

From the Potting Shed May 2019

Master Gardeners of Bergen County

SAVE THE DATES

MG meeting – Tuesday, May 28

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

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

James Cooper presents: Growing figs in ground and in pots

Jim has been propagating, growing, and selling figs in New Jersey for more than 25 years. He is extremely passionate about his work. He will cover the following:

- Starting fig trees as cuttings;
- Growing them in pots and in the ground;
- Overwintering the figs; and
- The crazy world of fig buying and collecting.

Jim will present the different ways to purchase cuttings and rooted plants online and in nurseries. He will also discuss EBay, FigBid, Facebook groups, and



Jim Cooper

the fig forums where all the action is. Jim will explore a number of well-known nurseries run by fig fanatics, all vying for that rare and delicious fig that they can put into their collection.

He will show several videos on rooting techniques, and he'll take us on a visit to the famous (now shuttered) Belleclaire Nursery on Long Island that grew and sold some of the most sought-after fig trees in history. Jim will have a few starter plants for purchase.

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Jim is entirely self-taught. He said he learned about fig techniques through fig forums and YouTube videos.

He is a key grip in a camera and lighting department and works primarily on episodic TV shows and commercials, movies, music videos, and live concerts. He reported that, through his production contacts, he acquired a tree used in The Godfather movie. He takes care of that tree and trims it every winter when he makes cuttings and grows and then sells them.

You're invited: MG BBQ Tuesday, June 4

Eat, shop, and learn! Instead of the annual picnic at Van Saun Park — the usual spot for our end-of-season event we'll meet at Rohsler's Allendale Nursery from noon-2



pm Tuesday, June 4 for a triple header: A barbecue, shopping with a discount, and a lecture for which you'll earn education hours — plus a fun afternoon outdoors with like-minded people. Rohsler's is located at 100 Franklin Turnpike, Allendale.

Rohsler's staff will barbecue for us. However, attendees are asked to bring appetizers/salads or desserts based on the first letter of your last name.

- A to K: Bring desserts
- L to Z: Bring appetizers or salads

Shopping: You'll get a discount on your purchases above and beyond the usual 10% discount given to MGs.

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Lecture: Eric Rohsler will speak on a topic to be determined. You can receive education hours for attending by listing the lecture on your 2019 volunteer hours spreadsheet.

RSVP: Rohsler's needs a headcount for the BBQ.

Please let us know no later than Wednesday, May 29 if you'll attend the June 4 event. Send an email to <u>info@mgofbc.org</u> if you plan to attend.

Rutgers MG Association annual conference is Oct. 5

Mark your calendar for the Rutgers Master Gardener Association of NJ Annual State Conference Saturday, Oct. 5. This year's theme is "How Did Climate Change My Garden." You can earn 5 Rutgers Master Gardener CEUs for attending. More information will follow in future *Potting Sheds*.

From the President's Desk

By Carolyn Gretchen

Here we are in mid-spring. It's a time to celebrate, and also for MGs, a time for honors. We'd like to acknowledge Lida Gellman, our new Lifetime Member, who has



Gellman, our new Lifetime Member, who has logged in 20-plus years of service and more than 1,000 volunteer hours.

We'd also like to celebrate this year's two Award for Excellence winners: Donna Faustini, program chair, and Miriam Taub, corresponding secretary, co-editor of the *Potting Shed*, and garden club liaison. In addition, we'll be recognizing our 25- and 30-year members to be honored at the RMGANJ state conference Oct. 5.

On a much more somber note, the association offers its deepest sympathy and sincere condolences to Janet Schulz on the passing of her son, Jeff, on April 16.

Out in the garden

Don't you love the new green colors of the trees, the flowering trees and shrubs, and seeing new growth popping up? As we approach Mother's Day, there's plenty to keep us gardeners occupied. It's still not too late to separate your perennials and to engage in that rite of spring — planting your annuals and warm-weather vegetables. Keep after those weeds now so you don't have an epidemic in the summer. It's also a great time to plant new evergreens.

If you're an iris lover, don't forget to put in your order at the Presby Memorial Iris Gardens so you can pick up your rhizomes in August for planting. Don't miss all those excellent plant sales taking place now. Not only will you be helping those organizations, but you'll also be treating yourselves to some beautiful new additions to your gardens.

MG OF BC NEWS

Meet Peter Bernich, Class of 2016

By Miriam Taub

Peter "Pete" Bernich said he didn't know much about "business, per se" growing up, nevertheless he wound up spending his entire career in business as a certified public accountant, both in public accounting and in the private sector.

Pete, 77, grew up in West New York and North Bergen and went to St. Michael's High School in Union City, which was closed many years ago. His mother, he

recalled, grew flowers in a tiny front yard. "I didn't have a clue" about gardening, Pete said. "All I wanted to do was go out and play ball."

He graduated from Saint Peter's College (now Saint Peter's University), where he studied accounting because he was told it was "a pretty good career." Initially, Pete worked for small CPA firms but



Peter Bernich

in 1967 he joined Arthur Andersen, at the time one of the Big Eight public accounting firms. From there he went into private industry and worked in various financialrelated positions, such as in controller and chief financial officer roles, before retiring in 2014.

Though he was busy with work and raising a family, Pete had an interest in singing. In college, he sang in the Saint Peter's College glee club. It was in Sears at Paramus Park, he said, that he overheard a conversation about an upcoming spring concert by the Orpheus Club Men's Chorus. He jumped in, he said, to learn more about the group and then became a member. Come September, Pete will mark his 15th anniversary with the chorus, where he sings first tenor.

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The chorus, one of the oldest male choruses in the Northeast, performs at least four concerts a year. This year the chorus will sing at the VA home in Paramus in May; Valley Hospital in Ridgewood in June; Holland Christian Home in North Haledon in July; and the Ridgewood United Methodist Church Dec. 14 and 15. The men rehearse in the Georgian Room of CareOne at the Cupola, Paramus, Pete said, in exchange for "doing a little singing" for residents of the facility. They'll also participate in the Ridgewood Fourth of July parade.

The men sing both a cappella and with accompanists. Their repertoire can be anything from classical music to spirituals to Broadway show tunes to doo-wop. Pete also serves as the chorus's VP of administration. He corresponds with high school music teachers and guidance counselors about the chorus's annual \$2,000 scholarship awarded to a graduating high school senior who intends to study music at an institution of higher learning or on the college level.

It was through the chorus that Pete met Cliff Gerenz (Class of 1991) who, of course, told Pete about the MG program. "I thought it sounded interesting and here I am," said Pete who enrolled in the Class of 2016.

Pete volunteers at Thielke Arboretum of Glen Rock and described himself as a "grunt," most recently maintaining the trails and repairing fences to protect the native plants from the deer. He serves as a steward on the arboretum's Land Management Team, whose members — under the leadership of Jean Epiphan, the forest ecologist and stewardship director — plan assignments for the volunteers. Pete also volunteers at Washington Spring Garden.

At home in Woodcliff Lake Pete has been experimenting with the propagation of azaleas, forsythias, and euonymus to enhance his property and "save some bucks." Some of his efforts ended in failures, he admitted, but his successes are planted in his side and backyards.

Pete and his wife, Marie, will celebrate their 52nd wedding anniversary at the end of September. They grew up in the same neighborhood, about two blocks apart, in North Bergen. They reconnected years later in Paterson: Pete was en route to work and Marie was on her way to classes at Seton Hall's Paterson location. They have two children, Christine and Steve, who are both married and live in Chatham; and five grandchildren. Recently, Pete completed his first season as a volunteer tax aide for AARP.

Pete is also active in Our Lady Mother of the Church in Woodcliff Lake where he's a Eucharistic minister, a member of the Finance Committee, and a member of one of five "count teams" that tally the weekly collections and deposit the donations.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Recognition pins to be distributed at May meeting

By Donna Karpel

The annual process of confirming individual members on their anniversary of becoming a Master Gardener of Bergen County is finished for 2019. Recognition pins for members who completed five, 10, 15, and 20 years are ready to be distributed. Below is the list of members who will receive a pin for their anniversary.

If you're eligible to receive a pin and would like to pick it up at the May 28 meeting, please contact me at 201-327-8835 or <u>donna9189@gmail.com</u> prior to noon Monday, May 27 and I'll bring your pin to the meeting. If you were eligible for a pin last year and didn't pick it up, let me know and I'll bring the appropriate pin. If you're unsure whether you're to receive a pin this year or from last year, feel free to contact me. Pins will be distributed before the meeting begins.

Special congratulations to members who've been Master Gardeners for 25 and 30 years. They'll be honored and will receive their pins at the Rutgers Master Gardener Association of NJ Annual State Conference Oct. 5.

Help keep our lists current! If you know that former classmates or friends on the lists below have moved, please notify me. If you have their updated contact information, let me know that, too.

20-year pins, Class of 1998

Choby, Elizabeth Langer, Inge Maurer, Laura Wallace, Edith

15-year pins, Class of 2003

Czarnecki, Patricia Ford, Diane Toonkel, Jeff

10-year pins, Class of 2008 Cooper, Joseph Danzig, Suzanne

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5-year pins, Class of 2013

Cheddie, Dania Curtin, Lynn Karpel, Donna Ko, Josie Leibowitz, Paula O'Connor, Pat Oliveri, Christiane Sheridan, Sue Walenczyk, Bruce White, Wendi

Special congratulations to the following!

30-year pins, Class of 1989

Andrew, Joyce Lombardi, Ralph McDonnell, Betty

25-year pins, Class of 1994

Grill, John Wells, Doris

Lida Gellman named 'Lifetime Member'



Lida Gellman, second from right, was honored as a Lifetime Member of the MG of BC at the April meeting. From left: Carolyn Gretchen, president; Melody Corcoran, VP and volunteer site coordinator liaison; Lida; and Donna Karpel, volunteer records.

Lida Gellman, Class of 1999, has been named a "Lifetime Member" of the MG of BC. This designation is given to those who've been members of the MG of BC for 20 years and have performed more than 1,000 hours of volunteer service. She has been site coordinator of Garretson Forge and Farm for 10-plus years and was one of the MG of BC's two winners of the 2015 Award for Excellence.

Lida (pronounced Leda) recalled how Joel Flagler told her class that he'd had a request from Garretson for volunteer help. A group from her class met with the president of Garretson's board of trustees and were given a tour of the house and grounds. "We saw what a gem this place was and that was the beginning of Garretson as a volunteer site," she said. "It was a perfect match for me and my interests, and I have been volunteering there ever since."

Lida said she's always been interested in herbs and vegetables and pointed out that Garretson grows more than 75 types of medicinal and culinary herbs that date back to the 18th and 19th centuries and grows a large and varied amount of organic vegetables. Much of this produce, she said, is donated to a local food pantry.

"As site coordinator, much of my time is spent planning the day's activities, providing instruction, and managing the work that is done," Lida explained. "Garretson has always attracted a good number of Master Gardeners so my days there are busy and productive. This year the farm is celebrating its 300th year so we are extra busy planning for special events to celebrate this milestone."

Meanwhile at home in her Fort Lee mid-rise, Lida reported that she grows "loads of houseplants" but no vegetables. "I get all the vegetable gardening I can handle at Garretson," she said.

MG volunteers meet at Garretson on Thursdays from 10 am-2 pm and the second and fourth Sundays from 1-4 pm.

Here's the revised syllabus for the 2019 MG program

All MG classes are from 10:30 am-12:30 pm in the 4thfloor learning center at 1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack, unless noted. Any MG may attend. Here are the dates, topics, and instructors for the remainder of the season:

- May 3, Vegetable culture and IPM; Pete Nitzsche, Rutgers.
- May 10, Pruning hands-on at Thielke Arboretum of Glen Rock for Class of 2019 students only; Jean Epiphan.
- May 17, 10 am. Spring planting with Bergen County Environmental Council at Westvale Park, Westwood; Joel Flagler.
- May 24, Ticks and Lyme disease; Joel Flagler.
- May 24, Insects of ornamentals, best herbaceous perennials; Joel Flagler.
- May 31, Stormwater management, rain gardens; Joel Flagler.
- June 7, Field trip to Skylands; meet at 10:30 am in Parking Lot A for a walking tour, rain or shine.
- June 14, Nuisance wildlife IPM; Madeline Flahive DiNardo, Rutgers.

OUT AND ABOUT

Garretson Forge and Farm



From left: Arta Pagano, Jeannie Yoo, Barbara Patete, Linda Kochenburger, Melody Corcoran, April Barth, and Lida Gellman, site coordinator.

MG volunteers are promoting Garretson's 300th anniversary, which will be celebrated at the annual spring festival from 10 am-4 pm Saturday, May 4. The festival will feature open-hearth cooking demonstrations; spinning demonstrations; members of the 3rd New Jersey Regiment Revolutionary War re-enactors; Maypole dancing; tours of the home and gardens; and the annual organic herb and native perennials plant sale. Garretson is located at 4-02 River Road, Fair Lawn. Visit the <u>website</u>.

The Hermitage

The Hermitage is one of 12 sites you can visit with one \$10 ticket during History Day 2019 sponsored by the Northwest Bergen History Coalition. The event will run from 11 am-4 pm Saturday, May 4.

In addition to the Hermitage, each of the following historic sites will feature unique textiles, artifacts, and ephemera and share information about Northwest Bergen County's history: John Fell House, (Allendale); Mahwah Museum, Old Station Museum (Mahwah); Van Allen House (Oakland); Old Stone House (Ramsey); Schoolhouse Museum (Ridgewood); Hopper-Goetschius Museum (Upper Saddle River); Waldwick Museum of Local History, Harvey Springstead Memorial Museum (Waldwick); and Wyckoff Historical Society, Zabriskie House (Wyckoff).

Fee: \$10 for adults; free for children 16 and younger. You can buy tickets at the above sites May 4. Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit these historic sites.

Overpeck County Park

The Hackensack Riverkeeper and Teaneck Creek Conservancy — along with the Bergen County Parks Department — will sponsor the 6th annual EarthFest Overpeck celebration from 1-5 pm Sunday, May 19 at Overpeck County Park. You can enter the park from Fort Lee Road in Leonia or Challenger Road in Ridgefield Park. The majority of activities will occur near the amphitheater.

Events include NJ batman Joe D'Angeli of the Wildlife Conservation and Education Center; birds of prey presentation by Flat Rock Brook Nature Center; children's activities; a rain barrel workshop; "green" and non-profit vendors; and food trucks.

For more information or to sign up for the rain barrel workshop run by Green Mojo EcoConsulting, click <u>here</u>; \$10 from every rain barrel sold will be donated to the Hackensack Riverkeeper.

Frelinghuysen Arboretum

Are you a mum kind of gardener? Learn how to obtain chrysanthemums, details of chrysanthemum cultivation, potting your plants, care and feeding for maximum bloom, and grooming your plants for exhibition.

This free mum program will run from 10 am-noon Saturday, May 18 in the arboretum's Haggerty Center, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. No preregistration is needed. Visit the arboretum's <u>website.</u>

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

Do you recognize me?

By Edith Wallace

Datura, aka jimson weed or thorn apple, usually has white trumpet-shaped flowers that open late in the day. The flowers may be purple. The fruit is a prickly eggshaped capsule. The name jimson weed comes from



about 1680 when Jamestown residents fed a salad containing datura leaves to British soldiers who developed hallucinations and convulsions.

Datura is native to tropical America. In New Jersey, I've seen it only in gardens (NJBG) and in my friend's garden. It is a weed most likely found in corn and soybean fields. It has killed cattle and sheep. I have seen it as a weed in Kenya. In Haiti, it's known as the zombie cucumber.

In India, the seeds were used to make the equivalent of a Mickey Finn (a drink containing a psychoactive drug or incapacitating agent). In the United States, a Mickey Finn would contain opium or chloral hydrate. Beware of accepting salads or drinks from strangers!

Contain yourself!



Charlie Nardozzi poses with one of his books that were available for purchase after his presentation about container gardening at our April meeting. Charlie accompanied his lecture with dozens of colorful overheads of containers large and small holding annuals, perennials, herbs, vegetables, shrubs, and trees. Visit his website for videos, newsletters, information about trees, shrubs, flowers, his garden tours, and more.

PLANT SALES

May 3-6, hours vary: Van Vleck House and Gardens, 21 Van Vleck St., Montclair. Unique perennials, shrubs, trees. Visit the <u>plant sale page</u> for hours and other information.

May 4, 8 am-2 pm: Garden Club of Oakland, parking lot of Ponds Reformed Church, 341 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland. Annuals, perennials, hanging baskets.

May 4-5, 9 am-4 pm: Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. Members shopping



from 4-7 pm May 3. One of the biggest sales in the tristate area. Visit the <u>plant sale page</u> for more information.

May 4, 5, and 12, 10 am-4 pm: NJ Botanical Garden/Skylands,

Carriage House visitor center, 2 Morris Road, Ringwood. Members preview 5:30 pm May 3. Lush perennials, colorful annuals, hanging baskets, Rutgers tomatoes, vegetables, herbs, trees, shrubs, collector's items.

May 4-12, hours vary: Garden Club of Teaneck, east end of Lindbergh Boulevard, off Glenwood Avenue, Teaneck. Herbs, vegetables, tomatoes, annuals, geraniums, figs, houseplants, many varieties of coleus. Click <u>here</u> for hours and directions.

May 10-11, 10 am-4 pm: Tenafly Garden Club, two locations — Davis Johnson Park and Gardens and across from the Tenafly Post Office, Tenafly Road, Tenafly. Large selection of plants. More information: 201-568-8254.

May 10-12, hours vary: Rutgers Spring Flower Fair, Rutgers Gardens, 112 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick. Find your favorite varieties as well as unique and/or difficult-to-find plants. Visit the <u>flower fair page</u> for hours and other information.

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May 11, 8 am until sold out: Garden Club of Bergenfield, Cooper's Pond, 133-153 W. Church St., Bergenfield. Annual bedding flats, patio planters, coleus trees, caladiums, hanging baskets, geranium pots.

May 11, 9 am-1 pm rain or shine: Glen Rock Garden Club, Main Line train station parking lot, Rock Road, Glen Rock. Member-grown and more, annuals, perennials, hanging baskets, tomato plants, herbs.

May 11, 9 am-noon: Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club, town green, Sycamore Avenue and Franklin Turnpike next to the Ho-Ho-Kus Inn. Designer pot gardens (new this

year), hanging baskets, flats and pots of annuals, perennials from members' gardens, gently used gardenrelated items, bake sale. Proceeds benefit club's horticultural scholarship to one or two students of \$1,500 each.

May 11, 9 am-2 pm, Ramsey Area Garden Club, train station, East Main Street, Ramsey. Perennials (many from members' gardens), hanging baskets, herbs, annuals.

May 18, 8 am-noon rain or shine: Allendale Garden Club, Lee Memorial Library, 500 W. Crescent Ave., Allendale. Featuring locally grown perennials from members' gardens and from NJ nurseries.

VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

The Hermitage



Photos by Kathleen Sullivan.

From tap to bottle: After tapping 18 trees at the Hermitage in February and collecting sap for the next four weeks, MGs filtered the sap into the delicious, all-natural syrup in the Hermitage kitchen. At left, Lynn Curtin, MG site coordinator, checked the temperature of the boiling sap, which needs to reach 219 degrees F before it turns into syrup. Center, Keith Mazanec poured boiling sap into the filter with help from Sandi Liberti, both from the Class of 2019. At right, Carol Ennis, Lynette Stewart, and Lisa Yoler were on the bottling brigade. Carol and Lisa are in the Class of 2019. An eight-ounce bottle of syrup is the thank-you gift given to anyone who makes a donation of \$15 or more to the Hermitage. Mail checks to the Hermitage, 335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423.

Thielke Arboretum at Glen Rock

By Laura DeFlora

Imagine seeing a swallowtail butterfly for the first time, or learning how pond life is dependent on creatures too small to see. Volunteer docents introduce school-age children to sights, sounds, and concepts in nature through outdoor classrooms and experiential learning.

Thielke offers programs for all class levels as well as scouting groups. In addition, docents guide tours for both children and adults. Volunteers don't need a background in teaching or biology, just a love of nature and a willingness to learn.

Docents generally are needed on weekdays in the mornings or afternoons based on when groups want to visit the arboretum. The arboretum is located at 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock.

If interested, contact me at <u>lauradeflora@gmail.com</u> or 201-960-9358. Please don't call after 7 pm.

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 <u>Miriam Taub</u>.

- May 2 7:30 pm, Garden Club of Harrington Park, upstairs in the Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: Gerri Gibney, club founder and president. Topic: A brief history of garden furniture from stone seats to fashionable furnishings. Refreshments to follow program.
- May 6 11:30 am, Tenafly Garden Club, Davis Johnson Park and Gardens, Tenafly. Speaker: MG Edith Wallace. Topic: The mystery writer's garden. A \$10 donation is requested toward the club's annual scholarship given to two students studying horticulture with Bruce Crawford at the Rutgers Gardens summer program. For more information, call 201-568-8254.
- May 6 **7 pm, Sundial Garden Club,** Meadowbrook School, 50 Piermont Ave., Hillsdale. Speaker: MG and landscape designer Arnie Friedman. Topic: From gardener to landscape designer.
- May 87 pm, Wyckoff Area Garden Club joint meeting with Garden Club of Oakland, Oakland Senior
Center, 20 Lawlor Drive, Oakland. Speaker: Don Torino, president, Bergen County Audubon Society.
Topic: How to attract more butterflies to your garden.
- May 8 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: Randi Eckel, entomologist and owner, <u>Toadshade Wildflower Farm</u>. Topic: If you plant it, they will come – supporting and attracting native wildlife. Randi will bring a selection of NJ-grown native plants and seeds for sale.
- May 13 7:30 pm, Garden Club of Bergenfield, Cooper's Pond, 133-153 W. Church St., Bergenfield. Speaker: Patricia August, club member. Topic: Using home phototherapy to jump start spring gardening and save money.
- May 14 7 pm, Ramsey Area Garden Club, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave., corner of Woodland Avenue, Ramsey. Speaker: Don Torino, president, Bergen County Audubon Society. Topic: Facts about hummingbirds and how to attract them to your garden (rescheduled from February due to snow).
- May 20 7:30 pm, Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club, Ho-Ho-Kus Community Church, 400 Warren Ave., Ho-Ho-Kus. Entrance on Sycamore Avenue. Speaker: MG Arnie Friedman. Topic: Landscape design with respect for the environment. For more information, call Susan Robertson, 201-652-0729.
- May 227 pm, Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club, senior citizen meeting room, 320 Boulevard,
Hasbrouck Heights. Speaker: Terry McGarty, day lily hybridizer for 30 years. Topic: Hybridizing
day lilies. Refreshments and greetings at 6:30 pm.

The Master Gardeners of Bergen County doesn't share or sell its email/mailing list/membership directory to nonmembers or to other organizations. Our membership information is confidential and for use by members for official MG use only. Please don't share our list with non-members or use it for any unauthorized or commercial purposes. When sending an email to the MG list, address it using the "bcc" option instead of "to" in order to keep the list of recipients from being visible.