



## The Quarterly Newsletter of the Virginia Society of Landscape Designers

### Summer 2015

#### In this issue:

1. President's Message
2. Announcements
3. Lewis Ginter Report
4. Inspirational Quotes
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Landscape Design goes to school
7. Box Turtle Mystery
8. Piedmont Native Plants Guide
9. Selection of Summer Tour Photos
10. Calendar of Events
11. VSLD Board

### **President's Letter:** July 2015

I was driving to a job the other day and the route took me past the first job I ever did. The light was red so I had the opportunity to get a pretty good look at things – the tree is getting big, blooming nicely. I probably should have planted it two

feet to the left. The perennials I planted are long gone, victims to the dogs that are routinely walked in that neighborhood. Probably should have thought of that before I planted them. Only a few of the original shrubs are still there and I can't understand why I arranged them the way I did! It must have seemed like the thing to do at the time.

I see some of my old work from time to time and I catch myself wishing I could have a "do over" for a lot of them. I'm not the designer I was when I did them – I'm better than that, I hope, but I've changed over the years. That's the one thing that we can count on in our business. THINGS CHANGE! Change shouldn't scare us as designers, but how often is the nursery salesperson waiting for you at your "usual" spot/house/area of the nursery,

ready to load your "usual" plants when you drive in to pick up plant material?



*Actaea (Cimicifuga) racemosa*

Photo by Katie Sokol

Well folks, I think it might be time for the VSLD to make a few changes, too. [Bet you thought you were going to get off easy this time, didn't you?]. We have the normal changes of people moving or retiring and leaving the organization and people applying and joining too. Then there are the regular changes like board members rotating off and on the board. Right now we have an immediate opening for a

marketing director to take charge of our Facebook page (Michele Fletcher has done enough, it's time for someone else to take a turn). There are regular changes that come along as time passes like updating our by-laws. Then, we have bigger changes, like the possibility of opening up membership to ALL landscape designers in Virginia, or maybe changing our certification process. Got your attention with those last two, didn't I?

I've written about this subject before, but we are facing a membership crisis. Quite frankly, we NEED more members. We've held steady at about 100 certified designers for a while now but that number makes us a garden club not a professional organization. If you joined for the social functions, then good for you! Where have you been? If you thought you joined a professional organization, then right about now you're probably wondering what's in it for you. We need more members and I can't say that too often. Simplest solution – let's take their dues, let them in and get them certified later. There has been a difference of opinion about this at the last few board meetings, and it will take changing the by-laws to allow it, but it's something we do need to talk about and vote on and sooner rather than later.

We need more members. You need to make that your new yoga mantra! So the first thing we should do is to make getting certified MORE difficult. That sounds counterintuitive, doesn't it? It's not. Charles Gillette notwithstanding, most landscape designers are able to draw their own designs, but drawing a pretty picture makes you an artist, not a landscape designer. Our certification needs to be more than that. Landscape design has changed drastically since the VSLD was formed – new methods, new materials, new tools, new laws – it's getting complicated, and that is good for us. Our particular skill set is in greater demand now than at any other time in the history of the VSLD. How do YOU keep current? Touring gardens is essential; tours get the creative juices flowing. Seminars and lectures are good as long as the degree of difficulty is greater

than that which is being taught to Master Gardeners (no offense intended). Our industry changes almost daily. Certainly our certification process should change every 50 years or so,

The VNLA is in the process of updating and re-writing their certification manual. Yulita and I have been invited to attend a meeting on that subject on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July so that we can provide some input on the process. I intend to ask that group to think about building a separate landscape design certification course that will be taught separately (by VSLD members?) from the current Certified Horticulturist course. This course would be like the LEED courses – the Certified Horticulturist course would be like the LEED GA course, with the new Certified Landscape Designer course being like a LEED AP course. The VNLA is interested in this idea. Done properly, both organizations will benefit by attracting new members. If we choose not to go that route – which is entirely up to us – the VNLA will begin certifying landscape designers and the VSLD will survive as a garden club, but its professional status will become questionable. Change is coming folks; you up for it? .

Tom Thompson

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LANDSCAPES 2015 Reminder:



**[Formerly PLANET's Green Industry Conference]** is to be held in Louisville, Kentucky, October 21-23, 2015. Please visit the website at <http://landscapesconvention.org> for more information about the event.

WEBSITE: <http://bit.ly/nalplandscapes>

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## Maymont Horticulturist Job Opening

This full time position works under the direction of the Director of Horticulture [VSLD certified Landscape Designer and Horticulturist Peggy Singlemann] planting and maintaining the various gardens, shrub plantings and the arboretum; operating outdoor power equipment; and assisting with all the maintenance tasks the gardens require year round. This involves working with other staff members and garden volunteers in the daily maintenance of the grounds and assisting with the set up and presentation of garden related programs and special events.

### Required Qualifications:

Basic background/understanding of and previous experience with Horticulture- degree preferred. Possession of or ability to qualify for a Commercial Pesticide Registered Technician license. Ability to perform the manual work required including lifting, carrying, bending and climbing; ability to work outside in all weather conditions.

Position is full time, 8:30 – 4:30 Monday – Friday. Benefit package includes paid time off, health, dental, life and disability insurance and retirement plan.

### How to apply::

Email cover letter and resume

to [employment@maymont.org](mailto:employment@maymont.org) EOE

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## Report from Lewis Ginter

by Kay Moore

The fall plant sale will be one week earlier than usual on September 11-12, 2015, this year since the International Bike Race will have trials and a race starting at Ginter on the following weekend. The Richmond city managers are planning to close down several city blocks to motorized traffic and those planning to visit the city should be aware of the parking and travel restrictions associated with the erection of these barriers.

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## Inspirational Quotable Passages:

By Chris Coen

*Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to William Hamilton in July 1806, wrote, speaking of landscape design:*

"[To England] without doubt we are to go for models in this art.

Their sunless climate has permitted them to adopt what is certainly a beauty of the very first order of landscape. Their canvas is of open ground, variegated with clumps of trees distributed with taste. They need no more of wood than will serve to embrace a lawn or a glade.

But under the beaming, constant and almost vertical sun of Virginia, shade is our Elysium."



Do you think Jefferson is onto something, here?



## Treasurer's Report -Susan Kappel-

### Income/Expense by Category last quarter - Last quarter 4/1/2015 through 6/30/2015 (Cash Basis)

Category	4/1/2015- 4/30/2015	5/1/2015- 5/31/2015	6/1/2015- 6/30/2015	OVERALL TOTAL
[Income]				
Other Income	540	5,230.00	610	6,380.00
TOTAL [Income]	540	5,230.00	610	6,380.00
EXPENSES				
Advertising (Business)	575	0	0	575
Board Expenses	0	0	253.66	253.66
Gifts & Donations	250	0	0	250
Not Sure, Biz	0	200	0	200
Postage and Delivery (Business)	14.7	20.93	0	35.63
Printing and Reproduction (Business)	0	200.64	0	200.64
Scholarship Award	500	0	0	500
Summer Tour Expense	0	0	6,409.60	6,409.60
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,339.70	421.57	6,663.26	8,424.53
OVERALL TOTAL	-799.7	4,808.43	-6,053.26	-2,044.53
Begin balance 4/1/2015		17,900.08		
End Balance 6/30/2015		15,608.95		

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## Introducing Children to a Career in Landscape Design

A career in landscape design has a magical component----designers can take a ragtag property and by applying the **art of design and using science, math, communication skills, computer skills, physical fitness, music, and social studies**---all subjects near and dear to every elementary student (!), can create beautiful gardens that encourage our clients and their children to spend more time outdoors.

Designer Linda Nichols, of Hidden Lane Landscaping, spent a wonderful day on Career Day explaining to 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at Hunter Woods Elementary School in Reston VA, how designers use virtually every subject

students study in the process of doing our design work.



Showing before/after photos of five of Ms. Nichols more amazing projects immediately captured the student's attention. The 'wow's,

and ‘this is better than HGTV!’ were immediately gratifying. Each project was then discussed in detail, showing how designers use **Math** to measure the job site, calculate radius/diameters of circles, patio square footages, to count plants and to calculate how long a project will take to install.

**Principals of design** were pointed out in each of the five completed projects. Ms. Nichols explained how the **science** of plants is very important so the right plant is installed in the right spot so that a successful garden will thrive.

We all know how important good **Communication Skills** are to landscape designers. That they are essential in selling our designs to homeowners, in relaying the design aesthetic/ details to the installation crew and in discussing plant/hardscaping needs with our suppliers was explained to the pupils.

**Computers** are just a given in the lives of today’s children. Ms. Nichols discussed how they are routinely put to use by designers in the process of creating a good landscape design. Additionally, she pointed out that in order to walk around and to work on job sites, it helps to have a good level of **Physical Fitness**.

Designers probably don’t consciously use **Music** and **Social Studies** in their design work, but the principals of music follow those of math and art, and it also helps to know the geography/history of your design area in order to stay within its vernacular.

All of the Hunter Woods students were extremely interested in the work designers do, and asked quite intelligent questions both during and after the PowerPoint presentation. A few days following the talk, a packet of over 25 hand drawn Thank you cards arrived at Hidden Lane Landscaping, and among them were the following quotes:

*“Thank you for coming to our class to show us how landscape designing works. I found it very interesting how a landscape designer manages to go from point A to point*

*B, the end result putting the former landscape to shame. I learned that a landscape designer has to use many skills in order to properly do the job. The part I found was most surprising was just how much social skills a landscape designer needs to have. They not only need to work with the client, but the construction crews and the company they work for too.”*

*“Thank you for coming and sharing your creative job as a landscape designer. I am a very artistic person, and I know I for one love designing! As you mentioned, one of the best parts of your job, is seeing your thoughts come to life. A thought is just a thought – but it can become a miracle if you put a bit of work to it. I am also amazed at how many factors you must take into consideration – cost, the growth of the plants, the times of the seasons and more! Thank you very much once again, for taking your time out of your job to speak to us!”*

*“Thank you so much for speaking to us on career day! We learned a lot about your job, and had a lot of fun, too! My favorite part of your time with us was when you showed us the before and after pictures of projects, and the steps you took in setting it to the after. All of those houses and yards looked amazing. You showed us that being a landscape designer is not only hard work, but a lot of fun!”*

*“Thank you for educating our class about landscape design. I didn’t know much about your line of work before career day, but when you talked about it to us, I became intrigued. I liked the pictures of the projects you did on houses because I thought it was fascinating to see how much the yard changed. I also liked the blueprints for the house and how it actually looked. Thank you for getting me interested in a rather different topic than I’ve learned about and for coming to our class.”*

*“Thank you so much for coming to our class! Ever since 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, I have wanted to do landscape/interior design! I really loved how you showed us the before and after pictures and the work in progress. The designs were*



*beautiful and I absolutely loved them! I think you have an awesome job!"*

Now, do we see a future VSLD member who may take a leadership role in, let's say, 2030 as a result of these talks? Who knows?! But, 125 children have been exposed to the magic of our career, and, just maybe, one of them will consider joining us. If you have the opportunity to speak to classroom about the joys of our career, please consider doing so. The experience will amaze you!

"Before" Property View



"After" Property View



Submitted by Linda Nichols

## Box Turtle Mystery Behavior

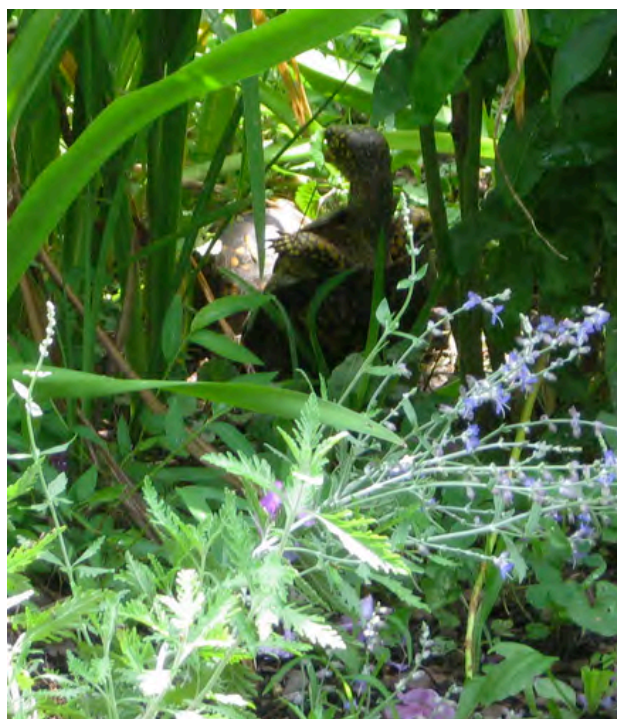
On July 13, Anne Henley witnessed something she couldn't explain. Perhaps some of you can shed light on what was going on. Here is how she explained it.

"While working in the garden yesterday afternoon, I witnessed a remarkable event, which I think was

either a nesting or mating ritual between two box turtles. I recently read that apparently not very much is known about the activities of Box Turtles, since they usually stay underground and mostly come out after a lot of rain. So I felt very lucky to stumble upon this little drama.

At first I thought this turtle had been killed or injured, because I could see the underside of its shell, as if leaning against the stalk of the Phlox above it. Then I saw a second turtle below it, and thought, oh, maybe it's dying and the other turtle is somehow mourning. Then I realized the one I thought was leaning was actually standing up on purpose, and was quite alive and well!

The one in the center snuffled around in the leaves, turning sometimes, while the other, supporting itself in an upright position, looked on, occasionally craning its neck to peer over its shell down to the other turtle. Then, after a few minutes, the upright one would extend its neck and front paws fully (the way we do when we stretch before getting out of bed), and lean just slightly to move sideways; over the course of an hour and a half, it made a complete circle around the other turtle. Isn't Nature amazing?"





## **New Pollinator Support Publication Available for Purchase:**

### **Piedmont Native Plants: A Guide for Landscapes and Gardens is HERE!**

Written and published by Piedmont Natives, this indispensable, user-friendly handbook provides species summaries, cultivation tips, design applications, and luscious color photographs--to tap our wealth of central Virginia natives. Suggested retail \$5.00 (plus S&H as applicable; \$4.75 wholesale/in bulk).

Available soon in local nurseries—or contact Anne Henley, VSLD ([lirio@mindspring.com](mailto:lirio@mindspring.com)); Repp Glaettli ([rgglaettli@albemarle.org](mailto:rgglaettli@albemarle.org)); or Lonnie Murray ([murray4albemarle@gmail.com](mailto:murray4albemarle@gmail.com)). Piedmont Natives is a partnership of the Thomas Jefferson Soil & Water Conservation District, the County of Albemarle, the Jefferson Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, the Piedmont Landscape Association, and the Piedmont Environmental Council.

*Thanks for helping to support our pollinators!*

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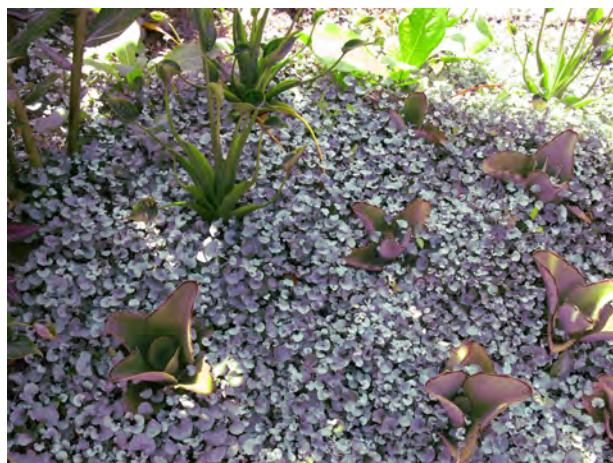
## **Summer Garden Tour:**



Guide Julie Jenney at Swarthmore's Scott Arboretum H. Janele



Jeff Jabco's Fascinating Garden: Swarthmore H. Janele



A Chanticleer Tapestry

Photo: H. Janele



Thalictrum at Chanticleer Gardens

Photo: H. Janele

## 2015 Calendar of Events & Meetings

August 19–21, 2015

**VNLA Field Day and LEAN Workshop**  
Northern VA Area - stay tuned for details

August 21, 2015

**CCLC – Meadows Tour and Field Day**  
York County PA

<http://www.chesapeakelandscape.org/events/meadows-tour-field-day-in-york-county-pa/>

August 30 - September 1, 2015

**SPOGA+GAFA (European Landscape Trade Fair)**  
Cologne, Germany

(VSLD has been offered tickets; please contact a board member if you are interested in attending this show!)

September 11–13, 2015

**Virginia Native Plant Society Annual Meeting**  
Staunton VA

October 8–11, 2015

**2015 APLD International Landscape Design Conference, Washington, DC**  
**Saturday Garden Tour of MD and Sunday Garden Tour of VA Piedmont,**  
[http://apld.org/\\_media/2015DC\\_ConferenceRegForm.pdf](http://apld.org/_media/2015DC_ConferenceRegForm.pdf)

October 21–23, 2015

**LANDSCAPES 2015, Louisville, KY**  
<http://bit.ly/nalplandscapes>

Contact Joan Haller at [events@landscapeprofessionals.org](mailto:events@landscapeprofessionals.org) or Telephone at 800–395–2522

November 12, 2015

**Dinner and Preconference Screening of New Documentary Film on Conservation Landscaping**  
Sheraton Baltimore; Towson, MD  
<http://www.chesapeakelandscape.org>

November 13, 2015

**Turning a New Leaf Conference, Sheraton Baltimore; Towson, MD**  
**Creating Landscapes that Work with our Natural Resources**  
<http://www.chesapeakelandscape.org>

Fall 2016

**Gillette Forum Returns**





Photo: K. Sokol

## **Officers & Directors 2015**

### **Officers**

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[Michele looking for replacement]

### **Public Relations Chair**

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