



SAVE THE DATE

MG meeting – Tuesday, Jan. 22

1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack
1st-floor meeting room

Refreshments at 7 pm; announcements
at 7:20 pm; program to follow

Arnie Friedman presents: Making the blues go away

MG Arnie Friedman presents his survey of the development of the modern practice of surrounding homes with lawns. Arnie offers alternative solutions for creating landscapes that are much more eco-friendly, easier to care for, and perhaps prettier to look at.

Arnie Friedman, a New York Botanical Garden-certified landscape designer and former NYBG instructor, is owner of Landscapes by Design. His design services encompass creating entire landscapes into small intimate



plantings; solving issues like excess storm water and old out-of-control gardens; and building features of natural stone.

Arnie is a past president of the MG of BC and current chair of our Speakers Bureau. Arnie lectures around the region on landscape design, outdoor construction, and environmental issues. He has a strong commitment to the environment and tries to build gardens that are sustainable and welcoming to dwindling wild bird and native plant species. Of late, he has been pioneering the replacement of turf with meadow-like environments of native, deer-proof, and easy-care plantings.

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Links are clickable and are noted in **blue**.

From the President's Desk

By Carolyn Gretchen



Closure for 2018

The MG of BC's Great Hall decorations at the Holiday Open House at Skylands were a tremendous success. It was the "photo op" destination for all. Special thanks to Sue Sheridan for her meticulous organization of all our volunteers and to De Trezza, Laura DeFlora, and the whole team of creative designers/decorators who made the room come alive with holiday sparkle. If you have never volunteered to help for this occasion, put it on your calendar for 2019. It's so much fun.

What's the start of the holiday season without a party? This year's MG of BC holiday celebration at Van Saun Park was outstanding. Not only did we have an excellent selection of sliders, wraps, and paninis and a cheese platter set up by our very own Hank Annunziata, but we also had a delightful array of appetizers, salads, and desserts made by our members. Thank you, Hank and team for an outstanding job and to everyone who pitched in to help with set up and clean up.

We are so fortunate to have among the members our floral design expert Albina Daukantas. In 2018, as in previous years, Albina contributed all the materials for a large number of beautiful centerpieces that were available for purchase by party guests. She was supported and helped by a dedicated group of MGs, who could be professionals themselves, according to Albina. Their beautiful efforts resulted in a collection of \$420 to be divided equally between a local food bank and Thielke Arboretum of Glen Rock.

Welcome 2019

The MG of BC extends happy new year wishes to all our members and interns. May your year be blessed with a deeper connection to nature and expanded joy in your volunteering.

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With a brand new year comes opportunities to try new things. A number of conferences are coming up in 2019, beginning with the Ornamental Horticultural Symposium Jan. 7-9, which includes Landscape Day with Joel Jan. 9.

Traditionally, a new year brings new ideas and new opportunities. We have discussed keeping our membership engaged and the approved volunteer sites active. One of the methods used in Monmouth County is a mentoring program. If we have enough interest, at the January meeting we can discuss the possibility of creating a mentoring program in Bergen County. I'd love to hear your thoughts. Another opportunity is to explore another volunteer site or a new site.

Winter — a time to dream

Here comes winter. It's a quiet, peaceful time for our gardens, our sites, and ourselves. We can use this quiet time to leaf through seed catalogs, peruse garden books and blogs for ideas and information, and vicariously or actively plan for the year ahead. Plus, it's a great time to give your indoor plants a little TLC. And, don't forget our wildlife. Feeding the birds can be entertaining in itself. However, we also have to protect the bushes and young trees from deer. Before it's too late, put netting around your trees and shrubs to keep them safe.

Happy dreaming!

MG OF BC NEWS

Renew MG of BC membership ASAP

Click [here](#) to download the MG of BC membership renewal form for 2019 so your membership doesn't lapse. Mail the completed form and your check for \$20, made payable to the MG of BC, to Terri Pegg, 54 W. Magnolia Ave., Maywood, NJ 07607. You can include an additional amount as a donation to the MG of BC. Donations are welcome!

We mean it! Volunteer hours due now; no password needed to download the forms

By Donna Karpel

Volunteer hours are due now. And, you can download the reporting forms from the home page of our [website](#); no password is needed.

You can report your hours via Excel form or paper, as explained below. The information from the V&EAR is used for our Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) and Rutgers University reports as well as the annual recertification of Master Gardeners. *RCE receives*

additional funding based on total number of reported volunteer hours.

Here are the two ways to report your hours:

1. Excel form: You can use the form on any PC and email it to me. This is the easiest and most accurate way to track hours. (Do not create your own spreadsheet.)

2. Paper form: Paper forms must be mailed, and you need to keep a copy for your records. The mailing address is on the form.

Both the Excel and paper forms are available on the right side of the home page of our [website](#) under "Volunteer & Education Reporting Forms." *No password is needed.* If you haven't downloaded the forms recently, be sure to download the current versions. The November 2018 Excel form has the most accurate list of approved sites, which are the only entries that should go under the location column.

Do not use the online volunteer reporting system as it's not ready for data entry!

When using the Excel form, remember to change the file name from "V&EAR Email Form" and save with your name and year of reporting, for example, Mary Smith 2018. If you need help renaming your form, please ask. Send the entire report as one spreadsheet.

Do **not** separate your education and volunteer hours into two or more reports or send two or more spreadsheets. Enter only one date per line, especially if you're submitting a paper report. **Note: If I can't read it, I can't enter it.**

Under education hours you can include the following:

- Any MG workshops and lectures at the meetings;
- Lectures, educational courses, conferences, and docent-led tours at almost any venue including, but not limited to, garden clubs, Rutgers, NYBG, NJBG, association meetings, guided tours, seminars, workshops, etc.

Do not include any of the following:

- Travel time, lunch, socializing;
- Tours of other MG gardens or Garden Conservancy open garden tours;
- Online research and reading (online or magazines, books, etc.).

If you have questions or need help, don't hesitate to contact me at 201-327-8835 or donna9189@gmail.com.

SPOTLIGHT ON ...

The Rutgers MG Association of New Jersey

If you've ever attended the annual state Master Gardener conference, then you're probably aware it's sponsored by the Rutgers Master Gardeners Association of New Jersey (RMGANJ), a statewide advisory board of volunteers from each of the 17 county-based MG associations. A highlight of the conference is the awards ceremony that recognizes MGs from each county with the Award for Excellence and those with 25 and 30 years of service.

The conference is one way the state association helps Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) in its basic mission to distribute research-generated horticultural information to the general public. The distribution of information is also done through the telephone Helpline; MG booths/tables at fairs and festivals where volunteers answer questions and hand out various "how to" brochures and fliers; alerts and notices sent to the press and public, such as those distributed in 2018 about the spotted lanternfly and longhorned tick; and through MG meetings and conferences.

Generally, one or two volunteers represent each county association at the RMGANJ (each is allowed two state representative and two alternates). The state association meets 10 times a year on the Rutgers campus to share the events and programs occurring in their respective counties. MG of BC representatives are Karen Pennell, who's held either the alternate or representative job for the past nine years, and Joseph Cooper (six years). Both Karen and Joseph also are former presidents of the MG of BC. Carolyn Gretchen and Melody Corcoran are the current alternates.

The state association elects officers from among the representatives for a two-year term. The current officers are Pat Schanzlin, Sussex County, president; Terry Zane, Burlington County, VP; Jane Gardener, Sussex County, treasurer; Tricia Deering, Somerset County, recording secretary; and Joseph Cooper, Bergen County, corresponding secretary. Jan Zientek, the Essex County extension agent, is the program coordinator for the Rutgers Master Gardener Program and reports the news from Rutgers at each association meeting.



Useful links

Many local garden centers give discounts to MGs. See the list on our [website](#). Bring your membership card when shopping.

HORTICULTURE

Re-creating local habitats using native plants

By Marie Alfano

In horticultural circles, the subject of native plants comes up over and over again. Jean Epiphan, forest ecologist and stewardship director at Thielke Arboretum of Glen Rock, is passionate about finding ways to change our local environmental conditions to improve habitat conditions for birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. Jean, pictured below, is also a research ecologist at Rutgers University and has been certified as an arborist by the International Society of Arboriculture.



Human beings, Jean explained, are the reason exotic and invasive plants got here. Especially in the past 100 years, the horticultural industry brought thousands of species from all over the world into our gardens, parks, and forests.

The result is that the typical middle-class Bergen County suburb consists of a "collection of well-manicured lawns with an array of ornamental exotics, many of which are invasive," she said. "There is little to no native plant diversity left in our neighborhoods. Trees and shrubs are solely picked for aesthetics. Insecticides are used at the first sign of a problem, rather than as a last resort. This sort of landscape provides no benefits to native wildlife." Jean said she feels strongly that we "need to reset the standard" and "re-create native habitats in our yards as well as protect the remaining native forests."

Where to begin? "Learn the ecological importance of a few specific natives, learn what conditions they require to thrive, and plant some in your yard," Jean advised. "To accurately re-create local wildlife habitat, plant selections must be locally native to our county."

Exotic plants are not habitat for native animals; rather they are habitat for exotic pests and "the equivalent of plastic to native wildlife," she continued. "Furthermore, many wildlife species are 'species specific.' They need a specific plant to rear their young or a specific insect to eat that lives on a specific native plant."

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Jean gave the example of the spicebush swallowtail. This species of butterfly requires one of two specific host plants, spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) or sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*). The spicebush swallowtail lays its eggs on one of these plants specifically because the “caterpillars have evolved to eat the leaves only of these two plants; it is a required, specific diet.” Without these two specific natives in our landscapes, we cannot support the spicebush swallowtail, she said.

Meanwhile, Jean explained that our “dry, dead leaves are important parts of our local ecosystem as well.” Her advice? Leave the leaves in our garden beds, especially leaves of native plants as “leaves provide microhabitats, nesting material, and larval hosting, too,” she stated.

“Decomposing leaves are nature’s own mulch,” she continued. “Native leaf litter regulates pH and provides all the available nutrients for the native plants that belong in the understory environment. Typical mulch does not provide this leading to the need for artificial fertilizations. If you leave the leaves, your native plants will thank you. Plus, it eliminates the costly chores of mulch placement and leaf removal.”

Jean Epiphan’s top 5 list: Invasives vs. natives	
Instead of planting this:	Plant this:
Wisteria	Coral honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>)
Bamboo	Black willow (<i>Salix nigra</i>)
Norway maple and all cultivars	Red maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)
Chinese silvergrass (aka Miscanthus)	Little bluestem (<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>)
Barberry, any size or color	American holly (<i>Ilex opaca</i>)

Do you recognize me?

By Edith Wallace

Snake plant has several names — *Sansevieria trifasciata*, mother-in-law’s tongue — and gets high praise for being an undemanding house plant, much more likely to be killed by overwatering than from neglect. When visiting a garden in Key West I was surprised to see this “house plant” in the ground and about 5 feet tall.



Photo by Edith Wallace.

There are several varieties. My favorite, the cylindrical form (*Sansevieria cylindrica*) that I kept for many years is gone. We were defeated by mealy bugs. I missed it so much that I replaced it so I could take a picture for this article. Snake plants are not prized for their flowers so I was quite surprised to find my snake plant in bloom in my home.

VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

The Hermitage



Photos by Kathleen Sullivan.

Cold weather didn’t deter members of the Class of 2019, along with other MG volunteers, from putting the Hermitage gardens to bed for the winter. At left, Lynn Curtin, Hermitage site coordinator, and Carol Ennis, labeled mini greenhouses while Herb Arbeiter, in photo at right, hauled hay bales. Volunteers will resume activity in March, weather permitting, from 9:30 am-noon Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Meanwhile, visit the [website](#). The Hermitage is located at 335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus.

OUT AND ABOUT

Frelinghuysen Arboretum

Frelinghuysen Arboretum is located at 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. All events are held in the Haggarty Center. Visit the [website](#).

Orchid program and judging

Bring an orchid to be judged by the North East Judging Center of the American Orchid Society or come for a free educational program. The program begins at 10:30 am Saturday, Jan. 19, and the judging begins at noon.

Lecture on old-growth forests

“Speaking for the trees: The importance of old-growth forests” is the topic of a lecture from 1-3 pm Saturday, Feb. 5. Lecturer Joan Maloof, professor emeritus at Salisbury (MD) University, founded the [Old-Growth Forest Network](#) to preserve, protect, and promote the country’s few remaining stands of old-growth forest. Earn 2.0 Rutgers MG CEUs. Cost is \$35 for members and \$40 for non-members. To register, click [here](#). Then scroll down to Feb. 2 in the left column.

The Hermitage

The Hermitage is located at 335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus. Visit the [website](#).

Party to thank volunteers

The Friends of the Hermitage will honor volunteers during a thank-you party at 6 pm Saturday, Jan. 12 at the Hermitage. If you helped on the grounds during 2018, you and your family members are welcome. RSVP by Jan. 4 to Leslie Naghshineh, visitor services manager, at lnaghshineh@thehermitage.org.

Maple sugaring is only a few weeks away

In preparation for the annual maple sugaring event Feb. 16, the Hermitage has scheduled an instructional meeting for MGs who intend to volunteer.



First, come to the Hermitage from 1-3 pm Friday, Feb. 15 where you’ll learn maple sugaring’s history and process, from tapping to boil-down, so that you can answer questions from the people who’ll attend the event the following day. You’ll be shown the 15 maple trees to be tapped so dress appropriately.

The Maple Sugaring Event will be 1-4 pm Saturday, Feb. 16. Volunteers are needed at 11 am to set up; during the three-hour event; and at 4 pm to clean up. Rain date is Sunday, Feb. 17.

At right, an old-fashioned bucket is used to demonstrate how farmers collected sap in the good old days. Photos by Kathleen Sullivan.



Meanwhile, from Feb. 17 until early March individual volunteers will be needed to collect the sap, take it home, and boil it down. (You can collect your sap at any time from 9 am-5 pm.) If you plan to collect the sap, start saving gallon-size water jugs (not milk jugs).

In mid-March, volunteers will have a boil-down in the Hermitage kitchen and will bottle the syrup. The finished product is pictured at bottom left.

- Kathleen Sullivan

NJ Botanical Garden/Skylands

NJBG is located at 2 Morris Road, Ringwood. Indoor events take place in the Carriage House and are free unless noted. Parking is free at this time of year. Visit the [website](#).

First-day hike

Start 2019 on the right — or left — foot by participating in a self-guided family friendly hike in the State Park woodlands at the NJBG from 1-3:30 pm Tuesday, Jan. 1. Weather permitting you can climb to the Mt. Defiance overlook on the Halifax trail and return, or hike without a climb. This annual event is a joint project of State Park staff and volunteers from the NJBG/Skylands Association and the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

Wear sturdy shoes and weather-appropriate clothes. Small children may need to be carried. Meet at the Carriage House from 1-2 pm where a map and hike directions will be provided. Allow 90 minutes for the hike. Staff will be on the trail for assistance, if required. Call 973-962-7031 for more information. Snow cancels.

Historic landscape design lecture

Join head landscape designer Rich Flynn for a slide program on the history of garden design at Skylands, originally created by some of the most famous landscaping names of the era. The event is at 10 am Saturday, Jan. 19 in the Carriage House. An ongoing snowstorm cancels. A \$5 donation is requested.

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Family winter hike

Take an easy hike in the garden's woodlands at 1 pm Sunday, Jan. 20. You'll learn a bit about the plants and animals around you in a hike designed to fit the group. Smaller children may need to be carried. Wear sturdy shoes, and meet at the Carriage House. Rain cancels.

SHOWS, CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

Several conferences and workshops are scheduled for the winter and spring. Mark your calendars if any of these interest you.

Rutgers MGs Community Garden Training Program

Friday, Jan. 25, 9 am-3 pm. Location TBD in Mercer County. **Registration details to come.**

MGs are on the front line in meeting the educational needs of community and school gardens. This course, for MGs and MG interns, consists of scripted PowerPoint presentations, evaluation materials, and related fact sheets on topics such as starting a community garden; keys to successful composting; keeping pests out of the garden; and harvesting and food safety.

The program counts toward 5.5 hours of specialized training to achieve the status of Rutgers MG community educator. To become an educator you'll need additional training and provide 10 hours of training to community groups; details will be explained at the training program.

Review of basic beekeeping class

Saturday, Feb. 16, 9 am-3:30 pm (check-in at 8:30 am). Rutgers Eco Complex, 1200 Florence-Columbus Road, Bordentown 08505 (directions at the link below).

This class is for first-year beekeepers and people who have previously taken a beginning beekeeping course but don't have their bees yet and would like a review. This course will build confidence and help you prepare before the start of the spring beekeeping season. Topics include starting a hive; packages and nucs; hive management and nutrition; honey bee pests, diseases, and treatments; and harvesting honey. Fee \$250. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. *Preregistration is required.*

2019 Community Garden Conference

Saturday, March 2, 9 am-4:30 pm. Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. **Note:** This conference fills up quickly.

The Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County team up for the ninth year in a row to sponsor this conference. Topics include the top 10 pests and diseases of 2018; mastering the art of vegetable gardening; garden tools and ergonomics; and horticultural therapy and community gardens.

Fee: \$50 (includes lunch) if registered before Feb. 1; \$60 if registered on or after Feb. 1. Earn 5.0 MG CEUs. For the full list of topics and speakers and to register, click [here](#). Then scroll down to March 2 in the left column.

Rutgers Home Gardeners School

Saturday, March 23, 9 am-4 pm (check-in begins at 8 am). Hickman Hall, 89 George St., New Brunswick 08901. **Note:** Workshops fill up quickly.

The Home Gardeners School is made up of 40 individual workshop sessions covering an array of horticulture topics. You select the four workshops that are most relevant to your gardening interests to create a customized schedule. You have the option of attending two keynote presentations during lunch.

Fee for MGs: \$65 if registered on or before Feb. 28. You must use promo code MG2019 and fax proof of MG certification to 732-932-8726. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

FARMERS MARKETS

Ramsey indoor farmers market, Sundays, 10 am-2 pm. Eric Smith School, 2 Monroe St., Ramsey.



Bergen County Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office

Joel Flagler Agricultural/Resources Management Agent & County Extension Dept. Head 201-336-6780
Karen Riede Horticulture Consultant 201-336-6788
Cooperating agencies: Rutgers, the State University of NJ, US Department of Agriculture, and Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension educational programs are offered to all without regard to race, religion, color, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HORTICULTURE GRAPEVINE

Deadline for the Horticulture Grapevine is the 25th of the prior month. Submit information about garden club meetings that are open to the public to [Miriam Taub](#).

- Jan. 3** **7:30 pm, Garden Club of Harrington Park**, upstairs in the Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: Esther Ross, club member. Topic: Members night, a fun evening of slide show and tell of their own gardens, gardens they have visited, or anything garden-related.
- Jan. 8** **7 pm, Ramsey Area Garden Club**, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave., corner of Woodland Avenue, Ramsey. Speaker: MG Janet Schulz. Topic: Art and design in the garden.
- Jan. 9** **9:30 am refreshments, 10 am meeting and program, Wyckoff Area Garden Club**, Wyckoff Public Library, 200 Monroe Ave., Wyckoff. Speaker: Marc Gussen, director, Closter Nature Center. Topic: Hydroponics: A gardening alternative to dirt.
- Jan. 9** **7:30 pm, Bergen-Passaic chapter, Native Plant Society of NJ**, NY-NJ Trail Conference headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road (Route 202), Mahwah. Park in the lot or the Ramapo County Reservation, a short walk through the woods. Parking and trail are not lighted, so bring a flashlight. Speaker: MG Edith Wallace. Topic: Native plants in New Jersey public gardens. Visit her [website](#).
- Jan. 14** **7:30 pm, Garden Club of Bergenfield**, Cooper's Pond, 133-153 W. Church St., Bergenfield. Speaker: Joe Verga of Sustainable Jersey. Topic: How Sustainable Jersey, a non-profit organization, provides tools, training, and financial incentives to support communities as they pursue sustainability programs. Visit its [website](#).
- Jan. 16** **7 pm meeting, 7:30 speaker, Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club**, second-floor meeting room, Hasbrouck Heights Library, 320 Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights. Speaker: Roman Osadca, garlic grower and owner of Valley Fall Farm, Frelinghuysen (Warren County). Topic: Be somebody! Grow garlic.
- Jan. 28** **7:30 pm, Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club**, Ho-Ho-Kus Community Church, 400 Warren Ave., entrance on Sycamore, Ho-Ho-Kus. Speakers: Margaret Morgenthaler and Kris Nylund, club members. Topic: Slide show of their visits to Europe (Margaret's to Switzerland and Kris's to Spain).

Please share photos of your volunteer work or of your garden. When submitting photos, please identify everyone in the photo by first and last name. Submit photos to janet-schulz@hotmail.com.