

Rutgers Master Gardener Association of New Jersey

Minutes of November 1, 2016 RMGANJ Meeting

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

Minutes from Sept 27, 2016 Meeting: Changes from Betty Scarlata and Terry were noted, most being typos. A motion was tendered and members unanimously voted to accept the minutes incorporating the changes referenced above.

Attendance:

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|---------------------|--|
| Atlantic: | Mary Lou Monihan |
| Bergen: | Joseph Cooper, Karen Pannell, Donna Faustini |
| Burlington: | Terry Zane, Marilyn Bidrawn, Lee Parry, Merry Bogert |
| Camden: | Diane Shonyo |
| Cumberland: | Carol Henry |
| Essex: | David Haines, Suzie Yamarone, Jim Myvacle, Jane Kinkle |
| Hunterdon: | Tricia Deering |
| Mercer: | Betty Scarlata, Bob Robinson, Theodora Wang |
| Middlesex: | Kathy Dopart, Dale Duchai, Jerri Barclay |
| Monmouth: | Karin Poorvin, Gayle B. Williams, Ellen Simonetti |
| Morris: | Absent |
| Ocean: | Suzanne Keane, Jerald Jehlets |
| Passaic: | Darlene Nowak |
| Somerset: | Absent |
| Sussex: | Pat Schanzlin, Jane Gardner |
| Union: | Dolores Batz-Culp |
| Rutgers University: | Nick Polanin |

TREASURER'S REPORT: We received \$11,104. through a transfer from OCEPE for Conference registrants. Our expenses for the Conference were less than that amount. \$12535.97 is the current balance so far, although not all of the accounting is present since the system conversion has not been completed. There are a number of people who have passed in Tabor forms for reimbursement, but these have not been paid. Motion to accept the Treasurer's report is made and seconded. The group voted to accept the report as presented.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Terry felt that it was a very successful Conference and people seemed to enjoy it. There are some leftover packets of seeds and candy that are available for you upon request. There were extra folders returned that Nick will store for next year. There are extra door prize tickets available to use for next year. There are extra booklets and programs left, should anyone like copies. Members should remember that whatever Conference responsibilities assigned for this year will be assigned to you for next year as well.

RCE UPDATE: Nick Polanin reported that there was a department meeting of Oct 4, 2016. The Department has 14 or 15 working groups currently devising mission statements. Dan Klushinski is trying to get strategic plans together for reporting purposes this year.

There have been several retirement announcements throughout the department; Ocean, Cumberland and Warren have openings and Jack Raven has announced his retirement. Win Cowgill has retired from Hunterdon as well. The Monmouth County Agent position is also open. Extension positions at the county level have to be supported at least 50% with local money in order to fill the positions. Some counties have positions that are shared, due to specialties, such as marine biology in the south, which makes funding less of a challenge. Funding will be a more complex process going forward. The annual Stakeholder Meetings at each county are worth attending to find out more of the thinking and program development going on at the local levels. Because of the expansion of relationships with other higher education institutions in the state, partnering opportunities are becoming wider for support for programs.

USDA and Forestry presentations were given to his department.

Oct 12, 2016 was the last MG Coordinator's meeting. Coordinators liked the Conference this year, as well as the future speakers list for next year that was presented to them. They talked about the youth protection program that has been implemented by the 4H group, and will be implemented next year with MGs. We need to find out how many programs are sponsored for children directly by MGs or that MGs participate in, which are sponsored by others. The sponsoring group is responsible for offering the safety program and for running background reports. When MGs are invited in, then we are not responsible for background checks or safety training. This factor will be important as programs are offered or sponsored by local groups. There is cost involved with background checks, currently not

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covered by Rutgers. The department is trying to develop Safety training through an online video training, which Dan wants to offer to all MG members.

We need to survey Coordinators to find out how many have junior MG programs and what safety training and background checks need to be completed, such as is offered in Monmouth County. No entity shares background check results, so that means separate checks need to be done annually. You will need to pay for these checks, although some districts will reimburse speakers.

The policy also involves taking pictures of children who are participating in MG programs. Nick suggested that we use the Rutgers Picture Release Form to confirm permission of parents to take pictures of children or take such pictures so that none of the children are recognizable, particularly if the picture will be used electronically or published.

Coordinators are now being asked to compile the annual report form, which Nick is trying to get online to enable better data collection. Some counties still do the survey on paper and submit it.

The Cornerstone Finance Management system conversion is not going too smoothly, although the University is saying that things are moving as expected. Nick said that he would be available to follow up with you if you have any questions or outstanding items pending. In the future, no more Tabor forms will be used by MGs; only electronic submissions will be accepted for employees only. Non-employee expenses will require a W9 in the future or we will need to plan ahead to use POs to get the expenses covered for the Conference. Many policy changes are anticipated moving forward.

Nick extended his congratulations on the Conference results. It was a very good event and the Coordinators really enjoyed it. Nick will not be in attendance at the December meeting.

SURVEY Discussion: Qualtrics has been installed at Rutgers for use as a survey tool. We need to collect feedback and to send out the survey to our group. The draft survey was distributed to the group. Members should provide suggestions back to Jane for inclusion. We will run the survey on the Rutgers website, once Nick gets more information on how this should be done. We decided to provide live links to the local MG groups through which an email can be distributed to each group's members. This should be completed prior to year-end.

25-Year Pins and the New Pin Order Fund: The State Board pays for Twenty Five Year Pins. Marilyn created a new pin order form because we have a new price schedule. Marilyn needs a proper Rutgers heading to include in the form, which Nick will send Marilyn by email. We pay no sales tax for pin orders. Marilyn cannot collect postage due to the issues associated with Rutgers accounting, so she suggested that members plan to collect pin orders at the state meetings.

At the present time the funds transfer process receipt is not being confirmed, so we need to straighten out our order process. Pat will take a look at the paragraph on the form to ensure that it correctly outlines the steps for ordering. It is easier if you give checks made out to Rutgers at the present time, until the accounting system is up and running.

Members are reminded to process pin orders at the meetings to expedite things and avoid the postage expenses. Many counties made long-term projections for 3 or more years, so orders should be minimal from these counties. Some counties don't do pins. You can either send along a postage check for your order, or preferably send a prepaid postage envelope for your order if you are unable to pick up pins at the meeting.

Nominating Committee: Jerri Barclay, Dale Duchai and Karen Pennell will serve as the Nominating Committee for upcoming election. Our bylaws outline the process to be followed and when positions are to be filled.

Terry will finish out her term in 2017. We need a Treasurer for 2017 only. We need a VP, Corresponding Secretary and Recording Secretary for 2-year terms, beginning in 2017 per the bi-laws. The Committee will bring the slate to the December meeting for voting.

CONFERENCE Follow-Up:

Reimbursement: A question came in a few days before the conference from an individual who had a family emergency and asked for reimbursement of the Conference enrollment fee. Terry asked the group about their perspectives about a refund process. If we decide not to offer reimbursement, then this policy needs to appear in the registration website or form. Terry believes that OCPE already reimbursed this person for this year. Another county did have a person who requested the reimbursement and we do not know if she was reimbursed. Many members felt that we shouldn't offer reimbursements because there are so many individual situations that could arise. Other members felt that we should offer reimbursement. We need to remember that not all people are in the same financial situation. OCPE has a policy, which could be mirrored; nonetheless, RMGANJ needs a written refund policy in place.

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After discussion, a motion and second were offered that no reimbursement would be offered for cancellations. We will add the wording to the registration process in upcoming years. The group was advised that only representatives should vote. The vote was 16 in favor, with 3 opposed. The motion carried.

Evaluations: Mary Lou collected 189 returned evaluation sheets from the Conference. She compiled the ratings, using the scale provided. There were very few 4s (lowest rating), which she included with the non-response reply. She analyzed the notes and made a summary of each of these items. Her report is attached to the minutes for reference under separate title 2016 Feedback.jpg.

Most respondents felt that Joseph Simcox was an excellent speaker. Those rating him lower stated that they could not relate to his presentation or presentation style. Participants liked the Rutgers speakers as well. Personality played into their evaluations and ratings, although they felt speakers had excellent information. People appeared to be rating the presenters' styles most heavily.

Many people are looking for practical information about gardens and containers, rather than scientific presentations, according to the survey results. Respondents felt that they got too few credits for attending the Conference, most counties only give 3 credits for a full-day offering. Nick pointed out that states across the nation have a multiday program and include an awards dinner, and more in-depth events. We need to determine what people really want to have offered before we try to determine what to do in the future on the hours assigned to the Conference.

Barnes and Noble – We got a good offering list because none of the speakers had books. We sold 123 books, the most popular being the cheaper books, such as butterfly books, month-by-month NJ and seed saving. These books were \$20 or less, including tax. We should get back \$175 to \$180 according to the records.

Next Year's Conference: The date for next year's Conference will be Saturday Oct 7, 2017. The Facilities Team needs to start booking the facility immediately. The group decided that we should stay at Cook, since this seems to work well.

Potential Speakers: Ellen has not heard any of the speakers who were suggested as presenters. Dr. Jason Grabowski is an excellent speaker and educator. His style is quite humorous. The group decided to ask Ellen to contact him and ask him to be the keynote speaker for 90 minutes. He is also a Rutgers professor. We can give him an honorarium and Ellen will try to get him to donate his fee to Rutgers Gardens. The amounts allocated are \$300 for hour talks and \$500 for a keynote address.

John Black, Master Naturalist and President of the Native Plant Society of NJ, comes from an interesting background and is Native American. He demonstrates a quiet commanding style of presentation. People who have heard him were inspired to join his society, since he does such a good job. He talks about a variety of native pollinators and how the pollinator system works. He is good at integrating information. We need to ensure that he has an interesting offering that is new for the group, since many of the Board have already heard one or more presentations. We need to remind him to do a low-key pitch to the group for membership in his own group.

Leda Meredith, an instructor from the NY Botanical Gardens and author of "The Foragers' Feast," will be the third speaker, presenting information on over-wintering plants. Her books can be offered through the Barnes and Noble table and the Conference. Ellen will book these people for next year.

Members are reminded to submit their county reports to the Secretary electronically, due to the length of the meeting today.

County Report Highlights:

Atlantic – Atlantic County coordinator interviews need to be scheduled ASAP since county budget approval monies will soon expire with new fiscal year. Signs for MG sites are being worked on by our ag agent, Rick VanVranken. A study by the American Society for Horticultural Science was distributed (& later shared with state board members). A grant application was submitted for the Mays Landing Library Demo/Art garden project. Congrats to Pa. Horticultural Society tri-state winners: Atlantic City Aquarium; Seashore Gardens Living Center; MG Nancy Fiedler for her home garden.

Most projects are in the midst of putting their gardens to rest; water is of concern due to lack of rain (even with help of rain barrels). Horticulture therapy program made scarecrow dish gardens. Our hospitality committee is now sending cards to members for illness & birthdays in order to go green. A trip is planned to Philadelphia for October 20th to the Woodlawn Historic Site & community gardens with a Pa. Horticultural Society docent. Our AC fall newsletter is out.

Our Facebook page is functioning well but they want to tweet it to, perhaps, a group page and/or do a blog. A speaker for the month was Glen Ward on "Soils of Southern NJ."

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Bergen – New Jersey Botanical Gardens/Skylands Holiday Open House (theme: A Gardener's Holiday) takes place Thursday, Dec. 1 - 4: Bergen County is decorating the study and library. Our theme is "A Seasonal Fairy Walk." Other events in November include Carriage House Concert: Abbie Gardner, Audubon Fall Nature Walk Sunday, Skylands Manor Tours NJBG volunteer docents lead visitors on a tour of the architecture and history of Skylands Manor. Two Wreath-Making Workshops and a Family Woodland Hike on Nov. 20, 1 pm are being offered. Rain will cancel the events. Free.

Thielke/Glen Rock Arboretum

Holiday Décor Workshop Saturday, Dec. 3, two sessions

Thielke/Glen Rock Arboretum, a holiday décor-making workshop will be held Saturday, Dec. 3 in Fellowship Hall of the Glen

Carol A. Thielke, Master Gardener Class of 1993, passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family at the age of 91 on Oct. 24, 2016. Carol was a one who spearheaded the formation of the Arboretum in Glen Rock. A memorial service was held Oct. 28 at the Community Church of Glen Rock. Contributions in Carol's memory may be made to the Friends of the Glen Rock Arboretum, P.O. Box 34, Glen Rock, NJ, 07452 or to the Community Church of Glen Rock, 354 Rock Road,

At the *November Meeting, Bruce Crawford Presents: Plants Through the Ages*. Bruce is going to share a glimpse of how the life of plants all began. How long various plants in our gardens have been on Earth or what the Earth was like when they were in their formative stages? The continents have been continuously shifting and the climate changing over the past 400 million years. These changes impact the development of the "family tree" of plants.

Burlington – Projects:

Butterfly Garden at Smith Woods

The team is preparing the garden for winter. A few more perennials and pollinator shrubs were planted during this month. Each plot was given lime to bring up the pH, since the soil test was done early in the month. A plant list was made for next spring and a plan made to add additional educational information for the public to view.

IPM and Demonstration Plots at BCCAC

The five raised beds were closed at the Ag. Center. The kitchen garden is still providing herbs and blooms. The row of asters is in full bloom and provides much needed food for the honeybees. Caterpillars are still on the parsley.

The team is still working on the demonstration plots. The cotton was harvested and plants removed. The pollinator plot was also closed and the hops vines have been cut down. A wreath was made using one of the hop vines and cotton bolls from the "Black beautiful" cotton plants.

The team is also working on ideas for next year.

Donation Garden at Medford Leas

Harvested this month were 28.5 pounds of sweet and hot peppers, watermelon, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, onions, eggplant, cucumbers, tomatillos and long red beans for a year-to-date total of 628.5 pounds donated.

Removed dead tomato plants and stored tomato cages

Put plastic down on main and secondary gardens for weed prevention

Carrot seeds have germinated

Cleaned up for winter

Repotted peanut, tomato, pepper and eggplant plants and placed in the greenhouse to experiment over the winter

Removed several trees to provide more sun for both gardens (see photo below)

Rancocas Nature Center Historic Garden Project

SEASON SUMMARY by Toni Price

This garden focused on plants that would have been grown by former inhabitants of the Center circa 1700-1850, the Lenni Lenape, Quaker farmers, and Free Blacks from the adjacent area of Timbuctoo. It was planted in May and will be disassembled in early November. Sources at Bartram's Garden were consulted before planting, and seeds were obtained from Monticello and Landreth's Seed Company. Here are the plant selections with performance notations:

GREEN ORACH-Satisfactory but bolted after July heat.

GEORGIA COLLARDS-Infested by aphids. No harvest.

SWISS CHARD-Aphid infestation but harvested some early tips.

BATH COS LETTUCE- Good results. Bolted late.

CLARY SAGE-Rotted after heavy rain in August.

BALSALM PEAR-Failed to thrive in July heat.

CARDOON-Rotted after heavy rain in July.

COW'S HORN OKRA-Failed to germinate.

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WHIPOORWILL COW PEA-Excellent consistent production.
VIRGINIA WHITE CORN-Each plant within the Three Sisters planting produced 2 ears.
WHITE BUSH CYMLIN in same planting was excellent, as were the SCARLETT RUNNER BEANS.
GEORGIA RATTLESNAKE WATERMELON-Flowered late-no fruits.
JEFFERSON BEANS (Hyacinth Beans)-Excellent production.
SWEET POTATOES-Poor flower & fruiting.
MALABAR SPINACH-Planted mid-season to replace failed greens, this produced through light frost.
JEWEL WEED-Grew to about 6 feet high and flowered beautifully

OBSERVATIONS

The garden was too shady for some of the plants. DEP had agreed to cut down some of the trees and brush that shaded the spot, so the team planted accordingly. Unfortunately, this did not happen. Cool spring weather, a drought and excessive heat and then some heavy winds and rain also had a negative impact.

This project did not receive the participation it needed to thrive. Early verbal interest never brought workers. Through the 3rd week in July, the garden was maintained by T. Price alone, until two additional master gardeners lent their much-needed assistance.

A major discovery about historical vegetable varieties was that they taste very different from current day produce. The corn was the most striking: it had no flavor at all compared to the sweet corn our palates now enjoy. Cowpeas were also very bland and stringy, and the Jefferson beans had no flavor since they required double cooking for safety reasons. The squash was pretty good but lacked the sweetness of today's varieties.

The insect load was not well mediated by organic methods, possibly because of inconsistent attempts to pick off the bugs. Watering and weeding were also irregular.

But in spite of the difficulties, approximately 500 adults and children visited this garden between May and October. Explanatory signage was in place for most of that time and /or staff conducted brief educational talks about the plantings. The personal learning experience of T. Price from this project is that she probably would have starved to death if she had been depending on it circa 1700-1850! It was much more difficult than anticipated in all areas. However, because of the amazing success of the Jewel Weed, everyone in the whole 1200 acres would have been kept free of Poison Ivy rash!

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

- October 26,2016, "Helping birds through the winter" by Judy Janas

Events held:

- October 11, 2015, Quarterly Meeting
- October 24, 2016, the President of the South Jersey Bonsai Society gave a presentation on Bonsai trees.
- An "Ask a Master Gardener" table was present at the county farmers' market twice during the month.



Camden – A 5-Year Demonstration Garden Plan was presented to the general meeting, outlining step-by-step plans for one acre of property behind the Environmental Center. The Demonstration Garden Committee cleaned up the three demonstration beds. The divided plants were sent to our greenhouse for our spring sale.

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The General Meeting elected the new board for 2017. The Greenhouse Committee is cleaning up the pots and closing down the greenhouse for the year. Our annual luncheon for our graduating interns will be held on November 18th.

Several Camden MG's attended the Rutgers Community Garden lectures held in Blackwood, NJ.

Cumberland - The tomato seed extraction of the Rutgers 250, organic 250 KC146, Schermehorn and Trw002 an earlier generation of Rutgers 250 with Dr. Orton is complete. These will be the seed that will be available next year. We will also be working on a tomato tasting for next year with Dr. Orton. Our November speaker was Richard DeMarco from Greenwich Tea burners and we learned all about growing tea in your garden and he also brought along sample for us to taste. The propagation team is already planning for 2017 plant sale. The Discovery Garden at Wheaton Art's has been put to bed until spring along with our own pollinator garden. Plans are being made for the Christmas luncheon with a make and take. The horticulture enrichment team will be making pinecone turkeys at the Veteran's Home. We will be having a wreath making class and a basket weaving class in December. There will be a bus trip to Longwood Gardens on January 3rd.

Essex – Our greenhouse officially opens today. We are accepting mother plants for propagation for our next year's plant sale.

~ On November 17th we will have the Hudson, Essex and Passaic Soil Conservation coming to our environmental center to analyze a wetlands garden that has proved to be a difficult growing area over the years. We will learn about the new technology that is being used to analyze soil composition, nutrients and trace minerals. They are bringing a portable X-ray and ground penetrating radar.

~ We have been very active in Brookdale Park this summer. A new pruning group will be assisting with pruning new dogwoods and ornamental trees and bushes. Our rose garden there finally completed its installation of its long awaited irrigation system.

~ We are starting a new project at the Turtleback Zoo. We will be assisting the zoo's horticulturalist with coordinating and directing the various volunteer groups that come to work at the zoo. We will also assist in refurbishing different areas of the zoo such as the pollinator pathway.

~ Our new MG class started on September 14th. There are 26 currently enrolled and they are all busy doing their volunteer hours.

Hunterdon- The speaker at the October Hunterdon County meeting was Dr. David Robinson who spoke on "Gardening in a Changing Climate". Two visits to the Philip Alampi Beneficial Insect Lab were held in October. The Helpline is closed for the year effective October 31. The numbers on the Master Gardener apple plot harvest at Snyder Farm are in and it was a record-breaking year. Master Gardeners harvested 16,000 pounds of apples for local food banks. This is the largest year to date. A total of 58,000 pounds of apples have been harvested for food banks since the Master Gardeners took over the plot. The new for 2016 Sensory Garden Team had a great first season with 9 on-site visits and 6 Outreach visits. The Hunterdon Central Team finished up the season with garlic planting, garden cleanup and a video of the season's highlights. Hunterdon Care Center activities have moved inside. The Speakers Bureau gave presentations to over 650 Hunterdon County residents this year

Mercer – On Oct. 10, we held our annual awards banquet. Ten more people were honored for reaching the 1000-hour status, and 8 were awarded 20-year service pins. One long-time Rutgers Master Gardener, who had been active for 19 years, was given Emeritus status. New this year was the Presidential Service Award, which honors those who have helped address pressing needs in their community, and whose 'volunteer service demonstrates the kind of commitment to the community that moves America a step closer to its great promise". Four RMG's, Carol Bencivengo, Greenie Neuburg, Nora Sirbaugh, and Theodora Wang earned the award, each having between 4749 and 6218 volunteer hours. After the presentations, Stephanie Cohen talked on "Fallscaping – the Last Hurrah".

The class of 2016 graduation will be held on Nov. 9. Hours sheets are currently being reviewed to determine who has fulfilled all the requirements to be granted Rutgers Master Gardener status.

A seed exchange took place on Oct. 12. RMG's exchanged seeds from their gardens, unused packets of seeds, plant cuttings, tender plants (begonias, houseplants, and spring and summer bulbs).

David Byers, Jacquee Davis, Janet Sheppard and Theodora Wang attended the community Garden Training Course on Sept. 28 in Monmouth County, and found it very helpful and informative.

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The next to last Community Education lecture of the year took place on Oct. 19, featuring Barbara Bromley speaking on "Rules for Successful Gardening". The final program will be on Nov. 16, on "Terrariums".

Our Insect Festival featured the "Big Bug Band", which was very popular, and who will be invited back next year. All speakers for our March 17 Symposium have been confirmed. They are Tony Avent, "Landscaping in Drifts of One", Ruth Rogers Clausen, "A Glorious Last Hurrah", Ken Druse, "The New Shade Garden: Creating a Lush Oasis in the Age of a Challenging Climate, and Don Leopold, "Creating and Restoring Sustainable Landscapes with Native Plants and Natural Plant Communities". Barbara Bromley will hold a Q&A session as well.

Middlesex – The **Rutgers Environmental Steward** class will again be offered starting in January, 2017. Learn about local environmental issues from the experts and how to create positive change in your communities. For more information or to register go to <http://envirostewards.rutgers.edu/Contacts.htm> and scroll to "Central/Middlesex County".

Our helpline has cut back to winter hours, which are 10 - 12 Monday to Friday.

Through an Earth Center Conservancy Grant, we were able to purchase a dozen new reference books for use by the helpline volunteers. Thanks to Betty Scarlata and the Mercer County helpline staff for their assistance in selecting the titles.

Monmouth – October was full of partying...composting (garden cleanup), manure, mulch...the fun just keeps going! One-by-one the gardens at the Agriculture Building are being put to bed for the winter. One that's got a little more to give is our PAR garden with over 2,600 lbs. of produce given to local food banks this season! The success of this garden has all to do with the hard work and many hours our Interns have spent there this year...way to go, Interns! A second President's Award recipient was Joe Luongo who was recognized for his continued service at almost every event we had this year. He was always there for set-up, breakdown and in between just in case something might come up. As Chair of our Spring Garden Days, he was a true example of one who is organized, focused, skilled, dedicated and creative. Along with his spirit and energy, and the combined talents and efforts of many MGs, we again had a very successful Spring Garden Days! Congratulations, Joe!

Committees are completing their end-of-the-year annual reports and we are now planning for Graduation on November 17th. Two Honorary Master Gardeners, Scott Applegate and Andrew Valdes, will be honored that night for their continued and varied support to the MCMGs. Milestone Award recipients will be honored as well. Along with Rich Obal (retired Rutgers Ag. Agent) and Bill Sciarappa (Rutgers Ag. Agent), Monmouth County Freeholder Lillian Burry will join in our celebration!

Morris – Master Gardeners worked with clients at six HEP assisted living/day care center venues creating horticultural-themed projects such as: sun catchers with dried flowers; beneficial insects out of stones with felt pieces & leaves; rose pedal decorated picture frames.

- Four Speaker's Bureau Lectures were given.
- Master Gardeners held a successful fund-raising event (sale of bulbs) during the State MG Conference.
- Volunteers within our Library Outreach Program concluded the program for this year in presenting the topics, "Living with Wildlife" and "Supporting a Backyard Habitat" respectively at the Morris County & Parsippany Library locations.
- Our Helpline Core Team Members successfully fulfilled their seven-month commitment this month. The scheduled program will begin again in April, 2017.
- Courses on soil, weed control, care and maintenance of perennials and shrubs, entomology, community gardening, worm composting, successful gardening, etc. were offered this month to our master gardeners for CEUs.

Ocean – This past month, we had a successful Fall Garden Day dispensing horticultural information to about 90 of our residence. Because of the rain, the Interns moved the demos into the auditorium. The many winners were happy with all the garden related door prizes available this year.

Our gleaning efforts, led by Noreen Baris and her Community Garden team, have yielded over 5,000lbs of squash, apples, and sweet potatoes for our O.C. food banks. The Hoop House received its new cover, the Greenhouse was sanitized, and the Wright House was readied for the spring season. Some other committees are winding down, including Helpline and Diagnostics. There were four talks given by our Speakers in October.

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A trip to the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens is planned for Dec. 6th.

Both Helpline and Publicity Committees have added new members to help with their revisions and to better advertise our services respectively.

Passaic – At last meeting Wing-Lee Pavlosky (Morris Co MG) spoke on Growing Beautiful Chrysanthemums. She was a delightful speaker and grows 100 plants in her yard. Some of these plants are as tall as 6 feet.

Passaic County will be decorating the Dining Room at the NJBG. The theme for the room will be “From Garden to Table” which is part of the overall theme of Gardener’s Holiday. Hosted Kerry Ann Mendez at Laurelwood. Topic was “Small Gardens, Big Attitude”

Members are asked to divide their perennials for the 2017 MG Plant sale. They can drop off plants for overwintering at the Extension Office. Plants will be buried and mulched; to be dug up in the spring.

Free milkweed seeds were given out at the last meeting along with a large selection of vegetable and flower seeds from last year. They were free from a local garden center.

Somerset –

Sussex – RCE Sussex will be combining our MG Intern Training with a Home Horticulture Educational Series available to all Sussex County residents this year. The classes will be given on Tuesday evenings from 5:30 – 7:30 PM starting on January 10, 2017 and running through June at the SCCC Public Safety Training Academy. Interns will receive additional training classes at the end of the Home Horticulture series to complete their training. They will then need to fulfill the 60 hours of volunteering to become certified. Some classes will also be available for pesticide certified training credits for commercial clients.

We are hoping to expand technology in training by recording several classes as webinars to offer not only live classes, but also online offerings. We are creating CE classes as well as prerecorded webinars of the content.

Work continues slowly at developing the infrastructure at the Research Garden area. Gates have been built and installed. Hardscaping paving blocks have been inventoried, the entrance and patio areas have been staked out. We are meeting with the county facilities department to figure out work details for the underlayment. Our hope is to get the paving blocks installed, or at least the underlayment complete, before it completely freezes this year.

We are endeavoring to find more ways to create and drive more educational outreach programming from our office and deliver this on evenings and on weekends to reach the widest audience possible. We are also seeking ways to write and post informational articles to our website. Our long-term goal is to create more instructional videos. We feel this will help us improve our impact and enable us to reach more people.

Union – Madeline Flahive Di Nardo, Union County Coordinator would like to thank all of the counties that participated in the Community Garden Training Program. Over 125 Master Gardeners were trained through this program at three different locations of the great Garden State of New Jersey.

In October, 53 fifth grade students from the College Achieve Central Charter School of Plainfield came to the Union County Master Gardeners Demonstration Gardens. They learned about how Master Gardeners work in several areas including the Herb, and Sharing Gardens. Hands-on activities included insect catch and release, and nature’s paints.

There are 25 new Master Gardener Interns. They have visited the Demonstration Gardens and have been assigned the shrub beds of the Cutting Garden. This garden has shared flower arrangements with cancer patients in the past. The Master Gardener Helpline has purchased a new microscope after the old one could no longer be repaired. Thanks to a grant from ExxonMobil via one of our Helpliners, we were able to acquire a beautiful, modern one.

BREAK – Thank you Atlantic for the break refreshments.

AMC = Agriculture Museum Classroom
ECC = Extension Conference Center

December is the Pot Luck Lunch plus our Auction to be held at the ECC. You can bring something either new or gently used for auction. There will be a regular meeting next month. Bergen is responsible for the break refreshments for the December meeting.

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ADJOURNMENT: Motion made and seconded to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted
Jane Gardner, Recording Secretary