



# The VMGA Report

A Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners  
vmga.net

July/August 2019

Volume 25, Number 1

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## VMGA Officers

President-  
Wanda Gerard, Suffolk

Vice President-  
Leslie Paulson,  
Prince William County

Secretary-  
Nelda Purcell,  
Franklin County

Treasurer-  
Georgianna Hall,  
Loudoun County

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Master Gardener Association is to foster communication, education and fellowship among Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteers.

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## From the President

Wanda Gerard, Suffolk, President

Here we are, already in July!

There are not many entries in my calendar, which means it's time to work in the garden! There is something special about summer gardening and I think it's the celebration of seeing blooms open up on plants that sprang up from the ground after the winter season. The aroma of healthy soil, compost and some of our beautiful flowers somehow drag us out the door with that pair of gardening gloves, sunscreen and wearing a good hat to 'dig in'. The continued anticipation of seeing plants, colorful flowers, pollinators and, of course, harvesting vegetables and herbs must be in my blood and perhaps yours too?

Earlier this year I decided my Baptisia did not survive its transplanting effort last fall to a new location. A few days later it showed signs of life, became a beautiful plant and has finished blooming. It's a good feeling when you beat the odds of transplanting something that hates to have its roots disturbed! The hedge that I planted of it is quite striking, if I say so myself! I'm striving to provide more plants for butterflies, bees, and all creatures of nature that will survive because of my garden.

It is also time for many of our teaching garden volunteer projects to spring into action. Take time to enjoy those moments, especially working with fellow Master Gardeners and sharing experiences, such as teaching children and adults how to plant a seed, nurture it and watch it grow, especially if learning for the first time. Don't follow my mistake of not taking pictures! Our phones make the task easy, so capture some memories.

When we host the International Master Gardener Conference in 2021, it will be our time to share what we do with many others – those pictures and stories could be a part of our overall Virginia Gardening showcase. I hope you are planning to attend Master Gardener College in September in Norfolk. Enjoy the gardening days ahead!

Wanda

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## VMGA BI-MONTHLY MEETING

**Saturday, August 10, 2019 10:00am**

Hosted by Greenspring MGs

Horticulture Center, Green Spring Gardens  
4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA 22312

Tour of the grounds will be available from 8:30-10:00.

President's topic of discussion: Emeritus membership

Save the Dates:

September 19-22	Master Gardener College, Norfolk
December 14	Northern Shenandoah Valley
February 8, 2020	Hanover

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## National Night Out

Is your unit participating in a **National Night Out** event on Tuesday, August 6? If so, please send a paragraph with your unit info, MGs involved, and a brief explanation of your activity, community response, etc. to Wanda before August 15. [vagardengurl@aol.com](mailto:vagardengurl@aol.com)

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## The VMGA Diane Relf

### Master Gardener College (MGC) Scholarship

Each year, VMGA's MG College Scholarship Committee solicits nominations and selects deserving Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners wishing to be considered for the honor may provide nomination information to their local coordinator or agent.

For MGC 2019, four (4) scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$800 each.

Each unit is allowed to nominate two volunteers. Winners will be announced September 6.

**Application Deadline: August 9, 2019**

Submit your application to your unit agent or coordinator early so they will have adequate time to finalize and submit it to the VMGA Scholarship committee by the above deadline.

**Guidelines and Criteria**

<http://vmga.net/scholarship-criteria.php>

**Application**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10s20QB127MGAY8jkBb21oT2-4ubiHH8X/view>

**ABOUT VIRGINIA  
MASTER GARDENERS  
AND VIRGINIA  
COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION (VCE)**

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of VCE, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the Commonwealth. Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. VCE programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

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## News and Notes

Dave Close, State Master Gardener Coordinator

Dave has been on the road traveling to destinations far and wide. First up:

- National Extension Conference on Volunteerism in Montana

Then on to:

- South Korea for ten days with a team from Kentucky to attend the Ag Expo Conference at Seoul University. While there, one day was spent at the MG Symposium in Suwon, ROK.
- In Kwangju, the group learned about "food clusters"
- Study Abroad opportunities for undergrads are being explored
- Opportunities for faculty level exchanges are also being explored

Update on Assistant State Master Gardener Coordinator position, formerly held by John Freeborn:

- Nineteen applicants
- Search committee met on June 11
- It is hoped the position will be filled in early fall

Update on Devon Johnson, Communications Project Coordinator

- Congratulations!! They have a new addition to their family: Fox Fralin Johnson was welcomed on April 23

New student employee, Sara Wright, began work in the office in June. As the Program Support and Implementation Assistant, Sara is responsible for completing edits on projects, sending out certificates and pins to counties, and updating the social media networks. Please be patient as she learns her way around.

Due to the high volume of emails received in the office, and the vacancy of the assistant's position, [please direct all correspondence to:](mailto:EMGoffice@vt.edu)  
[EMGoffice@vt.edu](mailto:EMGoffice@vt.edu)

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## IMGC 2019

Erica Jones, New River Valley MG, VMGA Education Chair

I had a great time attending the 2019 International Master Gardener Conference (IMGC) in mid-June at a hotel/casino/conference complex at Valley Forge, PA. I chose to arrive a few extra days before the conference which allowed me to explore the area too. The Pennsylvania Master Gardeners were the host of this conference. Since we were so close to our nation's first capital, were practically beside the Valley Forge National Historic Area, and Pennsylvania is one of the original 13 states, does it surprise you that some history was included throughout the conference? The first morning's keynote speaker wore the proper 1700's

attire, and was even heard grumbling about how hot the wig was. He represented John Bartram, a famous botanist, plant collector, and native of Pennsylvania.



There were some 1100 attendees. Home base, or Event Central, was the place for meeting each morning for breakfast (and lunch) and several key note speakers. This area allowed for everyone to be seated at banquet sized tables and thanks to a good audio/video team, everyone could see the

actual talk live from the state, or on one of several screens throughout the room. In the back of this huge area was a very large silent auction with baskets of wonderful items donated by PA's Master Gardener (MG) units. Posters from almost every state decorated two other walls that gave a glimpse into a successful MG program or research project from the state. Our registration packets included the typical conference literature, some goodies (Hershey candy), and a pamphlet about the fabulous gardens in the Philadelphia area. There were two quizzes that involved meeting master gardeners from other states and foreign countries and/or learning more about some of the many master gardener projects or highlights of the many counties in Pennsylvania.

Throughout the registration and vendor area were displays of county "kites". (Ben Franklin = Kites – get it?) Each Master Gardener unit in PA designed a kite that had to be about their area. Another quiz was to answer questions by locating and studying the displayed kites. Pennsylvania has 67 counties. In case you were wondering, Virginia has 95 and that number is lower than it was in the 1950s and 1960's. I enjoyed finding and reading about each kite and have put several more places to visit on that bucket list of mine. I have to admit, I am on the tourism board for my county, so seeing other areas is a hobby of mine.

A typical day at this IMGCC went as follows: we listened to a keynote speaker after breakfast. Then after a break, we attended a concurrent session of your choice before having lunch. After lunch back in the event center, we had two afternoon concurrent sessions. A lot of folks chose to attend a field study in lieu of everything after the morning keynote speaker. They boarded buses for whatever venue they chose and either had a boxed lunch or ate at some sort of eatery at their site. The conference was planned so that we did not have to rush from session to session, and in keeping with early American history, we had a mid-afternoon 'tea'. Ok, it wasn't tea, but there were some serious spreads of foods for us to munch on, and coffee too. The PA Master Gardeners had a lot of volunteers directing us around the labyrinth of halls and meeting rooms. Picture if you can, two huge hotels with connecting hallways and meeting rooms in between them. And, yes, there was a casino atmosphere there in more ways than one. There was absolutely no pressure for anyone not interested in gambling. Every evening after the dinner hour there was an activity or speaker, including the evening before the conference started. Most of these were an extra fee, but one evening

## In the news:

Has your unit or members of your unit been featured in your local newspaper? Let us know!

Send links to:  
[peggyfox@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyfox@hotmail.com)

they had speakers from England representing the Royal Horticultural Society with an armchair tour of the Wisely Garden - it was free.

One of the local gardens, Chanticleer, offered free admission if you had a 2019 IMGC name tag. Many of the other gardens had reciprocal admission; that is, if you belong to a local participating garden you can go to participating gardens for reduced or free. Some of the gardens were not open to the public, and even though I didn't realize that, we were allowed to enter free after seeing our IMGC name badges.

Most people I talked to stayed at one of the two hotels supporting the conference, or another one just a few miles away (shuttle buses were provided.) I persuaded another Master Gardener from my unit to come with me. We stayed at an Airbnb only eight miles away. This was great except for rush hour driving and since we were on the outskirts of Philadelphia there were a lot of commuters. Parking, fortunately, was not a problem - and free.

It seems like you cannot attend a Master Gardener get-together without having a chance to receive some free plants, or try your luck at a silent auction item. The silent auction was a fun representation of things Pennsylvanian; hotly contested were the small artwork type items. One group of items that didn't bring in the big bucks was the large buckets/baskets of goodies from individual counties. I came home with the offering from the far northwest county of Venango in a large tub. Venango was the home of the start of commercial crude oil drilling in 1860's. I think these large items did not do as well as they would have been difficult to cart home, especially if you traveled by air.

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## State Fair of Virginia Sept 27 - Oct 6, 2019

Christy Brennan, Hanover



*Get ready for the 2019 State Fair of Virginia at The Meadow in Doswell, VA.*



The Master Gardener Booth will be a part of the Pollinator Walk in cooperation with Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). State Fair visitors will visit each booth on the walk and have their "passport" stamped as they learn about pollinators.

## VMGA

Membership has its advantages:

- Online modules
- Unit Support
- Scholarships
- Newsletter
- Advanced Training
- Discount event fees
- Membership Directory
- Statewide Networking

### FROM THE EDITOR

We'd love to feature your unit's announcements, events or articles in the next issue. Articles can be about a favorite plant, tree, project, book review. This will encourage involvement around the state, getting more MGs involved.

**Deadline for submitting articles for the Sept/Oct issue: August 24, 2019**

**Please send to:**  
Peggy Fox,  
VMGA Newsletter Editor  
Newport News unit  
[peggyfox@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyfox@hotmail.com)

Volunteers are needed to work in the VCE Booth. We have twelve (12) tickets per day for volunteers. These tickets cover parking and admission to the fair. Tickets will go fast. Reserve your shift now!

For more information email [Christy Brennan](mailto:Christy.Brennan).

Don't forget to enter your plants and crafts to win a blue ribbon. Visit <https://www.statefairva.org/p/getinvolved/competitions>

## Unit Support

This committee collects, maintains and provides information that will assist local units in establishing MG associations or improving existing units. Specifically, the committee:

- helps local MG Units with management problems
- helps new, local MG Units get organized, particularly with respect to choosing whether to incorporate, obtain tax-exempt status and other crucial aspects of forming,
- and provides a clearinghouse for information exchange.

Recent topics include:

- Plant Sales. How does your unit handle them, and other fundraising efforts? VMGA asked units to tell us.
- Tax Exempt Organization. While we are not able to provide specific legal information, VMGA and some local associations have experiences in obtaining tax exempt status as a 501(c)3 organization, staying exempt and reinstating exempt status.
- Sales Tax Guidance.

For further details, go to: <http://vmga.net/unit-support-committee.php>

## Tree Stewards Help County in Spotted Lanternfly Control

Carol Ivory, Loudoun County, Tree Steward reprinted with permission



Photo Credit: VCE

<https://ext.vt.edu/agriculture/commercial-horticulture/spotted-lanternfly.html>

On May 28, Virginia's spotted lanternfly (SLF) quarantine was put in effect for Frederick County and the city of Winchester to try to stem the spread of this insect. Despite an eradication effort in Winchester in 2018, SLF increased its distribution from about 1 square mile to 16 square miles. This year, the overwintering eggs began their hatch on April 27, earlier than last spring. This insect threatens to be a major pest of fruit crops, forest trees, and other plants in Virginia. In eastern Pennsylvania, where it has been established since 2014, it has ruined orchards and vineyards and is a disgusting backyard pest. The SLF traveled to Pennsylvania from China on a shipment of landscaping stones and then to Winchester the same way. These insects are hoppers and depend on hitchhiking on vehicles and products to travel from one locality to the next.

The preferred host plant for the SLF is the Tree of Heaven, a member of the Ailanthus genus. While the SLF feeds on all types of trees and crops, the Tree of Heaven appears to play a critical role in its life cycle and survival.

The Loudoun County Master Gardener Tree Stewards are working under the guidance of Beth Sastre, commercial horticulturist; Chris Kenney, arborist, Loudoun County Parks and Recreation; Kyle Dingus, Arborist – County Forester, Natural Resources Division; and Matt Shaffer, GIS Specialist, Dept. of Mapping & Geographic Information, to educate county residents and to identify the location of Tree of Heaven in high-risk areas. High-risk areas are those likely to have vehicles from the Winchester area, such as Loudoun County Park and Ride lots, and also from areas with fruit crops attractive to the SLF. Tree Stewards and county staff members are using a phone app built especially for the purpose of gathering data on tree locations and size. A few trees in each area are banded with a very sticky tape that will capture the insects as they crawl up the tree, providing positive evidence of an infestation.

The long-term strategy is to remove 90 percent of all Tree of Heaven including all the female trees on properties and use the remaining 10 percent as trap trees that concentrate the insect. Then the trap trees will be treated with a systemic insecticide to kill the SLF.

Killing Tree of Heaven requires more than simply cutting it down. Tree of Heaven is a very strong stump and root sprouter so cutting down one tree may produce five trees in its place. Trees should be treated with an herbicide as part of the removal process. Details for treating Tree of Heaven with an herbicide can be found in this publication:

[http://www.dof.virginia.gov/infopubs/Control-and-Utilization-of-Tree-of-Heaven-201903\\_pub.pdf](http://www.dof.virginia.gov/infopubs/Control-and-Utilization-of-Tree-of-Heaven-201903_pub.pdf) .

Report sightings as soon as possible through this [online form](#).

The Lifecycle of The Spotted Lanternfly

[https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu/ENTO/ento-268/ENTO-321.pdf](https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/ENTO/ento-268/ENTO-321.pdf)

## Resources

Find out more here:

[Extension Master Gardener website](#)

[VMGA.NET](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[EMG Program-- Blog](#)

[VCE--Facebook](#)

[Volunteer Management System](#)

[Online Learning Opportunities](#)

[VA EMG Bi-weekly Update](#)

[Marketing and Branding Resources](#)

Links to other events around the state:

[Virginia Is For Lovers](#)

[Blandy Experimental Farm](#)

[Hahn Hort Garden](#)

[Norfolk Botanical Garden](#)

[Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden](#)

[Maymont](#)

[Williamsburg Botanical Garden](#)

[Meadowlark Botanical Gardens](#)

[Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU](#)

## Help Wanted:

VMGA Education Committee is searching for a volunteer or volunteers to chair/co-chair the leading, planning and coordinating of advanced educational events for EMGs of Virginia. Events are held bi-annually in a variety of locations by units across the state. Our most recent successful event was conducted on the campus of Virginia Western Community College, Roanoke.

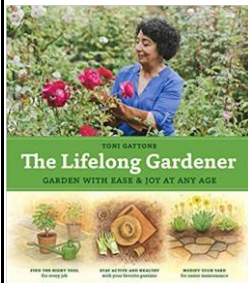
Please contact [Erica Jones](#), New River Valley, if you are ready to help fill these positions.

## THE GRAINETHUMB

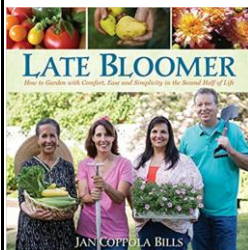
THE AGELESS GARDENER  
George Graine, Fairfax Master Gardeners

“A little studied negligence is becoming to a garden”  
---Eleanor Perenyi in Garden Thoughts (1981)

For the past several years some authors of garden books have honed in on writing what can best be described as adaptive gardening or gardening for a lifetime. This makes a lot of sense once you realize that by year 2020, more than 46 million baby boomers would be 65 and older. The most recent book in this genre is:



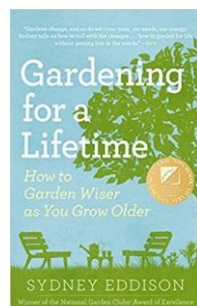
“**The Lifelong Gardener: Garden with Ease & Joy at Any Age**” by Toni Gattone (Timber Press, 2019).



A couple of other examples include:

“**Late Bloomer: How to Garden With Comfort, Ease and Simplicity in the Second Half of Life**” by Jan Coppola Bills (2016)

and



“**Gardening for a Lifetime: How to Garden Wiser as You Grow Older**” by Sydney Eddison (2010).



The key point made by all these books can be summed up as recognizing your ability to create a landscape of beauty that supports your lifestyle. Indeed, your new landscape can be inspirational, beautiful and perhaps most importantly, functional all at the same time.

It seems reasonable to accept some of the objectives of adaptive gardening as noted by Gattone.

- To raise awareness of adaptive techniques that enable gardeners to re-think how and when they garden for greater ease.
- To describe ways gardens can be changed or modified to ensure the safety and comfort of the gardener.
- To modify favorite tools to increase their usability or to replace them with more ergonomic options.

Another way to think about gardening is that if you garden smarter, it will take less time to do more. In simpler terms, as one ages or has some kind of physical disability, knowing how to garden smarter will help to keep you more physically fit than most other activities. You need proactive solutions when you have physical challenges. "The Lifelong Gardener" is all about three T's – tips, tools and techniques.

In the chapter "You and Your Body" the key is to identify what you can control. Keep your attitude in check and be realistic regarding any mobility issues. In other words, find a way to maneuver about so that you will conquer pain with joy – adapt! Regardless of age and aging, gardening is about how you feel, so again – adapt! In essence, this becomes the new normal and enables you to garden more comfortably and without or with little pain. Your attitude is showing when you are able to recognize some limitations, that is, your abilities and disabilities when you are gardening. Take note that age is just a number although age may be important when you are looking for bargain prices. Otherwise, does it really matter? In the end, aging and attitude should not be a deciding factor for a gardener; however, it is important to understand your limits. Mark Twain said "Aging is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

Gattone has a message relative to your comfort zone. She says "It is important to strengthen our resilience to discomfort, as a path to inner peace." If you can achieve that, you will not regret that resilience is a critical skill that goes along with caring for your body. As one ages you need to rethink how even simple gardening chores can be achieved regardless of some malady that heretofore limited your activity in the garden. The Dali Lama noted "Pain can change you, but that doesn't mean it has to be a bad change. Take that pain and turn it into wisdom." This chapter includes a compilation of why and how you can maintain your physical fitness for working in the garden. The critical aspect is to accept your own reality. In other words, change your attitude and recognize your limitations more commonly called – STOP! As your body changes you can expect to see changes in balance, stamina, mobility and reaction time. This will become your new normal as noted above.

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The second chapter is about "Your Garden." It is akin to attending a lecture on adaptive gardening and how you can garden for a lifetime. Here is where you might want to give serious consideration as to how to make some changes to your garden. In order to help with a garden transition, Gattone has included an excellent multi-page worksheet called an "Adaptive Gardening Action Plan." This starting point is invaluable as it helps plan your garden on paper and "forces" you to be honest with yourself. You can put into practice every point she makes because sufficient word and color photos from previous reading provide a DIY perspective.

The last chapter is about "Your Tools." Where would you be without some of your favorite gardening tools? Are they still serving the original purpose? Human factors engineering, or the more familiar term ergonomics, comes to the rescue. This is especially true for those with weaker hands, arthritis, achy joints, loss of muscle, bad back, etc. More than likely, just as the need to adapt a garden is paramount, one also needs to find tools that "work." Fortunately, a number of tool manufacturers are listening to the plight of aging gardeners. They have developed garden tools that recognize how ergonomically designed tools can be a difference maker for gardeners that are more suitable for their needs. These days it is a lot easier to find quality tools and helpful products such as kneeling seats, carry tool seats and pot lifters for moving heavy containers. This is a win-win for the tool purveyor and the gardener. Many of these new tools will help you to stay in the garden longer. Also, look for tools that serve multiple purposes. Consider adapting tool handles with a bicycle handle grip or the type of tape used on tennis rackets for a better grip and ease. Do not shortchange on quality. The marketplace has many lookalikes and it is better to personally check what is available instead of making a purchase over the internet. One last point is about gloves. Although this may seem like a rather mundane topic, it is actually a practical consideration for every gardener. You need to protect your hands! Today you will find a confusing array of gloves so look for those labeled as "bionic", with padding, reinforced finger tips and well-constructed seams. Gloves come in all price ranges and with many different types of materials. Try before you buy. Consider the type of gardening that you do as this may dictate your glove selection. For example, long leather gloves (costly) if you work with roses but inexpensive "mud" gloves with a cotton-poly back and latex coated fingers and palms may be very serviceable for lots of gardening chores.

A few last words....  
Garden smarter, not harder and never give up. Continue to stay in the garden for as long as it provides you with so much pleasure.

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## Calendar 2019

### August

9 Application deadline: VMGA Diane Relf MG College Scholarship

### September

19-22 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Virginia Master Gardener College Norfolk, VA

### October

19 [Central Shenandoah Valley Garden Symposium: Going Native](#)

19 Eastern Shore MG Garden Symposium <https://www.esvmg.com/>

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## TIME FOR A MUSICAL INTERLUDE

by Janet Rash, Newport News reprinted with permission

Sung to the tune of ***THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS***  
(with a most sincere apology to Irving Berlin)

Our real business is people business we teach wherever we go...  
We reach out to the kids in all our classrooms,  
We talk to garden clubs around the town,  
We host Go Green to educate the masses,  
Our Speaker's Bureau deserves a crown.  
Our strength is in the research, it's done at Tech as you know...  
Even if they hate the bees around them,  
and if they want grass without a weed,  
Or if they think Bradfords are the real gem,  
We get to tell them, just what they need.  
We're dedicated to science, and we give it free of charge...  
We spread the facts, they really are terrific,  
We'll teach you that a vole is not a mole,  
We'll get down to the truth and be specific,  
About our natives, we do cajole.  
So go out to your neighbors, and tell all that you see...  
We are here to help you do it safely,  
And our way is healthy for the world,  
We care about our Earth, and all that's in it,  
Our MG banner, it is unfurled.  
(BIG FINISH!)

Yesterday they told you, you could spray with ease,  
And now we know of the harm to bees,  
Today you have the knowledge to help save the trees,  
Let's go out there and showwww...  
LET'S - GO - OUT - THERE - AND - GROW!

Happy summer everyone! -Janet (*and Irving*)