

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Minutes of April 5, 2016 RMGANJ Meeting

Kathy Dopart welcomed the group. Terry Zane then led the meeting, following the Agenda.

Minutes from March 1, 2016 Meeting: Minutes from the last meeting are accepted as presented, with clarification on the \$35 charge for the conference attendees being made and clarification on the budget savings because of non-rental of 2 additional classrooms for lunch usage.

Attendance:

Atlantic:	Marylou Monihan
Bergen:	Karen Pennell, Joseph Cooper
Burlington:	Terry Zane, Marilyn Bidrawn, Lee Parry, Merry Bogert
Camden:	Diane Shonyo, Nancy Sullivan
Cumberland:	Carol Henry
Essex:	
Hunterdon:	Tricia Deering
Mercer:	Bob Robinson, Theodora Wang, Betty Scarlata
Middlesex:	Kathy Dopart
Monmouth:	Gayle Williams, Ellen Simonetti, Gordon Boak
Morris:	Pat Hudson, Sandi Gonski, Carla Schan
Ocean:	Suzanne Keane
Passaic:	Barbara Cook
Somerset:	Linda Madretzke
Sussex:	Pat Schanzlin, Jane Gardner
Union:	Dolores Batz-Culp, Caryl Hannemann, Dennis Lenahan
Rutgers University:	Nick Polanin

TREASURER'S REPORT: Pat Schanzlin reported a balance of \$12499.32. We still have a couple of outstanding items, in effect since January. There is still an open item for the Barnes & Noble royalty. It was moved and voted to accept the Treasurer's report as submitted.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: The email address for Terry for all business is rnganj.pres@gmail.com. Please use the new address for contacting the president to improve communication. Terry asked for a full contact list of all members of the association, including email, address and phone contacts. Pat Hudson had started this list and it was handed over to Suzie Yamarone a couple of years ago. Terry will check with Suzie to get it updated.

Terry brought to the attention of the group that the bi-laws state that the offices of President and Treasurer are to be elected during the even years and the Recording Sec and the VP to be elected in the odd years. As such, the Treasurer should be asked to continue thru the 2017 term. The Nominating Committee when establishing the slate for next year should consider these bylaws.

MG Coordinator's Report: Rutgers 250 is the 250th anniversary of the university will be celebrated in November this year. There are many free give aways available through the university, so coordinators and staff members should check with the university to get these for MG events. There is a RU250 website, but contact your county extension dept head for more insight on how this website will be used throughout the year.

This is National Volunteer Recognition Month and for some counties, some events have been planned to recognize volunteers. There is a proclamation on SAKAI that can be used to recognize volunteers which can serve as a template for the counties. This celebration provides an opportunity to gain recognition for volunteers by freeholders and RC staff.

Nick is working on the 2015 Annual Report and plans to get this completed in the next 6 weeks or so. All the county reports are in. Personnel updates include that Passaic County has started the search for a Hort3 level person. They had 4 candidates to interview, and one of the candidates is being offered the job. In Atlantic County, Mona's position was approved for funding from the county at 50% with an equal share by Rutgers. The position will be filled shortly.

There is discussion within Monmouth County to replace the agent who has retired. The county is talking with Rutgers to see about having that position partially/fully funded. In Ocean, the county agent is on sabbatical and retirement planned for Jan of 2017, so they will be refilling that position next year. Win Cogill has retired from Hunterdon County effective April 1, 2016. He did apply for the Professor Emeritus position and would, if granted, continue his fruit tree research at Snyder Farm.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Part of the Rutgers meeting yesterday included updates on the strategy for the department. A good third of the group did not have their team strategic plans ready for discussion. The MG team needs a strategic plan, including how many volunteers are needed and how the group will be focused in its efforts. On average, MGs stay about 5 years and the coordinators and local constituents need to consider such factors going forward. What are the emerging issues to be addressed going forward? Perhaps a survey would be helpful

Old Business:

Petty Cash – Terry sent out the new voucher to everyone through email. She asked for comments on the form. The group felt that the form was appropriate for use and no further discussion was needed.

Barnes & Noble Receivable from the 2015 Conference – Nick will follow up on the reimbursement due and report back to us when more information is available.

Procedure for Ordering Pins: We are still working on the form for ordering pins. One thing that will change is that no pins can be delivered to PO boxes, so please include a street address. We also need the PO form and number before Marilyn can process orders. She has pins today if you need them.

New Business:

Election of Corresponding Secretary – Karen Pennell presented the slate of candidates developed by the Nomination Committee for the Corresponding Secretary position. Joseph Cooper has been nominated. Karen asked if there were any further nominations from the floor. Being none offered, a motion to close the slate was approved and a motion to vote on the candidate was forwarded and approved. Joe Cooper was unanimously approved as the new Corresponding Secretary. Nick will set up Joe as a maintaining member for SAKAI.

BREAK – Thank you to Union County for this month's refreshments. The May Refreshments will be hosted by Morris County.

Conference:

Catering – We need to have a cost for AM Refreshments and Lunch. Marilyn is working with Nick to get started on this item.

Facilities – We have received a revised booking acknowledgement. We were able to delete the upstairs classrooms previously used for lunch and were able to then realize the added savings.

Program – Ellen is working on the revised schedule. She has changed the schedule to include the visit to the Rutgers Gardens and the IFNH Eco Wall. We will get an answer shortly regarding the Eco Wall so that Registration can begin in June.

Registration - We will use the online Registration service again. Ellen suggested that M&M might be able to help with getting chocolate for all the registrants at the Conference. Terry will contact the chocolate speaker to offer these at the Conference.

Speaker Gifts – There was a discussion regarding the gifts for speakers. Some discussion occurred around appropriate items for the honorarium/non-honorarium speakers. The group felt that a \$50 amount for such a gift was appropriate. Terry presented a catalog for travel and office item to the group for additional consideration. Pat Hudson (in charge of the gifts) will select appropriate items.

County Report Highlights:

Atlantic – Our acting coordinator is the Atlantic County Ag Agent, Rick VanVranklin. He seems to feel hopeful that once the county budget is finalized, we will receive the funding for a part time coordinator.

Atlantic County programs are up and running, re-organizing, beginning new projects with nothing specific to describe at this time except that our Mays Landing Library committee that re-landscaped a large portion of the library grounds from scratch last year and has been offered new areas for planning and development. Our acting coordinator, & agriculture agent Rick VanVranklin has suggested working with an artist that he is familiar with from Philadelphia and this idea has many interesting possibilities. He provided us with slides of some of her work. Rick's particular interest is Asian vegetables and he has presented a lecture to us on this subject.

We also had professor Richard Zimmerman from Stockton University speak to our group whose research interest is ecological forest management. His particular specialty is the Atlantic White Cedar. We also had owner, Jennifer LaMonaca, of "Sea Salt CSA" make a presentation to our group. Her father-in-law is Art Brown retired NJ Secretary of Agriculture who owns B & B Farms in Cologne, NJ.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

We are planning a trip to the Morris Arboretum with an added option of touring their Bloomfield Farm property with a docent. Not actually a farm, it is a historic 65 acre property and naturalistic landscape which is a separate part of the arboretum and includes cultivated gardens, research plots, meadows, floodplains, a woody plant nursery, historic grist mill, just to name a few of the interesting areas associated with the farm.

Our new coordinator of the "helpline round table" has re-instituted sending out to all members minutes of their meetings; this has been well received.

We will be a part of the Atlantic County Utility Authority's Earth Day celebration and fair on Sunday, April 24th from 10am until 4pm.

Bergen – In the advancement of our educational efforts, the Master Gardeners of Bergen County Association has purchased portable equipment for the use of our members including a projector, projector screen, laptop computer, public address system, and peripherals.

Garretson Farm hosted two workshops on April 3. Growing a Healing Herb Garden: a Hands-on workshop. Participants learned how to grow herbs traditionally used for healing from seed, division. Composting Made Easy. Participants had commonly asked questions answered...will it be smelly, messy, or too much trouble? How to get the right balance of greens and browns? What's really involved?

The Community Seed Bank at Garretson is open for the season.

Garretson Farm Annual Spring Festival and Plant Sale will be held May 7, 10 am - 4 pm. Offering a large variety of native perennials and herbs as well as milkweed seeds and plants.

Teaneck Creek Park has more than 1.3 miles of groomed trails, an outdoor classroom, and ecological art exhibits that make this oasis unlike any other. We maintain trails, plant native trees/shrubs, identify and remove invasive species, and remove debris Wednesdays year-round with a spring kick-off breakfast on April 13th.

New Jersey Botanical Garden is having their Annual Plant Sale Saturday, April 30 - Sunday, May 1 and May 8 (Mother's Day).

The Thielke/Glen Rock Arboretum is launching its annual free Spring StoryWalk® on April 9 Mayor Bruce Packer will be joining the Friends of the Glen Rock Arboretum for this delightful story set in nature. Thielke Arboretum Weed Warrior Day 2016 is set for April 17 for the annual Weed Warrior Day stewardship project.

In March, Bergen and Passaic County held a joint meeting where author Amy Ziffer presented *Shade Revealed: How to Garden Successfully in Low Light (REALLY!)* Amy has been helping clients create beautiful residential gardens since 1998. She is a former staff editor at *Fine Gardening* magazine and a Master Gardener. "Shade Revealed," a talk abundantly illustrated with beautiful photography, focuses on what makes some shade plants better performers than others for the best chances of long-term success. This program was the basis for Amy's new book, *The Shady Lady's Guide to Northeast Shade Gardening*.

Burlington- Projects:

Butterfly Garden at Smith Woods

A walk through is scheduled for April 6th to assess each plot and begin cleaning out to follow the plot plan for this calendar year.

Demonstration plots at BCCAC

Plantings have been decided for the ten demonstration plots and five raised beds. The team is researching and making signs for each plot and bed. Planned plot plantings are saffron and herbs, pollinators, hops, blueberries, strawberries, herbs as insect repellants, cotton, composting, sunflower varieties, lentils and ancient grains. Plantings for the five raised beds are herbs for sun, shade tolerant herbs, butterfly garden, shade annuals planted in a bed with tree roots and saffron and white vinca.

Donation Garden at Medford Leas

A planning meeting and seed planting sessions were held where 15 flats were planted with pak choi, Brussels sprouts spinach, Chinese cabbage and herbs. Tomatoes, peppers and eggplant are being cared for in the volunteers' homes. These will be transferred to the greenhouse and eventually the garden as the season progresses. Snap peas planted on March 7th in the garden are germinating.

A keyhole garden was laid out and the frame expected to be completed by the end of March.

Rancocas Nature Center

Nothing to report.

Pinelands Preservation Alliance

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

The first workday for is scheduled for April 5th. Kitchen Garden - focus on herbs with adding some annuals for more color. Pollinator Garden - increase plant varieties to attract more pollinators and group plants to achieve a greater impact.

Articles published in the *Burlington County Times* Master Gardeners Journal:

- March 9, 2016, "Saying hello to hydrangeas" by Susie Jacobsen
- March 24, 2016, "How does your clematis grow?" by Judy Janas

Presentations given:

- Gardening with Native Plants to Support and Attract Wildlife by Meredith Bogert
- Pruning by Meredith Bogert
- Dill's Atlantic Giant Pumpkins by Marilyn Bidrawn

Upcoming events:

- April 12: Quarterly meeting. Ellen Simonetti will talk about Rutgers Gardens.
- April 23: Ask a Master Gardener table at the Lumberton Arbor Day Festival
- April 30: Plant sale at BCCAC

Camden – On April 13 we will be having a talk on beneficial insects. We also had one on March 22 on Gardening with Ferns. In May, we will have their Spring Garden Fair. 85% of the goods are already sold.

Cumberland – We have been invited to participate in an Arbor Day event at the County Library teaching Children how to plant tree seedlings. There was a hands-on Grafting class where we all learned how cut and tie. We had our propagation class at the RAREC farm. Had a Seminar day about Organic Gardening & Blueberries. Went out into the field to help our Ag agent prune his Hazelnut Trees. Helpline will be opening this month. Getting ready for the Plant Sale on May 7th at Wheaton Arts. Doug Tallamy will be speaking sponsored by CU. Planning the Butterfly events for the upcoming season.

Essex – not present

Hunterdon – The Rutgers Master Gardeners of Hunterdon County (RMGHC) March meeting speaker was Jared Rosenbaum speaking on Native Plants. Our April speaker is John DeMarrais speaking on Gardening for Birds. A self-drive trip to Buck Gardens is scheduled for May. The 2016 Hunterdon Helpline season is up and running as of March 29. Helpline re-orientation sessions were held in early March. Two sessions of Worker Safety Protection training/certification have been held at Snyder Farm. Our Horticultural Support Programs are up and running for the season and our Children's Programs are gearing up. A new horticultural support program at the Hunterdon Care Center, a nursing home, has been approved and is underway.

Mercer – Our annual symposium, held on March 12, was a great success. We had 292 attendees, close to our maximum allowed, and virtually sold out of the books offered for sale. This made several speakers very happy.

Our first Community Outreach event, at the 10th Annual Sustainable Lawrence Living Local Expo, had some 200 people visit our booth for gardening questions or general information. We do get recruits through events like this. We are purchasing some miniature magnifying glasses, with our logo and the helpline phone number, to give out at events.

Our Plant Expo will be held on May 14, from 9 to 2. Six vendors will be on hand, over 1000 perennials donated by RMG's will be for sale, and our popular "second-hand sale" of gently used garden items (very popular) will take place. We are providing a kit of garden tools and supplies to each of the five schools where we have a school garden program. We are partnering with a local non-profit, Isles, to increase our involvement. In July, our now-annual Trent House garden program for inner-city kids will have three sessions, with three different camps. Rutgers Master Gardeners will have tours to the Princeton University nurseries and campus gardens on April 7, and to Moss Acres, in New Hope, PA, on April 29. For our March meeting program, David Benner, who developed Moss Acres, gave a very interesting talk.

Middlesex – Our helpline, which is staffed year round, is now operating on an expanded summer schedule. Our hours are Monday to Friday 9-12.

As is typical this time of year, we are seeing an increase in speaker and events requests.

On March 12 a free seminar titled "Preparing Your Garden for Spring" was held at the EARTH center.

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Also at the EARTH center on Riva Ave is a workshop called Introduction to Backyard Composting. Two options for this free workshop are Sunday morning April 10 from 10-12 or Saturday morning April 16 from 10-12. Pre registration is required.

On April 30 we will hold our plant sale as part of Rutgers Day. If you are looking for the new Rutgers Scarlet strawberry or the classic Rutgers 250 tomato plants, this is a great opportunity to pick them up.

On May 7th, Master Gardeners will hold a garden Q & A from 10-3 at the EARTH center. Gardeners can learn about best gardening practices and receive a free starter plant.

Monmouth – April is bursting out in Monmouth County starting with our annual School Program Conference on April 8th featuring speakers addressing the following topics: why outdoor spaces help children reconnect with nature, bringing the classroom outdoors to address Common Core State Standards in a more creative and fresh way, and organic school gardens incorporating math and language arts skills.

There will be garden tours at our Ag. Building with plenty of interest stations for our educators. This is our second year for this program. The following week, on April 16th, we will host a Spring Garden Symposium. The public is invited and is a free event at the Ag. Building. Topics of interest will be organic vegetable gardening, lawn care and advice, perennials, raised bed gardening and butterfly/pollinator gardening. Our Master Gardeners will lead all workshops for this event.

To begin this month as well, is our Junior Master Gardener Program with 18 new children eager to get their hands dirty! To educate us MGs, our speaker this month will be Anne Haines addressing unusual and uncommon deer resistant plants.

Morris – quality of answers given to residents on the helpline indicated that long-term staffs worked more effectively than did part time drop-in staffs. Better training is going to be offered to a core group of volunteers to . Clark Beebe gave a talk on chestnut trees and participated in replanting of trees at the park. Two new locations will be replanted. A gardening outreach program will be offered at the library. Horticultural Enrichment is in full swing. 15 lectures have been offered so far this month.

Ocean – This month our Speakers are very active with 10 talks to our residents. The greenhouses and Hoop House are filling up with plants for our May event. Early spring crops have been planted at our two community garden sites.

The Intern class visited the O.C. Park MG gardens and greenhouses last week and is anxious to participate with the veterans. Their classes finish next week and then they will begin Helpline and Tick ID training. Most other committees are active now.

Our monthly meeting is this Thurs. where the Nominating Committee will present the Slate for 2016-2017. Planning has begun for our Toms River Library event in June where we will have talks, demos, and information tables. A Longwood Gardens trip is planned for June.

Passaic – Passaic County had a joint meeting in March with Bergen County. Our speaker was Amy Ziffer who spoke on “Shade Revealed - Recommended Plants”. She was an excellent speaker and both counties shared the cost. Joint meetings are good ways to get good speaker whose fees are high. The Plant Sale Committee is planning for the plant sale in May and will implement new and exciting ideas this year, including short presentations.

The Help Line will be staffed for questions. For our April meeting, the speaker will be Alison Hosford from Two Pond Farms. She will speak on the Layout for Vegetable Garden Success. Projects have been submitted and approved for the coming year, such as Horticulture therapy, Community Garden, and Habitat for Humanity.

Somerset – Somerset County Master Gardeners are chugging along. We are working diligently on creating a speaker's bureau. We are currently offering “how to do” topics for the public to attend at our home site in Bridgewater. A small fee will be charged. We have offered several “talks” that were well attended.

On April 13, we will all attend an awards luncheon for our nominated active members. It will be held at a restaurant in Bridgewater.

All committees are up and functioning successfully.

Sussex - Just as a garden is designed, planted, nurtured and admired, so is the acclaimed Springfest Garden Show. Carefully planned and cultivated over the last 20 years, Springfest has grown to be one of the best small flower and

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

garden shows in the region.

However, at the end of the day, a garden is ephemeral and sadly, so is Springfest. The Springfest Committee is announcing the retirement of the Show after 20 years. Although the show has come to an end, we hope that the positive effects of its success and the lasting memories created endure for many years to come.

Our Springfest educational exhibit won 1st place for an educational display again this year, focusing on conifers. As a result of our request, the NJ Forestry Service provided educational samples for us to use of different species (branches, leaves and cones). Two MGs from the Passaic County program joined us to volunteer at our booth at Springfest (thanks and hope you enjoyed yourselves!). One MG intern from Morris County will be joining our intern class to take the pruning class in April as she missed the Morris County class. We are happy to be hosting other MGs to our county!

The Helpline schedule has been recently adjusted and affords the opportunities for our MGs to volunteer any day, since our clientele seem to drop in at various times when they have a problem. Our current class has 18 interns. Our Award and Appreciation Luncheon will be held on April 20th.

Sussex County MGs will be participating in a reforestation conservation effort in the Sparta Glenn this spring. Martha Mahady, MG, gave a presentation at the Sussex Main Branch Library in March explaining her study results from an experiment she ran to complete her Master's degree on loosestrife's response to fertilizer, both native and invasive species. We are still not completely settled from staffing changes due to the secretary retiring in April of last year. We hope to have that fully resolved by mid-April this year.

Union – Our Wild Earth Fest will be held in the county part on April 30th. We are getting ready for the plant sale in May. We will have tables to answer questions and promote the MG program. We are clearing out the gardens to get ready for the new season. New class members will be signing up for the volunteer opportunities this month. We have obtained a Proven Winners handout that includes informational items about plants and garden design. A trail was named for one of their members (Ruth) who is also a geologist and MG.

Nick clarified that speakers can accept honorariums, but cannot charge fees. Registration fees are fine to accept for locally offered events, but no charges for speakers, following the Rutgers policy.

Kathy Dopart wanted to poll the group regarding the payment of fees for speakers. Her county has limited such fees to no more than \$150. Some members suggested that they are sharing speakers across a couple of counties to help manage the costs for speakers, while other MG groups are paying more than this amount. Many groups are struggling with spending. Each county struggles with its own issues and these issues need to be addressed at local levels.

Next meeting:

May

ECC

Morris County will Host

AMC = Agriculture Museum Classroom

ECC = Extension Conference Center

ADJOURNMENT:

Respectfully Submitted

Jane Gardner, Recording Secretary