



GRAPEVINE

New River Valley Master Gardener Association Newsletter

July/August 2014

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Remember our early May plant sale?

Well, we never gave proper thanks to the businesses who donated plants. So here they are:

Montgomery County and Christiansburg area

- ◆ Plant Marketing Class, Va Tech
- ◆ Crows Nest Farm—Price's Fork Road
- ◆ Corrine's—100 Radford Rd, Christiansburg
- ◆ L & I Wholesale Nursery—569 Franklin Rd, Christiansburg (they do sell retail)
- ◆ Lacie's in the Valley—750 Den Hill Rd, Christiansburg
- ◆ Southern States—885 Roanoke St, Christiansburg
- ◆ Walmart

Giles

- ◆ The Green Market—6643 Virginia Ave, Pembroke

Floyd (area)

- ◆ Wildwood Farms—2380 Floyd Hwy South, Floyd
- ◆ Riverbend Nursery (they are NOT retail)
- ◆ Childress Garden Center, 4065 Childress Rd, Cburg
- ◆ Slaughter's Greenhouse, 536 Floyd Hwy NW, Floyd

Pulaski

- ◆ Thyme to Grow—5062 Woodlyn St Dublin
- ◆ Vaughn's—4801 Cleburne Blvd Dublin
- ◆ Walmart—Pulaski

We have been very late in acknowledging these groups and businesses. If you are in any of these places this fall, be sure to thank them for their participation in donating. Garden Centers get "hit" a lot for donations (I've worked in several) so having the gumption to give us something is really nice. Some of our donors from previous years went out of business; bummer.

Also, look at this list and take note of places we did not get to in 2014 so we can be better prepared in 2015. I know there is one brand new garden center (small) store in Pembroke.

Pot Luck! Social!

One of our Pulaski County members, Mickey Balconi is fortunate enough to live on Claytor Lake. She is graciously inviting us down to her abode on Sunday, September 7th at 1pm for a pot luck, social, boat rides and swimming in Claytor Lake. She is going to provide lemonade, plates and silverware, and the lake. Mickey's address is 6293 Old Ferry Road, Hiwassee which is about 30 miles from the Christiansburg extension office. Directions will be sent out later via eMail. Please bring water attire, and food to share.

Minutes July NRVMDGA General Meeting

JULY 18, 2014 6:30 PM ; PULASKI RECOVERY CENTER

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY CO-PRESIDENT MAUREEN FALLON. THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 10 MEMBERS PRESENT. A SHORT BUSINESS MEETING WAS HELD.

THE GARDEN TOUR WENT WELL. THE BOARD WILL DISCUSS AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INCENTIVE PROGRAM WHERE THE VOLUNTEERS WOULD BE ABLE TO ATTEND ALL THE GARDENS AT NO CHARGE. ALSO LOOK INTO SOME REMUNERATION FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROVIDING VOLUNTEER STAFFING.

WENDY IS STILL LOOKING FOR FAIR VOLUNTEERS.

BETH UMBERGER IS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR THE AUGUST 23 MONTGOMERY MUSEUM PROGRAM.

MICKY BALCONI RECEIVED A CHECK FOR 255.50 FROM THE PULASKI GARDEN TOUR FOR THE MGA VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION. A THANK YOU NOTE WILL BE SENT TO THE LIBRARY.

THE AUGUST GENERAL MEETING: STEVE HALE HAS SUGGESTED THAT THE MEETING ALSO SERVE AS A SOCIAL. MEMBERS ARE TO BRING APPETIZERS OR DESSERTS FOR ENJOYMENT AFTER THE PRESENTATION.

MICKY BALCONI WILL BE HAVING A SOCIAL AT HER HOME ON CLAYTOR LAKE ON SEPTEMBER 7 AT 1 PM. MORE INFO TO FOLLOW.

DONNA FERN: \$500 IN MINI GRANTS HAS BEEN AWARDED WITH ANOTHER ONE JUST SUBMITTED.

WENDY WILL BE LEAVING HER POSITION AS MG COORDINATOR ON JULY 31. MUCH HELP WILL BE NEEDED TO STAFF THE HELP DESK UNTIL HER REPLACEMENT IS HIRED.

GWEN EWING'S SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE POSTER/PRESENTATION AT THE MG COLLEGE RECEIVED FIRST PLACE IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE CATEGORY. LYNN BRAMMER'S PROJECT SHARE THE SPARE WAS THE SUBJECT. THE POSTER WILL BE ON DISPLAY AT THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING.

GWEN ALSO ATTENDED THE MEMORIAL FOR KELLI SCOTT'S HUSBAND.

A VERY INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION WAS MADE BY KATE GRESHAM, DIRECTOR OF THE RECOVERY CENTER IN PULASKI. [BOB LOCKWOOD IS THE MGA LIAISON FOR THE PROJECT]. THE PROJECT'S PURPOSE IS TO OFFER OUTDOOR GARDENING TO MONTGOMERY COUNTY RESIDENTS WITH LONG TERM MENTAL DISABILITIES. ATTENDEES OF THE CENTER ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE TO INCREASE SOCIAL INTERACTION, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND EDUCATION. THE MEMBERS WERE IMPRESSED WITH WHAT THE PROGRAM OFFERS, AS WELL AS ITS SUCCESSES.

AN INDOOR PROJECT HAS JUST STARTED. KATE IS LOOKING FOR LARGE INDOOR PLANTS THAT COULD SERVE AS "INDOOR WALLS" TO MAKE A SECLUDED SPACE IN THE CENTER. IF ANY MEMBERS ARE INTERESTED IN DONATING PLANTS, EMAIL KATE KGRESHAM@NRVCS.ORG



Left – Kate and Bob Lockwood at the Recovery Center

Below – some plants!



RECIPIE—Teala

Use olive oil to grease a casserole. Slice zucchini & potato in rounds about 1/4". Layer in casserole with bread crumb mixture consisting of freshly grated Parmesan or Romano, garlic, basil, oregano, salt and pepper. Drizzle casserole with 4-6 T olive oil. Bake at 375 for about 45 minutes. It should be lightly browned. Delicious. Old family recipe from Susan Lockwood

Grants Update

Over the summer months two more Internal Mini-Grants were awarded for a total of \$600 in awards in 2014. There is \$400 remaining in the fund and available for use in the remaining months of this calendar year. Grants in the amount of \$100 are available to members of the Association.

In June, Wendy Silverman was awarded \$100 for supplies for ECHO, a day program for adults with emotional and intellectual disabilities. The program has raised beds at their facility location in Blacksburg which were in need of enclosure as well as a watering hose, hanger and other supplies. In August, Bob Lockwood was awarded \$100 for a new project at the Recovery Center in Pulaski to complement their summer outdoor garden program. Indoor plants will be purchased to create "serenity" garden room within the facility, and participants will research plants for selection, provide labels, and learn how to maintain the houseplants.

The Grant Committee is gearing up to advertise for Applications for Community Grants for 2015 Gardening Projects. Activities such as the Plant Sale in May and Rain Barrel sales helped to raise funds for our educational grants program. Similar to last year, \$1000 will be set aside for Internal Mini-Grants, and more than \$2000 will be available for Community Grants, open to the general public. Grants are available in varying amounts. Applications for Community Grants will be received until November 1st and money will be awarded by January 31, 2015. To request an application for a Community Grant contact Donna Fern at vafern3@gmail.com or 336-380-5242.

Minutes August NRVGA Board Meeting

August 14, 2014 Home of Lynn Brammer

Meeting was called to order at 6:20 PM by Co-President Maureen Fallon. Also in attendance: Donna Fern, Javad Torabinejad, Pete Imhoff, Susan and Bob Lockwood, Evelyn Melia, Beth Kirby, Lynn Brammer

Minutes from July meeting were approved.

Treasurer Report: There is a total of \$7378.68 in the treasury. Approximately \$4800 will be allotted to the Grant funding for next year. Pete will transfer the proceeds from the plant sale, rain barrel sales and donations into the grants account. Donna asked if we should be tax exempt. She will call the office to obtain the tax exemption number.

Old Business:

Rain Barrel Workshop for the fall. Lynn has contacted Sustainable Blacksburg and they are interested in working with us. Several suggestions were made for decorating the barrels to make them more decorative: High School art project, sorority/fraternity service project.

Nominating Committee: Lynn has not had an opportunity to follow-on this. So far, Maureen and Beth have volunteered for co-secretary, Susan Lockwood for Vice-President. Still looking for President and Treasurer. Will need another member at large. Donna volunteered to remain chair of the Grants Committee. Lynn will contact the membership A-L, and Evelyn will call M-Z looking for people who may be interested in serving on the board. Members will need to have completed their certification [initial volunteer hours] to serve.

New Business:

Evelyn has a source of barrels that may be suitable for composters. Will check with Stan Stanley to see if he is interested in making some.

September is Hunger Relief Month at VT. Lynn suggested we might want to set up some sort of tour of community gardens for students who might want to use as community service projects. Share the Spare would be a good project for students. Debra Graff might be a good source for information on garden practices.

Sustainable Blacksburg will be holding a Booth Day at the Bburg Farmer's Market on Wednesday, September 17th. A volunteer search will be sent out on the MG list serve.

Appreciation dinner for Wendy Silverman for her excellent service to the MG organization over her tenure as MG Co-ordinator. It was decided to have at Mickey Balconi's home at the September 7 social at Claytor Lake. More details to follow.

Javad brought up the situation of plant clinic staffing. Several plant clinic opportunities have had to be cancelled due to lack of volunteer staffing. It was suggested that an increase in plant clinic hours be made for annual certification. The state organization determines the number of hours needed so we could not arbitrarily change the requirement. How to get more participation? Personally call MG's to ask for assistance? Will discuss with Wendy.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM. Many thanks to Lynn Brammer for hosting the meeting and offering a wonderful array of refreshments and snacks!

Respectfully submitted, Beth Kirby, secretary

Dates: In & Around the New River Valley

- Sept**
- 6 Sand casting leaf forms—Hahn Hort Garden, 10 am
 - 7 Social at Mickey Baloni's house in Pulaski County on Clayter Lake (Sunday 1pm)
 - 11 NRVNGA board meeting, place and time TBA
 - 18 General NRVNGA meeting, Pandapas Pond, 6:30 pm -
 - 23 Montgomery Museum, Beth Umberger
-

- Oct**
- 11 Painting your "leaf" - Hahn Hort Garden, 10 Am (see Sept 6th)
 - 16 **NRVMGA General Meeting**, Vermiculture at Floyd County High School, 6:30 pm.
Address is 721 Baker St SE, Floyd VA
-

- Dec** TBA **Winter Pot Luck/Awards/End of year review**

Tour of Pandapas Pond Pollinator Gardens Thursday, September 18th at 6:30 pm



The September General Membership meeting will be held at Pandapas Pond . We will tour the gardens following a brief business meeting.

Barbara Walker, with the help of the U.S. Forest Service, has established rain garden and butterfly gardens at Pandapas Pond. This day use area is a pastoral, eight acre pond located just west of the town of Blacksburg. It sits on the Eastern Continental Divide and is surrounded by a forest of hardwoods, some conifers and rhododendron. Come early and enjoy a stroll along the one-mile wheelchair accessible trail that encircles the pond. A wooden boardwalk separates the pond from a small wetland area that is abundant with dragonflies, turtles, songbirds, waterfowl, and evidence of beavers.

Directions: From Blacksburg, VA: Follow US 460 West for 3 miles. Turn left across from SR 621 (Craig Creek Road) into Pandapas Pond Day Use Area. Horse trailer and bike parking is located first parking area on left. Continue down hill to the lower parking area .

October Meeting: A Visit to Floyd High School Vermicomposting Project Thursday, October 16th at 6:30 pm

The Floyd High School Vermicomposting project received funding from our Association as a Community Grant Recipient in 2014. Joe Tesauro, Agriculture and Life Sciences teacher at the high school, spearheaded the project to construct and implement an innovative system to recycle the school's food waste from the cafeteria into nutrient-rich soil. The intent is for the soil/compost to then be used by the agriculture students to grow more food for the school's lunch program, creating a closed loop system of recycling nutrients.

Our October General Membership Meeting will be held at Floyd High School and we will tour the project and learn firsthand about the program's challenges and successes. Directions and carpooling information will be provided via email.

Feel free to contact Donna Fern at 336-380-5242 or at vaferrn3@gmail.com if you have any questions.

More Garden Travels with Erica Jones - Maymont (<http://www.maymont.org/directions>)

Richmond has more than a few places for horticultural visits but Maymont might be the most likely to appeal to variety of interests/ages on my list, and probably my favorite.

Maymont is the home of a former estate and now is a hundred acre park and trust adjoining the James River. The residence was built late 1800s and there is also the original barn and some other buildings on the property. If you are not into touring very Victorian mansions then try the nature center, or tour the 100 acre grounds with resident domestic livestock, raptors, and wildlife.

In the horticultural field, first and foremost should come the trees. I think living so near the Va Tech campus for so many years I may have gotten a little jaded about admiring well shaped, mature trees, but this may be the best part of Maymont. Some are labeled; most are not, so take a reference if you get frustrated about tree ID. A lot of the trees are natives, but certainly not all of them. Trees are good to admire any time of the year. I've been to Maymont in the late fall for a walk for a brush up on bark and tree form.

And speaking of trees; one of my goals this trip was to see the cover girl for "Magnificent Trees of Virginia". Well, I could not find her; but I will put this out as a challenge for you the reader - go and give it a whirl.

During the summer (or winter if you like admiring the structural bones) you can see four gardens. The one closest to the entrance is an wildflower garden (near the children's garden center) which had a very good sampling of fairly ornamental plants (I am not going to get into whether all of them were "real" wildflowers – and I did not worry about that). Maybe the wildflowers were put here because they can withstand some "pressure" from the kids? The second garden area was a geometric herb garden in front of the meeting area (which is a converted barn). I do not understand how people can go through an herb garden without squeezing a few leaves. The third garden was a formal Italian garden of long, narrow form in front of the mansion but slightly downhill towards the river. And the fourth garden, which is easy to miss unless you are fairly motivated to walk significantly (the tram was not in service when I was there on a Wednesday afternoon) is the Japanese garden right along the James below the Italian garden. This garden had a lot of water features and some spreading bamboo which they seemed to be keeping mostly in bounds.

The Italian garden was located on a fairly steep hillside so stone retaining walls and steps had been built. There were stone planters containing small evergreens scattered along the wall. The plantings had nice specimens of obviously overwintered lantana, bananas, and a geometric planting area with an adjoining long gazebo. Other species used were a lot of peonies and shrub roses.

A few more notes. Using route 195 and paying the \$.70 toll to get there is totally worth it. The place was being well used on an afternoon summer's day so if you are bothered by enthusiastic offspring and slightly stressed parents find another time. And there are some not as well traveled stone pathways to check out around the area of the mansion. I do recommend touring the house if you have time. And finally, bring your walking shoes or check the tram schedule – not only will you cover some distance, but through the middle of the park is a ravine so some walking up and down is in order.

Fall gardening

The last issue of the newsletter "In Season" had an article about fall gardens. A few more thoughts on this article and some expansion.

(Vegetable) plants need a lot of sunshine to grow; but some can motor along in basically hibernation mode on less sun and colder air and soil temperatures. How much sun is needed to put on leaf? Well, about 10 hours. So that is the magic day length when you need to have gotten your garden plants up to about 75% of total size. Past this they will grow some depending on temperatures, but with much less gusto. My trusty calendar has the 10 hour days hitting us about November 21st. You can harvest greens fall veggies up to late November, but you will not get much new growth after that. By the end of February we are up to almost 11 hours or daylight, so if the temperatures allow it plants will be back to putting on new leaf.

Spinach is fairly easy plant to use for some fall harvesting and then over winter if seeded no later than the second week of September. Kale and collards, both easy to overwinter plant have to be started much earlier - about three months before the magic November date (late August that computes to). Other crops for winter harvest under a tunnel or cold frame are Brussel sprouts, lettuce, collards, various greens, endive, and bunching onions. In a pinch you can start kale and collard seed inside and transplant. Lettuce, I have found, needs to be started about one week before the spinach – September 15th - as it is a little more sensitive to cold weather. Early spring kale and collards are really fabulous after the winter doldrums of nothing out of the garden. Even if you get these in late, if you baby them they will survive over the winter and you will have early spring greens. Swiss chard, turnips carrot (plant about September 15th) and radishes (planta little later in September) are for the more talented gardener with a tunnel or cold frame.

Personally I have had spinach (sometimes), kale and collards over winter just mulched, but plants like lettuce and others in this list probably need a little more help with covers.

These planting dates will vary some with the prevailing soil temperatures and soil water content. If it is hot and dry you might want to postpone seeding a tad. Some of these seeds like spinach germinate a higher percentage of seeds when the ground is cooler (but also take longer to germinate). Hot dry ground is just hard to get anything to germinate in no matter how much water you can put on it, how deep you put the seeds, and if you put row cover over the bed.

Minutes, July NRVGA Board

NRVGA BOARD MEETING JULY 10, 2014 Montgomery Co. GOV'T BUILDING, CHRISTIANBURG

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY CO-PRESIDENT MAUREEN FALLON AT 5:35 PM. IN ATTENDANCE: MAUREEN FALLON, JAVAD TORABINAJAD, DONNA FERN, EVELYN MELIA, NINA TEMPLETON, WENDY SILVERMAN, BETH KIRBY, SUSAN LOCKWOOD, LYNN BRAMMER.

THE MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING (MAY 29, 2014) WERE APPROVED.

THERE WAS NO TREASURER'S REPORT.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. GRANTS FUNDING: DONNA REPORTED THAT THE ASSOCIATION HAD APPLICATIONS FOR \$7344.91 AND WAS ABLE TO FUND ONLY \$2600.00. SHOULD WE RE-EXAMINE THE FUNDING FOR THE GRANTS. AT PRESENT, \$1000 IS HELD OVER IN CASE THE NEXT YEAR'S FUND RAISING IS NOT AS SUCCESSFUL TO HAVE A CUSHION TO CONTINUE FUNDING.

July Minutes, con't

- A DISCUSSION ENSUED OF WHY THE \$1000 WAS NEEDED, SHOULD IT CONTINUE, WHAT WOULD BE NEEDED TO CHANGE THE FUNDING. MAYBE WE NEED ANOTHER SOURCE FOR FUND-RAISING TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR THE GRANTS. THE DISCUSSION WAS PUT ON HOLD UNTIL WE HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF WHAT FUNDS WOULD BE AVAILABLE NEXT YEAR (WHEN WE CAN SEE CURRENT TREASURER REPORT)
2. RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP: NEED TO TALK TO STAN STANLEY ABOUT HAVING ANOTHER WORKSHOP. MAYBE WE COULD JOIN FORCES WITH SUSTAINABLE BLACKSBURG FOR ADVERTISING.
 - 3 SIGNS FOR MASTER GARDENER FUNDED PROJECTS: SOURCE FOR EITHER A PLASTIC SIGN OR ALUMINUM SIGN WILL BE RESEARCHED BY DONNA. MOVED AND PASSED TO PURCHASE 10 SIGNS
 4. PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT: DONNA IS STILL TRYING TO SET UP A SESSION FOR SOME PHOTOGRAPHY TRAINING FOR MEMBERS. INSTRUCTOR IS STILL UNKNOWN—POSSIBLY DONITA HALL FROM PULASKI?
 5. MASTER GARDENER COLLEGE: GWEN EWING ENTERED LYNN BRAMMER'S PROJECT—SHARE THE SPARE—IN THE SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE COMPETITION AND RECEIVED FIRST PLACE IN THE COMMUNITY SERVICE CATEGORY. WAY TO GO GWEN!!!!!! NOW ON TO AMES, IOWA IN 2015 FOR INTERNATION COMPETITION. SOME PARTS OF THE PRESENTATION WILL BE ADJUSTED ACCORDING TO JUDGES' COMMENTS. LOCAL MEMBER ATTENDANCE WAS DISCUSSED. THERE WERE 37 VOLUNTEERS FROM THE LOCAL GROUP. MAYBE THERE COULD BE AN AFTER COLLEGE VOLUNTEER GET-TOGETHER. SUSAN VOLUNTEERED TO ORGANIZE SOMETHING FOR THE NEXT COLLEGE.
 6. NEXT GENERAL MEETING WILL BE IN PULASKI AT THE RECOVERY CENTER. DIRECTIONS WILL BE SENT OUT BY DONNA VIA EMAIL. JULY 17, 6:30 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS

1. WENDY IS LEAVING JULY 31. SHE WILL BE NEEDING HELP IN THE OFFICE TO TAKE CALLS. SCOTT MCELFRISH IN PULASKI WILL BE LEAVING AND THE (GILES/BLAND [extension] AGENT) WILL BE GOING ON MATERNITY LEAVE. MAY NEED TO CUT BACK ON MASTER GARDENER PRESENCE AT ACTIVITIES IN THE MEANTIME DUE TO LACK OF LABOR. WENDY WILL SEND OUT EMAIL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS. WENDY'S NEW EMAIL ADDRESS IS WSSMASTERGARDENER@GMAIL.COM.
2. A SYMPATHY CARD WAS PASSED AROUND FOR KELLI SCOTT. IT IS UNKNOWN WHEN SHE WILL BE BACK IN THE OFFICE.
3. MICKEY BALCONI WILL BE HAVING A SOCIAL GATHERING AT HER HOME IN THE FALL.
4. STEVE HALE HAS SUGGESTED A SOCIAL GATHERING WITH APPETIZERS AND DESSERTS FOLLOWING THE AUGUST GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD AT HIS HOME IN AUGUST.
5. OFFICER ELECTIONS: SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE BOARD/OFFICER CANDIDATES WERE DISCUSSED. MEMBERS WHO MIGHT HAVE AN INTEREST IN HOLDING OFFICE WERE SUGGESTED. THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE WILL PURSUE. MAUREEN FALLON VOICED AN INTEREST IN THE SECRETARY POSITION. BETH OFERED TO CO-SECRETARY
6. WENDY WOULD BE SENDING OUT AN EMAIL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR THE NRV FAIR.
7. NEWPORT FAIR IS AUGUST 8-9. LOOKING FOR SOME MEMBERS TO MAN A PLANT CLINIC TENT FOR THOSE DAYS.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:05 PM
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
Beth Kirby, secretary

New River Valley Master Gardeners Association



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Find us on the web at <http://civic.bev.net/nrvmga>

The New River Valley Master Gardener Association is a nonprofit organization working in conjunction with the Montgomery County Virginia Cooperative Extension Office to bring horticultural education and enjoyment to people in the New River Valley.

As Master Gardeners we are committed to learning about gardening and communicating our knowledge of gardening to others. We direct our efforts to creating and maintaining an awareness of the need for intelligent stewardship of the environment.

Share your know-how and enthusiasm for gardening in the *Grapevine*!

All NRVMA members are welcome to contribute articles and other materials for publication in the *Grapevine*. We welcome project highlights, photos, book reviews, gardening tips, event announcements, stories on garden visits, how-to, favorite recipes, and other garden-related items for publication in the *Grapevine*. And, remember, time spent researching and writing articles counts toward your Service Activity hours.

Please send your submissions for the *Grapevine* by the 22nd of October

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