



The Grapevine

September 2011

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

President – Connie Lawson 674-6127 conniel@vt.edu
Vice president – Helen Young – 392-2292 helen.young@verison.net
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At large – Lynn Brammer – 449- 6621 lbrammer@vt.edu
At large – Keith Mileski – 382-7479 janicem955@gmail.com
Past president – Gwen Ewing – 382-9566 ewinggr@vt.edu
Open Position, Trainee Member-at-Large

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NRVMGA

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Treasurer's Report by Erica Jones

Grants Account:

Outgo	Income
6/16 From silent auction	\$711.50
6/16 From Ruritans	\$200.00
6/29 East Mont. Garden Club (second ½ grant) -	\$150
7/5 Montgomery County Libraries	\$ 50.00
(for support of Cburg Library water garden project)	
7/13 Pulaski County Library (second ½ grant)	\$200
7/13 Treasurer of Virginia Tech – Signs for grants	\$48
7/13/ Dividends	\$.08
7/13 Balance	\$3874.46

Grants status – Done – Pulaski Co Library, Pulaski Co 4-H, East Mont Garden Club, Harding Elementary, Belview Elementary
No activity to date – Montgomery Museum, East Mont Elementary School
Finished but not spent all of grant \$ – Heritage Hall, Christiansburg Library

Club checking:

7/14 Old Town Printing (Grapevine May-Aug)	\$93.92
7/21 Bev Net (web site annual fee)	\$19.92
7/14 Balance	\$3503.63

Upcoming bill - \$92 for POB

Notes from the Board

We had what I consider the most educational meeting of the year on August 18th. The articulate and hospitable Deb Graff who worked in our extension office for awhile, hosted a curious, question filled crowd. She shared her years of experience with raised bed planting and with square foot gardening. This lady knows her stuff. Not afraid of the trial and error process, Deb had amazing results from seasons of fine tuning her methods. We came away with a wealth of information compliments of her realistic approach. And I came away inspired and impressed with all she has accomplished despite her physical limitations. There will be an upcoming "plant day" at her garden in September and as a tribute to Deb and all the knowledge she shared we are going over to help get some plants in the ground and assist with any other garden chores she might have. There will be an email about this get together when arrangements are confirmed.

As with all monthly meetings, we had a brief business portion and these are the highlights:

* By- law amendments are on Jon Vest's desk for feedback/advice/input and then on to Wendy

for revision. They will be emailed to the membership to read through and voting will be at November potluck meeting.

* Remember the International MG meeting in West Virginia in October; Wendy is going. It may never be hosted this close to us again!

* Because of no dues in 2011 our treasury has taken a hit, we need to generate funds if we want to continue the grant program. Plant Sale/Garden Day suggested for the first week in May. Start thinking of dividing some plants for the event. We could also incorporate a plant clinic/composting demo/sell stepping stones/hypertufa pots ...we need your input and ideas and most importantly everyone's commitment to make this a success.

* Remember Saturday, September the 10th, Floyd Harvest Festival; see Wendy to sign up.

* Seeking nominations for officer positions for 2012. No treasurer on the ballot at this time. Optimally we could use someone with accounting experience to make sure we maintain our non-profit status...or how about someone that can balance their checkbook?

*Reminder that all board meetings are open to the membership. Second Monday of each month, usually 5:30 at the Extension office

*Share the Spare is breaking records each week at the Farmers Market. Now we are gleaning local fruit trees for donation. See Lynn Brammer if you would like to participate. If you help with gleaning you get some of the fruit if you'd like!

David Helsher (dandjhelcher@cox.net<mailto:dandjhelcher@cox.net>) has kindly agreed to be the point person for collecting photos. Just make sure you add a note indicating what the project is. Erica Jones has been checking in to a photo website that can be used for all to drop them there. We will let the membership know when we have worked out the kinks, but in the meantime please be taking shots of your projects to add to our "brag board." We will use them for educational purposes, showing off at Master Gardener College, and to defend our existence with the state and extension. All grant liaisons should make a point of documenting how our grant money was spent.

Thanks to all for hard work on our various activities, and remember the board welcomes your input on how our association is running. **By Lynn Brammer Member- at- Large**

**MINUTES OF NEW RIVER VALLEY
VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER BOARD MEET
AUGUST 8TH, 2011
Location: Government Building
Extension Office**

In Attendance: Connie Lawson, Gwen Ewing, Lynn Brammer, Helen Young,
Keith Mileski, Erica Jones, Jack Selcovitz, Rosemarie Sawdon
Wendy Silverman, Jon Vest

Connie called meeting to order at 5:30pm. Minutes from July 13th meeting approved.
Wendy suggested adding date of **next Board meeting which will be Monday, September 12th**.

Erica noted that there were no changes in the Treasurer's Report from the July 13th report.

Old Business: By-Laws

Wendy had suggested changes to the By-Laws at the May 6th meeting based on the premise that the Association may not have a Coordinator at some point in the future. The changes were approved at that meeting and then rescinded for additional discussion at the May 6th meeting.

It was requested that Jon Vest, Floyd County Extension Agent, give input and suggestions for the final change. Jon suggested several changes which, in effect, would not hold Association Officers of the NRVMG responsible as the program is under the VA Extension Office and a designated Extension Agent. This program is run at the discretion of the VA Extension Office and under the oversight of an Extension Agent..

Wendy will rewrite the changes and submit them to Jon for approval. Changes made will be submitted to Board members and published on the website.

New Business:

Also discussed was volunteer time which includes monthly meetings and education, such as any program presented by a Master Gardener, Hahn Garden Walks, etc. Education credit must be approved by Jon Vest.

The week of October 10th is the International Master Gardener Meeting in West Virginia. Wendy is attending and has asked if anyone would like to join her. She will be staying the nights of October 11 & 12th

FundRaising

The yard sale originally planned for this Fall has been reconsidered, since it would probably not generate enough money for the effort and work involved.

Instead the Association will concentrate on a Spring Plant Sale. Jon gave examples of how the Roanoke Master Gardener Association handled their plant sale and how successful it has been over many years. So the focus

for our big fundraiser will be the Spring Plant Sale in Christiansburg, after checking that it will not interfere with the Hahn Garden Plant Sale.

Wendy stated that the Friends of the Library would like to meet with us, and Wendy will arrange this meeting. Lynn, Erica, Connie & Rosemarie indicated they would be interested in attending.

Carol Moats our newspaper editor is desperate for material to put in The GrapeVine. She needs the information in a timely manner and would like to hear from all members. Garden tips, bios, recipes, insect issues and remedies, "what's new in my garden", etc are suggested topics. Remember there is a deadline!

Erica asked again for pictures. If person can be identified, most request photo release form.

Jon requested a large poster showing the accomplishments of the NRVGA to use at Extension Events. He offered to help with printing, etc., and one is apparently being worked on for the Board of Supervisors Meeting in November.

Upcoming Events: Monthly Meeting...

August 18th at Debra Graff's Home, 351 Rolling Hills Drive, Christiansburg
Directions: Approximately 2 miles past New River Valley Mall,
Route 114, left turn on Rolling Hills Drive. Approximately .04
of mile to Brick Cape Cod on cul-de-sac .
Car Pooling from New River Valley Mall near Penny's & Dick's
Sporting Goods (across from Red Robin) meet at 6:15pm.

Debra is well known for her expertise on vegetable gardening and raised beds.

September 10th - Floyd Harvest Festival - Master Gardeners will have plant clinic.

Nominations are needed for Board Member Elections in November.

Submitted by:
Rosemarie Sawdon

2012 Master Gardener Class

Change is happening. The seasons are changing, a new school year begins, and now it is time to focus on the 2012 NRV Master Gardener Program. This month we are advertising for the next Master Gardener training class. Applications go out in October. I have already met with Master Gardeners from Pulaski, Giles and Floyd about where to advertise in those counties and some flyers have already been distributed in Pulaski. Soon, advertisements will be published in the area newspapers.

Recruiting for the next class is a big undertaking. To be successful, we need all of your help. Talk to

your friends about Master Gardening. Mention becoming a Master Gardener at plant clinics, share the spare, gardening at the Hahn Gardens, and in our 40 or so Master Gardener Projects. If you would like to help distribute recruitment flyers (especially in Floyd, Giles, and Pulaski) please let me know. I hope to have the 2012 trainee class be a true representation of the New River Valley. With your help, we can make that happen.

By: Wendy Silverman

Things Blooming – Present, Past, and Future

Shrubs

Crape myrtle

Dead headed spirea

Buddleja (esp the dead headed ones)

Abelia

Clemnatis virginia

Some hibiscus

Annuals. The cutting ageratum looking great; had patches of cutting zinnia (Peppermint) and summer phlox dry up!

Perennials

"Garden" mum

Helianthus

Past it:

Ruebekia

Beauty Berry

Coming on:

Various varieties of Autumn Joy-like sedum

Goldenrod (under rated I think)

By Erica Jones

The Plant People

Last month while taking on my nanny job for a week for our 4 and 6-year old grandchildren in Chevy Chase, I planned a daily project. Some e.g. "plant person" and "bug suckers" were borrowed from working with the Junior Master Project this spring at the Hort Garden. Each of them created the head for the the "plant people" using one leg of a panty hose, dropping a few spoonfuls of grass seed in first and then adding a couple of cups of potting soil and twisting to form a large ball. They watered the "heads" during my stay and sure enough, the green hair sprouted on each one. Charlotte and Miles were excited and the plan was to keep the heads moist to continue hair growth and then they would design the face using foam squares, etc.

Last weekend Charlotte wanted to talk with me on the phone. She said "Mimi, I have some sad news." I asked what had happened. Her reply, "The plant people died." I assured her that we could try to make the "plant people" another time.

By: Susan Lockwood

How to Dry Tomatoes

Roma type tomatoes are the best. Wash well. Slice in half, or thirds if big. You can pop out the seed capsules when you slice. No need to peel. Last batch I sliced off the stem end.

Best temperature is about 150F. My dehydrator does not have a thermostat; I put a meat thermometer on a rack to test (and temperature will vary by rack). Place on drying racks, skin down. Segregate the center slice pieces, as these will dry much faster. Wait and watch.

Middle slices are easy to burn (turn black). Commercial instructions say 10-12 hours. Varies with temperature and thickness.

When the slices with skin start curling up, flatten them out and flip over to keep flat.

Storage: If really dry, keep fine in cupboard (dry being still flexible but not mushy). Marginal put in freezer. Use up within 12 months.

Uses: I usually cut up smaller when cooking with these. They are pretty potent (unless you really want that "tomato zap"). Add to lentil soup, chili, bulgur, pot roast. **By Erica Jones**

Recipe of the Month Frieda Bostian's Candied Ginger and Rosemary Squares

1 lb unsalted butter, softened
1 3/4 cups sugar
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp salt
2 large eggs, beaten lightly
1 cup (@5oz) finely chopped crystallized ginger
3 tblsp dried or 1 tblsp fresh chopped rosemary
1 tblsp water

Preheat oven to 350 degrees; grease a 9 x 13 pan.

In large bowl beat together butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Gradually add flour and salt to butter mixture, then eggs and water and mix well.

Beat in ginger and rosemary and spread dough evenly into pan.

Bake in middle of oven 35-35 minutes or until a tester inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan on a rack. Cut into small squares. Freezes well. **By Evelyn Meliano**

Local Happenings

September

15th Membership meeting 6:30 pm- Alex Niemera, "Gardening in all Seasons" Hahn Hort Garden

October

10-14th International Master Gardener College- Location: Charleston, WV .

See <http://imgc.ext.wvu.edu/> for information. Tours! Some eight "breakout" sessions concurrently!!

20th Membership meeting 6:30 pm- Tour of PME Floyd Not confirmed; stay tuned. 540-763-5688 (Office) 540-239-5728 (Mobile) www.pme-compost.com

22nd "Water-wise Landscaping" W E Skelton 4-H Center (Smith Mt Lake) 9-3 \$25/\$30 Plants, water quality, slide show, water projects Contact Nelda Purcel 540 576 9931

September Garden Chores

The Whole Garden

- *Continue watering your garden as needed during dry weather.
- *Continue collecting seeds for next year's garden.
- *Continue checking regularly for signs of pests and diseases.
- *Continue weeding your beds and garden.
- *Cover water gardens with netting.

Trees and Shrubs

- *Plant roses as well as other trees and shrubs.
- *Cut roses with fall bloom to bring indoors.
- *Water newly planted trees and shrubs once a week.
- *Water established trees and shrubs only in periods of drought.

Flowers and Grasses

- *Cut back ragged-looking perennials.
- *Divide perennials.
- *Divide peonies.
- *Uproot spent annuals and toss them on the compost pile.
- *Sow annuals for bloom next year.
- *Dig tender bulbs when leaves die back.
- *Plant tulips.
- *Move indoors any houseplants that summered outdoors.

Fruits and Vegetables

- *Continue direct-seeding lettuce, endive, escarole, and spinach and any cold hardy plants.
- *Harvest all your basil before frost.
- *Harvest fall raspberries (*Rubus* spp.).
- *Before a hard frost, harvest fava beans.
- *Begin harvesting cold-tolerant vegetables such as Brussels sprouts and kale.
- *Harvest pumpkins and winter squash.
- *Dig up and pot rosemary to overwinter indoors.
- *Clean up areas of the vegetable garden that have finished producing.

Floyd Harvest Festival



Yesterday was Harvest Festival here in Floyd and I can attest to the fact that everyone attending had a wonderful time. There were lots of entries and the judging was tough but fun. The weather was perfect and there were things for children and adults to enjoy as well as scrumptious foods. I just found out that we, as MGs, can enter items for judging as well and at this Thursday's meeting, Sept. 15th, we will have a mock judging. Please come out and bring anything from fresh produce, live

plants, or canned goods. It should be a good time as well as a learning experience.





I want to thank every single person for responding to my requests for contributions. I also want to remind those who are sitting back that one of these days, when you least expect it, I will be emailing you with a request - - - so, come on and get 'er done ahead of that!

Also, those of you who contribute regularly - - - I will not be using you guys to fill our newsletter constantly (this does not go for the board members and those who give reports). That is truly unfair when we have a rather long membership role. Remember, you get to count your time for your contribution!!

**New River Valley
Master Gardener Association
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Blacksburg, VA 24063**