

**Northern Plains  
Botanic Garden Society**



**2017**

**Annual Report**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

This has been a very transitional year for the Northern Plains Botanic Garden Society as we have reorganized our structure and focus. After quite a few years of pursuing land primarily for a Japanese Garden and events center, we have decided to direct our energies to our current site and beautiful gardens adjacent to Yunker Farm.

Recently we have met with the Fargo Park District about securing a Concessions Agreement so we can continue growing the botanic gardens on site in the current location with a more refined plan. The original site gave us 53 acres to work with, but we decided to focus on 10 acres for now in order to do them right and make them spectacular before slowly transitioning to additional acreage. We are hoping this new agreement is signed and in place by the spring of 2018.

This tract of land will encompass the current gardens including the Woodland Garden, Alerus Financial Butterfly Garden, Alphabet Garden, Rain Garden and the gardens surrounding the entrance and in front of the Japanese garden gate. Expansion within this space will include the beginnings of our Arboretum, the future Edible Forest along with a Japanese Garden (minus an events center, which does not fall under the guidelines of the local covenants) on this piece of property.

Our restructuring has included an upbeat and energized Board of Directors, revamping our membership committee to focus on members and membership, and how to best follow up and maintain member viability within the organization. I am proud to say our member numbers are on the increase once again with our new focus, and with that comes new and energized volunteers.

Our contract with the West Acres Shopping Center, which includes the implementation and design of both interior and exterior plantscapes, continues to be one of our best partnerships that helps us maintain a face in the community while providing a visual experience for all who use that space, which happens to attract a regional base of users. We are forever grateful for their continued support of us!

As we go into our 21<sup>st</sup> year, I am excited about the direction we are headed and how the gardens are going to bloom into the attraction we have always wanted. There will be more color, more design and more users starting from this point forward to bring people from all around the region to our botanic garden to enjoy for many years to come.

I would personally like to thank each and every person who has believed in this project and who has supported us in every way possible. Your continued faith in this mission continues to be greatly appreciated!

John Zvirovski

NPBGS Interim President

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This past year was a challenging one with many changes. In late 2016, NPBGS's part-time executive director left her position for a new, full-time position, and our volunteer events coordinator was no longer able to volunteer due to her full time work and family obligations. In addition, NPBGS, like many non-profit organizations, has been struggling to find and retain committed Board members.

In spite of these challenges, NPBGS carried on by promoting community through gardening. We pondered potential land opportunities in downtown Fargo for developing a conservatory, but they were unrealistic and not tenable. We also considered a possible partnership with the Red River Zoo for developing some of their land in "common use" areas into gardens, but we realized that our goals and vision differ from the Red River Zoo. We decided that our focus had to be on the botanic garden at Yunker Farm where we already have a committed presence.

Our programmatic efforts were focused on sustaining and maintaining our core gardens, the greenhouse and associated infrastructure. Some of our key volunteers invested many hours in improving the gardens, doing maintenance on the Japanese Gate and Living Fence, and sustaining the gardens with lots of watering sessions during our summer drought. In addition, the Board procured the services of our part-time *Contract Gardener*, Ms. Lou Worner, who helped to clean up the Alphabet, Woodland and Chrysanthemum Gardens. Also, she re-painted the greenhouse and signs, and expanded the irrigation lines within the Sensory and Woodland Gardens.

Some of the Board initiatives in 2017 included the following: Reactivation of the Garden Committee; Direct Outreach to members via mailings; the first annual *Conversations and Cocoa* social at the NRI atrium in January; and a *Volunteer Engagement Picnic* and meeting at the gardens in July. Also, a presentation on *Growing Together* was given in October, which summarized our garden site accomplishments during the past growing season.

The Board reached out to the Fargo Park District to re-establish a relationship and to pursue a new Concessions Agreement. We initiated plans to develop the area south of the Japanese Gate into a *Dry Garden*. Also, we discussed re-activating the Arboretum Committee and developing an *Edible Forest* east of the Alphabet Garden. To these ends, a revised *Master Plan* was created that focuses development on the south 10 acres of land at Yunker Park.

Our administrative work included the decision to drop our *Giftworks* accounting subscription, due to expense and complications in accessing their cloud-based files, and to instead directly manage our lists of Members, Volunteers, and Contributors. We decided to terminate our monthly accounting services, and we will seek external accounting services when needed.

The Board of Directors realize that it is essential for NPBGS to recruit more active members and volunteers, and, to strengthen the Board with more engaged members, which is difficult to do in our current cultural climate of ennui. We have set the stage for more active member engagement. The Board invites all members to consider joining the Board. All are welcome to attend Board meetings, which are open to the public.

# Income & Expense Statement 01/01/17 – 12/31/17

## Ordinary Income/Expenses

### Income

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 43400 – Direct Public Support              |           |
| 43450 – Individual, Business Contributions | 5,608.30  |
| 43460 – Annual Pledges                     | 510.00    |
| 43470 – Annual Membership Dues             | 6,485.00  |
| Total 43400 – Direct Public Support        | 12,603.30 |
| <br>                                       |           |
| 45000 – Investments                        |           |
| 45030 – Interest-Savings, Short-term CD    | 16.95     |
| Total 45000 – Investments                  | 16.95     |
| <br>                                       |           |
| 46400 – Other Types of Income              |           |
| 46430 – Miscellaneous Revenue              | 4,622.26  |
| Total 46400 – Other Types of Income        | 4,622.26  |
| <br>                                       |           |
| 47200 – Program Income                     |           |
| 47260 – West Acres Contract                | 23,262.38 |
| 47300 – Events – Ticket Sales              | 3,475.00  |
| 47310 – Events – Revenue                   | 7,070.86  |
| 47320 – Events – Sponsorships              | 975.00    |
| 47330 – Events – Donations                 | 577.00    |
| Total 47200 – Program Income               | 35,310.24 |
| <br>                                       |           |
| Total Income                               | 52,552.75 |

**Gross Profit** **52,552.75**

### Expense

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| 60900 – Business Expenses              |          |
| 60950 – Dues & Subscriptions           | 305.00   |
| Total 60900 – Business Expenses        | 305.00   |
| <br>                                   |          |
| 62100 – Contract Services              |          |
| 62110 – Accounting Fees                | 1,350.00 |
| – Contract Gardener Fees               | 2,265.00 |
| Total 62100 – Contract Services        | 3,615.00 |
| <br>                                   |          |
| 62800 – Facilities and Equipment       |          |
| 62880 – Repairs & Maintenance          | 64.47    |
| 62890 – Rent, Parking, Utilities       | 1,134.12 |
| Total 62800 – Facilities and Equipment | 1,198.59 |

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 63000 – Information Technology          |                  |
| 63100 – Giftworks Web Subscription      | 440.00           |
| 63200 – Pay Pal Fees                    | 3.24             |
| 63300 – Website                         | 805.00           |
| 63400 – Hardware/Software (Credit)      | -4,137.00        |
| 63500 – Merchant Service Fee            | 1,294.52         |
| 63600 – Credit Card Equipment Rental    | 1,644.56         |
| Total 63000 – Information Technology    | 56.62            |
| 64000 – Program Expenses                |                  |
| 64100 – Events – Supplies               | 2,622.72         |
| 64200 – Events – Food                   | 2,430.62         |
| 64175 – Events – Other Expenses         | 154.95           |
| 64200 – Public Relations & Advertising  | 961.28           |
| 64300 – West Acres Project Expenses     | 2,341.83         |
| 64400 – Gardening Expenses              | 5,047.08         |
| Total 64000 – Program Expenses          | 13558.48         |
| 65000 – Operations                      |                  |
| 65010 – Books, Subscriptions, Reference | 63.78            |
| 65020 – Postage, Mailing Service        | 358.62           |
| 65030 – Printing and Copying            | 574.75           |
| 65040 – Supplies                        | 193.72           |
| 65060 – Bank Service Charges            | 5.00             |
| Total 65000– Operations                 | 1,195.87         |
| 65100 – Other Types of Expenses         |                  |
| 65120 – Insurance – Liability, D and O  | 2,324.70         |
| 65160 – Other Costs                     | 63.75            |
| Total 65100 – Other Types of Expenses   | 2,388.45         |
| Total Expense                           | 22,318.01        |
| Net Ordinary Income                     | 30,234.74        |
| <b>Net Income</b>                       | <b>30,234.74</b> |

## ASSETS

### Current Assets

#### Checking/Savings

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 11100 – Bell State Checking                  | 61,359.56 |
| 11200 – Bell State Money Market Savings      |           |
| 11210 – Savings Unrestricted                 | 5,753.06  |
| 11220 – Japanese Garden Fund                 | 5,195.60  |
| 11230 – Building Fund – Japanese Garden Only | 3,519.00  |
| 11240 – Memorial for Alma T Tucker           | 225.00    |
| 11250 – Iris Garden – Irene Rust Memorial    | 1,164.00  |
| 11260 – Reserved for Executive Director Fees | 857.00    |

Total 11200 – Bell State Money Market Savings 16,713.66

11300 – Martha Lee Mem. Conservatory Fund (Alerus Financial CD) 4,155.82

11400 – Raffle Account 2,030.00

Total Checking/Savings 84,259.04

#### Accounts Receivable

11000 – Accounts Receivable 8,512.38

Total Accounts Receivable 8,512.38

Total Current Assets 92,771.42

**Total Assets 92,771.42**

### Liabilities and Equity

#### Equity

32000 – Unrestricted Net Assets 62,536.68

Net Income 30,234.74

Total Equity 92,771.42

**Total Liabilities and Equity 92,771.42**

## DEVELOPMENT

### Fundraising:

*Tea Time at the Atrium:* \$2933.59 net income

*Calendar Raffle:* Net loss; exact amount not determined

*Container Garden Show & Spring Luncheon:* \$138.02 net income

*Spring Plant Sale:* \$2,345 net income

### Grants:

*William and Anna Jane Schlossman Fund of the Fargo-Moorhead Area Foundation:* \$1,000

*Love Always Donor Fund Group, West Acres Development:* \$2,500

**Event Sponsors:** \$1,425

**Pledges:** \$2,120

**Individual Donations:** \$230

**Memberships:** \$4,565 (136 paid Members; 1 organization membership)

**West Acres Landscapes Project:** \$30,000 (Marketing initiative via landscapes services)

## OPERATIONS

**Buildings and Grounds:** Maintenance of NPBGS' infrastructure was the focus of our efforts in 2017. The greenhouse, which was re-skinned in 2016, was repainted with additional trim added to the west side. Our garden signs and two wooden benches were repainted, and we expanded our irrigation lines with two additional water spigots, one each, in the *Woodland* and *Sensory Gardens*. Also, we straightened and reinforced the *Living Fence* as well as the walls of the *Japanese Gate*. Finally, we installed a plaque on the Japanese Gate which commemorates our September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013 dedication, with representative of Japan America Cultural Exchange Society (JACES), of five "Spring Wonder" Sargent Cherry Trees, which were planted to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japan's gift of cherry trees to the United States.

**Gardens:** Weeds and water were our challenges in 2017. We invited volunteers to help on Saturday gardening sessions, starting in early June, to focus first on the Japanese Gate Sumac and round circle plantings, and then on the *Chrysanthemum*, *Rain* and *Woodland Gardens*. The *Chrysanthemum* and *Rain Gardens* were thoroughly weeded and are primed for new perennials in 2018. The *Woodland Garden's* dry creek was deepened, a new bridge was constructed and placed, and the old bridge was relocated in the *Alphabet Garden*. Plans were created for the patio area which will be expanded in 2018, with a paver brick base and access pathway defined with assorted perennials, giving the *Woodland Garden* are more welcoming space. The *Fairy Garden* was relocated to the west side of the *Woodland Garden* near the new bridge, and it is undergoing a renovation and expansion with new, exciting elements planned for 2018. The *Alphabet* and *Sensory Gardens* were maintained by a few key volunteers, with a focus on much weeding and watering. Plans were initiated for a future children's activity area on the south side of the Alphabet Garden, and for a critters' and beneficial insect habitat display on the north side. Drought was a challenge for all of the gardens, and much time was spent on watering tasks. The

*Food Pantry Gardens* and *Seeds of Opportunity* beds were planted with assorted vegetables, which yielded just under 1,500 pounds of produce donated to the Fargo-Moorhead Emergency Food Pantry. Also, our Concord grapevine cuttings from a 100 year old grapevine yielded a bumper crop of grapes, which were harvested and made into delicious grape jelly by dedicated volunteers. The grape jelly is being sold at various NPBGS events.

We are grateful for the 2016 *Davies High School Philanthropy and Youth* grant of \$700 (courtesy of *The Barry Foundation*), which allowed us to procure numerous mums and annuals for the gardens, and expand our irrigation lines and add two new spigot faucets. Also, we received a grant of \$1,000 from the *William and Anna Jane Schlossman Fund of the Fargo-Moorhead Area Foundation*. This grant was used to buy a new riding lawn mower, which was greatly needed. The new mower allowed us to efficiently mow the grass and knock down the weeds on the “hills”, and it will help us to haul small trailer loads of compost and soil. We thank *S and S Landscaping* and *John Deere Co.* for the riding lawn mower discounts.

## **PROGRAMS**

In lieu of no Programs Committee, the Board of Directors determined that the Northern Plains Botanic Garden would be the key programmatic focus of the organization. However, a few programs were hosted by the Board in 2017, including: the first annual *Conversations and Cocoa* social and seed swap on January 28<sup>th</sup> at the NRI Atrium; a July 27<sup>th</sup> *Volunteer Engagement Picnic Supper and Meeting* with frequent garden volunteers at the Northern Plains Botanic Garden; and an October 24<sup>th</sup> *Growing Together: Northern Plains Botanic Garden* slide presentation by Lisa Brown about the progress at the Northern Plains Botanic Garden, held at the NRI Atrium. Also, the keynote speaker at the March 21<sup>st</sup> *Annual Meeting* was Dr. Todd West, who spoke about his woody plant research project at NDSU. Mr. Greg Mortenson, Research Plant Specialist at NDSU, spoke at the May 13<sup>th</sup> *Container Garden Show and Spring Luncheon* about various aspects of the woody plant research program at NDSU’s Dale Herman Arboretum.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

This year we dedicated a new focus to membership by improving our tracking records and by determining exactly who our members are. We sent 300 membership renewal letters to past and present members to ask for their continued support. As a result, membership increased this past year from 157 members to 182. It is a step in the right direction and we have a dedicated committee to continue this growth in the coming year through continued mailings, promotions and correspondence. With a new agreement with the Fargo Park District underway, we are excited that we can begin to promote our current site once again as our permanent location for the Northern Plains Botanic Garden.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

The Northern Plains Botanic Garden Society grows through the generous efforts of its volunteers. Our volunteers are key to our development and success. We are grateful for all the work that our volunteers did in 2017, including the many things they do “behind the scenes” in preparing newsletters, sending e-mails, maintaining databases, meeting with officials, and doing the general work of the organization. In addition to performing organizational tasks, our volunteers are actively “promoting community through gardening” through our various public garden displays, as well as fundraising in support of the Northern Plains Botanic Garden. Below is a snapshot summary of some of these volunteer efforts. Thank you, Volunteers!

*Northern Plains Fresh Farmers Market at West Acres:* 5 volunteers, 212 hours (estimated)

*West Acres Plant Scape Design:* 14 volunteers, 112 hours

*NRI Atrium Plant Care:* 6 volunteers, 143 hours

*Tea Time at the Atrium:* 34 volunteers, 320 hours (estimated)

*Spring Plant Sale:* 12 volunteers, 150 hours (estimated)

*Container Garden Show and Spring Luncheon:* 6 volunteers, 80 hours (estimated)

*Northern Plains Botanic Garden:* 36 volunteers, 698 hours

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN 2017:**

Jim Anderson\*, President (January – March, 2017; end of one-year, third term)

John Zvirovski\*\*, Vice President (until March, 2017; end of second term)

John Zvirovski, Interim President (March, 2017 – March, 2018; end of one-year, third term)

Lisa Brown+, Secretary (effective March, 2016; third term, non-consecutive)

Bill Fradet, Treasurer (effective March 2017; second term)

Cathi Tiedeman (until end of second term, March, 2017)

Paula Grimestad (until end of first term, March, 2017)

Don Kinzler (May, 2015 – March, 2018; first term)

Vern Hunter\*\*\* (prior Board service: 2003 – 2008)

Brandi Malarkey\*\*\*

Ruth Morton\*\*\* (prior Board service: 2009 -2014)

Ann Riley\*\*\* (prior Board service: 2001 – 2007)

\*End of Second Term in March, 2016; started third term of one year that ended in March, 2017

\*\*End of Second Term in March, 2017; started third term of one year that ends in March, 2018

\*\*\*Interim Appointment by Pres. John Zvirovski, effective 21 Sept. 2017 - 14 March 2018

+Appointed by Pres. Jim Anderson, effective March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016

**NORTHERN PLAINS BOTANIC GARDEN SOCIETY**  
**MINUTES: ANNUAL MEETING**  
**March 21, 2017**  
**At the Neuropsychiatric Research Institute, Atrium**  
**700 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S, Fargo, ND**

President Jim Anderson convened the meeting at 7:06 p.m. He introduced our Keynote Speaker, Dr. Todd West, Associate Professor at North Dakota State University Department of Plant Sciences. Dr. West specializes in woody plant improvement and he is the Horticulture Undergraduate Program Coordinator.

Dr. West spoke about his work in woody plant improvement research, including the work at the NDSU Research Arboretum at Absaraka, ND, which is an 80 acre farm for woody plant introductions. The woody plant improvement program began in 1986. Since then, 51 woody plants had been released by NDSU through the research efforts of Dr. Dale Herman and his technical research associate, Larry Chaput. Dr. West was hired to continue the woody plant research program after the retirements of Dr. Herman and Mr. Chaput. Dr. West hired Greg Morgenson as his research specialist in 2012.

Dr. West discussed the need for a diversity of woody species in our landscapes, and he highlighted a number of plant introductions released by NDSU that are adapted to the northern Great Plains. Over the years, over 200 genera of 300 species – 9,500 different plant accessions – have been studied at the Dale E. Herman Research Arboretum (comprising 35 acres of the farm) at Absaraka. Dr. West discussed a number of the released plant varieties, including Japanese Elm, Maples, Red Bud, Birches, Pear, Spruce, Lilac, Japanese Katsura Tree, etc. Some varieties were suggested as suitable for planting in a Japanese Garden. He mentioned that PDFs of the plant releases are available on NDSU's website: <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/plantsciences/research/introductions> . Dr. West also discussed the various methods they use in their research for selecting and developing new test varieties, including plant tissue culture. Dr. West ended his presentation at 7:50 p.m., which was followed by an interesting question and answer session. The meeting broke for refreshments in the NRI Atrium, where cake, bars, and other light refreshments were served. Members socialized and met with Dr. West.

The Business portion of the Meeting convened at 8:40 p.m.

Jim Anderson gave an update on a potential partnership with the Red River Zoo for a Conservatory and use of common areas for a botanic garden (see details as outlined in the President's Message in the 2016 Annual Report). Also, Jim mentioned the Consortium of businesses and individuals who are working on the revitalization of downtown Moorhead. He has discussed meeting with some of these individuals, and there is potential support for a Japanese Garden as part of their plan. Jim answered a few questions about the Zoo land and the Moorhead Land issues.

2016 Annual Meeting Minutes: Lisa suggested that they be corrected as they could not be approved in their current form. The Board will correct the minutes so that they can be archived with the 2016 Annual Report.

Financials Report: All reviewed the Income and Expense Statement. Ann Riley inquired about the Events and other expenses, since they were not clear. Treasurer Bill Fradet said that NPBGs is pursuing a different accounting firm. Lisa Brown mentioned lack of clarity in the Calendar Raffle net income. Ann Riley made a motion to approve the Income and Expense Statement, which Don Kinzler seconded. All approved the 2016 Financial Report.

Cynthia Herfindahl mentioned that she had tickets and promotional literature for the Container Garden Show and Spring Luncheon, which will be held on May 13<sup>th</sup>. She invited people to volunteer, participate and purchase tickets, and requested donations of container gardens. Lisa Brown mentioned that the Spring Plant Sale will be on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

Nominations to the Board of Directors: There were no nominations solicited for the Board.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Brown, secretary