

October, 2011 Newsletter

THIRD QUARTER TIME SHEETS ARE DUE!

Randy Langford needs your time sheets ASAP. Timesheets are due 4 times a year, 1 April, 1 July, 1 October and 20 December. Click below on your choice.

[**MG TIME SHEET – EXCEL**](#)

[**MG TIME SHEET – PDF**](#)

UPCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings will be the third Sunday of the **month**, and we will meet at 4pm. 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, October 16, 4pm, Virginia State Arboretum at Blandy

Randy Langford will talk on Aquaponics. We need a quorum eded to vote on Bylaw changes submitted to the membership.

Directions: Blandy is on U.S. Route 50, one mile east of U.S. 340.

NEW LOOK FOR WEB SITE!

SURPRISE! As you can see, our webmaster Eleanor Ames, has been busy updating our site to get in step with the times. The new site is done in WordPress. In the future, someone else can assist with the site because there is no html code to learn. With the photo galleries added, and options for more, members can now send photos of events, workshops etc to her. We also now have a blog to post information and news, as well as post answers to some of the common questions being asked on the Greenline. The whole point is to put as much information out there about MG's and what they do as possible. And, to promote the site as the "go to spot" for information and news about gardening events. The site needs to become more active! This will help with future funding, promotion of events, and recruitment of members. If you have some experience with Blogging & WordPress, and would like to be an editor, [contact Eleanor](#) and she can set up an account for you. This would enable the person to do postings but not have to deal with any other part of the web site.

IMPORTANT NOTE: WordPress places "cookies" in your browser to remember you the next time you visit the site. Depending on how you have your "browsing history and cookies" set up in your browser and how often you clean it out, you will give the password once for a page and then may not have to give it again when you go back. So be aware this may occur. When cookies are purged, you will once again be asked for your password.

OTHER EVENTS

Sat & Sun, Oct 8-9, 9am-4:30pm, Arborfest at the State Arboretum Of Virginia, Clarke County.

This fall festival and plant sale offers fine items for home and garden. Free guided tours and children's activities. There is a donation for parking.

Sat & Sun, Oct 9, 1pm, Virginia Native Plant Society Piedmont Chapter Second Sunday Walk, Clarke County.

The second Sunday walk will be a tour of the 35 acre native grass meadow at Blandy Farm. The tour will leave from the Amphitheater 1 pm and will last about 2 hours. Look for a green and white VNPS event sign. The walk will mostly follow a gravel path that loops through the meadow, and we will also briefly visit the Rattlesnake Springs wetland area, where we will be on a boardwalk. Please wear comfortable shoes and dress for whatever weather we have that day. The fall colors in the meadow should be wonderful. Blandy Farm's Arborfest Event will be going on, and there is a donation for parking.

Thursday, Oct 20, 7-8:30pm, The Future American Landscape: Getting Off The Treadmill, Frederick County, Stimpson Auditorium, Halpin-Harrison Hall at the Shenandoah University.

Neil DiBoll, President of Prairie Nursery in Wisconsin, will speak on the benefits of native species and why natives are the logical choice for landscapes in a future world of global warming, escalating energy costs, and constrained landscape budgets. The talk will focus on the economic and ecological problems of traditional lawns and the chemicals used to maintain them, and how native plant landscaping can be a beneficial alternative.

DiBoll received his degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1978. He has since worked for the National Park Service in Virginia, the U.S. Forest Service in Colorado, and the University of Wisconsin. In 1982, Neil began his involvement with Prairie Nursery, producing native plants and seeds and designing native landscapes. He has since devoted his efforts to championing the use of prairie plants, as well as native trees, shrubs and wetland plants, in contemporary American landscapes.

Neil's work includes designs for residential, commercial and public spaces throughout the Midwest and Northeast United States. The essence of Neil's philosophy is that we, as stewards of the planet, must work to preserve and increase the diversity of native plants and animals, with which we share our world. The protection of our natural heritage and our soil and water resources is essential to maintaining a high quality of life for today, and for the children of future generations to come.

The lecture is free and open to the public. Co-sponsors: Smithsonian Institute, Virginia Native Plant Society, Blandy Experimental Farm, Virginia Working Landscapes group.

Saturday, Oct 22, 7-8:30pm, Nature Walk, Rappahannock County.

Join naturalists Neil DiBoll, Cole Burrell, Sally Anderson, and Peter Heus for tours about the farm of Bruce and Susan Jones, near Washington, VA. Explore meadows, woodlands, and wet areas, with observations of nature through the eyes of these naturalists, who will discuss how native species can restore backyards and landscapes. Limited space, reservation required. Fee for nature walk: \$10; fee for walk and box lunch: \$15. For reservations and location please contact: khopkins@pecva.org or bwest@pecva.org or call 540-316-9978. Co-sponsored by: the Smithsonian Institute, the Virginia Native Plant Society, Blandy Experimental Farm and the Virginia Working Landscapes group

FREDERICK COUNTY COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Teri Merrill

I'll be hosting a county meeting at my home in early October. We have several things to consider next year, and I would really love to have an active, committed membership in Frederick County.

Here are some of the topics that we'll address in 2012:

- **Greenline:** I'd like to make it a real information booth, not a virtual one. I'd like a team of people to help me do this. We need to plan everything from where we should put it next summer (the walking mall; Farmer's Market; another place?) to what materials we need on hand (table, chairs, extension informational releases), to where we can store the materials, to how we can get committed volunteers. I have my ideas on this, bring yours. We will need to work with the new Extension agent and Clarke County on this, as they already have a successful program for us to model.
- **Junior Master Gardeners:** Lynn Hoffmann has lead this project successfully for the past two years, but she could use a committed team to help her in the future. Things to consider include whether and how to expand this, whether and how to create a new curriculum while adding to the old one, how to expand our dedicated team of teachers, and developing a support team that is on hand to help out as needed.
- **Rain Gardens:** We oversee the rain garden at the Frederick Douglass Learning Center on Kent Street. This is not a big project, but it does require annual maintenance with students from the Interact Club at Handley. I took this project on last year, but I'd like a few folks to help me or consider taking this on as their project. We already have a date set with Handley for this year's maintenance, so I can discuss this further at the meeting. This is a really simple project for someone to consider.

- We also oversee Hedgebrook rain garden, and we'll hear about how we can support the efforts at the meeting.
- **Home/garden Consultations:** We don't get a lot of these, but we do get a few each year. I'd like a committed team of members, both veterans and interns, to work together to be available whenever we hear of someone who needs help with a landscape, garden or yard. I've done three this year, so they do occur at times. Perhaps if we were more visible to the community, we would get more requests for this. I'd like a team leader and a group to support this effort. Don't worry if you've never done it before. It's so much fun, especially if you go with a another member or two.
- **Lectures/Speakers:** We have several master gardeners who already give lectures, but I'd like to develop a team of public speakers who are ready to talk whenever we're contacted by the Extension. If you're an intern who is interested in this, I'd like to find ways to team you up with a veteran . I'd like to have names and topics that we can promote and become visible to the community.
- **Frederick County Fair:** The other counties have master gardeners at their county fairs for at least part of the time. Is this something we want to explore? If so, I'd like someone to lead this effort and work with the Extension in making this reality for next year.

And finally, I'm committed to being coordinator for one more year. I'd like someone to step up and learn this job, with the intent of taking it over for a two-year stint in 2013 and 2014.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT by Carolyn Willson

Shenandoah county's big activity in September was our week long MG booth at the Shenandoah County Fair. Twenty-two MGs (some from counties other than Shenandoah) helped answer gardening questions from the people viewing the horticulture exhibits. We made 147 public contacts (despite being closed down by severe weather the first night) and really got the word out about Master Gardeners and what we can do to help home gardeners. The most often asked question was, "How come the biggest vegetable/fruit didn't get the blue ribbon?" Only because Bob Carlton had arranged a teaching session for us, was I able to answer this question that I had often wondered about myself. It's not a biggest contest. It's about quality, uniformity and usability. This year the agriculture entries were in Building #1 and our MG table was in the center with fruit and vegetable displays surrounding us. That made for easy interaction with the viewing public. It's so rewarding to see how excited the children are when one of their entries gets a ribbon!

Other than the greenline and a fall cleanup of the New Market rain garden, the only planned activity in October is a MG table at the Woodstock Halloween event from 1-2:30pm on Saturday October 29, organized by Johan Guss. Johan will

have take home gardening pictures for the children and for the grown-ups information about next year's Master Gardener class which will be held in Shenandoah unty.

CLARKE COUNTY REPORT by Mary Craig

The farmers' market is winding down for the season. The weather conditions have been less than favorable the last couple of weeks and a lot of the vendors have been 'no shows', but, overall, we had a good season. A lot of questions were asked and answered and a lot of good information was handed out.

Thanks to Nancy Specht for arranging for us to have a booth at the Clarke County Fair, and thanks to Suzanne Boag, Helen Lafferty, Mary Flagg, Marianne Pagington, Susan Garrett and Mary Stickley for taking shifts there to answer questions for the public. I'm looking forward to next year. We learned some things and will improve on our set up next year.

The plantings are in at the Barns of Rose Hill and I'll be meeting with Susi Bailey to see just what section we can designate as our "rain garden". We are hoping that we can start a butterfly garden at the Burwell Morgan Mill that a lot of you toured on Sept. 10th. It would be nice to have three demonstration gardens in Clarke and it would give people a choice of when they could put in a few hours. Thanks to Nancy Specht, Suzanne Boag and Bryan McKay for coming out to help with the xeriscape garden upkeep. It is a really nice looking garden.



Of course, we will be at Blandy this weekend for ArborFest. If you have volunteered for a shift please remember to wear your shirts and nametags. I have some parking passes and will give them to those that are helping with set up on Friday.

If you don't have a pass, just tell the parking volunteers that you are a vendor and they will direct you to the vendor parking lot. We are trying to get a rain barrel to raffle off. That usually draws people to the booth. It should be a great event. Here's hoping we have good weather.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT by Mary Craig

As of September 2011 we have 173 members; 141 have paid dues and 108 are listed as active. There are several interns who have completed their 50 hours and been ‘moved up’ into the list on the webpage. Congratulations to the class of 2011! They are a wonderful group and very enthusiastic.



Also, for those who are new, the membership list is posted on the member’s section of the webpage. If you need a phone number or address for a MG you can find it there. It is also broken out by counties for the coordinators. Please take a moment to look over your information and make sure everything is correct. If not, please let me know atmcorneliac@centurylink.net.

HISTORIAN REPORT by Mary Craig, Historian

You may or may not know, but I am the ‘unofficial’ historian for the NSVMGA. If any of you have any items; articles, pictures, information on projects that are ongoing and you feel they should be included in our archives, please let me know. You can send them to me or I can pick them up at the October meeting.

The first Master Gardener class in our organization was held in Front Royal in 1993. Corey Childs was the coordinator for that first class. It started on February 5 and was held on Monday and Wednesday evenings. The first President was Frank Baxter. Frank, Skip Bowling and Johan Guss are the only members from that class who are still active. There were 11 people in that first class and they did not have a graduation, but they did receive certificates.

CENTRAL SHENANDOAH MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION CLASSES

by Johan Guss

The Central Shenandoah Master Gardeners held all day classes in Harrisonburg September 24th. We received, via e-mail, notification of training entitled “Cultivating Community Food Systems” from Amber Vallotton, the VCE Horticulture Extension Agent in Rockingham County and coordinator of the Central Shenandoah Master Gardeners. I signed up and was exposed to good speakers and good topics.

Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services Matt Lohr was the first speaker. He lives on the 250 acre family farm next to Interstate 81 just north of Harrisonburg. Most Virginia farmers are 65 years old or older. 70% of the farm land will change hands soon. Small farms can't compete with large tract farmers who may lease a hunk of land bigger than all of Rockingham County and plant corn. In the mid-west they have corn picking machines that pick 24 rows at a time!! The size of the machinery in the mid-west is phenomenal, so small farms are becoming “niche” farms. Wineries are a good example. Other examples are the greenhouse growers, Christmas tree growers, and those that sell at Farmer's Markets or roadside stands. The Lohr family raises poultry, beef and grain crops, plus, sweet corn, pumpkins and garden produce that brings people to their farm.

There were seven other speakers. One was the dietitian for the five public schools in Harrisonburg. She is working locally grown food into the school lunches, buying directly from local farmers.

Another speaker told that attendees of a specific church all raise a row (or more) of vegetables for the local food pantry. They also raise three acres of green bush beans, pull up the plants, and harvest the beans as a group. “Many hands make light work.” Plus they make it a social event with food, music, etc.

One speaker worked with school kids to produce vegetables for the school lunches. (If a kid grows it that kid will eat it).

If people buy local produce it keeps the money in the area and impacts the local economy. There is a PRODUCE AUCTION in Harrisonburg on Tuesday and Friday from 9:30-2:30. I think I will check that out just to see what it is like.

I was exposed to a lot of programs that I'm not familiar with:

- GROWS – using horticulture to impact youth (using youth to teach other youth).
- EBT-SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

- Shenandoah Farm to Table Program
- There were handouts, and bumper stickers that said Buy Fresh-Buy Local

Lunch was catered by a Harrisonburg restaurant that buys food locally. A husband and wife team were there promoting Vermiculture. They had indoor composters, worms and worm casting for sale. It was a full day, well done, with excellent speakers.

GARDEN AND RELATED PROGRAMS ON TV

by Niles Hokkanen

These horticultural and related TV shows/documentaries may be of interest to MGers. Some programs may be in sporadic rotation and may not be aired currently, but are likely to reappear within several months. The title of the program (or series) is listed, following the name of the channel. (Your cable system or satellite package may not include all these channels; consult your TV program guide.) **PBS stations** (MPT=Maryland Public TV, VPT=Virginia Public TV, WETA, WHUT=Howard University):

Ongoing episodic series:

- “Victory Garden” (30 mins, PBS/ VPT)
- “Growing A Greener World” (30 mins, PBS/MPT)
- “P. Allen Smith’s Garden Home” (30 mins, PBS/WHUT)
- “P. Allen Smith’s Garden To Table” (30 mins; PBS/WHUT)
- “Ask This Old House” (30 mins; various PBS)
- “Endless Feast” (30 mins; PBS (not currently being aired))

Single episode shows & documentaries:

- “To Market To Market To Buy A Fat Pig” (60 min documentary., PBS)
- “Food Inc.” (As an installment of Point of View) (documentary, 90 mins; PBS)
- “The Botany Of Desire” (documentary, 2 hrs; PBS)

Secondary public-tv channels (WETA-Create, VPT-Create, MPT-2), which include much more “how-to” and DIY (Do-It-Yourself) programming, may or may not be carried on your cable/dish system and may need to be accessed via a digital (broadcast) antenna.

Cable/Satelite TV channels:

Ongoing episodic series:

- “Best of ‘Making It Grow’” (30 mins, RFD-TV)

- “Prairie Farm Report” (30 mins, RFD-TV)
- “Living The Country Life” (30 mins, RFD-TV)
- “Meet The Farmer TV (30 mins, Free Speech TV; This show produced in VA; shows can be also be watched online at <http://meetthefarmer.com/>)
- “In Search Of Food” (60 mins, Ovation)
- “Smithsonian Channel’s GARDEN SECRETS” (four 30 min programs, Smithsonian HD)

Single episode shows & documentaries:

- “Dream Window: Reflections On The Japanese Garden” (60 mins., SmithsonianHD)
- “Rebecca’s Wild Farm” (55 min BBC documentary on permaculture; LINKTV)
- “The World According To Monsanto” (eco-documentary; Free Speech TV, LINKTV)
- “David vs. Monsanto” (eco-documentary; Free Speech TV, LINKTV)
- “How Cuba Survived Peak Oil” (documentary, LINKTV; note: between oil shortages/ embargo, the whole Cuban agricultural system reverted to essentially an organic/ permaculture based system with minimal use of fertilizers/chemicals)

Gardening shows on the DIY and HGTV (Home & Garden TV) channels, which used to include “*Gardening By The Yard*”, “*Dig In*” and a couple others, appear to be a thing of the past, being supplanted by (contractor) yard makeovers, home renovations, real estate shows (DIY should be renamed “Let’s-Hire-A-Contractor Network”).)

Some of LINKTV’s programming can be watched on-line: <http://www.linktv.org/>

Free Speech TV schedule: <http://www.freespeech.org/schedule/>

RFD-TV <http://schedule.rfdtv.com/?tz=0> has lots of AG programming, much of which reflect the views of the traditional commercial agribusiness/chemical & GMO (genetically modified) industries.

EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

Have you smelled a strong mint odor while walking across a field or through the woods? You probably stepped on or brushed American Pennyroyal (*Hedeoma pulegioides*). You usually don’t see this small plant (4-18 inches tall), only smell it. Its flowers are small, about 1/16th of an inch diameter.

We grow many members of the Mint Family (*Lamiaceae*) for fragrance and flavoring besides the mints themselves: basil, lavender, marjoram, oregano, rosemary, sage, savory, thyme. I think Pennyroyal has the most potent odor.

