

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETING

- **Sunday, September 16, 4-6pm**, Blandy Experimental Farm Library in Clarke County to learn more about our two community gardens--why we have them; who plants, maintains, and harvests them; what we do with the produce; and how we can support them. Join us to learn more about the Blandy Community Garden from Mary Craig; and the Timbrook Park Community Garden in Winchester from Mary Turner and Bob Gail.

Directions: US-50 east of Winchester, one mile east of US-340.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Sat-Sun, Oct 8-9, 9am-4:30pm, Arborfest at Blandy**

FROM THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR by Mary Flagg,

What a summer it has been, not to mention brutally HOT! Yet, I wanted to recap several of the active projects we have been working on throughout this hot summer. The VMS calendar has been full, with lots of projects for members to participate in. For that, I wanted to thank you: from getting the applications approved, to getting project leaders assigned, to getting the projects posted on VMS. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Clarke County's projects involved educating students and planting trees at the new high school, setting up a booth at the annual CCHS Plant Sale, working on the raised beds and the green house at Johnson Williams M.S., planning the new native pollinator garden at DG Cooley and Boyce ES, scheduling the Millwood Community Garden workdays, manning the Berryville Farmers Market table, helping the 50/340 Pollinator Garden mass planting, And handling the Green Line had and the very rainy but eventful Clarke County Fair week

Frederick County hosted the 2016 Intern Class which had the interns out in droves throughout all five counties. Garden Fest was a huge fundraising success with the Barn Series following monthly; the Jr MG homeschoolers were busy; the Timbrook Community Garden workdays educated kids from the Fremont Nursery; the Lowes Help desk was scheduled; the Village at Orchard Ridge Sensory Garden was organized; the Fredrick Douglass Rain Garden along with the Handley H.S. students was maintained; and the Frederick County Green Line was very busy.

Page County manned a table at the local farmers market, setup a booth at the Page County Fair, partnered with Valley Health on garden cleanups, continued preservation of the Chinquapin Oak in Luray, and also had some Green Line activity.

Shenandoah County's projects included the local South Street Farmers Market, a booth at the Edinburg Ole Time Festival, community gardens and rain gardens, various children's educational events, Corhaven Graveyard educational workdays along with setting up booths at the Shenandoah County Fair.

Warren County worked on the Belle Boyd and Calvary Memorial gardens, hosted the Samuels Public Library MG Speaker Series, attended Southern States events, helped at Hilda J Barbour ES gardens and manned the Warren County Help Desk.

As I recap, you can see how busy we have all been, and that's just from project sign ups on VMS which does not include all of our active projects. Our membership consists of 120 active members, half of which have met their 20 project/8 educational hour requirements. Please continue to post your projects on VMS and continue to enter your volunteer hours on VMS so we can get 100% participation, which brings me to mention my "Grow the Pot"

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initiative where we will be recognizing 20/8 achievements with NSVMGA limited merchandise at the monthly NSVMGA meetings.

So come on NSVMGA members, let's go and let's grow!

FROM THE PRESIDENT by Susan Garrett



Why am I a VCE-MG? Four reasons are pictured above: Zachary, Jonathan, Benjamin and June. In retirement, I choose the way in which I use my time very carefully. I have little desire to spend it doing anything that does not improve the world in which my grandchildren will live. I have chosen to dedicate a good part of my time to supporting Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Master Gardener program because it brings together two of my passions: education and nature. I think that scholarly and scientific research should be shared as widely as possible, and I believe that people are made happier and healthier when in touch with the natural environment.

As I enjoy one of my favorite seasons and experience autumn colors and harvest bounty, and as I look forward to the renewal that comes during earth's winter rest, I also look forward to continuing to work with the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association to make a better world for all of us, our children, and our grandchildren.

PAGE COUNTY REPORT by Lesley Mack

Thanks to all the folks that ventured 'up the valley' to Page County for the September monthly meeting. To see old friends and meet new like-minded folks is always good. Thanks to Cheryl McDonald, Robbin Holland, Charlie Newton, Susan Finlay, and Tom Mack for helping with refreshments for September's MG monthly meeting.

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The MGs that have been involved with the Farmers' Markets, like our Cheryl McDonald, are noting that the season is winding down. Cheryl said that she has had a regular amount of folks asking questions while she was at the market, which gives her hopes of further success next year. If Page County could settle on a regular Farmers' Market and a regular place, we will be all set.

Charlie Newton was happy with the turnout at the 'Water Quality' booth at the Page County Fair. Sufficient numbers stopped by now and then, Charlie noted. Luckily they had enough candy for the kids coming through. Hopefully, next year, the weather will not be so very hot...or the guy that was selling air conditioners will point the exhaust fan away from the MG booth.

FREDERICK COUNTY REPORT by John Kummer

Other than the Frederick County Greenline is closing down at the end of October, there is no real news to report. The greenline is noted at the website.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT by Sharon Bradshaw

Our attendance at the county's two farmers' markets will end this month, as well as our Green Help Line office hours. The Green Line will be monitored from home by volunteers on a rotating basis until next spring. Several other projects are slowing down, but continue to be monitored. The two rain garden sites are looking good, especially with the recent rainfall. Corhaven Graveyard has had several community groups visit to learn more about the site and to assist in caring for the grounds. Volunteers kept the plantings watered during the long dry spells this summer and it is green and peaceful there. Sarah Kohrs, project lead, has recently been notified that the efforts at Corhaven will receive a 2016 Virginia Preservation award, another impressive recognition for a unique project.

Several county Master Gardeners met recently with the owner of Max's Greenhouse, on Rt. 11 South in Woodstock, to discuss the possibility of a community garden on site in their retail area. He already has several raised beds that are designated for the project, along with a small office building that he is adapting for a classroom/workshop setting. After spending time becoming familiar with the location and his plans, we assured him that we were very interested. We then walked to the next door café where we spent an hour in discussion. By the time we adjourned, we had project lead coordinators, plans for specific research and a date to meet again. The owner is interested in reaching out to minorities who are adjusting to growing conditions in the Valley and do not yet have gardens at home. Our overall intent will be to create successful experiences with growing vegetables and flowers, both in the ground and in containers.

A PROJECT BEYOND WORDS by Kris Behrends

Last year Sarah Kohrs (Shenandoah County) volunteered to head a project to reclaim, preserve, and honor a newly discovered slave graveyard, the first found in the county. Sarah advised that slaves were buried at the outer perimeters of the master's property, and this graveyard was overgrown and neglected since the mid to late 1800s.

She was contacted by the property owners about Master Gardeners assisting with the restoration of the site as well as teaching visitors about the plants that would have been found in the area and specific flora that would have been used as memorials. Thankfully Sarah took the project under her wing, and she recruited MG volunteers who graciously donated their time, efforts, and plants to the project.

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When I first visited the graveyard last year I was awestruck that it was even found! I would never have thought that those scattered stones were in fact headstones. Prior to our planning meeting at the site, Sarah asked for a moment of silence in honor of those buried there, and it was a moving way to start the project. I was unable to assist in the reclamation process, but thankfully MG volunteers as well as volunteers from the community contributed greatly.

The next time I visited the graveyard was a couple of weeks ago. I met Sarah to take measurements of the site for the diagram she is creating for the Corhaven Graveyard website. I was moved to tears. The care, respect, and planning that has gone into this project are beyond words.



Because Mother Nature has decided we need a dry spell, I've been helping Sarah water the plants at the graveyard. Upon arriving at the site, I have adopted Sarah's approach—taking a moment of silence to reflect on the souls who occupy these graves. Their names are unknown. Their lives are a mystery to us. But thanks to all those who volunteered on this project, they will not be forgotten.

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Corhaven Graveyard is at 2883 Quicksburg Road, Quicksburg, VA. I encourage you to visit; but, if you're unable, you can visit virtually at corhavengraveyard.org. When you visit, please give a moment of silence in honor of those buried there.



HAWKSBILL GREENWAY IN LURAY by Lesley Mack

The corridor now occupied by the Greenway was not always a source of pride for the Town of Luray. From 1880 to 1980, the Virginia Oak Tannery operated on the east side of town, often drying animal hides on the banks of Hawksbill Creek which contributed to water pollution. The creek banks were overgrown with unsightly vegetation, and the water was stagnant and “swampy”. In a relatively short amount of time, this “eyesore” which was the gateway to the town, has been transformed into a place of pride and beauty for residents and tourists to enjoy not only for recreation, but for the health benefits as well. This project would not have been possible without the dedication and hard-work of staff, the support from our Town Council, monetary contributions, and the many volunteers who have dedicated priceless hours to this rewarding project. The Luray-Hawksbill Greenway has truly become Luray’s “New Front Porch”.

At the September chapter meeting, board directors Ken Beyer and Margaret Stevenson presented a wealth of information about the Greenway from its beginnings in 1999 when the Page County Tree Board was invited to the Virginia Department of Forestry conference on greenways and trails to the recent accolades the Hawksbill Greenway Foundation received.

The Hawksbill Greenway was created at a cost of over \$3,500,000 as a 501 (c) (3). All grants and money received by the Foundation help offset the continuing cost of the Greenway's maintenance, and ideas for its future. They receive no money from the town or county.

The trail is 4 miles long. The Greenway links several neighborhoods and parking areas with the downtown shopping district. The Greenway was the obvious catalyst for many improvements and activities in Luray. Many communities in Virginia have sent representatives to Luray to see how a small town was able to develop this award winning greenway in such a short time. The Greenway development improved

- water quality in the Hawksbill Creek flowing to the Chesapeake,
- stream energy dissipation
- land use for recreation, fishing, walking, biking, sightseeing, birdwatching, and planting areas.
- riparian buffers
- habitat

A second fishing pier for handicapped folks and an extension through the neighborhoods to the Ralph Dean Park are planned.

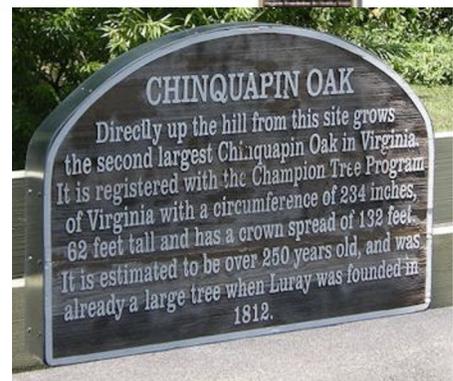
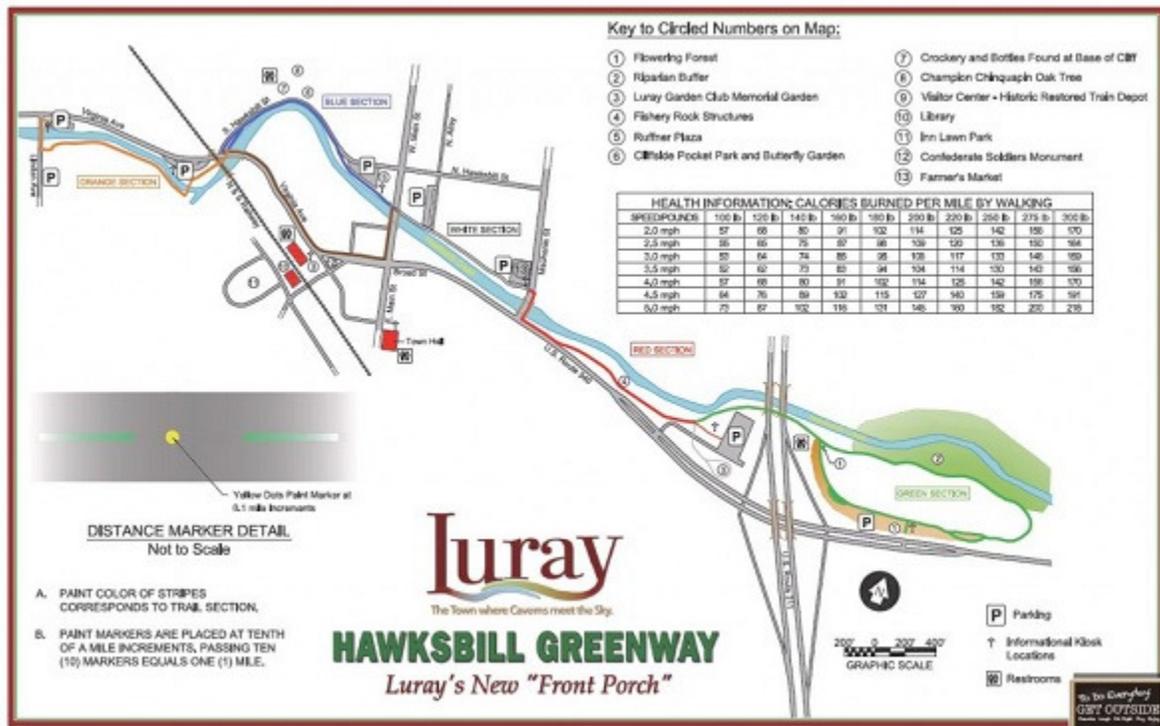
The Luray Hawksbill Greenway Trail was one of three applicants out of hundreds to be awarded the 2016 Governor's Environmental Excellence Gold Medal, being



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recognized as an example of exemplary implementation of the Virginia Outdoors Plan.

You can read about the Hawksbill Greenway <http://hawksbillgreenway.org/> and see pictures at <http://hawksbillgreenway.org/photos/>. The history page of the website has a nice video (<http://hawksbillgreenway.org/history/>).



A NEW PROJECT FOR THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF THE CIVIL WAR by Lesley Mack

"Though i am not of wealth, I have a treasury of love for you..." are the words Jacob Bushong wrote to his sweetheart, Sarah Strickler, early in the year 1814. Sarah was from Page County, Four years later on March 5, 1818, they married. Jacob built a small log cabin for his bride in Shenandoah County.

On May 10, 1864, the VMI Corps of Cadets was ordered to join Gen. John C. Breckinridge's Confederate forces near Staunton, Virginia. After marching nearly 85 miles northward, the Corps arrived at New Market on Sunday morning May 15, 1864.

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Gen. Franz Sigel's Union troops atop Bushong's Hill raked the Confederate line with cannon and musketry creating an ugly gap in the line. Originally, Breckenridge refused the advice of Major Charles Semple to send in the Corps, saying, "This will not do. I cannot expose them to such a fire as our center will receive." Breckenridge soon realized he had no choice, and reluctantly ordered the cadets to fill the gap.

During the battle the field, just north of the Bushong House was planted in spring wheat. It would become the site of the fiercest fighting. Five days of rain had made the field a quagmire. As the Federal and Confederate infantry pushed back and forth through the foot tall wheat, shoes and socks were sucked from their feet by the clinging mud leaving one soldier to name this place "The Field of Lost Shoes".

Three generations of the family took shelter in the basement of their home. After the battle, they continued to live in the basement as their home became a hospital. Determined and strong, they rebuilt in the aftermath of war. The family continued to grow and continued to farm the land.

Not until 1942 did the property pass out of their hands. By 1944 it was owned by George Collins, VMI Class of 1911, and was on its way to becoming a permanent memorial to those participating in the Battle of New Market. It was Mr. Collins who saved the battlefield and house from the destruction of I-81.

The volunteers and staff of the Virginia Museum of the Civil War, would like to improve the grounds by adding a kitchen garden, improving the orchard, removing non-period shrubs and trees and replanting what the Bushong's would have had in 1860.

To date we have gotten a soil sample for the areas of interest. We also have a dedicated fund for the purchase of plants and trees. We would like to take several further beginning steps this fall.

If any MGs would like to participate in this project, contact Lesley Mack. She will write a project proposal to make it official. Lesley and Tom both work as volunteers for the museum, so they have been just kinda "doing it". The Museum's website is <http://www.vmi.edu/museums-and-archives/virginia-museum-of-the-civil-war/museums-and-grounds/bushong-farm-house/>.

TRAINEE CLASS OF 2017 by Sharon Bradshaw

Plans continue to move forward, with potential presenters being contacted. This month Mark Sutphin will send out the first announcement about the class to the NSVMGA email list of those who have indicated interest in being informed of our offerings. Please forward any additional contact names that you may have collected to Mark as quickly as possible. We'll have the half-page handouts at the October meeting if you need more of these. The full page flyers for posting will be ready at the November meeting.

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BARN SERIES AT BELLE GROVE by Lynn Hoffmann

Rose Fairman presented the September Barn Series program at Belle Grove on preserving and pressing flowers. We had an exceptional collection of flowers and foliage that were saved over the summer by several master gardeners. The attendees were given all the materials to make a greeting card and a design and a picture frame. The last of the barn series was Sunday Oct 2, a workshop on creating a natural autumn wreath.



CHRISTMAS AT BELLE GROVE by Lynn Hoffmann

This year Master Gardeners will be decorating Sally's Room in the lower area of Belle Grove. We have a open theme of Christmas Trees so it will be a lot of fun to come up with something creative. If you are interested in helping please email Lynn Hoffmann at gwendydog@gmail.com. Information on a meeting and instructional class will be sent out on the VMS in October.

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EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

VDOT and several local groups planned a Monarch/Pollinator Habitat Planting for the field behind the Park and Ride Lot near the intersection of Rts. 50 and 340 in Clarke County. VDOT tilled the soil and put down mulched so 2,500 native plants the project obtained could be planted easily and the ground was marked off into two small squares and eight large squares. In the picture below you can see the lines marking off the squares.

September 22 Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, and Virginia Native Plant Society volunteers gathered as VDOT personnel unloaded plant flats and separated them for each square. Counts for a large square are shown in the table.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Number of Plants
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	89
<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	Swamp Milkweed	55
<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	Common Sneezeweed	21
<i>Monarda didyma</i> 'Jacob Cline'	Beebalm	21
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	Bluestem Goldenrod	21
<i>Aster novi-belgii</i>	New York Aster	13
<i>Baptisia australis</i>	False Blue Indigo	13
<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>	Whorled Tickseed	13
<i>Conclinium coelestinum</i>	Hardy Ageratum	13
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Smooth Oxeye	13
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild Bergamot	13
<i>Euthamia graminifolia</i>	Grass-leaved Goldenrod	13
<i>Solidago rugosa</i> 'fireworks'	Wrinkle-leaf Goldenrod	13
<i>Vernonia noveboracensis</i>	New York Ironweed	13
<i>Liatris spicata</i>	Dense Blazing Star	7
<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	White Beardtongue	7
<i>Pycnanthemum muticum</i>	Short-toothed Mountain Mint	7
TOTAL		345

The plants were put in the ground randomly. Almost half the plants are milkweeds, the host plants for Monarch butterflies, so one direction was every other plant should be a milkweed. If you want to see the planting, recognize that most of the species flower in late summer or fall so there won't be any flowers until June except the *Baptisia*.

Two buses brought Loudoun Valley High School seniors to do the planting at about 10am. After some instructions and handing out trowels lent by Morven Park, we began to put plants in the ground, with adults assigned to groups of students in each square. By lunch time, all the plants were in the ground. VDOT promised to water the next day and as needed later, and, fortunately, the rains came ending the August-September drought.

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