

MGPW Annual Meeting
6:30 PM Thursday, 12 March 2026
Atrium/Auditorium Dr A. J. Ferlazzo Bldg.
1591 Donald Curtis Drive
Woodbridge, VA 22191

Order of Business

1. Meeting Opening – Jimmie Jones call to order 6:34 PM

- a. Introduced the current Board of Directors.
- b. Announced Special Committee Members
 - i. Diversity and Inclusion Committee needed.

c. Accomplishments and plans for 2026

- i. TEACHING GARDEN
 - 1. The Teaching Garden is a big activity and increased volunteer participation is needed. Each workday accounts for 4 volunteer hours.
 - 2. During garden work hours, volunteers are encouraged to exercise friendliness to both fellow volunteers and the public who may visit while we are working.
 - 3. Volunteers are encouraged to accurately report the hours that they work. Historically it appears that more hours are worked than hours reported.
- ii. In 2026, looking forward to more social activities and more volunteers to assist with the Help Desk.
- iii. Would like to encourage an increase in instructor classes offered. To facilitate attendance, we will begin providing signup sheets for seminars/classes so the instructor will have a better idea on how many materials to bring.
- iv. As in years past, we have a goal to increase Best Lawns assessments. This is a reporting requirement for the Extension program.
- v. Also looking to increase Storm Water assessments.
- vi. All should be aware that there are many opportunities for classes. North Carolina has great classes for cooking via ZOOM. Fauquier County also offers classes.

d. Recognitions

- i. Staff introduced: Thomas Bolles, Trish Westenbroek, Christina Hastings
- ii. Recognized the 2026 Intern class.

2. Trips and Sponsorships

- a. Trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show
- b. 4H kids sponsored for Summer Camp

3. Guest Speaker: Will Shoup, County Arborist (2 years with Prince William County)

- a. Presentation on the New Programs for Prince William County
- b. **Observation: a significant increase of DATA centers in the County. Working with County officials to be more responsible to the environment. Scientific approach to impacts on natural resources from development.**
- c. **Shoup works in Environmental Management. New hires – 4 for the Environmental Management Department**
- d. **New Programs all listed on the organization's website**
 - i. Reforestation Program – Line item in the County budget. Concern of loss of tree canopy. Begin using LiDAR to calculate tree canopy on natural land. Adding layers to County Mapper.
 - ii. Tree Planting opportunities in March. 4H volunteer opportunities. Check the Environmental Management Website. Take potential land that can be preserved and put trees and shrubs back onto it. Focuses on RPA and previous agricultural areas. Also stream management and invasive species management.
 - iii. Public participation is key to the success and support of Environmental Management. Public comment opportunities at county meetings.
 - iv. Stream Restoration and Stabilization program (looking at the entire ecosystem.)
 - 1. Introduction of freshwater muscles
 - v. MS4 Program – controlling pollutants that enter streams from local storm sewer systems
 - 1. Bandalong collects trash from streams, there are 2 in the county
 - vi. Volunteer Opportunities are listed on the organization website
 - vii. Training session in conjunction with Parks
 - viii. Invasive management - the time of year is important, maximize efforts and target species, simple hand tools only, not chemicals
- e. **Questions from the audience:**
 - i. Are you working with Manassas Battlefield organization regarding invasives?
He executed a reforestation plan by planting trees but Bradford Pear trees took over the plot. The County Arborist does not work with Manassas.
 - ii. Is there a minimum lot size for reforestation program?
No, the program allows plots as small as a handful of trees.
 - iii. How much do you speak to HOA's and landscape companies regarding tree and tree management?

Environmental Management responds based on complaints. The department also works with contractors and HOA's regarding mulch; however, problems do persist.

- iv. Can you tell new Developments that they are not allowed to plant invasives?
He has no authority over landscaping. He can only make recommendations.

4. President's Remarks

- a. Thanks for the opportunity to be President. The Master Gardeners are a great group, and Jimmie is impressed with the Prince William County Extension Program. Land Grant colleges were a great establishment. Once again, Jimmie wants to appeal to volunteers for better hour reporting in 2026. There are lots of opportunities to volunteer, including Farmers Markets, Teaching Garden, Committees, and speakers.

5. Elections of Officers

- a. David Fuller – Treasurer Unanimous
- b. Rebecca Arvin-Colon - Secretary Unanimous
- c. Janice Improta - Member at Large Unanimous
- d. No nominations from the floor
- e. Unanimous votes for David, Rebecca, and Janice
- f. Needs
 - i. Need a President Elect to take over for a year.
 - ii. Need a Diversity and Inclusion Committee Chair and special committee volunteers
 - iii. More participation from the general population of Volunteers would be greatly appreciated.

6. Thomas Bowles – Agent

- a. MG program gets financial support from Environmental Management.
- b. Need to meet Best Lawns Requirements which we are not meeting yet. Best Lawns is a key deliverable for Environmental Management.
- c. Kathy and Kim are stepping in to assist Leslie with the Teaching Garden.
- d. Multi County Event - Soils Project, May 23rd at the Teaching Garden, training for MGs
- e. Projects need to get approval from the office, ask Erin or Thomas
- f. Home Vegetable Trials Program from the State Office. Get involved and do it the same way.
- g. Drew is the MS4 worker and supervises Best Lawns
- h. Soil and Water Conservation District - Veronica Tangiri, manages the bandalong program and other cleanup projects
- i. Paige and Nancy worked on what trees can be planted with the county.
- j. **Recognitions and Appreciations:**
 - i. Over 6 FTE's of volunteer hours in 2025.
 - ii. Over 200,000 pounds of food collected from the farmers markets. Dale City collected the most.
 - iii. \$11,000 raised through the annual Plant Sale to help the Teaching Garden. There is a core group of 20 volunteers working in the garden and can use more help. Watering

needs extra help when the weather is hot. 4 hours at the Teaching Garden requested every year

- iv. Erin Clark Johnson returns in April.
- v. Trish new employee and taking over Best Lawns and Well program. – April 1st collection expecting 100
- vi. Please read the announcements that Christina Hastings sends out.
- vii. Seed Libraries – 16,000 seeds were distributed last year, funds from MGPW.
- viii. Need more volunteer speakers for classes and class participation.
- ix. Additional support for the Youth Training for summer reading
- x. This year we will have 2 interns, one for county and one for Tech (June, July and August)
- xi. 25 year anniversary of Teaching Garden – May 16th working on the logistics now. The program will be in the afternoon. We may also do tree planting in the fall.
- xii. Project Summaries will be put on the Website.
- xiii. Working on improving communications internally and externally

7. Master Gardener Awards

- a. New Interns class of 2025 - 2026 - 22 Graduates from the program
- b. Intern Mentors recognized – Thank you gift is a flower bag.
- c. Recognition of Master Gardeners that have gone above and beyond - Thank you gift is a Master Gardener Kneeler
 - i. Perspiration award – Judith Rodriguez
 - ii. Web Master Award – Susie Besecker
 - iii. Bookworm Award – Robert Pertroker
 - iv. Energizer Bunny – Leslie Paulson
 - v. Social Butterfly – Jeannie Jabaro
 - vi. Dream Works – Dale City Plant a Row team
 - vii. Human Megaphone – Robin Finehout
 - viii. Most Spunk – Jeff Zimmerman
 - ix. Johnny/Judy on the Spot – Vernell
 - x. People's Choice – Abigail and Vincent Panettiere (newsletter), Jacquelin Buris (Manassas Farmer's Market), Spencer Williams
 - xi. Linda Arvin and Jan Rice recognized for Best Lawns Program
 - xii. Jan Rice - Help Desk

8. Other New Business from the floor – No new business

9. Closing remarks from the President

- a. Looking forward to Spring
- b. Get seeds started and Planted
- c. Meeting adjourned – 8:04 PM

MGPW Committee Members

Committee	Type	Voting Member	Alternate Voting Member	Current Member
Audit	Special			Vernelle Boykin, Allan Pearson
Communication	Standing	Robin Finehout	Susie Besecker (Co-Chairman)	Webmaster/Podcast: Susie Besecker Facebook/Next Door: Robin Finehout In Season Newsletter: Krissie Aussems Teaching Garden Photography: Harriet Carter, Kim Zell, Lynne Lanier Calendar: Janice Improta
Community Garden Grant	Special	Valerie Gaffney		Chris Flench, Rebecca Arvin-Colon, Valerie Kenyon Gaffney, Janice Rice, Jeanne Lamczyk, Janice Improta
Education/Social	Standing	Christina Hastings		Robin Finehout, Kathy Kershner Social: Christina Education and Communication: LeAnn Strang, Janice Improta, Suzanne Kinnison
Fundraising	Special			
MG College Scholarship	Special			
MG Training Scholarship	Special			Jannell Bryant, Jeanne Lamczyk
Teaching Garden	Standing	Leslie Paulson	Lynne Lanier	
Teaching Bed Lead				Leslie Paulson
BBH Garden				Teri Madden, Jan Rice
Children's Garden				Lynne Lanier
Compost				Kim Zell
Cook's Garden				Amye Foelsch, Jean Meink, PamRockx, Ellen King, Jannell Bryant, Stephanie Johnson, Harriet Carter, Cathy Kubat
Deer Resistant Bed				Leslie Paulson
Drought Tolerant Bed				Linda Ligon, Moria Suter, Nd Yvonne Reid
Fairy Garden				Jeanne Lamczyk
Four Seasons				Patti Slaughter, Martha Grover, & Kim Gates (Jean B. Advisor)
Fragrance Garden				Ruth Johnson
Her Garden				Cheryl Ayres
Mailbox				Lynne Lanier
Memorial Garden				Jean Meink, Amye Foelsch
Natives				Kim Zell, Jannell Bryant, Phil Peck, Gloria Larsen, David Fuller
Red, Wite and Blue				Maritza Neuman and Lorraine Yake
Rock Garden				Spencer Williams
Shrub Bed				Ruth Johnston
Silver				Jeanne Lamczyk
Study in Pink and Blue				Jeanne Lamczyk
White Garden				Nancy Hanrahan
Woodland Garden				Harriet Carter and Yvonne Reid
Zen Garden				Sally Peterson
Integrated Pest Management Advisor				Thomas Bolles
Purchase Reimbursement Manager				Spencer Williams, Christina
Plant Sale Committee Leads				Harriet Carter, Jeanne Lamczyk, Jannell Bryant, Yvonne Reid, Lorraine Yake, Kate Cohen, Joanne Cashwell
Intern Coordination Leads				Sally Peterson/Tuesday Patti Slaughter Yvonne Reid/Thursday
Equipment Manager				Allan Pearson
Mowing and Compost Lead				Spencer Williams
Garden Tours Manager				Sally Peterson and Jan Rice
Reimbursement Manager/Spreadsheet Keeper				Christina Hastings (MG) and Spencer Williams
Monastery Relations Lead				Leslie Paulson
Chiefs or Kindness/Arbiters				Valerie and Thomas