lesson plan and tried to mix discipline and humor into a benevolent dictatorship. Our class dwindled from a high on day one of 22 down to 13 or 14 pretty steady attendees with a core of 6 or 7 who were really interested.

They learned what a plant was and we explained how they would be eating roots (carrots), fattened stems (onions), blanched stems (celery—we never did successfully grow celery!), seed cases (peppers), seeds (peas, corn), tubers (potatoes), leaves (cabbage, lettuce), etc.

At this juncture (Arbor Day) we planted a grove of conifers to be given, in the future, to local organizations as Christmas trees.

Our 4,000 square foot garden grew a variety of herbs, water melons (unsuccessfully), squash in variety, many peppers, beans, peas, cabbage, broccoli, kohlrabi, tomatoes, corn, potatoes, carrots, beets, radishes, lettuce, and a flower border to make us look colorful.

Our guys weeded, watered, staked, hoed, raked, and generally did a pretty good job. Watering was a problem, it was never uniform, often untimely, and generally unreliable.

Our motivational tool was taking them for days out. I took the best students to Plant Science Day at the Agricultural Station, a plant nursery, Home Depot, and the North Haven Fair—in our second attempt we won a couple of prizes!

In 1994, the program ran again with Norman van Cor from the 1994 MG Class taking over from Ken (his journey to and from Branford took as long as the work session at the prison) and Norman continued through 1995 when we also had help from Ted Kraus.

There were many frustrations from the beginning, from the prison rules, the staff—some cared, some didn't; plans failed, students quit, but these vicissitudes were overwhelmed by the pleasure in seeing people learn to begin and end a task, take pride in their work, take produce they had grown home on weekend furlough and show parents "their" garden with pride on open days.

We had some success in our underlying purpose—to show these young men that there was a career for them in the "green industry." Certainly two of them went that route and others were at least aware of the opportunities that could lead to a more meaningful future than life on the streets.

And now, the Prison's charter will change immediately, to become a training center—without permanent staff—no kids—no garden. We have the State cutting costs, abandoning programs but nevertheless leaving me with many happy memories of good times with colleagues and the fleeting companionship of some neat young men.

Michael Hughes, Wallingford

Flavored Vinegars

Now is the time to make flavored vinegars for next winter when fresh herbs and flowers will not be available. Many herbs can be used, singly or in combination, including tarragon, basil, bay, burnet, dill, lemon balm. Or you could use flowers, such as clover, lavender, nasturtiums, rosemary flowers.

Bruise the herbs slightly, loosely fill a jar with them, and add warm vinegar. Let it sit in the sun on the window sill, or in the garden, for two weeks. If you add garlic, remove it after a day. It's best not to overstuff the bottle and exceed the vinegar's preservative strength.

Which vinegar to use, white or red? Distilled white vinegar, produced from grain, is used for pickling and condiments. Cider vinegar is made from apples. The Heinz apple cider vinegar label reads "Ideal for Food," words not found on their white vinegar bottle. Some sources say use either cider or wine vinegar; others say white is also ok.

Susan Munger

Teaching Opportunity for MGs

The Master Gardener program at the Norwich Extension Center has been asked by the Norwich Adult Ed Center to teach a course in the Fall 1996 Evening Enrichment Series. I have agreed we could offer a 4-part course on fall lawn and garden care to cover

1. preparing garden beds for winter
2. composting
3. fall fertilization of lawns, trees, shrubs, and perennials; pruning and protection from snow, ice, deer
4. planning for 1997 lawn, flower and vegetable gardens: site selection and preparation, soil nutrient analysis, design alternatives, raised beds, etc.

Classes are tentatively scheduled for Thursday 6:30-8:30 pm, Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, at Teachers Memorial Middle School, Norwich, to be confirmed after preregistration in August.

I will be available to teach, however, it would be better if there were at least one MG as co-presenter each evening. If interested in teaching all or part of a session, please call me.

Paul E. Stake, Norwich Extension Center, 887-1608

Powdery Mildew on Ornamentals

The following is excerpted from Horticulture Fact sheet #51 available for free at extension offices.

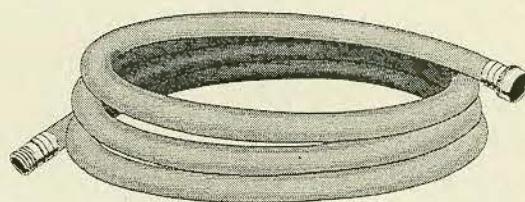
Powdery mildew infects woody ornamentals and many perennials. In spite of the similar appearance on various hosts, different species may be responsible for infection. For example, powdery mildew on oak will not infect zinnias.

Powdery mildew thrives in mid-summer to fall because the warm days followed by cool nights favor disease development. During warm dry days the mildew spores may be blown to new hosts. The high humidity at night is favorable to spore germination. Unlike most other fungi, powdery mildew spores do not require water on the leaf surface to germinate and then infect a leaf.

Because powdery mildew occurs so late in the season, it may not reduce the long-term health of trees and shrubs.

Recently, researchers have investigated the potential use of biorational materials such as potassium bicarbonate, sodium bicarbonate (baking soda), superior horticultural oils, and neem oil as possible alternatives to more traditional fungicides. Biorational materials have a relatively short residual on plants and less of an impact on beneficial organisms than more traditional pesticides.

The fact sheet provides more information on these materials, as well as a list of some ornamentals resistant to powdery mildew.



There will be a tour of the Gertrude Jekyll Gardens for MGs on July 11. See Calendar for details. Ms Laurie Clement-Lawrason, the garden curator, is a member of CAEMG

Gertrude Jekyll Garden at Glebe House

In 1926, the renowned English garden designer Gertrude Jekyll was commissioned by Seabury Society member Annie Burr Jennings to plan an "old fashioned" garden for the newly opened Glebe House Museum in Woodbury, CT. Miss Jekyll's plan, one of only three American gardens she designed, was, for unknown reasons, never installed. Knowledge of its existence faded into obscurity until a graduate student discovered it in the Reef Point Collection, bequeathed by Beatrix Farrand to the University of California at Berkeley, nearly 60 years later.

The present day Seabury Society, overseers of the Glebe House (considered the birthplace of the American Episcopal Church), were understandably reluctant to even consider the idea of installing an extensive (600 linear foot) English style border around the 1750 colonial farmhouse. Gardening enthusiasts, however, prevailed in convincing them of the garden's significance as it would be the only existing Jekyll garden in the United States.

Ground breaking began in the fall of 1988 under the direction of Nellie Doolan who formed a Garden Committee to raise funds and recruit volunteers named JAWS (Jekyll Associated Weeders) to undertake the vast installation. Serious drainage problems existed requiring costly remediation. Shade patterns from mature trees had changed and led to the decision to flip Miss Jekyll's plan to accommodate and best utilize existing conditions. Finally, Miss Jekyll's acknowledged unfamiliarity with our climate resulted in plant substitutions for about 20% of the plan—primarily evergreen shrubs which create the enclosure for the borders.

A JAWS member since 1989, I was asked to take over as Garden Curator in 1994. My task was to ensure the integrity of Miss Jekyll's plan in light of the pitfalls we had encountered. A thorough review of the original plan handwritten by the 83-year-old designer, the final selection and placement of substitute shrubs, and some realignment of perennials within the border brought all the pieces together.

The garden today is the result of the hard work of volunteers and staff devoted to seeing it come to fruition demonstrating Miss Jekyll's genius for creating borders which sizzle with bold sweeps of red, yellow and gold and cool waves of silver foliage and lavender hues. Using Miss Jekyll's suggestions and techniques we employ annuals, biennials and plants in containers to provide transition and seasonal interest always with her goal in mind of creating a "series of soul satisfying pictures" to be enjoyed by all who visit.

The garden is open Wednesday through Sunday from 1-4pm or by appointment. We are funded entirely by contributions and proceeds from our annual Garden Tour (July 14, 1996). The Garden Committee also sponsors an excellent Garden Symposium in March. For further information, please call the Glebe House Museum at 203-263-2855.

*Laurie Clement-Lawrason, Garden Curator,
Gertrude Jekyll Garden at the Glebe House Museum*

Gardengraphs from the Past

The following appeared in the July 1942 Gardengraphs written by Albert E. Wilkinson, UConn, US Department of Agriculture and County Farm Bureaus Cooperating.

Gourds are desired by many gardeners. After harvesting the fruits, cure them in a light warm, dry, well-ventilated place for several weeks. The gourd must be dry before applying varnish, shellac, or wax. By making small holes in the ends of the gourd to permit air to enter, the interior will dry more quickly.

Plant vegetables for winter storage now to assure more and better food at less cost and a better diet. Enthusiasm for gardening sometimes wanes about this time, but late summer and fall gardens should be just as productive and as well managed as spring gardens. What crops to plant? Beets of the Detroit Dark Red variety ... carrots such as Hutchinson, rutabaga turnips such Long Island Short-Neck, cabbage such as Ballhead, squash such as Des Moines....Why not have a row of dandelions in the garden? They can be started from seed at this time and will be delicious next spring.

The War Production Board has forbidden the use of rotenone spray and dust manufactured after April 13, 1942, on eggplants, cucumbers, squash, onions, peppers, and sweet corn. These are luxury vegetables. Use pyrethrum dust or spray as a substitute.

July 9, 10 am

CAEMG Board Meeting, Bethel Extension Office, 67 Stony Hill Rd. All CAEMG members invited.

July 11, 10-12

Show n'Tell Diagnostic Clinic with Ed Marrotte, Bethel Extension Office, 67 Stony Hill Rd. Bring lunch. At 1:30, tour of Glebe House Gardens, Woodbury, led by MG Donna Hopper

July 14, 10 - 6

Tour of Wesley Rouse gardens, Southbury, sponsored by The Garden Conservancy. For information on TGC write PO Box 219, Cold Spring, NY 10516

July 20

Tour gardens of MGs Margaret Boehm, Bernadette Hanford, and Tony Inch. Call Hamden office for details 203-789-7865

Sept 10, 10 am

CAEMG Board meeting. Location to be determined.

September 18-21

1996 Northeast Regional Master Gardeners Conference. Portland, ME. See page 4 of last issue for details or call 207-743-6329.

October 5-6

50th Annual Horticultural Show, University of Connecticut. See page 2 of last issue for details or call 860-486-2021.

Nov. 12, 10 am

CAEMG Board meeting. Location to be determined.

Autumn Leaves

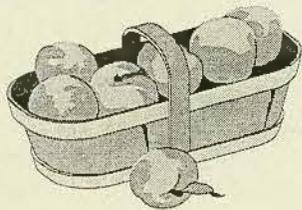
An interesting piece of gardening news extrapolated from the agricultural experiment station Frontiers of Plant Science, Spring 1996.

Autumn leaves spread over the garden plot at the end of summer, or decomposed leaves spread in the spring reduced the yields of vegetable crops significantly, as compared to composted leaf litter. Possible cause for reduction in yield may be that when leaves decompose, phenolic substances are released, especially at the early stages of decomposition. Phenols have been shown to be phytotoxic and would be in the soil in contact with newly emerging roots in the spring. Whereas leaf piles releasing phenols over winter are leached out before coming in contact with the roots.

Jonas Zucker, Fairfield

Susan H. Munger
11 Plant Street
New London, CT 06320

- Newsletter deadline:
September 1
- July 9 CAEMG Board
meets in Bethel



Robert & Enid Sherman
15 Fire Tower Road
Killingworth, CT 06417



Connecticut in 1998!

The CAEMG members gave their approval to go forward with plans to host the 1998 Regional Master Gardener Conference. The UConn Extension System and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station will be cosponsors with us.

We ask all Master Gardeners going to this year's regional conference in Portland, Maine, to talk with Master Gardeners from other states about the virtues of *Connecticut in '98*. We will have a display with slides and brochures in the shareware area. We plan to put a promotional brochure on everyone's chair before Thursday night's banquet. Contact Marie Dube to help, please. Let's show *enthusiasm* and put on a united effort.

Marie Dube, Extension Educator, Horticulture



Those of us not attending the regional conference this month in Portland would be interested to hear about it from those who do go. The program lists a number on interesting talks, trips, and other events. I would like to include reports on as many aspects of the conference as possible in the next newsletter.

So I hope people will take notes and send me their comments before the end of October for the November-December newsletter. Thank you. Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320

From the President

Exciting things are in the works for Connecticut Master Gardeners over the next couple of years.

Regional MG Conference in '98

There's good news and bad news. The good news is that both the CAEMG membership at a special meeting in Haddam and the Experimental Station in New Haven have each agreed to endorse and commit their respective organizations to support a bid to hold the 1998 regional Master Gardener meeting in Connecticut.

The bid will be submitted at the September meeting in Portland, Maine. In conjunction with this proposal, the Joint Planning Committee held in West Hartford on August 28 discussed the various aspects of the proposed symposium: location, program, and format.

The general locale of the symposium will center around Mystic. However, the site committee found there are not sufficient conference rooms in the Mystic area to accommodate the size of the symposium, and alternate sites would have to be considered.

The committee is considering sites in Farmington, as well as other locations in which the majority of meetings will be held. The regional meetings usually offer off-site visits and tours, and Mystic would be one of the items on the off-site itinerary.

*President Jonas Zucker / Vice President Pamela Weil / Secretary Judy Davies / Treasurer John Neff
Special Projects Jeanné R. Chesnow, Gail Collins / Historian / District Coordinators: North: / South: / East: Positions Open
Past Presidents: Robert McNeil / Wendy Donnelly / Paul Brown / Robert Sherman*

Newsletter Editor Susan Munger

Deadline for November / December 1996 Newsletter: November 1, 1996

Mail or fax articles and ideas to Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 Tel/Fax: 860/443-2261

The bad news is that anyone interested in attending this year's regional conference in Portland has to be advised that the program was sold out over two months ago.

Symposium in 1997

I find our association's activities are exciting, with support from many of our members. Sylvia Wahl has accepted the chairmanship of the educational program for the 1997 CAEMG gardening symposium. A general chairman has not yet come forward and anyone interested in this role is eagerly being sought. A wonderful backup committee is at hand to support the general chair. Are you interested? Please call Jonas at 203-368-4978 and leave a message on the answering box.

Condolences to Paul Brown

CAEMG extends our sympathy and condolences to Paul Brown on the death of his wife after a long illness. Paul is a past president of CAEMG and has been an active member of the organization.

Board Meetings

The date for the next meeting of the Executive Board has been changed to Tuesday, September 24, at 1 pm in the Norwich Extension Office on New London Turnpike. For directions call Jonas or Marie Dube (203-789-7865) or the Norwich office (860-887-1608).

Everyone is welcome at the board meetings. The meeting following the September one will be on November 12 in West Hartford.

Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars to note the annual meeting is Saturday, December 7, at noon, tentatively scheduled for the West Hartford office. It will be a brown bag lunch. A featured speaker will be presented following the short business meeting and election of officers. All CAEMG members are urged to come and socialize with fellow Master Gardeners.

Jonas Zucker, CAEMG President

Cornucopia '96

Food, tours, demonstrations, and exhibits await all at *Cornucopia Fest '96, Sunday, September 29*, at UConn's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Held in conjunction with the fall student open house, 11 am to 5 pm, Cornucopia Fest showcases the College's diverse educational programs and activities.

Take this opportunity to learn about degree programs in Animal Science, Natural Resources, Nutritional Sciences, Pathobiology, Plant Science, Resource Economics, and the new two-year Associate of Applied Science degree in the Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture. Discover the College's many student clubs and service organizations. The main activities will be under the tents in front of the Young building on Route 195 in Storrs, and the event is free and open to everyone.

Take a tractor-drawn hayride to see the farm animals or tour the UConn forest. To mark this second annual festival, the UConn Dairy Bar once again will serve—what else!—Cornucopia ice cream. Call 860-486-2918 for information regarding student groups.

For Sale

Mulch Hay (Salt Hay)

\$4/bale

Lyme, CT

860-434-8373

Powdery Mildew & Black Spot Control

A spray for roses, etc.

1 Tblsp Baking Soda

2 1/2 Tblsp ultrafine horticultural spray oil

1 gallon water

Do not spray when sunny.

from Fine Gardening, May/June 1992

Book Committee Report

During the summer five people contacted me with ideas and offers of help in identifying books to purchase for the offices where Master Gardeners-in-training do their summer hours. With the ball in my court, I have been slow to return it, but hope to make progress soon.

Bernadette Hanford has offered to help list the books in the Bethel office, which appears to have a quite good collection. Don Chandler, Master Gardener in Training in the Brooklyn office, and Ellen Morse from the West Hartford office both called in with some suggestions. Annemarie Godston, now residing in New Hampshire, and Judy Davies from Mystic gave me titles they have found useful. Thanks to each of you.

The *Ortho Problem-Solver* is, partly by default, one of the most useful references. It would seem that each office could benefit from one comprehensive gardening encyclopedia, such as Wymans or Reader's Digest. Also there should be one or two references for identification of garden pests and diseases. Comprehensive reference books with good illustrations tend to be expensive.

It might be worth considering purchasing second-hand copies of out-of-print or earlier editions of certain titles where the basic information is still valid. While 20-year-old recommendations on pest control might be useless, insect identifications remain valid much longer.

I plan to have more information to report in the near future. And please send more ideas and suggestions to me.

Susan Munger, New London

Dues Increase Approved

At the special CAEMG meeting on August 2, members approved increasing dues to \$10, starting in 1997. Still a great price for belonging to a great organization.

Home Page Address

Anne Marie Godston, a Connecticut Master Gardener residing in New Hampshire, has sent us her Home Page address. She'd love to have CAEMG members with access to the Internet visit her page and perhaps help her when she gets stuck with a question. Her home page address is

<http://www.connriver.net/Customers/NCMG/HOME>

Her e-mail address is

NCMG@ConnRiver.net

NGMG stands for North Country Master Gardener. So all you e-mailer and home page browsers get communicating!

Allen Gauthier of Ledyard reports having good success this year with Giant Belgium, an heirloom tomato.

Yellow Jackets—Pro and Con

Apart from what annoyance they cause and what fruit they may eat, yellow jackets are beneficial because they destroy enormous numbers of insects. They construct large paper nests from fibers; some yellow jackets build above ground, others construct them in the soil.

Yellow jacket nests are started in the spring by the queen, who is the only individual to survive the winter; workers take over the building and feeding duties and the nest rapidly increases in size.

After new queens and males are produced and leave the nest, in the summer and fall, the old queen dies and the nest declines. Workers left in nests built above ground always die before the advent of cold weather. Those that nest in the soil may live on into the winter.

Marie Dube, Extension Educator, Horticulture

Freezing Vegetables

The following is excerpted from Farm Market Notes, UConn Cooperative Extension System

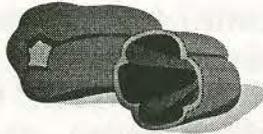
Freezing fresh vegetables is one of the quickest and easiest ways to preserve the taste of summer. Make sure your freezer keeps food at a temperature of 0F (18C).

Packaging Materials

Choose freezer packaging materials that are sturdy and moisture-vapor resistant. Heavy aluminum foil, plastic freezer bags, plastic or coated paper freezer type wraps, or rigid containers of aluminum, glass, plastic, or heavily waxed cardboard can all be suitable for freezing. Check the labels on the packaging materials to make sure you buy freezer-quality materials. Foods frozen in regular aluminum foil or plastic wraps and bags may dry out, or become "freezer burned" because these materials are not as strong or moisture-vapor resistant.

Processing Vegetables for Freezing

Each vegetable needs to be washed, trimmed, and blanched before it can be packaged for freezing. Only onions, peppers, and garden fresh herbs can be frozen without blanching.



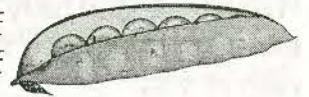
Blanching

Blanching is the most important step for successful home freezing of vegetables. The first stage of blanching involves heating vegetables in boiling water to inactivate enzymes that may cause off-flavor or color changes in texture and loss of nutrients while the vegetables are frozen. The second stage involves cooling the vegetables to prevent overcooking.

To blanch in boiling water, use a blancher or a large kettle with a cover and a wire basket. Use about one gallon of water for each pound of most vegetables (about 3 cups of prepared vegetables). Use about 2 gallons of water for a pound of leafy vegetables.

Fill the pot with the recommended amount of water. Cover and bring water to a boil. Place prepared vegetables in the blanching basket and lower them into the boiling water. Cover the kettle and start counting blanching time *immediately*. Accurate timing is important, so follow the recommended time for each type of vegetable. Keep the heat high and keep the kettle covered during blanching.

To cool, remove vegetables from the heat as soon as blanching time is up. Immediately place vegetables (you can leave them in the wire basket) into a large pan filled with ice, ice water, or plain cold water. This works best if you place the pan of



water in your clean sink. Run cold water over the vegetables, making sure all of the vegetables are exposed to the cold. It will take about as long to cool the food as it did to heat it. The food must be cooled all the way to the center. Drain the vegetables as soon as they are cool.

Packaging

Pack drained, cooled vegetables into freezer bags or containers. When you use rigid containers, leave a headspace of about 1/4 to 1/2 inch. For greens, mashed squash, and other solid or liquid packed vegetables, leave a headspace of about one inch. When you use plastic bags or freezer wraps, make sure most of the air is removed before sealing the bag. Label, date, and freeze promptly.

Here are some sample blanching times:

- Snap beans, 3 min;
- Broccoli, 3 min;
- Eggplant, 4 min;
- Summer squash, 3 min.

For more details, obtain the flyer from the Extension Office or at a Farmer's Market.

Master Gardener at Farmer's Market

Elaine Boska Wood is a master gardener and market gardener who sells her produce at the New London and Niantic farmer's markets. She took the course in Norwich and attended the first Master Gardener convention, in Washington, D.C., in the 1980s. She said the summer has been good weatherwise, although her tomatoes were two weeks later than usual. At her stand were 11 varieties of tomatoes: Oxheart, Yellow Brandywine, Northern Exposure, Heat Wave, Lemon Boy, Husky Gold, Gold Dust, Paragon, Celebrity, a plum, and sugar bunch. The first two are heirlooms and a number of the others are yellow.

Elaine's approach to gardening is from the soil upward. When she first had her soil tested the pH was 4.3. It took 10 years to raise it to 6.2. She uses organic fertilizers, such as bone meal, green sand, and rock phosphate. She plants a cover crop of rye in the winter on her garden, which is on a hill in Chesterfield. The cover crop prevents erosion and reduces the number of insects laying eggs in the soil. She has an estate-size shredder-chipper and goes around the neighborhood to collect leaves and other stuff for compost.

She also rotates her crops, which requires recording-keeping. BT has been an enormous help for her in controlling tomato hornworm.

Usually, her main crops are blueberries and raspberries but this year the harvest has been terrible. Elaine thinks it may be due to a lack of pollinators; disease took out her 13 colonies of bees.

At her stand, Elaine says the emphasis is on variety, choice, and advice, such as on seed saving and cooking. She sells a slim jade variety of bean, sweet red peppers, and a delicious mideast type of green summer squash. She grows what she likes, which excludes hot peppers.

If you have a Farmer's Market in your area be sure to check it out for new varieties, to supplement your own output, and to find out how other gardeners are faring.

Susan Munger, New London

What's In a Name?

It has been suggested to me in the past that the CAEMG newsletter should have a better name than simply "the newsletter." I confess to not being clever at naming things so have not pursued this. But now with the possibility of hosting the regional conference in 1998, maybe the time has come to name "the newsletter." Let's see.

- Connecticut's state flower is the mountain laurel.
- We are the nation's largest producer of rhododendrons.
- Connecticut oyster farmers produce more oysters than the entire Chesapeake Bay.
- We have dairy farms, sheep farms, herbaries, historic flower gardens, and orchards.
- There is one horse for every 55 people in the state.
- And Connecticut has over 300 Master Gardeners in CAEMG.

So with these facts to inspire you send your ideas for a name for the newsletter to Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 and judges will pick out the best one.

(Most of the above facts came from an attractive brochure *Farms & Family Fun in Eastern Connecticut* to promote opportunities for farmers and rural communities.)

Susan Munger, New London

Tomato Seed Saving Advice

From Elaine Boska Wood, Silver Falls Market Garden, Chesterfield, CT

When the tomato is dead ripe, remove its seed and put them in water to rot the protective outer coating. Spread on paper towel to dry. It may be necessary to use several towels to dry thoroughly.

Put the seed in storage container, along with some silica gel, and store in the refrigerator for the winter. The silica gel absorbs the moisture; it can be obtained from florists.

CALENDAR

September 24, 10 am

CAEMG Board Meeting, Norwich Office. All CAEMG members invited.

September 18 - 21

Regional Master Gardener Conference. Portland, ME.

September 21, 10 am - noon

CAEMG meeting, Norwich office. Everyone bring one or more samples of garden produce, flower, etc., that you've had success with this year. We'll share our comments and questions with each other. Also bring failures and problems to see what free advice you might get. We'll also discuss plans for a topic or site to visit on October 19. Coffee & pastries provided.

September 29, 11 am - 5 pm

Cornucopia Fest '96 at UConn. See p. 1 for details.

October 5, 9:30 am - 1 pm

3rd Annual Plant Sale, Connecticut College Arboretum. Harkness Chapel Green.

October 5 - 6

50th Annual Horticultural Show, UConn.

Susan H. Munger
11 Plant Street
New London, CT 06320

Newsletter deadline:
November 1

CAEMG Board Meets
in Norwich, Sept. 24

**October 6, 2 pm**

Free tour with docent of Caroline Black garden at Connecticut College. Meet on campus at blue sculpture, Olin Science Building.

November 9, 8:15 am - 3:30 pm

Wild Medicine Symposium, sponsored by Connecticut College Arboretum. \$45 members; \$55 nonmembers (includes lunch). Call 860-439-5020 for details.

November 12, 10 am

CAEMG Board Meeting, West Hartford Office. All CAEMG members invited.

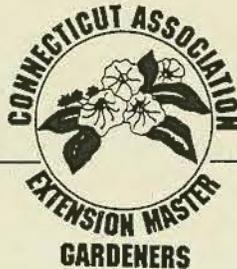
November 16, 9:30 am - 11:30 am

Growing Orchids without a Greenhouse, with Ron Rozsa and Margaret Welch. Sponsored by Connecticut College Arboretum. \$10 members; \$15 nonmembers.

December 7, noon

Annual CAEMG meeting. Location to be announced.

The Hamden Cooperative Extension Office has moved. New Address is 305 Skiff Drive, North Haven, CT 06473.



Welcome to Newly Certified Master Gardeners!

I want to congratulate all you new Master Gardeners! You have been certified and trained as qualified gardeners. Your mission is to transmit that information to the larger Connecticut community through education and demonstrations. Within the Connecticut Association of Extension Master Gardeners (CAEMG), an independent organization affiliated with the University of Connecticut, you have an opportunity to practice your skills and continue to learn more about your craft. CAEMG offers camaraderie with fellow gardeners, educational lectures and tours, and opportunities to obtain new plant materials at plant swaps. You can also expand your skills in teaching others in both formal and informal meetings. There is plenty of room for those of you who like to write articles for gardening news releases, too. The opportunities are endless and the price is right. It is only \$10 for a

year's membership in CAEMG. We provide a bimonthly newsletter filled with gardening news and information. There are two general meetings a year, and I want to extend an invitation to you to our next meeting on Saturday, December 7, 11 am to 1 pm, at Comstock Ferre Nursery in Wethersfield. In addition we hold an annual Gardening Symposium in March, a great meeting for which CAEMG members can register at a reduced rate. District meetings are held more frequently in your area where speakers and demonstrations take place. I hope to meet you and personally congratulate you at the December meeting.

Jonas Zucker, President, CAEMG

See elsewhere in the newsletter for more information on the December meeting. Please also fill out the membership application to bring to the meeting or mail it to John Neff, Treasurer.

1998 Regional MG Conference to be held in Connecticut

Connecticut was chosen by the attendees at the 1996 Regional Master Gardener Conference to be the site of the 1998 Regional Conference. A small group of people have been working on selecting a conference site. It must have a banquet room that can hold 500 people seated at tables, plus enough large breakout rooms for classes and vendors.

The next step is to start planning the program; contacting speakers, vendors, sponsors, donors; arranging tours, meals, flower arrangements, etc., etc., etc.

Please come to the December meeting at Comstock Ferre in Wethersfield prepared to discuss and to VOLUNTEER!

Marie Dube, Extension Educator, Horticulture

*President Jonas Zucker / Vice President Pamela Weil / Secretary Vacant / Treasurer John Neff
Special Projects Jeanné R. Chesnow, Gail Collins / Historian / District Coordinators: North: / South: / East: Positions Open
Past Presidents: Robert McNeil / Wendy Donnelly / Paul Brown / Robert Sherman*

Newsletter Editor Susan Munger

Deadline for January / February 1997 Newsletter: January 2, 1997

Mail or fax articles and ideas to Susan Munger, 11 Plant Street, New London, CT 06320 Tel/Fax: 860/443-2261

Report on 1996 Regional MG Conference

In September, I attended the Regional Master Gardener Conference in Portland, ME. I went to five workshops besides the keynote address that Eliot Coleman and Barbara Damrosch delivered. Knowledgeable, enthusiastic professionals shared their expertise with us. Topics I chose included Principles of Organic Gardening, Improving Your Soil with Compost and Green Manures, Basic Perennial Garden Design, Creating Spaces in the Landscape, and Growing a Master Gardener Volunteer Team.

Organic Gardening

In the Principles of Organic Gardening lecture I learned that organic gardening was a response to the dust bowl in the 30s. The farming practices used by farmers depleted the soil of nutrients which then reduced the soil's ability to hold water. The four basic tenets of organic gardening are (1) to improve soil fertility and structure, (2) to conserve and recycle nutrients, (3) to eliminate toxic residues from food, and (4) to eliminate toxic substances from the environment.

The basic action point is to feed the soil not the plant. The gardener can accomplish this through organic soil care, building the soil by adding rock phosphate and greensand to it. These items release small amounts of phosphorous, potassium, and the trace minerals to the soil on an annual basis. Unused elements remain in the soil eliminating leaching and erosion. By the way, leaching is vertical washing away of minerals and erosion is lateral loss of minerals. Compost is how nitrogen is added to the soil. Planting of green manures is another way to manage the nutrients in the soil. Crop rotation is another organic practice that builds the soil and controls disease and insects.

Moved to Action

The power of these speakers moved me to action. I have already purchased rock phosphate and greensand and annual rye grass for a green manure in my vegetable garden. I mixed the greensand and rock phosphate with

compost and started working it into my perennial beds as I divide and replant. My next step is to buy a compost thermometer because I learned that the compost must heat to 160 degrees to kill weed seeds.

Yes it was a worthwhile conference and I am seriously considering the international conference in California next July.

Sylvia Wahl, Redding

1996 Master Gardener Programs

MGs have presented seven programs at the East Lyme Public Library for the 6th year, coordinated by Bob McNeil, and seven at the Mystic/Noank Library for the 4th year, coordinated by Al Romboni. The excellent programs elicit many positive comments from the approximately 350 attendees.

We thank all who participated and invite other MGs to let us know if they would like to assist next year.

Bob McNeil, Niantic

Garden Columns

Master Gardeners have completed a 7th year of writing weekly garden columns in the New London *Day* from March to October. Thirteen MGs from all sections of the state contributed 34 columns on a wide variety of topics. Since 1990, well over 200 columns have been published.

The columns are an excellent way to meet one of the purposes of CAEMG: to provide means by which members may share their knowledge and expertise and offer help and assistance to the public.

Many thanks to this year's writers, as well as those from the past. If you are interested in contributing next year, send me your name, address, telephone number now and I will send you information.

Bob McNeil, 16 Damon Heights Rd., Niantic, CT 06357 860-739-5134

December 7 Annual Meeting

Mark your calendar for Saturday, December 7, 11 am to 1 pm for the annual statewide Master Gardener meeting. It will be at Comstock Ferre, retail nursery/seed dealer; a lovely place in an old barnlike setting in historic Wethersfield.

We're hoping that Pierre Benerup will be the speaker, to be confirmed upon his return from a trip in search of new specimens.

The agenda also includes election of new officers, discussion of the 1998 regional conference and the symposium for next March. The slate of nominees for new officers is as follows:

Drying Flowers

The following is excerpted from a handout written by Jeanne McNeil, wife of Bob McNeil, MG, Niantic.

The most common method of drying flowers is to tie them in small bunches and hang them upside down in a dark space free of humidity. Strawflowers can be picked with a 1/4" inch stem, mounted on wire, and placed in styrofoam blocks since they are basically dry when picked. Lunaria (money plant) simply needs to be peeled after turning brown and the seeds scattered where you would like more next year.

Flowers can also be dried using silica gel, purchased in craft shops and garden centers. It can be used over and over. The process usually takes several days and requires a covered container. Use it primarily for flowers that do not air dry well.

The microwave is another method of drying, requiring several steps and using a limited number of flowers. Each step usually takes 2-3 minutes.

Here are two books you might consult for more information.

Flowers that Last Forever, Betty Jacobs. Storey Communication

The Book of Dried Flowers, Hilliar and Hilton. Simon & Schuster

President: *Pam Weil, Westport*

Vice President: *Helene Verglas, West Redding*

Treasurer: *Larry Van der Jagt, Simsbury*

Secretary: *Andrea Masisak, Trumbull*

Bring a brown bag lunch, meet with fellow Master Gardeners, and if you have time stroll around Wethersfield.

DIRECTIONS: Comstock Ferre is very close to I-91. Whether on I-91 North or South, take exit 26 (just south of Hartford). Follow signs to Old Wethersfield. You'll pass a cemetery and a Congregational Church on right. Turn right on Main Street, the first cross street. Just ahead is Comstock Ferre (1-800-733-3773)

Late Fall Activities

The following list of activities and tips for gardeners is taken from past backyard calendars for the months of November and December.

Mulch strawberries, perennials after the ground freezes.

Install wire guards to protect fruit trees from rodents.

Pot paperwhite narcissus in early November for December flowering.

White pine needles make excellent mulch.

Do not use wood ashes around acid-loving plants.

Cut back roses by 1/3 before mulching

Make a wreath of grapevines or bittersweet.

Firewood provides shelter for insects, so store away from the house.

Birds will use crushed egg shells as grit. They also enjoy overripe fruit.

Keep holly berries away from small children.

Potted azaleas should be kept moist, not wet.

Place cyclamen in a cool (55 degree F.) location.

Use sand instead of salt on icy walks.

Jerusalem cherry likes bright light and cool nights

Be sure to remove or poke a hole in foil wrapped around a gift plant so water can drain.

Make garden resolutions for next year.

Winter Squash Casserole

- 3 cups cooked, mashed butternut, buttercup, or Hubbard squash
- 1/4 cup low fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar, Swiss, or Monterey Jack cheese
- 1/2 cup rolled oats, or 1/4 cup wheat germ and 1/4 cup oats
- 2 eggs beaten
- 1 teaspoon basil, oregano, or parsley, to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons fresh minced onion or green pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced or 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- Topping: sunflower or sesame seeds

Combine all ingredients and place in a greased one quart casserole. Top with sunflower or sesame seeds. Place casserole dish in a pan with about two inches of water. Bake in oven at 350 degrees F, for about 45 to 50 minutes or until firm in the center.

Makes six servings.

from Farm Notes, Cooperative Extension System

Eastern District Meetings

Master Gardener meetings are held from 10am to noon on the third Saturday of the month in the fall and spring in the eastern district.

In October Jeanne and Bob McNeil gave an informative talk on dried flowers.

On November 16, we meet again in the Norwich Extension Office where Susan Munger and Dorothy Cheo will talk about living wreaths and Allen Gauthier will talk about hairy vetch as a living ground cover for tomatoes.

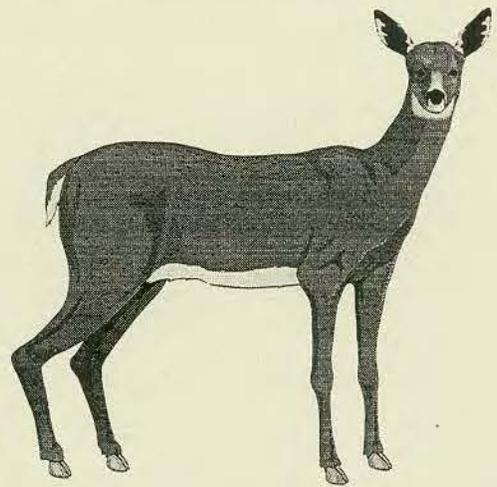
The coordinator of these meetings is Allen Gauthier, assisted by Susan Munger. These are informal meetings and all MGs are invited. Coffee & donuts on hand.

Meetings for March, April, and May will probably include a trip and a plant swap. Ideas are always welcome.

Oh Deer! Milorganite?

Those of you in pitched battle with deer have probably tried everything, but in case this tip passed you by, Milorganite has been reported by various sources to have deer repellent qualities. Florence Marrone, an MG in Killingworth, sent in a piece from *National Gardening*, June 1996. Milorganite is a pungent, granular, slow-release fertilizer made from sewage dried at intense heat.

A person in New York state reported that Milorganite sprinkled around yews, tulips, and hostas kept deer away. This remedy is said to work best in spring and summer when tender plants are most at risk and there is plenty of other food for the deer. Furthermore it needs to be applied every two to four weeks making it less than ideal. If desperate, try it now. Otherwise put this information in your call-up file for next spring.



1997 Backyard Gardener Calendar

The UConn garden calendar for 1997 is on sale at UConn in Storrs and at Extension Centers around the state. This useful calendar features a major gardening activity for each month, plus a tip for each day. It is attractive and inexpensive, only \$4 plus postage, so purchase yours now plus some extras for gifts. Call your extension office for details on postage and bulk orders.

Plans Shaping Up for Gardening Symposium

The fifth annual Master Gardener Symposium is scheduled for March 23, 1997, to be held at Manchester Tech College, in Manchester, just east of Hartford. The school will be on intercession, so we have the run of the school for ourselves. And for a good price. Sylvia Wahl of Redding is the program chair.

There is much work to be done between now and March so please think about ways you can

help. Speakers need to be found, publicity needs to be planned, vendors contacted, signs and badges made. We will also need volunteers to help during the symposium itself manning the MG table, setting up coffee and tea at lunch, being a speaker keeper. Please contact Jonas Zucker, Pam Weil, other members of the board, or Sylvia Wahl if you would like to help out. And let's hope it doesn't snow this time!

Please renew your membership now in CAEMG

Or if you just completed the course and became certified this year won't you please join us!

Our membership is scattered around the state, which means that all kinds of interesting people are working on projects in your neighborhood. When you join, you receive the directory listing our 300-plus members, along with their particular interests. The application below indicates just how wide the variety of MG interests are.

CAEMG has ambitious plans for the future, starting with the March 1997 Symposium and building to the

1998 Regional Conference. We need everyone's input on speakers, topics, tours, and demos for these events, as well as behind the scenes organizers. So please come to the December 7 meeting, to board meetings, to local meetings, and help make the years ahead glorious for CAEMG.

An additional benefit of membership is the newsletter six times a year. So for this alone, please help our hard-working treasurer and *renew your membership now*.

Thank you very much.

CALENDAR

November 9, 8:15 am - 3:30 pm

Wild Medicine Symposium, sponsored by Connecticut College Arboretum. \$45 members; \$55 nonmembers (includes lunch). Call 860-439-5020 for details.

November 12, 10 am

CAEMG Board Meeting, West Hartford Office. All CAEMG members invited.

November 16, 9:30 am - 11:30 am

Growing Orchids without a Greenhouse, with Ron Rozsa and Margaret Welch. Sponsored by Connecticut College Arboretum. \$10 members; \$15 nonmembers.

November 16, 10am - noon

CAEMG meeting in Norwich Extension office. Talks on living wreaths and living ground covers. Everyone invited.

December 7, 11am - 1pm

Annual CAEMG meeting. At Comstock Ferre, Wethersfield. All CAEMG members and all master gardeners who have been certified this year are cordially invited to attend. Bring a brown bag lunch and meet fellow MGs. Program includes a speaker, election of officers, and more. See inside for details or call any of the CAEMG board members.

March 23, 1997

Fifth Annual Master Gardener Symposium. Manchester Tech College. This will be an all day event. See inside for more details.

Come to Connecticut...the place to be

1998 Northeast Regional Master Gardener Conference

Sponsors include the Connecticut Association of Extension Master Gardeners, the Connecticut Experiment Station, and the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System