

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey
Minutes of March 3, 2015 – **REVISED 3/20/15**

President Ellen Simonetti called the meeting to order at 10:00.

Attendance:

Atlantic:	Mary Lou Monihan
Bergen:	John Walters, Karen Pennell, Joseph Cooper
Burlington:	Terry Zane, Marilyn Bidrawn
Camden:	Nancy Sullivan
Cumberland:	Carol Henry, Mary Rowson
Essex:	Claudia Kolster, Suzie Yamarone
Gloucester:	Absent
Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering
Mercer:	Betty Scarlata, Bob Robinson, Theodora Wang
Middlesex:	Jerri Barclay, Dale Duchai, Kathy Dopart
Monmouth:	Ellen Simonetti, Gayle Williams, Gordon Boak
Morris:	Pat Hudson, Carla Schan, Stan Nathanson
Ocean:	Suzanne Keane, James Digney
Passaic:	Barbara Cook
Somerset:	Linda Madretzke
Sussex:	Jane Gardner, Pat Schanzlin
Union:	Carol Hannemann, Toni Rinehart
Rutgers University	Nick Polanin,

Kathy Dopart welcomed delegates and new delegates: Gayle Williams (Monmouth County), and Gordon Boak (Alternate, Monmouth).

Minutes from the December 2nd meeting were approved as presented. *Please forward your county reports to Claudia Kolster: Claudia.wilcke@verizon.net*

TREASURER'S REPORT: Pat Schanzlin was officially installed as Treasurer and presented with a rose from Ellen on behalf of the State Delegates.

As of 11/28/14 the bank account total was \$12,513.33

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Ellen has taken over the pin distribution. She asked the delegates to advise who the contact person is in their county. A new form was developed.

RCE UPDATE: Nick is working on the Annual report, Sussex, Cape May, Gloucester, Cumberland, Hunterdon, Ocean, Bergen (pictures only), and Morris (pictures only) are the Counties for which reports have been submitted. Nick brought copies of the Experiment Station reports for reference.

Dan asked that Nick remind us of our commitment to comply with USDA requirements of non-discrimination, referencing the email he sent on this subject.

Status of Rutgers policy revisions for protection of minors for youth programming – a decision is on hold until Rutgers lawyers and Extension Administration have finished their review, which could be another 2 to 3 months. Question remains whether all MG's have to complete training, or only those who interact with youth.

Three PowerPoint presentations are in process for MG use; Community Gardens and 2 on Native Plants, currently on the Rutgers Coordinator's Sakai website. Nick will check to see if these are ready to be used.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 2015 Budget – Ellen, Pat, and Kathy will meet to outline a draft to be submitted to the delegates for review.
- Date for Pot Luck/Auction – since we will no longer have a State table at the Annual Conference with our leftover items, Ellen proposed that we postpone the pot luck until December. All voted in favor.
- Dates and Calendars – due to repeated cancellations due to inclement weather, motion was made by Betty Scarlata to permanently remove the Feb meeting from the calendar. All approved.
- Update Contact Lists – Suzie Yamarone

ANNUAL HISTORIAN'S REPORT:

- Nancy Sullivan – asked for submissions on the County or State level on large scale events to be included in our archives.

CONFERENCE TASKS

- Catering – Linda Madretzke: no updates at this time
- Program – Carla Schan: no report
- Registration: Discussion on possibly using an online registration process. Nick is checking with the Rutgers Home Garden School OCPPE registrar on how their online registration is handled, whether they could take this over for us and what the cost would be.
- Barnes and Noble/Book Sale – we have decided to sell former State delegate, Judy Shaw's, book (Raritan River, our Legacy, Our Landscape). Ellen will check with her whether she would be interested in doing a book signing.
- Door Prize Committee – Because some Counties will not be contributing, the State committee will arrange for 6 baskets funded from registration fees. 6 Counties (Atlantic, Mercer, Monmouth, Hunterdon, Essex, and Middlesex) will be providing the baskets @ \$50 each.
- Nametags – TBD pending registration process
- Other concerns – Kathy is rewriting the manual for the Conference; Registration, Gift Basket and Catering sections will need to be amended to reflect the new procedures.

BREAK – Thank you Somerset and Sussex!

Upcoming:

April 7	ECC	Union
May 5	ECC	Atlantic
June 2	ECC	Bergen
July 7	ECC	Burlington
August 4	ECC	Camden
September 1	ECC	Cumberland (Pot Luck)
September 29	AMC	Essex
October 3		STATE CONFERENCE
November 3	ECC	Hunterdon
December 1	ECC	Mercer

AMC = Agriculture Museum Classroom

ECC = Extension Conference Center

COUNTY REPORTS: Note: Some County reports include both February and March data as a result of the cancellation of the February meeting. Claudia informed the group that Burlington County had included a photo in their County report, which was included in the meeting minutes. She invited other delegates to include photos in future reports as well.

Atlantic: Most of our programs are still in a "sleep/winter" mode. However, we have taken on a new project that is in the active planning stages and that is redesigning and planting the garden beds around the Mays Landing Library. We have also reinstated our Scholarship Committee; our first \$500 scholarship was awarded to a high school senior who has an interest in horticulture/science/biology in June 2014. There was question whether or not we would wish to pursue this concept but after discussion we have decided to pursue this goal for 2015.

We also have a few Master Gardener's who are involved in trying to re-institute an active Facebook page for Atlantic County MG & increase our participation in social media.

Our Community Outreach Committee has prepared a few new power point presentations: "Seashore Gardening in New Jersey " (which was presented at our February meeting) and "Four Season Gardening" are completed; in addition, "How to Read a Seed Packet: It's More than Meets the Eye" and "Drip Irrigation" are in the works as well as an updated presentation on "Pruning."

Our new class is doing well with about 30 members.

Our Helpline began once again for 2015 on February 1st. It was sad to hear that our total calls for last year were down about 300!

We would be most interested in hearing from other counties what their experience has been recently.

We would also like to hear from any county who is selling perennials at their annual plant sale and if they have a local NJ wholesaler to recommend. Atlantic County has, what we feel, are excellent sources for native plants, herbs and sedums but not perennials.

We enjoyed a lecture from Professor Arndt of Stockton University on "Amphibians in the Garden," and we are looking forward to Dr. Cromartie from Stockton University on "Bees and Pollination" at our March meeting.

Bergen: Due to inclement weather, the January meeting was canceled and the speaker is rescheduled for later this year. At the February meeting, we had the privilege of hearing Bill Hlublik, Director/Agricultural Agent, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County in his lecture on *Mastering Organic Gardening and Landscaping*.

Our Trips and Tours begin this month with a private tour of the Teaneck Greenhouse. This venue is special because the Greenhouse is one of only three municipal greenhouses in NJ; the others are in Maplewood and Belmar. With its annual plant sale, the Garden Club of Teaneck generates the funds for the maintenance of the greenhouse, outreach programs, town plantings, and scholarship. Members propagate approximately 17,000 plants using no pesticides or herbicides. They control whitefly and aphids with the introduction of parasitoids. It is an interesting process which requires coordination and cooperation amongst the membership. They conduct seminars during the sale and do a lot of point of purchase educational pieces.

Many of our sites are preparing for Spring. Garretson Forge & Farm will be starting the spring schedule with its annual Pea Day planting on Sunday, March 22, from 1–4pm.

Garretson Forge & Farm is pleased to announce the opening of a Community Seed Bank, the first of its kind in the Northern New Jersey Area. It will stock open pollinated seeds, many of which are heirlooms. Members may obtain small packages of seeds, and agree to grow them, collect the seeds at harvest, and return a like package of seeds to the seed bank, if successful. We will be asking for the help of many master gardeners to get this new and exciting venture up and running.

Burlington: A new column, “Master Gardeners Journal” started in the *Burlington County Times* on January 14. This begins a series written by MGs to provide information on a wide range of horticultural topics. Some examples of questions to be answered and addressed relate to plant and insect identification, pest and disease control and, at this time of year, planning for your spring garden. Coordinator, Brian McDonald wrote the initial article. The column will appear once a month in January, February and March and increase during the gardening season.

A presentation on Native Grasses was given January 14 at the RCE Office by Chris Miller, Director of the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Cape May Native Plant Materials Center. Material covered included native grasses in general, application of these grasses for use in buffers, shorelines, stream banks, storm water basins, or as native meadows, as well as some effects on the grasses due to climate change.

The 2015 MG Training Program started January 16 with 11 interns and runs through April 15.

The first quarterly meeting of the year was held January 20. Included were slide presentations from team leads of the projects with recent accomplishments and plans for 2015.

A series of presentations given to the public held at BCCAC kicked off January 24 with the topic “How to Read and Use a Seed Catalogue and Plan for your Garden”. The second in the series was presented on February 21 on the subject “Herbs”.

On Wednesday, February 11, Karl Gercens from Longwood Gardens presented a program on Tropical/Exotic Plants.

The IPM Team has been holding regular planning meetings. Plantings for the demonstration plots and raised beds at BCCAC and work schedules are planned and discussions held regarding outreach to the community and publicity plans.

The Pinelands Preservation Alliance Team acquired a new bed for 2015 which will be a shade garden. Plans are also in place for refurbishing the kitchen garden.

The Medford Leas Team is successfully growing salad greens, despite the cold spells, in an unheated greenhouse using water bottles (dyed black) and heated by the sun to moderate temperatures. The running water has been turned off and the water barrel collection system is providing enough water for the crops. (see photo below)



Camden: Camden's perennial plant sale is now underway. We just enjoyed a lecture on Figs. Our next Homeowners Series is "Right Plant, Right Place'.

Cumberland: Started propagation for plant sale in May. Some of us ventured up to the NJ Flower Show.

The County Board of Ag sponsored the Film "Farmland" on Feb 21st. It was well attended but due to the bad weather will be re-shown on March 6th at the County College.

Hort Therapy is going strong. I

In process of setting up Speakers Bureau.

The new MG classes were started in January with 14 new interns. Also Nick came down last week and taught a class about volunteering.

We have been accepting some MG's from Gloucester County.

Essex:

February:

At our January meeting our speaker was Captain Bill Sheehan of the Hackensack Riverkeeper group. It was a very interesting lecture on water quality and the influences on the health of the river.

Our February speaker will be Amy Rowe a Rutgers Environmental & Resource Management Agent will be speaker on rain gardens and their importance to the environment.

We are partnering with the Brookdale Park Conservancy to help establish a small shade garden near the Rose Garden that we have been managing for years. We will also be replacing some failing tea roses in the spring.

We are busy in the greenhouse propagating coleus, tradescantia, pelargonium etc. for our spring plant sale.

Horticulture for Seniors January program was about the winter garden. They made bird feeders out of pinecones. Seniors discussed how to stay active and healthy during the winter months.

Snow and cold temps have kept the Branch Brook Pruning team indoors.

We are gearing up for our spring educational programs for adults and children.

Hunterdon: The new Rutgers Master Gardeners of Hunterdon County Program Manual was completed and distributed to all members in January. Approximately 100 members have signed the volunteer agreement for the new organization. Several Team Manuals have been completed and approved while others are being finalized.

The Hunterdon Volunteer Recognition Luncheon was held in January. Since the Hunterdon Master Garden program is no longer raising money several changes were made. Master Gardeners paid the full cost of the luncheon. Costs were kept low by holding the event at a Polish American Club and using hand-made table arrangements. The food was excellent and the luncheon was very successful.

The target for the Hunterdon Master Gardener new class start date is March 3rd. Classes will be twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Previously classes were held once a week. The change was made because the class got a late start due to the Hunterdon/Somerset program split. The change will allow the

new interns to finish in time to work the Helpline. There were 40 people that expressed interest in applying throughout the past year.

Ruth Claus, Hunterdon Master Gardener, spoke on Wild Flowers at the February meeting. Upcoming speakers include: Mark Mayer from the Phillip Alampi Lab on Beneficial Insects in March; Mark Vodak on Invasive Insect Pest Species in April; Tom Sheppard from the Hunterdon County Park System on Bats in May; Chela Weiler from Burpee on Herbs in June, and Kathy Klink on Monarch Butterflies in June.

The Speakers Bureau continues to be very active despite the fact that talks are limited to Hunterdon County organizations.

Participation at Community Events is beginning to be scheduled for the upcoming season.

The Helpline is planned to open on April 6.

Horticultural Support activities continue at the Meadows facility. Planning for Children's Programs and other Horticultural Support activities is starting up.

Mercer: Our new officers have assumed their duties. The new President is Ann Calder.

Registration for our annual gardening symposium is approaching its limit. We currently have about 270 RMG's registered, and our limit is 300. If you interested, we are still accepting registrations until March 5 (I have forms, and they are available on our website).

We are in the midst of a winter reading program for elementary students in the Trenton Public Schools. We are operating in six schools currently, and hope to expand this. It targets children in grades K-5, and lasts four weeks. We provide volunteers and books, which the schools keep (the books, that is!). Our school gardening programs are very popular with the kids.

Boys and Girls Club, serving Trenton, Lawrence, and Ewing, is constructing a large new facility just down Spruce Street from Extension. It is planned to open in the fall. Cooperating with 4-H, we can offer children's programs there during the entire year. They also have a large meeting room which they have offered to allow us to use. Our current meeting room at Extension is quite overcrowded during most meetings.

In 2014, we provided 4791 Helpline hours, with 2343 contacts. Our annual total for Helpline and RMG activities was 24,500 hours.

We have a wide variety of Community Education classes, about a dozen Community Outreach events, and numerous tours planned for 2015. Many of our standing committees are making formal presentations as well. We are currently looking into additional ways to connect with the general public, such as social media, locating some programs to alternate sites, more basic programs for gardening novices, you tube presentations, etc.

Middlesex:

Thursday, February 19, 2015 from 6:00 – 8:30 PM

The annual Graduation & Awards Program for Master Gardeners and Extension Volunteers was held at the 4-H building located at 645 Cranbury Road, East Brunswick. There were 33 Master Gardener graduates.

Saturday, February 14, Noon - 2:30 PM

Davidsons Mill Pond Park Bird Count.

All welcome, beginners to advanced. Explore Davidson's Mill Pond Park's over 300 acres (including wooded trails and open fields). Bring binoculars and/or field guides.

Sunday, February 22, 4 PM - 8 PM

Spaghetti Dinner Benefit. At the 4-H Center, Cranbury Rd. in East Brunswick.
All proceeds of this fundraiser will go towards the Middlesex County 4-H Program. Saturday,

February 28 "Grape Expectations" Symposium Forsgate Country Club, 375 Forsgate Drive, Jamesburg, NJA daylong series of lectures by viticulture professionals designed to present new and relevant information to professionals and amateurs involved with grape growing or the wine industry. Register with Gary Pavlis <<mailto:pavlis@njaes.rutgers.edu>>, at 609-625-0056

Are you in the "Green" industry and need pesticide credits? Many will be available at the Central Jersey Turf and Ornamental Institute Thursday, March 5 8:30 am – 3:30 pm. Call 732-398-5262 for location and details.

Monmouth: Monmouth completed its annual cycle of elections and chair rotations (almost).

Our JMG team will be working with Essex County. They would like to start a similar program.

On February 19 the new class of 33 was welcomed with a lavish breakfast.

Ellen shared the January agenda of the RMGAMC General Meeting agenda so other delegates could see how we organize ourselves.

Morris: Our MR Coordinator, retired in November. No one has been hired to replace her.

We will assist at the Community Garden Conference at Frelinghuysen Arboretum Saturday March 7.

We are hosting a Turf Management Symposium Advanced MG Training Workshop March 26 at Frelinghuysen Arboretum.

Our Events Committee is organizing a bus trip to Wave Hill on June 17.

Ocean: This year Ocean County will be celebrating our 25th anniversary. A committee has been formed to set up programs both within our organization and with the public to help us celebrate. We will be planting silver leaved plants throughout our display garden in front of the Agriculture building. Our motto is "25 Years and Growing".

A new class started on Jan. 22nd with 31 interns participating.

We had a table at the NJ Flower Show and handed out brochures listing our activities and services available to the public in Ocean County. On Feb. 6th we graduated 28 interns and celebrated with a luncheon and some entertainment from our own master gardeners. The theme was "Hollywood" and everyone had a fun time. Veterans were also recognized with awards for reaching volunteer service milestones.

Our greenhouses in Ocean County Park have ramped up planting specialty annuals and vegetable seeds and plugs for our plant sale in May.

We're opening our HelpLine this week and we are sponsoring a trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show on March 4th, and have 2 buses filled.

Passaic: Passaic County had its first meeting of 2015. Others were cancelled due to weather. Bill Kolvek spoke on Ornamental Grasses. Next meeting will be about rain barrels. The budget for the coming year was approved. Will be starting another horticulture project located at our meeting site which will give volunteer hours to those in another part of the county. Most of the projects from last year will be done again in 2015. Herb and Vegetable garden at the Cooperative Extension Site. Continuing with improving and maintaining gardens at the Morris Canal, Bloomingdale Senior Center, libraries and animal shelters. Will give two scholarships this year. One to a college student studying agriculture, horticulture, etc. The other to someone who will be attending the next Master Gardener Class.

Plans are in motion for the plant sale the Saturday after Mother's Day.

Awards will be given to members at our next meeting for hours of service.

Somerset: The "butterfly Guy", (Rick Mikula), was our speaker at our February monthly meeting. He was extremely knowledgeable and very funny.

For our March meeting our speaker is Roman Fabiyan. His topic will be Pruning Fundamentals.

Somerset Master Gardeners have added another team to our roster. The Entomology Team. They will keep abreast of current research and little known facts and they will bring them to the knowledge of the public. They have already presented a program to a Middle School, during which the students viewed a movie, and participated in a discussion and learned how to mount an insect for display.

This month, members have several opportunities to attend workshops: Creating Meadows; A Deeper Understanding of Orchids; It's all in the Flower: Growing Orchids in Tune with Nature: Potting and Trouble Shooting Workshop.

On January 8th Joe Gyurian welcomed 27 new students to Somerset Master Gardeners.

Sussex: It's all about SpringFest in Sussex County this month. This annual volunteer support and educational outreach is held at the Sussex County Fair Grounds during the second week of March and helps to raise awareness on everything gardening, landscaping and education. This year, among other experts, we have noted author of the ***Layered Gardener***, David Culp on hand to present a session on his gardening concepts, which is sure to be presented to a packed house.

The SpringFest event is growing each year, with last year attracting over 10,000 visitors. Master Gardeners of Sussex County support this program by helping to prepare materials and the setting up/taking down the site, handing out information, serving as docents and acting as support staff throughout the event. The countless combined hours contributed by volunteers help to make this event a renowned success.

The Speakers Bureau has been receiving a number of requests to provide educational activities from local schools, the Rotary Club, SCCC and Selective. We are busy ahead of schedule this year in filling these requests and preparing the materials to ensure high quality offerings.

We anxiously await some warm weather to get started on the hardscape features in the new Demonstration Garden behind the Sussex County Library. Once the snow breaks, this will be a major focus in Sussex County by the Rutgers Master Gardeners. The primary plan includes raised beds and various other features to create a solid foundation for the growing of a variety of materials.

Union: We'll be starting several varieties of tomatoes, peppers and cool weather crops for the Sharing Garden and our Spring Fair in March in our greenhouse.

4-H children will be visiting the Demo Garden on Thursday, April 9th from 10:30am until noon. The group will tour the garden, and then learn about the do's and don'ts of successful seed starting, and what you need to start and grow plants from seeds. This is a hands-on show and tell. The visitors will then plant their own seeds and transplant seedlings to take home with them

A Sharing Garden planning meeting was held on Feb 3 after the MG new class session.

The meeting opened with a statement of the goals of the garden which is to raise, harvest, and deliver fresh food to residents of Union County.

The new Master Gardener class will be visiting and learning at the Demo Garden on Tuesday, April 14, May 5, and May 12, 10am – 12:30pm. This is also a great time for a "skill brush up" in perennial care in

early spring, types of fertilizers, soil test sampling, tick detection and planting.

SHARING:

- Clarification of University policy regarding education hours: is there a minimum of 10 hours? – James Digney
 - Per Nick Polanin: Up until 2005 there was no requirement, and since then requirements have not been updated. Also Master Gardener Educator status needs to be addressed. Nick would like to have this resolved by committee this year.
- Regarding an earlier comment on an increase in Email correspondence with the Helpline ~ Nick cautions that email is official correspondence, phone calls are “hearsay”. Hence, Nick cautions on responding via email and the need for vetting any information that goes out in writing.

The meeting ended at 12:00pm.

Next meeting is April 7, 2015.
Extension Conference Center

Respectfully Submitted
Claudia Kolster, Recording Secretary