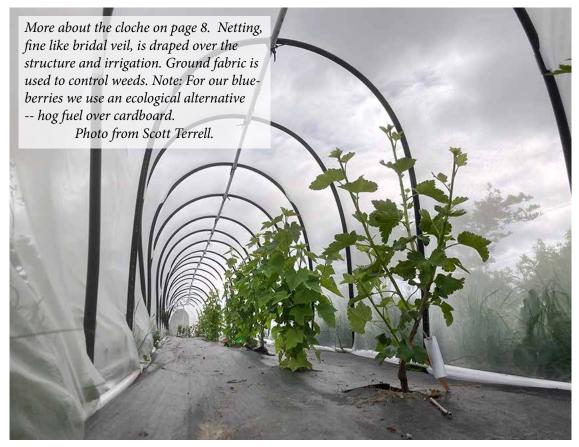
16650 State Route 536, Mount Vernon, WA 98273 in cooperation with the Northwest Washington Research & Extension Center (NWREC) of Washington State University

Fruit Garden Report

The Fruit Garden has been a busy place this spring, the garden's volunteers have accomplished a great deal of work. Ground was broken and tilled, then irrigation installed, to create a long row for planting Ribes varieties (currants and gooseberries) (pronounced RIE-bees). With the consultation of Dr. Lisa DeVetter and entomologists at NWREC, a cloche of hoop supports and netting was built to exclude sawfly and cane borers, pests that have damaged our previous row of Ribes plants. The new structure demonstrates how local small fruit growers manage to control pests and successfully grow healthy fruit.

Not far from the new cloche is a new row of fig trees, planted with irrigation and mulched to suppress weeds. This new location meets our NWF goal to improve our display of fig varieties that grow well and will ripen in our area. A second row of figs is planned for next year and will be located adjacent to the new row. A big thanks to volunteer Ned Garvey for his work designing and creating the fig row. A protective



Fruit Garden Report, continued

structure will be installed later this season to demonstrate how to cover and protect figs in winter.

This year's garden plan calls for the planting of several trees. We will also update the map of the Fruit Garden to indicate where the new trees and shrubs are located, and they will be included in this year's labeling project. New varieties that have been planted are:

Apple: Bardsey, Kandil Sinap (from Türkiye), Hudson's Golden Gem.

Mulberry: Pakistani and a dwarf mulberry suitable for an espalier.

Plum: A Mirabelle combination tree to include Mirabelle de Metz, Geneva Mirabelle, Mirabelle de Nancy, and Reine de Mirabelle. We are also planting a Geneva plum this year.

Ribes: Black Currants Hilltop Baldwin, Minaj Smyriou, Ben Lomond, Risager, Ben Sarek, Lentaj and Missouri Giant, an American black currant. Red Currants Rovada, Red Jade, Cascade, and Jonkeer Van Tets. Pink Currants Pink Champagne and Gloire des Sablon. White Currants Primus, and Zitavia. Gooseberries Leepared, Jeanne, Invicta, Captivator, and Poorman. Also Jostaberry and ORUS 8 both of which are black currant x gooseberry.

Figs: Little Ruby, Olympian, Brown Turkey, Nordland, Madeleine de Deux Saisons, Grantham's Royal, Desert King, Lattarula.

Columnar apple trees: Blushing Delight, Tasty Green, Golden Treat, Tasty Red, White Icicle.

Dwarf Nectarine: Necta Zee, Garden Delight.

The Fruit Garden Committee concluded that, with three rows, we had an over-representation of haskap (honeyberry) shrubs. The decision was made to replace some haskaps with elderberries, reflecting the recent and wide interest in growing elderberries which are easy to grow and attract pollinators. One row of haskaps has been removed to make space for both European and American elderberry cultivars which are currently growing in the nursery: Black Lace, Korsor, Laced Up, Samdal, Alleso, Haschberg, Wyldewood, and Sambucus caerulea, a Pacific Coast native which is self-fertile, i.e. does not require another for pollen.

Our nursery has been expanded to make way for several rows of various rootstocks, some for stooling and some for future grafting. Newly grafted trees were planted in the nursery (and at volunteer Bob Ness's orchard) and will eventually be available for the Garden to replant and replace trees that are not doing well and struggle with disease.

Volunteer in the Nursery

Last summer the NWF nursery was enlarged and fenced, with enhanced irrigation and protection against voles. The nursery provides space for up to fifty juvenile trees, potted trees and the stoolbed for growing rootstocks. All these, in time will supply the Fruit Garden as we maintain the varieties and replace diseased cultivars. So important and what a great place to learn!

Volunteer Ned Garvey and other experienced nursery people will work with and train the new volunteers as they learn. **Please tell Garden Manager Tom Wake that you are interested.**

This year we will be working with NW Fruit Rescue to minimize the amount of dropped fruit that ends up in the compost pile. Steve Gaber and his assistants will help pick up fruit that is on the ground and repurpose it to a cidery as well as other options. Steve's nonprofit organization's website explains their mission. www.nwfruitrescue.org

Fruit Garden Report, continued



Tom observes Larry's technique • from Sue Williams

We continue with the yearly mulching of alternate blueberry rows and continue to thank North Hill Resources for their donation of the wood mulch. Volunteers continue to keep the Garden mowed and trimmed in our endless efforts to discourage and control the mole-vole population.

Thank You to North Hill Resources

4600 651 N. Hill Blvd, Burlington 98233 360-757-1866 • NorthHillResources.com

For landscaping materials and continuing support



Virginia crabapple blooming in April

Many grafting and pruning classes have been offered to our members this Spring. To date, approximately 53 people have taken classes. More classes in espalier pruning, bud grafting and summer pruning will be available throughout the Summer.



Carole and Carol, espalier minders • from Bob Ness

A big thanks to these volunteer instructors, Larry Crum, Bill Pierce, Beth Jones, Carole Jacobson and Carol Butz who offer their time and considerable expertise to promote fruit grafting and/or pruning.

We look forward to seeing you in the Garden.

Colleen Sanders, Fruit Garden Committee Co-Chair Sam Benowitz, Fruit Garden Committee Co-Chair

Many Hands Make Light Work

Please consider joining the **Membership Team**.

From home you can help NWF
with database know-how. Or
offer some time for our events
by helping at the Registration Tables

Send a note of your availability to info@nwfruit.org.



Teaching and learning, March grafting workshop. • Photo from Sue Williams

Northwest Fruit (aka Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation)

Membership Form	Please check one box ONLY:
DATE:	
Name	Email address
Address	Phone #
City	State Zip
Please check all applicable lines to designate type	e of membership and/or extra donation:
\$25 FOR ANNUAL <u>INDIVIDUAL</u> M	NEMBERSHIP (One person only)
\$40 FOR ANNUAL <u>FAMILY</u> MEMB	ERSHIP (Parents with their minor children)
\$ FOR <u>GIFT MEMBERSHIP</u> FOR: (F	Please note For Whom, above at Name)
\$125 FOR ANNUAL <u>COMMERCIA</u> (Includes 3 people, and also inc	<u>l. (List Only)</u> MEMBERSHIP :ludes business name on our website)
\$200 FOR ANNUAL_COMMERCIA	<u>.L (Full)</u> MEMBERSHIP
(Includes 3 people, and also inc	cludes a link from our website to the commercial members' website)
AN <u>EXTRA SUSTAINER DONATIO</u>	ON of \$ FOR GENERAL FUND FRUIT GARDEN
I would like to volunteer to help as follows	s (please check all applicable lines):
FIELD WORK IN THE WWFRF F	FRUIT DISPLAY GARDEN (Thursdays/Saturdays, 9am to noon)
BY DOING WORK I CAN DO A	T HOME USING MY COMPUTER OR TELEPHONE
Please make your check payable and MAIL your completed membersh and check to this a	ip form PO Box 864



You know that NFW Membership is required for volunteering in the Fruit Garden. Safety training, is part of the program and we rarely use ladders. Here, Carole Jacobsen prunes and trains the upper espalier branches while Carol Butz does the same on lower branches, during this March workshop.

Photo from Scott Terrell

The Fruit Garden Offers Many Rewards

On each Thursday morning from 9 a.m. to noon, a bunch of people show up to do the work of maintaining the six acre Fruit Garden located at WSU's Research Extension Center in Mount Vernon. The Garden has almost a thousand fruiting plants. Our group, Northwest Fruit (NWF) is entirely made up of member-volunteers. It includes people who have spent a lifetime growing fruit along with people who are just starting on their own personal journey of learning how to successfully grow fruit. NWF includes volunteers who have gardens or small farms, and folks who have little personal space to grow their own fruit. All enjoy learning and doing the pruning, grafting, thinning and other necessary tasks. As the season progresses the volunteers can then enjoy eating and sharing the delicious healthy fruit.

It's not just the work, it's the friendships

We work about an hour and a half on the many tasks needed at each time of the year. Then we stop for coffee and delicious snacks while we sit and socialize. Then back to work for another hour. We discuss what needs doing, each volunteer chooses what they want to work on.

It is not just the work that keeps volunteers coming back. People return because of the atmosphere — outdoors with nature along with the opportunity to meet and work with like-minded helpers on projects that are accomplished together.

More Fruit Garden Volunteers Are Welcome

We have a core group of about 15 year-round volunteers although the number of participants fluctuates to

double and triple that number in various seasons. And we need every one of them, plus you. Our goal is to replace duplicate or diseased and unproductive plants in the Garden with new proven varieties of fruit, leaving us with about the same amount of plants to care for.

We also schedule work sessions on Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon to provide an opportunity for those who can't come on Thursdays.

People Who Live Far Away Can Help Too

We have members who live too far from the garden to regularly come to work. They remain members to get the valuable information about fruit growing in our newsletters. Most also want to support NWF because they understand how important our fruit garden is as a regional attraction, helping people learn to grow healthy fruit in our climate.

Truth be told, among our troop of regulars, most of us are eager to work in the garden but we're not keen on the desk-work needed to keep our non-profit organization going, even though we realize this work is an essential aspect of the volunteer organization, and for the garden to prosper.

This essential deskwork includes maintaining our website, tending our membership list, help with routine communications, signage, and the thoughtful work of our board of directors. Many of our followers have skills in these areas. Your help in these areas is very much needed and encouraged.

Sam Benowitz, Fruit Garden Committee Co-Chair



Volunteer Faraneh Abbasi

"I'm so grateful for this garden. Sometimes my shoulder hurts but I come anyway because the garden delivers to me a lot more than I give. This garden takes care of me both physically and mentally. It helps keep me healthy."

Faraneh adds, "We moved here a few years ago from Maryland. This garden was the most important reason for us to move to this area. Every time I have visitors I bring them here to lift everyone's spirits. Picking fruit from a tree, put it in your mouth. It's wonderful."

Volunteers Speak



Volunteer Bill Pierce

"I view the fruit garden as a great resource. I've learned so much here that I use back on my own fruit trees. Each Thursday I get a view of what mature fruit trees should look like. I see the pest management over a long period of time so I better understand what I encounter at my place."

Bill continues, "I have a group of friends here. The nature of the work attracts people I like and have become friends with. I can see my friends on a regular basis. We don't only talk, we accomplish something important, together."

Weekly Work Parties – Find Schedule at NWfruit.org

Thursdays 9 to 12

Saturdays 9 to 12, check website for Saturday dates

We continue the Saturday work day opportunity, for aspiring volunteers who can't come on Thursdays. Dress for the weather and bring a pair of hand pruners. Come help with seasonal pruning and fruit thinning, and watch the summer fruit ripen! Park in the parking area on the North end of the Garden. These workdays are great opportunities to learn about growing fruit, meet friends, and to contribute to caring for the Fruit Garden.

Note: NFW Membership is required for volunteering in the Fruit Garden.

Please contact Tom Wake for details, at info@nwfruit.org.

From Their Hearts



Volunteer Samantha Chang

"I enjoy learning more about how to manage the fruit trees. I focus especially on the espaliers, and on summer pruning. It's fun to see and work on the many varieties and to sample the ripe fruit."

Samantha added, "This is a great resource for our community. I enjoy working with the other volunteers and I'm glad I started volunteering."

Facebook Page Helpers

Post updates & channel inquiries to members who can answer.
To offer your help, please email sambenowitz2@gmail.com.



Volunteer Bob Ness

"When I moved to the Skagit 4 1/2 years ago, I planted a hundred dwarf fruit trees but I had no idea how to care for them. I had heard about volunteering in the garden but I didn't know I could be one. I came down here to see what was going on and now three years later I keep coming back and I'm learning the skills I need, including grafting and pruning."

Bob continues, "What I mostly gained were all the the good friendships with people with a wide range of interests for the sense of community. For me, this volunteering is very rewarding."



Annual Volunteers' Picnic ♦♦ Slated For August 22 ♦♦

Volunteers are encouraged to attend our annual Potluck on **Thursday August 22** at noon, following the 9 a.m. to noon work session at the fruit garden. Beverages and a main dish with both meat and vegetarian choices will be provided. If you can, bring a pot luck dish.

Annual Picnic is a lot of fun.

Currant Cloche Encounters

Successfully growing gooseberries has been difficult at our fruit garden, as it is for most gardeners in the Pacific Northwest. A major problem is the sawfly, whose larvae defoliate most gooseberry plants in our area. In addition, we had trouble keeping the plants weeded. Our currants, especially black currants, have also been infected with the currant cane borer. If you prune the base of a black currant cane, you can see a hollow middle created by the borer. The larvae hatch out to be blueish white moths, which fly and infect other plants. We hope to solve these and other pest problems, by building a cloche over our 90-foot-long row. At 3-foot intervals we have planted black, red, pink and white currants, and American black currants. We also added gooseberries. All are varieties proven to thrive in our region.

We rotovated the ground, installed drip irrigation hose and covered it with landscape groundcover cloth that prevents weeds from growing through it. We cut holes in the fabric to plant the plants.



Our cloche was made by bending 3/4-inch black plastic pipe. The pipe is about 4 1/2 feet tall and wide, while the arches are spaced 3 feet apart. This frame structure is covered by insect netting purchased from the Dubois company in Canada. We drove 2 1/2-foot-long rebar about 12 inches into

the ground and slid the pipe to the ground over the rebar. We connected the netting to the pipe and to the groundcover with plastic cloche clips.

We designed this experiment with the help of WSU Mount Vernon station small fruit specialist Dr. Lisa

DeVetter and with the station's entomologist, Dr. Louis Nottingham. We put the insect netting on this spring, just after the plants flowered, to allow pollination, but before the sawflies deposit their eggs. We will take the netting down in the fall and bring it inside so it will last longer. We don't know how long the netting will last. We will have to figure out the best timing for having the netting up. We will report our findings in the newsletter.



Sawfly - Named for the saw-like appearance of the ovipositor, which the females use to cut into the plants where they lay their eggs. • photo from Wikipedia

In many parts of Europe, fruit cages with various coverings are used by gardeners for protecting many different fruits. For our blueberries we have a cage that is about 7-feet tall that is covered by bird netting which allows us to successfully grow blueberries. The use of cloches and cages can aid in growing many fruits without using pesticides. This spring we planted a row of many of the best figs for our area and we plan to protect some of the plants with a structure to consessive heat and reduce wind as winter protection. Temperatures below 10 degrees Fahrenheit kill fig trees back to the ground. This winter we had a night that reached 6 degrees.

If you would like to help us as we experiment on how to improve growing many fruits, please volunteer and work with us.

Sam Benowitz, Fruit Garden Committee Co-Chair

Benefits of Membership

Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation (WWFRF), aka NW Fruit is a 501(c) non-profit organization created thirty years ago. Your annual membership dues support the foundation that maintains the six-acre Fruit Garden, a collection of hundreds of varieties of fruit. It offers members and the community hands-on opportunities to learn about fruit growing in our region through advocacy, education and demonstration.

- Field Days and Workshops are free to members.
- Apple & Pear Sample-the-Harvest Day, second Saturday in October, offers garden tours and lectures on growing and harvesting fruit. Members are offered samples of apples, pears, grapes, and sometimes cider, to take home. Crop quantities vary from year to year.
- Winter Field Day, second Saturday in March, offers tours, lectures on fruit growing, grafting demonstrations, plus sale of scionwood and rootstocks for grafting apple, pear and other fruit trees.
- Workshops are held in Spring and Summer on learning to prune apple, pear, plum, and cherry trees, as well as blueberry bushes, grape and kiwi vines.
- As a member you may volunteer to work in the Fruit Garden on designated days. Members receive instructions on maintaining the trees, safety, and growing conditions in the local climate. Membership is required for all volunteers to work in the garden.



Yellow currants flowering in July 2016, from Kim Siebert



- A picnic for volunteers is held in the summer.
- Members receive the NWFruit newsletter three times a year with current information about the organization's activities and fruit growing.
- Membership ensures your inclusion in occasional emails about Field Days, special events and workshops that occur through the year.
- Membership helps NWF pay expenses for: Events: auditorium, speakers & publicity Garden Maintenance: tools & equipment
- Members may attend board meetings, join committees and participate in committee planning.

NW Fruit Thanks Raintree Nursery

Morton, WA

800-391-8892 • raintreenursery.com

For continuing support

Free Summer Classes for Members

If you are not a current member you can join at the Fruit Garden before the class. Classes are taught by volunteers with years of fruit growing experience. Pre-registration is recommended for our planning, but it's not required. We welcome new members, new volunteers.

To register for these classes email <u>info@nwfruit.org</u>

Summer Pruning Saturday August 17th, 9:30 a.m. to noon

Summer pruning provides an opportunity to shape your tree without stimulating vegetative growth. It is also a good control for next year's fruit set.

Learn from Bill Pierce and Larry Crum in a fun, hands-on class, "How to prune our apple, pear, plum and other fruit trees."

Chip and T Budding Saturday August 24th, 9:30 a.m. to noon

Learn how to make a new tree or top work an existing tree by budding, with Larry Crum and Sam Benowitz

You will be invited into the Fruit Garden nursery where dwarfing rootstocks are growing. We will cut buds off trees in our orchard and learn how to successfully insert these buds into the rootstocks. Along with these skills you will learn the aftercare needed to produce a tree ready to plant in your own orchard. We will also demonstrate how to make a stoolbed so you can make your own rootstocks.



Sam and Gary, bud grafting and labeling an apriicot tree in the NWF nursery. These young trees will remain protected from voles for a year or so, to be transferred to the Fruit Garden in good time. Gary Moulton is a local orchard farmer and former NWREC field manager.



From USSR With Love Just kidding...

<< The Niedzwetzkyana (pronounced need-VETZ-kee-ah-na) apple tree in bloom, at left and below. This is a red fleshed apple (native to Kazakhstan, Siberia, and Turkestan) that was propagated from seed in Germany in 1890. It is among the inner oval antique apple collection.



Larry Crum has developed added information using QR codes on apple trees in the Fruit Garden..



Peach Leaf Curl

Report from Sam Benowitz

Peach leaf curl is a disease caused by the fungus Taphrina deformans. Peach leaf curl affects the blossoms, fruit, leaves, and shoots.

On May 23, after a very wet winter and spring, we evaluated the peach trees in the Fruit Garden for leaf curl and also fruit set. This has been a horrible year for peach leaf curl. Even the varieties marketed as 'leaf curl resistant,' which typically have some slight curl that we can live with, this year are badly defoliated.

In an attempt to save the trees we are removing all the fruit, thinning out damaged branches, and then cutting back the remaining branches severely. Our hope is that each tree will send out new leaves once it doesn't have to support fruit production and so many branches. We will see over the summer how that works.

While most of the peach trees at our Garden were decimated, the Frost and Betty peach trees have only moderate peach leaf curl, and have very good fruit set. The **Landt** variety had no leaf curl but nevertheless had no fruit.

At the Fruit Garden, our peach trees are in proximity to each other along the south fence, some 10 or 12 feet apart. Only one, the All Star was about 50 yards away which may have contributed to its lack of curl. The newly planted genetic dwarf nectarines rated 4 on leaf curl.

In previous years our garden trees have been sprayed with lime sulfer, applied in late December through February at about three week intervals. Ziram is also an effective spray.

Variety D	amage	Fruit Set
All Star	2	Heavy
Autumn Rose	5	Light
Avalon Pride	4	None
Betty	2	Heavy
BlackBoy	4	None
Charlotte	2	Light
Frost	2	Heavy
Indian Free	4	None
Landt	1	None
Mary Jane	4	Light
Naniamo	5	Light
Salish Summe	er 4	None
Township	5	Heavy





Damage Rating:

1 slight, 5 all branches

NWF Interest Groups

NW Fruit volunteers engage in interest groups to manage specific projects. Some administrative tasks could benefit from modernization. Your skills are welcome. We use the Work Group model to keep track of seasonal projects, and to coordinate with Garden Manager Tom Wake and Garden Comimittee Co-Chair Colleen Sanders. These work groups offer experience accordingly:

In the Garden

- Blueberries, Cherries, Kiwi, Pears, Heritage Apples, Elderberries, Peaches, Persimmons & more
- Pollinator friendly plantings
- · Espalier training
- Construction projects, Irrigation, Organic Growing

Please make check payable to:

and mail your donation

along with this form to:

Or Administrative Support

Website & Media Updates Volunteer Coordinating Membership/Mailing Communications Event Planning Publicity

Northwest Fruit (aka Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation)

Donor Form

To make a donation by credit card go to: NWFru	it.org and click on Support.
Enclosed is my gift of:\$5000\$1000\$500\$	100\$50\$25 \$
Please designate Where it is needed my monetary gift toward: WSU sponsored res	most! Our Fruit Garden earch Field Days and other events
I would like to volunteer! In the Display Garde By doing work that	en On Field Days and events can be done from my home
Name	Email address
Address	Phone #
City State	Zip
Please make my gift: In Honor of: In Memo (Name of person) Address of person or person's family (So we can notify them)	•

Your gift is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Please consult your tax accountant for details.

NW Fruit or WWFRF

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

P.O. Box 864

Thank you!

Say Hello to friends from

a WA nonprofit in Bellingham, WA



NWFruitRescue.org

Steve Gaber, Director • 360-927-1768
"Fight Hunger and put surplus tree fruit to good use."

Similar name but not affiliated with NWfruit.org





Decisions, Decisions Steve Gaber and friends pitched in to help with winter pruning on March 28. Photos from Bob Ness



How To Find Your Membership Status

If the email by which you received this newsletter begins "Hello NW Fruit **Member**" then your membership is current through May 2024.

If the email begins "Hello NW Fruit **Friend**" then your membership is not current at present. Membership expires on the anniversary of the last payment.

NWF volunteers are working to initiate a dues reminder to be sent monthly to members who's year is ending. >>> More to come on that. <<<



Upcoming Events

- June 29, 2024, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. -- **Master Gardeners' Open House**, at the public gardens of WWREC,16650 State Rt 536. Free admission to all. www.skagitmg.org/home/events/openhouse
- 9 to Noon Workdays Fun and educational Thursday Work Days every week, plus frequently scheduled Saturday work days, for willing volunteers who can't come on Thursdays. Learn about all that's going on, plus new ideas being proposed. For more information contact Garden Manager Tom Wake info@NWfruit.org
- Several NWF workshop days are offered this summer, sometimes with fruit sampling, depending on the season. Free to Members.
- Apple and Pear Sample the Harvest Day second Saturday in October. This event centers around the harvest with educational classes on related garden techniques and information. Members are allowed to keep a portion of the harvested fruit. Details in September Newsletter.
- Cider Making on one or two Thursday's after Apple and Pear Day in the fall.
- December Celebration with cookies and endof-season farewells. Program may include informative classes to answer home gardeners' questions. Free to Members.
- Winter Field Day -- 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., March 8, 2025 at WWREC,
 16650 State Route 536. Free admission with upto-date membership.
- Annual Membership Meeting March 8, 2025

Save the Date

Dr. Cameron Peace, WSU's director of DNA fruit testing, headquartered in Pullman, will be Guest Speaker on **October 12, 2024** at our Apple & Pear fest. Dr. Peace has been working with orchardists and fruit enthusiasts in Eastern Washington to test the DNA of old, promising fruit trees, to establish the identity of each tree. Many old apple trees are either of an unknown variety or possibly misidentified.

This year wve plan to have a fruit identification table. Bring your mystery fruit for possible variety recognition!



There would be no NWF without the dedicated, long term commitment of volunteers.

Like Tom and Hazel, pausing here under the English Walnut, several others'

Thursdays at the Garden reach back over decades.

Photo from Hal Torrance

Non-Profit Essential Needs

Along with the many gratifications of working in the fruit garden, to be able to continue, we are required to run a non-profit corporation. The NWF board of directors are looking for volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Recently the board created a position, **Vice President of Business Affairs** for an individual, possibly more than one. Please write to positions@nwfruit.org to offer your help for this essential role. Some duties include:

- Work with NWF treasurer;
- Monitor PayPal and other software subscriptions.