

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

May, 2014

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **Sunday, May 17, 4pm, Belle Grove.** Belle Grove Project Co-chairs Claire DeMasi and Elena Lycas will discuss MG involvement with projects at the site. For example, MGs now use the site to teach interns and Junior Master Gardeners. Claire and Elena will discuss new opportunities for us at the site, as well. And, we will learn about the demonstration/teaching garden and other changes at the site. We will meet in the large red barn behind the plantation house. Park near the barn, past the designated Visitor Parking. We have our potluck after the meeting, with Frederick County serving as host.

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 EVENTS

- **Saturday & Sunday, May 9 & 10 9am-4:30pm, State Arboretum Garden Fair.** Perennials, small trees and fine items for garden and home for sale; children's activities, gardening information, food and more. Information at <http://blandy.virginia.edu/our-foundation/2014-garden-fair>.
- **Saturday & Sunday, May 9 & 10, 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/upload/Wildflower.pdf>.
- **Saturday, June 6, Garden Fest, Belle Grove Plantation.** Set up will be on Friday, June 5th. We have leaders signed up for the many areas to be covered before, during, and after the event so everyone will have lots of opportunities to gain project hours. Garden Fest is set up on VMS and you can get signed up to volunteer now.
- **Sunday, June 14, 1pm, Massanutten Flower Walk.** Join us on west side of Fort Valley as we seek Tassel Rue (*Trautvetteria caroliniensis*), Skullcaps (*Scutellaria*), orchids, and other plants at the bottom of the east side of Green Mountain. For more information, email piedmontvnps@gmail.com.

2015 MG CLASS by Cy Haley

The class will wrap up soon, and things are going strong on the Class Project at the Community Garden at Blandy. If you get a chance please stop by and take a look at the progress. The "Dirt Team" has done an excellent job of preparing the bed as shown in the picture and the "Construction Team" will soon have the raised beds in. Planting is scheduled for the evening of the 14th, so if you want to watch the class in progress come on out. They are putting everything they have learned in class into the garden, and this will be a great teaching garden for any MGs that want to hold a class there. The remaining classes:

5/05/2015	Tues	Class Presentations / Weeds	Angie Hutchinson
5/07/2015	Thurs	Class Presentations / Water Quality	Cindy Frenzel
5/12/2015	Tues	Greenline /Exam results	Katherine Rindt

REMAINING 2015 JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER SCHEDULE by Lynn Hoffman

Date	Topic	Teachers
5/5	Insects and Diseases	Deborah Byrd, Lynn Hoffmann
5/12	Trees, class will be at Belle Grove	Larry Haun
5/19	Fairy Gardens	Angie Hutchinson
6/2	Pollinators class will be at Belle Grove ½ hour Work session in the Teaching Garden	Helen Lake, Deborah Byrd
6/6	Belle Grove Plantation Gardenfest Jr. MG Display table, Saturday 9-11am	
6/9	Composting and make a compost box	Lynn Hoffmann, Rodney Dowty, Deborah Byrd
6/16	C-CAP Garden Project Fairy Garden construction & Garden Bed	Angie, Hutchinson, Lynn Hoffmann & all MG instructors and helpers

GARDENFEST by Cy Haley

We are headed into the final prep stages for GardenFest. If you haven't signed up for an area on Saturday or are able to help with set-up on Friday please let me know. We still need some volunteers in the following spots:

- Entrance table - 6 more needed (2 hour shifts)
- Kid's Trail - 13 total needed (will work 9 to noon)
- Second Hand Rose - 4 more needed (2 to 3 hour shifts - your choice)
- Plants - 4 more needed Saturday Morning, 6 more needed Friday Afternoon
- Plant Sales - 6 total needed (2 hour shifts)
- Wagon Runners - 6 more needed (2 hour shifts)
- Parking Lot Helpers - 2 hour shifts (First shift starts at 7:30, last shift starts at 11:30)

Also, bring your items for Second Hand Rose to the Association Meeting at Belle Grove this month or let me know if you need someone to pick up items.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Mary Flagg
A VMS Overview- Part 3 of 3

VMS part 3 reviews adding your volunteer hours into the system. The VMS manual is posted for your convenience. After your volunteer work, always remember to post your volunteer hours.

At the **HOME** screen, in the left column, under your information, below your profile, click Editing hours. ADD you volunteer hours here:

FROM THE PRESIDENT by Susan Garrett

My husband loves his green grassy lawn, and we make sure it stays free of pesky broadleaf weeds, but every so often on the side of the lawn at the garden's edge, surprises await. When I went out into the garden to do some weeding this week, there they were: dandelions and violets, blooming together in a lovely little patch of dark green, purple, and golden yellow. And I thought what a beautiful creation they were; a real Spring gift of color and freshness. I was reminded of the final verse of the Gerard Manley Hopkins poem, "Inversnaid":

*"What would the world be, once bereft,
of wet and wildness? Let them be left.
O let them be left; wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet."*

We take dandelions and violets for granted, or we see them as weeds, things to be rooted out and discarded. But maybe we need different eyes, eyes that can see beauty in the commonplace.

We need those kinds of eyes as we work together as Master Gardeners. Each of us is a unique individual, with our gifts and with our limitations. But we all have a place and a part in the work. Let's remember to see the beauty in each other, for it is surely there!

PAGE COUNTY REPORT by Lesley Mack

Happy Mother's Day to all the Moms of every generation!

The adventure of MG classes is almost complete for our three new MGs, Sari, Cooper, and Susan. We look forward to their, and all the new MGs, joining the project teams in all five counties. Congratulations all.

Black Vine Weevil on rhododendron seemed to be the culprit of one homeowner's question this month. The quarter-inch long weevil adults chew marginal notches in leaves. The overwintering larvae feed on roots deep in the soil and pupate in May, or when the weather is warmer. Feeding occurs mostly at night. No male weevils have ever been found so they must reproduce without fertilization.

The Third Largest Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus Muehlenbergii*) in Virginia, one of trees in the [Remarkable Trees of Virginia](#), lives in Luray. We recently had John Rockette, Virginia Big Tree Measurer, recheck the tree's size. The circumference is 248 inches (up from 234 previous measurement), height 96 feet (up from 82), and crown spread 122 feet (down from 132). This tree is estimated to be 260 years old, which means it germinated about 1755, twenty-one years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and 57 years before the founding of Luray in 1812. Just think of how much carbon this tree sequesters, and the party all the flying, crawling, or jumping critters have up in the branches. We had a remarkable project day ourselves!

CLARKE COUNTY REPORT by Ginny Smith

We are hosting the booth at Blandy's Mother's Day Garden Fair in May. We will offer sunflower seeds and plant cuttings, donated by members, for children to plant in a pot to

take home. We will hand out flyers for Gardenfest in June. Several members of the class of 2015 will participate.

The Berryville Farmer's Market will be Saturdays from 9 until 12 starting May 2nd. Please contact Pam Hough to volunteer to work the MG booth or sign up through the VMS system, and Pam will be notified.

Cleanup at the Xeriscape Garden in Hobert Park will be done May 1st. If you would like to volunteer for the next garden maintenance session please contact Suzanne Boag or Ginny Smith. You don't have to live in Clarke County to volunteer for any of these projects. We will gladly accept any volunteers!

Community garden talks are open to all MG's. A project form needs to be submitted for this.

PUBLICITY AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE by Stacey Smith

The warmer weather means homeowners are starting to need help. To make sure they can find us, we are working on getting out the news about each county's Green Line/Help Desk and info booths. If your county will be at a fair or event, please let us know. While you are at an activity, **please take "action shot" pictures for us to include with articles** and get the names of all participants. (This picture is from the 2013 Main Street Ag Day.)

We are publishing monthly meetings in the Shenandoah Valley Herald and trying to get into the Northern Virginia Daily. Though targeted to current members, the notices also invite the public to contact us for more info about the organization, which helps increase community awareness.

Project leaders are writing dedicated website pages for our projects. The pages contain current and past information, photos, and regular updates. These pages will make it easy for press and other websites to link directly to the relevant page, as well as help the public find us at events.

We are also updating (where necessary) and ordering handouts, rulers, bookmarks, cards, brochures, etc. for the five counties. If your county is low on a handout or brochure, or if you need a lot of something for an event, please contact me a couple of weeks before you need them.

Finally, we want to share a few of our NSVMGA projects to help spread awareness of the many different ways we contribute our time. Contact leaders with questions or check VMS for additional and most-up-to-date info.

Garden Fest, 6/6, 336 Belle Grove Rd, Middletown, VA (6/5 setup)

Project hours for a variety of jobs, from creating displays to helping with signage, setup, and children's events. Check with individual leaders. Contact individual leaders or Cy Haley: cyhaley@comcast.net

Garden Fest Plant Sales, 6/6, (6/5 plant drop off)

Project hours for digging/babysitting plants, potting bulbs/roots or starting seeds, helping with pricing the day before, and assisting day of the Fest. Contact Stacey Smith: staceymorgansmith@gmail.com or Carolyn Wilson cmwilson22842@gmail.com

WE NEED POTS – as you bring home your plants this year, please save the pots and bring them to meetings for Stacey or Carolyn. If you don't have pots now, we accept them yearround, so if you clean out the potting shed in November, you can still bring pots for the next Garden Fest!

Green Help Lines & Help Desks, contact your county coordinator or county's project leader through VMS. The list below is also useful if you do a project in another county and need to provide Help Line info to the public.

Clarke County

Phone: 540-955-5164
Question Drop-Off Location: VCE Office, Clarke County Gvmt Building
Drop-Off hours: Monday – Friday 8:30am – 5pm
Question Drop-Off Address: 101 Chalmers Ct, Second Floor, Ste B, Berryville, VA 22611

Frederick County

Phone: 540-665-5699
Email: GreenHelpLine.FrederickCo@gmail.com
Help Desk In-Office Hours: Fridays 9am – 12pm, April - October
Help Desk In-Office Location: VCE Office
Help Desk Street Address: 107 North Kent Street, Winchester, VA 22601

Page County

Phone: 540-778-5794
Email: aprilang@vt.edu
Question Drop-Off Location: VCE Office hours Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm
Question Drop-Off Address: 215 West Main Street, Ste C, Stanley, VA 22851

Shenandoah County

Phone: 540-459-6140
Email: greenhelpline@gmail.com
Help Desk In-Office Hours: 1st and 3rd Friday of each month, 9am – 12pm, April - October
Help Desk In-Office Location: VCE Office, Shenandoah County Government Center
Help Desk Street Address: 600 North Main Street, Ste 100, Woodstock, VA 22664

Warren County

Phone: 540-635-4549
Help Desk In-Office Hours: Mondays 9am – 12pm, April - October
Help Desk In-Office Location: VCE Office, Warren County Government Center
Help Desk Street Address: 220 N Commerce Ave, Ste 500, Front Royal, VA 22630

PICTURE QUIZ by Lynn Hoffmann

Can you name the green blooms and what type of tree? Send your answer to Lynn at gwendydog@gmail.com.

THE LIFE OF A BROODING CHICKEN by Cy Haley

It came a little early this year...the brooding of Smokie. She usually waits until the hottest days of summer to brood, just like her habit of molting during the coldest spells of winter. But she started her brood April 26th, and, if she lives up to her usual pattern, she won't

give up the roost (no pun intended, well maybe a little) for another five weeks. Most chickens will brood for around 4 weeks, but Smokie usually goes for 6 weeks. She may be an over-achiever or a little OCD.

Actually things are more peaceful when Smokie goes into brood. Honey misses having her buddy to scratch around with, so she hangs out with me when I'm home or Sammy when I'm not. And since Smokie is the terror of the garden I don't have to constantly rake mulch back into the flower beds while she's brooding. The only non-peaceful time is when Smokie thinks she needs to defend her "egg"--she'll screech at me which is an ear piercing experience.

I say "egg" with quotations because as you can see in the pictures, she's actually trying to hatch a golf ball. I switch her egg with a golf ball so we can enjoy the egg, which wasn't going to hatch anyway since we don't have a rooster, and she can continue through her brooding period without having a month old egg under her. It's a little deceiving but considering the smell that would eventually come from an old egg I think it's a fair trade-off.

Wish her luck trying to get a chick to hatch. Maybe she'll hatch out a new 7 Iron for me or maybe a full size golf cart. That would be nice.

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

The DC Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club offered an outing on April 18th that fit two of my interests: hiking and gardening. It was titled "Earth Day Celebration – Tibbet Knob Hike and Deauville Farm Day". Deauville is farmed by erstwhile Master Gardener and ardent organic farmer Gail Rose, who coordinated my Master Gardener training in 1999. So here was a chance to get in a hike and see Gail again after several years. I met the group at Wolf Gap on the West Virginia border. They had decided to hike north to Big Schloss instead of south to Tibbet Knob, a little longer but more spectacular.

As most of the hike was above 2,500 feet, we had stepped back from spring, so the only flowers I saw were Trailing Arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*), and Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*). The clear air gave us some spectacular views.

Then we drove down to Deauville Farm near Basye to join the First Annual Friends of Farmer Gail Volunteer Days. In addition to the hiking group, many of Gail's neighbors (mostly summer residents in the resort) joined us in getting things ready for the season an indication of how well-loved Gail is. So we had twenty-some people volunteering. We pulled weeds, mostly Purple Dead Nettle and Common Chickweed, which as annuals come out easily, and Dandelion, which doesn't. I worked on some raised boxes which also yielded beets, carrots, and chard left over from last year—some of them useable. When we uncovered a Little Black Ant (*Monomorium minimum*) colony in the corner of one box, Gail showed up with a pitcher of Pyrethrin, a natural insecticide derived from *Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium*. When weeding was done, potatoes were planted in one plot and kale in another. Each kale seedling was wrapped in newspaper to retain moisture and protect the plants from cutworms. Meanwhile three guys were roofing a frame with evergreen branches to provide shade over the plot to allow lettuce to grow in the summer.

Meanwhile Gail's neighbor, Jackie Donaldson, who organized the Volunteer Days, was grilling burgers, dogs and chicken for our dinner.

Gail also raises chickens, varieties from around the world. We dumped our pickings in the chicken yard and they loved pawing through them. They especially like the Chickweed, whence its name. (Want to expand Cy?)

Gail originally moved to the farm when she married Alex Rose, who raised Fallow Deer there. Fallow Deer are a European species that live in herds. Gail has given up the deer since Alex died.

Gail earns money by selling the multi-colored eggs and pick-your-own veggies. Basye vacationing kids learn about farming here.

Two more Volunteer Days are scheduled: May 16th to plant tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and herbs/spices (plants are already up in the greenhouse) and June 20th for pumpkins and squash. She says, "I've got forty varieties of pumpkin, only one of them orange." Gail is going to open up the deer field for the pumpkins—already well fertilized. She will plow it once and never again. Leave the mycorrhizae and microbes alone!

Check out

<http://us7.campaign-archive1.com/?u=afc0981e71b8b02b67843362f&id=caebe941b3> for more information.