



# The Grapevine

January 2012

## New River Valley Master Gardeners Association

### ***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**

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### **Contact Us:**

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**Treasurer's Report 1/6/2011 Through 1/5/2012**  
**Submitted by: Erica Jones**

**Income:**

Ruritans	200.00
Plant sales (fund raising)	23.00
Misc	18.75
Raffle	82.00
Refunds (POB)	74.00
Silent Auction	712.50
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>1110.25 (- 912.00 to "grants" account) = 197.75</b>

**Expenses:**

Club expenses	
Copies	12.60
Grapevine	183.18
Internet fee	19.92
Seeds	24.95
<b>TOTAL Club expenses</b>	<b>240.65</b>
Educational	14.66
Gifts Given	50.00
PO Box	96.00
Printing and Reproduction	142.99
Social Supplies	47.20
Soil Tests	10.00
Tax	-10.00
State	10.00
<b>TOTAL Tax</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>448.51</b>

**Overall Total (loss) - \$250.76**

**MG Coordinator's...Announcements... Announcements... Announcements...**

The 2013 Master Gardener Class is about to begin! Please come with a pot-luck dish to the Hahn Pavilion on Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> for the first MG training class and welcome reception. Meet the 20 new MG Trainees, eat some great food, and re-connect with fellow Master Gardeners.

The February NRVMDGA Meeting is a special one. Instead of having it on Thursday Feb. 16, we will be having the meeting on Saturday Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> at Connie Lawson's House. The meeting will be a lesson on how to prune fruit trees. One big concern that Connie had after her husband passed away last month was how to manage pruning her orchard. We came up with the solution to have as many Master Gardeners come to Connie's house as possible, learn and practice pruning techniques, build fellowship, eat well (bring a pot-luck dish) and by the end of the day, her orchard should be pruned. Details of this wonderful and educational event.... Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Bring

pruners, loppers, and hand saws. Connie has ladders. Dress warm, for this event is likely to take place regardless of the weather (we will cancel if there is a snow storm). Yes, service hours would count.

Please send me your membership forms as soon as you can. To date, I have only received 30 completed 2012 Master Gardener contracts. We will have the forms available on-line at the NRVMGGA website, and at January and February's NRVMGGA meetings. They are also on the Master Gardener Helpdesk at the Mont. Co. Extension Office.

We will soon be launching the new database system. Once that is launched, we will no longer be collecting timesheets. Until then, please continue sending in your monthly timesheets. I hope to get everyone into the new system by early March. If you are in charge of a service project and have not done so, please send me your service project authorization forms (let me know if you need one) so I can enter the project into the new system.

We are off to a great start! See you on the 17<sup>th</sup>!!!  
Wendy

## Master Gardener Training for 2012

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class</b>	
Jan. 17, Tues	Master Gardener Welcome and Orientation Meeting – Mixer, 6:30 pm Meet the current Master Gardeners	Allen Bame, MG Training Ldr. Wendy Silverman, NRV MG Co-Ord. NRVMGA Ex. Bd. And Members
Jan. 19 Thurs	Botany- Dr. Alan McDaniel, Retired Professor of Horticulture	
Jan 24, 26	OPEN	
Jan. 31 Tues	Indoor Foliage - Dr. Jerry Williams, Retired Associate Professor of Horticulture	
Feb. 2 Thurs	Annuals and Geophytes- Stephanie Huckestein, Education and Outreach Coordinator, Hahn Hort. Gardens	
Feb. 7 Tues	Risk Management- Michelle Dickerson, Montgomery County 4-H Agent, Vegetables - Jon Vest, Floyd Agriculture Agent	
Feb. 9, Thurs	Vegetables - Jon Vest, Floyd ANR Agent	
Feb. 14 Tues	OPEN	

Feb. 18 Sat. NRVMG Meeting 10:00-4:00 at Connie Lawson's House, Dublin Topic: Tree Pruning  
Feb. 21 Tues Plant Propagation - Dr. Roger Harris, Professor, Department of Horticulture  
Feb. 23 Thurs Trees and Shrubs - Dr. Alex Niemiera, Associate Professor of Horticulture  
Feb. 28 Tues Soils- Jeannine Freyman, Soil Scientist USDA/NRCS

## Upcoming Events

### January

17<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm -Bring dish (for 20 new trainees) Meet the new class!! Hahn Hort Garden Pav.

25<sup>th</sup> Wednesday NOON garden walk at Hahn Hort Garden - "Diagnosing Plant Problems" Parking passes available!

25<sup>th</sup> Seminar Hahn Hort Garden - "Seed Starting Workshop" 10-noon \$20/\$25 Parking passes available!

### February

**18<sup>th</sup> -NRVMG Meeting** 10:00-4:00 at Connie Lawson's House, Dublin Topic: Tree Pruning

11<sup>th</sup> Seminar at Hahn Hort Garden - "Woody Plant Propagation" 10-noon \$20/25 Parking passes available!

16<sup>th</sup> **Thursday Place TBA "Native Trees for Landscaping" Alex Niemera 6-7 pm \$10/15**

## Recipe for January

### White Chili

**By: Carol Moates**

1 lb chicken, cut into small pieces	2 15 oz. cans great northern beans
1 tbsp. oil	1 14 oz. can niblet corn
1 med. onion chopped	1 14 oz. can chicken broth
1 lg. garlic clove, minced	1 4 oz. can green chilies
1 15 oz. can garbanzo beans	1 tsp cumin
1 tsp salt	½ tsp pepper
1 c sour cream	½ c whipping cream
Parsley sprigs	

In large pan heat oil and sauté chicken with onion and garlic. Add all the ingredients but sour cream and whipping cream and simmer 30 minutes uncovered. Remove from heat and add the sour cream and whipping cream; garnish with parsley sprigs.

I got this recipe from a woman in AZ who is almost 70 and cooked for the horsemanship clinic Tom attended. Her summer job is for a group that packs folks out on horseback and they travel up into the Sierra Mtns. for a week at a time. She helps pack and cooks on the trail. Lynn was quite an amazing woman who finds time to do fine beadwork as a hobby.

## **New Fundraising Event**

**By: Erica Jones**

I talked to a number of (other) MG clubs at the annual "college" and the most commonly mentioned fundraiser is a plant sale. So our (first annual) plant sale will be May 5th, 10-5 at the Montgomery County Government Center (755 Roanoke St Christiansburg), rain or shine. We will be needing:

- 1) Labeled and priced healthy plants
- 2) Tables for displaying. And chairs.
- 3) Suggested best sellers were perennials and annuals. House plants were a maybe but I'd say try them
- 4) If you have any other gardening items like tools or books we sure can sell them too.
- 5) Plant carrying devices - trays or cardboard boxes. If folks are comfortable accumulating plants to purchase, they will buy more.
- 6) People to help with sales, marking, set up, and take down.

This fundraiser will be the main support for our grants program (which lately we have been doing every year, albeit smaller total amounts). Our grant program has been in existence some 20 years and has been a cheerful supporter of public and private school gardening programs, nursing home, Jr MG programs and 4-H programs, and some public garden spots. We try to emphasize the educational, informational and garden enjoyment in the grants we fund.

So start thinking now about what you can divide or propagate. Do remember - the longer a divided plant gets to establish in its new container, the better.

## **What's in bloom in January**

**By: Erica Jones**

Well, this might be cheating, but on January 1<sup>st</sup> I had pansies and violas, and a vine which I think is *Gelsemium rankinii* I think, not *Gelsemium sempervirens*. See <http://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=812>. According to Va Tech, it is supposed to bloom late fall and again early spring. This plant is basically not hardy in my (polar)

garden so it drops all its leaves every fall and does not always bloom profusely. But it does spread profusely.

### **Travel tips**

**By: Erica Jones**

I have some cousins who seem to be getting older (unlike myself of course) so during the holidays I drove north to visit. I had a sudden inspiration to leave a day early, and take a detour to Longwood Gardens. Enough of the family!

I have to admit I have avoided “doing” large public gardens with conservatories during the holidays in the past. Being a bit of a snob; I thought “oh, I will see nothing new”. Bah humbug!

The conservatory and “growing greenhouses” were the main attraction for most tourists; but the grounds that day (blowing snow and about 40 F ) had an impressive number of folks outside enjoying a garden in the winter. Two of the highlights for me was a large conifer decorated with painted birds nest gourds and Osage oranges, and being able to really view the structure/form/shape of some of the impressive older trees and shrubs on the grounds. With no leaves in the way you could appreciate better the bark texture, fruiting bodies (Japanese larch for example) and branches/twigs. One shrub that was particularly impressive is an upright Japanese yew which must be quite elderly. Interestingly the topiaries were well trimmed, but closed to close-up inspection.

Inside were masses of color on the greenhouse floors. I particularly liked the white kolachoes which were interspersed with spikes of red amaryllis. Gargantuan pink poinsettias scattered around a mass of cyclamen. The sheer expanse of these displays is mind boggling. Also fun was the planted “theme” wreaths. Think sedum or ferns in a wreath, hanging above your head some 8’ across in a frame.

One non-holiday (and popular) attraction inside were the bonsai. Labels on these usually had the date they started “training” (I think torture might be a better word) and the species. A couple of the 100 yearers were unknown species. Of interest was a 100 year old Pomegranate which appeared to have lost ½ of its top, with one lone fruit hanging from the “good” side. Seeds for a future exhibit? The bonsai were behind glass; I assume in a less heated environment. Most of the bonsai were deciduous which gives you a better view of all the torture process.

### **January’s Tasks**

#### The Whole Garden

- \*Collect seed and plant catalogs.
- \*Check the dates on seed packets that you already own.
- \*Read your catalogs thoroughly before ordering new seeds or plants.
- \*Study the bare bones of your garden and make notes on potential improvements.
- \*Tour your garden and look for plant damage.
- \*Plan new gardens.
- \*Place your seed orders.
- \*Beware of a January thaw.
- \*Apply winter mulch.

#### Trees and Shrubs

- \*Remove excess snow from shrubs, especially those planted close to the roofline of the house.
- \*Use Christmas trees and holiday greens to protect plants from the frost heave.
- \*Prune dead or broken branches off trees.
- \*Prune summer-and-fall-blooming woody vines and shrubs while they are dormant.
- \*Fertilize acid-loving shrubs, if you didn't fertilize them in the fall.
- \*If you forgot to apply anti-desiccant to your broad-leaved evergreens in late fall, do it now.
- \*Water broad-leaved and needled evergreens during a thaw.

#### Flowers and Grasses

- \*Routinely inspect houseplants and outdoor plants overwintered indoors for pests and diseases.
- \*Water indoor plants less frequently until they return to active growth.
- \*Pinch and turn houseplants to keep them shapely.
- \*Keep houseplants clean.
- \*Avoid excessive salt use on icy paths and driveways.

#### Fruits and Vegetables

- \*Make a plan to rotate vegetable crops when designing next year's garden.
- \*Prune fruit trees now that they are dormant.



It's a new year and a new beginning for everything. I am ordering seeds and planning my garden and I know many of you are also. I discovered the Bakers Creek catalog this year, thanks to one of you MGs. I must say, I had to order for both Bakers Creek and Fedco this year and I have always been a Fedco woman!

I do hope more of you will contribute to our (stress the OUR part) newsletter. We need photos and updates on projects, recipes and things of interest. Let's make this more of a group effort. I am looking forward to 2012 being a year of interest and inclusion for OUR newsletter.

Carol Moates

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