



From the Potting Shed December 2016

Master Gardeners of Bergen County

SAVE THE DATE



MG Holiday Party

**Class of 2017
students welcome**

Tuesday, Dec. 6 noon-2 pm
Van Saun Park Zoo
Education Building

**Sandwiches and beverages
will be provided.**

**Please bring one of the following
based on your last name:**

**A to F
G to L
M to Z**

**salad
dessert
appetizer**

From the President's Desk



On Saturday, Nov. 19, Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) had its graduation for the MG Class of 2016 at the McFaul Environmental Center, and it turned out to be a perfect fall day. RCE and Bergen County Executive James Tedesco gave graduation and appreciation certificates to the graduates, while the MG of BC association gave out pins. We also have membership cards, so see me at a meeting or contact me at joseph@mgofbc.org to receive yours.

Thanks to the newly minted Master Gardeners for a productive year as students. Your volunteer contributions added up to nearly \$38,000 in volunteer value to the county. I invite you to consider volunteering and serving on an MG of BC committee. We could use members with no experience to members proficient in computers, writing, speaking, organizing, and more. Please contact me to find out how you can serve and help better our organization. *Remember, all volunteer time counts toward yearly certification.*

Lastly, a shout out to Albina Daukantas, Hank Annunziata, and their helpers who did a wonderful job with food and decorations. Congratulations to the Master Gardener Class of 2016!

- **Joseph Cooper**

Contents	Page
Save the Date	1
MG of BC News	1
Membership News	2
Shows, Conferences & Workshops	4
Sunshine News	4
Volunteer Site News	5
Farmers Markets	5
Garden Club Grapevine	6

Links are clickable and are noted in **blue**.
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MG OF BC NEWS

Bylaw Amendment Proposal

At the next meeting — Jan. 24, 2017— we will vote to update two sections of our bylaws. These two proposals have been approved by the MG Board for consideration by the membership.

Section 1b to be adopted, and (Section 1) to be updated to (Section 1a).....

Article IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Rutgers Certified Master Gardener – A Rutgers Master Gardener Training Program graduate who is an active volunteer and has completed the initial volunteer service requirement. To retain the Rutgers Certified Master Gardener status, a minimum of 25 hours of annual volunteer service hours and 10 hours of annual continuing education must be completed. Certification is valid for one year only; therefore, all Rutgers Certified Master Gardeners must be recertified every year. Submission of a regularly updated record of all volunteer activities and continuing education hours is required.

Section 1b **“Lifetime Master Gardener.”** This will be a designation bestowed to Rutgers Certified Master Gardeners who are active, dues-paying members for at

least 20 years and who have accumulated a minimum of 1,000 hours over those 20 years.

Article II Executive Board

Section 3

a. The President and the Vice President shall be elected for a term of up to two years. All officers shall be elected at the November general meeting and will take office after installation at the regularly scheduled January meeting.

b. All officers may serve for a maximum of two consecutive two-year terms in the same office. Each officer may hold one elected office at a time.

Congratulations Class of 2016

By Joel Flagler

The graduation of the MG Class of 2016 was held Saturday, Nov. 19 at the McFaul Environmental Center in Wyckoff. It was well-attended by the graduates and their families and friends. The buffet was awesome and filled with tasty delights. The Class of 2016 already returned almost 3,000 hours of service, and that's a lot.

The class has really made a mark in many areas, including service to county parks, horticultural therapy programming for multiple populations, Earth Day and environmental fairs, and more.

Bergen County Director of Parks Jim Koth was there to recognize the graduates for their contributions to the county, especially in the parks. Freeholder Maura DeNicola had beautiful certificates of commendation made for the graduates; she has been a strong supporter of our program. Also, County Executive James Tedesco had his office prepare certificates (with gold seals) for each graduate. He is a strong supporter, too. The nature-inspired decorations were handcrafted by Albina Daukantas, as always. Many were repurposed for other facilities and programs for fall celebrations. In this way her artful botanical sculptures go on to delight a wider audience.

The buffet team was headed up by Karen Becker; her team included Anne Lander, Deb Walker, Christine Belli, Pauline DuBois, Mary Tierney, Hank Annunziata, and Christine Mueller. Hank was chair of the weather committee and he and his committee delivered a beautiful day. This entire "catering team" from the Class of 2015 worked hard to create a visually beautiful and most delicious buffet for the 2016 grads and their guests. Thanks to Karen and the team! We are grateful for all you did.

In addition, we thank the team that helped deliver the event and set the day off to a great success. Committee members included Robyn Lowenthal, Donna Karpel,

Josie Ko, Christiane Oliveri, Karen Pennell, Hank Annunziata, Barbara Pisacane, and (of course) Albina Daukantas. We ran out of time, but Karen had been working on a haiku to share with the guests. Perhaps next time.

As November began the year-long celebration of Rutgers University's 250th anniversary, we take note of Rutgers' newest achievements (new improved strawberries, tomatoes, and hazelnuts, dogwoods, turf grasses, and more). I am sure every Master Gardener is as proud as I am to be part of this wonderful university and NJ Ag Experiment Station. Let's continue the excellent work done by the entire Master Gardener community and help improve people's lives one garden at a time. Congratulations to the Class of 2016, and best wishes to all for happiness and a healthy new year.

Time to Renew Your MG Membership

Membership renewals are due. Open the attachment sent with *The Potting Shed*, and please complete the renewal form. Be sure to make any changes to last year's information as needed. Then mail the form with your check for \$20 payable to the Master Gardeners of Bergen County to:

John Walters
6 Valley Road
Glen Rock, NJ 07452

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Meet Denise Slusarev, Class of 2011

By Miriam Taub



Denise Slusarev is taking her certification as a master gardener to the next level. Denise is enrolled in the Landscape Design Certificate Program at the New York Botanical Garden. Her goal is to start a small landscaping business with classmate Filomena Kappock. As Denise explains, she and Filomena "found each other" in the Class of 2011 because they were the only two students under age 50.

Since their meeting in the fall of 2010, they've taken several landscape-related classes at Bergen Community College and then advanced to the NYBG program. "It's one step at a time," explains Denise, since both she and Filomena have children in school. So far they've completed Landscape Design History and three graphics classes toward the 350 total required hours.

Denise says it was Filomena who suggested that “maybe we should take some classes and one day we could parley them into a business we could do together.” They have a specialty in mind — boutique gardens for urban areas — because that’s an area that appears to be underserved and overpriced by landscape designers, especially in Hudson County. (Filomena lives in Weehawken.)

Denise grew up in Englewood and Englewood Cliffs where she says her mother was a “big flower person” and her father always grew vegetables and flowers. She majored in psychology at Clark University and later worked in retail without a specific career goal. But she periodically took classes in subjects in which she had an interest. After taking a law-related course at Pace University, she got a job as a paralegal. Then she got a law degree from Quinnipiac University. She worked in a general-practice law firm in Englewood Cliffs specializing in litigation and estate planning until her daughter was born.

Currently, Denise, 49, is a stay-at-home mom to Fiona, 17, and Alex, 14. Her husband, Boris, is an architect by training and works as a construction project manager. They all live on a cul-de-sac in Tenafly with three dogs, two guinea pigs, and a cockatiel.

When Denise and her family moved from an apartment in Brooklyn to Bergen County 11 years ago, she decided that the home’s landscaping needed improvement. She began working in both the back yard and front yard with its semi-circular driveway. In the back, for example, she removed a shed and replaced the deck with a patio. She created screening to separate the pool area from the sitting area though that’s a work in progress. She added understory trees and shrubs for year-round interest. Not only did she decide what trees and shrubs she wanted and where, but also she says she planted them. She has a contractor to “mow only.”

Once her kids agree to part with the swing set, Denise will replace them with plantings. Every year, she says, she thinks she’s done, but “come spring, I wind up moving, fixing, and planting.” Currently, she’s experimenting with ornamental grasses in pots.

Denise recalls that after she’d done a fair amount of home landscaping, she saw a newspaper article about the MG program. “It sounded like a neat way to get my feet wet in something I was already interested in,” she says. And, she was in luck because her Friday mornings were free. As an MG student, she volunteered at the Tenafly Nature Center and Teaneck Creek Conservancy. Currently, Denise is the MG liaison to the Teaneck Creek Conservancy.

Recently she completed a small landscaping project for a friend who had about \$200 to spend. After learning what the friend did and didn’t like, Denise went to Victoria’s Nursery in Paramus and to Costco, picked up some inexpensive plants, and used them to hide some unsightly cement and “tidy up” her friend’s flower bed. “It wasn’t huge and it took a day.” Admittedly, she said she can’t consider it a “job” when she did the work for free. But, she says, “It’s a start.”

Butterfly Garden in Hillsdale



Photo by Robert Cinek

From left, students Evan Minneker, Shane Hein, Emma Nagler, Kiera Jennings, and Celina Bussanich.

Fourth-grade science students at Ann Blanche Smith School in Hillsdale planted a butterfly garden this fall to be ready for the monarch butterflies’ spring migration and to help with the preservation of the species. The garden was established with the help and support of Raymond Brothers Landscaping in Hillsdale and the Master Gardeners.

- Robert Cinek

Bergen County Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office

Joel Flagler Agricultural/Resources Management Agent & County Extension Dept. Head 201-336-6780

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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.

SHOWS, CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

The Art of Growing Food

Saturday, Dec. 3, 10 am-4 pm

Duke Farms Foundation
1112 Dukes Parkway West
Hillsborough, NJ 08844
908-243-3604

www.dukefarms.org/communitygarden

Duke Farms, through its Community Garden Education Program, will sponsor "The Art of Growing Food - a Garden Design Workshop" to be taught by Ellen Ecker Ogden, co-founder of "The Cook's Garden" seed catalog and author of numerous books on cooking and gardening.

This workshop will teach you the six steps to successful garden design that are often used in ornamental gardens and how to put them to use in your edible patch. During the hands-on afternoon workshop, participants will discuss how to draw a design on paper and then transfer it to their landscape. This in-depth program is ideal for new gardeners or anyone with a garden who needs help seeing it with fresh eyes.

Bring your garden plans and ideas. Lunch and a copy of Ellen's book "The Complete Kitchen Garden" are included with your registration. Click [here](#) to register.

2017 International Master Gardener Conference

Master Gardeners from across the United States and Canada will gather in Portland, OR, for the International Master Gardener Conference July 10-14, 2017.

Early [registration](#) is open for the event, which will be held at the Oregon Convention Center. Anyone interested in gardening is invited. About 1,000 people are expected to attend.

More than 45 classes will be given in concurrent sessions. Classes embrace a broad range of topics, including garden design, edibles, bee health, disease and pest management, pruning, soils, and history.

Three keynote speakers are on the agenda: Dan Hinkley, plant explorer and former owner of Heronswood Nursery, Kingston, WA; Renee Shepherd, founder and owner of Renee's Garden in Felton, CA; and John Marzluff, professor of environmental and forest sciences at the University of Washington.

Other well-known presenters are Lee Reich, horticulturist and author; Sean Hogan, owner of Cistus Nursery in Sauvie Island, OR; Lucy Hardiman, Portland garden designer and author; Ramesh Sagili, assistant professor and bee expert at OSU; and Thomas Rainer, landscape architect, teacher, and author.

A [garden-themed movie festival](#), trade show, and 16 [full- and half-day tours](#) (each tour at an additional charge) are also planned.

Event sponsors include the Oregon State University Extension Master Gardener Program and the [Oregon Master Gardener Association](#).

Click [here](#) to visit the OSU Extension Service.



Sunshine News

Thank you to everyone who attended Carol Thielke's memorial service Oct. 28 at the Glen Rock Community Church and to all the Master Gardeners who demonstrated respect for Carol and her legacy by donating cuttings of plants from their gardens. Everyone was touched by our thoughtfulness and the outpouring of love for Carol.

I was with her and her family until the end. I will cherish my memories and my opportunity to know Carol for several years. She taught me (without formal teaching) so much about everything, including knowing when kindness is viewed as weakness and learning that sometimes I should say "no."

I myself grew up at an orphanage. She was my loyal friend and mother figure. I know that many MGs who got to know her will miss her very much.

Special thanks to Sheri Abel-Colao and Christiane Oliveri, both of the Class of 2013; John Walters, Class of 2012; and Joseph Cooper who created an opportunity to honor Carol by installing a table and bench with a plaque dedicated to her in the Thielke/Glen Rock Arboretum. It was the nicest thing to do, and it was accomplished at a time when she was able to be present for the dedication.

- **Albina Daukantas**

VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

Holiday Events at Garretson

Deck the halls: Thursday, Dec. 1, 10 am-2 pm

Join us as we decorate the Garretson Forge & Farm homestead, 4-02 River Road, Fair Lawn, for the holidays. Many hands are needed for this fun task. Get in the holiday spirit for an hour or two or more.

Dutch Christmas: Saturday, Dec. 3, 10 am-4 pm

Come see the house in all its splendor. A holiday sale will include craft vendors along with Garretson goods, gift shop goodies, our wonderful handcrafted wreaths, bake sale, and Sinter Klass holding court by the fireplace. Bring the little ones for a great photo op.



Melody Corcoran, Lida Gelman, and Dominick Badolato in front of Garretson's new fence.

Skylands Manor Holiday Open House

Volunteers are needed to be docents at the Skylands Manor Holiday Open House on Friday, Dec. 2 from 10-noon and noon-2 pm and on Sunday, Dec. 4 from 10 am-noon, noon-2 pm, and 2-4 pm.

Volunteers are also needed to break down the display on Monday, Dec. 5 from 9-11 am and 11 am-2 pm or until done.

Visit the Holiday Open House Dec. 1-4

Skylands Manor will be decorated floor-to-ceiling for "A Gardener's Holiday," this year's theme. Start the holiday season by attending the open house. You may want to visit the gift shop and Holiday Café, too.

Daytime tours are from 10 am-4 pm daily; the last ticket is sold at 4 pm. Tickets are available at the door. Cost is \$10 for adults; \$8 for seniors; and \$5 for children 6-12. Children under 6 are admitted free. No strollers allowed in the manor. The address is 1304 Sloatsburg Road, Ringwood.

Hermitage Happenings



It's black walnut harvesting time at The Hermitage, 335 N. Franklin Tpke., Ho-Ho-Kus. We've been ducking these big green projectiles for a few weeks now, so we have plenty to shell and shuck. Expert hands are needed to help us get at the tasty morsels. Please drop by Tuesday mornings if you can help.

Maple sugaring will take place, probably in late February when nighttime temperatures stay above 40 degrees. Two huge sugar maples stand at the front of The Hermitage, one of which was growing when George Washington visited in 1778. We hope to tap the trees, collect the syrup, boil it down, and bottle it. Contact Melody Corcoran at mmegnin@verizon.net to help.

The MGs have been asked to plant a demonstration "war garden" for Northwest Bergen History Day, Remembering World War I at The Hermitage May 20. Many Americans began "war gardens" in 1917 in response to food shortages in Europe and the decline of American food production as farmers left their fields to work in factories. Some of the most popular crops were beans, beets, cabbage, carrots, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, peas, tomatoes, turnips, squash, and Swiss chard.

Thanks to all the MGs who donated native plants, The Hermitage has been certified as a wildlife garden by the Bergen County Audubon Society.

Contact Monica Buesser at mkbuesser@gmail.com if you can plant seedlings over the winter to set out in early spring.

Volunteers are always welcome Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9:30 am-noon.

- Kathleen Sullivan kmsrhc@verizon.net

FARMERS MARKETS

Ramsey Farmers Market, Eric Smith Middle School, 2 Monroe St. www.ramseyfarmersmarket.org
Through March; Sundays 10 am-2 pm

GARDEN CLUB GRAPEVINE

Dec. 20 **7:45 pm, Glen Rock Garden Club**, Glen Rock Municipal Annex, 678 Maple Ave. Topic: Plants in history from the Victorian era to World War I at The Hermitage. Speaker: Kathleen Sullivan. Refreshments will be served. Contact via website at <http://glenrockgardenclub.org/>.

Contact Lucy Malka at lhalka@optonline.net or 201-791-3562 to supply information for the Garden Club Grapevine. *Publication deadline is no later than the 25th of the prior month.*

As a reminder, the Master Gardeners of Bergen County does not share or sell its mailing list to non-members. We keep all membership information confidential and for use by members only. If you receive email from other organizations, we did not give permission for their use of our membership list. We would appreciate it if our members would not share our list with non-members or use it for any unauthorized purposes as it is for official MG use only. When sending an email to the MG mailing list, please remember to address it using the "bcc" option instead of "to" in order to keep the list of recipients from being visible.

Please share photos of your volunteer work or of your garden. We would all like to see photos of Master Gardeners at work either at volunteer sites or in home gardens.