



## *April Grapevine*

*New River Valley Master Gardeners Association*

**Minutes of NRV Master Gardener Association  
General Meeting  
March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

Location: Christiansburg Public Library

At 6:30pm, Lynn Brammer welcomed the 16 members present and also acknowledged two trainees, Class of 2013, who attended the meeting.

Donna Fern talked about upcoming events as follows:

Rain Barrel Workshop - **April 6<sup>th</sup> - 1 - 5PM** (This will be the General Meeting for April)

Location: **Pulaski County YMCA**

Stan Stanley will teach the method of making a rain barrel, and provide the hardware required for approximately 10 barrels. The barrels will be used as a *fundraiser*, selling at \$50 to master gardeners and at the upcoming May Plant Sale. Two of the barrels will be donated to a worthy cause, not yet established. Also, members who are artistic are encouraged to decorate the barrels.

General Meeting & Graduation Potluck - **May 10<sup>th</sup> 5:30PM**

Location: Montgomery County Government Building

Plant Sale - **May 11<sup>th</sup> 8AM - 2PM**

Location: Montgomery County Government Building

General Meeting - June 13<sup>th</sup> - Stonewood Botanical Garden

General Meeting - July - Mitch Holcomb Daylily Farm

General Meeting - August - Virginia Tech Kentland Farm

(Student run vegetable garden, vegetables served in dining hall)

General Meeting - September - Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary

General Meeting - October - Certified Arborist

Donna also talked about the mini grants (\$100.00) available. To date three grants have been awarded. Criteria required are an educational component; positive community and/or environmental impact. A one page report about the project, progress being made and a brief presentation to the members at the completion of the work is also required.

To submit a request to the Grant Committee please describe the educational/community value, proposed budget, how the money will be used, such as plant material, tools, etc. It is important to note that the money cannot be used for labor, services or salaries. In other words, it is strictly a volunteer project.

The Grant Committee has committed \$1000 for mini grants, and to date, \$700.00 is available. You are encouraged to take advantage of these grants.

Donna also reminded members that it is necessary to re-authorize your project each year.

Lynn encouraged members to volunteer for Plant Clinics. She thanked those who volunteered for the New River Valley Home Show, and commented that many people stopped at our display to talk to our volunteers, which is good exposure for our organization.

She also asked members to sponsor a Plant clinic in their area if the opportunity presents itself. This is a great way for the community to learn about what we do as an organization.

Lynn then introduced the guest speaker, Eddie Boes. Eddie graduated from Virginia Tech and moved to Indiana with his wife for her residency in Vet medicine. There he gardened and became involved in community gardening as well as earning his Master Gardener certification.

He has returned to the New River Valley and is an avid gardener at Micah's Garden. Eddie's presentation "Vegetable and Herb Gardening Using the Square Foot Method" was informative and presented with humor. The slides of various home and community gardens as well as fabulous gardens in Munich, Germany were a nice exhibition of what can be accomplished in your garden.

He discussed the benefits of the Square Foot Method, steps to create such a garden, including the soil mix, the importance of planning, before you begin planting, and your plant selections. He talked about vegetable selection, "only plant what you eat" common vegetable and herb plants for cool season and warm season crops. Eddie also talked about proper watering methods, pest issues, feeding and weeding. He explained various preserving methods and especially dehydrating herbs. Most all herbs can be dehydrated, as opposed to drying by hanging, with the exception of basil and rosemary.

Eddie is also a mechanical engineer who works in kinematic art and he showed slides of his work in various states as well as in Europe. His art work is most impressive and the displays in some schools provides an opportunity for students to participate which they do eagerly.

In ending the meeting, Lynn thanked Eddie for his wonderful presentation and opened the floor for comments or further discussion from the members.

Gwen, Chair of the plant sale encouraged everyone to BRING YOUR PLANTS FOR SALE TO THE POTLUCK GRADUATION MEETING which is the night before the sale. Also please remember to identify each plant, and if possible, have a picture of the plant in bloom. "WE NEED LOTS OF PLANTS".

Also, *please volunteer to work the Plant Sale*. It was a wonderful success last year, and the committee is looking for an even bigger and more successful one this May. Remember, it is our **biggest annual fundraiser**.

Speaking of fundraisers, Carol Moates has offered to oversee a quilt project. Anyone who sews can make a square, or more, to donate. And Carol will put it all together. She has sent out information on this project, and if you are interested, please contact her directly.

Also very important.....a *deadline for submitting information for the Grapevine* has been established.....and it is *the fifth of each month*. Anything submitted after the fifth will be published the following month.

Lynn thanked everyone for their participation and reminded members to take a copy of the 2013 Membership Directory which is now available.

Submitted by:  
Rosemarie Sawdon

**PROPOSED BUDGET 2013**  
**Bob Lockwood, Treasurer**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Starting balance	\$3609.82	\$2901.47
<b>Income</b>		
A. Dues	Unknown	\$500.00
B. Donations	\$455.00	\$500.00
C. Raffles	\$158.00	\$165.00
D. Shirts/Aprons	\$115.00	\$1500.00
E. Plant Sale	\$1625.00	\$1700.00
<b>Expenditures</b>		
A. Printing	\$325.00	\$400
B. Wireless access	\$19.00	\$20.00
C. Advertising/display panels	\$282.00	\$200.00
D. Shirts /aprons	\$115.00	\$1500.00
E. Postage	\$75.00	\$100.00
F. Supplies	\$99.00	\$125.00
G. Plant Sale	\$1625.00	\$1700.00

## Notes

1. The shirt / aprons category is essentially a flow through-- we collect it as income and pay for it as an expenditure.
2. The Plant Sale is also a flow through-- we collect the money under income and move it into the grants account As an expense.
3. In essence, dues, donations and raffles form the operating budget income. While printing, wireless access, advertising, postage and supplies comprise our expenditures. Looked at in that way our income should cover our expenses. If not, we have the carry over to fall back on.

### **WE HAVE AN EXTENSION AGENT FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY!!!!**

I would like to send a warm welcome to Kelli Scott, our new Montgomery County Extension Agent. She has her undergrad in Horticulture and a Masters in Agricultural and Extension Education, both from Virginia Tech. Her previous job was the Farm Mentor Coordinator from the Virginia Farm and Ranch Coalition Project. Kelli lives in Floyd County. Kelly will be my direct supervisor for the Master Gardener Program, but she will also be working closely with Jon Vest throughout the transition. Her email is [kescott1@vt.edu](mailto:kescott1@vt.edu) and her phone number is 382-5790.

Welcome Aboard Kelli!

Wendy Silverman

### **Time Keeping Wendy Silverman**

**We have had a lot of questions about service hours vs. volunteer management hours vs. contributed hours. So I re-developed the NRV-MG guidelines for calculating hours. There have been some changes since the past, (like the Plant Clinic requirement), so please take some time to read these, and feel free to ask me any questions.**

#### **2013 NRV-MG Guidelines for calculating volunteer time Why we report our volunteer hours**

It is important that our local government and VCE know the extent of our volunteer work. Extension agents must report the activities of their offices to local officials and the VCE Administration. Master Gardener efforts are a substantial part of those activities. The VMS (Volunteer Management System) was developed to tally the number and type of volunteer hours, and number of contacts a Master Gardener serves. Timely entries into the system makes it easier for to report accurate data that represents our efforts to local officials and VCE. In addition, documenting these volunteer hours on a timesheet justifies the existence of the MG program, supports the need for funding a NRVMG coordinator, used to determine milestone awards, and to obtain reduced rates for volunteers who want to attend the annual Master Gardener College held at Virginia Tech campus. This timesheet is divided into specific categories that describe types of service.

**Time Sheet Categories:**

Trainees and Interns	Certified Master Gardeners
<p align="center"><b>Service Activities</b>  <b>50 hours needed, up to 10 of the 50 can be Volunteer Management, 5 of the 50 must be a plant clinic, Hort. Help Desk, or Share the Spare</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Service Activities</b>  <b>20 Hours needed, up to 10 of the 20 hours can be Volunteer Management, 2 of the 20 must be a plant clinic, Hort. Help Desk, or Share the Spare</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Volunteer Management</b>  <b>Up to 10 of the 50 can be Volunteer Management</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Volunteer Management</b>  <b>Up to 10 of the 20 can be Volunteer Management</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Educational Hours</b>  <b>60 hours of training to become a Master Gardener</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Educational Hours</b>  <b>8 hours per year</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Contributed Time</b>  <b>Includes travel time and maintenance only projects. Does not count towards your 50 hours but does count towards your yearly totals</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Contributed Time</b>  <b>Includes travel time and maintenance only projects. Does not count towards your yearly 20 hours but does count towards your yearly totals</b></p>

**Service Activities**– They are projects approved by the responsible horticulture agent, and fulfill at least one of the 5 SLM (Sustainable Landscape Management) objectives, or obj. 1 under Water Quality and Waste Management. All plant related activities will be considered service activities. If you are unsure if your project fits these requirements, please ask the MG Coordinator before investing time in that project

**\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*** at least 10 of the 20 required hours for a Master Gardener, or 40 of the 50 MG internship hours must be service activities. 10% of this time (2 of the 20 or 5 of the 50 must be in the form of a plant clinic, horticultural help desk, or Share the Spare)

**Volunteer Management** – All NRVMGA activities including committees, executive board meetings, all MG e-mail correspondence, and all Master Gardener College volunteer hours that are not moderators (like shuttle drivers) are considered volunteer management. **Exceptions...**NRVMGA Grant Liaison; session monitor at Master Gardener College can be counted as Service Activity (SA) or Education Hours depending on your needs; and attending Master Gardener College Sessions Educational Hours.

**Educational Hours** – Time spent in advanced training, educational conferences, educational NRVMGA meetings, or other settings that qualify as re-certification training. If you are not sure if a certain activity qualifies, please ask the Master Gardener Coordinator. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\***Educational reading counts on a case by case basis, it depends on what you are reading. Please ask the Master Gardener Coordinator before investing time reading for Education Hours. Eight of 28 hours must be education hours to maintain your yearly Master Gardener Status. For trainees. The 60 hour training counts as your educational hours

**Contributed Time (in the VMS system, this is called Non-Educational Programming)** Non-educational programming that still contributes to the goals and mission of the local Extension program, and approved by the extension agent. These hours do not count towards your yearly requirements but do count towards your yearly totals. **Examples** of Contributed time are maintaining a non-educational public garden, travel time and non-work time necessary to do the job of volunteering.

**WE NEED PLANTS TO SELL AND PEOPLE TO HELP SELL THE PLANTS**  
**May MG Plant Sale**  
**Gwen Ewing**

Plants can come from your yard, pot them up, and label them, (name of the plant, height, sun or shade,) print out a picture of what the mature plant will look like. The picture can be from your yard or from the web. Label each pot, multiples are wonderful. Last year we sold indoor plants, aloe, African violets, ivys, Christmas cactus, jade, starts of hearts on a string, whatever you have and want to share. We sold tomatoes, broccoli, as well as perennials were dug and sold. We also sold trees. Carol has 5 five foot corkscrew willow trees ready for sell. Bulbs were also donated.

I have black plastic pots if you need any, let me know.

Do you have a forsythia in the wrong place, can you dig it and donate it to the sale? Whatever you have we will accept. Do you have a garden item -wind chime, macramé hanger, birdhouse, garden hose, ugly ceramic pot you no longer want, donate these and they will be sold.

I need helpers to PRICE these plants and garden items, come early on Saturday morning to stick prices on pots. I'll be there at 7am.

I need helpers to MOVE plants and set them out for sale, come early on Saturday, help unload truck full of plants.

I need helpers to CARRY Tables and Chairs from Wendy's office to the parking lot. And help cleaning them off at the end of the day and return them to the office.

You may bring your plants to the Potluck dinner Friday night, May 10th at the Montgomery County Govt center, Roanoke Road, Christiansburg. Where Wendy's office is located.

We 'stockpile' plants in front of the Govt center in the little garden area to the left of the front door, by the flagpole.

I need helpers to make change and keep up with the money.

We will also have a Plant Clinic table, where people can ask questions about the plants they bought as well as general questions.

I'll also send out a flyer you can print out for work or email on to your friends, Facebook buddies, workmates, to announce the Plant Sale.

For those dear, blessed people who can schmooze and ask businesses for a donation; we will have a donation letter available on our website as well as a list of businesses/nurseries. You can print out the donation letter and take with you to area nurseries to ask for a variety of plants or garden related items. But please, please tell me who is going to which business. I need a **captain** to organize this endeavor. So that businesses such as Lacey's or Lowe's is only asked one time.

Contact me if you are interested in being the **CAPTAIN**.

Please respond to this email and let me know what times you can work on Saturday, May 11th, I'll be there 7am to 3pm.

Grins,  
Gwen Ewing  
[recycle.compost@gmail.com](mailto:recycle.compost@gmail.com)

## **Run for the Border**

By: Mickey Balconi

It is spring and it is time to make a run for the borders! No, I do not mean anything illegal. I am talking about putting in some borders in your garden. There are many different materials you can use to border a garden bed. The main purposes for borders are to delineate the edge of the garden bed, and if is abutted by grass, to make mowing easier and hand trimming unnecessary. A border can also add a decorative edge rather than simply being a practical edge.

A very traditional edging is brick. If your house is brick, this makes for a good coordinated look. Some people put the bricks up on edge vertically or at an angle. While this does separate the garden bed, this method does not give a mower an edge for the wheels on one side. Laying the bricks in a shallow trench with sand in the bottom so that the top of the brick is even with the grass level will save many hours of hand trimming around the bricks.

Flat flagstone or round river rocks give a casual look to the garden bed. They can be expensive, however, if you have a lot of area to cover. I had a flagstone patio that I replaced with pavers which provided a smooth surface. The leftover flagstone was broken up and put around the garden beds in the shade garden and the veggie patch. The round rocks I can pull out of the lake or my neighbor's garden. Surprisingly he does not seem to mind me taking big rocks out of his garden!

If you have to replace cracked concrete from a drive or sidewalk, you have a source of good, free edging. The rough edge of the pieces can face out and even be piled up two or three pieces high. Sometimes this material can be found in a recycling or fill area. It is heavy work but can be inexpensive if you have the muscles.

Treated lumber is often sold for edging. The only place I would not use this is around food plants. The chemicals which keep the wood from rotting can leach into the soil

which feeds your vegetables. I have used old wood from a walkway for my raised beds, but this wood has been outside for decades and I do not think it presents any danger.

Metal edging with stakes which anchor it is the most expensive. It does present a very neat edge to separate the lawn from the garden bed. I had a few pieces left here from another project and had my husband put it in a small lawn area. It is OK as an edging, but is a little boring for me.

One garden bed is edged with concrete blocks. The holes in the blocks are visible and once filled with potting soils they are a great place for marigolds or herbs to flourish. Again, I am not a fan of grey block so I fronted the concrete blocks with blue and white plates which had little chips on the edges. This is only a good option if the edge is NOT abutted by lawn because a mower might crack the plates.

My last border tip is my favorite. I use these within a flower bed for color and shine. These internal borders are made with blue wine or water bottles. I place them upside down and at an angle in a shallow trench. They are a colorful accent in the garden even when there is nothing blooming near. They also lead your eye to different plants within the overall garden. Like the plates, these cannot be where a mower will break them. Within the garden they are safe. And to answer a question I am often asked, "No, I did not drink all the wine represented by the many bottles!" I have been given many from friends and family and did have a connection to a restaurant for a while which really provided many.

Since it is still too early to plant those summer plants, have some fun planning and putting in some new borders. Do not do as I do and use many different materials. Your garden will look more coordinated if you stick with one or two kinds of borders which go together. Have fun living "on the edge" at least in your garden!

### **April's Recipe Mango Jam**

Carol Moates

I admit I got this recipe, or one similar, from Shana Maron-Kennedy. She shared a few jars with me and I became hopelessly addicted to what I call Sunshine Jam. It takes at least four mangoes to make one pint of jam. I wash them and prick a few small holes in them and then microwave them until they are soft. Cool until you can handle them. Open them and scrape every single morsel of flesh out that you can and run it through a food processor to make it nice and smooth. Taste and add sugar to taste. Then jar it. This is something I freeze or eat as soon as it's done so this is definitely not a safe canning recipe. Please check with your local extension agent or reliable cookbook if you plan to can it and leave it on your shelf. Mine just never last very long. It is my favorite thing to wake up to each morning! I hope you enjoy!

### **April Profile**

**Bonnie Maccubbin**

Class of 2013

Background: Communications/Marketing/Public Relations

Gardening History: Used to work for a landscape architect and nursery

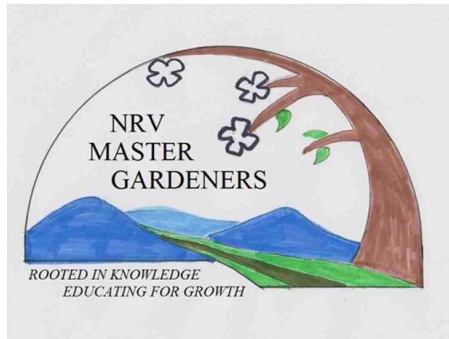


Interests and Hobbies: Karate (Tang Soo Do), Member of Panjammers (Blacksburg's Steel Drum Band)

Favorite Plants: Perennials

Recent Additions to My Garden: My husband! (Have him interested in vegetable gardening)

What is the most important thing about gardening to me? Attracting birds and butterflies



### Spring 2013

The New River Valley Master Gardener Association is a nonprofit organization working in conjunction with the Montgomery County Virginia Cooperative Extension Service (VCE) to bring horticultural education and enjoyment to people in the counties of Montgomery, Floyd, Giles, Pulaski, Craig and we are funding Radford City as well.

The money is used to fund gardening grants such as these.

**Pulaski County Visitors Center** - Continue to improve the garden (plant labels, plants!)

**Pulaski County 4-H** – Three elementary schools have greenhouses which are used by 4-H members to grow bedding plants (flowers and vegetables).

**Radford High School** - Grants in Radford are new for us. An existing garden there needs a lot of work.

**SEEDS/Blacksburg** – Children to establish a wildflower/butterfly garden.

**VICCC/Blacksburg** - Interfaith Child Care, Money for supplies for growing vegetables

**Prices Fork Elementary School/Blacksburg** - The fourth grade garden funded for plants, topsoil and garden tools.

**Christiansburg Public Library** – Install, maintain, and hold classes on "how to" for two ornamental gardens; classes for elementary school children.

May 11<sup>th</sup> is the date of our next plant sale, which will be held at the Montgomery County Government Center, Christiansburg. We are in need of your donations to make this venture extremely successful. Our federal tax # is 76-0757455. We can store plant donations if they need to be picked up before Thursday, May 9 or Friday, May 10.

We greatly appreciate your support and help in keeping the 'fun' in fundraising! Thank you!

Maureen Fallon and Lynn Brammer,  
Co-Presidents - NRV Master Gardener Association  
Office phone 540-382-5782

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### Officers

Presidents – Mo Fallon mofallon56@gmail.com & Lynn Brammer lbrammer@vt.edu

Vice president – Donna Fern—336-380-5242 vafern3@gmail.com

Secretaries – Rosemarie Sawdon – 540-953-0379 [sawdon@msn.com](mailto:sawdon@msn.com)

Linda Harris - [misslindafaye@hotmail.com](mailto:misslindafaye@hotmail.com)

Treasurer –Bob Lockwood-639-5982 [robellock@hotmail.com](mailto:robellock@hotmail.com)

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