

## NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

### UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETING

- **AUGUST 21, 2016, 4-600pm, Hilda J. Barbour Elementary School, 290 Westminster Drive, Front Royal, Virginia.** David Means, a certified arborist and owner of Copper Forest, LLC, will present a program about basic care and diseases of trees and shrubs. Members will also see the work that Warren County MGs have completed in the courtyard at the school. Since we will meet outdoors, please bring a chair. More details will follow soon.

**Directions:** From the junction of US-522 and VA-55 on the south end of Front Royal, go  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile east on VA-55 and turn left (north) onto Westminster Drive and go one mile to the school.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Sunday, August 21, 2-4pm, The Barn Series at Belle Grove Plantation: Miniature Gardens.** Angie Hutchenson will show how to grow with moss and how to plant in one-of-a-kind containers. The workshop will provide containers of rustic to ceramic, repurposed and interesting accents to create a container that you will take home. Options will be endless depending on your own creative genius. Succulents and a small accent plant will also be provided to plant in your container. Each one will be unique. If you are interested in attending, register at <http://www.bellegrove.org/calendar/miniature> or call 540-869-2028 or go to the Museum Shop. Cost of the class is \$25. You will earn 2 hours of educational hours for this class. If you have any questions you can email Lynn Hoffmann at [gwendydog@gmail.com](mailto:gwendydog@gmail.com).
- **Saturday, August 27, 10am-4pm, Museum of the Shenandoah Valley's Taste Fest, 901 Amherst Street, Winchester.** The Shenandoah and Potomac Iris Society will sell Irises at their booth. For more information, contact Sheryl Campbell at (540) 868-2123 or [irishillsfarm@outlook.com](mailto:irishillsfarm@outlook.com). In addition to the Iris sale, there will be a variety of gardening booths and cooking demonstrations.
- **Sunday, September 11, 2-4pm, The Barn Series at Belle Grove Plantation: Preserving your Garden Memories**
- **Sunday, October 2, 2-4pm, The Barn Series at Belle Grove Plantation: Autumn Wreaths**

### 2017 BOARD NOMINATIONS by Suzanne Boag

The Nominating Committee is eager to receive nominations for the Board Positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, & Treasurer. Don't be shy. We are approachable, and you can contact any member of the Committee to nominate yourself or another MG that you think would be a good fit for a particular position (so long as she/he agrees to be nominated). The members of the Committee are

**Chair:** Suzanne Boag, Clarke County: [suzannemboag@gmail.com](mailto:suzannemboag@gmail.com) 540.533.0061

**Members:**

Mary Flagg (VC), Clarke: [dazlmom@outlook.com](mailto:dazlmom@outlook.com) or 540.837.2748

Barb Hallar, Shenandoah: [b58hallar@gmail.com](mailto:b58hallar@gmail.com) or 215.850.9881

Stacey Smith (Secretary), Shenandoah: [staceymorgansmith@gmail.com](mailto:staceymorgansmith@gmail.com) or 540.481.3967

### LET'S ALL MAKE THE POT GROW by Mary Flagg, Volunteer Coordinator

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The NSVMGA membership was last counted at 120 members with 99 active members. As of today, one third of the membership have entered and met their 20 project/ 8 education requirements. As volunteer coordinator, my job is to track and recognize membership progress. Thanks to those members who have completed that requirement. My 4" pot represents that third of the membership. Each popsicle stick has a members name that has completed the 20/8 requirement. We had some fun at the July meeting and pulled members names for a winning prize of some NSVMGA logo merchandise. Congratulations go out to Ginny Smith who chose a NSVMGA cap. Please help me grow my pot this summer. Please volunteer for projects, enter your hours and get those requirements completed. Perhaps your name will be pulled for a prize!

### FROM THE PRESIDENT by Susan Garrett

I have been to Master Gardener College twice, and had a wonderful time each year. MG College takes place at the beautiful Virginia Tech Campus in Blacksburg, during the days around the fourth weekend in June. This year we had 9 members attend. We liberated a large round table in the cafeteria and ate together at every meal, allowing a lot of fun conversation. Some keynote lectures were really good, and I enjoyed participating in the workshops I had chosen. A major event every year at Master Gardener College is "Awards Night", when all those who are in attendance who have reached Milestone Hours receive their pin and certificate of achievement. This year we had 14 members who reached Milestones, and three of those were in attendance at MG College. Congratulations to all those who reached Milestones:

250 Hours: Claire DeMasi, Cecelia Latham, Charles Newton, Sue Rogers, Russ Watkins

500 Hours: Karen Brill, Lee Demko, Donna Funk-Smith, Stacey Smith\*

1000 Hours: Sharon Bradshaw, Mary Flagg

2000 Hours: Cy Haley\*, Richard Stromberg, Suzanne Boag\*

*\* received their awards at MG College*

### REFLECTIONS ON MASTER GARDENER COLLEGE 2016 assembled by Helen Lake



Eight Master Gardeners from NSVMGA attended MG College at Virginia Tech This year. Most had participated in previous MG Colleges and came prepared for the rhythms of what was to follow: walking, sleeping in college dorms, eating in the huge (huuuge) cafeteria, being barraged by a lot of information, and being surrounded by over two hundred fellow Master

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Gardeners. As always, we came away with different experiences. This year, we'd like to share some of those experiences with you. The following short stories from several of the attendees will give you a snapshot of what happens at MG College.

### **Carolyn Wilson– “Thru the Years”**

I have been to 10 MG Colleges over the past 14 years. Each one has been a great experience with a wide range of workshops and lectures to choose from. I learn something new and interesting every time. I especially enjoy the local private garden tours and an evening spent wandering through the beautiful Hahn Gardens. However, the most memorable aspect for me is the wonderful comradery between our fellow MGs, both with our group and MGs from other units. It's a wonderful bonding time. Next year will be the 30th anniversary of the MG College and they are planning some special events. (However, when I told Dave Close that I heard there might be fireworks, he just laughed). I hope that you will attend MG College next year. I certainly plan to be there.

### **Stacey Smith “My First Master Gardener’s College”**

I have wanted to go to Master Gardener College ever since Virginia Tech Alumni Magazine included an article on the event years ago. This year I finally made it!

It was a great experience from start to finish. Registration was smooth and easy to do online, and I was able to sign up for all of the classes I wanted. The directions to get to where we needed to be for parking, field trips, and registration were spot on. The shuttle from the parking lot to the residence hall was quick, and volunteers were there to help load and unload bags. Check-in took two minutes, and I received a folder full of helpful info, a nametag, an access/food card, and a VCEMG button (for first timers). For those who chose to walk to the classes, we saw plenty of signs to help navigate. There was little chance of getting lost!



Dining was “all you can eat,” and there were plenty of options. In 2015, VT’s Dining Services were voted Number 3 in the nation for “Best Campus Food” by the Princeton Review, and they were in the top one or two in 5 other rankings. The beef barbacoa was wonderful! (Visit this link to see some of the options available, and you can also calculate the nutrition information. <http://foodpro.dsa.vt.edu/FoodPro.NET/shortmenu.aspx?sName=Virginia+Tech+Dining+Service&locationNum=15&locationName=D2+AT+DIETRICK+HALL&naFlag=1> )

The residence hall rooms were comfortable, with air conditioning and, if selected, in-room bathrooms. My first room AC didn’t work. I called the number in our welcome packet, and within 10 minutes I was in a new room. Follow Cy’s recommendation to bring a foam pad or mattress cover. The mattresses are covered in vinyl, and it cuts down on annoying noises every time you move. (I didn’t bring one, but Carolyn looked out for me and brought a spare.) The provided sheets, pillows, towels, and blankets are really thin. If you care about comfort, you may want to bring your own if you have room in your luggage. I brought a towel and pillow, but the sheets were ok for a few nights. (I plan to keep an eye out for end-of-season sales on XL twin sheets and buy a set just for MG College.) We did have a midnight fire alarm interruption thanks to some kids in town for a camp, but that just helped contribute to the college experience.



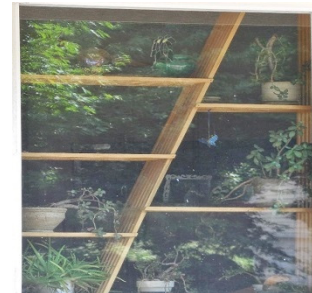
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We enjoyed great speakers, classes, and garden tours. A few literally wrote the book on their topics (one wrote a new section in the 2016 MG handbook). Spending time with knowledgeable people who have the same interests was wonderful. Even better, I got to know our own members better during breaks and meals. We ate together and walked to classes together. We also toured the Hahn Horticultural Gardens twice, and, as shown, we had a lot of fun! I hope even more of us can make the trip in 2017!

### Cy Haley- "I'm a Thief!"

Yes, I admit it, I steal ideas whenever I go to MG College. Going on any tour or taking any workshop at MG College will give you exposure to many things you may not have seen or experienced before. Some of us collect plants and revel in the many specimens we see during garden tours or classes around the VT campus, then we order or barter for the plants. I, however, have a love of yard art and growing forms. I take pictures of things that peak my interest and I steal the ideas like these from this year's MG College:

- Put interesting rocks on a painted pedestal. How easy is that for adding interest to your garden and how did I not think of that?
- Putting shelving in your front window to show off those beautiful house plants?
- Those of you that have been to my house know I have started putting goats and chickens in the yard, now I need to add a cow. Better yet, a cow with a chicken on it!
- And who ever thought of putting a tomato cage around a squash plant is a genius!



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- Now for the piece de resistance...these chairs were all over VT's Hahn Gardens and at some of the garden tour homes so of course I had to get pictures for Hubby so he can make me some.

It's amazing what you learn, see, and get to experience at MG College. It's a lot of instruction but also a lot of fun. You get to know each other better as well as meeting new MGs.

**Susan Garrett- "Can't walk far? Worry about dorm beds? No problem!"**

One of the things I love about MG College is that persons of every activity level are welcome. For the walkers, there is a beautiful campus to be experienced during the walks to and from class, and for bikers, it is a bike-friendly place.

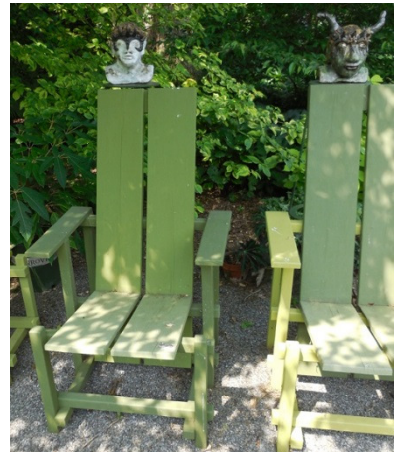
But for those of us with bad backs, tricky knees, or other mobility issues--well, there is room for us as well. MG College has three shuttles driven by volunteers that run between the dorms, the dining hall, and the classrooms. I can't walk far, but I have had a wonderful time at MG College for the last two years, and found I can absolutely rely on the shuttles to get me where I need to go. If you have a DMV Handicapped parking permit, there are also many places to park around campus.

Bad backs are not fun, but I have also discovered how to sleep well in a dorm room. The twin mattresses are plastic-covered, but quite firm. I bring a 1 inch memory foam mattress-topper (cheap at Target and similar stores), cover it with my own flat, folded over queen sheet or a mattress cover, and put the dorm sheets on top. I also bring my own pillow, and, *voila*, I sleep like a baby.

MG College is for everyone--and no matter your preferred activity level or physical abilities, I hope you will consider attending some year.

**Suzanne Boag "Master Gardeners in Motion!"**

Do you like action? Do you like to learn by doing? Master Gardener College offers an array of activities for people who want to get out and explore Blacksburg or learn how to do something garden-centered and hands-on. Workshops and tours offered this year included: kayaking the New River, Stadium Woods Service Project removing non-native invasive



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species, Gardens of the New River Valley Tour (Delbert Jones), Landscape Analysis, From Hop Yard to Hoop Houses (Holly Scoggins), Hiking in the New River Valley, Beliveau Vineyards & Winery Tour, Tree Budding and Grafting Workshop, Sun Red Tomatoes Tour, VT Greenhouses & Hahn Horticultural Gardens Tour. Past activities also included Bicycling Scenic Tour, Visit to Riverbend Commercial Nursery, and a Visit to a Private Hosta & Daylily Grower. This year's hands-on classes included: Living Flower Arrangements with Bulb Layering Hands-on and Fact or Fiction as Seen on TV. In the past, hands-on classes have been offered on Plant Propagation, Canning, Hybridizing Petunias, and more. For the past couple of years, MG College has offered an evening trip to Floyd, Home of Blue Grass Music, and I can testify to the rollicking return trip to VT, with music blaring and the whole busload of MGs singing along to, "Amie, Whatcha Wanta Do?" after being immersed in Floyd's tradition of Blue Grass Music on Fridays.

Master Gardener College is so much more than just lectures, so if you like action and hand-on activities, you will enjoy the wide selection of workshops, classes and tours offered to MGs!

### **Helen Lake- "A time of reunion and discovery"**

This was my third year attending MG College. I anticipated reuniting with Master Gardeners from different units that I have sat beside

- in vans driving to Floyd to see wonderful community/private gardens or enjoy bluegrass music on Friday night
- at sessions where we discovered similar passions
- over a glass of wine during social hour at the atrium or a chance encounter at one of the lounge areas at the dorm

Our fellow Master Gardeners are involved in so many interesting projects throughout the state! This year, a particular one grabbed my attention, "Share the Spare", a program by the New River Valley Master Gardeners. They advertise for the public to drop off extra produce folks may have raised in their gardens at the MG Table at the Blacksburg Farmers Market distribute it to local food banks. And they ask the vendors at the same farmers market to donate the produce that didn't sell that day to Share the Spare. It makes me think, can't we try something like this at one of our county farmer market tables? For those that know me well, it doesn't take much for me to get me excited at trying something new and 'out of the box'. There is lots to get inspired by between the programs of our MG units statewide and the amazing span of ongoing programs at Virginia Tech and in the Extension Program.

Each year I come away impressed at the caliber of our fellow Virginia Master Gardeners and the magnitude of ways we all strive to make a difference in our communities.



So, from all of us, to all of you, hope to see you at MG College next year!!

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

Part of the NSVMGA Samuels Public Library project is the Master Gardener Speaker Series at the library in Front Royal four times annually in connection with support from the Friends of the Samuels Public Library. Presentations are held on Saturdays and usually last about an hour.

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In March, we were happy to have Harry Reed, a local botanist, talk about plants that bloom all 12 months of the year, even in late winter! In June we were excited to welcome Theo Smith, Vineyard Manager and Winemaker at Rappahannock Cellars ([www.rcellars.com](http://www.rcellars.com)) who made a presentation on growing wine grapes in the Shenandoah Valley. Guests were able to sample wines during the presentation.

This October (date still to be determined), the series will feature scientists from the Smithsonian Conservation and Biology Institute who will present on their activities with the National Ecological Observatory Network, commonly known as NEON (<http://interdisciplinary.si.edu/collaboration-highlights/neon>). Included will be Citizen Science Programs like Project Budburst (<http://budburst.org>), that allows the community to input data on a selected plant in their yard to be used in large-scale seasonal forecasting.

We hope you will join us in October for the last NSVMGA Speaker Series presentation for 2016. For more information or for ideas for topics, please email Matt Windt at [mattwindt@yahoo.com](mailto:mattwindt@yahoo.com).

### PAGE COUNTY REPORT by Lesley Mack

BIG thanks to Cheryl McDonald and Robbin Holland for creating an inviting showcase at the Page County Library. The showcase is intended for the viewers to "Discover their Outdoor Spaces". Cheryl had many of the books, items and ideas to fill the showcase. Robbin helped put the showcase together. Robbin had the great idea to invite the viewers to become Master Gardeners themselves and give all the contact numbers and information to do that. The ladies also left soil test kit boxes for the viewers/visitors to take. Chris Slater, a staff writer for the Page News and Courier wrote an article about the showcase.



Chris stopped by the Chingquapin Oak on the day that Genna McGahee and the student interns of the Valley Healthcare and Hospitality Career Advancement program came in June to complete their community service project. Genna had asked me in January if we had projects her interns could do in Page County. We had also intended to partner with the Hill & Valley Garden Club to weed and mulch the memorial trees at Ralph Dean Park. Since the shade and the breeze under the wide limbs of the Chingquapin Oak were so cooling, the MG s and interns stayed there to clear away the weeds, privet, and other stumps. Thanks to Susan Finlay, Charlie Newton, and Tom Mack for coming and helping guide the interns. We love getting the folks who read the newspaper aware of the Chingquapin Oak, its historical significance and all the wonderful reasons to take care of it as long as possible. TV3 also played a spot on the interns and the program (<http://www.whsv.com/content/news/Students-giving-back-through->

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[new-Valley-Health-intern-program-385048491.html](http://new-Valley-Health-intern-program-385048491.html)). The oak could have been talked about more, of course.

Cheryl has been setting up a MG booth at the floating Farmers' Market in Luray. She says she has chatted with many folks about various plant problems, plant needs, and general encouragement for their gardening questions.

We have been getting a few Greenline questions about landscaping, fireblight, peaches, and getting soil tested.

Page County Fair Week is coming up at the end of August. Charlie will have a "Water Quality" booth. Charlie always likes company to "person" the booth. So, if you would like to experience the Page County Fair, give Charlie a holler to sign up. We will have MG information there as well.

### SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT by Sharon Bradshaw

Our two farmers' markets, South Street Barn Market in Woodstock and the Strasburg Farmers' Market, are going strong. The New Market Rain Garden is looking good and at the last workshop demonstration all the plants were (re)identified. We predict many plants will be ready for dividing before Garden Fest 2017.

Corhaven Graveyard is in great condition with all the rain we've had. This year's transplants, for the most part, have established good root systems and are growing well. We'll be working with a home school community group in early September, dividing donated plants and properly planting them.

The last 4-H Day Camp will be on August 10 at Woodstock's Riley Park. Campers have been enjoying the Water Cycle game along with the adult counselors.

Green Help Line is fielding questions ranging from bag worms to lilacs that don't bloom.

The Shenandoah County Fair roster is finalized and Bob Carlton has openings for the Fair Judging Class on August 6<sup>th</sup> from 9am to noon in the VCE classroom in Woodstock. To participate or learn more, contact Bob at [bobnsam@shentel.net](mailto:bobnsam@shentel.net) ASAP.

### TRAINEE CLASS OF 2017 by Sharon Bradshaw

The recruitment flyer is ready and will be available as half-page handouts at the August meeting. County coordinators have already received emails with them attached for distribution at farmers' markets, county fairs, and information tables in the county. We won't begin officially posting them until later in the year, but the most effective recruitment is individual contact. Retail plant nurseries frequently hold fall workshops and would be willing to promote the class with handouts to participants. Check with your coordinator or contact Sharon Bradshaw at [Bradrod573@gmail.com](mailto:Bradrod573@gmail.com) to receive flyers for distribution.

### THE GIRLS UPDATE by Cy Haley

As many of you know I lost sweet Honey this past spring. She made it another year after the awful hawk attack, and I think she enjoyed the additional time with her longtime friend Smokey. She is missed by both of us (meaning Smokey and me, hubby is indifferent to all animals except the dog).

Since I didn't want Smokey (who by the way is now 6 years old) to be alone, I contacted some parents of the Eggs and Ears 4-H club to see if anyone had bantams for sale. I found a breeder on a small farm north of Winchester who had some Cochins, the same breed as Honey. I told



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hubby I was going to look at some chickens after work one day and loaded up the large cat carrier. The drive was a bit long but the farm was tucked back into an interesting area so I didn't mind. After looking over the few bantams she had, I made my selection, paid up, and headed home. I came in through the garage so I had to pass by the kitchen where hubby was preparing supper. The look on his face at seeing what was in the cat carrier was priceless...his comment was., "TWO? I thought you were getting one to replace Honey?" I told him I only said I was going to look at chickens, not the amount I planned on getting. I also told him he's lucky I didn't get five since we can now have up to six chickens in the Town of Front Royal. Yup, that's right folks, I'm now a legal chicken owner. I no longer have contraband chickens.

So let me introduce you to the new additions to our coop, Bernice, the redhead named after my redheaded mom, and Gertrude, because everyone should have a chicken named Gertrude.

Although the two new ones aren't yet trained to come when I snap my fingers, we're making progress, just takes a lot of meal worm treats. And as I watch them gobble up slugs and Japanese beetles I know I'll always have feathered friends around.

Happy Gardening and cluck, cluck from the girls!

### BARN SERIES AT BELLE GROVE "BUG HOTEL" by Lynn Hoffmann



The barn series class "Bug Hotel" was a great success. Cyndi Walsh and Claire DeMasi gave a great presentation on pollinators and bugs. We were able to have the class in the barn, a great venue to make bug houses while looking out at the view of Signal Knob off toward Front Royal.

Claire and her husband crafted the bug frames and the attendees put together a unique bug sanctuary to be hung in the garden. A good time was had by all.



Three classes remain in the series. Miniature and Fairy Gardens Aug 21, Preserving your Garden Memories Sept. 11 and autumn wreaths will be held on October 2. All these classes are workshops and you will take home your garden creations!



### SUMMER AND WINTER DAPHNES by Lesley Mack

Imagine a semi-evergreen, small shrub that has a fragrance like a gardenia in late winter for several weeks, or during the summer for several months. Add on to that idea, interesting foliage that has thick, lustrous, dark green leaves some with a lovely white, cream or yellow margin.

Sorry I cannot boast that it is also a native. The Europe, Asia, and North Africa natives have been brought here and hybridized. There is a deciduous, four to six foot shrub native to eastern North America that is part of the Daphne family. Leatherwood or *Dirca palustris* has small yellow flowers that bloom before it leafs out, but the flower is short lived.

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Some think that Daphnes are finicky, persnickety and difficult. Drainage seems to be the key to successful Daphne longevity. Daphnes do not like wet feet, but also do not like to dry out.

Their soil pH preference is debated. A near neutral soil pleases most Daphnes.

If you Google "winter Daphnes" you will get the *Daphne odora* varieties, pink/cream flowers. For "summer Daphnes" you will get the *Daphne* × *transatlantica* varieties, which have pale pink/white flowers.



One of the best parts about having Daphnes, besides the graceful form, pleasing architecture and colors, fascinating tubular flowers and fragrance, is the delight on our visitors' faces when they get a nose-full of the flower clusters and begin to hear the story of summer and winter Daphnes.

### EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

I went to Eugene, Oregon, for ten days the beginning of July to watch the Track and Field Olympic Trials. Very exciting.

With the event spread over that amount of time, I had time to do other things. Four mornings I walked around gardens or natural areas. Walkways line both side of the Willamette River and go past some impressive flower gardens. Hendricks Park was more natural with some huge trees and a native plant garden. Skinner Butte offered views of the city. Fern Ridge Wildlife Area east of the city includes a large lake and several wetland bird watching spots.

I saw some beautiful flowers belonging to genera that are native to the western United States, but not the east though I have seen them offered in catalogs. *Clarkia* has some beautiful species. The one I saw, *Clarkia amoena* has a pink, poppy-like flower with a dark spot in the middle of each petal. It is called "Fairwell to Spring" because it blooms in summer.

Checkerbloom (*Sidalcea*) is like a miniature Hollyhock. California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) offers orange flowers, not a common color in the plant world. It has escaped gardens to naturalize in several locations in the east. In this damp, coastal area stringy lichens often drape the trees. Pears hanging





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amongst the lichen fringes was strange. In one wetland area European Pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*) had formed a large swath of purple.



No track events were scheduled on Tuesday, so I drove with friends to Crater Lake National Park. The six-mile wide lake in the filled-in volcano crater is the deepest in the United States. Its intense blue is amazing. In July a third of the road around the lake was still not open because snow still had to be cleared.

Of course, I found flowers. The saplings on the right side the road had been cut down as we waited to get into the Park, and the trees beyond were all burned in a fire (20,000 acres last October). Flowers were already blooming on that dry, pumice-based flat, so I hopped out to get some pictures while the car inched ahead. First was Lupine. We have one native Lupine in the east. Oregon has fifty. I figured out that this one was Brewer's Lupine (*Lupinus breweri*). Growing with it was a pink, globular flowerhead: Pussypaws (*Cistanthe monosperma*). I figured out that a blue Beardtongue I was Siskiyou Beardtongue (*Penstemon anguineus*), another tough search as Oregon has 47 *Penstemon* species. We have six in Virginia.



The rest of my pictures can be seen at <https://risy.smugmug.com/Travel/Eugene-2016>.