

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

May, 2013

UPCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings will be the third Sunday of the month, and we will meet at 4pm. All will be pot luck. Each county coordinator will be responsible for providing the eating utensils, plates, coffee/drinks. (Check with hosts of private homes if you have any questions.)

- **Sunday, May 19, 4:00 p.m.** – Phoebe Reeve, the herbalist will be emphasizing "Backyard Pharmacy" and the herbs that may be found in our yards can be used for healing purposes Meeting to be held at Belle Grove located in Frederick County.

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.

OTHER MEETINGS

- **June 9, 4 p.m.** – David Sours will speak on will speak on the "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" movement in our area and the impact it has on our communities and on MG'ers. The meeting will be held at his farm, Public House Produce in Luray, Page County.
- **July 21, 4:00 p.m.** Dr. Steve Carroll of Bland, topic is "Tomatoes and other Garden Obsessions". The meeting will be held in the Warren County Government Building in Ft. Royal.
- **August 18, 4:00 p.m.** – Speaker TBA. John Stevens, former President of NSVMGA and active member of the Frederick County community. His home is located on the outskirts of Winchester.
- **September 15, 4:00 p.m.** 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 p.m.** – MG Richard Stromberg will speak on, "Native Plants" at the Valley Farm Credit Site Bureau located in Winchester.
- **November 17, 4:00 p.m.** – Annual Election to be held at the Warren County Government Center located in Front Royal.

OTHER EVENTS

- **Saturday & Sunday, May 11 & 12, 9am-4:30pm, State Arboretum Garden Fair, Clarke County.** Select vendors with perennials, small trees and fine items for garden and home. Also: children's activities, gardening information, food and much, much more. Directions at www.virginia.edu/Bland.
- **Sunday, May 12, 10am, Second Sunday Walk, Clarke County.** Native plant walk at Bland during Garden Fair.

PROPER USE OF THE TITLE: "MASTER GARDENER"

by Cy Haley & Mark Sutphin, Horticulture Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension

The term “Master Gardener” is one that I have seen used in many ways, with many purposes, and more often than not in an incorrect or inappropriate manner when it comes to Extension. All across the nation, education volunteers who love plants, gardening, the environment, and anything horticulturally related, associate themselves with the Extension programs in their home state. These trained volunteers – YOU, who are serving and assisting in the horticultural education of your communities, have been coined the term “Master Gardener” by Extension programs all around the country.

Recently, I have seen the term “master gardener” noted in gardening advertisements to describe an experienced gardener; I’ve seen former Extension Master Gardener Volunteers identify themselves as “retired master gardeners”; but most commonly, I see current and active Extension Master Gardener Volunteers solely identifying themselves as “Master Gardeners”. Though this last occurrence is correct, because an active Extension Master Gardener Volunteer is a “Master Gardener”, with so much confusion and ambiguity in the title, I see the need for you as Extension volunteers to appropriately identify yourselves with the backing of the state Extension organization and the land-grant university system.

So, whenever you identify yourself, whether in the media (print, radio, TV), to a garden club before a talk, to a greenline client, or just to a friend or neighbor with whom you are assisting on a horticulture question, please identify yourself as a VCE Master Gardener volunteer (Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Volunteer).

(For more detailed information regarding the proper use of the title “Master Gardener”, please refer to the Master Gardener Manual, Chapter 17: Section on “Welcome to VCE Master Gardening”)

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR’S REPORT by Susan Garrett

As the new Volunteer Coordinator, and one of the Coordinators of the class, I’ve been spending a lot of time with the trainees in the MG Class of 2013. If you want to become excited about the VCE Master Gardener program, just spend some time working those who are beginning their VCE Master Gardener journey, and with the experts, MG’s and others, who donate their time for MG education. The piece below was written by one of this year’s 24 class members, and is typical of the caliber of this class and the enthusiasm of its members. It reminds me of the time some years ago when I first discovered the VCE Master Gardener program. I hope it reminds you as well!

Thank you, Anne, for letting me share this!

“NURTURING TRANSPLANTS” by MG Class of 2013 Member Anne Dewey-Balzhiser

Well, okay, some of you are reading this piece expecting to hear about coddling our little green fellows in our gardens. But it is not about that kind of transplants. It is about the human kind, as in, retired from the rat race east of us and looking for solace and connection in the mountains of northwest Virginia. Those kinds of transplants.

That would be me. My husband and I moved out to Frederick County from Fairfax last fall. He is retired now and I’m semi-retired-- we have more time and flexibility in our schedules than we used to. The questions that arise are familiar ones for other retirees: what do I want to do with my time; what is my passion; how can I use my unique talents to give back to my new community; and how do I make friends out here?

I found answers to those questions when I called Mark Sutphin to ask about the new master gardener training that was about to get underway at the State Arboretum at Blandy Farm. Learning that it is only held once a year, I decided to sign up. Combining my developing interest in gardening

with working on projects that reach out to the community seemed like a good start. And the adventure began.

As all of you Master Gardeners know, it's a lot of work! Two evening of classes for 11 weeks. A thick Master Gardener Handbook to be read, complete with quizzes. Workshops to attend. Preparing and delivering a 3- to 5-minute presentation on a topic linked to gardening. A final exam. This is a program for *serious* gardeners.

I could not have chosen a better way to connect to my new community. I got to know 25 wonderful folks of various ages, some still working and some not. At least half of them grew up on farms and/or live on healthy-sized acreages. I tasted wonderful dishes. I carpooled with two of my colleagues and got to know about their gardens. Through the presentations, I learned about beekeeping, bird watching, plant spirits, veggie gardening, canning. Not the sorts of things too many city folk like me do in their spare time.

And the instructors were fabulous! They regaled us with the latest in research and practice in such areas as viticulture, water conservation, plant therapy, pest management. They modeled for us how to take the research done at our nation's land grant colleges and work that into presentations. Of course, that is exactly what we will now be doing as we work with the cadre of seasoned master gardeners to educate the public on the best practices in horticulture, landscaping, etc. And thus we trainees will mature into interns and, hopefully, into true master gardeners in the next year.

Best of all, I met wonderful people – the colleagues in my class as well as the volunteers who tended to our care and feeding. I could not have chosen a better path to connecting to this beautiful area I now call home!

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

I spent a week hiking around Tucson, Arizona, in mid-April. Of course, I was paying close attention to the flowers: amazing what color appears in such a dry place (twelve inches of rain a year) and how plants have adapted. Ocotillo produces flowers and tiny leaves whenever it gets enough water. Cacti have converted leaves to protective spines and photosynthesize through fleshy stems, which also store liquids. Palo Verde has given up leaves altogether and photosynthesizes through its green bark, and at this time of year is flowering, providing masses of yellow in the air. I was also reminded that plants have their times to bloom: Hedgehog Cacti were in full bloom; Prickly Pears were just starting to open; Cholla were budding but not open; Saguaro will bloom in May-June; Barrel Cactus will not flower until July.