

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Minutes of May 5, 2015 Meeting

Vice President Kathy Dopart called the meeting to order at 10:00. Suzie Yamarone introduced Guest Gail Chmura from Essex County. Ann Cinquina was visiting for today from Atlantic County and Janet Osborne is a returning rep from Atlantic County.

President Ellen Simonetti then welcomed the group and called for any revisions or clarifications on the April 2015 Meeting Minutes. There being no comments, a motion was tendered and the minutes were approved as published for April.

Attendance:

Atlantic:	Mary Lou Monihan, Janet Osborne, Ann Cinquina
Bergen:	John Walters, Karen Pennell, Joseph Cooper
Burlington:	Terry Zane, Marilyn Bidrawn
Camden:	Nancy Sullivan
Cumberland:	Carol Henry, Mary C. Rowson
Essex:	Suzie Yamarone, Gail Chmura
Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering
Mercer:	Bob Robinson, Theodora Wang
Middlesex:	Kathy Dopart, Jerri Barclay
Monmouth:	Ellen Simonetti, Gayle Williams, Sandra Book, Gordon Boak
Morris:	Pat Hudson, Carla Schan, Sandi Gonski, Stan Nathanson
Ocean:	Absent
Passaic:	Absent
Somerset:	Linda Madretzke
Sussex:	Jane Gardner, Pat Schanzlin
Union:	Caryl Hannemann, Toni Rinehart
Rutgers University	Absent

Kathy Dopart welcomed delegates and guests.

TREASURER'S REPORT: We have a balance of \$12,641, which includes a correction from Rutgers accounting, which had this month entered some long awaited journal entries to show payments received for pin orders and other items. There were no changes or corrections and a motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the report as tendered.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

25 Year Pin Order: Ellen confirmed that we require at least ten 25 yr. pins, but no feedback has been shared with RMGANJ from the RCE coordinator's meeting regarding the pins..

Continuing Ed Requirement: It has been brought to Ellen's attention that there is confusion about the RMGANJ's perspectives on the issues associated with the continuing education and volunteer requirements policy for members. It was reported that the Coordinators at their most recent meeting have decided that a limitation of 10 hours maximum continuing education credits will be included in the new policies and procedures.

A discussion was held around the continuing ed requirements. Some in the group felt that they should be allowed to post greater than 10 hours of continuing education, while others saw the need in having some number of minimum hours of continuing education to maintain certification.

There is a concern about policies being inconsistency administered across the counties with regard to educational and volunteer hours. A member summarized the group's 3 issues of concern:

1. The continuing education policy needs to include a minimum number of hours of continuing education requirement for current Master Gardeners to retain membership in good standing.
2. The policy may need to include a maximum number of hours limit for continuing education for which credit will be ceded, without preventing individuals from seeking out and completing additional coursework
3. The basic policy and procedures need to be consistently implemented across all counties so that Master Gardeners have a single standard of expectation for certification and membership in good standing

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Upcoming Events of Interest: Monmouth University is presenting a Gardening for Good symposium on August 6-9 with excellent speakers. The Presby Garden is also presenting an open house starting May 8th, which is open to the public. The garden is quite beautiful this year and worth the visit.

RCE UPDATE: Nick is absent today, so no report was given.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Proposed 2015 Budget – Pat Schanzlin, Treasurer, brought some copies of the new budget for review and discussion. The registration costs begins with \$875 for the first 175 people, for the next groups it is \$5 per person, plus a 10% override to pay Rutgers CCE. For 300 people, the cost of registration with is \$2400. This cost will be adequately offset by an increase of \$5 per registration and will greatly streamline the registration process. Nick has told us that we can register online, by phone and by form and mail and CCE will take manual registrations with checks or credit cards. Motion was made and seconded, with group voting to pass the budget for 2015.

There is a line item for \$350 added into the budget for the pin fees, which will cover the cost for the 25-year pins that are needed. Pin fees are collected from various counties as they purchase pins and are reimbursed to the association as Rutgers processes the paperwork, so determining an exact number for the line item is difficult to forecast.

Meeting Locations —Since Terry Zane has offered the group the Burlington County Ag Center, 500 Centerton Rd, Moorestown, NJ for the July 7th meeting. This site is where the main focus of the MG group's efforts is placed. The house there is not large enough for the group, but a pavilion is available, which is comfortable and includes electric. Facilities are available nearby. The pavilion is large and provides cover from rain, while a nearby house has a kitchen and rest rooms. There is no air conditioning in the pavilion. A motion was made and accepted. The group voted to go to Moorestown for the July Meeting. The dates and locations for the 2016 meetings are now complete and will be attached to the June agenda.

Catering: Ellen thanked Atlantic county for the refreshments and Bergen will be up next month to provide coffee pot.

CONFERENCE TASKS:

Date of conference: The Conference on October 3, 2015 will be held again at the Cook Campus Center.

Registration: Online Registration will be provided by the OCE at Rutgers. Nick is away this month, and is still in the process of getting details sorted out, contracting for services, estimates for service finalized and the procedures determined. Jane Gardner was asked to serve as the contact for the registration process and will find out if she can serve as the contact with OCE for the registration process from here going forward. She will check with Nick to see if this is possible and get started. The registration process and forms needs to collect lunch orders at the time of registration. It is essential that the OCE provide a download list of all registrants, including their contact info, and lunch orders (if applicable) so that other processes can be completed. Additional information will be forthcoming at the next meeting.

Name Tags: The OCE should be able to give us an Excel list of the registrants and we may be able to send this to Staples for reproduction. Caryl Hannemann will then be able to insert the tags into the holders we have available and then forward them to the Conference Folder committee for inclusion in the folders. Lunch choices for food are required on the nametags for those people ordering.

Booklet: For Passaic and Union, no award winners have been received to date. All info needs to be submitted by end of June or July for publication preparation to Suzanne Keane of Ocean County.

Program Committee: Ellen advised that we need a new Program Committee, since the old members have retired. Interested members should get in touch with Ellen to share the willingness to serve. For the 2016 conference, there will need to be some action taken shortly, as good speakers book up quickly. There is some work associated with this position for paperwork and forms. Please consider Joe Simcox as a potential speaker. He was the speaker for the Frelinghuysen Consortium and was really good, but he travels extensively to find plants that are edible. Ellen will find out how much Joe would charge as a speaker for next year.

Speaker Info Sheets: Everyone should have received via email. The sheets Sandi Gonski provided include all the information needed for each speaker, arrangements, a bio and other essential info for their assigned escorts. Each speaker requires a personal introduction at the Conference prior to the presentation. The consensus of the group was that Ellen should be the MC throughout the program, including speaker introductions, to bring stronger consistency to the overall event. Tricia Deering, who is accountable for escorts, suggested that some escorts would like to provide

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introductions, while others would rather not. It was decided after short discussion, and given that the 2015 conference arrangements are already in progress, that if someone does not want to introduce a speaker or someone cancels, Ellen will step in at the conference.

Scheduling: To avoid the complaints that generally arise out of timing for lunch, a single block of time will be published for the Awards Ceremony and Lunch.

Conference Policy Manual: Kathy Doport is still working on the manual, because of the changes that have been made for the Registration Process. Jane Gardener will write up an overview paragraph and step-by-step requirements describing the new registration process, once these have been determined with Nick and the OCPE.

Outdoor Parking Lot Signs: The Sign Committee made a request to replace the outdoor **parking lot signs** for the Conference. By purchasing reusable signs, we can move the crowd into the venue more efficiently and with more clarity. The cost for the signs will be between \$300-\$500. A motion was made to accept the purchase of signs and was approved by unanimous vote.

Program Flier: No report

Awards Ceremony: No issues to discuss

Facilities Group: The committee is meeting with the site coordinator to walk through the venue within the next couple of weeks.

Gifts – The Gifts Committee noted that the budget presented cut the cost back to \$25. This number reflected what was actually reported as spent last year. The Gift Committee would like to have \$200 to pay for gifts for the speakers. Since there are only 3 speakers, an amount of \$150 was proposed by motion and second. The motion carried.

Garden Market - Ellen encouraged the various counties to set up tables to sell materials at the site for internal sale to members. Hunterdon County has an author who would like to sell a book at the Garden Market. Terry (Facilities Committee) stated that if we bring in “outside” vendors, even if a master gardener, then we will need to pay in added costs for the facility. The next option is for Barnes & Noble to sell the book for the author. In the event that B&N cannot get the book, then the author may be able to sell the book herself, but we may run into the outside vendor issues with Rutgers. Last year, there was only 1 book being sold, which caused a problem from B&N. Depending upon whether the book is self-published, there may be conflicts that will need to be addressed. No action was decided upon at the present time.

Barnes and Noble – The committee will be working with a new representative for Barnes and Nobel, Mr. David Pressier. Books not available through B&N may be sold by the MG’s. Outside vendor rules may apply. Further clarification is needed.

Door Prizes – Door Prizes are under control. Kathy needs to have an updated procedure for Door Prizes from Suzie. Kathy will send Suzie the current policy for revision. Team will send receipts to Pat for reimbursement, once purchases are made.

Registration Folders – Nick will provide the Rutgers Folders this year as he volunteered at the last meeting. Suzie will again staple the raffle tickets for the Door Prize drawings onto the distribution sheets, which may then be included in the folders distributed to the registrants at the conference.

Evaluation Forms – Nothing to report

Catering - A list of providers has been reviewed. Committee determined that they have selected the provider from last year, while keeping the vendor’s costs in line by not ensuring they do not provide too many staff people for distribution of lunches.

BREAK – Thank you Atlantic!

Upcoming:

June 2	ECC	Bergen
July 7	Burlington County Ag Center	Burlington
August 4	ECC	Camden
September 1	ECC	Cumberland (Pot Luck)
September 29	AMC	Essex
October 3		STATE CONFERENCE
November 3	ECC	Hunterdon

May 5, 2015

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Our annual Plant Expo at BCCAC was very successful and fun for all who attended. In addition to the plant sale, there were activities for children and adults.

Formal classes for the 2015 intern class have been completed which included mentor group training held on April 16th. The 4/16 class contained Helpline Training presentation and small groups of mentors and interns reviewing and solving samples of typical helpline questions. One-on-one intern training with a mentor started April 27 and continues through May 7.

Planning meeting was held for the upcoming events of Smithville Earth Day, June 14 and Burlington County Farm Fair, July 14-19.

Reports from ongoing projects:

- Medford Leas Donation Garden: Much of the work has been general maintenance – soil testing, turning over soil, and mulching footpaths. Many cold season crops have been planted – salad greens, Bok Choi, Swiss chard, peas, carrots, etc. In the green house they are growing warm weather crops – tomatoes, peppers, melon – all started from seed. Perennial vegetables are starting to appear, like rhubarb and asparagus. They have also planted hardier Kiwi and hope they will do as well as the female that has been growing for several years.
- Pinelands Preservation Alliance gardens: The season kicked-off with an update and planning session. Autumn ferns for the shade garden arrived and were planted. Work continues on the kitchen garden of preparing the beds for several herbs that have started from seed.
- Work continues at the Rancocas Nature Center and the various projects at BCCAC (Burlington County Community Agriculture Center).

Upcoming Events:

- Hands on flower arranging presented by Marna Andrew and Camden County MG Carla Krasnick, May 13
- Annual recognition dinner, May 15
- BCCAC presentation on how to grow strawberries for the home gardener, by Robert Mazza, May 16
- Ask the MG table for Downtown Bordentown Association Iris Festival, May 9

Camden: We had a program called Waste Not Want Not on 5/13. We have a field trip to Barnes Arboretum on 5/14. Pick up for our perennial sale is 5/9; at that time, annuals from our greenhouse will also be available.

Our new demo gardens are moving ahead. Compost bins will be in place by our Spring Fair on 5/16.

Cumberland: At our last meeting the guest speaker was from WW Manufacturing. It is a local company that makes high quality garden tools. Help desk is up and running for another season. We recently cleaned up and beautified one of the Women's Heritage Trail Markers. The plant sale was a huge success. Also featured that day was our butterfly tent, in which the children were able to make their own butterfly gardens to take home, lettuce tasting with healthy nutrition information was provided, and they also took home pumpkins seed for a contest to see who grows the largest to be judged at our fall event.

Essex: We are nearing completion of our Branch Brook Park cherry tree pruning project. Over a 4-year period, we have pruned 3200 cherry trees. We have helped remove large dead branches, identified trees for disease and identified the different cultivars of cherry trees in the park. We will be going back to do touch up work in the future.

Our plant sale was successful. We had a wide variety of tomatoes and coleus grown in our own greenhouse. We also had a large selection of perennials, shrubs and annuals.

Our MG Intern Program is winding down. Interns are busy doing helpline hours and volunteering in our many projects to complete their certification hours.

We are holding a class on container vegetable gardening at the Teaching Garden at Presby Memorial Iris Garden on May 16th. We have a trip scheduled to Mt. Cuba on June 10th. Our Senior Horticulture program was on bees and the importance of planting pollinator plants in your garden.

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Hunterdon: Mark Vodak spoke on Invasive Insect Pest Species in April. Tom Sheppard from the Hunterdon County Park System is speaking on Bats in May. A second workshop at the Phillip Alampi Lab on Beneficial Insects will be held in May. A Fig Tree workshop at Bill's Figs is also scheduled for May.

Participation at Community Events has been scheduled for the upcoming season.

The initial Great Tomato Tasting at Snyder Farm schedule has been completed and will be submitted to Nick Polanin. The Helpline opened on April 6. The call volume started out slow but has picked up considerably especially with questions about winter damage.

The new class is scheduled to graduate on May 28. A new process has been implemented where new class students shadow a certified Master Gardener on helpline for one session as part of their Helpline training. Horticultural Support projects are very active. Activities continue at the Meadows facility. The Hunterdon Central High School Team has been meeting with the students every Tuesday. Anderson House activities are in full swing. The Children's Programs Seed-to-Salad program at Clinton has held numerous sessions at the school.

The Snyder Farm team put in over 39 hours of work at the farm.

Mercer: Our annual Plant Expo was held on May 2. The weather cooperated, the crowds came, and we had a very successful day. Several Boy Scouts assisted with setup the morning of the Expo. Our format is to sell RMG donated perennial and raised tomato, eggplant, and sweet/hot pepper plants, have a second-hand sale of gardening items (also very popular), and have vendors who pay to attend and give us a percentage of their sales. The vendors are very happy to attend, bring a wonderful selection of plants, and all are returning next year.

There were tours to EcoWalls and Longwood Gardens in March and April. In May, there will be a bus tour to the New York Botanical Gardens and Wave Hill.

Recent outreach events included the Lawrence and Living Expo, and the Princeton Communniversity Day. A Community Education talk on composting was held in April as well. In June, there will be a workshop on native bees and a community education program, "Plan and Plant an Annual Garden".

A number of children's programs are planned for the summer. These have been described in previous reports.

Middlesex: Middlesex County Master Gardeners participated in Rutgers Day on April 25th by selling plants grown in our greenhouse.

On May 1st community outreach was the goal at the East Brunswick Arts Festival. Several Master Gardeners manned a table and shared information.

We participated in a "Gardening Question and Answer Day" and plant sale at the 4H center on May 2nd. May 23rd free workshops will be offered by Master Gardeners at the EARTH Center. *Beyond Organics-Lawns and Landscapes Without Pesticides* is from 10-12 and *Container Gardening for all Seasons* is from 1-3. Call 732-398-5262 to register.

The Butterfly House will open its doors on June 6th. In preparation, the netting is going up on May 5th, orientation for our guides is May 28th and the release of monarchs and painted ladies is scheduled for June 4th. Last month the horticultural therapy group at St Peter's Adult Day Care Center planted pansies using the infamous conference mugs. The clients loved the project and no one seemed to notice the error.



Monmouth: The fourth and final phase of a large Native Plant garden along side the Agricultural Building has been completed. The Master Gardeners have been working on this project for three years with the assistance of the county landscaper. The MG's will continue to monitor the garden for critters and weeds and to give tours when asked.

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Our Junior Master Gardener classes are moving along. The children's garden is beginning to fill with green. We had a successful trip to Winterthur.

We have re-signed our commitment documents to the Rutgers MG program. Our Spring Garden Days including sales and educational events will occur on Friday and Saturday, May 15 and 16.

Morris: 13 MG Interns completed training on April 13. It took longer than usual because of three snow days, which wreaked havoc with our schedule. Our Helpline service began April 1 and had a 3 percent increase over the same period in 2014. We are preparing for our first ever bus trip June 17. We are preparing to go to Wave Hill.

We have scheduled a Rain Garden Advanced Training Workshop May 11. We worked within 9 venues with 148 participants for our horticulturist. Speakers Bureau gave 8 presentations. Our Outreach program at the County library on vegetable gardening generated 19 discussions.

A second Helpline Refresher Course was held for MGs.

Ocean: Speakers and Outreach Committees were quite busy talking to and with our residents this past month. The Community Garden had two raised beds rebuilt by Community Service workers from the Dept. of Corrections. We had good weather for our Plant Fair and all went well.

On Thurs. we will celebrate our 25th anniversary with a potluck luncheon. Our past presidents will be introduced and a power point presentation of our history will be shown.

Next Monday we will be at the Toms River Library in the late afternoon thru closing with two talks, several demos, a Helpline table and general gardening information geared toward working folks who cannot attend daytime functions. On June 16 we will be having All-day Training on Soils. Pat Harry will send out information to surrounding counties.

June 9th is the date of our trip to the NY Botanical Garden in the Bronx as last time it was snow-covered.

Passaic: No report

Somerset: Our Seeds to Salad children's programs plan to continue on strongly after our county split up. We are looking for many new volunteers to fill positions on the team. Usually volunteers commit to three hours a week for about 10 weeks. This has been such a popular program that many schools and associations are calling for a start-up program.

Our Volunteer Awards Luncheon on April 15th was well attended and most opinions of the affair were positive. We will soon know the monetary return of our 'internal' Plant sale. It is continuing with pick-ups of orders to be done a Somerset Master Gardener's headquarters in Bridgewater.

Two Somerset County Parks are considering partnership with Somerset Master Gardeners to map and identify native plant species.

Sussex: The new RCE Research and Education Garden began work repairing the fences in April. Building a main gate is next on the agenda. MGs will be working on the hardscape within the site in order to develop a major teaching area for a variety of events and demonstrations currently being considered.

Our MG Coordinator Lisa Chiariello presented a Gardening 101 seminar at the Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden in neighboring Warren County this month to over 75 participants. The audience included many motivated Junior Gardeners and a host of engaged adults. Lisa's presentation was thought provoking, well received and generated a lot of interest and motivation for the participants.

MGs are working diligently at Founders' Park at the Fairgrounds. Part of the work there includes supporting the fairgrounds staff in plant propagation for the widespread plantings at the site. Kittatinny Valley State Park and other sites across the county have received many hours of care in getting the gardens and properties ready for visitors. MGs have already completed educational outreach engagements for this spring participating in the Ladies Retreat at Sussex County Community College, Healthy Kids Day at the YMCA, and a Children's Group engagement at Hope School. Upcoming events include children's summer camp activities at Project Self Sufficiency and the Sussex Main Library and an educational outreach engagement for Older Americans Day at Selective Insurance later this month.

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Our Annual Awards and Appreciation Luncheon was held at the Conservatory at the Sussex County Fair Grounds and was well attended. Many members received service awards and recognition for completion of the designation of Master Gardener. Pat Schanzlin was named Rookie of the Year for her over 150 hours of volunteer efforts.

Union: We are all busy working for our SPRING GARDEN FAIR AND PLANT SALE.

Our organization has experienced tremendous success at the Fair thanks to everyone working together as a team. As we approach our 26th year, we can all be very proud of this wonderful event and the good work we do all year long in our community. Please join us during this very special occasion, as we celebrate the milestone of over 27,000 visitors to the Fair since we began in 1990.

A GREENHOUSE CELEBRATION was held to thank all whose donations made this project possible.

SHARING GARDEN NEWS - Planting in the garden has begun with cold weather crops including bok choy, scallions, spinach, and lettuce. We are also starting seeds and transplanting seedlings into the garden.

Discussion of County Reports: Program sharing was discussed, since a good deal of interest was shown for Seeds to Salad, a school program that is being offered in both Somerset and Hunterdon County. This may be a way to share effective and well received materials for MG presenters and educators. Hunterdon agreed to send their program to Monmouth for reuse.

President Ellen Simonetti adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM.

Next meeting is June 2, 2015.
Extension Conference Center

Respectfully Submitted
Jane Gardner, Recording Secretary