



Gardenline

FALL

2016

Building a Garden From the Ground Up

IT TAKES ONLY TWENTY MINUTES for my shovel to dig up the grass, turn over the soft, rich soil, and extend a flowerbed three feet. I still marvel at the quality of the soil. It has not always been so compliant.

The journey began in my garden about sixteen years ago when I decided to convert my pea gravel driveway into a garden. Beneath the thin layer of pea gravel was about eighteen inches of compacted red clay. Below that was sand and then water—the high water table of our western Maryland shore beachfront community. Scattered around the driveway periphery were a handful of mature trees. It was a yard, not a garden.

“How am I going to do this?” I lamented to my sister. “Forget the tiller,” she said. “Get the soil to do the work for you from the bottom up.” She suggested I read “Gaia’s Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture” by Toby Hemenway. I did, and I’ve never looked back.

Permaculture is a set of techniques and practices that focus on the strong interconnectedness of soil life, plants, beneficial insects, and other animals, the gardener included. My goal was to create an environment that attracts all the hungry critters from the ground up—microbial organisms, insects, birds and people, and then add plantings rich in diversity. The process I used is called hugelkultur, a European gardening technique whereby garden beds are created with heaped branches and woody trimmings piled two to three feet deep, covered with compostable materials, and finally planted.

I committed myself to collecting hundreds of newspapers and a large amount of cardboard. I began gathering all the fallen debris in my yard, my neighbor’s yard, and the surrounding woods, including huge

branches, logs and twigs. Finally, I had a huge pile of topsoil and one of leaf mold delivered.

I prepared the ground by mowing down the few weeds and grass, hosed down the area liberally, then covered it all with two to three inches of soil and leaf mold. Next, I laid down several inches of newspaper and hosed that down. After spreading another few inches of soil and leaf mold I piled my branches, logs and twigs high in undulating heaps, creating berms and swales on top of the newspaper. I covered all the beds with the remaining soil and leaf mold and hosed it all down once more.

The bulk of the work complete, I tended my beds that summer and in fall collected pine needles and lots more leaves. I spread them deeply over the beds. When the planting season returned in spring, I ordered



Hardy begonias, hostas and pomelo tree.

small fruit trees and shrubs. When I began planting, I gasped with astonishment as my shovel sank in to the ground and pulled up rich black soil. The hard clay was still there, but undeniably less deep. Most noticeably, the soil was teeming with tiny wildlife—worms, beetles, spiders and more. Without doubt, the barren ground had dramatically changed thanks to these tiny creatures, which in turn were there because the microbial organisms feasted on the damp, decaying material I’d provided.

Since then, all my beds have been built using the hugelkultur technique, and the only clay left in my garden is in the paths and a few undisturbed grassy patches. ♻️

Leslie Garcia
Assistant Gardener

Manager's Message



Accreditation Validates Professionalism at Green Spring Gardens

Look around Green Spring Gardens, and it is immediately apparent that a highly professional staff works here. The gardens are gorgeous, the programs attract all ages and abilities, the plant and gift shops offer quality merchandise, and everyone is so friendly and helpful. We receive verification and appreciation of this hard work every day from our visitors. Our professionalism is recognized in other ways—with accreditation programs.

In November 2013 our parent organization, Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) was re-accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). This accreditation was first earned in 2008, and it acknowledges that FCPA has met a wide variety of standards for meeting its mission, accommodating the needs of its community, and managing its finances and staffing.

Since 1979 the museum aspects of FCPA operations within the Resource Management Division (RMD) have been accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). Initially, the historical collections documented and maintained by RMD and displayed at Colvin Run Mill and Sully His-

toric Site were part of the AAM accreditation program. In 2002 Green Spring Gardens joined the accreditation process, presenting the development, documentation, interpretation and maintenance of its plant collections for review.

This summer reaccreditation is on the agenda, and two new RMD collections will be added to the accreditation process: the antique farm equipment and other farm life related objects at Frying Pan Farm Park, and the archaeological collections maintained by the Cultural Resource Management Branch. The reaccreditation process has three steps: submitting a self-study, meeting with a visiting review team, and awarding the accreditation.

For the accreditation submission we have been part of a team of representatives from each of the five sites participating in the accreditation process. On July 1, 2016, the self-study documentation was submitted describing activities in these core areas:

-  Public Trust and Accountability
-  Mission and Planning
-  Leadership and Organizational Structure
-  Collections Stewardship
-  Education and Interpretation
-  Financial Stability
-  Facilities and Risk Management

In November a three-member review team will visit the five sites. Since FROGS is a critical supporter of our operations, the president, Mary Jane Medeiros, and vice president, Tatiana Lisle, will have an opportunity to meet with the visiting review team. Within six months of the review team visit we should

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Gardenline

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If accommodations or alternative formats are needed, please call 703-324-8563 at least 10 working days before the event.



FROGS Talk

Mary Jane Medeiros, FROGS President
Tatiana Lisle, FROGS Vice President

On behalf of the FROGS Board of Directors, we would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank You” once again to everyone who helped make Spring Garden Day another success! With sunshine, beautiful blue skies and gorgeous gardens as a backdrop, we welcomed almost 2,500 visitors. We are also grateful for all the dedicated hours provided by the entire Green Spring Gardens staff. FROGS profit from the day was \$18,150. These funds help FROGS keep Green Spring growing!

Even with dark skies and a rainy forecast for the Summer Concert on June 28, the “Fender Benders” musicians entertained a crowd of 200, and we ran out of cake again this year! The drawing for a *Hydrangea paniculata* from the Garden Gate Plant Shop and a one-year membership renewal were won by long time FROGS, Eileen Wiegert and Claire Bentley, respectively. For more details visit our website and Facebook page.

Thanks to all of you who took the time to complete our membership survey. We appreciate your comments. The results showed that members are attending classes and shopping for plants at Green Spring Gardens. Most of the responses, however, indicated that the reciprocal benefits of a FROGS membership are not being fully utilized. Please visit our website for the list of participating local nurseries and nationwide gardens where you are

eligible for discounts on plants, admissions, and gift shop items. You can also find a printed list of reciprocal gardens throughout the United States for 2016 in the GSG library located next to the FROGS membership display.

Fall Garden Day is coming up on September 10th. This is a great time of year for planting, so be sure to come see what the vendors have for sale. Preparations for the Silent Auction are in full swing—you don’t want to miss it. The “cash and carry” table will be full of treasures, too. Check out the enclosed insert with all the details and watch for the reminder postcard in the mail. You could be the next lucky winner of a prized plant from the Garden Gate Plant Shop. Be sure to bring your postcard and drop it in the basket at the FROGS membership tent on September 10th for the drawing that will take place that afternoon.

“Fall Color at Green Spring Gardens” is the theme of FROGS Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 23, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Park manager Mary Olien will take us on a guided tour of selected, remarkable trees on the property, followed by our business meeting. The detailed announcement can be found on the back page of this newsletter. We hope to see you there! Please continue to visit us at www.friendsofgreenspring.org, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. ♻️

Art Shows Throughout Green Spring

The art you enjoy at the Green Spring Art Shows is for sale!

AUGUST 30–OCTOBER 23

At the Horticulture Center:
Springfield Art Guild – various media

Reception: Sept. 18 from 1pm to 3pm at Horticulture Center

Cindy Dyer – photography
Reception: October 9 from 1pm to 3pm at Horticulture Center

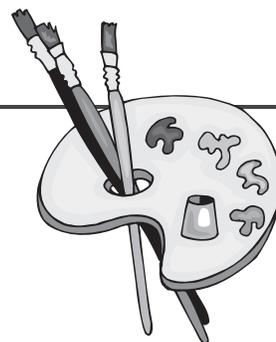
At the Historic House:
Mary Exline – oil painting
Reception: Sept. 11 from 1pm to 3pm at the Historic House

OCTOBER 25–DECEMBER 18

At the Horticulture Center:
Richard & Eva Neff – fabric, oil painting, and encaustic painting

Ravensworth Elementary School students – various media

At the Historic House:
Akemi Price – oil, acrylic, watercolor paintings and pastels



Summer Intern Experience



I will be entering my senior year as an undergraduate at Old Dominion University. I will be attaining a Bachelor's of Science in Ocean and Earth

Science with a concentration in geology along with a certificate in GIS (geographic information systems) to complement my degree. This past summer, I was lucky enough to join the Green Spring Gardens team as one of the horticultural interns. My intern title 'White Gardens Intern' refers not to Green Spring Gardens but to a nearby garden several miles down the road from Green Spring Gardens. Not long ago, White Gardens was a residence to John C. and Margret White, and within the past few years was sold to the FCPA. White Gardens is currently in the planning and development stages of one day becoming a small, visitor-friendly garden for residents of Fairfax and surrounding areas. Working at Green Spring indoors on ArcGIS and outside collecting data at White Gardens has been a wonderful and invaluable experience. My superiors have been patient and kind, and the work itself stimulating. Every day I commuted back and forth from Fredericksburg where I live, and every day it was worth it! Thank you Friends of White Gardens and Green Springs Gardens for this opportunity!

Suzannah Richards
White Gardens Intern



I am a rising senior at Virginia Tech. After graduating I plan to continue my education by completing a dietetic internship and becoming a Registered Di-

etitian. This summer, I have been fortunate to gain an internship at Green Spring Gardens working with the Fairfax County Farmers Markets to promote the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Access Program) at Market program. This internship has been an amazing opportunity for me to work with my local community and help provide access to fresh, local and nutritious produce to low-income families and individuals. Being able to work with Chelsea Roseberry, the Farmers Market Program Coordinator, has been a wonderful experience, and I am looking forward to all of the opportunities this summer will bring.

Erica Hess
Farmers Market SNAP Intern

I am a student at the Pennsylvania State University majoring in Environmental Science. I hope to attend law school to practice environmental law. As a Virginia



native, I was thrilled to be offered a position that was close to home and allowed me to be surrounded by all the beauty that encompasses Green

Spring Gardens. I was so lucky to be able to spend my summer helping children learn about all the wonders of the environment. Through my experience as Children's Education Intern at Green Spring, I have seen the large amount of work and effort that goes into creating fun and inspiring learning experiences for the children coming into the gardens. I've been able to see the rewards of this work through the fascination and wonder expressed by the kids. I am honored to have been awarded the opportunity of working alongside such positive, dedicated, and creative people.

Emily Milligan
Children's Education Intern



I am a senior at the College of William and Mary and plan to graduate with a dual major of biology and public health. I was fortunate enough to be offered this

internship funded by the Virginia Native Plant Society, and I would like to thank them for this opportunity; I can use this opportunity to gain valuable experience for my major. My goal is to apply my knowledge of plant biology, environmental factors, and ecological factors (such as competition and grazing) to the native garden here at Green Spring.

Previous research I had conducted involved plant competition with the absence of mycorrhizae in Little Blue Stem, Big Blue Stem, Side Oats Grama, and Rye. It was interesting

watching how the absence of these symbiotic fungi harmed Little Blue Stem and Side Oats Grama grasses, and witnessing plant competition in a controlled environment. On my first day at Green Spring Gardens, I could already apply the knowledge gained from my research when I noticed a bag of mycorrhizae in the garage and Big Blue Stem in the garden. It was neat seeing these in a wilder environment, especially after studying them in a lab. I hope to learn more about native plants, local invasive species, and their effects on one another.

Felipe Mesa-Morales
Virginia Native Plant Garden Intern

This summer I interned in the horticulture section at Green Spring Gardens. I'm new to the horticulture field; I have an associate's degree from



Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) in Animal Sciences and worked as a licensed veterinary technician for eighty years. Now I'm looking to change professions and am currently enrolled in the Horticulture program at NVCC. I've just finished the Landscape Design program and will finish the Horticulture Tech program next spring. Prior to Green Spring Gardens, I interned at Woodberry Forest in Orange, VA and was part of their grounds crew. I'm looking to expand my knowledge of plants and all things horticultural, gain experience and hopefully find a new career.

Pamela Bushey
Horticulture Intern

I am beginning my second and final year of a Master's program in Applied History at George Mason University. After finishing my degree, I hope to continue on and complete my doctorate, find work at a museum or historic site, and eventually teach history at the college level. After working as an Intern at Sully Historic Site this past winter, I was excited to be serving at a Fairfax County Park Authority site once again. As an Intern at Green Spring Gardens, I have been involved in revising the existing research filing system, assisting with public programs, and completing research in order to develop a new interpretive program for the historic house.



As a student of early American history, I have enjoyed the chance

to learn about the intricacies of a historic home built in 1784 and about the people who inhabited it during the Early American Republic period. I have also appreciated the chance to learn about the later period in Green Spring's history through the stories of residents such as Fountain and Anne Beattie, Minnie Whitesell, and Michael and Belinda Straight. As a historian, it is a real treat to be able to study a single area or home over an extended period of time, Green Spring Gardens not only serves as a wonderful example for this type of study with regard to the Historic House itself. It also provides a glimpse into how this portion of Fairfax County has changed and grown throughout the years. I am honored to have this opportunity at Green Spring Gardens to learn and grow as a scholar, public historian, and resident of Fairfax County.

Greta (Lohe) Swain
Historic Resources Intern

As a plant enthusiast, I consider myself very lucky to have had the chance to study horticulture in a place where it thrives, at Green Spring Gardens. Since switching my major from Biology to Environmental Horticulture the first semester of freshman year, I have been on the fast track to learning everything I can about plants and the environment. Here at Green Spring Gardens, I was involved in a variety of skills that have to do with gardening, propa-



gation, education, and the art of arranging plants in such a way that makes people feel connected to nature. I am thirsty to learn as much as I can, and look forward to every single class I am fortunate enough to take at Virginia Tech. I am also quite interested in entomology, and the positive and negative effects insects can have on plant and human health, diseases, and the food supply. In the future, I can easily see myself owning and operating a plant nursery. I am learning to love every aspect of a career in horticulture more and more with each passing day.

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Laura Stange
Horticulture Intern

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Summer was full of outdoor fun and exploration! Campers explored the plants and animals at Green Spring Gardens in our different themed camps. This involved: delving into the history of Green Spring Gardens during All-American Girl: Living Dolls Camp; using the gardens as inspiration for art creations during Arts al Fresco Camp; discovering the wonders of plants and animals in and around the gardens in the Living Wild & Eco Explorers Camps, and more! With the help of Green Spring Horticulture staff, campers got unique first hand experiences in the gardens tasting veggies, doing outdoor art, and learning about the plants that surround them.

Thanks to all the Green Spring Gardens staff and volunteers who helped make summer camps such a great success and made campers'



summers so special!

This summer we also debuted Let's Grow Garden Club, where participants dug in the soil, planted seeds, harvested from the garden, and tasted summer's offerings!

Join us this fall for more Let's Grow Garden Club once a month, our monthly scout programs, and programs for the whole family like the Monarch Migration Challenge, Fall Flower Tea Party and Leaf Critter Crafternoon! 🌿

Priscilla Plumb
Children's Program Coordinator



Top left: Living Wild: Animal Investigations Camp. Directly above: All American Girl: Living Dolls Camp
The photos were taken by Emily Milligan, and Rachel Gomez.

Manager's Message

Continued from page 2

know if we have met the criteria for reaccreditation.

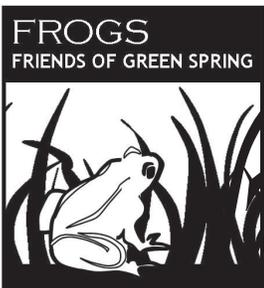
We have worked hard over the years to develop, interpret and maintain this attractive public garden as a botanical museum for all to enjoy, whether they come simply to delight in the beauty of the gardens or to complement their own knowledge of history and horticulture. We look forward to sharing this hard work with the accreditation team when they visit in late fall this year and to receiving validation once again, through reaccreditation, that Green Spring Gardens is a highly professional organization striving every day to provide an enjoyable garden experience for our visitors. 🌿

Mary Olien
Park Manager

don't **FALL** behind!



follow, share and propagate Green Spring!



WWW.FRIENDSOFGREENSPRING.ORG



FALL IN THE GARDEN GATE PLANT SHOP

Fall is approaching, and we're ready to supply you with some wonderful garden plants. Fall is a great time to plant, so please visit the shop while we still have a great selection! Natives abound, from our selection of ferns to our sunny bloomers, and we have a great variety of shrubs still available.

We'd love you to consider one of our native winterberries (*Ilex verticillata*) this year. These shrubs need both a male and female to produce berries on the female shrub. Our female cultivars include 'Little Goblin', 'Berry Heavy', 'Berry Heavy

Gold', and 'Berry Poppins'. Our male is 'Mr. Poppins' and this cultivar will pollinate any of our female shrubs. These are wonderful shrubs that prefer it moist and sunny.

Another great native shrub to consider is *Viburnum dentatum* 'Blue Muffin'. This arrowwood viburnum has glossy leaves and wonderful blue berries in the fall. More fruit is produced if planted in a sunnier location vs. a shadier spot, although it does tolerate partial shade. Fruit production is also enhanced by two different cultivars planted in close proximity to one another. So, we are offering another great *V. dentatum* cultivar named 'Chicago Lustre'. Both of these shrubs can be used as a hedge or as a specimen plant and can be pruned immediately after flowering to shape the shrub, reduce its size, and to keep suckering from its base to a minimum. These viburnums are considered to have a high wildlife value as their fruit is eaten by birds and other wildlife. They prefer moist soil but are fairly adaptable to dry and wet conditions, and best of all, are deer resistant!

We still have a wide selection of herbaceous perennials in the shop and two of our great fall bloomers include *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks' and *Solidago shortii* 'Solar Cascade'. These plants grow anywhere from 2.5 feet ('Solar Cascade') to 3-4 feet ('Fireworks'). They grow best in well-drained soil in full sun and will attract many bees and butterflies to your garden. New for us this year in the shop is *Chrysopsis mariana*, or Maryland golden-aster. We have it here at Green Spring Gardens and thought you might like to have in your gardens too. Clusters of bright yellow flowers bloom from late-summer to fall. It is very drought tolerant once established and grows best in sandy well-drained soils in a sunny location. Although short-lived, it often reseeds. Come on in and check them out!

Remember the Garden Gate Plant Shop closes after the first frost or by November 1 at the latest. Continue to shop with us throughout the fall for some amazing plants! 🌿

Diana Shannon
Plant Coordinator



Bloomin' Bucks with Brent and Becky's Bulbs Continues

Brent and Becky's Bulbs in Gloucester, Virginia, is continuing the FROGS fundraising program. Order bulbs or anything else from Brent and Becky's Bulbs, and they will donate 25% of the payment to FROGS.

Simply log on to bloominbucks.com, click on the drop-down box, scroll down to select Friends of Green Spring Gardens and then enter the online catalog. You'll get a superb selection of garden items and help support Green Spring Gardens at the same time.

Gingerbread House Contest Returns!

A gingerbread house contest will again be featured at Gardeners Holiday on Sunday, December 4th.

There will be five categories: individual children (twelve and under), individual teens, adult, family, and groups. Further information, rules, and a sign-up forms can be obtained from FROGS website or at the Horticulture Center.

Entry forms must be submitted by November 30th.

Start now to draw your plans and check out recipes.

\$25 FCPA gift certificates will be awarded to the first place winner in each category.



Gardenline

Green Spring Gardens • 4603 Green Spring Road • Alexandria, VA 22312

please join us for 'FALL COLOR AT GREEN SPRING GARDENS'
the Friends of Green Spring ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, October 23 ♦ 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Green Spring Gardens Horticulture Center



friendsofgreenspring.org

with a special prelude

Remarkable trees:

a talk & tour led by Green Spring Gardens Manager Mary Olien

... stories of Green Spring's most notable trees, their natural history and horticulture.



USDA, NRCS PLANTS Data base

- Meet at 2:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Horticulture Center followed by
- ♦ Light refreshments
- ♦ Business meeting—learn about FROGS activities, followed by Q&A

All members are encouraged to attend