

**Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener's Association**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Strasburg Community Center, Strasburg**

**November 11, 2014**

**Attendees:** President Bob Carlton, Vice President Ginny Smith, 2015 Vice President Nominee Karen Brill, Treasurer Lee Demko, Past President Cy Haley, Secretary Suzanne Boag, 2015 Secretary Nominee Kris Behrends, Volunteer Coordinator Susan Garrett, Education Committee Chair Helen Lake, Scholarship Committee Chair Lynn Hoffmann, Shenandoah County Coordinators Carolyn Wilson and Sharon Bradshaw, Frederick County Coordinator Emily Wickham, and MGs Stacy Smith, Elena Lycas, and Claire DeMasi.

President Bob Carlton brought the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**October Board Minutes:** Bob Carlton noted that the minutes had been circulated to the Advisory Board. ***Cy Haley made a motion to accept the minutes as circulated and Ginny seconded. All five Board members present were in agreement and the motion passed.***

**Treasurer's Report:** Lee Demko presented the report as follows:

Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association			
Financial Statement for Period Ending			
November 8, 2014 (10/9/14 – 11/8/14)			
<b>Checking Balance 11/8/14</b>			<b>\$5712.32</b>
Expenses: Outstanding checks as of 11/8/14			
Checks:	1498	Treas. Of Warren County	\$100.00
	1514	N. Staley	\$ 50.00
	1518	R. Johnson	\$ 10.00
	1519	C. Wilson	\$ 58.92
	Total Checks Outstanding as of 10/8/14		\$218.92
 <b>Checking Closing Balance 11/8/14</b>			 <b>\$5,712.32</b>
 <b>Investments:</b>			
		Certificate of Deposit, United Bank (11/4/2013)	\$5,172.24
		Savings Acctn, United Bank (12/31/13)	\$5,103.36
 <b>Total Cash on Hand</b>			 <b>\$15,987.92</b>
Submitted by Sandra Lee Demko			

**Vice President's Report:** Ginny Smith reported that November's Association Meeting will take place at Warren County Government Center (WCGC) located in Front Royal on Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. The NSVMGA annual election will be the focus of the meeting.

### **Committee Reports**

**Communications and Publicity:** No report.

**Education Committee:** Bob Carlton reported that Brenda Powell had volunteered for the Education Committee Chairperson position.

**Finance Committee:** No report.

**Membership:** No report.

**Newsletter:** Bob Carlton asked that MGs please send their Master Gardener or gardening topics to be included in the newsletter to the Editor, Richard Stromberg: [risy@embarqmail.com](mailto:risy@embarqmail.com) .

**Program:** Ginny Smith reminded everyone that Sunday's Association Meeting takes place at 2 p.m. and MGs are being encouraged to bring finger foods for the potluck.

### **County Coordinators' Reports**

**Clarke:** Suzanne Boag reported that Clarke County will be having a meeting prior to Sunday's Association Meeting at 12:30 at the WCGC.

**Frederick:** Emily Wickham reported that a computer training class will be held November 19 at 2:00; Stacy Smith, and Deborah Byrd will be assisting with the class and Mark Sutphin and Susan Garrett will be there also. The green-line has been switched over to computer. December 11<sup>th</sup> Frederick MGs will hold an appreciation dinner/county meeting.

**Shenandoah:** Carolyn Wilson reported the green line is switched over to computer. A final clean-up will be held at the rain garden and a wind-up county meeting will be held Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Page:** Ginny Smith reported for Lesley Mack that Page has an MG transfer interested in joining NSVMGA.

**Warren:** Cy Haley reported that December 6<sup>th</sup> MGs will give a talk at the Samuel's Library; the program will focus on the Master Gardener Program and upcoming MG Class of 2015, which will be held in Warren County.

### **Volunteer Coordinator's Report**

**Ask a Master Gardener Banners:** Susan Garrett noted that at October's Board Meeting the Board voted to approve the purchase of 2 tabletop banners per county for a total of 10 banners (Susan was not present at the October Board Meeting). She explained that each county only has one frame that came with the larger banners, which were already purchased. Susan suggested reducing the number of banners ordered. The group discussed how the smaller banners might be displayed and settled on the idea of small banners with grommets for hanging. ***Cy Haley made a motion to purchase 5 small banners with grommets at a cost of approximately \$100, Suzanne Boag seconded and the motion was approved with all five Board members present in agreement.***

**2014 Intern Report:** Susan reviewed the report and was pleased to report that several Interns were very close to completing their 50 hours.

**New MG in Page County:** Susan reported that an MG, Cheryl McDonald has moved from Fairfax to Page County and is interested in joining NSVMGA.

**New Volunteer Coordinator:** Susan reported that Mary Flagg has volunteered for the Volunteer Coordinator position for 2015 as Susan is slated to be NSVMGA President. ***Cy Haley made a motion to accept Mary Flagg as the 2015 Volunteer Coordinator, Suzanne Boag seconded, and the motion passed with all five Board member present in agreement.*** Susan noted that Mary Flagg's appointment needs to be approved by VCE Agent Mark Sutphin as well.

**New Clarke County Coordinator:** Susan reported that Mary Craig will be stepping down as coordinator, and Ginny Smith has volunteered for the position. ***Cy Haley made a motion to accept Ginny Smith as the Clarke County Coordinator, Suzanne Boag seconded, and the motion passed with all five Board members present in agreement.***

**Criminal Background Checks Required for MGs:** Susan reported that VCE will require criminal background checks on all MGs by June 2015. Implementation was discussed by the group. The fee per check is \$10 to be paid by MGs and checks will be conducted every three years after the initial check. NSVMGA will be notified if someone is ineligible. Cy Haley explained that the cost of the background check had been worked into the fee for students enrolling in the MG Class of 2015. The Board discussed having NSVMGA cover the costs for the initial background checks performed in 2015 and then raising dues to cover future costs for background checks. Susan suggested raising dues \$5 for 2016, which would cover the cost of the checks over the three year period. This will be a requirement for all Master Gardeners in the state of Virginia. ***Cy Haley made a motion that NSVMGA pick up the cost for criminal background checks done in 2015, Suzanne Boag seconded, and the motion passed with all five Board members present were in agreement.***

**VCE Liaison's Report - Tablecloths:** Mark Sutphin was not present, however, Susan Garrett reported that Page (1-8ft), Clarke (2-6ft), Shenandoah (1-6ft) and Warren (1-6ft) county coordinators had responded with VCE tablecloth orders (with the new VCE logo on a black background); the deadline for orders to go to Mark is late December. Susan explained that the tablecloths could come out of the \$200 allotment for each county. Emily Wickham asked if the Board has considered varying the amount of county allotments based on the number of MGs in each county pointing out that Frederick County has 45. Bob Carlton explained that most counties do not use their full \$200 allotment. Cy Haley stated that if county coordinators need more money, then they can ask the Board; the Board can approve up to \$250.

### **Special Committees**

**MG Class of 2015:** Cy Haley reported that 99 people had expressed interest in the class and 31 have said they want to sign up for the class. Cy will send out the applications this week. Sue Rogers is managing the class finances. Cy added that some supplies are missing and there are not enough compost wheels for the class – Lynn Hoffmann added that you have to order a large number of the wheels in order to get the cost per item down. She said that the class cost will be \$225; an open house will be held Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 6 to 8 p.m. and applications will be accepted at that time. Cy explained that Frederick County will host the 2016 MG Class. She noted that currently a couples' discount is available that will save a couple the cost of one handbook. Cy stated that any leftover monies will be returned to the students.

### **Old Business**

**Belle Grove Colonial Garden & Christmas Decorations Project:** Project leader and Frederick County MG Lynn Hoffmann explained the history of NSVMGA's involvement with Belle Grove Plantation, a late-18th-century plantation and estate situated in Frederick County. Belle Grove is a National Historic Landmark, a Virginia Historic Landmark, and a historic property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Lynn explained that in 2004 the garden was in disrepair and became the

Intern's Community Service Project supported by the Garden Club of Virginia (financial support); soil tests were done, research accomplished, and soil was brought in to augment the garden. Some class members researched colonial plants, while others did research at Handley Library's Archives on the overseers to see what they had grown. Belle Grove did not approach NSVMGA, rather, an Intern who worked at Belle Grove suggested it. All the Interns put in 20 hours each that summer to make the colonial garden project a success.

The project has grown over the years with Lynn's leadership and educational hand-outs have been incorporated. The original Garden Club of Virginia garden plans from 1982 have been followed to make the garden a Historical Colonial Demonstration Garden. Lynn stated that it is not a work program, rather a Colonial Demonstration Garden where classes, demonstrations, espalier, lectures, Junior MGs, and GardenFest talks have taken place, and participating MGs learn as well. Lynn has led this project for ten years and each year part of her responsibilities included planning, researching, and finally planting the colonial garden. VCE has been involved over the years in an effort to save cherry trees that have finally died and will need to be replaced. It is also a place where MGs can learn how to plant and grow the unusual plants used in colonial times, many of which can be found in Thomas Jefferson's gardens at Monticello as well. Lynn compared Belle Grove to AREC with its many community activities revolving around education such as tours, day camps and educational events like NSVMGA's GardenFest.

Lynn explained that MGs Claire De Masi (Warren County) and Elena Lycas (Shenandoah County) are interested in continuing to lead the Belle Grove project and spent the summer working with Lynn and learning about the Colonial Garden, Colonial Christmas decorations, and rain garden care (installed by the Potomac Conservancy). Claire will act as liaison between the Garden Club of Virginia, their architect and Belle Grove's Executive Director. Larry Hahn (2008, Warren County) has participated in Belle Grove's educational activities over the years and provided a statement in support of the Belle Grove project. Helen Lake (2005, Frederick) and Mary Stickley-Godinez (2005, Frederick) have also utilized Belle Grove for presentations. Paula Brownlee (2001, Frederick County), Carolyn Wilson (1997, Shenandoah County, and Lynn Hoffmann (2001, Frederick County) have taught classes at Belle Grove over the years. Lynn finished by saying the Belle Grove Plantation Colonial Garden is a tool for all Master Gardeners.

A lengthy debate ensued. Frederick County Coordinator Emily Wickham (2013, Frederick County), stated that, "My county really doesn't want to do it" referring to the Belle Grove Project; she said her county likes to do the green line. Helen Lake suggested that this was an opportunity for Claire and Elena to do research and share what they've found with fellow MGs. President Bob Carlton stated that Belle Grove is an asset and should be a unit project. Emily said that the Belle Grove Garden is not in line with the VCE guidelines; she said she has done research on Demonstration gardens in Iowa and Washington States to learn how they do them. Lynn explained that Belle Grove was most similar to the Hahn Horticultural Garden located on the Virginia Tech campus, in that MGs maintain the garden for public viewing and it is educational. Emily responded that she was not familiar with the Hahn Garden at Virginia Tech.

The discussion continued. Emily said that public advertising about MG activities and signs on the Belle Grove premises directing the public to MG activities will help to bring the Project more in line with VCE guidelines. Lynn countered that signs are not allowed because it is a Historical Colonial Demonstration Garden and Belle Grove does advertise on their website that Master Gardeners care for the garden; GardenFest has also been advertised on the Belle Grove website. Emily pointed to the lack of event specific advertising with regard to the garden and Lynn said that was a publicity issue and we are a

volunteer organization dependent upon volunteers to do jobs like publicity. Cy Haley added that Belle Grove has a new Executive Director, Kristen Laise, who has been a great team player with regard to advertisement of our annual fundraiser/educational event, GardenFest, which has been held at Belle Grove for over 10 years; she continued to say that Belle Grove even paid for GardenFest radio spots. Lynn added that meetings and classes have been held at Belle Grove for years as well and at no cost to NSVMGA. Suzanne Boag stated that Belle Grove had hosted our primary fund raiser GardenFest for years.

Susan Garrett suggested that a Belle Grove update be given at NSVMGA meetings. Karen Brill suggested advertising on a regular basis to let the public know when MGs would be doing various activities at Belle Grove. Emily said she would like to grow a vegetable garden as a teaching garden at Belle Grove and Lynn explained that the Colonial Garden has been researched and the Garden Club of Virginia determines the layout and plantings of the garden. Emily defined a demonstration garden as a teaching garden for the public and stated that MGs cannot count maintenance hours as project hours. Claire said that we can work on improving the educational aspects of the Belle Grove Project. **Cy Haley made a motion to establish Belle Grove as a Unit Project, Suzanne Boag seconded, and the motion passed with all five Board members present in agreement.** Lynn clarified that you cannot have a demonstration garden without doing maintenance and Emily countered that maintenance is not part of project hours. Susan agreed with Carolyn that there are gray areas and VCE guidelines are not black and white.

**Guideline Amendments:** The Board discussed the new Voucher Reimbursement Form and Guidelines drafted; Suzanne Boag made a motion to accept the Voucher Reimbursement Guidelines and Cy Haley seconded. All five Board members agreed and the motion passed pending Membership approval at Sunday's Association Meeting. Suzanne Boag agreed to circulate the new form and guidelines to the membership.

**Scholarship Chair Vacancy filled:** Lynn Hoffmann agreed to be the Scholarship Chairperson for 2015.

**Strategic Plan:** Helen Lake reported that the 2015 Board would need to prioritize goals set at the strategic planning workshop held October 25<sup>th</sup>. She suggested that the Board winnow down what is achievable to perhaps three goals and three action items. Susan Garrett stated that she intends to schedule a 2015 Board meeting sometime in January and will invite the 2014 Board to attend.

**GardenFest 2015: Chairperson Cy Haley reported that the first GardenFest Meeting will be held at the end of January – the beginning of February.**

#### **New Business**

**Appreciation Gifts:** Bob Carlton, Cy Haley, and Suzanne Boag met briefly after the Board Meeting, and **Cy made a motion to purchase \$50 gift certificates for outgoing County Coordinators Carolyn Wilson and Mary Craig, Suzanne seconded, and the motion was approved with all three Board members present in agreement.**

**Cy Haley made a motion to adjourn, Suzanne Boag seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Boag  
Secretary, NSVMGA