Call to Order

The Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardener Association held a Business meeting on Sunday, January 18, 2026 via Zoom. President Rochelle Dornatt presided over the meeting and called it to order at 2:05 p.m.

Opening Remarks

Rochell Dornatt opened the meeting by thanking the members for their attendance on this Sunday afternoon. She noted that she expects the coming year to be a very good one for the Master Gardeners. Her hope for the year is that members gather, enjoy one another's company, have fun, and garden together.

Attendees

There were 63 attendees, 56 full EMGs and 7 Interns. There were enough EMG members in attendance for a voting quorum.

Officers' Reports

Vice President

VP Chris Jorgensen expressed she also is looking forward to another year of friendship and fun time with our membership. Chris went on to announce that this meeting's educational segment will feature a gardening trivia game instead of a guest speaker, with prizes for the winners.

Secretary

MaryJane Korrigan, Secretary, called for a vote to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2025 Association meeting.

Motion: Jerry Jellets moved to approve the minutes. Pam Forshee seconded the motion. No one opposed nor absteined. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Jerry Jelletts, Treasurer, reported a year end checkbook balance of $16,723. The December closing documents are completed and will be shared with the Board in the next few days. Jerry stated the Association is financially in fairly good shape but as we go forward we will need to be a bit more frugal.

Motion: Jerry asked for a motion to approve the Treasury report for the month of December 2025. Motion to approve the minutes made by Debbi Talley. Jennifer Flitton Adams seconded. No one opposed nor abstained. Motion is carried.

New Business

Rochelle reported that a full time VCE Agent has been hired to serve as the lead partner and Extension Agent for Consumer,Horticultural, and EMG programs. According to John Thompson, they are scheduled to start on January 26,2026.

Terry Hannahan, Sunshine Fund Lead, will send former VCE employee Joanne Royalty a card of appreciation for all her work and input to the EMG program over the past 5 years.

Rochell announced the NSVMGA received a response from VCE concerning the status of the MOU. VCE has requested the deletion of the clause allowing dissolved association funds to be directed to "other local non-profit horticultural organizations". VCE prefers funds go to the

Virginia Tech Foundation. The membership discussed the legal implications of the MOU's non binding nature. After extensive discussion, Nancy Reed 'called the question', initiating a vote on whether to proceed to a final vote on the matter of signing the MOU with the updated VT language. The motion to 'call the question' passed unanimously. A vote taken determining if in favor of signing the MOU resulted in 53 people voted YES, accepting the revised MOU language, three people voted NO. **The vote** to accept the updated Virginia Tech language passed and the MOU will be signed by Rochell Dornatt and sent to Virginia Tech.

Rich Sankovich developed a two page list of 18 fundraising ideas which have been circulated and are included at the end of this report. Rich presented 2 of the 18 ideas: first a film night fundraiser at the Alamo Drafthouse; and second, re-enable the donate button on the NSVMGA homepage. The response to the presentation is that many of the ideas are very promising and will require follow-up and coordination with the new VCE Agent and the finance committee before implementation.

Rich went on to explain that each 501c3 NSVMGA Association member should be aware that Mileage to and from any projects listed in Better Impact/VCE as a member of the 501c3 Non-Profit Association is tax deductible at a 14 cents per mile rate or can be computed from gas usage cost using miles per gallon cost of gasoline compared to a high usage gas using vehicles per IRS regulations. IRS Publication 526.

Cindy Staff, Shenandoah County Coordinator, announced the Shenandoah County EMG's will have their first County meeting February 21st at Cave Ridge Vineyard. Secondly, Cindy announced she is going to bring back TWIG (This Week In Gardening) and rename it TWIG ll. Cindy urged members to send pictures to be posted.

Sue Scarborough, Clark County Coordinator, announced there is a new educational event for the public by the Clark County EMGs to be held at the Samuels Library on January 27th, from 6:30pm to 7:30pm. The name of the program is *Unlocking the Seed Catalog Symbols and Fine Print.*

Kathy Holcomb, a co-lead of Seed Exchange, reported that all the seeds at the VCE office that have been packed and donated, are now sorted into general care categories and are ready to be placed on the tables at the Fairgrounds. There are currently 2, possibly 3, Seed sorting parties available for members to get together and volunteer at. Kathy also mentioned the Banner for Seed Exchange is up on the fence of the Fairgrounds advertising the event. EMG's are urged to sign up on Better Impact. Seed Exchange is Saturday, February 7th, 9am-2pm, Clark County Fairgrounds.

Carol Belkin, Frederick County Coordinator, reminded everyone of the Indoor Plant Clinic at Bowman Library on Saturday, January 31, 2026, 10am to 2pm. Kathy Holcomb, Susan Matyuf and Joey Waters are the guest speakers. EMG's should sign up on Better Impact to volunteer.

Judith Stevenson stated the Newsletter is scheduled to go out on February 12th with plenty of content.

Education Segment

Chris Jorgesen presented a Gardening Trivia game packed with great information and questions. Chris donated a plant and Jennifer Flintton Adams donated 5 books for door prizes. Fun was had by all!

Closing Remarks

Rochelle Dornatt closed the meeting at 3:45pm and thanked everyone for attending.

Respectfully submitted by MaryJane Korrigan
MaryJane Korrigan NSVMGA Secretary
Date Approved_February 15, 2026

County Coordinator Reports

Clark County **See page 3 and 4 of this report for update*

Clarke County Coordinator Report
Board Meeting
Sue Scarborough
January, 2026
Project Update:

1. Nature's Surprises at Clarke County Library - Our December lesson was about gourds. Ann Hirshey came to share all about gourds, how they grow, where they grow, and uses for them.Then the students made a gourd vase as a holiday gift for a friend or family member. Our January class will be about the winter birds that are in our area and how we can help them survive and thrive during the winter months. Then we will make outdoor bird feeders.

2. Chet Hobart Park Garden - Ann Levy is looking into new signage for our garden. She is working with Clarke County Parks and Rec. to find suitable signs that fit with current park Signage.

3. Seed Exchange - We are getting very excited about hosting the Seed Exchange. This week we will meet to separate and organize the seeds we currently have. There are also still a few seed packing parties scheduled. We now have (and will continue to have) weekly ZOOM meetings to finalize all our plans. A reminder about the event will be going out soon to all MG's and Barbara and Joanne did a great radio promo before the holidays.

4. Clarke County MG's will have our yearly calendar planning meeting on January 11, 2026. This year, we will hold it at the VCE Headquarters in Berryville.

Upcoming Activities and Events:
Natures Surprises at CC Library - January, 15
Regular Seed Exchange ZOOM Meetings - Jan. 3, 10, 17, 23, 30
Natures Surprises at CC Library - February 19
January Planning Meeting - January 11, 2026
Seed Exchange - Feb. 7, 2026

Frederick County * *See page 4 of this report for update*

Report Business Association Meeting
Carole Belkin, Frederick County Coordinator
Board Meeting for January 5, 202

Bowman Nature Surprises:

Engaging Topics and Activities

The Bowman Nature Surprises program has finalized its calendar for 2026. Throughout the year, attendees can look forward to a range of fun and engaging activities, all designed to inspire and educate. Each session will focus on a different topic, providing hands-on experiences and opportunities for participants to deepen their understanding of nature and gardening.

January Kickoff: Plant Propagation Lesson

The new year begins on January 8th with a lesson dedicated to Plant Propagation. During this session, participants will learn practical techniques for propagating plants and assist with preparations for the upcoming Bowman Plant Clinic Festival. Each attendee will have the chance to take home “baby” plants or cuttings, which can be rooted and eventually planted in pots.

To join the Plant Propagation lesson or learn more, sign up on Better Impact or contact Extension Master Gardener leads Laura Best and Tricia Boyd.

Bowman Annual Plant Clinic:

Educating the Public on Houseplant Care

The Bowman Annual Plant Clinic is a one-day event focused on teaching attendees how to care for and maintain healthy houseplants. Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs) will be available throughout the day to answer questions, help identify various plants and diagnose plant diseases, and provide practical guidance to visitors. ’care. These sessions will include

Hands-On Plant Propagation

In addition to offering expert advice, EMG volunteers will assist participants with propagation techniques. Attendees will have the opportunity to root houseplants using a selection of donated plant cuttings, gaining valuable hands-on experience in propagating new plants.

Lectures and Demonstrations

Throughout the event, several speakers will present lectures and lead demonstrations covering a variety of topics related to houseplant care. These sessions will include discussions on propagation : methods, best practices for maintaining healthy indoor plants, and additional subjects relevant to plant enthusiasts. To date, the following EMGs will provide lectures and demonstrations: Sharon McLellan – AAMG; Kate Reed– Pruning techniques; Susan Matyuf and Joey Waters – Propagation techniques.

Opportunities for additional speakers are open. Contact Carole Belkin at:belkincarole@gmail.com

- When: Saturday, January 31st, 2026; 10 am to 2 pm
- Where: Bowman Library Address: 871 Tasker Rd, Stephens City, VA 22655

Sign up on Better Impact. There is a Google Spreadsheet for specific activities and times to volunteer. Volunteers Needed: 15-25 volunteers

Frederick County AAMG Services:

Extension Master Gardeners (EMG) volunteers are available at this venue to provide area residents with research-based solutions to a wide range of gardening topics and questions. Their expertise covers gardening basics, addressing common challenges, and offering diagnostic support for plant health issues. EMGs assist with the identification of plants, trees, and insects, and advise on proper cultivation, regular maintenance, and effective control methods.

Additional areas of guidance include best practices for fertilization, lawn care, habitat creation, and the management of both native and invasive plant species. Volunteers also help gardeners recognize beneficial and invasive insects, navigate the Pest Management Guide, and perform online reference searches to support home gardening efforts.

For more information, contact Sharon McLellan or sign up through Better Impact (BI).

NSVMGA VCEMG
JANUARY 2026 **PAGE COUNTY REPORT**

The Page County Plant Clinic began on 4/26/2025 and continued twice a month on the second and fourth Saturdays through and including October at Massanutten Country Corner. In addition to the Plant Clinic, we are providing an educational talk on these same days and times on a variety of topics. The last talk was the 4th Saturday in October. We are continuing this project into 2026.
We are continuing and expanding the Page County Fair as a project.

We are discussing the best way to reinstate the PACA Community Gardens as an EMG project

We are working on scheduling our annual unit meeting.

Respectfully Submitted
Nancy M. Reed
Page County Coordinator

Shenandoah County Report (Updated)

Membership Meeting
Cindy Stauff
January 2026

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season! Even though it's chilly outside and the pond is frozen, my daffodils are poking up through the mulch. The Hellebores are blooming too!
Project Updates and General Info:

1) AAMG in Woodstock is open for business the first Friday of each month during winter.
a)AAMG at Jon Henry's General Store will resume in the spring when Jon receives his first shipments of plants. I will let you know when that happens, and it would be good for those of us who are interested in volunteering at JHGS to meet there and familiarize ourselves with the plant offerings.

2) Our Shenandoah County EMG meeting to kick off the year will be Saturday, February 21 st , at Cave Ridge Vineyard. We will have an informal gathering from 1PM to 3PM. This meeting will review the progress of projects in Shenandoah County and establish a strategic plan for the coming year.
3) The South Street Barn Farmer's Market is under new management. And it will have a new name! Paugh's Farm now leads the market. It will still be held every Saturday from 9AM to 1PM. We are good to go there with no vendor fee. The contact number is 540 740-9076.
4) I have had a positive response to restarting TWIG (This week in gardening…). This is a way to connect with our gardeners by sharing photos taken in our gardens. Indoor as well as outdoor. Please send a photo and a brief description of the plant you are showcasing along with the common name and scientific name of that plant. I will pick from the group I receive and send that out. This will start as a trial but I plan to make it a weekly update. You may submit photos to me at cindylastauff@gmail.com. Please reference TWIG II in the subject line. TWIG started during Covid to help EMGs stay connected.

Warren County Report

Board and Association Business Meeting
Susan Matyuf, January 2026

Reports of programs:

Most of our programs are on hiatus for the winter, except for Samuels Library Indoor Plant Demo and Education and our Samuels Nature Explorers. Co-leads for this program (Joey and Lisa) will be finalizing adult education opportunities at the library.

1) Samuels Nature Explorers: (leads Dianne Lacy and Emma Bricker, co-leads)
Friday, January 23
2:45 - 3:00 PM - Set up and prep area
3:00-3:45 PM - Wee Ones in the Garden (ages 3-5), up to 20 participants
3:45 - 4:00 PM - Clean up and Reorganize
4:00 - 4:45 PM, Elementary Gardeners (ages 6-11), up to 20 participants
TOPIC/ACTIVITIES
Worms and Other Insects: Superheroes of the Garden!

We will look at how our superheroes spend the winter to gear up for their active lives during the warmer weather. Where do they live? What do they do? How do they eat? What can we do to help them prepare for their superhero work? Come join us! We will be doing a craft project so each participant will have something to take home! Don't worry parents - no live worms or Insects!
2) Samuels Library Indoor Plant Demonstration and Education: (Joey Waters and; Lisa Heim, co-leads)
3) Warren Heritage Demo Garden: (Katherine Rindt and Karen Leonard, co-leads)
4) Ask a Master Gardener Information Project: (Susan Matyuf and Christine Dagorn, co-leads).

This winter we will focus on inventorying and organizing supplies for our Information Booths, which will be housed at the County Extension office (Warren County) in the closet. Susan Matyuf, Dave Rushton, and Scott Emuryan will meet with Fern Vasquez of the Citizens Helping Each Other Community Garden to propose a new VCE EMG Project educating and supporting the community in a demonstration/working garden where the produce is donated to CPAC and other area food pantries.
Respectfully submitted,
Susan Matyuf, Warren County Coordinator

Committee Reports

Website

Webmaster Jay Tamamgan

As some of you may know, our website was flagged as ”unsafe”/”compromised” and access was limited because its security certificate had expired shortly before the New Year.
Rest assured, NSVMGA.org is now safe and everything is up and running.
Elaine got in contact with the hosting company and they told us that the website wasn't able to load the updated security certificate because it had run out of disk space*. The customer service lead provided additional storage space (+an additional fee) and installed the new security certificate. He also recommended adding more storage in the future to facilitate upgrading the website's firmware.
Lastly, for those who may have ended up paying their dues via Square over the past few weeks—please take note that the NSVMGA Square page is part of the Square website making it fully separate from our own website and thus, secure for all your transactions.

Technology and Equipment Committee

The Technology and Equipment Committee was formed in late December 2025 to help assess and address the growing technology needs of the unit.
As this endeavor is expected to be a multi-year effort, we are asking EMGs who might be interested in representing their county (esp. Warren and Page) and providing their insights and relevant expertise to join us.
Please contact Jay directly (angelsfindangles@gmail.com) for any questions.

*- We are currently weighing options (without buying more disk space) to better mitigate this issue down the road.

Vernon Jay Tamangan

Additional report:

Ideas for 2026/27 Fund Raising/Adjustments for NSVMGA and/or Scholarship funds

By Rich Sankovich

1. Start a GoFundMe on NSVMGA Face Book Page for scholarship costs.
2. Reduce Scholarship Dollar amounts distributed to make existing funds last 3 or more years. Combine Winchester & Frederick County as one Scholarship as part of this process.
3. Advertise Tax deductible contributions(501c3) and Donate Button on NSVMGA Web Home Page for both Scholarships and or Association project support.
4. Fundraiser at Belle Grove Barn for a Dinner/Keynote Speaker/Silent Auction using Shaffer's BBQ, Bonnie Blue or other notable caterers. Give away two 2 x 6 ft. x 15 inch high Raised Beds via free drawing of which current pressure treated material cost is $71.50 and my labor to build is free, and sell 50/50 tickets during event also. Menu to be Farm to Table based, cost per person TBD and could have drawings for donated items that we could muster during the dinner.
5. Start running a 50/50 drawing at every Face to Face member meeting. Could do a $1 each and or 6 tickets for $5 sale and use for High School scholarship funding.
6. Partner with Alamo Winchester Film Club for a Movie Night or Day/Fundraiser. Movie selection could be Classic or Garden/Farm/Environment related.
7. Partner with Churches who have kitchen facilities and do Spaghetti/Meatball/Salad fundraisers either at a 50/50 or 60/40 split – Giveaway One 2 x 6 ft. raised bed ($71.50)
8. Contact and or partner with/help Garden Clubs in 5 county area for their fund raising and a possible profit split with our labor to help supplement theirs.
9. Use Educational Adventure program to sponsor a Master Gardener event day for 4 to 5 hours educational training at a local college that includes 4 to 6 speakers from our Master Gardener Association Ranks presenting Classroom training topics previously approved in the past 10 years. Include a Boxed lunch and drink and

keep cost under $30
10. Begin charging $2 per person for those people attending Seed Exchange to offset costs of labels, envelopes, printing ink, boxes and other supply items etc.
11. Begin charging $2 to 3 per person for those people attending Garden Fest to help offset costs for rental, signage, dirt, soil, buckets, labels, sticks, paper, rental costs, dumpster, police assistance, and parking attendants.
12. Include Vegetable and Herb starter Transplants contributed by MG association members at Garden Fest Sale. $1 to 2 range per plant.
13. Reduce annual cost outlay to support VCE owned projects to match the actual amount fund raised. Example: $9500 raised in 2025 would equate to a $9500 max budget for VCE approved projects support in 2026 if matched to income. Stop bleeding the Association Treasury by forecasted Budgeting/Spending more than funds raised at VCE/NSVMGA collaborative events.
14. I could rent a spot at Garden Fest from NSVMGA and set up on behalf of my business name SRBG Inc., and state all donations received to support the NSVMGA scholarship program, do a show and tell on Raised Bed Gardening, give away 200 free copies of the Simplistic Raised Bed Gardening Book(SRBG) I wrote and published, and give 3 talks during the Garden Fest event at 9am, 11am and 1 pm. In addition, we could run a raffle(cost per ticket TBD) for four Raised Bed Garden Frames 3 foot x 8 foot x 15 inch high assembled and delivered including landscape cloth within the 5 county area. The cost of each frame with my labor donated would be $85 at current pressure treated lumber prices. We could also man the booth and sell our NSVMGA Gear there too as opposed to the Second Hand Rose booth!

Ideas for Attraction and Retention of New and Existing members to Association

1. Ensure that each 501c3 NSVMGA Association member knows that the Mileage to and from any projects listed in Better Impact/VCE as a member of the 501c3 Non-Profit Association is tax deductible at a 14 cents per mile rate or can be computed from gas usage cost using miles per gallon cost of gasoline compared to a high usage gas using vehicles per IRS regulations. IRS Publication 526.