

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

June, 2014

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Sun., July 20, 4-6pm – Belle Grove, Middletown (Frederick). **What is MG College?**
- **Directions:** Located one mile south of Middletown, Virginia, on U.S. Route 11. From I-66, take I-81 north to exit 302 (Route 627), go west on Route 627 to U.S. 11 in Middletown. Turn left to travel south on U.S. Route 11. After passing through Middletown, follow U.S. 11 one mile south to Belle Grove
- Sun., Aug. 17, 4-6pm – MG Siobhan O'Brien's Farm, 1167 Shenandoah River Rd. Boyce 22620 (Clarke), Heirloom Tomatoes
- Sun., Sep. 21, 4-6pm – AREC Center (Frederick), Nathan Stanley, **Wetland Studies & Solutions**
- Sun., Oct 19, 4-6pm – Southern States, 447 Amherst St., Winchester (Frederick)
- Sun., Nov. 16, 2-4pm – Warren County Government Center, 220 N. Commerce Ave., Front Royal (Warren) Election/Annual Business Meeting

OTHER EVENTS

- Sun., July 13, 10am-Noon, **Virginia Native Plant Society Walk.** See the flora, geology, and scenery of Compton Peak in Shenandoah National Park. Meet at Dickey Ridge Visitor Center in the North Section of the Park at 10am. See magnificent columnar jointing and, with luck, the massive inflorescence of Broad-leaved Bunchflower (*Veratrum hybridum*). Some rough, rocky, and steep sections: 2.4 miles, elevation change 800 feet. For more information, email piedmontvnps@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Susan Garrett

At this time of year all good Master Gardeners get involved with their gardens in a major way. Flowers are blooming, vegetables are showing promise, the world is green and gorgeous, and we are in love with the possibilities for our own plots of land. Even my humble (and prolific) coneflowers are a thing of beauty in my proud gardener's eyes.



Please remember though, that there is a whole world of gardeners out there who want to have the same experiences, but who need the help of VCE Master Gardeners to do so. The phone lines of the various county *Greenlines* are ringing off the hook with questions about evergreen branches browning and Emerald Ash Borer sightings. The information tables at the various Farmers Markets and County Fairs have anxious

growers of heirloom tomatoes and fruit trees wondering about the pests and diseases which are getting in the way of their perfect visions. And children are out of school, and this is a wonderful time for them to be learning about growing things and nature and gardens.

So as you put on your gardening hats and vision your summer as VCE Master Gardeners, please plan these months to include some volunteering at *Greenlines* and Farmers Markets, County Fairs and Information Tables, and with the many activities that involve children and growing things. All of these opportunities are available through VCE MG programs already planned by the various counties. Just call or email your County Coordinator to see where help is needed! I guarantee you that every single one of them would love to hear from you. Or just go to the VMS site at <https://virginia.volunteersystem.org/users/index.cfm> , put in your password (if you need help with this just give me a call or shoot me an email at SusanSGarrettMG@gmail.com) and look through the programs or sign up for events already on the General or Special Event Calendar. Enjoy your gardens, but please also share that hard-won knowledge with the community!

MEMBERSHIP by Mary Craig

As of the end of June, we have 83 Active and Emeritus members. The membership list is up to date on VMS.

FREDERICK COUNTY REPORT by Emily Wickham

Frederick County MGs are busy this summer. Helen Lake and her volunteers have done a great job with the help desk at Lowe's for the three Fridays in the past three months. Lowe's was very supportive and helpful to the volunteers. Thanks to all who helped out with this outreach program!

The Frederick County Greenline has also been busy. The line has averaged about one call/email a day during June. Of course, they do not come in a nice steady flow—more feast or famine! Thanks to the many volunteers that helped out this spring. We had two 2014 intern/trainees volunteer: John Kummer and Stacey Smith (Shenandoah County). They have been great in helping with client issues. Stacy used her hours to complete her 50 hrs and is now a full-fledged Master Gardener. I have stepped away from the Greenline coordinator responsibilities. We are looking for someone help with this great service.

I will be hosting a Frederick County meeting at my home (1008 Caroline St) July 12 at 9:30. It will be more a meet and greet and getting suggestions on county projects. Contact me for more information (teawick@aol.com, 540-504-7183) Thanks for the many well wishes and supportive emails I have received. I am excited to work with you all.



PAGE COUNTY REPORT by Lesley Mack

Thanks to **April Mays** at the Stanley Ext. office for forwarding the *Greenline* calls as needed. Several interesting and "make you giggle" calls:

- The winter's damage on Leylands has been particularly troubling to some.
- Sawfly larvae, a primitive wasp which has 4 wings (not 2), and lacks a wasp waist, has also been troubling the rose lovers in our area.

- A gentleman who loves the look of cypress mulch around his home was trying to grow his tomatoes and beans along the side of the house. Unfortunately, besides being unsustainable, cypress mulch is not a good conveyor of water or moisture, and does not provide nutrients.
- A lady thought her Variegated Redbud had a disease. It was a gift when her mother passed away, and she may have lost the tag.
- A gentleman, who has a small 5' x 5' veggie garden, thought one of his neighbors was sabotaging his cucumbers every year by spraying something on them. Turns out, his cucumbers have Angular Leaf Spot (*Pseudomonas syringae pv. lachryans*), and he has been "sabotaging" himself by watering with a hose and planting the cucumbers in the same place every year.



All these and other "Greenline" calls were gladly taken care of by our Page Co. MGs.



At the time of this writing, Tom and I are so happy the weather has been helpful in the growing season. Our garden will look particularly nice when the MGs meet here for the June meeting.

MGs visiting from the Pittsburgh area were greatly impressed by the gardens of Virginia that they saw and with Mark Supthin for his help in arranging areas of interest for them. Their tour bus even made it down our road!

CLARKE COUNTY REPORT by Mary Craig

The Clarke County Fair is coming up. We will be manning a booth from Monday, August 11th to Saturday, August 16th. We set up from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm last year. We may start and end a little earlier this year. The crowd tends to move to the rides and food when it starts to get dark. If anyone would like to volunteer for a shift, let me know at mcorneliac@centurylink.net. I will be setting up on Sunday, so if you'd like to help set up, let me know, too.

We could use some help for July at the Farmers' Market in Berryville on Saturdays from 9 to noon. I know it's vacation time, but if you can take a shift, please go to VMS and sign up on the calendar.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT by Carolyn Wilson

Thanks for all the hard work that made the Garden Fest a success this year. Although we did not have as many plants this year as last, they were well groomed and labeled. We had an especially good selection of herbs. I was impressed by how helpful and hard working the interns were.

Speaking of the interns, I'd like to congratulate Stacey Smith of Shenandoah county for being the first to earn and report their required 50 hours. When Stacey was helping me dig plants for Garden

Fest, she confided that she really wanted to be the first, but she was worried because she works full time she might not be able to. Way to go Stacey! You met your goal!

I'm sorry to report that the farmer's market in Strasburg has closed. Thanks to Belinda, who has worked hard the past few years staffing our MG booth there. However the Woodstock farmer's market at Fort Valley Nursery is going strong and we are making many contacts there on the second and fourth Saturday.

We have had several sessions at the New Market Rain Garden system. It's amazing how well weeds grow in a rain garden. We will probably be switching to Thursday evenings since it's getting so hot. We had a planning meeting with Susan St. Amand, the summer 4-H activities director. Most of the summer children's gardening programs are planned. We will be doing a new program about seeds. The programs are in the 3 elementary schools, 4-H camps and Signal Knob Middle School. There are 10 sessions scheduled in July, so we expect to be very busy. Many of the interns are helping with this program.

MG COLLEGE by Mary Craig



I'm sure you will hear a lot about Master Gardener College in the weeks to come, as there were a record number of NSVMGA Master Gardeners in attendance. The speakers were all very good for the classes I attended. I learned a lot and really enjoyed each speaker. Our group had several Milestone Award winners in attendance: Malinda Gordy – 500 hours, Angie Hutchinson – 500 hours, Janet Keithley – 500 hours, Cy Haley – 1000 hours and Carolyn Wilson with an amazing 5000 hours. We also received a Bald Cypress award for our contributions to the State Coordinator Endowment. Cy accepted the award for us.

For those of you who are thinking of attending in future years, and may not want to stay in the dorms, there is a great campground, right on the New River at the second Radford exit on Rt. 81. My husband and I took the whole week off and made it our vacation for the summer. Not many fish, but we did see a family of river otters playing along the bank, as well as a raccoon and several geese, Cormorants and Blue Herons. Claytor Lake State Park is nearby and we took a ride out there, as well. It's a beautiful lake and park with lots to do. Here is a picture of the view from my accommodations. Not the typical dorm view.

We also discovered, thanks to some fellow campers we befriended, there is a NASCAR sanctioned short track just 8 miles from the campsite. We spent Friday night, tickets courtesy of our camping friends, watching the races with them. Not everyone's cup of tea, but we are big fans and really enjoyed ourselves.

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

Two years ago I wrote about a small peat bog I found near the Bear Wallow parking lot along Fort Valley Road in the Massanutten Mountains. I hike a lot in our mountains, and I am always looking for flowers. For the most part our mountains are pretty dry. Any time I come to water along the trail, I look carefully to see if there are any special flowers. So a bog is something special for me. I



Unknown leaf growing in
Peat Moss (*Sphagnum*)

first went there in August, 2012, because someone had told me that Yellow Fringed Orchids (*Platanthera ciliaris*) grow there, and I found one blooming and leaves of others. Last year I went back and found at least a dozen blooming. But on both trips I encountered large, single, multi-lobed leaves coming up out of the peat moss—no flowers. I had no idea what they were. Studying my books and asking around and even putting a picture in the Virginia Native Plant Society Piedmont Chapter

newsletter, the most likely candidate was Tassel-rue (*Trautvetteria caroliniensis*). The Flora of Virginia says it flowers from May to July. So I went to look at the end of May this year—no flowers. So I went back again at the of June and finally found them blooming.

On the way to the bog I was delighted to see lots of Skullcaps (*Scutellaria integrifolia*) and Green-and-gold (*Chrysogonum virginianum*) blooming along the dry fire road. Both of them would be satisfactory contributors to a flower garden. In fact, I have a Green-and-gold plant that puts out multiple yellow flowers for a couple months. Of course, Yellow Fringed Orchids and Tassel-rue flowers are fancy enough for a flower garden too—if you have a bog. Oh, lots of Yellow Fringed Orchids were in bud.



Hyssop
Skullcap
*Scutellaria
integrifolia*



Green-and-Gold
*Chrysogonum
virginianum*



Tassel-rue
*Trautvetteria
caroliniensis*