



# The Grapevine

February- March 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)  
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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:  
(Membership Dues, Grants and General Correspondence) P.O. Box 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 awarded nine different grants for the year '11. totaling \$3807.84

#### **Treasurers Report**

As of 2/1/11

Checking	\$3996.84
Expenses	USPO \$8.89
	Pot luck \$22.94
	Pansies \$67.29
Grants account	\$6171.47 with about 50% of 2011 grants paid out.

Erica Jones, Treasurer

Minutes from January 2011 EC meeting: Well, not available. I will try next month.

### News bits:

- Lynn Bramer is still looking for mentors for the 2011 trainee class.
- Extension would like timesheets in MONTHLY. The Excel online timesheet file has been updated.
- Consider joining the (Virginia) state MG association! They have meetings across the state.
- Our MG coordinator has gotten a good list of projects and leaders together. See <http://civic.bev.net/nrvmga/projects/projects.htm> for the current list.
- I have been trying to keep the website sort of up to date. If you have any calendar additions (particularly) or have any problems, you can contact me Erica Jones [emjones@vt.edu](mailto:emjones@vt.edu)
- NRVMG BOARD meetings will be held the second MONDAY of the month at 6pm at the Gov't Center

Don't forget to check into joining the state Master Gardener Association. They have meetings and happenings scattered across the state, and are very active in the June college. For reasons not clear, NRVMG has not advertised joining the state group. I hope some local members join this year! See <http://www.vmg.net/> for more details.

Membership meetings for 2011 will be on the third Thursdays 6:30 pm (except for Friday in May and November). No rotating schedule this year! The meetings will be:

### Local Calendar Meetings NRVMG

March 17<sup>th</sup> – YMCA Solar Greenhouse

April 21<sup>st</sup> – Riverbend Nursery

May 6<sup>th</sup> (Friday) – Class 2011 graduation and Silent Auction, Montgomery Gov't Center 6pm

June 16<sup>th</sup> – To be announced

July 21<sup>st</sup> – Garden tours in Floyd county

Aug 18<sup>th</sup> – Square foot gardens Christiansburg

Sept 15<sup>th</sup> – NBA.

### Volunteers in the garden.

No, I'm not talking about two legged Master Gardeners here, but those lovely freebees we can get from certain annuals and biennials (ornamentals and edibles) that will germinate from seed.

Some gardeners adore re-seeders and others are just not suited to such chaos. Are you a volunteer type?

1. You have to be ruthless in keeping what you want, and pulling up what you don't want.
2. By definition, almost always volunteers will come up spaced too close together which means you need a killer instinct to obtain healthy plants the following year.
3. Volunteers can show up a fair distance from plant of origin.

Some annuals that reseed easily are: calendula, balsam, cutting ageratum, dill, love in a mist, annual poppies, larkspur and snow on the mountain. Some biennials also reseed vigorously, such as wallflower and parsnips. Some volunteers can be a little hard to find. Ageratum is not as distinctive of a leaf as, say balsam but it does not travel much so keep track of last year's location. And the colors tend to tone down some with the succeeding generations. My ageratum "regressed" to all blue (but how could you not like blue fluffies with 12" stems?) and the balsam was mostly pink.

Calendula has been the most faithful reseeded I've had. Part of that might be that keeping calendula blooming requires vigorous deadheading (I just mow the whole plant down to about 8" if I have gotten behind on it) which spreads the seeds. Calendula seed from commercial sources comes in things other than straight yellow -

orange (pinky yellow, semi double, yellow with dark red, orange-ish) but the seeds tend back to a more single yellow but the plants will cover the ground with blossoms.

## Summer Bulbs and Fund Raising

I understand talking \$\$ does not excite some people, but this setup seems pretty painless, and even a lot of fun.

Why do we need to raise any money? Well maybe we do not, but as a group we could branch out and do a field trip again like we did about 10 years ago. Traveling with a group of fellow gardeners to garden related spots; how can you beat that with a trowel? So what is the point of all of this? Last year we raised about \$60 with our Brent and Becky's bulb sales, which is not bad but we can add to that this year. Start your order from [www.bloomiNbucks.com](http://www.bloomiNbucks.com). We get 25% of those sales; nothing to sneeze at.

Summer bulbs can be way fun; and some things you plant this time of year can stay in the ground (around here) through the winter; unlike dahlias, elephant ears (Colocasia) and Tuberose to name three of my favorites. Winter storage for these is really not terribly difficult although having a less aggressively heated area is helpful (this might inspire you to turn down the heat next winter??). Besides the cool, you need a container (I use various hard plastic recycled multi-gallon containers) and some absorbent packing like vermiculite or wood shavings.

Dahlias seem to do really well in this area and the amazing range of colors and petal forms is worth the wait. If you are an impatient sort, nothing says you can't start the tubers inside 4 weeks before last frost. Elephant ears are a nice tropical contrast to flowering plants. The leaves come in wrinkles, burgundy, spotted, gigantic green, white ribbed, red stemmed; you get the picture. The Brent and Becky's catalog implies that plant height has everything to do with water and nutrient availability. And tuberose is a very under planted tender bulb. The fragrance is totally amazing which comes from the white spikes of waxy flowers.

Some winter hardy bulbs you might consider trying this year are any of the types of lilies, liatris, (hardy) cyclamens. and Bletilla (Chinese Ground Orchid).

Garden lilies are like dahlias in that they come in an amazing range of colors, but unlike them in that the different types have a fairly limited flowering period and then they quit. The foliage remaining after blooming is not bad though. Liatris have a funny history for me. The first time I spotted them growing was along a public highway and I was convinced they were some nasty invasive given how robust the foliage was. Well, they do bloom too in mid summer and are excellent mixed in with other perennials. Here the foliage I think is even better than on the lilies – well behaved grass like clumps. Hardy cyclamens and Bletilla are a bit pickier than most of these bulbs liking soil humus, ample water, and growing in some shade. But they both have an exotic/tropical flare.

## 2011 NRV-MG Guidelines for Completing the Timesheet Report

### Why we do timesheets:

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 timesheet was developed to tally the number and type of volunteer hours, and number of contacts a Master Gardener serves. Timely submission of timesheets 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:

**Service Activities (SA)** – They are projects approved by the responsible horticulture agent, and fulfill at least one of the 5 SLM objectives, or obj. 1 under Water Quality and Waste Management. If you are unsure if your project fits these requirements, please ask the MG Coordinator before investing time in that project. An Approved Service Projects List of codes is used to assist in filling out the SA portion of the timesheet. This list is available on the NRVMG website <http://civic.bev.net/nrvmg>, at NRVMG meetings, at the Montgomery County Office, and through the MG Coordinator.

**Example:** The VCE Apple Grafting Workshop would be entered on the timesheet under project code as SA-21. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*** at least 10 of the 28 required hours for a Master Gardener, or 40 of the 50 MG internship hours must be service activities. This is the only Category that needs to be itemized with code numbers.

**Volunteer Management (VM)** – All NRVMG activities including committees, executive board meetings, all MG e-mail correspondence, and all Master Gardener College volunteer hours are labeled as VM. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*** Just label volunteer management activities as VM and briefly describe the activity in the comment section.

**Exceptions...** *NRVMGA Grant Liaison* activities are labeled Service Activity (SA), *session monitor* at Master Gardener College can be counted as Service Activity (SA) or Education Hours (EH) depending on your needs, and *attending* Master Gardener College Sessions is Educational Hours (EH).

**Educational Hours (EH)** – Time spent in advanced training, educational conferences, educational NRVMG 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. Educational Hours are labeled EH. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*** Just label Education Hours as EH and briefly describe in the comment section. 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.

**Contributed Hours (CH)** – 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.

## New Class of 2011 Training Schedule

Tues. 3/8 AND , Thurs 3/10			Spring Break!!!!!!	
Tues. 3/15	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Trees and Shrubs MGA MEETING	Dr. Alex Niemiera, Associate Professor of Horticulture
Thrs. 3/17	YMCA Greenhouse	6:30-?	YMCA	L. David Roper
Tues. 3/22	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Plant Pathology and Plant Diagnostics	Dr. Anton Baudoin, Associate Professor, Plant Pathology, Physiology and Weed Science
Thrs. 3/24	102 Saunders	6:30- 9:30	Flower Design	Dr. Alan McDaniel, retired professor of Horticulture
Tues. 3/29	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Abiotic Plant Stresses and Plant Diagnostics	Dr. Dave Orcutt Retired Professor in Plant Physiology and fellow Master Gardener
Thrs. 3/31	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Water Quality/ Soil and Water Conservation	Cynthia Hancock and Chris Barbour, Skyline Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Staff
Tues. 4/5	Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Pavilion	6:30- 9:30	Lawns	Dr. Mike Goatly, Extension Turfgrass Specialist and Associate Professor in Crop, soil and Environmental Science
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	Vegetables	Jon Vest, Horticulture Extension Agent
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	Nestelrod on the New	6:00- 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* note time !	GRADUATION and MGA MILESTONE CELEBRATION!!!	MG Coordinator and MGA Officer Team