

Master Gardener Association of New Jersey
Minutes of February 5, 2013

President Ellen Simonetti called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Attendance:

Atlantic:	Absent
Bergen:	Joseph Cooper, Karen Pennell
Burlington:	Terry Zane, Marilyn Bidrawn
Camden:	Nancy Sullivan
Cumberland:	Carol Henry, Mary Rowson
Essex;	Suzie Yamarone, Claudia Kolster
Gloucester:	Mary Cummings, Coley Lyons, Dottie Hansbury
Mercer:	Bon Robinson
Middlesex:	Kathy Dopart, Dale Duchai
Monmouth:	Ellen Simonetti, Joan Cox
Morris	Pat Hudson, Carla Schan, Sandi Gonski
Ocean:	Jim Digney, Suzanne Keane
Passaic:	Darlene Nowak
Somerset/Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering
Sussex	Lisa Chiariello
Union:	Toni Rinehart, Caryl Hanneman

The December 2012 minutes were corrected and accepted.

The Treasurer's report for 2012 and the Conference was read and accepted.

SUNDRY ACCOUNT			
RU Starting Balance FY 2013	\$	9,274.20	
Actual Revenue		-	
Actual Expenditures		993.00	
Committed Expenditures		(100.21)	
Balance per RU		10,166.99	
Unrecorded credit for cancelled PO		100.21	
Unrecorded Revenue		586.75	
SUNDRY ACCOUNT TOTAL			\$ 10,853.95
CHANGE FUND			
Balance Forward	\$	1,783.69	
Pin Sale Monmouth		162.50	
Conference Book Sale		154.24	
Conference Garden Market Bulb Sale		1.00	
Conference State Table Sale		64.00	
CHANGE FUND TOTAL			\$ 2,165.43
TOTAL FUNDS			\$13,019.38

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Confirmation for our October 5, 2013 reservation for the 2013 Conference has been received.

A proposed budget for the Conference was presented and passed.

RCE REPORT - No Report

TRAINING - Gloucester County is again hosting a Spring Southern Region Helpline Training Conference on April 9. Brochures were distributed and will be sent to all counties by the RMGANJ Secretary. Cost is \$15 which includes lunch.

Magnets advertising the 2013 International MG Conference were distributed. Leftovers were given to Mercer County for distribution at their Spring Seminar.

BREAK – Thank you, Gloucester

Upcoming:	<u>March 5</u>	Middlesex	OTC	
	<u>April 2</u>	Monmouth	ECC	Extension Conference Center
	<u>May 7</u>	Morris	ECC	
	<u>June 4</u>	Ocean	ECC	
	<u>July 2</u>	Passaic	ECC	
	<u>August 6</u>	Somerset/Hunterdon	ECC	
	<u>September 3</u>	Atlantic (Pot Luck and Auction)	ECC	
	<u>October 1</u>	Union	ECC	
	<u>October 5</u>	STATE CONFERENCE		
	<u>November 5</u>	Bergen	ECC	
	<u>December 3</u>	Burlington	ECC	

2013 CONFERENCE

All new committee write-ups are to be given to Kathy Dopart.

CATERING – Gloucester County - The cost of catering for 2012 was \$2,944, raised to \$2,500 for 2013 to cover any increase in costs. Gloucester County has received many requests to do away with styrofoam cups as being ecologically unfriendly. They have looked into getting low cost ceramic cups with silkscreened RMGANJ logo for \$1.00 to \$1.50 each which can be accommodated in the registration fee. One will be given to each participant at the Registration Table.

STATE TABLE – Union County Because of the relatively low income, \$64, the table will go on for one more year and then reevaluated.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT - Monmouth County – The theme for 2013 is International Gardens with Andrea Wolfe as the Keynote Speaker on *Brother Gardeners, The First Four U.S. Presidents*. Our own Judy Shaw will deliver a seminar on *French Gardens* after spending a few weeks in France this Summer. Seuke Goto will talk on *Japanese Gardens*, and David Hyde of Windswept Herbs will discuss *Exotic Herbs and Spices*. A fourth speaker is to be decided.

Ellen Simonetti presented a new proposed time schedule for the Conference:

8:00 – 9:15	Registration'
9:15 – 9:30	Opening Remarks
9:30 – 10:45	Keynote Speaker
10:45 – 11:00	Beak and Awards Preparation
11:00 – 11:45	Awards Presentation
11:45 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 -- 1:30	First Afternoon Session
1:45 -- 2:45	Second Afternoon Session
2:45 - 3:15	Door Prizes and Evaluation hand-ins
3:30 - 4:30	Tour of Rutgers Gardens.

Ellen distributed her ratings of the difficulty of each Conference Task and asked for input. Below are the ratings, top down, from most difficult or time consuming to the 'easiest'.

- Registration, Forms, and Name Tags
- Program Development
- Facilities
- Signs
- Awards Booklet

Speaker Escort
 Catering
 State Table/Garden Market/Barnes & Nobel
 Registration Desk
 Registration Folders
 Program Flyer
 Speakers Gifts
 Evaluation
 Door Prizes
 Clean Up

Ellen developed a budget for 2013:

Speaker Fees and Travel	3,000
Facility Rental	1,000
Catering	3,500
Speaker Gifts	75
Awards Booklet	500
Handouts	300
Supplies	250
TOTAL	8,625

Non-Conference Expenses

Cards and Postage	50
Thank You Gifts	30
Supplies	30
Miscellaneous	50
TOTAL	180

COUNTY REPORTS

Atlantic: No Report

Bergen: We participated in the 2012 Holiday Open House at Skylands Manor. We decorated the Great Hall. It was a very successful year for fundraising for the Skylands NJ BG.

We will be distributing pins to our membership for years of service at our next general meeting.

We are encouraging our new students to attend the general meeting bring them into the organization after their training is completed. They will be resuming classes this week.

We had our Annual MG Holiday Party held at the Van Sawn County Park Education Center.

Food donations were collected which went to our local food pantry. The donated decorations were raffled and proceeds donated to the Cans for Community Project.

Burlington: Our 2013 class has begun with 16 students.

We have revised our Mentor Program with Marilyn Bidrawn as Coordinator.

Our IPM Committee is preparing for the growing season and plot management at Winner Farm at the Burlington County Community Agriculture Center.

Camden: Horticulture Therapy classes have begun.

We are hosting a /garden Tool Sharpening Workshop on the 28th.

PHS is sponsoring a series of lectures at the Camden County site. The first lecture is *Gardening with Annuals* on 2/19.

Cumberland: 2013 MG Training classes have begun.

We are working with the Veterans Home. They have just added a greenhouse and want us to work with them on propagation and later assist them planting around the facility. We have received permission to use the College greenhouse to start seeds for our plant sale in May.

We will be working with alternative schools to put in raised beds.

We planted crops at the Bridgeton Zoo for animals to eat in the Summer.

A correction from our last report: We collected and donated over 20 tons of peppers last year.

Essex: We continue to actively work in the greenhouse preparing for our annual Plant Sale. To date we have taken approximately 1800 cuttings from 70 types of annuals, including 30 varieties of coleus. In March, we will begin starting seeds for our veggies, tomatoes, peppers and herbs. We also have begun selecting what we will be purchasing from wholesalers and growers (perennials, unusual annuals, ornamental woodies, and hanging baskets for Mother's Day). This year we will be trying something new; we will be accepting credit cards (parameters to be defined). We hope this will increase our sales of higher priced items.

We elected a new slate of officers in December.

Our Horticulture for Seniors Program in December *Holiday Decorations Using House Plants* had 35 participants. In January we discussed household plant pests and how to get rid of them. There was a coleus propagation demonstration and 36 Seniors went home with a cutting in a mini greenhouse made from plastic bags and bamboo skewers.

Melissa Almendinger of the NJ Invasive Species Strike Team was the guest speaker at our January meeting.

Gloucester: Our Holiday Party was held on December 12 at the County Building. It was a great success with a wonderful turnout. Our MG Director, Mary Cummings was again acknowledged for all her patience and time.

The 2013 MG class began on January 9 with a group of about 20 new students along with continuing fellow graduates. The program runs through May 29. The new group was treated to a Welcome Breakfast on January 16. Certified MGs supplied baked French Toast, Danish, muffins, homemade treats, etc. Cooking was done on site with pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, etc. The breakfast was a huge success with a wonderful crowd in attendance.

MG volunteers are in the process of updating Helpline information files and fact sheets. They have updated the categories and are going through each and every file to remove, condense and add information as needed to give everyone the tools needed to supply answers quickly and correctly.

The greenhouse will be opening February 11 for initial clean up and planning.

Craft workshops have started for the MG plant sale to be held May 11 and the 4-H Fair in July.

We are sponsoring the *Southern Regional Helpline Conference* on Tuesday, April 9. Keynote speaker, Kirk Brown, will discuss *Sustainability in America*.

Mercer: We do not have a sharing garden so we hold a quarterly food drive for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. This normally raises hundreds of pounds of canned and dry foods. We collected 400 pounds yesterday.

In late 2012, we were informed that Mercer County is making a 5 – 10 acre area, located within an 1800 acre County Parkland available to us to develop and use. It was a farm and consists of meadows and wetlands. It connects the Lawrence-Hopewell Trail, a 20+ mile loop trail, and is adjacent to the historic Pole Farm. The County will provide money and labor for development. The entire area will be deer fenced and MGs will have partial use of a large barn for storage. A landscape architect has been hired to assist in planning. MGs are now brainstorming ideas for this facility, identifying needs, e.g. water, wants and 'nice to haves'. Meetings with the County have begun and they are extremely cooperative. This will be a long-term project, staged over the years and will eventually replace our current Mercer County Educational Gardens site.

We are supporting three classrooms for plants for pollinators.

Middlesex: Our calendar fundraiser raised \$500.

On December 4, MG volunteers decorated rain barrels outside the Earth Center with winter decorations. All materials were donated by Barclay's Tree Farm in Cranbury.

On December 12, the Executive Board hosted a Holiday Party at Fiddleheads in Jamesburg.

On January 1 we held our first Board meeting in our trailer. However, we are still waiting for phone and internet service to be hooked up.

January 22 we had a class reunion and white elephant auction which raised \$800.

Volunteer hours can now be entered on the Forum.

We met with the local Girl Scouts to help create badges for middle school girls on the environment, butterfly house, children's garden and green roof playhouse.

Monmouth: Nineteen interns graduated on January 23. The graduation and awards ceremony was moved from our usual November date because of Hurricane Sandy

The new class will begin with a sumptuous breakfast Tuesday, February 19. It will be a big class as Monmouth County's interns will be joined by several residents from Ocean County.

We are working with at least Nine Community Gardens. New requests for talks and assistance keep coming in.

Due to hardships suffered by many residents of Monmouth County, we ran a successful non-perishable food drive for the last three months.

Morris: Our help line continues to be so slow our MG coordinator and Ag Agent are handling the calls. Our 2013 MG classes continue until May.

Ocean: Linda Convey, a MG Educator, gave a series of talks about starting seeds and growing annuals in a greenhouse situation. Then the 2013 team began their season. However, we had a pipe break in our Ag Center resulting in all other activities being put on hold until after the 15th (we hope).

Our Graduation/Awards luncheon for 20 new certified MGs has been moved to March 8, just to be safe. We did not receive enough registrations for a class this winter.

We have a new Power Point presentation on gardens damaged by salt water that is being adjusted to our Speakers Program.

Our Community Garden Committee is holding its first meeting tomorrow.

Passaic: We have horticulture therapy programs in Wanaque and West Milford.

We work with Laurelwood Arboretum, Pine Lane, Wayne; New Jersey Botanical Garden's Lilac, Wildflower, and Moraine Gardens and their Open House. We also assist at the Bloomingdale Senior Center.

We have planted *Mums In Memory* plant containers in memory of 9/11 in various County Towns.

Somerset/Hunterdon: Written report not received.

Sussex: Our SpringFest is March 13-17 at the State Fair Grounds. An announcement will sent out.

We will participate in the Native Plant Sale in Chester April 27 with a pickup date of May 5. This announcement will be broadcast at well.

MG training class is already is up and running. Graduation is in May.

Reorganizing under the direction of new director and Ag Agent Stephen Kommas has begun.

Our website is under development.

Union: Echo Lake Park and surroundings suffered severe storm damage due to Sandy.

Our new Horticultural Therapy program is about to begin.

We will have a program for autistic children this summer.

The meeting ended at 12:00.

Next meeting is March 5. See you all then