

**WNF&GA National Annual Meeting
Thursday, May 14, 2015
U.S. National Arboretum
Washington, D.C.**

The 2015 National Meeting was called to order by President Molly Hamerle at 9:45 a.m. This portion of the meeting convened at the United States National Arboretum.

Former National President Bea Peterson gave the invocation.

Former National President Sylvia Anderson led the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

WNF&GA Liaison to the U.S. National Arboretum Audrey Ehrler welcomed participants and introduced the new Director of the U.S. National Arboretum (USNA), Dr. Richard Olsen. She thanked Dr. Olsen and the staff of the USNA for their teamwork.

Dr. Richard Olsen thanked Audrey and WNF&GA President Molly Hammerle and welcomed the members of the WNF&GA to the National Arboretum. He noted similarities in the missions and guiding principles between the National Arboretum and WNF&GA: conservation, outreach, education, and gardens as sustenance for the soul. There are over 700 plants in the Dogwood Collection at the Arboretum. There is a flowering dogwood stamp – created jointly with the U.S. National Arboretum and Japan. Dr. Olsen thanked WNF&GA members for coming and for supporting the Arboretum. The Renaud-Peterson Internship is vital support for the Dogwood Garden and has educated many interns over the years who have gone out to do good things in the world of horticulture.

Dr. Olsen introduced Scott Acre, head of horticulture and education at the Arboretum. He thanked WNF&GA for support of the Renaud-Peterson Internship, for general ongoing support (bedrock for them), and for our interest in what they do at the USNA. They learn from the collection and have found one variety of dogwood that is very resistant to powdery mildew among other things.

Mr. Acre introduced the staff of the USNA. Carol Bordelon supervisor of horticulture, Chris Carly, Joan Feely – curating the dogwood collection, George Waters – managing the collection, and Nadine Hires – director/secretary.

Dr. Olsen presented WNF&GA with a certificate of appreciation for decades of service and dedication to the USNA.

Mary Pat Ford, Editor of the National Magazine and Editor of the Centennial Commemorative Book, presented a donated first copy of “Growing and Giving” the centennial publication of WNF&GA, to Dr. Olsen and the U.S. National Arboretum.

Roll call was taken. Jenny Rose Carey was excused. All other members registered for the National Meeting were present.

National Awards were then presented. Audrey Ehrler made a presentation to former National President Susan Celentano, honoring her as a leader of great vision who helped maintain and grow the WNF&GA affiliation with the USNA.

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Other national awards were presented by Pat Brown on behalf of Jean DeDecker, Chair of National Awards. Pat asked Marla to come forward to present awards in Horticultural Therapy. The Rochester Branch of the Michigan Division received a Class E First Place Award in Horticultural Therapy. Jane Giblin accepted the award on behalf of her branch. Their horticulture therapy group goes to a nursing home twice each month to do programs with the residents. They also work with Starting Point, a program for special needs adults.

The Trenton Branch of Michigan Division received a Class C First Place Award in Horticultural Therapy. Marla Diamond accepted the award on behalf of her branch. They have been working in horticultural therapy since the 1960s. This year they are working in a school teaching students ages 4-7 how to work in horticulture.

Pat asked Susan Smith-Oscilowski, Director of Environmental Concerns, to come forward to present a Class C First Place Award in Environmental Concerns to the Ambler Keystone Branch. They provided public lectures on insects and bugs and native plants to raise awareness. They sold plugs to the public to get more native plants in use. Leslie Morris Smith came forward to accept the award on behalf of her branch.

Pat asked Kathleen Welsh Beveridge to come forward to present a Class E First Place Award in Promotion and Growth to the Ann Arbor Branch of the Michigan Division. They created a branch history book. Anne Rogers came forward to accept the award on behalf of the Branch.

Pat asked Molly Hammerle to come forward to present a Class B First Place Award in Floral Arts to the Tri-County Branch for their fabulous annual flower show. Bea Peterson came forward to accept the award on behalf of the New York Division.

Finally, Molly Hammerle presented the Orchid Award (given on occasion to recognize a unique undertaking) to the Ann Arbor Branch for the publication of the branch's history. Anne Rogers accepted the award on behalf of the Ann Arbor Branch.

There was nobody present to report on the Local Food Initiative. This item was deferred.

Suzanne Smith-Oscilowski, Director of Environmental Concerns, presented an update on Environmental Concerns and an update on the National Project to plant 100,000 native plants and trees. The current total is 99,999. The final tree will be planted today in the USNA. The first tree was a Magnolia grandiflora at the Ambler Arboretum. The last will be a Cornus florida.

Suzanne encouraged members to continue to submit native plants they have planted this spring – through May 17, 2015. Awards will be published in the Fall 2015 magazine.

Suzanne asked WNF&GA members to provide suggestions for priorities of the Environmental Concerns area going forward. The following suggestions were made:

- Restoration Agriculture
- Wetland Protection
- Bees
- In Michigan – a trail of plants to bring bees across Michigan

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- Bees and butterflies trail
- Host larval plants, not just native plants
- Insects
- Educate branches to go into schools and educate children
- Redo defunct golf courses to restore a natural environment and demonstrate alternatives
- Invasive plant removal/eradication as part of environmental restoration
- Educate hunters and farmers about the danger of invasives that they typically use
- Address pest management practices that are harmful to biodiversity
- Seedlings in schools to educate children and spread helpful native plants
- Experienced native plant landscape designers share design plans and continuous bloom strategies
- Local tours showcasing native gardens and those in the process of going from traditional to native over time with good design (include pictures on national website)

The Executive Committee recommended a motion “to use the proceeds from the silent auction of the 2015 National Meeting for the purpose of updating and maintaining the website – www.wnfga.org.” All were in favor and the motion carried.

Announcements were made as follows:

Julia thanked the USNA for providing an excellent facility for our meeting. She thanked Kelly Oklesson, Member-at-Large, for providing a vegetarian lunch for today.

Julia recognized the nine first time attendees to the National Meeting this year.

Julia recognized Audrey Ehrler for her 10th year serving as Liaison to the U.S. National Arboretum.

President Molly Hammerle adjourned the first session of the annual meeting at 11:02 a.m.

WNF&GA National Annual Meeting Friday, May 15, 2015

The second session of the National Meeting was called to order at 8:08 a.m. This portion of the meeting convened at the Doubletree Hotel in Bethesda, MD.

The Invocation was offered by Janet Leingang of the Dooryard Branch.

Carol Leonard of the Romeo and Juliet Branch, Michigan Division, led the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

President Molly Hammerle requested changes to the minutes of the 2014 National Meeting. There were no questions or additions to the minutes. Bea Peterson moved that the minutes be approved as submitted, Lenore Treba seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Molly directed participants to review the standing rules and the bylaws in the meeting packet.

The Executive Committee of WNF&GA recommended a change to the bylaws to make the duties of the E&C Treasurer (Article V: Section 5-G) consistent with the duties of the A&O Treasurer (Article V: Section 5-F) and the expectations stated in Article XI: Section 2 regarding the requirement to have the financial records of the organization reviewed by an auditor or a CPA every two years.

The following change to the wording of the bylaws is recommended:

Replace Article V: Section 5-G. Education and Charitable Fund Treasurer, bullet number 9 - "Working with the Finance Committee, submit a financial report of the review/audit to the Association for adoption every year."

With the following two bullets (taken verbatim from Article V: Section 5-F, bullets 11 and 12) "9. Recommend to the Executive Committee an auditor/CPA to review the records at least every two years." "10. Working with the Finance Committee, submit to the Association every two years a financial report of the review/audit;" The current Article V: Section 5-G, bullet #10 will become bullet #11.

The motion was seconded by Rita Urbanski. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Lenore Treba, A&O Treasurer, provided a report on A&O accounts. There were no questions and the report was filed as submitted. Lenore directed members' attention to a limited number of copies of the Financial Review for A&O for 2014. She offered to mail copies to anyone who would like one. Lenore directed members' attention to the 2015 A&O Budget. This document was approved by the Executive Committee of WNF&GA. Under the new bylaws, it does not require a vote by WNF&GA membership.

Susan Hunt, E&C Treasurer, provided a report on E&C accounts. She thanked Lenore for her assistance in organizing the report. There was a question about the purpose of the Frances Plate Bequest. This fund supports the Student Conservation Association for a student working on an environmental project with the organization throughout the United States. Carol Leonard manages the Bequest. Susan offered to provide detail about the Raymond James accounts if any member is interested.

Susan reported that Mary Lynne Moellering has helped us understand how much interest has been earned by all of our scholarships over the years. She offered thanks to Mary Lynne and her husband Ed Moellering.

Susan called attention to scholarships that were recently disbursed, including the Warren Sanders McNaughton Oceanographic Scholarship. Marla Diamond is looking for additional schools that might be appropriate to find a student for the Burlingame/Gerrity Horticultural Therapy Scholarship. We have \$1,000 to give this year. Marla will inform the membership when she finds a student for the scholarship for 2015. The Sarah Tyson Scholarship went to Vanessa Young (Clemson University), and Jade Florence (Oregon State University).

The Hazel Herring Civic Improvement Grant will be given out this year. The recipient will be announced shortly.

Leslie Morris Smith of the Ambler Keystone Branch reported that she has given out the scholarship to Temple Ambler in past years. It is mentioned in the history but she wasn't able to find a record of it being given out and it isn't split out in the budget. Susan reported that WNF&GA was making an annual

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gift for this scholarship and Faith Tiberio was matching it. For some reason, this stopped last year. Susan suggested that this should be reinvented and she promised to investigate and begin it again.

Julie reminded the group that the past two years there has been a concern with TUA – Temple considering whether to close the campus and sell the land. No decisions have been made. It was decided with Faith to hold off giving funds until the future of the campus is decided. Faith Dougherty indicated that her mother, Faith Tiberio, has continued to provide annual funding through the Tiberio Foundation. A \$1,500 donation is listed in the E&C Treasurer's report with the date 8/2014. The Executive Committee will check with Faith Tiberio about this and report back to the membership.

The Treasurer's report was filed as submitted.

Susan directed members' attention to the 2015 E&C Budget. This document was approved by the Executive Committee of WNF&GA. Under the new bylaws, it does not require a vote by WNF&GA membership.

A report on **Horticulture Therapy** was given by Marla Diamond. She provided materials about horticulture therapy activities for members to review in hope of inspiring them to become involved with the activity.

President Molly Hammerle reported on the **website**. We are looking at ways to improve navigation of the website and Molly hopes a specific proposal will be ready for a vote by next year.

Molly reported on **National Awards** for Jean DeDecker. They were presented yesterday during the first session of the 2015 National Meeting. Jean asked that branches please write up their projects and apply for awards.

Faith Dougherty provided a report on **Memorials**. Since May 2014, we have lost Linda Vittands, Peggy Romine, and Hazel Herring. Details are in the meeting packet. Faith asked that all members please e-mail or call her with news of the passing of any members.

Leslie Morris Smith, **National Registrar**, reported that membership was 1,627 in 39 branches as of May 2015. Two Divisions (OH and PA) recently closed but several branches remain as independent branches. A handful of members converted to Members-At-Large. Fran Ralstrom asked if members of the closing branches were aware that they can become members-at-large. Julia reported that all were informed of the opportunity.

Julia Siefker, Past President of the **Ohio Division**, provided a report on the dissolution of the Ohio Division. Julia reported that she offered all members an opportunity to become members-at-large. All paid members-at-large will continue to be members of WNF&GA and to receive the magazine.

Mary Pat Ford presented a report as **Editor of the Magazine**. The deadline for the Fall Magazine is August 30th. She also reported on the **Centennial Commemorative Publication** and the process that was undertaken by the collaborators on the publication. She presented the publication, "100 Years of Growing and Giving" to the membership. The book will be on sale through the rest of the meeting for \$20 each.

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Pat Brown provided a report as **Historian**. She compiles a book of the records of each President following their term. A copy of each goes to the Schlessinger Library. Julia explained the significance of the Historian's work and offered thanks to Pat for her excellent work.

Both Audrey Ehrler (Liaison to Members at Large and Loyal Friends) and Emmajane Brice (Charitable Affairs) directed members to their report in the meeting packet.

Audrey Ehrler reported on the **Renaud-Peterson Internship** at the US National Arboretum. Sara Halloran will begin her term as intern this month. Audrey offered thanks to George Waters, head gardener of the Dogwood Collection, for his hard work helping the interns and maintaining the beautiful Dogwood Garden. Letters of thanks may be sent to him. Audrey will find out his contact information and share it with the membership.

President Molly Hammerle reported that Dr. Olsen of USNA issued a press release about the 100,000 plants accomplishment. It will be posted on our WNFGA website and in the next magazine.

Carol Leonard reported on the **Frances Plate Bequest**. The money is sent to Student Conservation Association and it is used to help several students. Bea Peterson, former National President, commented that a group from SCA came to her area and created two miles of trails – very natural looking – that made a nice difference in her community. Kathy Beveridge suggested approaching SCA for a profile of the students helped by the Bequest. Carol promised to do that.

Regarding the **Sara Tyson Scholarship**, new trustees Carol Leonard and Sylvia Anderson will work with Jeannette Maytn on this scholarship going forward.

Susan Hunt reported on the **Warren Sanders McNaughton Oceanographic Scholarship**. It was created by combining several other scholarships. This year it was given to Melissa Von Meyerhauser. There is information about her in the 2015 National Meeting packet.

Gerry Howard reported on the **Hazel Herring Civic Improvement Scholarship**. There was one applicant from Milford Branch in Michigan. They want to develop an improved monarch butterfly waystation in downtown Milford. They have worked with the city, will have Girl Scouts work with them on the project, they have promised to maintain it, and they are donating all of the material and the work to the City. They will receive \$1,000 from the Hazel Herring Civic Improvement Fund for this project. The branch is raising additional funds for the project, as well as the investment of their labor.

Karin Bickle from the Rochester Branch, Michigan Division made a comment about the monarch throughway. Clear cutting on the highways is making this effort more difficult. She recommended we need to work on addressing that problem as well.

Susan Hunt reported on the **Schlessinger Library** at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. We send them \$100 per year. They house all of the archives of the WNF&GA. The materials are meticulously chronicled and they provide support as we approach them to go through our materials. We were not charged for all of the materials we needed from them for the Centennial Commemorative Book.

Mary Pat Ford moved to increase the donation to the Schlessinger Library – the amount to be discussed. Jane Giblin seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

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There was discussion about the amount to be donated per year. \$500 was suggested. Sylvia Anderson suggested that the Finance Committee consider the amount that should be donated. Mary Pat suggested that the membership approve a one-time donation of \$500 this year and allow the Finance Committee to discuss what the amount should be going forward.

Diane Patton moved to increase the amount of the annual contribution to the Schlessinger Library to \$500 for the year 2015 and to ask that an increased amount be discussed by the Finance Committee in years ahead. Mary Pat Ford seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

There was discussion about the possibility of increasing amounts for some of the scholarships. Rita suggested that the membership should raise their suggestions in writing to Mary Lynne Moellering and other officers so that increases can be considered when the budget is created in the fall.

There was a ten minute break called at 9:25 a.m. The meeting was called to order again at 9:35 a.m.

Julia Siefker made several announcements pertaining to the schedule for the remainder of the meeting. The Centennial Commemorative Book will be available for sale at dinner this evening and at the Floral Arts program in the morning.

President Molly Hammerle opened the discussion about growing the WNF&GA. Membership has been declining over the past 5-10 years. She called for ideas from the membership.

Mary Pat Ford suggested we use the slogan "friendships don't grow on trees, they grow in branches" from the back of the Centennial Commemorative Book.

Fran Ralstrom suggested we understand why people have dropped out.

Kelley Okleson suggested a survey of current members about the way the organization is functioning to get a sense of the issues affecting members. This can lead to an action plan and taking steps to fulfill those goals. Molly commented that people don't respond to surveys. Kelley suggested committees among the branches might be responsible for calling members instead of sending out surveys.

Janet Leingang commented that if people didn't attend Ohio Division meetings and programs, then they didn't know what the organization is doing for them and they don't value the organization.

Susan Hunt commented that some younger people are working on their careers and don't have time for a membership organization. Often older members drift off because the direction of their lives changed.

Sheila Kneeshaw found that the younger generation wants direction about what to do in their gardens. They don't want to take classes or go to conferences to learn for themselves. It is difficult to get them interested in volunteering also. They don't seem to want to do the work

where you learn what to do to be effective as a gardener or as part of the organization. She is having success with junior master gardeners who are in school.

Jane Giblin commented that her branch has about 90 active members. Older members are passing and new members are still being attracted. They are working on increasing their visibility in the community through promotion of educational programs, newspaper articles, etc. They attract members in the garden walk. They have members tasked to “talk up” the group and attract members. Jane suggested that we shouldn’t worry about people who aren’t happy. We should just do what we do best and try to attract new members.

Robin Heller suggested that we should try to gather more information relevant to today. We should work on sharing our success stories, understand what has worked and what roadblocks we have run into. Expansion should be our focus. At the Daffodil Day luncheon (250 attendees each year), there were people who wanted to join the organization. Molly asked Robin to submit some ideas to the next magazine via Mary Pat Ford.

Rita Urbanski shared that her branch (110 members) loses some and gains some every year. Their perennial plant exchange in the city (publicized at the library, city hall, stores and newspapers) takes very little work. People bring plants and trade and some just adopt “orphan” perennial plants. Only a few people are needed to run it. They get members from this each year.

Karol Carter, President of Troy Garden Club said that at the perennial plant exchange they give away tickets to the Garden Walk, people register on the website, people request more information, etc.

Karin Bickle said the branch members must be encouraged to talk to other non-branch members. Their branch also gets better speakers and blend them in with members and lecture participants.

Susan Hunt suggested that we must all become “town criers” about WNF&GA – talking about this in our communities all of the time.

Judy Krieman of the Plymouth Garden Club in Michigan indicated that their club is growing steadily because they are offering excellent programs. This is of interest to people who want to learn to be a better gardener. She complained that there are no “top-notch” speakers at the National Meeting. She suggested that there should be well organized transportation to special gardens at these meetings as well.

Sue Vette suggested we should use technology better to get the word out.

Terry LaBeau suggested that we should engage with Master Gardeners to get better speakers.

Linda Coughlin from Plymouth Garden Club shared that her area has two clubs – one meets in the day and the other meetings in the evening. This works well as they help each other with events and members have options about when to attend.

Bea Peterson indicated that all New York area garden branches are declining. She recalled that, in the past, new members were always immediately put on committees and got excellent experience that way. Projects also created a significant amount of interest and engagement.

Judy Hansel of Trailwood Garden Club in Plymouth shared that they have a budget of \$300 for programs. They sign up members at garden walks and perennial exchange. To avoid losing members, they have organized mentoring for new members to help them understand how to get involved in the group.

Yolanda Tenorio Thomas is programs director for her branch. She suggests that programs and food are the activities that bring members and keep them engaged. They advertise their speaker and invite guests. Several of them sign up as members each time.

Cheryl Malin from Pontiac branch shared that those who are recently retired like her may now have time for WNF&GA. She agreed that we should have speakers at the National Meeting.

Molly Hammerle indicated that new members of her branch are given a flower to wear at their first meeting so that people can recognize and speak to them.

Molly indicated that ideas from this discussion will be put on the website and in the magazine.

Kelley suggested that each member give her a page with her top three ideas that are working to grow membership and the top three challenges that need work.

The following Unfinished Business was discussed:

A report of the **Special Committee on the Frysinger Exchange** was presented by Julia Siefker. The Committee met over the past year and included Sylvia Anderson, Bea Peterson, Audrey Ehrler, Rita Urbanski, Kathy Beveridge, Kay Engelhart, and Julia Siefker. People who participate in the Frysinger have become national leaders of WNF&GA.

The Frysinger Exchange has been on hiatus for several years. There is \$8,200 in the fund that have come in from donations restricted to this purpose.

Bea Peterson and Sylvia Anderson made a presentation about the Frysinger Exchange. The world is getting smaller, but we still do not know enough about people living in other parts of the world. When you stay with local families, you learn and build relationships that go on. Bea advocated that projects growing out of the Frysinger Exchange can draw our WNF&GA together.

Sylvia asked that members review the flyer and material that she placed at the back table in the meeting room. The Exchange is a personal growth experience but it is not a vacation. The participants have a responsibility to learn as much as they can about the country they visit and

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bring it back to their members. There is often a commitment to go beyond what happened on the exchange to do something more – providing organization leadership or leading a project to benefit the people of the country that was visited.

Julia Siefker reported that the Special Committee is still researching options for what the Frysinger program can be. The Committee requested more time to come up with the direction of the program. She suggested that during this year some members will travel to the Triennial ACWW Conference in England in August to talk to members about what can/should be accomplished.

Sheila Kneeshaw moved that the Special Committee be given an extension of a minimum of one year. Lenore Treba seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Molly commented that the committee will be studying several options and will report back at the next National Meeting.

There was no new business.

Susan Chambers commented on the Dogwood Collection at the USNA and the recognition of our WNF&GA in that space. She was impressed by this and by the recognition and special treatment we received from the staff at the USNA. She believes these comments and this visibility will help us grow WNF&GA and indicated we should keep working on projects to gain this kind of visibility and recognition in communities where we exist. This will help to put a positive spin on our organization. She challenged members to get involved and step up to help plan activities, the national meeting, and other projects.

Molly Hammerle announced that she has a copy of the history of the Ann Arbor Branch for members to examine if they are interested. This book won an award for the branch yesterday.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

WNF&GA National Annual Meeting Saturday, May 16, 2015

The third session of the National Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. This portion of the meeting convened at the Doubletree Hotel in Bethesda, MD.

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Molly announced to the membership that Jenny Rose Carey had resigned the position of National Vice President earlier that day. She asked Recording Secretary Kathy Beveridge to read a recommendation from the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee recommends that Mary Pat Ford fill the position of National Vice President beginning immediately. Janet Leingang seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

There were several announcements.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.