

## President's Message

August 2014

Greetings.

I sit at my desk and enjoy the many honeybees and goldfinches that feed on the runaway cup plant, *Silphium perfoliatum*.

I love the plant, though it is one you need to keep under control. A



native to the tall grass prairie, it towers at over eight feet, like many of the plants in the prairie. The bees pollinate, the goldfinches

harvest the seeds and I have seen warblers drink from the cups that hold water, formed by the joining of two leaves at the stem. It is small wonders like this that make me realize why I make my living in the plant world.

I have been placing orders for bulbs, both for my clients and my own garden. Every spring I note what I feel is missing from the bulb palette and try to fill it in come fall. This year there will be hundreds of blue and white Spanish Bluebells, *Hyacinthoides hispanica*. In my woodland I use the smaller but charming English Bluebells, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. Their subtle beauty works well there among ferns and spring ephemerals.

We recently had a WVNLA Board meeting in Sutton, a small, sleepy town in Braxton County.

(Continued on page 3.)

## WVNLA lends a helping hand

A mobile agricultural science lab, school landscape award program and horticulture research all benefited from WVNLA's board members' decisions at the July 23 board meeting to fund their organizations.

Mark Rigglesman, program coordinator of the WV Farm Bureau Mobile Ag Ed Science Lab, said WVNLA's \$1,000 contribution will help keep the lab on the road as it travels to elementary schools throughout the state.

Instructors in the 40-foot lab bring agricultural and horticultural lessons and experiments to schoolchildren, with the goal of interesting students at a young age in horticulture, gardening and farming.

"We set up on their school grounds for a week at a time teaching students agriculture-related lessons through scientific explorations using the scientific method," Rigglesman said in his application. Leaders read ag-related books to younger students and follow up with hands-on activities that reinforce the lessons.

The program also emphasizes the value of land stewardship and natural resource conservation.

WVNLA's donation will be recognized in an inscribed plaque inside the lab.

Board members also voted to fund a school landscaping award given through West Virginia Garden Club, Inc. The award is given to a garden club whose members have achieved excellence with a landscaping project for a public school.

WVNLA both renewed its membership in and made an additional donation to the Horticulture Research Institute. In recent years, the institute has provided funding for research projects and scholarships and has worked to guide USDA funds toward Boxwood Blight research.



Schoolchildren listen to "The Tree Farmer" as they sit in front of individual experiment stations inside the Mobile Ag Ed Science Lab.

## Member focus

# Propagate and protect are bywords at Davis Nurseries

ST MARYS, WV -- When they hit the “empty nester” stage in the 1980s, Danny and Donna Davis found themselves with some extra time on their hands. They eschewed the classic time-filling options such as hobbies and travel for a more productive option. They started a nursery near their St. Marys home.

Both kept their day jobs, Danny as Maintenance Superintendent at Pleasants Power Station and Donna as a teacher, but they also carved out time to slowly expand Davis Nurseries, a business they started on a shoestring in 1981.

“We had kids in school. There was no money to invest. Somebody would give us a cutting and we would propagate it. We started cuttings from plants at home,” Danny said. “We’d hunt around in the woods for things to dig up. Those were good times.”

Today Davis Nurseries sits on 12 acres along the Ohio River, just north of St. Marys. Eleven polyhouses protect the nursery stock from the harshest of winter’s conditions. The resulting plants suffer less damage and are therefore more saleable in the spring.

Danny switched from growing trees in-ground to a two-pot system years ago, allowing him to safely pull out the trees and sell year round. He deters deer from them using a trick he picked up at WVNLA’s Winter Symposium years ago. He ties empty plastic pots around the trees’ trunks. The deer stay away.



*Danny Davis scoops soil that he mixes on site in an old cement mixer (behind him) purchased for that purpose.*

Before they started the nursery, the Davises’ landscaping efforts centered on their homes, first in Fairmont and later in St. Marys. A series of gardening courses in the 1970s conducted by West Virginia University Extension Service in Fairmont

provided Danny with some guidance.

“I figured out I was doing everything wrong. I started paying attention as I landscaped our home. Pretty soon, people were asking for our advice,” he said.

He enjoys experimenting with propagation and said he has gained an unexpected benefit from it. “It teaches me patience, which I probably needed to learn,” he said. “I try something and have to wait a year to see how it works. That requires patience.”



*Davis Nurseries includes a garden center with some annuals, but most of the stock is shrubs and trees.*

Like many nursery and garden center owners, Danny says customers buy lots of tried-and-true – boxwoods, barberries, hollies. Most prefer plants that consistently perform well and suffer less from deer damage. But he stocks much more than that. Wander along the rows and see flowering shrubs that are Danny’s favorites. Customers come from well beyond St Marys – Belmont, New Martinsville, Pennsboro and Ellenboro.

After he retired from the power company 18 years ago, Danny was able to really concentrate on the nursery and plans to continue the business as long as health allows.

Contact Davis Nurseries at 304-684-2324 or email [dadodavis@frontiernet.net](mailto:dadodavis@frontiernet.net).



*Plastic pots tied on the trees discourage deer.*



## Greenspaces enhance state fair tent entrances

FAIRLEA, WV -- Visitors to the Arts and Crafts Tent at the State Fair of West Virginia walked through entrances softened by landscaping provided by Cole Nurseries, Greenbrier Valley Dreamscapes, Groundworks and Tally Ho Landscaping. The four companies combined efforts to landscape either side of both entrances, creating four "plantings" of weeping purple beech, hydrangea and hosta.

Appreciation goes to Chris Chanlett of Groundworks, Norman Cole of Cole Nurseries, Rudy Horst of Tally Ho Landscaping, and Curtis Dowdy of Greenbrier Valley Dreamscapes for their time and efforts. The Arts and Crafts Tent is one of the most popular and heavily trafficked areas on the fairgrounds. Special thanks goes to Chris, who organized the effort among the four companies.



## President's message

*(Continued from page 1.)*

The 2010 census notes a population of 994. Before the meeting, we all sat overlooking the banks of the Elk River. It was difficult to go indoors. The bulk of the meeting was spent in discussion about supporting the WV Botanic Garden by underwriting consultants to help them move forward with their master plan. The botanic garden board members will be selecting a candidate to bring in for an interview and



*Birds and bees flock to Silphium perfoliatum, or Cup Plant.*

we have selected Bill Noble, who recently retired from The Garden Conservancy, as a second candidate to interview. Both will share their observations, and one will be selected.

It is exciting to watch the botanic garden grow. The dam at the garden is being breached and the Solar House that West Virginia University has donated will be moved onto the property soon.

We are always looking for those who are interested in joining WVNLA's Board. We are a very diverse and committed group. The reward of your commitment is in seeing things accomplished, not just discussed.

Enjoy the end of summer!

Regards,

Bill Mills  
WVNLA President

## Cross over to an early chill to heat up pre-Spring sales

COLUMBUS, OH -- Garry Grueber of Cultivaris urged audience members attending his presentation at the Cultivate'14 in July to consider cultivating "crossover plants" to boost early spring sales. With the right treatment, "half hearty" perennials, plants such as *Erysimum*, *Pericallis*, *Calceolaria* and *Primula*, can be set out in full bloom weeks before the frost date required of true annuals.

The key to these early blooms is to give them the cold shoulder, or expose them to a chill period of short-day, low-light conditions of generally 6 to 8 weeks, after they are planted in liners in late summer/autumn and grown in greenhouses.

The process, called vernalization, gives the plant the ability to flower in the spring, by exposing it to prolonged cold (frost-free.) When created artificially, the process allows growers to stock blooming annuals that should withstand cold outdoor temperatures and boost early spring sales.



*Primula 'Ooh La La' series is a good early spring container plant. Photo courtesy of Cultivaris.*

Grueber suggested that these "crossover plants" provide a smoother transition from the traditional abrupt swing from winter to summer sales. Many will bloom into fall. If their lengthened bloom time does not extend into fall, they provide an opportunity for additional sales.

"Think of them as seasonal, disposable color," he said.

Grueber said that the much-hyped *Digiplexis*, a shrubby foxglove lives up to expectations and performs well as a crossover plant, producing non-stop



*Digiplexis 'Berry Canary.'* Photo courtesy of Walters Gardens, Inc.

flowers until a hard frost.

To view details of Grueber's presentation, visit

wvnla.org and click on Crossover Plants, or email [wvnlassoc@gmail.com](mailto:wvnlassoc@gmail.com) and request a copy.



*Digiplexis 'Illumination Flame' was named Plant of the Year 2012 at Chelsea Flower Show. Photo courtesy of Cultivaris.*

### Cultivaris suggested plants for "Crossover" success

*Erysimum* (wallflower)  
*Pericallis* (cineraria)  
*Calceolaria* (pocketbook plant)  
*Leucanthemum* (Moroccan daisy)  
*Primula* (primrose)  
*Digiplexis* (shrubby foxglove)



## Plants, pests and pollinators took center stage at workshop

Nearly 30 licensed pesticide applicators earned 11 hours of continuing education credits during a mid-summer session hosted by WVNLA in Flatwoods. The July 14 event featured speakers from West Virginia State University and West Virginia University Extension Service as well as from co-sponsor West Virginia Department of Agriculture.

WVNLA members who attended took advantage of free admittance through the



*Doug Jolley with WVDA presented information on invasive plants.*

membership, while non-members paid \$50.

Barbara Liedl, an associate research professor of Plant Breeding and Genetics at WVSU, spoke on “Biocontrol Options in Protected Cultures” and “Pollinators and Neonicotinoids.” Mahfuz Rahman, a plant pathologist with WVU Extension Service, spoke on “Disease Management in Turf and Landscape Ornamentals.”

In the afternoon session, Daniel Frank, an entomologist with WVU Extension Service, provided information on “Invasive Insect Pest Management in Landscape Plantings.” Mira Danilovich, who heads WVU Extension’s Consumer Horticulture program, gave a “Pesticide Safety Review,” with plenty of good reminders about safety on the job.

Mike Arnold with WVDA’s Plant/Pest Regulatory Programs, presented “Plant/Pest Regulatory Changes,” with sobering reminders of the dangers of non-compliance such as the devastation wrought by the Emerald Ash Borer

and the coming threat of Asia Long-horned Beetles.

Doug Jolley, a plant regulatory officer with WVDA, finished the day with a look at “Invasive Plants in the Landscape.” Some may be controlled while others such as the dreaded kudzu are not dissuaded from aggressive growth.



The next Pesticide Applicator’s Recertification Workshop sponsored by WVNLA will be held Jan. 22, 2015, in Charleston.

WVU Extension Service will offer a session in Morgantown in October. Contact Daniel Frank at 304-293-8835 or [dlfrank@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:dlfrank@mail.wvu.edu) for more information on the Morgantown session.

## WVPlants provides license check

As the not-so lazy days of summer slip away, pesticide applicators might take a minute to see if they are up to date on continuing education credits required for certification -- if they can find their paperwork, that is.

If not, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture invites you to visit the WVPlants website, which will provide applicator’s certification status.

Visit <https://portal.wvda.us/WVPlants/Index.aspx> to get to the WVDA’s Regulatory and Environmental Division, and then click on the Pesticide Programs to view your options. You’ll need a WVPlants ID number and PIN number, which may be obtained by contacting Kathy Martin at [kmartin@wvda.us](mailto:kmartin@wvda.us) or 304-558-2209.

Once into the system, you can:

- search for continuing education courses,
- request CEC credit for a meeting or event,
- check your current status.

## New member note

We are pleased to welcome Watkins Nurseries in Midlothian, VA, to WVNLA as an Association Member. Founded in 1876, Watkins Nurseries is a landscape design build firm and wholesale grower of large field-grown plants. At Watkins Nurseries, trees and plants are propagated and grown on 750 acres of farmland south and west of Richmond.

Watkins offers individual landscape consultation, design development, and complete landscape project bidding.

Watkins Nurseries  
Robert Watkins  
101 Dry Bridge Road  
Midlothian, VA 23114  
804-379-8733  
info@watkinsnurseries.com  
watkinsnurseries.com



*Watkins Nurseries, Midlothian, VA.*

## Upcoming events

**Sept. 17** -- Greenhouse & Nursery Growers Tour, Toledo, OH. [onla.com](http://onla.com).

**Sept. 24** -- A Gathering of Plantsmen, Kirtland, OH. [onla.org](http://onla.org).

**Sept. 25** -- S. Carolina Nursery and Landscape Fall Field Day, Columbia, SC. [scnla.com](http://scnla.com).

**Oct. 25-29** -- International Plant Propagators' Society Annual Meeting, Hickory, NC. [ipps.org](http://ipps.org).

**Jan. 5-7** -- Green & Growin', Greensboro, NC. [ncnla.memberclicks.net](http://ncnla.memberclicks.net).

**Jan. 7-9** -- CENTS, Columbus, OH. [onla.org](http://onla.org).

**Jan. 14-16** -- MANTS, Baltimore, MD. [mants.com](http://mants.com).

**Jan. 22-23** -- Pesticide Applicator's Recertification (Jan. 22) and WVNLA Winter Symposium (Jan. 23), Charleston, WV. [wvnla.org](http://wvnla.org).

## Certified Professional Horticulturist prep

Earn the distinction of adding Certified Professional Horticulturist to your qualifications by preparing for and passing the exam, next offered by WVNLA on Jan. 22, 2015. A CPH designation indicates that the holder is a trained horticulture professional with demonstrable knowledge of the industry. He or she is qualified to offer sound scientific horticultural advice on a variety of industry-related subjects.

If you'd like to hit the books now and avoid cramming later, order a CPH manual for \$50. This informative resource is an excellent study tool.

Topics covered include plant nomenclature, trees & shrubs, lawn establishment and maintenance, interior and bedding plants, fertilizers, composting, insect, weed and disease control as well as landscape contracting and management, and regulations.

Email [wvnalssoc@gmail.com](mailto:wvnalssoc@gmail.com) or call 304-553-1234 or visit [wvnla.org](http://wvnla.org) for additional information.

## Robert Barnitz receives hall of fame honors

Congratulations to Robert Barnitz, owner of Bob's Market and Greenhouse in Mason, WV, who was recently inducted in the West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame. Robert was one of five inductees who were chosen for the honor because of the outstanding contributions they have made to the establishment, development, advancement and improvement of the agricultural, forestry and family life of West Virginia.

Other inductees were Mark Alan Metz (posthumously), Roscoe Kessler Plumley, Richard McClung and Jack Sturgill.

## Norman Cole named SNA officer

Congratulations to Norman Cole III of Cole Nurseries in Pipestem, WV, who was elected as a Southern Nursery Association officer. Norman will serve as Director, Chapter 1, for the 2014-2015 year. He was elected at the Annual Business Meeting on July 24 in Atlanta.

# Aspen historic renovation project hits a hole-in-one

DANIELS, WV -- Golf Inc. recently awarded Aspen Corporation, a WVNLA member in Daniels, WV, as Renovation Project of the Year. The national magazine selected Aspen's renovation of The Country Club of Buffalo, NY, in the category of Projects Topping \$1 Million.

Aspen Golf, a division of Aspen Corporation, specializes in golf course renovation, restoration and full-service golf course construction. It is one of only 36 certified golf course construction companies nationally.

The course at The Country Club of Buffalo was first designed by Donald Ross and opened in 1926. A design architectural firm drew up plans to restore the Ross design, based on historic maps and photographs. Aspen implemented the design, which included the restoration of original bunkers and fairways, recreation of greens and draining, irrigation and tree work.

Aspen has been involved in numerous historic golf course restorations, so the company brought those experiences to the project, according to Aspen Vice President Ronnie Adkins. Still, they faced more than a few obstacles along the way.

"Weather was quite a challenge at times as the first phase went into late fall and of course, Buffalo winter can arrive early, as it did," Ronnie said. "Other challenges included getting an

to a few holes at a time.

"Aspen is pleased and proud to have its work recognized by industry peers and experts. It is very gratifying to our organization to be recognized for



*A picture perfect day on the links.*

our efforts and results on this project," Ronnie said. "This project was in competition with many other U.S. and worldwide projects that were being considered. We are humbled to have the project we did to be selected as number one in its category, but also as Best in Show among all of the projects being considered."

Aspen Corporation has three divisions: Aspen Golf, Aspen Irrigation and Aspen Landscape. Visit [aspen-landscaping.com](http://aspen-landscaping.com) or [aspen-golf.com](http://aspen-golf.com).



*Golf Inc. recently recognized the renovations at The Country Club of Buffalo, NY with a Best in Show award.*

enormous amount of restoration work completed in a relatively short time so the course could be utilized by its members."

The Country Club of Buffalo project was also selected as Best in Show. The course remained open during the construction, as work was limited

## Renewal reminder

The deadline to renew annual memberships, as set forth in WVNLA bylaws, has passed, but 2014-2015 renewals and dues will still be accepted for a brief time. All members should have received a renewal letter with a self-addressed and stamped envelope enclosed for your convenience. If you did not receive one, please email [wvnlassoc@gmail.com](mailto:wvnlassoc@gmail.com) or call 304-553-1234 to request one.

We appreciate all of our members and want each one to enjoy the benefit of an accurate listing in the Member Directory, which is distributed to potential customers, and of free or reduced admittance to Association events. Ensure these benefits, as well as others, with your membership renewal.



# WVNLA NEWS

P.O. Box 20284  
Charleston, WV 25362

## Winter Symposium

Mark your calendars now for WVNLA's 2015 Winter Symposium on **Jan. 23** at the Holiday Inn & Suites in South Charleston. We're bringing top-notch speakers such as the team of Ed Laflamme and Bill Arman, two landscape and green industry business veterans who will present their keys to competitive success, and Kevin Kehoe who will talk about successful job estimating and pricing and about managing costs and schedules.

Acclaimed garden designer and preservationist Bill Noble, most recently of The Garden Conservancy, and Tres Fromme, whose designs include Atlanta Botanical Gardens, Tulsa Botanic Garden and Longwood Gardens' 2000 master plan, will get creative juices flowing, as will other design-related speakers.

On **Jan. 22**, we'll sponsor a Pesticide Applicator's Recertification Workshop, in the same location.

Watch for upcoming registration details, but save the dates Jan. 22 and 23 now.

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Scott Barnitz – [scott.barnitz@bobsmarket.com](mailto:scott.barnitz@bobsmarket.com)  
Mike Bartholomew - [info@premierprosinc.com](mailto:info@premierprosinc.com)  
Chris Chanlett – [cchanlett@gmail.com](mailto:cchanlett@gmail.com)  
John Jett – [John.Jett@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:John.Jett@mail.wvu.edu)  
Stephen Saunders – [saunders801@aol.com](mailto:saunders801@aol.com)

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