

Michigan Nut Growers Association Fall Meeting Minutes

Saturday, October 4, 2014

Noon: potluck with many delicious offerings.

Meeting called to order by President Mike Dority at 12:48 p.m.

Mike thanked our gracious hosts: the Carl and Art DeKleine family and workers at the De Kleine Orchards, LLC, 1887 32nd Avenue, Hudsonville. The tent set up was perfect for this showery, cool, windy afternoon.

Several people brought their Nut Evaluation Day samples for the January 10, 2015 event. Contact Dennis Strahle for more details.

Mike noted that there were several new members and asked how they found out about MNGA: On-line, Ag Expo and through the Chestnut Growers Inc.

Old Business:

Summer Minutes were distributed. No comments. Alan Van Antwerp made a motion to accept the Summer Minutes as written. Tom Latterner seconded the motion and it **passed by unanimous oral vote (PBUOV)**.

Treasurer's Report was distributed. Alan commented that he is waiting for \$3 contribution, but other than that, all is balanced.

Alan asked if it the Association should order more of Dennis Fulbright's book for sale. We get a discount by ordering in multiples of 10. Dick Wolthuis made a motion to buy 10 of the books, 2nd by Bill Nash, PBUOV.

MNGA Officer Election

Trevor Newman (unable to attend) had been contacted in advance to see if he would be willing to be President of MNGA (he would). Mike Dority nominated Trevor.

Dick Wolthuis suggested that he has been 1st Vice President for a number of years and that possibly he could be 2nd VP and Clay Ottoni be 1st VP. Clay agreed.

Dennis Strahle nominated Tom Latterner as a Director-At-Large. Tom accepted.

Further discussion was that we could have up to four Directors-At-Large per the Bylaws.

Clay Ottoni made a motion that MNGA have two Directors-At-Large. 2nd by Bill Nash. PBUOV

Marc Boone was nominated as a 2nd Director-At-Large. Marc accepted the nomination.

Bill Nash made a motion that we close the nominations. 2nd by Ken Howe. PBUOV.

PBUOV, the MNGA Board for 2014/2015 is:

- President: Trevor Newman
- 1st Vice President: Clay Ottoni
- 2nd Vice President: Dick Wolthuis
- Directors-At-Large: Marc Boone and Tom Latterner
- Secretary: Dennis Strahle
- Treasurer: Alan Van Antwerp
- Immediate Past President: Mike Dority

- MSU Faculty Advisor: Dennis Fulbright
- Resident Agent: Bill Nash
- MNGA New Editor: Jim Fydroski

Demonstrations:

1. Chestnut windrower: moves nuts and burrs from under trees to center aisle
2. Chestnut pick up and burr separation machine: picks up from windrows and separates burrs from nuts
3. Chestnut floater: bad chestnuts float out and are removed
4. Tree trimmer mobile platform: lifts a person high enough to trim trees
5. Black walnut husker: Tom Latterner brought his latest version of the husker

Farm Tour

Wagons were used to transport MNGA throughout the farm with informative stops along the way.

Karl De Kleine noted that you do not harvest chestnuts, you manage the burrs. By volume, there are 6 times more burrs than chestnuts. To facilitate picking up the burrs and nuts, a clean orchard floor is required.

They use herbicides and various mowers to create a beautiful harvest floor. The grass is mowed very short and weeds are non-existent. In 2013, they harvested 22,000 pounds of chestnuts.

We saw the maple woods where they harvested 5,000 gallons of maple sap to make syrup.

They showed us the dwindling cherry orchard. 7 acres were recently removed to make room for more chestnuts.

There is a section of the orchard for specialty nuts including Carpathian walnut and hazelnut.

In their second orchard that is about 5 miles away, the chestnuts were also thriving. Of major significance is that there were 1000 trees on 20' X 20' grid. The trees are about 20 years old and are now too close. The De Kleines hired a 90" tree spade operator to move alternate rows of these mature trees in April 2014. The wet summer agreed with the transplanted trees and they appear to be doing great. The test of winter will be critical. This is an unheard of practice that appears to be working.

Auction: a modest auction netted \$113.00. Thank you people who brought items to sell and thank you to those who bought them. Holding the auction after the farm tour was not ideal, but was a weather driven decision.

There was not a 50/50 drawing.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Strahle
MNGA Secretary