

President's letter

Greetings members,

I am writing to you from Boise, Idaho. I am lucky that this town is the home of one of my daughters and her family.



From their home, I can walk a block and start a hike on the Ridges-to-Rivers trail system. This trail system of 150 miles

can bring you to the Boise River that runs through the heart of the city, or up the ravines and gulches that lead to the Saw Tooth Mountains. Today's hike had me thinking about my trade - native landscaping and plants. Here you cannot have a typical garden without irrigation. In the summer months, rain is not predictable. Some winters do not bring much snow pack or rain either.

Strolling in this city, you come across many different landscapes. They range from crisp green lawns and handsome shrubs, yards that are all fruit and vegetable gardens, and a few native landscapes. This is a different kind of aesthetic to learn to appreciate, but they are very handsome indeed and require very little care once they have established a deep root system.

On my way back down the gulch with its fantastic views and abundant wildlife, I started to think about the native landscape in our West Virginia.

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WVNLA's 2014 scholarship recipient balances unusual responsibilities

In some ways, Silas Childs took the road less traveled on his route to receipt of WVNLA's 2014 scholarship. While he's an honors student in Horticulture at West Virginia University, he is also married with two small children at home.

His unique position as a family man with a full-time course-load and a job presents challenges not everyone could handle.

"I don't get to spend as much time with the family as I would like because I have homework to do in the evenings and weekends. I struggle to get quality time for studying and really have to maximize the time I have," said Silas, who is 25 years old.

Somehow, he's managed to squeeze in enough study time to maintain an impressive 4.0 GPA. His interest in horticulture began in high school, when he planted a vegetable garden at his family's home in Australia. He researched solutions for the sandy and dry soil there.

"I began reading any gardening books I could get my hands on and started making large quantities of compost to improve the soil. My hard work paid off and our expanded gardens soon provided the majority of our family's vegetable consumption," Silas.

That interest in gardening and horticultural research continues in his studies of ornamental and vegetable plant breeding at WVU.

Before starting his course work at WVU, he worked for various nurseries and at landscaping companies, where he

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Silas Childs, WVU Horticulture major and WVNLA 2014 scholarship winner

Pesticide Re-certification date added

WVNLA and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture have scheduled a Pesticide Applicator's Re-certification Workshop on Monday, July 14 at the Days Inn Conference Center in Flatwoods. *Details on page 3.*

MANTS planners prevail despite weather challenges

A first-time visit to MANTS is rather awe-inspiring. It's the largest trade show of its kind in the nation and this year included 3,183 vendors, 10,352 paid registrants and 967 exhibiting companies in more than 1,530 booths.

Some impressive numbers to be sure, but you really do have to see it to believe it.

When I arrived the day before the January show opened to set up WVNLA's booth, I was grateful to find our booth near the entrance. Baltimore Exhibition Hall stretched nearly endlessly and hummed with activity as forklift drivers delivered pallets of shrubs, plants, products and exhibition materials.

The polar vortex was at its icy height, complicating deliveries and travel plans. As I left the hall on the evening before the show opened, many booths were incomplete, some



Exhibitors scurried to set up their displays before the doors opened.

The hall underwent a remarkable transformation by the following morning. Booths featured fully landscaped displays of thriving plants, neatly presented products and company representatives ready to do business.

The doors opened and customers rolled in. Some bee-lined for particular vendors, while others wandered a somewhat aimlessly. As several told me, it's a good idea to do some homework and have a plan to be sure you hit the exhibits of the most interest.

Visitors stopped by WVNLA's booth, sandwiched between show co-sponsors Maryland Nursery and



Julie Robinson explains membership options to an attendee.

barren of any contents. Carpet hadn't been laid. Pallets of materials were untouched in their plastic wrapping.

It didn't look as though the show would go on.



Attractive booths catch the eye of some attendees, while other buyers head to familiar wholesalers.

Landscape and Virginia Nursery & Landscape Associations' booths, to pick up directories with the list of wholesaler members and directions to WVNLA members exhibiting at MANTS.

Others reviewed marketing materials highlighting the association's projects and events. They picked up membership applications.

Exhibitor Norman Cole of Cole Nurseries in Pipestem said he did more business at MANTS 2014 than he has in recent years. "People love MANTS," he said.



Normal Cole discusses stock with a customer who stopped by Cole Nurseries' booth.

MANTS 2015 will be held January 14-16 in



Brett Merritt of G&G Nursery greets potential customers at his booth.

More MANTS



A booth from Southern Living showcases some of the company's new selections.



Officers present at the WVNLA Annual Meeting in Baltimore included Vice President Norman Cole, Treasurer Mark Springer, Executive Director Julie Robinson, President Bill Mills, and Past President Patrick Biafore.

Pesticide Applicators' Re-certification session date added in July

WVNLA and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture have scheduled a Pesticide Applicator's Re-certification Workshop on Monday, July 14 at the Days Inn Conference Center in Flatwoods.

Registration forms will be mailed shortly. As always, WVNLA members attend at no cost, but non-members will pay \$50.

Speakers confirmed at press time include: Mike Arnold, WV Dept. of Ag; Daniel Frank, WVU Extension Service; Doug Jolley, WV Dept. of Ag.; Mahfuz Ruhman, WVU Extension Service; and Mira Danilovich, WVU Extension Service.

For details, email wvnlassoc@gmail.com or call 304-553-1234.

Scholarship winner

Continued from page 1.

watered, fertilized, pruned and planted and then progressed to crew leader for WVNLA member Biafore Landscape Development in Morgantown. He currently works for WVU's Division of Plant and Soil Sciences in the greenhouse and at the farm.

Both his employer and WVNLA members Pat Biafore and his professor, Dr. Sven Verlinden highly recommended him for the Marcus W. Rennix Memorial Scholarship.

"Silas is a one-of-a-kind student that we see in our program every 5 to 10 years. A devout Christian man, he works 20-plus hours while taking a full load of classes to provide for his family and put himself through college," said Sven in his letter of recommendation.

Silas plans to use the scholarship to help pay for tuition, fees and for the home he shares with his wife Cheryl, two-year old daughter Lydia and one-year old son Asa.

"This extra money would enable me to concentrate more on classes and getting horticultural experience rather than working long hours to pay the bills," he said.

Silas is scheduled to graduate in 2015 and plans to attend graduate school, studying plant breeding of ornamental or edible horticultural crops. Ultimately, he thinks he'll pursue a career as a plant breeder.

President's letter

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I spend some of my volunteer time working on the Carriage Trail in Charleston. This trail of almost 12 acres, starts on the south side of town and winds its way up to the South Hills area at the MacCorkle mansion, the former home of Sunrise. Visit www.carriagetrail.org



Photo by Nancy Ward.

English ivy has become a serious invasive nuisance on the trail, taking over wooded hillsides that once were home to an abundance of native gems. As the ivy is removed, the areas are being replanted with native trees, shrubs and many varieties of herbaceous plants. The herbaceous ones are often planted bare root. All these plants are pretty much left on their own to establish themselves. Timing of planting is critical to take advantage of spring and fall rainfall.

Some of these plants have now established themselves and are self-sowing. Blood Root has started to bloom. Soon we will see Virginia Bluebells and Celandine Poppy. A few Yellow Lady Slippers are a very special find.

Consider a walk on the trail if you are in Charleston, it is just over a 1-mile loop. Spring is especially rewarding.

On other fronts, remember there is a mid-summer Pesticide workshop on July 14 in Flatwoods. The West Virginia Botanic Garden in Morgantown continues to move forward with good progress. We hope to be able to announce some major news in the near future. The WVNLA is a strong supporter of this organization. You may consider showing your personal support by becoming a member as well. Visit www.wvbg.org/index.php/help-wvbg-grow/membership.

For anyone who is interested in trail systems, David Gordon the coordinator for the Boise Ridges-to-Rivers Trail System will be speaking in Charleston at a lunch meeting on April 30th. Reservations are needed.



Photo by Nancy Ward.



Rustic benches provide a resting place for weary hikers on the Carriage Trail. Photo by Bill Mills.

Contact me for further information at williamjmills13@gmail.com. Trail systems help grow local economies, especially for businesses that involve the out of doors.

Wishing you all a healthy and profitable spring.

Sincerely,

Bill Mills

Award-winning WVNLA members

Three WVNLA members were singled out for recognition at the Jan. 24 Annual Meeting in Charleston.

Aaron Helmick of Joseph Nurseries received awards from both WVNLA and MANTS in honor of the 20 years he served on the MANTS board of directors. Aaron left the board this year. Aaron received an Outstanding Service award from WVNLA for his contributions to the Association.

Brett Merritt of G & G Nursery was named Outstanding Nurseryman of the Year in recognition of his service as a board member and president. As such, he exhibited great judgment, insight, compassion and strong leadership.

John Jett of Jettree Landscaping received an Outstanding Nurseryman of the Year in honor of his many years of service on the WVNLA board of directors and his educational and volunteer contributions, including the initiation of the West Virginia Master Gardener program and as a volunteer at the West Virginia Botanic Gardens.

Congratulations and thank you to these three outstanding WVNLA members for their many years of dedicated service and leadership.

Member profile

Groundworks owners sing their swan song

Chris Chanlett says he was “a hippie with a pickup truck” when he and his wife Torula Chanlett-Avery opened their Hinton nursery in 1984. They built the landscape business into the thriving garden center and nursery it is today.

Chris grew up in Chapel Hill, NC, while Torula came from Long Island and Washington, DC. They landed in Hinton as part of the “back-to-the-lander” movement in the 1970s.

But after 30 years of planting, planning, building and designing, they are ready for a less rigorous

which the Chanlett-Averys relocated it.

Groundworks’ strengths are the owners’ love of plants, design and a general willingness to work with customers, their dedicated employees, and its “specially charged” location near both the river and their farm.

“The river excites the place. Occasionally, it arises and kicks our asses. We get back up on the horse. People sympathize and love to see work getting done,” Chris said.

On its location just off WV Route 3, Groundworks’ displays such as shade-loving plants under trees inspire customers as they walk the 2.64-acre grounds. Two wells supply water for the plants.

The Chanlett-Averys have seen many changes during their years as nursery owners. Advances in container production, hoop house production and a customer base that is increasingly willing to educate itself are positive changes. The invasion of big box stores has hurt, he said.

Groundworks is open for business this season, but Chris and Torula will cut back on production. They plan to remain living on their nearby farm after they sell the business and would consider working for the new Groundworks owners.

“We have thoroughly enjoyed mediating between our customers and their places on the earth. It has given us a meaningful way of life and, we like to think, made a few properties more functional and beautiful from collaborating with owners,” Chris said.

“We believe we might just be able to attract like-minded buyers to follow in this challenging form of livelihood.”

Learn more about Groundworks Nursery at groundworksnursery.com or call 304-466-5181.



Customers enjoy browsing through the thriving plant displays at Groundworks Nursery in Hinton.

schedule and have placed Groundworks on the market. “We have always been able to get done near about anything asked and everything promised. We now realize that available energy is receding,” Chris said.

Perched on the banks of the undammed Greenbrier River, Groundworks’ Nursery is built to withstand the ebb, flow and floods of the river. The Chanlett-Averys constructed the garden center’s buildings with deep pilings, removable doors and windows and washable materials after the two trailers on the site were washed away in the flood of 1996. Lines on the garden center’s walls mark the heights of past floodwaters. Hoop houses are on higher ground to escape floodwaters.

They purchased their greenhouse in 1988 after the Summers County school system placed it for auction. At \$75, the greenhouse was the deal of a lifetime and still serves Groundworks in the space to

Blogs & such

Several WVNLA members keep their readers and customers up to date with blogs. Among them are:

Scott Barnitz (Bob’s Market):

www.bobsmarketblog.com.

Chris and Torula Chanlett-Avery (Groundworks): groundworksnursery.blogspot.com.

Bill Mills (Terra Salis) terrasalis.homestead.com/ramblings.html.

Check out these well-written and interesting blogs at the addresses above. If you also have a blog to which you’d like us to link on WVNLA’s website, please email wvnlassoc@gmail.com with the address.

2014 Re-certification Workshop and Symposium hit the mark

Location, location, location.

The South Charleston hotel at which WVNLA held its annual Winter Symposium and Pesticide Applicators' Re-certification Workshop on Jan. 23-24 received high marks from most attendees, who appreciated the easy access and free parking.

The snowy day prevented some registered attendees from making it to the workshop, but those who came commented on the quality of the speakers and relevance of subjects they presented.

Attendees received 11 continuing education credits from co-sponsoring West Virginia Department of Agriculture. WVNLA is sponsoring an additional

workshop July 14 at the Days Inn Conference Center in Flatwoods. See page 3 for additional information.

Symposium attendees, including 17 Horticulture students from West Virginia University, heard insightful and interesting presentations from renowned national and compelling local speakers. Design topics of garden art, layering, and container combinations were balanced with more technical plant breeding, photography, design technology and pruning subjects.

As we plan for the 2015 symposium, we'll work on finding speakers to address topics suggested this year, including small business and time management practices. Your suggestions are welcome.



Students show interest in green industry careers

Nearly 700 high school students from Wayne, Cabell, Lincoln and Mason Counties in WV and Lawrence County, OH walked by WVNLA's information booth at the Career & Technical Education Job Fair and Expo Feb. 25 in Huntington. Some stopped and asked for information about careers/jobs in nursery and



WVNLA table at Wayne County Career Fair.



Students career options in fields that interested them.

landscape industry. Most of them are in the Vo/Ag programs in their schools.

Those interested in summer employment provided their names and contact information, which was passed along to members in the area. Future career fairs might prove to be a source for entry-level employees.

SNA scholarships available

Did you know the Southern Nursery Association offers scholarships for horticulture students? In 2013, the Sidney B. Meadows Scholarship Endowment Fund awarded a total of \$18,000 to 12 students, according to Danny Summers, executive vice president of the fund.

The 2014 deadline for applying is May 30. For more information, visit www.sbmsef.org.

Certified Professional Horticulturists

Dee Fournier of YardEscapes in Berkeley Springs and **Mike Bartholomew** of Premier Professionals Inc. in Huntington both received designations as Certified Professional Horticulturists after achieving a passing score on the exam administered in January.

The exam might be administered again July 14, if there is enough interest. Contact Julie Robinson at wvnlassoc@gmail.org or 304-553-1234 for more information.

New member of Board of Directors

The Board of Directors welcomed **Mike Bartholomew** as a new board member at the March 5 board meeting. Mike is the owner of Premier Professionals, Inc. in Huntington.

New members join WVNLA, while former members return

WVNLA is pleased to welcome the following new or returning members, as approved by the Board of Directors.

New members:

Greater Huntington Park and Recreation District

Associate member
210 11th St., Shop #1
Huntington, WV 25701
304-696-5954
mhaldeman@ghprd.org
ghprd.org
Park and grounds maintenance.

Holly Grove Forestry, LLC

– **Ruffner Woody**
Associate member
114 Monongalia Street
Charleston, WV 25302
304-542-7833
hollygroveforestry@gmail.com
Arborist

Huntington Museum of Art

– **Mike Beck**
Active member
2033 McCoy Road
Huntington, WV 25701
mbeck@hmoa.org
hmoa.org
Landscape maintenance and tropical plant conservatory.

Raynes & Company

– **Josh Raynes**
Associate member
P.O. Box 438
Eleanor, WV 25070
304-389-6535
wvgoextreme@yahoo.com
Landscape construction and excavation.

WV Dept. of Admin. – General Services

Associate member
1900 Kanawha Blvd. E.
Building 1, Room 60
Charleston, WV 25305
304-558-2317
john.c.cummings@wv.org
Landscape and grounds maintenance, lawn care and hardscapes.

West Virginia Wesleyan College

– **Jeffrey Wagner**

Active member
16 Camden Ave.
Buckhannon, WV 26201
304-473-8209
wagner_j@wvwc.edu
wvwc.edu
Landscape and nursery maintenance, landscape architect, educator.

Returning members:

Grant County Mulch, Inc.

– **Larry Berg**

Associate member
181 Mulch Drive
Petersburg, WV 26845
304-749-7451
tonya@gcmulch.com
gcmulch.com
Manufacturer of mulch and soil.

Thomson's Landscaping

– **Russ Thomson**

Associate member
26130 State Route 7
Marietta, OH 45750
740-374-9353
mariettaman@hotmail.com
thomsonslandscaping.com
Landscape construction and maintenance, retail nursery.

Top Notch Landscaping & Supply, LLC

– **Chris Duplago**

Active member
140 Peninsula St.
Wheeling, WV 26003
304-233-0332
office@topnotchlandscape.com
topnotchlandscape.com
Landscape construction and maintenance, nursery supplies, retail nursery.



WVNLA NEWS

P.O. Box 20284

Charleston, WV 25362

Upcoming dates to note

Pesticide Applicator's Re-certification Workshop, July 14, Days Inn Conference Center, Flatwoods.

Cultivate'14, formerly Ohio Short Course, July 12-15, Columbus. Visit cultivate14.org.

Southern Nursery Association 2014, July 23-24, Atlanta. Visit sna.org.

Penn Atlantic Nursery Trade Show, July 30-31, Philadelphia. Visit pantshow.com.

Summer Green Road Show, Aug. 12-15, Raleigh, NC. Visit ncla.com.

FYI: **MANTS** Jan. 14-15, 2015, Baltimore. Visit www.mants.com.

WVNLA regularly receives emails with updates from PLANET, AmericanHort, West Virginia Department of Agriculture and other industry-related entities. If you would like for these emails to be forwarded to you, please let us know at wvnlassoc@gmail.com.

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Vice President:

Norman Cole – colenurseries@frontier.com

Secretary:

Tim Forren – tforren@aol.com

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Mark Springer – mark@lavalette.net

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