

shenandoah valley gardening

Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association

2023 Memorial Scholarship Fund Recipients

Helen Lake

Now in our 11th year of awarding local high school students a \$1,500.00 scholarship, the NSVMGA Scholarship Committee recently selected five students from the counties of Clarke, Frederick and Shenandoah, as the 2023 recipients of the Association’s Memorial Fund.

Scholarship Committee representatives from each of the counties personally awarded the scholarships at the respective high schools. Recipients included: **Addison Plummer**, who will attend Virginia Tech and major in Veterinary Science. She graduated from Clarke County High School with a GPA of 4.07. Cathy Dickey presented Addison with an Award Certificate.

From Frederick County: **Brooklyn Davis** will attend Virginia Tech and major in Agribusiness. She graduated from James Wood High School with a GPA of 4.09. Tammi Loving presented Brooklyn with an Award Certificate. **Hunter Legge** will also attend Virginia Tech where he will major in Food Science and Technology, and minor in Agribusiness. He graduated from Sherando High School with a GPA of 3.90. He received his Award Certificate from Helen Lake.

Raea Nicole Crabill from Shenandoah County will attend Bridgewater College and major in Equine/Veterinary Science. She graduated from Strasburg High School with a GPA of 4.03. **Samuel “Braden” Stern** will attend Virginia Tech and major in Agribusiness. He graduated with a GPA of 4.0. Belinda Palmer presented Raea and Braden with their Award Certificates.

The scholarship recipients have been invited to attend the July 16th NSVMGA Membership Meeting at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley in Winchester to speak about their goals and selected fields of study. On behalf of our entire membership, we congratulate these five recipients of the NSVMGA Memorial Scholarship fund! *(photos on pg.4)*

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2023 NSVMGA Business Meetings

July 16, **2 p.m.**, Museum of Shenandoah Valley in Winchester
 August 20, 3 p.m., Barn at Belle Grove with 2023 class
 September—no meeting
 October 15, 3 p.m., Montevento/Clarke County
 November 19, 3 p.m., Warren County Government Center in Front Royal
 December—no meeting
 Members can record time for business meetings as one hour of volunteer time (for the meeting) and one hour of continuing education time (for the program). Trainees and interns can record both hours as volunteer time. Everyone is encouraged to partake of a potluck social with food and drinks provided by the host county. Don’t forget: **Board meetings** are open to all members and are held via Zoom. They are always held on the **second Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.**

Volunteer Coordinator Message Kathy Doyle

There's a lot going on with the Extension Master Gardener's (EMGs) this summer. We have a new class of interns who are ready to learn and contribute to projects. EMGs are involved at libraries with summer programs for kids, at the Seed Lending libraries, and at teaching gardens. Community gardens are flourishing with our involvement. We have school garden projects starting up. The lead team for Gardening in the Valley Symposium is planning for 2024. There is a lot of background work that makes all of these things happen successfully. So many volunteer EMGs generously give their time and talents to start new programs, and keep existing programs moving forward.

In addition to all that, this year we are celebrating our 30th year as a Master Gardener program! Planning is underway to mark this occasion as we honor the past and look forward to our future. Things have changed with the program over the years, but our commitment to being the horticulture educational arm of the Virginia Cooperative Extension is unchanged. According to the national Extension Master Gardener website, "The EMG program was started in 1972 in Washington state. Dr. David Gibby trained volunteers with a passion for gardening to assist Extension with consumer horticulture education in the community. This unique volunteer program has become internationally recognized and often duplicated as a model for other volunteer programs. Today, EMG programs exist in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, several Canadian provinces, and South Korea."

We have a lot to celebrate this year! No program is perfect, but we are working hard to meet the challenges that we have faced this year, and we're looking forward to learning from the past as we continue offering research-based information to the public in all our programs.

Ask a Master Gardener Help Desk County Contacts

Clarke County 540-955-5164

ClarkeCountyAskAMG@gmail.com

Frederick County 540-665-5699

GreenHelpLine.FrederickCo@gmail.com

Page County 540-778-5794

pagecounty.ask.a.mg@gmail.com

Shenandoah County 540-459-6140

greenhelpline@gmail.com

Warren County 540-635-4549

GreenHelpLine.WarrenCo@gmail.com

Who are we? Extension Master Gardeners are trained volunteer educators. We work within our local communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices. As an educational outreach component of Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Master Gardener program brings the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities – Virginia Tech and Virginia State University – to the people of the commonwealth.

All volunteers are trained, and have at least 50 hours of horticultural classes and return at least 50 hours of volunteer community service through their local Extension office.



Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law. If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Mark Sutphin, Frederick County Extension, at (540) 665-5699/TDD (800) 828-1120 during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations five days prior to the event.

VCE Frederick County Extension Agent and NSVMGA President's Message

Mark Sutphin and Jennifer Flitton Adams

Anniversaries are milestones to look back and reflect, celebrate accomplishments, and move forward with a renewed sense of commitment. This year, NSVMGA celebrates 30 years as a not-for-profit association of EMGs supporting Virginia Cooperative Extension - a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Through volunteerism and continuing education, program support, leadership, and fundraising, EMGs and our NSVMGA members have been trained and certified to help educate the public on all aspects of home gardening. In this respect, you – the local EMGs who make up the NSV EMG unit – are the face of VCE in the local community with NSVMGA supporting these VCE programs.

Because all NSVMGA members are first and foremost EMGs, each person must abide by the rules, regulations, guidelines, standards of conduct, mission, and goals set forth by the state VCE program. We are so much more than hobby gardeners; we are volunteer educators. This is what sets us apart. We hope you take pride in having earned the credentials necessary to serve the community on behalf of Virginia Tech and Virginia Cooperative Extension.

From humble beginnings, our local program has grown from a seed planted by a few trailblazing individuals into an active and passionate team of 160 members. Today, the program and NSVMGA have roots in all five NSV counties. Dozens of horticulture education projects and events, ongoing communications and promotional activities, and Help Desk contacts account for more than 16,000 hours of volunteer service that reach tens of thousands of people a year. These are just some of the great reasons we can celebrate, not just this year, but every time we tally our impact and outreach.

Coincidentally, as the NSV EMG unit, along with NSVMGA, celebrates our 30th Anniversary, Virginia Cooperative Extension is refreshing its presence in the community by launching a new identity campaign to unify all the program areas under the broader VCE umbrella of food production, environmental sustainability, and community health. An important piece of the whole, the Extension Master Gardener program is just one of the five volunteer program areas offered by VCE, and one of 60 EMG units in the State of Virginia that will begin using new unit logos. For EMGs, the logo is a stylized hand shovel with the VCE swoosh, accompanied by the words Extension Master Gardeners and the name of each unit. In our case: Northern Shenandoah Valley. You already may have seen it on our Facebook page and other advertisements. This new logo not only creates a consistent visual identity among all EMG units, but also a complimentary look and feel between the various VCE programs. These new logos tie in to the VCE logo and the recently updated branding guidelines.

While we are looking forward to celebrating our accomplishments during this 30th Anniversary year, we are looking beyond this milestone to the future. Together, we are focused on strengthening the camaraderie within our organizations around our shared program goals of fostering broader community outreach and engagement through a plan of work that encompasses educating the public on fruit and vegetable production, integrated pest management, and sustainable planting and land management practices for the protection of native flora and fauna.

With one voice, we cheer you and your accomplishments. Thank you for your contribution to the NSVMGA and to the VCE horticulture programming in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

Sincerely,

Mark Sutphin and Jennifer Flitton Adams



Photos of Memorial Scholarship Recipients



at left: EMG Cathy Dickey and scholarship recipient Addison Plummer

photo credit: Bonni Broy (guidance counselor at Clarke County H.S.)



above right: EMG Tammi Loving and scholarship recipient Brooklyn Davis

photo credit: Shelly Andrews (assistant principal at James Wood H.S. in Frederick County)



above photo: EMG Helen Lake and scholarship recipient Hunter Legge

photo credit: Karen McCoy, (principal at Sherando H.S. in Frederick County)

at right: EMG Belinda Palmer and scholarship recipients Raea Crabill and Braden Stern

photo credit: Kathy Stewart, (guidance counselor at Strasburg H.S. in Shenandoah County)



Lesson Plans for EMGs Laura Best

One of the primary objectives of being a Master Gardener is education. New EMG, Carole Belkin, a retired educator, quickly realized that lesson plans either did not exist, were not easily shared, or were lost to the ages. Carole made it her mission to rectify this, and so the Education Committee was formed. The Committee asked current EMGs to share their lesson plans, interviewed retired EMGs, and put together an online resource that all EMGs can access for tried and true lessons. The lessons are sorted by age appropriateness and subject. There are also links to websites, printable games, worksheets and a list of books available to check out at Winchester Virginia Tech office. This is a great resource that we hope EMGs will turn to first when planning their educational experiences.

Contacts and Quick Links

Local association providing leadership and financial support – Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association:

NSVMGA Website : <http://nsvmga.org/> (Password for "Members" areas is: stinkbugs13)

NSVMGA Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NSVMGA>

NSVMGA Newsletter: <http://nsvmga.org/newsletter/>

Virginia Cooperative Extension – local offices in the Northern Shenandoah Valley:

VCE Clarke: <https://clarke.ext.vt.edu/>

VCE Frederick: <https://frederick.ext.vt.edu/>

VCE Page: <https://page.ext.vt.edu/>

VCE Shenandoah: <https://shenandoah.ext.vt.edu/>

VCE Warren: <https://warren.ext.vt.edu/>

Virginia Cooperative Extension – State Master Gardener Program:

VCE Master Gardener Website: <https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/>

VCE Master Gardener Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VCEMasterGardenerProgram/>

VCE Master Gardener YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT-rsFK2y4FJD15ful2JEiw>

State association providing leadership and financial support – Virginia Master Gardener Association:

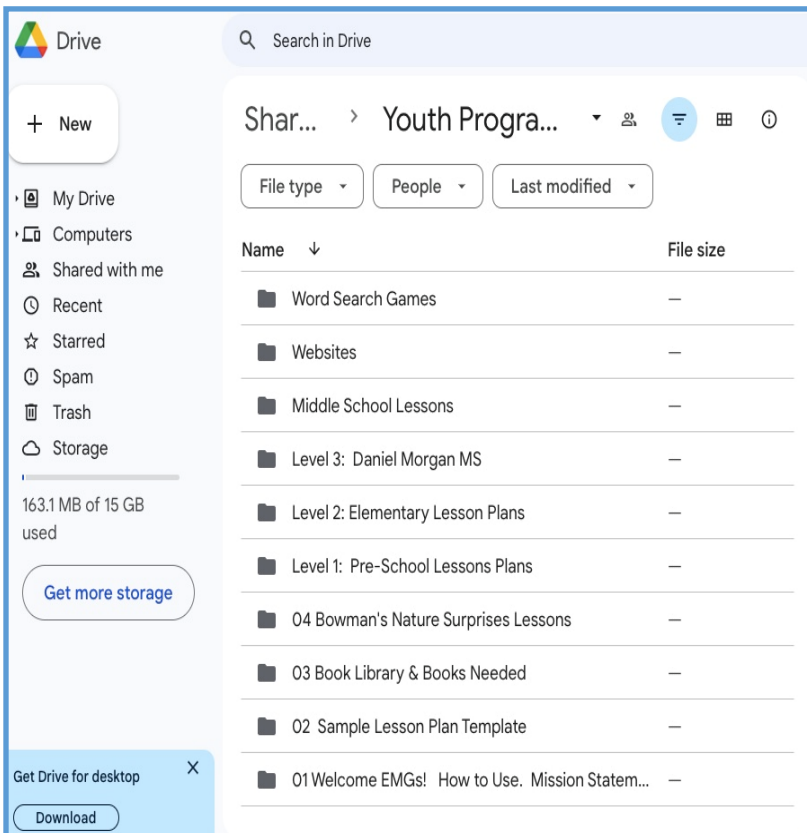
VMGA Website: <https://vmga.net/wordpress/>

click on this link

NSVMGA Youth Programming Committee Resources for Teaching

Research-based educational horticultural lesson plans and activities for youth are available for downloading at:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LsUzEt5Z8MdT6X85BVozNb2JR61zLmvf?usp=sharing>



Please note: The links in the screen shot above are not live and only for instructional purposes.

Here is how a Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener can access these plans:

- Sign in to Better Impact
- On the Home tab, scroll down to "Contacts and Quick Links" (screen shot above)
- Click on the link under NSVMGA youth programming committee resources for teaching.
- The link will take you to the shared folder in Google Drive, double click on any folder to view topics and lessons. At left, there are examples of lessons.

My Experience as an EMG Trainee Jessica Mason



Maybe it's just me, but making friends as an adult is not easy. This is especially so when you are new to a rural area, as we were, in July of 2022, when my husband, Andrew, and I moved to Woodstock. We left behind the hectic atmosphere of Chantilly, VA, with not a single regret. We moved into our first house on a five-acre plot of partially wooded land with, honestly, hopes and dreams, but no real experience of how to engage with our land.

I knew I wanted to plant flowers, attempt to grow some of our own food, and begin to understand this new environment, but how? I knew I could keep houseplants alive, and the odd hanging flower basket on the back porch, but outside...in the ground...for real? Yikes! So I did what any other self-respecting elder

Millennial would do, I Googled it. Upon searching "what to grow in my garden, Woodstock, VA," I was presented with several VCE articles on growing vegetables, when to start, what to plant, container growing, etc. These resources were clear, complete, and exactly what I needed! So much so that I kept searching: "What is VCE?," "Who are Extension Master Gardeners?," and "How can I learn more?" Then, it happened. I found the Northern Shenandoah Master Gardener Association website. [Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association \(nsvmgga.org\)](http://nsvmgga.org) I learned that they offer classes and an Extension Master Gardener program!

I signed up immediately and completed my application and references in October 2022. Fast forward to Valentine's Day 2023 when our first class began. I sat among all the new faces, wondering what the next several weeks would hold, and pondered if I could actually be successful. Would I fit in if the other trainees knew so much more than me? But fit in I did, as did the entire class of seventeen.

The VCE Master Gardener Program is an amazing program run by amazing people. They not only taught us basics for the home gardener, but also welcomed all of us with open arms. I learned things like the best time of day to water my lawn, what time of year I should prune my forsythia, what powdery mildew looks like, and what is the VERY FIRST thing you do before planting anything??... (say it with me) soil test!

I enjoyed the Soils and Nutrient Management lecture from Extension Agent Bobby Clark, and the field trip to EMG Lesley Mack's Birdsong Pleasure Garden to practice pruning. Keeping current with the reading was the most challenging part of the program since I work full-time. I tried to have all of the reading completed prior to class so that I could get some stickers answering the quiz questions. *Ha ha*. The program far exceeded my expectations!

What I didn't expect was to find friends, or as EMG Rich Howell, who runs the Shenandoah County "Ask a Master Gardener" line and taught a few classes says, "I found my people." Every single EMG that I have encountered throughout my training has been kind, eager to teach me, share their knowledge, and just plain happy for a new volunteer to join the mission. I have many new friends and I'm excited to pay it forward. I look forward to being part of sharing this invaluable resource, this knowledge, and these people with the community. Think about becoming an EMG if you are looking to become part of something special!

San Damiano Sensory Gardens in the Courtyard

Helen Lake

We are entering our third and final year of work at San Damiano Spiritual Retreat. Along the way our dedicated crew of Extension Master Gardener (EMG) volunteers have learned about therapeutic horticultural concepts, to research and design effective and sustainable landscape designs, and to joyously work together to create unique and meditative garden spaces.

Our "SD Crew" regularly hears feedback from retreatants and staff at San Damiano how much the courtyard is appreciated and enjoyed during their stay. Often when the Crew are there during a workday, we stop to enjoy a moment to smile and observe visitors exploring the transformed courtyard.

This year, Vanessa Lewis, staff member and main point of contact at San Damiano, invited us to participate in a Speaker



Series using the courtyard as the backdrop for the presentations. In April, EMG Karen Kelly (*at left*) presented "The Garden of Hope and Joy," basing remarks on transforming the garden space at San Damiano from a gnarly, ugly

bed of scrawny bushes and poison ivy, to one filled with white and purple blooms flourishing in a landscape reflecting her personal journey.

photos by Helen Lake

In May, we guided a volunteer group of 25 American Heritage Girls completing a community service project at San Damiano by planting annuals throughout the garden spaces. Also in May, a team of seminarians laid cardboard over the last portions of invasive groundcover and covered it with mulch.

Now in June, the many lavender bushes are bursting in bloom and fragrance, ready to be harvested for sachets or lavender wands. The glorious

curry bush, which was suggested by EMG Suzette Niess,



gets much attention and deep sniffs of its fragrant blooms and leaves. The many winged visitors, be they hummingbirds, butterflies, bees or birds, all enjoy the flora that has been introduced to rejuvenate the courtyard into sensory garden spaces.

In anticipation of this being our last year as a VCE project, Ms. Lewis has created a monthly calendar of tasks that need to be accomplished, based on the EMG's model of work over the past three years. This calendar will be used by volunteers who will be tending to the garden spaces in the future. Ms. Lewis has been a wonderful partner and much of the success of this project is based on her motivation and interest.

Coming Next on the Speaker Series

- Chef Riccardo Stocco, Violino Restaurante Italiano in Winchester, October 1
- Brother Shaemus, a former resident of San Damiano, will speak to "Spirituality in the Garden." date TBD
- EMG Carolyn Rutherford will present 'Putting the Garden to Bed.' date TBD

This series is not open to the public, but EMGs can sign up on Better Impact under Speaker Bureau.

Full House 2023 Gardening in the Valley Symposium Helen Lake

This year's educational symposium was SOLD OUT! There were no surprise blizzards (2022) or pandemic-driven virtual symposium (2021), but an in-person event with nearly two hundred attendees!



Based on evaluations, the roster of speakers were a hit with just about everyone. And our speakers were most complimentary about NSVMGA, and how much they enjoyed spending time after their presentation mingling and answering questions.

A big **THANK YOU** to our symposium committee members who worked for many months pulling together their varied assignments up to the last hours prior to the event. A great team of Extension Master Gardeners came together and we were able to enjoy the fruits of our labor on the day of symposium.

All proceeds from the event, including the raffle, book sales and registration went to the NSVMGA Memorial Scholarship Fund. The Scholarship Fund, via the NSVMGA Scholarship Committee, awards \$1,500 each year to high school students in our five counties covered by our Association.

(You can read about this year's recipients on page one.)



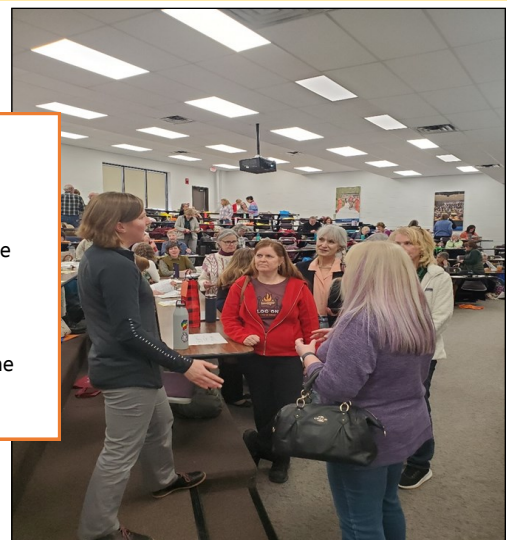
left to right: Ginger Anderson, of Oak Spring Garden Foundation and former Agtech teacher; Caitlin Garis, intern at Oak Spring, and former James Wood H.S. FFA president, and Helen Lake, symposium-co chair and FFA volunteer

NSVMGA SYMPOSIUM - March 2024

Message from Co-Leads Joan Newman and Heather Enloe

Plans for the March 2024 Symposium are underway! We are excited to be working on this fun and educational event. The 2024 Symposium Project has been approved and volunteer opportunities will open up on Better Impact on August 1, 2023. On that day, we will post a Google sign-up sheet that will include descriptions of the various opportunities, and ways in which interested members may volunteer. We welcome your interest and assistance, and project committee and subcommittee meetings will be scheduled and conducted both in person and via Zoom. We are finalizing logistics and look forward to announcing the date, location, as well as a terrific speaker line-up as soon as those details are confirmed.

Dr. Karin Burghardt presented "Ecology in the Garden." She answered questions throughout the day.



photos by Helen Lake

Which App Is Apt for You? Will Daniels

(Note to readers: products in this article are mentioned as examples only. Endorsement is not implied.)

No doubt, technology available on our phones has made it possible for more people to become interested in plants. Naming a plant makes us feel that we have knowledge of it in our environment. Convenience, the genius feature of smartphones, lets us easily identify plants, where we used to have to carry books around. No guidebook could contain more than a small fraction of the plant species in the data base of an application for plant identification.

Phone apps for plant ID continue to pop up like spring seedlings. I can't say how many now exist. When the internet offers a list of the "23 Best Plant ID Apps," we know the field is crowded. But let's not forget the non-apps, either, the built-in capability of operating systems from Apple and Google, or the manuals like the very useful *Flora of Virginia*.

Choice is both a blessing and a curse, from my point of view. "Which app are you using?;" or "Which app do you think is best?," now are common questions we ask each other. Who can say which app is best?; there are too many criteria on which to base a rating, and so many qualities of an app that we may find personally appealing or off-putting. In addition, updates to the apps mean that they change and improve over time. The most important feature for everyone would be accuracy, but even that is difficult to rate, judging by the different results of tests that have been conducted. Some apps are good on leaf ID, but less accurate on flowers, and vice-versa. (In my experience, none of the apps are good at IDing emerging, immature plants, and grasses and sedges often stump them, too.)

And no matter how many thousands of pictures the app's artificial intelligence has been trained on, an unfocused photo or one with a busy background could doom the ID attempt. Even a super-sharp photo may miss minute distinguishing features. That means that the app may not decide on the species of the plant. But if it gets the genus right, that's still an impressive feat.

It's also true that, under the surface, an old-school/new-school dynamic plays out. There is no substitute for close observation of nature using guidebooks to

make determinations. The apps can provide quick answers, but can't be depended on in areas without internet service. A good compromise is to use the apps as starting points but also familiarize yourself with the basics of identification such as leaf shape and size, leaf arrangement, and observing stems and branches.

You can find your "best" app through experimentation, but it may help to consider the type of experience you want from an app and what you want it to do for you, and then choose the one with that emphasis.

What's the cost? Even if the app is free, there can be an aggravation cost when the app hounds you to sign up for premium or flashes ads at you. For me, it's either pay for premium or use the apps that receive funding and therefore don't ask for your money. iNaturalist, PI@ntnet, and Seek are three in that category.

Does the app function as a community of plant enthusiasts, through which you can submit pictures for ID by the community, as well as confirm other users' IDs? iNaturalist is the best-known such "citizen science" app. PI@ntnet is another app that uses your photos to add to its data base of plants. It also brings in other users to verify your identification.

The apps mentioned so far do best with native plants or nonnatives that have naturalized to an area. For exotic plants or houseplants, apps are available that both identify these plants and tell you how best to care for them. Examples are NatureID, Planty, and Planta. Or, you can find plant-care manuals that don't ID plants but do have a searchable data base that takes you to the care pages for the plants you want to know about. Indoor Plant Guide, Pocket Edition is one such app.

The old-fashioned dichotomous key for plant identification still lives in digital forms, and is worth considering for plants of a specific geographic area. We're fortunate to have the app form of the massive (1,500 pages) *Flora of Virginia*. It can be a satisfying exercise to hunt down an ID using the app's keys. The cost is \$20, but it's yours forever and it is frequently updated.

As mentioned earlier, both Apple's and Google's operating systems have plant ID capabilities. To boggle my mind further, they can identify all sorts of other objects from photos. *Smart phones, indeed.*

When Plant, Insect and Wildlife Problems Happen in the Lawn or Garden, Who Do You Call? NOT GHOST BUSTERS!! Joanne Royalty

Trained volunteers at all five of our Extension "Ask a Master Gardener" Help Desks are available to answer gardening and pest questions, and solve problems using current research-based information from Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs) will identify the cause of your problem and provide a response. We can answer questions about trees, shrubs, house plants, perennials, annuals, and more!

To access this helpful resource, email a description and photos of your gardening problems to your county extension office, or stop by during office hours in Frederick, Shenandoah, and Warren Counties. Our Page and Clarke "Ask a Master Gardener" Help Desks operate virtually, and these EMGs do not hold in-person office hours. During the growing season visit our booths at area plant clinics and farmers markets, as well.

Clarke County

drop-off location and hours: VCE Office,
524 Westwood Rd., Berryville
Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
Email: ClarkeCountyAskAMG@gmail.com
phone: 540-955-5164

Clarke County Farmers Market: second Saturday of each month, June–October, 8 a.m.–Noon

Frederick County

VCE Office, 107 N. Kent Street, Winchester
Help Desk: every Wednesday, 10 a.m.–Noon
Email: GreenHelpLine.FrederickCo@gmail.com
phone: 540-665-5699

Winchester Farmers Market: third Saturday of each month, April–October, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Page County

drop-off location and hours: VCE Office,
215 W. Main St., Suite C, Stanley
Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
Email: pagecounty.ask.a.mg@gmail.com
phone: 540-778-5794

plant clinic at Massanutten Country Corner:
second and fourth Saturdays of each month,
April–October, 10 a.m.–Noon

Shenandoah County

VCE Office and Classroom, Shenandoah County
Government Center, 600 N. Main St., Suite 100, Woodstock
Help Desk: first and third Fridays of each month, April
through October, 9 a.m.–Noon;
first Fridays in November and December, 9 a.m.–Noon
Email: greenhelpline@gmail.com
phone: 540-459-6140

South Street Barn Farmers Market: fourth Saturdays of each month, May–September, 8:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Strasburg Farmers Market: first and last Saturdays of the month, April–October, 8:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Warren County

VCE Office, Warren County Government Center,
220 N. Commerce Ave., Suite 500, Front Royal
Help Desk: every Monday (except holidays),
April through September, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Email: GreenHelpLine.WarrenCo@gmail.com
Phone: 540-635-4549

Garden funny:

When my neighbor saw me on my kneeler busily working a garden bed, he asked what I was doing. I answered: "I'm putting all my plants in alphabetical order." "Really? How do you find the "time"? "It's right next to the sage."

While EMGs can assist with garden challenges, **we need complete information.** We will be unable to answer a question such as, *"I have two trees, one in the front yard and one in the back. Can you tell me what they are?"*

Please ensure that you supply good samples, such as:

- a branch or stem with several leaves
- include flowers, seeds and/or fruit when possible
- bring fresh samples as dead grass, leaves, branches and twigs provide very little useful information
- photos should show the leaf, stem, damage, whole specimen image, location, etc.
- bring samples in a zip-top bag, plastic container or box
- for grass samples, bring a section of grass that is 1' square and shows a progression of symptoms
- take a sample of healthy turf and a sample of declining turf, and place grass samples in a box or in newspaper
- insects must be placed in a zip-lock bag or plastic box



It's Tomato Season

Joyce Watson

Growing and eating a sun and vine-ripened tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) is one of summer's pleasures. It is hard to beat the flavor and freshness of a home-grown tomato, or one from your local farmer's market. There are a dizzying number of varieties from huge, juicy beefsteak tomatoes, to meaty plum tomatoes, bite-sized cherry tomatoes, and flavor-packed heirloom tomatoes in a variety of colors.

I guess it makes sense that since humans enjoy them so do other animals and insects...deer, squirrels, rabbits, groundhogs, birds, voles, raccoons, caterpillars, leaf miners, stinkbugs, aphids, and the dreaded tomato hornworm!



High temperatures and high moisture can lead to disease development. Bacterial and fungal diseases are common and frustrating for the gardener. Here are three excellent resources for you to consult to preempt disease, and suggestions on what to do if your plant contracts it.

[Tomato Diseases | Piedmont Master Gardeners](#)
[Tomato Diseases & Disorders | Home & Garden Information Center \(clemson.edu\)](#)

[426-418 pdf.pdf \(vt.edu\)](#)

photo by Joyce Watson



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Celebrate Fall at FallFest

Susan Groom

Crisp fall air, fresh picked apples and pumpkins,
and music by Davis Bradley
through the day!

Plan to come spend the day with
Extension Master Gardeners
from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. ,
Saturday, **September 30th**
at Richards Fruit Market



6410 Middle Road, Middletown, VA 22645

- free event
- children's activities
- gardening demonstrations
- food for purchase
- live music
- plenty of parking
- rain or shine
- fun for the entire family

**Northern Shenandoah Valley
Master Gardener Association**

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NSVMGA

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Frederick County Co-Coordinators: Carole Belkin
and Tammi Loving
Page County Coordinator: Lesley Mack
Shenandoah County Coordinator:
Mary Jane Korrigan
Warren County Coordinator: Susan Matyuf
Volunteer Coordinator: Kathy Doyle
VCE Agent: Mark Sutphin

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From the Editor: A Trio of My Photos From Norway

I was in Norway from June 4th to the 12th. It was a wonderful trip and I can't say enough delightful and lovely things about Norway! I'm not sure what I expected in terms of flora. I knew there would be spruces, pines and birch...but what else? Everything was in bloom, and my allergies responded accordingly!

Who knew there would be so many very tall dandelions, *Taraxacum officinale*? You can eat the entire thing raw or cook them. They are packed with vitamin A and C, and beta carotene. Apparently dandelions played an important part in Norwegian history. [How the Humble Dandelion Saved Norway During World War I | by Knitting&Death | Medium](#)



A sod or turf roof is a traditional Scandinavian type of green roof. Until the late 19th century, it was the most common roof on rural log houses in Norway and large parts of the rest of Scandinavia. You can still see them. Norway is an environmentally and climate change sensitive country.

[Beautiful Norwegian Homes Topped with Lush Green Roofs \(inhabitat.com\)](#)



Native to Europe, the Golden chain tree, *Abur-num anagyroides*, gets its name from the cascading yellow flowers that bloom in late spring. All parts of this ornamental tree are highly toxic due to the harmful alkaloid cytisine. [Laburnum anagyroides](#)

