



### SAVE THE DATE

### MG meeting – Tuesday, Sept. 24

1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack  
1<sup>st</sup>-floor meeting room

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

### Bruce Crawford presents: The wonder of plants

Plants are a fantastic part of our lives, and all too often we take them for granted. Typically, we don't stop to marvel at how plants have adapted to live in seemingly uninhabitable areas or how the structure of a flower is designed to both protect the reproductive organs while attracting pollinators or even how a plant works.

Bruce Crawford will provide some interesting and fun insights into the world of plants that will make you marvel all the more at these wonderful and colorful parts of our lives.



**Bruce Crawford**

Bruce, director of [Rutgers Gardens](#), has been educating Master Gardeners for quite some time. He is also an adjunct professor in the Landscape Architecture Department at Rutgers University. In addition to managing, designing, and developing the 180 acres of the Rutgers Gardens, he teaches and shares his love of fun and unusual plants with students, garden clubs, MGs, community groups, and garden visitors. Bruce says that he's rarely met a plant he doesn't like. Bruce will be selling something — whether plants or bulbs — to support Rutgers Gardens.

Bruce last spoke to the MG of BC in October 2018. His topic was public gardens.

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### From the President's Desk

*By Carolyn Gretchen*

As the days get shorter and cooler (hopefully), there's a definite shift in activity level. The Bergen County Fall Harvest Festival will be held Sept. 21-22 from 10 am-5 pm each day at Van Saun Park. 4H and MG of BC have a noticeable presence at this event. Please stop by to enjoy the educational projects of the Class of 2019. Bring your family for the free kid crafts, see old friends, and enjoy the park. Fresh produce and plants from Bergen County farms will be there also.



The Rutgers University Master Gardener Program, a volunteer organization of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station recognizes the outstanding work accomplished by members of each county organization by presenting Awards for Excellence. This award is given annually in recognition of the contributions and service of volunteer members who trained and are certified under the Rutgers University MG program.

Award for Excellence winners provide a high degree of service to their communities. In addition, they have generously contributed their time, expertise, professionalism, and leadership to the Rutgers MG program throughout their years of membership. This year's MG of BC's winners are Donna Faustini and Miriam Taub. Their accomplishments will be highlighted in the RMGANJ program at the conference Oct. 5.

The topic of this year's conference is climate change and our gardens. All presenters are Rutgers personnel. The registration fee is \$45. Click [here](#) to register online or by mail. Continental breakfast and lunch are included. Registration closes Oct. 1; no walk-ins will be permitted. Since not everyone can attend the conference, we plan to honor our winners at our October meeting.

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Is fall your favorite season? Then plan to enjoy. Get ready to be dazzled by gorgeous deciduous leaf colors and fall-blooming plants. Walk in nature!

But garden work is not over yet. Plan to compost your fading annuals, plant some spring bulbs when they appear in the stores, separate your perennials, clean out your beds, and pick up some additional items at the many plant sales at nurseries — and at fall fairs and festivals. Treat yourself! As we gardeners say, “There’s always room for one more!”

You know what comes after fall, right? So, enjoy now and plan for spring! Stealing Joseph Cooper’s line, “Happy gardening!”

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Applications available for MG Class of 2020

Calling all future Master Gardeners. Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Bergen County is accepting applications for the MG Class of 2020. The MG training program runs from October through June.

Classes are held at 1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack, on Fridays from 10:30 am-12:30 pm. The first class will be Oct. 4. The fee is \$250 to cover materials and program costs. After completing the program students also must complete 100 hours of volunteer service for RCE to be certified as Master Gardeners.

For more information, contact [Karen Riede](#) or call her at 201-336-6788.

### 2019 Rutgers MG Association Conference registration deadline is Oct. 1

The 2019 Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey Annual State Conference will be held from 8 am-3:30 pm Saturday, Oct. 5 at the Cook Student Center, 59 Biel Road, New Brunswick. The theme is “How Did Climate Change My Garden?” This year’s speakers are Rutgers University personnel.

The conference costs \$45 per person and includes a continental breakfast and boxed lunch. Click [here](#) to register online, or you can mail/fax your registration. Instructions are on the website. Earn five Rutgers MG CEUs for attending the conference. **Note:** The registration deadline is Oct. 1. No walk-ins will be permitted.

## MG OF BC NEWS

### Meet Marie Alfano and Herb Arbeiter, Class of 2019

*Marie Alfano and Herb Arbeiter are the 2019 class liaisons to the MG of BC Executive Board. They attend the monthly board meetings, report back to their classmates, and raise issues concerning MG interns. Marie, no newcomer to volunteering, raised her hand to be class liaison. Herb is her backup. Both interviews were written by Miriam Taub.*

#### Marie Alfano

Marie and her daughter, Nikki, who lives in Little Falls, were frequent visitors to Passaic County MG plant sales. When Marie inquired about the MG program, she was asked where she lived and referred to Bergen County. Though she intended to enroll in two previous classes, health issues intervened. Finally, last fall the odds were in her favor, and she joined the Class of 2019. “The third time’s the charm,” she chuckled.

Becoming a Master Gardener, Marie explained, had been on her bucket list and encompasses a number of things she enjoys: Learning, socializing, being hands-on, and volunteering. “Everything about the program had something I liked,” she said.



Marie Alfano

Of all the MG volunteer sites Marie visited, she said she most enjoyed the hort therapy program at the Garfield Middle School and the Post-Stroke Groups in Ridgewood and Englewood.

Marie, 62, was born in Hoboken and spent her early years in Jersey City. She and her husband of 42 years, Tony Alfano, live in Rochelle Park. Their daughter, Nikki, and son-in-law, John, have two children, Sammy, 3, and Cecilia, 8 months. Prior to retirement, Marie was an administrative assistant to a partner in the accounting firm of Diamant, Katz, Kahn & Co.’s Rochelle Park office.

She described herself as “heavy duty into volunteering,” which explains why she was the first to raise her hand to be class liaison. In addition to her MG volunteering, Marie is president of the Rosary Altar Society of Our

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Lady Queen of Peace Church in Maywood and a member of the church's Human Concerns Ministry.

It's there that volunteers put together food baskets for needy families during the holidays; organize diaper and clothing collections for needy moms and their kids; and collect Christmas toys for various organizations that support needy families. Through Buddies of New Jersey, in Paramus she cooks dinner once a month for men and women with AIDS.

In the past, Marie has served meals to the homeless through Peter's Place in Hackensack and in tent cities in New York City. However, Marie said she's most proud of the Memoir Writing Circle, a group she organized 15 years ago in Brick Township where eight to 10 people write about their life based on memories and meet monthly to discuss their writings. Marie also participates in Visible Ink, a writing program for patients of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. On several occasions her memoir writing has been included in its *Visible Ink Anthology*.

Meanwhile, Marie said that as a result of volunteering at Thielke Arboretum of Glen Rock and attending various plant society meetings, she decided to rebuild her garden and go about 60% native. She explained that she "ripped everything out" and started from scratch. New soil, mulch, and railroad ties helped her create what she described as a two-level garden. And as a result of her MG classes, Marie said she picked plants that fit the landscape, where previously she put plants where she thought they "looked best." The result when she walks into her backyard: "Pure peace." she said.

Marie lists her hobbies as reading, photography, and watching sunrises on the beach (she gets to the Jersey Shore a few weekends a month). She's a member of the Essex Chapter of the Native Plant Society of NJ and the Bergen Bonsai Society. Marie wrote about bonsai for a story that appeared in the March *Potting Shed*.

### **Herb Arbeiter**

Herb Arbeiter was a volunteer at Thielke Arboretum of Glen Rock before he learned of the existence of the Master Gardeners of Bergen County.

After retiring last year, Herb said he wanted to do something "ecologically sound and environmentally correct" around his Glen Rock home. He checked out books on native plants at the Glen Rock Library where a librarian mentioned the new Environmental Education Center at Thielke. He offered his services and, he recalled, "The next thing I knew, I had quite a few hours of volunteering." After meeting several MGs who volunteered there, he attended a few MG meetings, then enrolled in the Class of 2019.

Herb, 68, grew up in Middle Village, Queens. "I tell people I speak the Queens English," he joked. He graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with an industrial engineering degree. After college, Herb



**Herb Arbeiter**

worked for defense contractors for about 20 years, then was laid off. Since he and his wife, Susan Schmidberger, had no children at the time, he said he wasn't in a hurry to look for a full-time job. Eventually, he began working in a surf shop near their second home in Hampton Bays, Long Island. He helped maintain a retail point-of-sale computer system and tried selling kayaks.

When Susan became pregnant after 19 years of marriage, he took a job in a small consulting firm in New York City. The majority of the firm's clients were condo and co-op boards and managing agents. Most requests were for structural inspections of stone and masonry of residential buildings "from penthouses down to slums," he said. Churches and synagogues also were clients.

During 24 years of consulting, he estimated he's ridden every New York City subway line in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. How did he do his inspections? Often, by working on a hanging scaffold moving down the side of a building to view it up close and personal.

Meanwhile, Herb and Susan had moved to Glen Rock so their daughter, Paige, could attend a Bergen County Special Services program. "She was born deaf, but is able to use listening and spoken language, thanks to cochlear implants," he said. Paige received her first at 3½ and her second at 18. Now 25, she's a graduate of Adelphi University and is pursuing an additional math degree at Ramapo College.

Herb said he's earned more than 220 volunteer hours as an MG student, mostly at Thielke, and the remainder at the Hermitage and Garretson. He's a member of Thielke's land stewardship group, which meets monthly to decide what work needs to be done. Depending on the time of year, six to eight members plan trail maintenance, invasive plant control, new plantings, and special events.

Why did he volunteer to be the back-up class liaison when no one else volunteered (other than Marie)? Herb

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explained that he had free time, he liked attending the MG meetings and hearing the speakers, and he knew he wasn't going to be the "main person" with full responsibility. ("I felt sorry for Marie," he said.)

Outside of volunteering, Herb said he enjoys surf kayaking in the ocean in Hampton Bays. He recently started making hypertufa pots. He and MG classmate Gerry Rotunda will be making a presentation at the Fall Harvest Festival highlighting these lightweight concrete pots made by mixing peat moss, perlite, and Portland cement.

Herb likes to propagate plants and joined the Great Swamp Bonsai Society and the Native Plant Society. For years, he's been training about a dozen ginkgo trees for bonsai. And, he said he "messes around" with acrylic painting on seashells, slate, and rocks.

### Happiness is ... a fall festival volunteer!



Photo by Karen Riede

Volunteers are *still* needed for the MG tent at the Bergen County Fall Harvest Festival at Van Saun Park, Paramus, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Sept. 20-22, especially for setup and breakdown. Contact [Karen Riede](#) or call her at 201-336-6788 to schedule your volunteer time. Fall festival hours are 10 am-5 pm Saturday and Sunday. Come to the festival for pumpkin picking, entertainment, food, a craft fair, carnival rides, and food, as well as for the MG exhibits.

Above from left (at last year's fall festival): Sharon Ma, Mani Peri, Jeff Chan, Connie Guo (sitting), Gloria Trangia, and Theresa Sabello. All, except Jeff, are from the Class of 2018.

## VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

Liz Gil plants anise hyssop and other natives outside the north gate at the Hermitage. MGs are making smudge sticks from white sage, lavender, and rosemary to sell at upcoming ghostly events at the Hermitage, 335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus, starting Sept. 13 through Halloween. For a schedule of ghost tours, click [here](#).



Photo by Kathleen Sullivan

Proceeds from the sale of smudge sticks support MG work in the Hermitage gardens. Contact [Kathleen Sullivan](#), site coordinator, for more information.

- Kathleen Sullivan

## FARMERS MARKETS

**Allendale Farmers Market**, 500 W. Crescent Ave.; through October; Saturdays, 9:30 am-2:30 pm.

**Englewood Farmers Market**, Depot Square Park, North Van Brunt Street and Demarest Avenue; through October; Fridays, 11 am-6 pm.

**Fort Lee Farmers Market**, Plaza at the Fort Lee Community Center, 1355 Inwood Ter.; through October; Sundays, 8 am-2 pm.

**Hasbrouck Heights Farmers Market**, Central Avenue and Boulevard; through October; Tuesdays, noon-6 pm.

**Oradell Farmers Market**, 618 Veldran Ave. (post office parking lot); through November; Sundays, 10 am-3 pm.

**Paramus Farmers Market**, Petruska Park north parking lot, 475 Farview Ave.; through October; Wednesdays, 2-7 pm.

**Ramsey Farmers Market**, Main Street train station; through November; Sundays, 9 am-2 pm.

**Ridgewood Farmers Market**, train station parking lot, Godwin and West Ridgewood avenues; through October; Sundays, 9 am-3 pm.

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**River Vale Farmers Market**, 406 Rivervale Road; through October; Thursdays, noon-6 pm.

**Rutherford Farmers Market**, Park Avenue and Glen Road; through October; Wednesdays, 11 am-6 pm.

**Teaneck Farmers Market**, Beverly Road and Garrison Avenue; through October; Thursdays, noon-6 pm.

## OUT AND ABOUT

### Frelinghuysen Arboretum

Learn how to put together arrangements of pumpkins and gourds and how to keep critters away so your arrangement can be enjoyed throughout the season. This demonstration is scheduled for 7-8 pm Thursday Sept. 26 at the arboretum's Haggarty Center, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township.

**Cost:** \$12 members/\$15 non-members. For more information and to register, call the arboretum at 973-326-7601.

### Garden Conservancy



*Garden Conservancy photo of Hay Honey Farm*

Five New Jersey gardens — in Essex, Hunterdon, and Somerset counties — will be on display during the Garden Conservancy's Open Days program from 10 am-4 pm Saturday, Sept. 14. Open Days provides opportunities to visit the area's most exciting, creative, and innovative gardens. The cost to visit each garden is \$10 per person; free for children under 12.

The following gardens will be on display:

- [Bird Haven Farm](#), 38 Hollow Brook Road, Pottersville.

- [Eillistan](#), Far Hills. Address/directions available at the other gardens open on this date, or by calling the Garden Conservancy at 1-888-842-2442 from 9 am-5 pm.
- [Hay Honey Farm](#), 130 Stevens Lane, Far Hills.
- [Jardin de Buis](#), 129 Pickle Road, Pottersville.
- [Silas Mountsier garden](#), 205 Rutgers Place, Nutley.

For a list of extra events at the Hunterdon/Somerset gardens, click [here](#).

### Hackensack River Greenway through Teaneck

The Hackensack River Greenway through Teaneck has scheduled a cleanup to remove trash and invasives from the Greenway from 10 am-noon Sunday, Sept. 8 at Camperdown and River roads, Teaneck. Park on Camperdown Road.

Bring gloves, rakes, and loppers if you have them. Check the home page of the [website](#) for schedule changes or cancellations due to weather conditions.

### NJ Botanical Garden/Skylands

To celebrate Spanish Heritage Month, [Carlos Pavan](#), a New York-based composer/guitarist, will present an afternoon of guitar music blending Argentine rhythms with classical and jazz concepts beginning at 2 pm Saturday, Sept. 21.

**Cost:** \$10 members/\$15 non-members. The event will be held in the Carriage House. The address is 5 Morris Road, Ringwood.

### Bergen-Passaic Chapter, Native Plant Society of NJ

Join the Habitat Helpers at the NY/NJ Trail Conference headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road (Route 202), Mahwah, to maintain plantings, plant new plants, and remove weeds and invasive plants at any of the following three dates and times: 9 am-noon Saturday, Sept. 8 and Sept 22, and 4:30-6:30 pm Monday, Sept. 23. Master gardeners receive volunteer hours for participating.

Click [here](#) for more information. Then click on "more details" to sign up. Please register so the organization will know how many people to expect and notify volunteers of any weather-related updates.

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## Teaneck Creek Conservancy

Dana Goin of the [Wolf Conservation Center](#) will discuss the history and ecology of eastern coyotes, the importance of coyotes in suburban ecosystems, and how we can best coexist with them. Her talk will be from 7-8 pm Thursday, Sept. 26 at the conservancy, 20 Puffin Way, Teaneck. Visit the Teaneck Creek [website](#).

### 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 25<sup>th</sup> of the prior month. Submit information about garden club meetings that are open to the public to [Miriam Taub](#).***

- Sept. 5** 7:30 pm, **Garden Club of Harrington Park**, upstairs in the Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: Mary Jo Sichak, Passaic County MG. Topic: Indoor gardening.
- Sept. 9** 7:30 pm, **Garden Club of Bergenfield**, Cooper's Pond, 133-153 W. Church St., Bergenfield. Speaker: Rick Mikula ([Butterfly Rick](#)). Topic: Butterflies.
- Sept. 10** 7 pm, **Ramsey Area Garden Club**, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave. (corner of Woodland Avenue), Ramsey. Speaker: Mary Jo Sichak, Passaic County MG. Topic: A garden safari – find out what's happening in your backyard.
- Sept. 11** 7 pm, **Garden Club of Oakland**, Oakland Senior Center, 20 Lawlor Drive, Oakland. Speaker: Mary Jo Sichak, Passaic County MG. Topic: Outnumbered – a series of slides focused on insects for a glimpse of what's bugging us.
- Sept. 11** 7:30 pm, **Bergen-Passaic chapter, Native Plant Society of NJ**, NY-NJ Trail Conference headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road (Route 202), Mahwah. Speaker: Dr. Susan Petro, biology teacher at Ramapo College. Topic: Gardening to attract birds.
- Sept. 11** 7:30 pm, **Wyckoff Area Garden Club**, Wyckoff Public Library, 200 Woodland Ave., Wyckoff. Speaker: Tony Bracco, [Bracco Farms](#). Topic: Adapting small farm methods to a backyard garden. Refreshments at 7 pm. Visit the garden club's [website](#).
- Sept. 12** 1:30 pm, **Senior Source**, second floor (across from Arhaus furniture), Shops at Riverside, Hackensack. Speaker: MG Janet Schulz. Topic: Bulbs for the fall. Visit the Senior Source [website](#).
- Sept. 17** 7 pm, **Backyard Garden Club**, sponsored by the Friends of the River Vale Free Public Library, River Vale Library, 412 Rivervale Road, River Vale. Speaker: Jeffrey Van Pelt, former horticulture supervisor, Somerset County Parks Commission. Topic: Spring or fall – what's the best time to clean and divide?
- Sept. 30** 7:30 pm, **Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club**, Ho-Ho-Kus Community Church, 400 Warren Ave. (entrance on Sycamore Avenue), Ho-Ho-Kus. Topic: Delights and disasters. Members will tell stories, show pictures, or bring plants to set the stage for a story.