

## NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

July, 2015

### ADD YOUR HOURS TO VMS

#### UPCOMING MEETING

- **Sunday, July 19, 4pm, Clermont Farm, past and current agricultural uses of this farm.** We will even meet a chicken or two and a "hairless" sheep during our presentation by Tait Golightly, the farm manager for Clermont. And, from Bob Stieg, the director, we will learn a little of the site's history. We will also learn about the previous gardens at the site. And, we'll learn about what the future holds! This will be a very interesting experience, especially for those who have not yet visited Clermont! Seating--and fans--will be provided. You are invited by our hosts, the Clarke County MGs, to bring a delicious food item for a potluck.

**Directions:** From Winchester, follow Route 7-East toward Leesburg and Reston. Turn right at the third exit for Berryville--Business 7-West. You will be headed back toward Berryville. Turn left at the first gravel driveway. There is a Clermont Farm sign at the entrance.

Also from Winchester or points close to Winchester, follow Route 7-East through Berryville. This is the business route. You will wind through town and just on the outskirts, look for the Clermont Farm sign. You will make a right onto the road into the farm. (I did this when I visited and it was easy!!)

From Route 340: Turn right onto Route 7-Berryville Pike-East, towards Leesburg. Turn right at the light onto Business 7-West. You will be headed back toward Berryville. Look for the Clermont Farm sign. Turn left at the first gravel driveway.

Once you are on the property, proceed past the historic house and the former slave quarters. Stay on the gravel driveway to the right and continue to the Big Gray Barn. There will be parking in and around the barn area.

#### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Mary Flagg

Summer is here and I am wondering, just like everyone else, how the heat is going to affect our gardens. According to the experts, the oppressive heat will bother us more than our gardens. Here are some tips from the experts when planting and gardening in the summer heat:

- *Water Deeply.* Deep watering encourages the development of deep root systems, that will help your trees, shrubs, and perennials better tolerate drought conditions.
- *It's never too hot to plant.* When you plant in the heat of the summer, prepare the soil well, use organic fertilizers, water deeply, and use quality mulch.
- *Mow the grass high.* During the hot, dry summer set the mower blades to cut the grasses no lower than three inches.
- *Beetle Watch!* Be on the lookout for these destructive pests before they wreak havoc on your perennials, trees and vegetables.

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT** by Susan Garrett

Last month the NSVMGA County Coordinators and County Greenline Coordinators were offered the opportunity to tour an amazing “green” building and also to learn how a very large MG Unit runs its Greenline. On June 11, with Mark as our driver and guide, five MG’s went on an “excellent adventure”.

Wetlands Studies and Solutions, Inc. in Gainesville was our first stop. They have wetland scientists, engineers, regulatory/compliance/survey/GIS specialists, and archeologists, all with the goal to assist developers and public works agencies in the mid-Atlantic region with creating innovative solutions to water quality issues affecting the Chesapeake Bay region. Their building is LEED Gold Certified (LEED stands for “leadership in energy and environmental design”) and, as you can see in these pictures, has a “green roof” planted with sedum, Russian sage, daisies, and other plants.

Everything in and around the building is designed for energy saving, from the rain barrel two stories high which provides water for the bathrooms, to the countertops of recycled material, lighting which automatically adjusts to conditions, and a parking lot with porous asphalt and surrounded with native plants. Rain gardens and berms deal with any runoff on the property.

From Gainesville, we headed to the Fairfax County Government Center to meet with Fairfax County Extension Agent and Unit Coordinator, Adria Bordas, and some of the MG’s who work with her in their plant and pest ID clinic. After meeting with the staff in the Extension Office, we went to the plant and pest clinic in a donated second floor building at Merrifield Garden Center. Every week, volunteer Fairfax County MG’s meet there to deal with the questions that come in from multiple sites in Fairfax where MG’s have had information tables: farmers markets, library clinics, children’s activities. Together, the volunteers identify pests and diseases of plants. A newsletter is produced on a weekly basis with information about the most frequent problems being seen that week.

Greenlines are one of the major ways we can help homeowners with research-based information, and are a key component of our mission as VCE Master Gardeners, so it was wonderful to get new ideas and inspiration as we shared ideas with another group. As we headed home after a full day, we were reminded again how rewarding it was to be VCE Master Gardeners!

## **SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT** by Sharon Bradshaw

Our Green Help Line is busy with questions about insects and Leland cypress problems, among others. The two farmers’ markets, Woodstock and Strasburg, will continue on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays into October. We are open for volunteers for our two 4-H day camps: July 29 and Aug 5, each at 1:00 for about 45 minutes.

A reminder about the request for donations of garden seeds and tools for Vonnie Hepner, who is working with villagers in Guatemala, any type of seeds are welcome. If you are knowledgeable about hoop houses and/or greenhouses and are willing to share information

with Vonnie, please let me know. (This may count as project hours, equivalent to a plant clinic or Green Line.)

### **FREDERICK COUNTY REPORT** by John Kummer

The heat is ON! The springtime blooming and growth is past. Once again gardens throughout the county are welcoming the summer sun and, so far, the rains that have been nourishing. In my particular case, the weeds are joyous. The bunnies and insectorhinos are also appreciative of the salad bar that has been provided. Next year, more mulch and maybe a scarecrow.

MG led projects in the county are progressing well. We do continue to need staffing for the Friday morning greenline/helpdesk. Please see the monthly project calendar in VMS for open slots, of which there are plenty. With Mark's help, we are in the early stage of planning for next year's MG training class. Contact Mark or myself if would like to help.

Oh, and if you haunt the nurseries in the area, recall that one or two have considerable sales on plants in July. No names given, most of you probably know which to visit.

And finally to close,

Sing, cuccu, nu. Sing, cuccu.

Sing, cuccu. Sing, cuccu, nu.

Sumer is i-cumin in—

Lhude sing, cuccu!

Groweth sed and bloweth med

And springth the wude nu.

Sing, cuccu!

Awe bleteth after lomb,

Lhouth after calve cu,

Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth—

Murie sing, cuccu!

Cuccu, cuccu,

Wel singes thu, cuccu.

Ne swik thu naver nu!

[Editor's note: Who else knows what this is? I had to memorize it in 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Congrats to John, because I couldn't recite it all any more.]

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

You know when people write, "at the time of this writing" ? Well, it is GEE-OR-GOUS outside today, cool, sunny, nice breeze, so I'm gonna get my writing done so I can go play outside! Yes, and we finally got some of that rain that everyone else has been getting.

Sari Carp, one of Page County's newest MGs, saw a need at our local Wall-Mart to have MGs not just sit at a table answering gardening questions for the customers, but circulate among the gardening shoppers and ask if they have questions or need specific gardening help. According to Sari's last conversation with Luray's assistant manager, Debbie, they are eager to have the MGs come a couple of times this fall, 2015. The assistant manager will be ordering trees for fall planting; and she plans on posting fliers in the store encouraging

the customers to plant. Sari hopes to concentrate on tree planting guidelines, ground prep for spring planting, fall vegetable gardening, ground preparation guidelines and maybe some relevant pruning or pest management. We will keep you posted if you would like to join Sari at Wall-Mart.

#### Greenline questions:

Thanks to Mark for the great link to the Missouri Botanical Garden Gardening Help, along with the Va Tech website, and the IPM manual, finding answers to homeowners questions has been pretty easy.

Spruce Spider Mites, Fireblight, Fungal tar spot on sugar maples, and replacing broken Bradford Pears, along with why the Leylands are brown, have been the latest questions. Not surprisingly, the answers include:

- Encourage natural predators
- Reduce plant stress, adequate water
- Avoid over fertilization (use organics)
- Remove infested plant debris
- Prune heavily infested limbs, (Clorox tools)
- Inspect newly bought plants
- Live with it, as in the case of this fungal tar spot

Most trees can tolerate leaf spots with little or no apparent damage. A tree affected early in the year will re-leaf and the new leaves may not be affected. Only if defoliation occurs three or more years in a row will most established plants be adversely affected.

#### **MASTER GARDENER COLLEGE 2015** by Susan Garrett

Larry Haun, Susan Garrett, Helen Lake, Sharon Bradshaw and Rich Howell received Milestone Awards at this year's MG College. Extension Agent Mark Sutphin is in the back row in the psychedelic yellow shirt which marked a member of the Master Gardener College Planning Committee. The NSVMGA had eleven representatives at MG College, one of the largest delegations present. Not pictured, but also attending, were Suzanne Boag, Cy Haley, Angie Hutchinson, Cheryl McDonald, Sandra Ward, and Carolyn Wilson. (We'll do better with pictures next year!)

#### **BUGS WITH BENEFITS** by Lesley Mack & Rodale's Organic Life

For the bird lovers:

Caterpillars, whether butterflies or moths, get a bad rap as garden pests. Only a few species eat our crops, and even fewer favor our ornamentals. Most of the 14,000 species of caterpillars in North America make their living harmlessly and unnoticed on wild plants. Ninety-six percent of our terrestrial bird species rear their young on insects, mostly in the form of caterpillars.

The soft bodied larvae, particularly the spineless and hairless ones, are ideal food for baby birds. They are packed with protein and lipids, and full of essential carotenoids, the antioxidants that create colorful feathers, a signal of good health and diet. Birds that feed their nestlings caterpillars need many thousands of them to bring a clutch to the point where the young can leave the nest.

So, how about that Lunch Wrap-up for us. I'll take the vegetarian wrap-up.

**EDITORS CORNER** by Richard Stromberg

Nobody submitted anything about Gardenfest, so I'll give my view. I set up and manned the Virginia Native Plant Society booth. When I sat down in my booth I noticed I was practically looking home, for there, in the distance, was Signal Knob and peeking over the left end of it was Buzzard Rock, and I live on the other side of that.

I sold a few books, gave away lots of brochures, and sent people to Hill House Nursery next door to get native plants. The most popular brochure is "Do I Have to Mow All That?" It can be found with other VNPS brochures at <http://vnps.org/vnps-brochures/>. Also popular were the "Native Plants for Conservation, Restoration and Landscaping" brochures. There are five of them: Coastal Plain, Piedmont, Mountain, Grasslands, and Riparian. They list plants and tell what the light and moisture requirements are for each species. They can be found at [http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural\\_heritage/nativeplants.shtml](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/nativeplants.shtml).