

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

September, 2012

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, September 16, 4pm, Frederick County, Alson H. Smith Jr. Agriculture Research and Extension Center (AREC)**, Janet Heishman of Gabalot Gardens in Strasburg, will discuss fall gardening with an emphasis on vegetable gardens.

Directions: 595 Laurel Grove Road, off Middle Road (State Route 628), midway between Winchester and Middletown.

From Winchester follow Valley Avenue to Middle Road. Turn onto Middle Road (located between Sheetz and Dairy Queen). Follow Middle Road at least 6 miles until you reach State Route 629/Laurel Grove Road. Turn right on Laurel Grove, 1 mile, through Apple Orchards. Look carefully for signage and turn into AREC on left.

From Exit 307 of I-66 turn left on Fairfax Pike into Stephen's City. Continue through the light on Main Street (Rt. 11) onto Marlboro Road. Travel 3.4 miles until the junction with Middle Road (State route 628). Turn right, for 1.5 miles. Turn left on Laurel Grove Road/State Route 629. AREC is about 1 mile down on your left.

- **Sunday, October 21, 4pm, Shenandoah County**, Woodstock Government Center. The speaker will be Gary Deonis and the topic is Orchids.
- **Sunday, November 18, 4pm, Warren County Government Center, Front Royal.** Annual business meeting and lectures
- **December.** No meeting

OTHER EVENTS

- **Tuesdays 7 to 9 pm, September 11 through October 27 "All About Trees" classes, Warren County Government Center**, 220 N. Commerce Ave, Front Royal. Light refreshments will be provided. In addition, there will be four half-day Saturday sessions (TBA). These sessions will include hands-on pruning as well as visits to the State Arboretum of Virginia and an active tree nursery. \$90 per couple. Individual evening sessions can also be taken for \$7 each (this fee will cover that particular class training and hand-outs but does not include the manual). No one wishing to become a Tree Steward will be turned away for inability to pay; email frwctreestewards@comcast.net to request tuition assistance. A brochure about Tree Stewards and how to sign up is at <http://www.treesfrontroyal.org/pdfs/AATClassBrochure2012.pdf>
- **Friday September 21, 2012 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM, Waynesboro Plant Health Care for Urban Trees Workshop - Trees: Fifty Shades of Green**, presented by Waynesboro Parks & Recreation, Trees Virginia & the Department of Forestry. Cutting edge speakers for thought provoking dialog on making our communities *better through trees*. This year's lineup features a timely discussion on tree risk assessment as well as tools to put the "park" back into our parking lots. More information and registration at [Health Care for Urban Trees Workshop](#).

AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES by Suzanne Boag, Secretary

See [Board Meeting Minutes on NSVMGA Website](#)

AUGUST MEETING MINUTES by Suzanne Boag, Secretary

See [Meeting Minutes on NSVMGA Website](#)

AUGUST MONTHLY MEETING by Mary Craig

Our August meeting at Blandy had a very good turnout. We had a short business meeting then we took a tour of the herb garden with Carrie Whitacre. This was followed by our potluck dinner. Angie deserves thanks for all her hard work to arrange our meetings and the programs this year. It's not an easy task, but she manages to get great speakers on timely topics and tours of some wonderful gardens. Thanks Angie!

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE by Mary Craig

We have reached the final cutoff for everyone to return their forms regarding their status as Master Gardeners. Susan and I will put together the final list and I'll get it posted as soon as we're done. As always, if you have any corrections or additions to your information, please let me know.

FREDERICK COUNTY Teri S. Merrill

We successfully sponsored a booth for five nights at the Frederick County fair, after a hiatus of several years. We were on the midway, which is where several members suggested we be placed. However, most nights were somewhat slow. The Wednesday crew had their hands full with rain and wind that tore down our canopy, but we managed to remain on site and have a presence there.

I have asked the volunteers who helped with the fair for their opinions on whether this is an activity that should be continued next year, and, as with any poll, the results are varied. It will be up to you, the county membership, to decide whether to continue being present at the fair next year. But please, if you verbally support the idea, then it's imperative you show your support and volunteer for a shift during the week. There is nothing more frustrating as a coordinator than to have people say they support this project or that project, and then to have to beg for volunteers when we do launch a project.

We host the September meeting this month, so thank you in advance for your help getting that arranged. Keep your eyes out for any emails about speaking engagements, as my bet is that many garden clubs and other groups will be gearing up again this fall and looking for speakers.

CLARKE COUNTY by Mary Craig & Suzanne Boag

Clarke MGs Marianne Pagington, Nancy Specht, Robert Vazquez and Suzanne Boag cleaned up the Xeriscape Demo Garden at Chet Hobert Park in Clarke County early in August. They weeded, trimmed, and dodged yellow jackets and the Xeriscape Garden looks beautiful!

We are in the home stretch for the Farmers' Market. We only have 9 more weeks to cover. We need people to sign up to help. Now that the children are back to school and activities, maybe you have a free Saturday morning. We set up by 9:00am and stay until noon. It is a lot of fun, and you get to meet a lot of very nice people. We have done a great job of filling the slots, let's not stop

now. We like to have a veteran MG with any new interns, but we welcome new people to sign up and learn how we do things at the Farmers' Market. Contact me at mcorneliac@centurylink.net if you would like to volunteer.

We will be scheduling a rain barrel building session in the next month or so. Anyone interested please let me know. It's good to see how they are put together. We will be raffling one off at Arborfest in October. We sold tickets at our County Fair and Carolyn Wilson took it on to the Shenandoah County fair, so hopefully we will sell a lot of tickets.

Our booth at the Clarke County Fair this year was in a great spot, right outside the Horticulture building. Many people stopped by with questions, a majority of them about tomatoes. Mark Sutphin sat in with us for an hour or so on Thursday night. Friday night the rain showers and the bull riding kept folks away. We didn't get anyone to cover Saturday, so we packed up Friday night, but it was a good week.

The Millwood Community Garden won two ribbons at the fair. The "Guess who is coming to dinner" arrangement in the adult division (left) received an honorable mention ribbon with an added comment that the arrangement was beautiful however it was more suitable for a buffet dinner. The "Fireworks" arrangement (zebra container, right) in the junior division received a Blue ribbon !!!

SHENANDOAH COUNTY NEWS by Carolyn Wilson

The greenline has fielded a lot of questions over the summer due to the unusual weather conditions. Our two farmer's market information booths (Woodstock on the second Saturday and Strasburg on the third Friday) have been busy. If you haven't visited the farmer's market each Saturday at Fort Valley Nursery you are missing a lot of fun. There is always live music and lots of great vendors. It is really like a mini block party!

The big event this month was our booth all week at the Shenandoah fair. We made over 250 contacts and handed out lots of gardening information. We even sold over \$50 worth of rain barrel raffle tickets. Thanks to everyone who helped make this event such a success, especially Lynn Hoffman, who came from West Virginia to help on Monday evening.

JUNIOR MG by Lynn Hoffman

If you are interested in teaching a class for the Jr MG this coming spring would you please let me know. We are looking into two possible programs. One will be with the Home School group during the day and second with Greenwood Elementary School off of Sensensy Road. The second program may be after school. There is a teaching guide and you can pick the topic you are most comfortable to teach. Email Lynn at gwendydog@gmail.com

The August 28th Hypatufa Class for the Jr MG was a great success. We had five MGs help eleven Jr MGs make their own hypatufa pots. The kids will be able to use their pots for next year's seedlings, and many of the kids said they would keep them to enter into the County fair next year. The garden is still producing tomatoes and beans, and the cantaloupes have been exceptional this year. The carrots are almost ready to pick, and they still are getting some peppers for the C-CAP program. The children pick the produce and walk it over to the CCAP building and many clients come on Tuesday just to be able to get the fresh vegetable from the children. This has been a great reward for the kids to see that their produce is really appreciated and they are doing something good for those who are less fortunate.

A graduation luncheon for the Jr MG will be held in October. I will email everyone the date as soon as I know. All are invited.

CHRISTMAS PLANS FOR BELLE GROVE by Lynn Hoffman

We have been asked again to participate in decorating a room at Belle Grove for Christmas. The theme is Christmas Carols. We can pick any song we like and decorate any part of it. If you are interested in helping, please let me know. Decorating is usually the Dec. 3 or 4 starting in the morning. Email Lynn at gwendydog@gmail.com

SEED EXCHANGES by Lynn Hoffman

Now is REALLY the time to start saving seeds. There are many seed exchange groups and community gardens that look for seeds. Blandy is an important one that looks to the MGs for some help. Their exchange is in late January.

The MGs will have 3 or 4 school/community gardens they participate with, and we will need seeds for veggies, like beans and tomatoes and flower seeds like marigolds. Red runner beans and hyacinth beans will be happily accepted. Herb seeds are also very welcome, so start saving now. Any seeds you would like to pass along, please let me know at gwendydog@gmail.com

GARDENFEST 2013 by Lynn Hoffman

We need to think about getting feedback on Gardenfest and a list of interested people for next year. I suggest Wednesday Oct 10 at 6pm, location to be determined. If you think you can make it, please let me know at gwendydog@gmail.com. If you want to volunteer for next year, and can't make the meeting, just send me your name and what you think you might want to do.

BEEKEEPING SCHOLARSHIP by Rich Howell

One of the local bee keeping groups is offering a scholarship to a young person to teach them about bee keeping. They are looking for an interested male or female, 13 to 18 years old. They will set him/her up with complete information on bees and bee keeping, including training. They will also set him/her up with bees, the hives and equipment, and a mentor to work with him/her.

Please contact Branson McKay at honey@verizon.net if you know of someone who would be interested.

QUIZ OF THE MONTH

Last month we asked, "What is an allelopathic plant?" Mary Flagg was the only person to send in the answer: An allelopathic plant produces biochemical substances that inhibit the growth of neighboring plants. For a broad example, many invasive plant species interfere with native plants thru allelopathy. For a specific example, the black walnut (*juglans nigra*) produces a allelochemical juglone which affects some plant species greatly and others not at all.

This month's question is, "What is a monoecious plant?" Send your answers and questions for future months to Richard Stromberg at risy@embarqmail.com.

MG SHIRT ORDER REMINDER by Carolyn Wilson

I will be ordering our MG shirts soon so that we can have them for Arborfest. I must have your order by September 6 so that I can have them to hand out at our September meeting.

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| T shirts | \$8.50 |
| short sleeve polo | \$12.25 |
| long sleeve polo | \$15.50 |
| sweatshirts | \$14.50 |

Please add \$2 for XXL and XXXL . Remember, these are unisex sized and will run a little large for ladies. Make your check out to NSVMGA and mail to Carolyn Wilson, PO Box 70, Mt Jackson, Va 22842.

Because of the short time please email me (cmwilson22842@gmail.com) to let me know what you want and that your check is on the way.

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

'Tis the season to be sneezin'. Fall pollen is flowing in the wind—the main culprit, Ragweed. Some people blame Goldenrod because it is blooming now too, but Goldenrod is pollinated by insects while Ragweed is wind-pollinated. Bees, butterflies, etc. are always coming to Goldenrods, but you don't see any pollinators coming to Ragweed. In fact, people hardly notice Ragweed because it shows almost no color except green, blending into the background, as opposed to Goldenrod waving its bright yellow flower fronds.

We have two species of Ragweed in our area: Annual or Common Ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*) and Great or Giant Ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*). Several other species grow elsewhere, two of them in other parts of Virginia. While Common Ragweed can grow to eight feet tall, Giant Ragweed, as the name implies, can grow to twenty feet.

Ragweeds are monoecious. The female flowers are inconspicuous in the leaf axils. The male flowers are clustered in green discs on a terminal spike. If you look closely at the green discs you can see yellow spots emerging. They are the pollen-wafting stamens of the disc flowers typical of a ray-less composite (*Asteraceae*) flower.

Why is the Ragweed genus named *Ambrosia*? Incongruous to name such a hated plant after the food of the gods. One hypothesis is that Ragweed is so hard to kill, it is named for the food of the immortals. Edwin Rollin Sencer, author of *All About Weeds* suggests that Linneaus, knowing that ragweed was so bitter it could make milk undrinkable if cows grazed it, decided to make a joke.

The specific name for Common Ragweed, *artemisiifolia*, comes from its leaves that look like the leaves of *Artemisia*. Giant Ragweed's specific name, *trifida*, derives from its three-lobed leaves.

On a trip to Tucson in March, 2009, I saw a shrub that I eventually identified as a Ragweed when I saw some yellow opening on the green discs. It was Canyon Ragweed (*Ambrosia deltoidea*). So you can get Ragweed pollen in the air in the spring out there.