

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

January, 2014

UPCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings will be the third Sunday of the **month**, and we will meet at 4pm, except January, 2014 will be at 2. All will be pot luck. Each county coordinator will be responsible for providing the eating utensils, plates, coffee/drinks. (Check with hosts of private homes if you have any questions.)

- **Sunday, January 19, 2pm (not 4pm), Fort Valley Nursery**, in Woodstock. Terry Vogel will be the speaker.

Directions: From I-81, take exit #283 Woodstock. Go west on Rt. 42 and take left on Hisey Ave. (just past Tractor Supply Company). Fort Valley Nursery will be located on your left 1/4 mile.

- **Sunday, February 16, Natures Common Scents by Sondra Johnson location TBD**

OTHER EVENTS

- **Sunday, January 26, 2 pm, Virginia Native Plant Society Winter Speaker Series at Tri-County Feeds in Marshall.** Jennifer Seay, Piedmont Natives LLC. For more information contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com.
- **Sunday, February 23, 2 pm, Virginia Native Plant Society Winter Speaker Series at Tri-County Feeds in Marshall.** James Barnes, Sustainable Habitat Program Manager for PEC. For more information contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com.
- **Sunday, March 23, 2 pm, Virginia Native Plant Society Winter Speaker Series at Tri-County Feeds in Marshall.** Charles Smith, Prince William Wildflower Society and Fairfax County Park Authority Natural Resources Protection Manager. For more information contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com.

March 15 to May 21, Master Naturalist Training Course, Wednesday evenings from 6 to 9 and on Saturdays from 9 AM to 2 PM. The Virginia Master Naturalist program is a statewide corps of volunteers providing education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities. The Shenandoah Chapter, serving the northern Shenandoah Valley, is offering a 2014 training course. Cost of the program is \$150. A limited number of full and partial scholarships are available. The evening classes will be held at Blandy Experimental Farm and State Arboretum of Virginia located on Route 50 just East of Route 340. Saturday field work classes will be held at Blandy and other locations. Classes include nature interpretation, research skills, wildflowers, trees, insects, fish, mammals, birds, geology, soil science, weather and climate, general ecology, land use, aquatic habitats, reptiles, and amphibians. The training is for adults or high school students accompanied by a parent or adult who also participates. For more information about the course contact Alex Newhart at vmnshenandoah@gmail.com or call 540-837-1626.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Susan Garrett

Welcome to 2014! We can't all have cute little yellow "Minions" like Gru from "Despicable Me" does (I want some!), but we can all celebrate the New Year's possibilities and the opportunities that stretch before us. As we do all the winter work that will help prepare us for a gardening springtime, there are a few things we can also do now that will help the 2014 Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association.

The first is when you get your NSVMGA-VCE Recertification Form in January, please fill it out and send it back in quickly. Enclose your dues, and you won't have to worry about a thing for the rest of the year! If you are raring to go right now, the recertification form is on the homepage of VMS, along with the instructions on printing it out and sending it in. (And let me know if you have forgotten how to get into VMS. I can help.)

Second, please make sure that you have claimed all your project and education hours due in 2013 and entered them on the VMS system or sent them to Sarah Kohrs, our Timekeeper. (If you enter them after January 2, please send her an email to let her know they were updated so she can add them to the total hours for her report.) We want to make sure you get all the credit you are due for your work, and we want the same for our whole organization when it comes to budget time in the Virginia Assembly.

I was so amazed to note when I was looking at our statistics on VMS (which I know Sarah has not yet finalized because not everything is in) that in the 20 years since the founding of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association, we have contributed over 64,000 volunteer project hours to the public. This year alone we in the NSVMGA have collectively driven over 51,000 miles, spent over 2000 hours in continuing education, and delivered around 7500 hours of project work to our five county area.

Congratulations, NSVMGA friends, you are awesome!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Bob Carlton

I hope all of you are looking forward to the new year as much as I am. Last year was a very successful one for us as Master Gardeners: a bumper crop of new Master Gardeners; our presence at Blandy in the Spring and in the Fall; another well-attended symposium; a GardenFest which once again enabled us to reach the public for education in home horticulture and fund-raising; booths at farmers markets and county fairs; presentations by members at a variety of venues; programs at historic sites; and projects too many to mention. Kudos to all who participated as project leaders and helpers.

This year should again be one in which we continue to grow—not just in numbers but also in our outreach to the public. Plans are going forward for the 2014 Master Gardener Class. As things progress, the Coordinators will keep you updated. Helen Lake has the Spring symposium well in hand—speakers are lined up and publicity has gone out. Cy Haley is pulling together the many strands that will make this year's GardenFest a success. We will be at Blandy this Spring and Fall. The projects at Belle Grove and Belle Boyd are ongoing. There are too many other projects that will take place this year to mention all of them. If your project wasn't cited, blame it on my Swiss Cheese memory, not that it wasn't important.

I can't leave without acknowledging that much of what was done last year and much of what will happen this year was due to the efforts of Cy Haley and the Board, Susan Garrett in her position as Volunteer Coordinator, the County Coordinators, Lynn Hoffmann who coordinated GardenFest the last several years and who was a major force in past symposia, 2013 Master Gardener Coordinators, Committee chairs and all of you who participated as project leaders and assistants.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Ginny Smith

“Plants are nature's source of most of what is needed to sustain health and life. In fact, plants are the only sources of almost all essential vitamins and minerals.”

Some of the topics that were suggested by members were seed collecting and exchanging seeds. I am researching the subject and looking for speakers. If you have any resources I would love to have them. Also miniature gardens, hellebores, genetically modified foods and turning trash into garden art. Looking forward to a great year!

NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES by Suzanne Boag, Secretary

See [Board Meeting Minutes on NSVMGA Website](#)

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PAGE COUNTY REPORT by Leslie Mack

Here in 'little ole' Page County we are sending in a MG project application form for the project of Historic Chinquapin Oak Tree. The tree is estimated to be over 250 years old and is either the first or second largest chinquapin oak in the state. In the book Remarkable Trees of Virginia, pages 74 and 75, the tree is described as being germinated in the 1750's, which would mean it occupied its site more than 20 years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence and about 60 years before the founding of Luray in 1812. When the county purchased the land in 2003, the owner's will stipulated that "...the old oak tree in my back yard...be untouched except for safe upkeep, forever, no matter who may own the property." The new county court house complex has been constructed next to the tree which has caused much concern, to us, for the root system and limbs of the tree. This project includes staying vigilant on the tree's behalf, maintaining its health, preventing weeds/English Ivy from getting a foothold, guiding county officials on proper care and protection of this valuable tree, educating the public through signage about the history of this tree and its usefulness to the community, and possibly creating a "pocket park".

CLARKE COUNTY REPORT by Mary Craig

We were never able to come up with a date and time that we could all meet to go over our 2013 projects. I have sent an email to all the Clarke MGs so, hopefully, we can get ideas, suggestions, comments on ways to improve our presence in Clarke County in 2014. We are happy to have so many new MGs in Clarke this year, especially since they are all so enthusiastic!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT by Mary Craig

As of the end of 2013, we have a total of 109 NSV Master Gardeners. Of these, 76 are Active members. As the last of the 2013 Interns finish their 50 hours, and some adjunct members have become active again, this number will grow to about 95 for 2014. I think that's fantastic. To have so many people across such a wide range not only geographically, but diverse backgrounds, skills and interests, is exciting! This is going to be a great year for the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association and I'm so lucky to be a part of it.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2014 by Mary Craig, Historian

As we start a new year, I'm sure we will all be making some New Year's Resolutions. I have vowed to get more organized in 2014. One way I have started to accomplish that is by sorting through all the years' worth of Master Gardener history I have accumulated. In going through old newsletters (back

to 2002) I see it used to be a sort of tradition for contributors to the newsletter to share their resolutions with us in the first newsletter of the year. Here are a couple I came across:

FROM THE PRESIDENT
By Janet Heishman

2003 Resolutions ...

1. I will try to contain and control my impulse to buy every plant or seed I think I can't live without this year. If I buy it, it must be planted within 3 days after purchase, not shoved in a shady spot "until I find a spot for it." This should save money and probably the life of the plant.

2. I will be more realistic about my garden projects this year – one new flower bed instead of six will suffice. I don't need to re-create the secret garden or the yellow brick road in one season! This should give me more time to smell the roses and save my poor back from aching.

3. When pulling weeds, dead-heading and trimming things, I will stop leaving the "debris piles" or tossed weeds on the freshly mowed grass my husband worked so hard to finish or on the garden paths for people to trip over. I'll take a basket with me and carry debris to the "real" compost pile. This should make even more time and probably kisses from my hubby, instead of curses.

4. With all the money I save, extra time on my hands, the good looking yard and a happy husband, I should be able to spend more time volunteering and helping in my community! I should be able to get my MG hours turned in on time and have free time to make those meetings with a pot-luck surprise! Well however it turns out, I hope it is time spent doing anything that has to with gardening and the people who love it as much as I do!

A Happy and Fruitful New Year Everyone!

And a 2004 entry from our one-time Volunteer Coordinator, three-time President, Bob Carlton:

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR NEWS

Bob Carlton

A new year is upon us. Time to break out last year's resolutions – which did we do; which did we not? What made us do some and not others? Now that we know the whys and wherefores, it's time to make this year's Master Gardener resolutions. Some you might consider are:

- As a minimum, I will give at least 20 volunteer hours and get 8 hours of continuing education.
- I will think up, develop and execute at least one new project.
- When a call goes out for volunteers, I will make every effort to respond in a positive way. If I volunteer, I will follow through.
- I will attend all Association meetings and participate in the activities of the meeting.
- I will support the Coordinator of the Master Gardener Program class in whatever ways I am asked.
- I will help new Master Gardeners to become involved in our programs so that they might get the same enjoyment, satisfaction, and fulfillment as I do.
- I will continue to support the efforts of my fellow Master Gardeners to help assure their success.
- When I meet Master Gardeners, I will let them know how happy I am to see them and to have the opportunity to be with them as Master Gardeners and friends.
- At meetings and other gatherings of Master Gardeners, I will not only mix and mingle with old friends, but make every effort to make new ones.
- I will try to plant at least one new vegetable or flower species or variety this year,
- I will turn in my hours on time.

When you have met all your resolutions, we will fit you for wings and a halo.

So here are my Master Gardener Resolutions for 2014:

- I resolve to get my hours in on time.
- I resolve to volunteer for more diverse projects this year, not just the same old ones. Maybe I'll branch out and see what other counties are doing.
- I resolve to make it to all the meetings; not only are they a good way to keep up with what's going on in our Association, they are a great time of food and fellowship with people who share my same interests.
- I resolve to do more research and keep up with the current horticultural topics.
- I resolve to get my newsletter input in on time. [*editor's note: you haven't been late yet*]
- I resolve to keep my house a little cleaner.... oops, wrong resolution list.

Anyway, you get the idea. Hope you all have some good resolutions, and if not, feel free to choose some of those listed here. They are all relevant to us, I'm sure.

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

Master Gardeners like to be given plants. Often they give them to each other. In the picture you see some plants I have sitting in the window. In front is a little cactus/succulent garden my daughter gave me a couple years ago. Behind it to the left is a Jewel Orchid Katherine Rindt gave me a couple years ago. It is kept primarily for its deep purple, striped leaves, but it is blooming with small white orchids for the second time. It has three flower stalks and some new leaves. I don't do much for it except water it regularly. Above it is a yellow orchid that Carol Groves rescued many years ago from Lowes, when she worked there. They were going to throw several of them out. I have watered and fed it under grow lights during the winter and just left it outside in the shade in the summer for many years. Every once in a while, one of the three that I have puts out a flower stalk. The scraggly Poinsettia is blooming for the third year. I guess I bought it. I suppose I have really mistreated it. I

put Poinsettias out in the yard in the shade over the summer. This is the first one that hasn't been eaten by some beastie. So before the first frost I brought it in and put it under grow lights, and without paying any attention to the rules for keeping it dark/light, it has bloomed last year and this. Maybe I'll consider pruning it next year.