



 THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER

ANNUAL REPORT
2017-2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter to Members and Supporters,
pgs 2-3

Volunteers and Lifetime Members,
p 3

Looking Ahead, p 4

By the Numbers, pgs 4-5

Project Spotlights, pgs 7-9

Donors, p 5

Project Spotlights, pgs 6-7

Contact Information, p 8

EXTENSION MASTER
GARDENERS ARE YOUR
NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS
WHO SHARE UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH-BASED
HORTICULTURE INFORMATION
AND PROMOTE
HEALTHY LANDSCAPES,
HEALTHY PEOPLE AND A
HEALTHY PLANET.

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Cover Photo taken by: Beret Halverson

TO OUR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

Program Highlights

Every fall, this annual report provides the opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the Master Gardener staff and volunteers across Vermont over the past year. As this report went into development, UVM students were moving back onto campus and getting ready for the new school year. I enjoy watching parents and students because it reminds me of the day I moved into the UVM dorms as a first-year student which leads me to reflect on how I came to learn about Extension and the land-grant mission. As an undergraduate, I didn't know UVM was a land-grant university, nor did I know about Extension. I learned about the land-grant system several years after graduation, when I started working on school gardens for the Oregon Master Gardener Program. Master Gardeners are well-known across the country, yet many people are unaware that the program's mission is tied directly to that of their state land-grant university Extension program. My experience is not unique; many people do not know that their state university is a land-grant university with an Extension program. Here in Vermont, UVM Extension's purpose is to cultivate healthy communities and our mission is to provide and facilitate research, education and outreach with our partners for the people of Vermont.

Extension Master Gardeners (EMG's) are an extension of the University, helping cultivate a healthier Vermont by creating and maintaining sustainable landscapes, and teaching others how to do the same. Extension Master Gardener's Program priorities are cultivating healthy plants and people. Each year, EMG volunteers help create resilient communities across Vermont by teaching integrated pest management (IPM) to manage pests and diseases, and reduce pesticides; sharing their knowledge on sustainable gardening practices; teaching horticulture skills; working to preserve and restore habitats; managing invasive species and conserving native species; growing sustainable food; conserving water and minimizing runoff; and working hard to assure there is access to green space for all Vermonters. This past year, an incredible 296 Master Gardener volunteers spent 11,791 hours making 33,373 contacts with people across Vermont. This amazing work was done by volunteers who are passionate stewards of the environment, and who use university research to improve their communities. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this mission.

Program Updates

Both Master Gardener and Master Composter courses have moved to the national *eXtension.org* online learning platform. This provides a more engaging and interactive way to share information with online students. We have been working with the Extension Media Team to create a fresh look for our marketing materials. Together we launched a new website, created new logos and brochures, and added an online EMG apparel store to the website. Additionally, we launched an annual conference that will be held each fall and will rotate between the northern and southern regions of the state. Last year's conference, "Gardening in the Off Season," was held at the North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier, and this year's conference, "Six Seasons of Gardening," was held on October 13 at the Fourth Corner Foundation in Windham, Vt.

Our local volunteer support staff, Kitty Werner and Cindy Heath, work hard behind the scenes to enhance EMG volunteer benefits and continuing education opportunities. Their list of accomplishments includes launching a statewide newsletter, creating a comprehensive list of educational resources, launching a nursery discount program, and working with local chapters to add new educational events to the calendar. They just wrapped up their second year of summer/fall project visits, which is done in an effort to connect with each project leader and support their efforts. Lisa Chouinard, our administrative assistant, has been doing a wonderful job making

sure the Helpline runs smoothly and effectively as well as managing UVM business functions and supporting volunteers, students and people interested in our program get connected and involved.

Our thanks to all volunteers for a very successful program year.

**--Beret Halverson
Lisa Chouinard
Cindy Heath
Ann Hazelrigg**

2018 EXCEPTIONAL VOLUNTEERS & AWARDS

Exceptional Volunteers

This year's report honors and recognizes the following volunteers who went above and beyond in their counties. Thank you!

Robilee Smith (Chittenden), Helpline Mapping Project

Margery Salmon (Rutland), New Helpline Intern and Active Rutland Chapter Member

Karen Patno (Chittenden), Champlain Valley Fair Coordinator, Farmers Market Volunteer, Special Projects

The Southern Region Conference Planning Committee: **Marie Alfieri** (Windham), **Cindy Heath** (Windham), **Sandy Kuehn** (Rutland), **Paula Laplant** (Windsor), **Helen Prussian** (Windsor), **Dottie Sundquist** (Bennington),

Awards

Each year, we award certificates of recognition to volunteers who have achieved 250, 500 and 750 hours of service. For 2017, we would like to thank and honor the following volunteers:

250+ hours

Maureen Bell, Susan Brown, Kathleen Bushey, Phil Carter, Mary Jo Engel, Sally Fleury, Beth Gutwin, Christine Hammer, Thana McGary, Carolyn Plage, Robilee Smith

500+ hours

Linda Barnard, Althea Derstine, Annette Preiss, Jane Sarno, Cindy Twombly

750+ hours

Denise Badowski, Gary Clifford, Jerri Hoffman

Lifetime Members

The UVM Master Gardener Program currently has 25 Lifetime members. These are exceptional Master Gardener volunteers who have contributed 1,000 or more volunteer hours to the program. This year we would like to recognize five additional volunteers (and the year they completed the EMG course) who have earned 1,000 hours:

Susan Adams '08
Marie Ambusk '06
☞ Donna Covais '03
Cindy Griffith '00
Ronald Hebert '00
Donald Hipes '95
Judith Irvén '95

June Jones '99
Mary Mazur '92
Jane Murphy '97
☞ Judith Nevin '09
Marijke Niles '02
Elaine Nordmeyer '97

☞ Michael Rooney '07
☞ Margery Salmon '09
Ann Serman '95
Jan Sherman '06
Susan Stanne '03
Peggy Stattel '92

Daryle Thomas '94
☞ Kelly Wakefield '09
Patti Westburg '12
Marge Westphal '97
Maureen Yates '97
Jeff Young '05

☞ - new recognitions

LOOKING AHEAD

Master Gardener Program Goals for August 2018-August 2019

Increase staff presence at statewide outreach events.

Improve the advanced training curriculum and online delivery system.



MASTER GARDENER BY THE NUMBERS

2017 VOLUNTEERING

489 active volunteers

11,791 volunteer hours

33,373 contacts with the public

2018 SUMMER ADVANCED IPM TRAININGS

2 advanced online trainings

6 advanced in-person trainings

125 Master Gardeners participating

2018 MASTER GARDENER COURSE

86 students enrolled

73 students completed the course

49 new intern volunteers

Format updated to *eExtension.org* online learning platform



A Part of the Cooperative Extension System

2017 HELPLINE

25 volunteers

644 phone calls

347 emails

88 specimens diagnosed

2018 VOLUNTEER OUTREACH

15 Ask-A-Master Gardener outreach tables promoting sustainable gardening practices

8 Compost Demonstration Sites conserving soil biodiversity

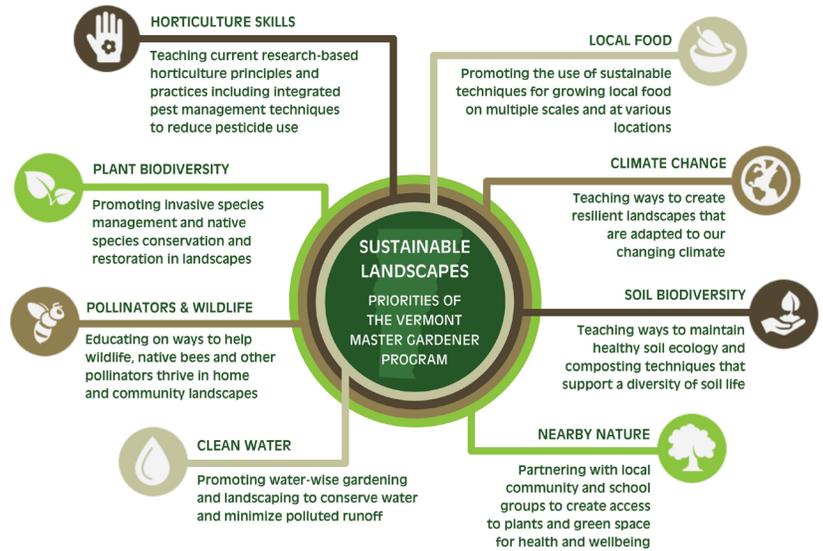
9 School Gardens + 6 Community Gardens growing food and teaching horticulture skills

5 Written Outreach Projects promoting sustainable gardening practices

2 Horticulture Therapy Programs creating healthy people

3 Plant Biodiversity Stewardship Projects managing invasive species, conserving native species, and restoring habitats

39 Demonstration Gardens assuring access to green space and teaching horticulture skills



Adapted with permission from University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener Program.

2018 VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT

45

volunteers placed in one-time projects requested by partner organizations

86

ongoing approved EMG projects around the state
48 - Northern Region
38 - Southern Region

2018 DONORS

We take this opportunity to thank Gardener's Supply Company for their annual donation to the Master Gardener Scholarship Fund.

During this program year, 200 people donated \$4,480 collectively in addition to their annual certification renewal. Thank you for your continued support.

SUPPORT US

All of our funds come from donations, course fees and grants. Your support helps us continue to train new EMG and Vermont Master Composter students, provide continuing education to members, operate the Garden Information Helpline, and place EMG volunteer educators in outreach projects throughout Vermont. Visit the Master Gardener Fund webpage at go.uvm.edu/emg-fund to learn more or to donate.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

Marvin Newton House Historical Garden — Brookfield, Vt.

Marvin Newton House is a historic house museum, located on Ridge Road in Brookfield, Vt. Built around 1835 for blacksmith Marvin Newton, it is a fine example of late Federal period architecture and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. The house was given to the local historical society by descendants of Marvin Newton in 1937, and has been a museum since that time. It is open during summer months on limited weekends.

Historic gardens in the United States fall into three categories: Colonist and Pre-Revolution (1600-1776), Post-Revolution (1776-1850) and Victorian (1850-1900). The Marvin Newton House gardens are considered Post-Revolution. During this era trees were massed for natural effects. Flowers increased toward the end of this period with the introduction of nurseries. Lawns were typically mowed using a scythe. Both oval and rectangular flower beds were common.

In 1995, a garden design for the entire property was prepared by Beth Urie, Mother Garden, Brookfield, Vt. Most of the extensive garden design was installed over the course of several years though plantings and the general landscape changed over time: plants were removed and replaced with new ones, and stone walkways were added, then removed. Currently, members of the Brookfield Historical Society are bringing back the days of glory by working to reinstall walkways and rebuilding the stone wall.

Master Gardeners are also in the process of restoring the gardens to their original splendor - and it is a great experience. The garden restoration began in 2017 and involves removing plants that are not historically accurate and replanting/restoring following Beth's detailed period-appropriate design. They are being quite accurate with the plant species and number of plantings called for. To date, the garden in front of the house (facing Ridge Road) has been completed.

This border garden, once filled with turtlehead, lilies, bee balm and daisies, now contains blue willow amsonia along with period-appropriate peonies flanked by classic lilacs. Simple, elegant and quite stunning! The removed plants are now in a "holding garden" by the road with golden glow ("outhouse plant") in the center. This is a show stopper of a garden that always receives compliments!

In the summer of 2017, Master Gardeners and volunteers held an "Ask a Master Gardener" event on the grounds to educate visitors on Post-Revolution gardens. This was attended by about 25 people. EMG's and volunteers talked about historic gardens, provided general plant advice, and conducted a tour of the grounds. Plant labels were made and installed prior to the event to help educate the public on the plantings.

Also that summer, EMG's set up a table during the Society's annual August Ice Cream Social. More visitors attended than during the "Ask A Master Gardener" event (perhaps the ice cream and cookies had something to do with it!), and volunteers were busy non-stop talking about plants and the Society's gardens; answering questions about perennials, bushes and pest management; and meeting lots of passionate plant-loving people.

Again this year, volunteers set up a table for the ice cream social on August 12. Unfortunately, it was raining, so the committee members decided to hold the ice cream social inside the Marvin Newton house. The Master Gardeners set up under a tent outside assuming attendance would be slow for the event, especially being located outdoors. The rain stopped, visitors started arriving, and they kept coming. More than 90 people showed up for this event, which was a fabulous turnout for such a dreary day! Almost all of the visitors stopped at the Master Gardener table for information on the gardens and the efforts to restore

them. Many recalled how much they enjoyed the EMG presentation the year before. Kitty Werner from UVM Extension Master Gardener was a special guest. She spent the afternoon with the EMG's and even enjoyed some ice cream! Volunteers had a great time talking with visitors about the Marvin Newton House gardens and answering gardening questions.

It seems that Master Gardeners have made an impression on the local community with the efforts to restore the gardens and we couldn't be happier about this success. Great relationships have been built with the Society's committee members, and while there is still much work to do in the gardens, and a long way to go before it is done, Master Gardeners know it's well worth it. The mission is simple: Bring people and nature together by educating, providing guidance and direction, and inspiration.



Smilie Elementary School Garden — Bolton, Vt.

Virginia Haviland is a Master Gardener volunteer and special educator working at Smilie Elementary school in Bolton, Vt. She very energetically volunteers her time to coordinate the Smilie School garden during the summer months. The Smilie School garden was started by a former school principal eight years ago. A donated greenhouse and raised beds were installed after the school received a grant. The students have planted peach and plum trees, and raspberry bushes around the upper rim of the garden, and there are nine raised beds. Each spring, students start the vegetable plants indoors and they typically put the plants out later than usual so the food is ready in the fall when school starts. During the summer months, parent volunteers and students work with Virginia to maintain the gardens and learn sustainable gardening techniques such as watering, fertilizing, pest control, replanting and mulching. Food that ripens during the summer is taken home by the families. The Smilie School garden parents and the school kitchen staff were amazed to discover that the children prefer to eat the veggies

raw, right out of the garden! To that end, only what the students will eat raw is planted. Their favorite vegetables to eat raw are red beets that they grow!

Willing Hands Educational Garden — Thetford, Vt.

The Willing Hands Educational Garden provides fresh, organic produce to more than 57 social service organizations throughout the Upper Valley area of New Hampshire and Vermont. The project is a collaboration between the non-profit Willing Hands, and the Extension Master Gardener Program. Kim Holzberger, Master Gardener project leader, educates the many volunteers who work in the two-acre garden throughout the growing season. During a recent harvest, more than 840 pounds of produce were picked and delivered to partner organizations. Hats off to Kim and the other EMG volunteers at Willing Hands and for making fresh produce available to those in need.

Old First Church Historical Garden — Bennington, Vt.

When the Trustees of the Old First Church approached Extension Master Gardener Dottie Sundquist about restoring the memorial marker on the green, she was eager to get involved. Dottie conducted extensive research on the history of the marker and designed a simple and elegant installation for the Trustees' consideration. The project went from having overgrown shrubs that hid the marker from view, to a beautiful circular garden rimmed by myrtle and a display of tulips, astilbe and daffodils. The garden was planted by Bennington second grade students. Congratulations to Dottie and her team for restoring this important historic Bennington monument.





THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER

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JOIN US

Become a Master Gardener or Composter volunteer and help UVM Extension create healthy plants, people and a healthy Vermont environment. Volunteers answer gardening and composting questions through the helpline, and at farmers markets, fairs and community events. They engage young people in hands-on learning, and act as trusted resources in research-based gardening information for historic, demonstration and community gardens.

Join the more than 400 volunteers across the state who learn from UVM experts and share their knowledge in seven key areas:

- Sustainable horticulture skills
- Managing invasive species, conserving native species restoring habitats
- Protecting native pollinators
- Conserving water and minimizing runoff
- Growing sustainable local food
- Creating climate resilient landscapes
- Assuring access to green space for all

To find out how to become a Master Gardener Volunteer visit

www.uvm.edu/mastergardener

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