

## NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **Sun., Aug. 17, 4-6pm – MG Siobhan O'Brien's Farm**, 1167 Shenandoah River Rd. Boyce 22620 (Clarke), Heirloom Tomatoes

**Directions:** From John Mosby Highway/US-50 East/17 South take the first right after crossing the Shenandoah River onto Howellsville Rd/VA-638. Go 2.6 miles and turn right onto Shenandoah River Lane. Go 0.7 miles to 1167 Shenandoah River Lane.

- **Sun., Sep. 21, 4-6pm – AREC Center (Frederick), Nathan Stanley, Wetland Studies & Solutions**
- **Sun., Oct 19, 4-6pm – Southern States**, 447 Amherst St., Winchester (Frederick)
- **Sun., Nov. 16, 2-4pm – Warren County Government Center**, 220 N. Commerce Ave., Front Royal (Warren) Election/Annual Business Meeting

### OTHER EVENTS

- **Tue. Aug 12, 9-11:30am, Reading Trees: An Introduction to Identification.** Carrie Blair, Virginia Native Plant Society. Learn to identify trees using simple keys, books, and memory tools developed by Carrie. Wear comfortable shoes, and bring cameras, notebooks, field guides, hand lenses, and a mystery branch or leaf. Foundation of the State Arboretum members \$10, nonmembers \$12 Reservations Required—Space is Limited. Call 540-837-1758 Ext. 224 or visit [www.blandy.virginia.edu/our-foundation/online\\_payments](http://www.blandy.virginia.edu/our-foundation/online_payments).

### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Susan Garrett



Behind this lawn chair (the picture is of me as a baby with three of my cousins) is the part of our property where my parents had their garden for over 60 years. On our acre of land in the country in Connecticut, my mother planted flowers (she loved zinnias) and my dad planted vegetables (tomato plants were his favorite). I grew up eating corn and strawberries from the garden, watching my dad make sauerkraut in a crock in the garage, picking blueberries from bushes in the surrounding woods, and enjoying home-canned and home-frozen produce.

I have to admit though, that when I married and began working outside the home (except for the three years after my second child was born when I was a full time mom), I found my career and household enough to handle, and gratefully bought my food from the local Kroger's without a second thought.

So it was really somewhat surprising to me to start getting pictures this year from my son and his fiancée in California of the potatoes they had harvested, the herbs they were cutting from the backyard, the peach jam they had canned, and the second place ribbon they won for the lemons they entered in the Orange County Fair.

I don't think they're alone, either. It is fascinating to see that all of this is becoming common once again: home gardening, canning, eating locally. One of the reasons I became a VCE MG was because I always knew that gardening was the healthiest way of life. I am always excited to see young people with a taste for gardening, and thrilled to be a part of a group like Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners that encourages this interest.

## NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

### MEMBERSHIP by Mary Craig

We have 83 Active and Emeritus members. The membership list is up to date on VMS. I'm very happy to say we have wonderful group of members this year who are very active in each and every county.

### FREDERICK COUNTY REPORT by Emily Wickham

1. Frederick County Meeting held at Emily Wickham (Frederick County Coordinator's house)
2. 9 MG's in attendance
3. Discussed future meetings:
  - a. more county meetings to get camaraderie and project solidification.
  - b. Vary the time and day of meeting to accommodate MG's differing schedules
  - c. Emily is looking at an August time from for next meeting
4. Janet Keithley described some of what MG College was like
5. Different Projects were discussed
  - a. Reemphasized the need for educational component to all projects
  - b. Lowes help desk (three Saturdays in Spring)
    - i. Lowes was helpful
    - ii. Good location
    - iii. About 30-35 clients
    - iv. Used banner from Extension office
    - v. Used materials stored at Extension office
    - vi. Enid McConnell will take this over from Helen Lake for the Fall help desk
  - c. Greenline/Help Desk at Extension office
    - i. Has been very busy lately
    - ii. Verified with Mark Sutphin that individual MGs need to record client contacts on VMS or paper reports
    - iii. More than 120 client contacted the line since April
      1. April: 42
      2. May: 14
      3. June: 37
      4. July (to 7/19): 28
  - d. Mill Brook Community Garden- vegetables
    - i. John Kummer is the lead
    - ii. Using vegetables for C-Pac
    - iii. Fine tuning educational component
    - iv. Emily Wickham check with Angie Hutchinson about a sign possibly on order?
  - e. Other county Projects
    - i. Emily Wickham will meet with Angie Hutchinson regarding her thoughts on past projects
    - ii. Tricia Boyd will check on a garden located in Winchester that Frederick County MGs used to have and see if there was a possible reorganization and or need for this project
    - iii. Frederic County Fair helpdesk
      1. Too late in the year to participate

## NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

- 2. Possible booth next year; in Horticultural Building if possible
- iv. Home Visit list
  - 1. Fred. Co. Coordinator would like to develop lists of MGs with specialties and those willing to make home visit (emphasizing always having 2 MGs)
    - a. Home visit MGs: Karen Brill, Trisha Boyd
- v. MG training on computers
  - 1. Determined there is a need/desire for training on searching on the internet and VMS system
  - 2. Possible location may be through Mike Neese (city employee) Picadilly/Mt Hebron



### PAGE COUNTY REPORT by Lesley Mack

Charlie Newton was able to go to the July MG meeting. I am anxious to hear what he heard and saw at the meeting.

Elke Thomas has put her home on the market. She is planning on moving to Florida to be closer to her son. That will mean we have a grand total of six MGs in Page County.

Greenline calls were mostly about trees: browning leaves on cherry, peach, and oaks. Amazing the amount of questions one needs to ask to narrow the possibilities down to what the cause might be. What kind of tree? What other symptoms? What insects have been seen or damage? What was the tree like last year? What has the homeowner been trying thus far? Amazing. Soooo glad, if all else fails, we can ship a sample to VA Tech, and hopefully their chemical analysis can make a better determination.

Glad so many MGs were able to attend the June meeting at our home. Always glad to give a tour.

Anyone that would like to come to Page County and help me with the youth or Gayle with the adult horticulture exhibits, August 16th or 18th, respectfully, let me know, 540-743-9389.

CLARKE COUNTY REPORT by Mary Craig

**The Clarke County Fair** is coming up. We will be manning a booth from Monday, August 11th to Saturday, August 16th. We will be setting up from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm this year. The later crowd is there to hear the music or ride the rides. We will be outside, across from the horticulture building. There is a calendar on VMS, for those that want to sign up. We already have quite a few volunteers. I will be setting up on Sunday, so if you'd like to help set up, let me know, too.

Due to the competition for space at the **Farmers' Market** in Berryville, I decided that we should set up from 8:30 to noon on Saturdays. It's only a half hour earlier, but it's still hard to get a spot. Boyd's Nest is going to have a tent every other week and they took our usual spot. If you would like to help, please sign up on VMS. It's easy, just click on the Berryville Farmers' Market calendar and pick a week. You can even set up a reminder, so you don't forget. We prefer no more than 3 people per week as space is tight. Bring a chair and a hat, as we are not in the shade anymore.



**The Millwood Community Garden** is going well. Thank goodness for the rain. Our latest battle is the pick weed that continues to take over. Our workdays continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-12 depending on the heat or vacations scheduled.

We harvest for the food bank the first week of every month. We had plenty of potatoes, kale, spinach, beans, beets, raspberries, basil and lots of fresh flowers. The community is really enjoying the fresh vegetables. We will be planting for late summer/early fall. The weeds are a constant battle. We had several children in the garden this month. Their joyful expressions said it all as the dug for potatoes and picked beets.

Workdays are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-noon if anyone wants to join us!

**Rain Barrel Raffle:** Just a reminder; each county should be selling raffle tickets at Farmers' Markets, County Fairs, and any other public events. The drawing will be held at Blandy's Arborfest in October, so there's still plenty of time to get tickets sold. If you need tickets, please buy a roll with your county budget. You should all have a binder with the information about selling them, if anyone is interested. We appreciate everyone pitching in to make this a successful raffle.



**MILESTONE** by Cy Haley



**FROM THE ARCHIVES** by Mary Craig

10 years ago, in 2004, the MG Class was held at Lord Fairfax Community College. Lynn Hoffmann was the Class Coordinator and the graduation was held at Belle Grove, followed by a garden tour. There were 28 students in the class, many of whom were active for years. Richard Stromberg was President, Bud Gregory was Vice President, Ruth Garrettson was Treasurer and Lesley Mack was Secretary. Cyndi Marston took over as our Extension Agent in September of that year. MG Susie Howard got a \$5,000.00 Water Quality grant for us and Katherine Rindt administered it. All-in-all, a very good year for the NSVMGA.

**WHEEL/COG BUGS** by Lesley Mack

After reading an article in a recent magazine, I remembered our first encounter with a Wheel or Cog Bug. We could not imagine what in the heck it was until VA Tech explained. Unfortunately, Tech



did not also show the other stages of the wonderful plant pest predator and we were too new, in 1992, to look it up ourselves. So, just in case you see one, here are more facts. The barrel-shaped eggs overwinter under tree branches. When the eggs hatch, the nymphs are gangly with bright red abdomens and a taste for aphids and other slow-moving herbivores. By midsummer, the nymphs become 1 1/2 inch long giants with appetites to match. The adult, lacking chewing mandibles, injects its prey with



digestive enzymes and paralyzing venom that eventually ends any



struggle from the prey. As the prey thrashes about its insides are dissolving into a paste (great with spaghetti or on pizza) which the cog bug then ingests.

Not harmful to people, the cog bug will excrete a foul-smelling musk if threatened. So, if you see this great predator, congratulate it for coming this far in its stage of life, and wish it further good luck.

Especially, when finding a 'babe' and procreating in your garden!!!



EDITORS CORNER by Richard Stromberg

Flowers are meant to impress: pollinators to enable reproduction; people to enjoy in gardens. For people, size makes a difference. We want big, beautiful blooms.

I have seen some really small flowers. At an orchid show I visited some years ago, they had a microscope set up to allow you to see the flower. When I walk along a trail or across a field and smell mint, I know I have stepped on American Pennyroyal (*Hedeoma pulegioides*). If you can find the plant, then you have to find the flowers, 3-5mm in the axils. My wife noticed a small plant along the trail because of its interesting leaf pattern.

Smooth Forked Nailwort  
*Paronychia Canadensis*



After some research, I determined it was Smooth Forked Nailwort (*Paronychia Canadensis*). When I saw it again, I looked closely and realized it was flowering. These flowers were 1-1.2mm! I have never been able to get the flower in focus.

I wondered how do these little flowers get pollinated—little insects, of course. How small is a gnat? Leaf miners live between the outer layers of a leaf.

We are not going to plant these peewees in a flower garden. At the other end of the scale, the biggest flower I know is the Eastern Rose-mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*) with its ten-inch flowers.



American  
Pennyroyal  
*Hedeoma  
pulegioides*



Eastern Rose-mallow  
*Hibiscus moscheutos*