



# *The Grapevine*

April 2011

## **New River Valley Master Gardeners**

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

*The Grapevine* welcomes news, articles, questions, editorials, and comments. *The Grapevine* is published monthly and provided to all active members of the NRV MGA. Non-members may subscribe for \$15/yr. Please submit all items to the Newsletter Editor **by the 25th** in order to be included in next month's issue.

### **Officers**

President – Connie Lawson 674-6127 [conniel@vt.edu](mailto:conniel@vt.edu)  
Vice president – Helen Young – 392-2292 [helen.young@verison.net](mailto:helen.young@verison.net)  
Vice president – Ini Beckman – 552-2873 [inibeckman@yahoo.com](mailto:inibeckman@yahoo.com)  
Secretary – open  
Treasurer – Erica Jones – 544-7359 [emjones@vt.edu](mailto:emjones@vt.edu)  
At large – Jack Selcovitz – 392-6132 [darnell861@yahoo.com](mailto:darnell861@yahoo.com)  
At large – Lynn Brammer – 449- 6621 [lbrammer@vt.edu](mailto:lbrammer@vt.edu)  
At large – Keith Mileski – 382-7479 [janicem955@gmail.com](mailto:janicem955@gmail.com)  
Past president – Gwen Ewing – 382-9566 [ewinggr@vt.edu](mailto:ewinggr@vt.edu)  
Open Position, Trainee Member-at-Large

### **Communications**

Website: <http://civic.bev.net/nrvmga>  
Erica Jones TEMPORARY, Webmaster and Listserv Administrator  
([emjones@vt.edu](mailto:emjones@vt.edu))  
Membership – Evelyn Melia [meliano@comcast.net](mailto:meliano@comcast.net)

## **VCE Master Gardener Program**

Wendy Silverman, Coordinator 382-5790

### **Contact Us:**

#### **NRVMGA**

NRV MGA Website:

<http://civic.bev.net/nrvmga/>

(Membership Dues, Grants and General Correspondence) POB 747, Blacksburg, VA 24063

Listserv: [nrvmga@listserv.bburg.bev.net](mailto:nrvmga@listserv.bburg.bev.net)

#### **Virginia Cooperative Extension – Montgomery County Office**

Website: [www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu)

(MG Coordinator and Timesheets)

755 Roanoke Street, Suite 1G,

Christiansburg, VA 24073

(540) 382-5790 Fax: (540) 382-5729

### **Treasurer's Report**

We have paid out 100% of grants on Belview and Pulaski County 4-H.

Directory 2011 Printing - \$132.00

Newsletter - \$24.00

Erica Jones, Treasurer

**News bits** – The 2011 directory has been published. Contact Evelyn Melia meliano@comcast.net

### **Minutes from March 2011 EC meeting 3/14/2011**

In Attendance: Connie Lawson, Helen Young, Gwen Ewing, Cindy Mize, Erica Jones, Wendy Silverman, Lynn Brammer, Jack Selcovitz, Ini Beckman, Keith Mileski, Evelyn  
Called to meet at 6:00.  
Minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report** – Erica report that there was little activity last month. Checking balance is \$3,834.24 and savings/grants account balance is \$5,921.48.

**Directory** – Evelyn brought 2 copies of the new directory for review. Revisions need to be sent back to Evelyn ASAP so they can be printed for distribution at the Thursday, March 17 meeting. Thanks to Evelyn and Lynn for working on the directory and membership.

**NRV Home Expo** – Special thanks to Lynn for organizing and setting-up the booth at the Expo. A lot of soil testing kits were distributed. People were encouraged to write letters in support of the Extension office.

**Charlie Wall Scholarship** – Keith spoke to two guidance counselors about the scholarship. He will have the application out to area schools by the end of March. The application due date will be the third week of April. He will check to see if there is an easy way to distribute to homeschooled kids as well.

**Plant Clinic** – Gwen suggested that the group consider making bookmarks with the logo and contact information. Keith suggested that the publications box be updated. Wendy suggested that we use the internet as much as possible.

**Program List** – Helen mentioned changes to the program list. She will email the updated list to everyone.

**Audit** – Gwen gave audit information to Keith for review.

**Jr. MG** – Will be held March 23 – May 25 at the Hahn Hort Center. There seems to be a lot of interest.

**Seeds** – Gwen saw an opportunity to purchase seeds to give away for \$15. The group thought seeds could be found for free.

**Website** – Erica and Wendy will review website for code corrections.

**Bylaws** – Wendy suggested that the bylaws be updated to reflect duties of the Coordinator position should it become vacant. The board agreed this was a good idea. Wendy will send the proposed changes to the Board for review and approval. Once approved by the board, they will be sent to the membership and voted on at the May meeting.

**Extension Office** – Board members are encouraged to write to their supervisor to request that the county continue funding for the Extension Office.

**Silent Auction** – Time to start working on the silent auction. Ini, Erica, and possibly Jack will start requesting donations with help from board members in different counties.

**Secretary** – With much regret, Cindy has decided to step down from the position of Secretary. A new Secretary will be recruited and voted on at the April Meeting.

Adjourned at 7:30

## **Gardening to do in the Spring** (Some ideas)

### The Whole Garden

- \*Begin digging new garden beds when the soil is workable.
- \*Prepare the soil for seeding.
- \*Improve poor soils with compost, wood ashes, fertilizers.
- \*Keep weeding!
- \*Water newly planted trees, shrubs, flowers, and vegetables approximately 1"/week.
- \*Remove/pull back winter mulch when growth begins.
- \*Cut to ground herbaceous perennials – grasses, herbs, perennials like sedum.
- \*Plant bareroot plants as soon as they arrive or heel in or refrigerate if ground not workable.
- \*Replant any frost-heaved plants.

### Trees and Shrubs

- \*Remove the compost mounded over the base of your roses as the weather warms.
- \*Prune repeat-blooming roses when the buds begin to swell.
- \*Dig up and replant any rooted suckers or layered plants.
- \*Finish transplanting before the buds swell.
- \*Prune shrubs which flower on current year's growth NOW.

### Flowers and Grasses

- \*Clean up ground cover beds and divide overcrowded plants to give them more room.
- \*Sow seeds of hardy annuals and perennials outdoors.
- \*Plant pansies and other cold-tolerant annuals.
- \*Harden-off hardy and half hardy seedlings.
- \*Repair the lawn by sowing grass seed or laying patches of sod.

### Fruits and Vegetables

- \*Direct seed peas, fava beans, lettuce, beets, parsnips, radish, onions and shallots, endive, spinach and escarole.
- \*Start hardy vegetable seeds 6 weeks before mid April; tomatoes 6 weeks before last frost, squash 3 weeks before frost.
- \*Cold crop plants need to be planted.
- \*Start melons, pumpkins, tomatoes, and summer and winter squash indoors.
- \*Start kitchen herbs indoors, to be transplanted outdoors.

## **Silent Auction**

Virtually since our humble beginnings, NRVMG as had a spring silent auction for fund raising for our grants program. I am a strong proponent of our grant program. As another board member put it, it is our chief source of community good will and one of the most important "projects" we do. This is not to downplay physical help, but sometimes what is needed is some hard cash to help support that school/retirement home/public library/garden club's idea to help spread the word about gardening.

For the past several years we have had more donations than bidders, and many items showing up have gone for significantly less than value. This may be fabulous for the bidder, but it is not fabulous for our fundraising efforts, and truthfully can be a little annoying to donors to see the items they brought go for so little money. So, you can help us on both fronts by planning to attend this year's version of the silent auction, class of 2011 "graduation", and pot luck dinner (do not forget about the food!).

In past silent auctions we have had plants donated (obviously) ranging from annuals barely past seeding stage to 5 year old shrubs in 3 gallon containers, not to mention house plants. If you bring a plant, please try to label correctly or ask for help. Non-chlorophyll items have been almost anything - and all that is required is a remote connection to gardening - ranging from memberships to public gardens, tools, clothes, hardgoods, services, books, gifts, baskets, birdhouses, containers, potting mix and gift certificates. And gardeners like to eat, too!

Items need to be labeled as to who donated them, and what they are (if not obvious). Donations can be brought that Friday along with you, or taken to the Mont. Co. Gov't Center before May 6<sup>th</sup>. Remember though that those chlorophyll producers need to be watered so have some sympathies to the folks in the office and don't park plants there that will need to be watered, kept cool, kept in strong light, etc.

If you have a snazzy auction item and just can not get there, try contacting a NRVMG member near you and ask for help. You can also help out by contacting a business you might be on good terms with and asking them for an auction donation.

Even better than a donation is if you can bring yourself to the auction and bid. Attending the pot luck beforehand is not a requirement (but you'd be crazy not to), but do plan on keeping Friday May 6<sup>th</sup> (6 pm) open so you can come. Try to come a little early if you have a donation so you can get it properly identified and find a good place for it on one of the tables in the hallway. Generally, for the evening we have some socializing and bidding, then pretty quickly get down to dinner and introduce the current year's class, do a little more bidding and then close out the auction.

### **Local Calendar Meetings NRVMG (and one out-of-state)**

April 15-17 – Washington Co. MGs Annual Garden Faire, Abingdon, VA

April 21<sup>st</sup> – Riverbend Nursery. Meet at 6:05 at "Stellar One" in Riner to carpool.

May 6<sup>th</sup> (Friday) – Class 2011 graduation and Silent Auction, Montgomery Gov't Center 6pm. 2011 graduates are guests – you are not expected to bring a dish!

June 16<sup>th</sup> – Rebekah's Country Garden

June 22-26 Master Gardener COLLEGE! Plan on going to awards ceremony, anyway.

July 21<sup>st</sup> – Garden tours in Floyd county - 6:30pm Guides Pam Cadnus, Jane O'Keefe

Aug 18<sup>th</sup> – Square foot and therapeutic gardens - 351 Rolling Hills Drive, Christiansburg. Contact Debra Graff 381-1470

Sept 15<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 pm- Alex Niemera, "Gardening in all Seasons" Hahn Hort Garden

Oct 10-14<sup>th</sup> – International Master Gardener Meeting – Charlestown, WV. Information is up on website.

\*Please take a minute to read over the emails Wendy sends. Many contain valuable information as well as notices (sometimes last minute) to attend events you don't want to hear about too late. This week there was also information about a new herbicide just released you need to know about.

## New Class of 2011 Training Schedule

				Dr. Mike Goatly, Extension Turfgrass Specialist and Associate Professor in Crop, soil and Environmental Science
Tues. 4/5	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Lawns	
Thrs. 4/7	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Landscape Design	Kim Webster, Landscape designer
Tues. 4/12	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Annuals	Dr. Holly Scoggins, Associate Professor of Horticulture, Director of Hahn Horticulture Gardens at VT
Thrs. 4/14	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Fruits	Doug Harris, Retired Agriculture Extension Agent
Tues. 4/19	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Veggies	Veggies
Thurs. 4/21	Riverbend Nursery 1295 Mount Elbert Rd NW Riner, VA	6:30-?	MGA MEETING Tour of Riverbend Nursery	Jim Snyder
Tues. 4/26	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	open	
Thrs. 4/28	Nesslerod on the New	6:00 PM til Dark	Urban Forestry/Pruning	Jon Vest, Floyd Agriculture Agent
Tues. 5/3	VT Duck Pond, Walking field trip	6:30- Dark	Tree ID Walk and Talk	John Seiler Honorable & Mrs. S. H. Short Professor of Forestry
Fri. 5/6	Montgomery County Government Center Community Room	6-9:00*	GRADUATION and MGA MILESTONE CELEBRATION!!!	MG Coordinator and MGA Officer Team

“One of the most important resources that a garden makes available for use, is the gardener’s own body. The garden gives the body the dignity of working in its own support. It is a way of rejoining the human race.”  
Wendell Berry

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**New River Valley  
Master Gardener Association  
P. O. Box 747 Blacksburg, VA 24063**