

## NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

April, 2014

# Time sheets due April 15

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings will be the third Sunday of the month, and we will meet at 4pm, except winter months will be at 2. 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, April 20, 4pm, Tour of Mackintosh Fruit Farm, 1608 Russell Rd, Berryville.**

**Directions:** From Route 7, 5.5 miles east of I-81 and 2¼ miles west of U.S. 340, turn north onto VA 660, Russell Road. Go 1.6 miles to 1608 Russell Road on the right.

- **Sunday, June 29, 4pm, Leslie and Tom Mack's home, Page County**
- **July 20 Heirloom Tomatoes at Sioban O'Brien's farm**

### OTHER EVENTS

- **Saturday, April 12, 10am-Noon, 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Calmes Neck Wildflower Walk, Clarke County.** Gary Fleming, Vegetation Ecologist, Division of Natural Heritage, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), will lead this VNPS registry site walk along the Shenandoah River. Rich mesic forest and ravines promise a spectacular show of Bluebells, Twinleaf, Blue Cohosh, Columbines and many others. The walk is moderate, but expect to climb over downed trees. We plan a gathering by the river after the walk. Wear sturdy shoes and bring a sack lunch, water, and a folding chair. To RSVP and get driving directions contact [piedmontvnps@gmail.com](mailto:piedmontvnps@gmail.com).
- **Sunday, April 27. 10am, Trillium Walk** at Marjorie Arundel Trillium Trail at Thompson Wildlife Management Area where over 30 million Large-flowered Trillium grow along with many other spring wildflowers. Contact [piedmontvnps@gmail.com](mailto:piedmontvnps@gmail.com).
- **Saturday & Sunday, May 3 & 4, Wildflower Weekend at Shenandoah National Park.** Appreciate the diversity of wildflowers growing in the Blue Ridge. More than 1,300 species of plants thrive in Shenandoah National Park, a haven for native woodland wildflowers. Choose from among many activities at the Park website, <http://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/index.htm>.

### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Susan Garrett



It's coming, I promise! Hopefully as you read this the weather will be a beautiful sunny 60 degrees, as April in Virginia *ought* to be but so often isn't! I write this as the temperatures are still in the 20's, and



snow remains on the ground. But as these two pictures at my house remind us—it may be snowy now, but the buds are preparing for blooming and Virginia's gorgeous spring is just weeks away. The bare branches of the dogwood tree on the left belong to the same tree that is blooming (in a picture from last year)—along with cherry blossoms, creeping phlox and azalea—in the other picture.

All sorts of things are blooming now! The 16 members of our 2014 Intern Class, with their wonderful group of teachers, helpers, and Co-Coordinator Bob Carlton and Rich Howell, continue their studies toward becoming VCE Master Gardeners. Two transfers have become part of the NSVMGA this month: Carol Pittillo, a VCE-MG from southwest Virginia with close to 600 Milestone Hours, who was the Volunteer Coordinator for her unit, and Deborah Byrd, an MG Intern and ethnobiology doctoral student from Prince Georges County, Maryland. Both were in attendance at the Frederick County Meeting the last week in March. Cindy Adams and Charles Newton were recognized this month as full VCE-MG's after recertification, and Joyce Scott is beginning the recertification process. How wonderful to have these new voices and ideas enriching the NSVMGA! And we are all honored that our own Carolyn Wilson has been recognized by Virginia Cooperative Extension as the February "VCE Volunteer of the Month" and was on the cover page of the Virginia Cooperative Extension online *Newsletter*.

County meetings will all have taken place by the end of March, and as Volunteer Coordinator, it has been my privilege to attend all of them. Our five counties have some wonderful volunteers, and it is a grace to be a part of this energetic and resourceful group of people. We're blooming!

#### **FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES** by Suzanne Boag, Secretary

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

#### **FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES** by Suzanne Boag, Secretary

See [Meeting Minutes on NSVMGA Website](#)

#### **MEMBERSHIP** by Mary Craig

As of the end of March, we have 77 Active and Emeritus members and 16 students. The membership list was updated on VMS and our webpage after the March meeting. It will be updated again after the April meeting, so if you haven't paid dues or turned in your hours from 2013, please get that done.

#### **CLARKE COUNTY REPORT** by Mary Craig

We held our Clarke planning meeting on Saturday, March 8th at Kelly Kunkel's house. We had a nice visit over all sorts of good breakfast pastries and coffee. A brief update of what we went over:

- Kelly updated us on all the things she's added to the NSVMGA Facebook page. If you get a chance, please check it out.
- Susan Garrett showed us how to get to and use the calendar function in VMS. There is one already set up for Clarke Farmers' Market. This is going to make it so easy to sign up for the Farmers' Market.
- Mary Flagg will continue to be project leader for Millwood Community Garden. They meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am to around 11:00am, May through October. This is a great

project. If you want to help, please let Mary know or just show up. I'm sure she'd appreciate any and all help.

- Suzanne Boag and Ginny Smith will be heading up the Demonstration Xeriscape Garden at Chet Hobert Park. We usually do spring and fall clean ups. Suzanne is also looking into the possibility of having an Eagle Scout volunteer to fix/set up a new handouts board. We'll keep you posted.
- We will plan to have a booth at the Clarke County Fair again.
- Susan Garrett will once again head up our Greenline with help from Mary Flagg and Cathy Dickey.
- We want to try to schedule a rain barrel building session this spring. We were hoping for late March, but the weather hasn't been the best. We will let you know when we schedule this. It's a great time and you get to see how the rain barrels are put together. This year Suzanne has taken charge and we are really going to get all 5 counties involved in the promoting of the rain barrels. I've made binders for each county, so they will have the information they need if they want to sell raffle tickets at their events.

We're looking forward to a great year with our newest MGs in Clarke. Let's just hope the weather agrees.

#### **FREDERICK COUNTY REPORT** by Emily Wickham

Emily Wickham continues to schedule and organize the Frederick County Greenline. Questions are already coming in for plant identification, weed management, pruning etc. As we know, for gardener's, spring has sprung. If you have a free Friday morning, consider signing up. This is NOT limited to Frederick County MGs.

The Frederick County meeting was held Wednesday the 26th in Winchester. There is still interest in a Lowes MG presence. We need a Project Manager to get this organized and going. Please contact me if you are interested.

Another interesting project comes from Mike Neese, who is with the City of Winchester, recycling. Mike and the City would like to start a community garden at Timbrook Park, the corner of East and Woodstock Lanes, in Winchester. Anyone interested in helping can contact me or Mike ([Michael.Neese@winchesterva.gov](mailto:Michael.Neese@winchesterva.gov)) for more information.

The Handley Interact Club will be working with Frederick County on maintaining the Frederick Douglass rain garden.

Keep an eye out for two new transfer members, Carol Pattillo from the Roanoke area and Deborah Byrd from northern Prince George's County, Maryland.

Frederick County is looking for a new County Coordinator. I am resigning effective June 1, 2014. The job is not difficult, but one needs to be able to type and use a computer effectively. Anyone interested, please contact Bob Carlton or Susan Garrett.

#### **PAGE COUNTY REPORT** by Lesley Mack

Thanks to Susan Garrett for traveling all the way from Berryville to Luray for our county meeting. Elke, Tom, and Lesley, county coordinators, hosted the meeting; with Fran, Anne, and Shelby in attendance.

We reviewed our 2013 projects and brought most of the project ideas forward for the 2014 year. Among the projects are:

- The education and development of the *Chinkapin Oak* pocket park and the tree's preservation
- The *Help Line* via the Virginia Extension Office in Stanley
- The listing of our MG volunteers for *talks and presentations* on the VMS site, along with the sign up of our volunteers on the VMS site
- Education of community volunteers through work at the *Habitat Homes*, the *Luray*
- Elementary School Garden, the Antioch Church historical tree, and the *garden tours* of the Mack Garden
- County Fair judging and MG booth
- MG booth at the local Farmer's Market

Possible project: since many of Page County's planted areas (i.e. Greenway, Animal Shelter, pocket parks) are partially maintained by County Trustees, it was discussed that Page Co. MGs should give them a mini course in proper care and maintenance for the plantings, use of weed whackers, mowers, and the like.

Susan and the other MGs were surprised to see so many daffodils in bloom at the 'Mack Garden'. (We gotta get a more lyrical name.)

As I write this, out my window, I am seeing cardinals collect bits of plant debris for their new nests, a flurry of Robins spar, and the Tree Swallows glide in the sky. Still looking for the bluebirds!



#### **SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT** by Carolyn Wilson

Things are getting busy in Shenandoah County. We had our spring planning meeting in late March with 20 members present including most of the Shenandoah county trainees. The Green helpline will start it's in-office Friday hours in Mid-April. The MG info booth at the Woodstock Farmer's Market at Fort Valley Nursery will start working from 9am to noon on the second and fourth Saturdays. The MG booth at the Strasburg Farmer's Market will be the third Friday from 5:30 to 8pm. We continue to work with the FFA at Signal Know Middle School in Strasburg and wish them well in their upcoming competition. In the May newsletter I'll let you know how they did. Several children's summer gardening programs are being planned.

#### **WARREN COUNTY REPORT** by Katherine Rindt

The Master Gardener Lecture Series at Samuels Public Library finished up the 2013 season in December with tips from Lynn Hoffmann on decorating for Christmas. Mary Stickley Godinez kicked off the 2014 season in March with a program on landscaping with shrubs. Frank Baxter is setting up quarterly lectures rest of this year and is always looking for good topics and presenters.

The deer have not been kind to the beautiful landscaping at the library entrances. It was designed by Sue Rogers last year and installed by a group of us. Frank will be setting up workdays later this spring to try to remedy this situation. There will also a need for occasional routine garden maintenance for the plants to keep them looking great throughout the season.



If you would like to help with the Master Gardener Samuels Library project, contact Frank Baxter at [skyland@centurylink.net](mailto:skyland@centurylink.net).

## AN EXCERPT FROM THE MARCH-APRIL 2002 NEWSLETTER by Mary Craig, Historian

### BUD'S CORNER "The Year of the Rose" By Bud Gregory

It's Official! The U.S. Congress has designated 2002 to be "THE YEAR of the ROSE." With a whole bunch of "whereases", Congress officially produced seven reasons why we should all be delighted to put roses on a pedestal for the rest of the year.

But let's face it. Many people will disagree that roses should be put on a pedestal, to say nothing of growing them at all! Most hate all those diseases and pests that plague roses: Black spot, powdery mildew, aphids, whitefly, etc., etc. And all those thorns! Don't you just hate them?

Now wait just a minute! If nobody liked to grow roses, how did Jackson and Perkins make all that money? So there must be *something* about roses that some people like.

And indeed there is. There are some great roses, and this leads to another problem. If I were to get a rose, which one should I choose? No, I'm not going to list a dozen of the better roses – I'm only going to recommend two. Both are vigorous and disease resistant.

**Double Delight** has a magnificent flower with cream petals and red edges. In my opinion, there is no other rose that can match it. It is my favorite.

The other rose is **Veteran's Honor**. It is one of the largest of the red roses and is a fitting salute to all the soldiers who so valiantly served their country. It was the winner of the 2000 Rose of the Year award. In a vase, this long-stemmed variety can delight you with its beauty and fragrance for up to two weeks.

As part of this celebration of the rose, Home Depot stores all over the country will be offering information on the growing of our National Flower – The Rose.

## JUNIOR MASTER GARDENERS PROGRAM AT GREENWOOD MILL by Helen Lake

**Master Gardeners Laurie Cocina and Cindy Adams, who put together the Terrarium Kits, which were a gift for each student. The kits had soil, seeds and instructions on how to grow their salads at home with their parents. Also helping and an instructor in the program is Ginny Smith, NSVMGA Vice President**



The 2014 spring session of the JrMG Program at Greenwood Mill Elementary School came to a close on 13 March. We were delighted to have about twelve parents who came to see their children be awarded their 4-H sprout pins, certificate of completion and an MG Terrarium Kit for their participation in a nine week class session. This spring, as I've shared with you in previous newsletters, the students grew a

variety of flowers and veggies that had short germination periods. Each student had at least two pots of plants that they called their own and were used to observe measure and record their data into their Interactive Science Journals, which they took home with them after the Award Ceremony, along with their plants.

We also had a special guest speaker, Ashley Thompson, a graduate research associate at the Alson H. Smith Research Facility (AREC). He had been invited to speak to the students, keying in on their science oriented use of the plants they had been growing under grow lights in the Science Lab. Speaking from prepared remarks, Ashley really made an impact with her audience when she called them “scientists”, since much of what they had been doing she too is presently involved in at AREC: collecting data, using observation and tools to reinforce the data, etc. The students were enthralled at meeting a ‘real scientist’, and Ashley touched all of us adults present with her enthusiasm in participating in our Award Ceremony.



Per our growing tradition, a graduation photo was taken of the MG Instructors, 4-H staff and the students. This photo and our previous Fall Session graduation photo will be included in the Greenwood Mill yearbook.







**MG instructors Helen Lake, Laurie Cocina, Cindy Adams & Tammy Epperson of 4-H in rear and Ginny Smith in foreground helping students pack up their plants**

#### **GARDEN IN THE VALLEY SYMPOSIUM** by Helen Lake, Symposium coordinator

Garden in the Valley 2014 is now in the history books of NSVMGA. From all accounts, we had a successful turn out of NSVMGA members as well as fellow Master Gardeners throughout our area, along with interested members from our community. Our annual symposium has developed a loyal following. Given the plethora of other gardening events in the Commonwealth during the early spring season, the turnout is a compliment to the efforts of Lynn Hoffmann and Bob Carlton, who established the strong roots for this event.



**Symposium committee member Suzanne Boag at the registration table**

The 2014 MG Trainees attended and had the opportunity to rub shoulders or at least share lunch with veteran Master Gardeners. The enthusiasm, laughter and camaraderie with old and new friends was palpable in Hester Auditorium—or was it all those fabulous door prizes?

Thanks to the terrific Symposium Committee, who pitched in with a wide variety of support and ideas as we began this journey in the Fall of 2013. And thank you to my fellow MGs for helping spread the word to neighbors, friends and family and posted publicity flyers in your counties. It was truly a team effort!



### **VMS TIP OF THE MONTH** by Sarah Kohrs

By submitting your hours as you complete them, you can keep up to date with your total number of hours for the year to ensure that you meet the 20 project hour and 8 education hour requirements for MG status. Ideally, first quarter hours will be entered by April 15th, second quarter hours by July 15th, third quarter hours by October 15th, and fourth quarter hours by January 10th. This allows for the time keeper, Sarah Kohrs, to keep accurate records and for all necessary reports to be sent to Va Tech in time for proper funding. To submit hours, go to VMS at <https://virginia.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm>. If you have any questions about VMS, please contact Sarah Kohrs at [kohrs@shentel.net](mailto:kohrs@shentel.net) or (540) 477-3257.



### KILDEER by Mary Craig

Last year the killdeer nested in our back yard. I chronicled their season, from mating to the babies running around. Here are the four little ones on the nest. Mom was not too happy about me getting this close to the nest. Here she is playing 'broken wing' trying to distract me from the nest. About three weeks ago I heard a killdeer and looked out. There was one of the adults, right by last year's nesting spot. She was calling for her mate. Luckily, he didn't show up, because the next day it snowed, again. So far she hasn't been back, but I'm keeping an eye and an ear out for her. They are so fascinating to watch.



### A LOVE POEM, TO BROCCOLI by Teri S. Merrill

Not love at first sight  
I'll be the first to admit.  
But there was some interest  
in your health benefits.

Though I've had you quite often  
since that very first time,  
I realize with consternation  
that the pleasure's all mine.

Lightly steamed on my plate,  
no fancy topping for this super food,  
Eternal youth in every bite,  
Scientific reports conclude.

Spurned by Presidents,  
Loathed by many a youngster,  
Oh broccoli you've been vilified,  
For being a leafy-green brassica.

Never mind all those haters,  
and the wildly misinformed,  
You're my cool-season favorite,  
Plant in spring, before it warms.





**EDITORS CORNER** by Richard Stromberg



Well that's done with! What does the ultra-cold winter we just had mean? I have some ideas:

- Lyme disease may be less prevalent, not because the ticks didn't survive (they did), but because the mice population that provides the Lyme vector will be reduced.
- We'll get heavier doses of pollen, not because plants will produce more but because the blooming season will be condensed. Things that usually flower one after the other will bloom together. For instance, in past years my Japanese Quince has occasionally started blooming in January and always by March, but this year it is just starting to open on April 9<sup>th</sup>. (At least the flowers won't

freeze.) But Redbud is starting to open on schedule.



Japanese Quince (*Chaenomeles japonica*)



Redbud  
*Cercis canadensis*

Out on the trail I usually see Skunk Cabbage in January. This year I didn't find any until March 23<sup>rd</sup>, but Trailing Arbutus

was on schedule April 2<sup>nd</sup> on Signal Knob Trail.



Trailing Arbutus *Epigaea repens*



Skunk Cabbage *Symplocarpus foetidus*