THE PRESIDENT’S CORNER

A new gardening season is fast approaching. The daylight hours are growing longer, the sun is warming the soil (we hope) and we are planning for that first day when we can till our gardens and begin planting. What better time than now to get together with other gardeners at our first meeting of the year on March 14 to exchange ideas and information. I hope that you have joined CAEMG or are planning to and will be with us to get the year off to a good start. Why not check with friends about carpooling. Details of our meeting are described elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Master Gardener program is designed to increase our knowledge of gardening with the expectation that we will share it with others. Our association has a great opportunity to contribute to gardening and related activities in Connecticut. How successful we are will depend on the enthusiasm and dedication of our members. At our meeting you will be able to suggest activities for the association and indicate committees on which you would like to serve. Bring your ideas to share with us.

—Robert McNeil, President

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, MARCH 14, Jones Auditorium, New Haven Experimental Station, Huntington St., New Haven. (Map and directions on page 6). 7:00 PM, refreshments; 7:30 meeting.

Bob McNeil requests that you call ahead if you are attending this meeting. Please call the Middlesex Extension Office at 345-4511 between 8:30 and 4, Mon.-Friday.

WARNING • WARNING • WARNING

This may be last CAEMG newsletter you will receive UNLESS you send your $5.00 dues to Wendy Maxwell, 79 Howard Street, New Haven, CT 06519.

Only paid members will get the May issue of the newsletter. YOU HAVE BEEN DUTY WARNED.

LAST CHANCE FOR CERTIFICATION

If you have taken the Master Gardener course but have NOT completed your volunteer hours, all is not lost. The CAEMG is going to have some splendid opportunities to volunteer, do interesting work, and meet fascinating people. It’s not too late to do those hours and get fully certified! Call Bob McNeil (phone number on next page) and he’ll explain how to sign up.
FOR YOUR BULLETIN BOARD

Bob McNeil
16 Damon Heights Rd.
Niantic, CT 06357
739-5134

Wendy Maxwell (Donnelly)
79 Howard Ave.
New Haven, CT 06519
562-8231

Jean Patrice Sparkes
14 Falls Bashan Road
Moodus, CT 06469
873-1355

Annmarie Godson
87 Meadowgate
Wethersfield, CT 06109
563-4335

Jeanné R. Chesaw
214 Cornwall Ave.
Cheshire, CT 06410
272-1131

Latif Lighari
Middlesex Extension Office
1066 Saybrook Rd., Box 70
Haddam, CT 06438
345-4511

The above are your officers plus the newsletter editor and liaison person (between the CAEMG and the Extension Services). We plan to have a directory of all members complete with information about each person's interests. Look for this in the fall. Sign-up sheets at the next two meetings will give you a chance to list your interests.

WE'LL BE FAIRFIELD-BOUND for our SEPTEMBER MEETING. WHERE SHALL WE MEET? AT THE EXTENSION SERVICE? OR? PROGRAM? ??

Please give us your thoughts at the March meeting so we can plan ahead.

HE-E-E-E-RE'S JEANNIE!

Moodus, CT-When Jean Sparkes entered the Middlesex County Master Gardener class of 1987, she didn't know that it would lead to a job offer and a new career.

A former art therapist for severely handicapped children, Jean worked this past summer as a landscape designer for fellow Master Gardener and professional landscaper George Johnson. Johnson hired her when he saw samples of her drawing. She subsequently has applied to the University of Connecticut School of Architecture, where she hopes to work course by course toward a doctorate in landscape architecture.

An avid gardener, Jean worked with her father, also a landscaper, as a child. Before moving to Moodus, she and her husband Robert owned a farm where Jean ran a farm stand.

She is the mother of 3-year-old Meghan, 2-year-old Lauren and newborn Ryan Austin. Jean said she volunteered for the job of secretary because she wants to stay in touch with the Master Gardener program while pursuing her studies.

-Ona McLaughlin-

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jean has drawn the logo for this edition of our newsletter. She comments, "(Since) we are an extension of the Master Gardening program of UConn, I thought that a small sunflower along with the larger one would describe our organization in an effective way."

If any member has an idea for a logo for the CAEMG (but can't draw), write to Jeannie and she'll translate your idea into a drawing. In December we'll vote on a permanent logo, choosing one from all those submitted. DEADLINE FOR LOGO IDEAS: OCTOBER 1, 1988.

CARPOOLS ARE FORMING

If you'd like to attend the March meeting, but need a ride, please call Bob or Wendy. They have the list of members and may be able to help you. DRIVERS for the Norwich meeting in June; send your names to Jeannie. She'll list you in the May newsletter so that others can call you for rides.
GENE WHAPLES WILL SPEAK

Dr. Gene Whaples will be the speaker at the March 14th meeting of the CAEMG. He is the Assistant Director of the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Connecticut. Dr. Whaples is expected to describe the relationship between the CAEMG and the Cooperative Extension Service, and to tell us a bit about the history of the Master Gardening program in Connecticut.

* * *

OUR FIRST PROJECT?

Bob McNeil got an interesting letter recently, a request to the CAEMG to participate in an important volunteer project. Members of the CAEMG would be involved in planning a large garden and working with special children. This could be our first project and an exciting one it would be! Several members will take a trip to A. in late February to look over the situation. By the March meeting more details of this project will be revealed for members to consider. Are you intrigued? Come to the March meeting and find out more about this venture.

* * *

NEW LONDON COUNTY MGs

Gardeners from the 1987 class who completed their classroom work and their volunteer hours are: LYNN RINEK (Waterford), EVE HORELIK (Baltic), MARCIA HAYNES (Coventry), MARGOT HALLETT (Hampton), NANCY WOLFF (Old Lyme), SHARON LARSON (formerly of Groton, now living in Pittsfield, MA where she is volunteering in their program). Congratulations to all of these new Master Gardeners and thanks to ARLENE HARTMANN for supplying this list.

* * *

FAIRFIELD COUNTY

We have received word that there were new Master Gardeners in Fairfield County, but the list of names had not been received as we went to press. Maybe next issue.

REGIONAL MEETING

According to Bob Taylor, one of our members, there will be a regional meeting of Master Gardeners in Rhode Island in October 1988. More details will follow in the May Issue of this newsletter.

* * *

SPREADING THE WORD

News releases went out to all the major papers in CT, telling of the formation of the CAEMG. A few of the papers printed at least part of the release. Have you noticed any such items in the papers you read?

* * *

BYLAWS COMMITTEE

This committee deserves commendation for their hard work in coming up with a set of bylaws. (These were amended and approved at our last meeting). For their hard work we thank the officers and the other members of this committee: ILONA SINGMAN (Brookfield Center), FRED BABBITT (South Windsor), MARGOT HALLETT (Hampton), and GAIL CONWAY (Roxbury).

* * *

SHOW AND TELL

Actually the table at the last meeting was for viewing only (no one had to get up and tell about what they brought). There were some splendid photographs taken at the national meeting and some brochures, articles, etc. of interest to Master Gardeners. We hope to have a "sharing table" at each meeting: bring whatever you would like to share with your fellow Master Gardeners.

* * *

PLANT OBSERVERS STILL NEEDED

If you have the stamina and the time to look for 2000 plants and note if they are flourishing in your area, you may want to volunteer for this national project which will result in a new, accurate (unlike the two now in use) hardiness map. Write to Plant Performance Guide, US National Arboretum, 3501 New York Avenue, NE Washington, DC 20002.
PUTTING PESTICIDES IN PERSPECTIVE
by Gail Collins

Speaking at the National Master Gardener Conference held in Washington DC in October 1987, Gary Clayton, director of Technical Services for the Professional Lawn Care Association of America, spoke to conferees about the safe and sane use of pesticides. He stressed the need to de-polarize the issue of pesticide application, the importance of application standards, and the role of master gardeners as educators.

Depolarization

“There are people who want to give us a check and say, ‘Make my lawn look good’. They want service and don’t care about the product,” Clayton said. These are not likely to be the same people who appear at public hearings to protest the use of chemicals by lawn care companies.”

To help move beyond impasses created by such different priorities, Clayton proposed that objective information about pesticide use be more readily available. He cited Lawn Care Chemicals, What Consumers Need to Know, published by the American Council on Science and Health, as an example.

One of the conferees, a pesticide applicator, immediately stated that the booklet didn’t present a balanced viewpoint, thus illustrating the objectivity problem.

Another way to de-polarize pesticide application issues amounts to changing the negative perception of pesticides. Clayton suggested that pesticides be thought of as “plant pharmaceuticals”, available to treat ailing plants, controlled and perhaps dispensed like prescription medications.

Individuals as well as lawn care companies should post standard warning signs at the time of pesticide application as a means of sharing the responsibility for their use, he concluded.

Standards

Clayton stressed the Lawn Care Association’s related objectives of minimum pesticide use and integrated pest management. A certified hazardous waste technician, he advocated national or state certification for applicators, citing Pennsylvania and Indiana as progressive in their applicator licensing programs. On-the-job experience, the ability to recognize situations where and when an application shouldn’t be made, and emergency preparedness training should be part of licensing programs.

Education

Master Gardeners can take the initiative in reaching the estimated 51 million lawn owners who need better consumer information. By teaching plant monitoring techniques and ways of avoiding panic reactions to lawn and garden problems, experiences gardeners can help reduce the amount of pesticide abuse.

Further, Master Gardeners can insist on responsible advertising of pesticides, and can promote label improvements such as the prominent display of the EPA product identity number. They can encourage manufacturers to use returnable containers, and push for central collection centers for pesticides (such as those now used in Florida) instead of relying on a one- or two-day special collection of hazardous materials. Master Gardeners can also question lawn care companies about their employee training and equipment care. Is tank rinse water recycled? How are tank contents disposed of?

Finally, Master Gardeners should continue to stress the many alternative ways of solving plant problems.
THE OPINIONATED GARDENER by Geoffrey Charlesworth

Book Review:
Geoffrey Charlesworth hates "silk underwear, late-night banquets, and lying on the beach." To him, "being happy is dirt under your fingernails, wearing old clothes, ... giving plants away, and listening to rain." Does Geoff sound like your kind of person, a kindred spirit, a fellow gardener? Indeed he is and an elegant writer to boot. Many of Geoff's opinions concern rock garden plants, but even if you don't know a draba from a drachma, his book will fascinate you. This beautiful hardcover book, published by Godine, has intricate drawings by Laura Louise (Timmy) Foster. CAEMG members have been offered a special price--$12.50ppd-- (regular price is $16.95); send your check to Norman Singer, HC66, Box 114, Sandisfield, MA 01255.

BECOME A CHARTER MEMBER

57 people have already become Charter Members of the CAEMG! If you are a certified Master Gardener and would like to join, please send your dues to Wendy Maxwell, 79 Howard Street, New Haven, CT 06519.

$5.00 will get you a membership in an organization that offers meetings with interesting speakers, activities, rewarding volunteer opportunities, and a chance to enjoy the company of others who share your interests.

BULLETIN: 81, yes, 81 people have become Charter Members! (Wendy just called.)

Yes, I am a fully certified Master Gardener and would like to become a charter member of the Connecticut Association of Extension Master Gardeners. Enclosed is $5.00, my dues for one year.

Name
Address
Phone

Interests

From the editor's desk...

A MAJOR MISCALCULATION on my part meant that a lot of you got your newsletters late last time. I had no idea how long a bulk mailing takes to arrive! Thank you to all who called or wrote me--I got a chance to become acquainted with several members in that way. A special thank-you to Grace Bishop whose note expressed understanding (about the lateness of her newsletter) and encouragement for the future of the CAEMG. With members like that we can't go wrong!

Do any of you have news that you'd like to share with other members? Have you gotten an article published, grown a new kind of radish, heard a great speaker? Tell us about it. We'll print your news items in the next newsletter.

Just as I was typing this page, Wendy Maxwell called to say that 24 more people had sent in their dues. She is getting 10 or more checks a day right now and predicts that by the time we meet in March--the 14th, remember?--we will be 100 strong! Our goal is 200 so keep those dues coming in.

Yes, I am a fully certified Master Gardener and would like to become a charter member of the Connecticut Association of Extension Master Gardeners. Enclosed is $5.00, my dues for one year.

Name
Address
Phone

Interests

---
Our March meeting in New Haven was held on a cold rainy night with flurries of snow which may have limited the attendance. However, we managed to take care of a number of organizational matters and enjoy a talk by Dr. Gene Whaples, Assistant Director of the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Connecticut, on the past, present, and future of the Master Gardener program.

Our next meeting on June 14th at the New London County Extension Service Office in Norwich should be held under much more enjoyable weather conditions with the long, warm summer days approaching and the gardening season in full swing. I invite you to break away from gardening activities and enjoy the company of other Master Gardeners. If you are driving some distance and have the time, why not invite your spouse or a friend to see some of the sights in southeastern Connecticut. They will be most welcome at the meeting. See the notice about the meeting elsewhere in the newsletter for details.

Compost is a gardener’s best friend. It will be the program topic of the meeting as we describe to you a Master Composter program in New London county. We think you will be interested in this unique project.

Robert McNeil, President
FAIRFIELD COUNTY MG'S 1987

Congratulations to all who completed the course and volunteer hours and received certificates in 1987:
Janelle Beardsley (West Haven), Alexander Bills (Stamford), Vincent Camperchioli (New Milford), Susan Carroll (Fairfield), Beverly Center (New Milford), Gail Conway (Roxbury), Kevin Fritch (Thomaston), Alice Garrard (Ridgefield), Mary Ellen Hoff (Danbury), Claire Kenny (Norwalk), Kathryn Leasure (Bethlehem), Naureen Noseworthy (Lakeside), John Padbury (Old Greenwich), Deborah McIntire (Trumbull), Lynn Hardiman (Shelton). Well done! Here's a star for you.

HURRAH FOR GEORGE ZIPP

George, who lives in Old Lyme, got his Master Gardener certificate in 1987 but got left off the New London County list. So he gets this space all to himself. Cheers!

HONEYSUCKLE SIPPING

Jeanne Chesanow got a note from Ray A. McNeilan, Extension Agent and State Master Gardener Program Leader for Oregon. He wrote to comment on her recently published book HONEYSUCKLE SIPPING: THE PLANT LORE OF CHILDHOOD. (Down East Books, the publisher, had sent him a review copy). McNeilan said, "(It is) the kind of writing that can effectively bring people back to the wonder of plants and of nature. Yesterday I sent the book home with one of my Master Gardeners who has children ages 3 and 4, just the right ages to start picking petals off the daisies. Thank you for the opportunity to read you marvelous book and to be taken again to the magic of using plants for games. Good luck with your writing career."

(Wanted: A used tractor with three point hitch, and front end loader. Call or write Janelle Beardsley, c/o Beardsley, 276 Leavenworth Rd., Shelton, CT 06484. Tel. 929-3080.)

CAEMG'S CLASSY CLASSIFIEDS

A bit of the bubbly was consumed by the daring at our last meeting. Later they discovered that the private stock 'champagne' was absolutely non-intoxicating.

Simply mix equal parts of white grape juice and grapefruit flavored sparkling water. Chill and serve with panache (or penuche).

HONEYSUCKLE SIPPING

(Honeysuckle Sipping, 201 pages, softbound, $10.95 + $1.50, by mail from Down East Books, Box 679, Camden, ME 04843.) Jeanne will be happy to inscribe your copy.

CAEMG'S CHAMPAGNE RECIPE

This issue's logo is based on an idea of Bob Taylor's—to have the CT state flower on our logo. Jeanne Chesanow sketched it and hopes it is in some way similar to what Bob had in mind. Eventually we will vote on a permanent logo and motto. Then we'll go to town, put it on our newsletter, stationery, tee-shirts, badges, scarves, necklaces, bracelets, towels, washcloths, hats, bibs, aprons, pillows, bumper stickers. Then in 1989 we'll all show up at the national meeting in Oregon with logo stickers all over our luggage.

AUGUST 1- LAST CHANCE TO SUBMIT YOUR IDEA FOR A LOGO
"Composting is collaborating with God in converting the inevitable entropic drift of the universe into... broccoli."

Bob McNeill is in charge of taking the "inevitable entropic drift" of New London County and converting it into black gold-rich compost for growing wonderful anything. He is a veritable Rumpelstiltskin, teaching others the art of spinning straw (and all other organic materials) into the black gold. We CAEMG members are lucky to be invited to share in Bob's expertise. At the June program he will describe the Master Composter project which he coordinates.

Bob writes: "The Master Composter Project is ongoing in New London County this year. Funded by the DEP through the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Service, the program is a pilot, one of only two in the United States (the other one is in Seattle), hopefully to be emulated by communities everywhere. Forty-five volunteers have taken a four-week course in composting and will spend the rest of the year educating people to compost their yard wastes instead of sending them to the landfill. We have set up demonstration sites in five locations in our county and have built compost bins for the public to use."

ATTENTION ALL MASTER GARDENERS-IN-TRAINING, you have been sent this issue of the CAEMG newsletter to let you know about the state organization you can join if you finish your volunteer hours and become certified. We invite you to come to our June meeting and see what we're all about. In September we will be meeting in Fairfield County and by that time perhaps a number of you will want to become members. It's just $5.00 a year. You will get four copies of the newsletter and a chance to meet other Master Gardeners, hear speakers, tour gardens, and do lots of other enjoyable things. Worth every penny. Hang in there! We'll be thinking of you as you answer the phone and give talks. Many of the Master Gardeners go on to businesses, other volunteer activities, or careers that started with their Master Gardener course. And, of course, the people that you meet are great, all gardening enthusiasts.

We look forward to seeing you at our meetings and hope you will become part of CAEMG.
COME EARLY, HAVE SOME FUN BEFORE THE MEETING: MAKE A DAY OF IT
by Bob McNei1

As suggested in The President's Corner, feel free to bring a spouse or friend to do some sightseeing before the meeting. Places of horticultural interest include the Harkness Memorial Gardens in Waterford (Exit 75 off I-95). Go 3 or 4 miles and ask directions at the Waterford Police Station., the Connecticut Arboretum at Connecticut College in New London (Exit 84 off I-95) and the Rose Garden in Norwich (Exit 81E off I-95).

For sightseeing and recreation there are the Mystic Seaport, Old Mistick Village, and the Mystic Aquarium at Exit 90 off I-95, Ocean Beach in New London (Exit 75 off I-95: through Waterford to Ocean Ave, in New London), Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme (Exit 72 off I-95, and the Nautilus Memorial (Rte. 12) in Groton.

A number of excellent restaurants and fast food places are available for dinner at Exit 90 (off I-95), on Route 12 from Groton to Norwich and Route 32 from New London to Norwich.

* * * *

We are looking for association activities so bring them with you. We also need volunteers for the Nominating, Auditing, and Finance Committees.

* * * *

I look forward to seeing you on June 14th in my bailiwick. We are hoping for a large turnout.

WENDY MAXWELL, RENAISSANCE WOMAN

Wendy Maxwell, CAEMG's treasurer, is a woman of the 21st century. We know her as our efficient treasurer, but she has many irons in the fire. She produces and directs a call-in radio program, Family Talk, which airs on Sunday evenings from 10 PM to midnight. The program is sponsored by Covenant House, the nationwide organization that helps runaway children. This job means that Wendy spends lots of time on Amtrak between New Haven and Manhattan every week.

Wendy got interested in plants and gardens when she was a child, learning from her mother and grandmother. She became a Master Gardener in 1987 (New Haven County). At that time she was in business at the Old Clinton Road Farm in Westbrook. For three years she had a retail business there -- herbs, dried flowers, wreaths, etc.

This summer she will be growing flowers for a special occasion, her wedding in early September!

We congratulate her and congratulate ourselves for electing her our Treasurer.

by Jeanné Chesanal

Annemarie Godston, our Vice President, will be profiled in our next issue (August).
PLANT SCIENCE DAY

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's Plant Science Day will be held on Wednesday August 10th from 10 to 4 at their farm on Evergreen Avenue in Hamden. (One block west of Whitney Ave.) Scientists will be available to explain their research projects. There will be special speakers at lunch time. In past years some research plots have dealt with mulches, corn, artichokes, Dutch elm disease, insect predators, and Christmas trees. For more information call Paul Gough 789-7223.

REGIONAL MEETING

The meeting of Master Gardeners from the northeast region of the U.S. is still on for October in Rhode Island, but we have had no more information. Perhaps at our June meeting we will get more details.

JUNE MEETING

Will you be at our June meeting in Norwich? Please let us know so we can roll out the red carpet for you (and your guest(s)).

From the Editor's Desk...

The quote about compost on page 3 of this newsletter is from a book review in Fine Gardening, a new magazine published by the Taunton Press, PO Box 355, Newtown, CT 06470. $20.00 a year, six issues. The magazine is reader-written, so if you have something to write about, send them your manuscript and photos. The first issue had articles such as: Two French Beans, Japanese Beetles, and Boxes and Trellises.

Since HONEYSUCKLE SIPPING was mentioned earlier, perhaps I should list a few of the things that are in my book: Willow Whistles, Puffer Bellies (sedum leaves), Fighting Violets, Lady in the Bath (bleeding heart), Little King Story (told with pansy), Cattail Leaf Ducks, Pumpkin Leafstalk Trombones and hundreds more amusements with plants, as told to me by more than 200 people from all parts of the U.S. and four other countries. Teachers and parents (or grandparents) are re-introducing children to these old-time customs, toys and games.

Gardening keeps you young—I had heard this saying and now have proof that it is true. I sent for Rakestraw's plant catalog and when I got my copy there was a handwritten note in the front, "This is our last catalog. Mr. Rakestraw is 95 so we are trying to phase out our mail order and sell from the yard." The Rakestraws are not giving up gardening or selling—only the mail order end of the business. More power to you, Mr. Rakestraw!
Halfway through our first year it might be appropriate to review the past and look at the future. I have been very impressed by the fact that over 200 Master Gardeners have joined the CAEMG. The officers and executive board have worked on organizational matters and programs for meetings. Jeanne Chesnaw, with limited help, has published several issues of an excellent newsletter.

Our progress to date has resulted from the efforts of a relatively few members. To become a really effective organization we need input from each of you. Check the purpose of the CAEMG as stated in our by-laws and bring your ideas for activities to the next meeting at Bethel on September 14.

One project we can support is the Northeast Regional Master Gardener Conference to be held at the University of Rhode Island on October 27-29. Information can be found elsewhere in the newsletter. If enough sign up perhaps we can travel as a Connecticut delegation by bus or train. Let us know what you think.

See you September 14 in Bethel.

Robert McNeil, President

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

PROGRAM: ORGANIC GARDENING

We are fortunate to be able to have Alton Eliasson speak to us about ORGANIC GARDENING, a topic that interests all of us. Please come on Sept. 14 to hear him.

DRIVERS

Bob Sherman (Killingworth) 663-2345, Dan Noel (Manchester) 646-2421, Annemarie Godfrey (Wethersfield) 567-2335
A VEIP WITH CLAS

Style, talent, and achievement—Annemarie Godston's got 'em all.
An account of her activities would fill a book—a women's investment
group, guide dog program, high
school curriculum committee, SafeRides, Literacy Volunteers of Amer­
ica, countless church committees,
and Master Gardener.
Annemarie finished the MG pro­
gram in 1987 and now gardens and
consults for the Deane-Webb- Stevens
Museum Houses in Wethersfield. The
Museum has embarked on a project of
research and planning to do a historic
Master Plan of the gardens (with
Rudy J. Favretti, landscape archi­
tect). Annemarie, who will be doing
the initial plan of the existing
sites, is available to give talks
about the project. If your club
would be interested in inviting
her to speak, for a nominal fee,
we will describe this fascinating
project.

LINDA ROSINSKY submitted this logo
(and three more). Thanks, Linda.
All logos will be on display at our
December meeting and we will vote
for our favorite.
Send all logo ideas to Jeannine Chesa­
now, 214 Cornwall Ave. Cheshire, 06410.

PUBLIC RELATIONS
Fred Babblett, Chairman
Margot Hallett
Bob Sherman

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Bob Taylor, Chairman
Lynn Rinck
Judith Spivey
Nancy Wolff
Mariluyn Yates

PROGRAM COMMITTEE
Karlhe Duke, Chairman
Edd Sherma
Mohamed Einbii

NOMINATING
Jeanne Cierarian
Bob Dennis
Jessie Dennis
Bob Sherman

AUDITING
We have a fine committee but I don't have
the names at this time. See next
issue of the newsletter.

THREE CHEERS FOR ALL THE MEMBERS WHO
VOLUNTEERED TO SERVE ON COMMITTEES!

Your name can appear on one of these
lists. Just volunteer for something
that interests you and we'll add your
name to the list of CELEBRITIES. Don't
pass up a chance for fame.

** RHUBARB PUNCH **

1 1/4 pounds of rhubarb
1 quart water
1 1/4 cups sugar
1/3 cup orange juice
Equal amount gingerale
Cook rhubarb in the quart water; put
through a sieve. Add sugar, orange
juice, gingerale, Chill.
Place punch in your best punch bowl
and savor on a hot summer day.
Thanks to Arlene Hartmann for the re­
cipe.
FIRST NORTHEAST REGIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE: Oct. 27-29

Kingston, RI: Master Gardeners from Maine to Virginia are invited to attend this first regional conference at the University of Rhode Island. The theme will be Safer Smarter Gardening.

Friday the 28th will be devoted to speakers and Saturday the 29th to tours, including a tour to the topiary garden Green Animals.

Among Friday's speakers will be Jim Wilkinson on Pesticides and Policy, Ernest Wasson on Pruning Basics, Wm. Albin on Landscape Maintenance Shortcuts, Tom Green on 1PM, Lucy Leske and Edwin Safford on How to Get Your Garden Writing Into Print, Tom Fournier on Composting for Large Gardens, Dr. Noel Jackson on Low-Maintenance Lawn Care, our own Bob Neil on the CT Master Composter Program, Dr. Irene Stuckey on Wildflower Gardening. The last "speaker" of the day will give a big WOOF or maybe ARF. He is Darryll the Termite Detecting Dog who will demonstrate his skill!

Cocktails and dinner at the Dutch Inn in Galilee, RI will help round off the day, ending with a program by Adelma Simmons of Caprilands Herb Garden in Coventry, CT.

Running concurrently with the talks will be a program for extension staff and volunteer leaders on the concerns of running a volunteer organization.

For registration packets, write to Conference Planning Committee, CE Education Center, Greenhouse Conservatory, URI, Kingston, RI 02881-0804.

Bob will try to have some registration forms at the September meeting too. (No prices available at this time.)

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK..............

We Nutmeggers will have two long tables for our state exhibit at the URI conference. What to put on display? Bob Taylor is making a folding bulletin board for pictures, brochures, copies of our newsletter, etc. What else should we bring for this table?

For the second table we had thought we might bring garden-related crafts to display and sell (10% to go to the conference organizers to help defray their costs). They have given us a happy thumbs-up on that idea. Herbs (dried or fresh), dried flowers, baskets, etc. etc. all would be fine.

The Inner-City Co-op Farm in New Haven is having problems -- vegetables are being stolen. This food is supposed to be only for members of the co-op, each of whom works in the garden two hours a week. The garden has also been vandalized with plants being ripped up and left to die. What a waste! These people need this food and they have worked for it. The Co-op could put up a barbed wire fence for $1100. By the time you read this maybe they will have raised that sum, but here's the address: 400 Columbus Avenue, New Haven. More information about the co-op is available by calling 777-8613. (Joe Moye runs the farm.)

Vandalism of crops is more obscene than any graffiti on walls. Don't you agree?

Coming in the November newsletter-- a rundown on all the bills that will be coming up before the state legislature in 1989 on topics of interest to us Master Gardeners. Lorraine Rizzo suggested this and Gail Collins will be preparing the article. After that what we choose to do about these proposed laws is up to us to decide. Our group has the potential for moving in many directions (but not all at once and not spread too thin!)
Composting—The End or The Beginning?

On June 14th, all those who attended the Master Gardener meeting were lucky to hear Bob McNeil speak on one of his latest projects—composting. Compost is a dark, crumbly and earthy matter. People should compost as a means of recycling as well as having a wonderful by-product for your garden.

The project in Norwich is similar to a program in Seattle, Washington. There are two separate aspects of the program; which is funded by a small loan from the DEF. One part is on the municipal level and the other is a pilot program to teach people to home compost. Bob McNeil is the coordinator of the home composting program.

After several weeks of classes there are now 45 Master Composters! These volunteers were then divided into five groups to set up various composting sites in the New London County. The sites are in Norwich, East Lyme, New London and Mystic. A fifth location will be in the Windham area. Volunteers man these sites on the weekends, turning the compost piles, adding compost and answering the public’s questions regarding home composting.

Volunteers are also available to go the people’s homes to give one-on-one advice. Lectures and slide shows are also presented to the public through the local schools and libraries.

A few of the helpful hints learned from Bob were the importance of having a good ratio of browns (leaves, etc.) to greens (grass clippings, manure). A balance is necessary for compost to be produced effectively. The materials should also be chopped up, the greater the surface area the faster the decomposing.

Moisture is another factor. The compost pile should be aerated in some fashion, either by turning the pile or a drain pipe may be placed in the center of the pile.

There are many ways to compost from a simple pile to an elaborate wooden bin with a cover. There are also numerous ways to use the compost: as mulch, mixed with potting soil or as a way to improve your garden. With our many landfills closing it is more important than ever to get the message across to the public—THE TIME HAS COME TO HOME COMPOST—DO YOU HAVE A COMPOST PILE AT YOUR HOUSE?

Anyone wanting further information on home composting please contact Bob McNeil at the New London Extension Office.

Interested in a handmade garden basket? Baskets custom made to your specifications. For information contact: Nancy Wolff (203) 434-9441. Classes also available.
Editor, cont.

THE MASTER GARDENING PROGRAM IN CONNECTICUT: ROSY FUTURE OR DIM?

What is in store for the Master Gardening programs in CT? As cooperative extension services and personnel are cut, what will that mean for our training programs?

Have you looked at your county lately? Since you did your training have you kept track of what’s happening? Are fewer Master Gardeners being trained? Have you heard about the re-organization of extension into three geographic areas? Are our programs funded less well than previously?

These are matters of concern to all of us and we need to know what is happening now and what is being planned for the future.

Some states, Virginia for example, have strong programs with many, many Master Gardeners engaged in a variety of ongoing programs. When you go to the URI conference, take a look around at other states, talk to their Master Gardeners, look at their exhibits, and then take a look at your state with new eyes.

Keep all this in mind. Ponder it through the summer. Maybe you'd like to call your extension office and ask about the MG program.

DETACH THIS SECTION AND MAIL IT TO: GAIL CONWAY, FAIRFIELD COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE, 67 STONY HILL RD. BETHEL, CT 06801 or call there -- 797-4176 and say you're attending the Sept. meeting.

YES, COUNT ME IN FOR THE SEPTEMBER CAEMG MEETING. I WILL BE BRINGING ___ GUESTS.

NAME ____________________________________________

ADDRESS (optional) ________________________________________
THE PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Our December meeting marks the end of our first full year as a statewide organization. We have held meetings in four areas of the state to encourage all of our members to attend at least one. We expect to continue this plan for another year but hope that members will attend meetings outside their area so that we can get to know each other. The alternative would be to hold all meetings at the same location in the geographical center of the state. At a future meeting we would like your reaction to these plans.

In our first year we have focused on organizational matters and presenting programs which we hope have been interesting. Our one community project (the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp garden) is on hold because of a change in directors. We hope to continue in the spring. A directory containing all members’ names, meeting dates, and programs, if possible, is planned for next year. Interesting places to visit and possible tours are being considered. We hope, also, to find other community activities to which we can contribute. As we plan ahead we welcome your suggestions and support if we are to succeed.

I look forward to meeting you at the annual meeting on December 1 and recommend that you visit Comstock Ferre, if possible, before the meeting.

Robert McNeil, President

NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER FIRST
FIRST CHURCH, WETHERSFIELD
7 PM Social Whirl (bring cookies) 7:30 meeting

SPEAKER: DR. ANNE RIDEOUT, Associate Director of Cooperative Extension

TOPIC: Master Gardener Program
(cont. on p. 10)

IN THIS ISSUE:
MG news......................... 2
The Raccoon Fence Man........ 3, 4, 5
It’s The Law..................... 6
Membership/Dues Forms......... 7
The Logos We’ll Vote On....... 8
Map for Dec. Meeting.......... 9
Restaurants/Places to Visit... 9
Rideout (cont.) ................ 10
Drivers.......................... 10
Bad Weather/Who to Call..... 10

REMINDER: THE DECEMBER MEETING IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE WE’LL VOTE FOR OFFICERS FOR 1989. THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE WILL PRESENT THE SLATE.

(Officers, cont. on p. 2)
1988 MASTER GARDENERS

New London County: Carol King (Ledyard), Lori Brennan (Oakdale), Marie A. Adams (Canterbury), Christine B. Kuckert (Ledyard), Ronald Bertothy (Chaplin), Linda Callahan (Waterford), Dick Muollo (Preston), Charlotte Hurlbutt (Waterford), Judith Strickland (Waterford), Allen Fitzgerald (Norwich), Ina K. Goldberg (Norwich), Robert Michael Lewis (Windham), Linda Callahan (Waterford), Dick Muollo (Preston), Charlotte Hurlbut (Waterford), Judith Strickland (Waterford), Allen Fitzgerald (Norwich), Ina K. Goldberg (Norwich), Robert Michael Lewis (Windham), Larry Carver (Bozrah).

CONGRATULATIONS! Certifications were presented at a luncheon on Sept. 30.

Arlene Hartmann, Master Gardener Coordinator for New London County, writes: total number of volunteer hours 780, calls received, 983. The office was covered 5 days a week from 9 to 4:30, April 11 to Sept. 30.

WOW!

Middlesex County: Frank V. Balboni, Elizabeth Buckley, Diana Byrne, George Cusack, William Dobbs, Chris Dzialo Evans, Tara Krause, Dillys McIntyre, Susan McNamara, Nancy Newcomer, John O'Leary, Kathy Correll, Donna W. Soudan, Charmain A. Sundell, Doris F. White will receive their MG certificates on Nov. 10th at a dinner.

(sent in by Latif Lighari, Cooperative Extension Agricultural Agent for Middlesex County).

CONGRATULATIONS, and we hope to see you all as members in the CAEMG.

MaGIC

What a great acronym for what sounds like a great group—Master Gardeners International Corporation, an outgrowth of the 1987 Conference of Master Gardeners. The word international in the title refers to the Canadian and USA membership. MaGIC's purposes are to promote communication and exchange of scientific information among MG's and to advance home horticulture. They will publish a quarterly newsletter starting this fall.

Bob McNeil has sent for some membership applications and will bring them to our Dec. meeting. You can also contact them at 2904 Cameron Mills Rd., Alexandria, VA 22302 for more information and an application.

Officers, continued from page 1.

The nominating committee has asked the same officers to continue and Bob McNeil and Wendy Maxwell have agreed. Annemarie Godston, under the pressure of so many other activities, cannot serve again. Jean Sparkes (now sec'y) would be willing to serve as VP for next year if we could find another secretary. And that is where the nominating committee is as this newsletter goes to press. The complete slate will be presented at the Dec. meeting.

We have reserved one booth (8'x10' with a 6' table) for the Portland, Oregon MG conference on Oct. 11-14, 1989. Reserving it was easy—getting our exhibit ready will be somewhat harder, although with many hands to pitch in and some advance planning, we can get something good together by then for sure.

In 1991 (mark your calendars now!) there will be a big conference of MGs jointly sponsored by Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

From the Editor's Desk..............

Coming in our next issue, an article by Bob Taylor with all sorts of tips on caring for perennials.

Thanks to Frank Lipski for the compost article, in hopes he'll send me more of his excellent writing (his articles appear in The Green Thumbprint, newsletter of the Knox Foundation).
At our September meeting I sat next to Carol Vann, one of the CAEMG's most enthusiastic members. She was taking the most amazing shorthand notes on Alton Eliason's talk. I asked her if she would send me the notes (in English!) and she was kind enough to write up the following account of Mr. Eliason's lively talk on organic gardening.

Carol also designed a mountain laurel logo for the CAEMG logo competition.

THANKS, CAROL!

ALTON ELIASON, THE RACCOON FENCE MAN (only one of his many titles!)
by Carol Vann

Mr. Eliason talked about the importance of using leaves in the garden for fertilizer as well as for mulch.

From his own personal experience, he shared with us interesting information on Reemay, which is a polyspun woven cloth made out of polypropylene. You lay this cloth over your seeds after you plant and place something on the edges to hold it down, the insects can't penetrate it but the sun, air and water can. Mr. Eliason said Reemay is fantastic for insect control and helps yields mature more quickly. Pell, the largest strawberry grower in the State, uses Reemay and has strawberries ready for picking around May 30th.

Mr. Eliason said it's a good idea to put clear plastic on your garden early in the season to help warm the soil, and can increase the temperature of your soil from as much as 10-15 degrees.

Upjohn, one of the biggest manufacturers of pesticides and herbicides, is now developing biological controls, such as Reemay. (Editor's note: Upjohn makes no claims for the insect-controlling properties of Reemay.)

Below, is a partial list of problems and solutions Mr. Eliason recommended:

Apple Maggot - fly on outside of apple lays its eggs, then railroads right through apple.

Mr. Eliason brought an interesting gismo with him, developed by Ladd in Vermont. It was a square piece of yellow plastic with a red rubber ball built into the center of it. This was designed for use in apple trees to keep the apple maggot from attacking your apples. He said to hang poles with these things attached to them around the middle of June, because the apple maggot comes out around the 1st of July.

Mr. Eliason said polypropylene is not advisable in the heat of the summer because this could cause overheating of plants. It is important to place the cloth on loose enough so there is some mobility when the plants lift up to grow they will have enough room to grow.
Cutworms - Cutworms are night flying moths. Early in the Spring, set out night light to attract night flying moths and it should help control cutworms. If you use an ordinary buglight, put it up high enough so no one will get electrocuted. (Editor: Alton advised taking off the protective wire bands around the light, leaving it exposed—hence dangerous and needing to be put out of the way). Weeds - A question was raised on weeds under the Reemay® and how to get to them. Mr. Eliason said when it's time to thin out seedlings you can pull the weeds out too, simply by removing the Reemay® Thin seedlings and remove weeds, follow by adding mulch, then cover garden back up with the Reemay. He said horse manure is a good mulch, because it's very readily available, but be sure it's composted, otherwise you will have a green carpet of weeds.

Deer - In response to a question raised on how to prevent deer from eating tomatoes and beans in the garden, Mr. Eliason said there is a product on the market called Hinder. Or, you could try placing 4 ft. of 1 1/2" - 2" chicken wire fence down around the garden. The deer won't walk into it because supposedly it hurts their hooves.

Bees - Mr. Eliason reminded us to remove Reemay® from crops dependent on bees for pollination; with one exception, there is an ant that pollinates.

Woodchucks/Raccoons - Mr. Eliason is quite a famous man, and he is known to many of us as the "Raccoon Fence Man." He wrote an article entitled, "Controlling the Clever Raccoon," published in the Natural Farmer Magazine. Mr. Eliason said he takes 3"-6" of black plastic and clips it on the outside of his fence with clothes pins. Takes 2 x 4s pressurized, cuts off 4 ft., uses a wire staple to attach onto strips of wood. Mr. Eliason chuckled when he told this tale, and said the whole principle is the raccoon will try to climb up, but will slip on the black plastic and fall down. The raccoon always knows when to come after the corn -- comes out the night before you are going to pick it.

Birds - Birds love to eat blueberries. Birds can be controlled on almost anything except blueberries. Mr. Eliason said he uses chicken wire on top of the netting and puts stickem on the poles, which he makes out of PVC, makes a roost on one side of the netting and applies the stickem. Birds will land on the roost and get their feathers stuck. This scares them from coming back.

Stickem - What exactly is this stickem stuff? Stickem is the old name. Tangle Trap® or Tangle Foot® is the new name.

Slugs - Beer. Also, they don't like anything that is gritty, like sand or leaves.
Mr. Eliason said if he applies leaves in the Spring, he always adds chicken manure first as fertilizer before adding the leaves.

In the Fall, he makes two plantings of buckwheat as a cover crop. In 60 days, it goes to seed as the frost kills it. Tills under the buckwheat, and throws in some sweet clover, and it starts growing in the Spring. If you put leaves on in the Fall, make sure you grow a cover crop. Throw winter rye on.

Japanese Beetles - Milky Spore
Blights - Most are spread by insects. If you keep insects off, this lessens your chances of getting blight.
Black Rot and Brown Rot on Peaches - One Spray of Ferban

**Reemay is one brand name for spun fabric used to cover plants as they grow. Generally known as row covers, these fabrics are made of either polyester (lighter weight, best for season-long insect control) or polypropylene (heavier; higher heat build-up makes these covers best for early spring and fall to extend growing season, protect plants from frost). 100 feet of either will cost about $20.00. (Editor's note.)

**Tangle-Trap is a product used to coat red sphere traps ("red rubber ball") and to re-coat yellow sticky bars. Spread on with a piece of plastic cut from a milk jug (suggested by the Natural Gardening Research Center in their booklet 1988 Guide to Safe, Natural Control of Garden Insects and Diseases. Free booklet from the center, Hwy. 48--PO Box 149, Sunman, IN 47041).

Tanglefoot (Tree Tanglefoot) is spread or sprayed in a 2 to 4" band on tree trunks, stems of vegetables and flowers. Keeps birds away from fruits and squirrels from bird feeders. (Editor).

If any of you have questions for Mr. Eliason, call him at 484-0277 and he'll be glad to help you. He is an enthusiast on the subject of organic gardening and wants to spread the word to everyone. He writes (among many other things) a column called The Organic Garden for the Northford- North Branford Citizen. He handed out copies of this column to all who were at our September meeting. In looking over these I found the greatest collection of hints. One example out of the many -- Juicy Fruit gum as a bait for moles. He'll tell you just how to use the gum if you call him. Another source (in addition to the one I listed above) for natural and biological controls is The Necessary Trading Co. New Castle, VA 24127 (listed in Al's Aug. 24th column).

All in all we had a great evening in Bethel and learned a number of fascinating facts about organic methods of growing.

THANKS to Joe Maisano and Gail Conway for making us welcome in Bethel.
At the end of September, Congress reauthorized the 1972 Federal Insecticide, Fungicide & Rodenticide Act. Some controversial provisions were deleted to insure passage of 'FIFRA Lite'. An 8 year deadline for reregistration of old pesticides was established, a reregistration fee schedule for manufacturers set up, EPA no longer pays for unused rejected pesticides out of its budget, and rules for storage and disposal of these products have been enacted. The Act does not address uniform national standards for pesticide residues in foods, protect farmers from liability for environmental damage caused by pesticide use, consider pollution of ground water by pesticides. Apparently these issues will be reintroduced next year.

On the heels of FIFRA reauthorization, the EPA has lifted the ban on pesticide residues known to be carcinogenic in processed foods under certain conditions. By using risk-benefit analysis, a procedure that it employs in evaluating residue levels of noncarcinogenic pesticides in foods, the EPA is instituting a 'negligible risk approach' it believes is more consistent with the evaluation of other pesticide health risks. Critics say the risk-benefit approach is poorly defined. The policy may be challenged in court.

The Connecticut Legislature, meanwhile, passed a farmers' potable water liability act (PA 88-211). It applies to pesticide groundwater pollution discovered on or after the bill's passage. Farmers who meet its criteria do not have to provide potable water to those whose wells become contaminated with the pesticides they use. Criteria include: annual gross sales of $1000 or more during each calendar year of pesticide application, use of the pesticide solely for agricultural production, agreement to submit and implement a plan in accordance with UCONN approved guidelines to minimize potential ground water contamination, maintenance of the plan and of required records for 20 years. Application of available IPM techniques is included in the specific requirements.

PA 88-247, An Act Concerning Notification of the Application of Pesticides, and Integrated Pest Management and Establishing a Pesticide Notification Task Force is effective in October, 1988, except for the sign regulations which must be promulgated by October, 1989. Pesticide application businesses must notify any abutting owner or tenant who requests notification prior to applying pesticides within 100 yards of any property line. Any person applying pesticides outdoors within 100 yards of any property line must post signs conspicuously at application time. A task force will study pesticide applications made to agricultural lands, rights of way, distribution lines and roadsides. Another provision requires state agencies to consider IPM when applying pesticides, defined as 'a comprehensive strategy aimed primarily at maintaining high crop quality with minimum pesticide use.'

Finally, a major effort to obtain an additional $15 million for state purchase of open space through the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program was successful. Because of the budget deficit, open space proponents are already rolling up their sleeves to assure funding renewal in the next session, which begins January 4th.

Thursday, Dec. 1
CAEMG meeting

Those interested are invited to visit Comstock Ferre across the street from the church before the meeting. Interesting exhibits of plants, crafts, etc.
RIDEOUT continued
Dr. Rideout is Associate Director of Cooperative Extension for the state. Her schedule is a hectic one and we are really fortunate to have been able to get her to come and talk to us. A lively and well-informed speaker, her topic will be the Master Gardener program in Connecticut, in particular the new organization (three regions) and how it will affect the MG program.

* * * * *
If the weather looks threatening on the first of December and you are wondering, "Will there be a CAEMG meeting tonight?", please call one of the following people. They will tell you if the meeting is ON or OFF. (And OFF really means OFF because we have not scheduled an alternate date.)

Bob McNeil (Niantic) 239-5134
Wendy Maxwell (New Haven) 562-8231
Jean Sparkes (Moodus) 873-1355
Annemarie Godston (Wethersfield) 563-4335
Jenne Chesanow (Cheshire) 272-1131
Marie Dube (North Haven) 239-3983

PLEASE bring a few cookies or other goodies. We'll have a "taste-in" for the first half hour. Also PLEASE call the Middlesex Extension Office (between 8 and 4) if you plan to attend. 345-4511

WHY NOT BRING A FRIEND, VISIT COMSTOCK FERRE, GO TO DINNER, AND THEN COME TO THE FIRST CHURCH FOR DESSERT........WE'RE HOPING FOR A BIG TURNOUT.............