

# Horticulture Field Day 2009

*By Suzanne Aiello, GCV Horticulture Field Day Chairman  
Dolley Madison Garden Club*

**W**ith great enthusiasm, Dolley Madison Garden Club invites you to join us for a spectacular Horticulture Field Day in historic Orange, Thursday and Friday, May 28 and May 29.

On Thursday, from 12:30 to 5:30, we will visit James Madison's Montpelier. Two different one-hour guided tours will be offered simultaneously at 1:00 and 2:15 for GCV members. Preregistration is required and limited to the first fifty people. The Big Woods Walk features Montpelier's old growth trees and native flora and the second tour features the Annie duPont Garden and the Montpelier grounds. The newly restored mansion will also be open for tours all afternoon. From 3:00 to 5:30 the Oriental Garden, an early American adaptation of a Japanese garden, and the Gillette garden at Bassett House will be open for GCV members.

On Friday, we will meet between 8:15 and 8:30 at the Holiday Inn Express on Rt. 15, in Orange. We will separate into two groups and depart promptly at 8:45 to visit three fabulous gardens. Mount Sharon Farm, a king's grant in 1724, is located on one of the highest sites in the Piedmont. The current owners, Charles and Mary Lou Seilheimer, restored the house and created a series of distinctive garden rooms using century old boxwood. Retreat Farm is a 570 acre working farm producing natural vegetables and raising natural livestock. The goal of the owners, Porter and Mariel Goss, is to create sustainable gardening, respecting diversity and working with nature. Farm managers will lead us on a tour. The two groups will reunite at Summer Duck Wood for a garden tour and buffet luncheon, generously donated by the owners, Jamie and Mary McConnell. Summer Duck Wood is a 1,600 acre hunting park managed for wildlife habitat. The central stone courtyard is planted with flowering perennials, trees and shrubs. Two stone pergolas frame a water garden.

Registration forms and more information may be found on the GCV website. Rooms have been set aside at the Holiday Inn Express in Orange for May 28. To make a reservation, call 540-672-6691 and ask for the Garden Club of Virginia group block. The rate is \$99 until April 29. Orange also has a number of beautiful inns, some of which are located within walking distance of the quaint shops in historic downtown. Please Google Orange, Virginia B&Bs for a complete list. Registration is limited to 120 people. We expect to be fully booked, so please register early.

