



From the Potting Shed February 2020

Master Gardeners of Bergen County

SAVE THE DATE

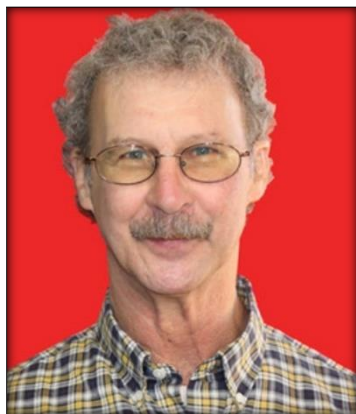
MG meeting – Tuesday, Feb. 25

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

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

Michael Wilson presents: *ABC's of rock gardens*

Michael Wilson, a specialist in rock gardening, will provide a slide presentation explaining three critical subjects for the successful culture of alpine plants in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area. Part 1 “alpine ecology” explains the native habitat, while Part 2, “building and maintaining,” explains growing alpine plants at low elevations. Part 3, the “compendium of plants,” lists those plants that perform well in our area.



Michael Wilson

Michel is the horticultural laboratory technician for Cornell University Cooperative Extension Service of Rockland County and an adjunct professor of environmental studies at Ramapo College.

He is a member of the US Study Team for the Aral Sea Disaster in Uzbekistan and has researched the environmental impact from the cultivation of cotton in that region. Michael retired in 2009 after 20 years at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, where he managed the rock gardens, and previously trained at the NJ Botanical Garden.

Michael, who grows alpine plants at home, has been a member of the [North American Rock Garden Society](#) since 1992 and is active in the Watnong Chapter. Michael has also hiked many alpine summits in the northeastern United States, Newfoundland, Colorado, Iceland, and Uzbekistan.

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Links are clickable and are noted in [blue](#).

From the President's Desk

By Melody Corcoran

By now, all your seed and gardening catalogs should be well-thumbed and dog-eared. Winter is the time to dream about and plan for the next gardening season. Will this spring bring us good weather, the glorious return of our favorite perennials, and critters that decide to eat the neighbor's plants instead of ours? As gardeners we are always optimistic, but I will still keep my fingers crossed.



If you did not clean and sharpen your gardening tools at the end of the season last year (and I confess that I did not), now is the time to do it. A sharp tool is safer and easier to use than a dull one. There are many instructional videos on YouTube to choose from and plenty of other sites online with cleaning and sharpening advice.

So, if you've ordered your plants and seeds and sharpened and cleaned your tools, there is one more thing that I can think of that needs to be done before spring: Make sure that your tetanus immunization is up to date. The bacteria that causes tetanus, *Clostridium tetani*, is an anaerobe that lives in the soil. Any cut or scrape while gardening could potentially be a hazard.

You don't have to step on a rusty nail to be at risk for tetanus. A booster tetanus vaccination is needed every 10 years for adequate protection. Click [here](#) to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for more information and to find out which tetanus vaccine is right for you. Most health insurance plans will cover the cost.

Have a happy and healthy gardening season.

Meet April Barth, Class of 2017

By Miriam Taub

April Barth began volunteering at Garretson Forge and Farm several decades before she became a Master Gardener. The Fair Lawn resident has been involved at Garretson for almost 30 years. She was president of Garretson Forge & Farm Restoration, Inc. from 1998 through 2005 and since then has volunteered as farm manager and is a first VP of the organization.



April Barth

April brims with facts and figures about the farm and homestead on River Road in Fair Lawn. For example, she said, when River Road is under water, closed to traffic, and area properties are flooded, the packed-earth cellar at Garretson keeps the homestead dry.

The historic property, dating to 1719 (2019 marked its 300th anniversary) is owned by Bergen County and maintained by volunteers of the restoration group. April explained that the mission of the trustees of the restoration group and its volunteers is to keep the homestead open to the public and foster local history and sustainable farming practices. While George Washington never slept at Garretson and the house plays no pivotal role in history, April noted, "It's a wonderful treasure to still have this property."

April grew up in Midland Park and Hawthorne. Her Italian grandparents lived in Hawthorne and maintained a garden. Her grandmother preserved the produce they grew, which included tomatoes, cherries, and currants. Meanwhile, April's parents cultivated a victory garden, and her job as a child was to help with weeding and harvesting.

After Hawthorne High School, April attended Wilson College in Chambersburg, PA, where she obtained a degree in modern languages. She studied German literature and politics at the University of Freiburg in Germany for a year. Later, in her publishing career, she pursued graduate studies in mathematics at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she took every course offered in cognitive development.

After college, April got a job working in publishing, writing and editing marketing pieces for scholarly and college textbooks. She took a break to raise her sons. She returned to publishing as an editor in elementary school mathematics working for major textbook publishers including Harper & Row, McGraw Hill, and Silver Burdett Ginn. Working with mathematicians, April said, "My job was to make math accessible to children."

In the late 1980s, April had the time to pursue the type of gardening she couldn't do in her own tree-covered backyard in the Radburn section of town. "I like the shade garden," she said, "but I also wanted to grow sun-loving plants." She was put in touch with Pat Idone (now president of Garretson Forge & Farm Restoration) who welcomed April as a garden volunteer. "I was interested in herbs, particularly medicinal herbs, which fit in nicely with the mission and interpretation of the homestead," April said.

Since there were few volunteers at Garretson at the time, April and Pat pooled their efforts starting with the herb garden. Over time, they tripled its size by adding medicinal and culinary herbs. Today Garretson boasts about 85 varieties of herbs, which are potted and sold during Garretson events. A large fenced-in vegetable garden provides organic produce, which is donated to an emergency food pantry.

The volunteers plant only what would have been grown on Dutch-colonial farms in the 1700s and 1800s, such as asparagus; strawberries; lazy housewife beans; bloody butcher corn; soapwort; comfrey; skirret; elecampane (used to treat consumption); Good-King-Henry, a spinach-like vegetable rich in iron and vitamin C; lovage; and borage. One exception to this rule of planting only herbs and vegetables from 200 years ago, April said, is butternut squash, which is grown on the property because it's a favorite of Lida Gellman, MG site coordinator.

It was after April retired and was free of the pressure of work that she enrolled in the MG Class of 2017. With gardening, she said, "There's always something to learn. You never know everything. That's one of the pleasures of being in a gardening community."

Among April's other interests are reading (she belongs to a book club); taking care of her grandchildren ages 2 and 5; and cooking for family and friends. She does some traveling each year and loves road trips. During Garretson's spring and fall festivals, April demonstrates open-hearth cooking using 18th- and 19th-century recipes and methods and food from the garden. She always lets children help in colonial farm kitchen activities.

In 2018, Master Gardeners reported 1,327 volunteer hours at Garretson Forge and Farm. More hours were spent at Garretson than any other MG of BC volunteer site.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Volunteer hours are overdue; remit now!

By Donna Karpel

Your 2019 volunteer hours were due in January.

To maintain your certified Master Gardener status, each year you must send in a record of your 25 volunteer hours and 10 education hours. Without completing and reporting both the full volunteer and education hours you are not considered certified. *Don't lose your certified Master Gardener status!*

There are two ways to report your hours:

1. Excel form: The Excel form can be used on any PC and emailed to me. This is the easiest and *most accurate* way to track hours. Do not create your own spreadsheet.
2. Paper form: The paper form must be mailed (the address is on the form), and you need to make a copy for records. Please write neatly. *If I can't read it, I can't enter your information.*

Both the Excel and paper forms can be found on the right side of the home page of our [website](#) under "Volunteer Reporting." *No password is needed to access the forms.*

Don't use the online reporting system as it's not ready for data entry.

When using the Excel form, change the file name from "V&EAR Email Form" and save with your name and year of reporting. Send the entire report as one spreadsheet. Do not separate your education and volunteer hours into two or more reports. ***Don't send your file as a pdf or place it on a shared (Google) drive.*** Enter only one date per line, especially if you're submitting a paper report. Again, if I can't read it, I can't enter your information.

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.;
- Up to three webinars.

Don't include any of the following:

- Travel time, lunch, or socializing;
- Tours of other MG gardens, Garden Conservancy open garden tours;

- Online research and reading (online or magazines, books, etc.).

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

Reminder

Only paid-up members will receive the *Potting Shed* newsletter as of March.

VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

The Hermitage

Volunteers needed for maple sugaring event

In preparation for the annual maple sugaring event Feb. 15, the Hermitage has scheduled an instructional meeting for volunteer MGs the day before. The Hermitage is located at 335 N. Franklin Turnpike, Ho-Ho-Kus.

Come to the Hermitage from 1-3 pm Friday, Feb. 14 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. Dress appropriately for the weather as you'll be taken around the grounds to see the 15 maple trees to be tapped.



The finished product

The maple sugaring event will be 1-4 pm Saturday, Feb. 15. 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. 16.

From Feb. 16 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.

If you missed our January meeting . . .



Chris Rubino of Monrovia narrated a slide show with gorgeous new plants and shrubs during our January meeting. For a copy of the presentation, which also contains names of garden centers, flower shows, and gardens and arboreta both locally and around the United States, send an email to [Miriam Taub](mailto:Miriam.Taub@monrovia.com) with the subject line "Monrovia."

Note: You may not use Chris's photos online or in any presentations.

OUT AND ABOUT

Frelinghuysen Arboretum

These events are held in arboretum's Haggerty Center, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. Visit the [website](#).

Orchids, bromeliads, and ferns: Feb. 9, 1-2 pm

Discover the world of air plants as you watch this design demonstration by staff member Catherine Allison.

Cost: \$15 per person. Earn 1.0 Rutgers MG CEUs. To register, call the arboretum at 973-326-7601 from 9 am-4:30 pm.

Nonstop plants - a garden for 365 days: Feb. 15, 2-3:30 pm (snow date Feb. 22)

Margaret Roach has worked for more than 25 years to make her garden in the Hudson Valley-Berkshires area a visual treat every day of the year. Meet the plants and the philosophy that make it happen. Her book, "A Way to Garden," originally released in 1998, has been updated and will be available for signing.

Cost: \$30 members/\$40 non-members. Earn 1.5 Rutgers MG CEUs. To register, click [here](#). Then scroll down to Feb. 15 in the left column.

Let's talk perennials: Feb. 23, 1-2:30 pm

Ann Fahey, the arboretum's superintendent of horticulture education, introduces you to some beautiful perennials that will bring color to your garden throughout the seasons. Bring a photograph of your garden, and she will give you helpful hints to customize your space.

Cost: \$20 per person. Earn 1.5 Rutgers MG CEUs. To register, call the arboretum at 973-326-7601 from 9 am-4:30 pm.

Laurelwood Arboretum

50th Earth Day event - Douglas Tallamy: April 19, 2:30 pm

Douglas Tallamy, author, professor at the University of Delaware, and expert in plant-animal interactions, will speak at the Knippenberg Center for Education, 725 Pines Lake Drive West, Wayne.

Cost: \$30 members/\$55 non-members (includes a one-year membership to the Friends of the Laurelwood Arboretum). Click [here](#) to buy tickets; limited seating.

Van Vleck House and Gardens

Online plant presale: Feb. 10-21

You'll have a limited time to purchase unique items online that will not be available during the May plant sale. This sale includes shrubs, trees, and milkweed for pickup this summer. To view the entire list of plants for purchase, including NJ natives, check the Van Vleck [website](#) beginning Feb 3.

THIS AND THAT

A view of the Rockies from your couch

Joseph Cooper, Class of 2008, has posted three videos on YouTube featuring the Rocky Mountains from 6,450 to 14,150 feet above sea level. You can experience these majestic views of the Rockies without hiking boots and a backpack.

Pikes Peak on [YouTube](#)

At 14,115 feet above sea level, Pikes Peak is the highest summit of the Southern Front Range of the Rocky Mountains in North America. It is one of the world's most famous mountains and can be seen from more than 100 miles on clear day. Located in Pike National Forest 12 miles west of downtown Colorado Springs, the summit can be accessed by Pikes Peak Highway, a 19-mile toll road that runs from Cascade to the summit in El Paso County. Visit the park's [website](#).

Red Rocks Amphitheatre on [YouTube](#)

Located in Red Rocks Park as part of the Denver Mountain Parks system, Red Rocks Amphitheatre is an open-air venue built into a rock structure. Several large outcrops angle outward with seating for 9,525 people in between. The surrounding Red Rocks Park covers 868 acres and is 6,450 feet above sea level.

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The Red Rocks Amphitheatre opened in 1941 and has featured such diverse artists as Nat King Cole, Harry Belafonte, the Beatles, Beach Boys, Paul Simon, Diana Ross, Carlos Santana, Eagles, Elton John, U2, Tom Petty, ABBA, Steve Martin, Bryan Adams, Matchbox 20, Billie Eilish, and OneRepublic. Visit the park's [website](#).



Photo by Joseph Cooper

A breathtaking view within the Garden of the Gods, Colorado Springs.

Garden of the Gods on [YouTube](#)

Garden of the Gods is a 480-acre public park in Colorado Springs. In 1879, Charles Elliott Perkins purchase 240 acres and established a home in the Garden of the Gods. He later added to the property, but never built on it, preferring to leave his wonderland in its natural state for the enjoyment of the public. Perkins died in 1907 and, in 1909, Perkins' children donated the property to Colorado Springs. It would be known forever as the Garden of the Gods where it is to remain free to the public. Visit the park's [website](#).

CONFERENCES AND WEBINARS

Community Garden Conference

March 7, 8:30 am-4 pm. Snow date: March 8. Haggarty Center, Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township.

The Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Morris County present a conference relevant to community gardeners, garden managers, and those trying to establish a new community garden. Participants choose four of the following six topics when registering: Weed ID and Management; Straw Bale Gardening; Early Season Vegetable Gardening; Finding and Securing Funding Sources; Culinary Herbs; and Succession Planting.

Cost: \$60, includes lunch. To register, click [here](#). Attendees are asked to bring a donation for the Interfaith Food Pantry of Morris County. Earn 5.0 Rutgers MG CEUs.

Rutgers Home Gardeners School

March 21, 9 am-4 pm. Hickman Hall, 89 George St., New Brunswick.

The Home Gardeners School is made up of 40 individual workshop sessions covering an array of horticulture topics. You can choose four workshops — two in the morning and two in the afternoon. However, many workshops have been sold out. Click the link below to see the workshops available.

Cost for certified MGs: \$70 on or before Feb. 29; use promo code **MG2020**. You must fax proof of your MG certification to 732-932-8726. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

MG discount program: Get a 10% discount on Rutgers landscape classes and the Home Gardeners School. Click [here](#) for the form.

Note about parking at Rutgers: All visitors must register their vehicles online with the Rutgers Department of Transportation Services. A link will be provided via email when you register. Be sure to register your car before arriving on campus.

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You can earn a maximum of three education hours per year by attending webinars.

Gardening simplified - tips for sensational gardens

Feb. 4, 2-3 pm. Speaker: Kerry Ann Mendez, lecturer and educator; one-hour presentation includes lecture notes and 24/7 access after the live broadcast. Cost: \$12. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Mosquitoes and ticks - safety and control

Available for approximately three months on YouTube. Created by the Middlesex County Mosquito Extermination Commission. The two videos are about 90 minutes long in total. Click here for [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#). Earn 1.5 Rutgers MG CEUs for viewing both parts.

Note: As per Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County, these videos are not intended for promotion or social-media sharing.

HORTICULTURE

Cercospora leaf spot, a disease that affects beets and Swiss chard, has become hard to manage in South Jersey. The soil-borne pathogen can live two years in plant debris on the ground and on many nearby weak hosts.

The fungus is resistant to typical fungicide interventions. Initial symptoms include tan spots on the leaves and purple along the margin. Wet weather favors the disease, especially in warm weather. Click [here](#) for instructions from a recent Rutgers Plant & Pest Advisory on how to control cercospora.

FARMERS MARKETS

Ramsey Farmers Market, Sundays, 10 am-2 pm.
Indoors at 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](#).***

- Feb. 3** **11:30 am, Tenafly Garden Club**, Davis Johnson Park and Gardens, Tenafly. Speaker: Kathy Sauerborn, Bergen County Audubon Society. Topic: Gardening for hummingbirds.
- Feb. 3** **7 pm, Sundial Garden Club**, Meadowbrook Elementary School, 50 Piermont Ave., Hillsdale. Speaker: Lisa Skoglund, Montvale beekeeper. Topic: A year in the life of a beekeeper.
- Feb. 6** **7:30 pm, Garden Club of Harrington Park**, upstairs in the Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: MG Janet Schulz. Topic: Tips for a successful garden. Refreshments to follow program. Visit the club's [website](#).
- Feb. 10** **7:30 pm, Garden Club of Bergenfield**, Cooper's Pond, 133-153 W. Church St., Bergenfield. Speaker: Joe Verga, Bergenfield Environmental Committee. Topic: Update on some of the [Sustainable Jersey](#) projects and encouraging youth to participate in projects such as community beautification.
- Feb. 11** **7 pm, Ramsey Garden Club**, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave., corner of Woodland Avenue, Ramsey. Speaker: MG Arnie Friedman, NYBG certified landscape designer. Topic: Garden details and the use of stone enhancements.
- Feb. 12** **7:30 pm, Bergen-Passaic chapter, Native Plant Society of New Jersey**, NY-NJ Trail Conference headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road (Route 202), Mahwah. Speaker: Paul Kubarych, landscape architect. Topic: Designing with native plants.
- Feb. 13** **7 pm, Garden Club of Teaneck**, Rodda Center (a sign will direct you to the meeting room), 250 Colonial Court, Teaneck; enter on Palisade Avenue. Use upper parking lot for handicap accessibility. Speaker: Tony Bracco, [Bracco Farms](#). Topic: Adapting small-farm methods to a backyard garden. Visit the club's [website](#).

- Feb. 18** **7:45 pm, Glen Rock Garden Club**, Municipal Annex, 678 S. Maple Ave., Glen Rock. Speaker: MG Cheryl Wardrop, club member and orchid expert. Topic: Orchids are not scary. Light refreshments served. Visit the club's [website](#).
- Feb. 19** **7 pm, Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club**, 2nd floor, library meeting room, 320 Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights. Speaker: Mark Gussen, director, Closter Nature Center. Topic: The amazing world of mushrooms. Greetings and refreshments at 6:30 pm.
- Feb. 24** **7:30 pm, Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club**, Ho-Ho-Kus Community Church, 400 Warren Ave., entrance on Sycamore Avenue, Ho-Ho-Kus. Speaker: Walter Perry, Perry's Florist and Gardens. Topic: New impatiens hybrids.

The Master Gardeners of Bergen County doesn't share or sell its email/ mailing list/ membership directory to non-members 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.