

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

June, 2015

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **Sunday, June 14, 4pm, Warren Heritage Society**, 101 Chester Street, Front Royal, in front of the Belle Boyd Cottage. Our host for this meeting will be the Warren County Master Gardener Association. We will learn about the two primary gardens that are the project for Warren County--*i.e.*, their establishment, their historical importance, and their purposes as both public and demonstration/education gardens, and, we will tour the Belle Boyd Cottage. Please bring a chair. Light refreshments and drinks will be served, courtesy of the Warren County Master Gardener Association. (There will not be a potluck meal for this event.)

Directions: Entering Front Royal from I-66: Cross the bridge over the South Fork of the Shenandoah River on Route 340 or from Route 55. At the major intersection, with the four-way traffic signal (Verizon will be on your left), get into the far-right turn lane. Make a left turn and continue along Royal Avenue/Route 340-South to Peyton Street. Turn left and continue on Peyton Street until it ends at Chester Street. Turn left. Go one block. The Warren Heritage Society is on the right.

From the south on Route 340, pass the Shenandoah National Park entrance on your right. Continue on Royal Avenue past the traffic light at Main Street. Turn right at the next intersection onto Peyton Street. Continue on Peyton Street until it ends at Chester Street. Turn left. Go one block. The Warren Heritage Society is on the right.

Parking: Parking is available at these locations: (1) Chester Street (the same side of the street as the Warren Heritage Society); (2) Crescent Street (on the left directly in front of the Warren Heritage Society); (3) Peyton Street Parking Lot; and (4) Visitor Center (corner of Chester and Main, near the gazebo and the train station housing the Visitor and Information Center). There is a driveway between the Warren Rifles Museum and the Warren Heritage Society that leads to the Belle Boyd Cottage.

OTHER EVENTS

- **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 21, 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.

HALF A YEAR, YOU'VE VOLUNTEERED;
NOW BEFORE IT'S DISAPPEARED,
ADD THAT TIME TO VMS:

BY 6/30 WOULD BE BEST!

Please add all your 2nd Quarter (April 1 to June 30) education and project hours to VMS by July 1, 2015. If you need help, contact Sarah Kohrs, NSVMGA Timekeeper, (540-477-3257 or kohrs@shentel.net).
<http://virginia.volunteersystem.org>

2015 MG CLASS by Cy Haley

The Master Gardener Class of 2015 has finished the classroom aspect, and the new Interns are working on attaining their 50 Project Hours to complete their MG Certification. **Congratulations to all 2015 Interns!** You were a pleasure to lead and get to know. I know every one of you will be a great asset to the NSVMGA organization and I look forward to volunteering with you for many years to come.

A special thank you to Claire DeMasi, Class Co-Coordinator, Kris Behrens, Class IT Specialist, and June Newcomb, Class Exam Specialist. You all are absolutely wonderful volunteers and I consider it an honor to have served with you. I want to also thank the many, many, MG volunteers who helped behind the scene to coordinate, teach, set-up, and participate in the class this year. I feel it was a success and it could not have been done without everyone's help and support. This is the best bunch of volunteers ever!

2015 JUNIOR MASTER GARDENERS by Lynn Hoffman

We had about 15 Jr MG and several parents and MGs plant the CCAP garden on May 26. Tammy Epperson from the Extension Office rototilled the plot and got all the tomato fencing up and ready for us early Tuesday morning. We planted plants that were donated from Weber's and a local farmer from Clarke County. Several parents had herbs and a few flowers that they brought to the garden along with some donations from the Master Gardeners. We got a load of my WV compost dumped with the help of my neighbors dump trailer and my husband's pick-up truck. This was turned into a raised straw bale bed with trellis headboard made by our own MG Intern Rodney Dowty; and we were able to start a fairy garden with Lincoln log train set from Helen Lake's grandson's stash. Stan Corneal oversaw the planting of our unconventional plot and told the kids that fairy's would have to check out that old toy set before they settled in. Janet Keithly thought the fairies would come! So if you are in the neighborhood, feel free to check it out.

On June 16 we will have a class at the garden given by Colin, a 16 year old iris expert. He will display his iris information at Gardenfest this year. He is donating some miniature iris for the fairy garden and will have some the kids plant them.

GARDENFEST by Cy Haley

Well, we're almost there. June 6th is looming big and right around the corner. Everyone's pulled together, as they always do, and it looks like we'll have another fabulous event! This will be our 12th GardenFest and thanks to the past leadership of Lynn Hoffmann setting us in the right direction we're on mark to make this another winner. Carolyn Wilson and Stacey Smith have gone above and beyond to make sure we have plenty of MG plants for sale and lots of items have been donated for Second Hand Rose. Cyndi Walsh has lined up almost 90 children for the Kid's Trail, and Suzanne Boag has worked endlessly to have great vendors participate. Speaking of Kid's Trail, we can still use some more volunteers to help out in that area. If you're interested let Cyndi know. With Siobhan O'Brien's Petting Farm, Mary Craig's Workshops, and Helen Lake's Speakers our visitors will have lots of fun and educational opportunities. Remember to bring your garden tools for Charlie Latham, Charlie Newsom, or Glenn Martin to sharpen for you. Now, if Mother Nature will just cooperate with the weather...

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Mary Flagg

I have been on vacation for the last two weeks, and this newsletter had to be written before I left. I had kids and family to pack for so my newsletter got put on hold until I got back. As I drove home along the main road, I noticed a lot of growth, especially the weeds. Then I noticed a gaping hole along the fence, it looked like someone had taken some of my beautiful plants.

I read about how many garden enthusiasts have been trying to rescue heirlooms from our ancestors' time. Areas where they grow are being bulldozed for construction of luxurious homes, large businesses and wide highways, while other areas are getting so overgrown with trees, weeds and vines, the plants are unable to survive without the sunlight. Although saving these heirlooms for future generations might be noble, it does not give anyone the right to take something that does not belong to them. Most land belongs to someone. When the owner of the land gives permission to dig plants, it might be considered a rescue. However, plants are taken without permission is theft.

Please always ask for permission whether it be public or private property. A trip or phone call to your local county office along with your address or location of interest can usually result in the needed information. Some owners may not grant people coming on their land to dig plants. Always check in your area first.

I think the best place to purchase pretty plants might be at local plant sales or garden fairs, like the one the NSVMGA will be having at Belle Grove the first weekend in June. On Friday, everyone will be setting up so you will get a first glance at what will be available. Then on Saturday, the registers will be ringing, with lots of gorgeous plants for sale.

FROM THE PRESIDENT by Susan Garrett

"It is difficult to realize how great a part of all that is cheerful and delightful in the recollections of our own life is associated with trees." 19th century Naturalist and Author, Wilson Flagg.

This picture is of a random house in Connecticut, which I took because I love the eyebrow window, the flag flying, and, of course, its setting among the trees. New England, where I

grew up, was full of houses like this, and full of trees. It's hard to find a person who doesn't love trees. Martin Luther wasn't exactly a naturalist, but perhaps the Augustinian monk and Protestant reformer gave trees their due when he said, "For in the true nature of things, if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold and silver."

"Trees" are the theme of Master Gardener College this year, and there will be an amazing variety of courses on all aspects of the subject. We have a really large NSVMGA contingent going, and I'm sure that the knowledge we bring back will be of great benefit to our Greenlines, Farmers Market tables, and all our educational interactions with the public. Some people in the group going to Master Gardener College in 2015 have been attending for years, and some of us are going for the first time: a good mix of veterans, newbies, and in-betweens. I know we'll have a lot of fun, and I know we'll learn a lot. So if you aren't going this year, plan for next year. Every MG should have the opportunity at least once!

PAGE COUNTY REPORT by Lesley Mack

Thanks to Cooper, Cheryl, Sari, and Charlie for attending the May business meeting. Charlie reported a, "good brief business meeting after a talk about the Bell Grove teaching herb garden and an appeal for more volunteer help to maintain it."

Fairly quiet on the Greenline, except for a question about *Galium aparine*, an annual weed, also known as cleavers, bedstraw, sticky willy, and "velcro plant". Pull, pull, and pull some more. Get it before it goes to seed. Sure, right, battle some 100-400 seeds per plant. Cutting is not effective, no insects help to control it. Oil-based herbicides will help when the plants are young. Roundup or other IPM herbicides will eliminate.

FREDERICK COUNTY REPORT by John Kummer

As most of you all know, Emily Wickham is leaving the roaming waters of the Shenandoah valley and crossing the wide Missouri, bound for Portland, OR. She has been an encouraging and resourceful coordinator for Frederick County for this past year and we will miss her. Best wishes to Emily and Tracy on the long trip to the other coast.

Spring is just about over and the prime growing season is upon us. Garden projects in the county have resumed. Thanks to all the volunteers and project leaders involved. Some county MGs are also helping with the new demonstration garden at the Blandy State Arboretum.

Volunteers are always needed for our Greenline, every Friday morning from 9am to noon at the VCE office on Kent Street in Winchester. It's a great way to pick up project hours and learn while helping the community with their plant related (for the most part) questions. Don't be concerned about experience. A veteran is always around for guidance. Contact the county coordinator or Elizabeth Bevan, the Greenline leader, if you have questions

Congratulations to Rodney, Mark, Susan, Terry, Patrice, and Russ, the Frederick County members of the recently graduated 2015 Master Gardener class. I hear some have already completed the initial 50 project hours to move on to full MG status. That was fast! Stay involved; we look forward to new ideas regarding current or future county projects.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT by Sharon Bradshaw

Our two farmers' markets, Woodstock and Strasburg, are going well with our Master Gardener display on the second and fourth Saturday mornings. The Green Help Line has been busy during the past few weeks and continues to function 24/7 with office hours on the first and third Friday mornings. Planning is underway for two 4-H day camps later this summer. The newest Shenandoah County project got off to a great beginning this month. Sarah Kohrs is the lead for the Sam Moore Slave Cemetery Project; look for her article in this newsletter.

ONE STEP AT A TIME by Sarah Kohrs

Star of Bethlehem is a perennial bulb, with lily-like flowers on a slender stem that reaches no more than 12 inches high. Over time, they cluster and have been noted as an invasive in riparian buffers, where Star of Bethlehem victoriously compete with native flora. By 1940, it was found as far as Indiana, swept along water systems, where it thrived in the moist riverbanks. But its venture into North America took a far longer journey. *Ornithogalum umbellatum* derives from the Mediterranean region and is native to northern Africa. Similarly, its name derives from ancient Greek and Latin. ὄρνιθων γάλα means "pigeon's milk," which is an ancient proverb meaning "any marvelous good-fortune" (Liddell & Scott, 1996:499). *Umbellatum* is derived from the Latin word, *umbella*, a feminine first declension noun that means "sunshade, parasol, or umbrella" (Lewis, 1996:886). It is convenient to note that this bulb likes both shade (consider the closely related word *umbra* or "shade" in Latin) and moisture (consider, too, *umeo* or "to be wet" in Latin). So, finding Star of Bethlehem in full bloom one mid-May day on the top of a knoll at the edge of a woods seems like marvelous good-fortune to me.

On May 16, 2015, five Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners and about 20 community members, including representatives of the Stonewall Jackson High School History Club and a men's retreat at Corhaven, worked together to clear brush, fallen logs, and new growth that had invaded a slave cemetery in Shenandoah County. Sam Moore Slave Cemetery, identified first in 1984 by local historians (Borden, 1986:96), contains more-than-likely antebellum burials in the form of depressions, some with head and foot stones (indicated by fieldstones), two with likely post-Civil War manufactured bases, whose headstones are either missing entirely or missing any inscribed portions, and others with barely any traces to note their presence. The site matches descriptions of slave cemeteries as defined by Lynn Rainville's paramount publication, *HiddenHistory: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia*. These features include: a high elevation, a ring of larger trees, an old fence line (with T.V. Allis Buckthorn barbed wire patented in 1881 at our site), and water nearby (Holman's Creek, to be exact).

The owners of Corhaven, Bill & Tara Haley, are working with members of the community to preserve the cemetery as a place to honor those buried there who were not honored in their own lifetime, and to bring healing to those living after the scars of slavery. This brush clearing was one step to that goal. Master Gardeners working at the site have already identified Star of Bethlehem and Bird's Foot Violet, which we believe were transplanted from the surrounding groves nearer the creek and intentionally planted beside headstones or near the cemetery in a similar fashion. And, we're working on landscape planning, which may include an appeal to other Master Gardeners for plant donations.

As we continue to work on the Sam Moore Slave Cemetery site, we will have opportunity to educate members of the community about best practices in landscaping within a riparian

buffer, identifying and reintroducing native species of plants into the area, and doing something that is greater than any one of us. As Dr. Rainville states, "A cemetery is often the only record we have of the lost community it memorializes" (2014:11). Our hard work on this project contributes to what it means to share in the commonality of human dignity and compassion.

If you are interested in helping with the Sam Moore Slave Cemetery project, please contact Sarah Kohrs (kohrs@shentel.net or (540) 477-3257). You are also welcome to read more about the project on Corhaven's website:

<http://inthecoracle.org/2015/05/clearing-sacred-space-by-sarah-kohrs/>.

RESOURCES:

Borden, D. (1986), *Tomb Inscriptions of Shenandoah County and Bordering Counties*, Vol. 8.

Lewis, (1996). *Elementary Latin Dictionary*. Oxford, Great Britain: Oxford University Press.

Liddell & Scott. (1996). *Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford, Great Britain: Clarendon Press.

Rainville, L. (2014). *Hidden History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia*. Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press.

PUBLICITY REPORT by Stacey Morgan Smith

Short and sweet this month – we have some opportunity to have articles published, but we need "action shot" pictures – photos of MGs working in gardens, educating children, and engaging the public. Please get the names of everyone in the photo.

The committee will meet in either July or August, depending on members' schedules. If you're interested in writing press releases, creating and updating website page copy for our Webmaster, and taking pictures at association events, please think about joining the publicity and communications committee. We have a lot we'd like to do in the second half of the year, and we need help!

June is a busy month for me this year, with visitors, vacations, and work fun on the calendar. Other than scheduled info booths, meetings, and ongoing press about those meetings, I'll be largely unavailable for the second half of the month. If you need something published in June, please try to get it to me before Garden Fest.

I'm leaving you with some pictures I've taken in my yard over the last year. When I joined NSVMGA, my gardens were mostly vegetables and herbs. In the time I've been a member, I've learned the joy of identifying, planting, dividing, and sharing flowers. I want to give a special thanks to Carolyn Wilson, who has taught me so much and shared so graciously. Many of the flowers in this photo are from Carolyn or other Master Gardeners. My favorite part of being an MG is working Greenlines and info booths, but the side effects of being a member are also pretty great. How can we let members of our communities know what they are missing?

YOUR FRONT DOOR: FIRST IMPRESSIONS by Lesley Mack

Here is a brief talk from Katie Sokol, owner of Downriver Landscape Design, <http://www.downriverlandscapedesign.com/> .

The impression your front door gives to visitors and friends really begins at the street, and the experience getting to the door identifies your personality. We all know how to decorate front doors with beautiful wreaths and baskets, but here are tips that go beyond the door.

- Create a Sense of Enclosure – Incorporate an arbor, trellis, or gate. Just one of these structures can define the main entrance of your home while supplying structure and beauty.
- Enhance the Entry – Make your home's front entrance an inviting focal point. Use bluestone, or brick to lead the visitor to the door, creating a sense of intrigue or a safe destination
- Clean Up – Fix flaws, peeling paint, sagging gutters, cracked windows, missing roof singles, or damaged siding that detracts from your home's beauty. Or upgrade exterior hardware: house numbers, mailboxes, porch lights, the door handle, all items your guests will notice
- Liven up the Landscape – Sometimes all your exterior needs to look its very best is a lift in landscaping. Add some colorful foliage plants, seasonal annuals, and some key accent containers. Window boxes will also give more seasonal color.

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

I'm just back from a week hiking in upstate New York: lots of cliffs, gorges, waterfalls, and, of course, flowers. I want to talk about two of them: Gaywings (*Polygala paucifolia*) and Starflower (*Trientalis borealis*). The first has a very irregular shape and the second, an unusual regular shape.

Several *Polygala* species grow in Virginia, but most of them in the coastal plain or in swamps. Most of them flower in racemes, some so tight that they look like elongated clover heads. Gaywings stands out even though it is less than six inches tall because the flowers are individual and it is rose-purple. *Polygala* flowers have three petals formed into a tube, two on top and the third, on the bottom, formed into a keel like a pea flower. The keel of *Polygala paucifolia* has a fringe at the tip, so it is also called Fringed Polygala. What really makes *Polygala* stand out are the sepals. Three are small and hidden, but the other two form large wings (up to two centimeters on Gaywings) on either side of the corolla and have the same color as the corolla. So the flower makes me think of a purple model of Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis. I have never seen Gaywings in Virginia

Starflower I have seen one place in Virginia, near Calvary Rocks on the Riprap Hollow Trail in the Southern Section of Shenandoah National Park. The plant is less than eight inches tall, but brought me to a standstill in New York every time I saw one--a perfect white star hovering above a whorl of green leaves. And it has seven petals—seven points on the star. What flower has seven petals? Almost all regular dicots have four or five. And each petal overlapping the next around the circle, better than any magician can fan a deck of cards.