you say you want to naturalize your yard and your sons are out there right now cutting down all the trees.” At this point, the other two MGVs’ ears perked up and they began to laugh. Above the giggles, the MGV on the phone could be heard saying, “No Ma’am, of course I’m not laughing at you – it’s something else here in the office.”

Carolyn started her professional career as a nurse and taught medical and surgical nursing at the University of South Carolina. She came to Case Western Reserve University under the federally funded Nurse Trainee Program and became a graduate student in the Psychology PhD program. After earning her PhD, she became a clinical psychologist and worked for many years as Chief Psychologist at Cleveland Psychiatric Institute.

Carolyn has one daughter who lives in Asheville, NC, with her husband and son – it just so happens their home is about an hour away from where Carolyn’s grandfather was once a preacher.

Carolyn’s advice to future MGVs – “come prepared to learn and have fun; be generous with your volunteering – if you do more than just the minimum hours you will get so much more out of your experience.”

Thank you, Carolyn!

A Book Review
Lois Rose, MGV 1998

A Garden of Marvels: How we Discovered That Flowers Have Sex, Leaves Eat Air, and Other Secrets of Plants

By Ruth Kassinger (William Morrow, 2014, NY, NY)
XHMF-0011-8776-6723-0135

Part memoir and part well-told history, this accessible and entertaining book imparts complex ideas and information in a juicy setting. Well known for previous works (Paradise Under Glass), the author writes for the beginner and advanced gardener. Some of this material was a refresher course for me as a master gardener: botany and cell physiology for instance. Some was a deeper delving into what I thought I knew. And there was a huge amount of material that I had not encountered (or did not remember at all) after many years of coursework. Did you remember that Joseph Priestley in 1771 discovered that mint cured "bad" air? Going back to 343 BC, Kassinger describes how Theophrastes addressed issues such as plant disease, plants as medicine and pruning. He was responsible, among others, for perpetuating the story of the borametz, a plant that had pods containing lambs' wool — cotton plants had not been seen at that time. She describes a do-it-yourself kit called “Botanicalls” with a leaf-shaped circuit board and moisture probes which, when plugged into the wall and plunged into the soil, sends a message to a cell phone or computer, alerting the user about watering needs.

There is a lot more of this kind of titillating and fascinating material in the book. The ongoing saga of her “fruit cocktail tree” helps to tie the themes together. This story is particularly poignant -- given what has just happened to the citrus crops and trees in Florida.

This book was a gift from my husband – and, for me, a page-turner.