



The Grapevine

May 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.

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Open Position, Trainee Member-at-Large

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NRVMGA

NRV MGA Website:
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Virginia Cooperative Extension – Montgomery County Office

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(MG Coordinator and Timesheets)
755 Roanoke Street, Suite 1G,
Christiansburg, VA 24073
(540) 382-5790 Fax: (540) 382-5729

Treasurer's Report, Erica Jones

May activity:

Checking

Office Max \$11.54 - "Bid" sheets

Silent auction deposit \$713.

Ruritan Donation - \$200.00

Balance (I think) \$5035.15

Grants Account:

Christiansburg Library - \$152.63

Grants Account balance - \$4322.15

Three grants have been 100% paid for this grant cycle. We started everyone out on 50% of grant for first payment.

New River Valley Master Gardener Association 2011 Directory Update

Changes to the Executive Board:

Rosemarie Sawdon Secretary 540-953-0379 sawdon@msn.com

Changes to Newsletter Editor:

Newsletter Editor: Carol Moates 540-745-4782 cymoates@gmail.com

Changes to NRV MGA membership (add):

Brad Jones

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Moving Forward with New Ideas and Programs

The big news of the month is I have accepted the full position as NRV Master Gardener Coordinator which started in mid May. I am very excited to be able to work with all of you on a consistent basis. Thanks for all of your support and patience while we went through a huge and sometimes difficult transition time. Now that I am working at full capacity and my e-mail is up and running as normal, we can now move forward with new ways to serve the public.

A lot of new ideas are taking place in how we can better serve the public. Soon we will have a Master Gardener Help Desk with a phone number and an e-mail that the public can access directly to ask their horticulture questions. The phone used will be in the Montgomery Office but the number will be advertized in all four counties. This way, we can funnel all questions to a central location. We will field the questions, attempt to answer them, or pass them on to Jon Vest when we get stumped.

Beginning in July, I would like to get some location and interest -based teams started including one of only Pulaski and Radford MGs, and one of only Giles MGs so we can address needs in those counties specifically. I would like to do this in Floyd as well once we get a few more Floyd MGs. If you would like to be part of a team please let me know. Some interest topics I have already heard about are organic gardening, lawn care, and horticulture therapy.

If you are interested in these topics and would like to start a team, or if you would like to start a different team, please let me know.

I look forward to working with all of you in the year ahead!

Wendy Silverman
Master Gardener Coordinator



June Garden Chores

The Whole Garden

- *Water newly planted plants and transplants.
- *Do the watering early in the morning.
- *Weed planting beds as necessary.
- *Throw healthy garden clippings onto the compost.

Trees and Shrubs

- *Deadhead rhododendrons, azaleas, mountain laurels, and lilacs.
- *Deadhead repeat-blooming roses to encourage more flowers.
- *Spray roses early and regularly to prevent fungal diseases.
- *Fertilize roses, except for once-blooming roses.
- *Continue planting trees, shrubs, ground covers, and other plants purchased in containers.
- *Continue pruning conifers such as pines, firs, and spruces.

Flowers and Grasses

- *Sow annual seeds.
- *Transplant warm-season annuals on a gray, windless day after the last frost date.
- *Stake tall annuals and lax perennials, if you haven't done so already.
- *Dig or pull out excess perennials.
- *Pinch back chrysanthemums when 4 to 6 inches high.

Fruits and Vegetables

- *Continue direct seeding vegetable crops.
- *Direct-seed or transplant basil when the weather is warm and settled.

- *Direct-seed kale, collards, and rutabagas in the garden for fall harvest.
- *Finish sowing corn.
- * Transplant broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts starts for a fall crop.
- *Continue planting tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants into the garden.
- *Continue transplanting or begin direct-seeding pumpkins, summer and winter squashes, and melons into the garden.
- *Transplant or direct-sow cucumbers into the garden when soil reaches 70F.
- *Continue transplanting or seeding herbs.

Meet Hazel Beeler

I went through Master Gardener training more than a decade ago, at least as far back as 1997 and maybe earlier, and I dropped my membership in 2001. I was having trouble finding volunteer opportunities that worked for me, but I missed the organization, so I was interested in renewing when Wendy Silverman contacted me earlier this year. My planned project of planting trees at the Christiansburg end of the Huckleberry Trail was approved by the MGA, but it is still awaiting an okay from the Town of Christiansburg, which administers that end of the Trail.

I am a botanist/geologist by education. I came to Tech more than 20 years ago to work on my doctorate, and when I finished, there were no tenure-track jobs in my specialty, paleobotany, so I stayed in beautiful southwestern Virginia. I have been an adjunct instructor at New River Community College for years, and when teaching is slack, I work as my husband's assistant in his carpentry business. We do home repairs, build decks and outbuildings, etc.

I've always loved plants, and gardening is a big thing for me. Michael and I plant a big vegetable garden every year and grow a significant portion of what we eat. We tried farmer's markets for a few years and found it was too much work for too little return, but I still bring in a small amount by selling fresh spinach to my colleagues. We freeze and can as much as possible and make our own tomato sauce, chutney and barbecue sauce. Our BBQ sauce won a first prize at the Newport Agricultural Fair a couple of years ago, and we often take ribbons in the fruit, produce and canning categories. We also have an orchard (peach, European pear, Asian pear, apple, Greengage plum, Japanese plum, apricot, plout and almond trees), and we can our fruit harvest too (ask me the best way to preserve fresh-picked apricots). To add to our homegrown bounty, we shoot the deer that get into orchard and garden, butcher them, and put the meat into the freezer. I prepared the skin of one of our victims several years ago and made a vest from it.

I also love to plant flowers, and I've tried to plant flowering perennials, trees and shrubs for as long a season of bloom as possible. There are lots of rhododendrons and azaleas in flower in our yard right now (20 May), two rugosa roses, 14 different varieties of iris, plus four different kinds of columbine and hybrids thereof. Easy-care plants are my favorites—things you can stick into the ground and not have to pamper. Michael used to say that plants you can't eat aren't worth growing, but now he says he knows that flowers provide food for the heart and mind too.

Our household has neither television nor internet connection, and we fill our free time (when we have any) by reading and working on household projects (we built and installed over-the-window bookshelves in two rooms last winter). I make small “cathedral window” quilted wall hangings, which sometimes win prizes at the fair, knit socks, and sometimes do sewing projects (I used to make most of my own clothes, but I no longer have time). I make Christmas ornaments by folding and gluing used Christmas cards and sell them at NRCC’s December craft fair. I’m active in my local garden club.

SHARE THE SPARE 2011

Share The Spare [made](#) its 2011 debut Saturday May the 21st at the Blacksburg Farmers Market. A booth at the market that is set up from 8 until 2 pm, we ask that patrons of the market consider buying just one more item that they donate to our basket. This fresh produce gets passed on to those in our community that need this healthy option on their dinner table. We had a tremendous response our inaugural year in 2010 that yielded an amazing amount of donations. From that we would like to expand this year to create an even higher awareness in the community about our mission. Our goal is to make sure that every member of the local community know that we also are ready to accept donations from the local gardeners as they see their own backyard harvest become available... got too many zucchini, we’ll take them, too many greens, we’ll take them. A fruit tree in the corner of the yard, we will not only accept your donation we can also get a team to come by and pick the tree if needed. Anyone that offers to volunteer at the booth would be encouraged to be outgoing and make every attempt to connect with the patrons at the market, to make sure they know our purpose. Making eye contact and catching their attention in order to start a conversation about Share the Spare will be a guarantee to raise our visibility in the community. Many locals are already familiar with us and have even asked when will start the season, so we already have an established reputation. If you are a Master Gardener hosting the booth, please take advantage of sharing and giving your “testimonial” about your experience about Cooperative Extension and the Master Gardener program. The more the public is educated about what extension does and offers can only be healthy for them at this horrific time with budget cuts. Also, regarding the donations themselves, use some common sense about protecting the more perishable of the items. If we have some eggs and the sun is hitting the basket, maybe pull them back and under the table in the shade. I like having the food out and displaying how generous folks are, (it inspires others) but not at the risk of harming any item. There have been a few folks that want to donate monetarily, I discourage that, but don’t want to offend anyone’s generosity, so accept the money and then let them know that you are going to use it to purchase items from one of the vendors. When you do this, let the vendor know that it is for our booth and they will typically give you a bit more or else sell at the “vendor price”, a discount they offer each other and have been gracious enough to extend to our booth. I plan to have a fact sheet available at the booth that goes in to a bit more detail about the program and about what organizations get this food. Also on that fact sheet will be my info if someone wants to know more

about a donation opportunity or if they would like someone to come speak to a group about our purpose. If you would like to sign up for a two hour shift or a double shift please let me know times and dates. I will always be there to set up at 8:00am and at 2:00pm to break down the booth and handle distribution. Anyone unsure about running the show for the first time would be welcome to stop by and shadow someone else to feel more comfortable with playing host. It is a fun and rewarding day each Saturday. And the first time you see that mom or dad letting their child put a head of cabbage in our basket and explaining what it's all about is worth its weight in gold!

Lynn Brammer lbrammer@vt.edu 381-4846h/449-6621c [Share the Spare has a facebook page!](#) Check it out and "like it" please! And don't hesitate to give me ongoing feedback about any tweaks we could do to make things smoother or more clear for all involved. Thank you so much for any time you could offer.

Recipes

There's been mention of sharing recipes. I'll go first and am expecting some folks to email me their favorites for the coming months.

Cardamom Banana Bread from [Vegetarian Planet](#) by Didi Emmons

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease a 9 or 10 inch loaf pan.
Combine 2/3 cup raisins with 1/3 cup apple cider and bring to a simmer. Let set for 10 minutes.
Combine in large bowl 1 cup unbleached white flour, 3/4 cup whole wheat flour (or use all white), 2 tsp. baking powder, 1 tsp. baking soda, 1 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. ground cardamom and mix well. In a separate bowl mash 3 bananas and add 1/3 cup safflower oil, 3/4 cup light brown sugar and beat together. Add 2 eggs and beat again. Stir the wet mixture into the dry mixture until well combined. Add the raisins with the liquid and 1/2 cup chopped walnuts. Pour into greased loaf pan and bake 50 – 60 minutes until a knife inserted in the middle comes out clean. Cool before taking from pan for at least 10 minutes.

This is a wonderful change from the same old banana breads with a new fresh taste. Nutmeg can be substituted for those who don't like cardamom. I also use barley flour because it has a sweeter taste than wheat.

Fruit Trees from Sticks

I have included my grandchildren with my love for gardening. They lived in Michigan and we only saw them a few times a year. They made a trip in the early spring and I was planting dormant fruit trees. Grace was helping me as much as a two year old could do. When they came back in the summer the tree had leafed out and she was so impressed with this tree that she helped Granny to plant. In late

fall the family was planning another trip to Virginia. They were walking their dogs. Grace picked up a stick and was carrying it as they walked. When they got home, her Mother told her to put the stick in the trash. She told her Mother she was taking the stick to Granny so Granny could plant it and it would turn into a beautiful tree.

Grace is now 11. She has her own garden that Granny helped her to start a couple years ago. She grows beans, tomatoes, peppers, squash, and this year she is adding watermelons. So I guess we can pass the love of gardening on to the next generation!

No Granny cannot make a stick grow, but it is sure fun trying to make other things grow. I have had lots of fun with the children in our church watching them grow different things. I have given them tomato plants and they have had such fun watching them grow and produce tomatoes. I enjoy working with the children and teaching them the love of gardening. They are such eager learners. I look at Grace now and cannot help thinking about that time when she was only two and thought we had only planted a stick and got a fruit tree. By: Connie Lawson

Schedule of Upcoming Events

June

13th NRV MG Board - Mont Co. Extension office, 6pm

16th - Membership meeting 6:30 pm Tour Rebekah's Country Garden 6pm - rebekah.paulson@comcast.net, 540-250-6905

22-26th Master gardener college Virginia Tech

July

7th -NRV MG Board - Mont Co. Extension office, 6pm

21th - Membership meeting - Garden tours in Floyd. 6:30pm Guides Pam Cadmus, Jane O'Keefe
Carpool

Nearby locations listing educational events:

- Green Spring Gardens, Fairfax <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gsgp/ed-adult.htm>
- VMGA calendar <http://www.vmganet.org/Calendar/calendar.htm>
- JC Raulston Arboretum Raleigh
NC <http://www.ncsu.edu/jcraulstonarboretum/calendar/2011/2011.php>
- Lewis Ginter Richmond <http://www.lewisginter.org/adult-education/index.php>
- Lynchburg "Old City Cemetery" <http://www.gravegarden.org/events.htm> - lots of horticultural happenings
- US Botanic Garden <http://www.usbg.gov/education/events/index.cfm>
- National Arboretum <http://www.usna.usda.gov/Education/events>.
- Southern Exposure Seed Exchange <http://southernexposure.com>

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Master Gardener Association
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