

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

August, 2013

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **August 18, 4:00 pm** – Garden tour of John Stevens garden. John is the former President of NSVMGA and active member of the Frederick County community. His home is located on the outskirts of Winchester.
Directions: Walnut Grove, 324 Roundhill Road, Winchester Va. 22602; 540-667-4527; on rt. 50 west of Winchester.
From the south, take I-81 to Exit 310, Rt. 37 (Kernstown). Take Rt. 37 to Rt. 50. Turn left on Rt. 50 and go 1/4 mile to Rt. 803, Round Hill Road (traffic light at new Wal-Mart). Turn left on Round Hill Road and go 1/4 mile to 324. Turn right into driveway.
From the north, take I-81 to Exit 317, Rt. 37/11. Take Rt. 37 to Rt. 50. Turn right on Rt. 50 and go 1/4 mile to Rt. 803, Round Hill Road (traffic light at new Wal-Mart). Turn left on Round Hill Road and go 1/4 mile to 324. Turn right into driveway
- **September 15, 4:00 pm** Speaker: Carolyn Farouki, who will be hosting the meeting at her home and will be leading tours of her gardens Carolyn lives in Clarke County.
- **October 20, 4:00 pm** – MG Richard Stromberg will speak on, “Native Plants” at the Valley Farm Credit Site Bureau located in Winchester.
- **November 17, 4:00 pm** Annual Election to be held at the Warren County Government Center located in Front Royal.

VOLUNTEER COODINATOR’S REPORT by Susan Garrett

I am writing this article on one of those absolutely perfect Virginia summer days. The temperature is in the high 70’s and the sky is light blue, with fluffy white clouds. The crape myrtle in my yard is getting ready to burst into gorgeous bloom. (Our house in Berryville is at the bottom of a hill, so we have a “micro-climate” and our flowering trees and shrubs are always later than our close neighbors at the top of the hill.) Some of my daylilies are still in bloom, and the coneflowers and black-eyed Susans are having a wonderful summer! I hope your gardens are giving you as much joy as ours is when we look out at the miracle of our summer perennials, shrubs, and trees.

I am not a “natural” gardener as some of you are. (For example, there is little that I have seen, and nothing I could grow, that would compare with Carolyn Wilson’s August flower garden—the sight of which makes me totally jealous. And I am sure I would feel the same about the gardens that many of you present to the world.) But I became a Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener because of the pure pleasure I find in seeing what happens when you mix some dirt, some water, and some seeds or bulbs or starter plants with a little love (and maybe some compost).

Of course, the lovely wet summer, which is keeping everything so green, is great for Japanese beetles and their close (and larger and uglier) cousins, the green June beetles, which have appeared in our area. And the nasty disease of late blight on tomatoes and potatoes is exacerbated by wet conditions. But the gardener’s life is full of challenge—and we wouldn’t have it any other way!

The Membership List has been undated on both the VMS and NSVMGA systems. On VMS, the Membership List can be found under "Newsletters/Documents", which you can find in the left side

of Home Page in the box entitled "General Information". Please also note that the "Members Only" section of the NSVMGA website seems to be working normally again. Please call me if you are confused or have trouble using the VMS system. I would LOVE to walk you through it.

MILESTONES by Susan Garrett

The Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association has had an exciting summer. June was a special time for us, because it marked the graduation of the Class of 2013 Master Gardener Interns. Our most recent class, some of whom have already achieved VCE-MG status, are pictured here in their traditional graduation photo on the steps of Belle Grove during the 2013 Gardenfest with three of their Class Coordinators.

June also brought the recognition of long service as a Master Gardener and Emeritus Membership, a rarely given honor, for a Page County member of the Class of 1995, Anne Stilwell. At the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association meeting on June 9 in Page County, Anne, in the presence of her special guests and the NSVMGA membership, received her Emeritus pin from Cy Haley, President, as Susan Garrett, Volunteer Coordinator, read the Virginia Cooperative Extension's "Certificate of Appreciation" and the Page County Co-Coordinators, Tom Mack, Lesley Mack, and Elke Thomas, looked on.

The July meeting saw our recognition of 4 new VCE Master Gardeners: two members of the Class of 2012, James Jones and Matt Windt, and two members of the Class of 2013, Ginny Smith and Barbara Gorham. Ginny (pictured) is the first member of the current year's class to achieve her 50 project hours and VCE-MG status. To mark that achievement, Ginny received a NSVMGA Master Gardener t-shirt to recognize her status as the first Master Gardener in her class. Each member of the Class of 2013 who achieves MG status by October 1, 2013 will receive a free MG polo shirt to commemorate their achievement.

In July we also celebrated Milestone Awards. Pins and certificates are given for 250, 500, and 1000 hours, and for every 1000 hours following. Milestone awards are based on accumulated hours as of December 31 of each year. (A Milestone Award of 500 Hours or more entitles the recipient to discounts at MG College for that year, or if not used in the year recognized, the year following.) Milestone Award eligible hours include every hour donated to VCE Master Gardener work, including drive time, project hours and education hours, and also includes 50 hours for the time spent in the Intern class sessions. In our unit, many wear their Milestone pins on their VCE identification badge lanyard.

Eight members received their 250 Hour award and Pin: Mary Flagg, David Freese, Donna Funk-Smith, Susan Garrett, Scott Hinkle, Richard Howell, Roberta Johnson, and Luann Woodward-Laundry. Cy Haley received her 500 Hour award and pin, Mary Craig and Suzanne Boag their 1000 Hour award and pin, Lesley Mack her 2000 Hour award and pin, and Lynn Hoffman her 3000 Hour award and pin.

Our congratulations to all these wonderful and dedicated VCE Master Gardeners and Interns that we have recognized and whose achievements we have celebrated this summer!

CLARKE COUNTY COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Mary Craig

The Clarke Master Gardeners have a table at the Farmers' Market in Berryville every Saturday morning from 9:00am to noon. All the slots have been filled through August. If you would like to sign up for a shift in September, let me know at mcorneliac@centurylink.net or (540) 635-0688. There's live music and plenty of wonderful vendors. Pets are welcome, We will have a booth at the

Clarke County Fair from Tuesday, August 13th through Saturday, August 17th. We are right across from the Horticulture building, a good location to catch people with horticultural questions. We will answer their garden related questions and hand out VA Tech fact sheets and information. We have filled all the slots for the Fair, too. What a great group of Master Gardeners, always willing to help, including the class of 2013 interns. They have put in lots of hours on Clarke projects already.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Carolyn Wilson

The greenline has been busy answering gardening questions, and often we will have a walk-in with a plant sample. Both of the Farmer's markets are making lots of contacts for Master Gardeners. The one at Fort Valley Nursery on the fourth Saturday of each month has always been a hopping place, but I am happy to report that the newer one (this is just their second year) in Strasburg has been very well received. In fact, when bad weather canceled their usual third Friday evening session due to severe thunderstorms, they were asked if they could please come the next week. I am glad that we are able to spread the word about Master Gardeners to both ends of the county. Thanks to Sharon Bradshaw, leader of the Fort Valley group, and Belinda Palmer, leader of the Strasburg group, for their great work.

We are also doing our usual 4-H camp program on Wednesday mornings at the various town parks. Unfortunately we have had to cancel two due to lack of enrollment. This year's topic is called "eat your veggies". As long as they have enough ranch dressing, the children will at least try most of the veggies. Carrots and tomatoes are the most popular.

At the end of the month we will have our MG information booth at the Shenandoah county fair from August 24 thru 30. I always volunteer for the first night because I love to watch the children check to see if they won any ribbons. They always get so excited, even if it's just a third place. It's good to know that we have lots of future potential MGs out there. The pictures show Mary and Siobhan handing out information at the Clarke County Fair in 2012.

LUNA MOTH (and other moths) by Mary Craig

It's that time of year when the Luna Moths come out. After getting some good pictures of them, I decided to do a little reading up on them. Luna Moths are members of the *Saturniidae* family, also known as the "Giant Silkworm Moths." Luna Moths are huge moths, with a wingspan of four and a half inches. They have a white body, pinkish legs, and huge pale green wings. The hind wings have eyespots and long tails. You can tell a male from a female, because males have larger, bushier antennae. They fly only at night, in Spring and early Summer. From what I've read, they only mate at night, but I caught these two in the afternoon. The female Luna Moth lays eggs on the bottom of Black Walnut leaves. She lays about 200 eggs in small groups. I have a small Black Walnut out back; this may be why I'm seeing more Luna Moths. Caterpillars feed on leaves of walnut, hickory, sweetgum, maple, oak, persimmon, willow and other trees.

"Moon" moths are active at night and are harmless. Caterpillars feed on tree leaves but are rarely found in large numbers, so they don't do enough damage to trees to warrant any control measures.

I also found an Imperial Moth on the back screen door. He is in the same family as the Luna Moth.

When we were on vacation we seemed to have a lot more moths hanging around on the side of the cabin. I took pictures of them and will get around to doing some studying up on these, too.

Just because the Luna is so big and beautiful, doesn't mean some of the smaller moths aren't just as pretty. I especially like the Rosy Maple Moth. His pink and yellow color really stands out. The

pictures show other ones I caught "napping" on the side of the house in the morning. We all love butterflies. They are so colorful, and we see them in the daytime. But the moths that come out at night can be just as fascinating. From the fuzzy heads to the furry antennae, they are unique in every way.

SUMMER LIBRARY PROGRAMS by Anne Dewey-Balzhiser

Volunteer opportunities are available at local libraries for Master Gardener interns. On July 10, Barb Hallar and I presented a program at the Bowman Library in Stephens City. Eager middle schoolers learned how to plant in unusual containers—old sneakers they brought with them.

As Mark Sutphin taught us to do, we presented basic information about plant botany (stems, leaves, roots), the four plant needs (nutrients, water, air, and light), and how plants make their own food through a process called photosynthesis. We easily pulled answers from our audience, a mannerly yet enthusiastic group. Repetition helped them to absorb new terms.

Barb had done a great job of propagating sedums, hens and chicks, and ajuga. After cutting holes in the sneakers, we helped the kids fill them with soil and carefully place their plants inside. The librarians provided colorful stones and beads to further decorate them. After we provided some tips for plant care, each child proudly left with his or her new sneaker planter.

If you're interested in making a similar presentation, an outline will be available soon on our NSVMGA website.

PLANTING FOR A FALL HARVEST Excerpted from the Franklin County, Va.

Master Gardeners Association "Landscape and Garden Guide" by Lynn Hoffman

Here is an old trick for germinating seeds in midsummer. Plant seeds, water well, and place a board over the row until the sprouts just reach the soil surface. Remove the board and don't let the sprouts dry out.

Vegetables that grow well during the cool days of fall are kale, turnips, mustard, broccoli and cabbage.

Now is a good time to check the condition of your cold frame. Replace broken glass, putty and repaint as needed. If you don't have a cold frame, build one!

Recipe for the Beet Salad that Lesley Mack brought to the July Meeting

from the Veganomicon Vegan Cookbook by Moskowitz and Romero

Must have a food processor, (or a strong shredding arm!)

Shred one pound of beets and one pound of parsnips and 1/2 cup mint (I used spearmint)

Dressing:

2 cups pineapple *or* orange juice

1/3 cup red wine vinegar

1/4 cup grapeseed oil

2 tablespoons maple syrup or agave nectar

1 finely grated garlic clove

1/4 tsp salt

Mix all together. Cover and refrigerate for, at least, 30 minutes.

Use alone, or on a sandwich (like coleslaw), or on top of greens, or use as a base and add baked tofu or tempeh.

Serves six.

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

Red, real red, not paled towards pink nor blued towards purple nor yellowed towards orange, really stands out. This was brought home clearly while I was hiking on the Appalachian Trail during the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Conference in North Carolina last month. On the high elevation (5,000-6,600 feet) trails everything is green and, sometimes very dark in the fir stands, so anything not green stands out, but red the most. Two plant species were true red: Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*) and Fire Pink (*Silene virginica*).